

*Canada's* **Urban  
Strategy**  
A Blueprint for Action



***FINAL REPORT***

**Prime Minister's  
Caucus Task Force  
on Urban Issues**

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Chair: Judy Sgro, MP

*November 2002*



November 19, 2002

The Right Honourable Jean Chrétien  
Prime Minister of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister:

The members of the Prime Minister's Caucus Task Force on Urban Issues are pleased to present the conclusion of our deliberations on the future of Canada's urban regions. Our final report sets the stage for implementing the recommendations for Canada's Urban Strategy.

We are delighted that the 2002 Speech from the Throne included many of our recommendations from the Interim Report of May 2002. We believe this final report offers an innovative blueprint for sustainable urban regions in every part of Canada.

The Task Force is proud to be part of the continuing debate on Canada's urban regions. Although this final report concludes our mandate, it is by no means the end of the pursuit for a national agenda on urban issues. Let us have the courage and the vision to take the next steps on our journey. This is an exciting opportunity for all governments and all citizens to shape the future direction of Canada.

Thank you for recognizing the importance of the urban regions to Canada's future prosperity. We trust the ideas and recommendations presented in this final report will inspire and guide our political leaders to work together to ensure the 'Canada We Want' is a reality for the 21st century.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Judy Sgro". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

*Judy Sgro, Chair*

## Prime Minister's Caucus



Judy Sgro, M.P.  
York West/Ouest  
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The Honourable  
Tommy Banks  
Senator (Alberta)  
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## Task Force on Urban Issues



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## Today's Vision for Tomorrow's Reality

**T**he Prime Minister's Caucus Task Force on Urban Issues received its mandate in May 2001 and immediately began consulting with Canadians to find ways in which *"the Government of Canada can work more collaboratively, within our federal jurisdiction, to strengthen the quality of life in our large urban centres"*. [Press Release, May 2001] In May 2002, The Task Force released its Interim Report, **Canada's Urban Strategy: A Vision for the 21st Century**. This Final Report concludes our mandate. It marks a new phase in the debate on the future of Canada's urban regions.

Our objective was to recommend ways in which the Government of Canada can work more effectively within our jurisdiction to enhance the relationship with our urban partners. It was not within our mandate nor within our means to determine a fiscal accounting of the recommendations contained in either report. Others will decide the financial implications of our recommendations.

The response to the Interim Report has been overwhelmingly favourable and positive. We received widespread support from both public and private sectors in response to the direction of our recommendations. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities called it *"a compelling analysis of the urban condition and of the role of municipal*

*governments in the Canadian federation"*. [FCM letter to Task Force members, August 2002]

There is extraordinary public interest in our Interim Report. Since May 2, 2002, our web site has had 12000 visits and more than 5300 copies of the report have been downloaded. We have also received written submissions and requests for information from all sectors and all regions.

The Government of Canada responded to the debate on urban issues on several levels. Within the Privy Council Office, an internal Task Force on Urban Communities was established to develop a profile of the federal presence in urban centres, research into best practices and to explore ways of integrating federal programs. Every federal department is preparing a Sustainable Development Strategy and Environment Canada has created a "sustainable development lens". As well, Industry Canada created a Sustainable Cities Initiative to advance this agenda in Johannesburg and beyond. A Sustainable Development Coordinating Committee was established comprising Deputy Ministers from departments that are responsible for programs related to sustainable development.

Provincial and municipal government initiatives, such as 'Smart Growth', support the concept that

Canada's urban regions are part of a broader system that integrates many components.

During the second phase of our mandate, members of the Task Force continued to visit major urban centres, to meet with provincial ministers, civic officials, urban experts, and business and community leaders.

The Government of Canada listened and acted on the Interim Report. We are pleased the 2002 Speech from the Throne recognized that "*healthy communities and competitive cities are vital to our individual and national well-being*". The Throne Speech also included many of our central recommendations including the development of a national urban strategy. This is a clear signal that the Government of Canada is committed to this important and essential agenda.

Since the Task Force was created in May 2001, there has been tremendous national interest in urban issues. It is one of the 'hottest' topics among federal, provincial and municipal governments. Media, economists, social scientists, and business leaders all talk about the growing importance of urban regions to Canada's economic prosperity and the subsequent socio-economic and environmental effects.

Several important non-government organizations such as the Conference Board of Canada, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Canadian Policy Research Networks, Canada West Foundation, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy, held conferences,

summits, and symposiums. Members of the Task Force are regularly invited to attend as participants and guest speakers.

Much has been written about the state of Canada's cities and the effects of urbanization on the lives of Canadians. According to the Conference Board of Canada, "*cities are at the centre of our new economy, the cradle of innovation, and the venue for wealth creation*" [Anne Golden presentation, "Cities and Globalization: Communities in a Changing World", 71st Annual Couchiching Conference: August 2002]. Clearly, there is wide recognition that urban regions have become more relevant and more important within the Canadian federation.

At the same time, municipal governments face enormous challenges. There is pressure on all governments to meet their obligations. Canada West Foundation refers to "*cities at the crossroads*" [Canada West Foundation, Discussion Paper August 2002]. We agree with the assessment that if we do not act now, the opportunity for change will be lost. The options for action being debated range from restructuring the constitution to provide more autonomy for cities to developing new means and new fiscal tools to serve municipalities.

At the core of the debate is the relationship between and among federal, provincial and municipal governments and how to develop opportunities to strengthen these partnerships. The significant presence of the Government of Canada in urban regions is a major factor in this equation and key to its success. The Organisation for



Economic Co-operation and Development endorses this concept: *"Currently, there is a new rationale for more federal involvement, not to reproduce centralised management but through negotiated planning with formal institutional mechanisms concerning area-based partnerships between three levels of government"* [OECD: Territorial Review of Canada, 2002]. **Canada's Urban Strategy** is the Task Force's response to this challenge.

The shift from a rural-based economy to an urbanized population that has seen urban centres emerge as the main engines of the nation's economy with social and environmental consequences, has led to one of the most important debates of the century for Canada and enormous challenges for rural Canada.

Canada is now one of the world's most urban nations. Four out of five Canadians currently live in large urban centres and there is every indication that this trend will continue. There is widespread agreement that it is time for a new approach.

We cannot ignore the major challenges facing our country; an aging population, urbanization, growing cultural diversity and a widening income gap. The 2002 Speech from the Throne proposed *"new partnerships, a new urban strategy, a new approach"* to ensure competitive cities and healthy communities. This will inspire us to invest in those areas of

economic growth and social capital that will ensure a successful and prosperous Canada.

In this report, we present a blueprint for action that will provide mechanisms for the Government of Canada to implement **Canada's Urban Strategy**. This blueprint will shape the future direction of our relationship with our key urban partners and with provincial and municipal governments. It refines the recommendations from the Interim Report on transit/transportation, housing and infrastructure and offers new tools to ensure sustainability in these areas.

A new approach means reviewing and reorienting existing partnerships while building new ones, at the same time respecting our federal jurisdiction and obligations. The Task Force recommends a Cabinet Minister be assigned the responsibility to develop **Canada's Urban Strategy** and implement an action plan to ensure the voices of urban regions are heard. Otherwise, our efforts will, at best, be fragmented and our results will be incremental.

This blueprint will assist political leaders in making the right choices to realize Canada's potential. It is built on the strength of all its regions and its citizens and can serve as the foundation for the 'Canada We Want' that will make our children, grandchildren, and their descendants proud.

**1    A Vision of Urban Sustainability: 2020 . . . . .1**  
     Economic Competitiveness  
     Social Harmony  
     A Sustainable Environment  
     Urban Revitalization  
     Education and Skills

**2    Canada’s Urban Strategy:  
      A Blueprint for Action . . . . .5**  
     KEY ELEMENTS OF CANADA’S URBAN STRATEGY . . . . .6  
         Coordination and Integration  
         Collaboration and Consultation  
         Federal Objectives of Canada’s Urban Strategy  
         Best Practices and Research

**3    Implementing Canada’s Urban Strategy . . . .8**

**4    Three Priority Programs . . . . .10**  
     A NATIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM . . . . .11  
     A NATIONAL TRANSIT/TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM . . . . .14  
     A NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM . . . . .17

**5    Moving Forward to 2020 . . . . .21**

**6    Appendices . . . . .23**  
     ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS  
     WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS – PHASE II  
     RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE INTERIM REPORT  
     PRIME MINISTER’S PRESS RELEASE MAY 2001



# A Vision of Urban Sustainability: 2020

**T**he Task Force believes that by 2020, Canada's status as a world leader should be based on integrating and balancing economic competitiveness, social harmony, a sustainable environment, and a high quality of life for all Canadians.

We want well-managed, healthy communities infused with cultural diversity, equal access, sustainable environments, and innovation. Urban regions should be a blend of distinct communities – centres within centres, villages within cities – with unique economic, social and cultural characteristics. They will become the focal points of interaction and enterprise within the larger regions, all with their own purpose, flavour, and community pride.

By 2020, it is estimated that Canada's population will be approximately 36 million, with 85-90% of our population and the vast majority of jobs located in the major urban centres. Most of the population will be living in the 25 largest urban regions, with 6 of these regions home to more than half of Canada's citizens.

Statistics Canada's projections for population growth in the eight largest Census Metropolitan Areas (CMA'S) are based on continuing trends in fertility, mortality and migration:

- Vancouver CMA is projected to grow from 2 million to 3 million;
- Toronto CMA is expected to grow to 6.6 million;
- Montreal CMA to 3.8 million;
- Calgary CMA to 1.2 million;

- Edmonton CMA to 1.1 million;
- Halifax CMA to almost half a million;
- Winnipeg CMA to over 700,000; and
- Ottawa-Gatineau CMA is projected to grow to 1.3 million.

[Statistics Canada, *Special Projections*]

## Economic Competitiveness

It is now more important than ever for the Government of Canada to provide opportunities to balance social and economic growth. Urban regions are the most powerful economic engines of the country:

- Halifax accounts for 47% of Nova Scotia's GDP;
- Montreal's Urban Community accounts for 49% of Quebec's GDP;
- Greater Toronto Area and Ottawa region combined account for more than half of Ontario's GDP;
- Winnipeg accounts for 67% of Manitoba's GDP;
- Calgary and Edmonton together account for 64% of Alberta's GDP; and
- Vancouver accounts for 53% of British Columbia's GDP.

[*'Metropolitan Outlook'. Conference Board of Canada, Spring 2001*]

Urban regions should possess clusters of economic activity in a range of different areas; such as, financial services, new media, business services, manufacturing, transportation, biomedical and biotechnology. Our universities and colleges should play a vital role in training skilled employees, undertaking applied and

basic research, and commercializing our research potential.

Canadians want to have more and better transportation options. Fast rail networks should be part of an inter-modal transportation network to carry people and goods more efficiently and quickly to their destinations as well as inter-regional links to the major centres. This is the key to economic prosperity.

### **Social Harmony**

Canadians are justifiably proud of their social safety net which reflects the values and principles that are at the very heart of our society. These supports should continue for all families so that by 2020 we should see a dramatic reduction in child poverty in Canada, as well as improvements in the quality of life for seniors living below the poverty line, the socially disadvantaged and marginalized members of society.

Canada's urban regions are safe places to live, crime rates are low compared to cities in the US and Europe, and measures are in place to secure our borders. Personal safety is important to Canadians and we want to continue to make our communities safe, protect our citizens and coordinate with all orders of government to strengthen our community policing and national security forces.

The majority of the increase in Canada's population will be fuelled by immigration with the vast majority of immigrants settling in the major urban centres. [*Statistics Canada: Annual Demographic Statistics, Catalogue No. 91-213*] It is critical that governments be prepared to

strengthen and support the cultural diversity of Canadian urban society.

The Government of Canada will “work with interested provinces to expand on existing pilot programs” and will “close the gap in life chances between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals” [2002 Throne Speech]. Our urban vision of 2020 should see the scope of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy extended to all urban regions. By 2020; “we hope to see more Aboriginal professionals, more Aboriginal women in both professional and political fields”. [Hon. Thelma Chalifoux, Senator (Alberta), Member of the Prime Minister's Caucus Task Force]

Canada will have a large and significant senior population, estimated by Statistics Canada to rise to 6.7 million by 2021. Our urban regions should be prepared to meet the increased demands for health care, home care, housing and social services for this growing sector of society. [*Statistics Canada: Population Projections*]

The arts and sciences should flourish side by side to create an environment that is smart, vibrant and attractive.

It is clear that investments in people and social infrastructure by all orders of government in harmony with civil society should identify Canada as a nation of healthy, well-educated and productive citizens.

### **A Sustainable Environment**

Canada has the capacity to be a world leader in new infrastructure design; that is, office buildings, transit systems, water and sewage treatment plants, that meet reduced targets of

green house gas emissions, and which are environmentally 'clean' in accordance with international agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol. We have the expertise and the resources to place Canada in the forefront of technology and innovation.

Canadians want to see green spaces within urban regions protected for everyone's benefit, as well as woodlands and watersheds on the outskirts of our cities.

By 2020, the benefits of a National Renewable Fuels Strategy should show a significant decrease in the use of non-renewable energy sources. There should be a shift from gasoline-powered to more efficient, less polluting vehicles using bio-fuels such as ethanol and bio-diesel that will reduce the level of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Hydrogen fuel cells and wind power are alternative sources of energy that deserve further research and investment. We should see more use of solar heating for homes and district energy systems should be utilised to heat and cool large buildings.

The rural areas and northern regions of Canada are an integral part of Canada's economic prosperity and success as a nation. The importance of rural Canada within the urban context is as principal food and energy supplier. We are fortunate to enjoy one of the lowest costs for food in the western world. By 2020, the rural regions should have developed their full potential as sustainable rural economies based on the primary industries of agriculture, fisheries, forestry, mining and energy. Canada should be a world leader in research and innovation in these key resource-

based areas if we invest now.

By 2020, initiatives taken by all orders of government should reduce the noxious emissions and 'smog days', which account for 2,500 premature deaths per year in Ontario alone. [*Illness Cost of Air Pollution Model, developed by the Ontario Medical Association, June 2000*]

### Urban Revitalization

In twenty years, there should be a closer connection between where people live and where they work. Older, established neighbourhoods could offer opportunities for new housing and innovative development such as the remediation and redevelopment of "brownfields" (contaminated sites). These sites have enormous potential and we should be exploring ways to utilise them.

By 2020, there should be in place a full description of all publicly owned lands and buildings, federal, provincial and municipal. The inventory should include current use, as well as current committed uses. These lands and buildings should be examined for opportunities and potential for urban development under leasing arrangements. Granville Island in Vancouver is a good example of an effective and successful use of publicly owned urban space. This concept has the potential to create a new and vibrant community within an urban core.

It will become even more important to preserve heritage buildings and historic sites in the context of sustainable development. Otherwise, whole chapters of our shared history will be lost forever.

*"A great city is one that buzzes with energy, one that is full of innovative people doing big things. The city is diverse – in class, income, and colour – and fights to maintain that diversity. It has rich, living culture – in all meanings of that word."*

["Building Up", Vision for a Great Canadian City, forthcoming Cities Report Canada 25]

## Education and Skills

In 2020, the urban economy will be driven by knowledge-based industries characterized by state-of-the-art urban communications technology.

By 2020, skills, training and knowledge will be even more crucial.

Currently, 40% of Canadian adults are functionally illiterate and only through Investment in life-long learning will we meet the demands required by industry and commerce. [*"Canada 2010: Challenges and Choices at Home and Abroad", Conference Board of Canada, October 2002*]

Canada should have the capacity to develop, attract, and retain highly skilled workers and to become a world leader in research, development and innovation. We must ensure that every Canadian has the opportunity for the education, skills, and training to participate fully in the knowledge-based economy.

Findings suggest that cities and regions have much to gain from making centres attractive to knowledge-based workers who prefer places with a readily accessible range of recreational and cultural activities. [*"Competing in the Age of Talent: Quality of Place and the New Economy", Richard Florida, January 2000*]

Canada could be at the forefront of information technology that researches worldwide best practices and finds innovative solutions.

The Government of Canada must make some firm decisions, take bold initiatives and follow a course of action that will lead us to attain these goals for sophisticated and successful sustainable communities by 2020.

Nation-building involves governments and people working together to secure our future and for our children and grandchildren to follow. We have a collective responsibility to ensure all citizens have equal opportunities and equal access. How we see ourselves is reflected in our changing values and attitudes. Our vision of Canada in 2020 is based on a united country, where freedom, quality of life, a strong economy and Canada's place in the world is the measure of our success. Continuing our commitment to prudent fiscal management and sensible investments, sound social programs, a good health care system and careful attention to environmental and cultural programs, the Canada of 2020 will have a secure foundation and we can look forward to a bright future for all Canadians.

# Canada's Urban Strategy: A Blueprint for *Action*

**T**he 2002 Speech from the Throne recognizes that “*Competitive cities and healthy communities are vital to our individual and national well-being. They require new partnerships, a new urban strategy, a new approach to healthy communities for the 21st century*”.

An enhanced relationship between the Government of Canada and among our urban partners, provincial and municipal governments, the private sector, community and business leaders and the voluntary sector, will guide strategic federal capital-investment in our cities and will improve the quality of life for millions of Canadians living in our urban regions.

This innovative relationship will form the foundation for a new approach. This is the basis of **Canada's Urban Strategy**. How we move forward on these issues will ultimately be shaped by partnerships that share a vision of what is important for our nation and its citizens.

The key to successful urban regions is economic sustainability combined with social cohesion. The challenge for political leaders is how to make every Canadian region as economically

sustainable as possible with the highest possible quality of life. The choices made today will affect the future success and vibrancy of our urban centres and it is critical that flexible institutions develop the strategies that address the differences in regions.

Implementation of **Canada's Urban Strategy** will establish a basis for economic sustainability for all regions of Canada. In this report, we suggest ways in which the Government of Canada can act both as catalyst and facilitator while working with provinces, municipalities, community leaders and private sector partners. The Strategy ensures that policies and regulations are assessed for efficiency and effectiveness. Investments need to be strategic in nature, targeted in areas where they will be the most effective.

These recommendations are not meant to be definitive or exclusive but rather possible ways in which the Government of Canada can work within our jurisdiction to develop a new relationship with all partners, both in urban and rural regions. By working together, we can build our future prosperity and a strong country for our children and grandchildren.

*“Federal, provincial and municipal governments should pursue enhanced tri-partite agreements. Tri-partite agreements offer a mechanism for the federal, provincial and municipal governments to combine their resources and expertise to build cohesive policies and programs that will benefit cities”.*

[“Cities at the Crossroads”, Addressing Intergovernmental Structures for Western Canada, Canada West Foundation, August 2002]



## KEY ELEMENTS OF CANADA'S URBAN STRATEGY

### Coordination and Integration

We live in an era of policy interdependence where actions of one order of government have an effect on other governments. This is particularly true for large urban centres where federal, provincial, and municipal policies and programs all affect urban life.

During our consultations, the Task Force frequently heard that federal legislation and policies across a broad range of areas linked to immigration, employment, health care, crime prevention, infrastructure, transit/transportation, and the environment, all have a profound impact on the quality of life of urban Canadians. This is also true of some international agreements.

Our Interim Report emphasized the Government of Canada's significant presence in the urban regions through its programs, policies and as an employer, land and property owner and manager. In fiscal year 2000-2001, the Government of Canada invested more than \$55 billion in direct and indirect services and programs.

Coordination and cohesive strategic decision-making is currently lacking to ensure those funds are spent in areas and on projects that ensure maximum social, economic and environmental benefits. We must ensure that Canadians receive the highest level of value from tax dollars. To achieve this, the Government of Canada should coordinate and integrate those federal programs and activities that are of key importance for urban regions. This can be

achieved on many levels and in different sectors. **Canada's Urban Strategy** includes mechanisms designed to meet this objective.

Environment Canada implemented a model of integration through the Ecosystems Initiative in the management of the Great Lakes area, the Saint Lawrence River and the Georgia River basin. This allows coordination of all orders of government, stakeholders and local communities to manage a complex system. This approach could be adapted to urban regions in areas of common interest such as the Kyoto Protocol.

### Collaboration & Consultation

Canadians also recognize that there are opportunities for cooperation among stakeholders at all levels. Strong urban partnerships and tripartite agreements should be developed between and among all orders of government as well as with the private sector. Provincial and municipal leaders need to be involved in decisions that affect them, particularly in those areas of policy that have an impact on budgets.

Urban projects and programs should be designed to meet federal objectives, on the basis of plans and targets developed in partnership with provinces and municipalities.

### Federal Objectives of an Urban Strategy

The Task Force believes that for **Canada's Urban Strategy** to succeed, programs and projects should adhere to established federal objectives that



will advance urban revitalization.

Projects and programs should demonstrate they have the capacity to:

- Conform with Government of Canada standards in fiscal accountability;
- Enhance and improve the quality of life for all Canadians;
- Meet our social obligations in health care, housing, employment and pensions;
- Contribute to sustainable development in transit/transportation, infrastructure, and housing;
- Enhance Canada's image as a world leader in sustainable urban development and technology;
- Increase urban regions' ability to attract and retain talent;
- Adhere to environmental and land use standards; and
- Assist Canada to comply with international agreements.

### **Best Practices & Research**

The Government of Canada should foster research on national and international best practices and provide intelligence on trends and conditions in our urban regions. The Task Force suggests this could be synchronized by an Institute of Urban Research or within a network of research chairs at Canadian universities and could be coordinated by the Government of Canada.

The centre(s) would collect, coordinate and distribute research from Canada and around the world on issues related to urban development that could include:

- Conditions and current trends in urban regions;
- Promoting Canadian successes and innovative programs abroad;
- Comparing the competitive position of urban regions within the global market;
- Sharing international practices and experiences related to urban development; and
- The provision of urban data to key stakeholders developing urban policies and programs.

In addition, the Government of Canada should develop a communications plan to make its urban policies accessible and available. This information will help guide national decision-making and encourage comments and suggestions from Canadians.

# Implementing Canada's Urban Strategy

**F**or **Canada's Urban Strategy** to be effective, the Task Force recommends a designated Minister be given the responsibility to coordinate the Government of Canada's efforts in urban regions and to provide a "voice" for the urban regions in Cabinet. The mechanisms we recommend to implement **Canada's Urban Strategy** stress strong political leadership from the Government of Canada and require an understanding that enhanced relationships will promote cooperation, better decision-making and more effective consultation.

The responsibilities of the designated Minister could include the following initiatives:

- Collaborate with all orders of government and urban partners to ensure key programs and policies are effective, efficient and strategic and reach those urban areas where they will have the most benefit;
- Act as a catalyst to promote growth and development in economic, social, environmental, transit/transportation and cultural matters;
- Promote and synthesize research and intelligence-gathering on "best practices" in urban regions/cities – nationally and internationally – with government departments that have an impact in urban regions;
- Liaise with departments within a coordinated framework to ensure

that urban concerns and priorities are considered through an "Urban Lens";

- Consult with the Secretary of State (Rural Development) and the Rural Secretariat on urban issues that may have an impact on rural Canada;
- Establish an external Advisory Body to advise the Minister on urban policies, comprising academics, urban experts from NGO's and national organizations, such as: Federation of Canadian Municipalities, National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy, Boards of Trade, Conference Board of Canada, Canadian Urban Transit Association, Canadian Urban Institute, The Transportation Association of Canada, Canadian Policy Research Networks, and the Canada West Foundation;
- Chair a National Urban Summit with provincial First Ministers responsible for Urban Affairs, and key urban partners and facilitate other urban conferences; and
- Assist in developing the criteria for the three national programs, housing, transit, and infrastructure, in cooperation with the Ministers responsible ensuring that the priorities and approaches of key urban centres are taken into account in the design of these programs.

**Canada's Urban Strategy** will provide opportunities to:

- Increase the visibility and credibility of the Government of Canada on urban issues and in urban regions;
- Build on the current federal presence and investments in urban regions and ensure those investments are prudent and effective;
- Explore fiscal avenues with urban regions;
- Provide an access point for urban regions; and
- Meet federal targets in the three national programs; infrastructure, housing and transit.

### **Implementing Canada's Urban Strategy: the Role of Parliamentarians**

Urban problems and challenges require locally-made solutions.

**Canada's Urban Strategy** is the federal government's approach to collaborate with all urban partners to seek solutions.

Members of Parliament are part of that action. Given their unique perspective and knowledge of their own Ridings, as well as the depth of experience in urban issues among our Caucus, it is imperative MP's be consulted and included as part of the decision-making process that affects their constituents. They should be invited to attend conferences with federal, provincial and municipal leaders.

These suggested mechanisms for implementing **Canada's Urban Strategy** are the key components for bold, political leadership that is necessary for a relationship with our partners to ensure urban regions have the economic and social foundation for the 21st Century.

*"Good government is one of the founding principles of our constitution. Each nation, each region and each community has a mission to balance the values of its local stakeholders and deliver the best services to ensure the best quality of life. The job of finding the perfect balance, that's **Great** government."*

[Rienk de Vries, Managing Director, EMA Canada, Centre for Municipal Value, Toronto, 2002]

## Three Priority Programs

*"When our urban centres are doing well, all governments benefit from the increased revenues and fiscal flexibility to pursue public policy priorities".*

[Toronto Board of Trade, pre-budget submission to the federal government, November 2001]

**T**he Interim Report of the Task Force on Urban Issues proposed three priority programs as the major pillars of **Canada's Urban Strategy**. These three national programs will form the foundation for urban revitalization and provide the basis for sustainable long-term funding for major projects:

- Affordable Housing
- Transit/Transportation
- Sustainable Infrastructure

It is clear, there needs to be a new fiscal arrangement for municipalities to ensure sustainability is a main component in any type of funding for multi-year planning.

Investing in the three pillars of **Canada's Urban Strategy**; housing, transit and infrastructure, will reduce pressures on municipalities for these large capital expenditures.

The Government of Canada's approach will not be to micro-manage individual projects, but to set directions and objectives and provide the resources to achieve them. Spending on projects and programs should only be in accordance with regional plans and targets developed by, and in partnership with, provinces and municipalities, and designed to meet federal objectives. Such plans should consider regional situations and include clear performance measures and criteria for evaluation.

## A NATIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM

### Recommendation from the Interim Report

*Establish a National Affordable Housing program that will strengthen the mandate of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to develop a National Affordable Housing Program in collaboration with all orders of government and housing providers.*

The Task Force is pleased that in the 2002 Throne Speech, the Government of Canada recognized the need for more investment in affordable housing; “it will extend its investments in affordable housing for those whose needs are greatest, particularly in those Canadian cities where the problem is most acute”.

This commitment will assist those communities with serious housing problems.

Our Interim Report highlighted housing needs in urban regions and described the lack of affordable housing and homelessness as one of the social and economic effects of growth in Canada’s major centres.

During our consultations, we learned of many examples of successful and innovative projects built with both private and public partnerships. We heard from regions where the housing shortage is critical and will only get worse without a large infusion of capital and creative thinking on the part of all orders of government.

With a low national vacancy rate, the country’s largest urban centres are losing affordable rental units at an alarming rate. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation’s annual rental market survey shows rents also increasing, creating less available and affordable low-cost rental housing in the larger urban areas. This situation

particularly affects the working poor and low-to-middle income earners. Every day, hundreds more families face eviction and homelessness. [CMHC, *Annual Rental Survey*, November 2001]

All thriving urban regions need sufficient affordable housing for all levels of income including the working poor. We must ensure sufficient urban housing for immigrants coming to our cities and for large numbers of people who make our urban regions the dynamic places they are now and will be in the future.

During its consultations, the Task Force heard from many provinces that have not had significant construction of new rental housing for over two decades as a result of discouraging tax rules instituted in the early 1970’s. As well, CMHC withdrew from building social housing. It was also suggested that rent control regimes and inequitable taxation by provincial and municipal governments exacerbated this situation. We recognize that all governments must work together to resolve a serious shortage of affordable housing in our major urban centres. No single government can resolve this situation alone.

The private sector should also be part of the solution. In the report of the Rental Working Group for the City of Toronto, urban developers and

others in the industry throughout Canada, expressed their ideas on fiscal incentives for rental housing. They stated that they are willing to build new classes of affordable housing if conditions, such as equal tax treatment, are made favourable. [*Unlocking the Opportunity for New Rental Housing: A Call to Action*, City of Toronto, June 2001].

In response to our recommendations in the Interim Report, CMHC, together with the Chair of the Task Force and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister responsible for CMHC, will host a National Housing Forum to focus on private sector opportunities. Representatives from the building and development industry, as well as financial and business leaders, will explore ways to overcome obstacles that might lead to

more public/private partnerships in the affordable housing market.

The \$680 million federal Affordable Housing Program, announced in Budget 2001, is a good start but is just not sufficient to meet the needs across the country.

This program, and the commitment announced in the 2002 Throne Speech, should form the basis for a long-term National Affordable Housing Program that will provide an effective and more sustainable means of increasing the supply of affordable housing.

Housing not only means providing new affordable units. It also means exploring concepts such as redevelopment of brownfields and controlling development patterns – both will influence transportation, environmental and social infrastructure patterns.

**The Task Force recommends the Government of Canada commit to a National Affordable Housing Program that should include:**

- A Cabinet review of CMHC's mandate to allow more flexible arrangements with housing providers, non-profit corporations, the volunteer sector and other orders of government to seek creative and flexible solutions in regions where there are pressures;
- Changes to CMHC mortgage insurance to allow greater flexibility;
- Opportunities for exploring partnerships with private and corporate pension funds such as the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System;
- Reinvesting a portion of CMHC insurance profits into grants against the cost of CMHC mortgage insurance to assist non-profit housing groups; and
- Recognition and promotion of building methods that go towards meeting targets on greenhouse gas emissions, and encouraging the use of Canadian-made environmentally "green" building materials and construction methods.



### The Task Force recommends the Government of Canada:

#### ■ Consider financing initiatives that include:

- Accelerated depreciation on rental properties;
- Defer capital gains and capital cost allowance on the sale of rental property when the proceeds are reinvested as affordable housing units (rollovers);
- Revise the rate and method used to calculate capital-cost allowance (CCA) against any losses and restore pooling provisions;
- Expand the definition of 'soft costs' for the first year of operations to allow investors the ability to deduct these from new rental properties;
- Change capital gains tax to encourage redevelopment of underused and derelict urban properties and lands;
- A housing tax-credit program that recognizes some private investors and owners may take a loss of revenue on the low-income rental market; and
- Tax incentive programs similar to the U.S. (e.g. Low Income Housing Tax Credit) as well as other housing subsidy programs.

Tax changes are crucial to create incentives for more and enhanced public/private partnerships. The role of government is essential to support lower income earners, particularly those who are paying more than 30% of their net income on rent. [CMHC target]

### The Task Force recommends the Government of Canada:

#### ■ Consider targetting initiatives in urban areas that include:

- Renewing the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) due to expire in March 31, 2003-for at least a further 3 years. Both the RRAP and Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative Program (SCPI) have been well received and are excellent examples of successful bi-partite partnerships between federal and municipal governments and individual homeowners;
- Incorporating a degree of flexibility into the RRAP program to include consideration of the value of the home as well as the income level of the owners;
- Linking housing targets to policies through an "urban lens" as a direct impact of federal legislation. The Urban Aboriginal Strategy could be used as a model for interdepartmental groupings;
- Giving special consideration to the critical need for housing among the urban aboriginal community and senior population;
- Providing targeted mortgage insurance for brownfield redevelopment and revitalization in areas where there is a shortage of affordable housing; and
- Offering grants to non-profit housing groups to support the restoration and conversion of heritage properties to affordable housing.

*"A national affordable housing program must be put in place for seniors and the working poor. We need to overcome the attitude of not wanting low income housing in our neighbourhoods".*

[Report from public consultation meeting, Moncton, New Brunswick, September 2002]

## A NATIONAL TRANSIT/TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

### Recommendations from the Interim Report

*Establish a National Transportation Program that would:*

- *Provide long-term sustainable funding for public transportation systems;*
- *Invest strategically in integrated multi-modal transportation systems;*
- *Invest in high-speed rail service to connect major centres; and*
- *Ensure that unused railway rights-of-way and corridors are preserved and made available at net salvage value or at no cost for future transit or be developed into recreational trails.*

In our Interim Report we recommended a National Transportation Program and we repeat this in our final report. A healthy, sustainable transportation network is vital to the success of urban regions.

We congratulate the government for its announced intention to set up a 10-year Infrastructure Program that includes a component for a strategy for a transportation system: *“Within this framework, it will introduce a new strategy for a safe, efficient and environmentally responsible transportation system that will help reduce congestion in our cities and bottlenecks in our trade corridors”*. [Speech from the Throne, 2002]

This is an important step towards the recognition of urban transit as an area of long-term national investment.

The Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) estimates that \$13.6 billion is required to meet transit infrastructure needs across the

country over the next five years. CUTA also estimates that *“current transit budgets can only meet \$6.8 billion of the total needs. Without new and creative funding sources, insufficient capital investment will place pressure on current operating budgets, increase life-cycle costs, limit access to services, and have a negative impact on the environment”*. [CUTA, Partnership in Urban Transit, Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance, September 2002]

There is no doubt that our roads are congested, air quality is deteriorating and low-density sprawl is encroaching on the countryside. Traffic congestion is increasingly becoming an economic burden and an environmental threat. The costs of driving continue to increase. It is estimated that gridlock costs the Greater Toronto Region alone, \$2 billion annually in lost produc-

Currently, the Government of Canada has several transportation related programs:		
Strategic Highways Infrastructure Program	\$ 600 Million	2002 – 2007
Border Infrastructure Fund	\$ 600 Million	2002 – 2007
Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund includes: 1. Highways and Railway Infrastructure 2. Local Transportation Infrastructure	Total allocation for the Fund – all five categories \$ 2 Billion	2002 –

tivity. [Toronto Board of Trade: *Presentation to the Ontario Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, February 2001*]

To build world-class, competitive urban regions, all orders of government must invest in multi-modal transit systems. Canada is the only G-7 country without a national transit investment program. Keeping pace with demand will require a commitment to transit infrastructure from all orders of government.

### **Strategic Objectives for Responding to the Challenges and Realizing the Vision**

The broad objective for a National Transportation/Transit Program is to facilitate implementation of sustainable transportation defined by the Centre for Sustainable Transportation as a system that:

- Allows the basic needs of individuals to be met safely and in a manner consistent with human and ecosystem health, and with equity within and between generations;
- Is affordable, operates efficiently, offers a choice of transport mode, and supports a vibrant economy;
- Limits emissions and waste within the planet's ability to absorb them, minimizes consumption of non-renewable resources, limits consumption of renewable resources to the sustainable level of yield, reuses and recycles its

components, and minimizes the use of land and the production of noise.

[*The Centre for Sustainable Transportation, September 1997*]

The Task Force firmly believes that this definition forms a solid base of objectives for a national Transit/Transportation Program.

The Task Force wants to see an increased emphasis on multi-modal transit to integrate regions where Canadians live, work and play and to connect the rural areas with the urban core. This includes improved passenger and freight rail-links, inter-modal systems to connect rail, road, air and sea, as well as regional transit systems such as Ontario's GO Train services.

Investments in rail networks will involve improvements to railway infrastructure such as grade separation. This is an important issue for the safety of residents where railroads pass through residential areas.

An efficient, fast rail system linking all parts of Canada will reduce congestion in the urban centres, and promote commuter and passenger rail as an alternative mode of transportation.

Consumer or "user fees" are gaining acceptance as a means by which provincial and regional governments can raise much needed cash without raising taxes. These fees also have the potential to change behavioural patterns.

*"Transportation is critical to Canada's trade-dependent economy. About one-half of our economy – from agriculture to manufacturing to tourism – depends on transportation".*

[*"The importance of Revitalizing Canada's Transportation Infrastructure", Western Transportation Advisory Council, July 2002.*]

**The Task Force recommends the Government of Canada commit to a National Transit/Transportation Program that will:**

- Consolidate current federal transit/transportation programs into a National Transit/Transportation Program;
- Create further tax incentives to aid the construction and use of public transit;
- Amend the Income Tax Act to permit employers to provide transit benefits to employees on an income tax exempt status. A personal income tax exemption gives employers the incentive to offer transit benefits to their employees. This in turn, motivates drivers to use public transit;
- Encourage the expansion of the 'Ecopass' and 'Passe Partout' Programs, currently a federal pilot program in the National Capital Region, to other federal employees to allow payroll deductions for the purchase of transit passes;
- Treat employer-provided free parking in large urban centres as a taxable benefit where there is readily accessible public transit. Taxes collected under this method should be dedicated to transit programs;
- Consider tax incentives to Canadian companies that implement traffic reduction programs such as shuttle services from main transit intersections to places of work; and
- Invest in a high-speed inter-city rail network with upgraded railway infrastructure, including grade separations and traffic control systems.

A National Transit/Transportation Program will have specific criteria, performance measures, rigorous evaluation and monitoring of all projects funded under this program.

## A NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM

### Recommendation from the Interim Report

*Establish a long-term National Infrastructure Program that will build on current programs to provide stable, reliable funding (i.e. 15 years)*

In our Interim Report, the Task Force recommended a long term National Infrastructure Program. We congratulate the government for its announced intention to set up a new 10-year infrastructure program: *“working with provinces and municipalities, the government will put in place a ten-year program for infrastructure to accommodate long-term strategic initiatives essential to competitiveness and sustainable growth”*. [Speech from the Throne, 2002]

This is a continuation and an extension of an agenda that began in 1993 to assist provinces and municipalities with the high costs of infrastructure.

The table below provides a summary of the infrastructure initiatives and programs of the Government of Canada since 2000.

In the Interim Report, the Task Force showed how sustainable infra-

structure is critical to the quality of life and everyday function of our cities. It is the foundation for economic growth and development. We heard that many municipal governments are unable to meet the demand. At the same time they are constrained by their inability to finance large projects through property taxes.

The need is greatest in the largest urban regions where the demand for infrastructure like highways, transportation systems, airports, bridges, water and sewage treatment plants and housing are paramount. This is where urban revitalization is also a key area of investment. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities estimates a \$44 billion shortfall in infrastructure funding across Canada. [Federation of Canadian Municipalities: *Early Warning: Will Canadian Cities Compete? 2001*]

Infrastructure Programs / Initiatives		
Name	Funding	Funding Period
Physical Infrastructure Initiative		
Infrastructure Canada	\$ 2.05 B	2000 – 2007
Strategic Highways Infrastructure Program	\$ 600 M	2002 – 2007
Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund	\$ 2.0 B min	2002 –
Border Infrastructure Fund	\$ 600 M	2002 – 2007
FCM “Green” Funds	\$ 250 M (endowments)	2000 –
Affordable Housing Program	\$ 680 M	2002 – 2007
Cultural Spaces Canada Program	\$ 80 M	2001 – 2004

*"A new deal for cities should be a new deal for Canada's urban regions, not a 'bail-out' for existing municipalities. We must begin to view funding transit and infrastructure on a regional basis rather than simply funding separate municipal governments."*

["Cities in the New Canada", prepared for TD Forum on Canada's Standard of Living, by Joe Berridge, Urban Strategies Inc. October 2002]

The Task Force recognizes that large and long-term projects take time to plan. Provinces and municipalities need a farsighted long-term approach that allows for changes in budgets, time-frames, land use planning, and priorities.

Decisions on major projects in urban regions such as transit, infrastructure and housing are shaped by costs, pricing, taxation and the policies of other governments. Basic questions such as where to build roads, transit stations, libraries and schools, etc. are governed in large part by capital, operational and maintenance costs.

Ground-breaking research is currently being undertaken by the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy into fiscal objectives for sustainability through ecological fiscal reform.

The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy is exploring various measures that affect

urban planning from a fiscal perspective. Such questions include: Is taxing & spending in cities adversely affecting the urban environment? In some instances, fiscal measures work against 'greenfields' and 'brownfields' or the regeneration of the urban core.

A long-term infrastructure program will allow the Government of Canada an opportunity to show leadership on urban sustainability and urban revitalization, not only through its own practices and policies but also by engaging the broader community and other orders of government in projects that meet specific targets of environmental and fiscal sustainability.

The 2002 Throne Speech acknowledges the importance of infrastructure as key to the prosperity of our cities and the health of our communities. We must invest wisely and strategically and make the right choices to ensure urban infrastructure is sustainable for future economic and social success.



**The Task Force recommends the Government of Canada commit to a National Sustainable Infrastructure Program that will include:**

- Stable capital investment so that provinces and municipalities can plan for long-term funding over a longer period of time, thus taking into consideration the fiscal capabilities of governments;
- Mechanisms for long-term planning to manage local needs and priorities;
- A focus on long-term strategies, while targeting regions on an “as needed” basis rather than on a per capita basis;
- Cost-shared funding to support projects that comprise part of a longer-term municipal development plan;
- Public/private partnerships essential to the goals of sustainable communities;
- A strong “green” component in all projects;
- A portion of funding for innovative sustainable communities that are conceived and built according to the principles of integrated sustainable development;
- Criteria to take into account ecological fiscal measures to ensure sustainability;
- Incentives for district energy systems;
- A central inventory of federally owned lands and buildings, their current and future use that could have the potential for strategic urban redevelopment; and
- Removal or reduction of the capital gains tax on the restoration, preservation and adaptive reuse of heritage buildings.

A National Sustainable Infrastructure Program will have specific criteria, performance measurements, rigorous evaluation and monitoring of all projects funded under this program.

# Moving Forward to 2020

In May 2001, the Prime Minister proposed an extensive agenda for this Task Force – to study Canadian Urban Issues and respond with recommendations.

Our interim recommendations were extremely well received. Many of our main recommendations are included in the Government of Canada's legislative agenda for the new session of Parliament, announced in the 2002 Throne Speech.

We believe our final recommendations are the building blocks of a national urban revitalization and innovation agenda for this Government and for Canada.

The Final Report of the Task Force is by no means the last step. The Government of Canada must seize the opportunity to put in place those measures that will give urban regions the tools they need to move forward. A piecemeal approach will not work. Housing, transit and sustainable infrastructure cannot stand alone and should be the main pillars of the Government of Canada's plans for urban action.

Our vision for Canada in 2020 is more than sustainable communities,

strong economic growth and social cohesion. It is a vision that means a change in direction, a significant shift in government policy that has the potential to revitalize urban regions and position them successfully in the global, knowledge-based economy. All regions, rural and urban, are equally important and must do well. In our vision, we see a new era of cooperation where coordination and collaboration, in partnership with all orders of government, will create the 'Canada We Want'.

A useful first measure to launch **Canada's Urban Strategy** on the national stage would be to call an Urban Summit with First Ministers responsible for Municipal Affairs, and with key urban experts.

This blueprint is the next step into the future. Let us have the courage and the vision to take the next ones on our journey. This is an exciting opportunity for all governments to shape the future direction of Canada.

Working together, we can build our nation into a successful and prosperous Canada, confident that all regions have the foundation to lead us into the 21st century.

# Acknowledgements

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# Recommendations from the Interim Report – May 2002

The Task Force recommends that the Government of Canada:

1. Develop An Urban Strategy for Canada which includes:
  - An integrated approach to policy and program development in order to deliver a cohesive, effective urban strategy;
  - Examining the effect and impact of federal policies and programs on urban regions (i.e. urban lens);
  - A strong urban partnership developed in collaboration with all orders of government, the community, the private sector, and citizens through bilateral, trilateral and multilateral agreements and initiatives;
  - Priority initiatives that include:
    - A National Affordable Housing Program
    - A National Infrastructure Program
    - A National Transportation Program
  - An advisory body to provide on-going consultation and advice on urban policy to the Government of Canada; and
  - Fostering research on best practices, providing intelligence on trends and conditions, and communicating the Government of Canada's activities related to urban issues.
2. Initiate further dialogue and debate on the mechanisms required to design and implement an Urban Strategy.
3. Continue to collaborate with other orders of government and support development of regional economic growth strategies that establish priority action plans.
4. Continue to work with the Provinces towards the harmonization of inter-provincial professional qualifications and trade certification.
5. Build on the success of the Sustainable Cities Initiative and continue to brand and support Canadian urban centres as sources of innovation and sustainability.
6. Build on existing partnerships with universities and the public/private sectors to support and facilitate research and development, and innovation.
7. Continue to invest in e-government programs.
8. Establish a long-term National Infrastructure Program that will build on current programs to provide stable, reliable funding (i.e. 15 years).
9. Establish A National Transportation Program that would:
  - Provide long-term sustainable funding for public transportation systems;
  - Invest strategically in integrated multi-modal transportation systems; and
  - Invest in high-speed rail service to connect major centres.

10. Ensure that unused railway rights-of-way and corridors are preserved and made available at net salvage value or at no cost for future transit or be developed into recreational trails.
11. Review the federal income support systems to ensure they are meeting the needs of Canada's most vulnerable population.
12. Continue to work with all orders of government and childcare agencies to ensure that all children have access to quality childcare and early education, and reaffirm our commitment to eliminating child poverty.
13. Implement a National Drug Strategy that will involve all orders of government, community agencies and the voluntary sector.
14. Establish A National Affordable Housing Program that could include:
  - Strengthening the mandate of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to develop A National Affordable Housing Program in collaboration with all orders of government, and housing providers;
  - Building on existing federal housing programs;
  - Changes to CMHC mortgage underwriting criteria to allow a more customized and flexible system;
  - Providing additional resources and flexibility in the RRAP program to rehabilitate existing properties;
  - Examining the federal tax environment related to rental housing and creating appropriate incentives;
  - Establishing grants against the cost of CMHC mortgage insurance;
  - Providing targeted mortgage insurance for brownfield redevelopment in areas where there is a shortage of affordable housing;
  - Facilitating agreements with municipalities to transfer small tracts of surplus land, owned by the Canada Lands Company, to community groups; and
  - Offering grants to community housing groups to support the restoration and conversion of heritage properties for affordable housing.
15. Extend the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI) beyond three years in order to meet its objectives to eliminate homelessness.
16. Review the policy and planning process for funding of programs for urban Aboriginal people, and develop a more collaborative and coordinated approach with other orders of government to strategically fund and better deliver services and programs to Aboriginal people in urban areas.
17. Partner with other orders of government and community Aboriginal groups to find ways to lower poverty levels, provide employment opportunities and expand the stock of affordable housing for urban Aboriginal population, especially among youth.

18. Work with our urban partners to increase the number of pilot projects in selected urban centres as currently included in the Urban Aboriginal Strategy.
19. Encourage cooperation between Urban Reserves and surrounding urban regions.
20. Examine current policies and develop ways to target the special needs of the urban Aboriginal population, including Metis and non-Status Indians.
21. Strengthen educational supports, in cooperation with First Nations, Metis and non-status Indians at post secondary levels to better meet the needs of Aboriginal peoples in urban centres.
22. Develop a cohesive approach that involves the coordination between orders of government, and non-governmental organizations that offer settlement services, language training and cultural resources to better meet the needs of the immigrant population.
23. Review with provincial and municipal governments the formula for funding settlement, integration programs and services in urban centres.
24. Consult and work with urban regions on immigration policies/programs.
25. Increase the resources to non-government organizations and community groups to provide additional support services for families, particularly language classes for women and their children.
26. Inform prospective immigrants and new arrivals about conditions and services in Canada BEFORE they leave their country of origin, and include a well-developed and up-to-date "Welcome to Canada" package listing the various services available to newcomers.
27. Streamline the Immigration and Refugee Board process in order to ensure that all claims are processed with maximum efficiency and as expeditiously as possible.
28. Provide access to appropriate upgrading/training programs for newcomers, as well as assessment of credentials and access to trades and professions.
29. Encourage Human Resources Development Canada to enter into more sectoral agreements to facilitate the quick and efficient entry of temporary foreign workers to fill national and regional labour shortages.
30. Convene a bi-annual Conference on Immigration with all orders of government. This will assist provinces and urban regions with declining populations to benefit from national expertise and resources to attract newcomers.
31. Continue negotiations with provincial governments that have not yet signed the bilateral agreement on immigration policies.
32. Continue to provide resources and cooperate with all orders of government and communities to ensure that police and emergency services have sufficient resources to adequately protect Canadians.
33. Continue to support innovative community-driven initiatives through our crime prevention program.

34. Continue to strengthen our investment in the arts and cultural sector in our urban communities.
35. Provide grants to support the restoration and conversion of heritage properties and develop mechanisms to encourage redevelopment and restoration for both commercial and residential uses.
36. Consider mechanisms to encourage more investments and donations to Community Foundations, philanthropic and charitable organizations, and community groups.
37. Facilitate the sharing of best practises among the voluntary sector and charitable organizations.
38. Continue to acknowledge and recognize the important contribution of the volunteer sector to building a nation of strong communities.
39. Ensure that any infrastructure program includes the opportunity to focus efforts on municipal water infrastructure by providing:
  - Traditional tripartite contributions for communities which do not have the revenue-generating capacity to support full-cost pricing; and
  - Revolving funds offering low- and no-interest loans for larger urban communities that can, over time, move to full-cost pricing.
40. Continue to consult with all orders of government and encourage existing federal guidelines to be used as a standard for drinking water quality.
41. Support the redevelopment and cleaning of ports and harbours.
42. Consider creating A National Building Retrofit Strategy to encourage and facilitate energy efficiency. This could involve:
  - Creating a National Better Building revolving fund to help facilitate retrofitting in commercial and institutional buildings;
  - Providing tax credits to homeowners and businesses that undertake energy efficiency retrofits; and
  - Supporting a national community-based home retrofit advisory service network.
43. Set higher fuel economy standards for new vehicles and support innovation, research and development leading to more sustainable urban transportation systems.
44. Encourage Government of Canada employees to reduce vehicle use by locating government buildings and services along existing public transit service and make bus pass purchases easy through programs like ECOPASS.
45. Support the development of new renewable fuel and GHG reduction technologies.
46. Support minimum efficiency standards for new power generation facilities.
47. Work with our partners in government to create an integrated risk assessment and liability management framework that harmonizes federal and provincial regulations.
48. Consider targeted mortgage insurance and appropriate tax incentives for brownfield redevelopment.



49. Continue to provide support for completion of brownfields inventories, risk assessments and community consultations.
50. Encourage innovation in ecological design by creating incentives for the private sector and municipalities to incorporate ecologically sound and smart growth principles, and to acknowledge successful private-public partnerships on smart growth.
51. Adopt and showcase sound urban design practices by incorporating ecologically sustainable landscape practices on government lands, and incorporate smart growth principles by building and locating government services in urban cores and along transit corridors.
52. Support the acquisition of critical urban green space by assisting community partnerships such as land trusts and conservation organizations and provide incentives to allow land donations for conservation purposes.

## PRIME MINISTER'S CAUCUS TASK FORCE ON URBAN ISSUES ANNOUNCED

May 9, 2001  
Ottawa, Ontario

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien today announced the creation of a Prime Minister's Caucus Task Force on Urban Issues. Creation of the Task Force is a key part of fulfilling the commitment made in Opportunity for All, the 2000 Liberal election platform, to engage in a dialogue with citizens, experts and other orders of government on the opportunities and challenges facing our urban regions.

"Over the last few decades, our cities have prospered and grown to become the places where a majority of Canadians live work and play," said the Prime Minister. "And, while our cities have responded well to many of the challenges of rapid growth, it is clear that strengthened partnerships will be required to sustain and enhance the quality of life in our large urban areas. I am delighted that our Caucus will be providing me with advice on how the Government of Canada can better focus its efforts in cities."

The Government Canada is an active partner with governments, the private and voluntary sectors and individual Canadians across a wide spectrum of programs and services that ensure that urban Canadians can have safe streets, quality health care, a strong economy, access to post-secondary education, parks and museums, affordable housing, pensions and income support for families. It is also a major land owner and employer in urban centres.

The Task Force on Urban Issues will consult with citizens, experts and other orders of government to explore how we can work more collaboratively, within our federal jurisdiction, to strengthen quality of life in our large urban centres.

The Task Force will place a special emphasis on:

- key opportunities for increasing economic competitiveness in our cities;
- environmental issues such as air, water quality and land-use;
- approaches to strengthening cultural assets;
- urban transit;
- effective approaches to settlement and integration services for newcomers to Canada, bearing in mind existing agreements with provinces;
- the specific needs and circumstances of at risk populations such as urban Aboriginal people, recent immigrants, persons with disabilities and the homeless; and
- crime-related issues facing large urban centres including substance abuse and sustainable prevention responses.

The Task Force will deliver an interim report by April 2002 and a final report by December 2002.

Members of the Prime Minister's Caucus Task Force on Urban Issues:

**Chair:** Judy Sgro, MP (York West)

**Vice Chair:** Bernard Patry, MP (Pierrefonds-Dollard)

**Vice Chair:** Senator Tommy Banks (Alberta)

**Members:**

Reg Alcock, MP, (Winnipeg South)

Carole-Marie Allard, MP, (Laval Est)

Mauril Bélanger, MP, (Ottawa-Vanier)

Senator Thelma Chalifoux, (Alberta)

Stephen Owen, MP, (Vancouver-Quadra)

Geoff Regan, MP, (Halifax West)

Andy Savoy, MP, (Tobique-Mactaquac)

Hélène Scherrer, MP, (Louis Hébert)

Allan Tonks, MP, (York South-Weston)

Bryon Wilfert, MP, (Oak Ridges)

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