

**AGENDA FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ONOWAY  
HELD ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2023 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF  
THE ONOWAY CIVIC CENTRE AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM  
COMMENCING AT 9:30 A.M.  
MEETING IS BEING AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDED**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

9:30 a.m. - New Councillor Oath of Office – To be sworn in by Terry Slemko, Notary Public

**2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

*Recommendation:*

*THAT the September 14, 2023 Regular Council Meeting agenda be approved as presented*

*or*

*THAT the September 14, 2023, Regular Council Meeting agenda be approved with the following amendment(s) (as noted at meeting time)*

**3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

P91-5

a) August 10, 2023 Regular Council Meeting

*Recommendation:*

*THAT the August 10, 2023 Regular Council Meeting minutes be approved as presented*

*or*

*THAT the August 10, 2023 Regular Council Meeting minutes be approved with the following amendment(s) (as noted at meeting time)*

P96-7

b) August 10, 2023 Municipal Planning Commission Meeting

*Recommendation:*

*THAT the August 10, 2023 Municipal Planning Commission Meeting minutes be approved as presented*

*or*

*THAT the August 10, 2023 Municipal Planning Commission Meeting minutes be approved with the following amendment(s) (as noted at meeting time)*

#### 4. APPOINTMENTS/PUBLIC HEARINGS

Pg 8

9:45 a.m. (TBD) - Jody Smears and Krystal Creed – The Mad House Daycare Expansion – Request is tentative, dependent on the report to Council that will follow before meeting time

*Recommendation:*

*THAT Council accept the discussion with The Mad House Daycare for information*

*or*

*some other direction as given by Council at meeting time*

#### 5. FINANCIAL REPORTS – n/a

#### 6. POLICIES & BYLAWS

Pg 11-19

a) Policy C-WS-SEW-1 – Sanitary Sewer Lines - Blockages – A Request for Decision is attached

*Recommendation:*

*THAT Council approve the Policy C-WS-SEW-1 Sanitary Sewer Lines Blockages Policy as presented*

*or*

*some other direction as given by Council at meeting time*

Pg 20-25

b) Policy C-HUM-RES-1 – Respect in the Workplace– A Request for Decision is attached

*Recommendation:*

*THAT Council approve the Policy C-HUM-RES-1 Respectful Workplace Policy as presented*

*or*

*some other direction as given by Council at meeting time*

- Pg 26-34 c) Policy C-FIN-DAI-1– Donations and Issuing Official Income Tax Receipts – A Request for Decision is attached

*Recommendation:*

*THAT Council approve the Policy C-FIN-DAI-1 - Donations and Issuing Official Income Tax Receipts Policy as presented*

*or*

*some other direction as given by Council at meeting time*

## 7. ACTION ITEMS

- a) Mad House Day Care – A Request for Decision to follow before meeting time  
Ms. Smears may wish to speak to Council, depending on the report to Council

- Pg 35-36 b) 2023-2025 Proposed FCSS Agreement Amendment – A Request for Decision is attached

*Recommendation:*

*THAT Council authorize Administration to accept the proposed 2023-2025 FCSS agreement with the Province of Alberta.*

*or*

*some other direction as given by Council at meeting time*

- Pg 37-40 c) FCSS Round #2 – A Request for Decision is attached

*Recommendation:*

*THAT Council approve the 2023 FCSS Funding Round 2 amount of \$... towards the FCSS grant applicants in the attached 2023 FCCS Tracking Spreadsheet Round 2.*

P941-42

d) Little Village Daycare Playground Agreement – A Request for Decision is attached

Recommendation:

*THAT Council approve Little Village Daycare – NFP, the operator of a facility based childcare program licenced under the Early Learning and Child Care Act that requires outdoor play space for the children in its care, to utilize Shaul Park and Elks Park subject to the execution of an agreement.*

or

*some other other direction as given by Council at meeting time.*

P943-61

e) Safety Codes Council Audit Report 2023 – Town of Onoway – A Request for Decision is attached

Recommendation:

*THAT Council accept the Safety Codes Audit findings to be implemented before November 8, 2023.*

or

*some other direction as given by Council at meeting time*

P962-63

f) New Councillor Education Requirement and Opportunity – A Request for Decision is attached

Recommendation:

1) *THAT Council approve Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ to attend the Munis 101 Program through the Elected Officials Education Program with expenses to be reimbursed per policy.*

2) *THAT Council request Municipal Affairs attend in the region to deliver the Council Roles & Responsibilities training AND THAT the Town of Onoway participate with regional counterparts to share the cost of this training.*

or

*some other direction as given by Council at meeting time*

P964-66

g) Intent to Enter a New Agreement – A Request for Decision is attached

Recommendation:

*THAT Council of the Town of Onoway notify Fire Rescue International Ltd. of the Town's intent to continue contracted fire services beyond December 31, 2025 with Fire Rescue International Ltd., at this time.*

or

*some other direction as given by Council at meeting time*

Pg 67-70 h) 2024 ATCO Franchise Fees – A Request for Decision is attached

*Recommendation:*

*THAT Council approve setting the 2024 ATCO Gas Franchise fee at 10.50% for the year 2024, which is an increase of 0.50%.*

*or*

*some other direction as given by Council at meeting time*

Pg 71

i) Christmas Light Up Date – A Request for Decision is attached

*Recommendation:*

*THAT Council authorize Administration to begin planning for the Town's Light Up 2023 festivities to be held on Friday, November 24, 2023.*

*or*

*some other direction as given by Council at meeting time*

Pg 72-80

i) Audit Engagement – Metrix Group – A Request for Decision is attached.

*Recommendation:*

*THAT Council authorize Mayor Kwasny and CAO Thompson to sign the engagement letter authorizing Metrix Group LLP to be the 2023 named auditor*

*or*

*some other direction as given by Council at meeting time*

k)

l)

## **8. COUNCIL, COMMITTEE & STAFF REPORTS**

a) Mayor's Report

b) Deputy Mayor's Report

c) Councillor's Reports (x 2)

Pg 81

d) Chief Administrative Officer Report – written report attached

Pg 82  
Pg 83

- e) Corporate and Community Services Director's Report – written report attached
- f) Public Works Report – written report attached

*Recommendation:*

*THAT the Council, Chief Administrative Officer, Corporate and Community Services, Public Works and Committee written and verbal reports be accepted for information as presented*

*or*

*some other direction as given by Council at meeting time*

**9. INFORMATION ITEMS**

- Pg 84-120 a) Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) Report – Understanding and Responding to the Challenges Faced by FCSS Programs in Rural Alberta
- Pg 121 b) Summer Village of Birch Cove – August 29, 2023 letter from CAO Wildman advising of Councillor resignation and by-election results
- Pg 122 c) Summer Village of Sunrise Beach – August 28, 2023 letter from CAO Wildman advising of Councillor resignation and by-election results
- Pg 123-124 d) Town of Onoway Development Permit DP09-24 – Renovation of an existing commercial building – 4915 Lac Ste. Anne Trail South
- Pg 125-126 e) Alberta Health Services AHS – August 18, 2023 letter to municipal leaders from President Chies and Karen Horon regarding Lab Services in Alberta transitioning to Alberta Precision Laboratories
- Pg 127-129 f) September Towns West Update – September 7, 2023 email from Krista Gardner, AB Munis, Towns West

g)

*Recommendation:*

*THAT Council accept the above noted items for information*

**10. CLOSED SESSION**

- 1. Pursuant to Section 197(2) of the Municipal Government Act and Section 24(1)(a) "Proposals" (2 items for discussion)

2. Pursuant to Section 197(2) of the Municipal Government Act and Section 16(1)(c) "Disclosure harmful to business interests of a third party (Labour)"

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

## **12. UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| - September 27-29, 2023 – AB Munis            | Edmonton  |
| - October 12, 2023 – Regular Council Meeting  | 9:30 a.m. |
| - October 26, 2023 – Regular Council Meeting  | 9:30 a.m. |
| - November 9, 2023 – Regular Council Meeting  | 9:30 a.m. |
| - November 23, 2023 – Regular Council Meeting | 9:30 a.m. |
| - December 13, 2023 – Regular Council Meeting | 9:30 a.m. |

TOWN OF ONOWAY  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2023  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE ONOWAY CIVIC OFFICE AND ZOOM

	<b>PRESENT</b>	<p>Mayor: Lenard Kwasny  Deputy Mayor: Lisa Johnson  Councillor: Bridgitte Coninx  Councillor: Robin Murray</p> <p>Administration: Jennifer Thompson, Chief Administrative Officer  Gino Damo, Director of Corporate and Community Services  Debbie Giroux, Recording Secretary</p> <p>3 members of the public joined the meeting via Zoom</p>
1.	<b>CALL TO ORDER</b>	Mayor Lenard Kwasny called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and advised that the meeting will be recorded. Mayor Kwasny acknowledged that the meeting was being held on Treaty 6 Land.
2.	<b>AGENDA</b> <b>Motion #218/23</b>	<p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Robin Murray that Council adopt the agenda of the Regular Council meeting of Thursday, August 10, 2023 with the following additions:</p> <p>7g) Partners in Progress (requested by CAO Thompson)</p> <p>7h) Harvest Festival Invite from the Onoway and District Historical Guild (requested by CAO Thompson)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p>
3.	<b>MINUTES</b> <b>Motion #219/23</b>	<p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Bridgitte Coninx that the July 13, 2023 Regular Council Meeting minutes be approved as presented.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p>
4.	<b>APPOINTMENTS/PUBLIC HEARINGS</b>  <b>Motion #220/23</b>  <b>Motion #221/23</b>	<p>Tony Sonnleitner, Development Officer, attended the meeting at 9:35 a.m. for discussion of Development Permit 23DP06-24.</p> <p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Robin Murray that the Regular Council Meeting be suspended to accommodate the Municipal Planning Commission Meeting at 9:35 a.m.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p> <p><b>MOVED</b> by Deputy Mayor Lisa Johnson that the Regular Council meeting resume at 10:07 a.m.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p> <p>Council moved to item 7a) at 10:08 a.m.</p>



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**DRAFT**

7.	<p><b>ACTION ITEMS</b>  <b>Motion #222/23</b></p>	<p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Robin Murray that Council approve Development Permit Application 23DP05-24 for My Place of Beauty, subject to the applicant meeting the conditions recommended by the Development Officer.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p> <p>Tony Sonnleitner left the meeting at 10:12 a.m.</p> <p>Council moved to Agenda Item 5 at 10:12 a.m.</p>
5.	<p><b>FINANCIAL REPORTS</b></p>	<p>n/a</p>
6.	<p><b>POLICIES AND BYLAWS</b>  <b>Motion #223/23</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Motion #224/23</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Motion #225/23</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Motion #226/23</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Motion #227/23</b></p>	<p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Bridgitte Coninx that Council approve the Policy A-HUM-HAS-1 Health and Safety Policy as presented.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p> <p><b>MOVED</b> by Deputy Mayor Lisa Johnson that Bylaw 804-23, the Borrowing Bylaw, be given first reading.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p> <p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Robin Murray that Bylaw 804-23, the Borrowing Bylaw, be given second reading.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p> <p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Bridgitte Coninx that Bylaw 804-23, the Borrowing Bylaw, be considered for third reading at this meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY</b></p> <p><b>MOVED</b> by Deputy Mayor Lisa Johnson that Bylaw 804-23, the Borrowing Bylaw, be given third and final reading.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p>
7.	<p><b>ACTION ITEMS</b>  <b>Motion #228/23</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Motion #229/23</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Motion #230/23</b></p>	<p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Robin Murray that Council accept the Lac Ste. Anne Foundation Service Area Housing Needs Assessment for information.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p> <p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Bridgitte Coninx that Council cancel the Regular Council meeting of September 28, 2023.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p> <p><b>MOVED</b> by Deputy Mayor Lisa Johnson that Council request that the Darwell Lagoon Commission allow the Town of Onoway to be a member of the Regional Wastewater Committee and that Jennifer Thompson, Chief Administrative Officer be appointed to represent the Town of Onoway, as a technical resource.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p>

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	<b>Motion #231/23</b>	<b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Bridgitte Coninx that Council support CN's request by proclaiming the week of September 18-24, 2023 as Rail Safety Week.  <b>CARRIED</b>
	<b>Motion #232/23</b>	<b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Robin Murray that Council approve the use of the remaining \$49,815.00 of the Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) Grant through the Intermunicipal Collaboration Component stream towards the Economic Development project proposed by the Partners in Progress Steering Committee.  <b>CARRIED</b>
	<b>Motion #233/23</b>	<b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Robin Murray that Council accept the invitation from the Onoway and District Historical Guild to attend the Annual Harvest Festival on September 16, 2023 for information.  <b>CARRIED</b>
8.	<b>COUNCIL, COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS</b>	Public Works Manager Gary Mickalyk attended the meeting from 11:05 a.m. until 11:15 a.m.
	<b>Motion #234/23</b>	<b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Robin Murray that the Council, Chief Administrative Officer, Corporate and Community Services and Public Works written and verbal reports be accepted for information.  <b>CARRIED</b>
9.	<b>INFORMATION ITEMS</b>	
	<b>Motion #235/23</b>	<b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Robin Murray that Council accept the following items for information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Thank You Card to Council from the Onoway Centennial Committee</li> <li>b) Alberta Beach Councillor Resignation – July 20, 2023 letter from Kathy Skwarchuk, CAO</li> <li>c) Town of Onoway Development Permit 23DP07-24 – 5340 Lac Ste. Anne Trail South – Construction of a Commercial Building c/w variance to the siting requirements (rear yard at lot line)</li> <li>d) Town of Onoway Development Officer – Tony Sonnleitner August 10 Report</li> </ul>

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		<p>e) Yellowhead Regional Library – Letter from Karla Palichuk, Director, enclosing the 2022 Return on Investment (ROI) Statement for Onoway Public Library</p> <p>f) Recycling Council of Alberta – Circular Economy Conference – October 18-20, 2023 at the Chateau Lake Louise</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p>
10.	<p><b>CLOSED SESSION</b>  <b>Motion #236/23</b></p> <p><b>Motion #237/23</b></p> <p><b>Motion #238/23</b></p>	<p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Bridgitte Coninx, pursuant to Section 197(2) of the Municipal Government Act, Council move into a Closed Session at 11:15 a.m. to discuss the following items:</p> <p>Solicitor Client Privilege - Section 27(1)(a) FOIP</p> <p>Proposals – Section 24(1)(a) FOIP</p> <p>Disclosure Harmful to Personal Privacy – Section 17(1) FOIP</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p> <p>Council recessed from 11:15 a.m. to 11:17 a.m. to allow the Recording Secretary to leave the meeting.</p> <p><b>CLOSED SESSION:</b>  The following individuals were present for the Closed Session:  Mayor Lenard Kwasny  Deputy Mayor Lisa Johnson  Councillor Bridgitte Coninx  Councillor Robin Murray  Jennifer Thompson, CAO  Gino Damo, Director of Corporate and Community Services</p> <p>Council recessed from 12:05 p.m. to 12:07 p.m. to allow staff to return to the meeting.</p> <p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Bridgitte Coninx that Council move out of Closed Session at 12:07 p.m.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p> <p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Robin Murray that Administration proceed as directed in Closed Session in regard to Shared Services with Lac Ste. Anne County.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p>

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REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
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	<b>Motion #239/23</b>	<b>MOVED</b> by Bridgitte Coninx that Council accept the resignation of Kingsgate Legal as Integrity Commissioner.  <b>CARRIED</b>																					
	<b>Motion #240/23</b>	<b>MOVED</b> by Deputy Mayor Lisa Johnson that Council advise the owner of 4802 – 49 Street on March 24, 2022 that the municipality supports the response of the insurer of the municipality in regard to the flooding that occurred on March 24, 2022.  <b>CARRIED</b>																					
	<b>Motion #241/23</b>	<b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Bridgitte Coninx that Council approve the release of the drafted correspondence, with amendments, to the Onoway Taxpayers Association.  <b>CARRIED</b>																					
	<b>Motion #242/23</b>	<b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Robin Murray that Council approve a question to be voted on by the electors in accordance with the Municipal Government Act s. 236 as a non-binding question during the by-election (if required) on September 11, 2023 subject to validity under Municipal Government Act s. 232(2) and that the question shall be: "Are you in favour of the Town of Onoway conducting a forensic audit?"  <b>CARRIED</b>																					
<b>11.</b>	<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	As all matters on the agenda have been addressed, Mayor Lenard Kwasny declared the Regular Council Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.																					
<b>12.</b>	<b>UPCOMING EVENTS</b>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>September 14, 2023</td> <td>Regular Council Meeting</td> <td>9:30 a.m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>September 27-29, 2023</td> <td>AB Munis</td> <td>Edmonton</td> </tr> <tr> <td>October 12, 2023</td> <td>Regular Council Meeting</td> <td>9:30 a.m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>October 26, 2023</td> <td>Regular Council Meeting</td> <td>9:30 a.m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>November 9, 2023</td> <td>Regular Council Meeting</td> <td>9:30 a.m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>November 23, 2023</td> <td>Regular Council Meeting</td> <td>9:30 a.m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>December 14, 2023</td> <td>Regular Council Meeting</td> <td>9:30 a.m.</td> </tr> </table>	September 14, 2023	Regular Council Meeting	9:30 a.m.	September 27-29, 2023	AB Munis	Edmonton	October 12, 2023	Regular Council Meeting	9:30 a.m.	October 26, 2023	Regular Council Meeting	9:30 a.m.	November 9, 2023	Regular Council Meeting	9:30 a.m.	November 23, 2023	Regular Council Meeting	9:30 a.m.	December 14, 2023	Regular Council Meeting	9:30 a.m.
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Lenard Kwasny

\_\_\_\_\_  
Debbie Giroux  
Recording Secretary



TOWN OF ONOWAY  
MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF ONOWAY  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2023  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE ONOWAY CIVIC OFFICE

	<b>PRESENT</b>	<p>Mayor: Lenard Kwasny  Deputy Mayor: Lisa Johnson  Councillor: Bridgitte Coninx  Councillor: Robin Murray</p> <p>Administration: Jennifer Thompson, Chief Administrative Officer  Tony Sonneleitner, Development Officer  Gino Damo, Director, Corporate and Community Services  Debbie Giroux, Recording Secretary</p>
1.	<b>CALL TO ORDER</b>	CAO Thompson called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.
2.	<b>NOMINATIONS</b>	<p>CAO Thompson called for nominations for Chair.</p> <p>Councillor Robin Murray nominated Mayor Lenard Kwasny as Chair.</p> <p>CAO Thompson called for nominations for Chair for a second time.</p> <p>CAO Thompson called for nominations for Chair for a third time.</p> <p>CAO Thompson declared Mayor Kwasny as Chair.</p> <p>CAO Thompson called for nominations for Vice-Chair</p> <p>Councillor Robin Murray nominated Deputy Mayor Lisa Johnson as Vice-Chair.</p> <p>CAO Thompson called for nominations for Vice-Chair for a second time.</p> <p>CAO Thompson called for nominations for Vice-Chair for a third time.</p> <p>CAO Thompson declared Deputy Mayor Lisa Johnson as Vice-Chair.</p> <p>Mayor Kwasny assumed Chair of the meeting.</p>
3.	<b>AGENDA</b> Motion #001/23	<p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Bridgitte Coninx that Council approve the agenda of the Municipal Planning Commission meeting of August 10, 2023.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p>
4.	<b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b>	n/a
5.	<b>BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</b>	n/a
6.	<b>OLD BUSINESS</b>	None

TOWN OF ONOWAY  
MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF ONOWAY  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2023  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE ONOWAY CIVIC OFFICE

7.	<b>NEW BUSINESS</b>	<b>DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION 23DP06-24</b>
	<b>Motion #002/23</b>	<p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Bridgitte Coninx that the Municipal Planning Commission for the Town of Onoway deny Development Permit Application 23DP06-24, 5012 – 53 Avenue for the operation of a Home Occupation – specifically a Kennel - as it does not conform to Bylaw 712-13, the Land Use Bylaw.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p>
	<b>Motion #003/23</b>	<p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Bridgitte Coninx that properties within 100 metres of Parcel F Plan 946KS be notified of the proposed dog kennel and seek advice from these adjacent properties.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p> <p>As all items on the agenda have been addressed, Mayor Kwasny declared the meeting be adjourned at 10:07 a.m.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p>

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Lenard Kwasny

\_\_\_\_\_  
Debbie Giroux  
Recording Secretary

UNAPPROVED





## REQUEST TO APPEAR BEFORE COUNCIL AS A DELEGATION

Anyone wishing to be placed on an agenda to address Council may apply by submitting this form to the Recording Secretary before 12:00 p.m. on the Monday one week prior to the meeting. The request can either be a copy of this completed form or a separate letter that you have written outlining the topic of concern. You can submit the form in person at 4812-51 Street or Mail (Box 540, Onoway, AB T0E-1A0) or email: [debbie@onoway.ca](mailto:debbie@onoway.ca)

The Recording Secretary will contact you to confirm that you are on the agenda for the requested meeting date. Council meetings take place at 9.30 a.m. on the second and fourth Thursday of the month in the Council Chambers at 4812-51 Street (Town of Onoway Civic Center). Delegations are scheduled at the start of the meeting.

As a delegation you are limited to fifteen (15) minutes to present your material.

PREFERRED MEETING & DATE Council Meeting Date Requested: Sept. 14 / 2023

### APPLICANT NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Last Name: Smears	First Name <u>Jody</u>
Street Address: <u>5459 Lac Ste Anne Trail N</u>	City, Province, Postal Code <u>Onoway, AB T0E 1V0</u>
Primary Phone No: <u>780- [redacted]</u>	E-Mail: <u>[redacted]@com</u>

### NAME OF PRESENTERS/ORGANIZATION

1. <u>Jody Smears</u>	<b>Supporting documentation (optional)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Handouts at the meeting (please bring 10 copies and provide them to the Recording Secretary before the meeting begins) <input type="checkbox"/> Audio/Visual presentation (must be received in pdf, jpg or PowerPoint format to <a href="mailto:debbie@onoway.ca">debbie@onoway.ca</a> before 11:00 a.m. on the Thursday preceding the Meeting. Digital presentations are not accepted at the meeting. Phone 780-967-5338 for assistance)
2. <u>Krystal Creed</u>	
3. _____	

### SUBJECT AND PURPOSE OF PRESENTATION

Clearly outline the topic of your presentation:  
We would only like to have the opportunity to speak if we feel we need to expand on any important topics or details

List desired outcome of the presentation:  
To have a clear plan of action with The Town of Onoway in regards to the MAD House Daycare expansion.

<input type="checkbox"/> For Information	<input type="checkbox"/> Requesting Funds
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requesting Action	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (provide details): _____

See following page for Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (FOIP) information.



# Town of Onoway Request for Decision

Meeting:	<b>Council Meeting</b>
Meeting Date:	September 14, 2023
Presented By:	Gino Damo, Director of Corporate and Community Services
Title:	Sanitary Sewer Backup Policy

## BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL

During the December 19, 2018 Council Meeting, Council made the following motion regarding A-WS-SEW-1- Sanitary Sewer Lines - Blockages:

**MOVED** by Councillor Jeff Mackie that Council approve all the existing Town policies presented with the exception of the Human Resources Code of Conduct, Recruitment policy and the Tendering policy. These approved existing policies are:

- A-ADM-FAX-1 Fax and Photocopier Use Requests
- A-ADM-INFO-1 Dissemination of Information to the Public
- A-FIN-TAX-2 Tax Roll Name Change
- A-FIN-TRF-1 Tax Recovery Fees
- A-PW-PRIV-1 Work on Private Property
- A-TRA-PET-1 Animals in Town-Owned Vehicles
- A-WS-SEW-1 Sanitary Sewer Lines - Blockages
- C-CAO-PER-1 Chief Administrative Officer Performance Evaluation
- C-COM-PRE-1 Special Event Presentations
- C-COU-CHA-1 Use of Council Chambers
- C-COU-ITG-1 Notification of Council and Committee Mtgs
- C-COU-PAR-1 Public Participation
- C-COU-REM-1 Council Remuneration & Exp Reimbursement
- C-FIN-DCA-1 Disposal of Capital Assets
- C-FIN-PUR-1 Purchasing Policy
- C-TRA-ROA-1 Street Cleaning and Sanding
- A-ENV-SEW-1 Sewage Lagoon Access
- C-FIN-DOIN-1 Donation Requests
- C-FIN-TEN-1 Partial Plan Cancellation
- C-TRA-ROA-2 Road Closure Requests
- A-PRO-BYL-1 Bylaw Enforcement
- A-TRA-INS-1 Road Inspection and Maintenance

CARRIED

The purpose of the policy is to establish guidelines for staff concerning procedures dealing with the blockage of private sanitary sewer lines, as well as to outline to property owners the degree of involvement of the Town in issues concerning sewer blockage. Also, to minimize the impacts of wastewater service line disruptions.

The Town of Onoway owns and operates a sanitary sewer collection system consisting of trunk sanitary sewers, sanitary sewer mains, and sanitary sewer services from sewer mains to the property line.

## DISCUSSION / OPTIONS / BENEFITS / DISADVANTAGES

Administration proposes an update to A-WS-SEW-1 Sanitary Sewer Lines – Blockages. The update provides clarity and detailed information to property owners/residents relating to sewer lines blockages. Additionally, the update clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of the Town from both an operational and financial standpoint.

Although the policy is derived from municipal best practices it may not cover every situation that may arise regarding sanitary sewer line – blockages. Also, as part of the update Administration recommends to reclassify this policy from Administration's Policy (A in the policy number) to Council's Policy (C in the policy number) due to the possible significant financial implications of sewer blockages.

Administration recommends that the policy be reviewed every four years.



**STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

Fiscal Sustainability

Service Excellence

Sustainable Infrastructure

**COSTS / SOURCE OF FUNDING**

No financial impact to 2023 operational or capital budgets.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

1. That Council approve the Policy C-WS-SEW-1-Sanitary Sewer Lines - Blockages Policy as presented.
2. (Or some other direction as given by Council at meeting time).

**ATTACHMENTS**

- Draft Sanitary Sewer Lines - Blockages Policy - C-WS-SEW-1.
- Approved Sanitary Sewer Lines - Blockages Policy - A-WS-SEW-1 December 19, 2018.
- Sanitary Sewer Backup Policy Flow Chart.
- Sanitary Sewer Service Line Diagram.



# Town of Onoway

## Council Policy

Nistration

Number	Title			
C-WS-SEW-1	Sanitary Sewer Lines - Blockages			
Approval	Originally Approved		Last Revised	
	Resolution No:		Resolution No:	472/18
	Date:	April 10, 1995	Date:	Dec. 19, 2018
			Resolution No:	
			Date:	
			Resolution No:	
			Date:	

### Purpose

To establish guidelines for staff concerning procedures dealing with the blockage of private sanitary sewer services/lines, as well as to outline to property owners the degree of involvement of the Town in issues concerning sewer blockage. Also, to minimize the impacts of wastewater service line disruptions.

The Town of Onoway owns and operates a sanitary sewer collection system consisting of trunk sanitary sewers, sanitary sewer mains, and sanitary sewer services from sewer mains to the property line.

### Policy Statement

This Policy deals with the backup of sanitary sewer into private residences and businesses. It is intended to cover only sanitary sewer backup and is not applicable to the storm water drainage system.

### Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

- a) "Chief Administrative Office" means the Chief Administrative Officer as appointed by Council or the Chief Administrative Officer's designate.
- b) "Council" means the duly elected Council of the Town of Onoway, as defined by the Alberta Municipal Government Act.
- c) "Property Owner" means a person or an entity included in the classification of 'business and



government' (such as corporations, governments, sole proprietorships and partnerships, and other legal types) that has property title transferred to, recorded in, registered in, or otherwise carried in their name.

d) "Resident" means the occupant of the property.

e) "Town" means the Town of Onoway.

## **Service Standards/ Expectations**

The Town of Onoway owns and operates a sanitary sewer collection system consisting of trunk sanitary sewers, sanitary sewer mains, and sanitary sewer services from sewer mains to the property line.

The Town recognizes a responsibility to maintain this system such that it will carry away liquid wastes meeting the following criteria:

- a. No person shall discharge into the sanitary sewer any fat, grease, improperly shredded garbage, ashes, cinders, animal parts, or any other solid, or viscous substance capable of causing an obstruction to the flow of a sanitary sewer.
- b. The owner of any building or facility connected to the sanitary sewer collection system has a responsibility to ensure that any liquid waste discharged from their property line into the Town sanitary sewer system meets the criteria outlined above.

### **1. First Response**

- a. If a resident is experiencing sewage backup into their home, they should call the Public Works dept.
- b. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Town shall respond by investigating for free flow in the sanitary sewer mains.

### **2. Sanitary Sewer Mains**

- a. If no blockage is observed in the mains, the customer shall be instructed to contact a plumber certified in the Province of Alberta to open the service line, from the house cleanout to the Town's sanitary sewer main.
- b. If the sanitary sewer backup has its origins within the sanitary sewer main, the Town is responsible for all costs required to restore the sewer to proper operating conditions.
- c. Backups into basements are not the responsibility of the Town. Claims for compensations shall not be considered unless negligence can be proven on the part of the Town, its employees, or its authorized representatives.
- d. If the Town or its agents are proven negligent and have caused the backup, the Town may be responsible for all costs including those that occurred on private property.

- e. If any property owner incurs damages to a property or building due to a sanitary sewer main backup and the property owner wishes to claim compensation based upon the case of Town negligence, the property owner must submit a written claim to the Town's Insurance Company.

### 3. Sanitary Sewer Services - Private

If no problems are found with the sanitary sewer main, the Town will provide a copy of this policy to the property owner and shall advise the property owner:

- a. To obtain the services of a certified plumber to check the sanitary sewer service to determine the nature and type of blockage;
- b. If the blockage is located on private property (between the property line and the basement) the property owner is responsible for all costs associated with the sewer backup;
- c. Should the plumber provide evidence supporting a claim that the cause of the obstruction is from any fat, grease, improperly shredded garbage, ashes, cinders, animal parts, or any other solid, viscous substance capable of causing an obstruction to the flow of a sanitary sewer or any foreign object that entered the sewer service line from within the building, or tree roots on any section of the service line, the customer shall be responsible for the costs of the repair.
- d. Should the plumber provide video evidence supporting a claim that the obstruction is from anything other than any fat, grease, improperly shredded garbage, ashes, cinders, animal parts, or any other solid, viscous substance capable of causing an obstruction to the flow of a sanitary sewer or any foreign object that entered the sewer service line from within the building, or tree roots on any section of the service, the customer shall provide a video record of the obstruction to the Town. This video may be produced by a contracted service provider.
- e. If an investigation by the Town determines the obstruction is from anything other than any fat, grease, improperly shredded garbage, ashes, cinders, animal parts, or any other solid, viscous substance capable of causing an obstruction to the flow of a sanitary sewer or any foreign object that entered the sewer service line from within the building, or tree roots on any section of the service, the following protocols shall be adhered to:
  - i. Should the cause of the claim be determined to be situated on the portion of the service line from the sanitary main to the property line, the Town shall assume reasonable costs incurred by the customer for the opening of the sewer by the plumber. The Town will also assume costs of repair.
  - ii. Should the cause of the claim be determined to be situated on the portion of the service line from the property line to the residence the customer shall obtain the services of a private contractor to repair the service if necessary. The costs of any repair shall be assumed by the customer.
  - iii. Should no problem be detected or is caused by than any fat, grease, improperly shredded garbage, ashes, cinders, animal parts, or any other solid, viscous substance capable of causing an obstruction to the flow of a sanitary sewer or any foreign object that entered the sewer service line from within the building, or tree roots on any section

of the service line, the customer shall obtain the services of a private contractor to repair the service if necessary. The costs of service or repair shall be assumed by the customer.

- iv. Should the problem co-exist on private property and between the main and property line, the Town shall in its sole discretion determine a fair apportionment of the costs of repair between the Town and the customer.
  - v. A letter of acknowledgement to authorize the activity required to complete any custom services shall be in place prior to commencement of repair. This letter shall identify responsibility to pay as may be determined.
  - vi. Repairs made by the Town or on behalf of the Town by contracted services, pursuant to this policy, shall be invoiced as required to recover actual costs for the repair.
- f. A blockage within the owner's portion of the service line must be cleared to the Town's sewer main at the property owner's cost; and
- g. If the certified plumber is not successful in resolving the sewer problem within six hours of working on site, the property owner shall advise the Town. The Town will review with the plumber and property owner other options to consider.

#### 4. Sanitary Sewer Services – Town of Onoway

If the certified plumber determines the blockage is beyond the property line (between the property line and the sanitary sewer main) the following conditions will apply:

- a. If the blockage is caused by any fat, grease, improperly shredded garbage, ashes, cinders, animal parts, or any other solid, viscous substance capable of causing an obstruction to the flow of a sanitary sewer or any foreign object that entered the sewer service line from within the building, the property owner is responsible for all costs;
- b. If the blockage is caused by a collapsed or misaligned service line (greater than 25%) the Town will pay all costs to repair the sewer service, including the plumbing costs incurred by the property owner, to discover the cause of the problem (provided the Town was contacted by the property owner or certified plumber prior to work commencing). The Town will not be responsible for any clean-up of the basement for sewer that has backed up into the basement unless Town negligence can be demonstrated.

#### 5. Sewer Blockage Due to Root Build-up

- a. Root blockage of sanitary sewer mains shall be dealt with as per Section 2 dealing with Mains.
- b. Root blockage of a sewer service to the sewer main will be the responsibility of the property owner. The Town will assist in determining the most appropriate treatment for the problem. The allocation of repair/clean-up costs remain with the property owner unless the origin of the roots is from a tree within the Town.

**6. Town Assistance to Private Property Owners and Related Costs**

- a. If the property owner is unable to obtain the services of a plumber, the Town or its authorized representatives may undertake the work required and bill the property owner accordingly. Prior to commencement of any repairs, the property owner must authorize the work in writing and agree to the terms and conditions of this policy statement.
- b. Property owners are urged to consult a certified plumber regarding the installation of a backflow prevention valve on their sewer service if they feel there is unwarranted risk of flooding their basement.
- c. Property owners are encouraged to have adequate insurance coverage under their home owner policy for sewer backups.

**Attachments**

N/A

**Revisions:**

Resolution Number	MM/DD/YY

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# Town of Onoway

## Administrative Policy

Number	Title		
<b>A-WS-SEW-1</b>	<b>Sanitary Sewer Lines - Blockages</b>		
Approval	Originally Approved	Last Revised	
(CAO initials)	Resolution No:		Resolution No: 472/18
	Date:	April 10, 1995	Date: Dec. 19, 2018

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for staff concerning procedures dealing with the blockage of private sanitary sewer lines, as well as to outline to property owners the degree of involvement of the Town in issues concerning sewer blockage.

The Town of Onoway owns and operates a sanitary sewer collection system consisting of trunk sanitary sewers, sanitary sewer mains, and sanitary sewer services from those mains to the property line of any lot.

### Policy Statement

The Town of Onoway shall not be responsible for sanitary sewer line blockages on private property. The area from the sewer main to the residence shall be the responsibility of the property owner.

If it is determined that the blockage problem is on Town property and if the problem is determined to be roots located beneath Town property, then the Town shall be responsible for the repair costs from the main to the property line.

### Standards

The Town recognizes a responsibility to maintain this system such that it will carry away liquid wastes meeting the following criteria:

1. No person shall discharge into the sanitary sewer any fat, grease, improperly shredded garbage, ashes, cinders, animal parts, or any other solid, or viscous substance capable of causing an obstruction to the flow of a sanitary sewer.
2. The owner of any building or facility connected to the sanitary sewer collection system has a responsibility to ensure that any liquid waste discharged from their property line into the Town sanitary sewer system meets the criteria outlined above.

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# Town of Onoway

## Administrative Policy

3. Any blockage of a sanitary sewer line caused by the discharging of any inappropriate or prohibited item or substance is to be unplugged at the expense of the property owner. The owner will be responsible for the unplugging of blocked sewer service if the blockage is within the building, from the building to the property line, or from the property line to the sanitary sewer main if the blockage is a direct result of, or is determined to have initiated on, something on private property. The unplugging of a blocked sanitary sewer caused by tree roots from trees located on private property is considered to be the responsibility of the property owner.

**Legal References:**

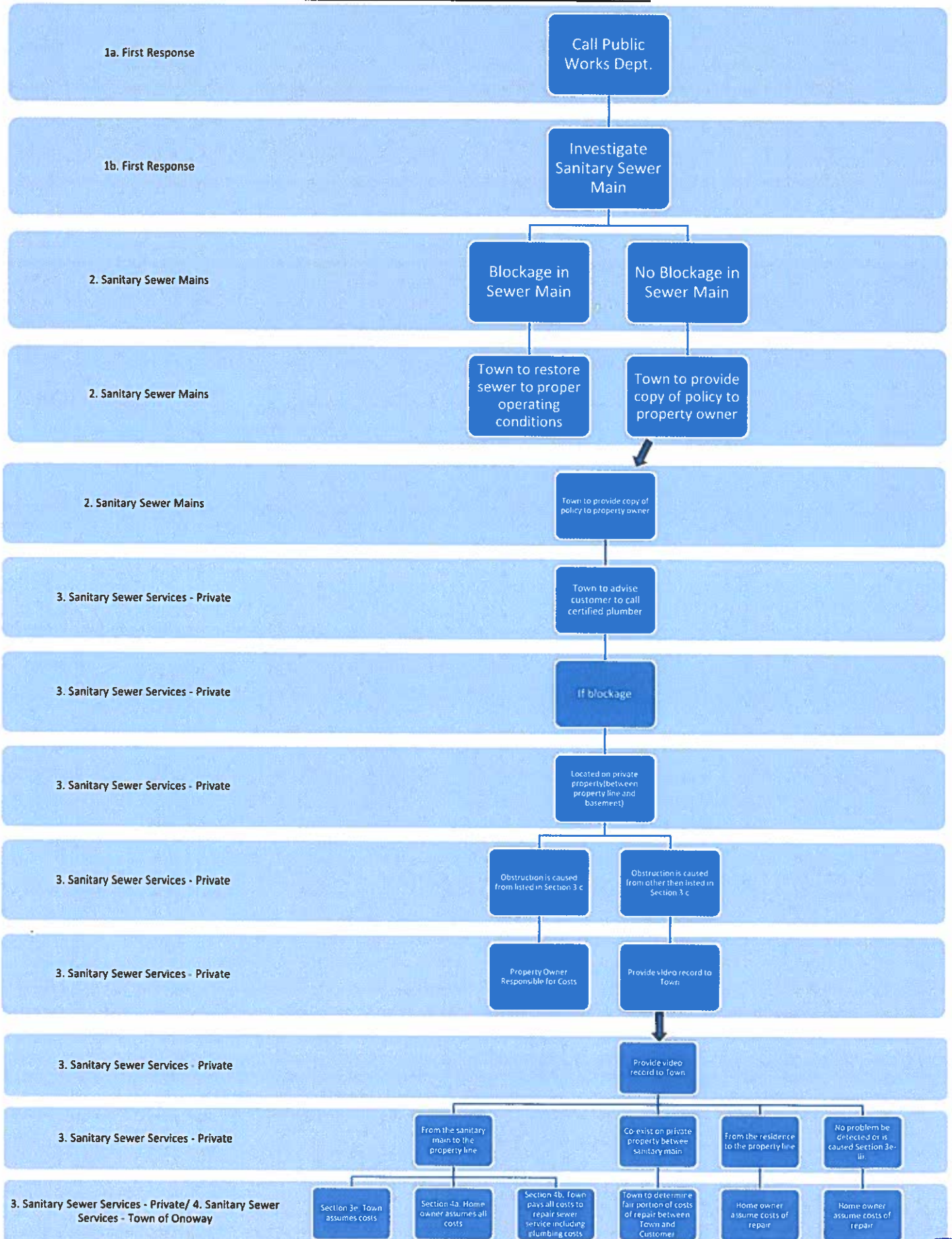
**Cross References:**

**Revisions:**

Resolution Number	MM/DD/YY



# Sanitary Sewer Backup Policy Flow Chart





Source: Strathcona County Website <https://www.strathcona.ca/your-property-utilities/water-and-sewer/wastewater/wastewater-services/>





## Town of Onoway Request for Decision

Meeting:	<b>Council Meeting</b>
Meeting Date:	September 14, 2023
Presented By:	Gino Damo, Director of Corporate and Community Services
Title:	Respect in the Workplace Policy

### **BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL**

All employees and Council members in the workplace have a right to work in an environment free from violence, harassment, and discrimination. The Town of Onoway recognizes the dignity and worth of every employee and Council member, and to that end believes in providing and maintaining a work environment in which all employees and Council members are free from workplace violence, harassment, and discrimination.

This policy applies to all Council members, Managers, Supervisors, Employees/Workers, Consultants and Contractors and covers all forms of violence, harassment, and all forms of discrimination prohibited under human rights legislation.

### **DISCUSSION / OPTIONS / BENEFITS / DISADVANTAGES**

Administration proposes a Respect in the Workplace policy C-HUM-RES-1. The purpose of the policy is to clearly define responsibilities and procedures to create and maintain a violence, harassment, and discrimination free workplace for all Town Council members, Managers, Supervisors, Employees/Workers, and Consultants and Contractors working for the Town.

Administration recommends that the policy be reviewed every four years.

### **STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

Good Governance  
Service Excellence

### **COSTS / SOURCE OF FUNDING**

No financial impact to 2023 operational or capital budgets.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

1. That Council approve the Policy C-HUM-RES-1- Respect in the Workplace Policy as presented.
2. (Or some other direction as given by Council at meeting time).

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- Draft Respect in the Workplace Policy - C-HUM-RES-1.



# Town of Onoway

## Administrative Policy

Number	Title			
C-HUM-RES-1	<b>Respect in the Workplace</b>			
Approval	Originally Approved		Last Revised	
(CAG 2018)	Resolution No:		Resolution No:	
	Date:		Date:	
			Resolution No:	
			Date:	
			Resolution No:	
			Date:	

### Purpose

Town of Onoway (the "Town") recognizes the dignity and worth of every employee and Council member, and to that end believes in providing and maintaining a work environment in which all employees and Council members are free from workplace violence, harassment, and discrimination. This policy applies to all employees and Council members and covers all forms of violence, harassment, and all forms of discrimination prohibited under human rights legislation.

### Policy Statement

All employees and Council members in the workplace have a right to work in an environment free from violence, harassment, and discrimination. In order to accomplish the Town's goal of promoting a violence, harassment, and discrimination free environment, the Town hereby establishes the following guidelines:

- a) The Town will not tolerate violent, harassing, or discriminatory behaviour from employees, non-employees (i.e., contractors, consultants, co-op students, agency employees, interns, volunteers), Council members and members of the public, visitors, or any others that attend at the workplace; and
- b) Every employee, non-employee (i.e., contractors, consultants, co-op students, agency employees, interns, and volunteers), Council member and member of the public or visitor conducting affairs at the Town's workplace shall be made aware of this policy, and the Town

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shall make every attempt to communicate its commitment to a violence, harassment, and discrimination free workplace.

Retaliation or reprisals are prohibited against any individual who has complained under this policy, or has provided information regarding a complaint. Any retaliation or reprisals are subject to immediate corrective action, up to and including termination for cause. Alleged retaliation or reprisals are subject to the same complaint procedures and penalties as complaints of violence, discrimination, and harassment.

The Town recognizes that individuals may find it difficult to come forward with a complaint under this policy because of concerns of confidentiality. Therefore, all complaints concerning workplace violence, harassment, or discrimination, as well as the names of parties involved, shall be treated as confidential to the furthest extent possible in law. The Town's obligation to investigate the alleged complaint may require limited disclosure. As it pertains to violence, where the Town believes there to be imminent danger to an employee, it may divulge such confidential information as is reasonably necessary. No record of the complaint will be maintained on the personnel file of the complainant. At the conclusion of each complaint process, all related documentation will be maintained for safe keeping in a confidential manner by the Chief Administrative Officer in the related "Respect in The Workplace" file.

## Definitions

**"Workplace"** means any place where business or work-related activities are conducted. It includes, but is not limited to, the physical work premises, work-related social functions (social events, golf games, etc.), work assignments outside the Town's office, work-related travel, and work-related conferences or training sessions.

**"Discrimination"** means the differential treatment of an individual based on race, sex, colour, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, same-sex partnership status, sexual orientation, age, disability, citizenship, family status or marital status, creed, gender identity or gender expression or any other factor that is legislatively protected ("Prohibited Grounds").

**"Harassment"** means any single incident or repeated incidents of objectionable or unwelcome conduct, comment, bullying or action by a person that the person knows or ought reasonably to know will or would cause offence or humiliation to an employee, or adversely affects the employee's health and safety, and includes

**"Violence"** whether at a work site or work-related, means the threatened, attempted, or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical or psychological injury or harm, and includes domestic or sexual violence.

## Scope

This policy applies to all Council members, Managers, Supervisors, Employees/Workers, Consultants, and Contractors.

## Responsibilities

Each and every employee or Council member is responsible for creating and maintaining a violence, harassment, and discrimination free workplace. All employees and Council members are requested to report promptly when they become aware of alleged actions or complaints of violence, discrimination, or harassment. This includes a responsibility for employees and Council members to report any alleged actions or complaints of domestic violence that occur outside the workplace and that may create a risk of danger to themselves or others in the workplace. Supervisors are responsible for providing a workplace that is free from violence, harassment, and discrimination. This responsibility includes actively promoting a positive work environment and intervening when problems occur.

The Town will provide training to its employees and Council members which will include a review and explanation of this policy and its procedures, as well as a description of the Town's expectations of employees and Council members relative to their behaviour in the workplace. This training will include the following:

- a) The recognition of violence and harassment,
- b) The policies, procedures, and workplace arrangements that the employer has developed and implemented to eliminate or control the hazards of violence and harassment,
- c) The appropriate response to violence and harassment, including procedures for obtaining assistance, and
- d) The procedures for reporting, investigating and documenting incidents of violence and harassment.

## Complaint Procedure

### Step 1 - Self-Help

Employee or Council members are encouraged to attempt to resolve their concerns by direct communication with the person(s) engaging in the unwelcome conduct. Where employees or Council members feel comfortable in doing so, communicate disapproval in clear terms to the person(s) whose conduct or comments are offensive. Keep a written record of the date, time, details of the conduct, and witnesses, if any.

### Step 2 - Management Support and Intervention

Employees or Council members who are not comfortable with step one (1) and who believe they are victims of violence, discrimination, or harassment, or become aware of situations where such conduct may be occurring, are encouraged to seek advice from and report these matters to the CAO or his/her designate.

### Step 3 - Formal Complaint

If informal attempts at resolving the issue are not appropriate, or proving to be ineffective, a formal complaint may be filed. To file a formal complaint:

- i. Provide a letter of complaint that contains a brief account of the offensive incident (i.e., when it occurred, the persons involved, and names of witnesses, if any). The letter shall also include the remedy sought and be signed and dated by the person complaining;
- ii. File the complaint with the CAO or his/her designate; and
- iii. Cooperate with those responsible for investigating the complaint.

Formal complaints shall be investigated. The investigation process shall involve interviews of the complainant, the respondent, and any witnesses named by either. Depending on the circumstances, the Town reserves the right in its sole and exclusive discretion to suspend the respondent with or without pay during the investigation. Generally, within ten (10) business days of the incident or notice thereof, the individual responsible for the investigation shall investigate the incident and may prepare a written report of the investigation findings. A report will be kept on file for a period of two (2) years from the date of the incident. The complainant and the respondent (if he or she is an employee or Council member of the Town) shall be informed in writing of the results of an investigation and of corrective action that has been taken or will be taken as a result of the investigation.

Disciplinary action for violations of this policy will take into consideration the nature and impact of the violations, and may include a verbal or written reprimand, a suspension (paid or unpaid), or termination of employment for cause as determined by the Town (where applicable). Similarly, deliberate false accusations are of equally serious nature and will also result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment for cause. Note, however, that an unproven allegation does not mean that the conduct did not occur or that there was a deliberate false allegation. It may simply mean that there was an insufficient evidentiary basis to proceed.

For greater clarity, if the alleged respondent is a member of the senior management team (i.e., the CAO), you should file your formal complaint with the mayor. If the alleged respondent is a member of Council, you should file your formal complaint with Council. Further, any respondent(s), regardless of their position within the Town, will be excluded from administering and managing the investigation and resolution process (save and except for their involvement as a respondent).

This policy is not intended to discourage an employee from exercising rights pursuant to any other law, including the Alberta Human Rights Act.

### **Complaints Against Third Parties**

The Town recognizes that an employee or Council member may be subject to violence, harassment, or discrimination by members of the public or by others who conduct business with the Town. An employee or Council member who believes that he or she has been subjected to such conduct by a person who does not work for the Town may seek the advice of his/her direct Manager who will take whatever action is appropriate in the circumstances.

### **Victim Support**

The Town recognizes that victims may require emotional support and reassurance. The Town will ensure that victims, as well as others exposed to discrimination, harassment, or violence, are advised to consult a health professional of their choice for treatment or referral.

## Program Evaluation and Review

The Town will engage in a program evaluation process to monitor the effectiveness of its policy and procedures. Given that the purpose of this policy and procedure is to minimize the occurrence of workplace discrimination, harassment or violence and establish an environment of non-tolerance to workplace discrimination, harassment or violence, the process will be evaluated against that measure.

A review will take place on the earliest of the following:

- a) When an incident of harassment, violence or discrimination occurs;
- b) If the joint health and safety committee or the health and safety representative, if applicable, recommends a review of the plan;
- c) Every four (4) years.

## Attachments

N/A

## Revisions:

Resolution Number	MM/DD/YY





## Town of Onoway Request for Decision

Meeting:	<b>Council Meeting</b>
Meeting Date:	September 14, 2023
Presented By:	Gino Damo, Director of Corporate and Community Services
Title:	Donations and Issuing Official Income Tax Receipts Policy

### **BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL**

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines and definitions when the Town of Onoway receives donations/gifts. This policy applies where an income tax receipt is requested for donations/gifts and also will clarify when and how receipts for income tax purposes will be issued.

### **DISCUSSION / OPTIONS / BENEFITS / DISADVANTAGES**

Administration proposes a Donations and Issuing Official Income Tax Receipts Policy C-FIN-DAI-1. It is necessary to establish a policy for handling donations/gifts to ensure that the Town of Onoway appropriately accounts for the donations/gifts and adheres to the guidelines as set out in the Canadian Income Tax Act.

The Town of Onoway may accept donations/gifts as prescribed by the Canada Revenue Agency as it is considered a registered qualified donee effective January 1, 2012.

Administration recommends that the policy be reviewed when there is a significant change in the Canadian Income Tax Act or regulations to this Act.

### **STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

Good Governance  
Service Excellence  
Financial Sustainability

### **COSTS / SOURCE OF FUNDING**

No financial impact to 2023 operational or capital budgets.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

1. That Council approve the Policy C-FIN-DAI-1- Donations and Issuing Official Income Tax Receipts Policy as presented.
2. (Or some other direction as given by Council at meeting time).

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- Draft Donations and Issuing Official Income Tax Receipts Policy - C-FIN-DAI-1.



# Town of Onoway

## Council Policy

Nistration

Number	Title		
C-FIN-DAI-1	Donations and Issuing Official Income Tax Receipts		
Approval	Originally Approved	Last Revised	
	Resolution No:	Resolution No:	
	Date:	Date:	
		Resolution No:	
		Date:	
		Resolution No:	
		Date:	

### Purpose

To provide a policy for receiving donations/gifts and issuing income tax receipts. This policy applies where an income tax receipt is requested for donations/gifts. This policy will clarify when and how receipts for income tax purposes will be issued.

### Policy Statement

The Town of Onoway may accept donations/gifts as prescribed by the Canada Revenue Agency as it is considered a registered qualified donee.

It is necessary to establish a policy for handling donations/gifts to ensure that the Town of Onoway appropriately accounts for the donations/gifts and adheres to the guidelines as set out in the Canadian Income Tax Act.

### Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

- a) "Advantage" means the total value at the time the donation/gift is made, of all property, services, compensation, or other benefits that a person is entitled to receive in relation to the donation/gift. The advantage may be conditional or receivable in the future, either by the donor or a person or partnership not dealing at arm's length with the donor.

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- b) "Appraisal" means the process by which the fair market value of the property being transferred by way of a donation/gift is determined.
- c) "Appraiser" means the person who determines the fair market value of the property and who is competent and qualified to evaluate the particular property being transferred by way of a donation/gift.
- d) "Arms Length" means A term that describes the relationship between persons who act independently of each other or who are not related. An arm's length transaction is generally a transaction that reflects ordinary commercial dealings between parties acting in their separate interests. See the definition for Non-Arm's Length for the criteria used by the courts to determine whether parties to a transaction are not dealing at arm's length.
- e) "Asset" means a capital asset as defined in the Town's Tangible Capital Asset Policy.
- f) "Canada Revenue Agency" means a Canadian federal agency that administers tax laws for the Government of Canada and for most provinces and territories, and administers various social and economic benefit and incentive programs delivered through the tax system.
- g) "Chief Administrative Officer" means the Chief Administrative Officer as appointed by Council or the Chief Administrative Officer's designate.
- h) "Council" means the duly elected Council of the Town of Onoway, as defined by the Alberta Municipal Government Act.
- i) "Donation" Also referred to as a "Gift".
- j) "Donor" means an individual or corporation making the donation/gift. Normally, this is the party who should receive the tax receipt.
- k) "Eligible Donee" means an organization receiving the donation/gift. In order to issue a tax receipt, an eligible donee must be a registered charity that:
- Is not subject to a suspension of tax-receipting privileges;
  - Is not subject to a security certificate under the Charities Registration (Security Information) Act;
  - Has no unpaid liabilities under the Income Tax act or the Excise Tax Act;
  - Has filed all of its information returns;
  - Has more than half of its directors/trustees at arm's length with each of the directors/trustees of the charity gifting to it.
- l) "Fair Market Value" means the value of the property on the date the property is donated to the Town, as determined by an independent appraiser or qualified Town staff. This represents the dollar value at which the property would change hands between a willing buyer and a willing seller, neither being under any compulsion to buy or sell, and both having reasonable knowledge of the relevant facts.
- m) "Gift" means a voluntary transfer of property, either in the form of cash or gift-in-kind, from the

donor to the Town without valuable consideration to the donor. Also referred to as a "Donation".

- n) "Gift-In-Kind" means a gift of property, other than cash, that has an ascertainable fair market value at the date of donation.
- o) "Nominal Value" means the fair market value of the benefit of the donation/gift that does not exceed the lesser of \$75 or 10% of the fair market value of the donation/gift.
- p) "Non-Arm's Length" means that the following criteria will be used by the courts to determine whether parties to a transaction are not dealing at arm's length:
  - Whether there is a common mind which directs the bargaining for the parties to a transaction;
  - Whether the parties to a transaction act in concert without separate interests; "acting in concert" means, for example, that parties act with considerable interdependence on a transaction of common interest; or
  - Whether there is de facto control of one party by the other because of, for example, advantage, authority or influence.

It is not required that all three tests be satisfied in every case. In any particular case, any one or more of the criteria may be of greater or lesser importance in the determination of whether the parties are dealing at arm's length.

- q) "Official Town Event" means an event hosted by the Town.
- r) "Property" means any tangible item that a person or business has legal title over. Property must have inherent monetary or potential value and provide a benefit to the Town of Onoway.
- s) "Qualified Town Employee" means a Town employee possessing the knowledge, expertise and experience to evaluate the property being donated.
- t) "Related Persons" means individuals who are related to each other by blood, marriage or common law partnership, or adoption. Related persons also include individuals or groups and the corporations in which they have a controlling interest. Persons related to these individuals or groups are also considered related to those corporations.

The Income Tax Act deems related persons to not be dealing at arm's length with each other.

- u) "Town" means the Town of Onoway.
- v) "Without Expectation of Return" means no benefit of any kind may be provided to the donor or to anyone designated by the donor, except where the benefit is of nominal value.

## Service Standards/ Expectations

### 1. General Rules

- a. No individual or organization shall solicit funds in the name of or on behalf of the Town without the approval of the Chief Administrative Officer or Council unless they are doing so on behalf of an Official Town Event.
- b. To have a valid donation/gift, there must be an intention to give, a delivery and an acceptance. As there must be an acceptance by the qualified donee, a donation is not completed until it is accepted.
- c. The transfer is made without the expectation of return.
- d. No benefit of any kind may be provided to the donor or anyone designated by the donor, except where the benefit is of nominal value. The benefit is considered "nominal value" where its fair market value does not exceed the lesser of \$75 or 10% of the amount of the donation/gift.
- e. Donations/gifts must be for the purposes consistent with the Town of Onoway's mandate, programs, services and activities and be in the public interest of the Municipality.
- f. Town of Onoway cannot accept donations/gifts from individuals or organizations currently in litigation with the Town of Onoway.

### 2. Qualifying Donations/Gifts

- a. Cash;
- b. Capital, real or depreciable property;
- c. Personal-use property or items such as art, furniture, equipment, or materials of historical interest;
- d. Donations made under a valid will.

### 3. Non-Qualifying Donations/Gifts

- a. Contributions of skills or time or donations of a service through volunteer service.
- b. When a donor requests that the donee pay for a portion of the donation/gift, no tax receipt will be issued.
- c. Donations/gifts that have a direct benefit to the donor or any relative of the donor will not receive a tax receipt.

- d. Donations/gifts made in exchange for consideration of a right, privilege, material benefit or advantage, such as promotions or advertising for the donor's purpose, do not qualify for income tax credits under the Income Tax Act and no receipts can be issued. In other words, sponsorship.
- e. The CRA regulations on donations/gifts where the donor's company name, logo, slogan, or address/phone number is listed in promotional material would not qualify.

#### 4. Issuance of Receipts

- a. Upon the confirmation that the donation/gift is in compliance with this policy, the Chief Administrative Officer shall issue an official tax receipt for income tax purposes.
- b. All requests for tax receipts must be accompanied by appropriate donor and donation/gift information, as outlined in point 4(e).
- c. Income tax receipts shall be issued for donations/gifts of \$25.00 or more, unless specifically requested by the donor and approved by the CAO
- d. Donations/gifts cannot be returned once an official tax receipt has been issued.
- e. Include the following information in the official pre-numbered receipt:
  - Identification of an official receipt for income tax purposes;
  - Town of Onoway name and address;
  - Unique serial number;
  - Registration number issued by the CRA;
  - Location where the receipt was issued (city, town, municipality);
  - Day and year the donation/gift was received;
  - Date the receipt was issued;
  - Full name, including middle initial, and address of donor;
  - Amount of the gift;
  - Amount and description of any advantage received by the donor;
  - Eligible amount of the donation/gift;
  - Signature of the person authorized by the Town to issue receipts;
  - Name and website address of the CRA;
  - If the donation is a gift-in-kind, the receipt must also include:
    - Date the donation/gift was received;
    - Brief description of the donation/gift received;
    - Name and address of the appraiser (if the gift was appraised).
- f. Receipts shall indicate the year the donation/gift was actually received. If a donation/gift is dated, mailed, and postmarked in one year and received in the next year (e.g., dated December 27 and received January 7), the Town may issue a receipt indicating the year on the postmark as the date it received the donation/gift, but must keep the stamped envelope as part of its records.
- g. The CRA ultimately determines the value of the donation/gift which is permitted for tax deduction.

## 5. Replacing Lost or Damaged Receipts

- a. Replacement receipt shall contain the same information as the original receipt, plus a notation to the effect that it cancels and replaces Receipt #. The Town's copy of the lost receipt shall be retained, marked as cancelled and cross-referenced with the number of the replacement receipt.
- b. If a receipt is damaged at the time of preparation, all copies of the receipt must be kept and marked as cancelled. Another receipt can be prepared.

## 6. Accounting for Donations of Money

- a. For cash donations, the receipt must be made out to the person delivering the donation/gift.
- b. All cheque donations will be required to have been cleared by the Town's financial department prior to the issuance of a tax receipt. The receipt will be made out to the same name and address appearing on the cheque or form of payment.
- c. Cheques, money orders and bank drafts should be made out to The Town of Onoway. No third-party cheques will be accepted.

## 7. Accounting for Donations of Gifts-In-Kind

- a) The Town of Onoway will only issue official tax receipts for gift-in-kind donations where the donation provides a clear benefit to the Town of Onoway.
- b) The value placed on gift-in-kind items will be determined by the item's fair market value.
- c) Valuation of fair market value should be based on an arm's length sale and purchase of similar property at or near the same date. A minimum of one appraisal is required to be completed by a qualified dealer, appraiser or other knowledgeable individual who is familiar with the market for the object or property.
- d) If the item is valued at \$1,000 or less, a Town employee qualified to make the appraisal for such items may complete an appraisal of the item.
- e) If the item is valued at more than \$1,000, outside appraisals are required, unless there is a ready market for the item from which a fair market value can be ascertained. The average of these appraisals shall be used to determine the fair market value of the item.
- f) The receipt shall be in the amount of the average appraised value. The receipt shall also indicate a description of the object and the name and address of the appraiser(s), and shall be dated the day on which the Town received the donation/gift.

## 8. Acceptance of Donations / Gifts

- a) The Town may elect to accept or decline any donation/gift. If it is not accepted, the donor shall be advised of the reason.
- b) Upon acceptance of the donation/gift, it will be transferred to the Town and will become the property of the Town of Onoway. The insurance, storage, ongoing maintenance, and scheduling of use will be at the discretion of the CAO.
- c) In the event the donor has indicated a specific use by the Town of their donation/gift, such donation/gift shall, to the extent reasonably feasible, be assigned to a project consistent with the donor's desired use.

## 9. Associated Costs

- a) Unless otherwise agreed upon by the Town, the donor may be responsible for any of the following costs (where applicable):
  - i) Transporting the item;
  - ii) Appraisal or evaluation by an independent certified agency;
- b) Where the Town agrees to incur any of the above costs, these costs will be expensed to the appropriate department.

## 10. Financial Implications

- a) Prior to accepting a donation/gift, an understanding of any potential financial impacts to the Town should be considered. Some of the financial one-time or ongoing costs to consider could include:
  - i) Cost of project implementation;
  - ii) Installation and timeline of the work;
  - iii) Restoration;
  - iv) Booking and scheduling related expenses;
  - v) Insurance, licencing, and fees;
  - vi) Ongoing operating costs, such as maintenance or storage.

## 11. Policy Review

- a) This policy shall be reviewed when there is a significant change in the Canadian Income Tax Act or regulations to that Act.

## Attachments

N/A



**Revisions:**

Resolution Number	MM/DD/YY

(34)



## Town of Onoway Request for Decision

**Meeting:** Council Meeting  
**Meeting Date:** September 14, 2023  
**Presented By:** Gino Damo, Director of Corporate and Community Services  
**Title:** 2023-2025 Proposed FCSS Agreement Amendment

### BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL

The Family & Community Support Services or FCSS program is an 80/20 funding partnership between the Government of Alberta and participating municipalities or Metis settlements.

The Town of Onoway's total annual FCSS funding is \$34,453. Of this total amount, the Town of Onoway receives \$27,562 (80% of total funding) from the province while the town contributes \$6,891 (20% of total funding).

### DISCUSSION / OPTIONS / BENEFITS / DISADVANTAGES

Recently the Town received an amendment to the 2023-2025 agreement in the form of an increase to the total annual FCSS funding. Below are the 2023-2025 proposed amendments to the agreement in comparison to the current agreement:

#### Proposed

Funding Category	2023	2024	2025	Amending Agreement Totals
Provincial Funding	\$28,492.22	\$28,802.29	\$28,802.29	\$86,096.80
Minimum Mun/Metis Settlmt Contribution	\$7,123.06	\$7,200.57	\$7,200.57	\$21,524.20
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$35,615.28</b>	<b>\$36,002.86</b>	<b>\$36,002.86</b>	<b>\$107,621.00</b>

#### Current

Funding Category	2023	2024	2025	Funding Agreement Totals
Provincial Funding	\$27,562.00	\$27,562.00	\$27,562.00	\$82,686.00
Minimum Mun/Metis Settlmt Contribution	\$6,891.00	\$6,891.00	\$6,890.00	\$20,672.00
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$34,453.00</b>	<b>\$34,453.00</b>	<b>\$34,452.00</b>	<b>\$103,358.00</b>

In 2023, the proposed increase is approximately 3.38% or \$930.22 to the provincial portion and approximately 3.37% or \$232.06 to the municipal contribution.

For 2024 & 2025, the proposed increase is approximately 4.50% or \$1,240.29 to the provincial portion and approximately 4.49% or \$309.57 to the municipal contribution.

If Council chooses to approve the proposed amendment the increase will be provided in the Q4 payment.

### **STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

Financial Sustainability

Good Governance

### **COSTS / SOURCE OF FUNDING**

2023 operating budget:

GL 1-51-00-840 - F.C.S.S. PROV. CONDITIONAL GRANT - Increase to \$28,492.22 from approved amount of \$27,562.00.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

- That Council authorize Administration to accept the proposed 2023-2025 FCSS agreement with the Province of Alberta.
- (Or some other direction as given by Council at meeting time).

### **ATTACHMENTS**

N/A



## Town of Onway Request for Decision

Meeting:	<b>Council Meeting</b>
Meeting Date:	September 14, 2023
Presented By:	Gino Damo, Director of Corporate and Community Services
Title:	2023 Family & Community Support Services (FCSS) Applications Round 2

### **BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL**

During the May 24, 2023 Council meeting, Council made the following Motion #171/23 regarding 2023 Round 1 FCSS funding.

**MOVED** by Councillor Robin Murray that FCSS funding totaling \$24,830.00 be allocated as follows:

- Onway United Church Thrift Store Volunteer Appreciation Dinner - \$1,380.00
- Northern Gateway Public Schools National Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration for Onway Schools - \$500.00
- Onway and District Quilt Guild Onway Quilts 2023 Show - \$500.00
- Onway and District Historical Guild Fall Harvest Festival - \$750.00
- Onway Public Library Storytime and Craft Takeaway Kits - \$1,500.00
- Cherished Memories Parents and Tots Annual Program - \$1,000.00
- Lac Ste. Anne East End Bus Society Seniors In Motion 2023 - \$1,000.00
- Onway Community Care Meals On Wheels - \$1,000.00
- Onway Golden Club 2023 Seniors Christmas Dinner - \$500.00
- Onway Facility Enhancement Association Annual Seniors Tea, Halloween Event and Kids Christmas Party - \$2,200.00
- Town of Onway Centennial Event - \$12,500.00
- LSAC Home Support and Preventative Counselling - \$2,000.00

**CARRIED**

During the June 8, 2023 Council meeting, Council made the following Motion #190/23 regarding the 2023 FCSS Application from Chateau Lac Ste. Anne Residence Council:

### **Motion #190/23 – June 8, 2023 meeting**

**MOVED** by Councillor Robin Murray that Council approve Chateau Lac Ste. Anne Residence Council 2023 FCSS Grant amount request of \$1,000.00 for Bloomin' Seniors.

**CARRIED**

### **DISCUSSION / OPTIONS / BENEFITS / DISADVANTAGES**

Administration is bringing forward Round 2 Family & Community Support Services (FCSS) Applications for 2023. It is important to note that Administration is only bringing forward requests made by application.

Tri-Village Committee Round 1 and 2 approved funding amounts is provided along with Lac Ste Anne County request and approved amounts.

Town of Onoway Centennial Event requested amount of \$12,500 was approved by Council in Round 1. The Centennial Event has since completed and resulted in an FCSS fundings surplus of approximately \$1,547; this is calculated within the attached 2023 FCSS Tracking Spreadsheet for Round 2.

The remaining 2023 FCSS funding amount for Round 2 is \$10,170.22. This amount includes the surplus amount of \$1547 mentioned above.

If Council approves the proposed FCSS funding increase, the remaining 2023 FCSS funding amount for Round 2 is \$11,332.50.

**STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

Service Excellence  
Good Governance

**COSTS / SOURCE OF FUNDING**

2023 operating budget.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

That Council approve the 2023 FCSS Funding Round 2 amount of \$.... towards the FCSS grant applicants in the attached 2023 FCCS Tracking Spreadsheet Round 2.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- 2023 FCSS Tracking Spreadsheet Round 2.
- 2019-2022 Town of Onoway FCSS Funding.



2023 FCSS Applications

Organization Name	Project/Program Name	Expected Project/Program Completion Date	Town of Onoway						Lac St Anne County		Tri-Village		Total Funding Approved	Notes
			Round 1 May 24 & June 8			Round 2 September 14			Lac St Anne County Funding Amount Requested	Lac St Anne County Approved Funding Amount	Tri-Village Funding Amount Requested	Tri-Village Approved Funding Amount		
			Council Meeting Date Presented	Application Funding Amount Requested	Council Funding Amount Approved (May 24, 2023)	Council Meeting Date Presented	Application Funding Amount Requested (After Round 1 Approval)	Council Funding Amount Approved (September 14, 2023)						
Onoway United Church Thrift Store	Volunteer Appreciation Dinner	May 26, 2023	May 24, 2023	\$ 1,380.00	\$ 1,380.00			\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,380.00		
Grasmere School Programs	Volunteer Lunches	June 5, 2023	May 24, 2023	\$ 600.00	\$ -			\$ -	\$ -	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00	Tri-Village Committee has given \$600 or 100% of requested amount.	
Northern Gateway Public School	National Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration for Onoway Schools	June 21, 2023	May 24, 2023	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 500.00	September 14, 2023	\$ 500.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,500.00	Tri-Village Committee has given \$1000 or 50% of requested amount. LSAC provided no funding.	
Onoway & District Quilt Guild	Onoway Quilts 2023	June 24, 2023	May 24, 2023	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 500.00	September 14, 2023	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500.00	As per letter, last year applied for \$2,050 and was approved by Council however declined \$1050 as this portion was applicable in 2023 and accepted \$1,000.	
Alberta Beach & District Seniors Citizen's Club	Life Members Lunch	August 13, 2023				September 14, 2023	\$ 600.00							
Onoway & District Historical Guild	Fall Harvest Festival	September 16, 2023	May 24, 2023	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 750.00			\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 1,000.00	Tri-Village Committee has given \$250 or 25% requested amount. LSAC providing up to \$2,000 in donation/sponsorship, pending submission of final report.	
Alberta Beach and District Museum and Archives Society	Penny Carnival	September 31, 2023	May 24, 2023	\$ 500.00	\$ -			\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	Tri-Village Committee has given \$500 or 100% of requested amount.	
Alberta Beach and District Museum and Archives Society	Seniors Tea	September 31, 2023				September 14, 2023	\$ 300.00							
Lac Ste Anne Foundation	Natural Gas Barbeque	October 16, 2023				September 14, 2023	\$ 1,099.99							
Alberta Beach & District Seniors Citizen's Club	Christmas Design Workshop	December 2, 2023				September 14, 2023	\$ 800.00							
Onoway Junior/Senior High School Parent Council//DEPA	Anchor Club/Breakfast Nook	December 15, 2023				September 14, 2023	\$ 2,550.00							
Alberta Beach & District Seniors Citizen's Club	Annual Christmas Dinner & Dance	December 16, 2023				September 14, 2023	\$ 1,000.00							
Alberta Beach & District Lions Club	Lion's Christmas Hampers	December 16, 2023				September 14, 2023	\$ 1,200.00			\$ 1,200.00			Town of Onoway gave \$2500 in 2022.	
Onoway & District Agricultural Society	Free Community Ice Use Programming/Volunteer Drive Program	December 20, 2023				September 14, 2023	\$ 6,200.00							
Onoway Public Library	Storytime & Craft Takeaway Kits	December 31, 2023	May 24, 2023	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 1,500.00			\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	Tri-Village Committee has allocated \$1000 or 40% of requested amount.	
Cherished Memories Parents and Tots	Annual program	December 31, 2023	May 24, 2023	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,000.00			\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 4,500.00	Tri-Village Committee has given \$2000 or 50% requested amount. Requesting \$2000 from Town of Onoway. LSAC provided \$2000 for direct payment of facility rent.	
Lac St. Anne East End Bus Society	Seniors In Motion 2023	December 31, 2023	May 24, 2023	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 1,000.00	September 14, 2023	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 12,500.00	\$ -	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 3,500.00	Tri-Village Committee has given \$2500 or 38% requested amount. LSAC has not released funds but anticipate full allocation of \$12,500 will be provided, pending submission of final report.	
Family and Community Twinning Society	FACTS Tri-Smart Summer Program (Onoway)	December 31, 2023	May 24, 2023	\$ 26,500.00	\$ -			\$ -	\$ -	\$ 26,500.00	\$ -	\$ -		
Onoway Community Care	Meals On Wheels	December 31, 2023	May 24, 2023	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,000.00	September 14, 2023	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00		
Chateau Lac Ste Anne	Blooming Seniors	December 31, 2023	May 24 & June 8, 2023	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00			\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	Table for more information.	
Onoway Golden Club	2023 Seniors Christmas Dinner	December 31, 2023	May 24, 2023	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 500.00	September 14, 2023	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	LSAC provided \$500 pending submission of final report. LSAC also provided \$3000 in Recreation Funding.	
Onoway Facility Enhancement Association	Annual Seniors Tea, Halloween Event & Kids Christmas Party	December 31, 2023	May 24, 2023	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 2,200.00			\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,200.00		
Town of Onoway	Centennial Event	December 31, 2023	May 24, 2023	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 12,500.00	September 14, 2023	\$ (1,547)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,500.00	\$10,000 2023 Allocation. \$2,500 for promotional material.	
Grasmere School Programs	Leadership Lunches	December 31, 2023	May 24, 2023	\$ 640.00	\$ -			\$ -	\$ -	\$ 640.00	\$ 640.00	\$ 640.00		
Lac St. Anne County	Home Support & Preventative Counselling	December 31, 2023		\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00			\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00	The invoice for the first quarter for Town of Onoway residents was \$390, all of which was Home Support Subsidy.  Home Support Subsidy for April was \$130, which will be invoiced to the Town at the end of the 2nd quarter along with May & June subsidies. Currently have no new Town of Onoway Home Support application nor any requests for the Preventative Counselling Subsidy from Town residents.  LSAC recommends estimating \$500 per quarter or \$2000 for the year. Last year \$4000 was for Home Support only.	
Onoway Moms and Tots c/o Tracy Alden	Annual program	December 31, 2023						\$ -	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00	LSAC provided \$2000 for direct payment of facility rent. Currently no submission of FCSS Application to the Town of Onoway.	
Onoway Health & Wellness	2023 Children's Fair Event	December 31, 2023						\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	No submission of FCSS Application to the Town of Onoway.	
St. John the Divine Anglican Church	Onoway Elementary Lunch and Snack Program	December 31, 2023				September 14, 2023	\$ 1,680.00							
<b>2023 Allocation</b>	Total for Round 1			\$ 64,820.00	\$ 25,830.00	Total	\$ 18,882.77	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 9,500.00	\$ 44,940.00	\$ 7,490.00	\$ 42,820.00		
\$	<b>34,453.00</b>	Surplus/(Shortfall)		\$ (30,367)	\$ 8,623		\$ (10,260)							
						New Round 2 Applications	\$ 15,428.99							
						Round 1 Carry forward	\$ 3,452.78							

TOWN OF ONOWAY	Paid (Y/N)	Pay Date	2022 Amount Paid	2021 Allocation	2020 Allocation	2019 Allocation
EAST END BUS	Y	May 10, 2022	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 800.00
MEALS ON WHEELS (HAZEL BOURKE)	Y	May 10, 2022	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 260.00
ONOWAY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL GUILD	Y	May 10, 2022	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
CHRISTMAS PARTY (SHELIA DOKA)	Y	May 10, 2022	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
HERITAGE DAYS - HERITAGE SOCIETY	Y	May 10, 2022	\$ 4,000.00			
LSAC HOME SUPPORT PROGRAM	Y	May 10, 2022	\$ 468.00			
RIDE FOR MOM	Y	May 10, 2022	\$ 500.00			
CHATEAU (SENIORS) - LSAC?	Y	June 8, 2022	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
QUILT CLUB	Y	June 8, 2022	\$ 800.00			
Alberta Beach & District Lions Club	Y	November 2, 2022	\$ 750.00			
Alberta Beach & District Lions Club	Y	November 2, 2022	\$ 3,000.00			
Alberta Beach Seniors Club	Y	November 2, 2022	\$ 600.00			
Onoway Facility Enhancement Association (OFEA)	Y	November 2, 2022	\$ 2,200.00			
Onoway Library	Y	November 2, 2022	\$ 2,900.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
ODAS	Y	November 2, 2022	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 4,500.00
ONOWAY MOM AND TOTS	Y	November 2, 2022	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
ONOWAY GOLDEN CLUB	Y	November 2, 2022	\$ 350.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
ONOWAY FACILITY (ONOWAY HALL)	Y	December 20, 2022	\$	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 2,200.00
Onoway Parents Educational Fundraising Association (OPEFA)	Y	December 21, 2022	\$ 675.00			
ODAS	Y	December 21, 2022	\$ 1,900.00			
FOOD BANK	Y	December 21, 2022	\$ 807.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
ONOWAY GOLDEN CLUB	Y	December 21, 2022	\$ 150.00			
Onoway Santa's Helpers	Y	December 7, 2022	\$ 1,085.05			
BEAUTIFICATION	N			\$ 1,145.06	\$ -	\$ 500.00
CADETS	N			\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
CURLING CLUB LITTLE ROCKS	N			\$ 500.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
DARTS	N			\$ -	\$ -	\$ 450.00
ODAS FARMERS MARKET - LSAC?	N			\$ 275.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
FISH N' GAME	N			\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 850.00
GIRL GUIDES	N			\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
LEGION	N			\$ 1,000.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
ONOWAY HERITAGE TRAIL COMMITTEE	N				\$ -	\$ 500.00
ONOWAY HIGH SCHOOL	N			\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00
ONOWAY PARENTS ELEMENTARY	N			\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00
SCOUTS	N			\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
PLAYSCHOOL	N				\$ -	\$ 2,900.00
ADULT VOLLEY BALL	N			\$ -	\$ 225.05	\$ 225.05
SUMMER PROGRAMS	N			\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,500.00
YOUTH GROUP THE FOUNDRY	N			\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
ONOWAY SKATING CLUB	N			\$ 750.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ -
TOWN OF ONOWAY SOUND SYSTEM	N			\$ 199.99		
LIBRARY CHRISTMAS PARTY	N			\$ 900.00	\$ 900.00	\$ 900.00
SENIOR WISH LIST	N			\$ 425.00		
PLAYSCHOOL AND OUT OF SCHOOL CARE	N			\$ 1,000.00		
TOWN OF ONOWAY LIGHT UP	N			\$ 1,100.00		
CHRISTMAS DINNER SHELIA DOKA - #2	N			\$ 500.00		
HERITAGE TREE BURNING	N			\$ 500.00		
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT APPRECIATE MEAL	N			\$ 3,000.00		
CENTENNIAL (100 YEARS)	N					
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$ 32,445.05</b>	<b>\$ 26,125.05</b>	<b>\$ 29,285.05</b>
<b>CARRY OVER</b>				<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 3,160.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
Total FCSS Money Left to spend			BY VALUE!	\$ -	\$ 3,160.00	\$ -
<b>TOTAL FCSS MONEY AVAILABLE:</b>				<b>\$ 29,285.05</b>	<b>\$ 32,445.05</b>	<b>\$ 29,285.05</b>





## Town of Onoway Request for Decision

**Meeting:** Council Meeting  
**Meeting Date:** September 14, 2023  
**Presented By:** Jennifer Thompson, Chief Administrative Officer  
**Title:** Little Village Daycare Playground Agreement

### BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL

In September 2021 Little Village Daycare approached the Town of Onoway in regard to usage of Shaul Park as a condition of outdoor space for licensing. Little Village Daycare, is now expanding and the expansion is a non-profit entity. They are seeking an agreement with the Town of Onoway to utilize Shaul Park & Elk's Park.

### DISCUSSION / OPTIONS / BENEFITS / DISADVANTAGES

Council provided approval to support Little Village Daycare to use Shaul Park after their presentation of August 5, 2021 that Council had no objections to the daycare using Shaul Park and Playground area, along with Elks Park and Playground area, on a daily basis.

The following was recorded in the minutes of August 5, 2021.

<b>4.</b>	<b>APPOINTMENTS/PUBLIC HEARINGS</b>	<p>Ashley Steinkey arrived for the meeting at 10:28 a.m. to discuss their new daycare business and use of Shaul Park. Ms. Steinkey noted for their business license they need to show access to an outdoor play space and inquired about both Shaul Park and Elks Park.</p>
	<b>Motion #304/21</b>	<p><b>MOVED</b> by Councillor Mickle that the Town of Onoway provide a letter granting permission (or no objection) to the Little Village Daycare to utilize both Shaul Park and Elks Park for their daycare business subject to no concerns being received from the Town's insurance provider, and noting in this letter that both parks will remain public parks and accessible to the general public at all times.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p>
	<b>Motion #305/21</b>	<p><b>MOVED</b> by Mayor Tracy that the Town follow up on the possible requirement to ensure all playgrounds are fully enclosed when next to a cul de sac.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CARRIED</b></p>
		<p>Ms. Steinkey left the meeting at 10:58 a.m.</p>

The Town of Onoway's insurance provider requested a simple agreement indemnifying the Town of Onoway when allowing Little Village Daycare to utilize the playground spaces. This agreement was drafted by legal Counsel and authorized to reduce liability



of the Town of Onoway. The same agreement is being proposed to be authorized by Council to assist the expansion of Little Village Daycare, accommodating families in Onoway with licensed childcare.

Earlier in 2023, Ms. Steinkey had requested this administration enclose Shaul Park with chain link fence. This was not in the approved 2023 capital budget however will be presented to Council in deliberations for 2024. Council did pass a resolution as noted above.

**STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

Good Governance  
Service excellence

Economic & Business Growth

**COSTS / SOURCE OF FUNDING**

N/A

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

- 1) THAT Council approve Little Village Daycare – NFP, the operator of a facility based childcare program licenced under the *Early Learning and Child Care Act* that requires outdoor play space for the children in its care, to utilize Shaul Park and Elks Park subject to the execution of an agreement.

OR

Any other direction provided by Council.



## Town of Onoway Request for Decision

Meeting:	<b>Council Meeting</b>
Meeting Date:	September 14, 2023
Presented By:	Jennifer Thompson, Chief Administrative Officer
Title:	Safety Codes Audit Results

### **BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL**

Safety Codes Council conducted an audit of the Town of Onoway's management of the Safety Codes Act the end of May 2023.

Safety Codes Council completes an audit of the overall quality management of accredited municipalities, administration of permitting and inspection services which is provided to the Town of Onoway by The Inspections Group, ensuring certification and practices of safety codes officers and permit issuers, as well as the administration of safety codes fees and levies.

### **DISCUSSION / OPTIONS / BENEFITS / DISADVANTAGES**

There are improvements to be made based on the audit findings from the Safety Code Council. Staff will ensure implementation prior to the deadline of November 8, 2023.

Staff are working with The Inspections Group to ensure that description of work are complete and detailed as well as collection and maintain accurate construction design documents.

### **STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

Service Excellence

### **COSTS / SOURCE OF FUNDING**

NONE.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

That Council accept the Safety Codes Audit findings to be implemented before November 8, 2023.

Or

Any other action Council chooses.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Town of Onoway – Audit2023 Mailed August 11, 2023.

**From:** Cristian Nadeau <[Cristian.Nadeau@safetycodes.ab.ca](mailto:Cristian.Nadeau@safetycodes.ab.ca)>  
**Sent:** August 11, 2023 9:32 AM  
**To:** [cao@onoway.ca](mailto:cao@onoway.ca)  
**Cc:** Mark Brodgesell <[Mark.Brodgesell@safetycodes.ab.ca](mailto:Mark.Brodgesell@safetycodes.ab.ca)>  
**Subject:** Safety Codes Council Audit Report (BEPG) 2023 – Town of Onoway

Good morning Jennifer

Please find attached the Safety Codes Council Audit Report (BEPG) 2023 for the Town of Onoway. Also, please note that a copy of this report has been posted to the organization's Council Connect account.

If you have any questions regarding the Executive Summary or Audit Report, you may contact Mark Brodgesell at 780-4998957 or by return email to [mark.brodgesell@safetycodes.ab.ca](mailto:mark.brodgesell@safetycodes.ab.ca).

Thank you,

**Cristian Nadeau**  
Audit Manager  
Safety Codes Council | [safetycodes.ab.ca](http://safetycodes.ab.ca)  
desk 780.392.1371 | toll-free 1-888-413-0099

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# Safety Codes Council

August 10, 2023

Jennifer Thompson  
QMP Manager  
Town of Onoway  
BOX 540  
Onoway AB T0E 1V0

RE: Safety Codes Council Audit of the Building, Electrical, Plumbing and Gas Disciplines for the Period of:  
March 1, 2022 to February 28, 2023

As you are aware, the Safety Codes Council (the "Council") conducted an audit of the Town of Onoway's management of the *Safety Codes Act* in the building, electrical, plumbing and gas disciplines from May 29, 2023 to June 2, 2023. The audit has been completed and filed with the Council. An executive summary of the audit, along with a copy of the report, is included for your reference and use.

We would appreciate receiving your comments and action plans to address the observations and recommendations included in the executive summary no later than **November 8, 2023**.

On behalf of the Council, I thank the Town of Onoway and staff for their cooperation. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Cristian Nadeau  
Audit Manager

Direct: 780.392.1371

Email: [Cristian.Nadeau@safetycodes.ab.ca](mailto:Cristian.Nadeau@safetycodes.ab.ca)

Enclosures

cc: Peter Burrows, Administrator of Accreditation, Safety Codes Council

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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August 2023

Town of Onoway (BEPG)

The Safety Codes Council (the "Council"), in administering its responsibilities and duties under the *Safety Codes Act*, audits the provision of permitting and inspection services by accredited municipalities. Audits assess the administration and delivery of these services to ensure they are consistent with the terms and conditions of the municipality's Quality Management Plan, the *Safety Codes Act*, and *Act's* regulations.

The process is intended to assist accredited municipalities with meeting the requirements of their accreditation and enhancing or refining the services provided to Albertans. Overall, the audits help provide an objective and unbiased assessment of performance, effectiveness, and risk associated with the broader provincial safety codes system.

The Council audit process takes the following into consideration:

- overall quality management of accredited municipalities;
- administration of permitting and inspection services provided by accredited municipalities under their approved Quality Management Plan;
- certification and practices of safety codes officers and permit issuers;
- processes supporting the issuance of orders or variances and the delivery of other safety codes services; and
- administration of safety codes fees and levies.

This audit was conducted on May 29, 2023 to June 2, 2023 focusing on the Town of Onoway's (the "Municipality") accreditation in the building, electrical, plumbing and gas disciplines for the period of March 1, 2022 to February 28, 2023. The audit took the following into consideration:

- previous audit of the Municipality's building, electrical, plumbing and gas accreditations;
- open and closed safety codes permits available under this audit;
- inspections available under this audit; and
- roles and responsibilities of those who provide services in these disciplines.

The auditors found some items requiring corrections which recommendations for implementation are included in this report.

Please note, recommendations of the auditor and/or Council's representative are to be implemented by the municipality as defined by the Quality Management Plan. Where recommendations are made, actions are required. Suggestions, however, provide guidance from the auditor to improve current processes, documents, etc.

Following is a summary of the observations from the audit:

## 1. PERMIT ADMINISTRATION

### Permit Applications/Permit Information

Based on the permit applications and issued permits reviewed, the information required, requested or collected as part of the permitting process is regularly captured or provided. Of the permits reviewed, there were:

- cases where the permit was missing the complete or correct description of the work/project.

*Recommendation: The Municipality will ensure that all permit applications and documents contain the required information to process the permit, including a complete and accurate description of the work.*

## 2. CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENT REVIEW

This review was always completed within 15 days of permit issuance and most of the documents were found on file. Construction documents were received prior to building permit issuance; however, there was:

- one case where the construction drawings submitted were not intended for permit or construction, and
- one case in the building discipline where the required professional involvement, drawings and schedule letters were not received and maintained prior to conducting the final inspection and closing the file.

*Recommendation: The Municipality will collect and maintain on file all construction design documents and letters of compliance required in accordance with the National Building Code when overall professional architect and/or engineer involvement is required for the work covered under a permit.*

The auditors concluded that the Municipality, its staff, and contracted accredited agency are providing services in the building, electrical, plumbing, and gas disciplines with integrity and reasonableness in meeting with the intent of the *Safety Codes Act* and the approved Quality Management Plan.

The Municipality indicated support from management and elected officials towards safety codes operations and its commitment to improvements. We thank the Town of Onoway for its commitment to safety and its involvement and support in conducting this audit. We look forward to working with you in the future.

## **SAFETY CODES COUNCIL**



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**Cristian Nadeau**  
Audit Manager



Safety Codes Council  
Audit

# Town of Onoway

Respecting the administration of the *Safety Codes Act*  
under Accreditation Orders 2540, 2541, 2543 and 2542  
for building, electrical, plumbing and gas disciplines.

— AUDIT PERIOD: March 1, 2022 to February 28, 2023 —

Audit Date:

May 29, 2023 to June 2, 2023

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# SAFETY CODES COUNCIL AUDIT

## 1.0 OVERVIEW

### 1.1 ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

The Town of Onoway (the "Municipality") is a community of over 966 people, encompassing an area of 346 hectares, and located 68 kilometres NW of Edmonton.

### 1.2 MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)

Quality Management Plan Manager: Jennifer Thompson

### 1.3 AUDIT TEAM

Audit Lead: Mark Brodgesell

Auditor(s): Don Kuziw

### 1.4 AUDIT HISTORY

The previous audit of the Municipality's safety codes operation was conducted by the Safety Codes Council (the "Council") in August, 2017 for the period of June 1, 2016 to May 31, 2017.

The Municipality has demonstrated a strong commitment to the administration of the safety codes operation within its jurisdiction by addressing the observations from the previous audit and implementing initiatives to continue improving its safety codes operations.

### 1.5 FILE SELECTION PARAMETERS

The Council selected the following number of files for the period under audit:

STATUS	FILE TYPE	NUMBER OF FILES AVAILABLE	NUMBER OF FILES SELECTED
Open	Permits - Building	2	2
	Permits - Electrical	1	1
	Permits - Plumbing	1	1
	Permits - Gas	0	0
	<i>TOTAL</i>	4	4
Closed	Permits - Building	16	5
	Permits - Electrical	30	5
	Permits - Plumbing	4	4
	Permits - Gas	16	5
	<i>TOTAL</i>	66	19

## **2.0 SCOPE AND ADMINISTRATION**

### **2.1 SCOPE OF ACCREDITATION**

The Municipality holds accreditation to administer the *Safety Codes Act* in the building, electrical, plumbing, and gas disciplines. The Municipality's service delivery matches the scope of accreditation as per the approved Quality Management Plan that was in place for the period being audited.

### **2.2 QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN ADMINISTRATION**

#### **Overall Administration**

The Municipality demonstrated an understanding of its responsibilities for ensuring compliance with the Quality Management Plan as an accredited organization. The Municipality's Quality Management Plan Manager assisted with the audit.

#### **Delivery of Safety Codes Services**

Through interviewing the Municipality's representative, the auditors were assured that sufficient personnel are available to meet obligations and respond to the workload as required by the Quality Management Plan.

The Municipality does maintain an atmosphere that supports objective and unbiased decisions. All safety codes officers working for the Municipality have the ability and opportunity to independently make decisions relative to compliance monitoring, without undue influence.

#### **Contracted Accredited Agency**

The Municipality has a signed contract with the accredited agency The Inspections Group Inc. on file. The contract was effective on May 30, 2018 and will continue on an annual basis until either party terminates the agreement.

### **2.3 PERSONNEL**

The Municipality currently employs safety codes officers in the electrical, plumbing, and gas disciplines, through the agency. The municipality uses the contracted agency safety codes officers to provide support and vacation relief as required.

The agency's safety codes officers are certified and have their designation of powers to carry out the provisions of the Quality Management Plan.

#### **Declaration of Status**

Based on the files reviewed, the auditors found no evidence of conflict of interest with the agency's safety codes officers in respect to the services provided under the Quality Management Plan, including being the owner, contractor, or designer of projects where they also provided compliance monitoring.

#### **Registry of Safety Codes Officers and Permit Issuers**

The Municipality does maintain a registry of the contracted agency's safety codes officers designated under its accreditation to provide safety codes services pursuant to its Quality Management Plan. The Municipality's representative confirmed that the registry of the agency's safety codes officers is up to date.

## **Training and Professional Development**

The Municipality's representative provided assurance that all Agency safety codes officers have attended the update training and development as required by the Council to maintain certification and competency. This was further confirmed through reviewing the Council's records.

The Municipality also ensured that other personnel/employees involved in the administration of its accreditation remain current and up to date on the *Safety Codes Act* and its regulations, their responsibilities in administering the Municipality's accreditation, and the contents of its Quality Management Plan.

### **2.4 QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN ACCESS**

The Municipality does ensure that all staff, safety codes officers, permit issuers, and contracted personnel performing duties under the *Safety Codes Act* are aware of the content of the Quality Management Plan and any revisions and have access to a copy of the plan. The Municipality does maintain a list of individuals that have been provided with a copy of its Quality Management Plan.

### **2.5 TRAINING ON THE CONTENTS OF THE QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Municipality does train personnel involved in the administration of its accreditation and the delivery of safety codes services on the contents and requirements of its Quality Management Plan. The Municipality does maintain a record of personnel who have received this training.

### **2.6 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

The Municipality's representative is aware that all information collected under the *Safety Codes Act* is subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

### **2.7 RECORDS**

The Municipality does maintain a file system for all records associated with permitting and inspection services.

The Quality Management Plan outlines that files and records will be retained for a period no less than three years, or for a period prescribed by the Council policy, or in accordance with the Municipality's record retention policy, whichever is greater.

Through interviewing the Municipality's representative, the auditors determined that the building, electrical, plumbing, and gas files are returned from the agency on a monthly basis and retained for a minimum period of 3 years, then archived to the property file. The records retention process employed by the Municipality meets the intent of the Quality Management Plan.

### **2.8 COUNCIL LEVY**

The Municipality's Quality Management Plan states that the Municipality will collect the Council levy for each permit issued under the *Safety Codes Act* and remit those levies to the Council.

The contracted agency currently collects and remits levies on behalf of the Municipality. The auditor confirmed through a review of Council records that the agency is remitting levies monthly.

## **2.9 QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENTS AND REVISIONS**

The Quality Management Plan was updated in 2019 with an in-force date of September 23, 2019. No changes or updates have been submitted to the Administrator of Accreditation since.

## **2.10 ANNUAL INTERNAL REVIEW**

The Quality Management Plan requires accredited municipalities to conduct an annual internal review to evaluate the effectiveness of the administration of its accreditation and compliance to its Quality Management Plan and provide the Council with a summary of all the findings of the review, identified successes, and areas for improvement.

The Municipality has conducted and submitted to the Council its annual internal review for the year 2022 in the building, electrical, plumbing and gas disciplines.



### **3.0 OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

#### **3.1 SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The Municipality, through the accredited agency, have a program of permit issuance, plans examination (when applicable), site inspection, follow-up inspections or verification of compliance, and file closure. Certified and designated safety codes officers provide compliance monitoring in accordance with the *Safety Codes Act*.

While some improvements are recommended, the auditors found that the Municipality, through the accredited agency under contract, has a well-established safety codes operation. The staff demonstrated integrity and a strong commitment to providing services in accordance with the *Safety Codes Act* and the Quality Management Plan.

#### **3.2 ORDERS/VARIANCES**

The Municipality has safety codes officers at the appropriate level through its contracted agency who may issue orders and variances in accordance with the *Safety Codes Act*.

There were no orders of compliance or alternative solutions/variances reported under this audit.

#### **3.3 PERMIT ADMINISTRATION**

##### **Permit Applications/Permit Information**

The Quality Management Plan requires that certain information be collected as part of the permitting process such as the applicant's, owner's, and contractor's contact information; description of the work to be undertaken; the permit issuer's name, signature, and designation number; and an advisory respecting the collection/use of this information and compliance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Based on the permit applications and issued permits reviewed, the information required, requested or collected as part of the permitting process is regularly captured or provided. Of the permits reviewed, there were:

- cases where the permit was missing the complete or correct description of the work/project.

*Recommendation: The Municipality will ensure that all permit applications and documents contain the required information to process the permit, including a complete and accurate description of the work.*

##### **Permit Terms and Conditions**

The Municipality is tracking closed permit files and meeting with the safety codes officers when those files are returned to the municipal office. The Municipality, through its current agency, uses eSITE to issue permits.

During the audit, the auditors understood that the Municipality will be regularly reviewing permit files with its agency and addressing any gaps in compliance monitoring that exceed the permit terms and conditions or the Permit Regulation, Sec. 25.

### **3.4 CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENT REVIEW**

A construction document review is required as per section 4.1 of the Quality Management Plan.

This review was always completed within 15 days of permit issuance and most of the documents were found on file. Construction documents were received prior to building permit issuance; however, there was:

- one case where the construction drawings submitted were not intended for permit or construction, and
- one case in the building discipline where the required professional involvement, drawings and schedule letters were not received and maintained prior to conducting the final inspection and closing the file.

*Recommendation: The Municipality will collect and maintain on file all construction design documents and letters of compliance required in accordance with the National Building Code when overall professional architect and/or engineer involvement is required for the work covered under a permit.*

### **3.5 PLANS REVIEW REPORT**

The auditors found the plans review report in the building discipline meets the Quality Management Plan's requirements.

### **3.6 SITE INSPECTIONS/INSPECTION REPORTS**

Under its Quality Management Plan, the Municipality is required to carry out periodic inspections of construction activity regulated by the *Safety Codes Act*. These inspections are conducted by a safety codes officer who then submits a report of their observations to the owner or other appropriate party who can ensure deficiencies are corrected as needed.

These reports are required to contain information that clearly ties permit services to the property and parties responsible. These must also include observations and direction to achieving safety codes compliance.

The type of information required on inspection reports is identified in the Municipality's Quality Management Plan. Equally important to the inspection process is the follow-up to ensure that deficiencies or unsafe conditions have been addressed.

The auditors found the inspection process in the building, electrical, plumbing, and gas disciplines to be meeting the Quality Management Plan's requirements.

### **3.7 NO-ENTRY POLICY**

The Municipality has a no-entry policy as required by the Quality Management Plan. No concerns were found.

### **3.8 VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE**

All required verifications of compliance were found on file. Based on the audit, the verification of compliance process meets the intent of the *Safety Codes Act* and Quality Management Plan.

### 3.9 PERMIT SERVICES REPORT

The Permit Services Report is the last step in the permitting process that allows closure of the permit file. This document is issued to the owner by the municipality when all required inspections are completed to the satisfaction of the safety codes officer. The document provides the owner with the final accounting of the safety codes services provided, including any outstanding non-compliance issues that may remain.

The auditors found all Permit Services Reports were issued within 30 days of completing the compliance monitoring services. Based on the audit, the process meets the intent of the *Safety Codes Act* and Quality Management Plan.

## 4.0 FILES REVIEW

### 4.1 OPEN PERMITS

#### 4.1.1 BUILDING: *Total number of files: 2 Number of files required for the audit: 2*

PERMIT #	OBSERVATIONS
240TIG-19-B0002	Permit: Missing complete description of the work/project
	<b>Professional Involvement:</b> No record of the required Architectural sealed construction drawings and; missing AB schedule letters for all design professionals; and missing C schedule letters for Arch, Mech, and Elec. professionals prior to conducting the final inspection and closing the file.
240TIG-22-B0008	No concerns.

#### 4.1.2 ELECTRICAL: *Total number of files: 1 Number of files required for the audit: 1*

PERMIT #	OBSERVATIONS
240TIG-21-E0011	No concerns.

#### 4.1.3 PLUMBING: *Total number of files: 1 Number of files required for the audit: 1*

PERMIT #	OBSERVATIONS
240TIG-21-P0001	Permit: Missing complete description of the work/project

### 4.2 CLOSED PERMITS

#### 4.2.1 BUILDING: *Total number of files: 16 Number of files required for the audit: 5*

PERMIT #	OBSERVATIONS
240TIG-21-B0008 240TIG-22-B0003	<b>Professional Involvement:</b> Drawings were issued for review only, not for construction or permit.
240TIG-21-B0001 240TIG-21-B0004 240TIG-21-B0005	No concerns.

**4.2.2 ELECTRICAL: Total number of files: 30 Number of files required for the audit: 5**

PERMIT #	OBSERVATIONS
240TIG-20-E0011 240TIG-21-E0001 240TIG-21-E0007 240TIG-21-E0014 240TIG-22-E0002	No Concerns.

**4.2.3 PLUMBING: Total number of files: 4 Number of files required for the audit: 4**

PERMIT #	OBSERVATIONS
240TIG-21-P0002 240TIG-21-P0003 240TIG-21-P0004 240TIG-22-P0001	No Concerns.

**4.2.4 GAS: Total number of files: 16 Number of files required for the audit: 5**

PERMIT #	OBSERVATIONS
240TIG-21-G0004 240TIG-21-G0005 240TIG-21-G0007 240TIG-21-G0010 240TIG-21-G0001	No Concerns.



## 5.0 RESTRICTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

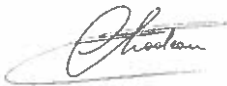
This report was prepared for the Town of Onoway to assist in ensuring that the municipality's permitting, and inspection system is effective, responsible, and accountable to the people it serves. It is intended that this report, not be used for any other purpose.

The audit was performed to examine the permitting process, administration, and service delivery standards on the selected samples and the Council levies based on the designed sampling approach. The results derived from the selected samples may not be representative of the entire data population. The audit provides a reasonable assurance that the Municipality is effectively administering and in compliance with its approved Quality Management Plan.

The Council reserves the right, and is under no obligation, to review and/or revise the contents of this report in light of information that may become available after the date of this report.

Yours truly,

### SAFETY CODES COUNCIL



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Cristian Nadeau  
Audit Manager



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Mark Brodgesell  
Audit Lead



## Town of Onoway Request for Decision

Meeting:	<b>Council Meeting</b>
Meeting Date:	September 14, 2023
Presented By:	Jennifer Thompson, Chief Administrative Officer
Title:	New Councillor Education Requirement & Opportunity

### **BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL**

With the addition of a new member of Council, newly elected on September 11, 2023 By election, as well as multiple regional partners having newly elected members of Council, administration has been asked if Council is interested in partnering in education collaboration with Onoway's regional partners.

### **DISCUSSION / OPTIONS / BENEFITS / DISADVANTAGES**

The Elected Official Education Program is planning a Munis 101: The Essentials of Municipal Government as zoom program delivery for November/December. It will be completed in four weeks, 2 hours per week format. Newly elected members of Council are required to complete this program within the first 90 days.

Roles and Responsibilities, would be a one-day event taught by Municipal Affairs. Each community that participates is required to pass a resolution for Municipal Affairs to attend the region and deliver the course. There would be a cost associated as each community would contribute to the costs of the venue and provision of lunch and refreshments for participants.

There are five communities in the region, including the Town of Onoway who have welcomed new Council members to their Councils. This training is not limited to new members of Council and Council may have any member of Council attend.

### **STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

Good Governance

Service excellence

### **COSTS / SOURCE OF FUNDING**

Munis 101 Cost approx. \$300.00 & Council meeting rate \$400.00

Role & Responsibility training by Municipal Affairs is dependent on participation of regional partners.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

- 1) THAT Council approve Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ attend the Munis 101 Program through the Elected Officials Education Program with expenses to be reimbursed as per policy.
  
- 2) THAT Council request Municipal Affairs attend in the region to deliver the Council Roles & Responsibilities training AND THAT the Town of Onoway participate with regional counterparts to share the cost of this training.

OR

Any other direction provided by Council.



## Town of Onoway Request for Decision

Meeting:	<b>Council Meeting</b>
Meeting Date:	September 14, 2023
Presented By:	Jennifer Thompson, CAO
Title:	Intent to Enter a New Agreement

### **BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL**

The Town of Onoway entered into a Fire Services Master Agreement with North West Fire Rescue in 2016. The Town of Onoway has agreements with surrounding municipalities that created the Onoway Regional Fire Services. The agreement was amended in January 2021 to extend the term to December 31, 2025. Chief Ives has provided correspondence requesting intent or general desire to continue to build on the service create from each municipality that is a part of the Onoway Regional Fire Services.

### **DISCUSSION / OPTIONS / BENEFITS / DISADVANTAGES**

The Town of Onoway performs administration duties for Onoway Regional Fire Services. The current request is not a commitment as the terms, conditions and fees of a new contract has to be negotiated. Negotiation of the contract that ends December 31, 2025 will commence before the end of 2023.

At this time, finalization of the amendment to the current agreement, of name change only from Noth West Fire Resue – Onoway Ltd. to Fire Rescue International – a non-profit entity, is being processed.

### **STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

This project aligns will all priority focus areas in the Strategic Plan:

Financial Sustainability  
Sustainable Infrastructure  
Service Excellence

Economic and Business Growth  
Good Governance

### **COSTS / SOURCE OF FUNDING**

None at this time.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

THAT Council of the Town of Onoway notify Fire Rescue International Ltd. of the Town's intent to continue contracted fire services beyond December 31, 2025 with Fire Rescue International Ltd., at this time.

Or

Any other direction of Council

### **ATTACHMENTS**

August 5, 2023 Correspondence Fire Rescue International.



## Fire Rescue International



August 5, 2023

**Attention:** All Onoway Regional Fire Services Member Municipalities  
**Regarding:** Soliciting Advice About Your Intent to Enter a New Agreement When Current Agreement Expires

Dear Mayors & Councils,

During our AGM this spring I asked that it be added to the agenda Fire Rescue International (FRI)'s request that each municipality return to their respective councils and discuss the long-term interest they have (or do not have) to continue within the Onoway Regional Fire Services Group that we have formed together. Upon completing those internal discussions, FRI requested that each municipality provide a letter of intent concerning their municipality's general desire to continue to build on the service we have created together or choose another path towards fire services provisions. To date, FRI has received no responses.

Of course, a letter of intent at this stage would not be a commitment as the terms, conditions, and fees of a new contract have not been yet brokered. It would, however, help FRI with some of our long-term capital purchase planning. Letters of intent will also help FRI leadership in terms of longer-term legacy and/or succession planning. This type of guidance from your council will help FRI continue to deliver the city-like performance we are known for as well as prepare for the future our member municipalities dictate.

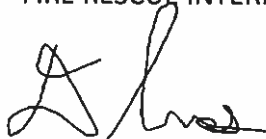
Box 1550 Onoway, AB T0E 1V0  
780-777-4688  
1-855-710-3473  
[di@secondwindenterprises.com](mailto:di@secondwindenterprises.com)

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FRI advocates strongly for continued collaboration between the ten municipalities and in fact, would welcome a dialogue that might invite additional municipalities into the fold (such as Birch Cove, Sunrise Beach, Sandy Beach, West Cove, and possibly Lac Ste Anne or Seba Beach as well). FRI believes there is strength in numbers and by retaining or even adding to the membership, we may be in a position to improve the current level of service at no additional cost per title or maintain the current level of service and actually cut the cost per title for service delivery. Of course, all options are on the table and will be subject to the wishes of the elected officials of our member communities.

If possible, on behalf of Fire Rescue International I request that your municipality consider signaling it's contract re-negotiation preferences by way of a letter of intent to FRI by September 30<sup>th</sup> if possible. Once in hand, FRI can govern itself accordingly and prepare for the next stage of contract negotiations with those who are interested: 2024 Terms, Conditions, & Levels of Service commencing 2026). If it would be helpful, I can make myself available to come before your council to answer any fire service questions or discuss the merits of building on the success we have created together as a team.

Kind Regards,  
FIRE RESCUE INTERNATIONAL



David Ives  
Fire Chief

Box 1550 Onoway, AB T0E 1V0  
780-777-4688  
1-855-710-3473  
[di@secondwindenterprises.com](mailto:di@secondwindenterprises.com)







## Town of Onoway Request for Decision

Meeting:	<b>Council Meeting</b>
Meeting Date:	September 14, 2023
Presented By:	Gino Damo, Director of Corporate and Community Services
Title:	2024 ATCO Gas Franchise Fee

### **BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL**

The definition of a Natural Gas Franchise fee taken directly from the ATCO website is as follows:

*"Municipal franchise fee is collected for the municipality for the exclusive right to provide gas distribution service to the residents and businesses located in the municipality as well as the right to use the municipality's property for the construction, operation and extension of our gas distribution system." (ATCO Gas website)*

During the October 7, 2021 Council meeting, Council made the following Motion #389/21 regarding setting the 2022 ATCO Gas Franchise fee.

**Motion #389/21 – October 7, 2021**

**MOVED** by Councillor Pat St. Hilaire that the Town of Onoway set their 2022 ATCO Gas franchise fee at 10% for the year 2022, which is an increase of .5%.  
**CARRIED**

On August 29, 2023 Administration received the attached 2024 franchise fee forecast letter. The letter states that the 2024 forecasted Delivery Tariff revenue is \$380,800. Based on the current rate of 10%, the 2024 forecasted franchise fee revenue the Town would receive is \$38,080.

### **DISCUSSION / OPTIONS / BENEFITS / DISADVANTAGES**

Administration is bringing forward the letter from ATCO to request a change to the current franchise fee rate 10% in 2024. In comparison, below are 2022 municipal franchise fee rates of municipalities in proximity to the Town of Onoway:

- Alberta Beach – 8.00%
- Mayerthorpe – 15.00%
- Seba Beach – 20.00%
- Spruce Grove – 30.00%
- Stony Plain – 35.00%
- Wabamun – 15.00%
- Whitecourt – 25.92%

To align with the previous decision made by Council as shown above, Administration recommends to increase the natural gas franchise fee rate by 0.50% for the year 2024.

Increasing the natural gas franchise fee rate of 0.50% from 10% to 10.50% will yield in a forecasted franchise fee revenue of \$39,984 rather than \$38,080 in 2024.

It is important to note that this increase only applies to the natural gas franchise fee and not the electricity franchise fee.

### **STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

Financial Sustainability

Good Governance

### **COSTS / SOURCE OF FUNDING**

2024 operating budget. If Council approves this request the forecasted franchise fee revenue in 2024 will be \$39,984.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

That Council approve setting the 2024 ATCO Gas Franchise fee at 10.50% for the year 2024, which is an increase of 0.50%.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- ATCO Natural Gas Franchise Fee Letter August 29, 2023.
- 2022 Municipal Franchise Fee Rates.

29 August 2023

Town of Onoway  
PO Box 540  
Onoway, AB, T0E 1V0

**Attention:** Ms. Jennifer Thompson, Chief Administrative Officer

**RE:** ATCO Gas and Pipelines Ltd. Natural Gas Distribution Franchise Agreement

As you are aware, ATCO Gas pays the Town of Onoway a franchise fee. The franchise fee is collected from customers in Onoway and is based on a percentage of our Delivery Tariff. In Onoway, this percentage currently is 10.00%.

In 2022, our Delivery Tariff revenue in Onoway was \$416,185. Our forecast Delivery Tariff revenue for 2024 is \$380,800. Therefore, based on the current franchise fee percentage, your forecast 2024 franchise fee revenue would be \$38,080.

Please note that the forecast 2024 Delivery Tariff revenue can be impacted by changes in customer operations and weather. Additionally, ATCO Gas has utilized forecast 2024 delivery rates, however, they are not yet approved by the Alberta Utilities Commission. ATCO Gas commits to providing updated franchise fee revenue forecasts at a future date should there be material impacts related to the update of these forecast assumptions.

Pursuant to our franchise agreement, you have the option to change the franchise fee percentage in 2024. A request to change the franchise fee must be received by ATCO in writing prior to November 1, 2023. If you are considering changing the franchise fee in 2024, please contact us as soon as possible to begin the process.

We trust you will find this information useful, and, if you have any questions or require anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me at [chance.herring@atco.com](mailto:chance.herring@atco.com)

Yours truly,



Chance Herring  
Manager, Operations  
ATCO Gas & Pipelines

Effective June 1, 2022 by AUC Disposition 27356-D01-2022  
This Replaces Rider "A"  
Previously Effective January 1, 2022

**ATCO GAS AND PIPELINES LTD. – NORTH RIDER "A"  
MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE FEE TO ALL RATES AND ANY OTHER RIDERS THERETO**

All charges under the Rates, including any charges under other Riders, to Customers situated within the communities listed on this Rider "A" Municipal Franchise Fee are subject to the addition of the percentage shown. The percentage shown is to be applied as an addition to the billings calculated under the Rates including charges as allowed under other Riders in effect.

Method A. - Applied to gross revenues\*.  
Method C. - Applied to gross revenues\* and Rider "E".

<u>Municipalities –</u> <u>Method A</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Effective</u> <u>Date</u> <u>yyymmdd</u>	<u>Municipalities –</u> <u>Method A</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Effective</u> <u>Date</u> <u>yyymmdd</u>	<u>Municipalities –</u> <u>Method A</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Effective</u> <u>Date</u> <u>yyymmdd</u>
Alberta Beach	8.00	20/03/01	Grimshaw	30.00	12/02/15	Seba Beach	20.00	10/06/03
Alix	12.00	19/01/01	Hardisty	22.00	18/01/01	Sexsmith	25.00	07/04/24
Amisk	9.10	00/04/18	Hines Creek	30.00	05/08/02	Sherwood Park	22.00	10/07/01
Argentia Beach	0.00	10/07/09	Hinton ***	14.60	12/01/01	Silver Beach	20.00	05/03/24
Bashaw	15.00	04/03/18	Holden	3.50	14/01/01	Slave Lake	25.50	20/01/01
Beaverlodge	11.50	20/01/01	Hughenden	10.98	00/07/18	Spirit River	24.00	01/06/18
Bentley	12.00	20/01/01	Hythe	12.00	18/02/01	Spruce Grove	30.00	20/01/01
Berwyn	22.00	19/01/07	Innisfree	25.00	08/09/08	St. Albert	20.30	19/01/01
Bittern Lake	7.00	18/01/01	Irma	20.00	04/10/15	Stony Plain	35.00	21/02/01
Blackfalds	35.00	10/01/01	Itaska	12.00	04/09/21	Swan Hills	10.00	21/01/01
Bon Accord	23.00	22/01/01	Jasper Muni	19.10	22/01/01	Sylvan Lake	27.00	19/01/01
Breton	15.00	17/01/01	Jasper Ntl Pk	17.10	06/09/01	Thorsby	20.00	14/01/01
Bruderheim	20.00	21/01/01	Kitscoty	10.00	05/09/15	Tofield	10.00	04/05/04
Camrose	27.00	20/04/01	Lacombe	27.75	22/01/01	Vegreville	33.00	04/10/12
Caroline	35.00	21/01/01	Lamont	35.00	04/05/10	Vermilion	22.00	21/01/01
Chipman	0.00	06/05/12	Lavoy	16.61	09/10/23	Veteran	6.00	17/01/01
Clive	16.17	04/05/17	Legal	25.00	22/01/01	Viking	21.51	04/09/26
Clyde	9.46	10/05/04	Lloydminster	25.00	08/02/01	Wabamun	15.00	18/06/01
Cold Lake	13.00	05/11/01	Lougheed	15.00	12/09/17	Warburg	10.00	09/01/01
Consort	22.00	04/05/07	Mannville	25.00	20/01/01	Wembley	25.00	08/07/01
Coronation	10.05	09/07/14	Mayerthorpe	15.00	22/01/01	Wetaskiwin	33.00	21/01/01
Czar	11.84	00/04/27	McLennan	24.00	05/05/19	Whitcourt ***	25.92	22/01/01
Donnelly	30.00	05/09/06	Millet	22.00	08/01/01			
Drayton Valley***	22.00	04/10/22	Minburn	16.61	16/01/01	<u>Municipalities –</u>		<u>Effective</u>
Eckville	20.00	16/03/01	Mirror	12.60	06/07/13	<u>Method C</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Date</u>
Edgerton	15.00	22/01/01	Mundare	23.00	20/04/01	Andrew	9.00	99/11/25
Edmonton	35.00	19/01/01	Nampa	16.84	04/04/22	Eaglesham	5.26	05/06/08
Edson***	20.00	21/01/01	Onoway	10.00	22/01/01			
Entwistle	17.32	10/02/22	Oyen	30.00	08/01/17			
Fairview	17.31	15/10/01	Peace River	32.00	22/01/01			
Falher	17.00	20/01/01	Point Alison	15.00	07/10/12			
Fort McMurray	10.00	21/03/01	Ponoka	23.00	21/01/01			
Fort Saskatchewan	0.00	04/09/28	Provost	22.00	13/01/01			
Fox Creek	15.00	20/01/01	Red Deer	35.00	17/01/01			
Gibbons	30.00	05/10/01	Rimbey	26.00	18/01/01			
Girouxville	26.00	19/01/01	Rocky Mtn. House	30.00	15/01/01			
Golden Days	25.00	04/06/15	Rycroft	30.00	16/02/10			
Grande Prairie	25.00	06/03/07	Ryley	10.00	16/02/01			

\* Gross Revenues are ATCO Gas total charges, less GST.  
\*\*\* Includes a \$10,000 maximum annual allowable assessment (Max) on any individual metered account.





## Town of Onoway Request for Decision

Meeting:	<b>Council Meeting</b>
Meeting Date:	September 14, 2023
Presented By:	Jennifer Thompson, Chief Administrative Officer
Title:	Christmas Light Up Date - 2023

### **BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL**

Staff will need to begin planning and organizing the events for the Town's annual Light Up festivities.

These events include: horse sleigh rides; arranging for the man in red to appear; coordinating activities with the County and Onoway Regional Fire Departments; creating goodie bags for children; arranging promotional items and liaising with businesses and community groups who wish to participate. The following week or so, Council members tour the Town to choose winners for a best decorated business and 2 decorated homes.

### **DISCUSSION / OPTIONS / BENEFITS / DISADVANTAGES**

Staff are suggesting Friday, November 24, 2023 to hold the Town's Light Up (this event has been previously scheduled on the last Friday in November).

This event is a community building activity and it's a celebratory way to kick off the Christmas Season.

### **STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

Service Excellence

### **COSTS / SOURCE OF FUNDING**

Estimated cost \$2,500.00

2022 expenses included: Mule Skinner Tours \$1000.00; Light Up Peppermint Wands for the Kids 250 for \$585.00; Candy and Bags 260 bags \$179.63; Prizes purchased for best decorated business and 2 decorated houses \$193.00

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

THAT Council authorize the Town's Light Up 2023 festivities to be held on Friday, November 24, 2023.



## Town of Onoway Request for Decision

Meeting:	<b>Council Meeting</b>
Meeting Date:	September 14, 2023
Presented By:	Jennifer Thompson, Chief Administrative Officer
Title:	Audit Engagement

### BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL

Municipalities are legislated under the *Municipal Government Act* s.188 that Council shall appoint an auditor for the municipality, to conduct an annual audit by a qualified accounting firm. Each year Council must authorize the engagement and agree to the scope of the work. The engagement letter includes:

1. The responsibilities of the auditor
2. Form and content of the audit opinion
3. The responsibilities of management
4. Communications
5. Use of information
6. Use and distribution of the report
7. Reproduction of the auditors' reports
8. Preparation of schedules
9. Ownership
10. File inspections
11. Accounting advice
12. Other services
13. Dispute resolution
14. Estimated fees
15. Cost of responding to government or legal processes
16. Termination
17. Not liable for any failures or delay beyond our control
18. Metrix privacy
19. Metrix working papers

### DISCUSSION / OPTIONS / BENEFITS / DISADVANTAGES

Council must authorize the engagement letter to name Metrix Group LLP as the Town of Onoway's auditor for 2023. Council appointed Metrix Group LLP the auditor for the Town of Onoway at the Organizational meeting held October 27, 2022.

### STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Financial Sustainability/Service Excellence



## **COSTS / SOURCE OF FUNDING**

The cost of the audit is \$16,500 for the engagement plus direct out of pocket expenses and applicable GST.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

That Council authorize Mayor Kwasny and Jennifer Thompson, CAO to sign the engagement letter authorizing Metrix Group LLP to be the 2023 named auditor.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. August 28, 2023 letter to the Town from Metrix Group LLP

August 28, 2023

Town of Onoway  
Box 540  
Onoway AB T0E 1V0

**Attention: Ms. Jennifer Thompson, Chief Administrative Officer**

Dear Ms. Thompson:

**Re: Audit Engagement Letter**

**The Objective and Scope of the Audit**

Metrix Group LLP is pleased to serve as auditors for Town of Onoway for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2023. The purpose of this letter is to outline the terms of our engagement to audit the financial statements of Town of Onoway which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2023, and the statements of operations and accumulated surplus, changes in net financial assets and cash flows for the year then ended. Philip Dirks, CPA, CA, will be responsible for the services that Metrix Group LLP performs for Town of Onoway. He will, as considered necessary, call upon individuals at Metrix Group LLP to assist in the performance of our services.

We are pleased to confirm our acceptance and our understanding of the nature, scope and terms of this audit engagement and all services related thereto, by means of this letter (the "Engagement").

The objectives of our audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement (whether due to fraud or error) and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

**The Responsibilities of the Auditor**

We will conduct our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- a. Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements (whether due to fraud or error), design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations or the override of internal control.

- b. Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. However, we will communicate to you in writing concerning any significant deficiencies in internal control relevant to the audit of the financial statements that we have identified during the audit.
- c. Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- d. Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going-concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditors' report. However, future events or conditions may cause the entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- e. Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements (including the disclosures) and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, together with the inherent limitations of internal control, there is an unavoidable risk that some material misstatements may not be detected, even though the audit is properly planned and performed in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards.

#### **Form and Content of Audit Opinion**

Unless unanticipated difficulties are encountered, our report will be substantially in the following form:

To the Mayor and Council of Town of Onoway

##### *Opinion*

We have audited the financial statements of Town of Onoway (the Town), which comprise the statement of financial position as at December-31-23, and the statements of operations and accumulated surplus, changes in net financial assets, and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Town as at December 31, 2023 and the results of its operations and its cash flow for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

##### *Basis for Opinion*

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with those requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

##### *Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Company's financial reporting process.

### *Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements*

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditors' report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

If we conclude that a modification to our opinion on the financial statements is necessary, we will discuss the reasons with you in advance.

### **The Responsibilities of Management**

Our audit will be conducted on the basis that management and, where appropriate, those charged with governance acknowledge and understand that they have responsibility:

- a. For the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the Canadian public sector accounting standards;
- b. For the design and implementation of such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; and
- c. To provide us with timely:
  - i. Access to all the information of which management is aware that is relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements, such as records, documentation and other matters;
  - ii. Information about all known or suspected fraud, any allegations of fraud or suspected fraud and any known or probable instances of non-compliance with legislative or regulatory requirements;

- iii. Additional information that we may request from management for the purpose of the audit; and
- iv. Unrestricted access to persons within Town of Onoway from whom we determine it necessary to obtain audit evidence.

As part of the audit process:

- a. We will make inquiries of management about the representations contained in the financial statements. At the conclusion of the audit, we will request from management [and, where appropriate, those charged with governance] written confirmation concerning those representations. If such representations are not provided in writing, management acknowledges and understands that we would be required to disclaim an audit opinion.
- b. We will communicate any misstatements identified during the audit other than those that are clearly trivial. We request that management correct all the misstatements communicated.

### **Communications**

In performing our services, we will send messages and documents electronically. As such communications can be intercepted, misdirected, infected by a virus, or otherwise used or communicated by an unintended third party, we cannot guarantee or warrant that communications from us will be properly delivered only to the addressee. Therefore, we specifically disclaim, and you release us from any liability or responsibility whatsoever for interception or unintentional disclosure of communications transmitted by us in connection with the performance of this Engagement. In that regard, you agree that we shall have no liability for any loss or damage to any person or entity resulting from such communications, including any that are consequential, incidental, direct, indirect, punitive, exemplary or special damages (such as loss of data, revenues, or anticipated profits).

If you do not consent to our use of electronic communications, please notify us in writing.

### **Use of Information**

It is acknowledged that we will have access to all information about identified individuals ("personal information") in your custody that we require to complete our Engagement. Our services are provided on the basis that:

- a. You represent to us that management has obtained any required consents for our collection, use, disclosure, storage, transfer and process of personal information required under applicable privacy legislation and professional regulation; and
- b. We will hold all personal information in compliance with our Privacy Statement.

### **Use and Distribution of Our Report**

The examination of the financial statements and the issuance of our audit report are solely for the use of Town of Onoway and those to whom our report is specifically addressed by us. We make no representations or warranties of any kind to any third party in respect of these financial statements or our audit report, and we accept no responsibility for their use by any third party or any liability to anyone other than Town of Onoway.

For greater clarity, our audit will not be planned or conducted for any third party or for any specific transaction. Accordingly, items of possible interest to a third party may not be addressed and matters may exist that would be assessed differently by a third party, including, without limitation, in connection with a specific transaction. Our audit report should not be circulated (beyond Town of Onoway) or relied upon by any third party for any purpose, without our prior written consent.

You agree that our name may be used only with our prior written consent and that any information to which we have attached a communication be issued with that communication, unless otherwise agreed to by us in writing.

### **Reproduction of Auditor's Report**

If reproduction or publication of our audit report (or reference to our report) is planned in an annual report or other document, including electronic filings or posting of the report on a website, a copy of the entire document should be submitted to us in sufficient time for our review and approval in writing before the publication or posting process begins.

Should some of the information in the annual report not be available until after the date of the auditor's report, we will request management to provide a written representation that the final version of the document(s) will be provided to us when available (and prior to its issuance) so we can complete our required procedures.



Management is responsible for the accurate reproduction of the financial statements, the auditor's report and other related information contained in an annual report or other public document (electronic or paper-based). This includes any incorporation by reference to either full or summarized financial statements that we have audited.

We are not required to read the information contained in your website or to consider the consistency of other information on the electronic site with the original document.

### **Preparation of Schedules**

We understand that your employees will prepare certain schedules and locate specified documents for our use before our Engagement is planned to commence.

This assistance will facilitate our work and help to minimize our costs. Any failure to provide these working papers or documents on a timely basis may impede our services and require us to suspend our services or even withdraw from the Engagement.

### **Ownership**

The working papers, files, other materials, reports and work created, developed or performed by us during the course of the Engagement are the property of our firm, constitute our confidential information and will be retained by us in accordance with our firm's policies and procedures.

During the course of our work, we may provide, for your own use, certain software, spreadsheets and other intellectual property to assist with the provision of our services. Such software, spreadsheets and other intellectual property must not be copied, distributed or used for any other purpose. We also do not provide any warranties in relation to these items and will not be liable for any lost or corrupted data or other damage or loss suffered or incurred by you in connection with your use of them.

We retain the copyright and all intellectual property rights in any original materials provided to you.

### **File Inspections**

In accordance with professional regulations (and by our firm policy), our client files may be periodically reviewed by practice inspectors and by other engagement file reviewers to ensure that we are adhering to our professional and firm standards. File reviewers are required to maintain confidentiality of client information.

### **Accounting Advice**

Except as outlined in this letter, this Engagement does not contemplate the provision of specific accounting advice or opinions or the issuance of a written report on the application of accounting standards to specific transactions and to the facts and circumstances of the entity. Such services, if requested, would be provided under a separate engagement letter.

### **Other Services**

In addition to the audit services referred to above, we will, as allowed by the *Code of Professional Conduct /Code of Ethics*, prepare the Municipal Financial Information Return. Management will, on a timely basis, provide the information necessary to complete the return and will review and file them with the appropriate authorities on a timely basis.

### **Dispute Resolution**

You agree that any dispute that may arise regarding the meaning, performance or enforcement of this Engagement will, prior to resorting to litigation, be submitted to mediation.

### **Estimated Fees**

We estimate that our fees for these services will be \$16,500 for the Engagement, plus direct out-of-pocket expenses and applicable GST. This fee estimate is based on:

- a. The anticipated cooperation from all your personnel in preparing the requested information on a timely basis;
- b. The ongoing assistance of personnel throughout the Engagement; and
- c. The assumption that unexpected circumstances will not be encountered.



If significant additional time is likely to be incurred, we will discuss the reasons with you and agree on a revised fee estimate before we incur the additional costs.

#### **Costs of Responding to Government or Legal Processes**

In the event we are required to respond to a subpoena, court order, government agency or other legal process for the production of documents and/or testimony relative to information we obtained and/or prepared during the course of this Engagement, you agree to compensate us at our normal hourly rates for the time we expend in connection with such response and to reimburse us for all of our out-of-pocket costs (including applicable GST) incurred.

#### **Termination**

Management acknowledges and understands that failure to fulfill its obligations as set out in this engagement letter will result, upon written notice, in the termination of the Engagement.

Either party may terminate this agreement for any reason upon providing written notice to the other party *[not less than 30 calendar days before the effective date of termination]*. If early termination takes place, Town of Onoway shall be responsible for all time and expenses incurred up to the termination date.

If we are unable to complete the audit or are unable to come to a conclusion on the financial statements, we may withdraw from the audit before issuing an auditor's report, or we may issue a denial of assurance on the financial statements. If this occurs, we will communicate the reasons and provide details.

#### **Not Liable For Any Failures or Delays Beyond Our Control**

We will use all reasonable efforts to complete the engagement as described in this letter within the agreed-upon time frames. However, we shall not be liable for failures or delays in performance that arise from causes beyond our control, including the untimely performance by your company of its obligations.

#### **Metrix privacy**

The privacy and security of the personal information you provide is important to us. We strive to ensure the strictest compliance with all applicable provincial and federal standards of protection and disclosure of personal information by any and all of our employees, agents, divisions and/or affiliates. You may review our privacy policy at [www.metrixgroup.ca](http://www.metrixgroup.ca). We will not collect, use, or disclose any of your personal information without your knowledge and consent, or as may be required by law or our profession's Rules of Conduct.

By signing this engagement letter you agree that for the purposes of this engagement, Metrix Group LLP may collect, use, and disclose personal information in accordance with our privacy policy. You also agree that Metrix Group LLP may collect and use personal information from you for the purposes of providing other services or informing you of other opportunities from time to time. Personal information that is not relevant to the purposes of this engagement or any other matters will not be disclosed to anyone for any reason without your further prior consent.

#### **Metrix working papers**

Metrix Group LLP owns all working papers and files, other materials, reports and work created, developed or performed during the course of the engagement, including intellectual property used in the preparation thereof. We will provide management with a copy of all practitioner-prepared working papers necessary for the company's accounting records. Metrix Group LLP may develop software, including spreadsheets, documents, databases, and other electronic tools, to assist us with our assignment. As these tools were developed specifically for our purposes and without consideration of any purpose for which the company might use them, any such tools provided to the company, are made available on an "as is" basis only and should not be distributed to or shared with any third party.

#### **Conclusion**

This engagement letter includes the relevant terms that will govern the Engagement for which it has been prepared. The terms of this letter supersede any prior oral or written representations or commitments by or between the parties. Any material changes or additions to the terms set forth in this letter will only become effective if evidenced by a written amendment to this letter, signed by all of the parties.

The arrangements outlined in this letter will continue in effect from year to year unless changed by either party.

If you have any questions about the contents of this letter, please raise them with us. If the services outlined are in accordance with your requirements, and if the above terms are acceptable to you, please sign the attached copy of this letter in the space provided and return it to us. We appreciate the opportunity of continuing to be of service to the Town.

Yours truly,

**METRIX GROUP LLP**

Chartered Professional Accountants

Acknowledged and agreed to on behalf of Town of Onoway by:

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Ms. Jennifer Thompson, Chief  
Administrative Officer

---

Date signed

---

Mr. Lenard Kwasny, Mayor

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Date signed



# ADMINISTRATIVE MONTHLY REPORT- AUGUST 2023

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**COMPLETED BY:** Jennifer Thompson, CAO

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## TASKS

- Accommodated workflow as staff took holidays
- Start budget process and small capital project planning
- Complete Fire Services Amending Agreement & distribute to member municipalities
- Review old landfill and lagoon locations, review decommissioning documentation.
- Partners in Progress meeting
- Workshops for Climate Resiliency Program
- Watershed Resilience and Restoration Program eligibility review
- Meet with Business Development ABMunis Michele Aasgard regarding insurance risk and claims process training.

---

## CONTINUING TASKS

- Regional Wastewater line

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## UPCOMING

- Update of Council Procedure Bylaw
- AB Munis Convention



# DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

## MONTHLY REPORT- August 2023

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**COMPLETED BY:** Gino Damo, Director of Corporate and Community Services

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### TASKS

- WBM Workshop meeting August 8
- Partners in Progress meeting August 9.
- Climate Resilience Capacity Building Program Grant meetings August 14.
- Met with FCSS recipient to assist in completing FCSS final report.
- Prepared and presenting Sanitary Sewer Backup Policy during Sep. 14 Council meeting.
- Prepared and presenting Respect in the Workplace Policy during Sep. 14 Council meeting.
- Drafting 2024 Budget to present at a future Council meeting.
- Drafting Food Truck/Vendor Policy to present at a future Council meeting.
- Sent FCSS Round 2/Final Round email reminders directly to 2022 FCSS recipients.
- Prepared and presenting Round 2 FCSS Funding during Sep. 14 Council meeting.
- Acting CAO duties August 17-25
- Presented Strategic Plan and Vision Action Plan to Town of Onoway staff on August 23.

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### CONTINUING TASKS

- Drafting 2024 Budget to present at a future Council meeting.
- Drafting Food Truck/Vendor Policy to present at a future Council meeting.
- Climate Resilience Capacity Building Program Grant next steps.
- Reaching out to 2022 FCSS recipients that have not submitted an application.
- Drafting and submitting Canada Summer Jobs Final Report.



## PUBLIC WORKS MONTHLY REPORT- AUGUST 2023

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COMPLETED BY: Gary Mickalyk

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### UPDATE

- Normal operation for the PW department. W.O received from rate payers were completed in a timely manner. We continue to address the issues as they come up.
- Summer students have gone back to school, we are sad to see them go as they were a pleasure to have around. We were able to accomplish some good things out there with their assistance. We look forward to having them return for summer 2024.

---

### PROJECTS:

- Asphalt crack seal and pot hole filling continue till end of season
- Curb painting until end of season
- Grass cutting and whipping till end of season
- Centennial time capsule was placed Aug 11
- Lift station wet well cleaned
- Cummins annual check up on generators and fire lift pump
- Lagoon discharged under way all approvals went thru.
- Vibration testing and facility inspections completed.
- Drainage ditches within town cleaned out and will be kept up to ensure no further over growth

### ITEMS COMING UP IN SEPT.

- Prep for fall and inventory winter related items





A Report Prepared for the Rural Municipalities of Alberta by the Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities at the University of Alberta

# Understanding and Responding to the Challenges Faced by FCSS Programs in Rural Alberta

## Authors

Clark Banack, PhD  
*Director, Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities*  
University of Alberta

Laticia Chapman, PhD Candidate  
*Senior Research Associate, Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities*  
University of Alberta



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## \* ABOUT THE ALBERTA CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE RURAL COMMUNITIES

The Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities (ACSRC), located at the Augustana Campus of the University of Alberta in Camrose, has, since its founding in 2009, assisted rural communities in meeting diverse challenges across many areas of public policy through fostering constructive dialogue, promoting interdisciplinary and collaborative research, and developing partnerships. The ACSRC's mission is to link the research, outreach, and educational capacity of the University of Alberta with students, researchers, rural communities, rural community organizations, and policy makers at multiple levels across the province, nationally, and internationally in order to support the improved sustainability of rural communities and populations.

Thinking respectfully and reciprocally with, not just for, rural communities is a main objective of the ACSRC. Through dialogue and collaboration, the ACSRC operates an outreach program that provides direction and stimulates innovation in the development of rural communities. This is built around various collaborations with educational institutions, municipalities, and not-for-profit organizations on research projects that seek to create resilient rural communities across Alberta.

Recently, the ACSRC has been engaged in rural-focused projects related to substantiable economic development opportunities, community mental health, the delivery of social services, enhancing inclusivity, advancing the transition to renewable energy, aiding municipal collaboration, and better understanding both rural public opinion and rural-based populism. To read more about the ACSRC and the work it does, please visit: [www.acsrc.ca](http://www.acsrc.ca).

## \* ABOUT THE RURAL MUNICIPALITIES OF ALBERTA (RMA) & THE PROJECT

The Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) advocates on behalf of Alberta's rural municipalities. The RMA's members consist of 63 municipal districts and counties, five specialized municipalities, and the Special Areas Board. The RMA's 69 members have several common traits: large land masses, small populations, and a lack of a traditional "population centre." RMA members provide municipal governance to approximately 85% of Alberta's land mass; Alberta is unique in Canada in that municipalities govern land throughout the entire province, from border to border.

Because Alberta's rural municipalities provide municipal governance to large, sparsely populated, and often isolated areas, efficient and high-quality delivery of municipal services is an ongoing challenge that often requires innovative solutions and partnerships with neighbouring towns and villages. It also means that provincial services readily available in urban areas are limited or inaccessible to rural residents, especially those without access to a personal vehicle.

For several years, the RMA has heard from members that reductions in provincial social service availability in rural communities combined with stagnation in provincial funding for municipally-operated family and community support services (FCSS) has led to unprecedented pressure on FCSS agencies to act as a catch-all for a range of social needs in rural communities, including many beyond their mandates. Similar pressure has been put on rural municipalities to contribute funding to FCSS services well beyond their formal requirement under the *Family and Community Support Services Act*.

As social challenges are often overlooked and under-reported in rural Alberta, the RMA prioritized the need to "dig deeper" on this issue to determine whether these concerns were as serious as members described, and whether they were widespread across the province. The work undertaken by the ACSRC provides some powerful evidence as to the reality of this issue in rural Alberta and will allow the RMA to continue to advocate for improved delivery of provincial social services and adequate funding of FCSS programs in rural communities.

## \* EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Family and community support service (FCSS) programs have provided vitally important “preventative” social service programming to vulnerable Albertans for several decades. FCSS programs remain a critical staple of community life in rural Alberta in particular, often existing as the “only place in town” for rural Albertans in need to seek assistance face-to-face. However, these rural-based programs are facing increasing pressures that are negatively impacting their capacity to serve those in need. This report highlights three key challenges faced by rural FCSS programs in Alberta and responds with four policy recommendations.

### Key Challenges

#### 1. Insufficient Provincial Funding

FCSS program costs have been rapidly increasing in the past five years, placing significant stress on their operations. Government of Alberta (GOA) funding (meant to equate to 80% of FCSS’s core funding) has remained largely stagnant since 2015. The majority of rural FCSS offices are increasingly reliant on municipal contributions well above their required twenty percent. However, rural municipalities do not have unlimited budgets, and are only able to make up so much of the shortfall created by the province refusing to meaningfully increase FCSS funding.

#### 2. The Increasing Inaccessibility of Provincial Social Services in Rural Alberta

The ongoing centralization of social support services in Alberta has generated challenges for rural FCSS programs; challenges that have only multiplied with recent GOA decisions to transition to “1-800” intake lines and online web portals for several social service supports. As rural FCSS offices are often “the only shop in town,” they face a disproportionate burden compared to most of their urban counterparts, as more and more community members approach FCSS offices for help. This places additional pressure on rural FCSS offices to go beyond their mandate and provide intervention-type services, incurring the extra cost this entails with no hope of being reimbursed.

#### 3. Changing and Increasing Social Needs in Rural Communities

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent period of inflation, FCSS programs across rural Alberta are encountering far more community members with more complex social needs than ever before. The number of people who are walking through the doors of rural FCSS offices in crisis has increased dramatically in the past few years, placing additional burdens on these offices to provide intervention-type services and incur the extra cost and effort this entails with no hope of being reimbursed.

### Policy Recommendations:

1. Increase core funding from the Government of Alberta.
2. Increase the accessibility of provincial social support services for rural Albertans.
3. Ensure that future public policy related to social service delivery in Alberta is approached via a rural lens.
4. Ensure that social service policy in Alberta is designed with meaningful contributions from rural FCSS programs.





## \* SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Family and community support service (FCSS) programs provide effective and vitally important “preventative” social service programming to vulnerable community members of all ages throughout Alberta. In an era of ongoing centralization of social service supports in the province, FCSS programs remain a staple of rural community life, often existing as the only physical location where rural Albertans in need can seek assistance face-to-face. These offices are staffed with hardworking and caring individuals who go above and beyond in serving their communities.

However, these rural-based programs are facing increasing pressures related to stagnant provincial funding, the centralization of provincial social service supports, and enhanced social challenges faced by vulnerable community members in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent period of rapid inflation. These challenges are pushing many rural FCSS programs to the brink, negatively affecting some of the most vulnerable members of rural communities and placing pressure on rural municipalities to shoulder an ever-increasing share of the costs of FCSS programming — a share that is now routinely in excess of the 20% mandated by provincial legislation.

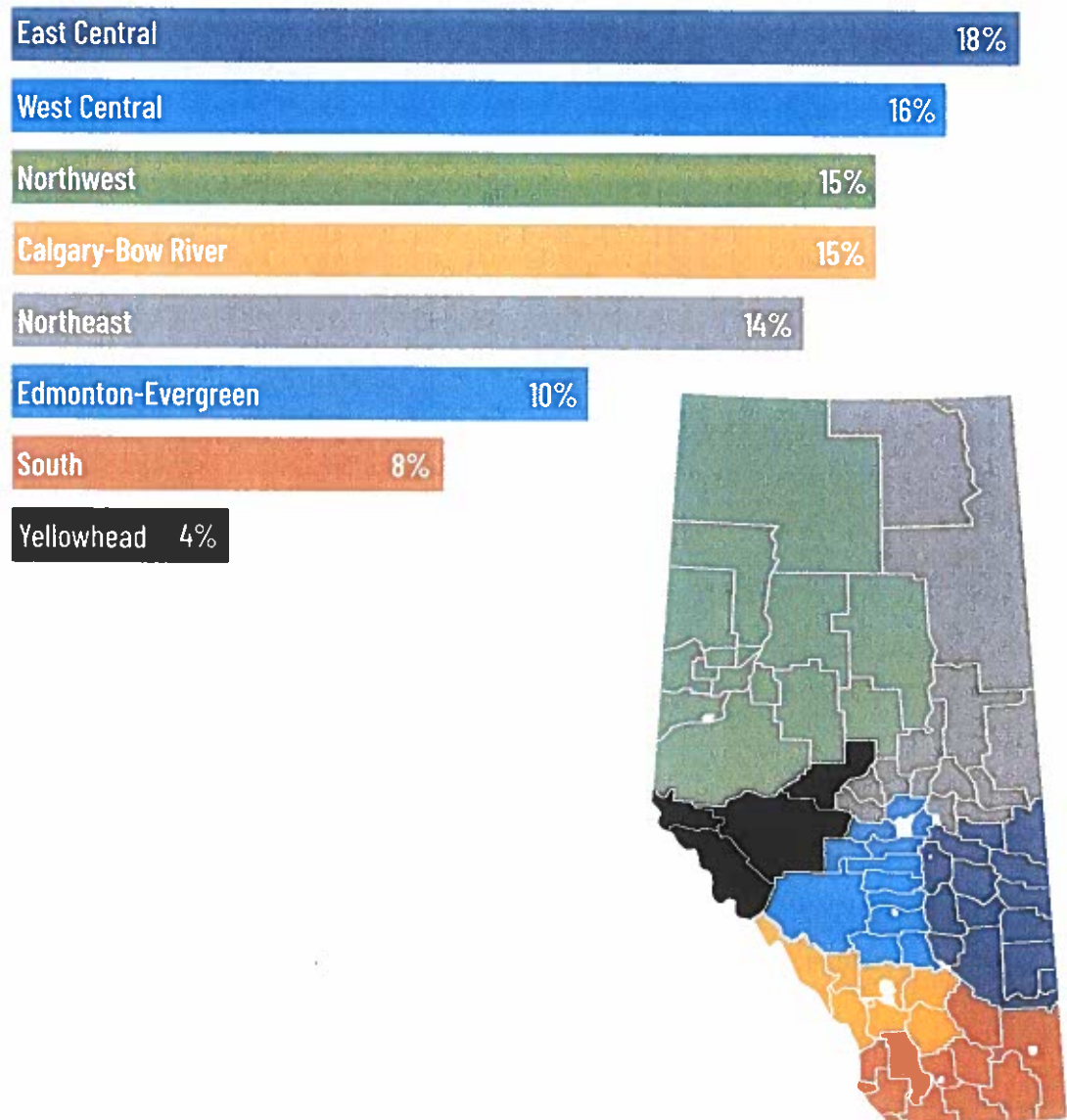
The Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities (ACSRC) at the University of Alberta was tasked by the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) to conduct a deep dive into the contemporary challenges faced by rural FCSS programs across Alberta and the subsequent burdens being placed on rural municipalities.

To complete this task, the research team utilized a mixed-method study design that was reviewed and approved by the research ethics board of the University of Alberta

(Pro00124133). The research began by conducting 20 semi-structured, in-depth, one-on-one interviews with individuals deemed knowledgeable about this topic. Those interviewed included 16 different directors of rural and smalltown FCSS programs across Alberta, one member of the Family and Community Support Service Association of Alberta (FCSSAA), and three separate Government of Alberta employees with significant experience working with rural FCSS programs. Each interview lasted between 45 and 90 minutes, were conducted online using Zoom, and were transcribed for thematic analysis by the research team.

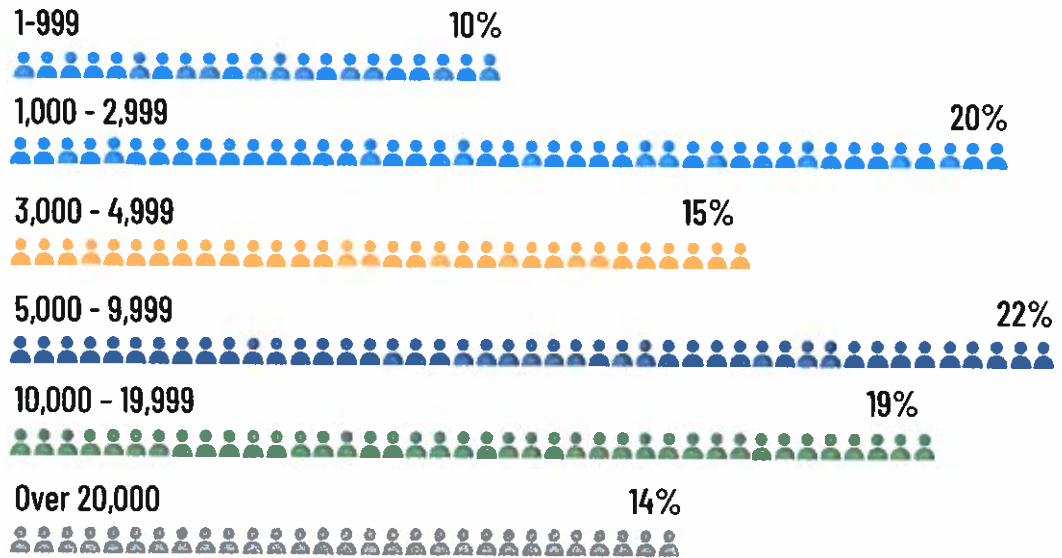
After completing all 20 interviews, the research team designed a 38-question survey to further explore the depth of the challenges faced by rural FCSS programs identified in the interviews. This survey was conducted online, was emailed to the directors of 158 FCSS programs scattered across rural and smalltown Alberta and received a total of 80 respondents. As Figure 1 and Figure 2, page 8 suggest, the survey respondents provided a representative sample of rural FCSS programs from across the province. Not only did the research team receive a good number of replies from each FCSS region, they also received responses from various sizes and structures of FCSS programs in Alberta.

**Figure 1: What FCSS region is your program located in?**





**Figure 2: How large is the population your FCSS program serves?**



The results of this study, discussed in detail throughout the report, were derived from an analysis of both the qualitative interview portion and the quantitative survey portion described above. In short, the research team found that rural FCSS offices are facing several important challenges that impact their capacity to address the social needs that are arising in their communities. After a brief description of the FCSS program in general (, page 9), the report delves into three specific and interlocking challenges and describe their implications for rural FCSS offices, rural Albertans in need, and rural municipalities in general (Section 3: Key Challenges, page 13). The report closes with four policy recommendations for the Government of Alberta (GOA) that would, if implemented, contribute to re-establishing the full capacities of rural FCSS offices, positively impact the lives of many of rural Alberta’s most vulnerable citizens who are currently being poorly served, and substantially relieve the additional FCSS-related fiscal load rural municipalities are being asked to shoulder in the current environment.



## \* SECTION 2: WHAT ARE FAMILY & COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES?

Social service delivery in Alberta is a complex file stretching across a variety of provincial ministries, agencies, and organizations. Family and community support services (FCSS) sit amid this complicated web, currently existing within the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services, but frequently collaborating with agencies from the ministries of Health, Education, Children’s Services, and Mental Health and Addiction, among others.

With a history stretching back to 1966, there are now 210 local FCSS programs across Alberta providing services to 316 municipalities and Métis Settlements, most of which can be designated as “rural” or “small town.”<sup>1</sup> All but a handful of FCSS programs are represented by the Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA), a member-driven organization that brings FCSS directors and staff together for educational and networking opportunities, while also representing FCSS programs to various stakeholders,

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1 Technically, FCSS does not make any formal distinction between rural vs. urban, although there do exist strong perceptions among FCSS directors that “rural” FCSS programs, however defined, face distinct challenges from “urban” programs. Although it is possible to select a formal measure to define rural from urban, there is little reason to do so in this context given that there exist many FCSS programming partnerships across Alberta between low population / low density rural counties or villages and higher population cities (for example, the partnership between the City of Camrose and Camrose County under the umbrella of Camrose and District Social Services) that make drawing a divide between rural and urban especially complicated when it comes to FCSS.





especially the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services.

Fundamentally, the mandate of FCSS programs is to provide preventive social services, defined as “a proactive process that strengthens the protective factors of individuals, families, and communities to promote well-being, reduce vulnerabilities, enhance quality of life, and empowers them to meet the challenges of life.” More specifically, FCSS programs are meant to enhance “protective factors to improve well-being and prevent problems before they occur or at an early stage before they require crisis supports.”<sup>2</sup>

FCSS programs are governed by the provincial *Family and Community Support Services Act*, although both their creation and the structure and programming decisions they make are strongly rooted in their local communities. When a municipality or Métis Settlement council decides to establish an FCSS program, they enter into an agreement with the Government of Alberta to jointly fund projects, services, or both. Since 1966, the funding model has been set at an 80/20 split, with the province meant to provide 80% of the core funding for FCSS programming and the municipality providing the remaining 20%.<sup>3</sup> As of 2023, the total annual provincial funding for FCSS programs across Alberta is \$105 million. Importantly, the FCSS model also relies upon what was described to the research team as “the multiplier effect.” In essence, the funds contributed by the provincial and municipal governments are further buttressed by significant on-the-ground volunteer participation, especially from community organizations who partner with local FCSS offices on a variety of programming. This significantly extends the reach of FCSS programming. In 2021, FCSS programs across Alberta reported more than 47,850 volunteers contributing over 1,295,700 volunteer hours annually.

## The Importance of Local Autonomy

Since 1981, local FCSS offices have had considerable autonomy to structure their programs and design their day-to-day programming in ways that are best suited to meet the local conditions in their respective communities. Indeed, “local responsibility for decision-making” remains a key principle of the entire FCSS program. Although the GOA is meant to provide the bulk of program funding, municipalities and Métis Settlements must “decide how to allocate the funding to best meet the needs and priorities of the community — within the FCSS

- 2 “Family and Community Support Services Accountability Framework,” Government of Alberta, December 2022.
- 3 For a more detailed history of FCSS in Alberta, as well as more information of the variety of regulations FCSS programs must follow, see: “Understanding FCSS,” published by the *Family and Community Social Services Association of Alberta*. Available at: <https://fcssaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/FCSS-101-All-Modules-2021.pdf>



mandate”.<sup>4</sup> This concept was repeatedly highlighted as a strength of the FCSS model in our study, a conclusion that coincides with academic literature on rural community development, which frequently stresses the importance of local autonomy as a key ingredient in program success across issues<sup>5</sup>. Unsurprisingly, this autonomy has also ensured a good deal of variation across FCSS programs in Alberta — there is no standard FCSS model in the province.

At the municipal level, FCSS programs can be operated directly by single municipalities, as multi-municipal programs, or in partnerships. The single municipality structure is most common. In a multi-municipal program, two or more municipalities join as a “regional” or “district” FCSS program, and each participating municipality makes its 20% contribution to the program budget. In a partnering or “grant transfer” FCSS organization, neighbouring municipalities agree to give some or all of their FCSS funds to one of the municipalities to provide services to residents of the partnering municipalities.

In addition to these three possible program structures, FCSS also offers three different models of program administration: the FCSS department (or FCSS program), the community services department, or direct municipal management. An FCSS department has a designated FCSS program director and FCSS staff who are municipal employees and report to a manager or CAO. In a community services department arrangement, FCSS is part of a larger municipal department that provides other services like recreation. Under direct municipal management, the FCSS manager or CAO administers the FCSS program and reports directly to council, which has oversight over FCSS funding decisions. This model is more common in smaller communities with small FCSS budgets. The community services department model is common both in smaller communities and in larger cities, and the FCSS department model is popular in municipalities with medium-sized budgets.<sup>6</sup> There are also six FCSS non-profit societies. In these programs, FCSS staff are employees of the non-profit society, not municipal employees. Although they are independent of the municipality, non-profit FCSS programs are still mandated to provide programming that meets community needs and priorities.<sup>7</sup>

Day-to-day programming also varies across FCSS programs; several interview respondents spoke passionately about the importance of tailoring programming to specific community needs. The most frequently mentioned programs across all FCSS offices included parent and family support, early childhood development, and youth programs. FCSS directors also described programs to benefit seniors, including home support and organized opportunities for social interaction to combat isolation, as key components of their mandate. Annual volunteer appreciation events, providing welcoming services for newcomers to the community, and low-income tax clinics are three other examples of commonly provided services in small and rural FCSS programs. Helping connect community members in need to the provincial and federal benefit and support services they are entitled to also falls within FCSS’s mandate.

Certain types of support services fall outside of the FCSS mandate and are thus ineligible to be supported with FCSS funding. These include services that are primarily recreational or leisure-oriented in nature; services that offer direct assistance such as money, food, or

4 See: “Understanding FCSS”

5 See: Yolande E. Chan, Jeffery A. Dixon, and Christine R. Dukelow, *Revitalizing Rural Economies*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2013

6 “FCSS Program Structure, Administration and Delivery,” published by the Family and Community Social Services Association of Alberta, p.2. Available at: <https://fcssaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/FCSS-101-All-Modules-2021.pdf>

7 “FCSS Program Structure, Administration and Deliver,” p.2



shelter; services which could be classified as intervention or rehabilitation; and services which duplicate programs that are the responsibility of a different ministry or government agency.<sup>8</sup>

### The Reality of FCSS Programs in Rural and Small Town Alberta

The research team heard repeatedly throughout this study that the FCSS office is often the only social service agency in rural communities. As this report will demonstrate, this is an important consideration that plays a central role in the challenges FCSS programs face across rural Alberta.

Given that they are often “the only shop in town,” rural FCSS programs are likely to spend a large portion of their funding on direct service delivery, including salaries for employees who provide direct service delivery. In general, this contrasts with larger urban FCSS programs, which tend to grant their funds to the myriad other community service organizations that exist to offer programming in urban centres rather than deliver programming themselves.

Where there are other social service agencies and community-based non-profits, rural FCSS offices often play a coordinating role. In addition to managing their own FCSS funds and outside grants, FCSS programs will often act as the banker or guarantor for community non-profits, helping them to write grants, manage funds, and fulfill reporting requirements. Several of the rural FCSS directors interviewed described this as a community development role: they want to reduce barriers for the community non-profit sector and see FCSS as having an important role in making funding accessible to local non-profit organizations.

Finally, while all the FCSS directors interviewed expressed their support for prevention as the core of FCSS services, it is also clear that provincial stipulations around funding only preventative programming frequently conflict with daily realities in rural communities. Many directors emphasized that rural FCSS programs serve as social service “catch-alls.” In the words of one director, “In rural communities, if you need help and you’re not sure where to go, you go to FCSS.” Rural FCSS offices are regularly approached by community members seeking assistance that often goes beyond prevention and FCSS staff are thus frequently placed in the largely untenable situation of “staying true to their mandate” and turning people in need away or providing some type of required intervention support, an action that not only goes beyond their mandate but also requires additional effort and resources that are not reimbursed by the GOA. Unfortunately, a variety of factors have pushed FCSS offices, especially those in rural communities, in this direction, placing significant additional stress on these programs.





## \* SECTION 3: KEY CHALLENGES

Over the course of this study the research team learned of a variety of challenges rural FCSS offices face, some specific to certain communities, others shared across the province. What follows is not a full account of all the challenges encountered, but rather a detailed consideration of three unique, complex, and often interlocking challenges that emerged as the most widespread and pressing for rural FCSS offices.

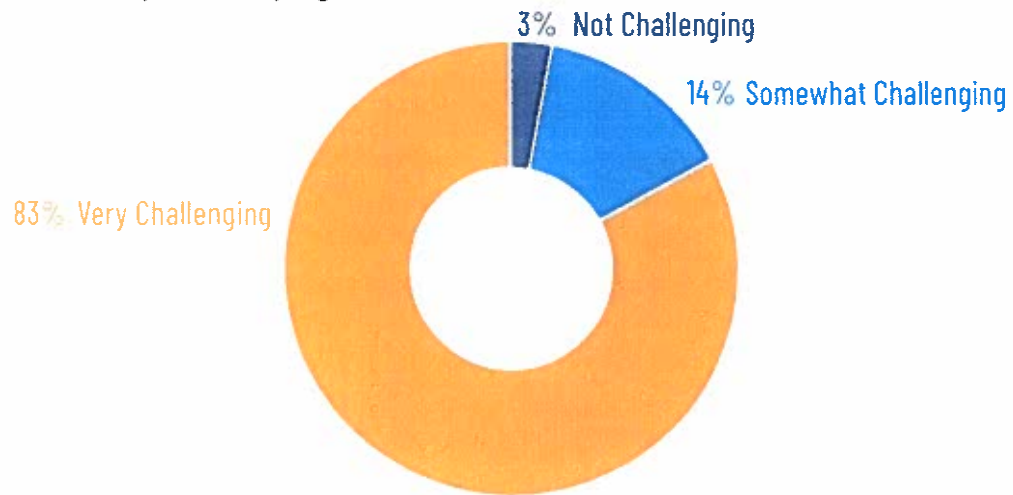
### Key Challenge 1: Insufficient Provincial Funding

The most significant challenge rural FCSS programs deal with is insufficient core funding. As mentioned in the introduction, the core programming of FCSS is meant to be funded by an 80% contribution from the GOA, with the remaining 20% from the FCSS's municipality (or municipalities). However, the overall contribution to the entire provincial FCSS program has remained stagnant at \$100 million since 2015, with a small increase of \$5 million in 2023. Given the very real challenges posed by the ongoing centralization of other social services, increasing need in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the inflationary pressures of the past few years, FCSS directors across rural Alberta were unanimous in their concerns that the failure by the GOA to meaningfully increase funding is tantamount to a funding cut. Indeed, within a series of survey questions, FCSS directors were asked to rate how challenging certain issues were to their operations. On a survey question asking about stagnation of provincial funding increase since 2015, over 83% of respondents suggested that this has been "very challenging" (see Figure 3, page 14), the highest scores among all challenges listed in the survey.





**Figure 3: How challenging has the lack of a funding increase since 2015 been to your FCSS program?<sup>9 10</sup>**



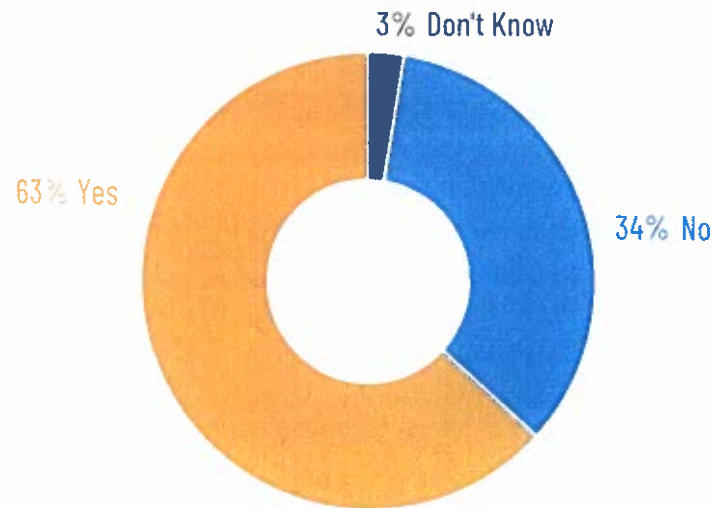
Although FCSS programs often supplement their core provincial and municipal funding with other government service contracts or grants, most rural FCSS offices increasingly rely on municipal contributions well over their required 20%. This municipal overcontribution often occurs because municipalities step in to fund programs which have become established in the community but have had provincial funding cut or are no longer affordable given rising costs of programming not being addressed with additional provincial funds. However, municipalities do not have unlimited budgets, and can make up only so much of the social service delivery shortfall created by the stagnation of provincial FCSS funding.

The survey results corroborated and expanded this information. Over 63% of survey respondents answered that their municipalities contribute more than the required 20% of FCSS funding (Figure 4, page 15). Almost 84% of survey respondents noticed an increase in the need for municipal overcontribution after 2018 (Figure 5, page 15). Of those respondents whose municipalities overcontribute, almost 43% estimated that the true contribution of their municipality is more than 35% of the FCSS program's budget (Figure 6, page 16).

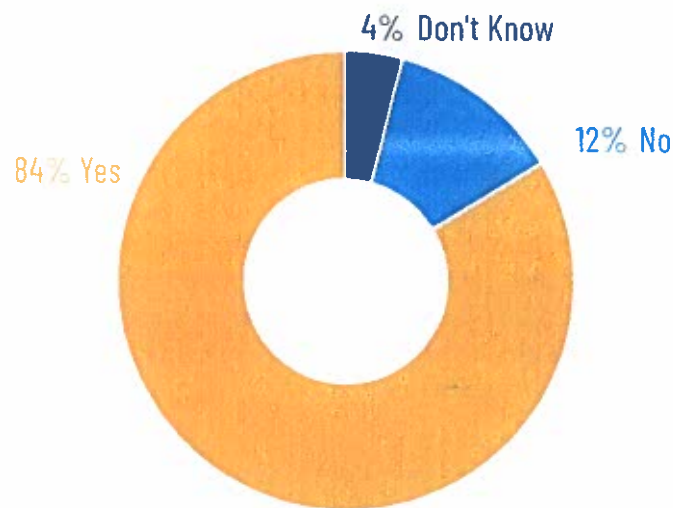
<sup>9</sup> For readability purposes, this data was collapsed from a survey question that employed a 10-point Likert Scale asking respondents to rate "how challenging" this was from 1 (not challenging) to 10 (extremely challenging). In this chart, scores from 1 – 3 were collapsed into "not challenging", scores 4 – 6 were collapsed into "somewhat challenging", and scores 7 – 10 were collapsed into "very challenging".

<sup>10</sup> This survey was completed in early 2023, before the increase in overall FCSS funding from \$100 million to \$105 million was announced by the GOA.

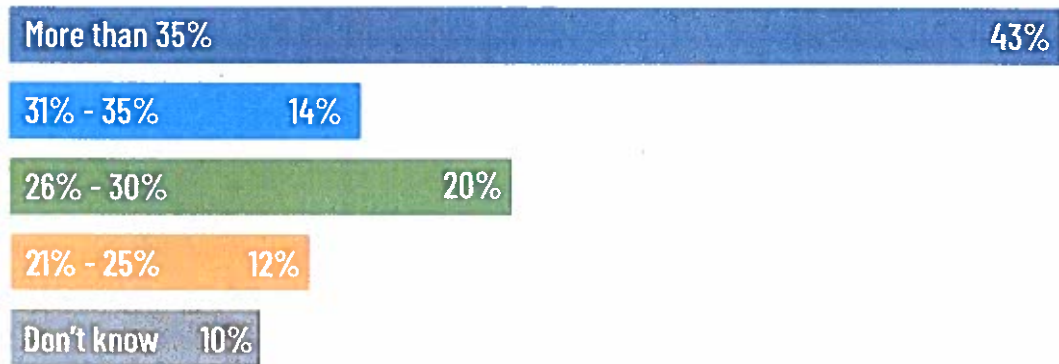
**Figure 4: Does your municipality (or municipalities) contribute more to your core funding than the required 20%?**



**Figure 5: Has the need for this municipal over-contribution increased since 2018?**



**Figure 6: If your municipality is contributing beyond 20% of your core funding, can you provide an estimate as to the true percentage that your municipality is contributing?**



Since “more than 35%” was the highest rate of overcontribution that survey respondents could choose, the survey did not capture the true rate of overcontribution in detail for municipalities with the highest rates of overcontribution. Indeed, within the interviews, the research team learned of one case wherein the municipality typically contributes about 50% of the FCSS program’s budget, but this year the contribution increased to 60%. Another director explained that their supporting municipalities will contribute more than the provincial amount this year.

Several FCSS programs are similarly growing more dependent upon outside grants for which FCSS directors must apply. Although outside grants (non-FCSS funding) make up a significant portion of some FCSS programs’ budgets, they make up very little or even none of other FCSS programs’ budgets. This is because accessing such funds depends on the capacity of individual FCSS programs. Directors and staff may or may not have the time or skillsets to identify, apply for, and manage external grants — a challenge that is especially acute for the smaller rural FCSS programs in Alberta.

Overall, the research team heard that insufficient funding is both a long-time concern and the result of recent events like the pandemic and some political decisions at the provincial level in 2019 – 2020 (to be discussed later). The funding challenges faced by rural FCSS programs can be broken down into four distinct components: insufficient operational funding, insufficient funding for staff, funding precarity / inattention to sustainability in funding, and, especially germane to this report, the funding challenges related to inattention to or lack of understanding of rurality on the part of the provincial government.





## Insufficient Operational Funding

Overall, rural FCSS programs do not feel they have the funds to adequately meet community needs. More specifically, respondents noted that there is a lack of funding to meet the operating costs for direct delivery of ongoing programs. Adequate and reliable program funding is extremely important because community members and service users come to rely on programs to support their own and their families' wellbeing. When a longstanding program is cut because of insufficient funding, this results in a loss of trust in the community and a decrease in individual and social wellbeing. As one director noted, "If we weren't seeking additional funding and partnerships, we would be offering a lot less to our communities."

As will be discussed later in the report, the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent inflationary period has resulted in several FCSS offices offering expanded or revised programming to meet emerging community needs, or simply being pulled in new directions to help those in need; this increased demand means higher staffing and material costs. Some FCSS directors interviewed seemed eager to respond to increasing and changing community needs by expanding their capacity to address a wider and more complex range of issues and taking on a larger social role in their communities. These directors noted, however, that they cannot expand their capacity without increased funding, infrastructure, training, and staffing.

It is also clear that the community-based non-profits many rural FCSS programs partner with have more financial need than the local FCSS program can meet. These groups have also been impacted by increasing community need and several rural FCSS programs are fielding increased requests for funding from these organizations, especially to fund mental health supports.

Rural FCSS directors also told us that their budgets are often too small to allow them to apply for many grants, largely because they lack the staffing capacity to do so. For similar reasons, many are unable to engage meaningfully

with evidence-based practice. Without the capacity to fund staff education, training, or research, rural FCSS programs perceive themselves to be at a disadvantage when it comes to understanding the impacts of their programming and designing more effective programs.

Ministerial-level changes to programming have also meant funding decreases for rural FCSS programs. In particular, the transition from Parent Link Centres to the Family Resource Network (FRN) model has seen FCSSs having to participate in a competitive process for a smaller pool of funding.

## The Ending of Parent Link and the Introduction of Family Resources Networks

In 2019, the Ministry of Children’s Services announced, with essentially no consultation with the rural FCSS directors we spoke with, that funding for the Parent Link program was being cancelled. This popular program, frequently administered and delivered by FCSS offices in rural communities, provided free play groups, classes, education, and social opportunities for parents of children ages six and under, in addition to early learning opportunities and developmental screening for these children. In its place, the ministry launched a funding competition for organizations to participate in local Family Resource Networks (FRNs), a program with similar goals as Parent Link, although the program was now designed to offer supports for parents and children from 0 – 18, and the total amount of funding was now smaller.

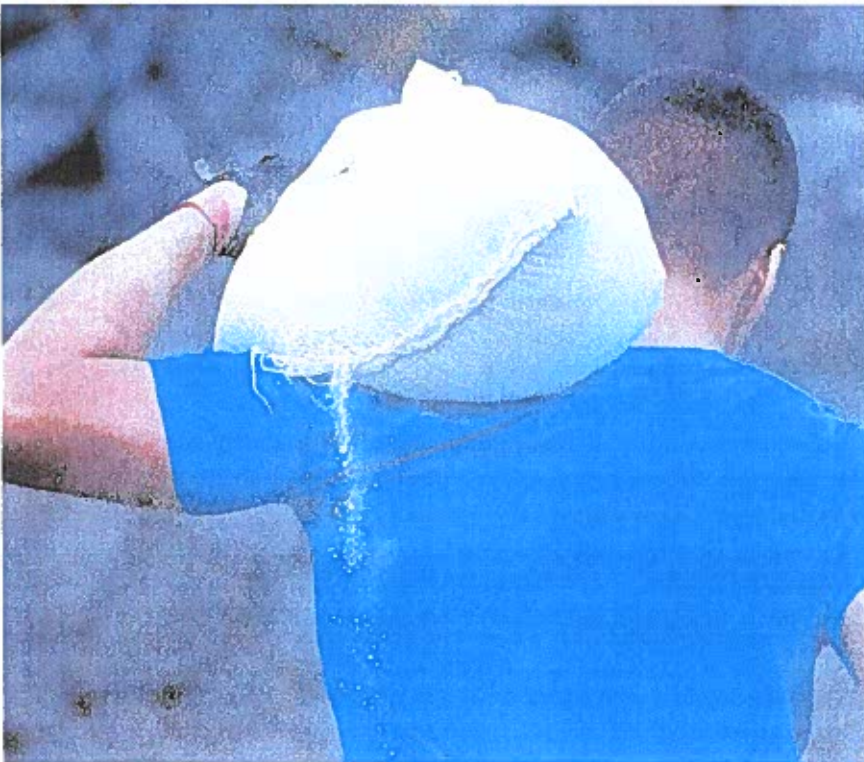
In our interviews, this shift from Parent Link to FRNs was often a flashpoint for frustration for rural FCSS directors. Not only was the loss of Parent Link problematic for many parents of young children across rural communities who benefitted from the program offerings (especially those who relied on the access to the development screening available for very young children), FCSS directors lamented the increased competition between communities in search of a smaller pool of children-focused preventative funding made available under the FRN program. Other concerns shared included the difficulty inherent in delivering programs, with less overall funding, for children aged 0 – 18, the subsequent necessity to lay off staff in certain FCSS offices, and a broader sense that the new model’s reporting structures are “a chaotic mess” compared to those that existed under Parent Link.

The FRNs are recognized by many FCSS programs as a significant funding cut to child and youth support in rural communities, and many FCSS directors also noted other problems with the FRNs including organizational structure (discussed in more detail below). As a result of the transition to the FRN model, some communities have lost early childhood services completely, and that the loss of funding because of the reorganization of children’s services is hurting rural communities.

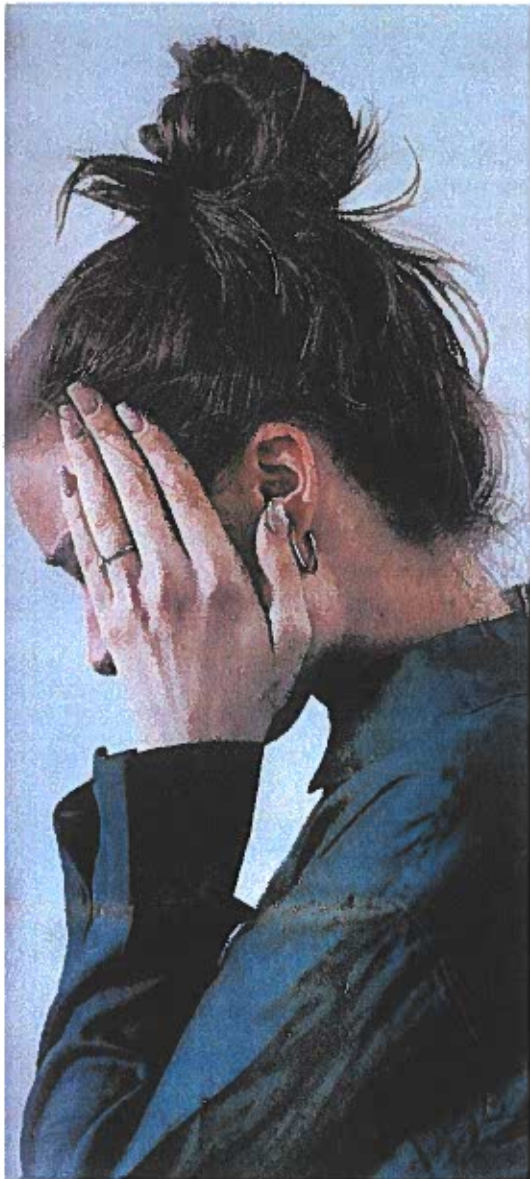
Finally, several directors highlighted that there is an overlooked rural component to FCSS

funding needs. Basing funding on population does not consider the needs of communities with high transient populations (like tourism-based economies). More generally, population does not give an accurate picture of need in rural communities because of the added costs rural communities experience because of large, sparsely populated areas, challenging geography, often poor internet and cell phone service, and transportation costs.

Overall, several of our respondents told us that their FCSS capacity is “maxed out” — current programs have full caseloads, FCSS offices are facing increasing need in their community and increasing costs overall, provincial funding did not increase between 2015 – 2022, and municipalities are being asked to shoulder more of the load.







## Insufficient Funding for Staff

Insufficient staff funding presents several challenges for rural FCSS programs. Many rural FCSS programs have minimal staff (sometimes just one person) and many directors felt they could more effectively serve their communities if they had the funding to hire even one or two more staff. Limited funding also means that rural FCSS offices struggle to be competitive with salaries and benefits, which can make it difficult to attract and retain qualified staff. Several directors brought up the challenge of trying to maintain a balance between appropriate staffing levels — and adequate compensation for qualified staff — with program funding and grants to community-based organizations.

Putting more effort into seeking outside sources of funding (e.g., other provincial, federal, private, or charitable grants) is often not an adequate solution to funding shortfalls because applying for grants requires time and expertise that is already in short supply for minimally staffed rural FCSS programs. Outside grant funding can also come with stipulations about how the grant money is to be used (e.g., developing new programs) that pull FCSS staff away from delivering core and established programs. More than one director has had to turn down grant opportunities, or be very careful when applying for outside funding, because of a lack of capacity to administer grants. Many grants also do not include wages as an eligible use of funds.

The loss of Parent Link Centres and transition to the FRNs has also had an impact on staffing at some FCSS offices. Many directors admitted that losing their Parent Link Centre caused them to significantly restructure their FCSS program and resulted in a loss of hours and staff. Many FCSS programs that were successful in applying for FRN funding noted that the FRN funding is a significantly smaller amount of money than they had received with the Parent Link program.

## Funding Precarity and the Lack of Sustainability in Funding

One of the significant stresses FCSS directors and staff experience is a sense of precarity over the future of FCSS. One respondent stated that “it seems to be this [feeling] ... always that FCSS is going to be gutted.” The people interviewed partially attribute this precarity and uncertainty to a sense of political instability in Alberta. The research team heard that there is a lack of clear signalling from the GOA that FCSS funding is secure. One director described waiting for FCSS’s next three-year agreement, which was overdue at the time of the interview, as a “nerve-wracking situation”.

Respondents also noted that formerly secure and reliable contracts are increasingly being put up for bid. One director said “We don’t know what’s going to happen” with a home care contract their FCSS has held for more than ten years. The team also heard that funding and support for FCSS programming or programs administered by FCSS is often piecemeal and short-term, with a lack of attention given to program sustainability in the face of unreliable funding.

FCSS directors experience provincial funding for social services as episodic and identified the inconsistency of provincial funding and support for FCSS as a long-term problem. Several interviewees noted a pattern where the GOA will introduce a pilot program for social services

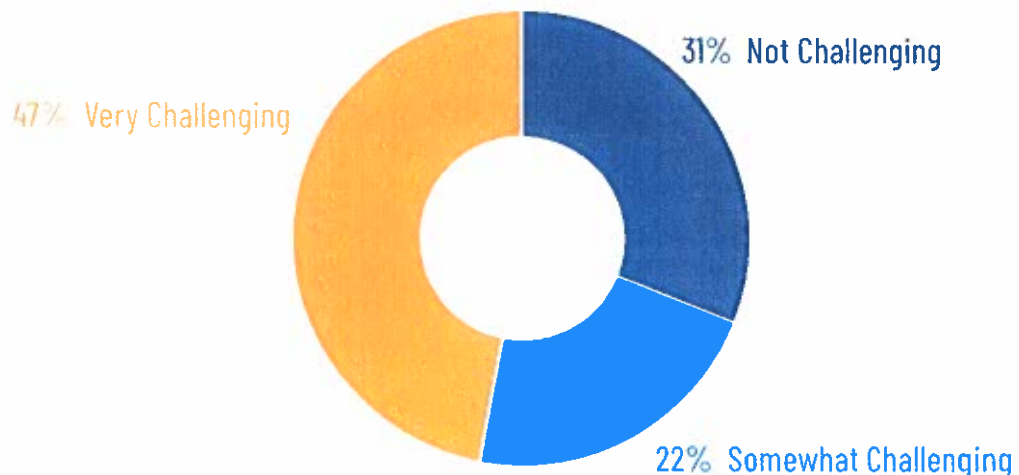


with limited-term funding (one to three years is common). In many cases, just when the program is starting to show results, the funding is inexplicitly dropped. Unexpected program restructuring and shifting government priorities contribute to challenges both in meeting government targets and in serving community members in a consistent, reliable way. From the perspective of FCSS, when funding for a program is ended, the reasons for the cut can be much better explained by a bias towards political novelty than by evidence of a need to revise policies.

The result of this sense of scarcity and instability, we were told, is increased territorialism between social service agencies. Organizations that could partner with each other instead may find themselves competing for funding. Many directors also pointed out that underfunding preventive social services ultimately results in increased social service costs. One director explained that “We put all of these dollars in ... intervention work, but if we put more money in ... prevention work ... we wouldn’t need as many dollars in intervention”.

The ending of the Parent Link program in late 2019 and early 2020 is an important example of this kind of unexpected program restructuring and funding instability. Results from the research team’s survey on this topic require some interpretation and possibly further research. In simplest terms, the survey results seem to show that the ending of the Parent Link program and its replacement with the Family Resource Network model (FRN) was either experienced as extremely challenging, or as not at all challenging. Roughly 31% of survey respondents rated the replacement of Parent Link by the FRN model as “not challenging,” while roughly 47% rated the replacement as “very challenging” (Figure 7, page 20). These two answers at opposite ends of the scale received the highest number of responses.

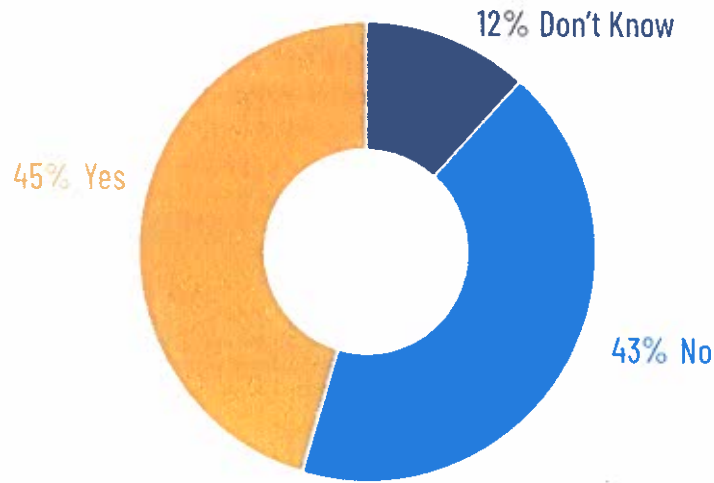
**Figure 7: How challenging was the replacement of Parent Link Centres by Family Resource Networks for your FCSS program?<sup>11</sup>**



Similarly, respondents were evenly split on the effects of ending Parent Link. Just over 45% of respondents said that their FCSS program was negatively affected by the ending of the Parent Link program, while almost 43% of respondents indicated that the ending of Parent Link did not negatively affect their program (Figure 8, page 21).

<sup>11</sup> For readability purposes, this data was collapsed from a survey question that employed a 10-point Likert Scale asking respondents to rate “how challenging” this was from 1 (not challenging) to 10 (extremely challenging). In this chart, scores from 1 – 3 were collapsed into “not challenging”, scores 4 – 6 were collapsed into “somewhat challenging” and scores 7 – 10 were collapsed into “very challenging”.

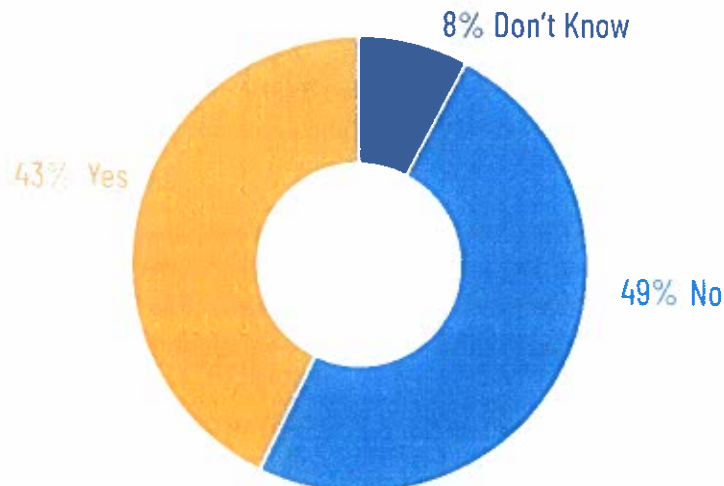
**Figure 8: Was your FCSS program negatively affected by the ending of the Parent Link program?**



Evidence given by interview participants was stronger and more clear-cut about the negative impacts of the ending of the Parent Link program and the transition to FRNs. Participants variously described the loss of Parent Link as “dramatic” and a “traumatic loss.” They described the transition to the FRNs as “abysmal” and “a chaotic mess” which introduced “a lack of clarity” about the role of FCSS in supporting child and youth development. Directors stated that the ending of Parent Link and transition to the FRN model was not just about funding. Many also expressed concerns related to a lack of clarity from the government about reporting expectations, goals and outcomes, and communication more generally.

Almost 59% of survey respondents answered that FRN funding was insufficient to adequately meet the needs of community members who had formerly attended Parent Link programming (Figure 9, page 21).

**Figure 9: Has FRN funding allowed you to adequately meet the needs of community members who formerly attended Parent Link programming?**





More than one director said that, under the FRN structure, they received about one-third of the funding they had received with Parent Link. As difficult to navigate as a two-thirds funding cut for early childhood programming must have been, the FRNs also imposed a requirement to expand the amount and type of services provided. Parent Link programs served families with children aged 0 – 6 years, while the FRNs cover ages 0 – 18. This means that FCSS programs which were successful in receiving FRN funding took on responsibility for providing services that meet the needs of families, children, and youth across a much wider range of developmental stages. Several directors expressed concern that the funding and administrative structure for the FRNs forced communities within the same region to compete for funding — something that has strained relationships between communities in certain cases.

Directors told us that in some cases their municipalities have stepped in to fund the programs that were formerly funded through Parent Link, while in other cases the loss of Parent Link and its funding had resulted in a loss of programming, jobs, and services. Directors agreed that programming for 0- to 18-year-olds was important but said that the expansion could have happened within the model already established by Parent Link. Directors agreed that the Parent Link model was much more functional, consistent, and easy to coordinate than the FRN model.

### Rural-Specific Funding Challenges for FCSS Programs

Being rural significantly shapes the financial needs of FCSS programs. Many of the directors interviewed feel the GOA does not understand or appreciate the unique cost-of-living and opportunity constraints faced by rural communities. In particular, the research team heard about issues related to transportation and limited access to social services in rural communities. The team also heard from northern FCSS programs about the isolation their communities face and about how a recent economic downturn due to changes in the oil and gas industry is putting strain on residents and social programs. These and similar stories suggest that it is important to pay attention not only to ruralness as a factor in the social needs of Albertans but also to variation within rural Alberta, and to the geographic, socio-cultural, and economic reasons for this variation.

Many of the issues faced by rural FCSS programs can also be framed in terms of an urban-rural divide. FCSS directors were quick to tell us that they do not measure themselves against urban FCSS programs and that there is generally open communication and sympathy within FCSSAA and between rural and urban programs. Nevertheless, urban FCSS programs have significantly greater access to both financial and human resources. The research team heard several times that resources are more likely to go to Alberta's urban centres, and that grants tend to be geared more towards urban organizations with administrative, data collection, and analytical capacity. The knowledge that funding is more accessible to urban FCSS programs which already have larger budgets and greater personnel capacity is experienced by rural FCSS directors as a kind of arbitrary punishment: one director told us that rural communities are “penalized for being small” when it comes to accessing social service funding.

Almost every director noted that rural FCSS programs are incredibly important because there often are no other social services available in small communities. Rural FCSS directors feel that decision-makers in urban settings do not realize how few social services there are in rural



communities, which leads to underestimating the needs of rural communities and the complexity of the situations to which rural FCSS programs must respond. The research team was told that, in rural communities, FCSS programs cannot be specialized because there often are no other social service agencies, and that rural FCSS staff must be similarly flexible, adaptable, and able to wear “many different hats.” There is a strong perception on the part of rural FCSS directors that urban FCSS programs have a narrower social focus and more internal specialization due to their

proximity to other social service agencies and greater ease of access to outside professionals such as mental health counsellors. Rural FCSS directors count their flexibility and “jack of all trades” pragmatism as a strength, in part because it means that they feel connected to and knowledgeable about the social wellbeing of their communities. However, directors are aware that the flip side of being a “jack of all trades” means that there is no one else around that one can consult or bring in to offer specialized knowledge or support for complex social issues.

Directors repeatedly raised transportation as a significant barrier for rural residents. Simply put, there is a lack of public transportation or other affordable and reliable transportation options serving rural communities. Residents often live long distances from neighbours and from municipal centres wherein so many social and health support offices are located. Lack of access to transportation is particularly acute for people living on low or fixed incomes. One of FCSS’s important preventive roles is guarding against isolation and increasing social connection. If people are unable to travel to programming, FCSS’s capacity to reach people is limited.

Transportation is also an issue for more acute social and personal needs, such as attending medical appointments or appointments with other social service agencies, either locally or in the city. FCSS programs are generally prohibited from using designated governmental funding to offer transportation service. At least one director told the research team that their FCSS provides a transportation service that they pay for with non-FCSS funding because reducing barriers to participation is a core FCSS goal. Directors also emphasized the need to provide outreach services and to meet people where they live in cases where an individual is housebound or unable to travel.

Another infrastructure issue rural FCSS directors raised concerned lack of available, appropriate, and affordable space for programming. Rural communities often have a limited stock of buildings suitable to rent or borrow for events, and building new infrastructure is for the most part prohibitively expensive for FCSS programs with limited budgets.

One final significant piece the research team heard regarding rural FCSS programs’ funding challenges is that some rural communities have experienced population growth or economic development and have increased in importance as regional hubs. While this shift may suggest an important corrective to assumptions of rural decline, the team was told that provincial FCSS funding has not kept pace with, or has not yet recognized, this growth. FCSS programs in these communities now have more clients, but in at least some cases, have had to cut programming to shift resources to “maxed-out” programs.



## Key Challenge 2: The Increasing Inaccessibility of Provincial Social Services in Rural Alberta

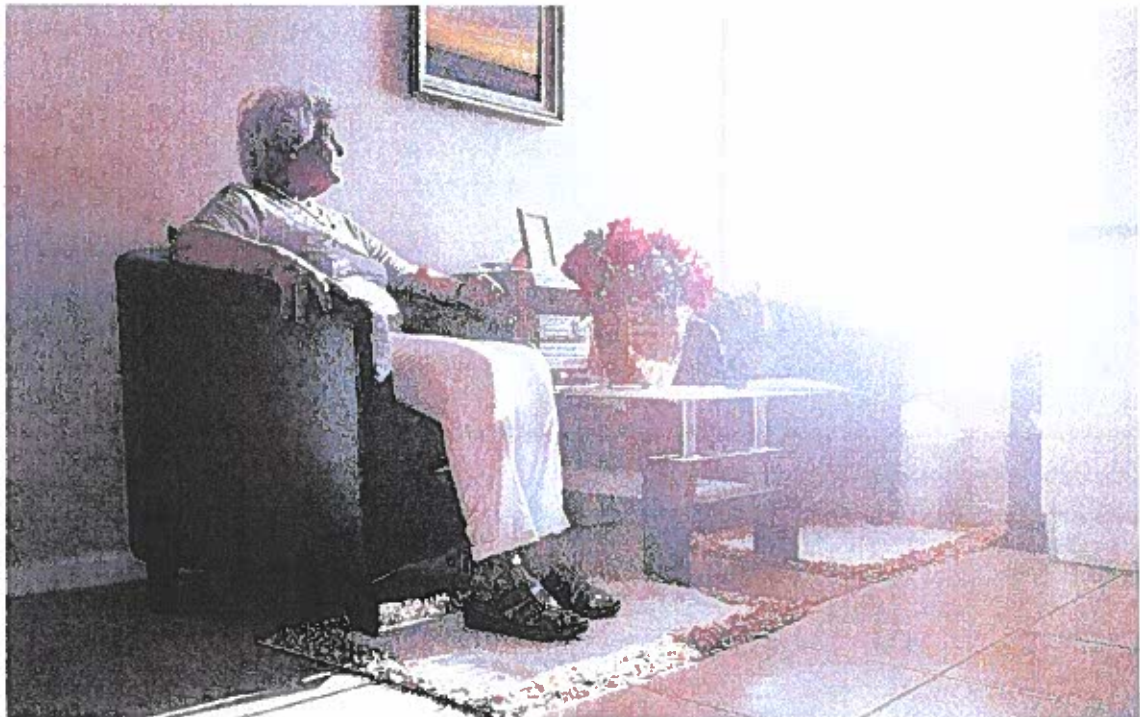
It is increasingly difficult for both rural residents and rural FCSS offices to access provincial government support services. This is partly the result of a long-running trend of the centralization of public services that has occurred in Alberta and elsewhere. In general, the story has been the same across Canada for more than three decades: stagnant populations in rural areas, combined with the ever-present search for “efficiencies” among cost-conscious provincial governments has led to a “retreat of the state” from rural areas. As one rural FCSS director noted, to the extent that services still exist in small communities, they are often “a shell of what they used to be.”

Nearly all FCSS directors who took part in this study highlighted the ongoing process of centralization of social services. They noted that, not only did these processes often unfold with little consultation or communication with key community stakeholders (including FCSS offices), this decline of services has significantly impacted rural community members who are dependent on government services but are now being asked to travel much farther at their own expense to a government office or healthcare facility for assistance. This presents a very real barrier for many community members for whom financial insecurity or health concerns make such travel difficult, if not impossible.

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*“For a long time, we have been talking with Alberta Supports and Alberta Works... We have been requesting that they provide a person on a regular basis, like once a month, to come to our office ... and there is an absolute refusal. There was zero interest in them being accessible out here. Their solution was that, if there are clients that need help, they can call their office and book an appointment to meet with those clients. But it still required a person to travel that 45 plus minutes.”*

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This is not a new observation with respect to the delivery of rural public services. However, what is increasingly evident for FCSS offices across rural Alberta is that, given that they are now very often “the only place in town” that is understood to offer social supports to community members in need, FCSS offices are often shouldered with additional requests for help from residents.

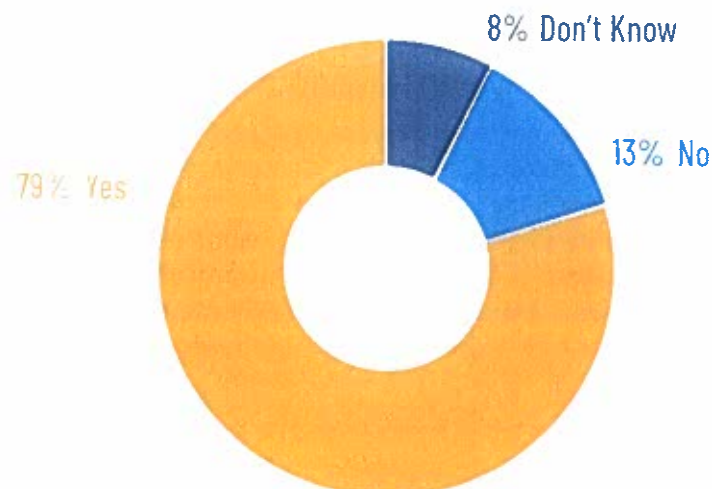
Part of this trend seems to have been by design on the part of the GOA. A significant concern raised frequently by FCSS directors is the ongoing “downloading” of additional responsibilities that were once within the purview of other provincial agencies onto FCSS offices, often without additional financial support or meaningful training. One FCSS director recounted a time wherein a designated provincial support worker would routinely visit the office to help local seniors with applications required to access certain supports or benefits. That worker eventually stopped coming and instead, “Our office got a PowerPoint and my staff are expected to go out and share the information on their services and benefits to the community.”

This may seem like an insignificant anecdote, but the research team heard a version of this story repeatedly during the study. The consistent downloading of tasks is further stressing FCSS programs across rural communities by increasing their workload without access to additional provincial funding.

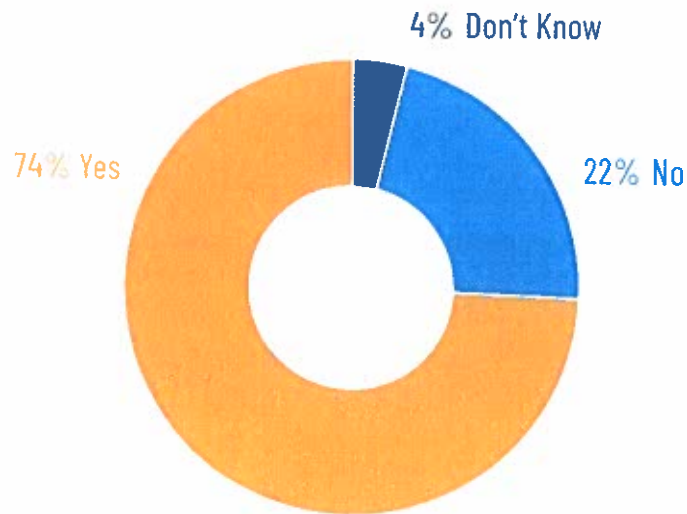
A related outcome of centralization of support services is, even if rural FCSS programs are not technically being asked to “take on” additional responsibilities, because they are often “the only place in town” offering any type of supports, community members requiring help will frequently show up at FCSS offices with requests for assistance. However, such requests are often beyond the FCSS’s legislated mandate of providing preventative services and thus, technically, meant to be addressed by other agencies who, in many cases, no longer have a physical presence in the community.

As Figure 10, page 25 and Figure 11, page 26 show, the overwhelming majority of rural FCSS directors are being forced to extend their mandate and completing additional work beyond what they are funded to do. Importantly, there is a strong sense that these requirements have significantly increased since 2018 (Figure 12, page 26).

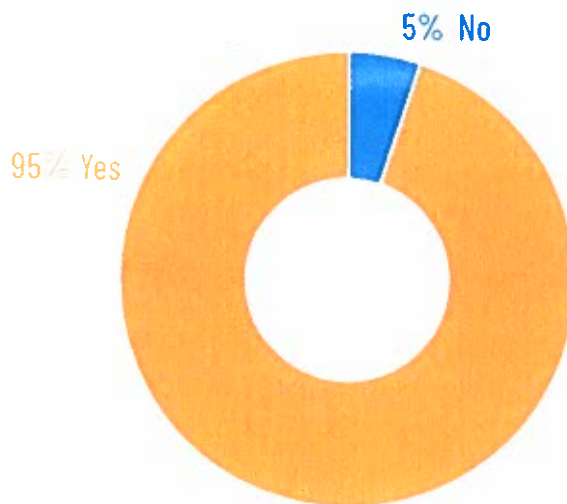
**Figure 10: Do you feel your FCSS program is having to take on responsibilities that are meant to be the mandate of other provincial ministries or agencies?**



**Figure 11: Does your FCSS program occasionally provide services to community members beyond those you understand to fall under the mandate of “prevention”?**



**Figure 12: Has this pressure to provide services beyond “prevention” increased since 2018?**



### The Relational Realities of Rural Life

Pressure for FCSS offices to complete work beyond their mandate is amplified by the “relational reality” of small-town life. Compared to urban centres, there is a higher likelihood that members of a rural FCSS office have some personal connection or familiarity to the community member in need and thus feel an additional responsibility to help, even when the request is well outside FCSS’s mandate. Even if this relational component is not part of the equation in a given request for help from a community member, the fact that rural FCSS offices are more likely to provide direct services compared to urban FCSS offices (who are more likely to “grant-out” their funding to other organizations), make them more prone to being approached for this kind of help.

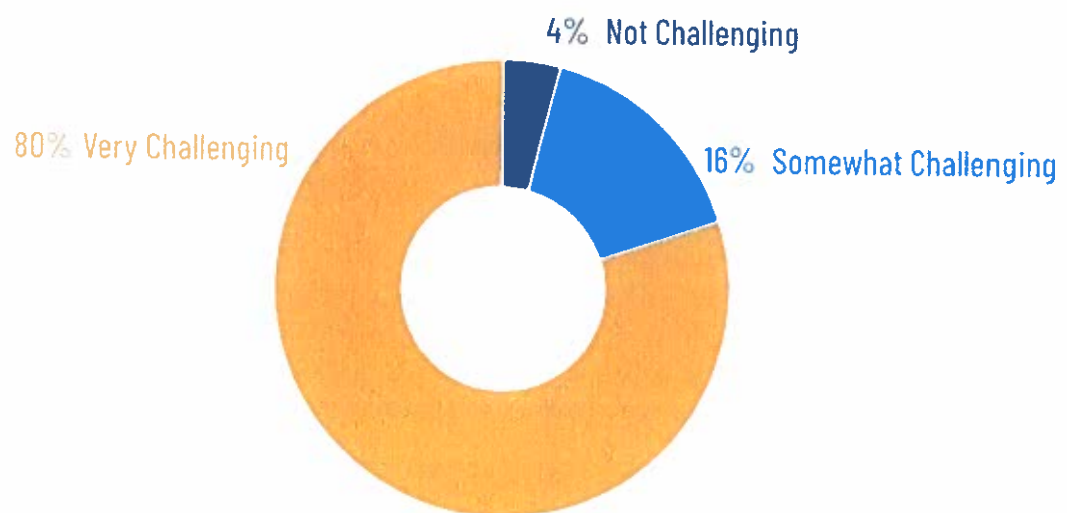
In either case, that rural FCSS offices have essentially become one of the last physical places (if not the only place) where people in need of social services can seek help, they are automatically placed in the unfair and untenable situation of having to go beyond their

mandate and provide intervention-type services (incurring the extra cost and effort this entails with no hope of being reimbursed) or turning away a community member in need, who may be someone they know personally, or at least someone they have a high likelihood of encountering again.

### The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Shuttering of Additional In-person Support Services

This reality of rural FCSS offices as the only local site of social supports has intensified in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent decision by the GOA to shutter or reduce in-person services across several social service agencies (conversely, almost all rural FCSS offices remained open throughout the pandemic). Alberta Supports was the service most frequently mentioned in this context by FCSS directors, but it certainly is not the only example of social services offices closing. In place of provincial in-person services, those in need of assistance on a range of issues, such as mental health supports, victim services, senior supports, and AISH applications are increasingly required to call a “1-800” line or seek assistance via an online web platform or email. Every FCSS director interviewed for this study highlighted the negative impact of this change on their operational capacity. FCSS directors were asked about the severity of this challenge (Figure 13, page 27) and roughly 80% of respondents rated this as “very challenging.”

**Figure 13: How challenging have increased community member requests due to the centralization of provincial services like Alberta Supports, Mental Health and Addictions, and Children’s Services, been for your FCSS program?<sup>12</sup>**

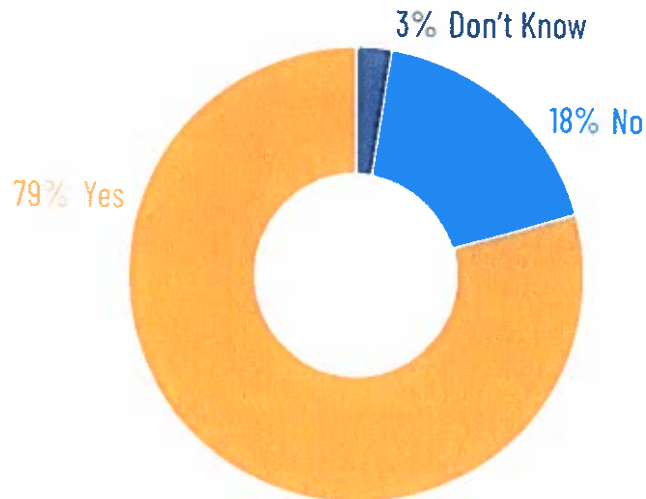


Online and telephone services have severe limitations for vulnerable people in rural communities. Several FCSS directors noted how difficult it can be for community members in need to navigate this new impersonal system. Stories of community members being left on hold for hours on end, of running out of minutes on their “pay as you go” cell phone plans while waiting for help, of attempting to navigate confusing web portals with poor internet service, and of seniors without email addresses being asked to “sign-in online” were very

<sup>12</sup> For readability purposes, this data was collapsed from a survey question that employed a 10-point Likert Scale asking respondents to rate “how challenging” this was from 1 (not challenging) to 10 (extremely challenging). In this chart, scores from 1 – 3 were collapsed into “not challenging”, scores 4 – 6 were collapsed into “somewhat challenging” and scores 7 – 10 were collapsed into “very challenging”.

common. For rural FCSS offices, this has led to a significant influx in community members seeking help. As noted in Figure 14, page 28, this has resulted in an increase in the amount of time FCSS staff must spend one-on-one with community members — time that is now no longer available for traditional preventative programming that is central to FCSS's mandate.

**Figure 14: Are your FCSS staff spending more time working with community members one-on-one since 2018?**



This new reality is captured well in this extended quote from a long-time rural FCSS director:

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*"The lack of foresight when it comes to centralization of services, the 1-800 numbers, the online portals; these do not work for all people in our community, particularly those that are illiterate, that don't have telephones, and that don't have computer skills. And my growing concern is that we are skewing statistics to look like rural communities do not need services because they're not able to access them.*

*When you look at seniors' programs, seniors' benefits, when you look at income support, when you look at even victim services, mental health services, continuing care, all of that has become a '1-800' intake. So you take somebody who has mental health concerns, they're on the line waiting for sometimes two, three hours, only to be cut off. And still not get to an actual appointment.*

*This is something that my staff experience on a daily basis with folks. Some days, we have five, six people in need come who come in here at their wit's end, they have no money, no phone, no internet access, no ID, and we are the only ones that try to maneuver through the system with them.*

*And this is what's happening in all of our rural communities. And we need a voice to say 'no, this isn't working.' And my fear is that the provincial government is swinging the pendulum to a fully centralized intake system because it's saving money, it's efficient...*

*These things pull us away from what the true mandate of FCSS is. And so it does cause a lot of stress on the staff, a lot of burnout, and a lot of feelings of helplessness, almost because there's nothing they can do.*

*And I would say everybody in (our office) has thought about walking away. But their sense of responsibility won't let them because they're also the ones that look people in the eye, as opposed to the person on the other end of a '1-800' call."*

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## Negative Impacts on Rural Clients

Unsurprisingly, not only has the recent move towards “1-800” lines and online platforms stressed rural FCSS offices, these changes have also resulted in noticeable negative impacts on rural citizens in need. Several rural FCSS directors spoke passionately about the reality of more vulnerable community members simply “falling through the cracks” and not receiving the help they require, and are entitled to, because the system has become far too inaccessible. Several FCSS directors recounted stories of people simply “giving up” and not pursuing the help they need. As the quote above suggests, there are legitimate fears that the true volume of “need” in rural communities is much more significant than what appears in provincial statistics because so many rural citizens either fail to navigate the new virtual reality of provincial supports or they have stopped trying. This was precisely the moral of one of the more dramatic (although not unique) stories shared with the research team:

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*“We had an individual that was threatening to commit suicide, or even take other people out because he was so frustrated with trying to navigate the provincial social services system. And so we did a bit of an intervention with him, and we were able to develop some supports that we could offer to him and support him, and help navigating some of those services. But I mean it, it was so bad that he was very serious about taking his own life. So, that’s just one example of where what happens when you have people that are already in challenging situations, and they just are getting the runaround from agencies and governments, and when there aren’t really clear lines about who is supposed to be doing what. I know there’s a lot of discussion in the FCSS world around the centralization of Alberta Supports. And I feel like we haven’t received as many clients requesting this type of help recently, and it’s mostly because people have given up.”*

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Even in cases where individuals are able to connect with support workers online or over the phone, many FCSS directors noted that such impersonal “virtual intakes” frequently fail to uncover the full range of services vulnerable people need. The result is “the loss of a continuum of service” wherein the social support system can “wrap around the entire client” and ensure they are both properly taken care of and receive the full multitude of supports they need. Further, clients no longer have a consistent contact person to follow up in this environment, leading to additional challenges accessing the required supports. Ultimately, as one rural FCSS director explained, “The actions of the provincial government [in transitioning to ‘1-800’ lines or online web portals for intakes and assistance] ... summarily dismissed people who are already disenfranchised.”





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In summary, the ongoing centralization of social services in Alberta has generated significant challenges for rural FCSS programs and rural citizens — challenges that have only multiplied with the recent decision to fast-track a transition to telephone intake lines and online web portals for a variety of provincial social service supports (especially Alberta Supports) in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Because rural FCSS offices are often “the only shop in town,” they face a disproportionate burden compared to most of their urban counterparts. Indeed, this issue raises a serious equity concern. Multiple provincial agencies mandated to deliver supports to all Alberta citizens have increasingly reduced their in-person supports to rural Albertans. Rural FCSS offices are subsequently faced with helping vulnerable community members navigate this new system — a considerable task for offices already facing funding and capacity pressures. This in turn intensifies pressure on rural municipalities to increase funding to local FCSS programs, which has resulted in a significant increase in municipal overcontribution to FCSS programs across rural Alberta.

### Key Challenge 3: Changing and Increasing Social Needs in Rural Communities

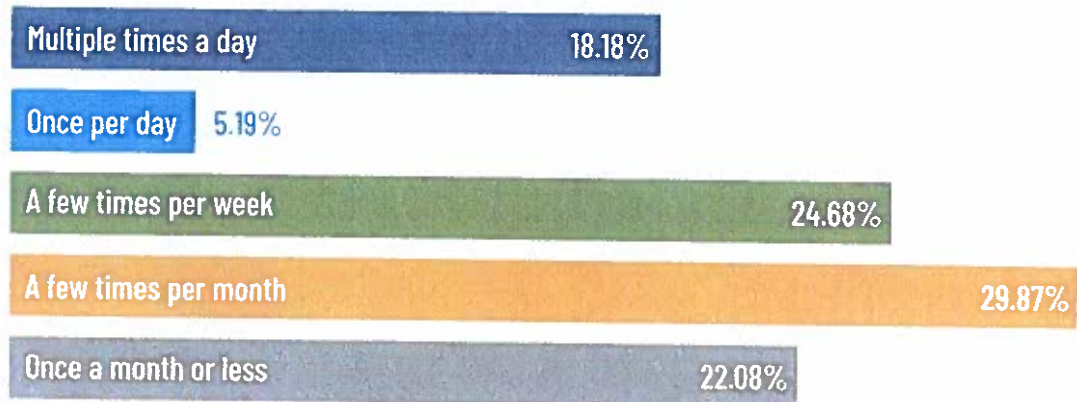
Rural FCSS directors were essentially unanimous in highlighting the changing nature and the overall increase of social service needs in their communities — two trends that have also placed new stresses on already taxed FCSS programs in rural Alberta. Although tracing precise causes of such complex trends is difficult, the FCSS directors we spoke with were adamant that both the COVID-19 pandemic and recent inflation are key drivers of changing and increasing client needs.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented unique and difficult challenges for all Albertans. Rural FCSS directors spoke at length about a clear decline in the mental health of many of their clients, of the impacts of social isolation (especially for children and seniors), and increased anxiety related to both physical health and financial wellbeing. In addition, directors noticed new patterns of division within communities, decreased comfort levels in group settings, and declining levels of healthy behaviours in the wake of basically losing two years of FCSS group programming.

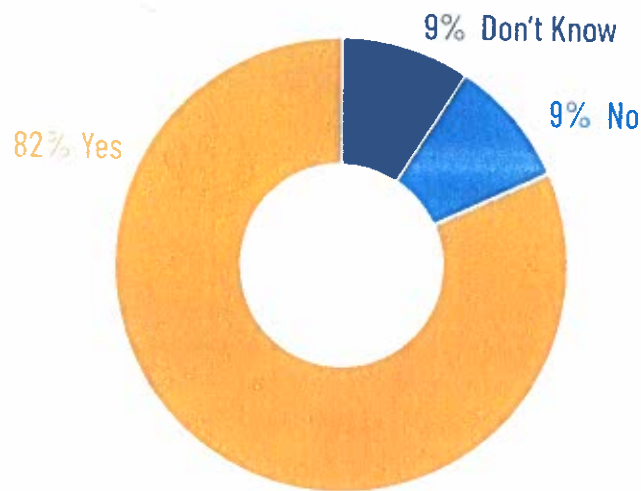
The current period of inflation has added more stress on many of the most vulnerable in our communities. Multiple FCSS directors spoke of “unprecedented demand” for the services of local food banks, of noticing more and more people “not eating,” and of a more general decline in the mental health of many given the overarching anxiety fast-rising prices of all key staples can cause in those populations without the means to absorb significantly higher costs. Several rural FCSS directors also noted increasing levels of homelessness in their communities, a trend that was already emerging prior to the pandemic, and has grown worse in the past few years.

Overall, rural FCSS directors are receiving more requests for assistance than previous years and are encountering more complex cases involving serious mental health issues, addictions, domestic abuse, crime, and individuals and families in serious financial distress. In short, the number of people who are walking through the doors of rural FCSS offices in crisis has increased dramatically in the past few years (See Figure 15, page 31 and Figure 16, page 31).

**Figure 15: How often do your FCSS staff encounter community members who are in a state of crisis?**

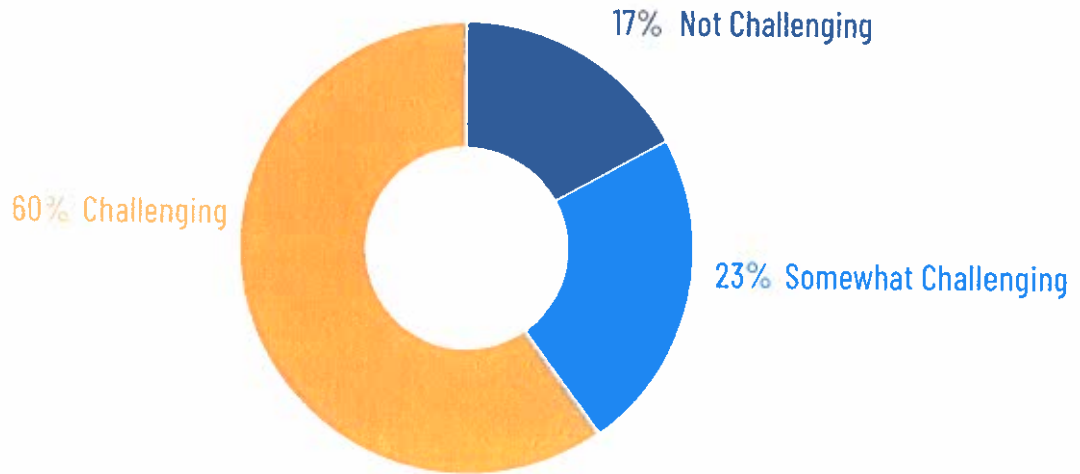


**Figure 16: Have your FCSS staff experienced an increase in community members who are in a state of crisis since 2018?**



These trends are especially problematic for rural FCSS offices because such cases clearly fall within the range of “intervention” rather than “prevention,” thus often pushing FCSS staff further beyond their legislated mandate. As discussed earlier, the “relational realities” of rural life make it especially difficult for rural FCSS staff to simply turn people in need of intervention away. Indeed, one clear outcome of this increased pressure that several rural FCSS directors noted was a noticeable rise in both workload and levels of personal stress among both FCSS staff and members of community organizations who partner with FCSS on local programming, often leading to what many respondents labelled as “staff burnout” (see Figure 17, page 32).

**Figure 17: How challenging has the problem of staff burnout been in your FCSS office?<sup>13</sup>**

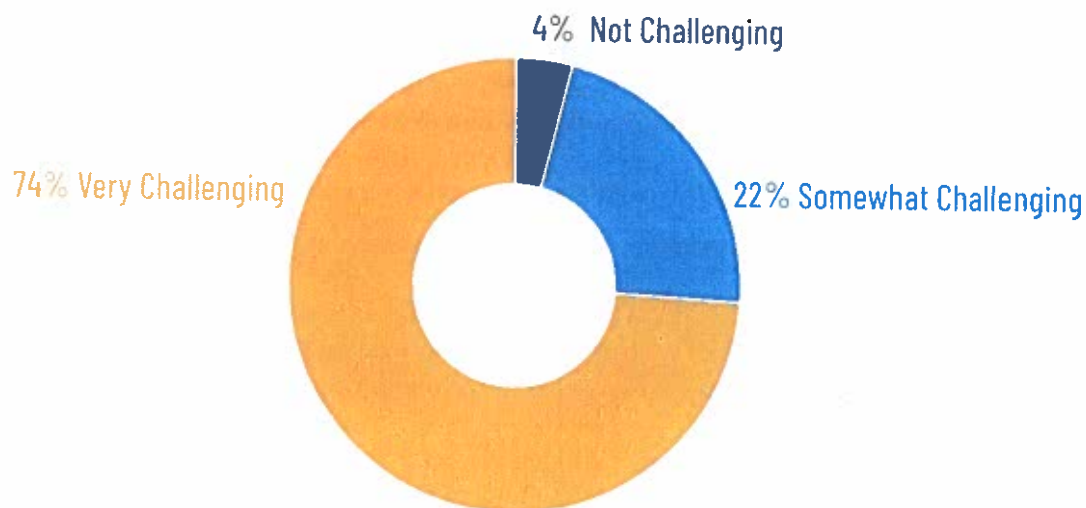


FCSS directors have faced increasing anxiety related to both the wellbeing of their staff and clientele, but also awareness that these patterns place even more fiscal pressure on their underfunded offices. In addition, many directors demonstrated a fair amount of despair in their conversations with us in response to their growing sense that provincial officials are simply unconvinced by their pleas regarding the increasingly dire situation facing both vulnerable individuals and rural FCSS offices.

Granted, the changing nature and increasing frequency of these social service needs are not localized to rural communities. It is likely that most urban social service providers across Alberta (if not North America and beyond) have noted similar patterns in the wake of the pandemic and the subsequent period of inflation. However, due to existing funding shortfalls and increasing client loads, these new challenges are pushing already taxed rural FCSS offices to the brink. FCSS directors were asked about the severity of this challenge (Figure 18, page 33) and roughly 74% of respondents deemed this to be “very challenging.”

<sup>13</sup> For readability purposes, this data was collapsed from a survey question that employed a 10-point Likert Scale asking respondents to rate “how challenging” this was from 1 (not challenging) to 10 (extremely challenging). In this chart, scores from 1 – 3 were collapsed into “not challenging”, scores 4 – 6 were collapsed into “somewhat challenging” and scores 7 – 10 were collapsed into “very challenging”.

**Figure 18: How challenging has increased demand for intervention-type services due to recent challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic or cost-of-living inflation to your FCSS program?<sup>14</sup>**



## Policy Recommendations

### 1. Increase Core Funding from the Province

The most commonly mentioned policy recommendation made by rural FCSS directors who participated in this study was simple: the provincial government must increase core funding for FCSS programs across the province. As mentioned earlier, provincial funding for FCSS programming remained capped at \$100 million from 2015 – 2022. In the meantime, several standard FCSS costs, from staff salaries to space rental to materials required for various on-the-ground programming have risen considerably. In this environment, many municipalities across rural Alberta have been forced to increase funding beyond their required 20% to prop up FCSS programs in their communities. Even with municipal overcontributions, the research team repeatedly heard about FCSS programs across rural Alberta facing significant fiscal pressure, often being forced to curtail programming, make smaller contributions to partnering community organizations, and reduce staff hours. Although the province increased overall funding to FCSS programs across the province by \$5 million in 2023, it is a near certainty that this amount will not be enough to address the key fiscal issues rural FCSS offices are facing.

A number of different ideas for ensuring more funds flow to rural FCSS offices were shared over the course of this study but, at minimum, it would be prudent for the provincial ministry to ensure annual increases in core funding are indexed to inflation. Given the emerging patterns of need discussed in the previous section, and the significant pressures the centralization of other social services puts on rural FCSS offices, there is an urgent need not only for funding to index with inflation but to increase significantly overall. Therefore, a significant increase to core funding that acknowledges the rising

<sup>14</sup> For readability purposes, this data was collapsed from a survey question that employed a 10-point Likert Scale asking respondents to rate “how challenging” this was from 1 (not challenging) to 10 (extremely challenging). In this chart, scores from 1 – 3 were collapsed into “not challenging”, scores 4 – 6 were collapsed into “somewhat challenging” and scores 7 – 10 were collapsed into “very challenging”.





need for the types of vital services and programs FCSS offices provide to their community members is also recommended. Widespread municipal overcontribution essentially means that the provincial government is failing to uphold the funding parameters that govern FCSS operations in Alberta: 80% from the province and 20% from the municipality. A meaningful increase to core funding would help to return the provincial-municipal funding balance to what is demanded by the terms of the FCSS Regulation. In an environment wherein the provincial government is basking in significant budget surpluses and has made several large spending announcements across different jurisdictions in the past year, a serious increase to the core funding of FCSS programs in Alberta seems imminently doable.

In addition, the provincial government must do more to ensure the sustainability of core funding for FCSS programming. Several FCSS directors noted that the current practice of signing three-year funding contracts with individual FCSS programs creates an unnecessary level of anxiety, and even program inertia, for directors and staff, especially when these contracts are frequently renewed at “the very last moment.” Similar concerns were shared in relation to “pilot programs” the provincial government decides to fund. These should be funded for at least three (if not five) years, and should not be abruptly ended without significant consultation with FCSS directors. The degree of precarity faced by FCSS offices on both these fronts adds additional stress to programs that are already “maxed out”.

## 2. Increase the Accessibility of Provincial Social Support Services for Rural Albertans

In accordance with the second key challenge discussed above, the GOA must do more to ensure certain provincial social services remain or are returned to rural communities. No rural FCSS director we spoke with expected a full return of social services that once existed in rural Alberta decades ago. However, there are actions the GOA can take to lessen the load rural FCSS offices face in terms of the increased demand from community members given that they are often “the last shop in town” offering some social supports.

At a minimum, the province must revisit the decision to transition so many support services and client intakes to “1-800” lines and online web portals. Not only has this decision placed incredible stress on rural FCSS offices, it has also proven to have significantly negative impacts on vulnerable people throughout rural Alberta who find it very difficult, if not impossible, to navigate this new system. Re-opening the Alberta Supports offices that were shuttered over the pandemic would be the most appropriate first step in this direction.

More generally, a serious commitment from the GOA to ensure that more in-person social service supports are made available across a wider cross section of Albertan communities is required. While it is unrealistic to insist that every town and village across Alberta contain a selection of social service offices covering multiple issues, the province must ensure that there are physical offices within reasonable distances to all Alberta communities so rural Albertans can seek assistance in-person. Some additional assistance with transportation costs must also be included in such plans.



In addition, the GOA must reinvest in ensuring that social service workers who possess the capacity to truly help community members in need with various supports they are entitled to are travelling to and spending time in rural Alberta. The slow erosion of this practice has negatively impacted rural FCSS offices and vulnerable rural citizens. The principle of equitable treatment for all Albertans, urban and rural, requires revisiting this model.

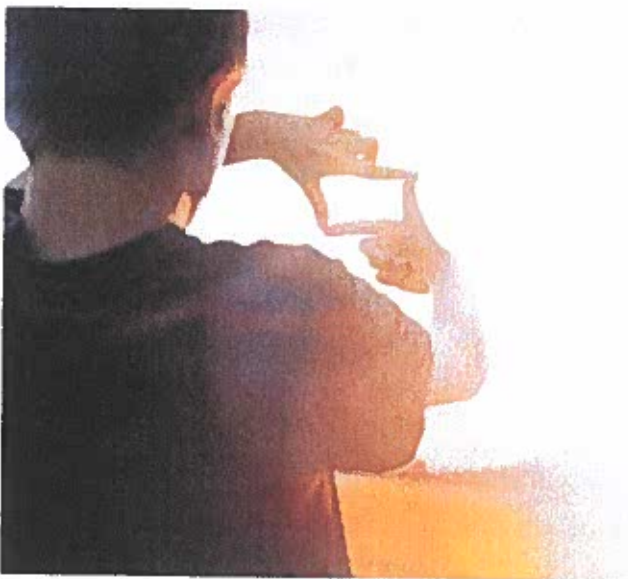
### 3. Ensure that Future Public Policy Related to Social Service Delivery in Alberta is Approached via a Rural Lens

The practice of applying a “rural lens” to public policy decisions refers to an assessment that specifically considers how a proposed policy change will impact rural regions and peoples. To apply a “rural lens” to public policy decisions related to social service delivery in Alberta would require a careful and systematic consideration of the impact that any policy change in this area would have on rural Albertan communities and citizens.

Having outlined the challenges rural FCSS programs face, many recent decisions related to social service delivery in Alberta were not considered through a “rural lens.” Although FCSS programs across Alberta are facing increasing pressures in response to similar challenges, impacts are often felt most acutely by rural FCSS programs that bear most of the burden generated by the ongoing centralization of broader social service delivery. On a more technical note, the transition to the use of telephone and web portals by many social service agencies discounts the reality of both poor internet and spotty cellular service in rural regions. Although the past cannot be altered, future policy decisions related to provincial social services must more seriously engage with questions related to impacts on rural communities and citizens.

Throughout this study the team heard many ways in which ministries responsible for social service delivery could better anticipate the impacts of policy changes on rural Alberta. Several rural FCSS directors noted the current funding calculation that determines the provincial contribution to each FCSS program should take into account that the size and sparseness of rural communities leads to higher costs for offering different FCSS programs, and of sharing important information with community members. Similarly, although some consolidation and centralization of social services may be inevitable, rural FCSS directors insisted that, when relocating services, more must be done to understand the actual travel patterns that rural residents follow, rather than assuming that travelling to a location pre-determined by an Edmonton-based bureaucrat will be realistic for rural citizens from a specific community.

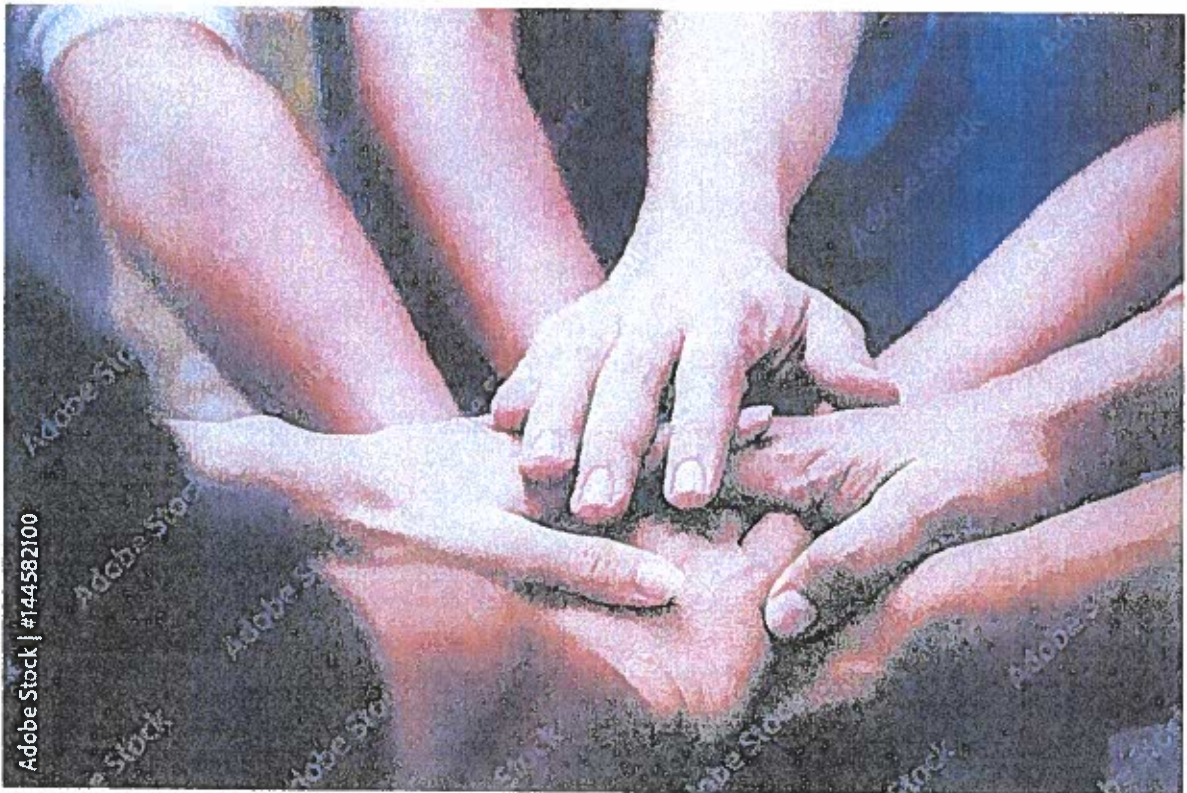
Several directors (although not all) were open to being more creative (and even somewhat radical) in terms of what rural FCSS programs can and should accomplish, given the realities they face. Rural FCSS offices are consistently “doing more with less” given the centralization of social service supports and the increasingly complex social challenges many rural Albertans are now facing. In such circumstances, more and more rural FCSS directors are asking whether they should take on an enlarged mandate capable of providing traditional “preventative” programming and additional “intervention-type” services and supports to community members in crisis given that no



local alternatives exist. Any such move in this direction would require careful planning, consultation, and enhanced resources from the GOA. Such an idea was not unanimously supported by the FCSS directors we spoke with. However, to even discuss it in a way that considers the impacts such a move would have on rural FCSS programs and community members is an example of applying a “rural lens” to an important debate about a large change in policy direction in rural Alberta. Evidence suggests that the time is now to have these conversations to ensure that social service delivery truly works for rural Albertans. The team heard too many examples that speak to the ways it currently does not.

#### 4. Ensure that Social Service Policy in Alberta is Designed with Meaningful Contributions from Rural FCSS Programs

Building upon the previous point, “applying a rural lens” to policy discussions amounts to more than a study conducted from afar by urban-based policy makers. To apply a rural lens is to meaningfully engage, consult, and listen to the true “experts” in this field: the directors and staff in rural FCSS offices who are living the realities described in this report. Most recent social service-related policy decisions have been made without this type of engagement — a process that goes some way towards understanding how Alberta has ended up in this situation. In fairness, recent work around the creation of a new FCSS Accountability Framework engaged a wide cross section of rural FCSS directors, and one of the goals of the process was to better plot ways to improve coordination with social service agencies located in other ministries. But more must be done by the GOA to intentionally engage rural FCSS offices when making broader social service delivery decisions that will inevitably impact rural communities and, of course, the rural FCSS programs that are actually in the community and will be tasked, formally or informally, with dealing with the on-the-ground consequences.







## \* CONCLUSION

FCSS is a crucial service in towns, villages, and rural communities across Alberta. Relying on the efforts of dedicated staff and supported by municipal decision-makers, FCSS offices in every corner of the province support strong families, connected seniors, and healthy children. In other words, FCSS is a massive part of what makes Alberta's rural communities great.

This report shows that the efforts and passion of FCSS leaders in doing whatever it takes to support everyone in their communities, even the most vulnerable, has been compromised by systematic provincial downloading of responsibility and underfunding of FCSS services. FCSS services are doing more than ever before without the requisite training, funding, and capacity support. This situation leads to unfair pressure on municipalities, unreasonable expectations on FCSS staff, and additional stress to vulnerable rural Albertans.

The RMA will continue to advocate to government for proper funding of FCSS services, and adequate local availability of social services that are the responsibility of the province to deliver. This report tells an indisputable story: FCSS offices are going above and beyond to soften the local impacts of provincial underfunding and service level reductions.



## Summer Village of Birch Cove

Box 8, Alberta Beach, AB T0E 0A0

PH:(780)967-0271 FAX: (780)967-0431

[www.birchcove.ca](http://www.birchcove.ca)

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August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Lac Ste. Anne County

Town of Onoway

Town of Mayerthorpe

Village of Alberta Beach

Summer Villages of Castle Island, Sunrise Beach, Nakamun Park, Ross Haven, Sandy Beach, Silver Sands, South View, Sunset Point, Val Quentin, West Cove and Yellowstone

**Re: Summer Village of Birch Cove Councillor Resignation & Byelection Results**

The Summer Village of Birch Cove, at their June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023 regular Council meeting received a letter of resignation from Councillor Eugene Dugan. A byelection was scheduled for August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Nomination day was concluded on July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and as no other candidates were forthcoming, Mr. Dean Preston was elected to Council by acclamation.

The Mayor remains as Steven Tymafichuk and Deputy Mayor as Dory Sample.

Please don't hesitate to contact the undersigned if you require further information.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

for Wendy Wildman  
Chief Administrative Officer

WW/dw

c.c. Summer Village of Birch Cove Council

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Box 8, Alberta Beach, AB T0E 1A0

Phone: 780-967-0271 email: [cao@birchcove.ca](mailto:cao@birchcove.ca)

[www.birchcove.ca](http://www.birchcove.ca)

(121)



Summer Village of Sunrise Beach

Box 1197

Onoway, Alberta

TOE 1VO

Email:

svsunrisebeach@wildwillowenterprises.com

Phone: (780) 967-0271

Fax: (780) 967-0431

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August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Lac Ste. Anne County

Town of Onoway

Town of Mayerthorpe

Village of Alberta Beach

Summer Villages of Birch Cove, Castle Island, Nakamun Park, Ross Haven, Sandy Beach, Silver Sands, South View, Sunset Point, Val Quentin, West Cove and Yellowstone

Ste. Anne Emergency Management Agency

Council and Admins:

Re: Sunrise Beach Councillor Resignation and Byelection Results

After the June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 regular council meeting, Councillor Everett Steenbergen submitted a letter of resignation. The municipality then underwent a byelection and we are pleased to advise Mr. Brian Benning was declared elected as a result of the August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023 byelection. We further advise Mr. Benning was officially sworn in as Councillor for the Summer Village of Sunrise Beach at the August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023 Council meeting. Mr. Jon Ethier remains Mayor, and Mr. Mike Benson remains Deputy Mayor.

Thank you.

Regards,

Wendy Wildman

Chief Administrative Officer

Summer Village of Sunrise Beach

cc: Summer Village of Sunrise Beach Council





Development Services  
for  
**Town of Onoway**

Box 2945, Stony Plain, AB., T7Z 1Y4, Phone (780) 718-5479 Fax (866) 363-3342  
Email: [pcm1@telusplanet.net](mailto:pcm1@telusplanet.net)

September 1, 2023

File: 23DP09-24

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**Re: Development Permit Application No. 23DP09-24  
Plan 6288 BZ, Block 2, Lot 20 : 4915 Lac Ste. Anne Trail South (the  
"Lands")  
C1 – Commercial – Office, Retail & Service District : Town of Onoway**

**Preamble: The proposed development includes the renovation of an existing commercial building c/w construction of a new peaked roof and the construction of an addition (covered patio) to the commercial building.**

APPROVAL OF DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

You are hereby notified that your application for a development permit with regard to the following:

***RENOVATION OF AN EXISTING COMMERCIAL  
BUILDING (CONSTRUCTION OF A PEAKED  
ROOF) AND CONSTRUCTION OF AN ADDITION  
(COVERED PATIO = 28.2 SQ. M.)***

Has been **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

- 1- All municipal taxes must be paid.
- 2- That the applicant shall display for no less than twenty-one (21) days after the permit is issued, in a conspicuous place on the site or on streets abutting the site, the enclosed notice.
- 3- The applicant shall provide to the Town of Onoway stamped engineered drawings and plans of both the proposed roof structure and the addition to the commercial building satisfactory to both the Town of Onoway (in support of the Development Permit Application) and Inspections Group Inc. (in support of the required Building and other related "Safety Codes" permits.).
- 4- **SAFETY CODES PERMITS – PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT**  
The applicant shall obtain and comply with the requirements, where applicable, from the appropriate authority, permits relating to building, electricity, plumbing and drainage, and all other permits required in connection with the proposed development.



Development Services  
for  
**Town of Onoway**

Box 2945, Stony Plain, AB., T7Z 1Y4, Phone (780) 718-5479 Fax (866) 363-3342  
Email: [pcm1@telusplanet.net](mailto:pcm1@telusplanet.net)

- 5- The applicant shall be financially responsible during construction for any damage by the applicant, his servants, his suppliers, agents or contractors, to any public or private property.
- 6- The improvements take place in accordance with the plans and sketch submitted as part of the permit application.
- 7- All development shall be landscaped and graded in a manner that all surface run-off is directed into the Municipal stormwater system, satisfactory to the Town of Onoway. All buildings must be completed with eaves which drain into the Municipal stormwater system.
- 8- All improvements shall be completed within twelve (12) months of the effective date of the permit.
- 9- The site and improvements thereon shall be maintained in a clean and tidy condition during construction, free from rubbish and debris. Receptacles for the purpose of disposing of rubbish and debris shall be provided to prevent scatter of debris and rubbish.
- 10- No person shall keep or permit to be kept in any part of a yard any excavation, storage or piling of materials required during the construction stage unless all necessary safety measures are undertaken. The owner of such materials or excavation must assume full responsibility to ensure the situation does not prevail any longer than reasonably necessary to complete a particular stage of construction.

Should you have any questions please contact this office at (780) 718-5479.

Date Application Deemed Complete

September 1, 2023

Date of Decision

September 1, 2023

Effective Date of Permit

September 30, 2023

Signature of Development Officer

Tony Sonleitner, Development Officer for the Town of Onoway  
cc Jennifer Thompson, CAO, Town of Onoway

**Note:** An appeal of any of the conditions of approval may be made to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board by serving written notice of appeal to the Clerk of the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board. Such an appeal shall be made in writing and shall be delivered either personally or by mail so as to reach the Clerk of the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board no later than twenty-one (21) days after the notice of decision. The appeal should be directed to this office at:

Town of Onoway  
Box 540  
4812 – 51<sup>st</sup> Street  
Onoway, AB T0E 1V0

and should include a statement of the grounds for the appeal and have attached an Appeal fee in the amount of \$200.00.

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**Date:** August 18, 2023

**To:** Municipal Leaders

**From:** Mauro Chies, President and CEO, Alberta Health Services  
Karen Horon, Interim Board Director, Alberta Precision Labs

**RE:** Lab services in Alberta transitioning to Alberta Precision Laboratories

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We are writing today to let you know about changes coming to lab services in Alberta.

Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL) will be the provider of community lab services in Alberta with an agreement in principle to purchase DynaLIFE assets and transition services and staff to AHS/APL.

The agreement with DynaLIFE will enable the transition of both community lab services and employees to APL in a manner that will ensure continuity of service and employment. The agreement reached this week will officially close on August 31, effectively meaning that AHS and APL will be the entity delivering community lab services from there on.

DynaLIFE and APL have always shared a focus on patients, and ensuring the safety, accessibility, and stability of lab services, across Alberta. This transition has been mutually agreed to and will see the staff and physicians from DynaLIFE transitioning to APL by mid-December.

DynaLIFE labs, facilities and equipment will be acquired by APL. This includes the lab operations currently and historically provided by DynaLIFE in Edmonton and North Zones. APL will also work with DynaLIFE staff and their unions to transition them to APL. This will take place in phases beginning in Calgary Zone. There will be no union job loss as part of this transition.

We recognize that Albertans have experienced challenges in accessing lab services in recent months; DynaLIFE and APL have taken action to address challenges, and further work is underway, specifically in the Calgary Zone. For more information, please visit: [albertaprecisionlabs.ca](http://albertaprecisionlabs.ca).

We appreciate the continued collaboration with DynaLIFE staff and leadership as we work to ensure Albertans are receiving timely access to community lab services.



Please note that all existing lab appointments and services will continue to be provided as scheduled, at this time. Albertans can continue to book their lab appointments [QMe \(dynalife.ca\)](https://www.dynalife.ca) or by calling 1-877-702-4486.

We understand and appreciate that you may be receiving questions from your communities about lab services, and we hope that this information provides you with assurance that we are taking action.

As always, please reach out to your Zone Leaders if you have any questions.

Thank you –

Mauro and Karen

(126)

**debbie@onoway.ca**

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**From:** Jennifer Thompson <cao@onoway.ca>  
**Sent:** September 7, 2023 2:06 PM  
**To:** debbie@onoway.ca  
**Subject:** FW: September Towns West Update

Can you add this to the agenda please?

NOTE: Does Council want to set up a meeting in October with Ms. Gardner to discuss questions or concerns with AB Munis?

Jennifer

---

**From:** Krista Gardner <KGardner@calmar.ca>  
**Sent:** September 7, 2023 1:52 PM  
**Subject:** September Towns West Update

Hello Towns West!

I hope everyone had a fantastic and relaxing summer as we all gear up for fall. Fall is my favourite season, so bring on the leaves, sweaters, and pumpkin spice lattes! Fall also brings us to our premier event of the year- our annual convention! I hope to see you all at the Edmonton Convention Centre in person later this month, but if you aren't able to attend, we also have a virtual option where you still get to participate in plenary sessions and voting. In addition to the usual items, we are holding our first Women in Local Government Networking event on Thursday evening. This was requested by a number of our members and the women of our board will be in attendance. I hope many of you will join us. The 2023 resolution book is now up on our website. Take a look and think about how the proposed resolutions will affect your community. [Resolutions | Alberta Municipalities \(abmunis.ca\)](#) Remember, the voting outcomes determine the future advocacy work of ABmunis.

Speaking of advocacy, here's a couple of quick updates!

### **LGFF**

I know we are all waiting anxiously to find out the new formula and begin making budget plans. Unfortunately as of this writing, the formula has not yet been finalized, although ABMunis is working hard on ensuring that our viewpoints are heard. One of the key pieces that we continue to address is that the funding pot is too small. When we look at the funding pot for the non-charter municipalities, the starting amount of LGFF (\$722 Million) is 33 per cent lower than the average of MSI over the last twelve years. To put it another way, over the last decade provincial funding for community infrastructure has dropped from \$424 per capita to only \$154 per capita. That represents a 64% decline in provincial investments in community roads, water lines, fire trucks, and other essential



community needs. The funding a short while ago was close to 3% of the provincial budget – it is now closer to 1%. Increasing the LGFF starting level to the required amount of \$1.75 billion would restore the priority of municipal infrastructure funding to around 3% of provincial government expenditures. Please consider using this message of needing the funding increased to \$1.75 billion when speaking with your MLAs. We anticipate a decision to be made very shortly on the LGFF formula and will provide analysis once it is announced.

## **Policing**

### *Alberta Police Advisory Board*

The interim Police Advisory Board remains in place and will stay until the end of the 2024/25 funding model. I was recently appointed to the board after the resignation of Angela Duncan. While I haven't heard of an upcoming meeting date yet, I anticipate there to be one sometime in the fall. If you have comments or concerns, particularly from our PPSA communities, please let me know and I will bring those forward to the board.

### *RCMP Unionization*

For those of you not in a PPSA-

Five negotiation sessions have taken place so far in the current round of bargaining. At the last negotiation session in June, Treasury Board Canada (TBC) and the National Police Federation (the certified bargaining agent for RCMP regular members) exchanged comprehensive offers. TBC indicated that no service changes are expected to occur as a result of this round of collective bargaining; negotiations are solely focused on compensation. Due to the confidentiality surrounding negotiations, TBC was not able to share the details of their offer. However, they did mention that the last five collective agreements they negotiated were three-year agreements with increases of 3.5% in the first year, 2.25% in the second year, and 2% in the third year. Accordingly, it is suggested that you use an estimated increase of 3.5%, retroactive to April 1, 2023, when budgeting your policing costs for next year.

## **Future of Municipal Government**

Thank you to everyone who provided feedback on the Draft Recommendations on the Future of Intermunicipal Collaboration. The draft recommendations are informed by the discussions had at our President's Summit on FOMG in March and also during Summer MLC sessions across the province. ABmunis is revising the recommendations report based on your feedback and will release an updated version very soon. The updated recommendations report will form the foundation for engagement with Municipal Affairs and RMA and other partners involved in enhancing intermunicipal collaboration efforts. Stay tuned for the next paper in the FOMG series which looks at the changing dynamics of CAOs. It will be released by early September with a webinar to follow in October.

## **Elected Officials Education Program**

The inaugural offering of EOEP's brand new course which is being offered as pre-convention session on Tuesday, September 26 is already sold out and has a waiting list. The Effective Meetings course was developed by parliamentarian Todd Brand, who is a familiar face at ABmunis and RMA events. This course will help you participate in council meetings more.... well.... effectively. From managing time to managing unruly participants to managing your own self...there are always ways to improve how we conduct council business. This course will be offered again soon, if you didn't get in this time. The Municipal Finance course also being offered on the 26 is also filling up -so don't delay register today as part of your conference registration or through [eoep.ca](http://eoep.ca) Then in October, EOEP will head back online with our ever-popular Public Engagement course. Go to [eoep.ca](http://eoep.ca) for more information and to register for upcoming courses.

If you have any questions or concerns about what the ABmunis board has been up to or how we can help you and your Town, reach out and let me know! I am hoping to complete some member visits during October. These can be as formal (presenting at a Council Meeting) or informal (a chat over coffee) as you'd like. I'd love to visit your Town and see what makes it special, while talking about the services ABmunis offers and how we can help you achieve your goals. If this is something you'd be interested in, let me know and we'll get in the calendar!

Have a beautiful September and see you at Convention!

Krista



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