

Deputy City Manager's Office Report to
Intergovernmental Affairs Committee
2021 January 21

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Government of Alberta's Red Tape Reduction Report – Municipal Stimulus Program (MSP)

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee receive this report for the Corporate Record.

HIGHLIGHTS

- This report is about following a Red Tape Reduction Report requirement by the Government of Alberta (GoA). A decision from City Council is not required.
- What does this mean to Calgarians? Funding received through the Municipal Stimulus Program (MSP) provides capital investment in important infrastructure which benefits all Calgarians.
- Why does this matter? Following through on GoA reporting requirements is necessary to retain The City's MSP funding.
- Administration worked cross corporately to gather information on progress made on red tape reduction in the three key areas identified by the GoA.
- The City of Calgary submission will illustrate progress on red tape reduction in all areas outlined by the GoA.
- The same reporting requirement exists for 2021.
- Strategic Alignment to Council's Citizen Priorities: A well-run city. While initiatives funded by the MSP benefit all Council Citizen Priorities, fulfilling the GoA's reporting requirement especially aligns with this priority.

DISCUSSION

In June 2019, the GoA passed the *Red Tape Reduction Act* with the intention to identify, reduce and eliminate processes that cause regulatory and administrative burdens. The government is aiming to cut red tape by 33 per cent over its four-year term. The work is undertaken with the goal of implementing change that promotes job creation, innovation and competitiveness, facilitates a strong and attractive investment climate in Alberta, and preserves and promotes public safety.

In this context, the GoA expects all municipalities in Alberta that receive funding under the MSP to reduce red tape and requires reporting on related initiatives for both the years 2020 and 2021.

For the purpose of the MSP red tape is defined as unnecessary time and resources spent by citizens and businesses to comply with regulatory and administrative requirements imposed by legislation, regulation, and associated policies. More specifically, red tape reduction in the context of the reporting required means action taken in support of the following objectives:

- Make it easier to start up a new business in the city of Calgary.
- Streamline processes and shorten timelines for development and subdivision permit approvals.
- Make Calgary a more attractive destination for new investment and/or tourism.

The City is required to prove measurable progress in at least one of the key areas identified by the GoA. We are confident that we will illustrate measurable progress on red tape reduction in

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all areas. Information gathered for this report is currently coordinated across the following business units:

- Business & Local Economy
- Calgary Approvals Coordination
- Calgary Neighbourhood, Partnership Management
- Community Planning
- IT-Innovation, Smart Cities
- Roads
- Supply Management

For reporting purposes, the GoA has provided a form that will need to be submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs by 2021 February 1.

The same reporting requirement exists for the year 2021, with submission to Municipal Affairs due on 2022 February 1.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)

- Public Engagement was undertaken
- Public Communication or Engagement was not required
- Public/Stakeholders were informed
- Stakeholder or customer dialogue/relations were undertaken

As the Red Tape Reduction Report requires The City to report on its own initiatives to reduce unnecessary time and resources spent by citizens and businesses to comply with regulatory and administrative requirements imposed by legislation, regulation, and associated policies throughout 2020, public engagement and communication was not required.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

Initiatives reported on in the Red Tape Reduction Report include support for Tourism Calgary to strengthen a vibrant local destination, funding for Civic Partners operating cultural attractions, or social-benefit driven procurement practices. These are only a few examples how red tape reduction benefits social outcomes.

Environmental

Red tape reduction initiatives by The City in 2020 entailed, amongst others, the enabling of micromobility operators, including e-scooter and e-bike businesses, which provide mobility alternatives for Calgarians that support a reduced carbon footprint. Cutting red tape also supported local businesses with the aim to keep more money in the local community, which helps with the reduction of carbon emissions.

Economic

The City of Calgary implemented many different initiatives throughout 2020 to cut red tape and support local businesses. Some examples of these initiatives include:

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- Implementing a process for temporary patios on private and public land in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Providing clear, easy to understand approval processes on The City’s website.
- Funding to support transformative investments that develop innovation ecosystems and key sectors identified in Calgary’s economic strategy.
- Flexible core operating funding for Platform Calgary (Calgary Technologies Inc.) to support entrepreneurs and innovation, and construction of the new Platform Innovation Centre.
- Investing in the Shophere pilot project to provide small businesses access to free support to enhance or develop online commerce.

All these initiatives support the creation of a diverse, business friendly climate in Calgary.

Service and Financial Implications

Existing operating funding - Base

The content for the Red Tape Reduction Report was developed using existing operating funding and resources. No further financial implications are expected.

RISK

While it is stated in the form provided by the GoA that MSP funding is not conditional on reducing red tape, it is also made clear that Municipal Affairs will review the submitted information and determine whether it’s sufficient based on the actions identified. The 2020 Red Tape Reduction Report must be approved by the Minister before the 2021 MSP payment will be released.

For the subsequent reporting of progress made on red tape reduction throughout 2021, it is stated by the GoA that a refund of MSP funding may be required if there is insufficient progress in reducing red tape in 2021.

At this point, it is not entirely clear what the GoA would deem as insufficient in this context. And while the risk to The City of Calgary is likely rather low given the extensive red tape reduction initiatives, we have undertaken over the past year alone, and are continuing to undertake, Administration will carefully follow any development in this area.

ATTACHMENT(S)

None

Department Circulation

| General Manager | Department | Approve/Consult/Inform |
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