

WHO IS UNSM?

The Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities is the provincial voice of municipal government. All 50 municipalities within the province are members. Our 378 elected officials gather each fall to develop and endorse UNSM policy.

UNSM represents municipalities and their citizens to ensure the needs of strong, healthy, vibrant communities are reflected in provincial policies and programs.

Founded in 1906, UNSM works to strengthen local governments and to advocate on their behalf. Our 13-member Board of Directors is composed of four representatives from each of our rural, towns and regional government caucuses, as well as one member of the Association of Municipal Administrators.

Municipal Facts:

Municipal Operating Expenses: \$1.57 billion
Plus Contributions (e.g. Education): \$224 million
Property Taxes: \$1.2 billion
Grants in Lieu of taxes: \$67 million

Operational Costs (unconsolidated):

Policing \$217 million
Fire (municipal): \$123 million
Solid Waste (garbage): \$109 million
Water \$155 million
Sewage: \$29 million
Roads, sidewalks, etc \$117 million
Transit \$102 million

Building the Municipal – Provincial Partnership

Long-Term Vision for Municipal Government

UNSM advocates and works toward long-term solutions for municipal viability. Provincial legislation, policy, regulation, and financial supports lay the foundation for long term sustainability. *We will work with the Province to develop a long-term vision that reviews roles and responsibilities, explores alternatives to structural change, and recommends additional revenue tools.*

A Better Funding Partnership to Upgrade Aging Community Infrastructure

Municipalities bear most of the responsibility for operating costs, maintenance, and eventual replacement of capital assets. Provincial and Federal governments contribute to the initial infrastructure capital costs, but the bulk of the life cycle costs for infrastructure are borne by property tax payers. Municipal asset management plans, based on actual condition assessments, will help prioritize capital investments for current and future needs. *We will work with Provincial and Federal governments to recognize municipal funding limitations, and to support municipal priorities when developing funding programs.*

A Joint Municipal and Provincial Economic Development Strategy

Municipalities lay the foundation for economic development by building essential infrastructure and

attracting people to live in our communities. Rural outmigration and changing demographics create major challenges. *We will work with the Province to develop a collaborative strategy that includes analysis of economic development data, incentives for regional approaches, and help with developing best regulatory practices.*

Improved Access to High-Speed Internet and Cell Phone Coverage Across the Province

High-speed internet and cell phone coverage are essential for business development, tourism, education, and attracting new residents. They are also necessary to ensure effective health, safety and emergency services. Many rural areas still have poor access to functional high speed internet and little or no cell phone service. *We will work with Provincial and Federal governments to develop a high-speed internet and cell phone strategy, including funding to ensure increased coverage across the Province.*

Predictable Funding to Meet Municipal Responsibilities

Amalgamation and dissolution will not resolve all the financial issues. Municipalities are developing more shared service and regional planning opportunities to promote efficiencies. *We will work with the Province to address short and long-term financial issues, including Provincial funding, so that municipalities can fulfill their responsibilities with a reasonable tax burden.*

UNSM Board of Directors

Deputy Mayor Laurie Murley

Town of Windsor, President

Councillor Geoff Stewart

County of Colchester, Vice President

Mayor Cecil Clarke

CBRM, Immediate Past-President

Councillor Wayne Mason

Halifax, Regional Caucus Chair

Warden Jim Smith

District of East Hants, Rural Caucus Chair

Mayor Pam Mood

Town of Yarmouth, Towns Caucus Chair

Councillor George MacDonald

Cape Breton Regional Municipality, Regional Caucus

Councillor Russell Walker

Halifax, Regional Caucus

Deputy Warden Linda Gregory

District of Digby, Rural Caucus

Warden Timothy Habinski

County of Annapolis, Rural Caucus

Mayor Jeff Cantwell

Town of Wolfville, Towns Caucus

Councillor Terry Rhindress

Town of Amherst, Towns Caucus

Bruce Fisher

Manager, Financial Policy & Planning
Halifax, AMA Representative

CONTACT US:

Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities

1809 Barrington Street, Suite 1304

Halifax, NS B3J 3K8

Phone: 902-423-8331

Fax: 902-425-5592

E-mail: info@unsm.ca

www.unsm.ca

The logo for the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) features the lowercase letters 'unsm' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The letters are contained within a white rectangular box that has a double-line border. The background of the entire page is a faded image of a waterfront town with colorful houses and a body of water.

**Strong Communities
Strong Province**

Provincial Election 2017