



**REPORT TO COUNCIL:
A SUMMARY OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AND STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

OTTAWA, ON

NOVEMBER 20 – 23, 2012

OVERVIEW

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Board of Directors meetings took place in Ottawa from November 20 – 23, 2012.

Board members participated in Regional Caucus meetings, Standing Committee and Forum meetings and a Committee of the Whole meeting focusing largely on the federal government's initiative to develop a new long-term infrastructure plan. FCM's advocacy efforts are in full swing around this once-in-a-generation opportunity to secure predictable, sustainable infrastructure funding from the federal government over the next two decades.

The Board meeting was highlighted by the participation of Denis Lebel, Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, and Steven Fletcher, Minister of State for Transport. Minister Lebel spoke to the Board about the long-term infrastructure plan and the government's partnership with municipalities. The plan will replace nearly \$2 billion in federal infrastructure funding set to expire in 2014. It would pave the way for construction of roads, bridges, water and wastewater systems, and other key municipal infrastructure elements. Other highlights included:

- keynote addresses to the Board by NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair, Liberal Party Leader Bob Rae and Green Party Leader Elizabeth May;
- our Table Officers' meeting with Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, who was open to our ideas and committed to working together to get the plan right; and,
- FCM's reception for Parliamentarians, which drew more than 300 people and included numerous Cabinet ministers.

Over the four days, Board members discussed many other important topics, including FCM's 2013 pre-budget submission, housing, policing and community safety, economic development, the environment, rural and remote issues, transportation policy and international development, among others. The Board considered and passed an emergency resolution about food packaging standards.

Board members also heard how their councils and communities can do their part to support FCM's campaign for the long-term infrastructure plan, by taking part in our Great Canadian Infrastructure Challenge. They can do so by visiting fcmchallenge.ca and signing up.

Advocacy Days

Again this year, our Advocacy Days activities during the November Board meeting surpassed all previous ones, as Board members met on Parliament Hill with Cabinet Ministers, MPs and Senators. We set a record for the number of Parliamentarians we met – 153 in all (74 Conservatives, 51 NDP, 27 Liberals and 1 Green). Last year, we set a record with 113 meetings.

During the meetings, FCM's directors provided each MP with a customized information package that summarized Gas Tax Fund investments made in his/her riding. In addition, MPs heard details of FCM's submission to the government in regards to the new long-term infrastructure plan. Highlights of our ask include a proposal for a new Core Economic Infrastructure Fund, worth \$2.5-billion annually, and indexing and protection of the Gas Tax Fund and Building Canada Fund.

Standing Committees and Forums

FCM's standing committees and forums met to discuss the latest developments and to make recommendations to the Board of Directors. A summary of these activities is provided below.

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Committee Chair Michelle Morin-Doyle began the meeting by welcoming members, including new members and conveyed Vice-Chair Marguerite Ceschi-Smith's regrets as she was unable to attend the meeting. The committee then adopted the agenda and approved the report of the previous meeting.

The main discussion began with a debrief on Advocacy Day meetings that had taken place with members of parliament (MPs) to get a sense of how FCM's messages were received. In general, discussions were positive and MPs agreed that new infrastructure investment was needed, particularly to meet the new wastewater regulations. MPs of all parties emphasized the need for federal infrastructure spending at the local level to be more visible and they were grateful to receive the "leave-behind" documents showing riding specific data on infrastructure investments in their community. Members also discussed different ways to make Advocacy Days more effective, including through follow up with individual members after each meeting.

The committee received an update on FCM's involvement in the Zero-Waste National Marketing Council. Committee members who had participated in the initial meeting of the Council provided their perspective on the role FCM could play and the limits to our involvement based on our mandate. Staff invited further guidance from the committee but in general members wanted to ensure that FCM promote objectives that were front-end focused, and not post-consumption.

The discussion then moved to the environmental priorities of FCM that were advanced through the Long-Term Infrastructure Plan. These include funding for the implementation of the wastewater regulations, climate change adaptation, transit and sustainable transportation and capacity building to enable better investments. Members were particularly interested in FCM's proposal around capacity building and the potential transformation of the Green Municipal Fund. The proposals were positively received and members were informed of the discussions that would be taking place on these changes following a successful meeting with Minister Oliver.

Finally an update was given on FCM's response to the changes to the Navigable Waters Act in budget Bill C-45. Committee members were pleased with the report and inquired as to how soon the changes would come into effect.

The meeting ended with a presentation by FCM's Green Team on the FCM Sustainability Charter, which describes a number of sustainability goals and an action plan for their achievement. Members were very impressed with the outcomes and asked for additional information.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Standing Committee recommends this report be received.

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON MUNICIPAL FINANCE AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Committee chair Don Downe welcomed new and returning committee members to Ottawa. The Chair introduced the Vice-Chairs, Robert Coulombe and Roger Anderson.

The committee approved the report from the September 2012 meeting. Staff then provided an update on the Action Items Status Report, highlighting the work done to date on the committee priorities.

The committee then heard from staff on the status of the committee's work to encourage greater intergovernmental collaboration and coordination in attracting foreign direct investment and linking Canadian goods to world markets. Significant opportunities have arisen that will allow FCM to build on the successful partnership with the Government of Canada and, specifically, International Trade Minister Ed Fast. Committee members emphasized the need to link the work of municipalities to priority areas of the Government's broad economic strategy on trade and investment. Further, members commented that the organization must seize on the strong relationships the Board has developed with Minister Fast to ensure that, as much as possible, FCM provides the link between trade, investment and municipal infrastructure insofar as providing opportunities to export Canadian knowledge, expertise and innovation to the world.

Next, the Committee discussed the positioning of public-private partnerships (P3s) within the broader context of FCM's Long-term Infrastructure Plan (LTIP) ask. It was reiterated that FCM must ensure that the position of FCM is not unduly influenced by industry and federal rhetoric on the ability of P3s to fix the municipal infrastructure challenge alone. Indeed, P3s should be aimed at *supplementing* traditional federal investments into infrastructure, not *supplanting* them. The Committee directed staff to report back at the next meeting on the state of federal research in support of the use of P3s in delivering municipal infrastructure.

The Committee then considered an emergency resolution from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario regarding the elimination of Canadian-specific food packaging requirements. It is clear that this is a significant economic issue for many parts of the country, and that this regulatory change will have a deleterious effect on many local economies, specifically in southern Ontario. The Committee recommended this resolution be categorized as Category A, concurrence.

Finally, the Chair facilitated a roundtable discussion of the Advocacy Days political meetings undertaken prior to the committee meeting. Members discussed perceptions relating to how the FCM LTIP ask has been received in Ottawa. A recurrent question posed to members was where the money for these federal investments would come from. Staff reiterated that this is a matter for the Government of Canada to sort out and that our goal to secure, predictable investments for communities. Other comments included the need to develop riding specific information for all political meetings (i.e. including Senators), that most MPs have responded that our ask is reasonable, and that FCM's broader

work to encourage a long-term plan targeting 15-20 year programming needs to continue as some MPs had not yet bought into the concept.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for adoption:

1. Direct staff to work with the Minister's Office and department officials to develop terms of reference for an "elevated and expanded" Joint Working Group on International Trade as well as options for tangible deliverables from this partnership;

Recommendations for referral to staff:

2. Direct staff to collect all research done by the federal government on P3s under the LTIP process and provide this research to the Municipal Finance and Intergovernmental Arrangements committee at the March 2013 meeting.

The Standing Committee recommends this report be received.

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

The Chair welcomed new and returning committee members.

During the Advocacy Days debrief, members reported that overall, MPs are showing a significant interest in and recognition of the importance of an infrastructure plan for Canada.

Committee members discussed and developed responses to key questions and concerns from MPs about the submission including: how will this plan will tackle the current and growing infrastructure deficit; should the federal government be making new big investments in tough economic times; what role can the opposition parties play to move our infrastructure agenda along?

The Committee also discussed infrastructure as it relates to Committee priorities such as the emergency services and the impact of natural disasters on infrastructure.

Members agreed that this infrastructure campaign presents an excellent opportunity to engage and build relationships with their members of parliament outside of advocacy days.

Councillor Bob Long provided a summary of a recent meeting of the Joint Committee on Community Corrections and thanked his committee colleagues who also sit on that committee. The Joint Committee heard from a number of regional organizations engaged in employment and employability of former prisoners. Arising from this summary, the Committee directed staff to invite Allen Benson, President, National Associations Active in Criminal Justice, to present to this Committee on the issue of crime prevention in the near future.

Staff provided an update on FCM's work with the Public Safety Canada for the upcoming National summit on the Economics of Policing as well as with Health Canada on reform to the Medical Marijuana Access Regulations.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for adoption:

1. Direct staff to work with FCM representatives at the National Policing Summit to develop and deliver key messages effectively throughout the summit; and
2. Direct staff to secure a commitment from the federal government to work with FCM develop mutually beneficial plans and initiatives for policing and crime prevention, similar to the approach that kick-started our relationship with Infrastructure Canada on LTIP; and

3. Support the incorporation of concerns and gaps created by Public Safety Canada's budget cuts into the key messages and strategy for FCM at the National Police Summit on Economics of Policing; and
4. Support a letter from FCM's President to the Minister of Public Safety further emphasizing the need for Public Safety to meet and work with FCM to address gaps in federal funding of emergency preparedness training, policing services, and equipment needs.

Recommendation for referral to staff:

5. Direct staff to develop draft principles on FCM policy on policing and crime prevention coming out of the 2011 President's policing tour for committee's consideration and input. This input would be incorporated into the final report on the policing tour.

The Standing Committee recommends this report be received.

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE RURAL FORUM

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Chair David Marit welcomed everyone to the Rural Forum, and introduced new members Jacques Demers of the Fédération québécoise des municipalités, and Rhona Martin of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, and returning member Russell Walker of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities. President Marit requested that two hours be set aside for all future meetings of the Rural Forum.

After approval of the minutes, the Forum discussed the correspondence between FCM and Minister Gerry Ritz concerning cuts to the Rural Secretariat. The Forum agreed that a follow-up letter should be sent to Minister Ritz and that a meeting should be arranged between the Minister and the Chair and Vice-Chair to discuss the government's vision for Rural Canada.

The forum then discussed Advocacy Days meetings, in particular the rural components of the proposed Core Economic Infrastructure Fund and the role of P3s.

Reeve Don Forfar provided the Forum with an update on small and regional airport viability and changes to federal regulations, and requested that staff provide an update on this issue at the next meeting of the Forum. Staff provided an update on efforts to include rural content at the 2013 FCM AGM in Vancouver, including a proposed workshop on capacity building in asset management for rural communities.

The Forum was also provided with an update on rural infrastructure, and the major rural components of FCM's LTIP ask: a) the focus of the proposed Core Economic Infrastructure Fund on the rural priorities of roads, bridges, water and wastewater, b) the need to streamline the Small Communities Component of the Building Canada Fund, c) and the need for federal leadership in assisting rural communities to build capacity in asset management. The Forum indicated a lot of support for the submission and agreed there is a need to continue to better communicate the rural dimension of the submission to MPs and the public. Members recommended that FCM highlight the individual experiences of rural municipalities in addressing rural infrastructure challenges in future communications and outreach products, and conduct outreach to private-sector partners with a shared interest in rural infrastructure. Staff will work with the Forum to develop a rural LTIP outreach strategy for January.

Staff also provided an update on rural broadband, and advised the Forum that Industry Canada has not yet completed its consultation on the D Block spectrum for public safety users, and that the government has not yet indicated how it intends to use the proceeds from the 700 MHz spectrum auction. Members asked staff to examine the issue of rural broadband affordability, in addition to rural coverage and capacity.

The Forum was provided an update on FMC's rural research initiative and the importance of linking economic growth in key resources sectors (e.g. agriculture, mining, forestry, fisheries) with the need for strong rural infrastructure and sustainable rural communities.

President Marit requested that staff provide an update on the Species at Risk Act at the next meeting of the Forum, and conduct research into whether changes to the federal environmental assessment process have cost implications for municipalities.

Councillor Somerville provided an update on a resolution from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario on changes to federal food processing regulations, and members agreed that the Forum supports the classification of this resolution as Category A with concurrence.

FORUM RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for adoption:

1. Examine options for a rural advocacy strategy on LTIP.
2. Provide an update on the Species at Risk Act and changes to the federal environmental assessment legislation at the next meeting of the Forum.
3. Request a meeting for the Chair and Vice-Chair with Minister Gerry Ritz to discuss the cuts to the Rural Secretariat and the government's vision for Rural Canada.

Recommendations for referral to staff:

4. Provide an update at the next meeting of the Forum on the issue of small and regional airport viability and changes to federal regulations.

The Standing Committee recommends this report be received.

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

The Chair welcomed the committee to Ottawa and led a round of introductions followed by a discussion about Advocacy Days.

During the Advocacy Days debrief, members reported that there is a growing positive response to FCM overall. MPs were mostly positive and while we are still at the beginning of our LTIP campaign, many parliamentarians are very aware and interested in FCM's long-term infrastructure plan for Canada.

Committee members discussed emerging themes coming out of meetings including: resistance to a new Core Infrastructure Fund, a lack of understanding about the Gas Tax Fund and too much flexibility over what projects would be eligible for funding. The committee also identified key parliamentary champions for our plan across all political parties.

The Chair provided a briefing on his team's meeting with the minister responsible for Housing, the Hon. Diane Finley. The Chair reported that the meeting was generally positive and the minister signaled that she supports long-term housing program funding, beyond the typical three year cycle, and that a decision on renewing housing programs is coming soon.

The Committee agreed that there are useful strategic lessons learned from FCM's approach to LTIP and that the same focus and strategy can and should be applied to our advocacy for affordable housing and housing affordability. The Committee looks forward to similar attention to FCM's housing strategy building up to Budget 2014.

Staff provided an update on FCM's housing advocacy strategy and the seniors research out of the Quality of Life Reporting System.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for adoption:

1. That the Committee establish a working group to work with National Programs as necessary to provide input on board and member priorities and concerns and that the Committee appoint the following SED members to the working group:
 - Councillor Ben Henderson, City of Edmonton
 - Councillor Marguerite Ceschi-Smith, City of Brantford
 - Councillor Erin Hogan, City of Thompson

- Councillor Lorne Olsvik, Lac Ste. Anne County

2. Direct staff to coordinate a joint presentation by Allen Benson, President, National Associations Active in Criminal Justice, to both the Social Economic Development and Community Safety and Crime Prevention Committees.
3. Direct staff to include in the March agenda, a discussion about new research on equity and inequity in social policy.
4. Direct staff to include in the March agenda, a discussion about housing advocacy and a national housing strategy.

The Standing Committee recommends this report be received.

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORTATION POLICY

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Committee Chair Doug Reycraft opened the meeting and introduced the two Vice-Chairs, Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti and Councillor Brian Pincott.

Members approved the agenda and the report from the September 2012 Committee meeting.

Staff provided the committee with updates on the Long-term Infrastructure Plan (LTIP) as well as telecommunications policy priorities. Staff discussed current research being undertaken by the FCM-Railway Association of Canada Proximity Working Group on an update to proximity guidelines. Further, an update was provided and update to the current review by Transport Canada on the Railway-Roadway Guidelines currently in development. Updates will be brought to the committee in the future as appropriate.

The Committee then heard a substantial update from staff on the narrative that has been shaped and communicated with respect to FCM's LTIP ask. Starting with the launch of the Canadian Infrastructure Report Card (available at: www.CanadaInfrastructure.ca), staff described the early response to the municipal narrative around the need for a truly long-term infrastructure plan. The launch of FCM's LTIP Submission in November 2012 was one of the most significant and widely discussed activities undertaken by the organization in recent memory. This work was supported by a substantial release by the BCMC the following week. This narrative has positioned the Advocacy Days meetings as critical opportunities to build on effective partnerships with the federal government and all political parties.

Staff then provided updates on the process to develop a model municipal access agreement for telecommunications companies under a consultative mechanism crafted by the CRTC. Significant progress has been made in many key areas and a more substantial update will be coming to the committee in March 2012. Following this, staff updated members on the progress made to date to develop a national protocol on antenna tower siting. Members reiterated their support for such a process yet reaffirmed that the end product must be flexible enough to ensure such a tool can be used by every municipality.

Finally, Committee members shared comments and perspectives on the meetings that have happened with MPs, Ministers and Senators over the week. Some general points of commonality included:

- MPs with previous municipal experience tended to be more receptive to FCM's messages given their understanding of the local contexts and environment
- Staff provided high-quality and relevant information to enrich the meetings with MPs
- The approach taken to engage with the Québec NDP caucus (to meet and brief with MPs as a group) was favourable and created a positive dynamic for FCM's advocacy efforts

- Advocacy Days in general are seen as a critical means to continuing to build the partnership between municipal governments and the federal government.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for adoption:

1. Approve the draft protocol in principle; and
2. Instruct staff to work with the CWTA on a final version to be presented to the Executive Committee in December 2012; and
3. Instruct staff to work with the CWTA on a joint launch of the protocol in January 2013.

The Standing Committee recommends this report be received.

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

As part of FCM's Advocacy Days, FCM met with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation, Lois Brown. This was a first meeting between FCM and Ms. Brown, who has requested a follow-up meeting with her office. The committee members also received a report from Mayor Debra Button on the activities organized throughout the past year to celebrate FCM's 25th anniversary of international cooperation.

Over the last 2 years, FCM, through its work with the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), has led the development of a policy paper on the role of local governments as development actors. FCM Past President, Cllr Berry Vrbanovic, provided members with an overview of the policy paper, including the key messages and call for action. FCM President, Cllr Karen Leibovici, reiterated FCM's leadership role in the development of this paper and the importance of development cooperation in implementing aid programs around the world. This policy paper will be presented for adoption to UCLG's World Council in December. Following the adoption of the policy paper, committee members will be involved in the implementation of the policy paper and monitoring of an advocacy strategy.

The committee members were presented with a framework on how local governments can effectively engage with the extractive sector. A task group of the committee, chaired by Cllr Garth Frizzell, worked with staff to finalize a set of criteria to assess opportunities to support local governments overseas to work with Canadian extractive companies. The committee had a good discussion and recognized the value-added FCM brings through its reputation and exchange of expertise. The committee agreed to approve the framework assessment criteria developed by the task group and to support the task group to develop a risk management and decision making framework before the March board meeting. The task group will also provide guidance on the assessment of the initial project presented to FCM by CIDA earlier this year.

Cllr Dorothy Hector, Chair of the Natural Disasters Task Group, presented the revised framework on responding to natural disasters. She explained FCM's experience in disaster reconstruction and the reasons why the framework was developed. The committee members were asked to provide feedback on the framework to the task group. FCM staff was asked to explore options for involvement in this sector and to consult key actors involved in disaster management. Staff will present its findings to the committee in March.

The committee members received a report on project development. FCM staff has been working on a new programming framework with CIDA. They're also working on the renewal of the Ukraine-Municipal Local Economic Development (MLED) and the Municipal Partners for Economic Development (MPED) programs, as well as on new initiatives, including opportunities in South-east Asia. FCM is no longer

looking at opportunities with CIDA in China and Bolivia due to changes in priorities in these two countries at CIDA.

In October, partners from the MLED, MPED and Caribbean Local Economic Development (CARILED) programs met in Ottawa as part of FCM's LED Forum. This was the first time partners from different programs met to share best practices and approaches amongst programs. The LED Forum included presentations from expert speakers, plenary sessions, technical workshops and networking opportunities that will help to strengthen the programs.

The MLED program has been working with the Association of Ukraine Cities (AUC) to ensure the involvement of women on the AUC board. Recently, the AUC passed a motion to ensure that no less than 5 per cent of the AUC board be women. The MLED program also signed agreements with Invest Ukraine to help AUC and municipalities in Ukraine to attract more investments and to support work of the MLED program. Cllr Pam McConnell travelled to Ukraine in October as part of a gender workshop related to LED.

The Haiti-Municipal Cooperation Program will come to a close in March 2013. FCM and its partners, City of Montreal and Union des municipalités du Quebec, have requested a 3-month extension. In the coming weeks, FCM and its partners will submit a proposal to CIDA for a 5-year LED program starting in 2013.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Standing Committee recommends this report be received.

**REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
ON INCREASING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT**

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Committee Chair Erin Hogan welcomed everyone to Ottawa and invited committee members and observers to introduce themselves.

The Committee then approved the agenda, the report from the Laval Board Meeting, and its action item, which was forming a sub-committee on long-term funding options.

Following these approvals the Committee heard a series of reports.

FCM President Karen Leibovici provided a report on the meeting between herself, Committee Chair Erin Hogan, Sub-Committee Chair Pam McConnell, FCM CEO Brock Carlton and the Minister Responsible for Status of Women Rona Ambrose, with regards to their discussions about FCM's women's programming. The meeting went well, with Minister Ambrose expressing personal interest in the success of our programs, particularly the Protégé program, and agreeing to personally follow up on our funding proposal to Status of Women Canada, submitted last August. Other committee members also provided debriefings on their Advocacy Days meetings.

Next Pam McConnell, chair of the sub-committee on long-term funding provided a verbal report on the first meeting of the sub-committee. The Committee then held a brainstorming session asking what success looks like when the Committee is fulfilling its purpose. The results from this discussion will inform the work of the sub-committee on long term funding.

The Committee then heard an update on the Protégé Program. Councillors who were present from pilot communities (Erin Hogan, Thompson, MB; Michelle Morin-Doyle, Québec, QC; and Ben Henderson, Edmonton, AB) gave updates on the program in their communities. Emily Goodacre, Coordinator of the Protégé program, provided an update on Protégé activities in Wainfleet, ON, the fourth pilot community. As funding for the program has ended, committee members were encouraged to access the Protégé toolkits on the FCM website, and to consider replicating the program in their own municipalities.

Next committee members reported on the activities for the first International Day of the Girl in their communities, held on October 11th, 2012. Recommendations on how FCM can support activities next year were provided.

Finally, for other business, Pam McConnell briefly shared her experience working with women in the Ukraine with FCMI.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for adoption:

1. The Committee will begin preparatory work on next year's Day of the Girl celebrations early in 2013
2. FCM staff will gather the inputs of the brainstorming session on long-term funding and disseminate the information to the Committee.
3. The sub-committee on long-term funding will provide an update on its activities and progress to the Committee at the March Board meeting.

The Standing Committee recommends this report be received.

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE NORTHERN AND REMOTE FORUM

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

The meeting began with a welcome from Chair Van Tighem and an invitation to add items to the agenda.

The first major discussion was on the advocacy days meetings which member generally felt were very positive. Members had met with the members of parliament (MPs) for each territory as well as senators and MPs from the provincial north; one member participated in a meeting with the Prime Minister. MPs were supportive of the notion of a territorial component of LTIP and of a long-term program timeframe. MPs also raised questions about project eligibility and the inclusion of municipal airports and recreational infrastructure. There was also a discussion of the challenges faced by smaller communities with respect to implementation of the Gas Tax Fund (GTF) in Labrador. Finally it was noted that the Prime Minister Harper expressed gratitude for FCM's support of changes made to the Navigable Water Act and was pleased to be collaborating with FCM in the development of LTIP.

The Forum then discussed the action items status report which included updates on research related to northern communications and northern economic development research. Staff indicated that the research was now complete – having been informed by member feedback – and would be polished for use in advocacy related housing which is likely to be FCM's next major priority issue. While members were pleased the housing eligibility was being pursued in the context of LTIP, concerns were expressed that additional federal funding might lead to a reduction in provincial/territorial contributions to housing.

The next major item was the Northwest Territories Economic Opportunities Strategy, a partnership that includes municipalities, the territorial government, industry, etc. The initiative would identify key wealth and job creation opportunities as well as the policies and investments needed to support them. With increasing resource development activity and competition from different regions of North America seeking employment opportunities for their citizens, having a strategic approach will be highly beneficial. Member noted the increasing number of resource projects in the north and the importance of ensuring that they are developed in ways that benefit northerners in terms of wealth and job creation. Concerns were also raised regarding mining projects that make use of 100 percent foreign workforce, who are flown in and out. Members discussed the possible benefits of raising the issue with the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development to support better outcomes in negotiation with companies who come to do business in the North.

Finally, the committee adjourned with a special thank you to Mayor Gord Van Tighem who would not be returning to the FCM board, having chosen not to seek re-election as Mayor of Yellowknife. Members congratulated Mayor Van Tighem on a very successful tenure and presented cards and a gift.

FORUM RECOMMENDATIONS

The Standing Committee recommends this report be received.