



RMA Federal Election Party Platform Guide

September 2021



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As the federal election nears, each of Canada's major political parties has put forth their vision for how they would lead Canada if elected. Within these platforms are positions on issues that would impact rural municipalities in various ways.

This document summarizes the position of all major parties on issues of importance to RMA members. The document does not analyze or critique any positions, but simply highlights the areas of each platform that are most relevant to rural municipalities to support members in better understanding each party, as well as holding the victorious party accountable for following through on their commitments post-election. The information is divided into three categories for each party: rural economic development, rural community issues, and environment and land use.

All information below has been taken directly from the platforms available on the official website of each party and does not include various statements made through interviews, social media, etc. The wording of some statements has been changed for readability.

The parties below are listed in alphabetical order.

Canada's New Democrat Party (NDP)

[Link to platform](#)

Rural Economic Development

- ◆ Declare high-speed internet an essential service and making sure that every Canadian has access to affordable reliable high-speed broadband within four years.
- ◆ Create a Crown corporation to ensure the delivery of quality, affordable telecom services to every community.
- ◆ Require companies to abolish data caps for broadband internet.
- ◆ Ensure affordable housing investments go to rural communities.
- ◆ Deliver reliable public infrastructure funding to all areas.
- ◆ Implement a new deal for rural infrastructure programs that provide long-term predictable funding for communities.
- ◆ Create an affordable public transit service that connects rural areas.
- ◆ Invest in regional economic development agencies and provide economic support for rural areas to invest in job creation in areas such as tourism and community development.
- ◆ Create a tax credit for graduates to work in designated rural and Northern communities.

Rural Community Issues

- ◆ Expand the Volunteer Firefighters Tax Credit.
- ◆ Ensure federal funding for rural policing is made available in a fair, predictable, and sustainable way.

Environment and Land Use

- ◆ Expand federal funding to respond to disasters, and support communities in proactively adapting their infrastructure to withstand extreme weather events.
- ◆ Increase the use of renewable energy and expand community-owned renewable energy projects and support efforts to transition remote communities towards reliable and clean energy alternatives.
- ◆ Establish a National Crisis Strategy that will help communities to plan for and adapt to the changing climate and weather extremes that communities are facing.
 - The National Crisis Strategy would be supported with long-term funding for adaptation, disaster mitigation, and climate resilient infrastructure.
- ◆ Strengthen the federal environmental impact assessment process for new coal mines and mine expansion projects.

- ♦ Ensure the *Species at Risk Act* is enforced and launch a 10-year nature plan to reverse species loss.
- ♦ Support environmental remediation and job creation by forcing big oil companies to pay to clean up inactive wells.
- ♦ Help municipalities improve their waste management and recycling systems and support improved standards for what products can be labelled as recyclable.

Conservative Party of Canada

[Link to platform](#)

Rural Economic Development

- ♦ Build digital infrastructure to connect all of Canada to high-speed internet by 2025.
- ♦ Speed up the spectrum auction process to get more spectrum into use and apply use it or lose it provisions to ensure that spectrum (particularly in rural areas) is actually developed.
- ♦ Set aside a portion of federal infrastructure funds for projects in rural areas.
- ♦ Scrap the Canada Infrastructure Bank and return to encouraging the use of public-private partnerships.
- ♦ Reprioritize the Investing in Canada Plan towards infrastructure projects that would have maximum benefit for economic recovery.
 - This will target projects that strengthen transit and trade, reduce congestion and gridlock, and advance reconciliation with Indigenous communities.
 - It will also reduce bureaucratic red tape in the application process to ensure funding can get out faster and to where it is needed the most.
- ♦ Ensure Canada's tourism strategy supports rural tourism.
- ♦ Eliminate Bill C-69.
- ♦ Fix the impact assessment process created by Bill C-69 by basing changes on the bipartisan recommendations made by the Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment, and Natural Resources.
- ♦ Implement a hydrogen energy strategy that rapidly increases the use of hydrogen.
- ♦ Open new markets for our livestock, grain, and oilseed producers in free trade negotiations.
- ♦ Ensure farm safety net programs are predictable, bankable, and manageable.
- ♦ Reform business risk management programs, particularly AgriInvest and AgriRecovery.
- ♦ Appoint a Minister of Rural Affairs to Cabinet.
- ♦ Reduce the price of the carbon tax. The Conservative Party will set the price at \$20/tonne and only increase it to a maximum of \$50/tonne.
- ♦ Invest in transmission infrastructure to bring clean energy to where it's needed and ensure that our electricity grid can support the growth in electric vehicles.
- ♦ Add fairness to equalization by adopting the Equalization and Transfers Fairness Act.

Rural Community Issues

- ♦ Tackle rural crime by adding sentencing consideration for courts based on evidence that an offence was “directed at a property or person that was vulnerable because of their remoteness from emergency services.”
- ♦ Implement a plan to tackle rural crime and ensure farm families feel safe.

Environment and Land Use

- ♦ Appoint a national disaster resilience advisor to the Privy Office that would advise Cabinet and the Prime Minister’s Office to ensure that the government is prepared for future risks.
- ♦ Implement a national climate adaptation strategy that:
 - Is based on measurable targets; and
 - Addresses wildfire and drought exposure in collaboration with farmers, ranchers, and foresters.
- ♦ Develop a natural infrastructure plan that includes:
 - The development of a national standard to assess the value of natural infrastructure;
 - Requirements to incorporate retention of natural infrastructure into community design; and
 - Incentives for farmers and landowners to protect and restore natural infrastructure.
- ♦ Invest in technology that can improve the early detection of wildfires and better predict their behaviour.
- ♦ Incorporate a mitigation and adaptation lens to the government’s infrastructure investments.
- ♦ Invest an additional \$3 billion between 2021-2030 in natural climate solutions focused on management of forest, crop and grazing lands and restoration of grasslands, wetlands, and forests.

Liberal Party of Canada

[Link to platform](#)

Rural Economic Development

- ◆ Require those that have purchased the rights to build broadband to actually do so by introducing a “use it or lose it” approach. Under this new approach, Canada’s large national carriers will be required to accelerate the roll-out of wireless and high-speed internet in rural and northern Canada by meeting broadband access milestones between 2021-2025.
 - If Canada’s large national carriers do not meet the milestones, the Liberal government will mandate the resale of spectrum rights and reallocate that capacity to smaller, regional providers.
- ◆ Strengthen Canada’s Regional Development Agencies to ensure that rural and small communities have the support they need where they live.
- ◆ Develop rural transit solutions.
- ◆ Ensure the oil and gas sector reduce emissions to achieve net-zero by 2050, with five-year targets to stay on track to achieving this goal.
- ◆ Set 2025 and 2030 milestones based on the advice of the Net-Zero Advisory Body to ensure reduction levels are ambitious and achievable to ensure that the oil and gas sector makes meaningful contributions to meeting Canada’s 2030 climate goals.
- ◆ Establish a \$2 billion Futures Fund for Alberta, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland and Labrador to help support local and regional economic diversification to transition into a greener economy.
- ◆ Add 1.4 million new homes across Canada.

Rural Community Issues

- ◆ Expand the number of family doctors and primary health teams in communities by 50% over five years.
- ◆ Deliver \$10 a day childcare within five years or less.
- ◆ Work to give rural communities greater access to a full suite of health and social service professionals.

Environment and Land Use

- ◆ Continue to increase the price on pollution, while putting more money back into the pockets of Canadians.
- ◆ Support retrofits and upgrades to protect against extreme weather.
- ◆ Complete work with provinces and territories to develop flood maps for higher- risk areas in the next three years.
- ◆ Finalize Canada’s National Adaptation Strategy by 2022, which will set clear targets and indicators to measure progress and strengthen the business case for adaptation.

- ♦ Finalize and apply a climate lens to ensure climate adaptation and mitigation considerations are integrated throughout federal government decision making.
- ♦ Restore and enhance more wetlands, grasslands, and peatlands to capture and store carbon.
- ♦ Increase support to farmers to develop and adopt agricultural management practices to reduce emissions and enhance resiliency.
- ♦ Invest an additional \$200 million in the Natural Infrastructure Fund to continue funding community-led public green space projects in collaboration with municipalities.
- ♦ Ban thermal coal exports from and through Canada by 2030.