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Comments on the Municipal Legislative Review

Municipal Elections Act

The City has been asking for changes for years, and a detailed programme for reform was recently outlined by the Citizens Assembly for Stronger Elections. I was glad to hear the Minister respond positively to their suggestions. This review is a logical time to fix the municipal elections statutes but I hope we get some action soon.

Other Acts Not Included in this Review

Working on development regulations has made me quite frustrated with the limitations of the *Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000*. I hope to see this reconsidered for the review.

It's also interesting that most municipalities' taxing powers are included in the review, but the *St. John's Municipal Taxation Act* isn't. I hope to see this reconsidered for the review.

Process

I would like to see this review happen again in 5 years.

City of St. John's Act

In the City of St. John's Act I would like to see the following changes:

1. Heritage Protection:

In general, the City needs expanded authority to protect built heritage, including:

- i. Authority to enforce penalties for non-compliance
- ii. Authority to address demolition-by-neglect through property standards bylaws
- iii. Authority to adopt maintenance provisions
- iv. Authority to force building owners to conduct repairs
- v. Authority to adopt conservation standards/maintenance standards for heritage buildings
- vi. Authority to enforce the salvage of historic elements in the case of demolition
- vii. Authority to adopt and enforce the Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

- viii. Authority to enforce design guidelines for new developments in Heritage Areas

2. Wetlands and Watersheds:

It's time for a legislative override of the *Lynch* decision

(<https://www.canlii.org/en/nl/nlca/doc/2016/2016nlca35/2016nlca35.html?autocompleteStr=2016%20NLCA%2035&autocompletePos=1>). The City needs to be able to protect watersheds from development without having to expropriate land and compensate landowners.

3. Traffic:

The City should have

- a. The power to modify speed limits.
- b. The power to implement a photo radar system and ticket speeders.
- c. The power to stop vehicles for moving violations.
- d. The power to sanction vehicles for excessive noise.
- e. The power to implement a congestion tax.

4. Ethics

The City should have

- a. The ability to enforce breaches in ethics codes, as recommended in [Clyde Wells's report](#).)