

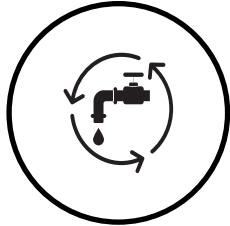
2023 Advocacy Report

Advocating for a Sustainable Future

Councillor Trina Appleby, Advocacy Committee Chair



The advocacy committee of MNL has identified six key areas on which to focus MNL's advocacy efforts:



Sustainable Municipal Infrastructure



A Regional Approach



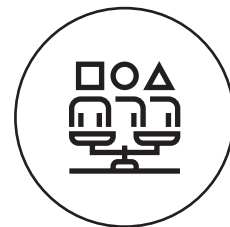
Municipal Fiscal Stability



Climate Resilience



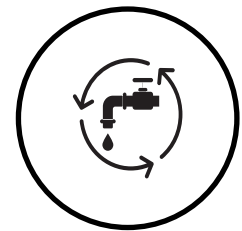
Community Health and Safety



Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion



Sustainable Municipal Infrastructure



The goal: to advance an approach to water and wastewater infrastructure based on right-sized innovative solutions and asset management.

Throughout 2023, MNL continued to work with our federal counterparts on the proposed amendments to the Federal Government's Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations (WSER). We engaged members throughout this process, holding additional information sessions to provide updates and to engage members in the final phases of the consultation process.

We continue to advocate, alongside the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, for specific municipal water and wastewater federal infrastructure funding streams.

In 2023, MNL further refined its collaborative work with post-secondary students on all aspects of sustainable infrastructure planning, development and asset management, particularly in a climate change context, and with great results for small communities.

In the last half of 2023, MNL engaged with members and with the provincial government to determine their progress on asset management.



A Regional Approach



The goal: to promote and support a regional approach to all challenges and solutions.

In February 2023, MNL launched its pre-budget advocacy campaign. One of the asks was for an update on regionalization from the provincial government. In April, the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs determined that it would not be going forward with a regional government model. We continue to advocate for a supported, resourced and formalized regional approach. We have had input on the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs' Community Collaboration Grants initiatives, and their approach to municipal regional collaboration.

Regional economic development work with our partners continued throughout 2023 and will now culminate with the Regional Economic Development Workshop, scheduled for December 11, 2023. This workshop will bring together stakeholders in regional economic development from across the province to develop an action plan, informed by the Report from the Regional Economic Development Task Force.



Municipal Fiscal Stability



The goal: reignite municipal-provincial fiscal framework advocacy and support research on alternate sources of revenue.

Municipal fiscal stability is critical in our sector right now.

MNL's pre-budget advocacy in 2023 ensured the increase of municipal operating grants from \$22 million to \$25 million in 2023; and \$28 million in 2024.

MNL worked with three other Atlantic provincial municipal associations on a municipal fiscal stability research project. A draft report from that work was completed and reviewed by all stakeholders. A series of informational briefs will be forthcoming using that work.

We join with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to advocate for a new municipal growth framework and have been clear that their advocacy work aligns with our own.



Climate Resilience



The goal: revitalize climate change and climate resilience conversations.

Climate change is an ever-present reality for municipalities. Municipal leaders and staff are at the forefront of responding to, preparing for, and adapting to climate change.

MNL has revived the 7-steps toolkit as foundation for local climate adaptation planning.

Work is ongoing with multiple partners to secure additional resources to support communities in baseline climate change assessments and capacity-building for action on both adaptation and mitigation.

We are active in our advocacy to the Federal Government to ensure that any municipal climate change funding meets our members where they are.



Community Health and Safety

The goal: to support members to address broad health and safety challenges in their communities through research and advocacy, and to specifically lay the foundations for leading sector-wide housing and public transportation conversations.



Increasingly, municipalities are involved in a wide variety of community-based conversations and activities that go well beyond core municipal issues. In this priority,

Recognizing that a lack of public transit and housing shortages are among the two most pressing issues for residents in our communities, MNL took leadership in 2023 to further conversations on both, and to work with members and partners on possible solutions. Our focus here is identifying clear roles for municipalities to play, and to unlock funding, legislation and support for our members to fully participate where it makes sense for them.

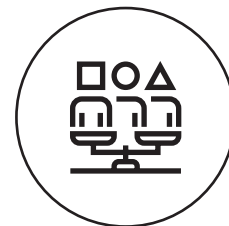
MNL and its members have been deeply engaged throughout 2023 in how to support well-being in our communities. We are active partners in both actions on the Health Accord recommendations, as well as on larger initiatives with the provincial government on well-being.

Throughout 2023, MNL has deepened its relationship with the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Fire Services. Fire departments across the provinces have been forced to fill in gaps where other emergency service providers cannot. This comes at a significant cost to our fire departments, both in terms of financial resources required and in terms of the impacts on firefighters. We are active in this space with our partners to determine the best solutions moving forward.



Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The goal: to lead municipal reconciliation and anti-racism efforts and to promote, encourage, and support greater equity, diversity and inclusion across the sector.



Equity, diversity, and inclusion are essential in our sector. MNL has been working hard to lay foundations to pursue this strategic advocacy priority and to lead municipal reconciliation and anti-racism efforts and to promote, encourage, and support greater equity, diversity and inclusion across the sector.

We continue to work with our Indigenous partners and members of the Indigenous community within our sector to ensure reconciliation efforts at the municipal level are ongoing.

Through financial support from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs, and a partnership with Equal Voice NL, MNL continued with the roll out of the Value We Bring project, through videos and conversations that acknowledge the important place of women and gender diverse individuals, across all their intersecting identities, at our council tables.

Deepening our commitment to allyship, MNL offered Male Allyship training specifically to our members in February 2023, through support from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and White Ribbon.

The 2023 Leadership Summit for women and gender diverse individuals features allyship as its theme.

MNL is advancing its work on and support for youth engagement in the municipal sector. The May Municipal Awareness Week is a product of this commitment. This year, our conference will feature a youth municipal council debate, in partnership with NL Youth Parliament.

