

Reference No. 2021-036

December 15, 2021

Honorable Minister Daniel Allain
Department of Environment and Local Government
Marysville Place
20 McGloin Street
Fredericton, New Brunswick
E3A 5T8

Re: Town of Sackville Proposal - Response to Local Governance Reform White Paper

Minister Allain,

Further to my letter of December 6, 2021, I am writing to you today, as you have suggested, to present an alternative proposal to the intended White Paper suggestions. As you know, our Council is opposed to forced amalgamation and as such, we urge you to consider our recommendation thoroughly.

The White Paper makes it clear that viable restructuring proposals were established on the criteria from the 2008 *Building Stronger Local Governments and Regions* (the Finn Report). These criteria suggest that a minimum of 4,000 people or \$200 million in tax base is needed. The proposal we are suggesting meets both criteria, without creating an additional entity.

Proposal

We are recommending that the boundaries for the Town of Sackville remain as is. Under the present geographical boundary, the Town would continue to have a population of 5,331 and a tax base of \$662,069,250 and therefore meets both the criteria of the *Building Stronger Local Governments and Regions* report.

As an observation, we want to point out that combining Entity 39 with the remaining structure of Entity 40 into a local government would result in a population of 4,824 and tax base of \$423,776,700. This too would meet both criteria of the *Building Stronger Local Governments and Regions* report and would still result in two entities: The Town of Sackville (Entity 40) and Entity 39. This would appear to be a very viable option for the region and would exceed the population and tax base of other suggested entities created within the White Paper in RSC 7.

It also appears to be of a similar geographical size to other local governments that are being created. Creation of a local government structure gives the Town of Sackville a partner to collaborate with on regional projects or developments, which was missing before and what the local governance reform process was intended to address. As expected, consultation with these communities would be needed. Please see Figure 1 outlining proposed entities 39 and 40.

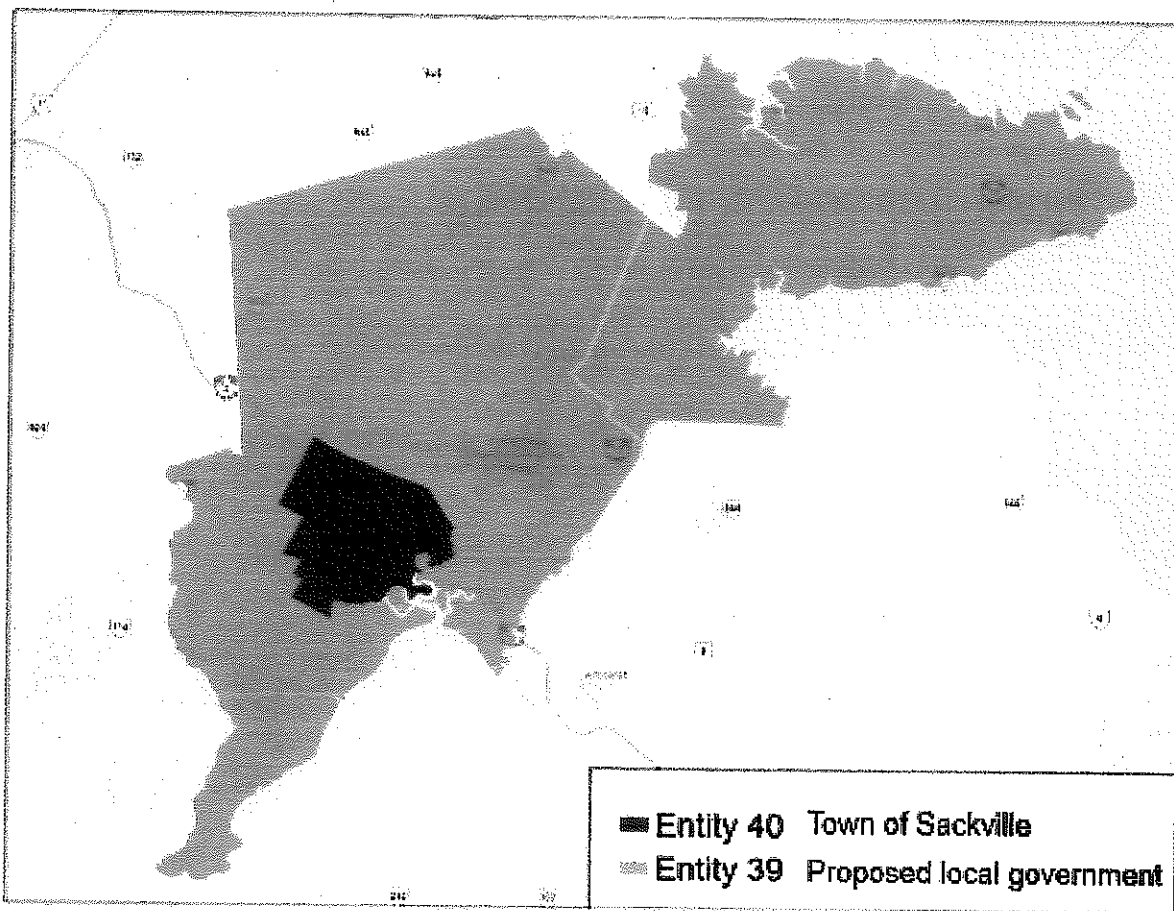


Figure 1: Proposed entities 39 and 40.

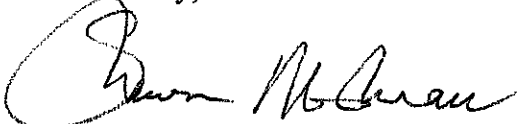
Conclusion

We have diligently evaluated alternative boundary locations for Sackville but cannot identify a geographical representation that would meet the criteria established in the Finn Report. As such, we strongly recommend that the existing municipal boundary for Sackville be respected. It is important to note that the Town is not opposed to regional collaboration or expanding our boundaries where it makes sense fiscally, and we are open to further discussions with your department and regional stakeholders as you embark on the restructuring process.

As noted in our December 6 correspondence, the reform process as outlined in the White Paper provides too little detail, leaves too much to be worked out, and gives too short a window. There are many significant items that don't seem to have been considered during the process, such as taxation, finance and administration, and municipal contracts.

We trust that you will take our concerns seriously and will consider the suggestions and observations we have made above. We would appreciate a response to our proposal and look forward to discussing this issue with you further in the weeks and months ahead.

Sincerely,



Shawn Mesheau
Mayor, Town of Sackville

Cc: Sackville Town Council
Jamie Burke, CAO
Ryan Donaghy, Acting Deputy Minister, Environment and Local Government
Union of the Municipalities of New Brunswick
MLA Megan Mitton
David Coon, Green Party
Roger Melanson, Liberal Party
Kris Austin, People's Alliance Party