



PRESS RELEASE

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CANADA NEEDS A NATIONAL URBAN STRATEGY: URBAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

Halifax, NS - September 19, 2019—At a news conference this morning in Halifax, the Canadian Global Cities Council (CGCC) called on the campaigning federal parties to support the development of a National Urban Strategy to help cities build the infrastructure they need to support Canada’s economic competitiveness.

In the second playbook of its [Agenda for Growth](#) campaign, the CGCC—a national coalition of Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce in eight of Canada’s largest urban centres—makes the case that the economic competitiveness of our cities depends on the quality and capacity of urban, transport, trade, and digital infrastructure. The CGCC believes that sustained investment in Canada’s infrastructure is critical to the functioning of Canada’s economy and the cities that drive it.

“Canada is an urban nation without an urban strategy. Rather than measuring the federal government’s impact by dollars spent or ribbons cut, it’s time Canada join the rest of our OECD counterparts in setting broader urban goals and engaging cities and city-regions to develop plans consistent with national priorities,” said Patrick Sullivan, Vice-Chair, Canadian Global Cities Council and President & CEO, Halifax Chamber of Commerce. “Without an ongoing planning process and coherent funding strategy for infrastructure, Canada will fall behind other countries, impacting business competitiveness, job growth and quality of life. While progress has been made in urban infrastructure priorities, now is not the time to take our foot off the gas pedal, let alone hit the brakes.”

INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) To help Canadian cities build the infrastructure they need, the next government should **IMPLEMENT THE CGCC’S NATIONAL URBAN STRATEGY** which would:
 - Track and report on Canada’s infrastructure needs
 - Develop long-range priority plans
 - Fund the plan, not the project

- 2) Until a National Urban Strategy is created and city and city-regions have had time to develop their regional plans, the next federal government should **INVEST IN PRIORITY INFRASTRUCTURE** including:
 - Trade-enabling infrastructure
 - 5G deployment

- Transit expansion and state of good repair
- Climate-resilient infrastructure

3) To ensure Canada can move forward on its priority infrastructure, the next federal government should **BETTER LEVERAGE PRIVATE INVESTMENT** by:

- Strengthening the Canada Infrastructure Bank
- Attracting private investment

“A National Urban Strategy, focusing on private and public investment in infrastructure, will accelerate Canada’s growth and improve our global competitiveness and quality of life,” said Patrick Sullivan, Vice-Chair, Canadian Global Cities Council and President & CEO, Halifax Chamber of Commerce. “Investment in infrastructure is essential for progress and pivotal to support the growth of Canada’s fast-growing cities. If you visited Halifax 20 years ago and then again this year, you might think you’ve come to the wrong city. The reason, amongst many things, is that Halifax has seen an infrastructure expansion. From the new Convention Centre, to the new state-of-the-art library, our city is planning for the future.”

“Infrastructure is the backbone of our nation’s economy, tying the country together and connecting us to the world. Whether its railways or roadways, ports or airports, tunnels or transit, investments in infrastructure drive economic prosperity and job creation,” said David Crawford, Interim CEO, Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. “As Canada’s population grows, we need to continue to focus on moving people and goods efficiently through our metropolitan regions.”

Founded in 2015, CGCC members represent half of Canada’s GDP and population to champion national policies to build competitive and sustainable urban economies. Over the next three weeks, the CGCC will release a series of policy playbooks with clear recommendations for the campaigning federal parties to consider and the next government to adopt focused on issues that matter to businesses in Canada’s large metro regions.

For more details on the CGCC’s Infrastructure recommendations click [here](#).

The CGCC CEOs were pleased to have been joined by Mayor Mike Savage for this press conference.

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce is committed to creating value and prosperity for its members. The Chamber provides the services its 1,700 members need while advocating for the conditions to enhance private sector growth.

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