
Federation of Canadian Municipalities
2019-2024 Strategic Plan

March 2019

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Executive Summary

Vision

*FCM **builds** better lives for **individuals, families and communities** through empowered and well-resourced municipal governments. Together, we are building a Canada that is: **caring and inclusive, progressive, environmentally sustainable, safe, resilient, globally engaged, competitive and prosperous.***

We work towards a future in which Canadians live in municipalities that:

- Are **full partners** with the Federal, Provincial/Territorial governments in addressing national priorities;
- Are **empowered** with legislative and fiscal tools that recognize the autonomy of modern communities and cities; and
- Have **enhanced capacity** to develop local solutions to national priorities.

Mission

FCM works on national issues where the impacts of federal action are felt on the ground in cities and communities of all sizes. It serves as:

- The **national convener of municipal governments**, leading the development of a common national municipal agenda and shared solutions to achieve tangible results for the municipal sector;
- The **national voice of municipal governments** and a partner in shaping the national agenda; and
- A national and international **hub for municipal capacity building, sharing knowledge and best practices.**

Values/Organizational Culture

To fulfil this mission, our work must reflect our commitment to:

- Make a Difference;
- Listen and Engage;
- Collaborate and Unite; and
- Learn and Share Knowledge.

Strategic Goals (2019-2024)

Over the next five years, FCM will focus its energy and resources to achieve the following Strategic Goals, delivering results for the millions of Canadian families and workers we serve at the local level. Detailed objectives are identified for each Strategic Goal in the full version of the strategic plan.¹

- 1. New intergovernmental arrangements that formally recognize the role of empowered municipalities as full partners in nation-building.***
- 2. Municipalities that have modern fiscal tools providing the resources and autonomy to address a broad range of locally-defined priorities.***
- 3. Federal policy and regulatory frameworks that enable municipalities to deliver local programs and services efficiently.***
- 4. A new generation of FCM's capacity building initiatives that support municipal innovation, and are delivered through strategic partnerships with the Federal government and relevant stakeholders.***
- 5. An FCM that utilizes innovative approaches, tools and skills in convening municipal leaders to address emerging priorities.***
- 6. An FCM that is led by a modernized model of governance, is appropriately resourced, and continues to be a nimble and efficient organization achieving maximum results for the municipal sector.***

¹ See pages 9-12

About FCM

FCM has been the national voice of municipal government since 1901. Our members include more than 2,000 municipalities of all sizes, from Canada's cities and rural communities, to northern communities and 20 provincial and territorial municipal associations. Together, they represent more than 90 percent of all Canadians from coast to coast to coast. Municipal leaders from across Canada assemble each year to set FCM policy on key issues.

We advocate for municipalities to ensure the needs of the Canadians we serve are reflected in federal policies and programs. We also deliver programs domestically and internationally that build the capacity of local governments to deliver services that improve the lives of their citizens. Year after year, our work benefits every municipal government and taxpayer in Canada, and our programming delivers tools that help municipalities tackle local challenges.

Background

FCM's 2019-2024 Strategic Plan has been developed through extensive consultations and research to ensure it responds most effectively to the opportunities and challenges facing municipalities of all sizes in all regions of the country. This plan will focus the organization's energy and resources over the next five years on the issues of highest priority to the municipal sector. Annual reports will track progress and identify adjustments required to realize FCM's vision for the country and the communities and cities that form its foundations.

Context

External Environment

Knowing where Canada is headed helps us design the best paths for municipalities, and for the country we are building together. FCM looked ahead to the next 20 years of Canada's with a significant report, *Canada's Horizons*, appended as context for the strategic directions for the next five years. This report, a partnership of FCM and Abacus Data, was researched and informed by interviews with dozens of thought leaders about forces that will shape our country over the next two decades.

What will Canada look like in 2040? To start, Canadians will be older and more diverse. And proliferating technology, from driverless vehicles to manufacturing automation will create a world of challenges and opportunities. The report covers these, and other selected trends, that informed the strategic directions presented here.

While there is no certainty how these trends will unfold, what is certain is that Canadians will experience them most directly in the cities and communities where they live. Municipalities will be on the frontline navigating these uncharted waters. These developments will call for a significant transformation in the way that local governments support their communities requiring new approaches to many of their areas of responsibility. Municipalities will need every tool that can be made available, and the freedom and flexibility necessary to get to work.

Internal Environment

FCM has continually invested in strengthening its internal capacity and this has provided a solid foundation for the results achieved in recent years. However, the growing complexity and scale of the opportunities before the sector call for ongoing efforts that build on FCM's core strengths and utilize innovative approaches that will increase its effectiveness and efficiency.

FCM has an excellent brand and a strong reputation with members, the Federal Government, partners and stakeholders. The emerging vision of FCM as nation-builder is compelling and engaging.

Members indicate a high level of satisfaction with FCM's communications and its knowledge sharing programs and products are highly rated. Moving forward, these services can be even more effectively guided by a deeper understanding of FCM's different audiences and supported by enhanced digital communications capacity.

FCM's governance model has created unity and maintains 'One Voice' on behalf of all municipalities, which has been essential to recent successes. Moving forward, FCM's governance will need to be as efficient as possible to ensure all members feel engaged in our municipal mission.

Partnerships with the Federal government, Provincial and Territorial Associations (PTAs), stakeholders and international partners have been a strong contributor to FCM's achievements in advocacy and program delivery. Deepening and formalizing FCM's partnership with the Federal government will be a priority over the next five years and engagement with PTAs holds great potential for enhancing the impact of FCM's advocacy and capacity building work.

FCM's vision, culture and achievements have attracted experienced Board/Committee members working in partnership with talented staff. This collaborative culture is essential, and resources and capacity will need to keep pace with the complexity and scope of the goals adopted by the Board. External funding to support capacity building and knowledge sharing has grown dramatically in response to sector priorities. However, membership resources to support FCM's operating budget (Policy, Government Relations, Communications and Events) have not kept pace with the growing expectations of members and our federal partners. This resource constraint threatens to undermine FCM's ability to respond to the historical opportunities facing the sector over the next five years.

FCM's ability to learn and adapt has been key to designing new approaches to its advocacy and capacity building work as well as its internal operations. The need for ongoing innovation that balances risks will be critical to optimizing the opportunities facing the sector.

The organization's recent growth has extended its impact but has also taxed internal systems and processes. Ongoing investments in modern technology and tools are needed to support FCM's work and strengthen its capacity to demonstrate the impact of its work to the sector, partners and stakeholders.

Implications for 2019-2024 Strategic Plan

These trends and factors identified in FCM's current environment are the context within which the organization will determine the focus for its work over the next five years. The Strategic Goals and Objectives identified will seek to respond to these emerging opportunities, leverage energy and resources within this environment and overcome the challenges facing Canadian municipalities as they strive to fulfil their mandates on the ground in every region of the country.

Vision – ‘Building Better Lives through Empowered Municipalities’

Canada is strongest when our national fabric includes vibrant cities and communities of all sizes, each making life better for the people who call them home. We believe Canada is stronger when families and workers—whether in big cities, small towns, rural or remote communities—can rely on their local government to meet their needs and be their champion. We believe Canada is stronger when each order of government is empowered to fulfill its responsibilities and contribute to the whole. We believe that Canada’s place in the world is strongest when we bring Canadian municipal expertise to international challenges and learn from the experience of others.

To unlock the remarkable potential of a strong Canada, municipalities need new tools and arrangements—fiscal, policy, administrative and intergovernmental—plus full recognition and respect for the unique and legitimate role each order of government has in nation-building. As the voice and a hub of knowledge and capacity building for municipal governments of all sizes, ***FCM builds better lives for individuals, families and communities through empowered and well-resourced municipal governments. Together, we are building a Canada that is: caring, inclusive and progressive, environmentally sustainable, safe and resilient, globally engaged, competitive and prosperous.***

Caring, Inclusive and Progressive

Canada is stronger when everyone is able to participate in our social and economic life. We work towards a country where the barriers to inclusion experienced by people of all identities are minimized. Reducing those barriers means a country that has policies and programs that achieve: equality; available affordable housing; reduced prevalence of poverty; effective immigrant integration; refugee resettlement and Indigenous reconciliation.

FCM supports the full participation of women in all aspects of public and political life, everywhere in the world.

Municipal leaders also recognize the significance of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and its recommendations. We recognize our potential as local governments and as a country will only be realized

by forging a new path with Indigenous people, based on empathy, respect and an honest understanding of history. FCM is committed to supporting and enabling municipalities to move in a new direction and support the federal government in strengthening the Nation to Nation relationship.

Environmentally Sustainable

The quality of life and the foundations of our prosperity must respond to current needs, while building a sustainable future for those who come after us. Our nation's infrastructure and accompanying policies and programs must protect our air, land and water from the pollutants that are detrimental to human health and deleterious to our physical environment. As a country, we must reduce our emissions of greenhouse gases through low-carbon solutions and green innovation, while at the same time protecting our communities and citizens by mitigating the growing impacts of climate change. All orders of government have an important and legitimate contribution to make to our nation's environmental sustainability.

Safe and Resilient

Our nation's ability to be resilient and innovate in the face of an ever-changing world will define our economic viability, environmental sustainability and social cohesion for the foreseeable future. Maintaining public order, effectively responding to emergencies, and creating communities that are better prepared for change help create a safe and secure country. We will need policies and programs that enable innovation, resilience and effective crime prevention. Intergovernmental cooperation will be essential, as community-based approaches are most successful when developed and implemented through partnerships between every order of government.

Globally Engaged

Being a good global citizen is part of our national value system. Every order of government has a role to play in the pursuit of national objectives, be they trade, environmental or development related.

Canadian cities and municipalities are recognized as international actors around the world. In many ways, Canadian municipalities face the same issues as local governments everywhere in the developing and developed world: shortages of resources, and inadequate fiscal and constitutional arrangements that do

not effectively meet the modern needs of their citizens. These common challenges create enormous potential for an international municipal movement to strengthen awareness, share knowledge and find innovative solutions to common local governance issues.

Prosperous and Competitive

An inclusive Canada ensures that everyone is contributing to our prosperity. Canada's prosperity is built on both the hard infrastructure—the roads, bridges, sewers and more that support our economic activities—and the soft infrastructure—the inclusiveness, social cohesion and good quality of life that attracts commerce, investment and talent—that drives growth and innovation. Our vast geography demands that our prosperity also be built on a web of digitally and physically interconnected local economies, where cities and communities serve as vital hubs.

Vision of the Municipal Sector

Within this context, we work towards a future in which municipalities:

- Are **full partners** with the Federal, Provincial/Territorial governments in addressing national priorities;
- Are **empowered** with legislative and fiscal tools that recognize the autonomy of modern communities and cities; and
- Have **enhanced capacity** to develop local solutions to national priorities.

FCM's Mission

FCM works on national issues where the impacts of federal action are felt on the ground in cities and communities of all sizes. It serves as:

- The **national convener of municipalities**, leading the development of a common national municipal agenda and shared solutions to achieve tangible results for the municipal sector;
- The **national voice of municipalities** and a partner in shaping the national agenda; and
- A national and international **hub for municipal capacity building, sharing knowledge and best practices**.

Values/Organizational Culture

FCM's mission and actions are grounded in the values we have chosen to guide our organizational culture. As a partnership based on complementary roles and accountabilities, FCM's Board of Directors and staff share a mutual accountability for the performance of the organization.

In order to fulfil FCM's mission and goals, our work and interactions must reflect our commitment to:

Make a Difference

We act decisively to achieve results within our communities, our cities, our country, our world and our planet:

- We are focused, we are driven by evidence and results, and we are passionate about our ideals and achieving our goals;
- We are dedicated to the communities and cities we work with, supporting them to become more inclusive, prosperous, environmentally sustainable, safe, resilient and globally engaged;
- We foster an organizational culture that supports achieving results, resilience, professional fulfillment and a healthy and satisfying work environment;
- We strive to demonstrate our commitment to environmental sustainability, gender equality and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in our organizational culture and operations.

Engage and Listen

We aspire to be an open, inclusive and empowering organization:

- We engage and champion diversity. We respect the dignity and diversity of each individual and build on the strengths of broad range of municipal realities we work with nationally and internationally;
- We honour the bilingual character of Canada;
- We seek to embrace the growing number of cultural and linguistic communities shaping our municipalities;
- We listen and respond to the needs, advice and expertise of the sector, stakeholders and colleagues;

- We are transformed by our conversations and our partnerships, incorporating feedback and evidence in future endeavours;
- We are as transparent as possible, communicating the rationale for our decisions in a timely fashion, as appropriate;
- We strive to achieving gender equality in FCM’s governance, management and service delivery.

Unite and Collaborate

We are committed to building a strong and diverse organization. We work collaboratively and respectfully to achieve our goals:

- We welcome new relationships and build partnerships that increase our knowledge, reach and impact;
- We collaborate across the sector, with partners and stakeholders and within our organization, respecting each other’s diverse expertise and experience, to achieve common goals;
- We are mutually accountable to the sector, our partners, our stakeholders, and to each other.

Innovate & Learn

We identify knowledge and expertise within the organization, the sector, partners and stakeholders, and facilitate knowledge sharing to achieve results:

- We innovate and support a culture that learns from experience and strives to be at the forefront of research and practice;
- We take informed risks, learn from our mistakes, welcome respectful dissent and incorporate our learning in creative approaches to achieve our goals;
- We recognize and celebrate our successes and commit ourselves to continuous improvement.

Strategic Goals & Objectives 2019-2024

Over the next five years, FCM will focus its energy and resources to achieve the following Strategic Goals and Objectives delivering results for the millions of Canadian families and workers we serve at the local level.

1. *New intergovernmental arrangements that formally recognize the role of empowered municipalities as full partners in nation-building.*

- A new intergovernmental forum is established for federal-municipal dialogue, with a co-developed agenda and established mechanisms to address national priorities;
- Municipal representation through FCM is expanded and formalized in intergovernmental tables across a number of federal departments where local perspectives and input are critical to effective implementation;
- Integrated intergovernmental agreements are fully implemented—including commitments to fund a fair balance of municipal and provincial-territorial priorities.

2. *Municipalities that have modern fiscal tools providing the resources and autonomy to address a broad range of locally-defined priorities.*

- A modernized federal-municipal fiscal relationship is established, based on a direct and allocation-based permanent federal transfer, that empowers communities of all sizes with tools to tackle a broad range of locally-defined priorities—efficiently, cost-effectively and with robust planning horizons;
- Federal funding programs are delivered to municipalities on a long-term, predictable and transparent basis, including programs for public transit, climate adaptation and resilience;
- Long-term and predictable funding is secured for national priorities that most deeply impact local government (e.g. affordable housing and rural and northern broadband);
- Municipalities are transferred the financial tools to cover operational and enforcement costs of any federal legislative or policy changes with direct community impacts (e.g. cannabis legalization);
- A ‘rural lens’ is incorporated in federal programs reflecting the fiscal and capacity limitations and sparse populations of rural communities, with the aim of enhancing rural economic development.

3. Federal policy and regulatory frameworks that enable municipalities to deliver local programs and services efficiently.

- The National Housing Strategy is accessible, expanded upon, and leverages municipal expertise to meet pressing and evolving local needs including addressing housing affordability;
- A "rural lens" applied to all federal policies and programs, so rural local governments have the tools to build more sustainable and prosperous rural communities nationwide.
- Local green innovation is supported, scaled up, and woven into a comprehensive national strategy to tackle climate change;
- Federal government policies recognize the importance of municipal infrastructure in creating jobs, helping get goods to market and driving economic growth in communities of all sizes;
- The municipal role in federal social policy is enabled, resourced and leveraged, including in areas such as settling newcomers, inclusion, mental health, addressing poverty and responding to addictions crises;
- The federal government has implemented a comprehensive national strategy to achieve fast, reliable Internet access in communities of all sizes which sets clear standards and timelines and includes targeted strategic initiatives to achieve reliable Internet for rural, northern and remote communities.

4. A new generation of FCM's capacity building initiatives that support municipal innovation, and are delivered through strategic partnerships with the federal government and other stakeholders.

- More strategic partnerships are in place between FCM, the Government of Canada, and other organisations in support of FCM capacity building initiatives;
- Sector-wide capacity building needs analyses are completed to better understand longer-term trends and needs of the municipal sector in selected thematic areas;
- GMF long term plan is implemented leading to an increased demand for innovative funding, increased and more targeted sub-sector funding offers & capacity building activities, and new client experience improvements;

- Current phases of our asset management (MAMP) and climate change (MCIP) programs, and of our First Nations (CEDI), women and local government (Toward Parity) and municipal innovation (FIN) projects are successfully completed and programs are renewed;
- FCM’s current international assistance projects on local economic development are successfully completed, and a new portfolio of international initiatives, in support of the Federal government’s international assistance policy, are in place;
- New innovative program funding arrangements with the Federal government and other stakeholders provide long-term funding predictability and continuity, flexibility and responsiveness and increased administrative efficiency.

5. *An FCM that utilizes innovative approaches, tools and skills in convening municipal leaders to address emerging priorities.*

- The success and outcomes of the Urban Project leverage innovative partnerships to advance pressing local government issues;
- FCM is proactively leading the sector’s response to emerging and transformative issues and trends (e.g. automated vehicles, rural out-migration) while building local capacity;
- Increased member driven advocacy is enabled through a broad range of easily accessible member engagement tools and products that reflect members’ needs.

6. *An FCM that is led by a modernized² model of governance, is appropriately resourced, and continues to be a nimble and efficient organization achieving maximum results for the municipal sector.*

- FCM’s governance model has been refined to ensure balanced representation of all regions and member types, ensure a unified voice for the sector and support effective direction setting and decision-making for all of its activities;

² As part of this strategic plan, FCM is undertaking a review of its governance model. The Terms of Reference for this review articulates the specific objectives intended for a “modernized” model of governance.

- FCM’s Long-term Financial Plan reflects a robust set of revenues from a variety of sources, including a revised membership dues structure and an enhanced corporate partnership strategy that provides adequate resources to address the sector’s expectations and priorities;
- FCM’s diverse functions and initiatives are closely aligned and coordinated, leveraging all the organization’s energy and resources to increase impact;
- FCM utilizes more efficient digital-focused communications that allows for more precise geographic targeting, greater efficiency of dollars-per-view, and increased ability to draw members in through an online “conversation”;
- FCM has developed a fresh analysis of its audience(s), how they have changed, and what they may look like in future;
- FCM’s programming approaches and tools, and communication strategies are improved to allow for more efficient, cost-effective, impactful, and innovative programming;
- Innovative technologies and best practices are adopted and processes streamlined to enhance effectiveness and efficiency;
- An Enterprise Risk Management framework supports the organization’s business objectives and strategies;
- FCM models excellence in environmental stewardship, gender equality and reconciliation through its internal policies and practices, service delivery, operations and events, meeting the targets set out in its Environmental Sustainability Charter, Gender Equality and Reconciliation plans.

Supporting Documents

There are a number of documents that will be developed to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan once it is adopted by the Board of Directors (see Appendices).

Performance Measurement Framework

Specific 5-year results, performance measures and indicators will be identified in the Performance Measurement Framework (PMF). FCM’s Board of Directors and senior management will review annual

progress reports based on this framework and identify any adjustments required to achieve the Strategic Goals identified above.

Logic Model

A Logic Model is a visual tool that provides a clear understanding of the organization's ultimate vision and the alignment of the goals and objectives that it is seeking to achieve. This tool provides the framework for the performance management framework ensuring that all key objectives are planned, monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis.

Risk Assessment

FCM will undertake a Strategic Risk assessment following its new Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) process. This process will make a holistic assessment of the risks the organization faces now and in the future, and design appropriate risk management and control mechanisms to mitigate the most significant risks which have potential to undermine its ability to achieve its objectives for 2019-2024.

Conclusion

Canada's future health and well-being depend on our ability to manage the forces of change. While there is no road map, the ingredients of our future success are clear: We need national leadership and direction; We need collaboration amongst orders of government; Finally, we need truly empowered local government with resources, and local capacity that builds resiliency to face the pressures of tomorrow.

FCM's 2019-2024 Strategic Plan provides the focus for our collective energy and resources over the next five years to advance our vision and maximize our impact on the issues of highest priority to the municipal sector. Annual Corporate Plans will identify more specific deliverables and results that respond most effectively to the opportunities and challenges facing the country and municipalities of all sizes in all regions of the country. Annual Reports will track progress and identify adjustments required to realize FCM's vision for the country and the communities and cities it serves.