

Resolution 19A

CLIMATE CHANGE ASSISTANCE FOR MUNICIPALITIES (PASSED)

⇒ UNSM Board of Directors

WHEREAS changes in average weather conditions will significantly influence our economy, society and infrastructure; and

WHEREAS flood damages from climate change-induced storm surges and sea-level rise will have higher than average cost impacts in Atlantic Canada; and

WHEREAS Nova Scotia's infrastructure deficit is significant, and the ongoing impact of climate change is expected to increase this deficit; and

WHEREAS by investing in adaptive capacity early on, local governments can greatly influence their ability to decrease vulnerability to future climate change; and

WHEREAS municipalities play key roles in preparing and positioning their communities to build resilience and to establish the right conditions for adaptation; and

WHEREAS all municipalities in Nova Scotia are required to complete Municipal Climate Change Action Plans (MCCAP) by December 31, 2013 to assess their vulnerability to climate-change impacts and develop responses to protect their residents, and the local environment and economy; and

WHEREAS the submission of the MCCAPs represents the first step in a long-term planning process to adapt to projected changes in climate,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities request that Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations continue to provide municipalities financial and staff support to implement their MCCAPs; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities request that Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, after reviewing the MCCAPs, develop a provincial plan to aid municipalities in addressing priority adaptation goals and provide resources for implementation. The plan will:

- Assess and prioritize the impacts and risks to municipalities (based on the potential magnitude and geographical scope) and provide a strategy to support municipalities' efforts to implement their MCCAPs
- Recognize and aim to balance all other provincial environmental requirements in place for municipalities

- Be developed collaboratively with municipalities to ensure they have the support required to achieve success in adapting to climate change at a reasonable cost to tax payers.

Response from:

Department of Environment & Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations

RESPONSE:

Responded jointly by Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations and Department of Environment

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations (SNSMR) and Nova Scotia Environment's Climate Change Unit will be undertaking a full review and analysis of all of the Municipal Climate Change Action Plans (MCCAP) in order to determine the range of hazards, risks and impacts affecting municipalities.

The review will look at the geographical scope and magnitude of climate related risks, and will use this information to prepare a report that will be the basis for determining a strategic approach to supporting municipalities as they implement their MCCAP. In addition, SNSMR and Nova Scotia Environment are working with other provincial departments to address risks that municipalities have raised for which other departments are responsible or have a role to play.

As the province's lead department on municipal planning and affairs, SNSMR is primarily responsible for overseeing the production of the MCCAPs, coordinating a provincial response to municipalities and leading any subsequent assistance to municipalities for MCCAP implementation. As the province's lead on climate change adaptation, Nova Scotia Environment will coordinate any required interdepartmental action that may be required in response to these plans and will provide strategic advice and direction to SNSMR, and the province, and in some cases directly with municipalities on how best to begin managing and adapting to identified hazards and risks.

SNSMR will continue to work in a collaborative manner with municipalities to ensure that professional expertise and other resources are directed effectively towards climate change adaptation. Over the course of 2014, SNSMR, in collaboration with Nova Scotia Environment is going to facilitate workshops and prepare resources that are designed to respond to many of the priorities and issues addressed within the Municipal Climate Change Action Plans.