

# Mathieson on wireless alert today

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NEW YORK -- When Dan Mathieson talks about the importance of information and communication technologies (ICT) to Stratford's future, he's not just talking the talk. He's walking the walk.

And sometimes he's doing both at the same time, with the help of an earpiece connected to his Blackberry.

In New York for the Intelligent Community Forum (ICF) Building the Broadband Economy summit this week, Mathieson is never without his wireless device.

At the airport, in a cab, on the subway, at his hotel, in restaurants and during meeting breaks, he's regularly talking, typing, texting or transferring data.

"It's all about communication," said Mathieson Wednesday after an Intelligent Communities workshop.

For the hour his Blackberry was switched off during the workshop, 22 new messages came in. It's not unusual for him to deal with 100 or more on an average day. "I check back with the office continually," he said, glancing down at the screen.

Walking along the bustling streets of downtown Manhattan, with a sea of people streaming along the sidewalks, an army of yellow cabs darting back and forth, and the collective noise of one of the world's frenetic cities threatening to drown him out, Mathieson simply hooked up an earpiece, hardly breaking stride, and carried a conversation with staff in Stratford.

It's not a nuisance, but rather an important link back to the city when he's on the road, he said, allowing him to provide information, direction and advice to staff, or respond to concerns from residents.

"I think people genuinely appreciate that you're accessible to them," said Mathieson.

That he's able to carry on city business from 850 kilometres away, in the middle of an important international conference, reinforces one of the key principles of the ICF that connectivity will be crucial to the economic and social development of the 21st century community, he said.

"This is a perfect illustration of where the world is headed, where mobile workers are going to be the future," said Mathieson.

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