

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING OF MAY 11, 2015
FROM:	KATE GRAHAM DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC INNOVATION
SUBJECT	CITY OF LONDON'S PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT RELATIONS NETWORKS

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Director, Community and Economic Innovation, the following report on the City of London's Participation in Government Relations Networks **BE RECEIVED**, for information.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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None.

BACKGROUND

The City of London works closely with other governments, associations and partners on a regular basis. Many City services and activities are influenced by federal and provincial policies, budgets and actions. The federal and provincial governments have an important impact on the City of London, and other municipalities across Canada.

The City of London is an active participant in several government relations networks and associations. The City participates in these networks because they can provide a powerful and effective mechanism to advocate for municipal interests, and they offer opportunities for the City of London to collaborate with, and learn from, peer municipalities and other partners. City Council and Civic Administration can leverage these networks to ensure that London's perspectives are heard.

City Councillors can play an active role in government relations networks and associations. The purpose of this report is to provide a high-level overview of key associations the City is involved with, and an overview of opportunities for Council members to become involved.

Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)

FCM was founded in 1901 and counts among its members communities both large and small from coast to coast to coast. FCM works with the federal government to influence policy and programs that affect Canada's municipalities. It also has a number of standing committees which facilitate detailed debate and provide the Board of Directors with recommendations on priority policy and program issues.

FCM's current standing committees are:

- Community Safety and Crime Prevention;
- Conference Planning Committee;
- Environmental Issues and Sustainable Development;
- Increasing Women's Participation in Municipal Government;
- International Relations, Municipal Finance and Intergovernmental Arrangements;
- Municipal Infrastructure and Transportation Policy; and,
- Social Economic Development.

FCM's Forums include: Rural Forum, Northern and Remote Forum, and Réseau des municipalités francophones de la FCM. Additionally, The Green Municipal Fund Council (GMF) is a unique group that oversees the directions and allocations of GMF grants and loans to Canadian municipalities. One third of Council members are Government of Canada representatives; one third are external members; and one third are elected municipal officials.

Elected Officials from member municipalities may become involved with FCM by running for membership on the Board of Directors or by volunteering to sit on a committee or forum. Each Board has a one year term, with elections taking place during the Annual General Meeting in June of each year. Councillor Harold Usher is a long-standing Director, and has been endorsed by Council to stand for re-election from June 2015 – June 2016.

Municipal Councillors are invited to apply for non-board committee member positions each year (information is posted annually on FCM's website in mid-May). Standing committees and forums meet quarterly to develop policy positions and make recommendations to the Board of Directors. Deputy Mayor Cassidy and Councillor Harold Usher are both involved in FCM's committees.

Upcoming meetings and events include:

- Annual Conference and Trade Show in Edmonton - June 5-8, 2015;
- Board Meeting in Fredericton - September 9-12, 2015;
- Board Meeting and Advocacy Days in Ottawa - November 17-20, 2015;
- Sustainable Communities Conference in Ottawa - February 9-11, 2016;
- Board Meeting in Sherbrooke - March 1-4, 2016; and
- Board Meeting in Oakville - September 13-16, 2016.

FCM has a number of priority policy issues including housing, infrastructure, transit and transportation. In the coming months, FCM will devote a substantial amount of its policy resources to preparing for the 2015 federal election. This will be done through outreach to the major parties and by establishing FCM's own electoral platform. Further information on FCM's policies can be found at: <http://www.fcm.ca/home/issues.htm>.

FCM is also involved in international programming with developing countries. London's involvement in FCM's international programs began in 2010 with its involvement in the Municipal Local Economic Development (MLED) program with Ukrainian communities. A five year program which ended in December, 2014, its goals were to promote business growth and economic development, strengthen intergovernmental cooperation, and advance economic and political gender equality, through better service planning and delivery. The project was funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, and was supplemented by significant in-kind contribution from Canadian and Ukrainian partners.

FCM announced on April 28, 2015 that it has negotiated an expanded partnership with local governments in Ukraine which will build on local economic development initiatives FCM has helped to implement in the last five years. The new Partnership for Local Economic Development and Democratic Governance (PLEDDG) is a five-year, \$19.5 million initiative funded by Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada. FCM's municipal experts will support their counterparts in Ukraine in their efforts to further generate economic growth and ensure all citizens participate in shaping their community and their country's future.

In the Caribbean, the purpose of the programme is to introduce and demonstrate to the Caribbean a new approach to local economic development (LED) that is not driven by central government but one that has local government agencies, local businesses, local stakeholders and community groups at the centre. Councillor Harold Usher has participated in the program as have two members of our Planning Services staff. Civic Administration has also coordinated the participation of several members of the London community.

It should also be noted that London recently hosted FCM's Sustainable Communities Conference. The feedback from delegates and FCM staff regarding this event was extremely positive. Over 95 per cent of the delegates said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the conference. The welcome reception, study tours, and closing dinner garnered especially positive reviews.

Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)

AMO was founded in 1899 and currently has 444 Ontario municipalities as members. AMO is committed to working with the Government of Ontario to give municipalities a seat at the federal-provincial table.

AMO is governed by a 43-member Board of Directors. AMO has numerous policy advisors who work with AMO task forces to develop and review policy position recommendations on many issues of municipal interest. Each Board has a two year term, with the next election taking place in 2016 at the AGM and Annual Conference in Windsor (August 14-17). A call for nominations will be circulated by the Clerk eight weeks in advance of the election. Elected officials interested in running for a Director position must fill out an expression of interest and acquire a Council Resolution supporting their nomination. The Board meets at the AMO Offices in Toronto approximately six times per year. Member municipalities may only be represented by one Director on the Board and London is currently not represented.

AMO's policy priorities include, but are not limited to, emergency services, insurance, and upload agreements. More detailed information about these and other policy priorities can be found at: <http://www.amo.on.ca/Advocacy.aspx>.

AMO's task forces include the Aggregates Task Force, Planning Task Force, Energy Task Force, Housing Task Force, Social Policy Task Force and numerous others. Elected Officials may apply to become a member of various working groups and committees. Volunteers assist AMO in developing policy and advancing municipal concerns by sharing municipal insight and experience. Meetings typically take place at the AMO Offices, with an option for teleconference. Meeting frequency varies, however groups often meet on a quarterly basis. Additional information can be found at <http://www.amo.on.ca/About/Volunteering.aspx>.

AMO holds annual conferences, with the most recent being held in London in 2014. Upcoming conference locations include Niagara Falls (2015), Windsor (2016), and Ottawa (2017).

Big City Mayors' Caucus (BCMC)

The Big City Mayors' Caucus is a group within FCM comprised of the mayors of Canada's 22 largest cities. The BCMC is currently chaired by Gregor Robertson, Mayor of Vancouver. Mayor Matt Brown is an active contributor. BCMC met most recently in early February and identified its policy priorities for the upcoming year. Three main policy areas of interest were identified: infrastructure, housing, and transit and transportation. In regards to infrastructure, the BCMC advocates for sustainable levels of investment across all levels of government. For housing issues, BCMC intends to focus on advocating for a long-term national housing plan that makes affordability a priority. In terms of transit, the BCMC's main priority is reducing commute times in Canada's big cities.

BCMC advocated for urban issues in preparation for the federal budget, and will be actively engaged in the upcoming 2015 federal election. The next BCMC meeting will be at the FCM AGM on June 4th in Edmonton. A list of members is available at <http://www.fcm.ca/home/about-us/big-city-mayors-caucus.htm>.

Large Urban Mayor's Caucus of Ontario (LUMCO)

The Large Urban Mayor's Caucus of Ontario is made up of the mayors of Ontario's 27 most populous municipalities and works to support and enhance large urban governments. LUMCO's current chair is Jeff Lehman, Mayor of Barrie. Mayor Matt Brown is an active LUMCO member.

LUMCO has a number of current policy priorities which are consistent with those of the BCMC. As with BCMC, LUMCO has reduction of commute times and gridlock as a priority. LUMCO also advocates for increased government (provincial and federal) investment in infrastructure, especially transportation infrastructure. In terms of housing, LUMCO would like to see the province and the federal government both increase funding for affordable housing. LUMCO recently met with Premier Kathleen Wynne at Queens Park on April 20, 2015 to discuss these issues.

Another policy priority of LUMCO is emergency services costs. LUMCO suggests that the Province of Ontario should modify the current interest arbitration system to help address these increased

costs. Further information on LUMCO's policies is online: <http://www.ontariobigcitymayors.ca/key-issues/>

LUMCO recently held its first Advocacy Days in Ottawa with the federal government from May 5-6, 2015. Mayor Matt Brown attended numerous meetings with Ministers, Members of Parliament, and other key government leaders.

Mayors and Regional Chairs of Ontario (MARCO)

The Mayors and Regional Chairs of Ontario performs similar functions to LUMCO, but with a different composition, as it includes mayors of single tier municipalities and the chairs of regional governments. MARCO has similar priorities to LUMCO and BCMC. The current Chair of MARCO is Ken Seiling, Chair of the Region of Waterloo. Mayor Matt Brown is the representative for the City of London.

MARCO shares policy positions with LUMCO on affordable housing and transit, but is also focused on two other notable issues. The first of these is to do with the Energy East Pipeline. TransCanada wants to convert the North Bay to Ottawa portion of the pipeline from natural gas to oil from Western Canada. Union Gas says this would increase costs to gas customers in Ontario. An application has been made to the National Energy Board and their recommendation is expected in February 2016.

Another policy priority for MARCO is the development of a multi-modal transportation strategy for Ontario. MARCO advises that municipalities should collaborate and ask the province to develop such a strategy to encourage economic growth. This matter will be further discussed in a joint LUMCO-MARCO meeting at the AMO meeting in August.

MARCO's next meeting is August 16th in Niagara Falls, immediately after the AMO Board Meeting. At the time of writing of this report, MARCO does not have a website.

Southwest Economic Alliance (SWEA)

SWEA was established in 2006 and is focused on growing the economy of Southwest Ontario through strong regional leadership and cooperation. It is designed to be a partnership between local governments, educational institutions, the private sector, and the broader public sector. London has been an active supporter of SWEA since its inception, and hosted its annual Assembly in 2010.

SWEA advocated extensively for the implementation of Fed Dev and the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund. Currently one of SWEA's main priorities is its intelligent region initiative, including the SWIFT project. SWIFT is designed to bring ultra high-speed fibre optic broadband to all of Western Ontario. More information about the intelligent region initiative and SWIFT can be found at: <http://swea.ca/initiatives/intelligent-region/>.

The next meeting of SWEA is on May 14, 2015 in Woodstock and London will be represented.

Municipal Government Relations Network

At a staff level, the City of London participates in the Municipal Government Relations Network (MGRN). MGRN was formed in 2012 to consist of government relations staff from approximately 25 municipalities and regions in Ontario. The group provides support to municipal government relations professionals by sharing ideas, tools and best practices in an effort to strengthen communication networks between municipalities and develop a deeper understanding of political environments for the staff and Council they support. MGRN meets four times per year.

CONCLUSION

The City of London works closely with other governments, associations and partners on a regular basis. This work benefits the City of London in a variety of ways, including ensuring that London's perspectives are heard, municipal interests are effectively considered by other governments. The City of London has also benefitted from participation in government relations networks and associations by forming new partnerships, learning from others, and creating linkages between

organizations. At a political level, London is well represented by the contributions of the Mayor and City Council members in various forums. At a staff level, individuals from across the organization are involved in government relations activities and networks. Participation in government relations networks requires an investment, but has historically provided significant benefits for the City of London.

This report was intended to provide an overview of key government relations networks and associations with which the City of London is involved, and highlight upcoming events and opportunities for further involvement. Should Council members have questions or interest in becoming more engaged in this work, further information can be provided.

This report was prepared with the assistance of Kristen Pawelec and Ben Fraser.

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