

Calgary



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

IGA2021-0087 – January 21, 2021

Purpose

- Fulfilling a Red Tape Reduction report requirement by the Government of Alberta (GoA), which is necessary to retain The City's Municipal Stimulus Program (MSP) funding
- The Report is due to be submitted to the GoA by February 1, 2021. The same reporting requirement exists for 2021.
- Cross-corporate effort to gather information on The City's red tape reduction initiatives. Our submission will illustrate progress in all areas outlined by the GoA.

Context

- The City of Calgary constantly improving efficiencies and how we deliver services to our citizens.
- The City has made significant progress over past years on an extensive number of red tape reduction initiatives – without provincial reporting requirements.
- One of the corner stones of the City Charter development was the acknowledgment that The City operates at a high level of autonomy and accountability, and that some aspects of provincial legislation pose obstacles to further innovations and efficiencies that The City may wish to explore and implement on behalf of its citizens.
- Newly imposed reporting requirements seem at odds with this acknowledgement.

Red Tape Reduction and MSP

ALL municipalities in Alberta that receive funding under the MSP are expected to cut red tape and report on related initiatives for both 2020 and 2021

- Definition of Red Tape:
unnecessary time and resources spent by citizens and businesses to comply with regulatory and administrative requirements imposed by legislation, regulation and associated policies.
- Three key areas outlined by the GoA to report on:
 - ☐ **Make it easier to start up a new business**
 - ☐ **Streamline processes and shorten timelines for development and subdivision permit approvals**
 - ☐ **Make Calgary a more attractive destination for new investment and/or tourism**

Conditions and potential consequences

- 2021 MSP funding is not conditional on progress made on reducing red tape in 2020.
- However, the 2020 Red Tape Reduction Report must be approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs before the 2021 MSP payment will be released.
- For progress made on red tape reduction throughout 2021, the GoA states that a refund of MSP funding may be required if there is insufficient progress.

Make it easier to start up a new business

- Waived fees for eligible businesses whose renewal fees were due – resulted in over \$2 million savings between May and October 2020.
- Created customer journey map for restaurant industry – resulted in removing barriers, improved clarity for City requirements, and improved two-way conversation.
- Created COVID business site that was linked to myBusiness site – from January to December 2020 33,974 page views for COVID business site and 43,409 page views for myBusiness site.
- Removed parking requirements for commercial uses.
- Internet exchange – The City is providing fiber to extend the Internet footprint and connectivity across the city. Will support Calgary's business attraction and retention strategy.

Streamline processes and shorten timelines for development and permit approvals (1/2)

- Continuous work to identify ways to streamline processes that enable faster approval timelines for development.
- In 2020 for complex subdivisions, reviews were completed within the 35-day timeline 87% of the time (up from 84% in 2016), and file decisions were completed within the 60-days timeline 76% of the time (up from 59% in 2016).
- Despite the impacts of COVID and the development industry, The City was able to exceed its 2020 performance target for multidisciplinary development applicants. Target 79% - actual 81%.

Streamline processes and shorten timelines for development and permit approvals (2/2)

- In March 2020, The City of Calgary's Planning & Development Department moved all development applications online – work was expedited in response to COVID-19.
- Center City Enterprise Area:
Approved in 2017 to make it easier for tenants, new businesses and building owners to set up operations and make improvements to buildings – savings of on average 15 days per application/customer and \$43,696 in cases of tenancy changes and \$61,172 for exterior alterations.
- Main Streets Streetscape Program:
Provides both in house expertise and resources – reduces costs to developers that typically would be 1-2 years worth of work.

Make your municipality a more attractive destination for new investment and / or tourism (1/2)

- SAVE program
- Downtown Strategy
- Main Streets
- Business and Local Economy Team
- Asset Management plans and policies
- Governance, operation and funding support for CED, Opportunity Calgary Investment Fund (OCIF), Calgary Tourism and other civic partners



Progress on Red Tape Reduction in 2020

Make your municipality a more attractive destination for new investment and /or tourism (2/2)

- Patios
- Shophere
- Micro-mobility
- Collection of levy shortfalls

Make it easier to start up a new business

- The Council-led Business Advisory Committee supported by Administration's Business and Local Economy team, is ensuring City industrial land remains regionally competitive.
- Review the change of use development permit process to reduce cost, time and alleviate the stress of uncertainty of City approval.
- Creating an online, one-stop shop for businesses that will include all business-related information in one place.
- Business Registry.

Streamline processes and shorten timelines for development and permit approvals

- Redesign of The City's decision-making framework on complex applications with the goal to be faster, more efficient and effective.
- Enabling Streamlined Approvals – Change of Use and Renovation Exemption Area Pilot.

Make your municipality a more attractive destination for new investment and /or tourism

- SAVE program
- Greater Downtown Plan
- Asset Management – Infrastructure Status Report (ISPR)
- Shophere phase 2 roll-out
- Continuous support for civic partners



Next Steps

- Finalizing the report – final round of circulation amongst ELT
- Submission due on February 1, 2021

Recommendation

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