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January 18, 2018

Honourable Rachel Notley  
Premier of Alberta  
307 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Premier Notley:

AUMA appreciates the opportunity to profile key municipal matters for consideration in the province's 2018 Budget and Business Plans.

AUMA appreciated your message at our recent convention when you spoke of compassionate belt tightening, and have tried to reflect that in the priorities we've outlined for this budget. Infrastructure remains a critical challenge for municipalities and as the stewards of sixty per cent of all publicly owned infrastructure this will always remain a critical topic. We hope to see the province engage with municipalities over the coming year on the development of a stable and predictable funding program to replace the Municipal Sustainability Initiative after 2019. The new program should be statutory and indexed where funding is allocation based. We understand this new model may not result in increased funding in the immediate future, but would add a much needed layer of predictability that would benefit all.

We would also strongly encourage the province to match the federal government's forty per cent commitment to infrastructure costs under the Investing in Canada fund. We know Minister Jansen hopes to conclude the bilateral negotiations with Minister Sohi by March and hope to see this commitment reflected in that agreement and the budget. We would also strongly encourage Minister Jansen to invite AUMA and municipal leaders into the negotiations.

Alberta's municipalities are also concerned about the current funding model for policing services. We would like to see the Ministry of Justice set out in their business plan a commitment to work with municipalities on the development of a new funding model for policing services which would see all municipalities pay a share of policing.

We also acknowledge that the tough economic situation of recent years has led to an increase in crime, and would like to see the province increase funding for the Municipal Police Assistance Grants in recognition of the challenges this creates for municipalities. AUMA also supports a fair allocation of cannabis excise tax revenue to municipalities that fully covers the costs legalizing cannabis for recreational use, and would ask that the province support us in this effort. We would also like to see the province clearly track and report on cannabis revenues.

An ongoing issue municipalities continue to grapple with, which we would like to see addressed in the upcoming business plans, is the issue of brownfields. AUMA would like to work with the province to complete changes to the Remediation Certificate Regulation to address barriers to brownfield redevelopment created by the lack of liability closure and a commitment to ongoing collaboration with stakeholders required to implement further solutions to redevelopment as identified in the 2012 Brownfield Working Group Report.

As part of your government's commitment to environmental stewardship, we are seeking your support to enact regulatory changes needed to ensure the viability of existing recycling programs, and a commitment to work with municipalities on more comprehensive approach to reducing waste, including developing programs that address packaging, printed materials, and agricultural plastics that our programs struggle to process due to fluctuating markets for recycled materials.

Additionally we hope the province would partner with AUMA and AAMDC to expand the tools and resources available to municipalities to:

- Mitigate and adapt to climate change;
- Neutralize the impact of the carbon levy on municipal budgets; and
- Increase savings through reduced energy costs.

As well, we urge the province to meet the 50% funding required by the federal governments new national housing strategy.

While these represent our most critical issues for the coming years, our members have expressed through recently passed resolutions a desire to work with the province on several additional issues important to municipalities and the Albertans they represent:

- That the province work to establish a new ministry which would consolidate Emergency Social Services and Emergency Management Services into a single, all-hazards, public safety orientated government department.
- That the Ministry of Health provide direct financial compensation on a full cost-recovery basis to all Alberta Medical First Response agencies for every call responded to.

- That the Ministry of Health provide support to municipalities to develop local medical equipment lending initiatives.
- That the Ministry of Health commit to providing 211 services to all Albertans.
- That the Ministry of Environment and Parks provide support and funding to complete non-motorized trail linkages between Urban Municipalities.
- That the province establish a Provincial Municipal working group on opioids to directly engage municipalities in addressing the opioid crisis.
- That Alberta Infrastructure restore the Red Deer Regional Hospital to the capital priorities list as identified in the 2015 Capital Submission.

We look forward to continuing to work with your government as partners in service to all Albertans.

Sincerely,



Barry Morishita  
AUMA President

Cc: Cabinet