

Municipal Government Act Review

What We Heard: A Summary of Consultation Input

Business and Industry Session
Held in Brooks on March 27, 2014

Released on June 24, 2014

Developed by KPMG for Alberta Municipal Affairs



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Introduction

Purpose

This document provides a summary of what was heard during a consultation session for the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) review. The summary below includes the comments and opinions of the participants of the Business and Industry Session held in Brooks.

These contributions have not been reviewed or edited for accuracy. Comments recorded here reflect the opinions of individuals offered in person and recorded by session facilitators; they do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Government of Alberta.

The input summarized below will be considered by Alberta Municipal Affairs as part of the review of the legislation. Municipal Affairs would like to thank the participants of this session, as well as all Albertans participating in the review of the MGA. Any inquiries related to this summary or to the consultation process should be directed by email to the MGA Review Team at mga.review@gov.ab.ca.

The Municipal Government Act Review

The MGA is designed to help build strong, prosperous and sustainable communities throughout Alberta. Alberta Municipal Affairs is reviewing and refreshing the MGA to address evolving circumstances and priorities in Alberta's many communities, and to ensure the MGA continues to meet its objective. A successful MGA review process will continue to position Alberta as the leading Canadian jurisdiction in terms of municipal legislation, having incorporated sound thinking, input and research into a clear Act that meets the needs of the Province and municipalities. In order to achieve this vision, an inclusive and comprehensive engagement process was developed to ensure stakeholders across the province have opportunities to provide input to the review.

As part of the MGA review, regional consultations were held in eleven locations around the province to give Albertans an opportunity to provide input face-to-face. In each location, different types of sessions were held, including Technical Sessions, a Business and Industry Session, a Municipal Administrators Session, an Elected Officials Session, and a Public Open House.

These engagements were conducted in February 2014 to April 2014 in 11 locations throughout the province. Each location was held over 3 days in the following locations:

- Brooks
- Calgary
- Edmonton
- Edson
- Fort McMurray
- Grande Prairie
- Lethbridge
- Medicine Hat
- Peace River
- Red Deer
- Vermilion

Sessions were promoted via news releases, direct email invitations, social media, and by the Minister of Municipal Affairs at stakeholder conventions. Information on regional session locations, dates and registration were on the MGA Review website.

Input to the MGA Review has also been provided through other channels, including the MGA Review website (mgareview.alberta.ca), the MGA Review Consultation Workbook, and official submissions.

Session Overview

Session	Business and Industry Session
Location	Heritage Inn Hotels and Convention Centre, Brooks
Date	March 27, 2014
Number of Participants	0

- This session was open to anyone who wished to attend. Participants were asked to register in advance in order to receive background materials before the session.

Regional Consultation Methodology

How sessions were organized

Regional consultations were structured around one or more of the three themes of the MGA Review:

- Governance and Administration
- Assessment and Taxation
- Planning and Development

Participants were provided with agendas in advance, which identified a list of potential topics for discussion. These topics were taken directly from the MGA Review Consultation Workbook. Several of the topics for discussion appear under more than one of the three themes of the review because they are relevant to more than one theme (e.g. public participation). The agenda is attached as Appendix A.

At this session, participants provided input through facilitated table discussions. The goal of the facilitated conversations was to give the opportunity to all participants to discuss the issues that mattered most to them. Given the large size and scope of the MGA, participants at each table were asked to focus their discussion on those topics that they felt were most important to provide input on, using the list provided in advance. In addition, this session included time for “open discussion” during which participants could provide any additional input that they felt was important to the review. Table facilitators and note takers included staff from Municipal Affairs, KPMG and ADR Education.

Capturing input and reporting

Input from session participants was captured on flipcharts by facilitators during the discussion. It was explained to participants that:

- Comments were being recorded on flipcharts so that they could be captured and considered by Municipal Affairs as part of the review of the MGA.
- Comments would not be attributed to individuals or organizations.
- Other avenues were also available to provide written input to the review.

The summary below documents the input heard from participants and recorded on flipcharts. These comments have been transcribed and organized according to the list of topics for discussion; they have not been screened for accuracy and do not reflect consensus of participants. As a result, comments and opinions listed may be contradictory. Comments that apply to issues outside of the scope of the review (e.g., suggested changes to other legislation) have been removed.

It is important to emphasize that this summary reflects the input heard from participants, and does not necessarily reflect the position of the Government of Alberta..

How the Summary of Responses is Organized

Input from session participants is organized according to the three themes for the review:

- *Governance and Administration*
- *Assessment and Taxation*
- *Planning and Development*

Within these themes, comments are organized according to the applicable topics for discussion, using the list provided to participants in advance. In some sessions, not all themes may have been discussed.

Summary of Input

At the Brooks Business and Industry Session, there were zero participants. For this reason, no input was captured and recorded from this session.

Appendix A: Session Agenda

MGA Review: Business and Industry Session

Agenda Item	Timing						
<p>1. Welcome and introductions</p>	<p>10:00-10:15</p>						
<p>2. Potential topics for discussion:</p> <p>The following topics will be available at table discussions:</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="224 737 1252 1749"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="224 737 597 800">Governance and Administration</th> <th data-bbox="597 737 971 800">Assessment and Taxation</th> <th data-bbox="971 737 1344 800">Planning and Development</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="224 825 597 1749"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Municipal powers ▪ Municipal structures ▪ Fundamental changes and municipal restructuring ▪ Municipal governance ▪ Municipal administration ▪ Financial administration ▪ Regional funding approaches ▪ Municipal revenue sources ▪ Fees and levies ▪ Compliance and accountability ▪ Liability and risk management ▪ Provincial powers ▪ Service provisions ▪ Regional services commissions ▪ Municipally controlled corporations ▪ Municipal relationships and dispute resolution ▪ Public participation ▪ Municipal Government Board </td> <td data-bbox="597 825 971 1749"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Taxation ▪ Municipal revenue sources ▪ Fees and levies ▪ Exemptions and other special tax treatment ▪ Market value assessment and administration ▪ Equalized assessment ▪ Progressive and supplementary assessment ▪ Linear property assessment ▪ Machinery and equipment property assessment ▪ Transportation properties ▪ Farm property assessment ▪ Assessment administration ▪ Public participation ▪ Assessment complaints and appeals ▪ Municipal Government Board </td> <td data-bbox="971 825 1344 1749"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fees and levies ▪ Statutory plans and land use bylaws ▪ Planning authorities ▪ Administrative decision-making processes ▪ Land dedication (reserves) ▪ Municipal relationships and dispute resolution ▪ Managing growth and development ▪ Regional funding approaches ▪ Municipal Government Board ▪ Public participation ▪ Planning and inter-municipal appeals </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Governance and Administration	Assessment and Taxation	Planning and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Municipal powers ▪ Municipal structures ▪ Fundamental changes and municipal restructuring ▪ Municipal governance ▪ Municipal administration ▪ Financial administration ▪ Regional funding approaches ▪ Municipal revenue sources ▪ Fees and levies ▪ Compliance and accountability ▪ Liability and risk management ▪ Provincial powers ▪ Service provisions ▪ Regional services commissions ▪ Municipally controlled corporations ▪ Municipal relationships and dispute resolution ▪ Public participation ▪ Municipal Government Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Taxation ▪ Municipal revenue sources ▪ Fees and levies ▪ Exemptions and other special tax treatment ▪ Market value assessment and administration ▪ Equalized assessment ▪ Progressive and supplementary assessment ▪ Linear property assessment ▪ Machinery and equipment property assessment ▪ Transportation properties ▪ Farm property assessment ▪ Assessment administration ▪ Public participation ▪ Assessment complaints and appeals ▪ Municipal Government Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fees and levies ▪ Statutory plans and land use bylaws ▪ Planning authorities ▪ Administrative decision-making processes ▪ Land dedication (reserves) ▪ Municipal relationships and dispute resolution ▪ Managing growth and development ▪ Regional funding approaches ▪ Municipal Government Board ▪ Public participation ▪ Planning and inter-municipal appeals 	<p>10:15-10:45</p>
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Agenda Item	Timing										
<p>3. Table Facilitation</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="310 438 1157 747"> <tr> <td data-bbox="310 438 618 522">Block 1: 10:45-11:45</td> <td data-bbox="618 438 1157 522">Governance and Administration Topics</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" data-bbox="310 522 1157 569" style="text-align: center;"><i>Lunch (1 hour)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="310 569 618 653">Block 2: 12:45-1:45</td> <td data-bbox="618 569 1157 653">Assessment and Taxation Topics</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" data-bbox="310 653 1157 699" style="text-align: center;"><i>Break (15 min)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="310 699 618 747">Block 3: 2:00-3:00</td> <td data-bbox="618 699 1157 747">Planning and Development Topics</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion will focus on what is working well, desired changes, and potential impacts of changes to the legislation 	Block 1: 10:45-11:45	Governance and Administration Topics	<i>Lunch (1 hour)</i>		Block 2: 12:45-1:45	Assessment and Taxation Topics	<i>Break (15 min)</i>		Block 3: 2:00-3:00	Planning and Development Topics	10:45-3:00
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4. Break	3:00-3:15										
<p>5. Open discussion</p> <p>Are there any other relevant topics participants want to address?</p>	3:15-3:45										
6. Wrap-up	3:45-4:00										