

LUMCO

Large Urban Mayors' Caucus of Ontario

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ONTARIO'S BIG CITY MAYORS TALK JOBS, TRANSIT & HOUSING WITH FEDERAL PARTIES HEADING INTO THE ELECTION

The Mayors of Ontario's largest cities traveled to Parliament Hill this week to ensure the key issues of gridlock and transportation, job creation and affordable housing are addressed on federal agendas heading into the 2015 election. The Large Urban Mayors' Caucus of Ontario (LUMCO), which represents 67% of Ontario's population, met with key representatives from the Government of Canada and each federal party to discuss the issues facing the majority of cities in Ontario and across Canada.

"We're here on behalf of more than 6 million residents who share our priorities," said Mayor Jeff Lehman, City of Barrie and LUMCO chair. "The 2015 federal election campaign provides us the perfect opportunity to find out where the parties stand on these priorities. Our issues are pocket book issues for Ontarians."

Economic development and job creation dominated many of the discussions. LUMCO believes that although all levels of government are working to create jobs and grow the economy, too often this is done in isolation. Mayors emphasized the need for a diverse and robust national jobs strategy that would include actions to address labour market reform through skills training, apprenticeship programs and immigration reform; expansion of international trade and foreign direct investment through a new, coordinated trade agenda shared by federal, provincial and municipal governments; and infrastructure investment that targets the problems that hold our economy back, particularly aging transportation infrastructure and the lack of public transit. LUMCO looks forward to working with the federal government to develop this strategy, which will result in job creation and growth in the local, provincial and national economy.

"I'm pleased to welcome my colleagues to Ottawa City Hall to discuss these important issues. The discussions we're having today will help shape Ontario's cities as better places to live, work and invest," said Mayor Jim Watson, City of Ottawa.

Gridlock is one of the most important issues facing communities across Ontario and Canada. LUMCO is encouraged by the recent transit investments in the 2015 Federal Budget as this level of permanent, ongoing funding marks a significant achievement on a key issue Canadians face every day. However, questions remain regarding flexibility on private sector involvement and the overall impact of a small fund.

LUMCO Chair

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Affordable housing is a critical issue facing cities across Canada. With housing markets on overdrive, many Canadians are priced out of our major cities. LUMCO emphasized the need for the next federal government to renew its commitment and partnership with provinces, territories and municipalities and take a leadership role in developing innovative options and solutions to address this crisis. While annual investments of \$1.7 billion for social housing were maintained in the 2015 Federal Budget, there needs to be forward progress, not status quo. LUMCO calls on the federal government to develop a comprehensive National Housing Strategy that provides a framework for greater policy coordination, collaboration and the necessary resources for action and results.

The issues facing Ontario's largest cities are the same ones facing cities across Canada. These are complex problems that require all levels of government to work together. LUMCO calls on all federal parties to include these critical issues in their 2015 campaign platforms and looks forward to working with the next federal government as a full partner in our efforts to build strong and prosperous communities for the benefit of all Canadians.

About The Large Urban Mayors' Caucus of Ontario (LUMCO)

The Large Urban Mayors' Caucus of Ontario (LUMCO) represents 67% of Ontario's population with Mayors of 27 communities over 100,000 residents. LUMCO advocates for issues and policies important to Ontario's largest cities. Jeff Lehman, the Mayor of Barrie is the Chair of LUMCO; Linda Jeffrey, Mayor of Brampton, is Vice-Chair.

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LUMCO Chair

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