



Business Plan

2020–21

*Department of
Municipal Affairs and Housing*



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Budget 2020–21: Business Plan
Finance and Treasury Board
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Message from Minister and Deputy Minister

I am pleased to present the Business Plan for 2020-21 for the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The department is committed to supporting and working with municipalities and our partners to ensure Nova Scotia has safe, strong, successful and vibrant communities.

During the 2019-20 fiscal year, Housing Nova Scotia became part of the department. Housing Nova Scotia is the primary housing delivery agency in Nova Scotia, responsible for ensuring access to safe, suitable, and affordable housing for Nova Scotians with low and moderate incomes.

Every Nova Scotian deserves a safe, affordable place to live. Our new 10-year housing funding agreement with the Government of Canada was announced in 2019. The Province's first 3-year Action Plan under the agreement outlines the initiatives that will be undertaken using federal and provincial funding.

The Action Plan supports the continuation of existing programs and contains new initiatives to advance National Housing Strategy objectives and provincial housing outcomes. New programs over the next three years will focus on preserving existing affordable housing stock and improving the capacity of the community housing sector to support the Province's approach to affordable housing over the next decade. The Community Housing Transformation Center in particular will be a key partner in providing tools and supports to increase the capacity of community housing providers in Nova Scotia.

During the previous fiscal year, the department also worked closely with the Municipality of the District of West Hants and the Town of Windsor to bring the two units together through a consolidation process after the municipalities determined that it was in the best interest of their region. In the coming year, we will continue to facilitate municipal modernization and encourage our municipal partners to identify innovative approaches to increased regional collaboration.

As part of this work, the department will deliver the Municipal Innovation Program that will provide funding to municipalities looking to work collaboratively with their neighbours in the areas of economic development, regional infrastructure, and regional planning. We will also continue to work with the Regional Enterprise Networks (RENs) and our municipal partners to identify opportunities to further support the RENs in their critical economic development role.

Through our various funding programs, we will continue to invest in Nova Scotia communities to help support them as they work towards building modern and robust infrastructure, reducing or mitigating the effect of floods, providing clean water, and delivering important services to Nova Scotians.

We will ensure Nova Scotians continue to have strong and robust emergency preparedness coordination and services, and fire and building safety programs and services. The Emergency

Management Office (EMO) has updated the Provincial Strategic Emergency Management Plan that supports the preparation for and response to emergency events. EMO continues to support municipalities in the review and updating of their emergency management plans.

Work also continues with the Next Generation 911 project (NG9-1-1). NG9-1-1 is a replacement of the current infrastructure and system. It will enable Nova Scotians to access new, enhanced and innovative 9-1-1 services.

The Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) will continue to support provincial fire services through our ongoing work with our provincial and municipal partners as well as through the Joint Municipal Fire Services Committee. The OFM will also continue to support the health and safety of our firefighters through the ongoing administration of the Emergency Services Provider Fund.

In the coming year, Municipal Affairs and Housing will continue to work with municipalities, the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities, the Association of Municipal Administrators, our emergency management and fire service partners, Regional Enterprise Networks, Regional Housing Authorities, the Canadian Housing Transformation Center and other partners. Together, we will continue to build a stronger, more sustainable province.

Sincerely,

“Original signed by”

Chuck Porter
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

“Original signed by”

Nancy MacLellan
Deputy Minister, Municipal Affairs
and Housing

Departmental Mandate

In 2017, the Minister responsible for Municipal Affairs and the Minister responsible for Housing Nova Scotia (at the time, the Minister for Department of Community Services) received the following highlighted items in their mandate letters:

- Work with federal partners to reduce the waitlist for affordable housing by 30% over three years beginning in 2018-19.
- Help first time home buyer by creating a down payment assistance program.
- Create innovative approaches to regional economic development such as updating and improving the Regional Enterprise network (REN) model.
- Work to build on the current strength of relationship with the municipalities and encourage municipal modernization.
- Work with municipalities and Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal on phase two of the federal infrastructure funding programs to support municipalities in leveraging federal investments.
- Create a beautification and streetscaping program
- Create a Community Works program.

In continuing to deliver on this mandate, the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing (DMAH) will continue to promote responsible local government and safe, sustainable, inclusive communities. Through working with municipalities and other partners, the department will contribute to strong and diverse economies, high quality of life, and affordable, adequate and suitable housing for all.

The mandate of the department is implemented through the following divisions/offices:

1. Corporate Policy and Innovation
2. Emergency Management Office (EMO)
3. Housing Nova Scotia
4. Municipal Sustainability

Government Strategic Goals

The Government of Nova Scotia has four strategic goals:

1. Inclusive Economic Growth
2. Quality Education
3. Healthy Population and System
4. Safe and Connected Communities

The Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing contributes to these goals by providing affordable housing, supporting the Regional Enterprise Networks (RENs), and partnering with municipalities to build and maintain community infrastructure and develop and deliver emergency management services.

Core Business Functions / Areas

The Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing delivers on the Minister's mandate through three core business areas: Emergency Management Office (EMO), Housing, and Municipal Sustainability. Through these core business areas, the department builds relationships with key community stakeholders, deliver programs, and provide advice around emerging issues in local government and housing across Nova Scotia.

Emergency Management Office (EMO)

EMO administers a province-wide EMO operational program, including collaboration and support of Municipal emergency management capacity, Provincial 911 Service, Ground Search and Rescue, and the Disaster Financial Assistance Program. The Office of the Fire Marshal collaborates municipally, provincially and federally to advise on building and fire safety issues and provides government departments, municipalities and the public with effective approaches for building and fire safety in Nova Scotia.

Outcomes

1. The safety of Nova Scotians is enhanced through the coordination and collaboration of all stakeholders in the prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery from emergencies.
2. Nova Scotians have access to high quality & reliable 911 Service.
3. Nova Scotians understand their personal responsibility for building and fire safety.

Actions

In 2019-2020 the Emergency Management Office will:

1. Support municipalities in reviewing and updating their Emergency Management Plans.
2. Partner with Public Safety Canada and other related stakeholders to continue to facilitate Critical Infrastructure emergency planning and resiliency.
3. Continue planning and development related to the deployments of Next Generation 911.
4. Work with private and public partners to identify gaps in cellular service coverage and promote extension of the existing cellular network.
5. Continue to work with provincial/municipal partners to support their efforts in achieving building and fire safety.
6. Continue to support provincial fire services, including the ongoing administration of the Emergency Services Provider Fund.
7. Support the work of the Joint Municipal Fire Services Committee.

Housing Nova Scotia

Housing Nova Scotia develops, delivers and administers housing programs across the housing spectrum in Nova Scotia. This includes operation of provincially-owned social housing rental properties and administration of rent supplements through Regional Housing Authorities; repair and renewal of the provincially owned social housing portfolio; delivery of capital contribution programs to support rental housing preservation and expansion; programs to support low-income homeowners and first-time home buyers; and programs to support households or individuals at-risk of homelessness.

Outcomes:

1. Housing has responsive programs that support Nova Scotians across the housing spectrum.
2. An adequate supply of affordable housing for Nova Scotians with low to moderate incomes.
3. A stronger community housing sector in Nova Scotia.

Actions

In 2020-2021 Housing will continue to deliver on the three-year Action Plan by:

1. Working with stakeholders and partners to build capacity in Nova Scotia's community housing sector.
2. Strengthening, modernizing, and delivering programs across the housing spectrum to ensure they are responsive to need, and aligned with deliverables under the new 10-year bi-lateral Housing Agreement with CMHC.
3. Completing a Rental Market Study to inform next steps on targeting partnerships for affordable housing development.
4. Advance initiatives to increase access to and the supply of affordable housing such as introducing new community-housing rent supplements and advancing new provincial programs that contribute to new affordable housing developments and preservation of existing Social Housing.
5. Investing in capital upgrades through Public Housing Renewal projects.
6. Leverage federal funding under the ICIP to improve energy efficiency within provincially owned social housing properties.

In 2020-2021 Housing will also undertake initiatives outside the Action Plan to advance the Province's long-range housing outcomes by:

1. Implementing the Integrated Plan to address Homelessness.
2. Working with the Advisory group to develop an Accessibility Plan as a designated body.
3. Developing a long-term strategy to ensure greater financial predictability and suitability of public housing assets, for the greatest number of Nova Scotians.
4. Deliver on year three of the Provincial rent supplement commitment to introduce 1500 new rent supplements for by 2020-21.

Municipal Sustainability Division (MSD)

The Municipal Sustainability Division provides advice, assistance and training in areas of municipal administration, financial management, and land use planning. MSD partners with municipalities; supports the Regional Enterprise Networks (RENs), and provides governance leadership on complex municipal issues. MSD negotiates, administers, provides project advice on federal and provincial infrastructure funding programs, and plays a key role in maintain the province's relationship with 50 municipalities and 20 villages in Nova Scotia.

Outcomes

1. Sustainable communities with diversified economies
2. A legislative and regulatory framework necessary to build and maintain healthy and vibrant municipalities.
3. Municipalities are provided with the appropriate resources and advice to support financial capacity-building and provide effective local governance.
4. Municipalities are easily able to leverage funding to support innovative projects and ongoing municipal infrastructure needs.

Actions

In 2020-2021 the Municipal Sustainability Division will:

1. Continue to work with the RENs to focus mandates and support increased operational effectiveness.
2. In collaboration with the Joint Municipal/Provincial Roundtable, continue to focus on the Partnership Framework deliverables; respond to annual NSFM resolutions; and coordinate policy priorities with the NSFM, DMA, and other provincial departments to ensure joint priorities are being addressed.
3. Review the Municipal Financial Capacity Grant (MFCG)
4. Encourage municipal regional collaboration in the area of land use planning, economic development, and infrastructure investment, and provide funding for regional initiatives through the Municipal Innovation Program.
5. Support municipalities voluntarily engaging in restructure and consolidation conversations with neighboring municipalities.
6. Support municipalities in addressing impacts of climate change through climate adaptation infrastructure.
7. Assist municipalities with implementation of minimum planning requirements.
8. Complete the development of a municipal planning flood line mapping standard for the province.
9. Continue the delivery and administration of infrastructure funding programs and work in collaboration with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal on the new Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.
10. Continue to work with our municipalities to create standardized tools and resources to advance asset management planning in Nova Scotia.
11. Provide in depth analysis on property assessment in support of Department various initiatives.

12. Continue to develop and improve financial tools used to enhance municipal capacity. Examples: development of a risk management program, enhancements to financial analysis and dashboard tool, changes to FRAM to reflect upcoming PSAB changes.

Financial Summary

Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing			
(\$ thousands)			
Program & Service Area	2019-2020 Estimate	2019-2020 Forecast	2020-2021 Estimate
Senior Management	706	811	980
Corporate Policy & Innovation	1,629	1,780	2,311
Housing	70,177	79,615	103,962
Municipal Sustainability	196,990	242,163	189,905
Emergency Management Office	13,897	23,010	11,335
Total Program Expenses	283,399	347,379	308,513
Ordinary Recoveries	137,721	190,986	127,559
TCA Purchase Requirements	505	268	476
Provincial Funded Staff (Net FTEs)	154.0	147.5	182.0