

## **Resolution 4C**

### **SUSTAINABLE TRANSIT FUNDING (PASSED)**

⇒ Halifax Regional Municipality

**WHEREAS** public transit ridership is rising significantly throughout Canada, with an all time record 1.9 billion trips in 2010; and

**WHEREAS** transit systems across the country continue to expand their services to meet rising demand; and

**WHEREAS** effective public transit systems reduce traffic congestion and gridlock, which Transport Canada estimates cost Canadians up to \$4.6 billion per year; and

**WHEREAS** public transit systems have significant environmental health and economic benefits; and

**WHEREAS** increasing energy prices and concerns over carbon emissions are leading to increased demands on public transit systems; and

**WHEREAS** the availability of public transit is a significant factor in the continued independence of senior citizens and Nova Scotia has the highest proportion of senior citizens in Canada; and

**WHEREAS** municipalities are responsible for operational funding for public transportation in Nova Scotia; and

**WHEREAS** it is estimated that over \$105 million is needed annually to operate and maintain transit systems in Nova Scotia;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities and municipalities enter into discussions with the Province of Nova Scotia concerning the possibility of increased sustainable, predictable operating funding on an annual basis for public transit within the Province and/or providing municipalities with the means to raise funds for public transit outside property taxes and paid fares; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities urge the provincial government to re-engage in the provision of public transit in the Province of Nova Scotia and work with the municipalities to develop a Public Transit Strategy for the Province.

**Background:** *Examples of potential public transit funding sources outside of property taxes and paid fares include advertising, parking fees, capital cost levies,*

*increased bridge tolls, vehicle registration tax and car rental tax, property value capture tax, cargo tax, sales tax, gasoline tax, carbon tax, employer tax, and room/occupancy tax.*

Forwarded to:  
*Minister of the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal  
&  
Minister of Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations*

**RESPONSE:**

*I want to acknowledge with thanks your letter of October 4, 2012, enclosing four Resolutions passed at the September Annual Conference of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities.*

*I should note that Resolutions 17A, 24A, and 4C fall under the purview of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Affairs. We have, therefore, referred those Resolutions to that department for response.*

*The Honourable Maurice Smith, QC  
Minister  
October 23, 2012*

**RESPONSE (from Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations):**

*I am pleased to send to you the Department's response to the 2012 Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) Resolution.*

*On April 22, 2013, the Province announced its Sustainable Transportation Strategy. The Strategy proposes \$10 million in spending over 5 years on transportation initiatives, pending approval. \$6 million of this is from existing funds.*

*The focus of the strategy is on four broad interconnected networks: active transportation, public and community transit, supportive land-use planning, and vehicles and fleets. This strategy will help us move toward expanded services for more riders, reduced traffic congestion, as well as more accessibility and greater mobility for seniors. The strategy also helps achieve some of the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, mandated in the EGSPA.*

*In regard to the request for increased funding for public transit, the Fiscal Review is currently underway in considering alternate revenue generating opportunities for municipalities. I will forward this Resolution to the Fiscal Review Working Committee for their consideration.*

*The Honourable John MacDonell  
Minister  
May 1, 2013*