Dear [INSERT CANDIDATE NAME],

As mayor of [INSERT CITY/TOWN/VILLAGE NAME], I am writing to you about your party’s stance on several important issues facing Saskatchewan’s hometowns.

Our hometowns are engines of economic growth. From cities and towns to villages, resort villages, and northern municipalities, our communities have the greatest potential to drive growth and provide opportunity.

While this is a federal election campaign, I strongly believe that local issues are federal issues, as strong communities are the foundation of a strong national economy. We are calling on all federal parties to present platforms that:

* **Build more sustainable communities by providing much-needed economic support and broadband access;**
* **Build safer communities by working collaboratively to address mental health and addictions, provide national leadership in addressing drugs and gangs and assists communities with climate resilience; and**
* **Build better relationships by inviting municipalities to the table to discuss infrastructure priorities, RCMP policing, getting resources to market, and a carbon tax rebate for the municipal sector.**

Our community, alongside others across Saskatchewan, believes there are several key areas where the federal government could make the biggest impact on the future success of our hometowns, and in turn, our residents. We are interested in hearing where your party stands on:

**Building Sustainable Communities:**

1. **Permanently doubling the** **Canada Community-Building Fund (formerly the Gas Tax Fund)** **with a predictable annual growth rate** that better reflects economic growth and construction costs. Municipalities have need for a permanent program to help address infrastructure shortfalls and stimulate economic growth. The Canada Community-Building Fund is a core funding tool that empowers municipalities of all sizes to build better lives for all Canadians – but it needs to be doubled to provide what municipalities truly require.

1. **Increase the scope of partnerships and funding for broadband to better serve Canadians in more areas**: The federal government’s broadband development plan focuses on incentivizing infrastructure development through grants to telecommunications providers. While this approach works well in more densely populated areas, telecommunications companies may still be unable to develop profitable business plans for more remote areas—even if their actual infrastructure investment is minimal. The result of this approach will be those living in more remote communities receiving broadband last, if they do at all.
2. **Provide more support to resource communities:**  In 2019, Saskatchewan’s natural resource industries provided more than 16 per cent of the provincial GDP. However, these industries, like oil, gas, potash, uranium, and coal, are sensitive to changes in world markets and environmental policies. The people working in these industries are part of our communities and our communities depend on them. It is essential that our communities and residents receive assistance to supplement natural resources where possible and replace them where they must be replaced.

**Building Safer Communities**

1. **Provide national leadership in public safety, including drugs, gangs, and root-cause crime prevention**. Public safety is a responsibility shared by all orders of government. However, it is municipalities that deal with the day-to-day effects of crime in our cities, towns, villages, and northern communities.

Municipalities cannot deal with this alone, nor is the problem confined to justice and policing. The root causes of drugs, gangs, street crime can be traced back to trauma, mental health issues, and poverty. Root-cause public safety initiatives cannot solely be a municipal responsibility. Having a coordinated approach will lead to better outcomes for individuals and communities, ending cycles of violence and crime.

1. **Facilitate a coordinated response to mental health and addictions in Canada, involving provinces, territories, municipalities, and non-profit organizations.** While health and social services are primarily provincial responsibilities, all orders of government and various non-profit organizations have a direct role to play in planning and service delivery. A collaborative approach is essential to achieve significant results.
2. **Assist communities with becoming more climate change resilient.** As the owners of more than 60 per cent of public infrastructure, municipalities are on the front lines during climate change events. Building resilient infrastructure can significantly reduce damage during an emergency event, and better preparations and more resilient infrastructure can also help to ensure that essential services continue to function in the event of a disaster, improving safety for residents and continuity for business.

**Building A Stronger Federal/Municipal Relationship**

1. **Establish a seat at the table for municipalities to provide input on infrastructure priorities and RCMP policing**. Currently, municipalities are unable to provide meaningful input into what types of infrastructure projects their residents are asking them to provide. RCMP policing is poised to be a particularly challenging issue for all levels of government in the near future, with the negotiations of a collective bargaining agreement that sees increases retroactive to 2017. Any cost increases or service disruptions experienced by the province will be felt by the municipal sector.
2. **Get resources to market:** Saskatchewan exports approximately 67 per cent of its products to world markets. But getting those resources to market often presents a challenge. Most product is transported by rail, leading to situations where different products and carriers compete for rail space. Pipelines provide an alternative to rail for oil and gas, but getting them built is often a challenge. Establishing national utility corridors would significantly ease project approval.
3. **Provide carbon tax rebates for municipalities to avoid unnecessarily and unfairly taxing them.** Many large municipal infrastructure project and large equipment upgrades receive funding from other orders of government. Developing either a straight rebate for municipalities, or a funding program to assist municipalities with adoption of more green technologies, would ensure that the money spent on the carbon tax is returned to the community, rather than transferred back to the federal government.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I look forward to hearing more about your party’s stance on these issues. They are vital to our urban municipalities — our hometowns and yours — and the very people you will serve, should you have the honour of being elected to the House of Commons on September 20.

Sincerely,

Mayor [INSERT NAME]

[CITY/TOWN/VILLAGE] of [NAME]