

May 29, 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2
justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

Dear Prime Minister,

RE: COVID-19 Stimulus Funding

We are writing to you regarding the federal government's plans to stimulate the Canadian economy once the current pandemic restrictions are lifted. We believe the Water and Wastewater Sector will be a key part of the recovery.

The Canadian Water and Wastewater Association (CWWA) is THE national voice of Canada's water and wastewater sector, representing the municipal water and wastewater utilities. We commend all government leaders and their staff for working together to protect the health and safety of Canadians during the COVID-19 crisis while ensuring the viability of our economy. CWWA fully supports the government in its efforts to mitigate the current crisis and facilitate the recovery ahead. In 2001, following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the national Water Sector was recognized by the federal government as one of Canada's Critical Infrastructure Sectors

The objective of stimulus funding is typically to reinvigorate the economy to prevent or reverse a recession by boosting employment and spending. However, it can also be an exciting opportunity to maximize long-term success **by seeking co-benefits** that can be leveraged for Canadian communities. **Our members envision multiple attainable co-benefits** in areas of sustainable financial management, critical infrastructure improvements, and accelerating the transition to a healthy economy of the future.

We respectfully request consideration of the following recommendations:

- 1. Fund the critical water and wastewater infrastructure sector for a minimum 3-year period:** Funding should be allocated in such a manner that essential water, wastewater, stormwater, and flooding needs are not crowded out by mega scale projects. Allocation of a portion of funds specifically to the water and wastewater sector is one way to accomplish this. Extending funding for a minimum 3-year period also helps small and medium size municipalities who have smaller projects but often have different struggles with construction timeframes and staff resources to manage infrastructure projects.

2. **Fund Shovel-Ready and “Shovel-Worthy” projects:** We request that stimulus funding be widened so that it can be applied to supporting **studies, design, and data collection**, to bring much needed projects from “shovel-worthy” to “shovel-ready”. Eligible studies should include types of studies which result in financial sustainability and risk reduction such as rate and financial studies, efficiency and optimizations studies, and master planning studies.

Data-based decisions are key to strategic infrastructure planning and renewal. We request that stimulus funding also be widened to invest in **municipal data collection systems and analytics**.

Most studies and designs can be initiated immediately, even while physical distancing is in place. The funding of **studies, designs, and data collection** will ensure a larger list of well-planned, shovel-ready projects and economic stimulus for years to come.

Thank you for considering our recommendations to magnify the long term impacts of vital economic stimulus programs. We believe these recommendations are in line with your government’s objectives and vision for a greener Canada. We are available to provide additional follow-up support or clarification as may be required.

Sincerely,



Robert Haller
Executive Director
CWWA

CC:

Hon. Catherine McKenna, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities
Hon. Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
Hon. Anita Anand, Minister, Public Services and Procurement Canada
Hon. Bill Morneau, Minister of Finance
Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Environment and Climate Change
Hon. Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry
Hon. Bill Blair, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness
Hon. Mélanie Joly, Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages