

PERSPECTIVES



PRESENTED BY THE MUNICIPAL INFORMATION NETWORK

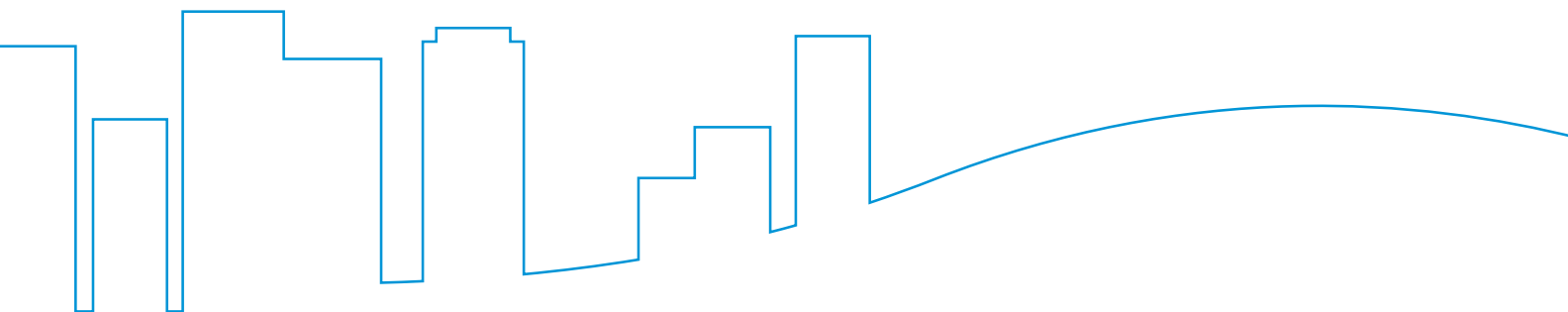
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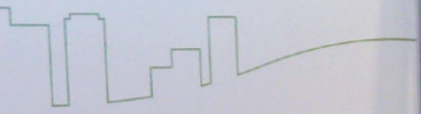
Leadership and Local Government



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From the Editor's Desk

GORD HUME

First, thank you to the many municipal leaders who came by the Municipal Information Network booth at the FCM Conference in Halifax. It was great to meet so many old and new friends, to hear your feedback on our new PERSPECTIVES e-magazine (thank you for the many nice comments!), and to chat about the important issues facing towns and cities across Canada. We value your ideas and hope some of you will share them with our readers in the magazine. Remember, it is very easy to reach us: perspectives@municipalinfonet.com

I need to apologize to the delegates in Halifax who came to the Municipal Information Network booth—I simply sold out of all the books that I had brought. To those of you looking to acquire one of my books on local government (and maybe even chat for a while and have me autograph your copy), I am sorry. You can still order them online by going to www.gordhume.com. Just look for the "Books" page on my site.

Our issue this month focuses on leadership. It is an often-elusive concept, but one of the most important for voters and constituents. There are a number of elections in Canada in the next 18 months at the municipal, provincial and federal levels. These will help to shape our country for the next several years—and longer.

That's why understanding leadership attributes is so important. In "The Leadership Crisis", the book I wrote a couple of years ago, I identified what I believe to be the 7Cs of great political leadership:

1. **Competencies**, including people, organizational, business and strategic.
2. **Character**, and its values and virtues; things like integrity.
3. **Commitment**, including aspiration, engagement, perseverance and sacrifice.
4. **Charisma**, that unquantifiable attribute that leaders either have or don't, but always want.

5. **Communication**, through effective messaging that inspires, informs and influences.
6. **Context**, an understanding of what's going on around them.
7. **Culture**, and how to develop, create, change and advance that culture inside city hall.

These seven traits were built upon original research from the Ivey School of Business. I asked the former Dean and co-author of their book on leadership to give us her perspective on these foundational ideas about leadership and how they relate to the political environment. To help us explore this crucial aspect of life in our city halls, we have articles from several really exceptional leaders:

Carol Stephenson is a former Canadian business leader, Dean of the Ivey School of Business, co-author of a book on leadership, serves on several corporate boards of directors, and is an officer of the Order of Canada. Her article, "Leadership is Hard Work", is an insightful look at how political and business leadership intertwine.

Dan Mathieson has served on Stratford, Ontario's City Council since 1995, and as Mayor since 2003. He has been a dynamic leader both in Stratford and in the Canadian municipal sector. He is highly respected for his leadership and innovation, and for making Stratford such a vigorous and attractive city.

Christina Benty served two terms as a councillor in Golden, BC, and then two terms as Mayor. As she says today, "You can quit your job but you can't quit your calling. I am passionate about policy governance, leadership development, asset management and community engagement with over 16 years of policy governance experience spanning from health care, government, information technology, and community planning." Christina is now a popular speaker and municipal consultant. Her article is an intensely personal reflection of public life; it is a must-read for all politicians and wanna-be mayors and councillors.

GORD HUME



Leadership Is Hard Work

CAROL STEPHENSON, O.C.

Leadership is hard work. It is not easy.

When I was Dean at the Ivey Business School at Western University we conducted many interviews around the world after the financial crisis in 2008. Much of the crisis was being blamed on lack of regulatory oversight, executive compensation, and other factors. We wanted to explore if good leadership made a difference. In fact, we found there was a correlation between leaders with consistent and admirable character traits and companies that did well.

I believe the framework we developed for leadership is transferable between the private sector and the public and not-for-profit sectors. The leadership framework that was developed by Professors Gerard Seijts, Mary Crossan, and Jeffrey Gandz became known as the 3 C's of leadership: competency, commitment, and character. What does this mean?

First, you must be competent. You have to know what you are doing. You must have the knowledge, skills, understanding and judgment needed to assess a situation, analyze solutions, and collaborate with others to get things done. This is the table stakes of leadership.

Second, commitment. You must roll up your sleeves and do the hard work of leadership. It isn't just occupying a position. It's delving into the many issues that face leaders, getting involved and finding solutions. Commitment is aspiring to a vision and being willing to make sacrifices in the pursuit of that vision. Commitment is the constant drive to learn more.

The third, and probably the "c" that surprised us most when doing the research on leadership was "character". Character is the glue that drives sound decision making. If you are skeptical about the importance of character, try to imagine a leader without courage who will not stand up to poor decisions made by others and lacks the perseverance and tenacity required to work through difficult issues. Or, those who may back down in the face of adversity and choose the easier, short-term solution. In doing so, it only postpones the inevitable or creates a worse crisis down the road. Without humility, leaders are not open-minded, nor will they solicit and consider the views of others. We developed 10 character traits that are essential to good leadership (see next page).

In short, when it comes to leadership, competencies determine what a person CAN do. Commitment determines what they WANT to do, and character determines what they WILL do.

Fortunately, leadership can be taught. The business school had some success with training programs for municipal leaders.

I wish municipal leaders great success because your leadership is required more than ever in this complex, ever-changing environment.

The original research was published in 2010 in a report called "Leadership on Trial".

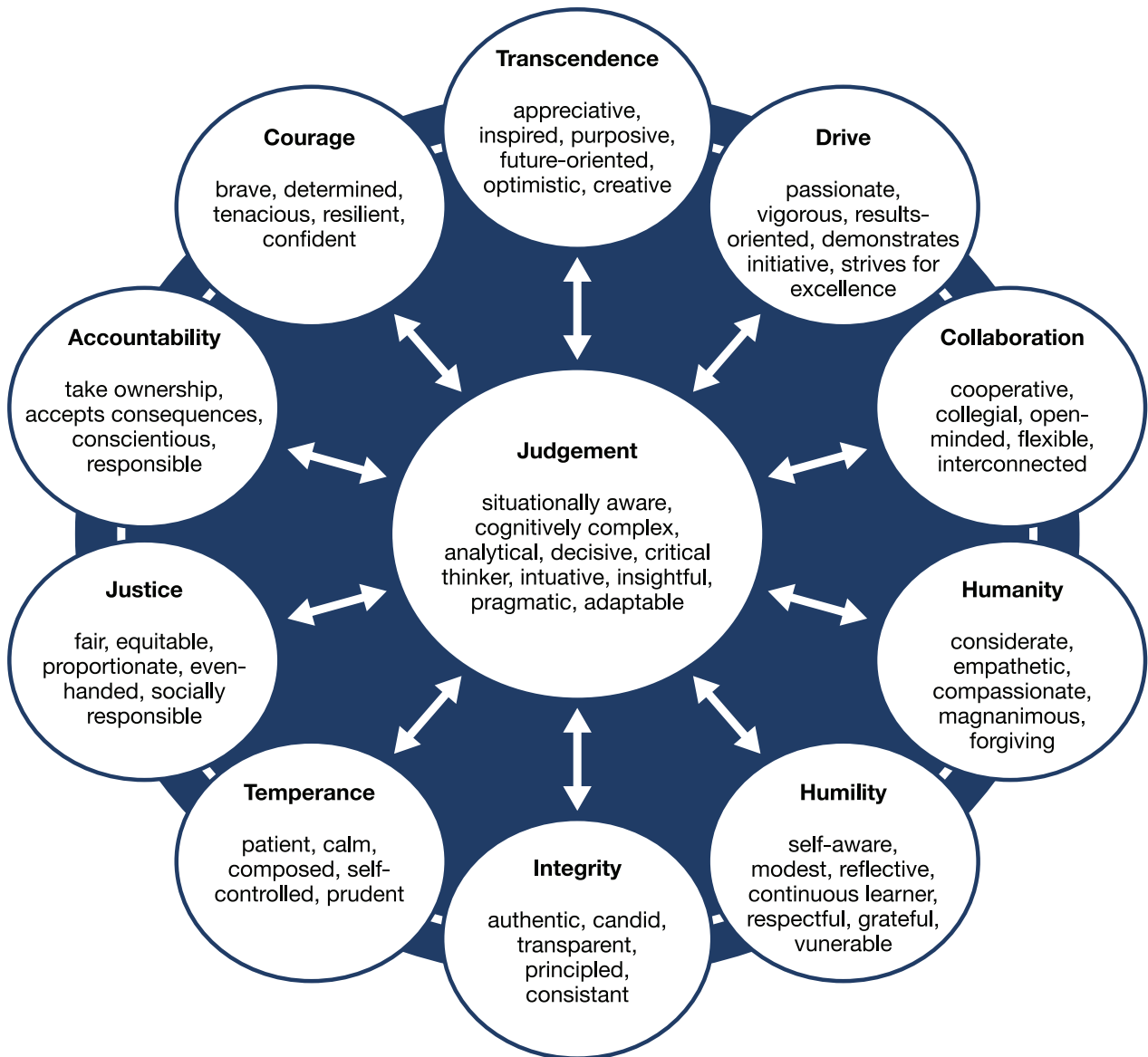
Carol Stephenson is a Corporate Director. From 2003 to 2013, she was the Dean of the Ivey Business School at Western University. She was President and Chief Executive Officer of Lucent Technologies Canada from July 1999 to February 2003. Prior to that, she held a number of executive positions with Bell Canada and BCE Media, and from 1995 to 1998, she was CEO of Stentor Resource Centre Inc.

Ms. Stephenson is a Director of General Motors Company, Intact Financial Services Inc., and Maple Leaf Foods Inc. Ms. Stephenson is a graduate of the University of Toronto, has completed the Executive Program at the Graduate School of Business Administration, University of California, and the Advanced Management Program at Harvard University. In 2000, she was awarded an honorary doctorate in engineering from Ryerson Polytechnic University and in 2016, an honorary doctorate from Western University. She has also received several industry awards, including induction into Canada's Telecommunications Hall of Fame and induction into the London and District Business Hall of Fame.

In 2009, she was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada.

Character

Source: J. Gandz, G. Seijts et al, Ivey Business School





Reflections on Local Leadership and Life

CHRISTINA BENTY

There is a rule of thumb for comedians: “Get off the stage while they are still laughing”. For politicians, maybe it should be “Get off the stage while **you** are still laughing”!

After twelve years in local government, including two terms as mayor, I retired while I still loved what I did. I learned plenty over my tenure, not only about public leadership but also about personal leadership. How one leads their life in the small moments is how one will lead them in the big ones. How you are in your private life is how you show up in your public life. The two are inseparably intertwined.

The following pitfalls may appear solely personal. However, these can have a profound effect on your leadership skills and integrity as an elected official.

- 1. Lack of Sleep:** Life can be full of late meetings and mornings that came too soon. During the night, my mind would rehash events, speeches, and conversations, wondering if there was something left unsaid or articulated poorly. It left me exhausted and bleary-eyed. Rest is critical. Sleep protects the brain and helps processes information. It allows not only your body but your mind to recover. A good night sleep can lead to solutions for problems that have been eluding you.
- 2. Lack of Exercise:** A lack of sleep and a busy travel schedule make it easy to talk oneself out of exercise. Elected officials do plenty of sitting. I was either in a meeting, preparing for a meeting, driving to a meeting or recovering from a meeting. Physical exercise is like fertilizer for your brain and in a world where your brain is the most important piece of equipment you have, size really does matter. Exercise helps with focus and cognition. As an elected official, you need all the smarts you can get! Since it is easier to stay in shape than it is to get into shape, make some time to be physically active.
- 3. Poor Eating:** Part of the ceremonial role of an elected official involves community events, conferences, and social gatherings. Where there are people, there is food; not leafy greens, healthy fats, and lean protein. We are talking coffee, saucy meats, gooey white buns, and endless sweets. Being a former wellness consultant, I know the importance nutrition has on every aspect of your life, including cognitive ability. What about alcohol? It is tempting to numb the anxiety of a long meeting or to socialize with

your peers after council or at conferences. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that, however, little good comes from drinking too much. It is toxic to brain function and can disturb the little sleep you’re already getting.

- 4. Connections and Disconnections:** The longer I was in politics, the more my relationships centered on those who were connected to politics. My conversations revolved around political issues. As mayor of a small town, I could not go anywhere without someone stopping to talk with, to or at me. Political life will take over every part of your life if you let it. It is critical not to shun your pre-election relationships. Those are the people that loved you before your title and will love you after.
- 5. Egocentricity:** Few politicians want to venture into a conversation about ego in politics. Your life is no longer your own. There is a temptation to become vulnerable to what people say about you. In my experience, many people loved and admired me for who I was not, and many people also disliked me for who I was not. That being said, no one could have prepared me for the “celebrity” status of becoming the mayor. Although the public loves to hate politicians, they nonetheless elect leaders and put them upon a pedestal. They treat them as if they really are important and special. As a result, elected officials begin to think they are important and special. The danger in political life is that it can lead to a real misuse of power. Hold the title loosely because it is yours but only for a point in time.

I enjoyed my career in politics immensely, but it is necessary to also reveal the darker side. To maintain the former, you must effectively deal with the latter. If you truly want to be a leader, then always, always, always lead your own life first.

Christina Benty, MA is a recovering politician who loves to talk about all things invisible..... such as sewer, water and strategy! In her spare time, she sings in a jazz band and is the owner of Strategic Leadership Solutions, a consulting firm designed to assist teams in building a culture of excellence in leadership and governance.

Check out her TED Talk on Leadership here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmDN0PLHZHk>

Higher Level Strategic Thinking for Municipalities

DAN MATHIESON



It seems everything is changing at a breakneck speed these days. Two-year-old cell phones are outdated. You can turn on the television or turn off the lights with Alexa. Autonomous cars are already being tested on city streets in Canadian cities.

The one constant is change, and hardly a sector of our society is untouched – except for municipal governments, some pundits would claim.

Not so fast.

Local government is not immune. In fact, there are huge changes that have happened and are going to happen in the way your city or town is governed and operated.

I began my career in politics as an elected official in 1995, and have lived through seven municipal elections - three for city council and four for mayor.

During that time, while cars and computers and cell phones were changing rapidly, municipal politics have undergone their own transformation.

The biggest change has been in the philosophy of governing and leading at city hall. The most forward-thinking communities have shifted away from day-to-day operational issues and are instead focusing on higher-level strategic planning directions and building road-maps for the future.

Local government leaders shouldn't cringe when we see those changes on the horizon, but rather embrace the advancements and improvements in local governance.

Back in the 1980s and 90s, most city councils and councillors were primarily concerned about "retail politics." You worried about garbage collection, snowplowing, or getting involved with disputes over a fence between neighbours. But that has changed (for the most part) and those sorts of issues are better left for senior staff to solve. Only in the rarest of cases do those sorts of issues end up in council chambers.

That's a good thing, because inevitably when it does end up before elected officials, the outcome is predictable – the decisions usually become political, not regulation or policy based. It is then that you see decisions of senior staff, who might be professional engineers or urban planners, overturned because the gallery is full of angry residents.

Progressive local governments in the 2010s now concentrate more on strategic planning--what your community is going to look like years from now.

The focus of local leaders should be on creating a robust civic environment where industry and business want to move to your community. The reality is, however, that a lot of that can't be accomplished overnight.

For example, a dozen or so communities may be vying for the next great employer to move to their town. To attract employers in today's competitive environment, municipalities need to realistically understand their assets and weaknesses.

Business requirements of communities today include such basic economic foundations as high-speed Internet, fibre optic communications, available serviceable (or serviced) industrial land, and strong infrastructure. All those building blocks take time for municipalities to acquire and develop.

Municipalities rarely used to talk about those sorts of things, but now you must.

The best employers know they are the best employers and they have high expectations from a potential community. They want that city or town to be a partner in their success, so smart communities have realized that you have to have all those business tools in place long before the decision-making process starts.

The other big change is in the city staff itself.

There was a time that the chief financial officer or the city clerk may have started with an entry level job and hung around long enough to work their way up to be a department head. Now, the head of the public works department has probably never been on the end of a shovel. The person who is in charge of Human Resources, or Health and Safety, or the finance department, has a degree or degrees in that field—and may have migrated over from the private sector.

However, there are still elected officials that cling to old philosophies about what makes up a good city councillor. Higher level thinking is outside their comfort zone and they are not comfortable talking about stretch goals, planning 10 years out, or capital asset management plans. You can often see a real schism developing inside a council chamber.

Mayors have lots of things to manage, including people, and this is one of them. A tale of two cities, as it were.

Sure it creates some challenges, depending on who makes up the council of the day. But right now, more than ever, I think you have two kinds of elected officials and two kinds of councils.



On one hand you have councils that are vision-oriented and planning for the future. These are the true governance councils. Yet Canada has many councils that are only worried about small operational issues that are most certainly best left to staff to figure out.

That's where real leadership comes in – making sure you have great staff to look after the day-to-day operational issues that keep people happy and get them the services they expect and deserve from their local tax dollars.

Equally important to understand, however, is that that kind of operational effectiveness then lets council members concentrate on strategies and planning and making sure the operations people have all the tools they need to do their job, not only now, but 10 years from now.

Developing a vibrant community vision of the future, and the strategic plan and the resources needed to achieve those goals, is what great leaders deliver for their town or city.

That is why muscular leadership in our city halls is so crucial to building, developing and running successful communities today.

Dan Mathieson is in his fourth term as Mayor and has sat on municipal council since 1995. He is currently Chair of the Ontario Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC), Past Chair of Kings University College at Western University, Chair of the Stratford Police Services Board, a member of the Board of Directors of Festival Hydro and Rhizome Networks and the Stratford Shakespeare Festival. Dan is also a Governor on the Board of i-Canada.

In November, 2015, Dan was awarded the Alumni Award of Excellence from Master of Public Administration, Local Government program at Western University. He was also the 2016 Western University, Public Administration Distinguished Practitioner in Residence, lecturing on governance and innovation in public institutions.

In 2012, Dan was chosen by the Canadian Advanced Technology Alliance (CATA) to receive the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, paying tribute to community leaders whose endeavours have set them apart as technology innovators. As well, Dan received the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002 for public service.

Dan has received an ICD.D Designation through the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto. He also holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Guelph and a Masters of Public Administration Degree from the University of Western Ontario.

Smart Cities Hoping to Cash Big Cheques

PERSPECTIVES STAFF

20 Canadian communities are happily looking ahead to cashing big federal government cheques, as they have been short-listed as the finalists for Canada's "Smart Cities Challenge".

The new, competition-based approach encouraged villages, towns and cities to come up with local, innovative solutions to their most pressing issues. More than 200 communities from across Canada responded. They submitted ideas that have the potential to improve their communities in areas such as reconciliation, protection of Indigenous language and culture, food security, better education and health for youth and children, and affordable housing.

The links to powerful local leadership are one critical element in towns and cities seeking bold and innovative ideas and solutions to local issues. As the other articles in this June issue of PERSPECTIVES demonstrate, leadership by Mayors, Councillors and senior administration is critical to making Canadian communities competitive in the global economic environment.

The connection between great local leadership and successful, prosperous and progressive towns and cities has never been greater.

And, as advanced technology will drive city halls even more in the future, it is important for Canadian communities of all sizes to support and encourage an open, innovative and progressive strategic development in their local communities—and city halls. This is where strong leadership can really separate weak from robust civic agendas.

The announcement of the 20 finalists was made at the FCM conference in Halifax by the Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities:

- ▶ Biigtigong Nishnaabeg First Nation, Ontario (\$5M prize)
- ▶ Bridgewater, Nova Scotia (\$5M prize)
- ▶ Cree Nation of Eastmain, Quebec (\$5M prize)
- ▶ Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, Quebec (\$5M prize)
- ▶ Yellowknife, Northwest Territories (\$5M prize)
- ▶ Airdrie and Area, Alberta (\$10M prize)
- ▶ Communities of Nunavut, Nunavut (\$10M prize)

- ▶ Côte Saint-Luc, Quebec (\$10M prize)
- ▶ Greater Victoria, British Columbia (\$10M prize)
- ▶ Guelph and Wellington County, Ontario (\$10M prize)
- ▶ Parkland, Brazeau, Lac Ste Anne and Yellowhead Counties, Alberta (\$10M prize)
- ▶ Richmond, British Columbia (\$10M prize)
- ▶ Saint Mary's First Nation and Fredericton, New-Brunswick (\$10M prize)
- ▶ Saskatoon, Saskatchewan (\$10M prize)
- ▶ The Pas, Opaskwayak Cree Nation, and Kelsey, Manitoba (\$10M prize)
- ▶ Edmonton, Alberta (\$50M prize)
- ▶ Montreal, Quebec (\$50M prize)
- ▶ Quebec City, Quebec (\$50M prize)
- ▶ Region of Waterloo, Ontario (\$50M prize)
- ▶ Vancouver and Surrey, British Columbia (\$50M prize)

The twenty finalists that have been selected will now go on to compete for four prizes:

- ▶ one prize of up to \$50 million, available to all communities;
- ▶ two prizes of up to \$10 million, available to all communities below 500,000 residents; and
- ▶ one prize of up to \$5 million, available to all communities below 30,000 residents.

Congratulations to the twenty finalists are certainly well earned. But equally, to the other 180+ Canadian towns and cities who entered, congratulations as well. Their work and ingenuity will undoubtedly better each of their communities and help to resolve pressing local issues.

Well done, Canadian municipal leaders!



CIVIC COMMENT

Tariffs and Trade Trump Talks at FCM

GORD HUME

The Halifax FCM conference was an interesting one, and comes at a terribly important time in Canadian politics. The Ontario provincial election saw a dramatic change in government. What that might mean for the province's 444 municipalities is yet to be determined. Alberta has an election soon. Canada goes to the polls next year. Several provinces have municipal elections in the next two years. It is a time of momentous change in Canadian politics, and those two years will be tumultuous.

At the exact time that delegates were gathering in Halifax, the word came thundering down from Washington about new tariffs being imposed by the United States. Speaking at the FCM opening, Prime Minister Trudeau quite properly stated his opposition and dismay at these actions, and promised to work with and defend Canadian cities affected. Regina, Hamilton and several other communities are squarely in the firing line.

The fall-out from Trump's tirades after he left the recent G7 conference in Quebec is still resonating. As of publication of this e-magazine, there are serious cracks in the Canada-US relationship and in the trade talks. We live in very uncertain political times, and Canadian municipalities are rightly nervous.

There are two crucial points to understand: first, there are no winners in a trade war. The US can couch it in whatever smarmy terms it wants, but it is a bullying tactic that has global implications—none of them good for Canada, or indeed most of the Western world.

Consumers will pay more. Jobs are jeopardized. Our global competitiveness is threatened. And second, as almost always is the harshest of realities, it is our towns and cities that ultimately feel the impact. The impact on jobs, local economies, employment opportunities and the subsequent threats to the social structure of a community (and again, the impact on the local government and the community, health, social services and other costs it must absorb) can be devastating.

Canadian cities are very nervous about the future of the NAFTA talks, and what the implications of that could mean for regions like South-western Ontario that have already been battered cruelly by the auto sector and manufacturing cuts in recent years.

Manufacturing has gotten so sophisticated and so complex that modern industries such as the auto sector may have a car cross a border half a dozen times during its manufacture. Robots are common. Artificial Intelligence will have a greater impact than most municipalities understand yet—and it is coming sooner than city halls are ready for the onslaught. The overall impact on local jobs is significant.

Other thoughts after FCM: Don Iveson, who wrote such a thoughtful article in the April PERSPECTIVES, continues to lead the battle on social housing for the Big City Mayors. Housing was one of the main themes at the FCM conference, and it remains an important one.



The three main national political leaders must present municipalities with clear plans for their strategies to deal with civic issues, and social housing is a key area but so are other hot topics for local governments. That clarity didn't always happen in Halifax in the three party leader's speeches. Rhetoric is not sufficient.

There was also a very clear impatience by delegates with getting the infrastructure money rolling out. Towns and cities are desperate to address their local infrastructure needs, and the feds have been slow in partnering. Let's get moving, Ottawa.

A final observation—there was an interesting divide amongst delegates. There were lots of older, veteran council members in attendance...but there also was a growing number of younger, female, indigenous and those with different social backgrounds represented. This is a healthy development for local government.

Finally, thank you for the many nice comments we had about PERSPECTIVES. So many of you took the time to come over the Municipal Information Network booth and say how much you're enjoying the articles and commentary. Thank you. And remember, we welcome ideas and articles from you and your municipality. Just email us at:

perspectives@municipalinfonet.com

Gord Hume is recognized as one of Canada's leading voices on municipal government and is an articulate and thoughtful commentator on civic government and community issues. He is a very popular public speaker, an advisor to municipal governments, and a respected and provocative author.

Gord was elected to London City Council four times. He has had a distinguished career in Canadian business, managing radio stations and as Publisher of a newspaper. Gord received two "Broadcaster of the Year" awards. He is now President of Hume Communications Inc., a professional independent advisor to municipalities.

