

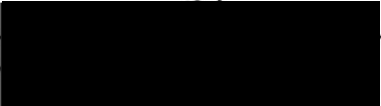


Schedule A

Conference, Workshop/Seminar & Training Policy #2

**Council and Staff Education Evaluation Report
Conference, Training, Seminars & Professional Development/Self-Study**

Participant's Name: MARTIN SHIPSTON

Course/Workshop/Conference: <u>F.C.M</u>	Overall Evaluation: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/>
Association /Institution Provider:	Name of Instructor:
Dates of Attended: (if online, indicate online) <u>MAY 25 - 28th 2023</u>	
Purpose of Attending: <u>TO LEARN AND NETWORK WITH OUR NATIONAL COUNTERPARTS</u>	
Please summarize the contents and the main points of the course: (Attach additional pages if necessary) <u>SEE ATTACHED</u>	
Will you use this information in your role? If yes, explain how: <u>YES, I BELIEVE I WILL IN THE FACT ONE HAS TO THINK OUT SIDE OF THE BOX WHEN DEALING WITH INFRASTRUCTURE AND FISCAL ISSUES</u>	
Do you recommend that other Council Members/Staff attend this course? If so, who and why: <u>A VERY WORTHWHILE CONFERENCE</u>	
Should similar course material be presented in house? If yes, by whom? <u>N/A</u>	
Signature: 	Date: <u>JUNE 10 - 2023</u>

FCM CONFERENCE NOTES

DAY 1

Janet Drysdale, rep for C.N, opening remarks dealt with C.N's safety record and commitment to working with municipalities and businesses. The company now only moves freight not passengers so emphasis was on supply chains to keep the economy moving. I did ask reps manning their booth about the ongoing discussion about maintenance of drains on or near C.N.tracks but not much comment as talks are stalled.

Carol Saab, FCM C.E.O. in her welcoming speech talked about immigration policies. There is a need for growth as the population is ageing and less children are being born. Growth is needed for the people and ensuing economic growth. She also touched on a theme that was very evident throughout the conference, that there is a flawed dynamic between the Federal and Provincial governments, and the vacuum that leaves municipalities left to figure things out. This also tied into the discussion of a much needed new revenue stream. A statement that almost could be a rallying cry was municipalities are the providers of services and first in line to the people and should not be satisfied with the "status quo".

Jennifer McKelvie, Deputy Mayor of Toronto in her opening speech mentioned that 60% of all infrastructure is owned by municipalities but only "you cannot eat subdivisions".receive up to 12 cents out of every tax dollar. Another reason for the need for a new fiscal source and renewal.

WORKSHOP ON INTERCOMMUNITY TRANSIT

- Intercommunity transit is a driver,(no pun intended), for economic growth and mobility of new populations especially in rural areas.
- Ridership has been falling because of the pandemic, business failures of private carriers, or the same moving their operations. This does not reflect on the importance of having transit
- This again is reflected in populated areas where 3% of trips are done by bus or rail. Corridors like the Windsor to Quebec line are non-existent in rural and Northern Ontario.
- Hubs are the answer to this for they provide servicing for Go-trains, buses, public transit and smaller bus runs like the Owen Sound to Guelph line.
- Transit in rural areas should be looking for private sponsorship and advertise and highlight what we have,i.e., Grey/Bruce transit and Saugeen Mobility.
- Partnership with upper levels of government to increase the infrastructure needed in rural areas, again mentioning the fact that it is good for economic growth.
- In smaller communities transit can alleviate social isolation, help with food security issues, and impact local economies. Route times can be coordinated with local clinics for medical needs with partnerships with groups like United Way, V.O.N. etc.

PRIME MINISTER OPENING SPEECH

The Prime Minister talked about housing and transit funding and the necessity to make changes. One item that stuck with me was as far as the housing was to allow multiplexes being built in all developments, not just stay with the ancient idea of inclusive detached housing zoning.

DAY 2

FUTURE PROOFING CANADA'S AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

- Build up not out and keep farmland prices at respectful farmland prices, not overpriced for speculative land use. One panellist said "you cannot eat subdivisions". The resounding consensus was prime farmland should stay just that, prime agricultural land.
- A call to create agricultural advisory boards to oversee AG policies, not politicians who look only at 4 year terms, not the 25 plus that is needed for sustainability.
- Not enough lobbying by the agricultural sector to the province, needed to counterbalance the lobbying done by developers.
- Looking down the road of 25 years for sustainability many examples were given. One farmer has his own bio-digester, which quickly was copied by neighbouring farms. They treat their own manure, treat food waste from local businesses and in the process create hydro and make their own fertiliser. A perfect example of a cyclical and sustainable operation.
- Only 3% of global landmass is arable, with hundreds of thousands of acres being lost every year. Again the idea of building up not out was prevalent.
- 90% of farms across Canada are family owned, while at the same time being only 2% of the population. This is the exact opposite in the U.S. as most farms fall under a corporate banner or umbrella.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND FARMING

- The panellists touched on this topic as it directly affects land use and food sustainability and security.
- The extreme weather can destroy crops so actually more arable land is needed to offset any failures. It was stressed that land decisions have to have an agricultural climate lens to adapt to these extremes. To quote again, "you cannot eat subdivisions".
- Save arable land for farming not inclusive urban sprawl.
- An example of climate sustainability was one chicken operation that used technology in their barns. Solar walls were used for preheating, solar panels for hydro and air/heat exchangers to use heat. Water use was decreased by 40% and the carbon footprint decreased by 37%. Water use was decreased and retention was increased because of higher temperatures. Catching and retaining water will be important for times of drought and other extreme weather.

A very engaging and informative session

DAY 3

- Sustainability was also a main area when dealing with housing. This also touched on climate issues.
- A social housing organisation used CMHC seed money, their own reserves and grants from climate funds to renovate their existing buildings. Because of the cost savings of making the buildings climate worthy they can pay off loans from money saved in utilities etc. No new money is needed as it is self paying and sustainable.

I found this was a general theme of the FCM conference. To look at sustainability and to be creative with what monies municipalities can acquire. These ideas lead in to the plenary on funding.

NEW FISCAL FRAMEWORK FOR MUNICIPALITIES

-The current system of raising revenues mostly through property taxes places constraints on municipalities.

-All are labouring under a paradigm that was built on property taxes under an Act called the Baldwin Act of 1849.

-Today's challenges are different from 174 years ago as municipalities are being asked to settle newcomers, reduce greenhouse gases, as well as dealing with a infrastructure deficit of 175 billion.

Halifax Mayor Mike Savage stated "municipalities across the country are constrained by a fiscal framework that is not designed to empower local governments to drive local solutions at the scale needed for 2023 and beyond. He also stated that local governments have no ability to get respective provincial governments to even consider changing the current model. Lower tier's have no "leverage".

Mayor of Montreal Valerie Plante stated "We need to fix this broken system of fiscality because it puts us into a situation where cities are always needing and asking for things here and there." I would also say that applies to rural townships as well. Plante also said "we are looking for a vision and we are looking for recognition that we are partners". And " we want a working partnership".

Coupling that sentiment with the previously mentioned fact that municipalities own 60% of all infrastructure but get very little out of a tax dollar was can certainly understand the reasoning behind such statements.

The sessions were very informative and had one of the best trade shows. I was impressed how so much we have in common, good and bad. I am thankful I was able to attend. A very worthwhile conference.

Martin Shipston