

## Report to the Mayor and Council of the City of Prince George

I would just like to begin this report by thanking the Mayor and Council, the Student Needs Committee, as well as the staff for the amazing experience of being able to attend the Federation of Canadian Municipalities meeting in Ottawa. I would also like to thank our Member of Parliament Mr. Todd Doherty for the private tour of the House of Commons. This was truly an amazing experience for me as a student leader and it has truly inspired me to continue to dream big and work towards my goals as a community leader. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities meetings in Ottawa were truly inspiring, hearing speeches from leadership from across Canada, including our own Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

The first few days of the meeting were very interesting, the large expo included many different private company solutions to municipal infrastructure problems. These problems are ones that all communities across Canada face. There were several expo booths I found very interesting, including ones that showed simple solutions to everyday city problems as well as technology that would “green” our municipalities.

There were various opportunities to go to panel sessions where I heard from various community leaders, one of which was presented by our own Mayor Lyn Hall, with regards to innovations in the wood industry. This was a very impressive presentation and it was enjoyable to hear the Mayor speak in front of such a huge crowd (there was standing room only).

Another session I went to was a presentation that included breakout sessions with various municipalities regarding issues with northern housing issues across Canada. I very much enjoyed this session because I had very insightful conversations with our Inuit neighbours to the north about some of their issues with regards to dealing with municipal challenges regarding climate change the impacts of permafrost melting and how they are trying to deal with it, but also about the various federal programs that have been released by the Trudeau government to tackle northern housing issues.

The speech by Elisabeth May was by far the most interesting speech I heard, mostly because she talked about the impacts of the municipal voice in federal politics specifically in regards to Trump leaving the Paris Agreement, this showed me how important the municipal voice is to a nation, and the collective voice of municipal governments importance not just, in America but in Canada too. Not only was this speech insightful, but it was also very, well articulated and often times funny, she has a very good sense of humour.

It was also interesting to see Garth Frizzell and staff work on Garth’s campaign for 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President, for which he won. I really enjoyed seeing some of the work that went into running a successful campaign at the FCM. Though I did not know Mr. Frizzell prior to the event, it was great to see a member from Prince George elected.

There were various opportunities during FCM to see what sort of opportunities are available in municipal governance, this was very new to be because I grew up on an Indian Reservation and we do not belong to any sort of national platform except as wards of the Indian Act. Being a Status Indian, this large meeting was sometimes a very somber event, there seemed to be a huge

amount of capacity in the FCM for the benefit of most Canadian's, but especially not for Indian communities under the Indian Act.

In all I would like to thank the Mayor and Council for allowing me to come along on this trip to Ottawa. Many people from my home community of Nak'azdli were excited to follow some of the adventures I had during my stay on facebook. I very much enjoyed this trip and have learned so much about the decisions that mayors and councils make across Canada and how it can make a tremendous difference in the community development.

Sincerely,

Marion Erickson