

H & K Communications

72 Elvaston Avenue
Nepean, Ontario
K2G 3X9

Phone: (613) 829-1800
Fax: (613) 829-2449
E-mail: hturkow@rogers.com

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PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH IN GORMLEY

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Phone (613) 829-1800 Fax (613) 829-6181 E-mail hturkow@home.com

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(APPLAUSE)

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER (Prime Minister of Canada): Bon après-midi. Good afternoon. I want to thank you for that warm welcome, and thank you, Paul, for that very kind introduction. I'm delighted to be here in your hometown, to share the stage with you. I knew Paul for a number of years before he became a Member of Parliament. He's been a great addition to our team, and of course is my Parliamentary Secretary, not the easiest job in the House of Commons. Also, greetings to Chairman Finch, who looks way too young to be retiring, in my opinion. Greetings also to my colleague, to Patrick Brown, Member of Parliament, who's here with us.

Et le ministre des Infrastructures, des Collectivités et des Affaires intergouvernementales, Denis Lebel. Ladies and gentlemen, très tôt au début du mandat de notre gouvernement, nous avons fait du développement et de l'amélioration de l'infrastructure de notre pays l'un des piliers de notre politique économique.

Early on, very early on in our government's mandate, we made the development and improvement of our country's infrastructure one of the pillars of our economy policy. Obviously I'm speaking of the roads, ports, bridges, tunnels, public transit, water systems, and other essential economic infrastructure that Canadian families, businesses and communities depend on on a day to day basis.

Nos premières grandes mesures ont été prises dans le budget de 2007 avec le lancement du plan Chantier Canada.

Our first major actions on this came in budget 2007 with the launching of the Building Canada Plan. The plan established predictable

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and flexible funding for what was, at the time, the most ambitious program of national infrastructure investment in more than 50 years. We designed the Building Canada Plan to provide greater certainty to cities and communities as they prepared for the future.

Puis, en 2009 quand s'amorcée la crise économique mondiale, nous avons fait un autre investissement sans précédent de grand envergure dans l'infrastructure public avec le fonds de stimulation de l'infrastructure.

Then in 2009, with the onset with the worldwide economic downturn, we made another large scale, unprecedented investment in public infrastructure through the infrastructure stimulus fund. What we did there, friends, we didn't create a new bureaucracy. We didn't create new programs. We simply moved forward planned infrastructure spending during the recession by all levels of government and industry and non-profit organizations. We moved it forward to when it was most needed. That was one of the most successful stimulus programs in the world, creating and maintaining literally hundreds of thousands of jobs, while investing in vital improvements of lasting value.

En fait, notre gouvernement a maintenant investi dans plus de 43 000 projets d'infrastructure aux quatre coins du Canada.

In fact, our government has now invested in more than 43,000 infrastructure projects from coast to coast to coast. (APPLAUSE) Now, let me mention all of these projects... No, I'm just kidding. (LAUGHTER) Let me mention a few of these projects. Our government invested in the state of the art Halifax mainland Common Centre. To make it safer, our government

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twinned highway 11 in Saskatchewan. To move suburban commuters farther and faster, we put money into British Columbia's Evergreen Line.

Nous avons combattu la congestion routière grâce à notre investissement dans l'autoroute 30 dans la région de Montréal.

We committed to extending Toronto's busiest subway line all the way to Vaughn. In fact, this afternoon, I'm planning on visiting one of the stations under construction to see for myself the good progress being made. But, ladies and gentlemen, it's often the less glamorous projects, the ones that don't make national news, that mean the most to communities and families, like our investment in a water tower in Sackville, New Brunswick, water mains and sewers in Prince Edward County, Ontario, a new bridge over Noon's Creek in Port Moody, BC.

De nouveaux aqueducs et de nouvelles conduites d'égouts, comme par exemple à Roberval au Québec.

And a new sewage lift station in Cronos, Saskatchewan. Ladies and gentlemen, our many infrastructure investments have been tremendously successful. And because the Building Canada plan has been so successful, because Canada's infrastructure needs are ongoing, and because we're focused on creating jobs, growth and prosperity for all Canadians over the long term, in Economic Action Plan 2011, we committed to establishing another major infrastructure plan once the Building Canada Plan would come to an end, and that's in this year. In last year's budget, Economic Action Plan 2013, we announced...

Plus précisément, Denis, c'est Denis qui a annoncé.

...we announced that it would be the largest and longest such plan in Canada's history. It's called le Nouveau plan Chantier Canada,

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the New Building Canada Plan. Ok, the name may not be original, but the money, \$70 billion if we count our own federal infrastructure investments, is new, or at least almost all of it is new. After careful review and through consultations with provinces, territories and municipalities, with the Canadian Federation... sorry, with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and with other stakeholders...

Je suis enchanté d'annoncer que le cadre de notre Nouveau plan Chantier Canada est complété, donc les provinces, les territoires et les municipalités auront maintenant un accès sans précédent, et des fonds fédéraux prévisibles et durables pour leurs infrastructures.

I'm delighted that the framework of our New Building Canada Plan is complete, and as a result, provinces, territories and municipalities will now have unprecedented access to predictable, sustainable federal infrastructure funds, for a decade. (APPLAUSE) This will allow those whose job it is to make infrastructure decisions, to plan those decisions with assurance over the long term. Now, I'm not going to go into all of the details with you, but I will tell you that the documents released today outline how much our government will invest, and the kinds of projects in which we're prepared to invest. Let me just mention three things, three components of the New Building Canada Plan. First, first is the new Building Canada fund itself, which will support major projects in large cities, but also local projects in smaller communities. During the consultation process, our government heard repeatedly that smaller towns, smaller towns and places such as Stouffville, need the same predictable access to federal funds that large urban centres have. Ladies and gentlemen, our government listened.

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Donc, notre nouveau fonds... Excusez. Donc, notre nouveau fonds Chantier Canada met de côté un milliard de dollars exclusivement pour les communautés de moins de 100 000 habitants.

As a result, our New Building Canada Plan sets aside \$1 billion exclusively for communities with less than 100,000 people. (APPLAUSE) Let me just emphasize that in addition to these funds, small communities are also eligible for some other funds. They can also apply for additional infrastructure investments through their provincial/territorial infrastructure component and the national infrastructure component as well. The second component of our plan is the community improvement fund, consisting of the incremental GST rebate for municipalities and the gas tax fund.

Et en parlant du fonds de la taxe sur l'essence, permettez-moi de vous rappeler que notre gouvernement l'a prolongé, l'a doublé, l'a indexé, et il l'a rendu permanent.

And speaking of the gas tax fund, let me remind you that our government has extended, doubled, indexed it, and made it permanent. Finally... (APPLAUSE) Finally, we made positive changes to the public-private partnerships fund. The P3 model is an excellent additional tool to allow taxpayers to share risk, and thus help get projects completed on time and on budget. We want to see - in fact, I can tell you we need to see, we need to see a growth of this. We need to see more private sector innovation, and we need to see it better utilized in developing modern infrastructure. That's why our government is renewing funding for the P3 Canada fund, and we've also stipulated that all new Building Canada fund projects with capital costs in excess of \$100 million will automatically undergo a P3 screen.

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Now, ladies and gentlemen, I've taken up enough of your time, so let me wrap up with this. It was William Shakespeare - Valentine's Day is tomorrow, after all - it was William Shakespeare who asked "What's in a name?" Well, the New Building Canada name says it all. It's our plan to help physically build a better, stronger, more prosperous Canada. And under this plan, we will continue to work with provinces, municipalities, territories, and industry over the next ten year and beyond to do exactly that. So thank you all for being here. Merci beaucoup. (APPLAUSE)

(1453 words)

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