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Press Release

Leaving no one behind – CCPA-NS releases municipal report in advance of Fall elections

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HALIFAX/K'jipuktuk – The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Nova Scotia Office released a new report today on the state of municipalities in Nova Scotia ahead of municipal elections in October.

Building Inclusive Communities: A Policy Agenda for Nova Scotia Municipalities that Leaves No One Behind contains policy recommendations in six key areas and includes sets of questions that residents can ask candidates running in municipal elections in the Fall.

“I invite every person who runs for municipal council in Nova Scotia to look at this report and steal some of its ideas. These recommendations focus on fairness, getting value for money, and expanding opportunities for residents to shape municipal budgets and services. This report provides examples, tools, strategies and lessons learned here and elsewhere that are implementable once the new councils are elected,” said Dr. Christine Saulnier, Director of CCPA-NS and a co-author of the report.

The report recommends that municipalities move toward providing free public transit, support building 30,000+ new affordable homes, and save money by putting an end to ineffective contracting-out and privatization.

“Progressive changes at the municipal level can have a huge impact on provincial and national policy debates. Municipalities can lead the way. Nova Scotia needs municipal councils that will turn the values of social and economic justice into concrete policy realities to improve people’s lives. This report outlines some of the steps that municipalities can take to ensure they are leaving no one behind,” said Kyle Buott, a co-author of the report.

Urgent action is required at the municipal level to address and mitigate climate change's impacts. The report also highlights steps municipalities can take to be more prepared for climate change. “Municipalities need new revenue options, and leveraging green technologies to create new, municipally-owned green energy utilities is one way to do it, as many municipalities in Nova Scotia have done already. Addressing climate change requires every municipality to adopt a climate action plan with meaningful investment, targets and timelines,” said Kenya Thompson, a research associate with CCPA-NS and a co-author of the report.

The report is available online at: <https://policyalternatives.ca/NSMunicipalitiesVote2024>



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Support for *Building Inclusive Communities*:

“Putting an end to contracting out of public services and becoming living wage employers would be a huge step forward for municipal workers and residents who want excellent quality service when they need it. These recommendations should be implemented in every municipality in the province. The evidence provided for making these changes is compelling. For example, HRM could save just over \$3 million by bringing just waste collective services in-house. CBRM should stop contemplating contracting out these services because doing so could cost them up to \$200,000 a year extra or \$5 million over a 25-year contract.” – Nan McFadgen, President of CUPE Nova Scotia

“We encourage other municipalities in Nova Scotia to follow the example of the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg and become Blue Communities. Recognizing water as a human right and valuing public delivery of water and sanitation services are the first steps to protecting water resources for future generations.” – Angela Giles, Atlantic Regional Organizer, Council of Canadians

“There is a fundamental fiscal imbalance, leading to perpetual financial instability for municipalities in Nova Scotia. Municipalities are the closest level of government to our communities, to us and our neighbours, and they see most vividly the growing economic disparities we live with, and the increasing need for larger and more sophisticated social policy and program responses. Until the financial formulas (transfers) and tools (taxes) of municipalities are modernized, they'll continue to struggle to respond on a scale appropriate to the need. Municipalities know intimately what their residents and neighbourhood needs. We welcome this report and its highlighting of a vision for a brighter future for municipalities in Nova Scotia.”

– Erika Shea, President/CEO, New Dawn Enterprises.

“No more delays! Municipalities must step up and ensure that renters in their communities are not worried about losing their housing and have safe, affordable housing in good repair. The HRM must work with the provincial and federal governments and demand massive investment in our housing. They must also use their full powers to create more non-market housing, and stop tenant displacement that is rampant in our city. We are asking all tenants to take the pledge, support the HRM Tenants Vote Platform, and vote for tenant-friendly politicians in the upcoming election.”

– Heather Clark - HRM Mainland Chapter Chair

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For more information, or to arrange interviews, please contact Kenya Thompson at ccpans@policyalternatives.ca or (778) 581-2057 (cell).



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The Nova Scotia office of the CCPA opened its doors in 1999. With the help of our loyal supporters and research associates, we continue to raise debate and propose policy alternatives that will get us closer to achieving an economically and socially just—as well as environmentally sustainable—province and Atlantic region.