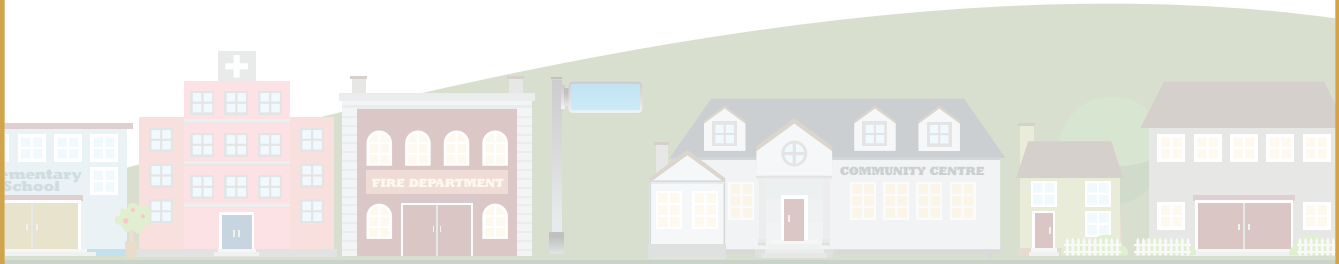


SECTION 3

GETTING STARTED AND
WORKING TOGETHER



SECTION 3

WORKING TOGETHER

In this section you will step through the process of how to work with other municipalities to apply for funding for a growth management study.

So far in the process you should have:

1. Completed your own assessment
– Section 1.
2. Identified possible and municipal partners and approached them
– Section 2.
3. A commitment from a group of municipalities that have agreed to meet.

Now you will:

4. Ask each of these municipalities to work through Section 1 of the Toolkit, if possible, before coming to the meeting.
5. Schedule your first meeting and plan for it.

INSTRUCTIONS

Use the tools in this section to guide your first meetings with the group and future discussions with the group as you prepare an application to the province for a growth management study.

By focusing on agreements, and ways of working together now, you are building trust and understanding and developing best operating practices that will be helpful when bigger discussions and challenges arise.

You are being provided with the following tools:

1. Two meeting agenda outlines.
2. A template and list of key topics to cover in your Terms of Reference to allow your group to move forward.
3. Information to consider and include in your application to the province for funding.

MEETING #1 AND #2: SHARING AND LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

These meetings are for all the municipalities that have had a conversation and agreed to participate in further discussions.

Below is a brief working agenda for what we recommend your group of municipal leaders discuss at the first meetings.

A few points about the meetings:

- We recommend **2-3 participants per municipality** to keep the numbers manageable. At the beginning of the meetings make it clear that those in attendance are expected to report back to their respective Councils on the discussion and outcome. Be sure to provide comprehensive notes for all participants to use in doing this.
- These meetings should be described as an opportunity to learn about each other and learn about the potential process you can embark upon in applying for funding.
- You may wish to **engage professional help to assist with facilitating the meeting(s)**. If you would like to find a facilitator, we would encourage you to contact the Federation of PEI Municipalities and/or someone from the Municipal Affairs Division of the provincial government.



SECTION 3

WHY A FACILITATOR?

An external facilitator, not connected to any of the municipalities, can really assist with this process.

Someone who is experienced with building partnerships will help make sure all municipalities are viewed equally (not one telling others what to do) and all are able to participate fully.

When searching for a facilitator consider their background and experience and ask for references. Talk to these people to see if there will be a fit between your needs and what they bring.

MEETING #1 AGENDA

- 1. Welcome and Introductions.** Take a few minutes to provide everyone with an opportunity to introduce themselves and tell the other participants which municipality they are representing.
- 2. Purpose and Agenda.** Provide everyone in attendance with an overview of the purpose of the meeting and what the agenda will include.
- 3. Presentation from host Municipality.**

Have a representative from the host municipality take a few minutes and present the findings from their *Reasons for Change Template*. Use this as an opportunity to highlight why you decided to move forward, your strengths and challenges and ultimately what you think are the positives of considering change.

Discussion: Open the floor for discussion among the other municipalities, asking questions like:

- **Has anyone else gone through this process? What did you learn?**
- **Is your municipality experiencing any of these issues?**
- **Do you have any other issues we didn't highlight?**

This is where a facilitator or another attendee could capture the information on a flip chart or white board so everyone can see what was mentioned. This information becomes an initial list of the reasons why municipalities might want to change. (Make sure this information is captured in notes of the meeting, too.)



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- 4. Questions and Concerns.** At this point it is recommended that you invite people to raise any questions about change and the process. Keep this very open and do not try to answer any of the questions but rather capture them all visually so people can see them.

The purpose of this activity is to let people share burning issues and identify particular items that will need to be addressed going forward – but not to solve them now. Again capturing these on a board or flip chart will help everyone see them.

- 5. Information Sharing.** At this point it would be helpful for a couple of leaders (*or the facilitator*) to present some information about the current Municipal Government Act and the funding available from the provincial government for growth management studies. This will ensure all participants have the same information and understanding of what options are available to them.

One recommended way to do this is to invite someone responsible for municipalities from the Municipal Affairs Division of the provincial government to present. An example of what this could include is demonstrated in this recorded presentation <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMsSgfnY5k4>

- 6. Question and Answer Session.** After the presentation allow time for questions and encourage all participants to ask what they wish to know. Make notes of anything that you might need to find out after the meeting and send to participants.
- 7. Next Steps.** It is important at the end of the session to be very clear on next steps and, in particular, what decisions each municipality is being asked to consider.

Here is a recommended list of items for everyone to understand and agree to.

"Moving forward, we agree to:

- a. **Report back** to our Council. The lead municipality for the meetings should commit to providing a summary of the discussion including what was captured on the flip charts and a copy of any presentation given.
- b. **Identify any information** we are still missing and will communicate that to the meeting leaders who will direct us to where we might find the information or try and help find it.
- c. **Conduct our own municipal assessment.** If we haven't already done so, we will take the time to conduct our own municipal assessment from Section 1 of the Toolkit. At the next meeting, we can have a broader discussion with everyone on our findings.
- d. Discuss assessment and decision and **come prepared to express our Council's level of interest in and support for continuing** to be a part of the group.
 - i. *For example: At our next meeting, we will discuss how we will work together – creating a document called Terms of Reference – and get into more details about what a proposal to the province might look like and include.*
- e. **Identify a timeline.** Set the next meeting date or range of dates."

During the time between the meetings, the group leaders may wish to stay in touch with the various participants to hear how things are going. Address any questions they have, if you can. Overall, continue to build relationships.



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MEETING #2 AGENDA

- 1. Welcome and Introductions.** Take a few minutes and provide everyone with an opportunity to introduce themselves and the municipality they are from. *(Don't assume that everyone caught it all at the first meeting.)*
- 2. Purpose and Agenda.** Provide everyone in attendance with an overview of the purpose of the meeting and what the agenda will include.
- 3. Group presentations of Toolkit Section Findings.** Have a representative from each municipality take a few minutes to present their findings from their Reasons for Change Template. This was the 'homework' each municipality was asked to go through.

This is where a facilitator or another attendee could capture the information on a flip chart or white board so everyone can see what was mentioned. Open discussion on the common reasons for looking at change and other thoughts.

An alternate way to do this would be to ask each municipality to write on a piece of flip chart paper the main reasons they are looking at change. Have each group present their own reasons and then hang them all up together on a wall.

- 4. Review of findings.** Take a moment to identify the similarities across municipalities as well as the areas where one municipality might be strong but another is in need. These are the collaboration points and opportunities for being 'better together'.

Specifically review what is important to each municipality, again identify similarities – do you have shared values and focus on what you want for your municipality? It doesn't all have to be the same but similarities help everyone see where they are alike, rather than just focusing on how they want to remain separate and different.

- 5. Information Question & Answer Session.** We encourage you to invite someone responsible for municipalities from the Municipal Affairs Division of the provincial government:

- To present any new information about the Municipal Government Act or growth management study, and/or
- To be available to answer questions that may have arisen during the municipalities' assessment processes and/or
- To be available to answer questions brought from the Councils when participants reported back.

This is important as it will help make sure correct information is available and less 'guessing' or sharing 'what I heard' information without verification.



SECTION 3

- 6. Decision Making.** At this stage, you will want to ask municipalities in the group if they have made a decision. Ask whether they would like to move forward, with the group, to create terms of reference and apply for funding for a growth management study.

We would recommend that each municipality be asked to choose one of three options:

1. **yes**, they would like to move forward and already have their Council's direction,
2. **no**, their Council would not like to move forward, or
3. **they are unsure**, they need to go back and discuss it again with their Council and let the group know.

For those that say they don't know, we would recommend setting a timeline to when you'd like to confirm participation so the remainder of the group can proceed. Let them know you're there to help if they need more information. If there continues to be a lot of uncertainty, an additional meeting might be necessary.

For those that say they do not want to proceed, we would recommend thanking them and letting them know they can contact you if they want to know what is happening and/or re-engage in the process later.

You will, as a lead municipality, determine if there is enough support to proceed once all the municipalities have responded.

- 7. Next Steps.** At the end of the session, have everyone agree to the following next steps.

"We agree:

- a. **To report back** to our Council and if needed, confirm our answer *by an agreed upon date*.
- b. **To identify any information** still missing – communicate that to the group leads who will direct us to where we might find the information or try and get it brought to the next meeting.
- c. **Those who decide to continue with the group will identify a timeline** for a next meeting – which follows the deadline for any pending Council decisions

NOTE: This process will take time, possibly 3-4 meetings to get to consensus on who is interested in moving forward. Remember to bring everyone along 'with you'. You will know you're ready to move to the next phase when a core group whose Councils have agreed to move forward and discuss terms of reference.



SECTION 3

LATE ADDITIONS

After the first meetings you may have new municipalities, or municipalities who initially declined your meeting request, express interest and ask to be a part of the meetings and discussions.

It is recommended that they be welcomed to the group. If possible, ask to meet with the individuals that will be attending meetings prior to the next group meeting. At this point, you need to update them on everything that has been covered and encourage them to do their own assessment if they have not already done so. While this may not be a requirement for participation it could be very helpful as a new municipality is brought into the process.

UNINCORPORATED AREAS

Questions will arise about the unincorporated areas. It is recommended that the work continue between incorporated municipalities only at this step. During the growth management study, unincorporated areas will be considered and consulted.

MEETING #3

This meeting is for all the participants that have determined they are interested in moving forward to apply for a growth management study. The purpose of the meeting will be twofold:

1. To discuss Terms of Reference for working together, and
2. To learn more about the application process and decide how to move that process forward.

A few points about this meeting:

- **Facilitator.** Having a facilitator may be useful to guide discussion, clearly push the group to decisions and make sure all are in agreement. If you don't have a facilitator it will be important to have a chair that will serve in this role.
- **Note taking.** Be sure to assign someone to the role of taking clear notes - particularly notes on the decisions made.
- **Decision making.** Since this meeting is about deciding on Terms of Reference elements it will be important to have a clear decision making process.
- **Provincial staff participation.** Since one of the main agenda items will be discussing the growth management study and how to apply for funding, it would be beneficial to invite someone from the Municipal Affairs Division of the provincial government to attend and speak about the particulars of the application process and what is needed.
- **Assign tasks and timelines.** During the meeting be sure to assign tasks to individuals along with timelines. The most effective way of operating at this stage will likely be to divide tasks so that no one is overwhelmed with the work. *(It might be beneficial to hire a facilitator to assist with compiling the information and help you to stay on track.)*



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- **Consider small group work.** Another effective way to work will be to take the tasks that have been assigned and create a small working group to prepare information and documents between meetings to share with the larger group.

MEETING AGENDA

1. Welcome, Purpose, and Agenda

Welcome everyone and outline the agenda and purpose of the meeting. Identify how it will work, who will chair the meeting, note takers, task assignments, etc.

2. Terms of Reference

The purpose of this agenda item is to walk through the various elements recommended for inclusion within a Terms of Reference for the group. Use the template provided to discuss each element and come to a decision on what to include in your Terms of Reference.

Next Steps / Actions:

- Once you have discussed and confirmed each element, assign someone to prepare a written draft version for circulation after the meeting.
 - Participants are asked to provide comments/edits on the draft document and then a final version will be circulated.
 - This final version must be shared with each representative's Council and receive formal approval from each Council.
- #### 3. Growth Management Study
- The purpose of this agenda item will be to review in detail the requirements for applying for a Growth Management Study and to make decisions on key aspects and assign tasks for completing the proposal/application.

The most effective way to do this will be to invite someone from the Municipal Affairs Division of the provincial government to participate in the discussion, review the application form and process and together identify the information and work required to complete the application.

4. Next Steps

At the conclusion of the meeting, restate all the agreed upon next steps, who is responsible, and determine a time and place for the next meeting.

At the next meeting, you will review what is completed, consider the feedback from Councils and continue until the Terms of Reference are approved and an application has been made to the provincial government for a study.

Each municipality will need to submit a motion to their Council for approval. Based on their schedules, this may take time, so consider this when setting a date to meet again.



SECTION 3

WHY CREATE A TERMS OF REFERENCE?

To make sure that everyone has a common agreement about working together, a Terms of Reference can help to guide discussions and confirm decisions.

A Terms of Reference:

- Provides a structure to allow for discussion of sensitive or difficult issues
- Helps people be more open and honest with each other
- Prevents and reduces misunderstandings and conflicts
- Helps people decide if they want to be partners in the group or not
- Creates a clear understanding of intentions and common understanding of agreements
- Creates a guide for working together

OUR DEFINITION OF A TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR MUNICIPALITIES WORKING TOGETHER

A "Terms of Reference":

- Is a guide for fairly dealing with each other, expressing expectations, and dealing with potential problems
- Is written by those who want to work together and collaborate
- Is meant to be reviewed and revised as the partnership grows
- Is not a binding agreement but helps to instill and build a collaborative, partnering spirit.

What to include in a Terms of Reference:

- A list of participating municipalities
- The goal of working together - example: To identify a group of municipalities who are interested in participating in a regional growth management study
- Intentions, desires, and agreements - **examples:**
 - We want to work to develop agreements among our partner municipalities.
 - We will talk about and decide what information we agree to share with our municipal councils at the end of each meeting.
- If one partner thinks something is really important, it should be included - **example:** one municipality may feel it is important to state that "no final decisions will be made by this group" while others think it is understood without stating. Agree to put the item in your Terms of Reference.
- Items that you already agree on - **examples:** each municipality will take a turn hosting meetings; we will split the costs of having a facilitator for our meetings; we will approach government for funding support for this planning stage.

Each item should be discussed long enough to allow all partners to share their understanding of the item. We may think we have a common understanding of what something means but this is often NOT the case. Discussing it brings differences in understanding to the surface for discussion.



SECTION 3

SAMPLE TERMS OF REFERENCE [XX GROUP] – TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. GOAL OF THE GROUP

The primary goal of the [XX Group] is to investigate and discuss the needs of our municipalities with a view to commissioning a joint regional growth management study.

Areas for discussion may include:

- Current challenges facing our municipalities – such as: economic growth, land use planning, declining number of families, aging population, and resources needed to administer our roles
- Opportunities associated with working together – such as: shared services, stronger voice, improved planning and management, community growth, etc.
- Complying with the new requirements under the Municipal Government Act – such as: a full election process, new bylaw requirements, and minimum office hours.
- Areas of potential cooperation to be examined including: extension of existing services, cost-sharing of services, involvement of unincorporated areas and the potential of municipal amalgamation.
- Preparing an application for funding for a regional growth management study.

These Terms of Reference do not constitute a binding agreement but we commit to work together as we explore options.

2. MEMBERSHIP

Eligible Municipalities: Municipalities in the [XX] area who are interested in discussing and investigating options.

Composition of [XX] Group: the [XX] Group will include:

- Up to 2 members of council from each municipality. Each municipality decides who their representatives will be but are asked to send a consistent representative, where possible
- The chief administrative officers of the participating municipalities (non-voting)
- Representative of the Municipal Affairs Division of the provincial government (non-voting)

Meeting Chair – a chair will be identified by the group. The Chair will take the lead in calling meetings, setting the agenda and facilitating the discussion of agenda items.

Spokesperson – because media may contact representatives of this group to ask for comment, we have identified our Chair as the spokesperson. A spokesperson takes on the responsibility of speaking on behalf of the group, providing the main messages and information.

Meeting host – each municipality will take a turn in hosting meetings by providing space.



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Sub-committees – where needed, the group may set up a sub-committee to work on items between meetings.

Note taker – this person is responsible for taking notes during our meetings, identifying those in attendance, key decisions made, agreements and joint statements.

3. ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

When a municipality sends a representative, they agree that the representative:

- Will attend scheduled meetings
- Will inform the Chair if they are unable to attend a meeting
- Are responsible for reporting to their own municipal councils
- Will only report on the agreed upon statements from the meeting and their own conversation
- Cannot commit to signing on to the request for a regional growth management study without the approval of their own council
- Will respect confidentiality.

A Council may choose to leave the process at any time but this will not prevent the other members from moving forward with the process.

4. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

It is anticipated that this process, leading up to the application for funding, will take approximately 8-12 months, depending on the time it takes the Group to come to agreements. It is expected that meetings will be held monthly to keep the progress on track. Additional meetings may be called as needed.

RESOURCES

Municipal Growth Management Study Funding:

A Municipal Growth Management Study can help municipalities and communities study the social, cultural and economic resources in an area to increase capacity, improve service delivery and promote economic opportunities. This study can help an area determine the appropriate size and scope for restructuring initiatives. A Municipal Growth Management Study can consider a range of service and taxation options and provide a thorough description of different taxation scenarios.

Funding for Municipal Growth Management Studies is being offered to support ongoing municipal efforts to address and build municipal capacity. Approved applications are eligible for funds to contract professional services to complete a Growth Management Study.

For a copy of the Application and Application Guide, go to: <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/topic/municipalities> or for more information, call Municipal Affairs at: (902) 620-3558.

