

Ernie Hardeman, MPP
PC Critic for Municipal Affairs and Housing

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December 11, 2017

Mayor George Bridge
Town of Minto
5941 Highway 89
Harriston, ON N0G 1Z0

Dear Mayor Bridge and members of Council,

As you know, PC Leader Patrick Brown recently released the Ontario PC Platform, called the People's Guarantee. I want to take this opportunity to provide more information on some of the policies that will impact municipalities. I also want to thank municipalities for their input. These policies are based on ideas, suggestions and concerns that we heard from municipal representatives both through our policy process and during the many meetings and conversations we've had.

Below I have outlined some of the most significant policies impacting municipalities.

Restore the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund. We understand the importance of this unconditional grant that municipalities can use to fund their own local priorities so we will restore the \$70 million that has been cut from this fund since 2013.

Increase transparency by explaining infrastructure decisions. On numerous occasions, we heard from municipalities about the cost of preparing infrastructure applications that are turned down with no explanation, such as those for the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund. We will provide feedback on these applications. We will also allow pooling of similar projects so smaller municipalities can benefit from P3 financing.

Fix the Joint and Several Liability issue. We know that municipalities are sometimes viewed as having deep pockets and therefore required to pay a far greater portion of settlements than they are responsible for leading to rapidly increasing insurance costs. As Patrick Brown announced at the AMO conference, an Ontario PC government would fix joint and several insurance issues while still ensuring adequate protection for victims.

Invest in Broadband and Cellular infrastructure. We understand that infrastructure is necessary to attract new businesses, improve quality of life, and even ensure that emergency calls can be completed. We will invest up to \$100 million into the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund. The money will be tied specifically to broadband and cellular infrastructure to help rural and smaller municipalities build the necessary infrastructure.

Increased input into Growth Plans. Municipalities have told us that they need more input into their growth and intensification targets to ensure that they are appropriate and suit the municipality. We will ensure a planning process that provides proper input into future growth plans.

Investing \$124 million for recreational infrastructure. We heard from many municipalities that have aging recreational infrastructure that they cannot afford to upgrade or replace. As part of our commitment to healthy living and supporting municipalities, we will invest \$124 million to build and upgrade this infrastructure including arenas, swimming pools, sports fields, and other recreational infrastructure.

Restore local planning authority over renewable energy projects. The *Green Energy Act* started a dangerous precedent of removing local planning authority over renewable energy projects. We do not believe that these projects should be forced on unwilling hosts. An Ontario PC government will restore the local planning authority over renewable energy projects.

Red Tape. We understand the burden and costs that excess regulation creates for municipalities. We have committed to address red tape across the government by eliminating two regulations for each new regulation that is introduced. This will lead to smarter regulations that will allow businesses and municipalities to thrive.

If you would like to read the full plan it is available at: www.ontariopc.ca/peoplesguarantee.

I hope that these policies will help build a strong future for your community and help relieve some of the pressures facing your municipality.

Please let me know if you have any feedback. I would appreciate hearing your thoughts on how these proposals will impact municipalities. As always if you have any questions or if I can be of assistance please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ernie Hardeman', with a large, sweeping initial 'E'.

Ernie Hardeman, MPP

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