



**Municipal Affairs and Housing
Office of the Minister**

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June 26, 2020

Mayor Pam Mood
President, Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities
VIA E-MAIL: communications@nsfm.ca

Dear Mayor Mood:

Thank you for your email to the Premier on May 29, 2020, regarding the way in which the Province is working with and engaging municipalities. The Premier has asked that I respond on his behalf as Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

As you know, this is an extraordinarily difficult time for all levels of government, and we have had to make some very quick and difficult decisions to protect our citizens. Much like our municipal partners, we are doing our very best to balance competing interests and to reopen the Province in a manner that prioritizes the health and safety of Nova Scotians.

We have been providing regular updates to municipalities in recent weeks to keep them apprised of the ever-evolving situation with respect to public health protocols, the easing of restrictions, and the supports that the Province is providing to business. Specifically, and in addition to our plan to regularly meet with the AMA/NSFM working group that helped in the development of the Municipal Operating Loan Program, we have provided regular updates to all municipalities via the AMA Maritime List Serve with our DMAH Bulletin to Municipalities, the Department of Business Stakeholder Communique, and assorted FAQ documents. We regularly join your Wednesday call, and invite guest presenters, to ensure that you and your colleagues have the best information in a timely way. In addition, we will re-convene the sub-group that supported the development of the Municipal Operating Loan Program, with me, to ensure that we maintain regular connection.

With respect to your concerns about the Municipal Advisors, the Municipal Advisory Team has been working very hard to respond to all municipal inquiries in a timely manner. We currently have protocols in place that require all pandemic-related responses to be vetted through a communications process specific to COVID-19. As matters have been evolving so quickly in this environment, it is critical that such responses be coordinated to ensure that they are answered accurately and consistently.

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Later this month we will be consulting with the NSFM and municipalities on several items, including joint priorities of NSFM and the province, such as accessibility and municipal code of conduct. I understand that our staff have been working with you to ensure that session has maximum value in both content and relationships

The relationship between the Province, NSFM and our municipalities is an important one. Every citizen of Nova Scotia is also a resident of a municipality, and this fact is not lost on us. We value local government and the knowledge, experience and insight that our elected officials bring to the table.

I appreciate you taking the time to share your concerns with me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chuck Porter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chuck Porter
Minister

c: Honourable Stephen McNeil, Premier (**PNS-10574-F8Z0K8**)