

# Councillor Allen takes Local Infrastructure Priorities to Parliament

[Robert John](#) | 2016/11/30 Kingston Herald

Last week councillor Richard Allen took local priorities directly to Parliament as part of a delegation of municipal leaders from across Canada. Led by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), they had over 150 meetings with parliamentarians from November 24– 27, to guide the design of Phase 2 of the federal infrastructure plan. Councillor Allen serves as a member of FCM's Board of Directors.

“This infrastructure plan has tremendous potential to boost our local economy and quality of life here in Kingston,” said Allen. “But to unlock that potential, the programs need to fit communities of any size to ensure they improve lives here and across the country.”

While in Ottawa, Allen met with the Honourable Diane Finley, Member of Parliament Anita Vandenberg, MP Harold Glenn Albrecht and also spoke with Minister Sohi, the federal Minister of Infrastructure and Communities. Councillor Allen highlighted the city's proposed third crossing project and the expansion of Kingston's successful express transit service. During his conversations he stressed the importance that any federal infrastructure plan be flexible and based on local expertise.

“Kingston is really a leader in how we invest in our infrastructure and if we get Phase 2 right, we can look forward to continuing this great work through better transit, better roads and bridges, more affordable housing and real progress on climate change,” said Allen. “I look forward to continuing to work with the federal government as more details about Phase 2 become available.”

Municipalities deliver cost-effective solutions to local needs in ways that tackle national challenges—like creating jobs and reducing GHG emissions. To bring that strength to Phase 2, they are urging Ottawa to provide the predictable allocations communities need to plan, tap local know-how and move forward. They say cost-sharing should be modernized so local fiscal limits don't block progress. They also recommend dedicating most of the Social Infrastructure Fund to affordable housing.

The federal government's recent Fall Economic Statement expanded its Phase 2 infrastructure commitment to \$81 billion over 11 years, while announcing dedicated support for smaller and remote communities. Program details for 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.