

October 15, 2019

Dear Mayor Eisenberger,

Thank you for writing and allowing the NDP Candidates to provide our plan for cities.

### **Modernizing the federal-municipal relationship**

Local governments across the country deliver many of the important programs, services and infrastructure that Canadians rely on. And local governments are on the frontlines dealing with the serious problems that emerge when the system isn't working for everyday people.

From the opioid crisis to the housing crisis to the impacts of climate change, local governments, like Hamilton, face enormous challenges and require a real partner at the federal level ready to work together with you to address these challenges. New Democrats will be a stable, long-term partner with Hamilton and local governments across the country, so we can finally start tackling these issues head on.

An NDP government will work with municipalities and other levels of government to tackle the housing crisis with substantial new investments, on top of the existing ones already promised by the government. We will inject an additional \$5 billion in the first year and a half of our mandate with the goal of building 500,000 new affordable homes in communities across Canada. To achieve this, we will take the lead from Hamilton and local communities across the country – no one understands local needs like local government. We will also support the repair and creation of more social housing, shelters and supportive housing that will help municipalities like Hamilton make real progress in delivering much needed housing for all of your residents.

To fight the climate crisis, make life more affordable and improve commutes, a New Democrat government will create permanent, direct, allocation-based funding to modernize and expand public transit in local communities across Canada. The funding will place an emphasis on scaling up low carbon transit projects, like zero-emissions buses and LRTs. Working with municipalities like yours, we will provide low-cost financing to electrify Hamilton's transit system and your municipal fleet.

As a priority, we will work with your government on investing in energy efficient retrofits for social housing units and government buildings. We will provide low-interest loans to municipalities to complete these energy efficient renovations, which will lower greenhouse gas emissions and substantially reduce utility bills for people and municipalities. Additionally, we will work with you to improve your waste management and recycling programs, as we move towards an eventual zero-waste future.

And we will enhance funding for Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation to help communities deal with the ever-increasing effects of climate change.

### **New funding tools**

While local governments like yours don't have access to the array of funding tools that the federal or provincial governments do, you are responsible for delivering a wide range of programs, services and infrastructure. A New Democrat government is committed to be a stable, long-term partner for municipal governments – which means predictable, stable funding for public transit and housing, low-

interest loans for energy efficiency improvements of public buildings and social housing, and enhanced funding for municipal infrastructure with a focus on lowering emissions, reducing waste and upgrading infrastructure so that it is climate resilient.

### **Predictable transit funding**

A New Democrat government will put in place a permanent, direct, allocation-based funding mechanism to expand and upgrade public transit systems across Canada, for the long-run. We will increase investments to help cities transition their bus fleets to electric – helping lower emissions and ease commutes. For those governments that deem it a priority, we will work with them to build towards fare-free transit systems that help make life more affordable and improve the quality of life for everyday families. Our stable, long-term investments in public transit will help lower greenhouse gas emissions, ease commute times, and ensure municipalities can count on the revenue they need to make investments in their communities and deliver the services that their residents count on.

### **Housing affordability**

All Canadians deserve a safe, affordable place to call home. But, for too many families, this is increasingly out of reach. Canada is in the midst of a national housing crisis impacting every area of the country.

Average rents rose in every single province last year and today, 1.7 million Canadian households spend more than 30 per cent of their income on housing. Sadly, for many Canadian families the dream of homeownership is beyond their reach.

Justin Trudeau and his Liberal government have let Canadians down when it comes to affordable housing. Despite Mr. Trudeau's pretty words, the Parliamentary Budget Officer reported that the Liberals are actually spending 19 per cent less than Stephen Harper's Conservatives did on housing. The Conservative/Liberal housing plan had not worked – its time for something completely different.

A New Democrat government will build half a million quality, affordable homes in every part of the country in the next ten years – with half of those units built in the next five years. We will ensure that federal lands sold for housing will include substantial new affordable housing and we will help kick start the construction of co-ops, social and non-profit housing by dedicating fast-start funds to streamline the application process and help communities get the expertise they need. To spur the construction of new affordable rental units, we will also wave the federal portion of the GST/HST.

A New Democrat government will provide immediate relief for families that are struggling to afford their rent by giving families in greatest need up to \$5,000 per year to help keep a roof over their head. This will help as many as 500,000 families who now pay more than 30 per cent of their pre-tax income on housing.

We will also help make the dream of homeownership a reality for more families. We will re-introduce 30-year terms to CMHC insured mortgages on entry-level homes for first time home buyers – meaning smaller, more affordable monthly payments. To help people with closing costs, we will double the Home Buyer's Tax Credit to \$1,500.

And we will put an end to the speculators and fight back against the money launderers who have been fueling sky-high housing prices in so many communities. We will introduce a Foreign Buyer's tax on the

sale of homes to individuals who aren't Canadian citizens or permanent residents to help make housing more affordable to people who have earned their income in Canada. We will also work with the provinces to create a public beneficial ownership registry to increase transparency about who owns properties and require reporting of suspicious transactions in order to help find and stop money laundering.

New Democrats know that seniors face unique challenges when it comes to housing. We believe that seniors shouldn't be forced out of their communities. Our commitment to half a million new affordable housing units will include accessible housing, which will increase choices for seniors.

A New Democrat government will also help seniors stay in their homes longer by making the Canada Caregiver Tax Credit refundable and working with the provinces and territories to develop national care standards for home care that will ensure care is consistent and meets people's needs. And we will also invest in increasing the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), to lift thousands of seniors out of poverty.

### **Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund**

Communities across the country are already feeling the impacts of the climate crisis through increased incidents of flooding, fires and other extreme weather events. It is crucial that we adapt our infrastructure to protect families, communities and businesses from the consequences of climate change, even as we fight to reduce emissions and address the climate crisis.

Municipalities own a significant portion of the infrastructure that will need to be made more resilient to climate change. They have been at the forefront in responding to climate change related events and preparing for future changes – municipalities deserve a real federal partner ready to help them adapt their infrastructure and respond to extreme weather events.

A New Democrat government will expand funding for the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund by \$2.5 billion. We will sit down with provinces, territories and local government to ensure the fund meets their needs and we will make it easier for municipalities to access these important new investments. We will also do more to help communities respond to extreme weather events, including the mapping of Canada's flood plains.

As for fighting the climate emergency, it is imperative that we make the necessary investments to lower emissions in order to stabilize global temperature increases at 1.5 degrees Celsius. That is why the NDP has put forward a bold \$15 billion climate change plan to lower emissions and create 300,000 new jobs. We look forward to working with Hamilton and local governments across the country to make this a reality.

Sincerely,

Scott Duvall