RESULTS OF THE UBCM MEMBER SURVEY ON THE LONG-TERM INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN AND FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMS

BACKGROUND

In late June 2012, UBCM developed a survey on the Long-term Infrastructure Plan (LTIP) in order to seek the views of the members about the LTIP and the next iteration of a federal/provincial/local government infrastructure program, anticipated to commence after the 2014 expiry of the Building Canada Plan.

The survey was intended to inform UBCM’s comments at the BC infrastructure roundtable in early July, and as such, members were asked to respond to the survey in a very short timeframe. 57 local governments responded, which, while perhaps not statistically valid, served an extremely important function to both confirm existing policy and identify emerging trends.

Consequently, these results should be viewed as representative only, and indicative of the types of issues that are top of mind with local government representatives, rather than a definitive statement of local government perspectives on infrastructure.

SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

Questions 1 - 4

These questions related to contact information. In total, 57 local governments responded, with 78 surveys completed, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Local Government</th>
<th>Number of Local Governments Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipality with population under 5,000</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipality with Population Between 5,000 and 9,999</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipality with Population Between 10,000 and 49,999</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipality with population of 50,000 +</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional District</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Regional Entity</td>
<td>2</td>
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Respondents included both elected and staff officials as follows:

- Elected Officials: 46%
- CAO: 21%
- CFO: 7%
- Other Senior Staff Member: 26%
- Elected Staff Member: 0%

Question 5

The membership has considered at least 75 resolutions between the late 1980's and 2011 dealing in some way with federal and/or provincial funding for infrastructure. These, along with UBCM's general policies, establish four key policy themes, which are outlined below. Please indicate how significant each of these policy themes is to your community:

- Infrastructure funding should be stable, predictable and long-term
- The scope of infrastructure funding programs should be broad enough and with enough flexibility to meet the needs and priorities of all local governments
- Programs should recognize the limited capacity of BC's small and rural communities
- Processes should be streamlined with a minimum of bureaucracy

Options:
- Not Significant At All
- Not Very Significant
- Somewhat Significant
- Very Significant
- Extremely Significant
Question 6

Are there any over-arching policy themes related to federal/provincial/local infrastructure programs not included in question 5 that you would like to see brought forward?

Highlights of the 32 responses were:

• 11 respondents indicated an interest in broader scope. Of these, a few provided specific suggestions for additional scope (e.g., ensuring sufficient funding to meet the cost of regulatory compliance or downloading including highways; less focus on projects leading to reduced greenhouse gas emissions; adequate funding for projects needed as a result of climate change such as flood protection) and the majority also suggested that the scope should be sufficiently broad as to allow for all local governments infrastructure priorities;

• 2 respondents indicated that the scope should be narrowly focused, one indicating that only “core” infrastructure (i.e., water, sewer, transportation, transit) be funded, and the other suggesting that the program should set priorities (first: water and sewer; second: transportation and transit; third: housing and parks);

• 7 respondents indicated that elements present in the Gas Tax agreement, particularly those related to Community Works Fund, served the needs of local governments well (predictable, consistent, stable source of funding, with significant local choice and no local contribution requirements); consequently many of these respondents suggested that arrangement be used as a model for other infrastructure programs; 3 also suggested this as a way of streamlining (e.g., reduced emphasis on grant applications, potentially simplifying the program structure by reducing the overall number of programs);

• 4 responses indicated the importance of good asset management, and/or the need to consider infrastructure rehabilitation and renewal in grant programs.
Question 7

Please rate each of the following statements:

7.1 Only P3 infrastructure projects should be eligible for funding
7.2 Only infrastructure projects without private investment should be eligible for funding
7.3 Local governments should be required to consider P3 in order to be eligible for funding
7.4 Local governments should be required to consider P3 for any project over a certain threshold in order to be eligible for funding
7.5 Local governments are best positioned to decide on P3, and federal/provincial funding should be neutral as to whether there is a P3 investment or not
Question 8

The following are eligible project categories under the most recent federal/provincial/local government infrastructure program (i.e., Building Canada Fund Communities Component).

If you applied for funding under BCF, please indicate the types of projects you applied for:
Question 9

Please indicate whether you would support or not support eligibility for each of these project types for the next infrastructure program.

% of Respondents That Supported

- Wastewater
- Drinking Water
- Local Roads
- Solid Waste Management
- Public Transit
- Disaster Mitigation (e.g. Flood protections)
- Green Energy
- Collaborative (capacity building) projects
- Brownfield Development
- Sports Infrastructure
- Arts, Heritage and Cultural Infrastructure
- Connectivity and Broadband
- Local and Regional Airports
- Core national highway system
- Convention Centres and Exhibition Halls
- Shortline Railways
- Short sea shipping

Question 10

If the next infrastructure program could provide broader scope than the project types listed in question 8 and 9, what types of projects should be included?

Highlights of the 25 responses were:

- 19 suggested additional scope, including: firehalls; arts, culture, recreation and tourism infrastructure; beautification projects; affordable housing; and a range of “green infrastructure” from active transportation to slope stability and flood management infrastructure; 5 of these responses focused on asset management, and indicated that funding infrastructure renewal, replacement or operations was important; and 2 responses suggested funding for capacity building activities, including planning and public education programs;

- 3 respondents felt that the scope provided by the Building Canada Fund was appropriate; and

- 2 respondents felt that scope should be narrowed to focus on core infrastructure.
Question 11

Which of the following methods would be most effective in supporting the needs of small/rural local governments?

A number of respondents indicated that all three of these methods, in combination, would be the most effective in supporting these communities. In addition, some respondents suggested other ways to provide support including:

- spreading the project completion requirements over a longer timeframe;
- eliminating application processes, or providing assistance with completing grant applications; and
- encouraging growth management.

Thank you

UBCM would like to extend our sincere appreciation to those local governments that responded to this survey, particularly given the extremely short timeframes allowed for that response. The results will be used to inform ongoing discussions about the LTIP and the permanent Gas Tax program.