



ALBERTA
MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

*Office of the Minister
MLA, Calgary-Hays*

AR108633

May 16, 2022

Dear Reeve/Mayor:

I am inviting your council to provide input to identify potential legislative changes that might improve the local election process, as well as enhance the public's trust in local councils.

The *Local Authorities Election Act (LAEA)* establishes the framework for the conduct of elections in Alberta municipalities, school divisions, and Metis Settlements. The *Municipal Government Act (MGA)* includes rules governing the conduct of those elected officials once on council, including code of conduct requirements and councillor disqualification.

Reviews of the *LAEA* typically occur following each municipal general election. The most recent election in October 2021 resulted in a number of citizen concerns regarding a variety of issues, including privacy of information on voter lists and the appropriateness of the current eligibility criteria for candidates. Meanwhile, the application of the code of conduct in some Alberta municipalities has caused varying degrees of public concern regarding the fairness and/or effectiveness of the process.

The *MGA* has undergone a number of minor amendments over the past few years, as part of the broader red tape reduction initiative. Municipal stakeholders were engaged on potential changes to the code of conduct requirements in summer 2021. The engagement indicated a strong interest in further engagement on this issue; the engagement process we are undertaking now responds to that interest, while also providing an opportunity for a more holistic review of councillor accountability and ethics.

Municipal Affairs is initiating an engagement process and is looking for your insights and feedback to ensure any legislative changes meet the needs of elected officials, municipal administrations, and the general public. The first part of this engagement is to receive your valuable input specifically on the code of conduct. I would appreciate receiving your municipal council's combined feedback on the code of conduct through the following link, your.alberta.ca/mga-code-of-conduct, by June 14, 2022.

This survey for elected officials' feedback on the code of conduct will be followed by a public survey on local elections and councillor accountability, which will be posted online by summer 2022 for input from Albertans and stakeholders. Individual councillors will also have this additional opportunity to provide their input.

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This public survey may include ideas generated through this first round of engagement with municipal councils. Input received from elected councillors, other municipal stakeholders, and Albertans will ultimately guide decision-making on potential amendments to the *LAEA* and the *MGA* regarding local elections and councillor accountability.

Your input is important to the Government of Alberta. It will help ensure we have the most comprehensive legislation in place, which not only respects the rights of the electors, but also provides accountable governance for Albertans.

In order to provide your input, please go to your.alberta.ca/mga-code-of-conduct. I look forward to receiving your input and perspectives on this important matter.

In addition, I encourage you to read the attached documents to familiarize yourself with the scope and intent of the engagement. If you have any questions about the engagement or would like to submit a written response on behalf of your municipal council, please contact the Engagement Team, Municipal Services Division, in Municipal Affairs at ma.engagement@gov.ab.ca.

Sincerely,



Ric McIver
Minister

Attachments:

- *Municipal Government Act's Code of Conduct Discussion Guide*
- *Local Authorities Election Act and Municipal Government Act – Scope of Engagement*