



Direct from the Mission

August 21, 2008

FCM Sustainable Communities Mission

Seeing is believing

What has been your “aha” moment on the Mission?

“I’m so excited about going back and sharing ideas. We should be looking at things like Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) buildings. We’re doing one right now, but we need to do it in everything.”

–Frances Caldarelli, Councillor, Sudbury, Ontario

“I was looking at the bike paths in Vancouver, and I realized that we already have wide enough streets [in Grande Prairie]—we just need to repaint the lines. Often we make things too complicated. Repainting the lines is free; we do that every year anyway.”

–Gladys Blackmore, Alderman, Grande Prairie, Alberta

“The City of Vancouver has a person attached to the chief administrative officer who makes sustainability accountable. We hired a coordinator, but once they leave, things can slow down. You need a burr in the side [of government], someone encouraging continuing on the sustainability route.”

–Kelly Hegg, Alderman, Airdrie, Alberta

Will the presentations and site visits help you with a project back home?

“I am finding a lot of relevant material. But [now the question is] how am I going to get [Spruce Grove] Council to buy in?”

–Louise Baxter, Deputy Mayor, Spruce Grove, Alberta

“I have invited the Canada Green Building Council to address [the Drayton Valley] Council and to hold a working session with delegates, council, administrators, and developers to get the knowledge out there. I want to bring that high level of understanding to my community.”

–Moe Hamdon, Mayor, Drayton Valley, Alberta

What has been the most relevant presentation or site visit so far?

“I took the most notes [so far] on August 19, especially about the company that recycles Styrofoam. I was also interested in the company that recycles Gyprock as gypsum. I made a note to mention to the Province [of Nova Scotia] that this is something they should follow up on and get more information on.”

–Amery Boyer, Town Manager, Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia

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“The presentations this morning [in Squamish: Squamish—A Compact, Liveable Community and Smart Bylaws: Moving from the Guide to Smart Growth on the Ground] were the most relevant. I enjoyed the site visits, but the presentations really caught my attention. [Sustainability] is about sustainability planning and the Official Community Plan [OCP]. I’m from British Columbia, so I face the same issue, which is, how do you reconcile the OCP and the plan for sustainability? I was also very interested in the lawyer’s [Susan Rutherford’s] information on the tools and tax exemptions for sustainability.”

–Brenda Holmlund, Councillor, Tumbler Ridge, British Columbia

“All of the presentations and site visits have had something [relevant]. I was most excited about the West Coast Environmental Law presentation, with the smart growth and sustainability tools. There is so much information, it’s hard to grab hold and do something to get started. These tools could help us. Waste as a resource also sticks in my mind. To think of waste as a resource gives you a whole new perspective.”

–John McGee, Councillor, The Town of The Blue Mountains, Ontario

“The Squamish presentation was really relevant. It’s another small city, so the things they want to do are similar [to our goals]: their downtown is not very active, they need to protect existing commercial activity, and they need to create density to keep that commercial activity. But it can be a challenge to convince existing residents to embrace density. They moved to the country for space.”

–Louise Baxter, Deputy Mayor, Spruce Grove, Alberta

“I was really interested in the Olympic Committee’s presentation, especially the way they have integrated sustainability into every facet of the Olympic Games. They have the support of the City of Vancouver. How they are achieving their environmental sustainability goals is inspirational.”

–Stephen Walker, Community Planner, Selkirk and District Planning Area Board, Manitoba

“Last night’s presentation on sustainability [Engaging the Private Sector in Sustainable Community Development by Peter Busby] and how to keep that going in an organization [was] the most relevant to me. Looking at our community, we have a sustainability coordinator to make sure that [sustainability] happens, but that is on a contract basis. Maybe that could be a permanent staff position.... It is important to have someone who has sustainability as part of the portfolio to offer advice.”

–Kelly Hegg, Mayor, Airdrie, Alberta.

Do you think these kinds of initiatives can be replicated in your region?

“The Town [of East Gwillimbury’s] population is currently about 22,000. Over 40 years, 130,000 people will be moving into the current area. The town already requires Energy Star standards for building permits, and LEED silver standards for commercial or industrial building permits.”

–Don Sinclair, General Manager, Development and Legal Services, East Gwillimbury, Ontario

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“Seeing the green roof on the Whistler Public Library, and knowing they’ve got a couple more [was exciting]. We’re building a new fire station, and I thought a green roof would be perfect. I have staff at home who say it won’t work in our climate. But it’s doable!”

–Jeff Carlson, Alderman, Lethbridge, Alberta

“The presentation on Smart Growth on the Ground by West Coast Environmental Law [was great]. We’ve started the Smart Growth initiative in Yellowknife. You can talk about smart growth, but it [all comes] down to the bylaws. There are examples in the West Coast guide from communities of an equivalent size that will be useful.”

–Shelagh Montgomery, Councillor, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

“I think all of the initiatives are replicable [in Tumbler Ridge]. I’m not as interested in the waste-to-energy plan, but we could probably get rid of all our waste through burning because it is all separated. The thing about sustainability is that you shouldn’t shut your mind to anything because it could turn out to benefit you.”

–Brenda Holmlund, Councillor, Tumbler Ridge, British Columbia

“A lot of the initiatives can be transferred to my town [The Town of the Blue Mountains]. Some initiatives we have started on; some initiatives we are still talking about. One area we have not done a lot on is community involvement in the overall concept. We have to get people to buy in—a lot of [sustainable initiatives] are voluntary. There is less pushback when people buy in.”

–John McGee, Councillor, Town of the Blue Mountains, Ontario

Recap: Wednesday, August 20

Presentations:

Squamish: A Compact Liveable Community

— Brent Leigh, Deputy Administrator, District of Squamish, and Managing Director, Squamish Sustainability Corporation

www.squamishbusiness.com

Smart Growth on the Ground

— Amanda Mitchell, SGOG Outreach Coordinator

Amanda@smartgrowth.bc.ca

<http://www.smartgrowth.bc.ca>

Smart Bylaws: Moving from the *Guide* to Smart Growth on the Ground

— Susan Rutherford, Staff Counsel, West Coast Environmental Law

srutherford@wcel.org

www.wcel.org

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Whistler 2020 & The Natural Step

- Ted Battiston, Manager of Sustainability Initiatives, Policy and Program Development
Department, Resort Municipality of Whistler
tbattiston@whistler.ca
www.whistler.ca

Whistler Athlete's Village & Cheakamus Crossing

- Mike Vance, General Manager, Policy & Program Development
mvance@whistler.ca
www.whistler.ca
- Neil Godfrey, Vice President, Whistler 2020 Development Corporation
ngodfrey@whistler.ca
www.whistlerdevelopmentcorp.ca

Whistler Public Library: LEED Gold Building

- Andy Chalk, Capital Projects Manager, Resort Experience Department,
Resort Municipality of Whistler
www.whistler.ca

BC Hydro: Sustainable Communities – Innovation and Energy

- Robyn Wark, Key Account Manager, Sustainable Communities, BC Hydro
- Paul Bouman, Key Account Manager, Sustainable Communities, BC Hydro
www.bchydro.com

Site Visits:

Downtown Squamish Walking Tour and Energy Plan Overview

- Cameron Chalmers, Director of Planning, District of Squamish
- Sabina Foofat, Planner, District of Squamish
www.squamishbusiness.com

Whistler Public Library

- Andy Chalk, Capital Projects Manager, Resort Experience Department,
Resort Municipality of Whistler
www.whistler.ca

Whistler Olympic Athlete's Village

- Neil Godfrey, Vice President, Whistler 2020 Development Corporation
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Today at a glance: Thursday, August 21

Presentations:

11:00-12:30

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve Operations Centre: LEED Platinum building

14:45-15:45

Sustainable Community Development: Dockside Green – A Developer’s Perspective

16:00-17:30

First Nations greeting with Unity drummers and singers

Site visits:

11:00-12:30

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve Operations Centre

16:00-17:30

Dockside Green