

Who We Are

The UNSM is a non-profit organization that has represented the Provincial interests of municipal governments across Nova Scotia since 1906. Total membership is **404 elected officials** representing all **52 municipalities**.

Municipal interests are represented through three caucuses—a Regional Caucus, Rural Caucus and Towns Caucus. The Board of Directors is comprised of twelve municipal elected officials and one appointed non-voting member from the Association of Municipal Administrators.

The Executive is comprised of the President, Vice-President, Past President and Chairs from the Rural, Town and Regional Caucuses. A staff of five works on behalf of the Board of Directors and general membership.

The UNSM hosts an Annual Conference to give its members an opportunity to present issues of concern through resolutions and to provide training opportunities through various workshops and seminars. An annual Spring Workshop is also held to provide additional training opportunities for members. Both of these events provide excellent networking opportunities for municipal elected officials to share information and ideas.

UNSM Priority Areas

- Building Provincial-Municipal Relationship
- Municipal Viability
- New Infrastructure Program
- Capped Assessment Program (CAP)
- Economic Development
- Environmental Sustainability

Strong Communities Strong Province

Municipalities build communities.

During UNSM's Advocacy Days, the UNSM Board of Directors come to Halifax to meet with as many Nova Scotia MLA's as possible. These meetings provide an opportunity to:

- build relationships between provincial and municipal elected officials
- look at how the Province and municipalities can work together to better serve the interests of all Nova Scotians and to minimize their collective tax burden
- build support towards provincial-municipal partnerships on an infrastructure plan and other issues critical to communities

The following three points highlight the importance UNSM places on the provincial-municipal partnership in order to advance priorities shared by both orders of government:

1. Our citizens are the same:

Both municipal and provincial orders of government are elected by, and serve, the same citizens. When we work together, results are better. Our services need to be

coordinated and complimentary to be most effective and efficient. Where our interests overlap, we need to work together to avoid duplication and confusion. We understand the province needs to balance its budget, it cannot do it on the backs of municipal taxpayers. The financial pressures facing municipalities, in large part because of increasing provincial and federal regulations, cannot be absorbed by our residents - we need to talk together to find solutions.

2. Municipalities are a true order of government:

Municipalities are a true order of government that provide critical services to its citizens including water and wastewater, policing, fire protection and recreation. Municipalities are accountable for their spending and balance citizen requests daily. Municipalities are limited in their ability to raise sufficient revenues, and many are actively involved in shared service delivery. More can be done, but municipalities need more flexibility. Taxes are growing because the costs of providing services are growing. We need to discuss our respective roles and priorities, and the most appropriate methods to pay for services.

3. Focus on cooperation with respect to infrastructure and other programs that impact communities:

It is imperative that municipalities work together with the provincial and federal governments in developing a new infrastructure program. In Nova Scotia, the cost of complying with federal and provincial regulations is over \$1 billion. Moreover, we are interested in working jointly with the Province on a variety of overlapping interests that impact our citizens. This would include economic development, environmental sustainability, climate change; public protection and safety services, healthy living, affordable housing, age friendly communities, and transportation services (active transportation, transit and roads).



UNSM Board of Directors

- **Warden Keith Hunter,**
County of Cumberland, President
- **Councillor Claire Detheridge,**
Cape Breton Regional Municipality, Vice-
President
- **Mayor David Corkum,**
Town of Kentville, Immediate Past-President
- **Councillor Bill Karsten,**
Halifax Regional Municipality, Regional Caucus
Chair
- **Mayor Bob Taylor,**
County of Colchester, Rural Caucus Chair
- **Mayor Carl Chisholm,**
Town of Antigonish, Towns Caucus Chair
- **Councillor Clarence Prince,**
Cape Breton Regional Municipality, Regional
Caucus
- **Councillor Jennifer Watts,**
Halifax Regional Municipality, Regional Caucus
- **Mayor Don Downe,**
District of Lunenburg, Rural Caucus
- **Warden Bruce Morrison,**
County of Victoria, Rural Caucus
- **Mayor Pam Mood,**
Town of Yarmouth, Towns Caucus
- **Councillor Laurie Murley,**
Town of Windsor, Towns Caucus
- **CAO Erin Beaudin,**
Town of Wolfville, AMA Representative

Further Information

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Advocacy Days—Spring 2015

Strong Communities

Strong Province