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Municipal Leaders Talk Infrastructure on Parliament Hill

Town of Cornwall Councillor Irene Dawson was recently on Parliament Hill to discuss local infrastructure with Federal politicians. Dawson was there representing PEI as member of the Board of Directors of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM).

Councillor Dawson says she found strong support for local infrastructure priorities. "The federal government's infrastructure plan is a huge opportunity to strengthen our communities. But all of this hinges now on Ottawa getting the funding details right," said Dawson.

Dawson joined local leaders from across Canada in a delegation led by FCM. She joined group sessions with the Finance Minister, Infrastructure Minister, and the leaders of the Conservative and New Democrat opposition parties.

Discussions focused on the design for Phase 2 of the historic federal infrastructure plan. As the experts on the needs of individual communities, local leaders say Phase 2 should be based on long-term funding allocations that help communities plan ahead and deliver results. According to Dawson, "cities, towns and communities need a cost-sharing model that allows them move projects forward without being held up by limited fiscal capacity. This means retaining the 50% federal share of capital costs."

The Federal Fall Economic Statement dedicated \$2 billion nationally to rural and northern infrastructure needs, responding to an urgent FCM recommendation. Councillor Dawson called this a good sign the federal government is listening. Final decisions for the design of Phase 2 are expected no later than Budget 2017.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities' 2,000 member communities represent more than 90 per cent of Canada's population.

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