



## NEWS RELEASE

### ABmunis talks infrastructure, policing & political parties at leaders' caucus

March 15, 2024

**EDMONTON** – The following statement was issued by Alberta Municipalities (ABmunis) President Tyler Gandam following the successful conclusion of the association's 2024 two-day Spring Municipal Leaders' Caucus (MLC):

A lot of things are happening right now in Alberta's political environment. Even our association finds it difficult to keep up with all the Government of Alberta's post-Budget 2024 announcements. The list is long; the issues are complex.

#### **More provincial funding to address Alberta's 30-billion infrastructure deficit needed**

Despite this, Alberta Municipalities has not taken its eye off its primary goal: securing more provincial funding for local infrastructure. Municipalities need a bigger slice of a bigger pie! It's just that simple.

Earlier today, Premiere Danielle Smith said her government is investing \$3.6 billion this year in infrastructure. She said lump sums from the provincial government for one-time infrastructure projects put municipal governments more than a billion dollars ahead of where they would otherwise be.

Alberta Municipalities will take a closer look at Budget 2024 in the coming days to see what "infrastructure" is included in the Government of Alberta's lofty figure. Our association's position has been and still is that local governments are best positioned to determine what their communities' infrastructure needs are. We encourage the provincial government to allocate the funding to municipalities and let their councils decide which infrastructure projects are built next.

#### **Bill 11: Creation of a provincial police agency steamrolling ahead**

On Wednesday afternoon, the provincial government introduced Bill 11 – which if passed, would create a provincial police agency. Minister Mike Ellis went to great lengths to say it *is not* creating a provincial police service. I sincerely want to take Minister Ellis at his word.

Regardless of this, it appears almost no one was consulted in the run-up to Bill 11. Neither ABmunis nor individual municipalities were consulted. Even the union that represents Alberta Sheriffs says it wasn't consulted.

Alberta Municipalities supports any effort that will help make life safer and more secure for Albertans. Unfortunately, we have no way of knowing if Bill 11 will do this. We have lots of questions. What will this agency that provides "police-like" services cost? How will it be governed? What will be its mandate?

Our association is concerned about the provincial government's tendency to avoid consultation and engagement. We ask that ABmunis be informed and consulted from this point onwards on this vitally important issue. Much greater collaboration between the two orders of government is needed.

### **Party politics coming to local elections, whether Albertans want it or not**

We heard Minister Ric McIver say yesterday and today that Albertans can expect the provincial government to amend legislation that will introduce political parties in local elections. Legislation to make amendments to the Local Authorities Election Act (LAEA) and Municipal Government Act (MGA) may be introduced as early as this session of the Legislature.

This, despite the fact three successive Government of Alberta surveys have shown that most Albertans do not favour the introduction of political parties in local elections. This, despite the fact a survey conducted by pollster Janet Brown for ABmunis in September 2023 found that 68 per cent of Albertans were opposed to the idea.

---

#### **Media contact:**

Scott Lundy  
Communications Manager, Alberta Municipalities  
780.668.2436

[scott@abmunis.ca](mailto:scott@abmunis.ca)

[ABmunis.ca](http://ABmunis.ca) | [@ABmunis](https://twitter.com/ABmunis)

Visit the [Media](#) section of Alberta Municipalities' website for recent news releases and backgrounders.

*From the smallest village to the largest city, across every region of the province, Alberta Municipalities (ABmunis) represents the communities where over 85% of Albertans live. ABmunis was founded in 1905 to provide urban and rural-region communities with a united voice. Alberta Municipalities now serves more than 260 of Alberta's 334 municipalities making it the province's largest municipal group.*

*We work with elected and administrative leaders of Alberta's summer villages, villages, town, cities, and specialized municipalities to advocate for solutions to their common issues.*

*And we help them build resilient and thriving communities by providing valuable services. We use our members' combined purchasing power to negotiate the best possible value and competitive pricing on employee benefits, insurance, energy, and other services needed to run an effective and efficient municipality.*

---

Alberta Municipalities' [digital imagery library](#) is now available to news reporters, editors and producers.

To register, click on the "create new account" button and complete the online form. Please use your business email to help us with verification. Requests may take up to two business days to review. Once approved, registered users can view and download image & video files.

While the imagery can be used without additional approval, we ask that you read and understand our [Terms and Conditions, accreditation requirements, and intellectual property rights](#). Questions? E-mail us: [digitallibrary@abmunis.ca](mailto:digitallibrary@abmunis.ca)

---