



1. Are you willing to increase the Municipal Financial Capacity Grant, frozen at 2015 levels, by \$20 million over the next three years?

A Re-elected Liberal government will continue to work for increased funding for municipalities through various approaches. We are working with municipalities to leverage federal infrastructure funding for the electrification of our public transit and countless other incredible projects. We have recently announced support for a federal program that allows firehall infrastructure to be an eligible spending category under the newly named Canada Community-Building Fund Program.

Substantial funding has been made available to municipalities to aid in COVID-19 recovery as part of the Safe Restart Agreement. Through this program, municipalities received \$67.5 million to help address lower revenue from transit and taxes, as well as increased costs associated with COVID-19 infection prevention measures.

The Liberal Party values the positive relationships with municipalities and the NSFM and will continue to work together with our valued partners.

2. Will you cost-share 50/50 in all municipal projects required to comply with the Accessibility Act, if those projects do not receive other funding?

The Nova Scotia Liberal Party is committed to an accessible Nova Scotia and will continue to work with the disability community, municipal governments, and the education and private sectors to achieve our collective goal of an accessible province by 2030.

Government has identified several key focus areas for improved accessibility. These include goods and services, information and communication, public transportation and transportation infrastructure, education, employment, and the built environment. As we work with municipalities and communities to identify needs we will support projects and municipalities as needed.

An example of the targeted funding that has been made available recently can be found in the Accessible Transportation Assistance Program. BayRides, a community transit operator based in St. Margaret's Bay, will purchase an accessible bus using grant funding from the Department of Municipal Affairs' Accessible Transportation Assistance Program.

3. Will you commit to providing municipalities with a substantial share of the revenues being generated by the sale of cannabis?

The sale of cannabis in Nova Scotia is still a relatively recent and evolving program. Municipalities should track both their costs and savings as a result of the implementation of cannabis sales and enforcement. The Nova Scotia Liberal Party remains committed to continuing discussions with municipalities as we move forward.

4. Given that many of the Commission's suggestions will have a significant impact on local government, how will you engage municipalities in a review of recommendations prior to their potential implementation?

We recognize that municipalities are the closest to the need for affordable housing and need more tools and resources to help deliver adequate affordable housing. In accepting the recommendations of the commission we acknowledge that empowering municipalities to become effective partners in affordable housing will determine our overall success.

In the Liberal Party's platform commitment on Making Life more Affordable and Equitable for Nova Scotians, we committed to give municipalities the authority to offer tax incentives for affordable housing developments, enabling municipal governments to help lower the cost of housing construction and attract new development in a way that puts them in control.

Creating affordable housing is a group effort. We remain committed to finding innovative solutions with our partners that help Nova Scotians find an affordable place to call home. Consultations with municipalities will be an important piece of these ongoing discussions.

5. What plans do you have to expedite the introduction of EPR legislation, given the extent of research and stakeholder engagement that has already been completed?

When it comes to solid waste regulations we believe that a regional approach is best. We value the input the Liberal government has received regarding Extended Producer Responsibility and look forward to continuing dialogue with other Atlantic Canadian provinces. Implementation of EPR would require attention to any impacts on small businesses or Nova Scotia producers. We also see the value of EPR for our municipalities and for environmental stewardship. We believe the right balance can be found.

We will hold further conversations with stakeholders regarding EPR as a tool to reduce environmental impact from consumer goods and reduce waste in the province's facilities.

6. How will you work with municipalities to update their Municipal Climate Change Action Plans (completed in 2013) and what funding and support will you provide to ensure local governments are prepared to mitigate and adapt to projected changes in our climate?

The Liberal Party will commit to working with municipalities to help them prepare for the impacts of climate change. Adaptation and preparedness are key components in mitigating the effects of rising sea levels, rising temperatures, erosion, carbon emissions and other climate impacts. Proactive plans and support are needed. The transition to a cleaner, greener economy may also offer potential benefits we are committed to exploring with municipalities.