



FEDERATION
OF CANADIAN
MUNICIPALITIES

FÉDÉRATION
CANADIENNE DES
MUNICIPALITÉS

Stronger Together: Local Strength, National Prosperity

**FCM STRATEGIC PLAN
2025-2028**



MARCH 2025

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Land Acknowledgement

As we set the course for the future through this strategic plan, we acknowledge the traditional and unceded territories of the Indigenous Peoples on whose lands we live and work. From coast to coast to coast, Canada's land is home to First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples who have stewarded these territories since time immemorial. Their wisdom, resilience and connection to the land remain foundational to the fabric of this country.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) recognizes the deep and enduring relationships that Indigenous Peoples have with these lands and waters, which encompass rich cultural traditions, spiritual practices and ways of knowing. Across Turtle Island, Indigenous communities have thrived despite the ongoing impacts of colonization, including the dispossession of lands, broken treaties and systemic inequities.

As a national organization representing municipalities large and small, urban and rural, from every corner of this land, FCM is committed to building relationships founded on respect, trust and collaboration. Through this strategic plan, we reaffirm our role in striving to amplify Indigenous voices and include their perspectives in municipal decision-making to foster inclusive and equitable communities.

This acknowledgment is not only a statement of respect but also a call to action. It reflects FCM's dedication to advancing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, integrate Indigenous ways of knowing and repair relationships with Indigenous Peoples.

We honor the original stewards of these lands and their enduring contributions to shaping Canada's past, present and future. As we move forward with this strategic plan, we commit to deepening our understanding, taking meaningful steps toward Reconciliation and working in partnership with Indigenous communities to create a more just and sustainable future for all.

Let this acknowledgment serve as a foundation for the work ahead and remind us of the shared responsibility we hold to protect these lands and to act as caretakers for generations to come. Through collective action and commitment, we can build communities that reflect the strength, diversity and unity of all who call these lands home.

Fourth Big City Mayors' Caucus (BCMC) Reconciliation Circle Meeting, Winnipeg, Manitoba Métis Federation, October 11th, 2024



Foreword from the CEO

Canada is at a defining moment. Economic uncertainty, global instability and shifting political dynamics are reshaping our national landscape. But through it all, municipalities remain at the heart of Canada's prosperity, resilience and unity.

Local governments are leading through some of the most complex challenges of our time—housing affordability, infrastructure renewal, economic sustainability, climate adaptation and more. They are not just problem-solvers; they are nation-builders. Yet, they continue to work within outdated fiscal structures that constrain their ability to deliver.

This strategic plan is not business as usual. It is an ambitious roadmap designed to unleash the potential of cities and communities to drive national progress and **strengthen the economic and social bonds that hold Canada together.** It reflects the scale of the moment we are in—and the urgency to act.



Over the next three years, FCM will focus on four strategic imperatives:

- ★ **Unleashing the Economic Potential of Cities and Communities**
- ★ **Strengthening Local Capacity and Scaling Municipal Impact**

- ★ **Deepening Unity to Drive Progress**
- ★ **Building a High-Performing, Future-Ready FCM**

Through bold advocacy, capacity building and strategic partnerships, we will equip municipalities with the tools they need to lead—so they can build stronger communities, a stronger economy and a stronger Canada.

This plan is driven by a deep belief: that **We are stronger together—when cities and communities thrive, Canada prospers.**

Carole Saab
Chief Executive Officer
Federation of Canadian Municipalities

Message from FCM's President and Board Chair

On behalf of FCM's Board of Directors, we are proud to endorse this strategic plan—a bold and necessary vision for Canada's municipalities at a defining moment for our country.

Municipalities are leading on the challenges that shape Canada's future. From economic growth to housing, infrastructure and climate resilience, local governments are stepping up. And with this plan, FCM is stepping up alongside them—ensuring municipalities have the tools, resources and national voice they need to deliver for Canadians.

As a board, we are committed to **guiding and supporting the implementation of this plan**—so that FCM remains an even stronger advocate, a trusted partner and a powerful enabler of local progress.

We look forward to working with all orders of government and partners across Canada to **turn this vision into action**—because when municipalities succeed, Canada succeeds.

Rebecca Bligh

President

Federation of Canadian Municipalities





Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

A strong, inclusive and globally competitive Canada—powered by municipalities that are **fully** equipped to build resilient communities and drive **greater** national progress.

Mission

FCM **advances** national priorities that align with the needs and priorities of cities and communities, driving outcomes that improve the quality of life for Canadians.

Values

These shared values guide FCM's work and define how we engage with our members, partners and stakeholders:

- ★ **Unite and Partner**—We bring people together, fostering collaboration across municipalities, governments and sectors to drive shared solutions.
- ★ **Champion Respect and Equity**—We advocate for and model respect, equity, diversity and Reconciliation in all that we do.
- ★ **Innovate, Scale and Share Knowledge**—We help local governments develop, adapt and scale solutions to Canada's biggest challenges.
- ★ **Commit to Organizational Excellence, Stewardship and Operational Efficiency**—We hold ourselves to the highest standards of performance, accountability and continuous improvement to serve our members effectively.

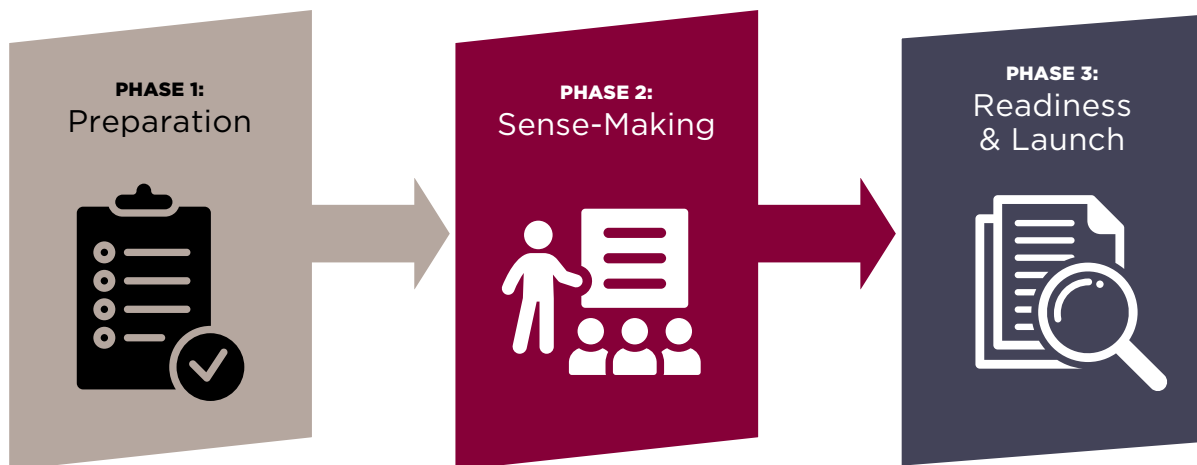


A Data-Driven and Inclusive Strategic Planning Process

FCM's strategic planning process was the most comprehensive and data-driven exercise in the organization's history—ensuring that this plan is grounded in real insights, member priorities, and forward-looking analysis.

Structured in three distinct phases—Preparation, Sense-Making, and Readiness & Launch—the process spanned more than a year and engaged a wide range of stakeholders, including municipal leaders, staff, partners and external experts.

Throughout this effort, FCM assessed the political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental factors shaping Canada's future, identifying the emerging opportunities, risks, and vulnerabilities that municipalities must navigate in the years ahead.





A Living, Adaptive Strategy

Most importantly, this plan is not a static document—it's a rolling strategic planning model, ensuring that FCM remains adaptive, forward-looking and responsive to shifting realities.

As new challenges and opportunities emerge, we will continuously refine our approach, ensuring that our strategic imperatives evolve alongside municipal needs. This is not just a roadmap—it's a commitment to action that will shape how FCM strengthens municipalities, drives national progress and empowers communities across Canada.

Engagement at Every Level

To ensure this plan reflects the priorities of those we serve, FCM gathered extensive input through multiple channels, including:

- ★ National public survey capturing the priorities of Canadians.
- ★ Comprehensive membership survey engaging elected officials and municipal administrators.
- ★ Employee engagement survey gathering insights from FCM staff across departments.
- ★ Operating expenses and financial review to support long-term financial planning.
- ★ Board Insights Workshop (December 2024), a dedicated strategy session with FCM's Board of Directors.
- ★ CEO listening tour & stakeholder consultations engaging federal, provincial, territorial, and private sector partners.
- ★ Internal equity and Reconciliation frameworks ensuring that principles of inclusion and Reconciliation inform FCM's long-term strategy.



This process has provided a clear, data-backed foundation for FCM's priorities—grounding our vision in the real challenges and opportunities facing Canada's municipalities.



Stronger Together: A Commitment to Regional Voices and Local Realities

At FCM, unity has never meant uniformity. As the national voice of local governments, we know that a one-size-fits-all approach does not work in a country as vast and varied as ours. The needs of a rural municipality in the Prairies differ from those of a mid-sized city in Atlantic Canada. The challenges facing northern and remote communities differ from those in the urban core. And yet, together, municipalities of all sizes and regions form the foundation of this country's prosperity.

That's why this strategic plan is not just a vision—it's a renewed commitment to deepening our engagement with members across all regions and realities. As FCM's work and influence grow, we are doubling down on ensuring that every member—regardless of size, geography, or local context—sees themselves reflected in our advocacy, programs and initiatives.

This means:

- ★ A stronger focus on regional priorities in our policy development and advocacy work, ensuring that national solutions reflect local realities.

- ★ More tailored capacity building and program delivery that meets the unique needs of municipalities in different parts of the country.
- ★ Enhanced regional engagement and communications, ensuring that all members feel informed, represented and empowered to shape FCM's direction.

This is the work that has always made FCM strong. It is the work that will ensure we remain the trusted, unifying voice of municipalities across Canada. Because when local governments thrive—whether rural, urban, northern, or remote—our country is stronger together.



Rural Canada: A Pillar of Prosperity

Rural Canada is essential to this country's prosperity and identity. Home to vibrant communities and a deep sense of resilience and innovation and the industries that power our national economy, rural Canada drives economic growth, natural resource development, food security and environmental stewardship.

And yet, rural municipalities face distinct challenges. From workforce shortages and infrastructure deficits to access to healthcare and broadband, rural communities require tailored solutions that reflect their unique realities.

FCM has long championed rural Canada—delivering direct support to rural communities and ensuring their voices are heard in national decision-making. Through this strategic plan, we are deepening that commitment, working to ensure that:

- ★ Rural municipalities have the tools, funding and resources they need to grow and thrive.
- ★ National programs and policies are designed with rural realities in mind.
- ★ Rural leaders have a strong, unified voice in shaping Canada's future.

Whether in the West, Atlantic Canada, the North, or anywhere in between, rural communities are integral to this country's success. And at FCM, they will always have a champion.

A Commitment to the North

Northern communities are at the front lines of Canada's most pressing challenges—and among the most innovative in finding solutions. Across the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut northern regions are leading the way in community-driven governance, sustainable resource development and climate adaptation.

Yet, these communities also face unique barriers, from major infrastructure gaps to the urgent need for housing and reliable transportation.

FCM has long advocated for stronger federal investment in the North and continues to support northern municipalities through:

- ★ Advancing solutions to close infrastructure gaps on roads, airports, housing and more.
- ★ Supporting energy security and climate adaptation in communities across the North.
- ★ Ensuring all Northerners have access to cellular connectivity and high-speed internet.
- ★ Ensuring northern considerations are reflected in national policy and funding programs.

Canada's North is a region of immense diversity, strength and potential. FCM remains committed to amplifying northern voices, ensuring that communities across the North have the tools and resources they need to build a prosperous, sustainable future.

A photograph of a suspension bridge with a wooden deck and metal railings, stretching into a dense, lush green forest. The bridge is the central focus, leading the eye into the distance. The forest is composed of tall, evergreen trees. The image is framed by a white border at the top and bottom, with a maroon triangle in the top right corner.

Our 3-Year Strategic Imperatives



**Unleashing the
Economic Potential
of Cities and
Communities**



**Deepening Unity to
Drive Progress**



**Strengthening
Local Capacity
and Scaling
Municipal Impact**



**Building a
High-Performing,
Future-Ready FCM**



Unleashing the Economic Potential of Cities and Communities



Municipalities are on the front lines of the most pressing challenges facing Canada today. They are the engines of economic growth, the builders of infrastructure and the order of government closest to the daily lives of Canadians. But despite their critical role, they operate within an outdated fiscal framework that does not reflect their growing responsibilities or the scale of today's complex and intersected challenges, including the mental health and opioid crises, housing affordability and homelessness and climate change and extreme weather disasters.

Without stable, predictable and linked-to-growth revenue tools, municipalities face barriers to unlocking investment, attracting businesses and delivering the infrastructure and services that support Canadians' daily lives—from safe roads and public transit to water, housing and economic opportunity.

A modernized fiscal framework is key to unleashing the economic potential of cities and communities by:

- ★ Providing municipalities with long-term, predictable revenue tools that enable investment in economic development, infrastructure, public safety and local services;
- ★ Reducing over-reliance on property taxes, which cannot keep pace with economic and demographic shifts and downloaded responsibilities;
- ★ Ensuring cities and communities are positioned to meet 21st-century challenges, including housing supply, climate resilience and infrastructure renewal.

Our Commitment

Champion a Modernized Fiscal Framework

We will continue to advocate for new, predictable funding tools that enable municipalities to plan and invest with confidence—unlocking local economic growth and strengthening Canada's overall prosperity.

Drive Strategic Infrastructure Investment

Renewing and enhancing federal infrastructure programs will ensure rural municipalities and all local governments can invest in core investment and productivity enabling infrastructure—including transportation, water and wastewater, broadband and community assets—while embedding climate resilience and disaster preparedness in long-term planning.

Advance Regionally Responsive Economic Policies

FCM will work with all orders of government to ensure federal policies and programs respond to regional economic strengths and challenges, ensuring municipalities of all sizes can seize economic opportunities that align with their local realities.

Unlocking New Investment in Local Economies

A modernized fiscal framework must be complemented by innovative investment partnerships and proven financing tools that allow municipalities to attract capital, maximize impact and expand financing options for local priorities.

★ **Build on the success of FCM's Green Municipal Fund (GMF):** FCM will continue to leverage GMF's innovative financing tools to help municipalities attract private capital and accelerate investment in sustainability, infrastructure and economic development initiatives.

★ **Expand municipal access to new fiscal mechanisms and opportunities to diversify revenue sources:** FCM will champion new financing mechanisms and strategic investment partnerships that provide municipalities with greater access to flexible, sustainable funding sources while ensuring public sector leadership in critical local investments.

★ **Advance economic Reconciliation:** FCM will explore how to build on the proven success of the Community Economic Development Initiative (CEDI), a program delivered with the long standing partnership with the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers (Cando), to support stronger municipal-Indigenous partnerships. This partnership has shown the potential for collaborative economic development and strengthened governance relationships leading to Friendship Accords between municipalities and their First Nation neighbours. We will assess how elements of this model could inform broader efforts to foster economic Reconciliation and shared prosperity in communities across Canada.

⊕ The CEDI partnership has shown us what being stronger together truly means. These are not only words, but a reference to action. Stronger Together is the philosophy behind CEDI partnerships. It is a recognition, standing side by side, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, that our futures are intertwined—that when Indigenous communities thrive, so do municipalities. That when we commit to honest, meaningful partnerships, we unlock solutions that benefit us all.

★ **Demonstrate FCM's role as an economic catalyst:** Beyond advocacy, FCM will track and communicate the direct impact of our programs and initiatives on economic drivers—including job creation, local investment and contributions to GDP—demonstrating the role municipalities play in national economic growth and ultimately in the quality of life for Canadians.

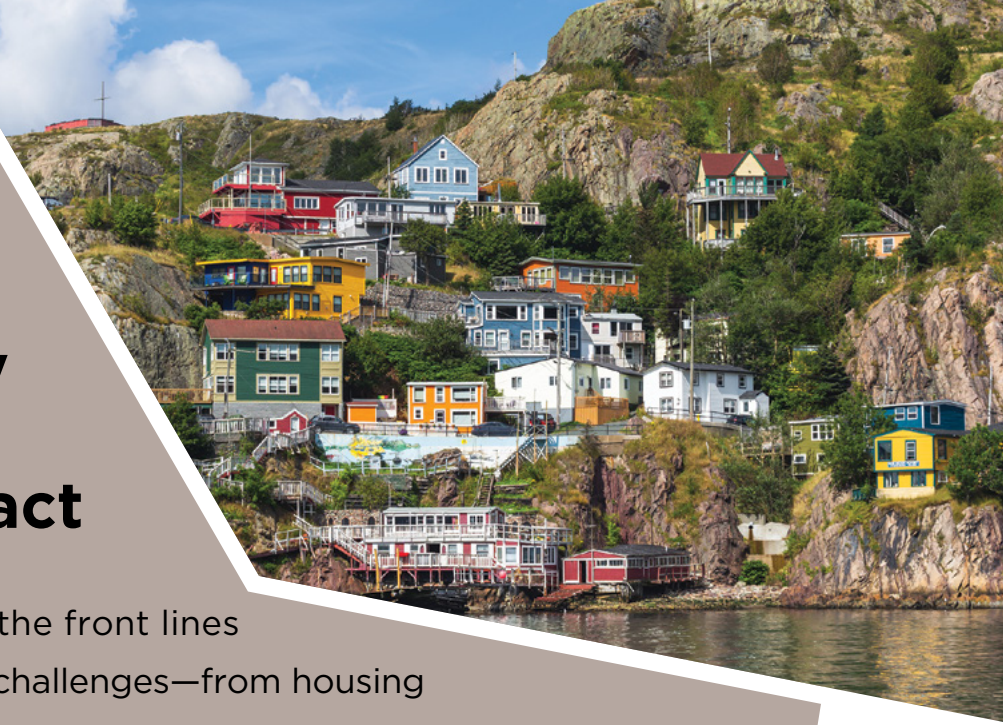


Strengthening Local Capacity and Scaling Municipal Impact

Local governments are on the front lines of Canada's most pressing challenges—from housing to climate resilience to economic development. But to meet these challenges head-on, municipalities need more than just financial resources—they need the capacity, knowledge and tools to lead transformative change.

Municipalities are already innovating, adapting and delivering solutions at scale. Yet, FCM's senior leadership discussions have reinforced that while we support capacity building across multiple areas, we need to take a more strategic approach—ensuring we maximize impact, leverage resources efficiently and scale best practices effectively.

As Canada's national municipal organization, FCM has a critical role to play in strengthening local leadership and building the expertise municipalities need to thrive.



Our Commitment

Strengthen Capacity Building as a Core FCM Function

We will build on our strong foundation in capacity building by enhancing coordination across FCM's programs, evaluating the most effective delivery models and ensuring our support is responsive to diverse municipal realities.

Develop a Structured, Phased Approach to Identifying and Launching High-Impact Capacity Building Initiatives

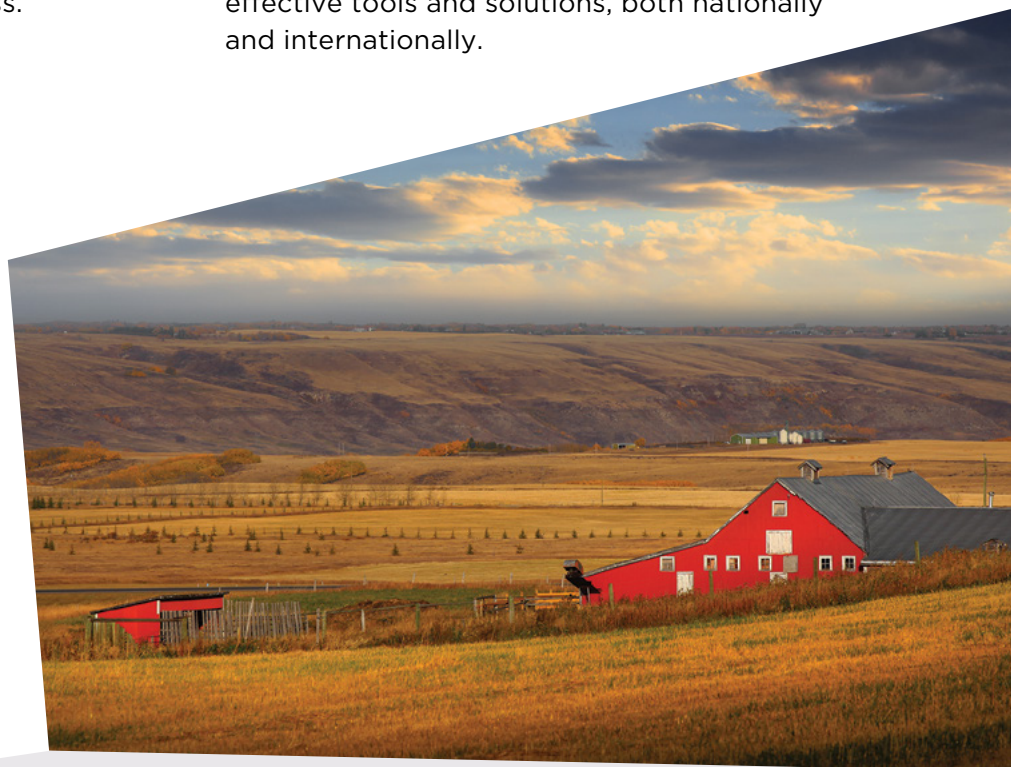
Over the next three years, FCM will first engage in targeted landscape analysis, deepened member engagement and a sector-wide needs assessment to pinpoint the areas where our capacity building efforts can deliver the greatest impact. From there, we will pilot initiatives in priority areas, refining and scaling successful models to maximize reach and effectiveness.

Ensure Regional Responsiveness in Capacity Building Initiatives

Recognizing that municipal challenges vary by region, we will pursue opportunities to tailor capacity building initiatives to local contexts—leveraging regional partnerships, engagement mechanisms and convening models to ensure our work is effective across Canada's diverse municipal landscape.

Leverage FCM's Expertise to Scale and Share Best Practices

Through our national convening power, we will curate, scale and share proven municipal innovations across Canada. By drawing from national and international best practices—including building on work and lessons from FCM's global programs and engagement—and leveraging our expertise and partnerships, we will ensure rural municipalities, and all local governments have access to the most effective tools and solutions, both nationally and internationally.



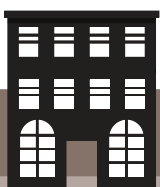


Deepening Unity to Drive Progress

Local governments are stronger together. Whether advocating for new fiscal tools, scaling best practices, or forging strategic partnerships, municipal unity is essential to amplifying local impact and securing meaningful national progress.

At a time of significant political and economic uncertainty, FCM's ability to bring municipalities together—across regions, community sizes and political perspectives—has never been more important. As the voice of local governments, FCM must continue to foster municipal collaboration while also strengthening ties with other orders of government and cross-sector partners to drive shared progress.

This imperative is about reinforcing FCM's role as a unifying force—not only within the municipal sector but as a driving force for national collaboration, pragmatic solutions and effective governance in Canada. A strong, united municipal voice is essential to shaping a resilient and prosperous Canada.



Our Commitment

Strengthen Municipal Unity to Maximize Influence and Results

FCM will deepen engagement with members across all regions, community sizes and political perspectives—ensuring our work reflects the full diversity of local governments. By strengthening ties with provincial and territorial municipal associations (PTAs) and fostering collaboration across municipal networks, we will amplify the collective voice of local governments, drive impact in national policy and enhance support for municipalities in delivering for Canadians.

Enhance Collaboration Across Orders of Government

Municipal priorities—from housing to infrastructure, climate resilience and public safety—are increasingly shaped by the actions of all orders of government. FCM will strengthen its role in intergovernmental collaboration, engaging with federal, provincial, territorial and Indigenous governments to drive effective policy solutions that work for municipalities and the Canadians they serve.

Develop a Strategic Partnership Approach to Maximize Impact

FCM has a strong track record of working with partners across sectors to support municipalities. Building on this foundation, we will take a more focused and strategic approach to partnerships—expanding high-impact collaborations while ensuring alignment with our core priorities. Over the next three years, we will develop and implement a structured partnership strategy that prioritizes high-value collaborations—across government, the private sector, philanthropy and civil society—aligned with our strategic priorities.

Strengthen FCM's Role in Defending Democracy and Fostering Inclusive Politics

FCM will play a leadership role in addressing rising polarization, threats to democracy and the harassment of elected officials. We will continue to support municipal leaders in fostering constructive public engagement and political discourse while advancing system-level reforms that safeguard democratic integrity and inclusive governance.

Advance High-Impact Regional and Thematic Convening

FCM will enhance its approach to bringing members together outside of its annual conference—through regional and issue-specific convenings designed to foster dialogue, share solutions and strengthen municipal networks. By deepening engagement through high-impact regional and thematic virtual and in person gatherings, we will reinforce FCM's role as Canada's leading municipal convener.





Building a High-Performing, Future-Ready FCM

As FCM scales its impact and influence, the organization must evolve to ensure its internal structures, processes and culture are aligned with its ambitions. A high-performing, future-ready FCM requires modernized systems, strong internal collaboration and a culture of continuous improvement.

At the heart of our ability to serve our members is our people—our greatest asset. FCM will strengthen its commitment to being one of Canada's best places to work, ensuring a workplace culture that reflects our values of excellence, equity and innovation. By investing in internal capacity, operational efficiency and digital transformation, we will ensure that FCM remains a trusted, high-performing advocate and enabler of local progress.

Our Commitment

Enhance Organizational Resilience and Adaptability

FCM will strengthen its ability to navigate change and uncertainty—investing in organizational resilience, risk management and operational agility. This will ensure that we remain a strong and stable advocate for municipalities, regardless of shifts in the external environment.

Advance Modernized Systems and Digital Transformation

To better serve municipalities, FCM will modernize its internal systems—streamlining processes, adopting new technologies and enhancing digital capabilities. This will improve efficiency, member experience and organizational effectiveness.

Strengthen Internal Alignment to Maximize Impact

As FCM continues to grow, we will ensure stronger internal coordination and strategic alignment across all programs and departments. This includes enhancing collaboration between advocacy, capacity building and programmatic work to maximize FCM's impact for municipalities.

Sustainability and Equity as Internal Commitments

Just as FCM supports municipalities in building sustainable and inclusive communities, we will ensure that our own operations reflect these values. This includes reducing our organizational carbon footprint, embedding sustainability in our workplace policies and advancing equity through internal initiatives and leadership.

Invest in a High-Performing and Collaborative Workplace Culture

FCM will continue to prioritize workplace excellence—ensuring that our culture, policies and leadership practices reflect our values. We will invest in professional development, employee engagement and equity-driven practices to remain one of Canada's best places to work.



Cross-Cutting Drivers

Throughout this strategic plan, four cross-cutting drivers shape FCM's approach to delivering results. These drivers reflect the fundamental principles that underpin all our work and commitments.



Sustainability



FCM will continue to champion sustainability—both externally, through municipal advocacy and capacity building and internally, by embedding sustainability into our own operations. Whether through climate action, resilient infrastructure, or innovative financing tools like the Green Municipal Fund, we are committed to enabling municipalities to lead in building a more sustainable Canada.

Equity and Reconciliation



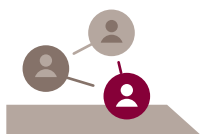
A strong Canada is one where every community is thriving. FCM will continue to support municipalities in fostering inclusive, equitable communities—through housing affordability, economic Reconciliation and municipal leadership on equity and anti-racism. Internally, we will embed inclusion in our workplace culture and policies. Our work will be informed by meaningful engagement with Indigenous friends and partners, ensuring that Reconciliation remains a core priority.

Performance and Accountability



FCM is committed to delivering excellence in everything we do—ensuring that our advocacy, programs and operations drive meaningful outcomes for municipalities and the Canadians they serve. Through enhanced processes for tracking progress and evaluating outcomes, we will strengthen our ability to measure impact and continuously improve.

Collaboration and Partnerships



Strong partnerships drive results. FCM will deepen collaboration with all orders of government, Indigenous friends and partners, the private sector, philanthropy and civil society to enhance our capacity to serve municipalities. We will also strengthen connections among municipalities, fostering knowledge-sharing and collective problem-solving across our membership.



The Green Municipal Fund— A Proven Model for Local Impact

The Green Municipal Fund (GMF) is one of Canada's most successful and enduring federal-municipal partnerships. Managed by FCM, GMF has grown and now manages approximately \$2.4 billion in programs funded by the Government of Canada, catalyzing investment in innovative municipal sustainability initiatives across Canada.

GMF's success in effectively deploying such substantial funding through impactful national programming has solidified FCM's reputation as a trusted delivery partner. Our ability to steward investment with precision and deliver measurable, nationwide impact uniquely positions FCM to meaningfully advance in a prosperous, resilient and sustainable Canada.



A National Asset Delivering Real Results

GMF provides municipalities with funding, training and capacity building support to accelerate clean energy, climate resilience and sustainability projects. It has demonstrated the power of local innovation in achieving national climate and economic goals.



Scaling What Works

Beyond financing, GMF serves as a platform for scaling proven municipal solutions. Through knowledge-sharing, research and best-practice dissemination, it enables communities to replicate successful models—delivering impact far beyond the individual projects it funds.



An Essential Tool for Canada's Future

At a time of global climate and economic uncertainty, GMF stands as a tested and highly effective mechanism for mobilizing investment in municipal sustainability. Its success underscores the potential for expanding similar models that empower local governments to deliver for Canadians.

FCM will continue to leverage and grow GMF as a cornerstone of municipal innovation—advancing sustainability, economic opportunity and community well-being.



A Commitment to Action

Canada's prosperity is built from the ground up. Strong, well-resourced municipalities drive economic growth and productivity and deliver a high quality of life for all Canadians. They are where national priorities take shape and where real solutions are delivered.

This strategic plan is more than a vision—it is FCM's commitment to ensuring local governments have what they need to lead—modern fiscal tools, expanded capacity and a united voice that drives national progress. It's a commitment to delivering real impact for the communities we serve and for the country we help build, every day.

At FCM, we don't just respond to change—we shape what comes next. Together, we will build stronger communities, a stronger federation and a stronger Canada.

Stronger Together. Local Strength, National Prosperity.







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