



The Union
of Nova Scotia
Municipalities

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April 29, 2016

The Honourable Zach Churchill, Minister
Department of Municipal Affairs
P.O. Box 216
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3K5

Dear Minister Churchill:

The UNSM Board received a presentation from the Deputy of Municipal Affairs on a proposed amendment to the *Municipal Government Act* enabling municipalities to phase in increases in commercial assessments as a means to encourage business investment. UNSM understands the basic content of the proposed amendment, as presented in person to the Board by your officials. The Towns Task Force had recommended this tool to be applied to downtowns, mainstreets and brownfield sites. We understand the proposed amendment is broader, and would enable every municipality to offer an incentive for new investment in the existing built environment, serviced by water and sewer, for a limited period of time. The UNSM Board recognizes the value of the tool and would be willing to work with the province to ensure it is appropriately applied and to monitor its impact.

A request has been received by our regional municipalities and municipalities with former towns to allow for the use of this tool within the region, to expand existing water and sewer services for a new development. This request is supported by UNSM. Also, UNSM supports Halifax requests for further amendments to their charter.

Economic development is vital for the health and sustainability of our municipalities. The UNSM Board is encouraged the province is willing to consider new tools for municipalities, and looks forward to further discussions with the province on the application of additional tools.

The UNSM Board appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed amendment.

Sincerely,

Mayor Cecil Clarke
UNSM President

CC/tv

cc: UNSM Board of Directors

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