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Liberals offer real plan for partnership with Dufferin-Caledon

More than 2,000 Canadian municipal leaders gathered this past weekend in Vancouver for the annual convention of Canadian municipalities.

Speaking at the conference, federal Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau called on cities to help form the next Liberal agenda and echoed their demand for an overhaul of the relationship between federal and municipal governments.

Trudeau recognized that Canada's municipalities ?still don't have the resources they need to deliver the services the citizens expect and our economy is suffering because of that fact.? Municipalities currently deliver 60 per cent of government services and do so while receiving just eight cents of every tax dollar.

Local Liberal candidate Ed Crewson believes that ?the failure of the Harper Conservative government to be an active and constructive partner with Canada's municipalities is an abdication of responsibility that severely undermines both our economy and the ability of Canadians to live their lives freely and successfully.?

He added Ottawa has too often had a minimal response to the challenges facing municipalities, and that current Conservative MP David Tilson's inability to deliver federal support to the pressing needs in Dufferin-Caledon in areas such as transportation, housing, aging infrastructure and the real costs created by a changing climate is compromising the quality of life in the riding.

Specifically concerning to Crewson are Conservative MP and Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification Michelle Rempel's remarks, wherein she admitted that none of the new money for transit announced in the 2015 budget would flow to small or medium sized municipalities, meaning that this federal government will continue to ignore needed transportation improvements in Dufferin-Caledon.

Crewson, himself a former mayor, says that strong, predictable annual funding is needed in municipalities across the country. Canada remains the only G7 country without a national transportation strategy, a failure that affects all Canadians, including those in Dufferin-Caledon who find commuting times and livability increasingly under pressure from an inadequate response to area growth.

?The Liberal plan calls for a dedicated revenue stream as we cannot sustain the current tax model and need new ideas to find relief for the residents of Dufferin-Caledon,? Crewson added. ?The residents are ready for a strong partnership, strong leadership and stronger communities to live and work within.?