

News Release

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## **Statement by Atlantic Municipal Associations on federal election priorities**

**Nova Scotia** – Municipal governments in Atlantic Canada share many of the same priorities as municipalities across the country. We also have a regional perspective on those issues. We're all calling on all federal political parties to continue to engage and empower the Atlantic Region with attention to the following:

- **Permanent doubling of the Canada Community Building Fund (CCBF)** – Across Atlantic Canada, federal funding from the CCBF has upgraded road networks, diverted waste, improved active transit, and enhanced cultural and sports facilities. A solar array for the centre that houses the rink, library and community space in Three Rivers, PEI, cuts energy costs and reduces greenhouse gas emissions and supports our shared responsibility to work toward a carbon neutral future. As a permanent program, the CCBF allows for better long-term infrastructure planning, while broad expenditure categories give municipalities more flexibility to address local priorities. To continue building and improving our rural areas and urban centres, we need the recently increased level of federal investment in municipalities to continue.
- **Disaster mitigation and climate resilience**- Independent research has shown that municipal costs related to climate change will be proportionately higher in Atlantic Canada. In New Brunswick, municipalities with railway right of ways have seen drainage issues and flooding risks from increased severe weather events. Coastal protection, and investment in drinking water systems supplied by groundwater sources, are also issues of sustained importance. We support the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) in requesting federal investment for local climate resilience projects, as well as investments in natural infrastructure. This funding must be available and accessible to municipalities of all sizes.
- **Housing affordability and availability**- Our region joins the rest of the country in seeking significant federal investment in housing. In Halifax Nova Scotia, home prices rose 30 per cent from 2020. Lack of affordable housing is trembling the foundation of our communities. With appropriate tools and investments, municipal governments can play a bigger role in delivering solutions.
- **Funding for Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) services**- Many communities in Atlantic Canada are served by the RCMP. Community policing is an essential service, but municipalities do not have the financial capacity to absorb the rapidly growing cost of local policing. In addition, municipalities should not bear the burden of retroactive pay increases to RCMP officers that was recently agreed upon through collective bargaining between the National Police Foundation and the Federal Treasury Board. Federal and provincial governments are requested to work with municipalities to ensure an equitable cost sharing formula for the protection of residents.
- **Rural broadband** – Through the Universal Broadband Fund, the federal government made a significant investment to support infrastructure in rural and remote communities. Twenty communities and over 3000 households in Newfoundland and Labrador have benefited from projects that will bring affordable broadband to those living and working in

rural areas. Work must continue to ensure municipalities who need this investment most can access funding.

- **Strengthening municipalities for post-Covid recovery-** Atlantic Canada is rebounding from the global pandemic and we're ready to become a global destination for business. We want to collaborate with a federal government that champions our region and facilitates the strengthening of communities where people want to live, and corporations want to invest. In addition to continued operational support for municipalities, attracting newcomers, bolstering health care services, and sustaining air transportation activity will all be necessary for a successful future.

Together, municipalities and the federal government can achieve great things for our communities. Investing in urban and rural municipalities will deliver results on shared objectives that benefit the Atlantic Region and all Canadians.



*Emily Lutz, President  
Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities*



*Bruce MacDougall, President  
Federation of Prince Edward Island  
Municipalities*



*Alex Scholten, President  
Union of the Municipalities of New Brunswick*



*Amy Coady-Davis, President  
Municipalities Newfoundland and  
Labrador*