

BRIEFING PACKAGE:

FCM Special Advocacy Fund

Context

In March 2018, FCM's Board of Directors approved a recommendation to seek member contributions for a special fund to support FCM's work toward the 2019 federal election. Contributions are voluntary, and not a condition of membership. However, we are seeking high uptake, to secure \$1.5 million over two years. And this is not an open-ended call: members are being asked to contribute set amounts aligned with their current annual fees within a sliding scale.

Timing is critical. While we will promote the fund into Fall 2018, the environmental factors of municipal budget cycles, upcoming municipal elections, and FCM's conference compel us to secure strong uptake by June—and to mail invoices on May 14.

With short time frames in Ontario, British Columbia and New Brunswick, and as part of our overall marketing and outreach strategy, the FCM Executive has agreed to reach out directly to their peers in select communities to promote and sensitize more members to the fund and the timing of the fund.

Objectives

- Ensure a clear understanding of the Fund (e.g. what it's for, and that it's voluntary), and how it will set up FCM and our members for success in Election 2019 and beyond.
- Encourage support for the fund and ensure timely response to invoicing for the fund.
- Promote the value of FCM to our members, leveraging this outreach to strengthen engagement with a cross-section of our membership.
- Set the stage for future conversation with our members about addressing the emerging gap between FCM membership fees and member needs and expectations.

Overview

The fund will allow for an ambitious campaign that better leverages today's multifaceted digital and social media landscape, increases our opportunities for actions and activities such as national polling, political engagement and member engagement that will be needed to match our ambitious election goals of greater municipal autonomy and entrenching the federal/municipal partnership with the next federal government.

Outreach

You have been asked to reach out to the Fraser Valley Regional District. Member fees for the District this year were \$43,079.59. The Special Advocacy Fund contribution would be \$16,300 per year for two years.

Please let us know if there are other members you are able to reach out to and we will provide further details about the fund for those members.

Key messages

We have developed key messages to guide contact with members—through both direct engagement and communications products. These messages form a persuasive sequence that connects FCM's achievements with the urgency of the Election 2019 opportunity we are inviting members to seize.

“FCM has delivered unprecedented gains for municipalities.”

- We drove and shaped new tools — like the \$180-billion federal infrastructure plan and Canada's first-ever National Housing Strategy to life.
- From economic growth to climate change, Canada now looks to FCM members to deliver local solutions to some of our biggest national challenges
- Together, we've achieved unprecedented influence among decision-makers— from policymakers to cabinet ministers, from opposition leaders to the Prime Minister.

“We built these gains through strategic hard work starting at Election 2015.”

- We have a hard-working, talented team in Ottawa (policy, government relations, outreach, communications).
- FCM is working strategically to influence federal investment and policy, and to shift how this country understands the role of local government.
- FCM's Election 2015 strategy was a turning point. We supplied the winning storyline for that election—about building Canada from the ground up—and we've never let up.

“Election 2019 is a vital opportunity, and we need to seize it.”

- We need an ambitious Election 2019 campaign to build on our recent gains— gains that got started with our Election 2015 campaign.
- The only way to secure our gains is to achieve new gains. We're reaching for new tools that will empower municipalities for years to come.
- This is our chance to make municipal empowerment the “new normal” in Canada— not a one-term project of one federal government.

“FCM's Board has approved a special 2-year Election 2019 campaign fund.”

- This fund will fuel a high-impact campaign to make the most of Election 2019. This needs to be our biggest campaign ever, engaging all federal parties.
- We need a multi-faceted campaign—with professional polling, platform development, intensive outreach, and extensive communications and media plans.
- We need an extended campaign to keep our priorities front-and-centre— building from now into the election, and the crucial first months of a new government.
- If we get this right, we'll see party platforms competing to support municipalities— *the governments closest to Canadian voters' daily lives.*

“We can move forward, or we can fall back. There's no standing still.”

- With an ambitious campaign, we can build on the historic gains we've made. Without one, we risk seeing federal parties move on from municipal priorities.
- Elections are black-and-white affairs. Federal parties will latch onto municipalities with clear new commitments—or they will move on to other priorities they can promote.
- Two consecutive election “wins” for municipalities makes our progress the “new normal.” That makes Election 2019 critical. We can't leave anything to chance.