Dear Editor,

As Canadians prepare to head to the polls on September 20, Saskatchewan’s hometowns are highlighting a number of issues that affect people and communities. Municipal issues are federal issues, and this federal election we are focused on building: building safer, more sustainable communities, and building a stronger federal-municipal relationship.

To help us build more sustainable communities, we are calling for the permanent doubling of the Canada Community-Building Fund (formerly known as the federal Gas Tax Fund), more support for resource communities negatively affected by downturns in world markets and changes to environmental policies, and an increase in the scope of partnerships and funding for broadband to better serve our residents and our businesses.

We know that safer communities can be created by addressing both the root cause and the current impact of drugs, gangs, and crime in our hometowns. Therefore, we are advocating for national leadership in public safety on these matters, as well as a coordinated mental health and addictions strategy across the country.

We are also asking for more assistance in becoming climate change resilient. Our hometowns are working to be leaders in building safe, resilient, and green communities, but we need support. Municipalities are responsible for 60 per cent of Canada’s public infrastructure, and we are on the front lines during natural disasters. Building resilient infrastructure can significantly reduce damage during an emergency event. Better preparations and more resilient infrastructure can also help ensure the essential services residents rely on continue to function.

Local governments are the order of government closest to the people, and as such, we understand the needs of our residents. That is why it is imperative for municipalities to be at the federal table when issues that directly impact us, like infrastructure priorities and RCMP policing, are discussed. Building a better relationship also means ensuring Saskatchewan’s resources get to market and that there are carbon tax rebates or programming for municipalities, so our residents aren’t paying the carbon tax on their property taxes.

Building better relationships and safer, sustainable communities builds better lives for us all.

Mayor [INSERT NAME]

[CITY/TOWN/VILLAGE] of [NAME]