

SUMMER 2024

Municipal observer

The Magazine for the **Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities**

*From Growing Populations
to the Rising Costs
of Infrastructure
Maintenance*



THE RISING RATES ISSUE



Crow Neck Beach in Baccaro

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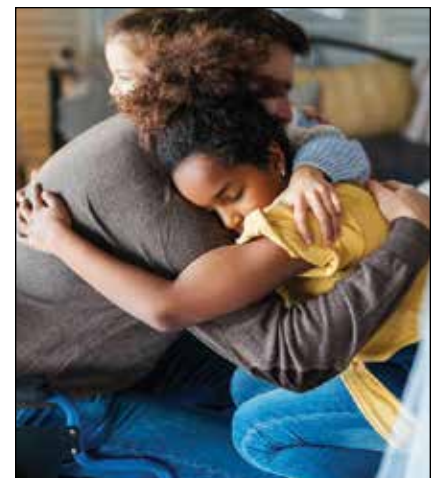
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Cheryl Kane Senior Vice President
Office: 902-474-3282
Mobile: 902-456-9633
cheryl.kane@hubinternational.com

Janine McInnis Associate Vice President
Office: 902-474-3293
Mobile: 902-789-3003
janine.mcinnis@hubinternational.com

Brad Wilson Consultant
Mobile: 902-233-7384
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The NSFM is a not-for-profit organization mandated to represent the interests of municipal governments across Nova Scotia. Total membership is 375 elected officials representing all 49 municipalities.

Contact NSFM at:
Ph: 902-423-8331
Suite 1304, 1809 Barrington St.,
Halifax, NS B3J 3K8
www.nsfm.ca
info@nsfm.ca



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info@nsfm.ca

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Navigating the Currents: Embracing Change in our Municipalities

By President Carolyn Bolivar-Getson

As we navigate the currents of our municipal landscape, it is evident that the tide of change is upon us. Our theme for this Spring edition, "Rising Rates," encapsulates the challenges we face, from growing populations to the rising costs of infrastructure maintenance. It is crucial that we, as leaders, rise to meet these challenges with strategic foresight and a steady hand.

In the face of increasing construction costs and the critical need for talent retention, our communities must adapt and innovate. We must cultivate an

environment that attracts and retains the best and brightest minds, ensuring the sustainable growth and prosperity of our municipalities.

Likewise, the burden of maintaining water and sewer infrastructure weighs heavily on our shoulders. As guardians of our communities, we must prioritize investments in infrastructure resilience and efficiency to ensure the continued well-being of our residents.

United we can harness our collective strength and determination to build resilient, vibrant communities for generations to come.

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Diving Deep: Understanding the Complexity of Rising Rates

By CEO Juanita Spencer

As we examine the challenges of “Rising Rates” in this edition of the *Municipal Observer*, it is important that we survey the complexities at play. From the burgeoning population growth, to the cascading impacts of construction cost inflation, each presents unique challenges and opportunities for our municipalities.

The escalation of construction

costs poses a significant hurdle, demanding thorough financial planning and strategic resource allocation. Simultaneously, the imperative of talent retention underscores the importance of fostering a supportive and conducive environment for municipal professionals to thrive.

Also, the daunting task of maintaining our water and sewer infrastructure necessitates a comprehensive approach, blending proactive maintenance strategies with innovative technologies to optimize efficiency and resilience.

In navigating these challenges, the Nova Scotia Federation of

Municipalities remains steadfast in our commitment to provide invaluable support to empower our members. Together, let us navigate these turbulent waters

The escalation of construction costs poses a significant hurdle, demanding thorough financial planning and strategic resource allocation.

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Changes to the Provincial Entrepreneur Streams under the Provincial Nominee Program Make it Easier for Newcomers to Begin their Entrepreneurship Journey

Building a future and a business of your own is now a little easier for newcomers looking to call Nova Scotia their new home and start or continue their entrepreneurship journey under the Province of Nova Scotia's Nominee Program.

New changes to the two entrepreneurial streams of the program (the Entrepreneur Stream and the International Graduate Entrepreneur Stream) recently came into affect by the Province of Nova Scotia and will help create more opportunities for newcomers. The changes outline a more inclusive process that also seeks to remove obstacles in helping newcomers achieve their entrepreneurship dreams.

Under the Nova Scotia Nominee Program, there are various streams, providing different ways for newcomers to immigrate to Canada. Streams cover immigration pathways for skilled workers, physicians and healthcare professionals, international graduates, and critical construction positions, to name a few. Learn more about the different Streams at <https://novascotiainmigration.com/topic/nova-scotia-nominee-program/>.

"These changes are a positive step forward and are needed, as the previous timeline could sometimes pose challenges to entrepreneurs," says Kelly MacKinnon, Labour Market & Immigration Advisor at the Cape

Breton Partnership. "The Provincial Government conducted an assessment of the programs and looked at ways they could improve and in turn make it easier for those looking to build their future and legacy here."

So how exactly will these changes impact newcomers to the province and make building a life here easier for them?

"The fact that there are two streams for entrepreneurs is not new. The International Graduate Entrepreneur

"In addition to removing some of the financial barriers, with these changes we are seeing investments that were once considered passive investments (which is a buy-and-hold strategy used for long-term investment potential) being considered on a case-by-case basis, such as real estate development and construction, which could prove beneficial for Nova Scotia as a whole"

~ Kelly MacKinnon
Labour Market & Immigration Advisor
Cape Breton Partnership

Stream has moved to an online application, which will make applying easier for newcomers, however the more significant changes we will see is to the Entrepreneur Stream," shares MacKinnon.

Previously, under the Entrepreneur Stream, an entrepreneur was required to have a

net worth of at least \$600,000 and make a minimum investment in their business of \$150,000. With the changes, those amounts have been lowered to a net income of \$400,000 and a \$100,000 investment for businesses located outside of the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), which will make it a bit more in reach for newcomers in rural areas.

"In addition to removing some of the financial barriers, with these changes we are seeing investments that were once considered passive investments (which is a buy-and-hold strategy used for long-term investment

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potential) being considered on a case-by-case basis, such as real estate development and construction, which could prove beneficial for Nova Scotia as a whole,” shares MacKinnon. “This is a huge step forward, and for those who support immigration efforts like myself, it will make it easier for us to encourage newcomers to consider the Entrepreneur Stream because it could be more attainable.”

MacKinnon explains that before these changes were made, there were entrepreneurs who were discouraged that they did not meet the criteria. With the new changes we might see more people use this opportunity to start their new business now and not have to wait, which ultimately leads to better retention of newcomers in Nova Scotia in the end, and newcomers building happy and productive lives in our communities.

In her role at the Cape Breton Partnership, MacKinnon supports employers and newcomers by promoting available immigration programs, including the two Entrepreneurial Streams.

“The People and Labour Market team at the Cape Breton Partnership work to support employers in attracting and retaining talent through immigration efforts. If you’re looking to fill job vacancies in your business located in Unama’ki – Cape Breton, we can support you to understand the immigration options available to you. In addition, we also support local businesses to retain current workers by helping them obtain permanent residence in Canada,” says MacKinnon.

To learn more about changes to the program, as well as current program details, visit the Nova Scotia Immigration website at <https://novascotiainmigration.com/move-here/>. When applying for immigration programs, it is important to check current program details as immigration programs can change frequently.

Are you a business in Unama’ki – Cape Breton looking for immigration support? We can help. For more information, or if you have any questions, contact the Cape Breton Partnership’s Labour Market & Immigration Advisor, Kelly MacKinnon, RCIC, at kelly@capebretonpartnership.com or 902-202-5119. Or visit our website to learn more about the services we offer: <https://capebretonpartnership.com/initiative/immigration-services/>.



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Managing Water and Sewer Infrastructure Costs Amidst “Rising Rates”

Deputy CAO of CBRM John MacKinnon, with Charlene Fekeshazy

In today’s landscape of municipal management, the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) faces an array of financial pressures concerning its water and sewer infrastructure. In an exclusive interview with, John MacKinnon, Deputy Chief Administrative Office of CBRM, we delve into the challenges and strategies employed by the CBRM to navigate these complexities, all within the overarching theme of “Rising Rates.”

1. Financial Pressures and Infrastructure Upkeep:

Aging infrastructure, regulatory compliance, and operational hurdles contribute to the financial strains experienced by the CBRM water utility. MacKinnon underscores the impacts of inflationary pressures on maintenance and upgrading efforts.

2. Impact of Rising Construction Costs: The interview highlights the inflationary effects on construction costs, affecting operational and capital budgets alike. Notably, the focus has shifted from building treatment facilities to modernizing distribution systems and addressing regulatory requirements for pre-2000 facilities.

3. Talent Retention Strategies: Amid rising operational expenses, attracting, and retaining skilled personnel is paramount. The CBRM employs targeted recruitment efforts to ensure a proficient workforce essential for managing and maintaining critical infrastructure.

4. Innovative Funding Mechanisms: MacKinnon sheds light on collaborative ventures with Efficiency Nova



Sydney Harbour West
Wastewater Treatment Facility

Scotia, aimed at enhancing operational efficiency and reducing costs. These initiatives include distribution system repairs and optimizing treatment operations for maximum efficiency.

5. Collaborative Approaches: The CBRM actively engages in partnerships to effectively manage water and sewer infrastructure costs. Collaborative endeavors with government entities and external organizations bolster sustainability efforts and resource allocation.

6. Balancing Infrastructure Needs with Financial Realities: The CBRM adopts a multifaceted approach, including rate-based utilities, governmental liaisons for funding, and strategic infrastructure planning. Asset management practices aid in prioritizing investments based on condition assessments and life cycles.

7. Future Planning Amidst Population Growth: With a burgeoning population, the CBRM prioritizes infrastructure planning to accommodate future needs while optimizing existing capacities and efficiencies.

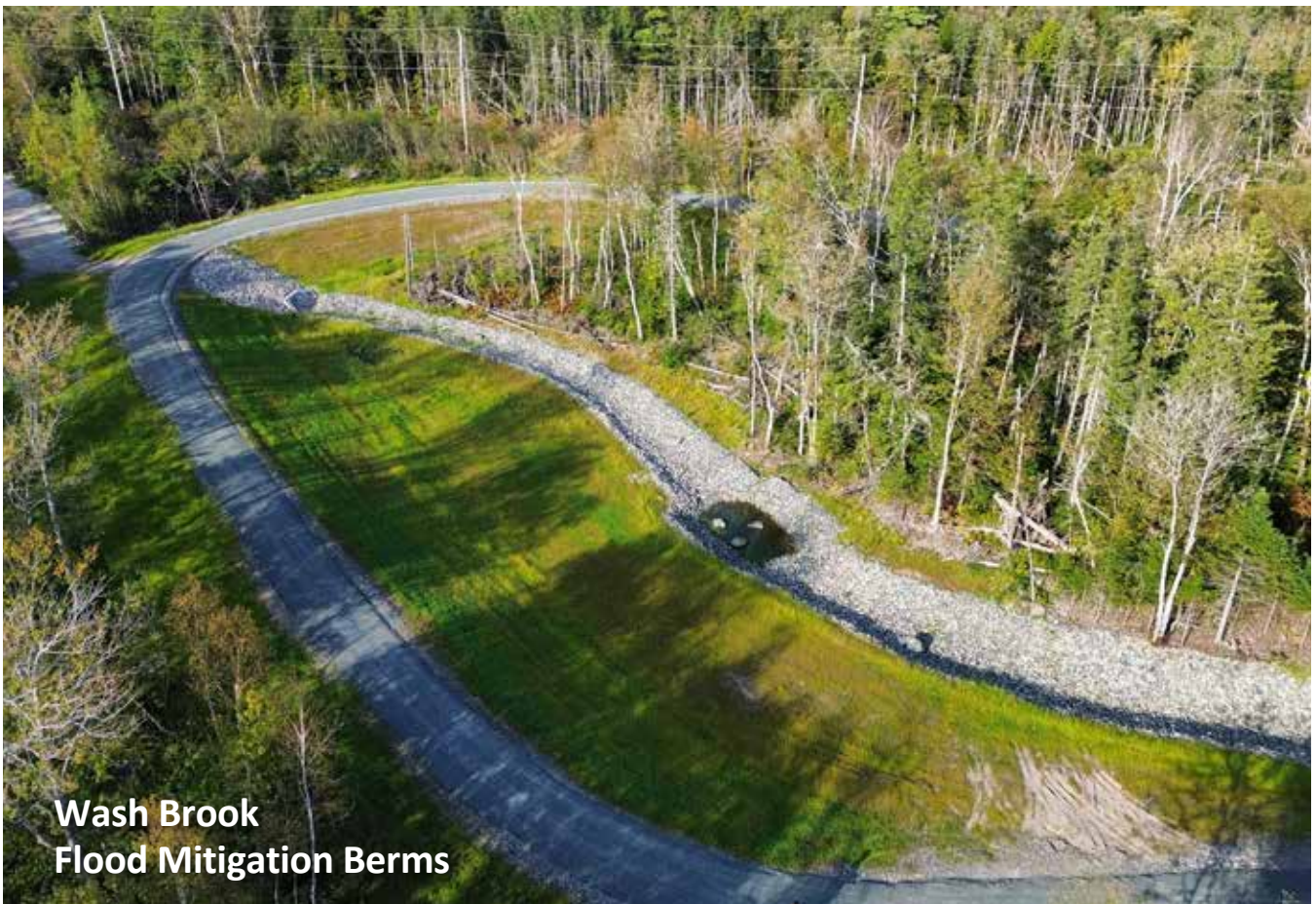
8. Exemplary Projects in Financial Management: Noteworthy initiatives such as leak detection and

reducing unaccounted-for water exemplify the CBRM's commitment to effective financial management and sustainability.

9. Overcoming Funding Challenges: MacKinnon discusses the hurdles associated with securing funding for infrastructure projects, particularly in light of regulatory requirements and expansion efforts. The municipality employs proactive measures to address these challenges head-on.

10. Long-term Sustainability Strategies: Looking ahead, the CBRM remains steadfast in its pursuit of long-term sustainability. Initiatives focusing on reducing energy consumption, implementing efficiency upgrades, and exploring renewable energy sources underscore the municipality's proactive stance.

In conclusion, the CBRM's proactive stance towards managing water and sewer infrastructure costs amidst "Rising Rates" reflects a commitment to innovation, collaboration, and long-term sustainability, ensuring the well-being of its residents and the vitality of its communities.



**Wash Brook
Flood Mitigation Berms**



A Policy Challenge for 2024 and Beyond: Ensuring Infrastructure Grows Alongside Nova Scotia's Communities

By: Scott Pearce, President, Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)

With spring underway, Nova Scotians, like people across the whole country, are on the move after a snowy winter. For many of us, this is a time for taking on the next chapter in our lives: in work, in our personal lives, in school, or in business.

And it is safe to say that our routines, our daily activities, and meeting our goals, from even before we set foot outside the front door, rely heavily on municipal infrastructure.

We all expect to travel on well-maintained roads and bridges, to use reliable public transit to get to school or work on time, to have safe water and wastewater for our homes and businesses, and to be able to play with our children in public amenities like parks, playgrounds, and rec centres.

It makes all the difference, for the wellbeing of our families and our businesses.

As I write this, FCM is fully engaged in advocacy efforts with the federal government ahead of the 2024 budget, which will have been announced by the time this article is published.

Canada is growing at an impressive rate, as are many Nova Scotian communities. In the last year, over 1.2 million new residents joined us in Canada, with many choosing to make Atlantic Canada their home.

That is why, for months, FCM has been urging the federal government to establish a new dedicated water and wastewater fund and extend funding for community, culture, and recreational facilities.

We have targeted water management as a crucial need, and now, with the \$6 billion Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund announced on April 2, which includes water and wastewater infrastructure, our message is resonating.

Communities in Nova Scotia know that we need this kind of investment to both cope with new growth, and to

replace and service the existing facilities in the province.

In addition, with other infrastructure programs winding down, we have continued to highlight the importance of the Canada Community-Building Fund. Our recommendations are not only for this fund to be retained in its current form, with no onerous reporting requirements, but for it to be increased to \$4.4 billion annually and its annual index to be increased to 3.5%.

These are all measures that will help Nova Scotian communities grow successfully. However, it is clear that more is required. It is time for all levels of government to come together and develop a Municipal Growth Framework. This represents a new way of funding communities that will reduce our reliance on transfers from federal and provincial/territorial governments and better meet the needs of residents.

Done right, this framework will support a stronger Canada and a better-resourced Nova Scotia into the future. As we look forward to the brighter, warmer months, my thanks go out to NSFM's members who have been so supportive of FCM's drive for better infrastructure funding and a Municipal Growth Framework.

I look forward to connecting with our Nova Scotia members at FCM's Annual Conference and Trade Show in Calgary from June 6-9, so we can continue to advocate for our growing communities more effectively.

About the Author

Scott Pearce is President of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and Mayor of the town of Gore, Quebec. FCM is the national voice for Canada's local governments, with more than 2,100 members representing more than 92 percent of all Canadians.

Learn more about the need for a Municipal Growth Framework:



Pioneering Solutions: Recap of NSFAM's 2024 Spring Conference

By Charlene Fekeshazy

In a dynamic display of innovation and collaboration, the NSFAM recently concluded its highly anticipated 2024 Spring Conference themed Future-Focused Municipalities: Pioneering Solutions. The event, held in Baddeck at the beautiful Inverary Inn, from May 8-10, served as a platform for municipal leaders, and experts to explore strategies, exchange insights, and chart a path for Nova Scotia's communities.



NSFAM President Carolyn Bolivar-Getson with Keynote Speaker & Olympian Brad Gushue

Embracing Tomorrow's Challenges: Key Themes and Discussions

Conference attendees examined pressing issues facing municipalities, ranging from sustainable development and climate resilience to inclusive governance and technological advancement. Recognizing the pivotal role of municipalities in driving positive change, speakers emphasized the importance of proactive, forward-thinking approaches to address evolving challenges.

Event Highlight

Keynote speaker and Olympian Brad Gushue shared his Roadmap to Success, sharing with attendees his path in developing leadership skills to create a culture that is open to vulnerability. He inspired delegates with stories of how to embrace vulnerability in a way that builds even greater strength. A strong team can be created by encouraging empathy and be-

longing. To be successful, a team cannot fear making mistakes and instead grows and learns from them. These are tools that can equip municipalities to thrive in today's challenging landscape.

Looking Ahead: A Vision for the Future

As the conference drew to a close, participants left inspired and invigorated, armed with fresh perspectives and tangible solutions to propel their communities forward. The collective commitment to innovation, sustainability, and inclusivity reaffirmed the NSFAM's mission to advocate for and support municipalities in building resilient, future-focused communities.

Gratitude and Acknowledgments

The success of the 2024 Spring Conference would not have been

possible without the dedication and collaboration of numerous individuals and organizations. The NSFAM extends its appreciation to all sponsors, speakers, and attendees for their invaluable contributions and commitment to advancing municipal excellence.

Continuing the Journey: Next Steps

As we reflect on the insights gained and connections forged during this conference, let us carry forward the spirit of innovation and collaboration in our ongoing pursuit of sustainable, prosperous communities. Together, we can establish solutions, shape the future, and build a better tomorrow for all Nova Scotians.

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Leveraging Grant Funding to Combat the Rising Costs of Municipal Infrastructure

By Staff

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities highlights an important statistic: municipalities in Canada own and maintain 62% of the total public infrastructure. In Nova Scotia, this responsibility has become a significant challenge as the rising cost of construction weighs heavily on these local governments. Balancing the need to maintain existing infrastructure with the demand for expansion to accommodate population growth has become increasingly difficult. Compounded by the rising costs of repairs and construction, municipalities face significant financial strain. However, in 2023-2024, the unveiling of two substantial funding opportunities provided a glimmer of hope. Despite these opportunities, the process of application-based grants remains a barrier for some municipalities dealing with this issue.

Provincially, the introduction of the one-time Municipal Capital Growth Fund injected \$100 million into infrastructure projects across the province. This funding, which covers 50% of project costs, translates to at least \$200 million worth of infrastructure development over the coming years. Particularly crucial is its focus on water and wastewater projects, an area historically underfunded but essential for public health and environmental sustainability.

Complementing this provincial funding is the federal Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF), which can also be utilized for municipal infrastructure. The HAF, totaling

over \$5 billion nationally, presented a competitive opportunity for Nova Scotia municipalities. Thirteen of the 49 incorporated municipalities secured funding through this program, with Halifax Regional Municipality receiving \$79.3 million and the remaining 12 sharing \$37.9 million, totaling \$117.2 million. These funds are crucial to bridge the gap between rising construction costs and municipal budget limitations.

To continue navigating these challenges, municipalities can leverage funding sources. The Canada Community Building Fund (gas tax) presents a great opportunity, as it allocates funds without the need for time-consuming applications. A recent survey completed by 70% of municipalities in Nova



Scotia revealed that constrained time and limited capacity for completing grant applications were significant concerns. Many municipalities struggle with tight application timelines and complex applications, hindering their ability to compete for funding.

In response to similar challenges, funders in the non-profit sector are adopting trust-based grant-making practices. This involves streamlining processes and paperwork to minimize distractions and allow organizations to keep their focus on critical work. Despite changes in other sectors, the funding landscape for local governments remains complex and creates some inequities amongst municipalities. This highlights the need for support in the grant funding space.

There are various supports available to enhance their grant preparation and writing skills, including using AI tools like ChatGPT for application polishing, utilizing grant finders such as CCTH's 'Grant Finder' tool and NSFM's Municipal Funding Database, collaborating with other municipalities on applications, and seeking guidance from Funding Navigators at NSFM or the Department of Environment and Climate

Change. Staff at the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing also stand ready to assist with applications.

Support and change to the grant application landscape are essential to ensure equity in funding amongst municipalities. The unprecedented disbursement of over \$200 million in grants for municipal infrastructure

this year represents a significant stride towards sustaining the well-being and growth of communities. Municipalities must continue to seek collaboration and support networks to navigate the complexities of funding acquisition. By harnessing available grants and assistance to overcome financial barriers, local governments can continue to address infrastructure challenges amidst rising rates.



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Nurturing Growth: Wolfville's Journey Towards Sustainable Development

Mayor Wendy Donovan, with Charlene Fekeshazy

In the picturesque town of Wolfville, nestled in the heart of Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley, Mayor Wendy Donovan sits down to discuss the town's evolving population dynamics and the strategies in place to manage its growth sustainably. With a blend of historical charm and modern allure, Wolfville has become a beacon for newcomers seeking a vibrant community and a high quality of life.

1. A Flourishing Community: Over the past few years, Wolfville has witnessed a notable evolution in its population, driven by a confluence of factors. Mayor Donovan highlights the influx of individuals returning home during the pandemic, drawn by the town's allure and the opportunity for remote work. Additionally, retirees seeking an idyllic lifestyle, immigrants, and the burgeoning local wine industry have all contributed to Wolfville's attractiveness.

2. Infrastructure and Growth: As the town experiences a surge in development, Mayor Donovan emphasizes the importance of balancing growth with infrastructure upgrades. Recent approvals for significant projects necessitate enhancements to roads, utilities, and social infrastructure to maintain the town's livability. Initiatives focusing on transportation, community infrastructure, and climate management are underway to accommodate the growing population.

3. Managing Expansion: With growth comes challenges, particularly in providing essential services and preserving the town's character. Mayor Donovan stresses the importance of managing growth to prevent overwhelming existing systems. Effective communication with residents is key, ensuring they understand the rationale behind development initiatives while preserving the community's identity.



**Infill Development
Woodman's Road, Wolfville**

4. Addressing Housing Affordability: The increase in population has exacerbated housing affordability concerns, prompting the town to implement strategies to diversify housing options. Collaborative efforts with provincial and non-profit partners aim to increase market supply and develop social and more affordable housing solutions.

5. Attracting Skilled Professionals: Retaining and attracting skilled professionals is vital for Wolfville's growth. While not solely a municipal responsibility, the town supports initiatives that enhance quality of life, including housing, childcare, and recreation services. Partnerships with local businesses and educational institutions aim to foster an environment conducive to talent retention.

6. Navigating Financial Challenges: Construction costs pose a significant challenge to community development projects. Mayor Donovan acknowledges the financial constraints and emphasizes the importance of phased projects and robust partnerships to minimize costs and maximize impact.

7. Ensuring Sustainable Growth: Wolfville's long-term plans prioritize managed growth and community engagement. Balancing hard and soft services, along with transparent communication, is essential for creating a thriving and livable environment for

residents.

8. Infrastructure Maintenance: Critical to Wolfville's growth is the maintenance of water and sewer infrastructure. With a focus on sustainability, the town leverages grants and partnerships to upgrade facilities and to ensure a reliable water supply for future generations.

As Wolfville continues to evolve, Mayor Donovan's vision for sustainable development underscores the town's commitment to preserving its heritage while embracing opportunities for growth. With careful planning and community collaboration, Wolfville stands poised to flourish as a model of sustainable small-town living.



**East End Development,
Wolfville**

New Municipal Flood Risk Check-Up Provides Nova Scotian Communities with a New, Free Tool to Reduce Flood Risk

By Joanna Eyquem, Managing Director, Climate-Resilient Infrastructure, Intact Centre on Climate Adaptation



A new, user-friendly tool – the Municipal Flood Risk Check-Up at <https://www.intactcentreclimateadaptation.ca/municipal-flood-risk-check-up/> – is now available to help Canadian municipalities identify flood hazards, their level of flood preparedness, and actions to limit future flood risk. The Check-Up tool was developed over the last two years by the University of Waterloo’s **Intact Centre on Climate Adaptation**, in partnership with over 50 flood experts, including representatives from the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities and all levels of government.

The Need to Get a Grip on Flooding

Flooding is the most common and
20 - Municipal Observer

costly natural hazard in terms of property damage, as identified in the report “A Flood Risk Check-Up For Canadian Municipalities: Tackling Flooding Together” that accompanies the new tool. Flood events can also cause loss of life, physical injuries, and negative impacts on mental health. This was sadly demonstrated in floods in Nova Scotia in 2023 and our municipalities are on the frontlines of adapting to reduce these impacts. Action and investment are required, not only to understand and map flood risks, but also to implement measures on the ground to reduce the risks.

What’s in the New Check-Up?

The Municipal Flood Risk Check-Up is designed to support all sizes of municipalities in

better preparing for heavy rainfall, river, and coastal flooding. It is a self-assessment questionnaire in MS Excel format that can be downloaded for free from the Intact Centre website at <https://www.intactcentreclimateadaptation.ca/municipal-flood-risk-check-up/>. Users are guided to answer 50 questions to assess their potential flood hazards (flood exposure), and implementation of actions to reduce flood risks (flood preparedness). Each of the responses is “High, Medium or Low”, with explanations of how to select the appropriate option.

The Check-Up also acts as a “guide to the guidance”, helping users navigate the variety of existing standards, guidance, and tools available. In terms of solutions, it focuses on the central role of municipalities in catalysing action at multiple levels: from the localized protection of individual homes, to urban planning, to the management of flooding processes at the watershed scale.

10 Reasons to Use the Municipal Flood Risk Check-Up

Municipalities can use the Check-Up to:

- Gain an understanding of flood exposure, even where flood mapping is not available.
- Benchmark and document their current flood preparedness by

drawing on Canadian guidance and standards.

- Document progress towards reduction of municipal flood risk over time.
- Access a library of key resources on flood risk and preparedness, including National Standards of Canada.
- Demonstrate municipal flood preparedness to interested parties.
- Prioritise actions for different flood types and at different scales.
- Inform future investment planning and funding applications.
- Anticipate and answer questions that may be asked by municipal insurers in developing insurance policies.
- Contribute to objectives and targets identified in Canada’s National Adaptation Strategy.
- Support municipal staff and service delivery.

Tackling Flooding Together

Positive action will help municipalities contribute to achieving several of Canada’s [National Adaptation Strategy](#) targets, including:

- By 2025, 50% of Canadians have taken concrete actions to better prepare for and respond to climate change risks facing their household.
- By 2027, 80% of coastal communities and 60% of businesses located in coastal regions are implementing adaptation actions to increase climate resilience and reduce the economic impacts of climate change.
- By 2030, 80% of public and

municipal organizations have factored climate change adaptation into their decision-making processes.

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










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Table 4: Structure of the Municipal Flood Risk Check-Up

Category	Sheet Name		Description
Introduction		Start Here	Provides the user with information on how to complete and use the Check-Up.
		Section I: Flood Hazard and Exposure - Identifying Potential Risks	Provides a basic assessment of how municipalities may be exposed to flood hazards using qualitative indicators.
Questions		Section II: Flood Preparedness - Analysing Risks	Assesses the level of understanding of heavy rainfall, river, and coastal flood risk, providing the basis for effective action.
		Section III: Flood Preparedness - Reducing Risks	Evaluates the degree to which measures have been implemented to reduce flood risks.
Results		Scorecard	Summarizes responses to all questions and sub-section averages.
		Web Diagrams	Provides a visual presentation of all ratings, grouped by section and flood type.
		Overview	Assesses the results, overall and by flood type.
		Background Calculations	Provides insight into how ratings are calculated in the analysis (editable with password).
Resources		Supporting Information	Practical guidance on key concepts used in the Check-Up.
		Glossary	Definitions of key terms.
		References	Direct links to key references.

Powering Your Community: Meet our Reliability Advisors

By Nova Scotia Power

Our customers count on us to power every moment of their day. It's a responsibility we take seriously here at Nova Scotia Power.

Our teams work every day to strengthen our system and continue to improve the essential service we provide to Nova Scotians. An important part of this work is continuing to listen to our customers. It's why we created a new team focused on exactly that.

Meet our Reliability Advisors: The team dedicated to working with customers to answer questions and communicate the work we're doing in their community to reduce power outages.

A voice for our communities

"I'm working directly with customers to hear their concerns and take action," explains Lisa, Reliability Advisor for Northeast Nova Scotia. "We also provide helpful information—from storm preparedness tips to outage restoration updates, to news about the work we're doing in their community."

"Our role was born out of feedback from our customers", adds Colin, our Reliability Advisor for Cape Breton. "We know they have questions about the work we do to keep the lights on—we're here as their local contact."

For Ciuin, our Reliability Advisor for Western Nova Scotia, the role is important because it enables us to remove barriers and better support customers that live in rural communities.

"We know there are different challenges in rural communities than what customers experience in HRM. As part of our role, we get to listen and speak directly with customers in our regions and provide them with the local information they need."

Supporting work in the field

Based in the Sydney area, Colin understands both the challenges and opportunities that come with working in a rural region.

"Cape Breton is beautiful, but the landscape can bring accessibility challenges—from lines that run through forested areas that are hard to reach, to muddy, rocky terrain. It's rewarding to be able to show customers where we're putting boots to the ground, installing stronger equipment, or trimming trees back from our lines."

Getting out in the field is one of the most gratifying parts of the job for Darcie, Reliability Advisor for the Metro region, including HRM, Windsor, and Chester.

"It's exciting to dig into a problem and be part of solving it", she says. "I spend my days visiting crews, checking where our tree trimming work is happening, and getting familiar with the performance of our lines. If there's a line that's experiencing more frequent interruptions, I'll work with our operations teams on the plan to address it."

Investing in our system

The addition of our Reliability Advisors is just one way we're listening to the concerns of our customers and working to reduce power outages. This year, we're investing \$230 million in our electrical system. This includes replacing deteriorated equipment, clearing trees from our lines, and upgrading our infrastructure so that it can better withstand the extreme weather we're experiencing more often.

It's work Lisa feels will make a positive impact for customers.

"We're working hard to prioritize the areas that need improvements. I hope to meet with more customers at upcoming community events and meetings. We're here for you and we're eager to listen."

For more information about how Nova Scotia Power is investing in service reliability, visit nspower.ca/reliability.

Lisa Forsey
Northeast Region

Ciun Shirkey
Western Nova Scotia

Powering Your Community

Colin Walker
Cape Breton

Darcie Hessie
Metro Region

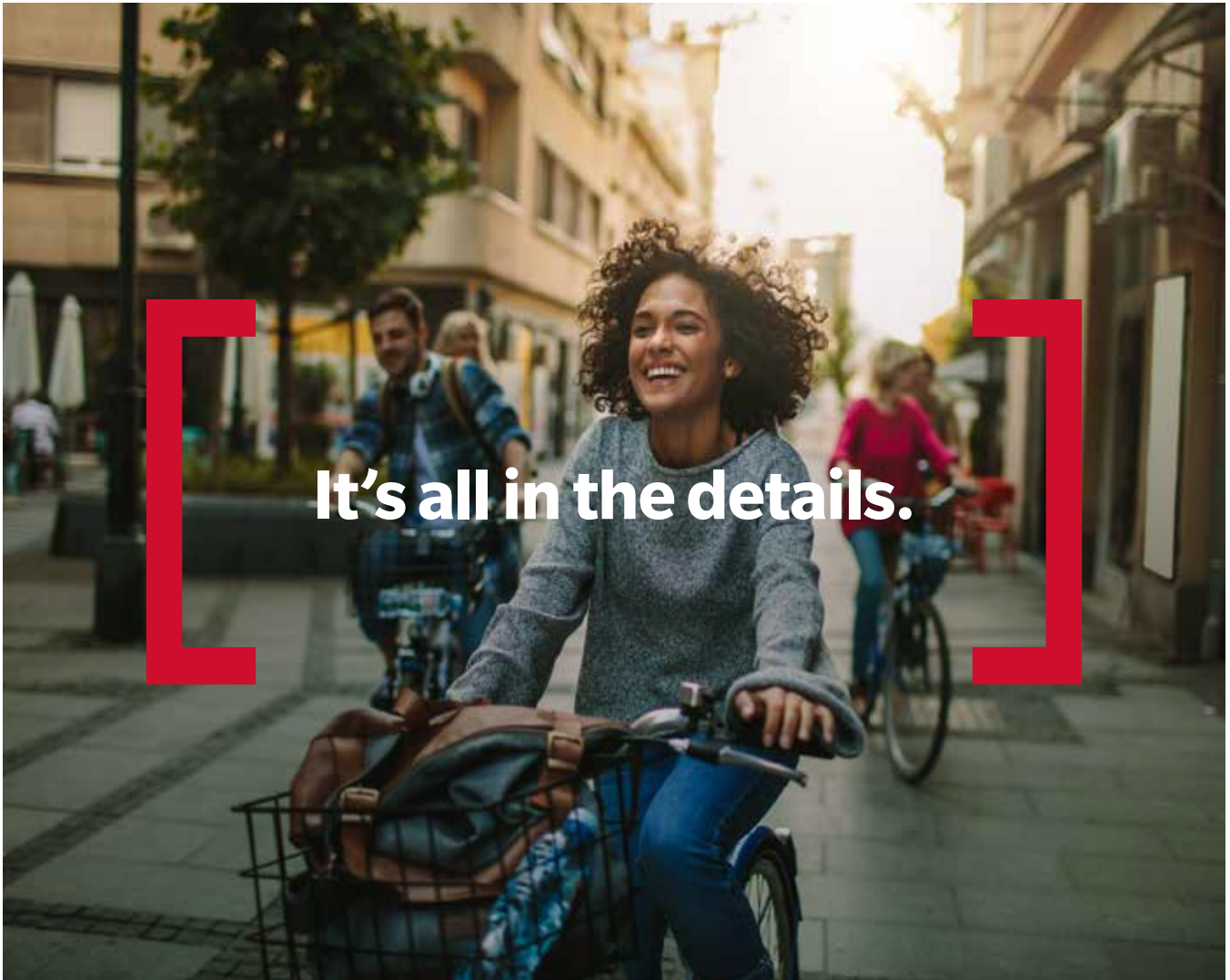
Meet our Reliability Advisors

Our Reliability Advisors are dedicated to working with customers to answer questions, and communicate the work we're doing in your community to reduce power outages.



Learn more about how we're strengthening our electrical system at:
nspower.ca/reliability





It's all in the details.

Especially when we're talking municipal insurance – it's what we live and breathe, it's even in our name.

A policy is a policy, except when it's not. We understand that your municipality requires so much more. With IPE in your corner, we can maximize risk mitigation and enhance the safety and resiliency of your community with our value added services.

Our team of experts are here to deliver a sustainable and trusted insurance program that is as unique as your municipality.

Connect with Paul Jewett, Regional Manager, Atlantic Canada

1 800 265 4000 | 506 866 1846 | paul.jewett@intactpublicentities.ca

**To learn more visit us at
intactpublicentities.ca**



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