



**Municipal Affairs
Office of the Minister**

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May 4, 2026

David Mitchell
President, Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM)
Suite 1304, 1809 Barrington Street
Halifax, NS B3J 3K8
Via email: david.mitchell@bridgewater.ca

Dear David Mitchell:

Under the provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*, the Minister of Municipal Affairs must provide to the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities 12-months' notice of any provincial legislation, regulation, or administrative actions that could have the effect of decreasing revenues or increasing the required expenditures of municipalities. This letter is intended to provide notice of such changes for fiscal year 2027-2028 and beyond.

The Department of Municipal Affairs (DMA) canvassed all provincial departments to seek information on plans for legislative, regulatory, and policy changes in the coming fiscal year. Below you will find a summary of the results of that process.

Department of Cybersecurity and Digital Solutions

- 1) Starting in 2026-27, the Department of Cyber Security and Digital Solutions (CSDS) will begin working with affected municipalities to offboard from the following SAP-related services:
 - Customer Care and Service (CCS) Utilities (e.g., property tax and revenue): Amherst, Annapolis, CBR, Cumberland, East Hants, Queens
 - Materials Management: Amherst, Annapolis, CBRM, Cumberland, East Hants, Queens, HRM
 - HR Pay: CBRM, HRM
 - Environment Health and Safety Management: HRM
 - Success Factors HR: HRM

CSDS is issuing notice and will be communicating with municipalities directly.

Department of Emergency Management

- 1) The Department acknowledges that elements of ongoing work to strengthen fire services in Nova Scotia may have a financial impact on some municipal units.

With the introduction of the *Act to Provide Support for Fire Protection Services*, the Department is providing one-year notice that all municipalities – whether they oversee fire services or not – will be required to:

- conduct a fire protection service review in order to ensure municipalities and fire service providers make evidence-based decisions about the services they provide to their community,
- ensure that local firefighter competencies, training, and personal protective equipment meet the service standard required by the fire protection service review, and
- participate in a common records management system.

The possible impacts of these new requirements, which will be further detailed through regulations and standards, may vary significantly based on local context, including existing governance and collaboration models, levels of municipal readiness, and voluntary fire service provider capacity.

This legislation is part of an ongoing commitment to strengthening the fire service sector through:

- access to specialized firefighter training and the certification process,
- education/training for municipal elected officials,
- procurement support,
- mutual aid and service agreement templates,
- the new Fire Records Management System, and
- a risk-based assessment tool to facilitate council decision-making around fire protection service levels.

Department of Growth and Development

- 1) A review of the *Peggy's Cove Commission Act* is seeking to modernize planning for the Peggy's Cove area. Given the location of Peggy's Cove within the boundaries of HRM, any proposed changes to the Act or its administration could have an impact on the municipality, for example, shifting responsibility for planning approvals.

- 2) The Department is undertaking a review of the Regional Enterprise Networks (RENS) program. Key areas of focus include improving consistency in service delivery across the province, improving how businesses access and navigate existing programs and services and aligning delivery with provincial economic development priorities. Addressing these areas may involve adjustments to the current REN model, which would have implications for municipal partners.

Department of Intergovernmental Affairs

- 1) Under our trade policy responsibilities, Intergovernmental Affairs advises that there are procurement thresholds under several free trade agreements that could impact municipalities. Every two years, Global Affairs Canada updates its thresholds for covered procurements under the Canada-Europe Trade Agreement (CETA), the Canada-UK Trade Continuity Agreement (TCA), and the Canada Free Trade Agreement (CFTA). Municipal procurements are covered under these obligations. All procurements above the thresholds must be publicly tendered unless subject to an exemption.

The threshold values in Canadian dollars for the period of January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2027, are as follows:

FTA	Goods	Services	Construction
CFTA	Province		
	\$34,700	\$139,000	\$139,000
	Municipalities and MASH		
	\$139,000	\$139,000	\$347,400
CETA/TCA	Crowns, Utilities, etc.		
	\$694,700	\$694,700	\$6,943,900
	Province, Municipalities and MASH		
	\$368,000	\$368,000	\$9,200,000
CFTA	Crowns		
	\$653,200	\$653,200	\$9,200,000
	Utilities, etc.		
\$736,000	\$736,000	\$9,200,000	

Department of Justice

- 1) The Nova Scotia Comprehensive Policing Review was released in June 2025. Since that time, the Department of Justice has met with all municipalities to discuss implementation of the six foundational changes and the expanded role of the provincial police service. These foundational changes are designed to strengthen public safety across the province and support more effective, consistent, and sustainable outcomes. As part of implementation:
 - Municipalities are required to meet established provincial policing standards. Municipalities that are unable to meet these standards independently will be required to contract with the provincial police service for the delivery of those services and, effective April 1, 2027, will be required to purchase those services on a fee basis. While these changes are intended to enhance public safety and ensure greater consistency across jurisdictions, they may result in increased costs for some municipalities. At this time, the specific nature and extent of any financial impacts cannot be determined for any individual municipality.
 - The Province will continue to enhance and modernize its policing standards over time. The creation or expansion of standards may result in additional costs for municipalities.
 - The Province will procure a province-wide records management system (RMS) in fiscal year 2026–27. The Province will fund the acquisition and associated start-up costs. It is anticipated that beginning in 2027–28, as part of implementation, municipalities with their own police agencies will be required to contribute annual licensing fees associated with the RMS. For municipalities policed by the RCMP under the provincial policing model, RMS-related costs will be incorporated into the provincial billing model.
 - The Province will continue to work toward the development of a new municipal billing model for provincial police services during fiscal year 2026–27. Municipalities will continue to be engaged throughout this process. The specific structure of the model and the extent of any financial impacts cannot be determined at this time for any individual municipality; however, changes to the billing model could result in increased costs for some municipalities beginning in 2027–28.
- 2) The National Police Federation is the certified union representing regular members and reservists of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) below the rank of Inspector. The current Collective Agreement expires on March 31, 2025, and labour negotiations between the National Police Federation and Treasury Board Secretariat Canada are ongoing. The cost implications cannot be determined at this time.

- 3) The 'H' Division (Nova Scotia) Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) have provided the Department of Justice with the annual Multi-Year Financial Plan (MYFP), that reflects the organization's budget requests for the next fiscal year, and strategic planning for subsequent years. The cost implications cannot be determined at this time.
- 4) Biological Casework Analysis Agreement provides municipalities with DNA analysis arising from criminal investigations. Costs will be determined upon the release of the "Total Uniform Assessment" by Municipal Affairs.
- 5) Municipalities in Nova Scotia are prescribed under the *Accessibility Act* which means they must have an accessibility advisory committee, prepare and make publicly available accessibility plans, and comply with accessibility standards (regulations) once they are enacted.
 - The Built Environment Accessibility Standard Regulations under the *Accessibility Act* were approved on March 7, 2025. Compliance with the standard is required beginning April 1, 2026. These regulations apply to newly constructed and newly installed elements of the built environment such as pedestrian facilities, recreational spaces, and outdoor infrastructure. These regulations include technical design requirements for infrastructure. The regulations also introduce requirements for accessibility planning for both new and existing infrastructure, including municipal infrastructure. These infrastructure plans are due April 1, 2026. There is no requirement to retrofit existing infrastructure, and as a result the cost implications are minimal.
 - The Department of Justice is expected to share the proposed accessibility standard for employment, and goods and services for public review in 2026-27. This would be an opportunity for municipalities to review the proposed standard to provide input into the feasibility and cost implications of the proposed standards on municipalities.

Department of Public Works

- 1) The recoverable cost to municipalities for adjustments to catch basins, manholes, and water valves during construction work will increase June 1st, 2027. Manhole and catch basin adjustments will increase from \$600 to \$1200, and water valve adjustments will increase from \$300 to \$600.

Department of Service Nova Scotia

- 1) Nova Scotia's new FOIPOP Act will come into effect on April 1, 2027 and regulations are currently under development to support the new Act. The legislation requires municipalities to adopt new privacy policies and practices, requires mandatory reporting of significant privacy breaches to affected individuals and the Information and Privacy Commissioner, and gives the Information and Privacy Commissioner oversight over municipal privacy programs for the first time. It is anticipated that these changes will require municipal resources in the form of personnel to undertake privacy assessments for any new projects or programs where personal information is being collected, for mandatory privacy breach notifications when there are significant privacy breaches, and for responding to privacy complaints filed with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC). The Province will support municipalities through creation of templates, training materials, and education campaigns to help mitigate some of these impacts.

Yours truly,



Honourable John A. MacDonald
Minister of Municipal Affairs

c: Juanita Spencer, Chief Executive Officer, NSFM