

# UNION OF MUNICIPALITIES OF NEW BRUNSWICK



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

About UMNB	3
How we could Collaborate: The Vision	4
Benefits	5
Governance Structure	6
Research and Policy	7
Dues and Financial Implications	8
Contact Information	9



# ABOUT UMNB

The Union of the Municipalities of New Brunswick (UMNB) is a bilingual association of fifty-four local governments, that welcomes and represents municipalities of all sizes and both official languages.

Since 1994, UMNB has advocated for strong, sustainable communities throughout the province. Our members decide UMNB's policies & priorities through member resolutions, at regional zone meetings, and at our Annual General Meeting. Together, our members tackle local challenges and share solutions to make life better for their citizens.

## How UMNB Currently Works

UMNB is governed by a board of directors made up of 20 directors, the past-president, and one ex-officio seat. The executive is elected at the AGM from the Board of Director and includes the President, First Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, and Past President.

Currently, UMNB's board is divided into 9 zones with two representatives from each community. Zones vote to nominate their representatives, which are then ratified by the membership as a whole at the Annual General Meeting.

UMNB's Board also includes 2 dedicated seats for cities. Five cities are currently represented around our board table:

- Jean Marc Brideau, Dieppe
- Maurice Comeau, Campbellton
- Steve Hicks, Fredericton
- Tara Ross-Robinson, Miramichi
- Michael Willett, Bathurst



Additionally, UMNB works closely with the Association of Municipal Administrators, who have an ex-officio seat on the Board. This seat is currently held by Shelley Morton, the Clerk from the City of Moncton.

There have been discussions about UMNB's governance model, and it is anticipated that changes will take place in the next couple of years, including adjustments to meet any new realities. There would be an opportunity for engagement with new members to ensure new structures would benefit the new realities of a strengthened association.

# HOW WE CAN COLLABORATE: THE VISION

The vision: A municipal association that unites and represents local governments of all sizes and both official languages, including a strong urban caucus advocating the unique needs and perspectives of New Brunswick's cities. Through this broad membership, and in collaboration with AFMNB, the new association will be a united, effective, influential voice for municipalities.

A bilingual association with strong backing from both urban and rural communities would immediately open doors for all members at the other levels of government. This kind of partnership would not only be beneficial to cities, but to rural communities as well and would set a new municipal association up for success and for mutual support of the whole sector.



# BENEFITS

Forming one association would strengthen the voice of all municipalities and deliver better results for local governments. For far too long the provincial government has played our cleavages against each other. Whether its associations, rural and urban or francophone and anglophone the government has used those cleavages to delay meaningful changes for our communities. Uniting the Cities and UMNB would create the biggest municipal organization in New Brunswick that represents all municipal perspectives and would open the door for the association to deliver more for the communities we serve.

UMNB currently has recognition among government, external stakeholders, and the public as the only municipal organization that is open to all municipalities in New Brunswick. Adding the full resources of the cities to the UMNB would further strengthen the association's brand and provide a significant boost to collective advocacy.

In coming together, the cities would gain access to a number of key services.

- Save membership dues for your community while expanding your government relations and advocacy influence.
- Member programs through Canoe Procurement and Canoe Benefits
- Cost savings through e-scribe
- Greater training and learning opportunities not only for mayors and councillors via annual conference, webinars, and other training and education opportunities.

## **Logistics:**

At the outset, here is what we would propose for building a new, stronger, and united association.

# GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

We would propose establishing an Urban Municipalities Caucus (UMC) that would be made up of the ten largest communities by population.

This group would have its own terms of reference and be a committee of the board.

In addition to the two seats currently on the board, the Chair of the UMC would also have a seat on the board of directors. That group would be supported by the Executive Director of UMNB, along with the policy officer and other dedicated resource people.

The UMC would have its own bimonthly meetings. This would include at least two meetings in person with an advocacy component tied into it. The advocacy meetings could include policy matter experts, provincial and federal ministers, senior governmental officials etc. Additionally, we could re-tool our annual conference to have a stand-alone day dedicated to urban issues and specific issues of interest to the group.

## **Proposed Urban Municipal Caucus membership:**

Moncton\*  
Saint John\*  
Fredericton  
Dieppe  
Riverview  
Quispamsis  
Edmundston\*  
Miramichi  
Bathurst  
Campbellton

\*Currently not members of the UMNB

In addition, to the elected representatives of the UMC, UMNB would welcome involvement from the CAOs of these communities in UMNB's committees. There would be significant experience and insight that these individuals could contribute to a strengthened municipal association. This could also take the form of a CAO council that would meet ahead of the caucus meetings or together as part of the caucus.

We would propose this as the starting point for the UMC, with the caucus then setting up principles and criteria for members joining or leaving the group.

# RESEARCH AND POLICY

For the 2023 and 2024 budgets, UMNB would propose dedicating a significant part of the additional revenues towards policy and advocacy work focused on fiscal reform and the upcoming provincial election. UMNB recognizes that fiscal reform has been a long-term priority of the cities, and UMNB's members recognize the importance of this as well. There is a demonstrated need for a new partnership between local governments and the provincial government. This is crucial to meet the services that are increasingly being demanded by residents and that are being downloaded to municipalities by the provincial government. This would be a natural collaboration point for the years ahead.

## **A New Brand for a Renewed Association**

UMNB is celebrating its 30th anniversary next year. It is an opportunity to celebrate our wins but is also an opportunity to change UMNB's name and/or external brand to better reflect new realities. This would be an important opportunity for new members to influence the look and feel of a new municipal movement in our province.

## **Committees and External groups**

Our committee structure would also be open for new members to collaborate on. While some CAO's and city reps already sit on these committees, we would welcome the opportunity to revisit this to address representation.

UMNB recognizes that the cities are currently represented on many external groups. It would be the intention of this process to preserve that. In instances where the province or groups place limits on the number of representatives at a table, UMNB would work to ensure urban communities' needs and perspectives are reflected and voiced.

Additionally, the UMNB would support continuing to have a caucus representative on the FCM board of directors and at the Provincial Municipal Council.

# DUES AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

For dues from the members of the urban caucus, we would propose a levy of .65 cents per resident. We believe that this would be less than current dues paid by the members of the cities association and would give an immediate and significant boost to the advocacy work that the Union of Municipalities of New Brunswick does on behalf of its urban and rural members. Should this change occur in 2023, we would propose pro-rating the dues each member would pay.

## Proposed dues for 2023:

#	Community	Population	Dues at .65
1	Moncton *	80,103	\$52,066.95
2	Saint John *	69,895	\$45,431.75
3	Fredericton	67,576	\$43,924.40
4	Dieppe	28,959	\$18,823.35
5	Riverview	20,584	\$13,379.60
6	Quispamsis	18,768	\$12,199.20
7	Edmundston *	18,390	\$11,953.50
8	Miramichi	18,151	\$11,798.15
9	Bathurst	14,343	\$9,322.95
10	Campbellton	11,995	\$7,796.75
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>352,812</b>	<b>\$226,696.60</b>

\*Indicates potential members

Membership dues will go towards supporting advocacy initiatives of the UMNb which are focused on realizing benefits for all members. This may involve cities' specific advocacy but that will be determined by the UMNb Board (which presently includes 5 city members) as it deems what is appropriate for overall member benefit. Any existing reserves brought forward by the CNBA may be used by the UMC for matters specific to cities' specific advocacy should UMC members deem it to be appropriate. The budget for the UMC would be set annually in consultation with the UMC and the Board of Directors as part of the overall budget process.



# MOVING FORWARD

We would propose the following transitional steps in creating a new organization. The first of which is building trust.

## **How do we build trust?**

The goal of this process is to create a stronger municipal association. That only happens if we come together, if we're not together than we're not stronger and we will struggle collectively to move the needle on key municipal issues, like fiscal reform. The question that we all must reckon with is how to build trust in the new organization. As we build this organization it will be critical to have an open dialogue and an ability to air challenges before they become issues. We would suggest these be the five priorities moving into 2024:

- Communication–Monthly check ins between the Chair and Vice–chair of the UMC, President and VP of the BoD, the CAO representative, and the Executive Director.
- Governance review–Part of establishing a new organization means building something where everyone feels valued and welcome.
- Rebranding exercise–Working on a new brand position where all councils can see themselves.
- UMC Chair (or designate) reporting to the Board and the president (or designate) reporting to the UMC. Ensuring that we are always on the same page and in the know.
- Establishing joint priorities for the year ahead, which could include fiscal reform and influencing the provincial election platforms.

## **What happens when we are at odds?**

While we anticipate that these will be few and far between, should the UMC want to take a position that is contrary to that of the rest of the organization we would establish a simple process.

- That the chair and president would meet to discuss why the position is creating animosity and determine if there's a path forward that works for all members.
- If there is not a path forward, then the UMC would be required to make it clear they are speaking for those members and not for the whole of UMNB.

# TIMELINE AND NEXT STEPS

## **Timeline:**

- By November 15th – Proposal and Q&A sent to Cities members.
- By December 15th – A decision on the future of the CNBA is made.
- Pending a decision of CNBA members, to proceed with the proposal with a target date of January 1st, 2024. Transition guide for new members to be prepared by UMNb ED.
- By January 19th – A joint meeting of the executive of UMNb along with the appointed reps of the CNBA takes place in person to discuss a more formalized work plan – location TBD
- By February 16th The first meeting of the new UMC to take place and a meeting schedule for the year established.
- By February 23rd – First meeting of the CAO advisory group.
- March 20th – 21st–UMNB advocacy conference and UMC meeting

## **Next Steps:**

If this proposal is acceptable, we will then proceed with an agreement and begin a transition document to provide to new members as we move forward with a target date of January 1st. UMNb will make this a top priority upon the completion of its annual conference on Nov. 28th.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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