



NOVA SCOTIA FEDERATION
OF MUNICIPALITIES

REVIEW OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY (REVISED)

Mayors, Wardens, and CAOs

February 26, 2025

Better government. Stronger communities.

OPENING REMARKS

- Notable electoral success has led to the second largest (%) majority government in Nova Scotia's history.
- With this majority (43 of 55 seats/78%), the current government can change house rules and can easily pass bills.
- New priorities not discussed during election campaign have emerged.



INITIAL CONCERNS OF LEGISLATION

- Reduction of public oversight and grounds for debate
- Reducing barriers to dismissing employees
- Streamlining approaches to order access to private lands
- Lifting bans and minimizing oversight on resource extraction
- New obligations for municipalities to comply with (and finance) orders from the Minister of Public Works as part of Link Nova Scotia



PERTINENT LEGISLATION/RESOLUTIONS

- Bill 1: An Act Respecting Government Organization and Administration
- Bill 6: An Act Respecting Agriculture, Energy and Natural Resources
- Resolution 5: Reforming the Law Amendments Committee to Public Bills Committee
- Bill 24: Amendments to Joint Regional Transportation Act and creation of the Temporary Access to Land Act



BILL 24 IN FOCUS

Bill 24: Amendments to Joint Regional Transportation Act and creation of the Temporary Access to Land Act

- Rename JRT Agency as Link Nova Scotia
- “Region” remains specific to area/municipalities surrounding HRM, but ministerial powers expanded to potentially apply to any and all municipalities
- Ministerial power to order municipalities with reasonable timelines but no financial support or regard for municipal planning/budgeting/etc both immediate and long term
- Orders under this Act are exempt from duty to consult (MGA s. 519)
- Municipalities must comply with the Link NS Regional Transportation Plan



KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR MUNICIPALITIES

- Increased reduction of municipal autonomy and ability to plan
- Decreased grounds for notice and engagement of government decisions (i.e.: Law Amendments Committee, s. 519 of the MGA)
- Potential for disruption of private property with new right of way legislation



OBSERVED ISSUES

- Ability to “do more faster” by centralizing decision making
- Intrusions into municipal jurisdiction (and at potential municipal cost)
- Willingness to withdraw plans when there is considerable public pushback and more information gathered



ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- What are key concerns?
- Legislation-specific response or thematic response to observed issues?
- Thoughts on working with the broader public and partner groups?





QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



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