

## **NSFM Advisory Board Recommendation to the Board of Directors – February 14, 2024**

The NSFM Municipal Autonomy Advisory Committee (herein referred to as the Committee) met on February 14, 2024, to discuss all delegated requests from members or the Board. Among these delegated requests was the former NSFM member Resolution on Municipal Modernization.

The focus of this Resolution is ensuring that municipalities are able to collaborate in the interest of the communities that they serve. The preamble of this Resolution notes that municipalities are often pitted against each other rather than supported in finding regional solutions to regional challenges. The main goal of this Resolution was for the Province to “provide human, material, and financial resources in the 2019 budget or before, to those municipalities willing to collaborate, based on the specific needs of those requesting assistance”.

Municipal Modernization was also recognized as a common priority between municipalities and the Province in the Partnership Framework, which was established in 2016. In the most recent Partnership Framework priority follow up agreement (signed July 2021), Municipal Modernization was confirmed as a top Joint Provincial/Municipal Priority in the following terms:

Encourage “Municipal Modernization” by ensuring the principles of municipal cooperation and regional governance are applied to:

- The modernization of the Municipal Government Act and HRM Charter;
- Regional planning support; and
- Municipal Financial Capacity Grant and other Provincial Grants.

A 2022 study on municipal collaboration noted the Nova Scotia was a frontrunner in Canada in terms of supporting regional collaboration with a 2014 Shared Service Guide, which is no longer available.

With the various forms that municipal modernization can take in mind, Committee members applied the Prioritization Framework as shown in the following two pages. In answering each of the questions in the Prioritization Framework, Committee members found Municipal Modernization to be a viable and worthwhile advocacy priority.

The Committee members present decided by consensus **to recommend that the NSFM Board of Directors approve Municipal Modernization as an advocacy priority for NSFM.**

The Committee also proposed the following actions to help NSFM reach success in this advocacy priority:

- Designating annual Advocacy Days with Municipal Modernization as a key theme.
- Continuing to engage in relationship building to find opportunities to increase municipal modernization with the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing as well as other departments.
- Expressing support for legislation that supports municipal modernization efforts at Law Amendments Committee and support municipalities that are looking to collaborate.
- Continuing to build on work done as part of the Partnership Framework.
- Requesting that the provincial government reintroduce the 2014 Shared Service Guide.

The Committee remains open to engaging in this issue as required by the Board or CEO.