



CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATORS

INFLUENTIAL. INSPIRING. GET INVOLVED.



2016-2021 STRATEGIC PLAN (UPDATED MARCH 2021)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



CAMA STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2021

VISION

“The Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) is recognized as the premiere national Canadian organization representing municipal administrators”.

MISSION

“To champion excellence in municipal administration and develop resilient leadership through professional development, networking, partnerships and advocacy.”

OUR PURPOSE

Professional Development	Networking & Partnerships	Member Engagement & Support	Resilient Leadership
Provide members with leading edge trends, tools and best practices for local government management through state-of-the-art sharing and professional development opportunities.	Create strong, strategic relationships. CAMA is well recognized as the national “Go To” experts in Municipal Administration	Deliver networking opportunities to engage and connect members. Increase the membership by attracting, maintaining and engaging members from large, small, and remote municipalities with an emphasis on balance and diversity.	Intentional about ensuring success of the profession. Foster a professional, respectful relationship between municipal administrators and Councils.

EMERGING TRENDS

The following trends will provoke a period of innovation and transformation that will make local government an even more exciting environment in which to work, and more responsive than ever to the needs of its citizens. Over the next five years, municipal senior management and elected officials should therefore expect to operate in a context of radical, ongoing, and accelerating change, which will require strong leadership. On the other hand, it is a unique opportunity to attract and retain talented people, committed to the mission of local government and ready to embrace a change.

CAMA reviewed the [“CAO Report: A candid look at the issues on the minds of Canada’s CAOs”](#) report prepared by StrategyCorp in June 2018 that a number of our members participated in. It was felt that these overarching trends were relevant to our Association:

THE GROWING FISCAL CRUNCH

While the responsibilities of municipalities may vary from one Provincial or Territorial jurisdiction to another, concerns about the municipal fiscal situation remain top of mind for CAOs. The revenue sources available to local governments are still narrowly based and often inadequate to meet the challenges of persistent service demands and maintaining, expanding and modernizing new and existing infrastructure. The mis-match between financial resources and service-delivery obligations can only accelerate as the new economy erodes traditional revenue sources, like business taxation and licensing fees.

THE “WAR FOR TALENT”

CAOs have differing views on the nature of their position, from corporate manager to community leader. But all recognize that the CAO’s job is not becoming any easier. Recruiting talent to municipal management requires thoughtful selection. But it also increasingly requires effective cultivation and marketing of the importance and value of municipal professional management, both in CAOs and in department heads.

MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING – THE ISSUE THAT WON’T GO AWAY

In past surveys, mention was made of the structural limitations of municipal government. This included a perceived need for a governance “footprint” that more appropriately aligns to the planning, economic and social issues that an increasingly regional and urban Canada must govern. But few seem willing, at the political level, to risk the predictable negative reaction that comes from proposals to alter municipal structure through annexation, amalgamation or regionalization of service delivery. Restructuring initiatives tend to come in waves, usually when pent-up need for fiscal sustainability, appropriate scope for infrastructure and community planning, and economic development pressures combine to force reform discussions. Are we approaching another such “inflection point”?

DISRUPTION

Whether it is new technologies, digital service delivery, fundamental changes to the traditional economic model for retail or tourism, or the unique demands of Millennials and new immigrants, CAOs find that they cannot rely on past practice to guide their approach to new problems and in the search for solutions. The new economy, the impact of extreme weather events and changes in the existing fiscal environment mean municipalities are rethinking their approach to fiscal planning, economic development and taking practical measures to explain and to manage the impact of climate change. The impact of the “grey tsunami” of Baby Boomers will affect everything from recruiting and retaining talent, to managing the very different service demands and planning preferences of the changing demographics of Canadian regions.

INNOVATION

Innovation is taking the private sector economy by storm, and municipal professionals are joining that wave. From digital service delivery and electronic consultation, to advances in performance management techniques and processes and the use of technology to guide infrastructure asset management, traditional approaches to municipal issues are being displaced by creative and innovative new experiments and techniques.

RECONCILIATION

After the country-wide efforts to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations, relations between municipal governments and Indigenous groups continue to evolve. From economic development and community collaboration, to symbolic recognition and sensitivity to traditional learning and decision-making processes, CAOs are engaged in a range of ground-breaking initiatives, both with First Nations and Inuit governments, as well as urban Aboriginal and Metis communities. We were particularly impressed by how municipal CAOs have embraced the importance of Reconciliation and are working to move the agenda forward in their communities.

POPULISM

Whether radically new ways to consult with residents, or the newly elected councillor or a mayor from the mold of Donald Trump, or social-media driven simple solutions to complex problems, or the loss of credibility of traditional stakeholder leadership, CAOs are finding that the cycle-time for finding solutions is shrinking, along with the traditional deference to professional expertise. CAOs recognize the need for a renewed emphasis on municipal good governance (from Council-staff relations through to municipal restructuring) and reminding the community of the importance of municipal professionalism.

CAMA MEMBERS VALUE

Accountability and Professional Integrity	Collaboration	Transparency and Honesty	Innovation and Excellence	Diversity and Inclusivity
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OUR GOALS/ACTIVITIES

Professional Development	Networking & Partnerships	Member Engagement & Support	Resilient Leadership
<p>To enhance innovative opportunities and professional development to increase CAMA members knowledge transfer and experience sharing around good local government management values and practices.</p>	<p>To build strong relationships with key stakeholders. Initiate, strengthen and leverage relationships with international, national and local organizations to create excellence in municipal government.</p> <p>To enhance and promote one consistent identity/profile to obtain the respect of our stakeholders</p>	<p>To support members in making connections and building beneficial professional relationships</p> <p>To be the national membership of choice for local government professionals across Canada</p>	<p>To ensure CAMA is providing new and existing municipal administrators with information, and a network, that assists them in their role, encourages the next generation of leaders and, promotes the importance of the Professional Municipal Administrator.</p> <p>To ensure CAMA is reminding/educating members of the key components of a professional, respectful relationship between municipal administrators and Councils and how to attempt to deal with specific situations that members are encountering that undermine that healthy relationship. Help members be resilient and maintain a healthy understanding of the municipal administrator role versus the Council role.</p>

REPORT CARD – MARCH 2020

CAMA STRATEGIC PLAN: 2016-2021

Dear CAMA Colleagues,

We are pleased to share with you the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrator’s Strategic Plan which was developed in 2016 and looks ahead to 2021. As we enter 2020, CAMA will be in its last year of our Strategic Plan. This plan was developed through member surveys and Board focus groups and we have sought to gather information about the issues that are important to you, and the trends that we see affecting the future of the municipal administrator profession, municipal government and the Association. We tried to respond to the important issues and trends that are shaping our environment.

This Strategic Plan has led us to some very important initiatives in addition to our core services that we provide to our membership on a regular basis:

- Annual Conference
- Awards of Excellence Program
- Long Services Awards Program
- Promotion of CAO Performance Evaluation Toolkit
- Membership Campaign
- Promotion of the Making Life Happen Campaign/Recruiting the Next Generation
- Provincial/Territorial Association Executive Director Meetings
- Website Advertising
- Jobscene Broadcasts
- E-Brief newsletters
- Relationships with Affiliate Organizations/FCM

YEAR	ACTIVITY COMPLETED
April 2016-March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Scholarship Program that has been made available to smaller and remote communities and the next generation of leaders to attend the Annual Conference. • A successful three-year membership campaign with a net retention of 117 members with the continuation of a sustainability strategy to retain existing members and continue to attract new ones. • Participation in an International Panel and a Discussion Paper on local government issues with our affiliates (United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand). • The launch of the “Cultivating Leadership: A Guide For the Next Generation in Local Government” which was designed in recognition of the importance of providing useful career advice to the next generation of local government leaders, and to provide an opportunity for our more experienced CAMA members to give back to the profession. It is our hope that it will help CAMA members at different stages of their career, students considering a career in local government, and potential future CAMA members. This is also a great resource to share with direct reports and managers throughout your organization. • The launch of a new website.

YEAR	ACTIVITY COMPLETED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant changes were made to the Federal Funding Programs for Municipal Infrastructure as a result of a series of administrative recommendations made by CAMA through a Position Paper presented to the federal government.
April 2017-March 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The addition of a Northern representative to the Board for Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. A partnership with six Provincial Associations which resulted in the launch of the Making Life Happen Campaign and website to recruit the next generation of municipal leaders. Workshops with FCM and CNAM on Infrastructure, Asset Management, and Climate Change at the 2017 and 2018 CAMA Conferences. The development and launch of the CAO Performance Evaluation Toolkit with a marketing campaign to CAOs and elected officials. Outreach to the Provinces and Territories where municipal elections were held to advise of CAMA's support should you become a Member in Transition. The development of a new Statement of Purpose for the Association.
April 2018-March 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach to the large municipalities noting the value of CAMA. A marketing/awareness campaign about CAMA and its benefits to the First Nations Band Administrators. Launch of a new partnership with muniSERV.ca, Canada's leading online platform to connect municipalities and the businesses that serve them all in one convenient location. You can find municipal consultants, post RFPs, bids and tenders and find municipal services. Launch of a new partnership with a BoxofDocs to provide our members with a discount on a library that holds thousands of documents with respect to municipal government. Increased focus on LinkedIn and other social media tools. The development and launch of the Political Acumen Toolkit and Mentorship Forum which will provide advice on the following topics: Administration & Council, Residents & Ratepayers, Inter-municipal, Provincial, Federal, Media, and Mentorship. The development and launch of the Members in Transition Toolkit to offer support and let you know you're not alone if you find yourself in this unfortunate position.
April 2019 to March 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued outreach to the elected officials and administrators on the CAO Performance Evaluation Toolkit including some sample completed templates. A sample mandate letter and performance evaluation template for Directors/Commissioners was also completed. A membership campaign featuring member testimonials promoting the benefits of our toolkits to administrators and elected officials thru our social media channels and digital advertising. A review of CAMA's assets in preparation of the next Strategic Planning process. Development of a CAO Employment Contract Toolkit to be launched in the Fall of 2020. Development of a Council Orientation Toolkit to be launched in the Fall of 2020.
April 2020 to March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board decided to hold all meetings virtually and more frequently due to the pandemic (bi-weekly). The Board had to pivot from its existing plans and determine the role CAMA could play in supporting its members during the COVID crisis. The 2020 and 2021 Conferences were cancelled and staff worked to minimize the financial impacts and reschedule new dates and locations. Many negotiations took place. The CAO Employment Contract Toolkit and Council Orientation Toolkits were launched in the Fall of 2020. The Board decided to delay the planning session for the new Strategic Plan for one year. The Board initiated "CAMA Connects" as a pilot project to allow members to meet virtually on a variety of topics. A successful and well attended virtual Annual General Meeting was held – a first time for CAMA. The Board initiated the CAMA 50th Anniversary Celebrations that include a series of free webinars for members, research into the history of the Association along with engaging past members in a networking series.

YEAR	ACTIVITY COMPLETED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A taskforce was established to compile and review all of CAMA's policies for relevance and clarity. • A new workplan was approved for 2020-2021 that considers the impacts of the pandemic, CAMA human and financial resources and the need to be relevant to members. • The Board initiated a webinar for CAMA member Executive Assistants recognizing the value that they play in the success of their jobs. • Completion of the inventory analysis variation of all CAMA's assets.



The Board held a strategy session in July 2020 to discuss our workplan for the next eighteen months and we plan to focus on the following initiatives:

- Outreach to municipalities to join CAMA.
- Increase the outreach to elected officials so that they will see the value when their senior managers would like to join CAMA and/or attend the Conference.
- The 2022 Annual Conference will continue to be the priority for professional development (if its safe) since the 2020 and 2021 events were cancelled.

- Free webinars will be offered as part of the 50th Anniversary Professional Development series.
- Launch the CAO Human Resources Toolkit in the Fall of 2021.
- Continue to promote the CAO Performance Evaluation Toolkit, Political Acumen Toolkit, Making Life Happen Campaign, Mentorship Program, CAO Employment Contract Toolkit, Council Orientation Toolkit and Members in Transition Toolkit to CAOs across the country (and the first three to elected officials).
- Promote CAMA's 50th Anniversary.
- Continue to work with our Provincial/Territorial Association partners, international affiliates, and FCM.

The planning process for the new Strategic Plan for 2022 and beyond that was set to take place in September 2020, has been postponed for another year due to COVID-19. This will allow us to determine the needs of our profession after things start to return to normal in our own communities.