

Mr. Craig Pollett
Chief Executive Officer
Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador
79 Mews Place,
St. John's, NL A1B 4N2

Dear Mr. Craig Pollett,

Thank you for your correspondence and for the opportunity to share elements of the Progressive Conservative Party platform as it relates to municipalities.

The road to recovery for our province must include the valued input from residents and communities across the province, and a PC Government will ensure that municipalities have a seat and a voice at the decision-making table. We will consult with municipalities on ways to strengthen local decision-making and engagement.

A PC Government would view Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador as a key partner. We can work together to address many of the challenges our province faces.

Stable Fiscal Reality for the Municipal Sector

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?

In providing infrastructure and services, municipalities and the provincial government draw on the same taxpayer. Provincial and local taxes must be affordable. Governments must collaborate to ensure the burden is reasonable so consumers and employers have money in their pockets to spend, invest and circulate in our economy. A PC Government will work with Municipalities NL to develop a new progressive tax regime for our communities. We will build on the groundbreaking Municipal Fiscal Framework introduced in 2015 to ensure that communities throughout the province can thrive as the province's economy grows in the years ahead.

Innovation in Infrastructure

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

A PC Government will pursue a multiyear planning approach for infrastructure – roads, water and sewer, recreational facilities, and so forth. Our multiyear infrastructure strategy will include an assessment of existing infrastructure throughout the province and a plan to maintain it and replace it as necessary. Decisions will be based on evidence. Roadwork rankings will be published to show where approved and unapproved projects rank based on the criteria the government is applying. Transparency improves accountability.

In conjunction with municipalities and industry, a PC Government will review best practices to ensure that new builds are efficient in terms of cost of heating the building and the environmental impact of emissions.

Regionalization

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 PC Government will facilitate and support the regional sharing of services among municipalities that choose to collaborate. We will advance regional governance and service sharing. We will follow through on the community sustainability partnership that we have negotiated with municipalities to enhance supports to communities and strengthen the social and economic fabric of our regions.

A Seat At The Table

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

The road to recovery for our province must include the valued input from residents and communities across the province, and a PC Government will ensure that municipalities have a seat and a voice at the decision-making table. We will consult with municipalities on ways to strengthen local decision-making and engagement.

A PC Government will invigorate municipal governance through a stronger and more productive partnership with Municipalities NL. We support Municipalities NL in recognizing the importance of enhancing diversity on councils.

A PC Government will develop a broader accountability framework to ensure that new funding for municipalities supports investments in priority service areas. We will develop a provincial municipal asset management framework. We will work with Municipalities NL in developing this framework.

Additional Considerations

In addition to the questions you have asked, there are some policy positions I would also like to draw your attention to.

A PC Government will improve the delivery of safe, potable drinking water. We will conduct a systemic review of water boil-order advisories across the province, with a goal of developing workable small-town solutions and a timeline to address them.

A PC Government will work with municipalities and the Government of Canada to find wastewater solutions that are innovative and right-sized for the communities they serve. Over-building wastewater treatment plants is not the solution. Threatening communities is the wrong approach.

A PC Government will cut red tape and streamline regulations that are making it difficult for municipalities to operate in the best interests of the people they serve. Provincial regulations should not slow down the flow of federal money to communities and deprive residents of those benefits.

A PC Government will use the Lands Act to create reserves that will assist municipalities in acquiring Crown lands at market value in a phased approach for development.

Together, we can work to bring back jobs, prosperity, and support for our communities.

Sincerely,
Ches Crosbie
Leader
Progressive Conservative Party of Newfoundland and Labrador