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## New Brunswick municipalities and consulting engineers on same infrastructure page: panel

FREDERICTON, N.B.

Municipalities in the province and the consulting engineering industry are on the same page when it comes to dealing with the ever-growing infrastructure deficit, affirmed a panel at an event sponsored by the [Association of Consulting Engineering Companies-New Brunswick](#) (ACEC-NB).

"It's important to [invest in infrastructure] because we don't want to fall behind. It's not sexy... I don't have people saying 'Brad, really happy to see you digging up that road and putting in new pipe.' I don't get that but it's important," said panelist Brad Woodside, mayor of Fredericton and second vice-president of the [Federation of Canadian Municipalities](#).

Other panelists reiterated Woodside's sentiments about the importance of developing a long-term plan, focusing on the prioritization of infrastructure based on maintenance and repair of current infrastructure and also allowing for long-term development.

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Raymond Murphy, executive director of the [Union of Municipalities of New Brunswick](#)(UMNB), noted that many small municipalities do not have the human or financial resources to carry out what is expected. This is complicated by the need to keep pace with regulatory and technological changes.

For instance, compliance with new federal water quality standards will have a significant impact on municipalities. His organization is therefore open to meeting with industry to discuss ways to improve delivery and services to the public in this regard.

John Gamble, president of the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies-Canada said the consulting engineering community shares many of the same objectives as the municipal sector.

He noted that infrastructure in particular is where the industry collectively adds value to society.

"Infrastructure connects our communities, it enables our economy and it protects our environment," said Gamble who characterized it as "an investment in our quality of life."

Other organizations in attendance included the Cities of New Brunswick Association, [Construction Association of New Brunswick](#), [Architects Association of New Brunswick](#), [Road Builders and Heavy Construction Association of New Brunswick](#) and the [Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of New Brunswick](#).

Representatives from the provincial government were in attendance as well at the mid-November event, part of ACEC-NB's advocacy efforts to create an open dialogue between municipalities and industry while working together to meet the challenges of infrastructure development in the province.

On the same day, the association also made a presentation to the UMNB board to highlight services provided by consulting engineering companies and to raise awareness of best practices for hiring a professional consultant.

The association said board members expressed “positive interest” in receiving more information on recommended procurement practices and qualifications-based selection and have made this an action item for follow-up with ACEC-NB.

The ACEC-NB board now is considering developing a program to achieve that exact objective with further information to be circulated once more research is conducted.

“This first meeting was very successful in beginning a dialogue with municipalities while demonstrating the importance of working together towards a common purpose – quality infrastructure for all New Brunswickers,” said association president Georges Roy.

For more information about ACEC-NB visit its website at [www.acec-nb.ca](http://www.acec-nb.ca).

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