

*Press Release
For immediate release*

**The Cities of New-Brunswick and the Association francophone des municipalités are
'frustrated' with lack of consultation**

Bathurst, May 25 2020 - The Cities of New Brunswick Association and the Association francophone des municipalités du Nouveau-Brunswick (AFMNB) have an important message for our provincial leaders as they discuss and prepare a strategy to boost our economy post COVID-19: New Brunswick municipalities need to be part of the discussion to guarantee long-term success for our province.

With the pandemic potentially triggering a global economic slowdown, leaders from all levels of government need to work together in true partnership when developing a plan moving forward that will stimulate economic growth with long lasting effects. "In order for anyone to get ahead right now, the Government of New Brunswick needs to work harder to establish with communities through better communication and stronger investments" says Adam Lordon, President of the Cities of New Brunswick Association and Mayor of Miramichi.

Several times throughout the last few years, the Cities of New Brunswick Association and the AFMNB has called on the provincial government to engage municipalities in conversation before making key infrastructure and investment decisions. "The Cities of New Brunswick and the AFMNB are still waiting for the opportunity to be brought at the table when decisions are made that will have dramatic impacts on the continued growth and prosperity of our cities," says President of the AFMNB and Mayor of Atholville, Michel Soucy.

We appreciate the leadership of the Premier and the other party leaders in taking the necessary steps by declaring a state of emergency to enhance measures to help contain the spread of COVID-19 as well as announcing assistance to support New Brunswick businesses and employees. "However, we are disappointed to hear that the Province is proposing changes to the IBA (Integrated Bilateral Agreement) that will effect municipalities for the next decade and not consulting us at all about what that will mean for us or to see if we might have input on how to strengthen the program" says President of the Cities of New-Brunswick Association, Adam Lordon.

Municipalities infrastructure and services are a basis for the economy and quality of life of a municipality. This includes both hard infrastructure such as roads or drinking water and wastewater systems and soft infrastructure such as IT services. "In the long-term, infrastructure investment can boost economic growth by increasing the potential supply capacity of an economy. Ongoing increased funding for local infrastructure must be a provincial priority" concluded the President of the AFMNB, Michel Soucy

Together we can accomplish great things. Investments in infrastructure and our municipalities are essential to our efforts to build a safe and healthy province. New Brunswick municipalities provide essential services, develop local infrastructure, promote economic development, and deliver social and cultural programs. With such important responsibilities, the province and municipalities must work together to help our communities thrive.

Once again, the Cities of New Brunswick Association and the AFMNB are calling on the Provincial government to be part of the conversation. The provincial government needs to engage New Brunswick municipalities about any proposed changes to the IBA (Integrated Bilateral Agreement) to ensure any proposed changes will maximize the economy recovery and strengthen the asset management of our municipalities.

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