

BRIEFING

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Deputy City Manager's Office Briefing to
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Alberta Municipalities Update – April 2022

PURPOSE OF BRIEFING

To update the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee on The City's provincial advocacy and related work with Alberta Municipalities (formerly Alberta Urban Municipalities Association).

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Alberta Municipalities Spring Municipal Leaders Caucus – 2022 March 9-10 – Edmonton

Wednesday, March 9 and Thursday, March 10, Alberta Municipalities held their Spring Municipal Leaders' Caucus (SMLC) at the Edmonton Convention Centre. It was a hybrid in-person/virtual event where Alberta mayors, councillors and members of municipal administration met to discuss pressing issues and meet with provincial ministers and staff. Councillors Demong and Wyness attended online while a member of the Intergovernmental and Corporate Strategy (ICS) team attended in-person. This briefing will give a summary of the sessions and events. For further details on the content of the education sessions, please read the attachments.

Minister of Municipal Affairs Speech

Municipal Affairs Minister Ric McIver opened the SMLC with a speech where he stated Municipal Affairs worked hard to draft Bill 4, the Municipal Government (Face Mask and Proof of COVID-19 Vaccination Bylaws) Amendment Act, 2022, to minimally intrude on municipal jurisdiction. Minister McIver said Bill 4 only requires a municipality interested in passing a bylaw on either a COVID-19 mask mandate or COVID-19 vaccine mandate to have the permission of the Minister of Municipal Affairs before doing so. He stated Bill 4 is very narrowly focused and does not intrude on any other aspect of municipal jurisdiction. Minister McIver discussed Alberta's improving fiscal situation, praised the sacrifices that Albertans and municipalities have made over the last three years that helped get the budget into balance. Minister McIver suggested the Alberta Municipalities membership develop a formula, build consensus and make recommendations to the Alberta Government on a formula to distribute the Local Government Fiscal Framework (LGFF) funding to the medium-sized cities, towns, villages and counties. Minister McIver ended his speech calling for healing, kindness, understanding and compassion as we recover from the pandemic.

Minister Dialogue Sessions

There were two sets of Minister Dialogue Sessions, question and answer periods with the following Alberta Cabinet Ministers:

- Jason Nixon, Minister of Environment and Parks
- Rajan Sawhney, Minister of Transportation
- Ric McIver, Minister of Municipal Affairs
- Jason Copping, Minister of Health

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- Nate Glubish, Minister of Service Alberta
- Josephine Pon, Minister of Seniors and Housing
- Jason Luan, Minister of Community and Social Services
- Tyler Shandro, Minister of Justice and Solicitor General

Premier's Address

Premier Kenney addressed the Alberta Municipalities membership Friday morning. He opened his remarks by discussing events in Ukraine and Eastern Europe, recognizing Albertans' willingness to welcome Ukrainian refugees and how Alberta produced energy can support the world during this crisis. He discussed at length the recent Government of Alberta budget, stated Alberta should not spend future surpluses it does not know it has, however, promised targeted investments (both capital and program spending) in 'bottlenecks and problem areas' to address ongoing issues. He concluded that another boom is coming to Alberta, was optimistic about Alberta's future and ended his speech calling for healing, compassion and a coming together as Albertans as we recover from the pandemic. Watch it here: <https://youtu.be/IceAeUVygpk>

Education Sessions:

There were four education sessions where significant issues were presented and discussed:

1. Alberta Provincial Police Service

Alberta Municipalities gave an in-depth presentation on the Government of Alberta's proposal for an Alberta Provincial Police Service (APPS) to replace the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) who are currently contracted to provide policing throughout most of Alberta. After the presentation there was a thorough discussion and debate by the membership. A vote of the attending Alberta Municipalities members resulted in 68 per cent not in favour of the current Provincial proposal. Please see Attachment 1 and 5 for further details, and the newly adopted Alberta Municipalities' position on an APPS.

2. Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Darren Sandbeck, Senior Provincial Director and Chief Paramedic, Alberta Health Services, gave an overview presentation on the current issues and challenges with Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and went over the 10-point plan Alberta Health Services is implementing to improve the situation. Please see Attachment 2 for further details.

3. Local Government Fiscal Framework (LGFF)

Alberta Municipalities staff presented a backgrounder on the past Government of Alberta Capital Funding programs, the Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) and Basic Municipal Transportation Grant (BMTG), and then unveiled their draft formula for calculating distribution of the LGFF capital funding for all municipalities that are not Calgary or Edmonton. It would be based on a municipality's population (48 per cent), a municipality's assessment base (48 per cent) and the size of a municipality's road network (4 per cent). A straw poll of the membership showed two-thirds initial support for the formula. There will be further discussion in the coming months within Alberta Municipalities and with the Rural Municipalities Association (RMA) on the formula. Please see Attachment 3 for further details.

4. Future of Municipal Government Project

Alberta Municipalities gave an update on the ongoing research project with the Calgary School of Public Policy on the Future of Municipal Government. Dr. Sandeep Agrawal, professor and inaugural director of the School of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Alberta, gave an in-depth presentation on his work and findings to date on municipal restructuring models across Canada. He discussed at length the different ways municipalities can be organized, compared different governance structures and regional amalgamations. Please see Attachment 4 for further details.

Coming Events

2022 Public Risk Conference

Alberta Municipalities' 2022 Public Risk Conference is scheduled to take place 2022 April 28-29 in Canmore. The conference offers elected officials and administrators an opportunity to discuss "hot topics" in municipal risk management. Go to www.abmunis.ca/events for details.

Alberta Municipalities Executive Committee visits Calgary

Alberta Municipalities' Executive Committee will be visiting Calgary on 2022 May 19 and attending Calgary's Intergovernmental Affairs Committee (IGA) for the annual meeting with Calgary City Council. All Council Members are encouraged to attend.

Other News

Deadline for Alberta Municipalities Resolutions Approaching

Alberta Municipalities Resolutions are an excellent way to bring an issue to the attention of other orders of government as well as fellow other municipalities

The deadline for submitting a resolution for September's convention here in Calgary is May 31. A resolution must include a motion passed by a municipal council, as well as a seconding motion from a supporting council, prior to this date.

Council Members and any Administration interested in pursuing a resolution should contact the Manager of Intergovernmental & Corporate Strategy as a first step.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 – Alberta Provincial Police Service
2. Attachment 2 – Alberta Emergency Medical Services
3. Attachment 3 – Allocation of the Local Government Fiscal Framework
4. Attachment 4 – Future of Municipal Government
5. Attachment 5 – Alberta Municipalities News Release – Alberta Municipalities Establishes Position on APPS