Dear Editor,

As Saskatchewan residents prepare to head to the polls to elect our next provincial government on [date], Saskatchewan’s urban municipalities are highlighting a number of issues that affect people and communities. Provincial policy has a direct impact on our municipalities, and this election we are asking the next government to consider that impact in three key areas: municipal revenues, municipal responsibilities, and provincial downloading.

Our municipalities need more opportunities to expand their revenue streams. In spite of ever-increasing costs related to infrastructure and community maintenance, cost relief for municipalities from other orders of government has remained stagnant. We cannot rely on property taxes alone to bridge the gap.

We need the next government to change legislation to improve how bylaws are enforced, assessments are conducted, and landfills administered. All of these areas have a more direct impact on municipalities than the province, but it is the province who is creating policies around them.

We are calling on the next government to re-write the Police Act to better reflect policing in today’s world, taking on a collaborative approach with other professionals and community-based organizations to create a holistic, wrap around approach that means safer, healthier municipalities.

We are living in a time of climate change, and we need the next government to take a strong leadership role on environmental issues so that municipalities can follow suit and create a better planet for future generations.

Last but certainly not least, we are calling upon the provincial government to change and improve their decision-making processes and policies that lead to responsibilities and financial burden being downloaded onto municipalities. In particular, we would like to see action on mental health and addictions, and improvements to social programs. The failure of good policy in these areas has a direct impact on Saskatchewan’s cities, towns, villages, resort villages, and northern municipalities.

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 provincial policies to take into account municipal requirements.

Working together means better lives for everyone.

Mayor [INSERT NAME]

[CITY/TOWN/VILLAGE] of [NAME]