



Wood Buffalo Development Advisory Committee

Wednesday, February 9, 2022

Conducted Electronically Via MS Teams

9:00 AM

Special Meeting Agenda

Public Participation for February 9, 2022 Wood Buffalo Development Advisory Committee Special Meeting

The Wood Buffalo Development Advisory Committee (Committee) will be conducting the February 9, 2022 Special Meeting through electronic communications in accordance with the Meeting Procedures (COVID-19 Suppression) Regulation, Order in Council 99/2020.

- Anyone wishing to participate in the meeting is encouraged to do so by registering to speak as a delegate by way of teleconference or by submitting their delegation comments by email.
- To participate by teleconference:
 - Anyone wishing to speak by teleconference to an item on the February 9, 2022 Committee Special Meeting Agenda must pre-register by 4:00 p.m., February 8, 2022.
 - To register to speak via teleconference, please email boardsandcommittees@rmwb.ca or call 780-743-7001 with your name, the phone number that you will be dialing in from and an email address that you can be reached at prior to and during the meeting.
 - You must provide the name of the agenda item that you wish to speak to.
 - All registrants will be emailed the details on how to participate prior to the start of the meeting.
 - Each registrant will be given a maximum of **5 minutes** to address the Committee.
- To make written submissions as a delegation before or during the live meeting:
- To make written submissions as a delegation before or during the live meeting:
 - Please complete the online form found at <https://www.rmwb.ca/writtendelegations/> or email boardsandcommittees@rmwb.ca
 - Please note that written comments for an agenda item must be received prior to the start of that item during the meeting. Emails that are received after the agenda item has been introduced or are not relevant to an agenda item, will not become part of the record of this meeting.
 - All written submissions are public and will be included in the Agenda Package as part of public record.

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1. Call to Order

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

- 2.1. Wood Buffalo Development Advisory Committee Meeting - January 5, 2022

3. New and Unfinished Business

- 3.1. Government of Alberta Associate Minister; Red Tape Reduction Meeting Update
- 3.2. Process Review Project Update
- 3.3. Municipal Development Plan Engagement
- 3.4. Potential Emerging 2022 Priorities – Round Table Discussion

Adjournment

Minutes of a Meeting of the Wood Buffalo Development Advisory Committee held via electronic communications in Fort McMurray, Alberta, on Wednesday, January 5, 2022, commencing at 9:00 AM.

Present:

Bryce Kumka, Business Community
 Bilal Abbas, Public-At-Large
 Steven Hale, Education Sector
 Curtis Williams, Community Development
 Ijeoma Uche-Ezeala, Public-At-Large
 Justin MacNeil, Arts, Culture and Recreation Sector
 David Secord, Business Community
 Alex McKenzie, Land Development
 Justin Ellis, Public-At-Large
 Jennifer Vardy, Public-At-Large
 Raj Vasal, Community Development

Administration:

Kelly Hansen, Director, Strategic Planning and Program Management
 Brad McMurdo, Director, Planning and Development
 Monica Lance, Manager, Strategic Planning and Program Management
 Sonia Soutter, Manager, Senior Legislative Officer
 Heather Fredeen, Clerk, Legislative Services

1. Call to Order

Heather Fredeen, Legislative Services Clerk, called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and welcomed new Committee Members Alex McKenzie representing the Land Development Sector, Jennifer Vardy representing the Public –At-Large, Justin Ellis representing the Public –At-Large, and Raj Vascal representing the Community Development sector.

For the benefit of the new members, Committee members and Administration provided round table introductions of themselves and the sectors they represent.

Entrance

Committee member B. Abbas entered the meeting at 9:13 a.m.

2. Adoption of Agenda

MOTION:

THAT the Agenda be approved as presented.

RESULT: CARRIED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Justin Ellis
SECONDER: Steven Hale
FOR: Williams, Uche-Ezeala, Abbas, Hale, MacNeil, Kumka, Secord,
McKenzie, Ellis, Vardy, Vasal

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

3.1. Wood Buffalo Development Advisory Committee Meeting - December 1, 2021

MOTION:

THAT the Minutes of the Wood Buffalo Development Advisory Committee Meeting held on December 1, 2021, be approved as presented.

RESULT: ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Steven Hale
SECONDER: Alex McKenzie
FOR: Williams, Uche-Ezeala, Abbas, Hale, MacNeil, Kumka, Secord,
McKenzie, Ellis, Vardy, Vasal

4. New & Unfinished Business

4.1. Appointment of Committee Chair and Vice-Chair

Committee Member Bryce Kumka put his name forward for the position of Chair. As there were no further nominations, Bryce Kumka was selected as Chair of the Committee by acclamation.

MOTION:

THAT Bryce Kumka be appointed as Chair of the Wood Buffalo Development Advisory Committee.

RESULT: CARRIED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Justin MacNeil
SECONDER: David J.R. Secord
FOR: Williams, Uche-Ezeala, Abbas, Hale, MacNeil, Kumka, Secord,
McKenzie, Ellis, Vardy, Vasal

Committee Member David Secord put his name forward for the position of Vice-Chair. As there were no further nominations, David Secord was selected as Vice-Chair of the Committee by acclamation.

MOTION:

THAT David Secord be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Wood Buffalo Development Advisory Committee.

RESULT:	CARRIED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Bilal Abbas
SECONDER:	Alex McKenzie
FOR:	Williams, Uche-Ezeala, Abbas, Hale, MacNeil, Kumka, Secord, McKenzie, Ellis, Vardy, Vasal

4.2. 2022 Committee Meeting Schedule

MOTION:

THAT the regular Wood Buffalo Development Advisory Committee meetings be held at 9:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday of each month with the exception of any statutory holidays and scheduled recess periods.

RESULT:	CARRIED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jennifer Vardy
SECONDER:	Raj Vasal
FOR:	Williams, Uche-Ezeala, Abbas, Hale, MacNeil, Kumka, Secord, McKenzie, Ellis, Vardy, Vasal

MOTION:

THAT the meeting scheduled for February 2, 2022 at 9:00 a.m., be rescheduled to February 9, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.

RESULT:	CARRIED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Bilal Abbas
SECONDER:	Curtis Williams
FOR:	Williams, Uche-Ezeala, Abbas, Hale, MacNeil, Kumka, Secord, McKenzie, Ellis, Vardy, Vasal

4.3. Committee Annual Progress Report Presentation to Council

Chair Bryce. Kumka provided an overview of the Committee's annual progress presentation to be presented to Council at their January 11, 2022 meeting.

MOTION:

THAT the presentation titled "Wood Buffalo Development Advisory Committee Introduction and Annual Progress Report" be approved for presenting at the January 11, 2022 Council Meeting.

RESULT:	CARRIED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	David J.R. Secord
SECONDER:	Bilal Abbas, Public-At-Large
FOR:	Williams, Uche-Ezeala, Abbas, Hale, MacNeil, Kumka, Secord, McKenzie, Ellis, Vardy, Vascal

4.4. Update re: Meeting with Associate Minister Red Tape Reduction

Monica Lance, Manager, Strategic Planning and Program Management, provided details on the meeting scheduled for January 25, 2022 between the Committee and the Associate Minister, Red Tape Reduction.

With consensus of the Committee, the following members will attend the January 25, 2022 meeting with the Associate Minister, Red Tape Reduction:

- B. Kumka
- B. Abbas
- S. Hale
- A. McKenzie
- D. Secord
- J. Vardy

4.5. Planning and Development Process Review Project Update

Amanda Haitas, Senior Manager, Planning and Development and Dennis Vroom, Program Manager, Strategic Planning and Program Management, provided an update on the Planning and Development Process Review Project including public survey results and current state findings. The importance of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for the project was also discussed.

Exits

S. Hale and R. Vascal, exited the meeting at 11:02 a.m.

4.6. Recap of Committee Initiatives to Date

A recap of Committee initiatives was discussed under agenda items 4.3 and 4.5.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

Chair

Annual report Red tape reduction 2019–2020

Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction



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Message from Associate Minister



For the first time in Alberta's history, our province has made red tape reduction a top priority.

Done right, it will boost our economy, get Albertans back to work and make life better in our province. We need this now, more than ever.

I am very pleased to be able to present our first annual red tape reduction report, a legislative requirement, but more importantly a promise to be open and transparent about our progress. We have made significant steps during our first year and completed initiatives across all of government.

In January 2020, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) awarded Alberta's government with a B minus in its 2019 report card. This is our highest grade ever and a big jump from the previous years of failing grades. I look forward to working with CFIB again in the new year, as we once again declare Red Tape Reduction Awareness Week. We will not rest until we move to a grade of A, because that means Albertans will be able to get back to work.

This report provides an overview of cross-government progress towards:

- Getting out of the way of our job creators to foster economic growth.
- Digital transformation; bringing government into the 21st century.
- Reducing costs and saving time for everyday Albertans.

It provides examples of recent projects that have improved access to government, saved time and money for businesses, or leveraged innovation to improve service delivery. Included is a measure of all the regulatory requirements that exist in Alberta as of June 30, 2020, and the reduction we have achieved. The baseline count will provide us the target of where we need to be at the end of this four-year term. We are committed to cutting red tape by 33 per cent, and we will not rest until we reach that goal.

Red tape reduction aims to identify, reduce and eliminate processes that cause regulatory and administrative burdens for all Albertans. This 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.

We are just getting started, but I'm pleased to present to you what we have done so far.

Grant Hunter

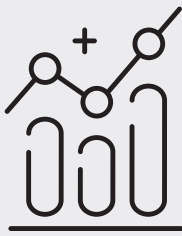
Associate Minister for Red Tape Reduction

No one likes red tape. It deprives Albertans of precious time and money. By cutting red tape, we are decluttering the lives of our job creators and innovators so they can continue to do what they do best—create jobs and boost the economy.

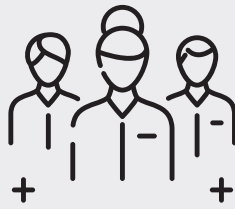
Grant Hunter, Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction



Red tape reduction success



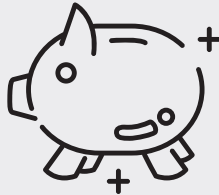
Increased
investment



Job
creation



Improved service
delivery



Saved time and
money



Reduced
costs

Regulatory burden and red tape

Regulatory burden is the combined impact of obligations imposed by government rules and regulations that require compliance from citizens, businesses and organizations in Alberta. While government regulation is necessary to protect public health, safety and security, ensure fiscal or environmental accountability, or achieve other public policy goals, excessive regulation can lead to red tape—stifling business growth and resulting in lost time and money due to complying with regulatory or administrative requirements.

Red tape may be present if one or more of the following exist:

- over-regulation
- inefficient administrative processes
- inflexible enforcement
- inequitable or unfair regulation
- cross-jurisdictional misalignment

Red tape is prevalent at all levels of government and all red tape has the same impact: it chases away investment that could have produced jobs. An example is the federal Bill C-69, which changes how major infrastructure projects are reviewed and approved in Canada, layering on overregulated review processes, and making it extremely difficult to approve major projects, such as pipelines that will benefit Albertans and Canadians.

The CFIB estimated that regulation from all levels of government cost Canadian businesses \$36 billion in 2017, with red tape accounting for \$10 billion of that total. Red tape hits small businesses particularly hard. In 2017, businesses with fewer than five employees spent 178 hours per employee complying with government regulations, while those with 100 or more employees only spent 20 hours per employee (CFIB, *The Cost of Government Regulation on Canadian Businesses*, Jan. 2018).

A recent report from Canada's Economic Strategy Tables concluded that inefficiency stifles innovation, makes things more expensive, drives away investment and slows down projects, ultimately eroding trust between governments and industry.

That same report points to Norway as a country with the best practices for fast tracking projects for regulatory approval when certain criteria are met, and to New Zealand for streamlining regulations and regularly reviewing their regulatory regime for performance (Canada's Economic Strategy Tables, *The Innovation and Competitiveness Imperative: Seizing Opportunities for Growth*, Sept. 2018).

.....

Outcome-based regulation focuses on achieving a measurable result, while process-based regulation layers on assessment and control processes that must be undertaken, documented and audited.

.....

We know that long government processes, even if they are efficient, do not always equal better protection for Albertans, which is why we are moving to an outcome-based approach to regulating as opposed to a process-based approach. Long and inefficient government approval processes have been a particular challenge for some of Alberta's major sectors. In 2019, the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) estimated that Alberta oil sands projects proposed between 2015 and 2019 experienced delays in Cabinet approval of 30 to 329 days (median delay of 211.7 days), the costs of which ranged between \$0.8 million to \$25.5 million (median cost of \$4 million).

Approvals under the *Water Act*, which supports the conservation and management of water in Alberta by establishing requirements for responsible water use, is an example of good regulation that causes red tape in the form of unintended consequences, in this case, for municipalities. Before the construction of a road or bridge can begin, Alberta municipalities must receive government approval under the *Water Act*, which can take months or years. This makes it difficult for municipalities to hire and retain contractors in advance of the project, introduces uncertainty into long-term capital planning and compromises the ability of municipalities' to adequately support local job creation and economic activity.

Alberta's government has taken action to address these challenges, while also continuing to preserve public safety and security, a cornerstone of the government's commitment to Albertans.

Reducing Alberta's regulatory burden

The baseline count

Definition

Between October 2019 and February 2020, all ministries counted the number of regulatory requirements that existed as of May 1, 2019, in their statutes, regulations, policies and forms. A regulatory requirement is any action that a citizen, business or government must take to access government services or programs, carry out business or pursue legislated privileges. The resulting inventory of regulatory requirements represents the Government of Alberta's baseline count, which is a key benchmark used to quantify the regulatory burden imposed on citizens, job creators and other stakeholders. Reduction of the baseline count is used to measure the government's progress towards implementing the platform commitment to cut red tape by one-third.

As a whole, Alberta's government has a baseline count of 670,977 regulatory requirements (Alberta Health Services' baseline count is still underway and is expected to be completed in spring 2021).

Progress to Date

Between May 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020, the government has reduced a total of 52,470 requirements and added 10,932 requirements related to the implementation of platform commitments, for a resulting net reduction of 41,538 requirements, or 6.19 per cent against the baseline.

Once the entire one-third reduction target has been achieved, the government will implement a 'one-in / one-out' rule requiring ministries to identify at least one offsetting regulation for every new regulation created.

Reducing Alberta's regulatory burden
The baseline count

670,977

5 to 1

Reduction to added
regulation ratio

6.19%

Net reduction against
the baseline

52,470

Total requirements
reduced

Red tape reduction initiatives

Alberta's government has completed hundreds of red tape reduction initiatives between June 2019 and June 2020. More than half are supported by public engagement through the Cut Red Tape website, what we heard from industry panels, stakeholder submissions and delivering on platform commitments. This report highlights 69 initiatives, some of which aim to make life easier for all Albertans, while others directly result in cost savings. Current efforts have produced more than \$476 million in savings for Alberta's job creators and government.

Getting out of the way of our job creators to foster economic growth

Now more than ever, it's important for government to clear the way of unnecessary burdens placed on our job creators. The following examples from the past year demonstrate how cutting red tape helps the private sector create jobs and drive economic growth in Alberta.

Now more than ever, it's important for government to clear the way of unnecessary burdens placed on our job creators.

Employment Standards and Labour Relations Code amendments

Legislative amendments to the *Employment Standards Code* and *Labour Relations Code* are designed to reduce regulatory burden on employers.

The *Restoring Balance in Alberta's Workplaces Act* supports economic recovery and gets Albertans back to work. The Act provides employees and employers with clearer and more transparent rules promoting fairness and productivity, including more clarity about rest periods and temporary layoff notices. This legislation could save job creators an estimated \$100 million per year by reducing red tape from daily operations—helping them keep their doors open—and providing jobs for hard-working Albertans.

Alberta Construction Association applauds the Government of Alberta for introducing greater flexibility and reduced red tape in averaging agreements, hours of work, and temporary layoffs. Changes to these employment standards support seasonal, remote, project-based construction jobs, while maintaining fairness in the workplace.

Frederick Vine, Chairman, Alberta Construction Association

Red tape reduction efforts:
more than \$476 million saved so far.



Premier Jason Kenney and Associate Minister Grant Hunter receive red tape report card grade from Laura Jones, Vice-President, Canadian Federation of Independent Business.



Associate Minister Grant Hunter accepts Golden Scissors Award from Laura Jones, Vice-President, and Annie Dormuth, Director of Provincial Affairs, Alberta, of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business for progress in cutting red tape.

Oil Sands Conservation Act

Alberta Energy removed the redundant requirement for Cabinet approval of oil sands schemes or operations above 2,000 barrels per day production capacity prior to approval by the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER). The amendments eliminate unnecessary delays in the oil sands approval process. The Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) estimates this will save between \$0.8 million and \$25.5 million.

The oil and natural gas industry continuously strives to improve performance and efficiency and we are happy to see the province of Alberta committed to this goal as well through red tape reduction. Streamlining project applications and approval timelines will support industry's recovery and job creation efforts, while providing greater certainty to attract investment back to the sector.

Tim McMillan, President and CEO, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers

Technology Innovation and Emissions Reduction

The Technology Innovation and Emissions Reduction (TIER) system came into force on January 1, 2020, replacing the Carbon Competitiveness Incentive Regulation (CCIR). The province estimates that TIER will achieve similar emissions reductions as the CCIR, but will save Alberta's job creators an estimated \$300 million annually relative to the previous provincial regulatory system.

TIER also includes provisions that allow tens of thousands of smaller conventional oil and gas facilities to voluntarily enter the regulatory system. This helps to achieve emissions reductions, while protecting the conventional oil and gas industry from the federal carbon tax.

Developing and implementing the *Farm Freedom and Safety Act*

Following extensive consultation to address the unique needs of the Alberta farm and ranch sector, Labour and Immigration developed the *Farm Freedom and Safety Act*. Provisions in the Act offer the farm and ranch sector greater flexibility, enhanced red tape reduction of undue regulatory burden and complexity, and less prescriptive language.

This enables farm businesses to become more cost-competitive and improves the sector's ability to create jobs and attract skilled workers through better wages.



Associate Minister Grant Hunter joins Minister Devin Dreeshen as they announce the introduction of the *Farm Freedom and Safety Act*.

Specifically, these amendments:

- Allowed employers to have choice when it comes to workplace insurance.
- Removed the applicability of the *Labour Relations Code* to farm and ranch operations.
- Recognized that a farm is unlike other businesses, and that farmers and ranchers require flexibility in meeting employment standards.
- Included nursery, greenhouse, mushroom and sod operations in the definition of farm and ranch for employment standards, giving them more flexibility.

Farmers asked for these changes to give us the flexibility to run our businesses and build a program collectively that works for everybody. This government has really listened to and responded to our concerns. Modern farms are highly safety-conscious operations and we take care of our farm workers like they are family.

Rhonda Mulligan, Tri M Farms

In terms of the overall shape of the industry, consultation has been a critical feature of the new government for Bill 6 and the *Farm Freedom and Safety Act*. We didn't have that under the previous government in 2015 when those changes were rolled out. We are very encouraged and optimistic about the future shape of farm safety legislation in Alberta.

Tom Steve, General Manager, Alberta Wheat and Barley Commission

Eliminating outdated permits

These limits had not been updated in nearly 20 years.

The Commercial Vehicle Dimension and Weight Regulation specifies the legal size, weight and configuration limits for commercial vehicles on Alberta roads. These limits had not been updated in nearly 20 years and do not reflect modern vehicle configurations and equipment.

As a result, commercial drivers in Alberta had to obtain permits for standard equipment that is allowed in most other jurisdictions, including wildlife bumpers, aerodynamic devices and wide load signs. Alberta Transportation routinely grants these permits for standard equipment when they are requested.

Alberta Transportation updated the regulation to eliminate more than 15,000 outdated provincial commercial carrier permits without affecting safety on Alberta roads.

We applaud the Alberta government for the reduction of red tape policies impacting carriers like Rosenau, who bring innovative solutions to lessen the environmental footprint while improving on-road safety and efficiency. These changes are welcome and deliver consistency between provincial and municipal roadways, creating an environment of effective trade corridors for the industry driving the Alberta economy.

Jude Groves, Director, Safety & Training with Rosenau Transport Ltd.

Trucking is an essential service, and demand is growing as commerce shifts online. The safe and efficient movement of goods across our province is critical to Alberta's economic recovery. These changes reflect the types of innovation that are driving the future of the transportation industry. Ensuring regulations keep pace with advances in technology, training, and standard business practices makes the commercial trucking industry more resilient and more efficient.

Chris Nash, President, Alberta Motor Transport Association

The Government of Alberta's bold decision to eliminate more than 10,000 commercial carrier permits effective January 1, 2021 not only supports the trucking industry, who has been such an integral part of keeping our country moving during the pandemic, but also contributes to Alberta's broader goals on sustainability and emission reduction. We appreciate their attentiveness to this issue and applaud them for moving these regulatory changes forward. Alberta truckers will be at a disadvantage without this change to eliminate barriers to a new generation of wide-base tires.

Andrew Mutch, President, Michelin North America (Canada) Inc.

Oil and gas equipment safety verification

Oil and gas companies prefer to internally manage the risks associated with some non-pressurized legacy oil and gas equipment in an effort to save time and money, while adhering to the intent of prescriptive code requirements.

The Government of Alberta is satisfied that the industry has acceptable quality assurance programs in place to manage the risks associated with the equipment in question.

A variance to the Gas Code Regulation was issued to provide an additional option for oil and gas companies to meet code requirements. They can now use a professional engineer to verify the safety of their equipment using the professional association's authentication standards.

This change maintains safety standards, while reducing considerable time and cost that industry estimates to be up to \$20 million initially, and then \$2.5 million annually.

CAPP supports action that reduces red tape while maintaining the industry's high health, safety, and environment standards. Red tape reduction efforts such as this can result in significant efficiencies and cost savings, which is appreciated by industry in these challenging times and increases Alberta's attractiveness to investors in the future.

Tim McMillan, President and CEO, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers

Proponent guide to First Nations and Métis settlement consultation procedures

Industry proponents wanting to develop public lands needed more clarity and a streamlined process to help them understand their role when they have a legal duty to consult Indigenous communities. Alberta's government cut unneeded requirements in the consultation process, making it more cost-effective to run and efficient for proponents and Indigenous communities alike. This will improve the consultation process on thousands of submissions for natural resource development activities each year.

The updated guide to support the process helps in these ways:

- Explains the application process in a more straightforward way, so industry and Indigenous communities have more certainty about moving development projects forward.
- Improves the information that industry proponents include in natural resource development applications and reduces errors in those applications. This change saves time and money.
- Ensures the Aboriginal Consultation Office can better respond to industry needs, while increasing the number of applications they process.
- Moves proposed projects to the development phase more quickly.

The updated guide was responsive to about 50 per cent of total red tape reduction submissions for Indigenous Relations.

Indigenous Relations was very proud to lead all ministries in red tape reduction.



Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction Grant Hunter presents Indigenous Relations Minister Rick Wilson an award for being the first department to reduce red tape by one-third.

Indigenous Relations always tries to improve how we consult with Indigenous communities on Crown land developments that could negatively affect their Treaty rights or harvesting activities. For us, finding ways to cut red tape has made the process more clear for industry, Indigenous communities and even within government. Indigenous Relations was very proud to lead all ministries in Red Tape Reduction. That hard work pays off in better communications and faster development approvals that keep people in Alberta working.

Rick Wilson, Minister of Indigenous Relations

These changes should help make consultation more efficient. We believe it will also help us be better prepared when working with Indigenous Peoples on important matters such as treaty or Aboriginal rights and harvesting and cultural practices. We want a process that benefits everyone.

Al Reid, Executive Vice-President, Stakeholder Engagement, Safety, Legal & General Counsel, Cenovus Energy Inc.

Liquor modernization

Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis (AGLC) made the following changes to modernize liquor laws:

- Changed the calculation for the small manufacturer threshold for spirits from total hectolitres of production to a calculation based on litres of absolute alcohol. This change supports manufacturers in producing different lines of spirits up to a threshold, while maintaining their designation as small manufacturers.
- Amended AGLC policy to enable manufacturers to blend or flavour products in any ratio. The requirement for a maximum 20 per cent allowance of blended or flavoured product for Alberta liquor manufacturers was removed. This policy change provides manufacturers with new revenue streams and accommodates more latitude in producing innovative products. It also puts them in a better position to respond to market trends.
- Select day-use area picnic sites now permit liquor consumption from 11:00a.m. to 9:00p.m.
- Created a new provision enabling restaurants and bars (Class A licensees) to sell liquor for consumption off the licensed premises.
- Amended policies to allow small liquor manufacturers to sell their products at a wider range of artisan markets.
- Amended policies to enable restaurants and bars to sell liquor on patios not directly attached to the licensed premises.
- Rescinded the May long weekend liquor ban at eight provincial parks.

These changes provide small liquor manufacturers, retailers, bars and restaurants more flexibility and opportunities to grow their businesses and create jobs. They also give responsible Albertans more options when choosing to purchase or consume alcohol.

We have been working with AGLC and its industry partners to cut red tape and allow for business development in the province. There is great work being done and we will continue to drive forward on improvements. These changes are increasing innovation in the industry, while continuing to maintain a socially responsible regulatory environment.

Travis Toews, President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance

Our members are pleased to see more improvements and look forward to continuing to work in cooperation with AGLC and the province on Alberta's ongoing modernization of liquor laws. This is why Alberta got top marks in our Raise the Bar Report.

Mark von Schellwitz, Vice-President, Western Canada, Restaurants Canada

Looking forward to the Regulatory Assurance Framework

A well functioning regulatory system is key to the province's economic success. Alberta Environment and Parks has launched a major project to fully transform Alberta's environmental regulatory system. This transformation will address application backlogs, increase efficiency and transparency, and support economic development.

By 2022, a fully transformed environmental regulatory system will be fair and predictable, and will use common sense to safeguard Alberta's air, land, water and biodiversity. It will inspire investor confidence that sustainable activity on Alberta's land base will not be bogged down by unnecessary red tape.

Key elements of Alberta's environmental regulatory system transformation include:

- Shifting from a rules-based system to an outcomes and risk-based approach.
- Ensuring environmental outcomes are met in real time, instead of trying to minimize environmental risk in the application stage.
- A digital application system that clearly outlines application requirements and prevents submission of incomplete applications, enables application tracking, and provides government with a date to compare against service standards.

Our pursuit of regulatory excellence reflects the need for modernized and streamlined improvements to project application processes, monitoring, compliance and closure to better serve Albertans, our environment and our economy.

Digital transformation; bringing government into the 21st century

Accessing government services should be easy.

We're working hard to cut red tape in order to deliver services efficiently and in ways that are modern and convenient. The following examples show our progress on this over the last year.

Streamlining child care subsidy application

Alberta's government launched a new user-friendly online childcare subsidy application that can be accessed easily on any computer, tablet or smartphone. The application is user friendly, eliminates paper submissions and reduces emails and phone calls. It also allows staff to focus on supporting children and families, and spend less time processing paperwork and managing the previous system's commonly occurring technical issues.

For example, in 2018 Children's Services received more than 95,000 paper submissions and documents, and fielded an estimated 87,000 calls from parents needing support and assistance with the old application system or with their paper application.

Overall, replacing paper forms and phone calls with an up-to-date, easy-to-use online system will save Alberta taxpayers approximately \$1.1 million per year.



Associate Minister Grant Hunter joins Minister Rebecca Schulz and Edmonton parents to launch the new online childcare subsidy application.

Workers' Compensation Board electronic funds transfer

During COVID-19, the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) took the opportunity to reintroduce a number of paperless options to clients, worked with key groups to reduce their reliance on paper and developed processes to share information virtually. This approach offers many benefits including clients getting timely information and WCB reducing its environmental and financial impact.

An early but important step in this plan was to encourage workers and health care providers to sign up for electronic funds transfer rather than receiving a cheque. From March 1, 2020, to July 28, 2020, more than 5,682 new workers and 476 providers signed up for direct deposit, allowing them to get their money quicker, while reducing WCB's printing and mail load by over 50,000 cheques per year.

These changes are projected to save the WCB more than \$320,000 annually.

Electronic loan process for Alberta student loan agreements

Every year, about 100,000 students apply for Alberta student loans, 40,000 of whom are new and are required to sign loan agreements. The Alberta government's new electronic loan process means students won't have to fill out paper agreements and take them to a Canada Post office to be validated, signed and mailed-in for processing. It will also save about \$400,000 in tax dollars each year.

Alberta Students Executive Council supports the move to a modern advanced education system. The shift to an online application process will increase access and reduce the administrative burden placed on students as they apply for Alberta student loans.

Emmanuel Barker, Director of Government Relations and Advocacy, Alberta Students Executive Council

Electronic pink cards

The Superintendent of Insurance now recognizes electronic proof of insurance, in addition to physical pink cards. For the 69 insurers who actively write automobile insurance policies in Alberta, the pink card was often the only piece of paper that an insurer was required to send by mail.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, this helped insurers to provide necessary documents to their clients in a timely manner, without running the potential risks associated with fully staffing a mail room.



Associate Minister Grant Hunter announces a red tape reduction initiative with Celyeste Power, Western Insurance Bureau of Canada, Rob Jesso, Alberta Motor Association Insurance Company and George Hodgson, Insurance Brokers Association of Alberta.

Reducing costs and saving time for everyday Albertans

Making life easier for Albertans is a key focus of red tape reduction.

We are looking at numerous government programs and services to make sure they're as efficient as possible. We are also looking at non-government agencies that serve Albertans to make sure they aren't weighed down by red tape. Below are some of the highlights from the past year.

Changing from annual to multi-year grant funding

Granting ministries have transitioned from single-year grant agreements to multi-year agreements, reducing administrative workloads and stabilizing funding. This reduces paperwork, allowing organizations to focus on delivering programs and services, rather than grant administration and reporting.

New K to 12 education funding model

Alberta Education updated the Kindergarten to Grade 12 education funding model for the first time in 15 years to improve funding and accountability, and to help Albertans feel confident that the education system is meeting the needs of students. In the fall of 2019, the province met with all public, separate, charter and Francophone school authorities, along with other education partners, to discuss improvements in the way funding flows to school authorities. Overall, school authorities wanted more predictability in their funding so they could better plan for each school year, more flexibility in how they spend provincial dollars based on their own needs in their communities, and reductions in provincial red tape.

The new K to 12 education funding model:

- Streamlines operations and directs more dollars to each school authority. In the 2020-21 school year, every single division will see an increase in operational funding.
- Simplifies the number of grants from 36 to 15 to give more flexibility to school authorities to determine how best to invest taxpayer dollars.
- Standardizes administrative and governance spending to maximize dollars for classrooms.
- Allows more flexibility in how school authorities spend provincial dollars based on their school and community needs.

The updated K to 12 education funding model has resulted in a reduction of over 1,000 regulatory requirements, and positively impacts more than 200 authorities in over 2,000 schools across the province.

We appreciate that the government considered input from the education system as they developed the new funding model. This new model will reduce some of the red tape associated with accessing certain grants. It will also give school boards the ability to better predict the amount of funding they will receive in future years within the new, simplified model.

Rod Steeves, 2019-20 President, Association of School Business Officials of Alberta

The reduction of red tape afforded by the new funding model has helped reduce the complexity and workload involved in providing extensive and repetitious data, which in turn, allows our teachers to focus on what is most important—our students.

Mary Martin, Board Chair, Calgary Catholic School District

Assignment of benefit project – improving coordination with employment insurance

In the past year, Community and Social Services implemented a new pilot project in the Northeast Region to simplify the Assignment of Benefits process by eliminating the duplication of benefits between Income Support and Employment Insurance. The reduction of workload complexity will lead to time savings for both Albertans and government staff. This change will also have a positive impact on the amount of recovered funds, as regular points of error will be eliminated. A provincial roll-out of the project is planned for 2020-21.

Looking forward to the Justice Transformation Initiative (JTI)

Alberta is adopting a new approach to deal with first-time impaired drivers and many other regulatory contraventions. With the passage of Bill 21, the *Provincial Administrative Procedures Act*, Alberta has created a process that can free up critical justice resources, improve our ability to regulate priority concerns and improve accessibility and ease of use for all Albertans. This model allows for streamlined administrative penalties to be issued for matters that do not require criminal arrest, trials or potential incarceration.

For matters best dealt with by fines and other regulatory consequences, these new penalties are a proven alternative to the criminal model. To adjudicate disputes of these penalties, a new branch called SafeRoads Alberta has been created to resolve all disputes of impaired and traffic-related administrative penalties within 30 days of their issuance. Phase 1 of JTI will divert most first-time impaired drivers away from the criminal system and instead apply some of the strongest regulatory consequences found anywhere in Canada.

This approach has been proven to save lives in British Columbia, while at the same time reducing the impact of impaired driving on their justice system. The new model is also fully modernized, replacing personal appearances in Alberta's courthouses with a new, simple, fast and fair online process that can be accessed 24/7 and without specialized assistance. The initiative will lower the amount of impaired driving offences entering the criminal justice system by an estimated 75 per cent. It will also reduce police investigation and document time, and lower wait times for reviews of these matters from over five months before the Alberta Transportation Safety Board to 30 days with SafeRoads Alberta.

Mitigating red tape during COVID-19

Alberta's government took action to simplify processes and accelerate supports that assist Alberta businesses through the COVID-19 health crisis and into the economic recovery and relaunch phases.

In June 2020, Jobs, Economy and Innovation (JEI) launched the Small and Medium Enterprise Relaunch Grant to ease costs faced by businesses and non-profits as they got back to work. The grant was designed to minimize red tape implications on business. Highlights of this program include:

- Program design and launch within three weeks.
- 75 per cent of applications processed and paid automatically within 10 days.
- Simplified application process requiring minimal input from applicants.
- Since the launch, the program processed more than 14,000 payments, benefitting organizations that employ nearly 136,000 workers.

The Biz Connect service was also launched to support businesses in their safe re-openings. Biz Connect removes layers of approvals to provide accurate information in a timely manner. To date, Biz Connect responded to over 7,500 inquiries, serving as a single point of entry for businesses seeking information.

What we heard

I was pleased to learn of the government's priority to establish a panel to address red tape in the non-profit sector. I look forward to working with a dedicated group that will come up with practical and constructive solutions for community organizations in Alberta. Cutting red tape for non-profits will lead to positive change across our province.

David Mitchell, President and CEO, Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations

I am honoured to chair a red tape reduction industry panel. This is a critical time in our province's history to ensure that our regulatory framework is nimble and efficient while meeting the needs of all Albertans. Alberta businesses, industries, charities and non-profits are all facing unprecedented challenges and I look forward to working with the panel members and the government to ensure that Albertans are best positioned to be competitive now and into the future. As someone who has spent my entire career advising entrepreneurs, businesses and organizations of all types, from small towns to big cities, from the north to the south, I am truly excited to be involved in the improvements we can make, together.

Kim Drever, Regional Tax Leader, MNP

Public engagement

As part of the government's commitment to cutting red tape (CutRedTape.alberta.ca) an online submission form and dedicated email (cutredtape@gov.ab.ca) was launched. Using the online submission form or email, Albertans, businesses and organizations can submit ideas to the government. This input has helped government departments set priorities, gather input on areas of highest impact to Albertans, and focus on initiatives that directly respond to public and stakeholder concerns. The Government of Alberta received over 6,300 submissions.

Alberta received over 6,300 submissions.

- The majority of submissions from the public related to speeding up approvals and issues related to social services and supports.
- From industry and business, submissions focused on how to enable economic growth, improve government services through digital transformation and how to save time and money.

Industry-focused engagement

Alberta's government launched nine industry panels to assist in identifying unnecessary red tape in key industries of the economy. The panels include leaders from each sector who have worked to support the government's plan to cut red tape by one-third.

These advisory panels provide input directly to the Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction and relevant government departments. Each panel's mandate is to:

- Identify areas of greatest regulatory and administrative burden in the applicable sector, with a focus on changes that will create the most jobs and economic growth.
- Provide ideas and advice for regulatory and administrative streamlining and red tape reduction.
- Provide feedback on proposed government policies, processes and actions.
- Provide feedback on progress updates provided by government regarding implementation efforts.
- Identify sector-government actions related to regulatory and administrative streamlining, potential deregulation opportunities to stimulate economic growth and alternate service delivery models.

To date, the panels have provided approximately 500 recommendations for cutting red tape.

Industry panels continue to meet semi-annually at a minimum with regular reporting to the Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction.

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The panels are:

Oil and gas
 Tourism and hospitality
 Small business
 Agriculture, agri-food, and bio-industrial
 Forestry
 Construction
 Chemical manufacturing
 Industrial manufacturing
 Non-profit

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Oil and gas

Panel representatives:

- Canadian Energy Pipeline Association
- Pembina Pipeline Corporation
- The Explorers and Producers Association of Canada
- Petroleum Services Association of Canada
- Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
- Repsol
- Perpetual Energy Inc.
- Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors
- Birchcliff Energy

Tourism and hospitality

Panel representatives:

- Alberta Craft Distilleries Association
- Alberta Small Brewers Association
- Banff & Lake Louise Hospitality Association
- Alberta Hotel and Lodging Association
- Alberta Professional Outfitters Society
- Convenience Industry Council of Canada
- Indigenous Tourism Association Canada/Indigenous Tourism Alberta
- Alberta Charitable Casino Operators
- Association for Mountain Parks Protection and Enjoyment
- WestJet
- Tourism Industry Association of Alberta
- Pure Canadian Gaming
- Tourism Calgary

Small business

Panel representatives:

- MNP
- Barre Body Studio
- Widnowski's Sausage
- Alberta Indian Investment Corporation
- Business Link
- Fresno Bros.
- Landmark Cinemas
- Jori International
- LSM Group of Companies

Agriculture, agri-food, and bio-industrial

Panel representatives:

- Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association/ Kasko Cattle
- CL Ranches/ Calgary Stampede
- Alberta Food Processors Association
- Alberta Canola Producers Commission
- Alberta Chicken Producers
- Alberta Forage Industry Network
- Alberta Greenhouse Growers Association
- Potato Growers of Alberta
- Alberta Vegetable Growers
- Julie Stitt, Agriculture Consultant

Forestry

Panel representatives:

- Alberta Forest Products Association
- West Fraser
- Tolko Industries
- Woodland Cree First Nation
- Millar Western Forest Products Ltd.
- Boucher Bros Lumber Ltd.
- Vanderwell Contractors Ltd.
- Weyerhaeuser Company Ltd.
- Woodlands Spray Lake Saw Millson
- Northland Forest Products Ltd.
- Canfor
- Alberta Newsprint
- Alberta Pacific Forest Industries Inc.

Construction

Panel representatives:

- Clark Builders
- Joette Decore, Construction Industry Consultant
- Qualico Group
- Stantec
- Melcor
- PCL
- Fort McKay Group
- Rolling Mix Concrete Ltd. (RMC Group of Companies)
- Catapult Solution Inc. and Sil Industrial Minerals
- Alberta Construction Association
- Alberta Roadbuilders and Heavy Construction Association
- Building Industry Land Development Association Alberta (BILD)
- Construction Owners Association of Alberta

Chemical manufacturing

Panel representatives:

- Resource Diversification Council
- Fertilizer Canada
- Chemistry Industry Association of Canada
- BASF
- CF industries
- Dow Chemical Canada ULC
- INEOS Canada Partnership
- Inter Pipeline Ltd.
- MEGlobal Canada Inc.
- Methanex Corporation
- Nutrien Ltd.
- Nova Chemicals Corporation
- Nauticol Energy Ltd
- Northeast Capital Industrial Association

Industrial manufacturing

Panel representatives:

- Universe Machine Corporation
- Collins Steel
- Lethbridge Iron Works
- Draco Industries Inc.
- Alberta Welding Optimization Committee
- Supreme Steel
- Goodfish Lake Business Corp
- Canadian Welding Bureau
- Tenaris
- Edmonton Exchanger
- Concrete Alberta
- Cement Association of Alberta
- Attabotics
- Plainsman Manufacturing
- Argus Machine Co. Ltd.

Non-profit

Panel representatives:

- Calgary Chamber of Volunteer Organizations
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Catholic Social Services
- CUPS
- Calgary Food Bank
- Inclusion Alberta
- YMCA Calgary
- C5
- Mustard Seed
- Aboriginal Counselling Services
- Special Olympics of Alberta

Additional completed red tape reduction initiatives

The following are additional examples of completed red tape reduction initiatives from across the Government of Alberta. While not a comprehensive list, the initiatives below provide context into the breadth of work done by government to reduce red tape in the first year.

Getting out of the way of our job creators to foster economic growth

Alberta Export Expansion Program

The Alberta Export Expansion Program (AEEP) provides funding support to small and medium-sized enterprises, municipalities, industry associations, Indigenous communities and economic development organizations, promoting Alberta exports through outbound international business travel and bringing international buyers to Alberta.

The AEEP was renewed and relaunched in December 2019. As part of the relaunch, the program team reviewed all of AEEP's requirements, assessed the application experience from a client's perspective and took into account public feedback, resulting in a number of changes to reduce red tape.

Three funding streams were consolidated into one, creating a streamlined application process with fewer forms. Unnecessary touchpoints between clients and Jobs, Economy and Innovation (JEI) staff were also eliminated for some funding streams. Direct applications to the program are now allowed. Previously, clients had to work with a JEI intermediary to complete applications. The changes not only reduced administrative burden, but also resulted in faster turnaround times for clients, with the average time from an application's submission to the date of its approval decreasing by 25 per cent.

Annual reporting requirements for clients also changed from a three-year reporting requirement to one follow-up report at the one-year anniversary, requiring 60 per cent less time to comply with reporting requirements. This change reduced the reporting burden placed on the client, while still allowing JEI to collect valuable information to assess the program's impact. Finally, the program removed two requirements that allowed more companies to leverage AEEP to grow their businesses.

Changing the approval level to facilitate more efficient land disposition and borrowing by post-secondary institutions

The Alberta government streamlined the process to dispose of land for post-secondary institutions. *The Post-Secondary Learning Act* (PSLA) stated that post-secondary institutions must obtain an Order in Council (OIC) approval for land disposition and borrowing. Due to the lengthy process to develop and review, an OIC can take upwards of eight months to receive Cabinet approval.

In March 2020, the PSLA was amended to change the approval requirement to a Ministerial Order, rather than an OIC Cabinet approval. This means land disposition timelines improve by approximately two thirds, allowing post-secondary institutions to pursue revenue-generating opportunities (e.g. sale or lease of lands) up to 90 days sooner than with previous disposition requests and government approval timelines.

Code of Practice for powerline works impacting wetlands

A new Code of Practice for power lines impacting wetlands maintains environmental protections and applies a more appropriate level of oversight for low-risk construction activities. This change will allow electricity providers to carry out important work on power lines without costly delays.

A Code of Practice regulates activities under the *Water Act* that would normally require an approval. The code sets out the standards and conditions that must be met to ensure the activity minimizes the disturbance and impact on the environment.

Between releasing the new Code of Practice December 23, 2019, and September 2, 2020, a total of 194 notices were submitted to the Environmental Approval Systems OneStop system, replacing the same number of approvals that typically took several months to process versus the new 14-day turnaround for a notification.

Albertans expect us to ensure that we're protecting the environment while we deliver reliable and affordable energy to their homes, farms and businesses. By streamlining this process, the Code of Practice for Power Lines Impacting Wetlands provides utilities with clarity on our environmental requirements and allows all of us to complete critical power line work in a shorter time frame.

Ed Rihn, Senior Vice-President, AltaLink

Ducks Unlimited Canada has a proud history of working collaboratively with numerous partners, including industry and government, in the development of pragmatic conservation solutions for working landscapes. DUC supports innovative tools like codes of practice that, when applied appropriately, achieve the goals of the Alberta Wetland Policy while maintaining Alberta's economic prosperity.

Ron Maher, Manager of Provincial Operations, Ducks Unlimited Canada

Directive 81: Water Disposal Limits and Reporting Requirements for Thermal In Situ Oil Sands Schemes

This updated directive addresses recycling of water for oil sands thermal in situ projects and encourages the use of alternatives to high-quality, non-saline water sources in a flexible, efficient and cost-effective manner. This results in increased efficiency, consistency and certainty in the reuse of treated wastewater from a third party for hydraulic fracturing purposes.

[This change] removes a significant barrier to greenfield investments, and represents estimated capital cost savings of up to \$200 million per greenfield project. Collectively, existing projects could yield cost savings of up to \$273 million, plus annual incremental savings of approximately \$3.75 million.

Letter from Tim McMillan (CAPP) to AER CEO

Fisheries research licence streamlining pilot

Fisheries studies are often required as part of applications for major developments in Alberta. A research licence, issued by Alberta Environment and Parks, is required to collect, hold or sample crown fish, shellfish, crustaceans or parts of those animals. The Research Licence Pre-Approved Assessment and Salvage (RL-PASS) project issues a streamlined licence to clients in good standing to conduct low-risk-high-volume fisheries projects.

Under the new program, the applicant notifies the department if they meet the conditions of the licence. Previously, applicants had to apply and await a biologist's review (10 days). This results in cost savings for consultants and less required reporting, translating into additional cost savings. In the first two months, over 60 hours of staff time was freed up. Applicants avoided over 300 days of potential wait times, saving them thousands of dollars.

Food Regulation amendment

Changes to the Food Regulation enable the growth of numerous small businesses.

Bed and breakfasts and other small lodging operators are no longer limited to providing only breakfast, and can now serve their guests other meals. Food banks are also able to prepare, cook and serve food on-site, provided they have the necessary facilities and equipment.

Home-based businesses will not require food-handling permits or be subject to inspections for foods that present a low risk for food-borne illness. These are foods that do not require refrigeration and include such items as baked goods, jams/jellies, candies, pickled foods and cereals. High-risk foods and foods containing meat, poultry, seafood and/or raw milk will continue to be prohibited.

The changes to Alberta's Food Regulation maintains standards for food safety, supports Alberta entrepreneurs, adds new jobs and benefits the economy by giving Albertans new opportunities to buy locally produced foods.

Forest management agreements

Changed the authority to allow the minister to enter into a Forest Management Agreement (FMA) without prior approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council. This will eliminate up to six months in approval time for FMAs, and will support investor confidence in Alberta's forest sector.

Insurance industry qualification equivalencies

The Insurance Agents and Adjusters Regulation, which sets out the educational and examination requirements for agents and adjusters in Alberta, was amended to allow the General Insurance Council to recognize equivalencies from other Canadian jurisdictions.

This amendment enhances labour mobility and provides another avenue to become licensed in Alberta, while still ensuring general insurance agents possess relevant and current knowledge to ensure consumer protection.

Marketing of Agricultural Products Act

Amendments to the *Marketing of Agricultural Products Act* give agriculture marketing boards and commissions (MBCs) the authority to develop their own bylaws. Now, the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry can make and amend MBC plan regulations and initiate plebiscites, rather than going through the Lieutenant Governor in Council. As well, the Alberta Agricultural Products Marketing Council now has the authority to issue directives when required rather than requiring Cabinet approval to do so.

Multi-registry access system

New West Partnership Trade Agreement Multi-Registry Access System Implementation (MRAS) introduced an information data exchange hub that helps enable extra-provincial corporations and limited partnerships to incorporate across the four western provinces. It also resulted in a new Alberta online self-service extra-provincial registration portal.

Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba had separate, duplicative processes for corporations and limited partnerships to complete their extra-provincial business registrations and maintenance filings. On June 27, 2020, the four provinces were the first to implement MRAS: a hub that allows corporate information sharing between the provinces, making extra-provincial registration faster and easier.

Oilwell service rigs

Alberta classifies service rigs as commercial vehicles, meaning they must meet requirements intended for commercial carriers. However, some commercial trucking requirements are not suitable for service rig equipment, since they spend 95 per cent of their time at a work site and only five per cent on the road.

Regulatory changes for service rigs have removed unnecessary red tape without compromising safety by replacing the annual Commercial Vehicle Inspection Program with an inspection every five years, and excluding service rigs from Safety Fitness Certificate requirements applied to commercial carriers.

In January 2020, support vehicles such as equipment trucks, pump tank trucks and the crew trailers were extended the same exemptions as service rigs through a Memorandum of Agreement with the Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors (CAODC).

Service rigs and support vehicles will still follow stringent and appropriate safety standards, including valid permits for transport and operation, as well as established Occupational Health and Safety requirements.

On behalf of CAODC members, I would like to thank Minister McIver for his support as this agreement will help get Albertans back to work on service rigs.

Mark Scholz, President and CEO, Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors

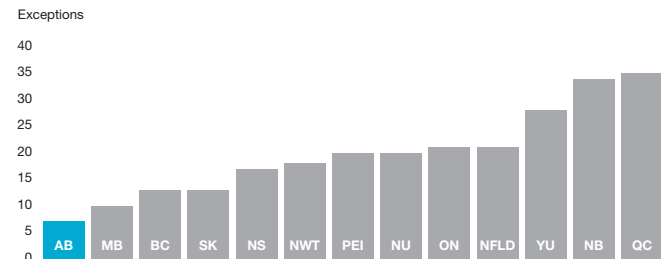
Powerline Reclamation Guidelines

Reclamation requirements can be unclear at times and costly to implement. The guidelines, released on May 29, 2020, provide detailed reclamation requirements for transmission lines in order to clarify and streamline the process to obtain reclamation certificates and get regulatory closure for sites. The guidelines replace the Environmental Protection Guidelines for Transmission Lines and aligns with existing regulations, while providing flexible assessment options for cost savings. These changes were requested by the electrical utility industry.

Reducing barriers to internal trade

Intergovernmental Relations collaborated with other ministries and jurisdictions to reduce red tape and barriers to internal trade through the following measures:

CANADA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT EXCEPTIONS BY PROVINCE



- Alberta announced the removal of 21 Canada Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) party-specific exceptions, representing an 80 per cent reduction. Alberta now has the lowest number of exceptions of any of the parties to the agreement. Removing these exceptions helps create a more open, transparent and competitive marketplace. Every action that removes trade barriers stands to improve the economy of Alberta and benefit Albertans.
- Representing Alberta on the Regulatory Reconciliation and Cooperation Table (RCT). The RCT was created under the CFTA to reduce barriers to trade, investment, and labour mobility within Canada by reconciling regulatory differences that companies may experience when doing business across provincial and territorial borders.
- Leading Alberta's participation in negotiations to bring financial services and non-medical cannabis under the rules of the CFTA.
- Encouraging other provinces and territories to join the New West Partnership Trade Agreement, the most open and comprehensive trade agreement in Canada, which allows goods, services, capital and workers to move freely across provincial boundaries.

Wood-building construction

Red tape was reduced for builders and developers by allowing the use of tall wood construction with fire-resistant material for up to 12 storeys. While the current Building Code allows the construction of wood buildings up to six storeys in height, the 2020 national code will introduce provisions for wood buildings up to 12 storeys tall. To enable timely code adoption, changes needed to be made to the *Safety Codes Act* to repeal a legislative provision that previously restricted wood construction to six storeys in height.

This allowed Alberta's builders to construct mass-timber buildings up to 12 storeys, at least two construction seasons sooner than they would under the automatic code adoption process of upcoming national code provisions.

In terms of impact on jobs and economy, the Alberta Forest Products Association estimates this change has the potential to create:

- About 60 jobs per construction site and up to 400 jobs per new sawmill and production sites.
- Growth in demand for lumber (for example, 100-million board feet, about \$40-million worth of lumber, is the equivalent to about two mills the size of Boucher Bros Lumber, which is located in Nampa, Alberta).

Changing the building code to allow more wood construction enables Alberta's job creators. Building with local materials supports jobs in resource communities and fosters innovation and investment in value-added processing. Wood construction is sustainable, beautiful, and part of the solution to climate change.

Janis Simpkins, Senior Vice-President, Alberta Forest Products Association

Removal of Fusarium from Pest and Nuisance Control Regulation

Removing Fusarium from the Pest and Nuisance Control Regulation has aligned Alberta with best practices from other provinces. This change supports the competitiveness of Alberta seed growers and cereal producers by providing enhanced access to new seed varieties, allowing the transport of fusarium-infested seed. This deregulation also supports additional research opportunities that will deliver outcomes more closely aligned with the province's growing conditions and crop health.

Eliminating the regulation of *Fusarium graminearum* (Fg) will give farmers improved access to competitive genetics, and better reflects the reality that farmers face in many regions. The Alberta Wheat Commission supports Minister Dreeshen's decision to remove this regulatory barrier in accordance with a 2017 AWC resolution calling for the removal of Fg from the Alberta Agricultural Pest Act. AWC has been dedicated to working with our partners for a continued emphasis on extension and education of best management practices, surveillance and monitoring, and research and development. The Alberta Wheat and Barley Commissions have launched a go-to web-platform with Fg resources for farmers at managefghb.ca.

Todd Hames, Chair, Alberta Wheat Commission

Repeal of Chapter 2 of the Air Monitoring Directive

The repeal of Chapter 2 of the Air Monitoring Directive (AMD) on December 10, 2019, eliminated redundancy with other reporting requirements for airsheds and reduced administration burden for internal staff. Airsheds are no longer required to submit and update a comprehensive air monitoring plan. This change will result in cost savings of \$14,500 for each of the eight airsheds that were required to adhere to Chapter 2.

Residence spacing for combustors/incinerators

Residence setback requirements were revised to allow combustors or incinerators to be deployed within 500 metres of residences at new heavy oil sites as of January 2020. This change provides flexibility to industry and unlocks new activity at heavy oil sites that were otherwise uneconomic due to the conservation requirements and lack of pipeline access. It also helps industry reduce a facility's methane emissions footprint.

Simplifying access to business lending

The Agricultural Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) made enhancements to its lending management platforms to make it easier and faster for agricultural producers to apply for and receive loans. This enabled AFSC to introduce a quick loan option for up to \$100,000 for existing insurance clients and \$150,000 for existing lending clients, providing loan authorizations in roughly 20 minutes compared to the previous average approval time of approximately seven hours. A total of 155 loans were processed for producers utilizing the quick loan option, saving an estimated total of 930 hours.

AFSC revitalized the Express Processing Option for farm loans up to \$3 million, reducing turnaround time from several days to as little as one day. These processing options provide clients with quicker access to business capital and reduce costs for AFSC. From April 1, 2019, through March 31, 2020, AFSC approved \$543.7 million for 1,563 farmers and agribusinesses in new lending support across all loan programs, which is expected to fuel economic growth and job creation.

Streamlined rules for workplace health and safety committees

In December 2019, Alberta's government introduced new rules designed to reduce administrative burdens for job creators, uphold workers' rights to participate in workplace health and safety committees, and support a consistent health and safety culture across organizations.

Rather than being required at each work site, committees and representatives are only required for each employer. For example, a school division will require only one committee rather than having a committee at each school in the division.

In addition, while government-approved training is mandatory for work site health and safety committee co-chairs and worker representatives, the number of training courses was reduced from two to one, reducing repetitive content and time spent away from work. These new requirements saved government an estimated \$360,000.

Survey and mapping on renewals and reclamation

Eliminating the requirement of a survey plan at the time of reclamation saves significant cost to the stakeholders. Additionally, eliminating the requirements of a 'statutory declaration' by a surveyor results in cost savings to industries dependent on provincial Crown land. In the case of low risk dispositions amendments, compiled information from the previous surveys in lieu of full surveys was introduced to save costs of the field survey operations for reclamation applications.

The changes provided clarification that a new survey plan is not required for the reclamation application, and that renewal applications no longer require an applicant to prove that the activities are within the boundaries of the disposition. The changes also created a new type of compiled survey plan to facilitate partial reclamation and partial assignment. These changes ensure lower survey costs, better asset management and greater security tenure.

Tax Exempt Fuel User (TEFU) certificates

Treasury Board and Finance eliminated the requirement for registrants to renew their TEFU certificate, which allows them to purchase marked fuel. This means TEFU certificates no longer expire, and newly granted certificates will not have an expiry date on them. Additionally, existing registrants are not required to re-apply or renew in order to receive a new certificate, and their TEFU number will remain the same.

As of April 30, 2020, 8,435 entities were not required to reapply, freeing up time to focus on other business priorities.

Wildlife renewable protocols

Bird Migration Survey and Post Construction Monitoring protocols were developed in order to increase clarity and decrease review timelines associated with bird surveying, monitoring and reporting requirements for wind energy projects under the Wildlife Directives. These protocols help applicants identify appropriate wildlife surveys in utilizing established protocols and necessary survey information that enable reviewers to adequately assess the risk of a project to wildlife and wildlife habitat.

The protocols ensure efficient use of surveyor time and more efficient project development, as redoing surveys could lead to major project development delays. Additionally, less time is required by Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) referral biologists as survey expectations are clearly outlined in the protocol documents, reducing meetings between proponents and AEP staff.

These protocols were available as of January 2020, and have been accessed around 400 times each, indicating a high interest from proponents.

Digital transformation; bringing government into the 21st century

Alberta Innovates – enterprise grants management system

Alberta Innovates (AI) provides funding, advice, connections, technical expertise and applied research services to stimulate and grow research and innovation across Alberta. It distributes more than \$150 million annually to support provincial research and the innovation system through a broad spectrum of funding opportunities. As a main program delivery agency for economic development in Alberta, AI's effort to reduce red tape and streamline client experience will result in quicker access to job creating opportunities.

In response to stakeholder feedback, the agency began the phased implementation of a new enterprise grants management system in April 2020, which provides a streamlined application experience for clients. The new system also includes standardized application questions to further improve the application process. The simplified suite of application questions will be used across all AI programs, with standardized questions currently being used by 20 AI grant programs.

Initial client feedback on the new system shows nearly 82 per cent of applicants are highly satisfied with the application process, with more than 50 per cent of those applicants rating their experience as excellent. Comments from applicants have identified the system to be user-friendly, easy to navigate, and a significant improvement relative to AI's previous application processes. On a routine basis through the application forms, applicants are also providing constructive feedback that will allow AI to review and continuously improve the process and standardized questions.

AlbertaRELM improvements: Introduction of the AlbertaRELM app and virtual WiN card

In April 2020, the AlbertaRELM app was updated to allow hunters and anglers to carry their hunting and sportfishing licences digitally, and to carry digital copies of the Hunting and Sportfishing Regulations with them in the field. Previously, these were only available in printed form.

Also in April 2020, a new virtual wildlife identification number (WiN) card was introduced. This card is provided for a one-time fee, never requires renewal and can be carried on a smartphone. Previously, the WiN card had to be renewed and paid for every five years and was only available as a printed card.

Auto renewal of sportfishing licences

Effective April 1, 2020, clients purchasing their 2020 sportfishing licences have the option of subscribing to automatically renew their 2021 licence. The added function is expected to improve client service satisfaction, increase overall participation, increase overall revenue and increase compliance by reducing the number of anglers who may forget to purchase their new annual sportfishing licence.

To date, over 18,000 anglers have subscribed to the auto renewal function.

Developed online applications for special event permits, school events and discharge permits for Alberta Parks.

Alberta Environment and Parks updated the Parks Special Events Directive and provided an all-digital and online submission process for members of the public to apply for permits to host weddings, sporting, educational and community events in provincial parks.

Previously, members of the public had to contact individual park offices to obtain information about special events and to submit a permit application. This often required multiple email exchanges or phone calls. A variety of different application forms and contact methods were in use in different locations across the province. The standardized online permit application form simplifies the process and improves clarity and convenience for applicants. It also reduces the amount of administrative work done by staff.

Additionally, hunters in some Alberta Parks locations were required to attend in-person training sessions. These sessions have now been replaced by online orientation packages for each of the Alberta Parks sites where hunting is permissible.

The online special events permit application went live on August 29, 2019, and the online permit application for discharge permit went live on June 3, 2020.

Digital innovation through traffic ticket payments

The Alberta government's traffic ticket digital service was created to improve online traffic ticket searches and provide enhanced online payment and resolution options for citizens. The service will allow Albertans to use cell phones to scan the barcode on the ticket and receive options to pay immediately, request additional time to pay, submit reasons supporting a reduction in penalty, and request a trial. Albertans will no longer need to come in person to the courthouse and wait to see a prosecutor or justice to request a reduction or time to pay. Also, the addition of barcodes to all handwritten violation tickets will streamline the processes for court staff and justice partners by increasing the speed and accuracy of data entry, providing more efficient service to Albertans.

Electronic communications in workplace pension plans

In June 2020, Alberta's government amended the Employment Pensions Plan Regulation to clarify that any record that is required or permitted under the *Employment Pension Plans Act* can be provided in an electronic format.

The flexibility introduced through this amendment impacts more than 600 active pension plans registered in Alberta and could apply to more than 570,000 members that participate in those plans. The use of electronic records and communications is expected to have tangible benefits in the administration of a workplace pension plan. For example, annual member statements can be emailed directly to active and retired pension plan members, rather than being sent by regular mail.

Not only could this amendment result in a reduction of postage costs, but it's more reflective of the active lifestyles of Albertans who may be able to more readily access information online from anywhere in the world, rather than waiting for a paper statement to be delivered to a home mailing address.

Electronic signatures

In order to reduce the necessity for taxpayers and tax preparers to meet in person, Treasury Board and Finance is now recognizing electronic signatures for all prescribed tax forms.

This supports increased ease of electronic interaction and reduces the need to send paper copies of prescribed forms to Treasury Board and Finance.

Enabled the use of Debit Visa and Debit MasterCard to pay for campsite registrations

Alberta Environment and Parks enabled the use of Debit Visa and Debit MasterCard to pay for campsite reservations online and by phone. This provides an additional payment method for individuals without a credit card, allowing more people to be able to book campsites. Previously, a credit card was required to reserve a campsite online or by phone. This change came into effect on February 20, 2020.

Enhancing access to supports and services

Community and Social Services is developing a number of mechanisms to enhance access to supports and services. During the fiscal year, the ministry began testing the use of video conferencing to enable Albertans to meet remotely with Alberta Supports and program staff when a face-to-face interaction is required.

Virtual access minimizes the need for Albertans to travel, reduces barriers and improves access to supports and services. Alberta Supports helps Albertans across the province access a wide range of government social programs and services on behalf of Community and Social Services, Seniors and Housing, Justice and Solicitor General, Advanced Education, Children's Services, Labour and Immigration, and Health.

E-transfers for community initiatives program

The Community Initiatives Program Project-Based grant stream was set up as part of the COVID-19 emergency response phase to support economic recovery and build social connections. E-transfers were set up for Community Grant Programs in 2019-20 to allow community-based organizations to receive their funding within a week, down from an average wait of 100 days when funds were received by cheque through the mail.

Subsequent intakes of this grant program will be able to continue to benefit from this faster receipt of much needed funds.

Occupational health and safety and employment standards portals project

Labour and Immigration continues to improve its efficiency by providing an online mechanism for stakeholders to effectively communicate with department staff.

The “Portals Project” produced eight new online portals to allow Albertans and job creators to submit applications or report situations related to legislative requirements on Employment Standards (ES) and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS).

The online systems help streamline application and reports by:

- Storing user data to reduce the required fields.
- Combining similar or related forms into one.
- Automatically pre-screening to make sure the form the applicant is submitting matches their need, and
- referring users to other agencies when necessary.

The project has made government more efficient by automatically transferring data into the compliance management system, reducing the time spent on manual data entry by government employees. Staff have saved on average 360 hours of administrative time per portal per year. By enhancing the public's access to OHS and ES services, department staff can spend more time on front-line services for Albertans.

Online document submissions for streamlined applications

Alberta's government has made it easier for seniors to access benefit programs. The Seniors Financial Assistance Online Services can now be accessed using a verified MyAlberta Digital ID for document submission and online loan repayments. Senior Financial Assistance programs are more accessible by enabling additional ways to submit applications, claims and supporting documents. As of November 1, 2019, a new online tool has allowed seniors to safely and securely upload scanned documents, such as application forms, banking information and other documents relevant to obtaining financial assistance. Previously, these documents had to be mailed, faxed or dropped off in person. Moving the process online also frees up resources for organizations that serve seniors. For the 2019-20 fiscal year, 7,500 documents were uploaded through the online uploader.

We're very excited about this improvement – it's been a long time coming. We're happy to see this reduction of red tape in our sector. The ability to submit documents in an electronic format will dramatically impact senior wait times for reimbursement and decrease the time and efforts of staff submitting claims on their behalf.

Lynn Smid, Director, Family and Community Support Services, Town of St. Paul.

Online emergency payments

The Provincial Emergency Social Services program adopted the use of online emergency payments, instead of issuing debit cards, to get funds to evacuees quicker. This enables evacuees to apply online and receive one-time emergency funding via e-transfer to assist with costs associated with being away from their primary home due to an evacuation order during a disaster.

This was put to use in May 2019, when more than 11,000 residents were evacuated under a mandatory order due to wildfires in northwest Alberta. Evacuees were able to apply online for emergency assistance using their MyAlberta Digital ID, which ensured emergency funding could be received within 24 hours by e-transfer or pre-loaded debit cards. Approximately \$21.6 million went to evacuees to cover short-term financial needs during the northwest Alberta wildfires evacuation.

Online loan repayment

By partnering with financial institutions, Alberta's government enabled online loan repayments for the Seniors Home Adaptation and Repair Program (SHARP) and the Seniors Property Tax Deferral Program (SPTDP) in November 2019. Before this change, the only method of repaying a loan was by cheque. For the 2019-20 fiscal year, 250 loan repayments (partial or full) were made through the online banking tool for SHARP and SPTDP.

Providing online loan repayments is more convenient, less costly and faster for Albertans, compared to writing and mailing a cheque.

Improving access to financial benefits and loan repayment is an important step towards reducing the barriers that seniors experience when navigating systems and supports. As technology adoption rates for older adults increase, improved online service delivery helps to ensure that seniors access services efficiently, freeing up resources to support seniors who require hands-on support applying for benefits. We look forward to continued work with government to ensure that older Albertans can efficiently and effectively access the supports they need, when they need them.

Karen McDonald, Executive Director, Sage Seniors Association

Case Connect

Case Connect is a mobile application that enables child intervention workers to work remotely, and is part of a larger initiative to move to paperless workflows. No other jurisdiction in Canada has implemented a mobile system for this purpose. It streamlines work by reducing data entry and duplication, as well as enhancing information accessibility through storage of electronic records.

Using Case Connect allows caseworkers to spend more time providing direct service delivery to families. By making it easier for caseworkers to complete their work, Case Connect offers the potential for reduced overtime, stress and sick days across the workforce.

Additional benefits of Case Connect include a reduced likelihood of information/privacy breaches, as well as improved overall service delivery allowing the government to be more efficient, ultimately saving taxpayer dollars.

Sub-division and designated industrial property appeals

The Municipal Government Board established an alternative process to help lower the volume of costly sub-division and designated industrial property appeal hearings. A formal pre-hearing telephone conference is a quicker, more cost-effective and less intimidating process that often eliminates the need to conduct a hearing.

Reducing costs and saving time for Albertans and non-profits

Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) improvements

A number of changes have been made to how AISH is administered to make the program more fair, efficient and transparent.

- AISH recipients who are seeking Legal Aid coverage are immediately qualified without having to fill out financial eligibility forms. This reduces burden on applicants with disabilities and mental health challenges having to produce income statements to prove eligibility.
- AISH recipients are now automatically enrolled into Seniors Financial Assistance (SFA) programs, including Alberta Seniors Benefit Program, upon turning 65 years old. This streamlined process ensures a seamless transition between programs for Albertans while reducing workloads on front-end staff. The change eliminates the application process so AISH recipients do not have to provide the same information to different Government of Alberta programs. It also helps reduce the burden on caregivers, AISH recipients and senior-serving organizations, and ensures uninterrupted provincial benefits for AISH clients as they transition to seniors programs. Since this change was implemented, more than 1,500 seniors transitioning from AISH have benefited. There are 64,000 AISH recipients and 44 per cent are age 50 or older, and they will benefit by the time saved through auto-enrolment to SFA programs when they turn 65 years of age.

Additionally, Community and Social Services streamlined and simplified processes for accepting and processing AISH applications, and informing applicants about the status of their eligibility. This includes simplifying the application process, improving efficiency and reducing administrative burden.

Ground Ambulance Regulations

The amended Ground Ambulance Regulations help to ensure that rural Albertans have timely and appropriate access to emergency medical services. Regulations have been updated to reflect current and emerging best practices in the delivery of patient-centered emergency medical services. In addition to physicians, other regulated health professionals, such as nurse practitioners and specialized physicians, will be able to provide real-time medical advice to paramedics. Also, more types of vehicles are now allowed for patient care and transport, so that ambulances are available when they're really needed.

Licensed Practical Nurses Profession Regulation

Regulatory amendments have expanded the scope of practice for Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) in five key areas, including administering blood or blood products. This change is part of our promise to strengthen the health system, create efficiencies, and deliver better results for Albertans. When LPNs work to their full scope of practice, they will provide timely, high quality care to Albertans, giving doctors or registered nurses time to focus on other, more complex patients.

Municipal Disaster Recovery Program application process

Municipal Affairs upgraded its Municipal Disaster Recovery Program application form to collect more information up-front, allowing eligible municipalities to receive funding more quickly.

In previous years, municipalities applied for disaster financial assistance using a limited form that required staff to obtain additional information from communities through numerous discussions before funding could be disbursed.

We're grateful to the Government of Alberta for providing us with Municipal Disaster Recovery Program funding after our recent flooding disaster. This funding will be put to good to use, bringing our infrastructure back to the standard of excellence and safety that our residents expect. Lac La Biche County appreciated the chance to work with a variety of helpful and friendly Municipal Affairs staff, who endeavoured to make the process as simple and easy to understand as possible. We're pleased to see progress being continually made in reducing red tape in government administration.

Mayor Omer Moghrabi, Lac La Biche County

Municipal grant program streamlining

Municipal Affairs implemented changes to several municipal grant programs to simplify administrative procedures and reduce processing times for both municipalities and departmental staff.

This included eliminating the Municipal Sustainability Initiative operating spending plan application form, as well as creating a single application for the Provincial Education Requisition Credit and Designated Industrial Requisition Credit programs. Additionally, designated industrial property requisitions of less than \$1,000 are no longer required to be submitted to the province, saving time and costs associated with administering low value requisitions.

AUMA looks forward to continuing to work with Municipal Affairs to highlight red tape reduction possibilities and the many red tape reduction initiatives municipalities have been diligently implementing for the benefit of their residents and businesses.

Jeff Henwood, Director of Government Relations, Alberta Urban Municipalities Association

Managing grant applications requires a great deal of time and capacity for municipalities. RMA is pleased that Alberta Municipal Affairs has identified grant applications as an area for red tape reduction, and is prioritizing the need to keep provincial funding flowing to municipalities for critical capital projects through streamlines application processes. In particular, and somewhat unique to Alberta, allowing federal stimulus funding to flow through directly to municipalities has enabled them to continue to provide services and invest in infrastructure needed to support our economy. RMA looks forward to continuing to work with Alberta Municipal Affairs to further reduce red tape in the grant application and distribution process.

Al Kemmere, President, Rural Municipalities of Alberta

MyAlberta emergency isolation support system

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Service Alberta developed the MyAlberta Emergency Isolation Support system in just eight days. The system launched on March 25, 2020, and by the close of the program on April 6, 2020, more than \$107 million was distributed to more than 94,000 Albertans. The system offered a fully digital experience, providing a fast, secure and cost-effective way to disburse emergency funds to eligible Albertans, without requiring that they leave their homes to apply for or obtain funds.

Online birth registry

This new online birth registration portal saves time and money by eliminating the need to visit a registry in person to order a birth certificate.

Cutting red tape to enable parents the flexibility to register their child's birth easily online wherever they are is just the beginning of our movement from worst to first in the delivery of online services for Albertans. I only wish my wife and I had this option when we welcomed our son into the world last year.

Nate Glubish, Minister of Service Alberta

Nursing Homes Regulations

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Alberta's government expanded the authority of nurse practitioners (NPs) and other regulated health professionals to expand the care provided to nursing home residents. Operators indicated the temporary changes were making a difference during COVID-19. Given this feedback, government took immediate action and made these changes permanent to ensure residents have quick access to the care they need beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

Amendments to the Nursing Homes Operation and General Regulations enabled NPs to act as primary care providers in nursing homes, admitting and assessing residents, as well as offering follow-up care. Nursing home residents can now receive prescriptions for Schedule 1 drugs and orders for common diagnostic tests, like X-rays, ultrasounds and CT scans, directly from NPs and other qualified health professionals, according to their scopes of practice and at the discretion of the nursing home operator.

Alberta NPs now have the broadest and most independent scope of practice in Canada and government supports their role as primary care providers in our health system. The amendments reduced red tape and duplication for health professionals, service providers and operators, while also improving nursing home residents' access to primary care. These changes are part of our commitment to make life better for all Albertans, especially seniors and our most vulnerable.

Owner-builder authorizations

Albertans building homes and who applied for owner builder authorizations (OBAs) were facing onerous up-front requirements that created long turnaround times and delays in construction. Specifically, applicants for OBAs were rigorously screened and investigated, requiring numerous calls and interviews with government staff. In most instances, the applicants were approved with no significant issues determined in the screening process.

To address this situation, government eliminated unnecessary and redundant steps of the OBA process and streamlined procedures to allow the review and approval of straightforward applications through a simplified process.

Processing time for OBAs was reduced from 17 days to 11 days. As a result, Albertans building their own homes will be able to begin construction sooner.

Regional services commissions streamlining approvals

Regional services commissions (RSCs) are entities set up by two or more municipalities, First Nations, Métis Settlements or armed forces bases that provide services on a regional basis to clients within the members' boundaries. As part of the government's efforts to reduce red tape, amendments to Part 15.1 of the *Municipal Government Act* reduce the required amount of provincial approvals for RSCs. The changes ensure RSCs are accountable to their member municipal authorities and will operate in a more streamlined manner.

The changes were developed after RSCs, municipalities and municipal associations voiced concerns regarding the timeliness and inefficiencies of the current RSC legislative framework.

To address those inefficiencies, the amendment transitioned RSCs outside of regulation. This eliminated 80 regulations and over 608 regulatory requirements. The operations of Alberta's 75 existing RSCs will continue with minimal impact and, going forward, will govern the services they provide without the need for additional provincial approvals.

Residential Access Modification Program (RAMP) paperwork revision project

Community and Social Services revised RAMP paperwork in 2019-20. Forms, letters and templates were revised to reduce unnecessary time and resources spent by Albertans and RAMP staff. The ministry developed technology and enhanced internal systems to align workflows and enable reporting capabilities.

Simplified reporting for housing management bodies (HMBs)

On January 22, 2020, Seniors and Housing announced the ministry will reduce time consuming administrative tasks required of HMBs. As a result, housing providers can focus more resources on directly serving their clients. Several processes were simplified regarding required submissions, burdensome operational reviews and redundant business planning requirements. The following changes were made for HMB reporting:

- Move from three to five-year cycle for HMB operational reviews.
- Move from quarterly to semi annual reporting for client profile data.
- Fewer reporting requirements in years two and three of HMB three-year business plans.

Housing providers indicated reporting requirements were an administrative burden. By streamlining processes, time spent completing lengthy reports, business plans and audits can now be better spent assisting Albertans in need of affordable housing.

Simplified reporting for HMBs was suggested in a public submission to the cutredtape.alberta.ca website, and also identified as an issue from housing providers. These changes align with the Government of Alberta's commitment to make the affordable housing system more efficient and effective for applicants, tenants and housing providers.

.....

Less time spent on paperwork means we'll have more time to spend with our seniors – listening to them and ensuring we're meeting their housing needs.

.....

We support reductions in red tape, because this will help us further our mission to positively influence seniors' quality of life. Less time spent on paperwork means we'll have more time to spend with our seniors – listening to them and ensuring we're meeting their housing needs.

Raymond Swonek, CEO, GEF Seniors Housing

Streamlining processes for the Adult Guardianship and Trusteeship Regulation

The process of assuming the role of a guardian or trustee, or asking the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee (OPGT) to take on the role, is time consuming and complex due to forms that need to be reviewed by the Court of Queen's Bench. Lawyers are often engaged to complete these forms on behalf of an Albertan. Each year, there are hundreds of applications submitted to the courts for an order. Preparing these forms is costly– legal fees are approximately \$2,000 to \$5,000, depending on the complexity of the estate of the person(s) involved. Having fewer forms will reduce this administrative burden and legal costs. OPGT is currently submitting changes to the regulations, to make the language more clear and simplify wording. When approved, these new forms will help Albertans understand the nature of the questions being asked, resulting in fewer errors when they submit the forms to court. Fewer errors means more timely court orders for Albertans who need a guardian or trustee.

Wage top-up and professional development funding

Children's Services conducted a comprehensive review of the voluntary Child Care Accreditation program and funding process to look at how to increase efficiencies, and at ways for child care programs to access government funding that supports a trained and qualified workforce. The accreditation program created duplicative and redundant requirements already in place under the *Child Care Licensing Act* and excessive paperwork to access funding.

The Alberta government kept the key elements of the accreditation program, wage top-ups, and professional development funding to continue supporting a high-quality workforce. This resulted in 2,200 child care programs and more than 18,000 staff having equal access to wage top-ups and professional development funding. On average, these changes save more than \$3 million in administrative costs relating to the accreditation process.

These savings have been reinvested into wage top-ups and professional development to support all early childhood educators who work directly with children. The elimination of barriers in the program has led to an 8 per cent reduction in regulatory requirements and allows child care providers to spend more time with children and families, improving overall service delivery.

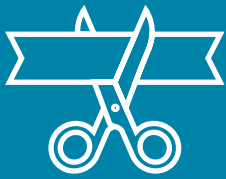
To ensure the quality of child care is maintained at a high standard, the ministry is conducting a legislative review, informed by a public consultation process, to embed principles of quality and safety directly into the legislation so they are requirements, not optional standards.

In our first year we've made great strides towards becoming the freest, fastest moving economy in North America...but we're not done yet.

No one likes red tape and so it is critical for us to double our efforts to get out of the way of our job creators and every Albertan.

Grant Hunter, Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction





Red Tape Reduction Annual Report 2020-2021

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“We committed to cutting red tape by one-third, and thanks to the ideas and advice of Albertans, we are more than halfway to reaching that goal. With more than \$1.2 billion saved already, we’re saving Albertans and their businesses time and money while driving Alberta’s economic recovery.”

Honourable Tanya Fir

Message from the Associate Minister



I am pleased to present the Red Tape Reduction Annual Report, which highlights the progress made towards removing unnecessary regulatory burden across government.

Removing needless red tape saves time, money and resources while still protecting the environment, keeping Albertans safe and healthy, and upholding fiscal accountability. Our government is committed to make it easier for people to get the government services they need and reduce the regulatory burden on job creators to encourage investment, boost Alberta's competitiveness, and get more Albertans back to work.

To ensure the transparency of the efforts of our government toward these objectives, we passed the *Red Tape Reduction Act* in 2019 that requires public reporting on red tape reduction strategies and initiatives. This report is a direct consequence of that legislation and highlights our progress in meeting the objectives we set out to achieve when we formed government. Regulatory modernization and red tape reduction, along with other initiatives such as the Job Creation Tax Cut, establishes Alberta as one of the most attractive places to do business in North America.

Alberta's government committed to cutting red tape by one-third, and we are more than halfway to reaching that goal. As of July 1, 2021, we have completed hundreds of red tape reduction initiatives and eliminated more than 17 per cent of Alberta's unnecessary regulatory requirements. Our efforts were recognized at the national level by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), which gave Alberta an "A" in its most recent annual report card for government efficiency. This is our highest grade ever. Alberta was also recognized as the most improved province in the country.

Even as we dealt with COVID-19, the downturn of the energy sector and a global economic recession, our government continued to make progress on our plan for jobs, investment and economic recovery. The pandemic reaffirmed the importance of reducing red tape and removing barriers for Albertans. We acted swiftly to introduce virtual doctor visits, allow liquor manufacturers to produce hand sanitizer and made many other legislation changes to keep Albertans safe and support economic recovery. Looking ahead, I will continue to work with industry panels and Albertans to identify regulatory barriers that may be preventing our economic recovery and growth, and intend to bring forward legislative reform that reduces and eliminates unnecessary red tape in the province.

By keeping taxes low, cutting red tape and acting on Alberta's Recovery Plan, the government is reducing needless red tape to further enhance Alberta's competitiveness, which will drive new investment and growth across the economy without compromising safety or environmental protections.

[Original signed by]

Honourable Tanya Fir

Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction
October 29, 2021

Executive Overview

Alberta's many advantages have made it ideal as a place to invest, do business, raise a family and find employment that supports the highest quality of life. The abundance of natural resources that have been a cornerstone of the province's economic success and development continue to underpin much of the province's prosperity. Alberta is taking bold steps to ensure ongoing economic dynamism that builds on its natural advantages while diversifying our economy.

The province has developed world-class education and health systems, offers a comparatively low cost of living, and has two vibrant and dynamic major cities along with a strong rural economy. Initiatives such as the Job Creation Tax Cut have made Alberta one of the most tax competitive jurisdictions in North America.

Alberta's government is committed to eliminating overregulation that imposes an unnecessary burden on Albertans and businesses, and we continue to review new and existing requirements for their necessity and effectiveness. Removing unnecessary regulations that increase the burden on job creators, or make it more difficult for Albertans to access services, plays a key role in protecting Alberta's advantage as a destination for investment, families and jobs.

Government is driven by the principle of "regulate only if we must," which means getting out of the way of our job creators by removing inefficient processes and prescriptive requirements and focusing instead on the outcomes that our requirements intend to achieve. Significant strides have been made in the use of outcome-based and risk-based approaches to regulation to address not simply "what" government regulates but "how" it regulates.

Alberta has also taken the lead in reducing barriers to free trade in Canada. After removing 21 party-specific exceptions to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, Alberta has only six remaining exceptions – the lowest number of any party to the CFTA. We continue to actively encourage the federal government and other provinces and territories to follow Alberta's lead and reduce their party-specific exceptions, creating a more open, transparent and competitive marketplace.

This report highlights some of the key successes in the second reporting year (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021) that have enhanced this competitive advantage and demonstrates our progress towards achieving government's commitment to cut red tape by one-third by the end of fiscal year 2022-23. This year's report also includes a focus on government's collective success in supporting Albertans and Alberta businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, and driving Alberta's economic recovery.

The achievements in this report form a key part of efforts articulated in Alberta's Recovery Plan, released in June 2020, which outlined the strategy to balance targeted government spending on infrastructure with strong incentives for private sector growth. The pandemic, and the resulting economic and social challenges, have only reaffirmed the importance of continuing to reduce red tape to streamline and modernize government service delivery and ensure job creators do not face unnecessary barriers to growth.

Between May 1, 2019 and June 30, 2021, government has reduced a total of 118,676 (or 17.8 per cent) of its regulatory requirements, saving Alberta's job creators and government an estimated \$1.2 billion.

The work of reducing red tape is supported by an industry-driven approach, informed by nine Red Tape Reduction Industry Panels, that includes representation from industry leaders across Alberta's key economic sectors: oil and gas; chemical manufacturing; forestry; tourism and hospitality; agriculture; non-profit; construction; small business; and industrial manufacturing. As of June 2021, 200 of the Panels' collective recommendations to eliminate red tape have been addressed, and we continue rely on their expertise to identify regulatory barriers that may be getting in the way of Alberta's economic growth and recovery.

Of the hundreds of red tape reduction (RTR) initiatives completed between July 2020 and June 2021, this report highlights 30 of the most impactful, representing our ongoing commitment to securing Alberta's future as an economic destination of choice.

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

Progress on Government's Commitments to Red Tape Reduction

Commitment	Status
Pass a <i>Red Tape Reduction Act</i> to measure, report, and reduce the province's regulatory decisions to be made.	The <i>Red Tape Reduction Act</i> was passed by Alberta's Legislative Assembly in June 2019.
Appoint a Minister for Red Tape Reduction to lead the (Red Tape Reduction) Action Plan and meet the one-third reduction target.	In April 2019, government created the Associate Ministry of Red Tape Reduction within Treasury Board and Finance. The Honourable Tanya Fir is the current Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction.
Form industry panels to help the Associate Minister identify unnecessary red tape in every sector of Alberta's economy.	Nine industry panels covering Alberta's key economic sectors were established in 2019, which continue to inform Alberta's red tape reduction efforts.
Implement a "One-In / One-Out" rule requiring ministries to identify at least one offsetting regulation for every new regulation created.	An offset requirement that ensures the regulatory burden does not increase will be implemented once the one-third reduction in red tape is achieved.
Create a Red Tape Challenge Website at StopRedTape.ca to replicate the United Kingdom's successful Red Tape Challenge by crowdsourcing input from businesses, organisations, and the public on which regulations should be improved, kept, or scrapped.	The Alberta government's public-facing web portal is located at www.alberta.ca/cut-red-tape.aspx and allows for direct input from Albertans, businesses and organizations on improvements to the province's existing regulatory approach.
Cut red tape within government to allow the public sector to focus on serving Albertans.	Among the efforts to enhance service delivery, government has delegated approval authority for a number of regulatory changes from Cabinet decisions to Ministerial level. This enables government to act more quickly, providing Albertans with improved access to the services they rely on most.
Move from a process to outcome-based regulatory approach.	Significant progress has been made to remove unnecessary and overly prescriptive regulatory requirements in favour of a focus on the required outcome, such as the implementation of the Digital Regulatory Assurance System for environmental approvals and streamlining child care licensing as part of Child Care Transformation.
Fight for an end to interprovincial barriers to free trade.	Alberta has the lowest number of trade exceptions (six) under the Canadian Free Trade Agreement and is ranked first by the Montreal Economic Institute in the Internal Trade Provincial Leadership Index.
A United Conservative government will cut red tape by one-third to reduce costs, encouraging new and existing businesses to get Albertans back to work.	Since the beginning of this mandate, regulatory requirements across government have been reduced by 17.8 per cent, well on the way to a one-third reduction by 2023, saving Albertans at least \$1.2 billion.



COVID-19 Response

The pandemic created unprecedented challenges for Albertans, particularly business owners, who had to adapt quickly to comply with necessary public health and safety measures to limit the spread of COVID-19. Alberta's government took swift action to protect lives and livelihoods, making government services more accessible, and reducing red tape to support businesses to stay open and operate safely.

Many of the initiatives undertaken by government in response to the pandemic have since been made permanent, decreasing the costs of doing business, speeding up approvals, and providing more options for Albertans to access goods and services safely and more conveniently.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Virtual Meetings

In Spring 2020, during the first State of Public Health Emergency in Alberta due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Alberta suspended the requirements for organizations to hold in person meetings in the interest of public safety. Previously, provincial legislation required organizations such as businesses, non-profits, societies, condominium corporations and cooperatives to meet and vote in person when conducting their regular business.

When the suspension ended in August 2020, many organizations wanted to continue to be able to meet and vote safely and more efficiently without meeting in person, but found their bylaws did not allow it. Alberta's legislation also did not reflect the advent of technology that allows organizations to meet virtually, send electronic meeting notices or conduct votes electronically.

By passing the *Service Alberta Statutes (Virtual Meetings) Amendment Act*, the Government of Alberta modernized its legislation, allowing organizations to conduct these activities remotely using digital technology, if their bylaws do not prohibit it. The changes provide thousands of organizations the flexibility to make their meeting bylaws work best for their membership.

MyHealth Records

In response to the pandemic, the Government of Alberta expanded the availability of health services through MyHealth Records, the online portal that allows Albertans to safely and securely access their health records without having to request their information from multiple health care providers. This included providing immediate access to COVID-19 lab test results for adults and parents/guardians of minors tested for COVID-19, and extending the timeline for verifying their account from 10 days to 30 days.

Government also added virtual care services, allowing patients and health care providers to safely connect online through secure messaging and video visits, while improving access to health care services for Albertans in rural and remote communities.

Municipal Stimulus Program

As part of Alberta's Recovery Plan, the Alberta government announced the Municipal Stimulus Program (MSP) in June 2020 to deliver \$500 million in infrastructure capital to municipal governments and Metis Settlements to contribute to local economic growth and recovery. The MSP boosts municipal infrastructure funding by almost 30 per cent, creating an estimated 2,500 jobs in 2020 and 2021. Municipalities must use the funding for roads, bridges, water and wastewater systems, public transit or recreation projects.

As a condition of receiving funding, municipalities are required to report to the Minister of Municipal Affairs on their progress in reducing red tape to make it easier to start a new business, streamline processes for permit approvals, and attract new investment and/or tourism.

In September 2021, Municipal Affairs released the [2020 Municipal Red Tape Reduction Report](#), which outlines municipal actions to reduce red tape and encourage private sector investment in their communities. The report highlights multiple examples of high-impact RTR efforts undertaken by Alberta municipalities in 2020, such as the City of Leduc's software changes that now allow the municipality to review development and building permits at the same time, or the 50 per cent reduction in business license fees by the City of Edmonton. Other key successes included streamlining business licensing processes, making application forms and payments available online, and eliminating redundant municipal requirements.

It is expected that municipalities will continue to pursue activities that encourage local investment, boost their competitiveness, and get more Albertans back to work in their communities.

"Alberta's Municipal Stimulus Program (MSP) created new opportunities for communities to invest in infrastructure projects like bridges, water systems and public transit while creating employment and economic activity during the COVID-19 disruption. Alberta municipalities are leaders in red tape reduction, allowing businesses to create economic growth and those same municipalities look forward to sharing and partnering with the provincial government to remove unnecessary barriers for businesses to thrive across our province."

Angela Duncan, AUMA Interim President

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Modernizing Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Regulations

Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis (AGLC) continues to make significant progress in reducing red tape for businesses, charitable organizations and Albertans.

In late 2020, in response to the necessary public health restrictions, AGLC made changes to existing liquor policies to allow:

- restaurants and bars to sell liquor and mixed drinks with takeout and delivery orders;
- retail liquor stores to host virtual tastings; and
- liquor manufacturers to offer complimentary sealed liquor samples for consumption at home.

These changes supported more than 5,300 bars and restaurants and over 1,500 liquor stores by providing opportunities for additional sources of revenue, helping more of them to stay in business during the pandemic and keep Albertans employed.

In January, Alberta received the CFIB's Golden Scissors award for expanding revenue and consumer choice opportunities by changing existing rules to allow alcohol to be sold for take-out and delivery and expanding outdoor patio spaces.

In addition, AGLC amended their gaming policies to allow licensed charities— such as food banks, community leagues and charitable sporting groups— to sell raffle tickets online, helping these organizations to reach a larger audience and increase proceeds. AGLC also launched PlayAlberta.ca, the only provincially-regulated online gaming website offered in Alberta, allowing money otherwise spent on illegal offshore gaming websites to be kept in the province and used for the benefit of Albertans either through government programs or the services provided by the non-profit sector.



Associate Minister Tanya Fir (left), MLA Nathan Neudorf (centre) and Minister Adriana LaGrange (right) join the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce.



Economic Recovery

Alberta's government continues to deliver on its promise to cut red tape and make it as easy as possible for businesses to form, operate, create jobs and drive Alberta's economy forward. At the beginning of 2020, Alberta faced the start of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the deepest global economic contraction since the Great Depression and an unprecedented collapse in oil prices. While the effects of the pandemic have created unprecedented challenges for businesses, Alberta has continued to reduce red tape to remove unnecessary burden and make life easier for job creators and Albertans.

The Government of Alberta's actions to reduce red tape are helping to create a globally competitive business environment and attract investment in Alberta's core industries and emerging sectors, which is key to our economic recovery. In June 2020, government released Alberta's Recovery Plan, which outlined sector strategies for growth in key economic sectors while doubling down on the government's commitment to reduce red tape, making Alberta one of the best places in the world to invest and do business. Reducing red tape also supports economic recovery through direct cost savings to industry that will stimulate investment and create new private sector jobs for Albertans.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Energy Sector Initiatives

The energy sector remains vitally important to Alberta and to the country, which is why government has taken action to remove red tape as part of Alberta's Recovery Plan. Reducing red tape in the energy sector allows companies in Alberta's largest economic sector to spend more time and money growing their businesses and creating jobs, making Alberta a destination of choice for investment.

Alberta has made aggressive efforts to eliminate burdensome regulations facing the energy sector to get Alberta's economy moving, leading to nearly \$1 billion in anticipated cost savings in the energy industry by 2022-23, including nearly \$713 million in savings identified in 2020-21 and \$273 million identified in 2019-20. This has been achieved without compromising environmental protections or safety measures within the industry.

In response to recommendations of the Oil and Gas Industry Panel to expedite the clean up of abandoned oil and gas wells, the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) made changes to Directive 020: Well Abandonment to allow lower-risk oil and gas wells developed together to be abandoned together, if there is no risk to the public or the environment. This will shrink the inventory of inactive and orphaned wells, while ensuring more timely restoration of land to its original state, and prevent backlogs in site clean up.

This change is estimated to save upwards of \$584 million for industry by shifting to an outcome-based approach that is more efficient, and reduces the number of wells that need to be abandoned separately, while ensuring that robust health and safety protections remain in place.

As reported in the 2019-2020 Red Tape Reduction Annual Report, the Alberta Energy Regulator also updated the directive for Water Disposal Limits and Reporting Requirements for Thermal In Situ Oil Sands Schemes, which could yield collective costs savings of up to \$273 million for existing projects according to an estimate from the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP).

A number of other initiatives have reduced regulatory burden and improved regulatory certainty for the energy industry, while supporting an outcome-based approach, including:

- Simplifying processes for oil sands lease holders by reducing the requirements for renewing or converting their leases, and removing an unnecessary step in new oil sands approvals. These changes will save companies time and resources, and reduce land disturbance.
- Streamlining requirements for the oil and gas industry's venting and flaring, which removed obsolete and duplicate requirements. This change results in less administrative burden for industry in its reporting to government.
- Creating a royalty rate for helium, allowing Alberta to become more competitive in attracting helium producers to the province.
- Lowering the deposit amount new electricity retailers need to pay, reducing the barrier to entry to the retail electricity market and paving the way for greater consumer choice and competition.

"The Alberta energy sector is the most important industry in the country. It employs hundreds of thousands of workers that develop the cleanest energy anywhere in the world. The Alberta Government's focus on red tape reduction is critical for the industry's ability to create jobs and attract capital. By making approval processes for projects more efficient, energy service contractors can hire more Albertans while operating under a strong regulatory system the public can trust. As the global demand for energy increases, Alberta is well positioned to be the world's choice for responsible energy resources."

Mark A. Scholz,
President & CEO, Canadian Association of Energy Contractors

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Water Conservation Policy for Upstream Oil and Gas

In response to recommendations from the Oil and Gas Industry Panel to address the significant increase in water use demand for oil and gas operators, the Government of Alberta implemented a new Water Conservation Policy for Upstream Oil and Gas Operations that provides direction for water use in major upstream oil and gas operations. The new policy encourages the energy industry to minimize the use of fresh water while promoting the increased use of alternative sources such as saline water, wastewater and deeper groundwater. This preserves fresh water resources and provides operators with more options for water sources used for hydraulic fracturing.

Ultimately, the new policy enables greater flexibility for operators to collaborate and share water infrastructure, leading to reduced duplication of infrastructure between operators and decreasing truck traffic through communities. This not only saves operators money that can be re-invested into other activities that support economic growth, but it reduces the environmental impact and disturbance footprint for hydraulic fracturing operations. The energy sector is the largest sector in Alberta's economy, and common sense changes like these support economic recovery by giving job creators more flexibility to operate in ways that are more efficient and environmentally sustainable.



Tristan Goodman, Explorers and Producers Association of Canada (left), Associate Minister Tanya Fir (center) and Tim McMillan, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (right) pose for a photo after participating in the Oil and Gas Industry panel meeting.

Canadian Agricultural Partnership Modernization

To support economic recovery in the agriculture sector, Alberta's government streamlined the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) grant programs and processes. Decreasing the number of programs, required forms and supporting documentation from applicants and introducing service standards to reduce application processing times will make it easier and faster for producers and food manufacturers to access funds, and enable businesses to more easily create jobs and inject money into the provincial economy.

In Alberta, the CAP represents a federal-provincial investment of \$406 million in strategic programs and initiatives for the agricultural sector. In 2020-21, the program awarded 989 grants that helped stimulate a total private sector investment of \$150 million and supported the creation of more than 750 jobs in the agriculture and agri-food processing sector.

Meat Inspection

Government amended the Meat Inspection Regulation, which outlines required operational and inspection procedures for meat facilities, to allow Alberta's livestock producers to sell an animal directly from the farm to consumers and have it slaughtered on-site for personal consumption. Additionally, provincially licensed meat facilities can now salvage and sell meat by-products for other uses such as pet food. Removing these unnecessary prohibitions against direct sales supports livestock producers by providing increased access to new markets, enhanced sale opportunities, and cost-savings—while maintaining food safety and offering consumers more choice and access to local meat.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Reducing Regulatory Burden for Job Creators

In order to support economic recovery, the Government of Alberta has reformed occupational health and safety legislation to enable innovation and competitiveness, while removing overly prescriptive requirements for businesses.

The *Ensuring Safety and Cutting Red Tape Act, 2020* amended the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* to simplify language and remove unnecessary barriers for job creators without reducing workers' safety, rights or protections. This included providing flexible requirements for health and safety committees and representatives, allowing employers to tailor the committees in ways that better fit their worksites.

The *Ensuring Safety and Cutting Red Tape Act, 2020* also reversed costly changes made to the workers' compensation system in 2018 to ensure the long-term viability of the program. Approximately \$2.25 million per year will be saved by employers in the workers' compensation system by transitioning fairness reviews, appeals advisory services and medical panels from the Fair Practices Office and Medical Panels Office to other organizations, such as the Appeals Commission for Alberta Workers' Compensation.

Streamlining Condominium Development

To support economic recovery in the construction and housing sectors and encourage new condominium development, in December 2020 the Alberta government amended the *New Home Buyer Protection Act* to remove the requirement for builders to complete a Building Assessment Report (BAR) for newly constructed condominiums.

BARs provided little value to condominium boards and owners, as they duplicated requirements already addressed by the *Safety Codes Act* and the *Condominium Properties Act*. Eliminating these reports will save Alberta builders and homebuyers \$2.7 million per year in costs associated with duplicate reporting on condominium development and construction. These savings also support new development by reducing overall construction costs for developers, which in turn lowers costs to new condo buyers. Removing the need to complete this report for new condominiums does not change the building's warranty coverage and high safety standards are still ensured through permits, inspections and safety codes.

Municipal Government Act

In December 2020, the Government of Alberta amended the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) as part of the *Red Tape Reduction Implementation Act, 2020 (No. 2)* to make it easier for residential developers to move their projects forward, stimulating investment and job creation in the construction industry.

These changes created the ability for the Minister of Municipal Affairs to set firm timelines for subdivision and development in larger municipalities, where appropriate and necessary, to prevent delays and ensure residential construction projects are completed on time. The changes also removed the ability of municipalities to take additional reserve land beyond the standard amount, creating greater certainty for developers. Additionally, the amendments improve transparency by requiring municipalities to publish the information used in the calculation of off-site levies (fees paid by developers to help cover the cost of necessary infrastructure outside the project site).

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Commercial Carrier Permit Reductions

On January 1, 2021 Alberta Transportation updated the Commercial Vehicle Dimension and Weight Regulation, which specifies the legal size, weight and configuration limits for commercial vehicles on Alberta roads.

By modernizing the regulation to eliminate unnecessary and outdated carrier permits and requirements, and reflect modern vehicle configurations and equipment, commercial drivers in Alberta no longer have to obtain permits for equipment that is typically allowed in most other jurisdictions.

These changes, recommended by both the Forestry and the Agriculture, Food, and Bio-Industrial Industry Panels eliminated roughly 10,000 unnecessary permits required each year, making it easier to do business in Alberta. These changes also support economic recovery by saving administrative time and approximately \$336,000 annually, while ensuring the continued safe and efficient movement of goods across the province, helping to drive economic growth for both the transportation and commercial industries.

Historical Resource Impact Assessments

To speed up project approvals while continuing to protect Alberta's valuable historic resources, the Government of Alberta established a new Historic Resources Impact Assessment (HRIA) process. All major industrial projects in Alberta—from construction to oil sands operations—are required to complete an HRIA prior to development to ensure the protection of archaeological sites, paleontological sites, historic buildings, and Indigenous traditional use sites.

After extensive engagement with industry stakeholders and the Oil and Gas Industry Panel, government implemented the streamlined HRIA approval process that employs an outcome-based approach, which provides a comprehensive overview of historic resource concerns for large projects all at once. The previous process required developers of industrial projects to submit separate HRIA approval applications for every individual component within a large project. The new approach achieves the outcomes of protecting historical resources without requiring redundant approvals, allowing developers to start construction sooner and get Albertans back to work.



Associate Minister Tanya Fir shares some of the work being done by Alberta's government to cut red tape at a Leduc, Nisku and Wetaskiwin Regional Chamber of Commerce event.

Alberta Innovates – Enterprise Grant Management System

The Government of Alberta is accelerating research, innovation and entrepreneurship to help drive economic recovery and diversification in Alberta. Alberta Innovates plays a key part in achieving these objectives by providing funding, advice, connections, technical expertise and applied research services to stimulate and grow research and innovation across Alberta. In 2020-21, Alberta Innovates standardized its applications forms to make them more user-friendly by simplifying and eliminating non-essential questions, and allowing this suite of standardized application questions to be used across Alberta Innovates programs. This work was undertaken in conjunction with the implementation of an enterprise grants management system, which includes an application and reporting portal that improves the user-friendliness and transparency of the grant process for Alberta Innovates clients.

Taken together, these changes have cut the administrative burden for the innovation sector, enabling easier access to \$150 million in annual funding, while allowing Alberta entrepreneurs and researchers to spend less time on paperwork and more time on developing innovative solutions that can drive economic growth and recovery.



Improved Service Delivery

Alberta's world-class education and health systems, strong communities and high quality public services, coupled with the comparatively low cost of living, make the province an ideal place to invest and to raise a family. The Government of Alberta continues to reduce red tape to improve service delivery that supports Albertans in their daily lives by reducing regulatory and administrative burdens faced when trying to access government services.

While responding to the immediate challenges presented by the pandemic, government also continued to enhance frontline service delivery and access for Alberta's most vulnerable. Government took action to reduce reporting requirements for service providers, allowing them to spend more time serving Albertans; streamline rules to make services such as child care and adoption easier to navigate; and remove barriers for Indigenous Albertans to access their Treaty rights.

IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY

Licence Plate Stickers

Alberta has modernized the delivery of vehicle registry services by eliminating the use of licence plate stickers that mark the month and year of vehicle registration. In place of these redundant and outdated expiry stickers, in Fall 2021 Alberta will transition to high-definition reflective licence plates that are more easily scanned by automated licence plate readers, assisting law enforcement agencies using this technology to validate licence plate registration at roadside.

The move to reflective licence plates will save government about \$1.2 million per year in costs previously spent on printing, shipping and storing expiry stickers for the more than 5.5 million vehicles registered in Alberta. This common-sense change cuts red tape, aligns Alberta with other Canadian provinces, and saves taxpayers money.

Christmas Trees

In November 2020, Alberta's government removed the \$5 fee for harvesting up to three Christmas trees from Crown land for personal use. Eliminating the fee saves Albertans almost \$100,000 and make it easier for individuals to get their own Christmas trees and firewood from Alberta's 87 million acres of forested land.

In order to harvest wood for personal use from Crown land, Albertans must obtain a Personal Use Forest Products Permit. Permits can be obtained online, and ensure preservation of our forests for generations to come by keeping track of the number of trees being harvested, outlining rules to be followed and ensuring that public harvesting is done safely.

Streamlined Processes for Service Providers

To improve service delivery for vulnerable Albertans, the Alberta government streamlined contracts, grants and reporting requirements for service providers across social service ministries, such as Children's Services and Community and Social Services. These changes enable service providers to focus more effort on providing high quality services to clients rather than filling out redundant forms, applications, and reports, a key theme from the Non-Profit Industry Panel.

For example, the Government of Alberta has saved time for service providers by moving from one-year to multi-year contracts and grants for Child Advocacy Centres, organizations that provide services for Persons with Developmental Disabilities, and organizations that provide support for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Government has also reduced reporting requirements for women's shelters, sexual assault centres, and Family and Community Support Services. These organizations can now focus on providing services rather than spending time on lengthy applications and reports.

The Government of Alberta also introduced five-year funding agreements for the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women (IAAW) to provide stable core funding, resulting in less administrative burden and increased capacity for the IAAW to deliver programs and services for Indigenous women.

IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY

Child Care Transformation

The new *Early Learning and Child Care Act* and associated regulation came into force on February 1, 2021, addressing the need to update outdated regulations governing child care operators. The new legislative and regulatory framework reduces administrative burden on child care business owners, operators and staff by simplifying reporting and other requirements, while creating a more flexible approach to child care programs. Key changes include reducing paperwork required for licensing, giving licensed programs more flexibility to provide care to children of different ages, allowing more flexible staff to child ratios, providing increased access to outdoor spaces, and supporting digital record keeping.

These changes allow for an increase in the amount of time operators are able to spend supporting children and increasing access to affordable, high-quality child care, while enabling more parents to be able to re-enter the workforce and continue to support their families.

Adoptions

The Government of Alberta amended legislation and associated regulations to improve access to adoption information for adult adoptees, birth parents and siblings, increase accountability for adoption agencies, and make the adoption process easier for families.

On January 1, 2021, amendments to the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* came into effect that allow for more open, consistent and transparent access to adoption information that allows families to connect and understand their family histories. This includes allowing the release of additional identifying biological background information to adult adoptees and their birth siblings, removing restrictions that made it difficult for Albertans to connect with their biological relatives if they so choose. Amendments also improve the disclosure of serious hereditary medical conditions, ensuring adopted persons have family medical information that could be lifesaving.

Amendments to the Adoption Regulation allow a licensed adoption agency to advertise profiles of prospective adoptive parents to birth families online, while protecting privacy of all parties. These changes give prospective parents a new way to share information with birth families, protect privacy, and ensure Albertans have the information they need to make the best choice for them as they navigate the adoption process.

“Both prospective adoptive parents and birth parents need to know they are in safe hands with the adoption agency they choose to represent them. These changes will help make sure Albertans have the information they need to make the best choice for them.”

Sheryl Proulx, Executive Director, Adoption Options

Elimination of the Alberta Indian Tax Exemption (AITE) Card

After engaging with First Nations leaders, government has discontinued the Alberta Indian Tax Exemption (AITE) card effective October 4, 2021. Alberta joins the other provinces in requiring only the federal Certificate of Indian Status card as identification to receive applicable tax exemptions on purchases of tobacco, fuel and accommodations on-reserve.

This responds to concerns from First Nations communities around the duplication and red tape for Indigenous peoples associated with having to apply for, and maintain, both a federal and provincial card and removes an extra layer of bureaucracy for over 100,000 Indigenous people in Alberta with Indian status, while providing improved access to Treaty rights.

“We are grateful to Minister Wilson and the Alberta government for eliminating the AITE card. We felt the old card was discriminatory and we are thankful to have an ally in the province. This upholds our treaty rights and we appreciate this step forward.”

Ken Alook, Member of Council, Bigstone Cree Nation



Digital Transformation

Moving the delivery of government programs and services online greatly improves interactions between government and citizens, saving Albertans time and effort and amplifying Alberta's advantage as a place to live and raise families. Going paperless is a global trend that makes accessing services more convenient, reduces wait times for businesses and citizens, and saves taxpayers money.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the need to provide Albertans with continued access to services by moving them online was greater than ever. Alberta's government responded to the challenge with digital solutions that reduced red tape and allowed Albertans and Alberta businesses to access government services quickly and safely – be it environmental approvals, processing Workers Compensation Board claims, or consulting with Indigenous communities.

The Government of Alberta remains committed to further reducing unnecessary paperwork and expediting processing times by moving more programs and services online while continuing to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of information.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Regulatory Transformation Project

Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) is undertaking a Regulatory Transformation Project (RTP) to reduce red tape by streamlining lengthy environmental approval processing times, and addressing application backlogs. The RTP is expected to address a number of issues identified by stakeholders—including multiple Industry Panels—around applications delays, inconsistent applications of policies and rules, and slow decision timelines.

The key component of the RTP is the creation of an integrated online system called the Digital Regulatory Assurance System (DRAS), which will shift industry away from multiple independent and outdated information systems to one single, consolidated digital system for regulatory applications, approvals, and long-term environmental monitoring—saving industry time and money, while ensuring Alberta's high environmental standards are maintained.

Ultimately, the DRAS improves the user experience with clear instructions and tracking of an application's activity, making processes faster and more predictable. This modernization will help the Alberta government become a world-class regulator, increase stakeholder confidence, and help economic recovery. The first DRAS module launched in June 2021 for approvals under the *Water Act* and will be followed by sand and gravel approvals in Fall 2021, with a fully transformed environmental regulatory system by 2023 that will include grazing dispositions and *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* approvals.

Aboriginal Consultation Office (ACO) Digital Service

The ACO Digital Service is a new online system that helps reduce processing steps and timelines for consulting with Indigenous communities on industry projects that may adversely impact their continued exercise of constitutionally-protected Treaty rights and traditional land uses. The digital platform allows all participants in the consultation process (industry proponents, ACO staff, and First Nations and Métis representatives) to easily manage and view regulatory consultation file information online, and provides details on the administrative steps, submission standards, and requirements of the consultation process.

By creating a more efficient consultation process that reduces the amount of time required to submit an application by approximately 80 per cent, this digital platform will allow industry applicants and Indigenous communities to spend more time on substantive aspects of consultation, improving participation in the consultation process overall.

By March 2022, the ACO Digital Service is expected to reduce the number of applications with missing information by 50 per cent, cutting administrative costs to the Government of Alberta by an estimated \$1 million and resulting in millions of dollars of savings for industry and Indigenous communities.

Ultimately, the system will strengthen relations with Indigenous communities, increase investor confidence and contribute to economic recovery and job creation.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

MyWCB App

All employers covered by the *Workers' Compensation Act* must maintain an account with Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) and pay premiums to help fund the workers' compensation system, protecting employers and workers against the impacts of workplace accidents and injuries. In December 2020, the Workers' Compensation Board launched the new MyWCB employer app to help businesses check the balance on their accounts, make payments, update payroll, and change to a monthly payment installment plan by signing up for pre-authorized debit. In 2020, WCB processed over 3.6 million transactions with notices delivered electronically rather than by mail, saving over \$2 million in postage costs for WCB-Alberta.

Nearly 6,000 employers have signed up for the MyWCB employer mobile app since it launched, with 96 per cent of current users being associated with small businesses. These employers have made more than 3,100 WCB payments to date through the MyWCB employer app, saving them a trip to the bank or from taking time out of their day to call WCB to make payments, allowing them to focus their time on growing their business instead.

There has also been continued progress on the MyWCB app for workers. In May 2021, WCB released a new electronic injury reporting feature that enables workers to report their injuries to the WCB quickly and easily, allowing them to focus on their recovery. In turn, the WCB can provide even faster access to the treatment supports and wage loss benefits that injured workers need. Since its release, more than 1,000 workers have submitted injury reports through the MyWCB worker mobile app.



Associate Minister Tanya Fir (left) and MLA Joseph Schow (right) visiting the Vulcan Trek Station to meet with tourism operators.

Online Registry Services

On June 27, 2021—in response to recommendations of the Small Business Industry Panel—Alberta expanded the number of registry products available online, no longer requiring Albertans to travel to a registry office. Albertans can now conveniently order specialty licence plates, commercial and farm vehicle registration renewals, in-transit permits, and duplicate vehicle registration certificates online.

Albertans can also conveniently download their vehicle registration certificates and in-transit permits directly through MyAlberta eServices after they have been purchased.

The province is committed to the continued modernization of online government systems and services to eliminate outdated or inefficient processes, including the addition of more online registry services in Fall 2021, such as driver abstracts and vehicle information reports.

Supports for Seniors

In March 2021, Government introduced a Seniors Financial Assistance (SFA) Online Services platform providing a “one-stop shop” for applicants, making it easier and faster for seniors to apply to programs. This fast, easy and secure online application enrolls seniors into the Alberta Seniors Benefit, Special Needs Assistance for Seniors, and Alberta Health’s dental, optical, and prescription drug coverage programs. Approximately 2,600 Albertans have benefited from this digital transformation in the first three months since implementation. Based on uptake to date, seniors will likely continue to increase their usage of online services for seniors.

Government also introduced the Collaborative Online Resource and Education Alberta (CORE) platform in partnership with the community-based seniors serving (CBSS) sector leadership. CORE Alberta is a centralized online hub for CBSS and allied organizations in Alberta. CORE Alberta has been successful in driving efficiency, innovation, and improvement in the flow of information from the Government of Alberta to the CBSS sector, and has benefited Alberta seniors through enhanced community-based service delivery, particularly through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Performance Metrics

Performance Indicator: CFIB Red Tape Rating

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Alberta grade	F	F	F	B-	A

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) is a leading advocate for regulatory reform and reducing red tape. Each year, it releases a report card that grades provinces on their RTR performance. In 2021, the CFIB recognized Alberta as the most improved province, increasing Alberta's grade to an "A" for the first time in the 11 year history of the Report Card.

Performance Measure: One-Third Reduction of Regulatory Requirements (by fiscal year)

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Target	5%	12%	20%	33%	Net Zero Increase
Result	5%	15.7 %			

In February 2020, Alberta's government completed a count of all regulatory requirements that existed in its statutes, regulations, policies and forms as of May 1, 2019, in order to establish a baseline to measure its progress in reducing red tape. Government has set cumulative fiscal-year targets of a five per cent reduction in 2019-20, 12 per cent reduction in 2020-21, and 20 per cent reduction in 2021-22, supporting the final reduction target of 33 per cent in 2022-23.

As of the end of fiscal 2020-21, government reported a cumulative reduction of 15.7 per cent of regulatory requirements from the May 1, 2019 baseline, and further reductions were achieved between March 31 and June 30, 2021, for a total reduction of 118,676 regulatory requirements (or 17.8 per cent).

Government remains committed to achieving its target of a 33 per cent reduction by the end of fiscal 2022-23. Once this target has been reached, government will implement an offset requirement that ensures the regulatory burden does not increase once again.

PERFORMANCE METRICS

Performance Measure: Direct Cost Savings

	2019-20	2020-21	Cumulative Total
Dollars Saved	\$476 million	\$722 million	\$1.2 Billion

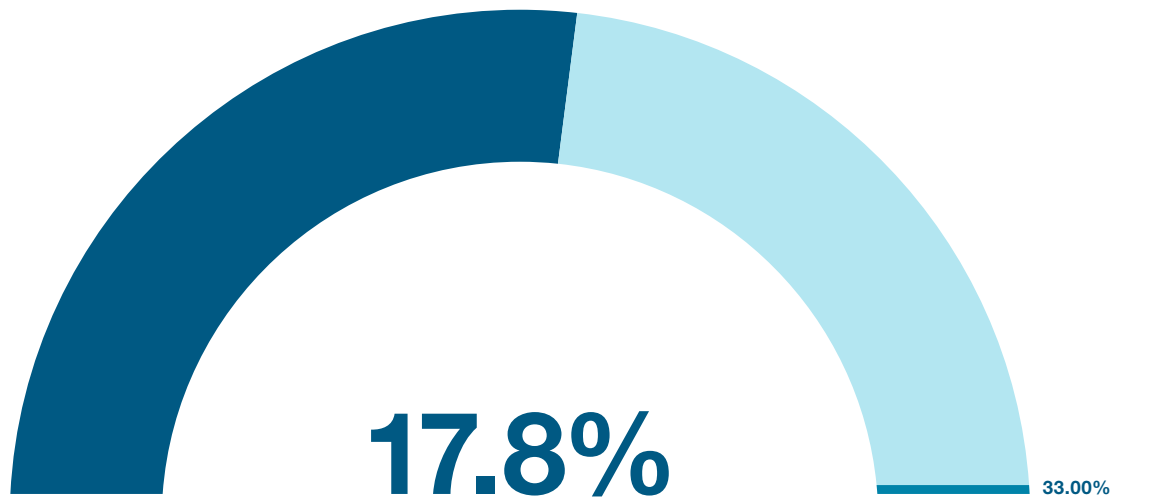
High cost of government regulation is a major form of red tape. Reducing the financial burden of complying with government requirements allows job creators to direct more money to investment and job creation.

To date, government's RTR initiatives have produced at least \$1.2 billion in direct cost savings for Alberta's job creators and government. This includes \$476 million in savings identified in the 2019-2020 RTR Annual Report, and an additional \$722 million in 2020-21. These figures represent conservative estimates, which may be adjusted in future reports, as a more comprehensive approach to measuring cost savings to stakeholders is implemented.

Appendix: Government of Alberta Count of Regulatory Requirements: An Overview

Chart 1.
Overall Reduction Progress (as of June 30, 2021)

As of June 30, 2021, the Government of Alberta has reduced 118,676 regulatory requirements, resulting in a 17.8 per cent reduction from the baseline count of 666,513 regulatory requirements (as of May 1, 2019), which equates to four requirements eliminated for each one added.



666,513
Baseline count

-118,676
Net change

547,837
Current count

-17.8%
Percent change

4:1
Reduction to added ratio

APPENDIX: GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA COUNT OF REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS: AN OVERVIEW

Chart 2.
Baseline Count Composition by Regulatory Instrument

The chart highlights the proportion of regulatory requirements found in each of the four types of regulatory instruments that comprise Alberta's baseline count (statutes, regulations, policies and forms).

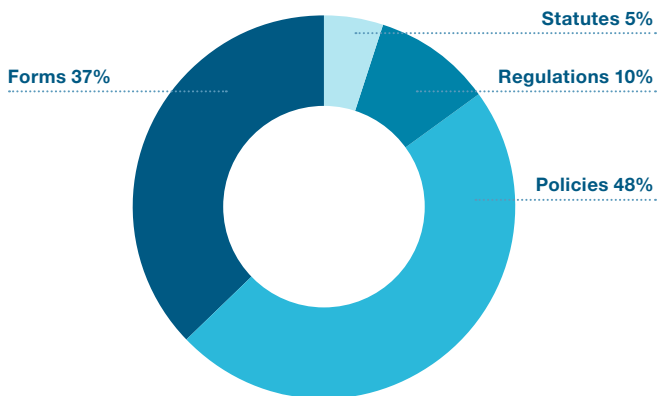
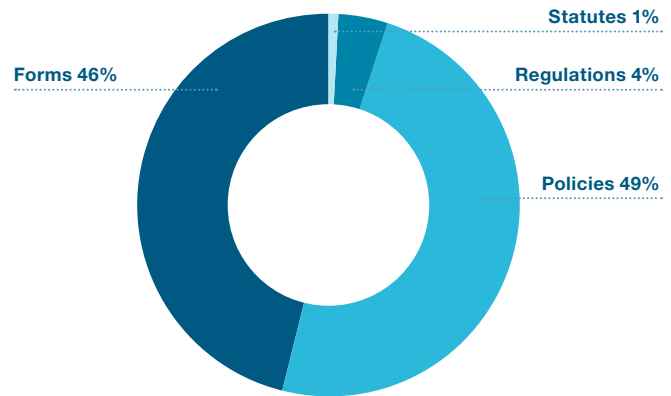


Chart 3.
Regulatory Requirement Reductions by Regulatory Instrument (as of June 30, 2021)

The chart highlights the composition of the Alberta Government's total reductions by the type of regulatory instrument (statutes, regulations, policies and forms), showing that the majority of reductions (49 per cent) have occurred in policies, followed by forms (46 per cent), regulations (four per cent) and statutes (one per cent), roughly proportionate to their respective share of the baseline count.



APPENDIX: GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA COUNT OF REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS: AN OVERVIEW

Chart 4. Baseline Count Composition: Departments and Public Agencies

Most Government of Alberta ministries consist of the department and public agencies, boards and commissions that report to the Minister. Policies and forms owned by public agencies that fall under the criteria of the *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act* (about 50 per cent of all agencies) are in scope for the baseline count. The chart below highlights the share of the baseline count that belongs to Government of Alberta departments and public agencies, respectively.

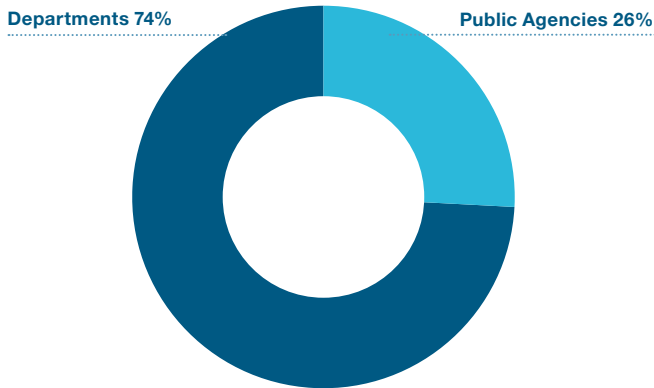
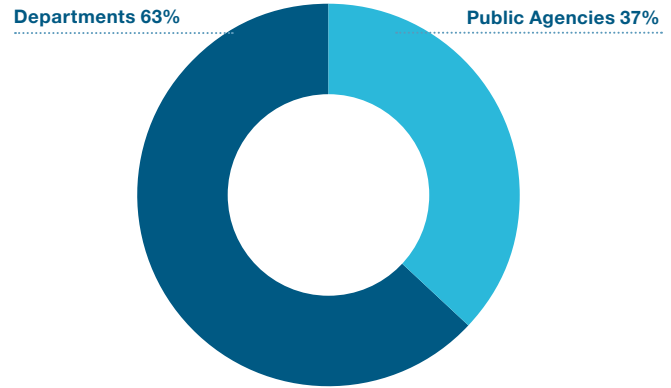


Chart 5. Regulatory Requirement Reductions: Departments and Public Agencies (as of June 30, 2021)

The chart highlights the share of the total government reductions achieved by Government of Alberta departments and public agencies, respectively, that are in scope for the baseline count. The data reflects that agencies have slightly outperformed departments, as their share of reductions exceeds their share of the baseline.







Topic: Meeting between the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, Wood Buffalo Development Advisory Committee and the Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction on January 25, 2022.

The following key points were discussed with the intent to:

- Better understand work that has been completed and work that is underway by the Government of Alberta (GOA).
- Better understand what red tape reduction initiatives have been working within the provincial government and find out more about what other municipalities are doing and what's working.
- Better understand what role we can play to contribute to small business and economic development moving forward with red tape reduction in mind.
- Identify ways that we could work together to create mutually beneficial outcomes moving forward.

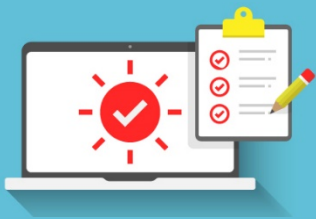
Some of the desired meeting outcomes included an intent to:

- Establish a positive relationship between the RMWB Administration, Wood Buffalo Development Advisory Committee members and the Government of Alberta for ongoing collaboration.
- Seek a shared understanding about how we can continue to work together to add value and advance red tape reduction initiatives that benefit the province and our region.
- Demonstrate our proactive interest in continuing to support red tape reduction and willingness to be a key point of contact for the GOA and regional champion for ongoing initiatives.
- Increase a shared understanding about what's already taken place or ongoing in terms of Red Tape Reduction.

Post meeting actionable next steps:

- Work with the Associate Minister or designate to set up quarterly meetings for ongoing collaboration.
- Review the existing Red Tape Reduction Reports @ www.alberta.ca/cut-red-tape.aspx.
- Continue to explore ways that Municipalities can work together and share more specific information about what's working across the province.
- Identify ways to measure the success of ongoing Red Tape Reduction initiatives.
- Seek to further understand what digital systems are being used by the Government of Alberta to implement positive Red Tape Reduction changes.





Making business easier

Engagement Summary Report

participate.rmwb.ca/permits

About this Project

Purpose

Understand, enhance and streamline Planning and Development's (P&D) permitting and licensing processes to provide exceptional customer service and support economic growth. Permits and licenses can include:

- Development permits (e.g. sheds, decks, homes businesses);
- Building permits;
- Business licenses; and,
- Leases

Approach

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) engaged a third-party to conduct an objective, impartial review of services delivered by each of P&D's three branches:

1. Community Development Planning
2. Safety Codes
3. Land Administration

A wide range of stakeholders, internal and external, were engaged through individual and group workshops, on what processes are working well, where there are challenges and opportunities for improvement.

To respect stakeholders' confidentiality, results provided in this Report are specifically from the public survey.

The Survey

The public survey was launched on November 3, 2021 and closed on November 17, 2021.

A total of 118 surveys were completed, of which 37 respondents requested and received follow up from the project team.

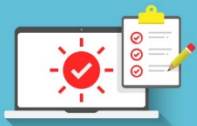
Online Statistics

○ Online Poll	118
○ Online visits	294
○ Social media impressions	26,123
○ Social Media likes, Shares, Comments	37

Communications Tactics

- News Release;
- Participate Wood Buffalo;
- RWMB website;
- Online Survey;
- Social Media likes, Shares, Comments;
- Local Radio;
- McMurray Matters interview; and
- Indigenous and Rural Relations (IRR) community meeting updates.





Survey Highlights

Perceived Barriers



Variations in how *codes* and *standards* appear to be applied across applications and inspections processes.



Lengthy processing times impacted by the tendency for requests to be re-routed or circulated for review.



High upfront costs resulting in applicants taking a risk to begin development or in applying for a permit or license.



Lack of clear guidance or supporting resources to assist applicants in completing an application.



Limited flexibility across processes to accommodate unique circumstances or exceptions.



Excessive requirements for permits and licensing, potentially restricting new development, residential improvement and small to medium sized business ventures.

Potential Opportunities

01 Improve Tools & Resources

Organize and simplify existing online materials and improve E-Permitting. Examples may include:

- Updated checklists;
- Website and E-Permitting system upgrades;
- Interactive “how to” guides; and,
- Introduction and improvement of communications channels.

02 Establish Process Standards

Development of baseline metrics to track processing time and application status across branches and staff per file. This may encompass:

- Inspections;
- Application intake;
- Request escalation; and,
- Staff assignment to specific files.

03 Streamline Permit & License Requirements

Clarify existing requirements by identifying barriers for local development and licensing. A prominent example being reducing the threshold for change of use development permits.

Next Steps

01

Conclude stakeholder engagement

02

Review findings and prioritize potential solutions

03

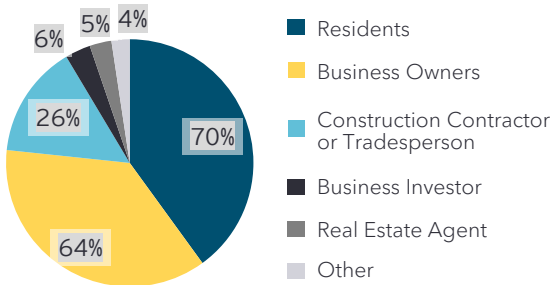
Educate stakeholders on resulting changes to process



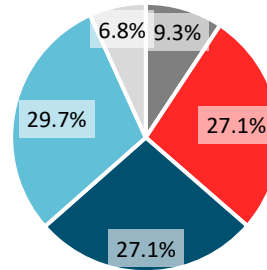


Survey Results

Respondent demographics

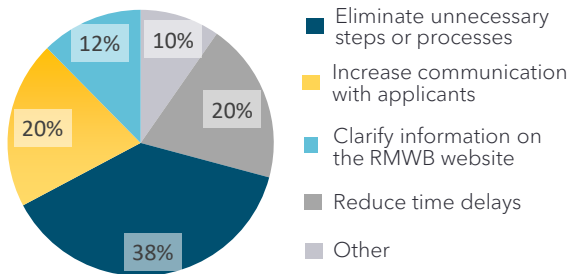


Understanding of application requirement



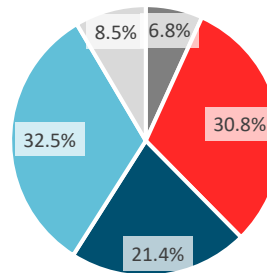
Approximately 54% of respondents indicated that it is difficult to understand P&D application requirements.

Recommended process improvements

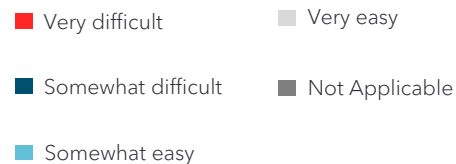


- 38% of respondents cited the **elimination of unnecessary steps or processes** as the most important area for improvement.
- Several respondents commented that **all of the listed improvements** will be **essential** to improving customer service.

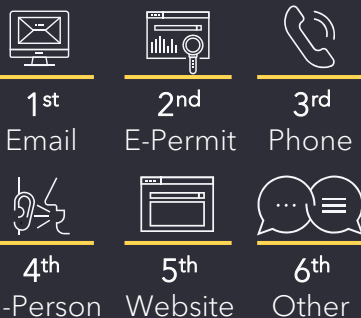
Ease of finding required information



More than half of respondents indicated that it is difficult to find required information from P&D.



Preferred communication channels



Respondents **miss the flexibility of interacting with P&D staff in person** since the closure of the office due to COVID-19.

Residents have come to **rely primarily on phone calls and E-Permits** to complete applications.

Applicants find the **website is difficult to navigate**, which limits their ability to access resources and information needed to complete an application.





Survey Results

Experience with Community Development Planning (CDP) Services

Development permits, subdivision applications, business licenses, compliance certificates, variances the Land Use Bylaw, special events on municipal land, portable signs on municipal land

Permits and Business Licenses

- ▶ Survey respondents most frequently interacted with CDP for development permits and business licensing services
- ▶ Respondents were generally satisfied with business licensing services
- ▶ Satisfaction levels were lowest for development permits compared to other services surveyed
- ▶ Respondents were dissatisfied with both portable signs/non-profit advertisements on municipal land and variance applications

Potential Opportunities

- ▶ **Clarity** on when certain permits and licenses are required; **reminders** to renew business licenses
- ▶ **Consistency** in guidance
- ▶ Shortened timelines, increased **efficiency**, and expedited applications for simple development type

Experience with Safety Codes (SC) Services

Inspection requests, building permits, occupancy permits, trade specific permits (electrical, plumbing, gas/ventilation, underground services, private sewage)

Inspections and Building, Occupancy, & Trade-Specific Permits

- ▶ Satisfaction levels were highest for inspection requests, gas (ventilation) permits, and plumbing permits
- ▶ Satisfaction levels were lowest for building and occupancy permits
- ▶ Of the trade-specific permits, respondents were most dissatisfied with underground service and electrical permits, closely followed by private sewage and plumbing permits

Potential Opportunities

- ▶ **Clarity** on how to satisfy safety requirements
- ▶ **Efficiency** in not having to submit the same information twice
- ▶ **Greater flexibility** on unique or minor builds

Experience with Land Administration (LA) Services

Municipal land transactions, letters of authorization, and various agreements, such as encroachments road use, licenses of occupation, easements, road closures, crossings, and third-party land consents

Agreements

- ▶ In general, satisfaction levels were highest for land transactions (sales and acquisitions)
- ▶ Satisfaction levels were lowest for road use, easement, and encroachment agreements

Potential Opportunities

- ▶ **Clarity** and a standard procedure on partial road closures





shape our region

Municipal Development Plan Phase 3 Engagement

WB Development Advisory Committee
February 9, 2022

Meeting Agenda

- › Project Review
- › What We Heard
- › The Plan
- › Implementation
- › Next Steps



Project Review

Purpose

The Municipality is preparing a new **Municipal Development Plan (MDP)** to reflect changes in the social, cultural, and economic conditions of the region.

The draft MDP has been created with input from residents throughout Wood Buffalo to ensure it reflects local values, opportunities, and challenges, and sets a clear vision for the Municipality's future.



What is the MDP?

The MDP sets out the **vision** and **blueprint** for future growth and development in the Municipality.

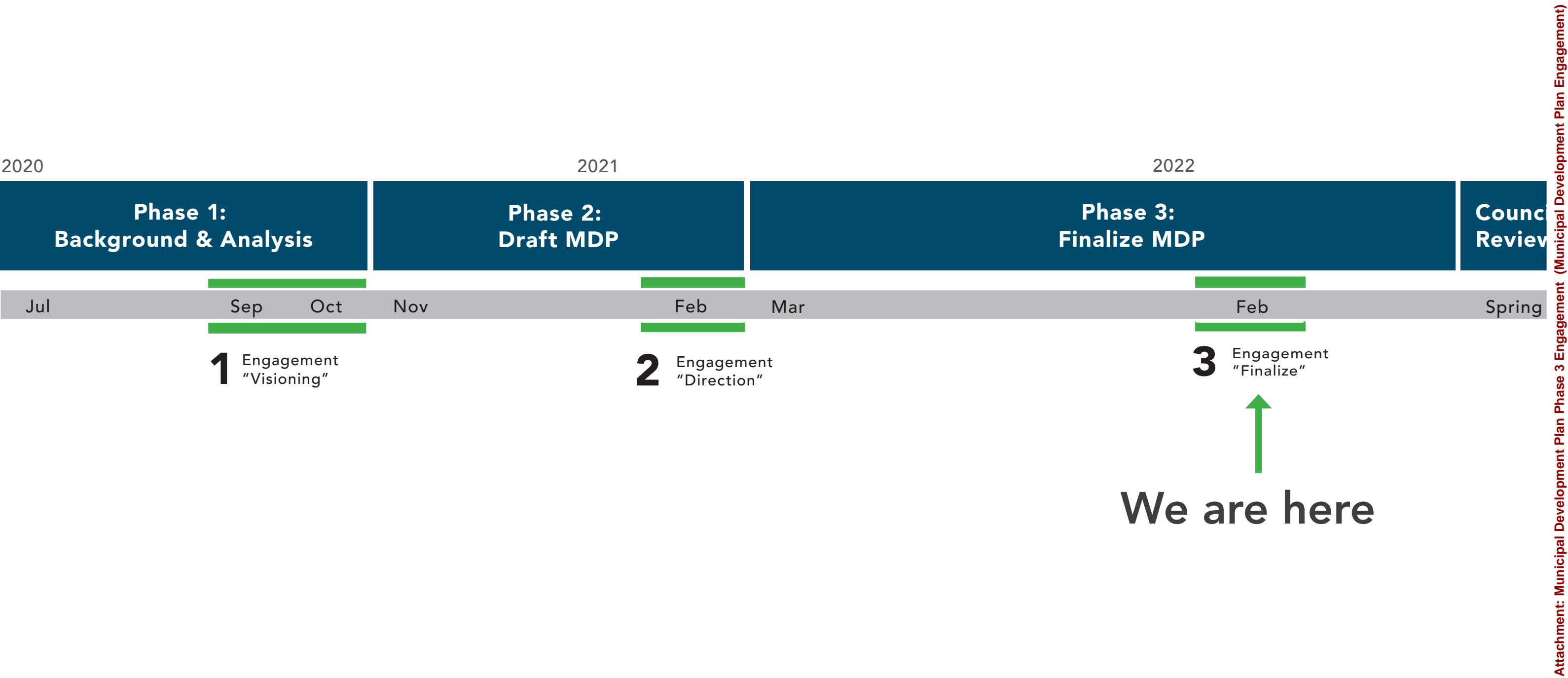
The MDP will:

- » Define future land uses in the Municipality
- » Provide strategies for managing growth
- » Guide short- and long-term decision-making
- » Shape the development and future of our communities



Where are we?

Phase 3 Engagement



Who have we heard from?

Phase 1 & 2 Engagement Stats

General Public



Indigenous Partners & Stakeholders



4

Virtual Open
Houses



77

Workshops, In-Person,
& Virtual Meetings



2

Online
Surveys



Interactive
Mapping



Idea Sharing
Platforms



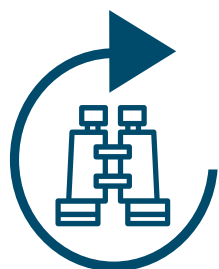
Online
Discussion
Forums

What have we heard?

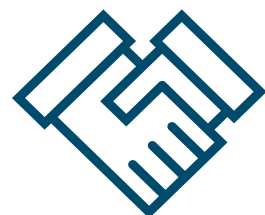
Engagement Thus Far



Including Reconciliation with Indigenous Partners as a 6th MDP Goal



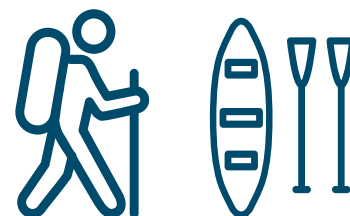
Revisiting the Vision to better reflect its intention



Committing to improved communication and collaboration with rural and Indigenous Partners



Ensuring the goals are not repetitious, and have clear direction



Emphasizing the Blue & Green Networks in the MDP as a priority



Aligning with existing economic development initiatives, including the Place Brand Strategy

The Plan

MDP Components



Describes the desired future of the Municipality.

Provide tangible outcomes for the plan to achieve.

Detail how to achieve the goals and translate them from ideas into actions.

Statutory statements that set the blueprint for future development.

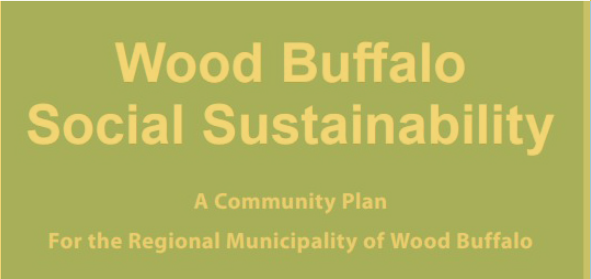
How to measure successful implementation of the plan.



Develop and Implement
Region-wide Design Guidelines



Review and revise the Land Use
Bylaw to encourage and facilitate
mixed-use development



Commit sustained funding for
implementation of the Social
Sustainability Plan



Develop and implement an Active
Transportation Master Plan

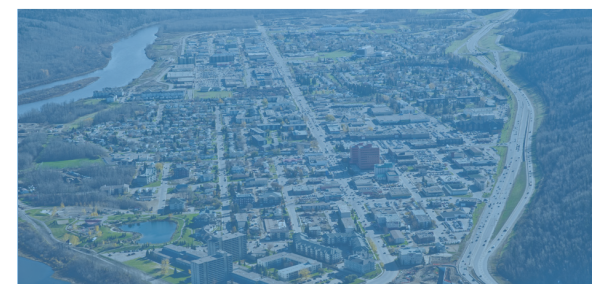


Develop an Equity, Diversity, and
Inclusion policy for the Municipality

ECONOMIC GROWTH & INNOVATION



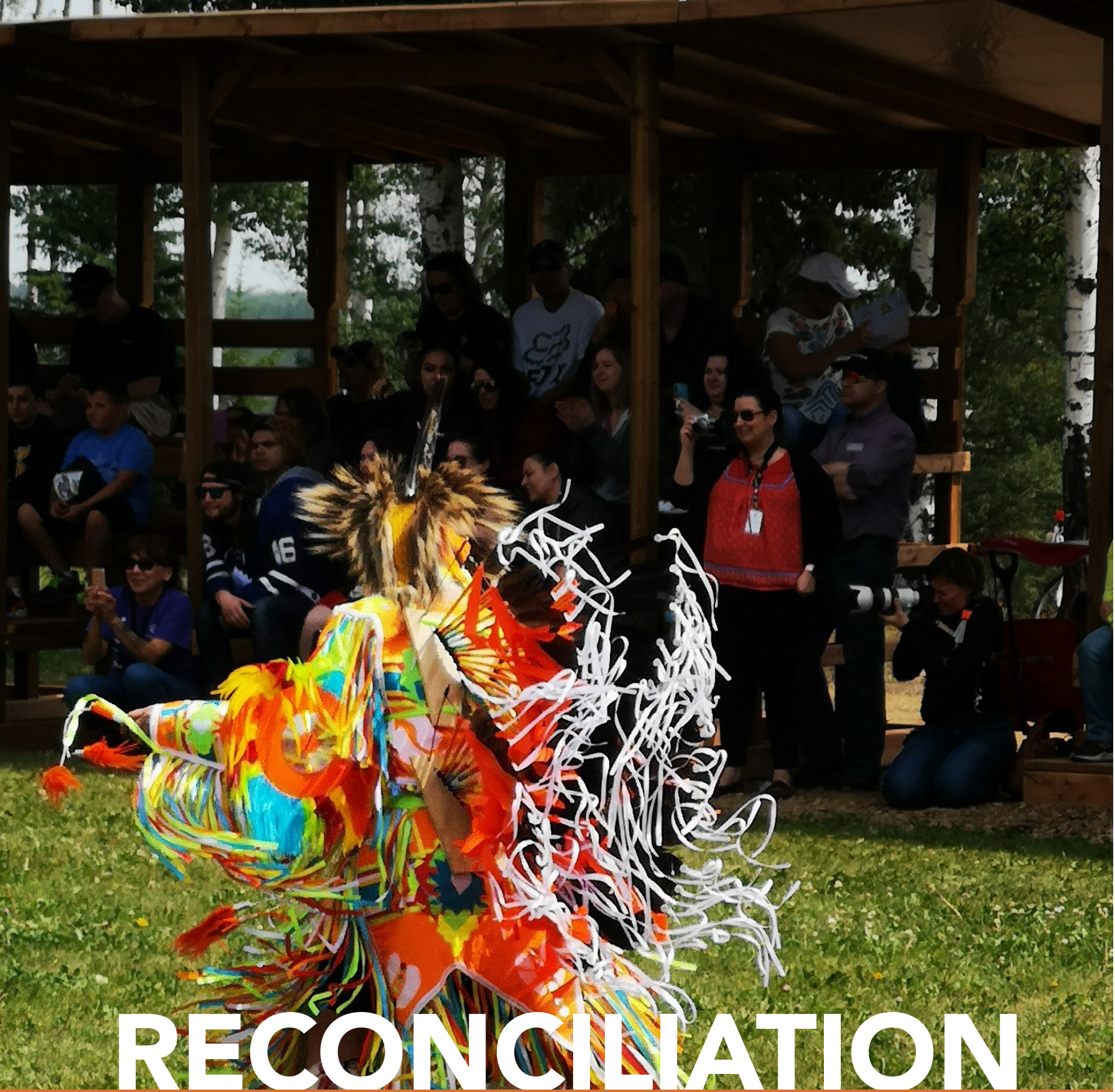
Prepare and implement an
Ease of Doing Business Plan



Expedite Development Approvals
for Downtown Plan-aligned New
or Expanding Businesses



Investigate creating
a business incubator



Continue the Reconciliation
Advisory Circle



Undertake an assessment of
implementing United Nations
Declaration on the Rights of
Indigenous People as the
framework for the Municipality's
response to Truth & Reconciliation



Coordinate a Traditional Land Use/
Place Name Study

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY & CULTURE



Investigate designating Heritage Character Areas



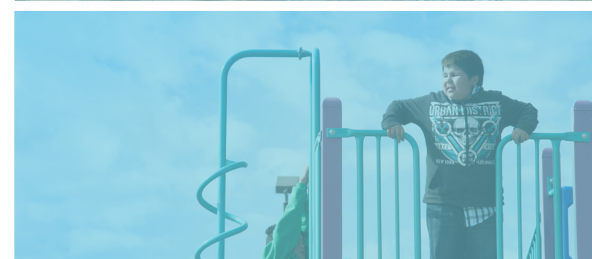
Prioritize Jubilee Plaza as a place to celebrate Wood Buffalo's multiculturalism and diversity



Investigate the creation of a Temporary Art Program throughout Wood Buffalo



Develop a community activation microgrant program

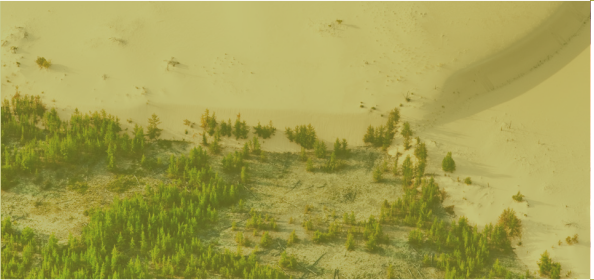


Increase youth representation in government

CONNECTING TO NATURE



Prepare the Green & Blue Network Plans



Identify and Protect Valued Ecosystems



Prepare and implement a Wilderness Development Plan



RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT



Emphasize Downtown
Revitalization as
a Municipal priority



Commit to optimizing
Regional Transit



Institute Disaster Risk
Management in Municipal
decision-making

Implementation

Making it Happen

KEY INITIATIVES

- › Provided for each goal in the plan
- › Translate the intent of the plan from ideas to implementable actions and tangible projects

PERFORMANCE METRICS

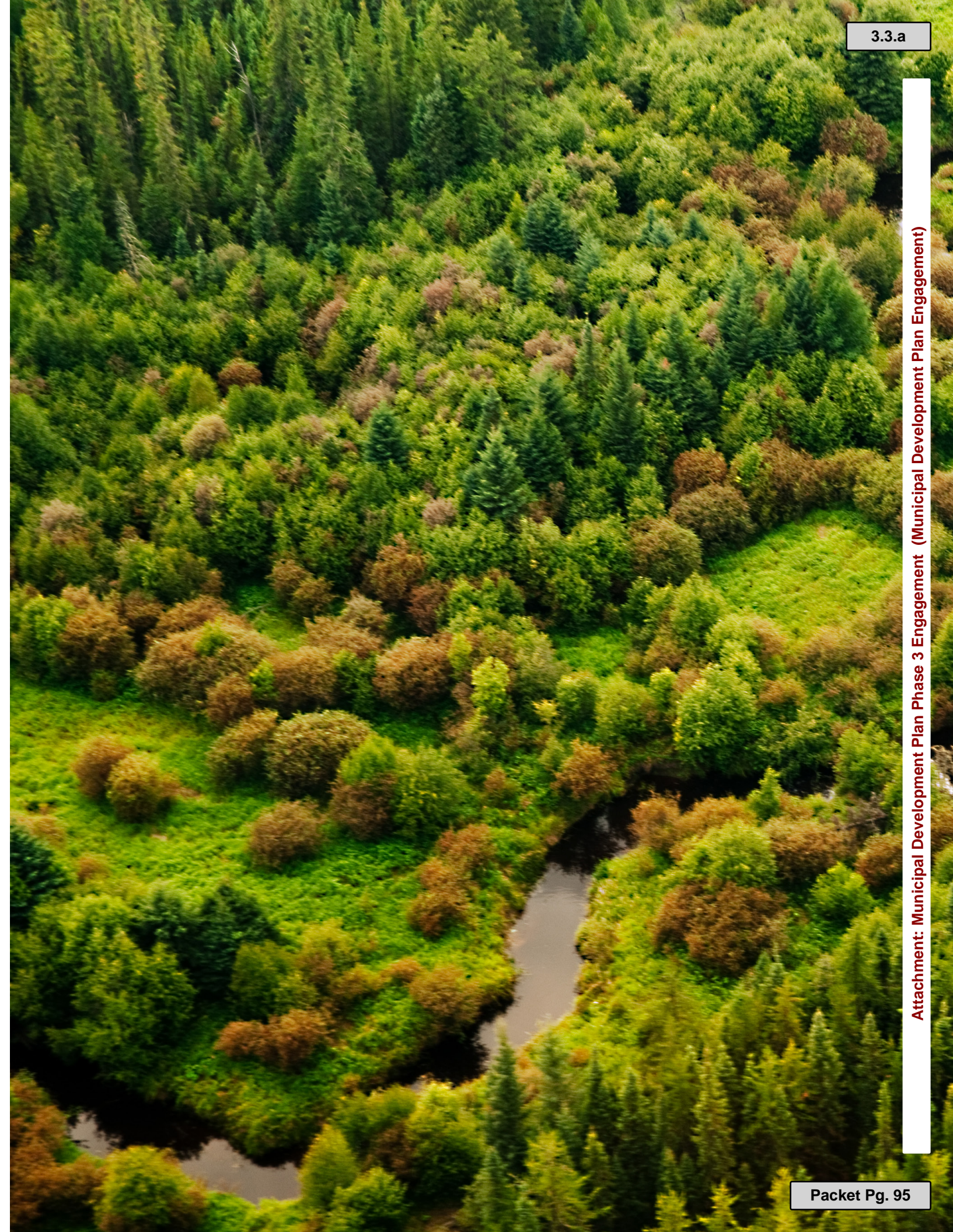
- › Provide a way to measure the successful implementation of the MDP

Prioritization

As part of this phase of engagement final prioritization of Key Initiatives is being discussed with Council.

The MDP will:

- » Identify priority key initiatives.
- » Create a high-level timeline for when and how each key initiative should be implemented.
- » Identify roles and responsibilities for ensuring the Municipality successfully implements each key initiative.



Performance Metrics

To ensure the MDP is achieving its goals a suite of performance metrics have been developed.

The performance metrics will:

- » Identify targets and triggers for when Municipal review or action is required.
- » Aid the Municipality in reporting to Council on MDP effectiveness.
- » Create consistency in reporting on MDP effectiveness over time.



FIGURE 3:
PERFORMANCE
INDICATORS

Performance indicator targets and metrics will be finalized following final review of the draft MDP with residents, Council, and administration.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

- Population / jobs ratio
- Building vacancy rate by use
- Number of distinct businesses
- Number of businesses by sector
- Changes in job classification
- Oil and gas industry growth
- Commercial development permits issued
- Number of post-secondary students
- New jobs
- Number of out-of-region shopping trips residents take per year

CELEBRATING CULTURE

- New area of arts and cultural space (institutions, performance studios, etc.)
- Number of cultural events held annually
- Number of festivals held annually
- New programs supporting arts and culture
- Multicultural groups operating in the Municipality
- Residential Diversity Index
- Number of residents attending festivals and events
- Percent of regional publications offered in additional languages

CONNECTING TO NATURE

- Total kms of multi-use pathway
- Total kms of Blue & Green Network developed
- Number of tourists using the Blue & Green Network
- Number of accessible lakes
- Number of residents using parks and trails
- Hectares of protected natural areas
- Number of development permits issued for cabins

RESPONSIBLE GROWTH

- People per hectare (Urban Service Area)
- Population of Neighbourhood Cores, Community Cores, and the Downtown
- Land Use Diversity in Neighbourhood Cores, Community Cores, and the Downtown
- Housing inventory by typology and affordability
- Available developable land
- Vacant lots
- Amount of reclaimed industrial lands
- New build starts
- Overall transit ridership
- Overall transit ridership per operating hours
- New businesses in the Downtown
- Number of projects with confirmed risk reduction strategies

HOME & BELONGING

- Number of crimes per 1,000 residents by type of crime
- Resident's rating of overall feeling of belonging
- Amount of newcomer services offered
- Demographics of settled residents
- In-migration data
- Percent of equity-seeking individuals who identify feeling welcome in Wood Buffalo

RECONCILIATION

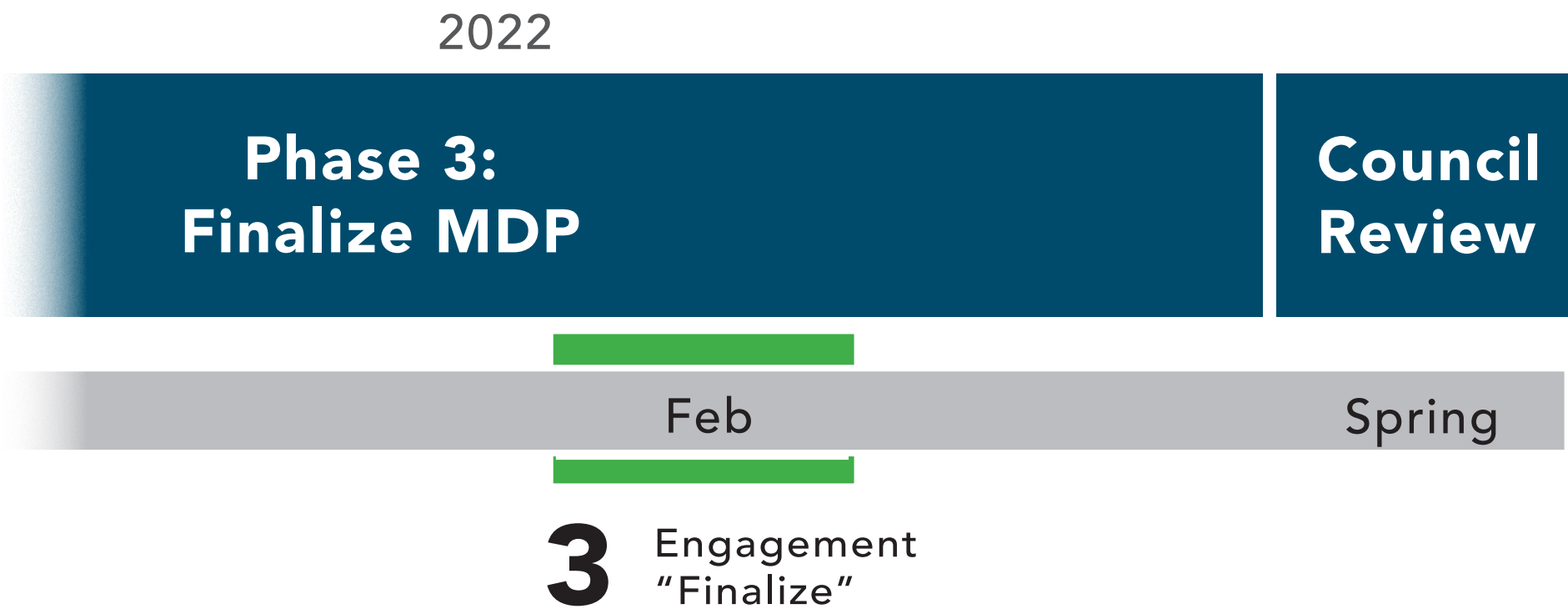
- Number of Calls to Action actively being implemented
- Number of annual meetings with Municipal administration
- Percent of Regional road signs in Indigenous languages
- Number of residents that speak an Indigenous language
- Actions taken towards developing an urban reserve

Next Steps

Next Steps

Project Team

- ›Finalize the MDP
- ›Bring finalized MDP to Council in Spring 2022



Next Steps

Public

- › This is the final phase of engagement. Visit **rmwb.ca/mdp** to learn more. You can get involved in the following ways:
 - › Online Survey
 - › Phone Survey via PULSE (780.743.7000)
 - › Urban Virtual Open House - Tuesday, February 15 at 6pm
 - › Rural Virtual Open House - Wednesday, February 23 at 6pm
- › This phase of engagement ends on March 13, 2022
- › Public hearing process in Spring 2022

Questions?





REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
OF **WOOD BUFFALO**

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Draft Municipal Development Plan available for review and final feedback

Help define where we're going for the next 20 years

(Fort McMurray, AB – January 31, 2022) – After on-going engagements the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) has reviewed and considered feedback on the future direction of our region. The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) is a blueprint on how the region will **evolve, thrive, and expand for the next 20 years**. With changes in our region comes the opportunity to adapt and pivot to make our region prosper within the current environment. The new MDP supports a **community and place-based approach** focusing on the **people first** in this region while considering relatable local values, opportunities, and challenges that are reflective of Wood Buffalo.

To gain more understanding of the proposed **approach, vision statement, and goals** view the draft [MDP Highlight](#) document.

Provide your feedback

Gaining the region's consensus for the direction is an important part of the planning process. Residents, Indigenous partners, and community stakeholders are encouraged to participate through diverse engagement opportunities. These include:

- [Online survey](#);
- **Phone survey** by calling PULSE at 780-743-7000;
- **Urban virtual open house** Tuesday, **February 15** at 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m.; and
- **Rural virtual open house** Wednesday, **February 23** at 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Pre-registration is recommend on rmwb.ca/mdp, however is not required to participate. Deadline to participate is **Sunday, March 13, 2022**.

Survey contest

Complete the online survey with your chance to **win a local gift card**. All residents who complete the online survey have an opportunity to win either a \$100, or \$50 local business gift card. To qualify you must consent to the rules and regulations when completing the online survey and provide your personal contact information.



Coloring contest

The youth are invited to participate in a fun [coloring contest](#), with the chance to win a home visit from **RMWB firefighters along with their shiny red fire trucks**. Creating conversations with families on the importance of the MDP and how it effects residents supports building community pride. Children 18 years and younger are eligible to participate by downloading the coloring page on <http://www.rmwb.ca/mdp> and submitting to participate@rmwb.ca. **Deadline to submit is March, 13, 2022.**

Next Steps

All feedback throughout final engagement will be carefully collected and considered when completing the final MDP. Upon completion, the MDP will be presented to Mayor and Council later this year at a public hearing.

Background information

The RMWB is replacing the previous MDP from 2011, when the social, cultural, and economic environment were very different. The priorities and projections at the time of previous MDP led to planning for exponential growth in population, high demand for land development, and singular engine economy.

The MDP has been conducting on-going engagement with residents, Indigenous partners, and community stakeholders since 2020. Throughout engagement phases, different objectives have been met gaining important feedback from the region. [What We Heard Report's](#) are available online outlying the participation outcomes, survey results and overall themes from the previous engagement.

To learn more visit rmwb.ca/mdp.

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Media inquiries:

media@rmwb.ca

