

News release

Modernizing Municipal Government Act and HRM Charter to Benefit Nova Scotians

[Municipal Affairs \(../search?dept=152\)](#)

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Amendments to the Municipal Government Act and the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) Charter introduced today, March 5, will mean municipalities will no longer require a legislative change to approve spending for a new purpose.

“With these changes, municipalities will have more autonomy and flexibility to better meet the needs of their citizens,” said Municipal Affairs Minister Chuck Porter. “These amendments are another step forward in our work to modernize the legislation governing municipalities.”

Currently, municipalities can only spend on items that are included on a list in the Municipal Government Act and the Halifax Charter. If they wish to spend on goods or services which are not on this list, they require a legislative amendment. This can restrict the services a municipality can offer, or activities they can be involved in and prevent them from making decisions in a timely manner.

This change will remove the list from the act and the charter so that municipalities can more readily respond to priorities.

“Municipalities are required to address complex issues at the local and regional level,” said Richard Donaldson, warden of the Municipality of the District of Argyle. “A modernized legislation delegates decision- making to municipalities and we should be ready to embrace the responsibility and opportunity this allows us.”

Municipalities remain accountable to their residents for how municipal finances are spent and are still required to spend within the budget that has been approved by council. All other legislated requirements for municipal spending remain in place to ensure fiscal responsibility and accountability is maintained at the municipal level.

FOR BROADCAST USE:

Amendments to the Municipal Government Act and the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter introduced today (March 5th) will mean municipalities will no longer require a legislative change to approve spending for a new municipal purpose.

Municipal Affairs Minister Chuck Porter says the changes mean municipalities will have more autonomy and flexibility to better meet the needs of citizens and this is another step in modernizing the legislation governing municipalities.

Currently, municipalities can only spend on items that are included on a list. If they wish to spend on goods or services which are not on this list, they require a legislative amendment. This change will remove the list so that municipalities can more readily respond to priorities.


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