

# EDAC on the Hill

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**2017 Report to Members**



# EDAC on the Hill

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Every day, EDAC members are deeply engaged in strengthening our economy and creating opportunities for Canadians and their communities.

EDAC is committed to communicating the role and impact of its members from coast to coast to coast.

Informing federal policy-makers is a strategic priority for EDAC. By connecting economic development practitioners with federal policy-makers we can help to create a more effective operating environment for members and the communities they serve.

# Why go to Parliament Hill?

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- Maintains awareness of EDAC, its mission, and the collective impact of its members
- Monitor a constantly changing policy and program environment
- Scan for emerging collaboration opportunities
- Contribute to ongoing policy and priority development processes
- Give voice to the evolving needs of our members and the communities we serve

# Why is Advocacy important?

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- Builds awareness of our profession and our shared priorities among Canada's most important decision makers
- Helps EDAC to anticipate emerging priorities and programs, to keep members well informed
- An opportunity for members, through EDAC, to shape the national economic development agenda
- Connects feedback from practitioners with program development processes
- Brings attention to our collective community and professional priorities at the federal level

# Fundamentals

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EDAC's Hill Day advocacy initiative is focused on three key fundamentals:

- Raising awareness of EDAC and its mission among key policy-makers and policy-influencers,
- Communicating the valuable role and impact of economic developers in Canada, and
- Prospecting for opportunities to collaborate in ways that advance the interests of our members and the communities they serve.

# Executive Testimonials

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“It’s clear that this deliberate and methodical approach to building relationships and advancing the cause of economic development is paying a dividend through our EDAC on the Hill initiative. EDAC enjoys greater access to stakeholders, is more frequently engaged in meaningful discussion of policy and priorities, and partners look to EDAC as a platform to engage economic development practitioners, coast to coast to coast.

The bottom line is this: EDAC knows that its members are challenged to keep pace with a complex and rapidly changing operating environment. EDAC’s growing connections with Canadian policy-makers, combined with insights on emerging Canadian programs and priorities, and deep knowledge of Canadian communities is unique. By helping economic developers understand and prepare for ‘what happens next’, EDAC is making a real difference for everyone.”

- David Emerson, Ec.D. (F), EDAC President (Saint John, NB)

# On the Hill Benefits EDAC Members

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Communicating the role and impact of Canada's economic developers builds recognition for the work of EDAC members, from coast to coast to coast, and strengthens the case for public investment in our profession and its work.

Connecting with federal government and non-government partners creates opportunities for collaboration, new insights, and new initiatives.

Dialogue with federal government and non-government partners helps to inform the policy-making process, and brings the voice of our members to discussions and decision-making.



# Executive Testimonials

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“EDAC on the Hill 2017 provided the opportunity for our organization to build upon previous years’ work. A targeted, focused and strategic approach to developing key relationships and building partnerships where it makes sense and aligns with our priorities. As the 2017 activities were reviewed, it was clearly evident that this year’s approach was the right one... the engagement, support and positivity experienced during our ‘Hill’ meetings far exceeded expectations and demonstrated that the time invested during the ‘awareness-building’ phase was well-spent.

With direction and support of our board, this year’s Hill Days also evolved with a new added dimension, an Ottawa held Policy Lab on Carbon Pricing that utilized technology to enable to our members in their communities across the country to participate via webinar. The attendance both in person and via the web was really encouraging considering this was an EDAC ‘first’.”

- Wendy Dupley, EDAC Secretary, On the Hill Committee Chair (Abbotsford, AB)

# Message to Policy Makers

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- EDAC is a **useful partner** in creating economic opportunities, in all regions of Canada
- EDAC has a prominent **national role and voice**
- EDAC is **seeking insights** on government policies, priorities, and emerging initiatives
- EDAC is seeking opportunities for **engagement and collaboration**

# Key Meetings 2017 included:

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- Global Affairs Canada
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)
- Canadian Chamber of Commerce
- Ministry of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada
- Ministry of Indigenous and Northern Affairs
- Ministry of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour
- Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor)
- Transport Canada

# Opportunities/Next Steps

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Some of the high points that emerged from our meetings, and how EDAC can respond:

1. Budget 2017 signals a transition in federal investment from ‘hard hats and construction’ to a multi-year commitment to ‘innovation and research’, intended to enhance Canada’s economic productivity. The Budget outlines the plan for single-point access to innovation assistance, and for industry-led, pan-Canadian innovation networks. These initiatives will offer EDOs new tools and opportunities to engage. Our delegates have been seeking to engage the leadership of these initiatives at the EDAC conference in Niagara Falls in September, to share plans in greater detail as implementation plans take shape.

# Opportunities/Next Steps cont'd

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2. EDAC's strategic partners increasingly recognize the value in sharing plans and intentions with the people who practice economic development with 'boots on the ground'. This is useful to them as they make decisions about programming, and as they seek to maximize the accessibility of programs to EDO clients and communities. This interest has been anticipated, and included as a priority in the three-year EDAC Strategic Plan, approved in 2016.
3. The federal government is placing a much greater emphasis on cluster-mapping as an analysis and policy development tool. Understanding how clustering will be applied in detail to economic policy will be important for practitioners, especially those outside the largest urban centres. Many EDAC members have expressed the need to have innovation policy create opportunities in all regions of Canada, and this has been conveyed in our discussions. EDAC is seeking additional contact between the cluster-mapping team and our members, to ensure that Canadian communities and economic assets are part of the inventory contained in this new analytic tool.

# Role for Members

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In the past two years, we vowed to engage EDAC members more directly during future ‘EDAC On the Hill’ advocacy days.

We are proud to say that for our 2017 advocacy days included a Panel Series/Webinar on Carbon Pricing in Canada. The webinar option allowed members from coast to coast to coast to tune in to our professional development portion of the Hill events.

We also provided additional benefit by accrediting the Panel/Webinar. Those working towards the Ec.D. earned points by attending the Carbon Pricing session. Specifically, attending the in-person Panels was worth five (5) points and the Webinar worth two (2) points.

We continue to strive to build on successes in Ottawa!