

# Agreement targets new Municipal Government Act in 2016

The Government of Alberta and representatives of Alberta's municipalities have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will see a revised Municipal Government Act (MGA) in place in 2016.



*L-R: Minister Diana McQueen, Premier Jim Prentice, Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi (back), AUMA President Helen Rice, Edmonton Mayor Don Iveson (back), AAMDC President Al Kemmere*

The agreement was signed by Premier Jim Prentice, Municipal Affairs Minister Diana McQueen, Alberta Urban Municipalities Association's (AUMA) President Helen Rice and Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties' (AAMDC) President Al Kemmere.

“Government remains committed to working with our municipal partners on this important legislation and to concluding the *Municipal Government Act* review in a timely manner. I would like to thank the thousands of people involved in the review for their significant efforts to date.”

Jim Prentice, Premier

“As Alberta’s second largest piece of legislation, the importance of the *Municipal Government Act* and its impacts cannot be overstated. We look forward to continuing to work with our municipal partners over the coming months towards the completion of this important review.”

Diana McQueen, Municipal Affairs Minister

The last major consolidation of the *Municipal Government Act* took place in 1995, after nearly 10 years of review. The current *MGA* review began in 2012 and has involved input from more than 1,200 written submissions, and more than 1,500 people at 77 community meetings. The MOU sets out timelines for legislation and the completion of the review.

“Alberta’s rural municipalities face unique challenges and need a strong piece of legislation that provides the necessary tools to grow and shape our communities. The AAMDC is committed to working with stakeholders, municipal partners, and the Government of Alberta to develop a *Municipal Government Act* that promotes sustainability, prosperity, and works for all Albertans.”

Al Kemmere, President, Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties

“The *MGA* review is a long-awaited opportunity to modernize municipal legislation, establish a new relationship between provincial and municipal governments, and harmonize with other legislation and policies. We have been encouraged by the scope and progress of this review in recent months and look forward to continuing this work as defined in this Memorandum of Understanding for completion in 2016.”

Helen Rice, President, Alberta Urban Municipalities Association

“I am pleased to see that, in addition to the city charters for Calgary and Edmonton, we are moving forward on an updated *Municipal Government Act*. It will help all of Alberta’s municipalities.”

Naheed Nenshi, Mayor, City of Calgary

“A modernized *Municipal Government Act*, in conjunction with big city charters, can better enable all municipalities to address current and future challenges, and meet citizen needs. We look forward to working together to achieve a common vision of a more resilient and prosperous Alberta.”

Don Iveson, Mayor, City of Edmonton

The government and its municipal partners – including AUMA, AAMDC, and the cities of Edmonton and Calgary – will participate in regularly scheduled roundtable discussions. Other stakeholders, such as industry representatives, will be invited to discussions when appropriate.

## **Work will focus on eight major policy areas and occur in three phases:**

- Phase one – identification of areas of agreement with legislative amendments targeted for spring 2015;
- Phase two – identification of items requiring further discussion and review leading to legislative amendments targeted for the fall of 2015.
- Phase three – completion of the *MGA* review process in 2016.

## **Policy areas for discussion include:**

- provincial-municipal relations;
- accountability and transparency;
- governance; municipal viability;
- regional decision-making;
- municipal revenues;
- property assessment and taxation; and
- growth management.