Dear Mayor,

The current economic crisis is of great concern to all Canadians. Both the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario have undertaken and are committed to making significant investments to help communities weather this economic storm and get much needed stimulus money into the economy.

Through the recent federal and provincial budgets, our governments have recognized that improving Ontario’s infrastructure will also help to boost the economy, create jobs and improve the daily quality of life in communities across this province. We want to take this opportunity to tell you about a new way for you to have Hamilton’s short-term priority infrastructure projects identified for funding consideration.

The Government of Canada has announced the creation of a new $4-billion Infrastructure Stimulus Fund, aimed at getting shovels in the ground for infrastructure projects across Canada that can be completed within the next two years. The Government of Ontario has agreed to match federal funding and to work together with the Government of Canada to ensure that these funds are delivered expeditiously and efficiently to municipalities in the province. These funds are focused on the rehabilitation of existing assets, but new construction is eligible, provided it can be fully completed by March 31, 2011, and it represents an incremental investment on the part of the municipality.

The Infrastructure Stimulus Fund works by having the federal and provincial governments match municipal contributions towards infrastructure projects on an equal basis. All parties share one-third of the total eligible project cost. This funding will help create jobs and provide much-needed stimulus to the economy. It will also help municipal governments meet their varied and growing infrastructure needs.
Proponents will be required to attest that the projects would not have been built over the next two construction seasons without the federal and provincial funding. A program guide and a very short application form can be accessed at: www.bcfontario.ca.

Your municipality can complete applications for up to three projects. Further information can be obtained by calling the Canada–Ontario Infrastructure Secretariat at 1-866-306-7827.

All applications are due on May 1, 2009. Successful proponents will be notified quickly so that construction may begin. Financial agreements will be signed between the Province of Ontario and municipalities. Prior to final approval of your funding and the conclusion of an agreement with the province, the Municipality must provide proof of Council support for each approved project and the municipal contribution.

We hope that you share our enthusiasm for this significant new funding and our new streamlined application process. We believe that it will make our decision-making process more efficient and get this much needed infrastructure money flowing faster.

We look forward to learning more about the infrastructure priorities in Hamilton. We value our collaboration with municipal governments in ensuring Ontario’s infrastructure needs are met.

Sincerely,

John Baird, P.C., M.P.
Canada’s Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities

George Smitherman, M.P.P.
Ontario’s Deputy Premier and Minister of Energy and Infrastructure

cc Clerks
Mary
Tony Tollis
Chris Murray
Trina