

# **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)**

**between:**

**The Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM)  
and  
The Province of Nova Scotia**

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR AN EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIP**

### ***WHEREAS:***

The provincial and municipal orders of government are dedicated to the well-being of Nova Scotia's economy, society and environment and the promotion of vibrant, healthy communities;

The provincial and municipal orders of government serve the same taxpayer and recognize the importance of consultation in developing sound policies and programs for the taxpayer;

An effective relationship between the provincial and municipal orders of government results in:

- better government planning;
- more efficient provision of government services;
- a reduction in duplication of services;
- a better public perception of government; and
- a clearer and more thorough understanding of each order of government;

Effective cooperation between the Province and UNSM enhances governmental performance and promotes public confidence and sound planning;

The Province recognizes the role of the UNSM as the single, unified voice of municipalities in Nova Scotia;

The Province reserves the right to discuss issues of a local nature with individual municipalities or groups of municipalities from time to time.

### ***THEREFORE:***

The following guiding principles established in this MOU form the basis of the relationship between the UNSM and the Province. This MOU is to serve as a statement of intentions of the UNSM and the Province and not as a contract in the legal sense.

## ***GUIDING PRINCIPLES:***

### **1. Regular and Ongoing Consultation**

- 1.1 The Province and UNSM will consult with each other in a timely manner on any municipally related legislative, regulatory, policy or financial proposal that has a specific impact on the Province or on municipalities.
- 1.2 Consultation should occur as early as possible in advance of the implementation process.
- 1.3 The Province and UNSM will endeavour to include in any consultation, where applicable, a costing of the proposed financial changes and an analysis of possible revenue sources.
- 1.4 A municipal-provincial roundtable will be established, with meetings scheduled three times annually, to promote the consultation process.
- 1.5 The municipal-provincial roundtable will work cooperatively to develop a short-list of priority areas to address on an annual basis. The list should include a reasonable number of items that may be resolved within the following fiscal year.

### **2. Respect for Areas of Jurisdiction**

- 2.1 The Province and municipalities respect the right of each order of government to discharge their responsibilities within their areas of jurisdiction.
- 2.2 The Province and the UNSM will promote a clear definition and understanding of the roles of the provincial and municipal orders of government to clarify accountability for specific policies and programs.

### **3. Robust Two-Way Communication**

The Province and UNSM will communicate in a timely manner and in an open and transparent way when addressing concerns or questions raised by the other.

### **4. Resolve Differences Through Direct Dialogue and Discussion**

- 4.1 The Province and UNSM will endeavour to resolve differences, conflicts or disagreements through direct dialogue and discussion.
- 4.2 Both parties agree that if one party notifies the media of an upcoming provincial / municipal meeting, that party also commits to notifying the other party of this fact, in advance of the meeting.

**5. Commitment and Responsibility**

- 5.1 The Province is committed to consultation with the UNSM when considering new legislation or regulations that will have a municipal impact.
- 5.2 This MOU builds on the strong relationship between the Province and UNSM and formalizes the Province's support for the principle of consultation with the UNSM.

***REVIEW OF THE MOU***

The parties will review the MOU within two years of its adoption to ensure its relevance and appropriateness and to maintain a common understanding of its meaning.

***ADMINISTRATION OF THE MOU***

The lead contacts for administering this MOU are the President of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities and the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

***COMMITMENT:***

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING to be signed as of this \_\_15th\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_September\_\_\_\_\_, 2005.

**SIGNED** on behalf of the **PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA** by:

*Original Signed By*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Barry Barnet, Minister  
Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations

**SIGNED** on behalf of the **UNION OF NOVA SCOTIA MUNICIPALITIES** by:

*Original Signed By*

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Charles Crosby, President  
Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities