

Stronger, Together: Council joined Canada's municipal leaders to share strategies and learnings

(Penticton, BC – June 12, 2025) – City Council took its advocacy to Ottawa recently, joining Canada's municipal leaders to exchange strategies and insights on housing, government efficiency, infrastructure renewal and national policy.

Mayor Julius Bloomfield and Councillors Ryan Graham and Jason Reynen attended the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) conference, as well as two City staff members. The conference brought together more than 2,000 local leaders and officials from across the country.

"It's important to be part of these discussions to ensure Penticton's voice is heard in national conversations that shape funding, policy and legislation," says Bloomfield. "Cities across Canada are facing similar challenges involving crime, community safety, homelessness, housing, mental health and addictions. This conference is an opportunity to share our learnings and to hear about solutions that are finding success."

The FCM featured keynote addresses from the Prime Minister and other federal party representatives, with this year's theme being: Stronger Together: Local Strength, National Prosperity. The Penticton delegation participated in sessions on a range of critical issues, including:

- **Homelessness and encampments:** exploring housing-first approaches, human rights considerations, and proactive, compassionate strategies for addressing encampments.
- **Government efficiency and red tape reduction:** sharing best practices for streamlining processes in housing, infrastructure and procurement to better serve residents despite fiscal constraints.
- **Infrastructure funding:** discussing the urgent need for sustainable, predictable federal investment in local infrastructure to support growing communities and aging systems.

In addition to the formal program, the delegation also met with South Okanagan West Kootenay MP Helena Konanz to begin conversations about federal supports needed locally. Informal engagements with Attorney General Sean Fraser and Housing Minister Gregor Robertson provided valuable opportunities to raise Penticton's priorities directly with senior federal decision-makers.

These conversations helped reinforce the City's advocacy on urgent issues such as housing, homelessness and community safety, and laid the groundwork for future collaboration and support. A

tour of Parliament and attendance at Question Period provided valuable insight into federal processes and decision-making.

The City of Penticton looks forward to continued engagement with its federal partners to share and advance its priorities. The cost of the trip for all participants, including tax, was \$29,000.

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