



BULLETIN

GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

of the United States and Canada

Alberta Chapter

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Alberta Government 2015 Budget Announcement

The Alberta Government tabled the 2015 provincial budget on March 26, 2015.

The focus of the Provincial Budget was to prioritize spending and minimize the reliance on Oil & Gas revenues due to the volatility in crude oil prices.

Although Budget 2015 will have a more significant impact on individual Albertans, the following are some highlights of its impact on Alberta municipalities:

- Municipal Grants - No changes to the Municipal grant funding formulas with few changes to allocation amounts including (but not limited to):
 - Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) including Basic Municipal Transportation Grant (BMTG) will be funded for \$850 million in 2015-16, which is a reduction from 2014-15 however has been stabilized with the additional allocation, which was announced earlier this month. The Original commitment of \$11.3 billion for the MSI program will not be changed, however it will take longer to fulfill.
 - MSI operating funding will be maintained at \$30 million in 2015.
 - GreenTRIP funding will be reduced to \$185 million from \$246.9 million.
 - Water for Life program will be funded at \$30 million in 2015, down from \$50 million.
 - Library Services Grant - A 10 cent increase to the per capita rate for public libraries.
 - Major Fairs & Exhibitions Grant will see a \$2 million reduction for Edmonton Northlands and Calgary Stampede.
 - Numerous grant allocations will be slightly increased to address population growth where population based formulas are used.

- Seniors – There will be a \$49 million increase in the Ministry of Seniors budget.

- Affordable Housing – The Alberta Social Housing Corporation Grants in Place of Municipal Property Taxes program has been eliminated in 2015.

- There will be a change to the structure of future Provincial Education Property taxes starting in 2016-17.
- An increase in traffic fine revenues of 35% will be offset by an increased percentage (10%) that will be retained by the province. Overall increasing revenues realized by municipalities.
- A 4-cent per litre increase on taxes levied on gasoline and diesel fuel will have an effect on municipal budgets.

To view the complete 2015 Budget visit www.alberta.ca.

Here are some useful links for further information:

<http://finance.alberta.ca/publications/budget/budget2015/fact-card-municipal-support.pdf>

<http://finance.alberta.ca/publications/budget/budget2015/fact-card-human-services.pdf>

http://www.auma.ca/live/digitalAssets/84/84869_AUMA_Questions_Budget_2015.pdf

*Barry Sawada, CA
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Alberta GFOA's Special Release Bulletins

Alberta GFOA, through the Communications Task Force, augments its Quarterly Newsletter Publications with Special Release Bulletins that will be distributed from time to time to all Members. These Bulletins are intended to provide information pertinent to various aspects of municipal finance. They will also be utilized to profile upcoming professional development and training opportunities. The Bulletins are intended to outline information on a specific topic in a brief and concise manner. In some cases, contact references will be provided in order that readers can obtain more detailed information from specific sources.

Current and archived Special Release Bulletins can be viewed on the Alberta GFOA Website at www.gfoa.ab.ca.