House of Commons
Chambre des communes
Canada

House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance – Pre-budget Consultations 2013

This brief is submitted by:

(●) **an organization** **Organization name:** Federation of Canadian Municipalities

or

( ) **an individual** **Name:** _____

Topic: Infrastructure

*Recommendation 1: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

The federal government must expand its partnership with FCM in order to continue building cities and communities that can support new jobs and growth and help meet our most pressing national challenges.

As a first step, the federal government must work with FCM to (1) ensure that a fair and predictable share of the new 10-year, $14 billion Building Canada Fund is invested in local roads, bridges, water and transit systems; and (2) develop national objectives and reporting mechanisms so we can make sure every dollar we invest is delivering the best possible value for taxpayers.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

≤$499,999

Immediately

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

This recommendation can be entirely funded from federal infrastructure commitments announced in Budget 2013.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

Improved local infrastructure will benefit all Canadians by improving their day-to-day lives and creating the conditions for new jobs and long-term economic growth.

Programs with long-term objectives, designed and delivered in collaboration with municipal leaders, will operate more efficiently and achieve better results, benefiting all taxpayers.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

See above

Topic: Employment, labour markets and unions

Recommendation 2: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

HOUSING

With the Bank of Canada recently naming problems in the housing market as the number one domestic risk to the economy, it is imperative that we tackle this issue now. The federal government must work with FCM to:

1. Develop a long-term plan to close the cracks in Canada's housing system; create jobs and attract workers; and protect communities from the scheduled expiry of $1.7 billion in federal housing investments.

2. Work with FCM to implement 'housing first' programs and address the growing problem of homelessness across Canada, as committed in Budget 2013.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

≤$499,999

Immediately

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

For fiscal year 2014-2015, all measures can be funded from existing and recently renewed federal housing programs.

However, the federal government must immediately begin working with provincial, territorial, and local governments to set long-term objectives and put these investments on a sustainable track; establish performance and reporting mechanisms to measure progress in achieving results; and determine what investment-levels will be required in the future.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

A more secure, and affordable housing market will reduce the risks to our national economy of high personal debt levels and "housing bubbles"; reduce the costs of chronic homelessness to publicly funded health, social, and emergency services; protect badly-needed construction jobs; help growing industries attract and accommodate the new workers they need; enable young Canadians to leave home and contribute more to the economy as workers and consumers; and help Canadians of all ages find homes that they can afford and that meet their needs.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

The benefits of investing in a secure housing market are clear: economic growth, job creation, and reduced reliance on costly emergency and social services for people caught in the trap of chronic homelessness. Each dollar spent on housing contributes to a $1.4 increase in GDP and an expenditure of $1 million generates roughly three full-time-equivalent jobs, and a further ten indirect and ancillary jobs.

Topic: Rural, remote and urban communities

Recommendation 3: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Every order of government has an essential role to play in keeping our citizens safe, and helping them build healthy, prosperous lives. Whether it's in addressing the growing risks associated with climate change, safety gaps in the transportation of dangerous goods, or increasing the capacity of small communities to prepare and respond to safety issues, all orders of government must work in close partnership so we can keep every communities as safe as possible in the future.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

≤$499,999

Immediately

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

N/A

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

N/A

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

N/A

Please use this page if you wish to provide more explanation about your recommendation(s).

On behalf of its 2,000 member municipalities, FCM is pleased to share its views on the next federal budget. We will deliver a more comprehensive submission to the Finance Committee during its pre-budget hearings this fall.

The commitments to local infrastructure in Budget 2013 were the largest and longest ever announced by the Government of Canada. This decade-long plan will deliver close to $50 billion in funding to help repair and maintain our existing, aging infrastructure and build the new infrastructure Canada needs to create jobs and compete in a global economy.

This plan was the result of increased collaboration and a more deliberate approach to planning federal infrastructure investments. The plan reflects the collaboration of key partners, having been developed in close consultation with FCM, provincial and territorial governments, and other stakeholders over nearly two years.

Now, as we work together to implement the new infrastructure plan, we must also expand its model of intergovernmental cooperation. When it comes to the national issues playing out in our communities, partnership must be the rule, not the exception. The federal government must apply this standard beyond infrastructure to address other pressing national issues, including housing, public safety, environmental protection, and the future of rural and northern communities.

The federal government must expand its partnership with FCM in order to continue building cities and communities that can support new jobs and growth and help meet our most pressing national challenges. Together, we must look past outdated jurisdictional obstacles to deliver the change that is needed for our cities and communities, and Canada, to succeed.

*Please note that at least one recommendation must be provided