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February 5, 2026

Nolan Young, MLA  
164 Water Street  
Shelburne, NS B0T 1W0

Email: [nolan.young@shelburnemla.ca](mailto:nolan.young@shelburnemla.ca)

Dear Mr. Young,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the Eastern Shelburne Amalgamation Committee and Mayor of the Town of Lockeport, on behalf of the full committee and the elected leadership of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne (MODS), the Town of Shelburne (TOS), and the Town of Lockeport (TOL).

The Amalgamation Committee is comprised of six elected councillors representing all three municipal units and reflects a unified, collaborative effort by municipal leadership across eastern Shelburne County within your constituency. Our mandate is to examine, in good faith and with due diligence, the potential benefits and challenges of municipal amalgamation, with the long-term interests of residents and taxpayers as our primary focus.

Through a recent meeting with the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board (NSRAB), the committee was advised that a comprehensive series of technical, governance, and financial studies would be required to accompany any formal application for amalgamation. Initial high-level cost estimates for these studies are in the range of \$550,000. These figures are preliminary, and based on comparable experiences elsewhere in the province, we believe they may substantially underestimate the true costs required to meet NSRAB expectations.

By way of precedent, the consolidation of Windsor and West Hants required study and transition costs exceeding \$1 million, costs which were fully funded by the Province of Nova Scotia. That provincial investment enabled a rigorous, evidence-based process and supported a consolidation that has since strengthened regional governance, improved service coordination, and enhanced long-term financial sustainability.

Likewise, the experience of Queens Region demonstrates how amalgamation can provide clearer accountability, improved strategic capacity, and more efficient service delivery—outcomes that are consistent with provincial objectives for resilient and effective local government.

The committee also met with the Honourable John A. MacDonald, Minister of Municipal Affairs, who advised that municipalities should apply for funding through the Municipal Innovation Program (MIP). While we appreciate this guidance, the structure and scale of the MIP render it an impractical funding mechanism for an amalgamation process of this magnitude. The program's total annual allocation is approximately \$578,000, funding is limited to 50–75% of eligible project costs, and the program is consistently oversubscribed. Even under the most favourable circumstances, MIP funding would leave a significant and unsustainable financial burden on small municipal units already operating within tight fiscal constraints.

In practical terms, the current funding framework presents a material barrier to informed, responsible decision-making. Without full provincial support for the studies required by NSRAB, the municipalities—and ultimately their residents—are being asked to assume costs that are disproportionate to their tax base and capacity. This risks undermining the very objective of encouraging thoughtful, evidence-based regional governance discussions.

On behalf of the Amalgamation Committee, I am respectfully requesting your advocacy and support for a provincial commitment to fund 100% of the costs associated with the NSRAB-mandated amalgamation studies for eastern Shelburne County. Such a commitment would not predetermine the outcome of the process, but it would ensure that any decision regarding amalgamation is grounded in comprehensive, independent analysis and aligns with precedents already established by the Province in previous amalgamations.

As elected representatives from all three municipal units, the committee collectively represents the leadership and residents of eastern Shelburne within your riding. Our communities expect that decisions of this significance will be evaluated thoroughly, fairly, and without undue financial impediment. Provincial partnership in this process is essential to meeting that expectation.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this matter further and to explore how we can work collaboratively to ensure a process that serves both local residents and the broader interests of Nova Scotia. In that spirit, we would like to formally invite you to attend the next meeting of the Eastern Shelburne Amalgamation Committee on March 4th, to be held at the Municipality of the District of Shelburne offices on Woodlawn Drive.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued service to our region.  
Sincerely,



**Derek Amalfa**

Mayor, Town of Lockeport

Chair, Eastern Shelburne Amalgamation Committee

*On behalf of the Eastern Shelburne Amalgamation Committee:*

- Warden Penny Smith, Vice Chair, Municipality of the District of Shelburne
- Mayor Stan Jacklin, Town of Shelburne
- Deputy Mayor Craig Hillen, Town of Lockeport
- Deputy Warden Heidi Wagner, Municipality of the District of Shelburne
- Councillor Terese Cruz, Town of Shelburne