



The Union
of Nova Scotia
Municipalities

OUR MISSION
The UNSM is the collective voice
of municipal government
in Nova Scotia

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UNSM Wants Political Parties to Tackle Municipal Issues During Election Campaign

Halifax, September 9, 2013: The Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) wants the three political parties to pay serious attention to municipal issues during the provincial election campaign. The UNSM has written the leaders of the three parties requesting responses to a number of questions that will promote the health and viability of municipalities across the province.

"We want to ensure that the three parties take municipal issues seriously during this election campaign", stated UNSM President Councillor Russell Walker.

Municipalities need to be recognized by the Province as a true order of government, as they own the majority of infrastructure and provide important services such as water and wastewater, policing and recreation services.

"Residents are expecting increased service demands yet municipalities receive only 8 cents of every tax dollar and 18 per cent of our budgets pay for provincial services of education, housing and corrections", Walker further stated.

To address these fiscal challenges, the UNSM wants the three political parties to respond to the following issues as part of their election platform:

- See municipalities as a partner in serving communities and work with them as another order of government
- Work with the UNSM to develop a long term strategy for municipalities
- Work with the UNSM and other stakeholders to support an independent study on an appropriate municipal taxation model
- Ensure direct negotiation with municipalities when contemplating new provincial regulations
- Ensure federal infrastructure programs are focussed on municipal infrastructure and address the community's highest priorities

- Be willing to make difficult decisions in the long term interest of communities
- Create a separate municipal program to tackle wastewater regulations
- Eliminate or at least limit mandatory education payments to school boards, corrections and housing
- Provide more support for roads while exploring new revenue sources such as a municipal fuel tax
- Implement a province-wide asset management plan
- Undertake a review of the Municipal Government Act, Halifax Charter, and Municipal Elections Act
- Create a standalone Municipal Affairs Department.

The UNSM is a non-profit organization representing the Provincial interests of municipal governments across Nova Scotia since 1906. Total membership is 411 elected officials representing all 54 municipalities.