



# MIC

## Terms of Reference

**Last revised  
Sept 2017**

  
**NOVA SCOTIA**



---

# MUNICIPAL INDICATOR COMMITTEE - TERMS OF REFERENCE

## 1- BACKGROUND

The Municipal Indicator Committee was established by Municipal Affairs to advise the Deputy Minister in the development of municipal indicators. The Municipal Indicator Program (MIP) is a set of financial, community, governance and performance indicators created to provide tools for better governance in Nova Scotia municipalities. Since the program was launched in 2002, there have been multiple reviews conducted on the MIP. Each of these reviews has provided suggestions for improvements to the program, in the hopes of enhancing the effectiveness, reliability and use of the indicators.

In December of 2012, the Committee produced a report which focused on the development of a new tool for measuring financial health. The report contained nine recommendations including:

- Department of Municipal Affairs (DMA) implement the finalized municipal profile & Financial Condition Index (FCIs) as additional layers to the municipal indicators.
- The Committee develop a governance indicator tool.
- The Committee continue to work on improving service performance indicators.
- The Committee continue to work on improving service performance indicators.

DMA initially launched the FCIs in May 2014 with the release of the 2011/12 FCIs on the DMA Website. Subsequent FCIs releases were:

- February 2015, released 2012/13 and 2013/14 FCIs;
- April 2016, released 2014/15 FCIs; and
- March 2017 released 2015/16 FCIs on the DMA Website.

The committee is currently working on development of governance indicator tool and reviewing the FCIS with the goal to provide suggestions for improvements in the hope of enhancing the effectiveness, reliability and use of the indicators.

## 2- PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Committee is to steward the MIP program with the goal to:

- Inform strategic decision making and policy development;
- Improve operational efficiency and performance management;
- Create informed citizens and good citizenship; and
- Foster good municipal governance.

The objectives of the Municipal Indicators Committee are to:

- Champion municipal indicators and ensure the vision and goals of the MIP are maintained;
- Steward a common set of financial condition indicators;
- Develop a governance tool for the MIP:
  - Create a provincial wide governance indicators
  - Engage municipal officials to help identify appropriate measures.
- Revise the MIP's service level indicators;
- Continue to garner greater buy-in among municipal officials;
- Maximize the value of Municipal Indicators by reporting on the "right" level data/information along with important insights;
- Build a collaborative partnership to promote and support sharing of information and practices in areas of common interest based on municipal indicator results;
- Share results and effective financial management practices; and
- Identify opportunities for collaboration and connection on common concerns across municipalities.

## 3- DEFINITIONS

**AMA** refers to Association of Municipal Administrators

**DMA** refers to the Department of Municipal Affairs

**FCI** refers to Financial Condition indicators

**MIC** refers to Municipal Indicator Committee

**MIP** refers to municipal indicator program

**UNSM** refers to Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities

## 4- STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

As illustrated by Figure 1 below, the structure of the Committee consists of one Municipal Indicator Committee (MIC) along with three subcommittees. The MIC has shared responsibility for the program, including development of recommendations for DMA Deputy Minister approval. DMA will be responsible for the communications around the program. DMA will monitor the implementation of the indicators, and will ensure the indicators are reviewed at least every three years.

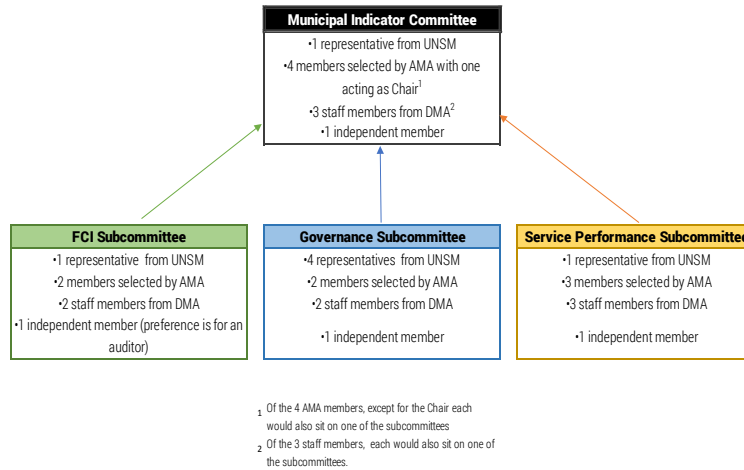


FIGURE 1- MIC STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

The three subcommittees include: Financial Condition Indicator (FIC), Governance Indicator and the Service Performance Subcommittee. The tasks of the subcommittees are to undertake the necessary research and consultation required to propose appropriate indicators within the theme of the subcommittee. The work and recommendations from the subcommittees are referred to the MIC for review and final recommendations.

Representative from MIC are selected to serve as Chairs for the subcommittee to ensure consistency

Assistance from additional municipal and provincial officials may be sought by the committee on a project specific basis, to ensure that the committee has sufficient expertise to achieve its objectives.

## 5- WORKING GROUP PRINCIPLES

**Commitment** – Participants will participate in all meetings and contribute ideas.

**Best Practice** - Recommendations by the committee will be assessed against current best practices.

**Respect** – Metrics/methodologies recommended by the committee will balance the needs and requirements of the municipalities, respecting the differences in their regions, organizations sizes and resources.

**Consensus** - The team operates with consensus decision-making. Consensus will be reached on all recommendations forwarded to the committee sponsor.

## 6-TEAM OPERATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### A. SPONSORSHIP

The Committee's mandate derives from AMA, DMA and UNSM.

### B. TERMS OF REFERENCE

MIC reviews the terms of reference at a minimum of once every two years.

### C. MEMBERSHIP TERMS

The chair, AMA and UNSM membership terms is for 2 years which can be extended. Terms can be extended once. Appointments are made by the respective organizations.

### D. CHAIR

The chair convenes meetings of MIC as needed, through conference calls and/or in-person meetings. The latter need not necessarily be hosted by the Chair.

The current chair is responsible for ensuring all documents generated within the term are handed to the next chair upon conclusion of the term or no later than the first meeting for the next report.

### E. DMA

DMA ensures all data submitted are managed and stored as per the records standards.

DMA develops the meeting agendas and research notes with input from members and ensures key decisions and action items are recorded and distributed.

#### F. MEETINGS

Meetings will be held at a frequency that is needed to conduct the business of the committee; generally, the committee shall meet at least twice a year.

#### G. COSTS

Costs associated with conference calls are to be covered by DMA.

Costs associated with hosting in-person meetings are to be covered by the DMA.

Costs associated with traveling (and accommodation, meals and associated expenses) to in-person meetings are to be covered by the individual members.

Costs associated with resources needed to prepare and present the Annual Reports are to be covered by DMA.

## 7-ANNUAL DELIVERABLES

The committee is expected to update the project partners at least annually on plan actions and progress to date.

## 8- LONG TERM DELIVERABLES

- Continued successful launch and improvement to the FCIs;
- Implement a new governance tool for the MIP;
- Implement training and outreach opportunities for MIP stakeholders; and
- Implement revisions and/or improvements to the service level indicators.

## 9- LONG TERM OUTCOMES

- Increase visibility and use of the MIP for planning and decision-making.
- Increase support for identification of strengths and areas of concern.
- Increased knowledge and use of MIP as evidence for strategic decisions.
- Actions taken to remedy problems and enhance accountability
- Support assessment and understanding of municipalities' governance and financial picture.
- Enhanced transparency and accountability
- More informed citizens



