



Dear members:

The Federal Election provides your council the opportunity to speak to local candidates and advocate on behalf of your municipality.

While we know that there are many municipal issues that require attention, we are focusing our attention on the most urgent things that you need for success.

The MNL municipal SUCCESS advocacy campaign focuses on:

- Sustainable Infrastructure
- Urgent municipal issues
- Climate Resilience
- Community Health and Safety
- Regional Economic Development
- Fiscal Stability and,
- The need for a Seat at the table.

Under this advocacy campaign, we have 9 specific requests that you can discuss with candidates.

The Municipal SUCCESS campaign

driven by a
collaborative,
problem-solving
approach
and aligned
with MNL's
strategic advocacy
priorities



Fiscal stability

In advance of the Federal Election, MNL is asking Federal Election candidates, and leaders, to commit to increasing municipal fiscal stability through new revenue sharing tools that ease the reliance of municipalities on property taxes to balance budgets.

Examples of things you can bring forward to local candidates in your discussions:

- Inflation and the increased cost of providing programs and services, with budgetary examples.
- Rising municipal debt to support cost-sharing (if applicable to you)
- For the largest seven municipalities, the lack of access to provincial municipal operating grants.

**Municipalities
require fiscal
Stability**



Sustainable Infrastructure

Municipalities in NL are challenged with replacing and updating water and wastewater infrastructure, especially when climate events put increased pressure on existing systems. The Federal Government is expecting municipalities to play a stronger role in addressing the housing crisis, which requires reliable infrastructure. While municipalities own more than 60% of Canada's core public infrastructure, they only collect between eight to 12 cents of every tax dollar. Funding is available for water and wastewater infrastructure under the Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund – both direct funding to municipalities and through provinces/territories. Municipalities in N.L. are also challenged in achieving compliance under the Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations.

In advance of the Federal Election, MNL is asking Federal Election candidates, and leaders, to commit to:

- Increasing water and wastewater funding directly available to municipalities. Specific focus needs to be on funding wastewater system treatment solutions in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Providing ongoing and additional support to municipalities in Newfoundland and Labrador to reach compliance with the WSER by funding two WSER compliance officers working under Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador.

Examples of things you can bring forward to local candidates in your discussions:

- The age of your water and wastewater infrastructure, the problems that you are experiencing with it, and the cost of repairs, maintenance and replacement.
- The cost of emergency repairs and replacement for aging systems and the challenge in securing funding to support this work.
- The cost of monitoring wastewater flows under the WSER and the need to secure a transitional authorization to avail of a decreased administrative burden and more flexibility under the regulations.
- Projected costs of wastewater treatment in your municipality, compliant with the regulations.

Municipalities in Newfoundland and Labrador must have Sustainable Infrastructure



Climate Resilience

Increasingly, communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador are being challenged by climate events. This includes flooding, damage to infrastructure, coastal erosion and wildfires. According to FCM, 2024 was Canada's costliest year on record for severe weather-related events, costing taxpayers \$8.5 billion in damages. Municipalities need resources and support to respond to emergencies; and to both adapt and mitigate climate change. Every \$1 invested in climate adaptation saves up to \$13-15 in economy-wide benefits.

In advance of the Federal Election, MNL is asking Federal Election candidates, and leaders, to commit to:

- Continuing support available to municipalities for climate adaptation and mitigation, including natural infrastructure solutions.

Examples of things you can bring forward to local candidates in your discussions:

- Emergencies that you have experienced in your municipality and/or region that are climate related, and related damage to your infrastructure.
- The cost of responding to climate-related emergencies, including the cost of replacing infrastructure and/or renewing infrastructure that adapts to climate change.
- Challenges in accessing Federal Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Funding.
- The need for and cost associated with innovative approaches to climate adaptation and mitigation at the local level.

**Municipal Climate
Resilience needs to
be supported and
resourced**



Community Health and Safety

Municipalities always have a role to play in community health and safety. They are the order of government closest to the people. They know their communities and they know the challenges that residents face.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, and throughout the country, municipalities are increasingly expected to play an active part in addressing community crises: they are expected to be part of the solution to the housing crisis; volunteer firefighters are increasingly responding to emergencies – medical and otherwise – outside of their scope of traditional practice. The RCMP rely on volunteer fire departments to support them in their response work because there aren't enough police officers within communities. Municipal leaders are concerned about violence and criminal activity in their areas, and feel there simply is not enough police presence, especially in rural areas. Finally, emergency response and overall community economic and social health relies upon digital connectivity. While investments have been made to advance broadband connectivity, the same is not true for cellular service and it is getting worse.

In advance of the Federal Election, MNL is asking Federal Election candidates, and leaders, to commit to:

- Continue direct support to municipalities to help address the housing crisis through programs such as the Housing Accelerator Fund, so that they can increase their capacity to respond to housing needs in the province.
- Increase, rather than decrease, RCMP community policing.
- Review the regulatory regime for the CRTC as it relates to cell phone service providers and increase funding available to support improved cell phone coverage in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Examples of things you can bring forward to local candidates in your discussions:

- Examples of housing needs in your community, and reasons for increased housing demand (e.g. to support health care professional recruitment and retention, to support economic development, to address seniors' housing needs)
- Statistics from your local/regional RCMP detachment demonstrating number of calls, and nature of calls, especially if there have been increases.
- Examples of discussions that you have had with RCMP regarding their needs, and the additional pressures that reduced RCMP staffing puts on fire departments.
- Examples of where cellular service is weak, worsened or non-existent and any conversations with service providers and the CRTC to suggest challenges and/or solutions.

**Community Health
and Safety must be
prioritized**



Regional Economic Development

The time for supporting local and regional economic development, both large and small, in our province is now. Tariff threats from the United States has forced Canadians, and Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, to rethink how we do business, and with whom. We have an abundance of resources in our province, and our communities; we have dedicated, smart entrepreneurs who are determined to make strong, relevant contributions to our local economies. Municipalities have an important role to play in this through attracting business and providing the right policy and financial ecosystem for businesses to thrive. They can't do this alone, and they need to be part of the process.

In advance of the Federal Election, MNL is asking Federal Election candidates, and leaders, to commit to:

- Supporting regional economic development in Newfoundland and Labrador that is driven by local entrepreneurs.

Examples of things you can bring forward to local candidates in your discussions:

- Economic development challenges in your area, including business closures and the reasons for those closures (e.g. COVID, lack of support, lack of available labour, housing, public transit, etc.)
- The potential impact of US Tariffs on local businesses/industry in your community, and what these impacts would mean for municipalities.
- Economic opportunities in your area and what is needed to ensure that businesses/industry can thrive.

**Regional Economic
Development
requires support**



Seat at the Table

Municipalities always require a seat at the decision-making table. Municipalities must have an active role in all Federal program and policy design on files that involve them, rely upon them, or impact them.

But we also need to get people to the municipal table. For any number of reasons, it is difficult to attract people to run for municipal council and to retain those who are already involved. In Newfoundland and Labrador, municipal councils are, for the most part, volunteers and are not fairly compensated for work that they do. In short, there are few economic incentives to run for council. Prior to 2019, councillor remuneration, as per the Federal Income Tax act, was one-third tax exempt. Changes to the Act introduced in 2017 and implemented in 2019 meant that no portion of councillor remuneration was tax exempt, thus reducing their after-tax compensation largely. If we want to attract diverse candidates to the council table, we need to ensure that there are financial benefits and incentives.

In advance of the Federal Election, MNL is asking Federal Election candidates, and leaders, to:

- Commit to change the Federal Income Tax Act to make volunteer councillor remuneration tax exempt.

Examples of things you can bring forward to local candidates in your discussions:

- After tax remuneration amounts for council members compared to how much time is actually spent on council duties per month.
- The challenges to attract and fill council seats in your municipality.
- Examples of the pressures and the realities of council work in small and large communities that occur; yet very little remuneration is even possible (because of lean budgets and legislated caps) and that even these small amounts are taxed in the same way as regular income.

**Municipal leaders
must always have a
Seat at the
decision-making
tables that affect
them**

