



June 25, 2020

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland
Privy Council Office
Room 1000
85 Sparks Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A3

Dear Deputy Prime Minister Freeland,

We are writing to you, in our capacity as Members of Parliament representing ridings in the Regional Municipality of Durham, in regards to the Region's federal funding priorities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped the delivery of public services by all levels of government. Durham Region was no exception and they had to adapt with new, innovative measures to ensure that workers, businesses and families are well protected. As an example, the Region of Durham partnered with local child-care operators and home child-care agencies in Pickering, Ajax, Whitby, Oshawa, Clarington and Uxbridge to offer free emergency child care for the children of front line and essential workers.

To support unsheltered residents, the Region of Durham also worked with community partners to open the In/Out of The Crisis (IOTC) program at Camp Samac in Oshawa, Ontario. The facility served as a temporary location to provide shelter for the homeless and is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with appropriate physical distancing measures and security to protect vulnerable residents.

These are just a couple of the programs the Region of Durham has been able to offer it's residents. Unfortunately, the Region of Durham is currently facing a \$40.5 million shortfall as a result of COVID-19 related expenditures. To contain this impact, they've worked to build community resilience and create a Regional Recovery Plan with opportunities to work in partnership with the federal government.

In addition to their support of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) request for \$10 billion in funding to be distributed to municipalities across Canada for emergency operations, Durham Region's policy priorities for federal partnership include:

- **Transit Infrastructure:** The Region is requesting that federal and provincial governments expedite the approval of Investing in Canada Infrastructure (ICIP) projects.
- **Supportive Housing:** The Region is looking to partner with the federal government to develop innovative housing solutions and enhance existing programs to support unsheltered residents.
- **Broadband Infrastructure:** COVID-19 has highlighted the critical importance of universal broadband infrastructure. Durham Region is looking to partner with the federal government to access funding in support of their Broadband Strategy to bridge the digital divide in Durham.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Durham Region is urging the federal government to implement the zero-interest home retrofit loan program in 2020, and are looking to partner on the Durham Forest Centre for Innovation and Resilience.

Further information and specific details regarding their funding priorities are found in the attached report.

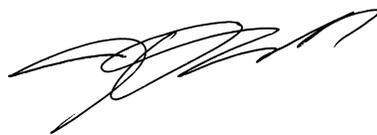
We'd also note that these four priorities align strongly with our government's core policy agenda. Supporting transit and housing infrastructure, as well as implementing universal broadband coverage by 2030 and protecting our environment from the devastating effects of climate change have been major policy areas of focus over the past five years.

As Durham Region Members of Parliament, we support these funding requests, and urge you work in partnership with the Region to deliver on our shared commitments to Canadians.

Yours Sincerely,



Hon. Mark Holland
MP, Ajax



Jennifer O'Connell
MP, Pickering-Uxbridge



Ryan Turnbull
MP, Whitby

CC:

John Henry, Regional Chair, Region of Durham
Elaine Baxter-Trahair, CAO, Region of Durham
Durham Regional Council