

Recommendation 8: Work with post-secondary stakeholders to achieve a revenue mix comparable to that in British Columbia and Ontario, including less reliance on government grants, more funding from tuition and alternative revenue sources, and more entrepreneurial approaches to how programs are financed and delivered. This includes lifting the current freeze on tuition fees.

Recommendation 9: Assess the financial viability of Alberta's post-secondary institutions. The government should move quickly to address the future of those post-secondary institutions that do not appear to be viable in future funding scenarios.

On Public Sector Compensation, Bargaining and Size: The Panel recommends that government should:

Recommendation 10: Establish a labour relations framework that creates long-term goals for compensation in line with comparable provinces.

Recommendation 11: End the freeze on non-bargaining staff with respect to providing merit/in range increases to ensure the equitable treatment of all Alberta public service employees (bargaining and non-bargaining) and support the attraction, engagement and retention of qualified staff.

Recommendation 12: Establish a legislative mandate that sets the salary levels for all public sector employees, including all fees and other compensation for insured medical and health services and all third parties, and applies to all negotiations and arbitrations. In the event of a strike, the mandate would form the basis for back-to-work legislation.

On Capital spending: The Panel recommends that the government should:

Recommendation 13: Bring Alberta's net public capital stock in line with the average per capita capital stock in the other provinces over the next ten years as part of its balanced budget plans and long-term fiscal sustainability.

Recommendation 14: Stabilize and rationalize the allocation of Capital Maintenance and Renewal (CMR) spending and give priority to CMR in the areas of greatest need in future capital expenditure decisions.

Recommendation 15: Examine its legislative framework for capital funding to municipalities with the goals of:

- aligning funding to provincial goals and priorities and fiscal capacity, while further considering funding formulas that require municipalities to share more in the costs of major projects;
- adjusting its allocation formulas for grants to municipalities in line with the policy of bringing Alberta's provincial and municipal per capita capital stock in line with the comparator provinces;
- establishing accountability mechanisms and performance measures to monitor the delivery of municipal programs and services and value for money spent, so citizens have the ability to constructively evaluate their local government and their use of tax dollars; and
- making better use of federal infrastructure funding, through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP), as a means of more effectively managing the costs of the Capital Plan.

Recommendation 16: Redefine the government's inventory of land assets to include the broader public sector and create a definitive policy to clearly define surplus assets and a process for disposal of surplus assets. Providing an increased ability to core government and the broader public sector to dispose of surplus assets can act as an offset to the capital cost of new investments or provide revenue for the province.

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