

# 2023 Resolutions Book



 **Alberta  
Municipalities**  
Strength  
In Members

Version 2: September 2023

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# About Resolutions

Alberta Municipalities (ABmunis) conducts an annual resolutions process that enables member municipalities to identify and prioritize common issues and solutions while also empowering Alberta Municipalities Board of Directors to advocate to the federal and provincial governments on members' behalf. This process includes a Resolutions Session at the Alberta Municipalities Convention where members vote on the resolutions submitted.

As set out in ABmunis' [Resolutions Policy](#), a resolution must address a topic of concern affecting municipalities on a regional or provincial level, and must be approved by the council of the sponsoring municipality and seconded by an additional municipal council. A resolution must not direct one or more municipalities to adopt a particular course of action or policy but must be worded as a request for consideration of an issue, including a call for action by Alberta Municipalities.

Resolutions adopted by members annually at Convention are typically active for three years. Alberta Municipalities administration, standing committees, and the Board take action to develop and implement advocacy strategies for each resolution. Given the scope, complexity, and volume of issues facing municipalities, ABmunis uses a [framework to prioritize](#) where it invests our collective efforts.

All resolutions from the current year and the fourteen previous years, including those that are both active and expired, are posted in the [Resolutions Library on ABmunis' website](#).

## *How to participate in the Resolutions Session*

The resolutions session will take place on Thursday, September 28 as part [of ABmunis 2023 Convention and Tradeshow](#). The session will follow our [Resolutions Policy](#), which outlines the process for the Resolutions Session at Convention in sections 32 to 57.

### **Who can speak to a resolution?**

As outlined in the Resolutions Policy, elected representatives of Regular Members can speak to resolutions. In addition, upon a motion from the floor, or at the discretion of the Resolutions Chair, a representative of an Associate Member, which are municipal districts and counties, may also speak to a resolution.

### **How to speak to a resolution**

After each resolution is introduced, and the mover has been given the chance to speak for two minutes, the Chair will call for a speaker in opposition, seeking clarification or proposing an amendment.

In person attendees wishing to speak to a resolution will be invited to go to microphones clearly marked for those wishing to speak in favour or in opposition. Those attending virtually, will be able use the Q&A function of Zoom to enter questions or comments, which will be read out by a staff member in turn.

Aside from the sponsor, a speaker cannot speak more than once on each resolution.

To be fair to everyone who wants to speak, we will turn off the microphone once a speaker's two minutes are up.

### **How to propose an amendment**

To propose an amendment, please send it to [resolutions@abmunis.ca](mailto:resolutions@abmunis.ca) as soon as possible ahead of the Resolutions Session.

Once the resolution session starts, those attending in person are asked to provide proposed amendments in writing to both the ABmunis staff person sitting in the audio booth at the back of the room and to the Resolutions Chair. Those attending virtually can enter amendments through the Zoom chat function.

Regardless of how you propose the amendment, please ensure you include your name, title, municipality, and the resolution title, along with the exact wording of the proposed amendment.

Note that all amendments must be moved and seconded.

### How to vote

In September, registered elected officials from Regular Member municipalities will receive voting credentials from Simply Voting. Elected officials who are eligible for voting credentials can vote on all resolutions.

The email from Simply Voting will look something like this:

You are registered to vote during the ABmunis Convention, taking place September 27 to 29. Below, you will find your login credentials for the vote.

**There is a test vote that is open now. Please check your credentials and cast a vote on the test question as soon as possible so that we can be sure you received your credentials.**

If you need any assistance, please contact: [credentials@dataonthespot.com](mailto:credentials@dataonthespot.com)

To vote, please visit: <https://abmunis.dotsconnect.com/>

Then enter:

Elector ID - \*\*\*\*\*

Password - \*\*\*\*\*

Or follow this link to access the ballot directly: [\(link will be included in the email\)](#)

Please note that these are only the voting credentials. Further information will be sent out by Alberta Municipalities in the coming days.

Regards,  
Alberta Municipalities

When you receive this email from Simply Voting, we ask that you **complete the test vote as soon as possible** to ensure that your credentials are activated. The same login information will be used during the Board of Director elections.

Please bring to convention a laptop, phone or other device that is internet enabled. Once we get to the resolutions portion of our event, you will be asked to log in to the Simply Voting website. Once a resolution is called to vote, you will hit the “next vote” button at the top of the page to see the current resolution available to vote on. After you have cast your vote, you will receive confirmation that your vote has been counted. Once the final vote result is posted, we will move on to the next resolution.

If you have any questions about this process, please contact [resolutions@abmunis.ca](mailto:resolutions@abmunis.ca).

# 2023 RESOLUTIONS

## Category B - Issues Related to Alberta Municipalities Strategic Initiatives

## B1: Protection for Vulnerable Residential Tenants

Moved by: Municipality of Jasper

Seconded by: Town of Edson

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**WHEREAS** the *Alberta Residential Tenancies Act* provides few protections for vulnerable residential tenants;

**WHEREAS** residential tenants in Alberta communities are vulnerable to unregulated annual rent increases, which can result in increased negative outcomes for Albertans, and for the communities in which they reside;

**WHEREAS** affordable housing for families, seniors and individuals is defined as housing that costs not more than 30% of a household's total annual income, including heat, water and sewer expenses;

**WHEREAS** residential tenants required to spend more than 30% of household income on rent are increasingly vulnerable; and

**WHEREAS** it is within provincial authority to protect vulnerable residential tenants through legislation, and it is also within provincial authority to create or increase rental subsidies and other housing supports to the most vulnerable Albertans.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to amend existing legislation or pass new legislation to increase protection for vulnerable residential tenants;

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to create or improve financial supports available to vulnerable residential tenants; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to continue its work improving the availability of affordable housing for vulnerable residential tenants.

### BACKGROUND:

- When rent exceeds 30% of household income, a variety of individual and social issues arise, including:
  - Increased mental health crisis and anxiety around experiencing homelessness and paying rent or bills;
  - Increased access to foodbank and food recovery programs;
  - Increased need for donated or free personal hygiene products;
  - Decreased ability to pay for childcare and extracurricular activities for children;
  - Decreased ability to engage in community activities;
  - Increased applications to Alberta Supports and seniors housing authorities for rent subsidies;
  - Increased job hunting for sufficient income;
  - Increased waitlists for Social Housing;
  - Increased negative impacts on employers; and
  - Decrease in community stability, including families and individuals having to relocate.
- Other jurisdictions have recognized the need for provincial protections for vulnerable residential tenants, such as British Columbia; Manitoba; Ontario; and Prince Edward Island.
- This resolution should be given high priority as it both impacts our most vulnerable residents in all Alberta communities, and negatively impacts our local and provincial economies.
- This issue and call to action align with the Alberta Municipalities strategic initiatives of Welcoming and Inclusive Communities (WIC) and Social Issues Scoping.

**ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

ABmunis does not currently have a position on this specific issue; however, this resolution aligns with past advocacy on affordable housing and homelessness. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Safe and Healthy Communities Committee within the context of related priorities and positions.

## B2: Enhanced Funding for the Rent Assistance and Temporary Rent Assistance Benefits

Moved by: City of Airdrie

Seconded by: City of Grande Prairie

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**WHEREAS** the Governments of Canada and Alberta proclaimed that every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable place to call home and committed to providing \$444 million in rent support to low-income Albertans in need through the Canada-Alberta Housing Benefit from 2019 to 2028;

**WHEREAS** the Stronger Foundations Alberta Affordable Housing Strategy identifies the goal to simplify processes and regulations for eligibility, prioritization, and rent setting, creating a more transparent and fair system for Albertans who need housing supports;

**WHEREAS** a diverse labour force is required to fill a wide range of jobs to support a vibrant, strong provincial economy;

**WHEREAS** Albertans across the province are facing increased financial pressures and there are 9.9 per cent (2021 federal Census) or approximately 422,000 Albertans in core housing need; and

**WHEREAS** the Rent Assistance Benefit (RAB) and the Temporary Rent Assistance Benefit (TRAB) programs are intended to assist lower income Albertan households to afford their rent in housing of their choice.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to:

- establish predictable, long-term rent assistance funding to meet the needs of all low-income Albertans allowing them to access rent support for appropriate housing;
- increase awareness of rent assistance programs to provide more Albertans in core housing needs with the support that they need to ensure they have access to appropriate housing; and,
- simplify the application process.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Core housing need refers to whether a private household's housing falls below at least one of the indicator thresholds for housing adequacy, affordability or suitability, and would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (attains all three housing indicator thresholds).<sup>1</sup>

The Rent Supplement Program provides a subsidy directly to households for an accommodation of their choice to help make rent more affordable. In 2021 the Government of Alberta redesigned the Program and created two benefits, the Rent Assistance Benefit (RAB) and the Temporary Rent Assistance Benefit (TRAB). RAB is a long-term benefit available to subsidize the rent for Albertans if they are below low-income thresholds, while TRAB provides a modest subsidy for working households with low income, or those between jobs, and is intended to help eligible tenants afford their rent while they stabilize or improve their situation.<sup>2</sup>

Presently the Province announces RAB and TRAB funding amounts in the Government's spring budget (prior to end of Q1 annually). The funding cycle for rent assistance program applicants is based on the calendar year, from January to December. This lack of alignment between the funding model and the term of the rent assistance program, means that Administrators must be cautious in accepting additional households in need of support until

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<sup>1</sup> 1 [Dictionary, Census of Population, 2021 – Core housing need \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/92-62-001-x/2021001/article/00001-eng.htm)

<sup>2</sup> 2 *Stronger Foundations: Alberta's 10-year strategy to improve and expand affordable housing*, pg 8.



after the budget is confirmed in the first quarter of the year to avoid oversubscribing the program. In the case that additional program budget is received, Administrators must then onboard new recipients and spend the money prior to the end of the calendar year.

The TRAB was initially launched in seven Alberta urban centres. In August 2022 the temporary assistance program was expanded to include residents from more than 80 communities across the Province. While this was a welcome announcement, no additional funding was dedicated to the expanded program.

Albertans are struggling to afford housing at alarming rates. An expansion of funding to rent assistance programs would help meet some of the increased need. The Province's *Alberta is Calling* campaign actively encourages people to relocate to Alberta to build their futures. The resulting high in-migration of people is a driver behind the low vacancy rates across the province, causing rents to spike to unprecedented levels impacting those who can afford it least.

Many lower income Albertans are not aware of either the RAB or TRAB. If people are not connected to government or not-for-profit supports, they may simply not know about the program and applying on-line can also be confusing. One of the main challenges applicants face is that to qualify they must already be living in a rental unit or have a signed lease prior to receipt of their first subsidy payment. Many individuals and families need to secure the rent assistance benefit prior to obtaining housing to be able to afford it.

In addition, the TRAB income level is quite low and Albertans who know about the program are finding it difficult to qualify for the temporary assistance. More funding targeted at those Albertans most in need, enhanced public education about the existence of rent assistance programs and a simplified application process would go a long way to addressing core housing need in Alberta.

Access to stable, adequate housing is foundational to community wellbeing and prosperity of all Albertans. Adequately funding the rent supplement program has a direct impact on building thriving, safe and welcoming communities for all.

**ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

ABmunis does not currently have a position on this specific issue; however, this resolution aligns with past advocacy on affordable housing. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Safe and Healthy Communities Committee within the context of related priorities and positions.

## B3: Homelessness and Associated Social Needs in Rural Communities

Moved by: Town of Rocky Mountain House

Seconded by: Town of Edson

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**WHEREAS** safe, stable, affordable, accessible, and permanent housing is a human right, and its absence negatively impacts typical development; physical and mental health functioning; nutrition; social and emotional wellbeing; education, employment, and training opportunities; academic success; family and social cohesion; and the ability to exercise individual rights and responsibilities;<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS** the provision of addressing homelessness and affordable housing falls within Federal and Provincial jurisdiction;

**WHEREAS** the Government of Canada renewed their support for affordable housing, and reducing chronic homelessness nationally by 50% by fiscal year 2027 to 2028, through the National Housing Strategy and a commitment to invest \$40 billion in capital over 10 years;

**WHEREAS** according to the Government of Alberta's Economic Multiplier Analysis, every \$1 invested in building affordable housing creates \$1.74 in total economic output;

**WHEREAS** in times of economic downturn, pandemics, job loss, and periods of high rates of under-employment and unemployment, persons of low socioeconomic status and those living in poverty in urban, suburban, and rural locations are at significantly heightened risk of losing stable housing resulting in homelessness;<sup>2</sup>

**WHEREAS** homelessness results from systematic barriers, structural racism, anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination, and embedded social injustices including the lack of safe and affordable housing; discriminatory gaps in wages based on gender, race, ethnicity, and immigration status; high costs of food, childcare, transportation, and utilities; insufficient supportive community services, including those targeted to treat mental health and substance disorders; under-funded schools ill equipped to prepare students for academic or vocational success; scarce job training programs; limited early childcare and after school programs to support working families; inadequate and unfair wages; job layoffs and under-employment and;

**WHEREAS** the purpose of municipalities are to develop and maintain safe and viable communities, and provide services and facilities that are necessary as established through Alberta's *Municipal Government Act*; and local residents, businesses, and communities are expressing concerns to their municipalities about the negative impact that homelessness is having on both individuals experiencing homelessness and the broader community.<sup>4</sup>

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate to the Government of Alberta to:

- Invest in the rural municipalities to aid in the development of affordable housing units and support those most vulnerable to the current economic and health impacts.
- Maximize the funding that can be leveraged from the Government of Canada, and increase research directed towards the prevention of homelessness among marginalized and vulnerable populations, and evidence-based intervention plans for those currently experiencing homelessness.
- Encourage the province to dedicate additional resources towards creating permanent shelter spaces in coordination with smaller communities who request it; ensuring homeless and women emergency shelters

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<sup>1</sup> American Psychological Association. (2021a). APA resolution on APA, psychology, and human rights. In *Council policy manual*. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/resolution-psychology-humanrights>

<sup>2</sup>(e.g., Blustein et al., 2019; Desmond, 2016; Kopf, 2017; Shinn & Khadduri, 2020; United States Conference of Mayors, 2020

<sup>3</sup>. City of Edmonton's [Provincial Support for Addressing Affordable Housing and Homelessness](#) (2020)

have the operating funding support they need; funding bridge housing to help transition people from shelters into supportive housing with additional supports;

- Invest in the cost-effective health and support services needed to help those with complex needs get housed and stay housed, resulting in a visible reduction in homelessness and a drastic savings in health, justice, and law enforcement costs.
- Investigation of interventions to promote resilience in different populations at risk for homelessness, including those within rural, suburban, or urban areas.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

Rural homelessness is a huge issue and it is a bigger problem that most people realize. Rural homelessness might look different than in urban centres but the percentage of those experiencing homelessness is the same in both places. There are some people who cannot afford a place to live due to a small and competitive rental market.

With the continued increase in pressures resulting from the transfer or assumption of responsibilities to municipalities without the resources to properly support them from federal and provincial government, many municipalities are recognizing that while there is a definite need for these support services but unfortunately, many municipalities are not able to fully provide financial supports and there is a need for increased sources of funding, which must be provided from all orders of government.

The Government of Alberta's Budget 2023 talks about providing essential services and supports, with \$316 million over 3 years for ongoing supports for affordable housing.

On March 1, 2023, Alberta Municipalities (ABmunis) release its Preliminary Analysis of the Government of Alberta's 2023 Budget, which included the following comments regarding Affordable Housing:

“Released in 2021, Alberta's affordable housing strategy maps out the changes needed to provide affordable housing for an additional 25,000 households over the next 10 years, an increase of more than 40 per cent. To meet this target the province aims to support the creation of 2,300 new affordable housing units and new low-income rental subsidies per year each of the next three years. Budget 2023-24 allocated \$342.5 million for affordable housing, including rent supplements. Of the \$342.5 million, \$34.3 million is allocated to help grow the supply of affordable housing in priority areas through the Affordable Housing Partnership Program.”

On February 28, 2020, AUMA (now ABmunis) released its Preliminary Analysis of the Government of Alberta's 2020 Budget, which included the following comments regarding Affordable Housing:

“AUMA is very concerned to see significant cuts to capital investment in affordable housing for both the development of new units, as well as the maintenance and repair of existing units. Addressing Alberta's lack of affordable housing is a priority for municipalities. In addition to stimulating employment and economic growth, capital investment in affordable housing yields long-term savings for all levels of government due to decreased use of health services, police and justice services, child welfare, and other services such as homeless shelters, income supports, and addictions and mental health supports.”

#### **ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

This resolution aligns with past advocacy on affordable housing, homelessness, and addictions. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Safe and Healthy Communities Committee within the context of related priorities and positions.

## B4: Rural Access to Supports for Addictions, Homelessness and Mental Health

Moved by: Town of Grimshaw

Seconded by: Town of Peace River

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**WHEREAS** the province is providing \$187 million to address addiction, homelessness, and mental health in Alberta's large urban centres and while challenges remain in these centres, equitable access to training, support, funds, and resources has not been provided for municipalities of all populations across the province;

**WHEREAS** municipalities of all populations in Alberta require collaboration and coordination, as they are in dire need of assistance to deal with addiction, homelessness, and mental health;

**WHEREAS** every Albertan, no matter their circumstance, deserves the opportunity to pursue recovery from addiction, and pre-treatment programs can be a bridge between detox and treatment for people who are pursuing recovery from addiction;

**WHEREAS** the most common factors contributing to persons being homeless are lack of money, unaffordable rent or mortgage, mental health struggles, addictions, medical conditions, and job loss; and

**WHEREAS** the urgent need for shelter spaces in rural communities has been steadily increasing and requires provincial support as access to resources is limited.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate to the Government of Alberta to provide a solution for municipalities of all populations who identify a need, to address the issues of addiction, homelessness, and public safety, and build on the province's recovery-oriented system of addiction and mental health care.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Addiction and mental health issues are exacerbated in rural communities, including towns and villages, as there is generally a large geographical area to cover. As a result, people have to travel further for treatment and wait a long time for services. Municipalities in rural communities also require more workers and funding per capita than is needed in large urban centres for supporting and treating mental health and addiction.

The total number of emergency department visits in Peace River and area (six hospitals) in 2021/2022 that had an Addiction/Mental Health presentation were over 2,000, with 1,400 of those visits being mental health related and 600 of them substance related. In 2022, the Peace River RCMP detachment made 62 transfers (a 135% increase from the previous year) to convey a person with Addiction/Mental Health presentation to a designated facility in Grande Prairie and/or Edmonton. This uses up many hours of the officers' time, in addition to the many hours responding to call outs from the public for these people.

When it comes to homelessness and understanding its causes, the larger urban experience tends to dominate the conversation due to the "visibility" of individuals experiencing homelessness. The issue of homelessness within rural and remote communities is far less understood or even acknowledged by the wider public because of its "hidden" nature. Individuals experiencing housing insecurity in rural and remote communities are more likely to couch surf, live in overcrowded housing, or own/rent housing that may need major repairs, often leveraging the relationships around them for support. The lack of available, accurate, and current data on rural communities' homelessness limits the ability of those communities to advocate for better resources for their residents in greatest need.

The shelter in Peace River has 15-20 people staying there every night and this number is steadily increasing. In Peace River, when persons are released from the Peace River Correctional Center they are provided with transport into the downtown core and end up at the shelter when it is open, due to extenuating factors, which greatly

increases the number of homeless in the area. In a one-month period, there were 80 persons transported to Peace River from the Correctional Center with no repatriation or transportation plan home for them. As a result, Peace River is overwhelmed with people who need better supports that rural communities cannot currently offer. RMA passed a similar resolution earlier this year, which provides the opportunity for ABmunis and RMA to collaborate on advocating for increased access to supports for addictions, homelessness, and mental health for Albertans in municipalities large and small, urban and rural throughout Alberta.

**ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

This resolution aligns with past advocacy on affordable housing, homelessness, and addictions. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Safe and Healthy Communities Committee within the context of related priorities and positions.

## B5: Supporting Long-Term Sustainability of Affordable Housing in Alberta

Moved by: City of Edmonton

Seconded by: City of Grande Prairie

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**WHEREAS** adequate housing is a fundamental human right affirmed in international law, and is a critical element to building vibrant and inclusive communities;

**WHEREAS** a lack of affordable housing puts people at risk of homelessness and contributes to social disorder and places increased pressure on health and social services;

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta has a key role in ensuring housing options are available to all Albertans, and is committed to supporting greater sustainability in the affordable housing sector and ensuring that housing supports are available for Alberta's most vulnerable populations through the province's 10-year affordable housing strategy;

**WHEREAS** there has been an increase in provincial investments into affordable housing; however, the demands for affordable housing exceed current funding commitments;

**WHEREAS** increasing costs due to inflation, deferred maintenance and other requirements are pushing the limits of affordable housing operators' abilities to maintain existing supply and;

**WHEREAS** municipalities are committed to working together in collaboration with other orders of government, non-profit and private housing providers, Indigenous peoples and other stakeholders to help develop, manage and maintain the supply of affordable housing.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate to the Government of Alberta to:

1. Provide increased capital and operating funds to address growing gaps in supporting affordable housing needs across Alberta and help further accelerate housing supply.
2. Amend provincial legislation to exempt all non-profit affordable housing providers from both municipal and education tax *and* establish a clear definition to indicate which properties will qualify for the exemption.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Alberta is often described as an affordable place to live, however this affordability does not extend to all households and is not equitable across all demographic groups and income levels. For example, through the completion of local housing needs assessments, many municipalities across Alberta are identifying significant and projected growing gaps in addressing core housing needs for very-low income households and select vulnerable and marginalized populations within their communities.

In 2021, the Government of Alberta released their 10-year strategy to improve and expand affordable housing. The strategy broadly describes affordable housing as supporting "low-to-moderate income households that cannot attain housing at market rates. It also provides stability for vulnerable people who may have several barriers to accessing safe, suitable accommodations on their own (e.g., Albertans in receipt of Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped). In Alberta, affordable housing is provided by housing management bodies or private, non-profit operators to individuals and families in core housing need. To determine which households are unable to afford market housing, the Government of Alberta uses income thresholds for each region/community as identified each year by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation."

Available 2022 [data](#) from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation shows that Alberta has the fewest number of affordable housing units per capita (with many units being rated in fair to poor condition) compared to most other

provinces across Canada. While progress has been made on supporting affordable housing development and providing increased rental supplements through recent provincial and federal investments, there are still concerns over insufficient funding to support capital maintenance and renewal of existing assets. Further actions are required to keep pace with Alberta's growing population and lagging housing investments.

Various housing management bodies, which operate most of Alberta's affordable housing units, have also shared how they have had their operating budgets decreased since 2018, and are limited in their ability to create financial reserves and explore innovative funding models which hampers their long-term planning and financial sustainability. Given growing inflationary pressures, and no new increases put towards housing management body operating agreements included in the 2023 provincial budget, many are operating with significantly less funding and having to potentially pivot limited resources away from critical reinvestments in preserving housing assets and required support programs and services.

In Alberta, property tax exemptions are governed by the *Municipal Government Act*, the *Community Organization Property Tax Exemption Regulation* and other regulations including the recently enacted *Alberta Social and Affordable Housing Accommodation Exemptions Regulation*. Existing provincial legislation specifically exempts a limited number of affordable housing properties from paying municipal and education taxes. While municipalities are enabled to exempt or cancel municipal taxes for other affordable housing properties who may not be covered by existing legislation, this does not include education tax and adds unnecessary inconsistencies and municipal red tape. Various non-profit organizations who support the delivery of affordable housing have raised challenges they face in qualifying for property tax exemptions and have echoed the need for legislative reform that is currently hindering their ability to reinvest into affordable housing.

On October 1, 2022, the Government of Alberta announced plans to take action on homelessness. The provincial [action plan](#) included the following statement about supporting Ministry initiatives, however, no action has yet been taken:

- In alignment with Stronger Foundations' Action 5.4: Introduce new programs and incentives to grow the supply of affordable housing. As part of this action, Alberta's government will explore policy and legislative changes that will provide tax exemptions and relief for more affordable housing projects, including exemption from municipal property taxes and provincial property education taxes.

During the Fall 2020 ABmunis' convention, a [resolution](#) seeking provincial support for addressing affordable housing received broad member support. While a number of the advocacy requests within this resolution still remain relevant, resolutions only have an active life of up to three years, therefore, this resolution will expire this year.

#### **ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

The first clause of this resolution aligns with previous ABmunis advocacy on affordable housing. With respect to the second clause, ABmunis has not taken a position on exempting non-profit affordable housing providers from paying municipal taxes. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Safe and Healthy Communities Committee within the context of related priorities and positions.



## B6: Capital Funding Support for Housing Management Bodies

Moved by: Town of Wembley

Seconded by: Town of Sexsmith

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**WHEREAS** Housing Management Bodies (HMB's) in the Alberta who provide supportive living facilities for seniors (lodges) are facing continual unanticipated increasing cost pressures including inflation, higher utility costs and interest rate increases that are heavily impacting budgets needed to keep sites operational;

**WHEREAS** these costs are pressuring HMB's operations causing deficits that require higher requisition requests as they try to balance capital repairs over and above operating expenses. The overall outcome is an impact to the affordability for residents;

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta has announced the Affordability Action Plan designed to provide assistance to seniors facing affordability crisis, however, there is no assistance offered for supplies or works needed for capital maintenance of the actual lodges which are also negatively affected by the increased costs crisis; and

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta has previously provided selected organizations with capital maintenance level funding, however, this has reduced or is no longer available to HMB's. HMB's are in immediate and long-term need of this support to sustain and improve Alberta's seniors' facilities.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that Alberta Municipalities lobby the Government of Alberta to increase funding to Housing Management Bodies to alleviate the affordability crisis and provide funding for capital upkeep or replacement needed to sustain supportive living at senior lodges.

### BACKGROUND

A recent presentation by our Housing Management Body (HMB), the Grande Spirit Foundation, highlighted the fact that all capital replacement funding is becoming the sole responsibility of the organization as lodges are not eligible for additional funding such as MSI or other regular grant contributions. Housing Foundations can typically access Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) for new facilities and capital maintenance via borrowing along with some provincial funding to complete new projects, but not for existing facilities. HMB's throughout the province submit annual business plans to the province with capital renewal requests for existing and new facilities. These requests were funded through grants in the past, which assisted HMBs to prioritize and upgrade capital repairs as required. This grant funding for capital repairs is either no longer existent or insufficient to keep up to aging lodge infrastructure. The result is the Foundation either continues to raise rental rates to the maximum of residents' income as per the Social Housing Regulation and further challenges our senior affordability or increases municipal requisitions which adds to the existing tax burden for municipal ratepayers. The Grande Spirit Foundation currently has over 1100 units with 1700 residents, more or less, and has approximately \$90 million in capital budgets in planning to assist people in need of housing accommodation.

### ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:

ABmunis does not currently have a position on this specific issue; however, this resolution aligns with past advocacy on affordable and seniors' housing. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Safe and Healthy Communities Committee within the context of related priorities and positions.



## B7: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Coverage for Community Peace Officers Under the Workers Compensation Act

Moved by: Town of Drayton Valley

Seconded by: City of Edmonton

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**WHEREAS** Bill 1: *Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2012*, was introduced to amend the *Workers Compensation Act* to include provisions under part 4, that if a first responder, correctional officer, emergency dispatcher or a member of any other class of worker prescribed by regulations is, or has been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder by a physician or psychologist, the post-traumatic stress disorder shall be presumed, unless the contrary is proven, to be an injury that arose out of and occurred during the course of the worker's employment;

**WHEREAS** post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a psychiatric disorder that may occur in people who have experienced or witnessed a traumatic event such as a natural disaster, a serious incident, a terrorist act, war/combat, or rape or who have been threatened with death, sexual violence, or serious injury;<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS** public safety personnel appear to be at an increased risk for developing a psychological injury due to the nature of their work and 44.5% meet the criteria for one or more mental disorders;<sup>2</sup>

**WHEREAS** post-traumatic stress disorder is a potentially disabling condition that is now a widely recognized public health issue, particularly among public safety personnel. A study conducted by Carleton et al. (2018) investigated the proportion of Canadian public safety personnel reporting symptom clusters consistent with various mental disorders. The results indicated that 23.2% of the total sample screened positive for PTSD (in contrast, estimates of the prevalence of PTSD among the general population range from 1.1 to 3.5%);<sup>3</sup>

**WHEREAS** the *Workers Compensation Act*, part 4, defines a first responder as a firefighter, paramedic, peace officer, or police officer;

**WHEREAS** the *Workers Compensation Act*, part 4, defines a peace officer as an individual appointed as a peace officer under section 7 of the *Peace Officer Act* who is authorized by that appointment to use the title "Sheriff";

**WHEREAS** the restricted definition of Peace Officer to only include those authorized to use the title of Sheriff under part 4 of the *Workers Compensation Act*, does not encompass approximately 3000 Community Peace Officers and Peace Officers throughout Alberta under the presumptive provisions for PTSD coverage; and

**WHEREAS** municipalities, their residents, businesses, and visitors benefit from having Community Peace Officers in their communities to preserve and maintain the public peace and benefit from an engaged mentally healthy and resilient workforce.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to

- A. by regulation, add all peace officers appointed under the Peace Officer Act as an 'other class of worker' referred to in section 24.2(2) of the *Workers' Compensation Act* until such time as the Act can be amended, and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://psychiatry.org/patients-families/ptsd/what-is-ptsd>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/17/4/1234/htm>

<sup>3</sup> <https://ourspace.uregina.ca/bitstream/handle/10294/9055/Glossary%20of%20Terms%20Version%202.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y>

- B. amend the definition of Peace Officer under the *Workers Compensation Act*, Part 4, section 24.2(1)(f) to include all Peace Officers appointed under section 7 of the Peace Officer Act.

**BACKGROUND:**

Under the [Workers Compensation Act](#), RSA 2000, specifically, Part 4; Compensation Entitlement, Application and Payment, workers are entitled to compensation under the Act if the worker suffers personal injury by accident, unless the injury is attributable primarily to the serious and willful misconduct of the worker, and to the dependents of a worker who dies as a result of an accident.

Further, under Part 4, is PTSD Presumptions, specifically section 24.2, if a first responder, correctional officer, emergency dispatcher or a member of any other class of worker prescribed by regulations is or has been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder by a physician or psychologist, the post-traumatic stress disorder shall be presumed, unless the contrary is proven, to be an injury that arose out of and occurred during the course of the worker's employment.

According to the American Psychiatric Association, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a psychiatric disorder that may occur in people who have experienced or witnessed a traumatic event such as a natural disaster, a serious incident, a terrorist act, war/combat, or rape or who have been threatened with death, sexual violence, or serious injury.

As of 2020, the Government of Alberta indicated that the province has more than 30,000 part and full-time police officers, firefighters, and paramedics.<sup>4</sup> Section 24.2(1)(d) of the Act defines first responders as a firefighter, paramedic, peace officer, or police officer. However, when reviewing the definition of peace officer under section 24.2(1)(f), it defines a peace officer as an individual appointed as a peace officer under section 7 of the [Peace Officer Act](#) who is authorized by that appointment to use the title "Sheriff".

According to the Government of Alberta, there are approximately 3000 Peace Officers in Alberta that are employed by approximately 290 authorized employers such as municipalities, post-secondary institutions, hospitals, and police agencies. These Community Peace Officers are appointed under section 7 of the *Peace Officer Act* but are only permitted by the Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General to use the title of Peace Officer or Community Peace Officer, and not the title of Sheriff. Therefore, there are approximately 3000 Community Peace Officers that are not covered under section 24.2 of the *Workers Compensation Act* and compensation will not be presumed.

Workers that do not fall under the definition of a first responder, are still able to submit a claim for PTSD, or other psychological diagnosis. Adjudication of these psychological injury claims will occur in the same manner as other WCB claims.

According to the Government of Alberta, which is responsible for the *Workers Compensation Act*, in Alberta, they indicated that a committee review is required every 10 years for the Act. The most recent committee review was completed in 2020. At that time, there was an amendment to the definition of workers covered under the presumptive coverage, which still does not encompass Community Peace Officers.

Peace Officers and Community Peace Officers are across Alberta providing services to protect Albertans and visitors alike. Community Peace Officers are in communities and institutions to "preserve and maintain the public peace". To that end, these dedicated Community Peace Officers can become involved in serious, traumatic, and life altering events. These events include but are not limited to physical confrontations; motor vehicle collisions where severe injury or death has occurred; transporting or assisting in the transportation of deceased people within hospitals; providing first-aid medical services such as CPR; amongst others. Duties that are consistent with "first responders" such as firefighters, paramedics, police officers, and sheriffs, which are currently being

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.alberta.ca/establishing-the-heroes-fund.aspx#>

covered under the Act.

Under the Public Security Peace Officer Program Policy and Procedures Manual, issued through the Government of Alberta, Community Peace Officers are permitted to provide emergency response while operating emergency vehicles, to injury collisions, attending fire or medical situations at the request of the Fire or EMS department, any emergent situation if requested by the police service to attend in an emergency response capacity, or to provide backup to police or peace officers where there is a reasonable belief that the officer is in serious danger.

There has been no previous advocacy or resolutions pertaining to this specific topic through Alberta Municipalities. However, in 2021, the City of Fort Saskatchewan brought forward a resolution, which was adopted, titled "[Mental Health and Wellness for Public Safety Personnel](#)". The resolution was that "it is resolved that the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request that the Government of Alberta work cooperatively with public safety personnel organizations and allied stakeholders to research, develop and implement evidence-based solutions to address mental health and wellness of public safety personnel in the Province of Alberta.

#### Heroes' Compensation Act

Should this amendment be made to the *Workers Compensation Act* and Community Peace Officers are defined as first responders under the *Workers Compensation Act*, Community Peace Officers would also be recognized under the [Heroes' Compensation Act](#), as First Responders. This Act provides a lump sum payment of \$100,000 being paid to the dependent(s), or the estate, of a First Responder that dies as a result of an accident defined by the *Workers Compensation Act*.

#### **ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

ABmunis does not currently have a position on this specific issue; however, this resolution aligns with past advocacy on mental health supports for first responders. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Safe and Healthy Communities Committee within the context of related priorities and positions.

## B8: Provincial funding for Medical First Response

Moved by: City of Grande Prairie

Seconded by: City of Medicine Hat, Town of Sexsmith, and City of Wetaskiwin

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**WHEREAS** public health is a provincial responsibility and emergency medical services (EMS) and ambulance response are the authority of Alberta Health Services (AHS) and its contractors;

**WHEREAS** AHS centralized and assumed responsibility for EMS from municipalities and at that time promised no degradation of EMS services;

**WHEREAS** many municipalities operate a fire service whose firefighters participate in the Medical First Response program but are not trained paramedics;

**WHEREAS** these firefighters often serve as first responders in the absence or delay of AHS paramedics within their service area;

**WHEREAS** AHS paramedics are at times delayed or not available to attend as first responders thereby leaving that responsibility to the firefighters;

**WHEREAS** the Alberta Emergency Medical Services Dispatch Review by PwC noted that the average wait time to respond to an EMS event increased by 18.5 minutes province-wide between 2017 and 2022;

**WHEREAS** Health Minister Jason Copping indicated that the Alberta government accepted all 53 recommendations in the Alberta EMS Provincial Advisory Committee's Final Report<sup>1</sup>; and

**WHEREAS** many jurisdictions, due to unbudgeted rising costs, are contemplating reducing MFR service levels to no longer respond to medical assist calls, even though it places its own residents in further jeopardy.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate to the Government of Alberta to compensate municipalities that operate a fire service with employees or volunteers who are qualified as Medical First Responders in instances when those firefighters respond to emergencies due to the absence or delay of provincial paramedics in their service area.

### **BACKGROUND:**

In May 2022, the Province engaged PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP to conduct an independent review of Alberta's integrated EMS dispatch model. The purpose of the review was to identify opportunities and provide recommendations that support the EMS Dispatch system in improving patient outcomes. The PwC Report noted that:

In 2004 Alberta began a journey to evolve the coordination and oversight of the EMS dispatch system from a decentralized system to a centralized system. This was done to improve service consistency, standardization, and embed EMS within the broader health system to provide high-quality, patient centered care across the province. However, a number of questions were raised by stakeholders about the impact the model's design has had on system performance, protocol challenges, and event addressing challenges.

Many municipalities have entered into agreements with AHS to have their fire services provide Medical First Response (MFR) when AHS paramedics are delayed. However, there is no direct compensation for this service although support for training can be provided by AHS.

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<sup>1</sup> [Alberta EMS report recommends steps toward privatization, critics say | CBC News](#)

In January 2022, the Alberta EMS Provincial Advisory Committee was established to address the growing demand for EMS across Alberta. In their Final Report, they made 53 recommendations to improve EMS services in the province. Several of the recommendations addressed MFR.

Recommendation #12 included, “developing strategies to enhance the profile of MFR programs and ensure that community and service delivery partners have an ongoing process for engagement, consultation and advice on the system, **including a sustainable funding model.**”

Recommendation #13 states that, “If MFR agencies are more effectively structured within the EMS system, then these skilled professionals can be used more effectively. ... To bring this about, it is recommended that AHS consult with MFR agencies and AHS EMS leaders to ... **develop options for funding opportunities to use MFR responders.**”

Throughout the Final Report, enhancing and expanding MFR is touted as one of the solutions to improving EMS service across the Province. Funding this important function of EMS service delivery would give municipalities the support they need to remain as part of the program and to possibly take on further responsibilities if service gaps exist.

Rural Municipalities of Alberta members passed the following resolution in November 2022 which has the similar intent and from which this resolution has been modeled:

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate to the Government of Alberta to compensate municipalities that operate a fire service with volunteers or employees that are qualified as Medical First Responders in instances when those volunteers or employees respond to emergencies due to the absence or delay of provincial emergency medical technicians and paramedics in their service area.

**ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

This resolution aligns with past advocacy on compensating municipalities that participate in the Medical First Response program. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis’ Board by the Safe and Healthy Communities Committee within the context of related priorities and positions.

## B9: Integration of Nurse Practitioners into the Alberta Healthcare System

Moved by: Town of Wembley

Seconded by: Town of Sexsmith

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**WHEREAS** Nurse Practitioners (NPs) are expert clinicians with advanced training, who are able to provide comprehensive primary, acute and specialty health care;

**WHEREAS** smaller municipalities in Alberta experience challenges accessing essential healthcare services and therefore need access to alternative options to a traditional physician-oriented service delivery model;

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta recognizes the potential of Nurse Practitioners in meeting the healthcare needs of Albertans and saving the healthcare system money;

**WHEREAS** current provincial grant funding programs for Nurse Practitioners are short term and do not address the broader funding models that create a barrier to greater integration of Nurse Practitioners into the healthcare system; and

**WHEREAS** provisions in provincial legislation should support Nurse Practitioners in providing services they are qualified to conduct.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to remove the legislative and funding barriers that impede greater integration of Nurse Practitioners into the healthcare system.

### **BACKGROUND:**

In Alberta, Nurse Practitioners have Master's degrees or PhDs and, as such, are prepared autonomous health professionals who provide essential healthcare services grounded in professional, ethical and legal standards. Nurse Practitioners integrate their in-depth knowledge of advanced nursing practice and theory, health management, health promotion, disease/injury prevention, and other relevant biomedical and psychosocial theories to provide comprehensive primary health care services. For more information on Nurse Practitioners, see the [Nurse Practitioners Association of Alberta \(NPAA\)](#) and [Alberta Health Services \(AHS\)](#) websites.

The [March 2015 Rural Health Services Review Final Report](#) clearly stated that Albertans are struggling to obtain access to essential healthcare services. Feedback provided by Albertans, which is documented in the report, identified that Albertans support the implementation of Nurse Practitioners as an approach to improving access to essential healthcare services.

From a funding perspective, Nurse Practitioners are labelled as a member of a multi-disciplinary team, as opposed to a primary care provider like a physician. Therefore, while physicians are paid directly by the Alberta Health Care Insurance Program for services they provide, Nurse Practitioners are paid out of the budget for an AHS hospital or clinic, or a Primary Care Network (PCN). As a result, about 60 percent of Alberta's Nurse Practitioners (i.e., 500 out of approximately 800 Nurse Practitioners) are employed by Alberta Health Services in hospital settings. In contrast, throughout Canada, about 66 percent are employed in community settings and only 24 percent work in hospitals. Municipalities have identified the opportunity to increase the number of Nurse Practitioners in rural/small community settings to improve access to healthcare. Providing a more flexible funding model would enable Nurse Practitioners to practice in community-based clinics and support the longer-term integration of Nurse Practitioners throughout the Province.

ABmunis' advocacy related to Nurse Practitioners started with a resolution adopted in 2015, [Promoting the Use of Nurse Practitioners within the Alberta Healthcare System](#), which called for the Government of Alberta to allocate



funding to models of remuneration that support the integration of Nurse Practitioners within the Alberta healthcare system. Since 2015, the province has provided grants and developed programs related to Nurse Practitioners. For example, in 2016, the province launched the \$10 million Nurse Practitioner Demonstration Project, which explored the increased use of Nurse Practitioners in primary health care. Based on the success of the four demonstration project sites, the province launched the Primary Care Network Nurse Practitioner Support Program in March 2019 to provide \$38.5 million over three years to Primary Care Networks to support Nurse Practitioners currently working within the networks, as well as to hire 50 more Nurse Practitioners over two years. Despite the passing of the intended end date of the Support Program (which was extended into 2022-23) grant funding for Nurse Practitioners continues to be provided to PCNs, while they negotiate a future funding model with Alberta Health.

The funding programs that the province has implemented to support Nurse Practitioners to-date have primarily benefitted metropolitan areas and have not focused on increasing the use of Nurse Practitioners in smaller and rural communities. In addition, small communities have identified that grant funding has not been sufficient to support deployment of Nurse Practitioners throughout Alberta. Instead, there is a need for an ongoing sustainable funding model that more permanently ensures the integration of Nurse Practitioners into Alberta's healthcare system as a whole.

Legislation limiting Nurse Practitioner authority to provide primary care has been a further barrier to the integration of Nurse Practitioners into the healthcare system. The province started taking steps to address these legislative barriers in June 2020. Changes made to legislation include:

- Updating ambulance regulations to allow NPs to work as medical directors and provide real-time medical advice to paramedics.
- Allowing NPs to act as independent primary care providers in nursing homes.
- Authorizing NPs to complete driver medical examination forms.

Allowing Nurse Practitioners to take on these roles and complete these tasks is in line with their typical responsibilities, as they are already within their regulated scope of practice under the *Health Professions Act*. Any remaining legislation that limits the ability of Nurse Practitioners to practice as primary health care providers should be identified and amended.

ABmunis administration and the Small Communities Committee regularly connect with representatives of the NPAA to discuss alignment of advocacy, any remaining legislative barriers to integration, and steps that both organizations are taking to promote the greater integration of Nurse Practitioners into the health care system.

#### **ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

This resolution aligns with ABmunis priority initiative, Access to Health Care Outside of Metropolitan Areas. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Small Communities Committee in the context of related priorities and positions.

## B10: Expand Capacity to Train Combined Laboratory and X-Ray Technologists for Rural Alberta

Moved by: Town of Sundre

Seconded by: Town of Olds

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**WHEREAS** all disciplines of healthcare in Alberta are experiencing shortages of qualified professionals and rural areas are experiencing even greater shortages than urban sites;

**WHEREAS** rural healthcare facilities require staff with a wider, multi-disciplinary skill set, known as a Combined Laboratory and X-Ray Technologist (CLXT), than the staff that are required in conventional urban settings;

**WHEREAS** CLXT skill sets are mandatory for rural healthcare locations, and inadequate numbers of students are being trained at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) to meet the need in rural Alberta;

**WHEREAS** NAIT is the only institution offering this training in Alberta, with a current class size of forty students per year. NAIT has indicated that they have the capacity within their infrastructure to increase their class size by an additional twenty students if they have the clinical sites to support student training and/or a viable option of simulation training that will allow for the increase in students;

**WHEREAS** NAIT has also advised that they are committed to exploring ways to increase their CLXT intake; and

**WHEREAS** the province's Alberta 2030 vision is focused on the post-secondary system and being highly responsive to labour market needs.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to collaborate with post-secondary institutions to expand the number of seats available to train Combined Laboratory and X-Ray Technologist (CLXT) for rural Alberta by increasing the number of seats for CLXT training at NAIT by twenty seats and exploring means by which an additional twenty seat capacity (to a total of 80 students annually) can be created at NAIT or another Alberta post-secondary institution.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Alberta landscape is dotted with many small rural hospitals. Although small, they are mighty, and provide an essential service to many Albertans. Often remote, these facilities offer a buffer for the injured and sick from the chronically overcrowded big city emergency rooms. Many rural hospitals offer minor surgeries, obstetrics, pre- and post-operative care, and palliative and long-term care, which helps to take the pressure off the city hospitals. These hospitals also allow local citizens to receive quality health care close to home and family.

One discipline where staff shortages have become a particularly serious concern is the combined Lab and X-ray Laboratory and X-Ray Technologist (CLXT). This part of our hospital's team is vital in assisting with efficient diagnosis and treatment and is essential to keeping a rural emergency room open. These combined skills are specific to, and mandatory for, rural hospitals, and staff shortages in this discipline are apparent across the Province. Rural hospitals are often limited in the number of staff they can hire by budgetary constraints and therefore in many cases cannot afford to hire both a position for lab and for x-ray as separate personnel. The combined CLXT provides a cost-effective way to fill both positions with a single staff member.

The [Alberta Health Services website](#) includes the following statement:

“Combined laboratory and x-ray technologists play a critically important role in the diagnosis, disease prevention and public health surveillance. They are responsible for collecting, preparing and analyzing patient samples, providing general patient care and taking blood. They conduct medical laboratory tests and administer electrocardiograms. They are also responsible for general radiography exams (X-ray). Combined laboratory and x-ray technologists are responsible to perform site specific manual and



automated approved laboratory procedures, diagnostic imaging exams and related duties, following established standards and practices defined by the ACCLXT (Alberta College of Combined Laboratory and X-ray Technicians), CPSA (College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta) and HPA (Health Professions Act).”

NAIT is the only post-secondary institution providing this specialized program, offering forty (40) seats annually. Increasing those seat numbers, from forty to eighty would significantly address the current demand in rural Alberta. NAIT currently has twenty new seats and thereafter increasing NAIT’s capacity, and/or adding another institution with capability to offer this training, may be enough to meet current demand. Currently, NAIT receives 500 applications for the program, and interviews approximately 200 people for each intake of the 40 seats. This demonstrates that the demand for the current program is very high and filling additional seats would not be an issue.

Access to health facilities and trained health care professionals in rural areas is essential to the sustainability and economic growth of our Province as a whole. Skill specific training, in adequate numbers, is necessary to foster growth and sustainability in rural Alberta. The request for the Government of Alberta to support additional post-secondary seats for CLXT training aligns well with the already developed Alberta 2030 vision:

- “Alberta’s world-class post-secondary system will equip Albertans with the skills, knowledge and competencies they need to succeed in their lifelong pursuits.”
- “The system will be highly responsive to labour market needs and through innovative programming and excellence in research, contribute to the betterment of an innovative and prosperous Alberta.”

This resolution was also adopted by RMA in November 2022, providing the opportunity for joint advocacy on this issue.

**ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

ABmunis does not currently have a position on this specific issue; however, this resolution aligns with past advocacy on access to medical imaging. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis’ Board by the Safe and Healthy Communities Committee within the context of related priorities and positions.

## B11: Maintaining Non-Partisan Municipal Elections

Moved by: City of Brooks

Seconded by: Village of Duchess

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**WHEREAS** municipal elections in Alberta have been predominantly free from political party influence, affording local elected officials the autonomy to debate and vote on community issues based on the best interests of their community;

**WHEREAS** at the Provincial level there has been comment on opening the door to having political parties at the local level;

**WHEREAS** partisan politics would restrict individual elected officials from independently pursuing the best interests of the municipality but instead bind them by the ideology of the political party they represent; and

**WHEREAS** the current *Local Authorities Elections Act* (LAEA) does not explicitly restrict political party influence in local elections.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate to the Provincial Government to refrain from introducing partisan politics in local government elections;

**AND IT IS FURTHERED RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to amend the LAEA to prohibit partisanship infiltrating local elections or politics in any way including political party endorsements of local candidates, donations directly or indirectly to local candidates, or by way of any other influence.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Local government elected officials are closer to the people they represent than any other form of government. These representatives also live in their community which is not always the case for those elected provincially or federally. Local representatives interact with their citizens often, are accountable to their citizens and are easily accessible.

On any community issue they face, these local elected officials bring their experience and what they believe is best for the overall community and express this through their debate and vote. This is critical in local government and plays a big part in why local government is the most accountable and efficient form of government.

Partisanship in local politics would be a disappointment. No longer could our local elected officials vote on what they believe is best for the community, but instead, they would be beholden to vote based on the ideology of the political party they represent. In the few cases where elected officials in non-local governments dare vote on what they feel is in the best interests of their constituents rather than by their parties' ideologies, they have been alienated by the party. This has the effect of leaving their constituents frustrated with the feeling their voice has been further eroded.

For our municipalities to remain efficient, effective and accountable, it is critical that we leave no room for partisan politics. Thank you for your consideration and support of this resolution.

### **ALBERTA MUNICIPLAITIES COMMENTS:**

This resolution aligns with ABmunis Local Election Principles (approved by members on June 18, 2020) which emphasize that candidates are elected to represent and be accountable to municipal residents, not a political party. These [principles have guided ABmunis advocacy on amendments to the LAEA](#) and they will be a foundation for future advocacy as ABmunis presses the province to complete a full-scale review of the LAEA. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Municipal Governance Committee.

## B12: Inclusion of Libraries in Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks

Moved by: Town of Cardston

Seconded by: Town of Magrath

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**WHEREAS** the purpose of Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks (ICFs) is to ensure municipalities contribute funding to services that benefit their residents (MGA s. 708.27 (c));

**WHEREAS** most libraries serve residents of more than one municipality and the financial sustainability of libraries is of great importance to all Alberta municipalities;

**WHEREAS** Library Boards are created by municipalities by bylaws, and many are primarily funded by a municipality, including many municipalities having responsibility for staffing and facility maintenance and replacement;

**WHEREAS** Library Boards are charged in the *Libraries Act* with the responsibility for funding, but have no effective leverage to secure funding for the provision of their services with neighbouring municipalities except within the ICF negotiation framework; and

**WHEREAS** many ICFs currently contain funding provisions for library services within many of the negotiated ICF agreements, which is of common knowledge to Municipal Affairs.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the clear articulation by the Government of Alberta in legislation that cost sharing for library services is within the scope of Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks.

### BACKGROUND:

ICFs are intended to require municipalities to create comprehensive frameworks between them which address all intermunicipal services that benefit the residents of both municipalities. This ensures that municipalities which benefit from services offered in neighbouring municipalities will equitably share in the costs associated with delivering those services. Limiting “intermunicipal services” to only those services that are directly administered by municipalities is contrary to the Legislature’s intent. With respect to library services, while it is true that Library Boards are separate legal entities, the fact remains that they are created and funded by municipalities, and most importantly are largely dependent on funding from municipalities to sustain their operations. Since ICFs are required to include provisions addressing the proportionate funding of intermunicipal services, it is an unreasonable for the Minister of Municipal Affairs to exclude any consideration of intermunicipal services that are funded by municipalities.

### The MGA

Part 17.2 of the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) creates a flexible framework intended to allow municipalities to, either by agreement or through arbitration, craft comprehensive ICFs which address all shared services which benefit residents of both municipalities. A broad and purposive interpretation of Part 17.2 of the MGA would include all intermunicipal services within the ambit of ICFs, regardless of whether the intermunicipal service is delivered directly by a municipality, or if it is principally funded by municipalities but delivered by a third party.

Section 708.27 of the MGA confirms that ICFs are intended:

- “a. To provide for the integrated and strategic planning, delivery and funding of intermunicipal services,*
- b. To steward scarce resources efficiently in providing local services, and*
- c. To ensure municipalities contribute funding to services that benefit their residents.”*

Section 708.29 sets broad parameters for what must be included in an ICF:

*“(1) A framework must describe the services to be provided under it that benefit residents in more than one of the municipalities that are parties to the framework.*

*(2) In developing the content of the framework required by subsection (1), the municipalities must identify which municipality is responsible for providing which services and outline how the services will be delivered and funded.*

*(3) Nothing in this Part prevents a framework from enabling an intermunicipal service to be provided in only part of a municipality.*

*(3.1) Every framework must contain provisions establishing a process for resolving disputes that occur while the framework is in effect, other than during a review under section 708.32, with respect to*

*(a) the interpretation, implementation or application of the framework, and*

*(b) any contravention or alleged contravention of the framework.*

*(4) No framework may contain a provision that conflicts or is inconsistent with a growth plan established under Part 17.1 or with an ALSA regional plan.*

*(5) The existence of a framework relating to a service constitutes agreement among the municipalities that are parties to the framework for the purposes of section 54.”*

Read together, sections 708.27 and 708.29 give municipalities significant flexibility in crafting an ICF that covers all intermunicipal services between them, provided those services are municipally funded and benefit residents of both municipalities.

The direction in section 708.29(1) is that the ICF “must describe the services to be provided under it that benefit residents in more than one of the municipalities that are parties to the framework.” There is no reference to excluding intermunicipal services that are municipally funded but are operated by third parties. All that is required is that the intermunicipal service be funded by the municipalities, and benefit residents in both municipalities, for it to be addressed in the ICF.

Further, there is no indication that the reference to “delivery” of services was intended to exclude intermunicipal services delivered by third parties. The broad and unqualified language in section 708.27 suggests that municipalities can have flexibility in determining how services are planned, funded and delivered, and there is no indication in the legislation that ICFs are intended to include only certain modes of service delivery and not others. The key consideration is whether the service is municipally funded and benefits residents in multiple municipalities (thereby addressing the third objective to require municipalities to contribute equitably to services that benefit their residents).

### **The Libraries Act**

The *Libraries Act* sets out the relationship between Library Boards and municipal Councils. Section 3 states that it is the discretion and responsibility of the local municipal Council to establish a library board.

#### *“Municipal board*

*3 (1) The council of a municipality may, by bylaw, establish a municipal library board.”*

The *Libraries Act* continues to expound upon the financial relationship between the Library Board and the municipality. It is obvious from section 8 that the local municipal Council continues to have great influence and discretion over the financial position of the local Library Board.

#### *“Budget*

*8 (1) The municipal board shall before December 1 in each year prepare a budget and an estimate of the money required during the ensuing fiscal year to operate and manage the municipal library.*

*(2) The budget and the estimate of money shall be forthwith submitted to the council of the municipality.*

*(3) Council may approve the estimate under subsection (1) in whole or in part.”*

The province also supplies a great deal of data to show the reliance of Library Boards on the local municipal authority. On the Government of Alberta web site, the following financial information is shared;

*“In 2018:*

*Provincial operating grants to public library boards (municipal and system) totaled \$30,132,755, representing 13% of total library operating revenue.*

*The province also expended \$4,841,109 to support the provincial library network. This included funds for SuperNet connectivity for all public libraries, electronic resources and the resource sharing network. Total provincial support for public library service amounted to \$34,973,864.*

*Municipal contributions (including in-kind support) to public library boards (municipal and system) totaled \$173,295,301. This represented 73% of total library operating revenue.”* (<https://www.alberta.ca/public-library-statistics.aspx>)

This confirms that the local municipality is the key stakeholder in library funding, and by extension should be permitted to negotiate library funding as part of the ICF process.

The successful future of libraries in Alberta is highly dependent on the ability of local municipalities to fund them properly, thereby maintaining or increasing library relevance in the community. The fact that Municipal Affairs prohibits the negotiation of library funding in the ICF context complicates the ability of the local municipality or the local Library Board to secure long term, reliable funding to serve the members of all benefitted communities.

The Town of Cardston respectfully requests the support of Alberta Municipalities membership in petitioning the Government of Alberta to reconsider their current position on cost-sharing within ICF agreements, and to include this service firmly within the scope of future negotiations of ICFs.

**ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

This resolution aligns with advocacy related to funding for municipal libraries, ongoing research and advocacy guided by the Future of Municipal Government project, as well as change management related to the province's reviews of the *Municipal Government Act*, with the most current review being focused on ICF legislation. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Municipal Governance Committee.

## B13: Provincial Funding for Growing Municipalities

Moved by: City of Airdrie

Seconded by: City of Leduc

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**WHEREAS** Alberta's population increased by more than 347,000 people, or by 8.3%, since 2016;

**WHEREAS** the Province's *Alberta is Calling* campaign encourages people to relocate to Alberta to build their futures;

**WHEREAS** Government of Alberta projections indicate that more than 91% of newcomers are settling in urban centres;

**WHEREAS** urban municipalities support the development of whole communities to house newcomers and provide crucial quality of life amenities and services;

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta's transition from the Municipal Sustainability Initiative to the Local Government Fiscal Framework in 2024-25 will result in a 37% decrease in total dedicated capital funding to municipalities;

**WHEREAS** high growth rates require large infrastructure investments in transportation, recreation and cultural amenities, water/wastewater and in protective services to ensure that communities remain attractive and viable; and

**WHEREAS** municipalities are very limited in options, other than steep property tax increases, to raise necessary capital funds to support large infrastructure investments.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate to the Government of Alberta to actively partner with municipalities absorbing the population growth required to support a vibrant, diverse and thriving provincial economy through the creation of a dedicated funding program to support the capital investment pressures of growth.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Alberta is one of Canada's fastest growing provinces. The Alberta is Calling campaign actively encourages skilled workers to consider relocating to Alberta. Most newcomers are settling in urban centres.

According to the Government of Alberta's Office of Statistics and Information population estimates 2016-2022 released in March of this year 61 Alberta municipalities recorded a growth rate of more than 10% over that time period<sup>1</sup>. In total these municipalities welcomed 326,068 newcomers, almost 94% of the entire population increase recorded over that seven-year period.

Alberta municipalities, as required by the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA,) must produce five-year capital plans outlining schedules to fund new and lifecycle capital projects. These capital plans include roads, bridges, pathways, water/wastewater infrastructure, community facilities like libraries, recreation, cultural and community amenities, parks and infrastructure for protective services. All of which are important in creating strong, vibrant, liveable communities.

Population growth pressures, coupled with high-cost escalations and a proposed 37% decrease in the amount of capital funding available to non-charter municipalities (all other than Calgary and Edmonton) is placing tremendous burden on those municipalities absorbing the population growth the Province is actively attracting.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/alberta-population-estimates-data-tables>

As an example, the City of Airdrie will see a reduction in capital funding of approximately \$3-4M from the Province when LGFF becomes effective in 2024. The LGFF Transition Fund introduced in Budget 2023-24 will help off-set the impact of the formula chosen to distribute funds but does nothing to address the impact of the overall decrease in the funding available to non-charter municipalities. The City's 10-year capital plan 2023-2032 outlines more than \$1B of capital projects. There are many other high growth urban municipalities that are facing similar pressures with very few options than to increase property taxes significantly.

In addition, three of the Government of Alberta's funding programs that address municipal water/ wastewater and local infrastructure projects – Water for Life, the Alberta Municipal Water/Wastewater Partnership and the Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program – exclude certain types and sizes of municipalities. The funding is not equally available to all municipalities to meet important infrastructure needs.

The three funding programs noted above need to be expanded to include all municipalities or the Government of Alberta needs to set aside dedicated funding, during times of high growth, to better partner with those municipalities absorbing the growth. Working better together we can make Alberta prosperous for all.

**ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

ABmunis is focused on advocating for a significant increase to the starting amount of the LGFF Capital to change from its current level of \$722 million to be \$1.75 billion to benefit all municipalities throughout Alberta. Our advocacy is based on the estimated municipal infrastructure deficit along with our analysis of the significant decade-long downward trend in provincial funding for municipal infrastructure, after accounting for Alberta's increase in population and inflation. In addition, ABmunis has engaged members in taking a principle-based approach to the proposed allocation formula for LGFF based on each municipality's scope of infrastructure and growth pressures while considering the differences in fiscal capacity between municipalities. ABmunis' recommendations to Alberta Municipal Affairs for population to be a primary weighting in the LGFF Capital allocation formula is in part designed to support higher growth municipalities.



## B14: Provincial Lending Rates to Municipalities

Moved by: City of St. Albert

Seconded by: City of Airdrie

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**WHEREAS** Albertan municipalities must build capital projects to support future growth and ensure their long-term sustainability;

**WHEREAS** it is difficult for Alberta municipalities to fund the building of capital projects using funds generated by property taxes alone;

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta provides loans to municipalities to fund the building of capital projects;

**WHEREAS** in 2021, the Government of Alberta announced that any new loans to municipalities would henceforth be charged a higher interest rate similar to what a large City could obtain in the bond market, as opposed to the lower rate available to the Government itself;

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta communicated that the new spread between the province's borrowing rate and the rate charged to municipalities is an approximate increase of 0.5%;

**WHEREAS** in addition to the increase of interest rates imposed by the Government of Alberta on municipalities, the shift in national and global financial markets since 2021 has caused a massive increase in debt servicing costs municipalities must pay in comparison to debt servicing costs paid prior to 2021;

**WHEREAS** the increase in debt servicing costs has created greater strains on municipal finances, forcing municipalities to make difficult financial decisions in order to provide well-managed, accountable local government to Albertans;

**WHEREAS** the burden of increased debt servicing costs has resulted in Albertan property owners paying more to fund the building of community infrastructure; and

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta's fiscal standing has significantly improved since 2021, with the Government posting a budgetary surplus of \$10.4 billion in the 2022-2023 fiscal year in addition to a projected surplus of \$2.4 billion for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate to the Ministry of Treasury Board and Finance to implement measures to restore the policy that permitted municipalities to obtain loans with lower interest rates, as was provided prior to 2021, to allow for improved financial flexibility to encourage municipalities to fund capital projects and save taxpayer dollars.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Albertan municipalities finance the building of capital infrastructure projects in their jurisdictions that are critical for long-term community sustainability and growth. Such capital projects, including the construction of roads, bridges and utilities, are required to support growth essential to Alberta's long-term economic prosperity.

Although grants and provincial funding such as the Local Government Fiscal Framework (LGFF) are provided by the Province, such funding is often inadequate to cover the entire cost of capital projects. Consequently, municipalities must utilize other fiscal tools to fund the construction of capital infrastructure projects to avoid placing undue burdens on citizens through the raising of property taxes or the reduction of essential services. One such tool is obtaining loans issued to municipalities by the Government of Alberta.



Loans are issued to municipalities with interest rates calculated by the Province, based on current market conditions. Municipalities are required to pay the principal of the loan back to the province, in addition to interest based on the type of loan and payment term. For example, on a 20-year term “Blended Amortization” loan of \$10,000,000.00 borrowed on April 15, 2023 (4.93% interest), municipalities will have paid in total, at the end of the term:

- Principle: \$10,000,000.00
- Interest: \$5,840,712.80
- Total: \$15,840,712.80

In 2022, the City of St. Albert needed to obtain the following loans to finance three capital projects critical to economic growth and sustainable development of essential infrastructure. The following loan terms and interest rates were obtained:

- Ray Gibbon Drive Construction:
  - \$15,000,000.00 – 20 Year Term – 4.78% Interest
- North St. Albert Trail Construction
  - \$7,000,000.00 – 20 Year Term – 4.78% Interest
- Community Amenities Site & Lakeview Business District (RR260):
  - \$4,000,000.00 – 3 Year Term – 4.77% Interest

At the end of payment terms for these loans, St. Albert taxpayers will have paid \$12.75 million in interest payments. Had the Government of Alberta restored the previous policy of offering loans with interest rates that are available to the government itself – a ~0.5% reduction in the above-listed interest rates – St. Albert taxpayers would pay \$11.268 million in interest at the end of the payment term, equating to a savings of over \$1.48 million. These savings will instead be received by the Government of Alberta as a revenue stream.

With higher interest rates set to only increase the burden on taxpayers if the City borrows more money from the province to fund new capital projects, St. Albert’s City Council is forced to consider deferring the approval of new capital projects, despite the economic growth and development such projects would generate.

Across Alberta, municipalities are faced with making similar decisions regarding approvals of capital projects. Consequently, certain projects may not receive municipal approval – not because these projects wouldn’t support the growth of new developments and availability of more local jobs for Albertans, but because related debt servicing costs would risk the ability of municipalities to continue to fund essential services without imposing further tax increases on Albertans.

Given that the Government of Alberta posted a budgetary surplus of \$10.4 billion in the 2022-2023 fiscal year in addition to a projected surplus of \$2.4 billion for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the Province is in a position where the charging of higher interest rates to municipalities is unnecessary for its own fiscal health, and instead levies increased pressure on municipalities who rely on loans to fund capital projects.

Should the Ministry of Treasury Board and Finance take measures to restore the policy of issuing loans with interest rates similar to those available to the Province, more capital projects may receive municipal approval; more infrastructure will be built, more local jobs will be created, taxpayer dollars will be saved, and Albertans will see increased growth and economic prosperity in their communities.

#### **ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

This resolution aligns with Alberta Municipalities’ existing advocacy efforts related to the 2020 resolution, “Continuation of Municipal Bonds in Alberta”, wherein members have called on the Government of Alberta to ensure a sufficient supply of low-cost infrastructure loans for local authorities. Alberta Municipalities made presentations about the interest rate differential to various ministers in early 2023 and will need to bring this issue forward again under the new government.

## B15: Infrastructure Servicing and Construction Costs of School Sites

Moved by: City of Lethbridge

Seconded by: Town of Okotoks

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**WHEREAS** sections 670.1 of the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) and 53.1 of the *Education Act* require municipalities and school boards to enter into binding agreements addressing the [allocation of reserve land](#) and servicing for future school sites;

**WHEREAS** the Alberta government's current school site readiness checklist requires school boards to obtain letters of commitment from municipalities to provide and fund the infrastructure servicing of future school sites (i.e., water, sewer, storm water, electric and telecommunications connections to property lines) if the landowner or land developer is unable, in advance of provincial allocations of capital funding for school construction;

**WHEREAS** school boards and municipalities have no authority to compel landowners or land developers to fund such costs in advance of the neighbourhood being developed;

**WHEREAS** the cost of serving school sites in advance of neighbourhood development creates an additional financial burden for landowners as well as private-and public-sector land developers;

**WHEREAS** the costs of school-site servicing are added to future lot prices, and this ultimately affects home affordability in a community;

**WHEREAS** the current requirements and constraints force municipalities to encumber municipal financial reserves or municipal borrowing capacity, or to raise municipal taxes to provide and fund the servicing of future school sites;

**WHEREAS** encumbering municipal reserves and borrowing capacity to facilitate school-site servicing is not sustainable and renders these financial resources unavailable for municipalities to make other much-needed community investments; and

**WHEREAS** the province currently collects the education property tax requisition, and all education property taxes are pooled through the Alberta School Foundation Fund.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to ensure provincial allocations of capital funding for school construction cover all costs of construction, including the servicing of school sites with the required infrastructure.

### BACKGROUND:

- This issue impacts all municipalities but especially mid-sized and small municipalities as well as those with slower rates of growth and land absorption. They may not have the financial ability to meet the requirements of the readiness checklist but still need new schools. Ensuring that the school-age population across the Province has the opportunity to learn in environments that are tech-friendly and are not overcrowded demonstrates equity and an investment in the future.
- Municipalities set aside monies in various municipal reserves that are not intended for servicing of school sites. Forcing municipalities to dip into these reserves to finance school site infrastructure costs renders these reserves unavailable for their intended purposes of addressing community needs. In addition, if monies in municipal reserves are not available to satisfy this requirement and a municipality must borrow, this would encumber overall municipal borrowing capacity.
- This issue is urgent, as this provincial requirement is already putting a strain on municipal finances, including municipal reserves. It could jeopardize the advancement of school construction in some communities unless the province ensures that allocations of capital funding for school construction cover

all costs of construction, including the servicing of school sites with the required infrastructure.

- The Government of Alberta already collects an education property tax, as a component on municipal property tax notices, to fund schools and school construction. This provincial education tax could simply be adjusted to sufficiently fund all costs of school construction, including the servicing of school sites with the required infrastructure.
- A somewhat similar resolution by the Town of Penhold was adopted in 2014 [Provincial Support for School Development](#), but has since expired. Although, there are some similarities, this resolution is distinct in that it seeks only the inclusion of site servicing (water, sewer, storm water, electric and telecom connections to property line) in provincial capital funding for school construction. Nor does our resolution seek to have the province take on an active role as contractor on school construction projects.
- ABmunis members also passed a resolution in 2019, [School Site Procurement](#), which focused on the province developing necessary legislation, policy, and procedures to ensure productive engagement by the province and school boards with municipalities in the early stages of planning and announcing new school sites. This resolution expired in 2022.
- On June 10, 2020, the MGA was amended to require municipalities to enter into [Joint Use Planning Agreements \(JUPAs\)](#) with school boards. These agreements were originally required to be in place by June 10, 2023; however, [the deadline for completion of JUPAs was extended to June 2025](#). A JUPA is a formal partnership between a municipality and a school board to enable the integrated and long-term planning and use of school sites on municipal reserve (MR), school reserve (SR) and municipal and school reserve (MSR) land. More than one municipality or school board may be a party to a JUPA.
- The Alberta School Board Association (ASBA) shared a position statement proposed by one of their members with the mover, the City of Lethbridge, in April 2023. which addresses capital funding for school construction covering all costs of construction, including the servicing of school sites, as well as ensuring that adequate properly sized reserve land is made available for school sites. See Appendix 1.

#### **ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

This resolution aligns with ABmunis' Municipal Finance strategic initiative, as well as with the Infrastructure Committee's priority initiative, Forthcoming Federal/Provincial Infrastructure Funding Programs. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Infrastructure Committee. The Municipal Governance Committee would also be asked for input on the approach to advocating for the requested capital funding allocations.

## Appendix 1

**Proposed Regular Position Statement – Infrastructure Allocation, Servicing and Construction Costs of School Sites**  
Sponsored by St. Albert Public Schools, seconded by \_\_\_\_\_

### Proposed Resolution

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, ASBA advocate to the Government of Alberta for the Ministries of Education, Infrastructure and Municipal Affairs work together with Alberta Municipalities and school boards to ensure provincial allocations of capital funding for school construction cover all costs of construction, including the servicing of school sites with the required infrastructure.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**, ASBA advocate to the Government of Alberta to instruct the Ministries of Education, Infrastructure and Municipal Affairs to work together with Alberta Municipalities and school boards to resolve challenges around the lack of properly sized and available reserve land for school site allocations through the Municipal Government Act.

### RATIONALE

[ASBA's 2023 provincial election advocacy priorities](#) included capital planning.

“Capital planning is a priority for school boards. Clarity on the new School Planning Program phases, and consultation on the capital planning process, would support well-informed decision making in relation to providing adequate, modern and appropriate learning spaces for our students.”

Section 53.1 of the Education Act requires school boards to enter into joint use and planning agreements (JUPAs) with municipalities under section 670.1 of the Municipal Government Act.

In April 2023, Alberta Municipal Affairs Minister extended the deadline for JUPAs to June 10, 2025.

Integrated and long-term planning and use of school sites has long been a challenge in Alberta and a priority for many school boards to address the need for new schools and spaces for students.

Changes to the reserve process in the Municipal Government Act for municipal reserve (MR), school reserve (SR) and municipal and school reserve (MSR) requirements challenge both municipalities and school boards to plan for and secure adequate school sites.

At the April 4, 2023, Lethbridge City Council Meeting, submission of the following proposed resolution to the September 27-29, 2023 Alberta Municipalities Convention was approved:

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to ensure provincial allocations of capital funding for school construction cover all costs of construction, including the servicing of school sites with the required infrastructure.

To ensure equity in funding and provision for adequate and appropriate learning spaces for students, the government must include school boards and municipalities in any consultation on the capital planning process.

### BACKGROUND

At the April 4, 2023 Lethbridge City Council Meeting, approved submission of the following proposed resolution to the September 27-29, 2023 Alberta Municipalities Convention:

“WHEREAS Section 670(1) of the Municipal Government Act requires municipalities to enter into binding agreements with school boards for the allocation of reserve land and servicing for future school sites;

WHEREAS the Alberta government’s current school site readiness checklist requires school boards to obtain letters of commitment from municipalities to provide and fund the infrastructure servicing of future school sites (water, sewer, storm water, electric and telecom connections to property lines) if the landowner or land developer is unable,

in advance of provincial allocations of capital funding for school construction;

WHEREAS school boards and municipalities have no authority to compel landowners or land developers to fund such costs in advance of the neighbourhood being developed;

WHEREAS the cost of servicing school sites in advance of neighbourhood development creates an additional financial burden for landowners as well as private-and public-sector land developers;

WHEREAS the costs of school-site servicing are added to future lot prices, and this ultimately affects home affordability in a community.

WHEREAS the current requirements and constraints force municipalities to encumber municipal financial reserves or municipal borrowing capacity, or to raise municipal taxes to provide and fund the servicing of future school sites;

WHEREAS encumbering municipal reserves and borrowing capacity to facilitate school-site servicing is not sustainable and renders these financial resources unavailable for municipalities to make other much-needed community investments;

WHEREAS the Province currently collects the education property tax requisition, and all education property taxes are pooled through the Alberta School Foundation Fund;

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to ensure provincial allocations of capital funding for school construction cover all costs of construction, including the servicing of school sites with the required infrastructure.”

**SOURCE:** <https://agendas.lethbridge.ca/AgendaOnline/Meetings/ViewMeeting?id=3901&doctype=2>  
[Education Act Section 53.1](#)  
[April 2023 Deadline for School Site JUPAs Extended to 2025](#)

## B16: Provincial Support for Downtowns, Business Districts and Mainstreets

Moved by: City of Edmonton

Seconded by: City of St. Albert

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**WHEREAS** downtowns, business districts and mainstreets serve as community hubs where residents and visitors can gather to celebrate, build community, share ideas, learn, trade and innovate, and are often the first and lasting impression of municipalities;

**WHEREAS** downtowns, business districts and mainstreets support a municipality's ability to attract, retain and grow economic investment;

**WHEREAS** vibrant, attractive, welcoming, safe, and economically diverse downtowns, business districts and mainstreets support the Government of Alberta's ongoing efforts to attract new residents and economic activity to Alberta;

**WHEREAS** downtowns, business districts and mainstreets were, and continue to be, some of the most impacted areas stemming from the negative economic effects of COVID-19 such as the loss of residents, workers, businesses, and visitors, and the increase and concentration of social disorder;

**WHEREAS** municipalities require partnerships with, and support from, other orders of government to revitalize and ensure the ongoing vitality of these strategically important areas of communities throughout Alberta; and

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta has recognized the importance and prominence of downtowns, business districts and mainstreets through the release of the Calgary Office Revitalization and Expansion (CORE) and the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Economic Recovery (EMRER) reports.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate to the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada to increase their financial commitment to supporting the recovery and ongoing vitality efforts for the downtowns, business districts, and main streets of communities throughout Alberta.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Downtowns, business districts and mainstreets are the focal point of businesses, retail, tourism, and the hospitality industry in communities of all scales.

These areas within communities throughout Alberta contribute greatly to Alberta's economy and are areas in which jobs are often concentrated. Furthermore, these areas exert a strong influence on how a community is perceived, in turn impacts the attraction of tourism, investment, workers, students, visitors, and new residents to a community.

These issues are not just big city issues but can be seen in communities throughout Alberta as the downtowns of mid-sized cities and the mainstreets of all communities have suffered from the negative economic effects stemming from COVID-19.

Alberta's municipalities and the Government of Alberta have a shared interest and responsibility to ensure these strategic areas within communities throughout Alberta can thrive and be utilized as an incentive to new residents and investment to Alberta. These areas within communities throughout Alberta have and will continue to play a critical role in our ability to attract and retain investment, grow our tourism industry, and contribute to the reputation of Alberta as a place to call home.

**ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

ABmunis does not currently have a position on this specific issue; however, this resolution aligns with past advocacy on community building and community safety. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Economic Strategy Committee within the context of related priorities and positions.



## B17: Changes to the Clean Energy Improvement Program

Moved by: City of Edmonton

Seconded by: City of Lethbridge and Town of Athabasca

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**WHEREAS** existing buildings make up a large portion of greenhouse gas emissions that are created from urban settings, and energy retrofits to existing buildings have been identified as a strategy to reduce these emissions;

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta's Act to Enable Clean Energy Improvements, SA 2018, c 6 amended the Municipal Government Act, and an associated Clean Energy Improvements Regulation, AR 212/2018, to establish the Clean Energy Improvement Program (CEIP);

**WHEREAS** CEIP is an alternative financing tool for residential and non-residential property owners to fund energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades that are repaid through property taxes;

**WHEREAS** initiatives similar to CEIP have proven successful in numerous jurisdictions and has the potential to result in significant retrofit investments, support the creation of a thriving retrofit industry, and create thousands of private sector jobs; and

**WHEREAS** changes to CEIP are required to scale up and expand the program so it can reach its full potential.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate to the Government of Alberta to make the following changes to the Clean Energy Improvement Program (CEIP):

1. Make borrowing for CEIP eligible under the Local Authorities Capital Financing Act;
2. Allow residential building financing for multi-unit buildings, including condominiums, to be equivalent to the non-residential investment limit;
3. Increase the maximum financing limit for residential properties, which is currently set at \$50,000 or no more than double the municipal property taxes, whichever is less;
4. Increase the maximum financing limit of \$1 million for non-residential properties; and,
5. Expand eligible items to include additional clean energy and adaptation upgrades such as, but not limited to, EV Chargers, while allowing municipalities to retain the ability to choose which elements of an expanded program to offer.

### BACKGROUND:

Legislation to enable a Clean Energy Improvement Program (CEIP) became effective in Alberta on January 1, 2019. This program is similar to the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs that can be found in other cities across Canada and the United States. CEIP is administered through ABmunis and to date, nine municipalities throughout Alberta have implemented a Clean Energy Improvement Program.

The City of Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy is Edmonton's plan to transition to a low carbon city by 2050. The strategy has five critical pathways for climate action, one of which is an Emission Neutral Building pathway. Existing buildings make up about 38 per cent of Edmonton's total greenhouse gas emissions.

Edmonton created a two-year pilot of the CEIP to provide low-cost financing to property owners to complete a minimum of three eligible upgrades to their buildings.

A few lessons were learned through this pilot, including:

- The benefit of low cost financing is critical for the success of CEIP and the extent to which property owners can make retrofit investments. Consideration needs to be given to making CEIP borrowing eligible under the Local Authorities Capital Financing Act as it can offer excellent rates that are transferred without markup to the applicants. Initially, CEIP was an approved borrowing reason under Alberta Capital Finance Authority



(ACFA). When ACFA was dissolved and LAC identified as the alternative source, CEIP was not an eligible borrowing purpose. This has forced municipalities to search elsewhere for program financing.

- The financing limits of \$50,000 and \$1 million for residential and non-residential buildings have proved to be too restrictive to support deep retrofits. Net Zero retrofits have typically required greater investment than the current financing limits, especially for residential buildings. Increasing the maximum financing limit may require increasing the ceiling for financing from doubling the annual municipal property tax, to tripling or disconnecting from the property tax assessment and incorporating equity or ability to repay calculations. There is an option to facilitate exceptions for increasing the non-residential ceiling above \$1 million as detailed in the regulation through approval by the Minister and by a resolution of council.
- Consumers have expressed an interest in energy efficiency upgrades that are not currently included within the program. The original eligibility list for the program was driven by the Energy Efficiency Alberta mandate to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. However, adding other technologies including those for adaptation, such as electric vehicle chargers and flood proofing is recommended and could be an opportunity to increase community climate resilience.
- The program currently considers multi-unit residential buildings as “residential” and allows only the \$50,000 maximum. Given the scale of multi-residential buildings, a financing limit similar to the non-residential buildings limit (currently \$1 million) is warranted.
- There are significant economic benefits resulting from a robust Clean Energy Improvement Program. Similar programs have proven to be very successful in other jurisdictions including the United States, resulting in billions of dollars in retrofit investment and the creation of thousands of jobs. It is estimated that since 2009, CEIP programs in the United States have had a \$21.6 billion economic impact, created 170,000 job-years, and have facilitated the completion of 325,000 projects.

There are significant economic benefits resulting from a robust Clean Energy Improvement Program. Similar programs have proven to be very successful in other jurisdictions including the United States, resulting in billions of dollars in retrofit investment and the creation of thousands of jobs. It is estimated that since 2009, CEIP programs in the United States have had a \$21.6 billion economic impact, created 170,000 job-years, and have facilitated the completion of 325,000 projects.

#### **ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

ABmunis does not currently have a position on these proposed CEIP amendments. However, ABmunis has previous resolutions advocating for additional financing options for micro-generation. This resolution also aligns with past advocacy on expanding the financing tools available to municipalities. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis’ Board by the Sustainability and Environment Committee within the context of related priorities and positions.

# 2023 RESOLUTIONS

## CATEGORY C – OTHER ISSUES OF POTENTIAL INTEREST TO ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES

## C1: Sustainable Community Hospice Funding Model

Moved by: Town of Rocky Mountain House

Seconded by: Town of Penhold, and City of Camrose

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**WHEREAS** the demographics in Alberta are shifting, it is projected that over the next 25 years, the share of the population 80 years and older will increase significantly, more than doubling to as much as 7 per cent of the total Albertan population;<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta has communicated, “adopting the palliative approach to care when life-limiting diseases are diagnosed is an effective way of managing health care spending. It reduces the cost of delivering care, frees up acute care capacity and improves quality of life for patients with life-limiting illness and their families;”<sup>2</sup>

**WHEREAS** there is an increasing demand on community providers, such as non-profit hospice societies, to deliver palliative end-of-life care (PEOLC) in Alberta;

**WHEREAS** the ability to meet the Alberta Health Services’ accepted standard for PEOLC bed capacity is severely limited by the lack of a province-wide, sustainable funding model;

**WHEREAS** Alberta Health Services’ Rural Palliative Care In-Home Funding Program can only be used to cover end-of-life care received at home and cannot be utilized to cover end-of-life care provided by hospice societies in their facilities; and

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta’s Palliative End-of-Life Care Grant Fund was one-time grant funding that was not eligible for operational costs for hospice societies.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to implement a sustainable operational funding model for the provision of hospice services by community hospice societies across the province.

### BACKGROUND:

There has been ongoing engagement from the Government of Alberta regarding Palliative End-of-Life Care, highlighting the importance of these supports and services to Albertans. The need to develop the capacity of these community services, especially in rural settings, is clear; the following provincial frameworks and reports are all consistent in that message:

- Government of Alberta – Advancing palliative and end-of-life care in Alberta – Palliative and End-of-Life Care Engagement Final Report November 2021
- Alberta Health Services – Palliative and End of Life Care – Alberta Provincial Framework Addendum 2021
- Alberta Health Services - Palliative and End of Life Care - Alberta Provincial Framework 2014

What remains is the question of continual operational funding for PEOLC hospice community providers.

The Government of Alberta identified the service gaps that exist for PEOLC needs in Alberta in the Advancing Palliative and End-of-Life Care in Alberta Final Report November 2021. The report included the following recommendation:

<sup>1</sup> <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/90a09f08-c52c-43bd-b48a-fda5187273b9/resource/bb7c6ef6-ade5-4def-ae55-ef1fd5d4e563/download/2020-2046-alberta-population-projections.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/130eb68f-c7b5-4ab1-8a4a-ce6181c34610/resource/69c4fd85-8206-4d63-b43f-94d447c55c31/download/health-advancing-palliative-end-of-life-care-in-alberta.pdf>

“Government, AHS, and their partners, should grow and expand community-based PEOLC services via home and community care programs and facility-based continuing care... Stand-alone hospices face challenges in maintaining sustainable operational budgets and workforce.”

The Government of Alberta committed \$20 million over four years to improve PEOLC by shifting from hospital to community-based care; raising awareness of how and when to access PEOLC; developing effective caregiver supports; and establishing education, training and standards for health professionals.<sup>3</sup> The funds were entirely allocated as of 2022 and were not eligible for hospice societies’ operational expenses.

Non-profit hospice societies who are already operating in communities and working towards expanding these important services in Alberta have been left in budget purgatory. They are actively working towards a priority identified by the Government of Alberta, but reliant on fundraising for operational funding.

Correcting the disparity between the funding available to patients who choose to receive PEOLC in-home versus in a hospice suite is an immediate solution that could address these challenges while the economic analysis of reallocating health care financial resources in accordance with the shift from hospital to community-based hospice care is completed.

Municipalities must advocate for the allocation of financial resources to these valuable supports and services provided in their communities.

**ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

ABmunis does not currently have a position on this issue. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis’ Board by the Safe and Healthy Communities Committee within the context of related priorities and positions.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/20-19f-policies-for-supporting-community-hospice-associations/>

## C2: Review of Vehicle Collision Reporting Damage Threshold

Moved by: City of Airdrie

Seconded by: City of St. Albert

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**WHEREAS** the Alberta Government has mandated that all collisions with combined damage over \$2000 must be reported and that all autobody shops are required by the Alberta Government to have a damage sticker that can only be issued by a police force in order to repair the vehicle;

**WHEREAS** motor vehicle collisions are among the top ten calls for service to municipal police departments and the work involved in managing these collisions is extensive;

**WHEREAS** the cost to repair a vehicle has increased, especially newer vehicles which have complex technology and require more parts to repair; and

**WHEREAS** the majority of collisions occurring in the province are property damage only and most will require a damage sticker.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to engage stakeholders and review the \$2,000 collision reporting damage threshold to reflect current repair costs, while reducing red tape and administrative work for municipal police departments.

### **BACKGROUND:**

According to Alberta Traffic Collision Statistics, out of the 95,001 collisions that occurred in our province in 2020, over 90 per cent were categorized as property damage only (PDO).<sup>1</sup> Due to a provincial requirement in sections 146 and 147 of the Operator Licensing and Vehicle Control Regulation under the *Traffic Safety Act*, if the combined damage to all vehicles and any property involved is over \$2,000, a collision report must be filed with police. A damage sticker will be issued which allows for repairs to be completed. With the increasingly high cost for vehicle repairs, nearly all PDO collisions will require reporting, using significant police officer and support staff resources.

A report released in March 2023 by the Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC), outlined that due to inflation, the price of vehicle and automotive parts had increased by 13 per cent in the last two years. Cost pressures are further magnified by increases in the price and availability of labour to undertake repair work. While the cost of replacement parts for older vehicles has increased making them more expensive to repair, newer vehicles have complex technology and require more parts to repair. The cost to repair vehicles on the road today has increased dramatically over the last few years. The IBC report compares the cost to repair a Toyota RAV4 bumper on models from 2017 and 2022. The number of parts required and total cost more than doubled.<sup>2</sup>

A Collision Cost Study Update prepared for the Edmonton Capital Region Intersection Safety Partnership (CRISP) in 2018 offered estimates on the average cost of damage to vehicles in the Capital Region during the time of the study. The report concluded that the average cost of vehicle repairs in a PDO collision was \$9,130.<sup>3</sup>

At the RCMP detachment in the City of Airdrie, almost every collision results in the requirement to be reported to obtain a damage sticker. In 2022, 3,030 collisions were reported to the Airdrie RCMP detachment.

The demand for RCMP officers and support staff is significant. Officer time to review damage and issue a damage sticker so that repairs can be completed, along with support staff follow-up to photocopy statements, prepare

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<sup>1</sup> <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/25020446-adfb-4b57-9aaa-751d13dab72d/resource/07d4f0b8-d2e3-42ab-9eae-3d01b8291e04/download/tran-alberta-traffic-collision-statistics-2020.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.albertaautoinsurancefacts.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Alberta-Auto-Reform-Report-March-2023.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [https://drivetolive.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/CollisionCostStudyUpdate\\_FinalReport.pdf](https://drivetolive.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/CollisionCostStudyUpdate_FinalReport.pdf)

requests from law offices for collision details, assist the driver with paperwork, enter the data into two databases and manage any errors of submissions, takes a great deal of time and resources.

The amount of administrative work surrounding this reporting has led cities such as Grande Prairie, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat to direct reporting of PDO collisions and the issuing of damage stickers to a third-party collision reporting centre. A 2022 collision reporting centre pilot project in Edmonton was offered at no additional cost to police or the public. Whether reporting to a public or private entity, the \$2,000 damage threshold remains for all PDO collisions.

Other provinces have different reporting structures. For example, in Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Manitoba, only collisions involving injury, death, criminal offence, towing or an out of province vehicle, require reporting to the police. BC also requires a police report if a vehicle has sustained more than \$10,000 in damage. All of these provinces operate under a provincial insurance model.

The Province of Ontario, similar to Alberta, has legislation that requires collisions resulting in property damage of \$2,000 or more be reported immediately to an authorized peace officer.

Alberta's collision damage threshold increased from \$1,000 to \$2,000 on January 1, 2011. Prior to the change, the threshold had not changed in almost 20 years.<sup>4</sup>

**ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

Alberta Municipalities does not currently have a position on this issue. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Infrastructure Committee.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=29699F51C2115-C0C6-C2B5-3131AF0A489B467C>

## C3: E-Scooters and Modernizing the Alberta Traffic Safety Act for Personal Use

Moved by: The City of Calgary

Seconded by: The City of Edmonton

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**WHEREAS** e-Scooters are now readily available for sale on the private market;

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta's *Traffic Safety Act* does not currently provide a legal framework for personal use of e-scooters beyond private property;

**WHEREAS** without a legal framework personal choice and freedom of mobility to meet needs and lifestyles is limited;

**WHEREAS** in Alberta a municipality cannot create bylaws to regulate the use of personal e-Scooters;

**WHEREAS** the Cities of Calgary and Edmonton have had to obtain special Alberta Transportation ministerial permissions to be allowed to authorize and regulate the use of rental e-Scooters under a pilot project;

**WHEREAS** if this process was replicated for dozens, or hundreds, of municipalities it would create needless red tape for both municipalities and Alberta Transportation and still not address the issue of e-Scooters for personal use; and

**WHEREAS** all Albertans should be able to legally use micromobility options that help connect travelers to local destinations.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to amend the Traffic Safety Act to accommodate the daily use of e-Scooters Alberta wide, for rental and personal use.

### **BACKGROUND:**

#### **What is micromobility?**

Micromobility refers to a range of small, lightweight vehicles operating at speeds typically below 25 km/h (15 mph) and driven by users personally. Micromobility devices include bicycles, electric bicycles (e-Bikes), electric scooters (e-Scooters), electric skateboards, shared bicycle fleets, and electric pedal assisted (pedelec) bicycles. Shared e-Scooters are a great way for a resident or visitor to travel throughout a community. Since 2019, many Alberta municipalities have issued permits to companies, with the approval of the Government of Alberta through Alberta Transportation and Trade Corridors (Alberta Transportation), to provide rental access to new, safe, and sustainable methods of transportation. Users can ride a shared e-Scooter municipality-wide on bicycle lanes, pathways, empty sidewalks and roadways with lower speed limits and lower traffic volumes. E-Scooters are not permitted on busier roadways, like Macleod Trail or Gateway Boulevard. Information on the types of vehicles allowed on pathways can be found on the following site - <https://www.calgary.ca/roads/safety/bike-laws.html>



ALLOWED VEHICLES	
Bicycles – manual and electric assisted 	Skateboards – manual and electric assisted 
Scooters – manual and electric assisted 	Inline skates or Rollerblades 
Segway 	Electric Unicycle 
Hoverboards 	Mobility Devices – Wheelchairs and Scooters 

PROHIBITED VEHICLES (with examples)	
All electric motorcycles 	Juiced Scrambler 
	CSC City Slicker 
	Vespa Style Scooter or genZe Scooter 
Any gas powered vehicle 	Gas Assisted Bicycles and Scooters 

Despite the type of vehicle being used, ALL users must obey a maximum speed of 20km/hr, or posted speed limit.

**Benefits of shared micromobility programs**

Data from other North American cities have demonstrated a wide range of benefits of shared micromobility programs including:

- Filling in the gap for the vital first/last mile by encouraging people to walk, cycle and take public transit more often.
- Saving time on short trips.
- Providing access to various transportation options for all demographics.
- Improving people's physical health by providing transportation options that encourage citizens to be more physically active.

**Personal e-Scooter use not allowed in Alberta**

Currently, personal e-Scooters are not allowed to operate on public sidewalks or roadways as they do not have provincial approval to operate beyond private property. For a private citizen to operate their own e-Scooter legally on a municipal roadway or sidewalk, they would also require a provincial exemption. No municipality has the authority to issue a vehicle exemption for public roadways. For personal e-Scooters, the devices do not have the same level of device regulation as shared e-Scooters, and many can travel at speeds over 50 km/h. Municipalities also do not have the authority to regulate what is sold online or in stores. If the Government of Alberta were to allow for personal e-Scooters on roadways, the City of Calgary would currently recommend that personal e-Scooters be treated the same as bicycles and travel on roadways, bike lanes and pathways.

Personal e-Scooters are a growing regulatory gap that the Government of Alberta needs to address and allow for it.

**Shared E-Scooter Operations and Restrictions**

Shared e-Scooters have a number of restrictions on them to receive an exemption from the Government of Alberta including restrictions of top speed (maximum of 20 km/hour), insurance requirements (which in the case of Calgary is \$10 million in Corporate General Liability Insurance), reporting requirements and geofenced areas that the

devices slow down and/or cannot operate in. Currently, shared e-Scooters are allowed to operate on roads without lane markings (lower volume roadways), bike lanes, pathways, and sidewalks (as long as they do not interfere with pedestrians).

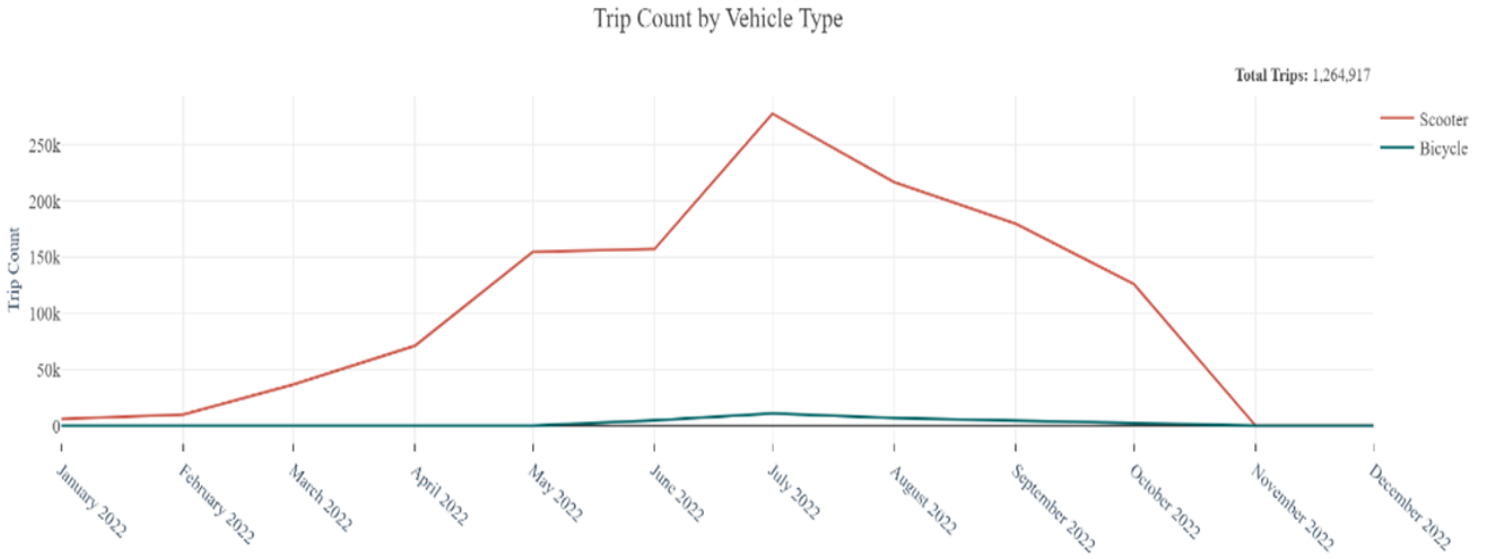
### **E-Scooter and Micro-mobility in Alberta**

Alberta's municipalities currently do not have the authority to create their own bylaws that allow for and regulate the operations of e-Scooters on sidewalks or roadways within our communities. The Government of Alberta through Alberta Transportation and the *Traffic Safety Act* has jurisdiction over what types of vehicles are allowed on roadways, cycle tracks and sidewalks within a municipality. Under the current provincial law, motorized scooters (both electric and gas powered) are considered prohibited miniature vehicles. Alberta Transportation can authorize exemptions and allow their use under the *Traffic Safety Act*, and it is this legislated procedure municipalities that wish to undertake an e-Scooter pilot program must comply with.

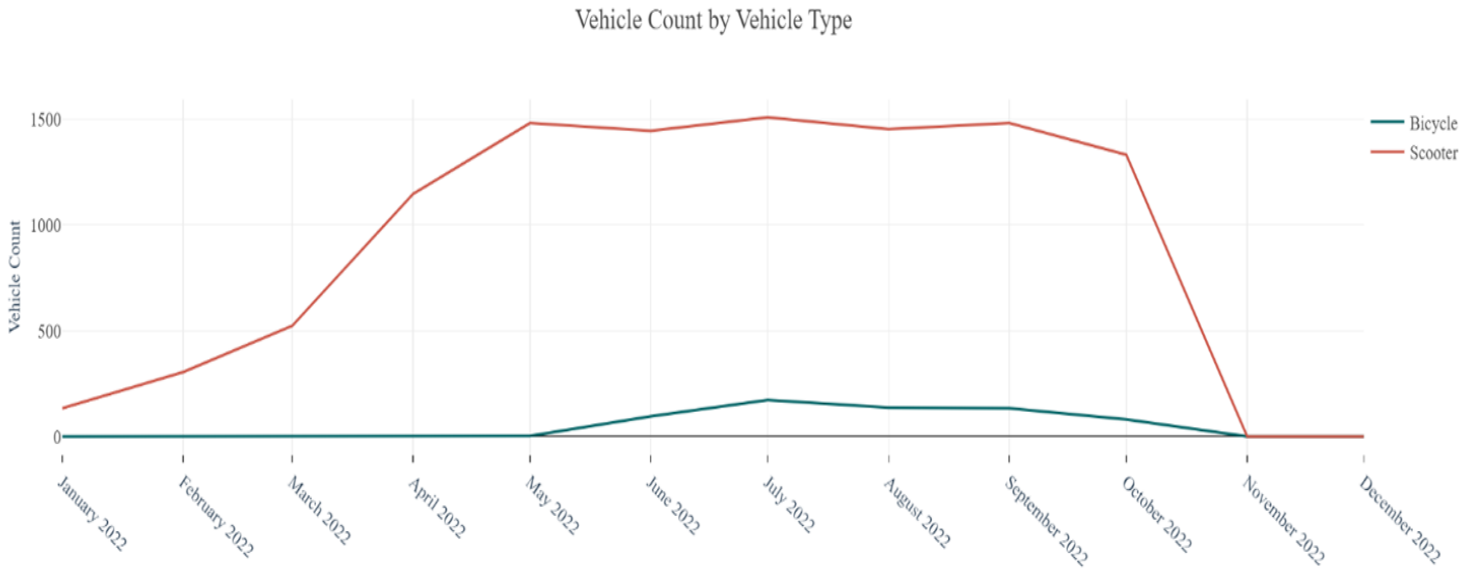
In 2018, the City of Calgary and the City of Edmonton received permission and permits from the Government of Alberta to be able to conduct pilot projects in 2019 (and subsequently 2021, 2022 and 2023) that allowed e-Scooter and e-Bike companies to operate within these municipalities, such as Bird, Spin and Lime, in Edmonton and Neuron and Bird in Calgary. Once permission was granted by Alberta Transportation, municipal administrations were able to author bylaws that further regulated the approved shared e-Scooters. For example, the City of Calgary updated its Traffic, Streets, Stephen Avenue and Parks and Pathways Bylaws through the course of their shared e-Scooter and e-Bike pilot and the City of Edmonton updated their Traffic Bylaw, including specifically prohibiting e-scooters riding on sidewalks, through the course of their pilot.

The Calgary and Edmonton 2019 e-Scooter pilots were successful and subsequently in 2021, 2022 and in 2023 more of Alberta's municipalities applied to Alberta Transportation for their own e-Scooter pilots. In 2023, authorized e-Scooter pilot projects are in effect in the cities of Calgary, Edmonton, Red Deer, Lethbridge, Airdrie, Medicine Hat, St. Albert, Leduc and in the towns of Okotoks, Cochrane, Lacombe, and Blackfalds, among others. With Alberta having 344 municipalities, municipal e-Scooter and e-Bike pilot programs becoming more common province-wide, and successful e-Scooter pilot programs transitioning to permanent programs, Alberta Transportation should reduce the burden of red tape on itself and municipalities by formalizing shared e-Scooter use and personal e-Scooter use within the *Traffic Safety Act* and permitting municipalities to draft their own bylaws to regulate the use and operations of e-Scooter within their municipality.

City of Calgary 2022 Micromobility Trip data.



City of Calgary 2022 Micromobility Operators fleet numbers.



**ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

Alberta Municipalities does not currently have a position on this issue. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis’ Board by the Infrastructure Committee.

## C4: Use of Golf Carts on Designated Municipal Roads

Moved by: Summer Village of Half Moon Bay

Seconded by: Village of Delburne

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**WHEREAS** a number of ABmunis members, primarily from smaller communities, have expressed support for the use of golf carts on certain designated municipal roads as an ability-inclusive, cost-effective, safe, environmentally-aware transportation alternative that enhances community connectivity;

**WHEREAS** as the result of a Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA) member resolution, the Saskatchewan Traffic Safety Act has been updated to allow people to drive golf carts on certain municipal roads. As of May 2023, Saskatchewan municipalities have the ability to allow golf carts to be used on public roads if their municipality passes a bylaw, subject to certain limitations and Saskatchewan Government Insurance (the “Administrator”) approval;

**WHEREAS** British Columbia and Ontario have implemented pilot projects to determine how to best integrate the safe use of golf cart in municipalities. The municipalities involved in the pilot projects must pass a by-law to permit golf cart use and may set out specific requirements, including additional safety requirements, based on what is best for their communities;

**WHEREAS** the operation of golf carts on Alberta municipal roads would be governed by changes to the Traffic Safety Act of Alberta and should be enabled through a municipality specific bylaw. Off Highway Vehicles already enjoy this type of flexibility through the Alberta Traffic Safety Act 120(4)(b) where the council of a municipality may, by bylaw, authorize or issue a permit authorizing persons to drive off-highway vehicles along certain roads that are under their direct control and management; and

**WHEREAS** the use of micro-mobility battery-powered scooters on roads is a good example of where municipality specific bylaws have been successfully created in coordination with amendments to Alberta provincial regulations to allow for the safe use electric scooters.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to make changes to the Alberta Traffic Safety Act and regulations plus the Use Of Highway And Rules Of The Road Regulation that would allow Municipalities, if they so desire, to approve the use of golf carts on certain approved roads and public lands within their municipality.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The requested action should have a high priority. Many jurisdictions across Canada already see the benefit of having an ability-inclusive, cost-effective, safe, environmentally-aware transportation alternative that enhances community connectivity and golf carts can provide this. Properly position, these changes could also form part of a bigger strategy on aging population, mobility, and declining rural populations.

Currently, golf carts are classified as a prohibited miniature vehicle, which also includes personal transporter, pocket bikes, go carts, electric scooters and golf carts. These vehicles are motor vehicles as defined in the Traffic Safety Act; however, they also meet the definition of “miniature vehicles” which are prohibited from use on roads. With the rise of a micro-mobility revolution to deliver low- carbon, cost- effective, ability-inclusive means for alternative transportation, changes are required to the prohibited miniature vehicle classification. Golf Carts and electric scooters should be removed from this classification and provided with rules and regulations that would allow for their safe operation on municipal roads.

### Saskatchewan

As of May 2023, Saskatchewan municipalities now have the ability to allow golf carts to be used on public roads for more than just getting to and from the course. SGI has updated a policy that will allow people to drive golf carts on certain municipal roads, if their municipality passes a by-law, subject to certain limitations and SGI approval. This change in regulations is the result of a member resolution at their recent annual convention of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA). The resolution called for change, stating, "many SUMA members, primarily from smaller communities and resort villages, have expressed support for ability-inclusive, cost-effective, safe, environmentally-aware transportation alternatives that enhance community connectivity and reduce parking congestion in public gathering spaces."

In response to that resolution, the Saskatchewan Government stated that, "Our government has listened to our municipal stakeholders and asked SGI to make these common-sense changes that balance safety considerations with meeting the needs of our communities," Minister Responsible for SGI Don Morgan said.

"Expanding the use of golf carts within our resort village will allow golf carts to operate as vehicles on municipal roadways subject to numerous safety requirements," Resort Village of Shields Mayor Angie Larson said. "This will improve the quality of life for our community."

### British Columbia

A new pilot project will now allow golf carts to operate on certain local roads in Chase and in Qualicum Beach, providing drivers with more transportation options, Premier Christy Clark announced today.

"This change makes it easier for people, particularly seniors, to stay engaged in their community and access the services that make their lives better," said Premier Clark. "By allowing these lower emission vehicles on local streets, we are connecting British Columbians with their families and friends and improving not only their health but the quality of their lives."

"This innovative pilot project will provide British Columbians with more transportation choices," said MLA for Parksville-Qualicum Michelle Stillwell. "Qualicum Beach is a great location to trial the program, keeping people, especially seniors connected with their family, friends and community."

"We have heard from residents that they would like additional options to use alternative and environmentally friendly vehicles," said Qualicum Beach Mayor Teunis Westbroek. "Golf carts will give our town more ways to get around and we are thrilled to be part of this pilot project as I believe it is appropriate in our community."

The golf carts will need to meet detailed operating conditions and vehicle specifications such as only driving on municipal roads with a maximum speed of 30 km/h during daylight hours. The golf cart must be registered and insured and be equipped with seat belts, a horn, lights, signals, and a rear-view mirror. Drivers will need to have a valid driver's license.

### Ontario

Ontario has created a ten-year pilot framework for permitting the use of golf carts on-road; referred to as 'golf cars' in regulations. On June 3, 2020, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation introduced this new pilot project in order to examine golf cart's ability to safely integrate with other vehicle types and determine whether existing rules of the road are adequate. The pilot project operates under Ontario Regulation 407/21 Pilot Project – Golf Cars sets out the broad regulatory framework to allow golf cars on roads on Pelee Island and in Huron-Kinloss and includes operator and vehicle requirements.

The province established the broad regulatory framework for golf carts that include a number of vehicle and operating requirements that must be met. The municipalities involved in the pilot project must pass a by-law to permit golf cart use and may set out specific requirements, including additional safety requirements, based on what is best for their communities. Municipalities are in the best position to determine the needs of their communities.

### Electric Scooters

Micro-mobility companies Lime, Neuron and Bird Canada offer rentable, battery-powered scooters after Alberta's provincial regulations were amended to allow for their use. Like other forms of motorized transportation, scooters are subject to laws governing safe usage. But those laws can vary. A great example of how municipalities can decide what is best for them, in Calgary scooter users can ride on sidewalks but not on roads and in Edmonton, it is the opposite: Riders are prohibited from sidewalks but allowed on roads with speed limits of 50 km/h or less. Both cities permit scooters on paved pathways and in bike lanes. It is notable that these rules specifically apply to rented scooters.

Municipalities in Alberta already have some flexibility in determining road safety rules under the Alberta Traffic Safety Act and this flexibility should be extended to the use of golf carts. Example, Alberta Traffic Safety Act 120(5) A [municipal] permit, order or bylaw issued or made under this section may do one or more of the following: (a) prescribe terms and conditions, or either of them, under which an off-highway vehicle may be operated on a highway; (b) prescribe the maximum speed limits, not to exceed the maximum speed limits prescribed for vehicles under this Act, that are applicable to an off-highway vehicle; (c) prescribe the minimum speed limits that are applicable to off-highway vehicles; (d) prescribe routes to be used by off-highway vehicles.

### **ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

Alberta Municipalities does not currently have a position on this specific issue. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Infrastructure Committee. The Small Communities Committee would also be asked for input on the approach to advocating for the requested legislative change.

## C5: Access to Mobile Wireless (Cellular) Services

Moved by: Alberta Municipalities Board of Directors

Seconded by: N/A

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**WHEREAS** Albertans rely on mobile wireless (cellular) services to conduct business activities, for personal use, and in emergency situations;

**WHEREAS** the Telecommunications Act affirms that the Canadian telecommunications policy has an objective “to render reliable and affordable telecommunications services of high quality accessible to Canadians in both urban and rural regions in all regions of Canada”;

**WHEREAS** the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) made access to mobile wireless voice and internet services part of a nation-wide service objective for telecommunications services in 2016;

**WHEREAS** the CRTC has a target of 100% of all Canadian households having access to the latest generally deployed mobile wireless technology (currently defined as long-term evolution [LTE]) by December 2026; and

**WHEREAS** despite CRTC reporting that more than 99% of all Albertans have access to cellular services, many Albertans outside of major urban centres do not have access to reliable cellular network coverage; and

**WHEREAS** access to landlines and high-speed internet is challenging in rural and remote areas which further increases the importance of reliable mobile wireless (cellular) services;

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities engage the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission to address the lack of reliable cellular network coverage for mobile wireless (cellular) service.

### **BACKGROUND:**

This resolution was adopted at the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) Spring 2023 Conference. Alberta Municipalities Board recognizes that many of our members also experience challenges with access to wireless internet and there is an opportunity for ABmunis and RMA to collaborate in advocating for improved coverage.

There are several telecommunications providers offering mobile wireless voice and internet services. Despite telecommunications providers offering services, there are areas throughout the province that do not have reliable cellular network coverage.

The lack of reliable cellular network coverage is experienced by residents and businesses in remote municipalities that are at a distance from the higher populated urban centers.

Residents and business owners alike have raised concerns about their ability to operate their businesses due to challenges with telecommunications. Today many residents and businesses in rural Alberta are not being serviced by landlines or being refused service. Therefore, reliance on mobile wireless (cellular) services becomes their only option. However, when a business must rely on high spots on the property to receive and send cellular calls it makes it difficult for business owners to operate and grow their business.

Even more importantly, emergency situations require reliable cellular network coverage. Rural and remote areas are at risk of emergency situations becoming critical when there is no access to 911.

The CRTC provides reports on “Major Roads With & Without LTE Services” that support cellular networks. Most major roads in Alberta are identified by the CRTC as having LTE service. However, the data does not accurately reflect the reliability of the service. For example, Highway 18 is marked as having LTE service, however there is a



location between Barrhead and Westlock with no cellular access or a dead spot. The same is true on Highway 33 between areas heading west to Swan Hills and south to Edmonton (marked in yellow on map below).

Source: [https://crtc.gc.ca/cartovista/RoadsWithAndWithoutLTE\\_En/index.html](https://crtc.gc.ca/cartovista/RoadsWithAndWithoutLTE_En/index.html)

CRTC also reports on “LTE Service Coverage Areas.” The area encompassing the County of Barrhead is shown as fully covered by two facility-based networks, however there are several areas within the County of Barrhead that are three-digit highways and local roads that do not have reliable coverage and experience dead spots. According to the map, the Village of Heisler also does not have LTE service along Highway 855. These dead spots occur from no coverage by service providers, no cellular signal or lack of towers.

Source: [https://crtc.gc.ca/cartovista/LTEProviderCountYE2019\\_EN/index.html](https://crtc.gc.ca/cartovista/LTEProviderCountYE2019_EN/index.html)

CRTC reports do not reflect the reality on the ground in rural and remote Alberta with respect to mobile wireless (cellular) services. As a result, the lack of attention and investment leaves rural Alberta underserved which limits economic growth from many perspectives and potentially increases risk to life and property by negatively impacting emergency response.

**ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

Alberta Municipalities has no active resolutions directly related to this issue. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis’ Board by the Small Communities Committee. The Infrastructure Committee would also be asked for input on the approach to advocating for the requested policy change. ABmunis would also seek opportunities for joint advocacy with RMA.

## C6: Capital Budget Disclosures Negatively Impacting Procurement Processes

Moved by: Town of Okotoks

Seconded by: City of Airdrie

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**WHEREAS** Part 8 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA) outlines the framework local councils and administrations must operate within when managing the finances of a municipality;

**WHEREAS** municipalities must follow specific requirements regarding budgets, borrowing, investing, corporate planning and financial reporting, and off-site levy requirements, and that same information and deliberations must be provided to the public;

**WHEREAS** the procurement and tendering process is a regimented and highly competitive process;

**WHEREAS** the costing and phasing of municipal project details provided as part of municipal budgets negatively impacts the results of open, competitive procurement processes; and

**WHEREAS** inflation, shortages of skilled trades and supplies have increased the pressures in budgeting and procurement processes.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate to the Government of Alberta for amendments to Part 8 of the *MGA* to provide that detailed phasing and costing of projects are protected information from disclosure in public budget documents and off-site levy bylaw requirements until after those projects have been awarded under the applicable procurement process.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Section 283.1 of the *MGA* states that each municipality must prepare a written plan respecting its anticipated financial operations over a period of at least the next three financial years and respecting its anticipated capital property additions over a period of at least the next five financial years. A municipality may only authorize expenditures that are included in the budget, are for an emergency, are legally required or are otherwise authorized by council.

Municipal operating and capital budgets are one of the most important policy decisions of council. The budget determines the programs and services that the municipality will provide to residents. The inability to keep phasing and design information for municipal projects protected until the procurement process is complete affects all municipalities across the Province. Escalating costs due to inflation, materials, skilled trades, and suppliers has magnified the negative impact of being unable to negotiate or award projects on a level playing field. Companies or firms submitting bids or tenders for municipal procurements have detailed financial information that no other private company or individual would be subject to divulging. To protect taxpayers, this amendment should be prioritized as these financial impacts will increase and be experienced on all local government projects.

Recent tendering results submitted to the Town of Okotoks have highlighted the trend for submissions to exactly match detailed budget documents contained in off-site levy and budget approval documents.

### **ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

ABmunis does not currently have a position on this issue. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Municipal Governance Committee within the context of related priorities and positions.

## C7: Trade Agreement Impacts on Municipal Procurement Processes

Moved by: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

Seconded by: Lac La Biche County

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**WHEREAS** the New West Partnership Trade Agreement (“NWPTA”) is an accord between the Governments of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba (“Western Provinces”) to create a barrier-free, interprovincial market;

**WHEREAS** the NWPTA is restrictive as it relates to the procurement process and limits the opportunities or options for local sourcing by municipalities in the western provinces to the posting thresholds, which are less than the posting thresholds in the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (“CFTA”);

**WHEREAS** that discrepancy in the thresholds creates an advantage for public bodies and contractors outside of the western provinces to be detriment of municipalities and contracts within the western provinces; and

**WHEREAS** local sourcing could be beneficial for a number of municipalities in Alberta as they would be supporting their own local economy.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the provincial government to abolish the NWPTA, as it would permit greater opportunities for local sourcing.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Municipalities in Alberta would benefit from a shift to procurement processes that allow for local businesses to be given priority. Domestic trade agreements, such as the CFTA and the NWPTA, which are negotiated at the federal and provincial levels of government, do not currently allow for such provisions.

One option for Alberta Municipalities is to lobby on behalf of all its member municipalities with a focus on dissolving one of the domestic trade agreements, being the NWPTA, which applies only to western provinces. While it is true that the NWPTA served a valuable purpose in promoting trade liberalization in the western provinces prior to the introduction of the CFTA in 2017, the NWPTA applies only to the western provinces, whereas the CFTA applies to the federal government and all provinces in Canada. Considering the introduction of the CFTA, a case can be made that the NWPTA continues to exist in a way that disadvantages the western provinces.

For example, the thresholds in the CFTA are tied to inflation and increase over time, while the thresholds in the NWPTA do not. Further, the CFTA has higher thresholds than the NWPTA, meaning the threshold for single-source or sole source procurements is higher for non-western provinces. Under the NWPTA, western provinces are restricted to a threshold of \$75,000 for goods and services and \$200,000 for construction, while other provinces can take advantage of the higher thresholds in the CFTA of \$121,200 for goods and services and \$302,900 for construction. This ultimately allows non-western provinces local preference policies for procurements up to \$121,200 for goods and services and \$302,900 for construction, while western provinces are limited to \$75,000 for goods and services and \$200,000 for construction.

Additionally, while the foundational concepts contained in the CFTA and NWPTA are similar, the agreements do contain some different exceptions for when single-sourcing or sole sourcing is permitted. This results in more opportunities for non-western provinces to engage in single-source or sole-source procurements than there are for western provinces.

When non-western provinces extend more sole sourcing opportunities to their own local contractors, contractors from the western provinces bidding on work in other regions of Canada may have fewer opportunities than are afforded to contractors from these other regions of bidding on work within the western provinces, which are bound by the more restrictive terms of the NWPTA.

As the NWPTA is negotiated at the provincial government level, Alberta Municipalities, which represents numerous Alberta municipalities, is a natural conduit to lobby the provincial government for support in this initiative.

**ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

ABmunis does not currently have a position on this specific issue. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the Economic Strategy Committee within the context of related priorities and positions.

# 2023 RESOLUTIONS

## CATEGORY E - EMERGENT RESOLUTIONS

# About Emergent Resolutions

## Criteria

The criteria for an emergent resolution, as set in section 16 the [Resolutions Policy](#), are that it **must**:

- a. Deal with an issue of concern to Alberta municipalities which has arisen after the resolution deadline, or just prior to the resolution deadline, such that Members could not submit it as a resolution in time;
- b. Have a critical aspect that needs to be addressed before the next Convention; and
- c. Comply with the guidelines for resolutions set out in the policy.

## Submission

If your municipality is considering an emergent resolution, please contact [resolutions@abmunis.ca](mailto:resolutions@abmunis.ca) as soon as possible. ABmunis administration can help your municipality determine if the proposed resolution may meet the criteria and help your municipality work through the submission process. Any proposed emergent resolutions will be reviewed by either Alberta Municipalities Board or Executive Committee, depending on timing, to determine if they meet the criteria and can go forward for consideration at the 2022 Convention.

## Seconding

The policy also stipulates that, if the Alberta Municipalities Board or Executive Committee determines the resolution meets the criteria of an emergent resolution, the Board will second the resolution.

## Notification

Should Alberta Municipalities receive emergent resolutions, an updated version of this Resolutions Book will be distributed to Members through email and The Weekly newsletter.

## More Information

For more information on emergent resolutions, see sections 15 through 22 of the [Resolutions Policy](#) or contact [resolutions@abmunis.ca](mailto:resolutions@abmunis.ca).

## E1: Enhancing Amusement Ride Safety

Moved by: Town of Stony Plain

Seconded by: Alberta Municipalities Board of Directors

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**WHEREAS** Alberta municipalities provide safe and healthy community spaces, events, and programs for residents and visitors to gather and celebrate;

**WHEREAS** Amusement rides offer an exciting and fun feature to many permanent and temporary festivals and events throughout Alberta;

**WHEREAS** Alberta municipalities seek to mitigate residents' and visitors' exposure to harm and injury associated with the operation of amusement rides in their community;

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta administers the *Safety Codes Act*, which includes the development, interpretation, and enforcement of safety standards for amusement rides;

**WHEREAS** the Alberta Elevating Devices and Amusement Rides Safety Association provides independent oversight to the installation and ongoing safety compliance of elevating devices, amusement rides, and passenger ropeways throughout Alberta; and

**WHEREAS** recent incidents involving members of the public on amusement rides in Alberta warrant a review of the safety standards and industry compliance.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to conduct a review of the codes and standards that govern amusement rides to ensure members of the public can enjoy the safe operation of these experiences.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Town of Stony Plain is requesting this emergent resolution be considered as a result of recent incidents that occurred in Stony Plain during a community event. In June 2023, two separate incidents occurred where amusement rides caused injuries to eventgoers, requiring an immediate call for inspection of the amusement rides, and resulting in the cancellation of the midway for the remainder of the event. Following these incidents, other Alberta municipalities with amusement ride providers participating in community celebrations have proactively requested onsite ride inspections to ensure the safety of eventgoers.

Amusement rides in Alberta must operate based on Canadian standards and regulations adopted under the *Alberta Safety Codes Act*. The *Safety Codes Act* outlines that amusement rides are inspected for compliance with the standards and regulations based on the following frequency:

- All amusement rides are reviewed for compliance at least once a year; and
- Portable rides must be inspected at the first set up in Alberta each year.<sup>1</sup>

The amusement ride provider involved in the incidents in Stony Plain received their required inspection at their first setup in Alberta for 2023 before hosting the midway in Stony Plain. Based on the incident in June, consideration should be given to conducting further inspections beyond the first setup.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/ddf68cc1-a702-4bc0-b867-f834194dd877/resource/5887fd61-c82a-42c3-a34f-4d764b16fb10/download/ar-2011-001frequencyofcompliance-monitoring.pdf>



While incidents involving amusement rides in Alberta are rare, the impact can be life-threatening. A 2010 incident at the Calgary Stampede resulted in enhancements to the regulations and oversight of the amusement ride providers<sup>1</sup>. These recent incidents in Stony Plain warrant a further review of the *Safety Codes Act* standards and consideration of improved oversight, compliance, and enforcement.

The Town of Stony Plain has been in communication with Alberta Elevating Devices and Amusement Rides Safety Association to clarify their role and consider opportunities to mitigate the occurrence of these incidents. Additionally, Alberta Recreation & Parks Association has been contacted by the Town of Stony Plain to request support for this resolution prior to or during their upcoming AGM in the fall of 2023.

Ensuring safe and healthy communities is a cornerstone role for Alberta municipalities. Our direct and strong relationship with the Government of Alberta provides an opportunity to respond to these incidents productively, seek improvements in regulations, strengthen industry partners, and allow for continued positive community events and celebrations.

**ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

ABmunis does not currently have a position on this specific issue. If this resolution is passed, it would be forwarded to the Government of Alberta for response and further advocacy would be recommended to ABmunis' Board by the standing committee within the context of related priorities and positions.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=30120E8777162-CD2D-2AF8-5615FA043A170717>

## E2: Adequate Level of Provincial Funding for Community Infrastructure

Moved by: Alberta Municipalities Board of Directors

Seconded by: N/A

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**WHEREAS** Albertans rely on public infrastructure for a broad spectrum of daily uses including transportation, access to safe water, removal of wastewater, fire and emergency services, recreation facilities, public buildings, and other day-to-day public services provided by municipal governments across Alberta;

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta plans to replace the Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) Capital with a new municipal infrastructure funding program in 2024 called the Local Government Fiscal Framework (LGFF) Capital program and LGFF Capital will represent the bulk of infrastructure funding that the Government of Alberta provides to municipalities;

**WHEREAS** the LGFF Capital program will meet ABmunis' principles for increased predictability and responsiveness; however, the program does not meet the principle of revenue adequacy because the starting amount of funding in 2024 is set to be \$722 million, which is 36 per cent lower than the historical funding average under the MSI program and does not compensate for changes in Alberta's population and inflationary changes in the cost of construction and materials;<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS** municipal governments have limited fiscal capacity to generate the revenue needed to maintain existing infrastructure as well as build new infrastructure to support community growth;

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta currently collects \$2.5 billion in property taxes, an amount that Budget 2023 signals will increase by a rate determined by combination of inflation and population, which further limits municipalities own revenue generation potential without unduly burdening Alberta homeowners and renters;<sup>2</sup>

**WHEREAS** Alberta's population has grown at an average of 1.8 per cent annually since 2011<sup>3</sup>, but provincial investment in community infrastructure has declined over that same period;

**WHEREAS** Alberta's population continues to grow with the province's "Alberta is Calling" campaign helping to contribute to a 3.5 per cent increase in Alberta's population between July 2022 and July 2023 and the Government of Alberta estimates that population growth will be up to 4.4 per cent in 2023;<sup>4</sup>

**WHEREAS** in 2011, the Government of Alberta delivered \$420 per capita across all municipal capital funding programs, but that level of investment has trended downward since that time to only \$151 per capita in 2023-24 and will only rise to a projected amount of \$180 per capita in 2024-25;<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The historical average of the Municipal Sustainability Initiative (including the Basic Municipal Transportation Grant) was \$1.13 billion per year between 2011 to 2020 before the province front-loaded the 2022 and 2023 funding years in 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Government of Alberta's 2023-2026 Fiscal Plan, page 66.

<sup>3</sup> ABmunis calculations using Statistics Canada Table 17-10-0005-01 (2011-2022) and Table 17-10-0009-01 (2023)

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0009-01 Population Estimates and the Government of Alberta's 2023-24 First Quarter Fiscal Update and Economic Statement.

<sup>5</sup> Figures are based on ABmunis calculations using the total of capital funding programs delivered by the Government of Alberta, excluding funding from the Government of Canada that flows through the Government of Alberta. Figures are sourced from the Government of Alberta's annual fiscal plans and consist of the Municipal Sustainability Initiative Capital, Basic Municipal Transportation Grant, Water for Life, Municipal Water and Wastewater Partnership, Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program, First Nations Water Tie-In Program, GreenTRIP, Alberta Community Resiliency Program, and the Municipal Stimulus Program. Population is based on Statistics Canada Table 17-10-0005-01, Population Estimates on July 1<sup>st</sup>. The projection for

**WHEREAS** over the last decade, the province has placed a lower priority on funding community infrastructure with total municipal capital funding dropping from 3.7 per cent of provincial spending in 2011-12 to only 1.0 per cent of budgeted spending in 2023-24;<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS** the quality of community infrastructure is a critical factor in the quality of life offered in Alberta's communities and is a key element to create a competitive advantage to attract and retain people, families, workers, and business investment in Alberta;

**WHEREAS** the Government of Alberta is making great efforts to encourage people to move to Alberta but there needs to be a corresponding increase in investment in community infrastructure to support new and existing residents;

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** Alberta Municipalities advocate for the Government of Alberta to restore municipal infrastructure funding to an adequate level by setting the new Local Government Fiscal Framework Capital funding program at a starting amount of \$1.75 billion when the program begins in 2024.

**BACKGROUND:**

Since ABmunis' initial work to design an infrastructure funding program to replace MSI, ABmunis has been consistent in our principles that LGFF:

1. deliver an adequate level of funding,
2. be responsive to changes in Alberta's economy and community needs,
3. provide increased predictability for municipalities to plan for their financial future, and
4. be embedded in legislation for improved stability of the program.

The Government of Alberta has delivered all of the principles, with the exception of funding adequacy.

ABmunis appreciates that the Government of Alberta acted on the calls from municipalities to remove the 50 per cent cap on the revenue growth index factor calculation. However, the starting amount of the LGFF funding pot is the primary determinant of what level of funding municipalities will receive into the future.

For example, if the Government of Alberta's revenue grows at the rate seen between 2008 and 2020, then it will take about 20 years for LGFF Capital to return to the same funding level that was already in place under MSI from 2010 to 2019.<sup>2</sup> This doesn't consider the significant shortfall municipalities will face to address inflationary increases in the cost of infrastructure and new growth needs associated with a rising population over the upcoming decades.

ABmunis' members have called for an increase in LGFF since the *Local Government Fiscal Framework Act* was passed in fall 2022. The purpose of this resolution is to define what funding increase is necessary for LGFF Capital to address community needs and that will be considered acceptable by municipalities. The request for the LGFF Capital funding pot to be increased from \$722 million to \$1.75 billion is based on three metrics:

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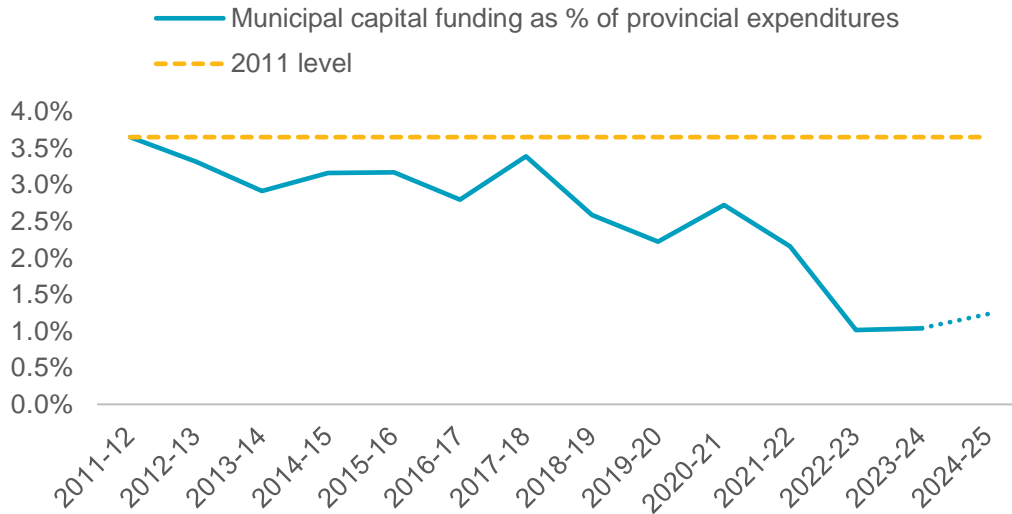
2024-25 is based on targets presented in the Government of Alberta's 2023 Fiscal Plan and estimated population based on the average annual change from 2011 to 2023.

<sup>1</sup> ABmunis calculations using total provincial expenditures reported in the Government of Alberta's 2023-2026 Fiscal Plan, page 164. Infrastructure spending is based on total municipal capital funding programs delivered by the Government of Alberta, excluding funding from the Government of Canada that flows through the Government of Alberta (same funding programs listed in footnote 5 above).

<sup>2</sup> Between 2008 and 2020, the Government of Alberta's revenue grew at an average annual rate of 1.1%. If the same growth rate is projected against an LGFF funding pot of \$722 million, it would take until the year 2043 until LGFF reaches a funding amount of \$1.1 billion, which was the average of MSI between 2010-2019. The 2021 and 2022 years were excluded from the calculation of annual average changes in provincial revenue due to the unique increase in resource revenues in those years.

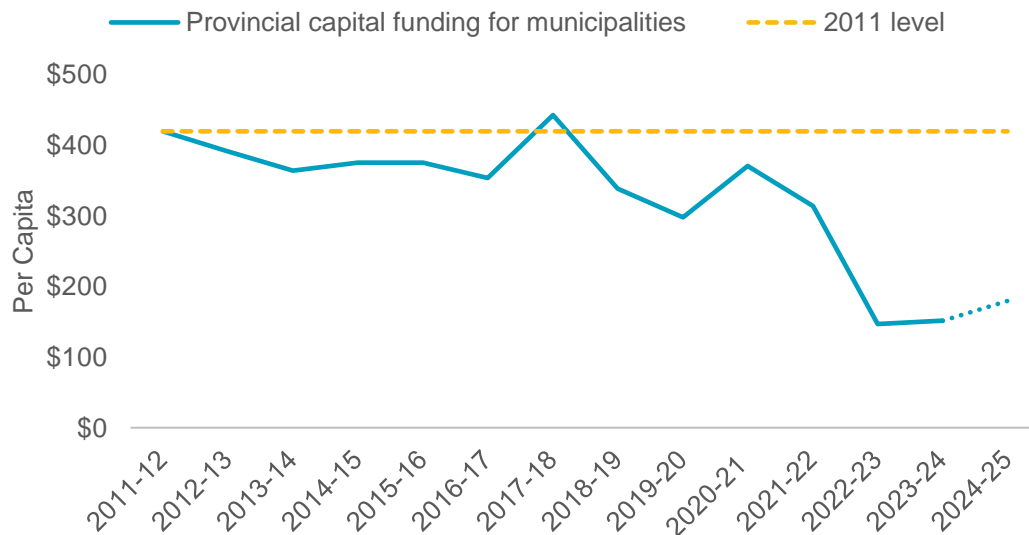
**1. Provincial Capital Funding as a Percentage of Provincial Expenditures**

In 2011-12, provincial capital funding for municipalities represented 3.7 per cent of provincial expenditures. In 2023-24, that figure has dropped to about 1 per cent and is forecasted to be 1.2 per cent in 2024 when LGFF is implemented. If the province committed to reinstate municipal capital funding to 3.7 per cent of provincial expenditures, then LGFF should be \$2.4 billion.<sup>1</sup>



**2. Provincial Capital Funding per Capita**

In 2011, provincial capital funding for municipalities amounted to \$420 per capita. In 2024, the total provincial capital funding for municipalities is forecasted to be only \$180 per capita. If the province committed to reinstate funding per capita to the 2011 level, then LGFF should be \$1.9 billion.<sup>2</sup>



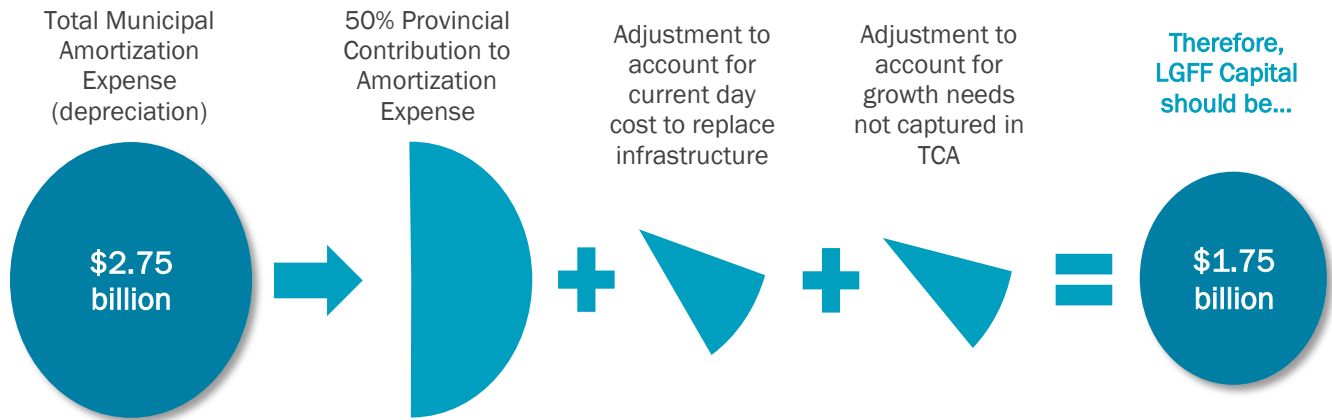
<sup>1</sup> Refer to footnotes 5 and 6.

<sup>2</sup> Figures are based on ABmunis calculations using the total of capital funding programs delivered by the Government of Alberta, excluding federal funding that flows through the Government of Alberta. Funding figures are sourced from the Government of Alberta’s annual fiscal plans and consist of the Municipal Sustainability Initiative Capital, Basic Municipal Transportation Grant, Water for Life, Municipal Water and Wastewater Partnership, Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program, First Nations Water Tie-In Program, GreenTRIP, Alberta Community Resiliency Program, and the Municipal Stimulus Program. Population from 2011-2023 is sourced from Statistics Canada Table 17-10-0005-01 and Table 17-10-0009-01 and 2024 is estimated based on the average annual change from 2011 to 2023.

**3. Funding Depreciation Cost of Community Infrastructure Plus Growth Needs**

Municipal governments manage 53 per cent of Alberta’s public infrastructure but collect significantly less taxes from Albertans compared to the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada.<sup>1</sup> With the inadequacies of the municipal property tax system and the revenue generating capacity of the provincial government, there is a strong argument that the province should be responsible for at least 50 per cent of community infrastructure costs.<sup>2</sup>

In 2021, amortization expense from all municipalities totaled \$2.75 billion. This is a fair indicator of how much needs to be spent annually to maintain community infrastructure. But those figures must be adjusted upwards to reflect the current day cost to replace that existing infrastructure plus add the cost to build new infrastructure to support the growth in Alberta’s population. When rolled together, the figures support ABmunis’ request for LGFF to be \$1.75 billion.



Alberta Municipalities acknowledges that asking the Government of Alberta to increase investment in community infrastructure by \$1 billion is a significant request. However, the figures demonstrate how provincial support for community infrastructure has declined over time, Alberta continues to be a place of growth, and there will be significant long-term consequences in terms of future costs to Albertans and challenges to retain people if the construction of infrastructure continues to be deferred.

**Replacement of Provincial Property Taxes**

In addition to these three metrics, municipalities are increasingly concerned with the amount of provincial property taxes that are extracted from municipalities with lower levels of grant funding being returned. When MSI was created in 2007, the program was intended to return all provincial property taxes to municipalities in the form of funding for local infrastructure. At the time, the Government of Alberta was collecting \$1.4 billion in provincial education property taxes and planned to deliver \$1.4 billion in MSI to municipalities starting in 2010. On top of that, the province was delivering hundreds of millions of dollars of other capital funding programs to municipalities.

Since then, provincial education property taxes have grown to \$2.5 billion and the total of all provincial capital funding to municipalities in 2023 was significantly less at only \$712 million. This is concerning because increases in provincial property taxes constrain a municipality’s flexibility to increase property tax to fund

<sup>1</sup> Ownership of public infrastructure is measured by the reported the historical cost of tangible capital assets excluding land. Figures are based on ABmunis’ calculations using Alberta Municipal Affairs’ 2021 Financial Information Returns – Schedule G(4) with the total of all municipalities and the Government of Alberta’s 2021-22 Annual Financial Report, Schedule E14.

<sup>2</sup> The Government of Alberta’s 2023 Fiscal Plan (page 121) states that Alberta has a tax advantage of \$19.7 billion compared to other provinces.

municipal services and at the same time, there is less infrastructure funding coming back from the Government of Alberta.

The Government of Alberta recognizes that changes are needed. Premier Smith's August 2023 mandate letter to the Honourable Ric McIver, Minister of Municipal Affairs directs the Minister to review "the feasibility of amending the education property tax to assist municipalities with retaining more funding for local priorities". The scope and outcome of that review is unknown and is likely many years away and therefore, an increase in the LGFF Capital program is the best solution to fund community infrastructure in Alberta until there are any meaningful changes in provincial education property taxes.

**ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES COMMENTS:**

ABmunis members approved a 2022 resolution on [Provincial-Municipal Revenue Sharing](#) that calls for the Government of Alberta to increase LGFF funding but it does not quantify the amount that would be acceptable to support current and future community needs.



# Alberta Municipalities Strength In Members

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