

## News Release

For Immediate Release

### **57 Projects in British Columbia Communities to receive \$73.3 million in federal Gas Tax Funds**

February 12, 2016 – Surrey, British Columbia

The Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities was in Surrey today to announce over \$73.3 million in funding from the federal Gas Tax Fund for 57 capital and capacity building projects in communities across British Columbia. The projects were selected through the application-based Strategic Priorities Fund. Minister Sohi was accompanied by the Honourable Peter Fassbender, Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development; Al Richmond, President of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities; and Linda Hepner, Mayor of Surrey.

Funding for the approved capital projects will support the construction of a range of community infrastructure projects in 27 communities. The projects relate to drinking water (8), wastewater (4), recreational and cultural infrastructure (6), local roads and bridges (4), solid waste management (2), community energy systems (2) and a regional airport improvement project.

It means that a deteriorated bridge in Zeballos will be replaced, providing faster routing for emergency vehicles and the two sides of the community will be reconnected. It means that residents in Columbia Shuswap Regional District will soon see an end to a long-standing boil water advisory. It means that residents of Terrace will enjoy their Aquatic Centre for another 40 years. And it means that the Smithers Regional Airport will double its passenger handling capacity and be more efficient for the flying public.

Also approved are capacity building projects in 30 communities. These predominantly focus on improving asset management in communities. Asset management is a process that integrates information about a community's physical assets and finances to support local decision-making. Other approved capacity building projects include updates to Official Community plans to include sustainability principles and a regional transportation plan.

## Quotes

“Through the federal Gas Tax Fund, the Government of Canada is allowing communities in BC, and all across Canada, to make informed decisions about their infrastructure investments and how best to spend federal dollars. Community officials are best positioned to identify their specific needs, and the federal Gas Tax fund supports them in making those strategic investments. These 57 projects will contribute to building the strong, inclusive and sustainable communities Canadians desire to live in.”

*The Honourable Amarjeet Sohi,  
Minister of Infrastructure and Communities*

“The Province of British Columbia continues to support its communities and ensure residents have access to clean drinking water, safe roads and bridges, modern recreational facilities and updated waste water treatment solutions. We are pleased to work with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities and the Federal Government to provide municipalities and regional districts with a reliable source of funding for infrastructure investments and community planning through the federal Gas Tax Fund.”

*The Honourable Peter Fassbender,  
Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development*

“Investments through the federal Gas Tax Fund are helping British Columbia’s municipalities address their local infrastructure priorities, while creating jobs and supporting economic growth. Gas tax funding is important for building and improving critical transportation infrastructure, including the bridge in Zeballos and other municipal facilities. We thank the federal government for its support from this fund, which will make way for a number of worthwhile projects around B.C. to complement our 10-year transportation plan - B.C. on the Move.”

*The Honourable Todd Stone,  
Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure*

“Local governments around BC are looking for ways to finance the replacement of aging infrastructure. The federal Gas Tax Fund is providing much needed long-term support for the upgrading of core facilities in our communities.”

*Al Richmond  
UBCM President*

## **Quick Facts**

- The total federal Gas Tax Fund contribution towards the 57 projects is \$73,389,257.
  - The 27 capital projects are receiving a total of \$69,174,890.
  - The 30 capacity building projects are receiving a total of \$4,214,367.
- The total estimated project costs for all 57 projects are about \$98 million.
- The funding provided for these projects comes through the application based Strategic Priorities Fund of the Federal Gas Tax Fund in BC
- See the attached backgrounder for details of the projects.
- The Government of Canada provides over \$253 million in indexed annual funding for municipal infrastructure in British Columbia through the federal Gas Tax Fund. The majority of this funding is allocated to municipalities, who decide which projects will address their local priorities. Municipalities can spend, pool, bank or use their annual allocation to finance loans related to eligible infrastructure or capacity building projects.
- The Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) administers the Gas Tax Fund in BC, in partnership with Canada and British Columbia.

## **Associated Links**

To learn more about the federal Gas Tax Fund visit: <http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/plan/gtf-fte-eng.html>.

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