

**IMPROVING THE MANAGEMENT OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL
RELATIONS: A PROJECT FOR THE CITY OF ST. ALBERT
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Regional and intergovernmental structures and dynamics are changing at a local government level in Alberta because of legislated collaboration frameworks and growth management boards, starting in 2008 and enhanced in 2017. For the City of St. Albert, who is impacted by this, it is becoming increasingly challenging to approach intergovernmental matters in a coordinated manner, and to maintain existing service-levels related to intergovernmental administrative services. One option to improve the situation, could be the development of a Government Relations Council Committee, as has been done elsewhere in Western Canada.

The purpose of this report is to look at if a Government Relations Committee is a viable option for the City of St. Albert, by looking at the literature around municipal intergovernmental structures and practices in Western Canada, and by surveying the same municipalities.

The research question is: if the City of St. Albert were to pursue the development of a Government Relations Committee, what would be the framework for its development?

The methodology for the project includes a literature review and municipal questionnaire of comparative municipalities to the City of St. Albert within British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan.

Key findings from the literature review and municipal questionnaire include:

- Inter-governmental structures and approaches are different across the three Western provinces;
- Outside of municipal-to-municipal matters, most municipal intergovernmental relations are with, or flow through the provincial government; there are little federal-municipal relations outside of major metropolitan cities;
- Of municipal comparators with the City of St. Albert, Alberta is the only province with intergovernmental staff. The number of staff and standardization of administrative systems and processes varies based on location and scale of the municipality;
- There is a lack of available information on standardized intergovernmental processes—the City of Calgary, as the largest comparator, and having “been in the game” the longest, have progressed the furthest within this realm; and
- Few municipal comparators have government relations council committees—of those who do, the City of Calgary and City of Edmonton seem to be utilizing them strictly for intergovernmental matters, although the creation of a dedicated government relations committee may inadvertently create additional bureaucracy.

Based on the research, the City of St. Albert is presented with four options to improve intergovernmental relations systems and processes:

1. Adopt and implement improved intergovernmental processes and policies, specifically: the development of a Council Advocacy Policy and Administrative Intergovernmental Relations Protocol (preferred approach);
2. Adopt a Council Government Relations Committee (future consideration);
3. Establish and implement additional staff resources for government relations activities (future consideration); and,
4. Transition from a part-time Council to a full-time Council (future consideration).

This report found that Option 4 is likely a future consideration and would require a broader conversation regarding the overall enhanced demands placed on the City; not just from an inter-governmental perspective. This solution, either increasing the “time” required of a part-time Council, or ramping up to a full-time Council, will likely emerge as the City grows and increased demands are felt more organizationally, and would require Options 1, 2, and 3 to be re-examined.

The four options were ranked against criteria developed through the research findings, and an implementation plan to adopt and implement intergovernmental processes and policies is provided as follows:

1. Adopt and implement a Council Advocacy Policy (Appendix D) and Intergovernmental Relations Protocol (Appendix E), and complete a 6 and 12-month post-implementation review; and,
2. Subject to the outcome of the post-implementation review, consider implementation of alternative options presented within this report.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Located within the Edmonton Metropolitan Region, the City of St. Albert operates in an area comprised of multiple cities, towns, and counties, and shares a boundary with the City of Edmonton. Municipal policy matters are increasingly regional in significance and many opportunities and challenges ‘have no boundaries;’ and examples include issues like homelessness, enabling economic development, or cannabis legalization. As the regional portfolio of issues has grown, the relationship the City has with other municipal jurisdictions, and the provincial and federal governments has simultaneously become more fluid and collaborative, as all three orders of government attempt to ‘do more with less’ through leveraging each other’s strengths.

The City of St. Albert, the client for this project, seeks to better address regional and intergovernmental matters in a strategic and coordinated manner, due to the growing complexity and fluidity of such issues and the number and variety of stakeholders and committees involved. The City, and other municipalities in the region continue to evolve with the tools, systems and processes for ensuring a strategic and timely approach to regional and intergovernmental matters. This project undertakes research and develops options for the City of St. Albert’s Administration to handle intergovernmental relations in a more coordinated, consistent, and proactive manner—specifically by creating a dedicated Council Committee.

The research question animating this project is: if the City of St. Albert were to pursue the development of a Government Relations Committee, what would be the framework for its development? To address this question, this project sought to:

- Document and analyze current and anticipated intergovernmental trends relative to the City of St. Albert at a high-level;
- Conduct a document and literature review on council committee best practice in the context of St. Albert’s current legislative environment;
- Identify and assess the inter-governmental relations committees, systems, processes, and resources of several other jurisdictions through a literature review and survey;
- Identify options and recommend a government relations committee framework for future City of St. Albert consideration; and
- Present an implementation plan for the recommended option.

The report is organized as follows. Section 2 provides background on the client, an overview of the state of intergovernmental activities, and the analytic framework. Section 3 reviews the methodology for the report. Sections 4 and 5 respectively report the findings of the literature review and questionnaires on municipal comparators. Section 6 reviews these findings and explores the strategic implications. Section 7 sets out and compares options and identifies a recommended approach and implementation plan for the client’s consideration.

2. BACKGROUND

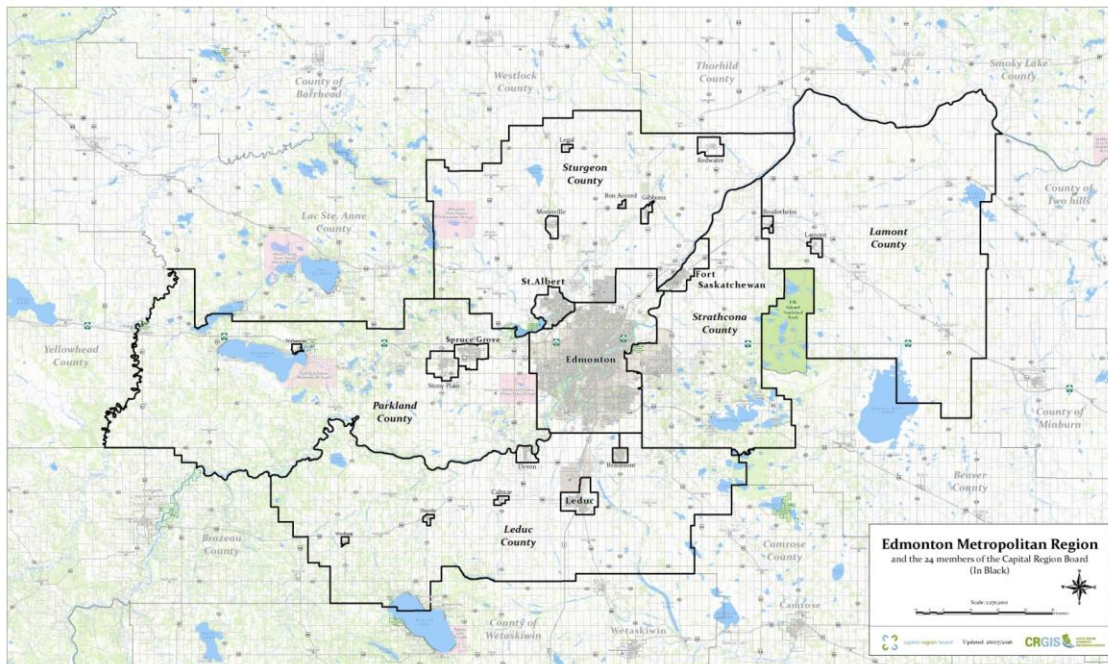
This section provides details on the client, including how intergovernmental relations are approached and the pertinent services of the City of St. Albert's administration. As a member of a broader Metropolitan Region, the City's intergovernmental repertoires are relatively new and evolving, with increasing formalization. It will also draw on the Canadian literature on municipal council committees, and indications when the structure of municipalities require change. This section concludes by suggesting there is an opportunity to improve how intergovernmental matters are handled.

2.1 City of St. Albert: An Overview of the Project Client

The City of St. Albert's Director of Strategic Services is the client. The client oversees the Government Relations portfolio at St. Albert, and should the City ever seek to implement any of the recommendations, the Director of Strategic Services would be accountable for doing so.¹

St. Albert is the third most populated municipality in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region with just over 66,000 people (City of St. Albert, 2018, September, p. 3). The City maintains a 'Botanical Arts City' brand, since residents value community and cultural programming and preserving its landscapes and watershed (City of St. Albert, 2018). With comparatively high income and education levels, residents of St. Albert are active and informed citizens who expect civic excellence from their local government.

Figure 1: Edmonton Metropolitan Region Map



¹ Please note that a corporate re-organization occurred in December 2018 that re-positioned the Manager, Government Relations to report to the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer.

The City employs roughly 600 people (including seasonal positions). The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is the only employee of Council, and two departments report directly to the CAO. The remaining ten departments report to the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO).

2.2 Intergovernmental Relations and the City of St. Albert

The City of St. Albert established the position of Manager, Government Relations in 2014, responsible for coordinating the majority of inter-municipal initiatives undertaken by the City. However, in recent years, the intergovernmental file has grown, as more work is undertaken at the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB), annexations within the region have increased, and more and more operational departments are being encouraged to partner with other municipalities on service-provision, such as transit and recreation.

Political and administrative officials are placing greater priority on intergovernmental matters; and some of these matters are engrained in new provincial legislation (Municipal Government Act and EMRB Regulation as of October 2017). Across the province, municipalities employ a variety of approaches to manage intergovernmental work, including the organizational structure and job function, and with sub-committees of Council, particularly in Calgary and Edmonton, which are examined in detail later in this report.

The City participates on a host of intergovernmental committees (see Figure 2, next page). Many of the initiatives overseen by these committees and task forces are interrelated or have cross-impacts on one another. Outside of Edmonton Global, an entity independent of the EMRB that leads international economic development activities for the region's municipalities (Edmonton Global, 2018) the Manager of Government Relations provides support to all of the committees and task forces identified in Figure 2. Support typically takes the form of working with Council to build overarching intergovernmental strategies and providing advice (written and verbal) to promote these strategies through the various committees, or other forums as they present themselves. All current members of St. Albert City Council participate on at least two committees that have intergovernmental responsibilities.

Generally, the services provided by the City of St. Albert's Government Relations Branch are captured in Figure 3 (see p. 11). It is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain these services in a timely manner and to approach individual topics in a holistic manner. The Manager of Government Relations works with Council to develop an overall Advocacy Plan, aligned with Council's Strategic Plan, to set the relative direction and philosophy regarding the City's intergovernmental engagements. The Manager reinforces and implements the Plan as the administrative liaison across other orders of government, and coordinates the City's overall response to the matter; the Manager is also expected to provide advice and regular updates on initiatives within the Advocacy Plan to Council and Senior Administration. The Manager provides support to Council and Senior Administration at a host of committees and task forces through developing resolutions, briefing notes, and verbal reports. All municipalities in Alberta are now

legislatively required to complete and maintain Inter-municipal Collaboration Frameworks with their immediate neighbours (Alberta Municipal Affairs, 2018), and this function is assigned to the Manager of Government Relations.

Figure 2: 2018 City of St. Albert Intergovernmental Committees of Council

Committee Name	City of St. Albert Council Members	Meeting Frequency
Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board	Mayor Cathy Heron Councillor Wes Brodhead (Alt.) Councillor Ray Watkins (Alt.)	Once every two months
Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board Audit & Finance Committee	Councillor Wes Brodhead	Once every two months
Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board Metropolitan Region Servicing Plan Task Force	Councillor Ray Watkins	To be determined
Edmonton Global	Mayor Cathy Heron Councillor Jacquie Hansen (Alt.) Councillor Sheena Hughes (Alt.)	Once every two months
Regional Transit Services Commission Transition Team	Councillor Wes Brodhead Mayor Cathy Heron Councillor Jacquie Hansen (Alt.)	Once every month
Sturgeon County Annexation Negotiating Committee	Mayor Cathy Heron Councillor Ray Watkins Councillor Sheena Hughes	Quarterly
Sturgeon County-St. Albert Intermunicipal Affairs Committee	All members of Council	Tri-Annually
Sturgeon County-St. Albert Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework Task Force	Councillor Ken MacKay Councillor Ray Watkins Councillor Natalie Joly	To be determined
Sturgeon County-St. Albert Joint Opportunities Task Force	Councillor Jacquie Hansen Councillor Wes Brodhead Councillor Natalie Joly	Monthly

2.3 General Observations on Municipal Committees from the Literature

To understand the broader overall impact and need for municipal committees, this section reviews the academic literature on municipal committees.

Tindal and Tindal (2009, p. 265) state that the use of Council Committees “is held to be advantageous because it speeds up work in council since the committee sifts through the details of an issue and presents a positive recommendation to council.” Moreover, “the informal atmosphere of a committee meeting encourages more “give and take” in debate, facilitates participation by municipal officials, and also provides a good opportunity for interested groups or individuals to be heard” (Tindal and Tindal, 2009, p. 265). Alternatively, Tindal and Tindal (2009, p. 265) note several possible negative aspects of Council committees:

- Referrals of an issue from Council to one or more committees of Council and back can be onerous, time consuming, and restrict accountability;

- Committee discussions may be duplicated in Council thereby negating a large portion of the committee's value;
- Councils' may have too many committees, placing significant time and capacity constraints on Council and Administration;
- Committees may be created unnecessarily given the limited volume of work, and may not have a Terms of Reference, meet ad hoc, and do not have a procedure of reporting to Council. As a result, Committee members may delve more into "administrative" matters than those related to policy and governance; and
- Committees may reinforce departmentalization of issues, thereby preventing a holistic view of an issue and potential solutions from being presented to the committee (and/or Council).

Given the context outlined by Tindal and Tindal, the creation of council committees should therefore attempt to address some form of structural deficiency within the municipal organization. Daft (2003, p. 47) states that when an organization's structure is not meeting the organization's needs, one or more general symptoms of structural deficiency typically appear:

- Decision making is delayed or lacking in quality: decision-makers are overloaded with requests for decision as all levels of decision are required to go to top executives; delegation of authority is insufficient; poor information flows across the organization (interdepartmentally and vertically) exist.
- The organization does not respond innovatively to a changing environment: interdepartmental coordination is poor; roles/responsibilities are unclear; no certainty that designated areas of the organization are monitoring the external environment to inspire innovation.
- Too much conflict is evident: interdepartmental mechanisms are not adequate; departments should be able to combine into a set of goals for the entire organization; if individual department goals are frequently in conflict or competition with organizational goals, the structure is often to blame.

Therefore, prior to the City of St. Albert creating a council committee, the context described by Tindal and Tindal (2009) and Daft (2003) should be considered. These factors are considered further in Section 8 of this report.

Figure 3: City of St. Albert Government Relations Services

Service	Definition	Component	Service Level
Advocacy Planning	Facilitate the development of Council's Advocacy Plan on an annual basis.	Annual Council Advocacy Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Advocacy Plan is developed on an annual basis. • An external consultant is hired to facilitate the development of the Advocacy Plan. • Council Advocacy Plan is aligned with the Corporate Business Plan. • Report on the status of Council's Advocacy Plan to Council twice per year.
Intergovernmental Liaison	Act as an administrative liaison between the City of St. Albert and other orders of government.	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requests are acknowledged within two business days. • All incoming/outgoing administrative communications to other orders of government are vetted by Government Relations. • Response time is dependent on complexity of requests.
Proactive Intergovernmental Counsel	Provide advice and recommended positions to elected and non-elected City officials regarding intergovernmental matters, based on research and policy analysis, intended to promote the interests of the City of St. Albert.	Elected officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice is provided based on the Advocacy Plan and affected stakeholders. • Advice is provided immediately or up to a maximum of two weeks. • Formal and informal advice is provided to Council, or as requested, at and outside of regional forums.
		City Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice to CAO is provided minimum of every two weeks, or as requested. • Advice to City Departments is provided as identified in the Corporate Business Plan, or as requested. • Requests are acknowledged within two business days. Timelines for provision of advice are dependent on complexity of the request.
Develop & Maintain Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks	Develop and maintain all of the City's Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks, as prescribed by the Municipal Government Act.	City of Edmonton Sturgeon County Other Municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks are in place per <i>Municipal Government Act</i> requirements and timing (by April 2020) and are reviewed at least every 5 years.
Intergovernmental Board, Committee and Task Force Support	Provide support to elected and non-elected officials at or for, all intergovernmental meetings. This includes the development of all Council Resolutions, Briefing Notes and Agenda Reports, as well as the provision of formal and informal advice to City officials regarding all matters pertinent to intergovernmental boards, committees, and task forces.	Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of all Council Resolutions, Briefing Notes and Agenda Reports. • An Agenda Report and Briefing Note on FCM and AUMA is presented to Council the week of, or the week prior to, the annual FCM and annual AUMA Conventions. • Government Relations representative's attendance is mandatory at each annual convention (FCM and AUMA), or as otherwise directed by the CAO.
		Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA)	
		Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing note is circulated to Council within 2 business days of the EMRB agenda package being released. • A debrief memo is circulated to Council within 2 business days after the scheduled meeting has occurred. • Government Relations representative's attendance is mandatory at a minimum of 6 Board meetings per year, a minimum of 12 Committee meetings per year, and a minimum of 6 Task Force meetings per year.
		St. Albert-Sturgeon County IAC, IASAG, JOTF, and Annexation Committees ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda and briefing notes are provided to members 7 days in advance of the scheduled meeting. • Meeting minutes are kept and are provided to members in the subsequent meeting agenda package, 7 days in advance of the scheduled meeting. • Government Relations representative's attendance is mandatory at a minimum of 3 IAC meetings per year, a minimum of 6 IASAG meetings per year, and a minimum of 3 Annexation Negotiating Committee meetings per year.

² Sturgeon County-St. Albert Intermunicipal Affairs Committee (IAC); Intermunicipal Affairs Strategic Advisory Group (IASAG); Joint Opportunities Task Force (JOTF)

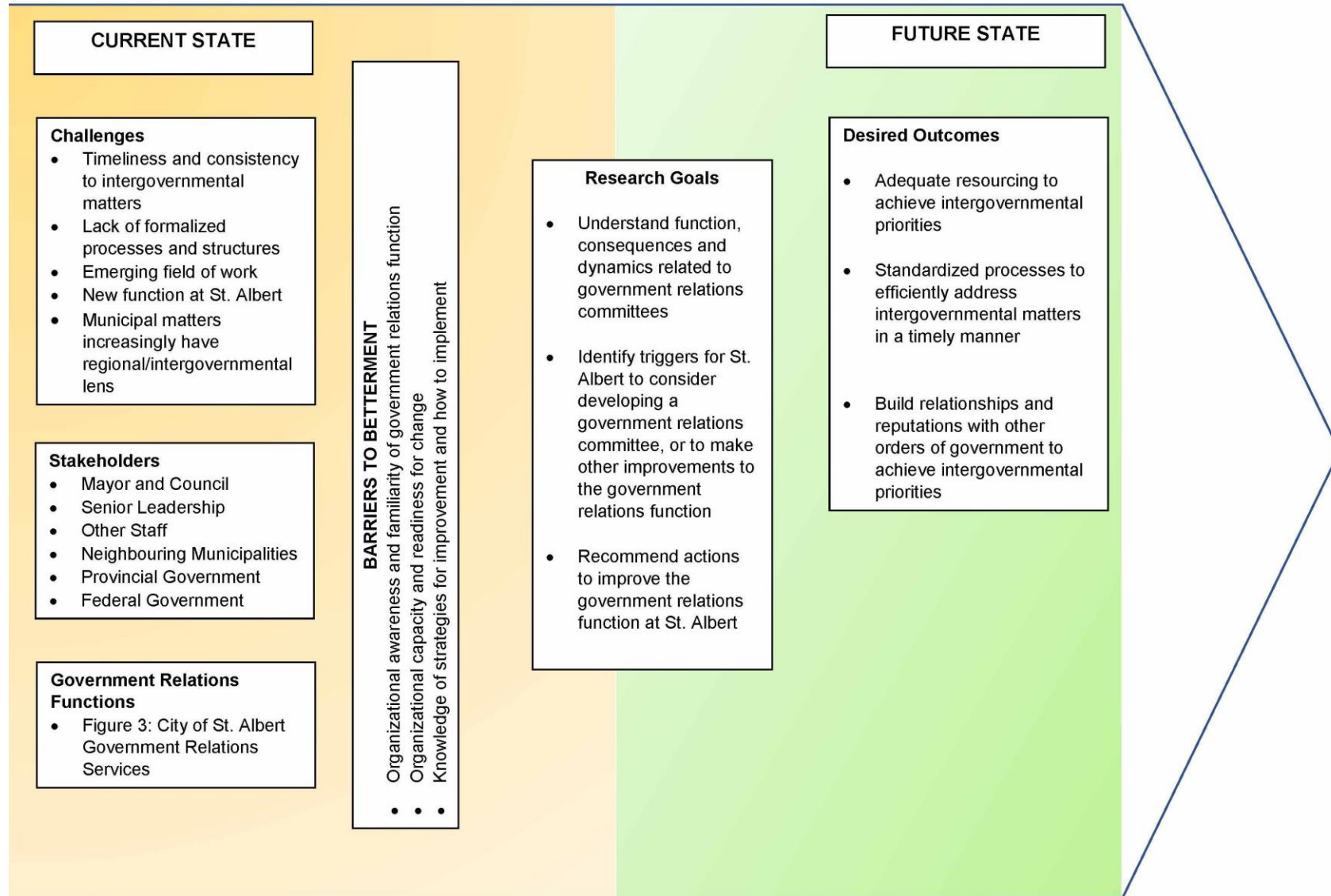
2.4 Concluding Remarks: An Analytic Framework to Guide this Study

This section observed that: municipal borders within the Edmonton Metropolitan Region are becoming more fluid; and that local policy issues work across boundaries, requiring the City of St. Albert to work regionally while protecting its self-interest. Members of Council participate on numerous committees and task forces dealing with specific inter-municipal or intergovernmental matters—all requiring some level of support from Administration, typically through the Manager of Government Relations. This report seeks to find a better way, or more streamlined way to support Council, and ensure the City is responding to intergovernmental challenges in a coordinated and timely fashion.

The literature indicates that a structural change will likely be required if decision-making lacks in timeliness or quality, particularly if a municipal administration is not responding well to the external environment, or if there is too much conflict across departments. Tindal and Tindal (2009) recognize council committees can add value if used effectively, but can lead to duplication between councils and committees, or too many committees can create a burden for an administration.

Figure 4 (next page) showcases the analytic framework, which illustrates the challenges faced by the City of St. Albert, the barriers to improvement, and the research goals that will help the City to work towards its desired future state.

Figure 4: Government Relations Committee Conceptual Framework



3. METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

This section identifies the scope and empirical methods used to inform this report. The methods include a document and literature review, comparison of approaches to managing inter-governmental affairs, and a municipal questionnaire to similar municipalities.

3.1 Document and Literature Review

The document and literature review were completed through several approaches. Firstly, the document review was completed by:

- Looking at relative provincial statutes available online across BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan to better understand the legislative environment for municipalities and potential impacts to inter-governmental matters;
- Meeting minutes and agenda reports from Edmonton and Calgary's respective council committees that address inter-governmental affairs were reviewed online, spanning approximately a twelve-month period;
- In the event the municipal comparators in Figure 5 could not be contacted, their websites were reviewed for any information related to dedicated government relations staff and committees of Council; and,
- Online newspaper articles from local media within the Edmonton Metropolitan Region were reviewed regarding inter-municipal matters to better understand the inter-municipal and regional municipal dynamics within which the City of St. Albert and its neighbours operate.

Secondly, the literature review was completed through two primary approaches:

- Local government literature regarding committee structures within local government and regional governance structures within Western Canada were examined through textbooks; and,
- Local government literature regarding advocacy associations and regional governance models and inter-municipal partnerships and relations were researched through the University of Victoria Library's e-reserves system.

3.2 Municipal Comparators

Figure 5 (next page) provides the context for select comparable municipalities with the City of St. Albert across Western Canada. Cities with populations between 50,000 and 100,000 were selected, except for the case for Leduc and Spruce Grove, both slightly over 30,000 people, and located in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region with St. Albert. The cities of Calgary and Edmonton were included since they had intergovernmental committees, were located within Metro Regions, and despite being much larger in scale than St. Albert, the City often looks to them as comparators.

3.3 Municipal Questionnaire

On July 13, 2018, an invitation was sent to a staff member in each municipality identified as a suitable comparator in Figure 5. The staff member was typically a Municipal Clerk, or a staff member working in government relations or external affairs units. The email invitation can be found in Appendix A along with the Participant Consent Form (Appendix C) that was emailed to these personnel.

In general, the survey aimed to determine:

- if the municipality has dedicated government relations functions or resources, and what that looks like;
- if any standardized systems or processes are in place to execute the government relations function;
- what intergovernmental activities the municipality is engaged in; and
- if the municipality has a Council Committee for Government Relations, and how it functions.

The detailed Questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

At the end of August 2018, only two responses had been received so all remaining cities were phoned by the researcher to inquire about interest in participating in the study. After this exercise, an additional four responses were received, for a total of six by September 21, 2018.

Figure 5: Municipal Comparators³

Municipality	Population	Part of a Metro Region?	Government Relations Committee?	Number of Full-Time Equivalent Employees
City of Airdrie, AB	64,922	Yes	-	375
City of Calgary, AB	1,246,337	Yes	Yes	14,965
City of Edmonton, AB	932,546	Yes	Yes	10,580
City of Grande Prairie, AB	63,166	No	-	598
City of Leduc, AB	31,130	Yes	-	340
City of Medicine Hat, AB	63,260	No	-	1,099
City of Red Deer, AB	100,418	No	No	1,157
City of Spruce Grove, AB	34,881	Yes	No	272
City of St. Albert, AB	65,589	Yes	No	620
Strathcona County, AB	98,044	Yes	Yes	1,505
City of Victoria, BC	85,588	Yes	No	800
City of Chilliwack, BC	88,287	Yes	-	?
City of Maple Ridge, BC	87,713	Yes	-	?
City of New Westminster, BC	73,928	Yes	-	?
City of Port Coquitlam, BC	62,194	Yes	Yes	?
City of North Vancouver, BC	53,816	Yes	No	500
City of Prince George, BC	70,316	No	-	?
City of Moose Jaw, SK	33,890	No	-	?
City of Prince Albert, SK	35,926	No	No	?

³ Data sources include Alberta Municipal Affairs, 2018; B.C. Data Catalogue, 2018

3.4 Strengths and Limitations of this Approach

This project uses the above mixed methods approach to learn from other municipalities and regions regarding approaches to intergovernmental matters.

This approach has some key limitations:

1. First, elected officials were not engaged through the process, and these individuals are a key stakeholder in intergovernmental matters: this is where the decision-making authority rests. This group may have solutions to offer from their unique position in elected office.
2. Second, broad engagement with City of St. Albert Administration is not included within the scope of this research. This group could be engaged to provide additional context regarding St. Albert intergovernmental matters, and how to build an effective implementation plan for the City.
3. Third, there was little incentive for participants to engage in the municipal questionnaire, other than to contribute to the furtherment of local government knowledge. Fourthly, interviews were not conducted to build context for the Edmonton Metropolitan Region: primary and secondary sources, and academic literature and government documents regarding the region were referenced to establish context.
4. Last, there is limited literature available on municipal government intergovernmental approaches at an administrative level. While more content exists at a federal and provincial level, this is truly an emerging field for Western Canadian cities.

The report consolidates information regarding intergovernmental structures, resources, and processes amongst Western Canadian municipalities using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, that may help to establish a baseline in the future regarding municipal administrative approaches to government relations. This mixed method approach is positive because it contextualizes the strengths and weaknesses of various municipal approaches, as identified in the literature, or provided by the municipalities themselves. The study will likely provide the most value to Albertan municipalities—particularly those who may be feeling gaps or pressures with intergovernmental relations and are looking for solutions or examples to draw from to move forward.

4. FINDINGS: ALBERTAN APPROACHES

The following section of the report provides a detailed overview of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region and its associated dynamics, drawing from academic literature as well as provincial legislation and media commentary. Alberta's two "big-cities," Calgary and Edmonton, each possess a council committee dedicated towards government relations, and their function and purpose is outlined, drawing from their respective meeting minutes and bylaws.

4.1 Edmonton Metropolitan Region Dynamics

Twenty-four municipalities are considered part of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region (see Figure 1 on p. 2). These include cities, towns, villages and rural counties. Thirteen belong to the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB), as mandated by the Government of Alberta through the "Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board Regulation" section of the Municipal Government Act. This Board was formally legislated in 2017; from 2008-2017 all twenty-four members belonged to the Capital Region Board, which was replaced in 2017 by the new legislation.

The EMRB primarily acts as a land-use planning board: it must create a regional growth plan and a regional servicing plan to ensure the efficient and effective use of land, and provision of inter-municipal services (Province of Alberta, 2017, p. 5-10). In addition, municipal member statutory plans, such as Municipal Development Plans and Area Structure Plans, require Board approval (Province of Alberta, 2017, p. 7-8). The Board consists of the thirteen mayors of member municipalities and uses a double-majority voting structure that provides the City of Edmonton with a veto (Province of Alberta, 2017, p. 5). The Board also has oversight of arms-length entities involved with economic development, joint advocacy, and transportation/transit planning (Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board, 2018 June 14).

Although the EMRB was only officially created in 2017, its predecessor, the Capital Region Board (CRB) had been created in 2007 to implement an "integrated regional growth management plan" (City Region Studies Centre, 2007, p. iii). Member municipalities were forced to the table since not all parties were prepared or willing to voluntarily participate (City Region Studies Centre, 2007, p. 16). While the CRB successfully adopted a Growth Management Plan and completed a full revision in 2016, a legacy of inter-municipal disputes in the region goes back nearly fifty years, with previous annexations and land-use planning entities.

For example, in the early 1980s, Edmonton attempted to annex a large portion of Strathcona County's industrial tax-base along Edmonton's eastern boundary, as well as the City of St. Albert. These actions are sometimes cited as the sources of inter-municipal mistrust. While these annexations ultimately did not go through, others did in certain rural jurisdictions initiated by Edmonton, and while some small inter-municipal gains occurred in subsequent decades, a culture of inter-municipal mistrust persisted at

a regional level due to weighted voting structures, statutory plan appeals, and competition for industrial and commercial developments.

For example, Edmonton's veto vote at the CRB was used to overturn administrative recommendations and quash statutory plans of neighbouring municipalities, such as Parkland County's Acheson Area Structure Plan in 2013 (Morin, 2013) and the Town of Beaumont's Municipal Development Plan in 2017 (Jansen, 2017). Edmonton maintains a veto vote at the EMRB, as provincial regulation establishes a double-majority voting model, whereby for a resolution to achieve regional endorsement, 9 of 13 municipalities must support it, and 66% of the region's population must be represented to support (Province of Alberta, 2017, p. 5). Since Edmonton possesses 72% of the region's total population, this model establishes a veto vote.

Despite this legacy, there are recent signs that the regional context is becoming more collaborative. For instance, nine of the thirteen Mayors of the EMRB signed a Memorandum of Agreement in 2016 (named the Metro Mayors' Alliance) which culminated in an independent report suggesting further collaboration be undertaken for economic development, public transit, and land-use/infrastructure planning (Metro Mayors Alliance Panel, 2016). Since then, Edmonton Global was created to lead international economic development activities for the region (Edmonton Global, 2018). The cities of Edmonton and St. Albert signed a Regional Transit Commission Memorandum of Agreement in September 2017 to work towards establishing an entity to oversee and provide regional commuter transit services between the two municipalities, structured so that other municipalities in the region could eventually join (Johnston, 2017). The Government of Alberta also approved the EMRB's proposed Growth Plan in October 2017, signaling a trend towards increased land-use planning across municipal boundaries (Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board, 2017 Oct 30).

The dynamics at the EMRB lend themselves to a municipality's ability to collaborate with others, through reputation, power, interest, or structure. The tone set at the Board – whether of collaboration or mistrust – sets the tone for regional and inter-municipal government relations.

Many collaborations occur beyond the EMRB across the region on a voluntary basis at a smaller, inter-municipal scale. For example, the City of Spruce Grove, the Town of Stony Plain, and Parkland County partnered to construct and operate a multi-use recreation center called the Tri-Leisure Centre. The City of Leduc and Leduc County hold recreation cost-sharing agreements and are working with Edmonton to provide transit service to the Edmonton International Airport. Most of the fire departments in the region maintain a Mutual Aid Agreement, and partner on training efforts.

4.2 City of Edmonton Inter-municipal and Regional Development Committee

The City of Edmonton's Inter-municipal and Regional Development Committee (RDC) was formally established on October 14, 2017 and held its inaugural meeting on November 10, 2017 (City of Edmonton, 2018a). This sub-committee of Council is comprised of the Mayor and four Councillors (City of Edmonton, 2018a). Edmonton's Council Committee Bylaw establishes the Mayor as Chair of the RDC (City of Edmonton, 2018, p. 6). The mandate of the RDC is three-fold (City of Edmonton, 2018, January 23, p. 8-9):

- The development of a stronger collaborative framework between the City and adjacent municipalities;
- Intergovernmental affairs as they relate to regional development; and
- Annexation-related items, including representing Council's position during annexation negotiations.

With the creation of this committee on November 10, 2017, Deputy CAO Gary Klassen identified the growing complexity of the broader city-region, and the opportunity to "share and advance [the] City's interests through strong mutually beneficial relationships" (City of Edmonton, 2017, p. 3). These opportunities can be taken up in several forums, in Edmonton's opinion, including the EMRB, Edmonton Global, and through inter-governmental relations, inter-municipal partnerships, and annexations (City of Edmonton, 2017, p. 4). Klassen noted that aggregating these inter-related matters in one committee is an opportunity to view the topics holistically, and that:

"Our ability to succeed as a city does not occur in isolation. Relations with our neighbours are becoming more intertwined than they've ever been before. [The City of Edmonton] needs to more aggressively work on activities at the regional level ... we've shaped some of our administrative support around that framework as well. Having a single Committee charged with handling items like these can be another means of supporting our integrated efforts" (Klassen, 2017).

Since its inception in November of 2017, the RDC has met nearly once a month, with more than half of its items occurring in-private, citing *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy* concerns, harmful to intergovernmental relations. The topics of these meetings typically concern annexation, regional strategy, or a specific inter-municipal project, such as the Airport Accord (City of Edmonton, 2018a).

While the RDC provides a forum for discussion and direction on intergovernmental matters (specifically in a regional context), some matters are taken to Council and/or need to be transacted by Council. This is the case for many intergovernmental matters that interface with the provincial government, the AUMA, and FCM (i.e. non-regional intergovernmental matters), as well as key decision points on annexations as required by the *MGA* (City of Edmonton, 2018b).

4.3 City of Calgary Intergovernmental Affairs Committee

A few hours' drive down the QE2 Highway, the City of Calgary's Intergovernmental Affairs Committee (IAC) has existed much longer than Edmonton's, having been established in 1988 (City of Calgary, 2018). While Edmonton's RDC is focused on regional matters, Calgary's IAC has a broader mandate, which includes federal and provincial relations. The mandate for Calgary's IAC is three-fold (City of Calgary, 2018):

- Preparing representations on the impact of other governments' policies on the City;
- Coordinating long term growth and development plans between the City and other municipalities; and
- Developing strategies to address the needs of affordable housing in Calgary.

The IAC meets monthly, and items of business range from AUMA and FCM reports, matters related to the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board, issues with neighbouring municipalities, regional water licenses, affordable housing updates, and federal cannabis legislation (City of Calgary, 2018a). The IAC is comprised of the Mayor and six Councillors, three of whom either are Calgary's representative at FCM, AUMA, or the Calgary Regional Partnership.

4.4 Comparison of Edmonton and Calgary Committees

While Edmonton and Calgary's respective committees address items of inter-municipal and regional matters, Edmonton's focus seems targeted more on regional matters since the Edmonton Metro region has had a growth management board since 2008. The Calgary region was recently mandated in 2017 by the Government of Alberta to create the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (Alberta Municipal Affairs, 2018, para. 3). Therefore, there may not have been as great a focus on matters of regional matters given the absence of work generated by having a regional growth management board.

Edmonton's land-use matter discussions also tend to focus on annexation(s), whereas annexation conversations for Calgary are non-existent. Instead, Calgary's committee tends to focus on inter-municipal land matters pertaining to neighbouring municipalities' growth aspirations and plans. Additionally, Calgary's committee tends to meet publicly more. This is likely because there is a greater federal and provincial focus for the committee, including reports regarding FCM and AUMA, that likely pose less of a risk to Calgary's intergovernmental relations if shared publicly than Edmonton's discussions regarding annexations. In the case of both committees, neither serves as a "one-stop shop" for intergovernmental affairs, since reports are often taken to the committee for discussion, and to Council for approval at a subsequent date.

5. FINDINGS: WESTERN CANADIAN PROVINCIAL COMPARISONS ON MUNICIPAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURES

Intergovernmental structures at the local level of government are somewhat different across the three Western provinces. The following sub-sections will look at regional and inter-municipal structures that exist within British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan, as well as available mechanisms for municipal-provincial relations.⁴

5.1 British Columbia: Regional District Model

Tindal and Tindal (2009, p. 84) note that in the mid-1960s, only a very small portion of the BC's overall landmass lay was formally incorporated as municipalities. Most of BC's population was centralized in a few urban areas governed by municipalities, financially challenged to provide core services. Regional entities were established for areas like the Greater Vancouver area to address needs such as water, urban planning, and parks. Over time, the province "gently imposed" regional districts that could administer functions over large areas, without dictating which services (Tindal and Tindal, 2009, p. 85). Today, BC has 27 regional districts, which vary greatly in geographic coverage and populations served. Common traits of regional districts include: a board of directors comprised of representatives of member municipal councils; responsibility for managing solid waste and emergency response planning; creating and managing a regional planning framework (eight do); and, funding is sustained through member municipality requisitions (Tindal and Tindal, 2009, p. 85).

Of the three Western provinces, only BC has a municipal association to represent its members on matters of provincial interest: the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM). BC is one of six Canadian provinces with a unified municipal association; UBCM represents all municipalities in the province, regardless of size or municipal structure (Shott, 201, p. 112). UBCM has a largely heterogeneous membership base in representing regional districts, district municipalities, cities, towns, villages, and First Nations communities, yet is charged with developing a united front when interfacing with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, largely related to taxation, municipal powers, and provincial programs and funds to support its members. Shott (2017) argues that municipal associations with a largely heterogeneous membership base tend to request authority to enact municipal programs, whereas homogeneous advocacy associations lobby for provincial programming changes (p. 122).

⁴ While Federal-Municipal relations were also a consideration, most municipal interactions with the federal government flow through the provincial government, although recently these interfaces may be changing. Initiatives like the 2017/18 Smart Cities Challenge have involved direct municipal-federal interactions, without provincial governments acting as "the go-between." Similar to municipal advocacy associations in each province, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) provides a national voice for cities with the federal government. The municipal "ask" would typically be specific and national in-scope. Given Canada's Constitution, there is no formal link between municipalities and the federal government (Tindal & Tindal, 2009, p. 190), however many national decisions have an impact on municipalities, often with unintended consequences, such as environmental legislation, transport/rail decisions, immigration policy, affordable housing investments, and more.

5.2 Alberta: Voluntary and Prescribed Collaboration

In Alberta, Tindal and Tindal (2009, p. 98) note that inter-municipal relations have involved annexation, especially for Calgary and Edmonton. They note that dealing with regional matters in this way “is at best a piecemeal, fragmented approach that does not consider the overall needs of the entire [region] ... but instead focuses on particular territories affected by proposed annexations, and in an invariably confrontational atmosphere” (Tindal and Tindal, 2009, p. 88).

Since the early 1960s, several entities for regional governance were instituted in the Calgary and Edmonton Metropolitan Regions, most recently recognized as the Calgary and Edmonton Growth Management Boards in the *Modernized Municipal Government Act*. In contrast to (a) a board of directors model; (b) a business model; or (c) a regional entity model, Alberta’s Growth Management Boards are consistent with the University of Alberta’s description of (d) a government-guided model (City Region Studies Centre, 2007, p. 7-8). This is a regional model whereby:

- An order of government provides the funding (Government of Alberta grant, and municipal requisition);
- An order of government participates in the identification of issues (Government of Alberta prescriptive as to what issues the Board must address);
- An order of government facilitates the decision making (Government of Alberta endorsement required of statutory plans developed by the Board); and
- Government legislation facilitates the process of decision-making and follows through to implementation (per the Board’s Regulation in the *MGA*).

The success of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region has not been linked to the structure it takes, but rather, the “underlying culture—the personal and corporate interrelationships, the motivations, the value systems” (City Region Studies Centre, 2007, p. 15).

Alberta also has a long history of inter-municipal service agreements, where two or more municipalities enter an agreement to cost-share on the provision/governance of a specified municipal service, such as fire and emergency services, recreation, and roads (Tindal and Tindal, 2009, p. 89). Such agreements are prevalent throughout Alberta, typically outside of the metropolitan centers. They form the foundation for mandatory Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks among adjacent municipalities, as prescribed by the *MGA* (p. 456). Under the new *Act*, the Government of Alberta mandates that one of the core purposes of a municipality is “to work collaboratively with neighbouring municipalities to plan, deliver and fund intermunicipal services” (Alberta, 2017, p. 39).

Examples of Alberta municipal-provincial relations generally take one of several forms:

- The Province mandates the municipality to do something;
- The Province provides the municipality with grant funding (typically project specific, outside of the Municipality Sustainability Initiative);

- The Province requests municipal feedback on legislation prior to finalizing it (usually through an online survey format);
- The municipality requests the Province do something (provide funding; change legislation; move forward with a provincial infrastructure project; change a Ministry's operating practice).

In Alberta, a single municipality may engage with the Province on its own, in partnership with other municipalities, or through advocacy associations, such as the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) or Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA). These traditional mechanisms of municipal-provincial engagement may also be going through a transformation. With the *Modernized Municipal Government Act*, the City of Calgary and City of Edmonton have each established a Big City Charter with the Alberta Government, which provides a more formalized and consistent framework for these cities to collaborate with the Province.

Despite the *MGA* providing the foundation for a unique provincial-municipal relationship, whereby the two entities are partners with local governments more liberated, LeSage Jr. and McMillan (2010) note that the Government of Alberta “must continue to discipline itself to prevent slipping back into a legislative and administrative paternalism in which picayune matters are inserted into municipal legislation to excise a political irritation or bureaucratic inconvenience” (p. 87). While for many issues, Alberta municipalities deal directly with Alberta Municipal Affairs, there are not many formalized structures to establish or maintain relationships outside of Big City Charters. Most of the formalization occurs through the two municipal advocacy associations regarding specific provincial-in-scope topics. AUMA is perceived as heterogeneous like UBCM, whereas the RMA is homogeneous (Shott, 2017, p. 115). In 2017, the AUMA passed a resolution to approach the RMA to merge the two associations (AUMA, 2017), which appears to have gained little traction.

5.3 Saskatchewan: Absence of Inter-municipal Context

Saskatchewan has approached inter-municipal structures much differently than BC or Alberta, because of the scale and location of urban growth, and lack of inter-municipal structures. Essentially, urban centers have been able to accommodate growth through small-scale annexations of land from adjacent rural jurisdictions. Saskatoon and Regina, the two largest cities in Saskatchewan, have not had to consider regional approaches to the extent of other cities in Western Canada, since their cities cover more than 87% of their respective census metropolitan areas (Tindal and Tindal, 2009, p. 92).

However, Saskatchewan is challenged because it has hundreds of small municipalities with financial and capacity constraints. In the mid-1990s, the provincial government considered several reforms including moving to a regional district model like BC and reducing the number municipalities from 1,000 to about 125 (Tindal and Tindal, 2009, p. 92). In 2017, the Saskatchewan government announced several “transformational change” initiatives, which led to some speculation that forced amalgamations may be

forthcoming, to reduce the number of municipalities in Saskatchewan (SUMA, 2017). Like Alberta, Saskatchewan has two municipal advocacy associations: the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM) and the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA). The provincial government interfaces with SARM and SUMA on policy development, and like their counterparts in Alberta and BC, the two associations lobby the government on behalf of its members regarding matters provincial in scope.

5.4 Discussion on Document and Literature Review Findings

The document and literature review findings indicate that regional approaches and structures differ across BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan, despite similarities in municipal-provincial relations. All three maintain advocacy associations, and municipalities are established by their respective provincial government, and are subject to their ultimate control—there is arguably a “parent-child” relationship in all three instances.

At the inter-municipal level, while BC utilizes a regional district model that focuses on service-provision, Alberta uses a combination of prescribed and voluntary collaborations between or amongst municipalities related to land-use planning, and Saskatchewan’s municipalities largely have not considered inter-municipal partnerships, opportunities, or challenges. In this respect, inter-municipal partnerships related to land-use planning and service provision are formalized to the furthest extent in BC, through regional districts. Inter-municipal partnerships become increasingly piecemeal through Alberta and Saskatchewan, whereas in Alberta formalization requires equal inter-municipal support to proceed or takes the form of mandated collaboration initiated by the provincial government. There is potential for small municipalities in Saskatchewan to consider inter-municipal partnerships, given the large number of tiny municipalities and their fiscal constraints. It will be interesting to monitor what comes of the provincially proposed “transformational change” initiatives.

6. FINDINGS: MUNICIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE

As identified in Section 3.3, the municipal questionnaire was submitted on July 13, 2018. The findings herein are based on six responses received, from either a CAO, legislative clerk, or government relations staff person from each municipality.

6.1 Key Findings from Questionnaire Responses

Figure 6 (see next page) provides a high-level review of the responses from municipal comparators. Figure 6 identifies that having dedicated municipal staff for government relations is strictly an Alberta phenomenon amongst respondents. The number of inter-governmental staff varies by the size and scope of the municipality—whereas the City of Calgary has eleven, for example, compared to the City of Red Deer, which has one. Three of the respondents (Calgary, Port Coquitlam and Strathcona County) have dedicated council committees for intergovernmental matters.

The survey also indicates some municipalities, such as the City of Red Deer, have limited inter-municipal engagements, while others of similar population size, such as Strathcona County, have many. The survey responses also indicate that government relation functions are more centralized where there are dedicated government relations staff. These findings are discussed in greater detail below.

6.2 Dedicated Government Relations Staff

The findings indicate that having dedicated municipal staff for intergovernmental matters is an Albertan approach. Within Alberta, the number of dedicated intergovernmental staff varies, based on factors like the number of intergovernmental associations/entities the municipality belongs to, and not on municipal population.

For example, the City of Red Deer and Strathcona County have similar populations (100,418 and 98,044 respectively) yet the City of Red Deer has one position, called Intergovernmental Strategist, while Strathcona County has four: one Manager, two Strategists, and one Policy Analyst. Strathcona County is a specialized municipality and is part of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region, while Red Deer is the largest city within Central Alberta, without any large neighbouring cities.

The proximity to a metropolitan area may explain why some Alberta municipalities have more dedicated government relations staff than others, as they are generally involved in more intergovernmental associations/entities.

All BC responses indicated no dedicated government relations staff, and that topics and issues of an intergovernmental nature are typically addressed by subject matter experts. The regional district form of governance may be an explanation as to why no dedicated government relations staff exist amongst surveyed BC municipalities.

Figure 6: Municipal Questionnaire Responses

Municipality	Themes
City of Calgary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eleven dedicated Government Relations staff • Government Relations functions largely centralized, and many processes are documented and standardized • Intergovernmental Affairs Committee established in 1988 as a forum to provide direction on regional, provincial, and federal matters of significance to the City • Engaged in multiple intergovernmental forums and activities; are actively involved in influencing policy to a greater extent than other cities in Alberta (i.e. Edmonton and Calgary have a different, more direct relationship with other orders of government and municipal advocacy associations than others)
City of Spruce Grove	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No dedicated Government Relations staff • Government Relations functions decentralized • No specific Government Relations Committee • Multiple inter-municipal service agreements with neighbours • Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board and Edmonton Global member municipality
Strathcona County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four dedicated Government Relations staff • Government Relations functions largely centralized within the Intergovernmental Affairs Branch of the Office of the Chief Commissioner • Governance Advisory Committee formed in 2015, which functions as a Government Relations Committee of Council • Engaged in 10+ intergovernmental associations/entities
City of Red Deer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One dedicated Government Relations position • No specific Government Relations Committee • Primarily interfaces with Provincial and Federal orders of Government
City of North Vancouver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No dedicated Government Relations staff • No specific Government Relations Committee • The municipality engages with the Provincial government, Metro Vancouver, and shares service provision across three North Shore municipalities
City of Port Coquitlam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No dedicated Government Relations staff • Government Relations functions decentralized • Maintains Community and Intergovernmental Committee (CIC) to address relational and reputational issues with other orders of government
City of Chilliwack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No dedicated Government Relations staff • Government Relations functions decentralized • No specific Government Relations Committee

No responses were received from Saskatchewan municipalities to confirm they have no dedicated intergovernmental staff, which the websites of Moose Jaw and Prince Albert appear to reinforce. No emails or voicemails were returned from the Saskatchewan municipalities surveyed; it is not clear why no response was received.

6.3 Dedicated Government Relations Committees

The existence of dedicated government relations staff does not indicate whether a municipal council has a government relations committee or not. The City of Port Coquitlam, for instance, has a Community and Intergovernmental Committee despite not having any dedicated staff. Strathcona County, while having several

intergovernmental staff, also has a Governance Advisory Committee which addresses intergovernmental matters. In short, the existence of a committee does not replace the function or requirement for staff.

Strathcona County and Port Coquitlam are the only two municipalities in the comparison group with the City of St. Albert, along the City of Calgary and the City of Edmonton to have a intergovernmental committee. While there may be some shared circumstances across Calgary, Edmonton, Strathcona County, and Port Coquitlam like population (50,000 or greater) and existence within a Metropolitan Region, other municipalities in Western Canada with these same circumstances do not have such committees.

One differentiating factor is if the municipality maintains a full-time Council, and a Council-Ward system. While Port Coquitlam does not, the City of Calgary, Edmonton, and Strathcona County do. No other comparator municipalities in Alberta have both a Council-Ward system and full-time Council. In other words, if an Alberta municipality has a full-time Council, a Council-Ward system, 100,000 or more residents, and belongs to a Metropolitan Region, the municipality will have: i) dedicated intergovernmental staff; and ii) a council committee for intergovernmental matters.

Figure 7: Council Size and Format of Municipalities with Government Relations Committees

Municipality	Council Size
City of Calgary	Mayor and 14 Councillors (Ward)
City of Edmonton	Mayor and 12 Councillors (Ward)
Strathcona County	Mayor and 8 Councillors (Ward)
Port Coquitlam	Mayor and 6 Councillors (at-large)

The City of Port Coquitlam’s Community and Intergovernmental Committee is comprised of all members of Council and seeks to maintain and promote the City’s interests through its relationships with the federal and provincial government, governmental organizations, the regional district, RCMP, and neighbouring municipalities. The committee does not have the authority to make any decisions, other than to recommend that the Mayor develop and submit correspondence to another organization or government on an issue. Agendas and minutes for this committee reveal it meets two or three times per month, yet often the agendas do not deal with inter-governmental matters. Other than discussing items like federal cannabis legalization and in-camera legal matters, over the last year the committee has reviewed largely municipal-specific items like off-leash dog parks, traffic calming, and recreational vehicle

storage (City of Port Coquitlam, 2018). While this committee's mandate does not differ much from Calgary or Edmonton's respective government relations committees, it deals with very different business.

Strathcona County's Governance Advisory Committee (GAC) has a similar mandate to the government relations committees in Calgary, Edmonton and Port Coquitlam, but is also responsible for several other additional responsibilities. These include:

- Board and Committee Reviews and Appointments;
- Public Engagement;
- Internal Governance Policy Reviews; and
- Review/Development for Terms of Reference of Council Committees.

The committee is comprised of three councillors, and the mayor is an ex-officio non-voting member. In reviewing the committee's 2018 Agendas, it appears that their work has predominantly focused on legislative and internal policy matters like a typical governance or executive committee would do. The occasional review of FCM, AUMA and RMA resolutions appear to be the only subjects that are intergovernmental in nature. In some respects, this committee's ability to handle intergovernmental business is constrained because the mayor does not sit on the committee, yet the Mayor typically sits on external intergovernmental entities, like the EMRB, or is the spokesperson for Council within an intergovernmental context. For example, the City of Edmonton's RDC reviews matters related to annexation, whereas the recent Fort Saskatchewan proposed annexation of Strathcona County lands did not appear in recent agendas of Strathcona County's GAC, yet Strathcona County's Mayor is identified as the spokesperson and signatory (Janzen, 2018 Sept 12).

One challenge for GACs is that they make recommendations to Council only. If there is time-sensitive businesses requiring official direction, it can be difficult for Administration to transact the item with both the committee and then with Council.

6.4 Big City vs. Mid-Sized City Approach

The City of Calgary is the most populated comparator with the City of St. Albert as shown in Figure 5 (p. 15), and the only "Big City" to respond to the questionnaire. While the intergovernmental portfolio in the mid-sized comparators seems to be a work-in progress for most and a decentralized approach, the City of Calgary is the opposite: it is engaged in more intergovernmental activities than any other responding municipality.

Calgary has more staff resources dedicated to intergovernmental relations and a long-standing intergovernmental committee of Council (since 1988). It has standardized and documented policies, processes, tools and templates. The City of Calgary also seems emphasize the coordination and monitoring of advocacy opportunities, whereas other municipalities respond to advocacy requests or items as they are identified. In other words, Calgary looks as it monitors provincial and federal legislation and looks for

opportunities for the City to influence outcomes to their advantage. Other cities appear to rely more on municipal advocacy associations and/or only seek to influence inter-governmental policy when asked to provide input.

Calgary can participate in forums that others are not, simply because of its size and scale. For example, intergovernmental staff from the City participate in the Big City Administrators' Table and the Alberta City Charter Collaboration and Fiscal Framework tables, whereas no other Alberta municipalities do except for City of Edmonton.

6.5 A Lack of Standardized Processes

The responses to the survey indicate a lack of standardized intergovernmental processes and systems within the municipal government sector. Outside of Calgary and Edmonton, formalized intergovernmental affairs are a relatively new endeavor for municipalities. As this aspect of local government in Western Canada develops and matures in the future, it will be interesting to monitor what processes and approaches become recognized as best practice.

6.6 Conclusions from the Interview Findings

Several findings emerged from the municipal survey responses. First, only Alberta respondents have dedicated staff for government relations. Second, the number of government relations staff per municipality seems to vary based on the location—whether they reside within a Metropolitan area—as well as the size, scope, and number of intergovernmental activities the municipality is engaged in.

Of the respondents indicating they have a council committee for intergovernmental matters, they also have full-time Councils, elected through a ward-based format, except for the City of Port Coquitlam. The City of Port Coquitlam is an anomaly, and although they have an intergovernmental committee, a scan of recent meeting minutes indicates the committee has not recently dealt with intergovernmental matters, but instead has focused on matters of local interest, such as dog parks.

An interesting point identified by Strathcona County is that its Mayor does not sit on their GAC, which can create challenges given that the Mayor is often the Council spokesperson or representative on intergovernmental matters. Another conclusion to flag is that the City of Calgary has more standardized processes, intergovernmental staff, and a more established committee dedicated to intergovernmental affairs.

7. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

This section identifies potential opportunities for the City of St. Albert to improve its approach to intergovernmental matters, based upon the findings of the document and literature review and municipal questionnaire. The potential opportunities are identified as strategic implications and are then refined into options and recommendations in Section 8.

7.1 Provincial Variances

The literature review and municipal questionnaire indicate there are different structures and approaches across BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan for provincial-municipal relations, and regional and inter-municipal relations amongst municipalities.

Federal relations typically flow through the provincial government in all three provinces, although the degree to which a municipality is able to engage with the federal or provincial government largely relates to who the municipality is—for example, the Calgary and Edmonton obviously carry more weight from a political and population standpoint in Alberta, so these two municipalities have City Charters, whereby they sit at a table with the province that other Alberta municipalities are simply not invited to. This also occurs federally through entities like the Big City Administrators' Table. In short—size matters. Across all three provinces, for smaller communities, there is a lack of formalized structures to engage with the federal and provincial governments outside of FCM and respective provincial advocacy associations like AUMA, SUMA and UBCM.

Regional and inter-municipal structures differ. In Saskatchewan, there are essentially no regional structures. Alberta has mandatory Metropolitan Region Boards which provide a planning function, and voluntary inter-municipal service and cost-sharing agreements are voluntary between municipalities. BC has a regional district model where districts provide services to multiple municipalities.

Comparing the City of St. Albert with BC and Saskatchewan may be thus somewhat constrained given the different regional contexts. In Alberta, provincial legislation has formalized power structures among municipalities at a regional scale through weighted voting mechanisms. The two municipalities with this advantage, both happen to have a council committee tasked with maintaining line of sight on the regional file, as well as keeping touchpoints with provincial and federal relations. Although the size and scope of Calgary and Edmonton is greater than that of St. Albert, the regional context is arguably more similar than like-sized municipalities in other provinces and therefore, greater comparison should be applied to Alberta's Big Cities than other jurisdictions.

Strategic Implication: St. Albert should pay closer attention to Alberta municipalities Alberta's Metropolitan Regions as municipal comparators given the different regional contexts that exist across BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan. Further, priority emphasis should be placed on regional and inter-municipal relations, followed by provincial-

municipal relations. There is limited opportunity to influence outcomes at a federal level given Canada's existing form of federalism, and St. Albert's size and scope.

7.2 No "One Size Fits All"

Overall, there does not appear to be a "one-size fits all" or best practice for government relations at the local level. Instead, some municipalities, given their size and context, simply have more formalized and sophisticated structures, tools and processes in place to address government relations.

Few municipalities have a specific intergovernmental council committee. Strathcona County and Port Coquitlam's committees have limited government relations functions. Moreover, few standardized processes exist in municipalities regarding government relations, likely because it is a relatively new trend. In this regard, Calgary and Edmonton seem to be further along within this realm, likely because they have more formally been engaged in intergovernmental matters in the past.

Having staff dedicated to intergovernmental matters is primarily an Alberta-based approach. The survey responses indicate that volume of intergovernmental work is likely more reliant on context than on size. For example, proximity to a large urban center, number of municipal neighbours, participation on a growth management board, and number of intergovernmental associations/activities that a municipality belongs to impacts the volume of work, and corresponding administrative resources required to complete the work. While the City of Red Deer and City of St. Albert each have one intergovernmental employee, and while Red Deer is bigger than St. Albert, St. Albert participates in more intergovernmental associations as a growth management board member and being a neighbour to Edmonton.

In reviewing existing legislative frameworks of comparative municipalities, all municipalities in BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan are subject to the enabling legislation established by their provincial governments. From there, whether a municipality has a full-time council or not influences their council committee structure.

The document review, literature findings and questionnaire responses indicate that few municipalities have dedicated intergovernmental council committees. Of the few that do, the outcomes their committees intend to achieve typically include:

- Formulating and preparing positions on government policies and programs of interest to the municipality; and
- Formulating and preparing positions on inter-municipal matters, such as inter-municipal partnerships, land-use planning, and annexations.

Generally, the positive results of having a committee are that intergovernmental committees provide certainty regarding consistent and frequent access to members of Council, and the less-structured format of committee meetings provides opportunity to

have more in-depth discussions with city administration regarding intergovernmental matters than a council meeting setting.

The challenges of having an intergovernmental committee are the internal agenda report deadlines do not align with the fluid timelines of intergovernmental relations; public perception of these committees because conversations often must occur in-private for *Freedom on Information and Privacy Protection* matters; and that many items must be taken to Council as a whole—so there is some level of duplication that occurs between the committee and Council. The documents on council committees in sum, indicates they are merely a tool to have more deliberation and focused attention on a matter; in this respect, there is a risk that committees may not view items as holistically as going to the Council body in its entirety.

When analyzing council committees in a broader sense, the literature indicates they can be effective in certain situations, or further complicate governance practices in others. With this in mind, and, given that a committee may not be the only or best solution to creating a more coordinated, consistent and timely approach to government relations, additional options should be considered by St. Albert. For example, both Calgary and Edmonton have other subtleties in addition to committees in place that may need to be considered, such as staff resources and full-time Councils.

Strategic Implication: Based upon these findings, potential evaluation criteria for options within this report should include:

- Does the option improve decision-making with respect to quality and timeliness?
- Does the option create an innovative approach to mitigate risk and leverage opportunities relevant to the external environment?
- Does Council have capacity to implement the option?
- Does Administration have capacity to implement the option?

7.3 Other Gaps and Opportunities

The research and questionnaire findings reveal that creating a council committee is not the only solution to improve the City's approach to intergovernmental matters. As an emerging trend, policy and process improvements at the City of St. Albert may be viable solutions to improve intergovernmental matters, as there is little information to draw from like-sized municipalities. However, there are learnings from bigger cities like Calgary. Current City of St. Albert service-levels (see Figure 3, p. 11) should be incorporated into evaluation criteria in Section 8 to weigh potential options—specifically, if an option will reaffirm, maintain, document, or improve existing service levels, or lead to increased efficiencies in achieving the service level.

Strategic Implication: Given the findings that intergovernmental approaches vary across provinces and municipalities and that there is no “one-size fits all” approach, the

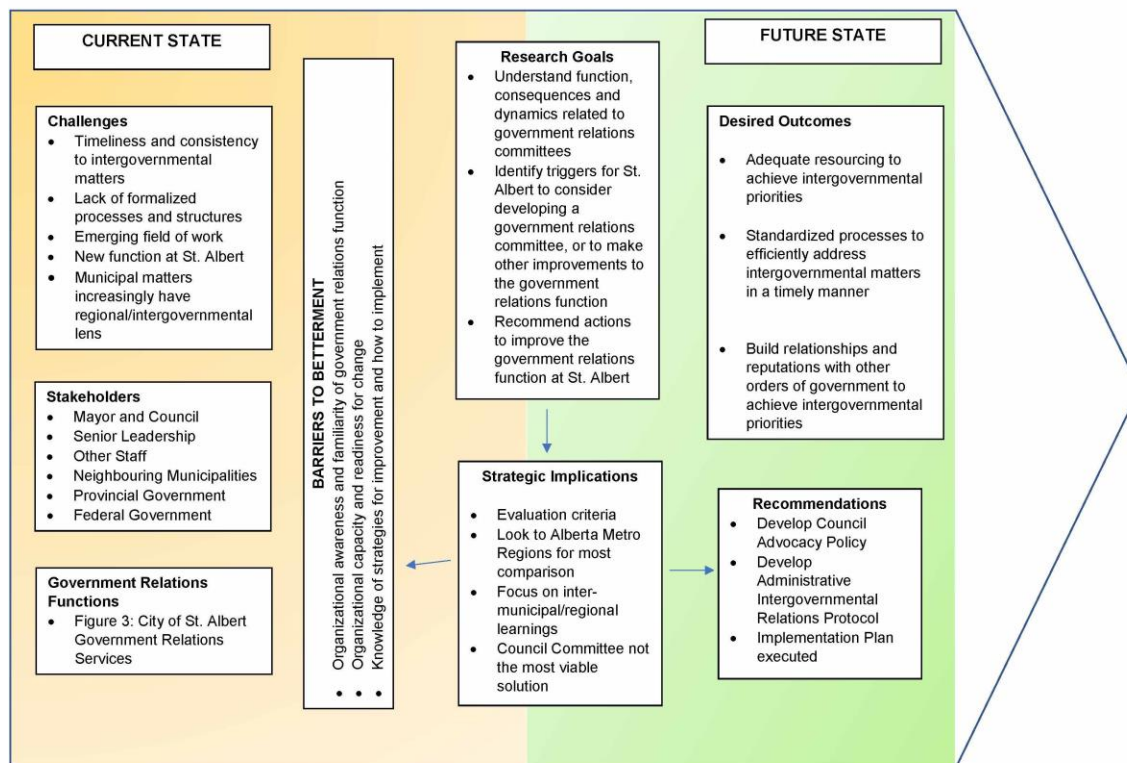
creation of a council committee is not the only solution that should be considered by the City of St. Albert to better coordinate intergovernmental matters.

7.4 Conclusion: Implications of Findings for Identifying Options

The research question animating this project focused on what a government relations committee framework could look like at St. Albert, if the City were to implement one. The desired outcomes identified in the Analytic Framework (Figure 4, p. 13) remains relevant: adequate resourcing to achieve intergovernmental priorities; standardized processes to efficiently address intergovernmental matters in a timely manner; and, positive reputation with other orders of government, to achieve City intergovernmental priorities. While the research question assumed the mechanism to achieve these desired outcomes was a council committee, research indicates that there are different mechanisms the City of St. Albert should consider. Once the evaluation criteria are applied against each potential option in Section 8, there are alternative mechanisms that will work towards these desired outcomes more efficiently and effectively.

The strategic implications gleaned from the research and subsequent project recommendations can be inserted into the analytic framework to “remove” the barriers to betterment and to achieve the desired outcomes of the future state. This is visualized in Figure 8: Applied Analytic Framework (next page).

Figure 8: Applied Analytic Framework



8. OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section of the report will identify potential options and recommendations for the City of St. Albert to conduct intergovernmental relations in a more strategic, coordinated, and proactive manner. The four options considered are as follows:

1. Process and Policy Improvement
2. Government Relations Committee
3. Additional Staff Resources
4. Transition to a Full-Time Council

The criteria for comparing the options are:

- Improvement/Maintenance of Service Levels
- Creates Efficiencies in Achieving Service Levels
- Improves decision-making quality
- Improves decision-making timeliness
- Mitigates external threats/Leverages external opportunities
- Council capacity to implement
- Administration capacity to implement
- Time/effort to implement

After each option is presented, each will be assessed and evaluated in sub-section 8.5 against the criteria and consolidated in Figure 10 (p. 40). A recommended approach will be identified and associated implementation plan will be presented in Section 8.6 and consolidated into Figure 11 (p. 42).

8.1 Option 1: Process and Policy Improvement

A general theme from the municipal survey is that bigger cities tend to have a more centralized approach to intergovernmental affairs. As St. Albert grows, and to address intergovernmental issues in a more consistent and strategic manner, a more centralized philosophy may need to be adopted and reinforced through stronger mechanisms to maintain existing service-levels. This philosophy can be implemented through policies and processes, specifically related to the flow of information.

The City of St. Albert should develop policies and processes that clarify and streamline:

- How and to whom information pertinent to intergovernmental matters is shared internally amongst City Administration;
- How frequently and in what capacity information pertinent to intergovernmental matters is taken to Council as information or for direction;

- What items of intergovernmental business can be transacted by Administration, and what items need to be approved by Council; and,
- Who within the organization can talk to whom outside of the organization regarding matters pertinent to intergovernmental matters.

The recommended medium to achieve this clarity is to develop a Council Advocacy Policy, and an Administrative Directive on Intergovernmental Relations. These items have been drafted and included as Appendix D and Appendix E, respectively.

Appendix D clarifies that City Council and Administration will work to develop and an Advocacy Plan on an annual basis, that the Mayor is typically the lead spokesperson on intergovernmental matters, and that City Council should strive to maintain consistent messaging regarding intergovernmental matters.

Appendix E focuses on intergovernmental communications protocols within the City and with external stakeholders and articulates that messages will typically come from either the CAO, Deputy CAO, Department Director, or Manager of Government Relations. Both the policy and the directive are intended to centralize and coordinate intergovernmental messaging, to ensure a streamlined and consistent approach, and to reduce the possibility of staff or Council accidentally contradicting the City's progress or approach on intergovernmental undertakings.

Both the policy and the directive could be criticized for centralizing communications too much, however this could be an interim step. In other words, as compliance to and awareness of the directive increases, informal practices may improve whereby centralized intergovernmental communication can be relaxed in time.

A third way to implement this option, is to work with the City's Legislative Services Department to amend the City's Council Agenda Report template to include a mandatory section on all Council reports and briefings to include a section on inter-governmental affairs. This would help to build organizational awareness and thought regarding inter-governmental impacts and opportunities. Further, the Manager, Government Relations could possibly be integrated into the agenda review and approval process for this section, just like the City's Financial Services and Legal Services areas are, for all Council reports.

8.2 Option 2: Government Relations Committee

Based on the research, the City of St. Albert has not reached specific thresholds to implement a dedicated government relations committee. The following criteria should be in place prior to the creation of a committee, to ensure adequate resources are in place:

- There is a full-time Council in place;
- There are more than seven (7) members of Council;

- The City has intergovernmental policies and processes in place for Council and Administration;
- Council meets more than twice per month; and,
- Council already has a Committee of the Whole, or Governance, Priorities and Finance Committee

Based on the format of similar committees in other municipalities, applied against the St. Albert's context, committee structure, membership, roles and responsibilities should include:

- At least three (3) members of Council;
- Should primarily be advisory in nature and will make recommendations to Council. Some authorities may be delegated to the Committee, such as providing written responses on policy matters through the Office of the Mayor;
- The Committee should be supported by the CAO and any staff supports deemed necessary by the CAO;
- The Committee should likely meet at least once per quarter

Administrative supports for the Committee will likely include the following, but will be done so at the discretion of the Chief Administrative Officer:

- Executive Leadership Team: information, advice, and request for decision
- Government Relations staff: information, advice, and request for decision
- Planning and Development staff: information, advice, and request for decision
- City Clerk's Office: legislative and legal support

8.3 Option 3: Additional Resources

Figure 2 on p. 9 summarized a host of intergovernmental activities, sub-committees and task forces at the City of St. Albert. While the City of St. Albert has one dedicated staff resource to intergovernmental affairs, the research findings indicate that some comparative municipalities have more staff assigned to this type of work at their respective municipality, including the City of Calgary and Strathcona County.

Figure 9 (next page) presents this trend in further detail. Although some comparators have more intergovernmental staff per capita than the City of St. Albert, the City seems to be adequately resourced at this time.

Figure 9: Intergovernmental Staff Resources in Western Municipalities

Municipality	Population	GR Staff	GR Staff per 100,000 population	Number of Municipal Neighbours	Metro Region/GR Council Committee
Calgary	1,246,337	11	0.88	3	Yes/Yes
Red Deer	100,418	1	0.99	1	No/No
St. Albert	65,589	1	1.5	2	Yes/No
Strathcona County	98,044	4	4.08	7	Yes/Yes

8.4 Option 4: Small Town with Big(ger) City Ambitions

Outside of the City of Port Coquitlam, the three municipal comparators with the City of St. Albert have full-time councils and ward systems. While these items may not be requirements for a government relations committee, these might be options that the City of St. Albert should address prior to consideration of the establishment of a government relations committee.

As the third largest municipality in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region, and the tenth largest municipality in Alberta, the City of St. Albert is one of the only municipalities in Alberta with over 66,000 residents that does not have a full-time council or a ward system. While this project sought to identify a more streamlined approach to intergovernmental relations for the City of St. Albert, there may be more streamlined approaches to governance holistically and thus, corresponding structures that alleviate higher-level problems. It is not clear that the City’s current governance structure is insufficient, but as the policy environment within which the City operates continues to grow in complexity and issues start to emerge, the transition to a full-time council and/or a ward system are potential solutions for St. Albert to consider.

From an intergovernmental context, a full-time council may provide for more frequent, and more consistent opportunities to gain elected official feedback and action on intergovernmental strategies. This is critical, because administrations may do ‘heavy-lifting’ behind the scenes on intergovernmental files, but the action and sponsorship of intergovernmental strategies largely rests on the shoulders of elected officials.

It is generally understood that elected officials speak to elected officials on intergovernmental matters, and a full-time council could provide opportunity for more frequent and timely interactions with counterparts at the inter-municipal, provincial, and federal level.

The underlying assumption with a full-time council is that intergovernmental staff would have more consistent and frequent access to elected officials, to be apprised of

intergovernmental developments at an elected level, and to provide advice and reinforce strategies as required, largely on an informal basis. To do something more formal would require improvements to processes, policies, and/or the creation of a committee.

This option, which is likely a future consideration, would be a broader conversation regarding the overall enhanced demands placed on the City; not just from an inter-governmental perspective. This solution, either increasing the “time” required of a part-time Council, or ramping up to a full-time Council, will likely emerge as the City grows and increased demands are felt more organizationally, and enhanced governance mechanisms become critical.

8.5 Assessing and Weighing the Options

Figure 10 (see next page, p. 33) sets out the four options and shows the relative rankings against the criteria. As the figure shows, each option will lead to the maintenance or improvement of existing service levels, as identified in Figure 3. The only option that achieves efficiencies in maintaining or improving existing service-levels is Option 1, meaning that the City would likely bear additional cost in implementing Options 2, 3, or 4.

Given that St. Albert Council is not a full-time Council, the findings indicate that there likely is not capacity to implement a government relations committee, and additional staff resources for government relations would likely be required in such an instance. The implementation of Option 4, which it is generally understood that there is no community appetite to currently pursue, would result in a re-evaluation of Options 1, 2, and 3. In many ways, Options 2, 3, and 4 are interdependent:

- A full-time Council is necessary to justify developing a government relations committee, as a full-time Council is required to be in place once a municipality reaches a certain level of size, scope, and complexity; and,
- Additional staff resources are required to move forward with implementing a full-time Council model, and to maintain a Government Relations Committee.

With these interdependencies, Option 1 emerges as the preferred option, given that it can be implemented with current capacity, without cost to the City, and should present an opportunity for the City to deal with intergovernmental matters in a more streamlined and consistent manner.

8.6 Implementation Plan for Option 1

The Implementation Plan for the recommended option, option 1, starts with the “low-hanging fruit,” as a Council Advocacy Policy and Administrative Intergovernmental Relations Protocol can be implemented quickly and efficiently. Once the Policy and Protocol have been in place for several months, a Post-Implementation Review should occur to analyze if the government relations function is operating more effectively and

efficiently. There may be the need for additional government relations resources or for more reinforcement and support of the policy and protocol. subject to this analysis.

Figure 10: Evaluation of Potential Options

	Option 1: Process and Policy Improvement	Option 2: Government Relations Committee	Option 3: Additional Resources	Option 4: Full-Time Council
Improvement/Maintenance of Service Levels	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Creates Efficiencies in Achieving Service Levels	Yes	No	No	No
Improves decision-making quality	Yes	Yes	No	N/A
Improves decision-making timeliness	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mitigates external threats/leverages external opportunities	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Council capacity to implement	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Administration capacity to implement	Yes	No	Yes	No
Time/effort to implement	Mild	Significant	Mild	Significant

Figure 11 (next page) visualizes the implementation plan. Utilizing Appendix D and E, the Council Advocacy Policy and Intergovernmental Relations Protocol could be implemented quite quickly and simultaneously by the City of St. Albert. Since it is administrative in nature, the protocol would only need to be approved by the City’s executive leadership before being ready to be rolled-out to the organization. The Advocacy Policy would need endorsement from executive leadership before being brought forward to City Council in a Governance, Priorities, and Finance Committee (GPFC) format for review and comments. From there, the Policy could be taken to City Council for formal approval.

For ease of organizational awareness and change capacity, both the Policy and Protocol could be communicated and implemented through the organization at the same time. The typical format to communicate organizational changes is to email Leadership Team and make a presentation at a Leadership Team meeting. The implementation plan suggests that a 3-month post-implementation review occur, to

identify the success of the policy and protocol. Changes to the policy or protocol may be required, or additional reinforcement from proper City personnel may need to occur to ensure the “change is not lost.”

Figure 11: Recommended Implementation Plan

Initiative	Description	Timeline
Implement Council Advocacy Policy		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Leadership Team Approval 	ELT reviews and approves Policy to go to Council	Month 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council Review at Governance, Finance and Priorities Committee 	Council reviews and provides feedback on draft Policy	Month 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council Approval 	Council approves Policy	Month 3
Implement Intergovernmental Relations Protocol		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Leadership Team Approval 	ELT reviews and approves Administrative Protocol	Month 1
Implement New Council Agenda Report Template		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative Services Approval 	Legislative Services Department adds an Intergovernmental Relations section to all Council agenda reports and administrative backgrounders	Month 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate to Leadership Team and Organization 	Roll-out Protocol and Policy to organization by presenting to Leadership Team	Month 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-Implementation Review 	Review effectiveness and reinforcement of Policy and Protocol 3 and 8 months after Implementation	Month 6 and Month 12

The 8-month post-implementation review will ask the same question as the 3-month review, but it is assumed that if this much time has passed and the problem of streamlining intergovernmental relations still exists, additional staff resources may need to be applied. This is two-fold: on the one hand, additional resources could contribute to building enhanced awareness and reinforcement of appropriate policies and protocols; on the other hand, additional resources could be acquired proactively to implement Option 2 and possibly Option 4. In other words, if the City finds that after execution of the implementation plan that the desired outcomes have not been achieved, they may want to implement the alternative options presented within this report, which would likely require additional staff resources.

9. CONCLUSION

This capstone report set out to develop options for the City of St. Albert to address intergovernmental relations in a more coordinated, consistent and proactive manner, specifically through the creation of a dedicated council committee.

This report documented current intergovernmental service-levels at the City and sought to further understand and compare approaches to intergovernmental relations across Western Canada through completion of a document and literature review and survey of comparative municipalities. At a high-level, the findings included:

- Inter-governmental structures and approaches are different across the three Western provinces;
- Municipal intergovernmental relations typically flow through the provincial government, outside of Alberta’s “Big Cities;”
- Alberta is the only province with intergovernmental staff of municipal comparators. The number of staff and standardization of administrative systems and processes varies based on proximity to a metropolitan centre, and scale of the municipality; and
- Few municipal comparators have government relations council committees—of those who do, the City of Calgary and City of Edmonton seem to be utilizing them as a focused intergovernmental entity, although the creation of a dedicated government relations committee may inadvertently create additional bureaucracy.

Several options were identified to achieve the desired future state for the City of St. Albert as presented in the analytic framework (p. 13). A recommended approach and implementation plan (p. 42) were developed for the City to proceed with a Council Advocacy Policy (Appendix D) and administrative directive related to intergovernmental communications (Appendix E). It is anticipated that these actions will help the City to ensure adequate intergovernmental resources are in place; standardized processes exist to efficiently and effectively address intergovernmental matters; and to maintain positive relations with other orders of government to execute City priorities.

Further research could be commissioned in several areas. First, since only municipal staff were consulted with the survey, elected officials could also be contacted since they often engage most frequently in intergovernmental matters. Second, since the timing of the survey coincided with BC’s municipal election, which reduced the response-rate, so additional interviews could be carried out on the BC experience. Third, this project did not explore municipal intergovernmental relations with First Nations but recent research has begun to explore this important dimension (Heritz, 2018a, 2018b). Finally, more research is required to assist in making sustained improvements to the civil service.

Continued study and refinement of municipal structures, systems and processes will ensure an effective civil service and good governance practices are implemented and improved upon across Western Canada. Intergovernmental relations are critically important to ensure collaboration with neighbouring municipalities and other orders of

government. While it is an emerging field, it will likely become more important as local policy issues continue to transcend municipal boundaries, and all orders of government work to “do more with less” for their citizens and businesses. Constant and consistent improvement within the field of approaches to intergovernmental relations will help to better achieve such an outcome in a more efficient and effective manner.

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APPENDIX A: INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

From: [REDACTED]

Subject: Invitation to Participate in City of St. Albert Government Relations Committee Study

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Trevor Duley, and I am a Masters Student in Public Administration at the University of Victoria, as well as an employee of the City of St. Albert. This project is being completed for Sharon Chapman, Director of Strategic Services with the City of St. Albert, whom is my direct supervisor at the City. The client will not have access to the raw data associated with this project.

As part of my Final Capstone Project to complete my Degree, I am tasked with looking at Intergovernmental Affairs systems, processes, and frameworks within a municipal context in Western Canada. Specifically, I am tasked with developing a report for the City of St. Albert around the viability of creating a sub-committee of Council dedicated to Government Relations.

The report would serve as an input into a possible future Business Case for the establishment of such a Committee or may provide evidence as to why such a Committee is not required in the short, or long-term. There may be additional recommendations regarding smaller, systems-based, or process related changes to intergovernmental work that may be provided, outside of the Committee structure. As you are a municipal employee engaged in intergovernmental affairs, I am writing to request your voluntary participation in my research.

As identified in the Participant Consent Form (attached), your participation would include the completion of the enclosed questionnaire; which I may contact you via telephone for clarification on responses, should they be required.

There are no anticipated risks or personal compensation to you for your participation in this research. The benefits of this research will be your contributions to academia and the progression of local government theory and best practice from a systems, processes, and governance perspective.

The Participant Consent Form identifies additional information regarding your confidentiality and dissemination of results. Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact myself or my academic supervisor, or project client.

Should you wish to participate, please send me your completed Participant Consent Form, and Questionnaire at your convenience. I would politely request that should you wish to participate, these be completed and sent to me by August 10th.

Warm regards,
Trevor Duley

[REDACTED]

APPENDIX B: MUNICIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your role for the municipality? How long have you been in the role for?
2. Describe generally, the services this role provides.
3. How many staff does your municipality employ that fill government relations functions? (Whether intermunicipal, or intergovernmental (provincial/federal)—please delineate if possible).
4. Do you believe your municipality has the appropriate level of resources to support Council in achieving intended government relations' outcomes?
5. Does your municipality have any standardized systems or processes for government relations' staff to fulfill their roles?
 - a. If yes, for what kinds of services or functions?
 - b. Are these processes documented, and are you able/willing to share them?
6. Does your municipality's Council have a Government Relations Committee (i.e. a sub-committee of Council dedicated to intergovernmental affairs)?
 - a. If yes, how long has it been in place for?
 - b. What types of matters are discussed by the Committee?
 - c. Does the Committee have any decision-making power?
 - d. Are you able/willing to share their Terms of Reference?
 - e. In your opinion, what are the pros and cons of the Committee?
7. If your municipality's Council does not have a Government Relations Committee, to your knowledge, has one ever been contemplated? Are there any specific reasons why your municipality does not have a Government Relations Committee?
8. What types of intergovernmental activities is your municipality engaged in?
9. I've asked you several questions on municipal government relations. Is there anything else on this topic you would like to share, that has been potentially overlooked?
10. Should the researcher have additional questions based on any of your responses, what is the best phone number to reach you at?

APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM



**University
of Victoria**

Participant Consent Form

City of St. Albert Government Relations Committee Framework

You are invited to participate in a study entitled “City of St. Albert Government Relations Committee Framework” conducted by Trevor Duley.

Trevor Duley is a graduate student in the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria, and an employee of the City of St. Albert. As a graduate student, I am required to conduct a client-focused capstone report as part of the requirements for a Masters’ Degree in Public Administration. This study is conducted under the supervision of Professor Evert Lindquist. This study is conducted for Sharon Chapman, Director of Strategic Services at the City of St. Albert, whom I report to as an employee of the City of St. Albert. Sharon may be contacted via email at schapman@stalbert.ca.

If you have any question, you may contact Trevor if you have further questions by email at duley@ualberta.ca or via phone at 780-289-0319. Professor Lindquist can be contacted at evert@uvic.ca or 250-721-8416. Sharon Chapman, the project client, can be contacted via email at schapman@stalbert.ca.

Purpose and Objectives. The purpose of this research project is to identify and assess other municipal jurisdictions’ processes relative to government relations and inter-municipal matters, specifically whether or not a sub-committee of Council exists to provide direction to municipal administration on such matters. The project will seek to determine the criteria that should be in place to “trigger” the need, or consideration for the City of St. Albert to develop a sub-committee of Council that oversees functions of government relations. A framework for future consideration would then be recommended to the City of St. Albert.

Importance of this Research. Research of this type is important because it helps to establish municipal best practices and to document processes that enable effective municipal governance and operations.

Participants Selection. You are being asked to participate in this study because of your experience in local government, specifically government relations and inter-municipal matters.

What is involved. If you consent to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include completion of the enclosed questionnaire; Trevor may contact you via phone for clarification on your responses, or for further information. Hand written notes may be taken by Trevor during conversation(s) to summarize main points and themes. No audio recordings will be taken.

Risks. There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research.

Benefits. The potential benefits of your participation in this research include contributions to academia and the progression of local government theory.

Compensation. There will be no compensation awarded to you for your participation in this research.

Voluntary Participation. Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw from the study your data will be destroyed.

Researcher’s Relationship with Participants. The researcher may have a relationship to potential participants given his employment with the City of St. Albert, and shared professional intermunicipal undertakings. Please consider this project with the lens of documenting and understanding municipal best practices, as opposed to your potential professional relationship to Trevor.

Anonymity. In terms of protecting your anonymity, your responses will not be attributed to you by name, but you may be quoted in the final report as a spokesperson for your respective workplace, to give context to your municipality’s functional approach. Certain readers may therefore be able to attribute the content of the information to you personally, although the report will be written in a manner that tries to speak to higher level themes, as opposed to detailed specifics.

Confidentiality. The information being requested is essentially publicly available, so there is limited confidentiality with the line of questioning and responses. However, you may choose not to respond to any question, should you feel the need to.

Dissemination of Results. It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others through high-level themes and trends in the final report presented to the Project Committee, and City of St. Albert. You may request a copy of this report once it is completed. The raw data associated with this project will not be accessible by the project client.

Disposal of Data. Data from this study will be disposed of through paper shredding, and erasure of electronic data, upon final approval by the Project Committee. All information will be stored in a locked file cabinet, and electronically on password protected devices.

Contacts. Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study include Trevor Duley, Evert Lindquist, and Sharon Chapman as indicated at the beginning of this consent form.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study, that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers, and that you consent to participate in this research project.

<i>Name of Participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
I consent to be identified by name / credited in the results of the study: _____ (Participant to provide initials)		
I consent to have my responses attributed to me by name in the results: _____ (Participant to provide initials)		

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

APPENDIX D: DRAFT COUNCIL POLICY

Purpose

To provide direction on intergovernmental initiatives to ensure a consistent and strategic approach to promoting the City of St. Albert's interests with other orders of government. This policy establishes roles and responsibilities for Council and Administration regarding intergovernmental affairs, and processes to enable positive advocacy outcomes.

Policy Statement

This City Council policy shall establish a consistent approach to, and a philosophical framework for, City Council's intergovernmental undertakings with the Government of Canada, Government of Alberta, Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board, and other municipalities.

Definitions

"Intergovernmental Matter/Issue" refers to any City business, outside of a grant application, that impacts, or is impacted by, a relationship or policy with another order of government. This includes all intermunicipal and regional matters, as well as provincial and federal items.

Responsibilities

The Mayor is the principle advocate for the City of St. Albert and the lead on City intergovernmental matters. The Mayor may designate others to communicate certain intergovernmental issues.

Councillors represent the City of St. Albert with other levels of government through direct communication and participation on committees and in other official forums.

The Mayor and Council, where possible, shall strive to promote messaging to intergovernmental stakeholders that is consistent with Council's Advocacy Plan.

The CAO (or designate) will work with City Council to facilitate the development of Council's Advocacy Plan on an annual basis, and report on the status of the Advocacy Plan accordingly.

Council's Advocacy Plan should be reviewed and updated annually, and a complete re-write should occur when a new Corporate Business Plan is adopted.

Service Standards / Expectations

The CAO (or designate) shall report on the status of Council's Advocacy Plan twice per year, within an in-camera workshop format, once in February and once in September. Outside of a municipal election year, the annual review/update should occur in September, in advance of the AUMA Convention.

Legal References

N/A

Cross References

N/A

Attachments

N/A

APPENDIX E: DRAFT ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE

Purpose

The purpose of the City of St. Albert's Intergovernmental Relations Protocol is to:

- Establish the roles and responsibilities of City staff involved in intergovernmental affairs and advocacy; and
- Institute practices and processes to take advantage of advocacy opportunities and support positive and effective relationships with other governments.

Directive Statement

City of St. Albert Administration shall articulate a common position and speak with one voice on intergovernmental matters, to effectively communicate messages and influence other levels of government to make decisions to the benefit of the City of St. Albert. City Departments and staff will work collaboratively on issues that involve the City's relations with other governments.

Scope

This Administrative Directive applies to all City staff. It is relevant to intergovernmental matters with the Government of Canada, Government of Alberta, Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board, and other municipal governments.

Definitions

"Administrative Directive" means a CAO-approved document that includes statements about the way Administration operates and descriptions of internal work processes.

"CAO" means the chief administrative officer of the City of St. Albert or designate.

"Intergovernmental Matter/Issue" refers to any City business, outside of a grant application, that impacts, or is impacted by, a relationship or policy with another order of government. This includes all intermunicipal and regional matters, as well as provincial and federal items.

Responsibilities

CAO (or designate):

- The CAO supports Mayor and Council on the City's strategic intergovernmental relationships and initiatives and ensures coordination across all divisions of the organization. The CAO provides direction and supervision to staff undertaking intergovernmental and external relations.
- The CAO is the principal administrative advocate for the City of St. Albert.

Council's Executive Assistant:

- The Mayor and Council's Executive Assistant provides logistical, scheduling and administrative support for intergovernmental meetings and events.

Department Directors:

- All Departments, through the CAO or Deputy CAO, should alert the Manager of Government Relations when there is contact with other levels of government.

Manager, Government Relations:

- The Manager of Government Relations is responsible for coordinating the City's policy positions and interests by communicating with the administrations of other jurisdictions.
- The Manager works collaboratively across City divisions to build strong relationships with all levels of government to support Council direction and advance the City's strategic interests.
- The Manager oversees the conduct of complex and high-profile intergovernmental projects and policy files, including coordination of content from staff teams assigned to support these projects.
- The Manager is responsible for supporting the Mayor, Councillors and the CAO in communicating the City's position on initiatives relative to other governments and identifying opportunities to further the City's agenda with other levels of government.

All staff shall:

- Not deal with other governments, outside of grant applications or networking capacities, unless otherwise directed to by their Director.
- Build and maintain positive relationships with appropriate administrative counterparts in adjacent municipalities, and provincial and federal administrations.
- Inform the Manager of Government Relations of intergovernmental matters within their operational area, and/or identify issues or opportunities that will significantly impact or advance the City of St. Albert's strategic interest that they become aware of through their day to day work with other governments.

Expectations / Guidelines

1. The Mayor is the lead spokesperson on the City's intergovernmental relations, and issues with other governments. The Mayor may designate others to communicate certain intergovernmental issues.
2. Only members of Council will speak on behalf of Council.
3. Only the CAO, Directors, and the Manager, Government Relations may interact and engage with other governments on City business, unless staff are otherwise authorized or directed by the CAO, Department Director, of Manager of Government Relations.

4. Any communications with elected officials of other governments must come from the Mayor or member of City Council. City staff should contact the Manager of Government Relations if they believe there is a need to communicate on an issue with Ministers, MLAs and/or MPs.
5. Any official communications to other governments should be shared with the Manager of Government Relations prior to final signature and distribution.
6. Point of contacts between the City of St. Albert and other orders of government and municipalities should be at the appropriate level and will depend on the issue. Generally, the following structure should apply:

Issue Type	Magnitude of Impact	City of St. Albert Point of Contact	Government Recipient
Operational/Networking	Low	Staff, or Manager	Staff or Manager
Corporate Initiative	Medium/High	Manager of Government Relations, or Department Director	Director, Assistant Deputy Minister
Advocacy: Policy, Legislation or Budgetary Impact	High	Mayor or CAO	Minister and/or Deputy Minister

Legal References

The City shall comply with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Cross References

N/A

Attachments

N/A

**APPENDIX F: DRAFT COUNCIL COMMITTEE BYLAW
CITY OF ST. ALBERT**

BYLAW XX/2019

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE BYLAW

A Bylaw to establish and set out the duties and responsibilities of the Government
Affairs Committee.

WHEREAS, pursuant to the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A, 2000, c.M-26, and amendments thereto, Section 145 a council may pass bylaws in relation to the establishment and functions of council committees and procedures to be followed by council committees;

AND WHEREAS, the City of St. Albert wishes to establish a Council Committee dedicated to reviewing and providing recommendations related to intergovernmental matters;

NOW THEREFORE, the Council of the City of St. Albert, duly assembled, hereby ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

TITLE

1. This Bylaw may be referred to as the “Government Affairs Committee Bylaw”.

DEFINITIONS

2. In this Bylaw:
 - a. “Act” means the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A., 2000, c.M-26 and amendments thereto;
 - b. “City” means the municipal corporation of the City of St. Albert;
 - c. “CAO” means the Chief Administrative Officer of the City of St. Albert or designate;
 - d. “Council” means the municipal Council of the City of St. Albert;
 - e. “Committee” means the Government Affairs Committee established by the Council of the City of St. Albert;

- f. “Intergovernmental Matter/Issue” refers to any City business, outside of a grant application, that impacts, or is impacted by, a relationship or policy with another order of government. This includes all intermunicipal and regional matters, as well as provincial and federal items.

SUBSTANTIVE SECTIONS

1. The Committee is hereby established to make recommendations to Council regarding:
 - a. An annual Council Advocacy Plan;
 - b. The development of collaborative frameworks between the City and adjacent municipalities;
 - c. Annexation related items, including representing Council’s position during annexation negotiations;
 - d. Preparing representations on the impact of other governments’ and regional board’s policies on the City; and
 - e. Consider any other intergovernmental matter as determined by Council.
2. The Committee is hereby established with the following membership:
 - a. The Mayor and two (2) members of Council;
 - b. The Mayor shall serve as the Chair of the Committee. In the Mayor’s absence, the Deputy Mayor shall serve as Chair; and
 - c. A majority of the Committee constitutes a quorum.
3. The Committee may recommend that the Mayor, on behalf of Council, contact or provide correspondence to an organization or other level of government regarding a particular issue. As outlined in Council Policy, the Mayor is the principle advocate for the City of St. Albert and the lead on City intergovernmental matters.
4. The Committee shall meet as set out at Council’s Organizational Meeting, or as requested by the Chair.
5. The Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for the administration of the Committee, in coordination with the Committee Chair.

EFFECTIVE DATE

3. This bylaw comes into force and effect on _____, 20____.

or

This bylaw shall come into force and effect when it receives third reading and is duly signed.

READ a First time this ____ day of _____ 20____.

READ a Second time this ____ day of _____ 20____.

READ a Third time this ____ day of _____ 20____.

SIGNED AND PASSED this ____ day of _____ 20____.

MAYOR

CHIEF LEGISLATIVE OFFICER