



Dear party leader:

Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador has been representing incorporated communities in our province since 1951. Over that time, we have worked hard to advocate on behalf of our members on issues that matter to them. This week, MNL launched its Municipal Solutions election advocacy platform. The four advocacy priorities reflected in this platform are:

1. municipal fiscal stability,
2. innovation in infrastructure,
3. regionalization, and
4. a municipal seat at the table.

We are encouraging our members to engage with local candidates on the issues and questions found within the platform. We have also shared this platform with you and your team. Now we are asking for an official response to some of the questions posed. We will post these publicly during the last week of the election campaign. Please respond by Monday, January 25 at 12 p.m. The context and questions are as follows.

Stable Fiscal Reality for the Municipal Sector

Property tax is the main source of municipal revenue in this province. Property tax alone cannot cover the rising cost of operations and infrastructure in a province with an aging and declining population. Municipalities need access to additional sources of revenue. Small changes in provincial fiscal policies can have a big impact on municipal fiscal stability.

Question for the candidate: Do you support exploring additional sources of revenue for municipalities such as access to income and sales tax, thereby lessening the burden currently placed on property tax?

Innovation in Infrastructure

Municipalities in Newfoundland and Labrador are facing an infrastructure crisis. We require more money than we can access to build and maintain infrastructure. We need to explore and foster innovative solutions that make sense for the realities in our communities. We need a clear plan on asset management from the Province.

Question for the candidate: Will you advance efforts to support the design, funding and implementation of new, innovative infrastructure solutions that address longstanding but solvable municipal issues?

Regionalization

Newfoundland and Labrador lacks a modern municipal system. We have 275 municipalities. 75% have fewer than 1000 residents. Regionalization makes it possible for communities to come together to share costs, services and to have a stronger voice together. In some cases, it can mean establishing a regional government.

Question for the candidate: Are you willing to work with MNL and the elected local leaders of this province to implement the necessary structural and legislative changes to implement regionalization in Newfoundland and Labrador?

A Seat at the Table

Municipalities are the level of government closest to the people in our communities. When legislation or regulations affecting municipalities change or when new federal – provincial funding agreements for municipal infrastructure are negotiated, municipalities are often on the outside looking in. We need a seat at the table with government and a strong collaborative relationship to make sure we can make those municipal solutions a reality.

Question for the candidate: What concrete plans do you have for giving the municipal order of government a real seat at the table when making decisions about us?

It is time for change with municipalities at the decision-making table. After all, municipal issues are provincial issues.

We thank you for your time and attention to this request and we look forward to hearing from you in advance of the deadline.

Sincerely,



Craig Pollett, CEO
Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador