



## FEATURED:

### RMA Releases Report on Rural Volunteerism in Alberta

The RMA partnered with the University of Alberta’s Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities (ACSRC) to develop a report on the declining rates of volunteerism in Alberta and the associated threat to rural communities.

[Learn more...](#)

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## MEMBER BULLETINS

Member bulletins are posted to [RMAAlberta.com](http://RMAAlberta.com) regularly each week. Below is a list of all the member bulletins compiled from the past week.

### RMA 2024 Board Elections – Declared Results & Candidates List

The RMA Board of Directors has staggered rotating board elections with three positions scheduled for election one year and four positions the next. Three RMA board positions were open for nominations as per the regular schedule for 2024: the President and directors for District 1 and District 4. The nomination deadline for the 2024 available district director positions closed at 4:30 pm on October 21, 2024. Nominations for President closed October 7, 2024.

[Learn more...](#)

Below the Drill – Week 5



## AGRICULTURE UPDATE

**Moisture Situation Update - October 23, 2024**

## JOB POSTINGS

This week Below the Drill explores the 35% reduction in shallow gas assessment. As an incentive to operators of shallow gas wells and pipelines located primarily in southeastern Alberta, the Government of Alberta reduced the assessment on these assets by 35% beginning in 2019, thus reducing municipal taxes paid on these wells.

[Learn more...](#)

## Government of Alberta Contemplates Legislative Changes Affecting Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks

The Government of Alberta has informed the RMA that amendments to the Municipal Government Act (MGA) pertaining to ICFs are expected to be introduced in the spring. If introduced, changes would likely impact municipalities that are either in the process of renegotiating their agreements or are required to do so in the near future based on a specific renegotiation date agreed to in their individual ICF(s).

[Learn more...](#)

## Government of Alberta Announces Local Growth and Sustainability Grant

The Local Growth and Sustainability Grant (LGSG), first introduced in Budget 2024 with a total funding commitment of \$60 million over three years, is now accepting applications. The LGSG is comprised of two components: Growth and Sustainability.

[Learn more...](#)

## RMA Submission Regarding Reclamation Securities for Renewable Energy Developments

Environment and Protected Areas (EPA) is seeking input on the design of reclamation securities to be used with renewable energy developments. The RMA provided written comments to EPA that draw on existing positions to respond to the specific questions posed in the consultation.

RMA

**Financial Analyst**

**Risk Advisor**

Town of Peace River

**Manager of Public Works**

Minister of Municipal Affairs

**Chair of the Special Areas Board (SAB)**

County Newell

**Environmental Services Supervisor**

Sylvan Lake

**Chief Administrative Officer**

Athabasca County

**Deputy Fire Chief**

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**LOOKING FOR  
INFORMATION FROM  
A PREVIOUS ISSUE?**

View our **Contact newsletter archive** or our **member bulletin archive**.

Learn more about the key issues facing rural Alberta by reading our **position statements**.

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[Learn more...](#)

## Applications Open for the Small Community Opportunity Program

The Government of Alberta has opened applications for the second intake of the **Small Community Opportunity Program** (SCOP), which will provide grants for non-profits, Indigenous and small communities to help build capacity in agriculture, small business, and local development. The SCOP provides grants to tackle challenges and tap into opportunities in rural areas.

[Learn more...](#)

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## REMINDERS

### Government of Alberta Introduces New Local Authorities Election Act Regulations

Bill 20, the *Municipal Affairs Statutes Amendment Act*, made changes to both the *Local Authorities Election Act* (LAEA) and the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA). On October 18, 2024, the Minister of Municipal Affairs announced two new regulations designed to implement some LAEA changes.

[Learn more...](#)

### Fall 2024 Emergent Resolution Deadline is November 4

As per the RMA's Resolution Process policy, an emergent resolution is defined as a resolution submitted to the RMA after the resolution deadline that addresses a subject or problem that has arisen subsequent to the resolution deadline. Emergent resolutions must be submitted prior to 11:00 am on Monday, November 4, 2024.

[Learn more...](#)

## RMA & Canoe Open House

On Monday, November 4 from 8:00 am to 2:30 pm, the RMA & Canoe will be hosting an open house at our office at 2510 Sparrow Drive. Join us for coffee and snacks while you get the chance to tour our new building!

## AUC Consultation on Rule 009

The AUC is contemplating changes to Rule 009 to expand cost recovery to municipalities, which aligns with recommendations made by the RMA's Quasi-Judicial Agencies Committee. Municipalities are encouraged to review the proposed amendments and submit comments by November 14, 2024.

[Learn more...](#)

## RMA's Third Report in Infrastructure Deficit Series, Focused on Utility Infrastructure, Now Available

The report identifies Alberta's rural municipal utility infrastructure deficit at \$2.96 billion. It also projects that the deficit will grow to \$5.72 billion in 2028 based on current provincial funding available for utility infrastructure projects.

[Learn more...](#)

## RMA Presenting Bylaw Amendments at 2024 Fall Convention

The RMA's bylaws clarify the association's objectives, membership, election processes, governance structure, and other key aspects of how RMA operates. As per the bylaws, any bylaw amendments must be approved by a three-fifths majority of RMA Full Members, and proposed amendments must be circulated to Full Members at least twenty-one days prior to the convention where the vote will be held.

[Learn more...](#)

## Call for Nominations for Potential Vice President and District 3 Elections

As a result of nominations received for the position of RMA President, a call for nominations for a potential one-year term for Vice President and District 3 Director has been issued. According to the RMA Elections Policy, a current board member who is midway through their term can submit a nomination package for the position of President or Vice President without resigning from their current board position.

[Learn more...](#)

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### The Great Twine Round-Up Comes to Alberta with \$12,000 in total Cash Prizes

Cleanfarms, in partnership with the Agricultural Plastics Recycling Group is **excited to announce the launch** of 'The Great Twine Round-Up', a new province-wide initiative designed to promote used plastic baler twine recycling. This exciting contest offers substantial cash prizes to the winners' 4-H club or district or an Alberta-based nonprofit organization or charity of their choice that supports agriculture.

### Resilience Builders Virtual Information Session

Join fellow resilience builders November 7, 2024, from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm MT for an engaging session revealing key insights from the fourth annual Preparedness Survey of Albertans, discuss teaching moments for the national test alert and start conversations around Emergency Preparedness Week. At the end, there will be plenty of time for open discussion! **Register by end of day November 6.**

### MCCAC Updates

- **Town of Stony Plain purchased two EVs in 2024:** The Town of Stony Plain received a \$28,000 rebate to help cover the \$99,074 cost of two new Kia Niro EVs purchased as part of the Electric Vehicles for Municipalities program. This project was funded by the Government of Alberta and completed in 2024. Read the full success story [here](#).
- **Flood & Drought: Natural Infrastructure as a Dual Defense (Oct. 29 webinar):** The Canadian Prairies have a long history of variable and extreme weather, shifting between periods of wet and dry and resulting in large variations in water availability between years and seasons. This variation in the availability of water leads to disasters that are all too familiar – flood and drought. The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) is hosting a webinar to build momentum around natural infrastructure on October 29, from 9:30 to 10:45 am. MT. Click [here](#) to register.

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## IN THE NEWS

- **New land transfer and mortgage registration levy comes into effect in Alberta**
- **'Reckless and irresponsible': Alberta government says feds must do more to reduce immigration**
- **Alberta's squeeze on renewable energy has pushed investment to other provinces**
- **New program ignites growth for local businesses**
- **Alberta premier pledges to protect right of professionals to express personal views**
- **Standing up for Alberta's livestock industry**
- **New Alberta government regulator for educators is floundering, critics say**
- **Supporting Jasper residents' return home**
- **Keeping Albertans' lights on and homes warm**
- **Bringing balance to Alberta's financial system**

Source URL: [rmalberta.com/news/rma-releases-a-report-on-rural-volunteerism-in-alberta/](https://rmalberta.com/news/rma-releases-a-report-on-rural-volunteerism-in-alberta/)

# RMA Releases Report on Rural Volunteerism in Alberta

Posted on: October 25, 2024



*The report was completed in partnership with the Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities*

The RMA has heard from several members that in recent years, levels of volunteerism have declined among rural residents. When voluntary organizations struggle to recruit volunteers, all aspects of their operations are compromised, including service delivery, fundraising, administrative functions, and others.

The RMA partnered with the **University of Alberta's Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities (<https://www.ualberta.ca/en/alberta-centre-sustainable-rural-communities/index.html>)** (ACSRC) to develop a **report (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/RuralVolunteerismReport-1.0.pdf>)** on the declining rates of volunteerism in Alberta and the associated threat to rural communities. The report focuses on volunteerism trends, including driving factors and community impacts. The report also includes recommendations for addressing declining rates of volunteerism for different stakeholders, including:

- Rural volunteer organizations
  - Increase flexibility and embrace the ideas and capabilities of younger volunteers
  - Rethinking the role of "micro-volunteering"
  - Embrace strategic planning

- Rural municipalities
  - Facilitating coordination between volunteer groups in your community
  - Engaging local volunteer organizations in both facility and organizational viability assessments
- Government of Alberta
  - Promoting volunteerism across Alberta: incentives, promotional campaigns, and youth education
  - Reducing the burden on rural volunteer organizations: granting, toolkits, and website support
  - Adequately fund municipalities to account for the rising costs associated with declining volunteerism

The **full report (<https://rmailberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/RuralVolunteerismReport-1.0.pdf>)** supports the concerns that RMA members have regarding the declining rates of volunteerism in their communities and points to actions that can be taken to reduce these burdens. The RMA plans to use the report to advocate to the Government of Alberta and work with members and other stakeholder organizations to support rural volunteerism.

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Source URL: [rmalberta.com/news/rma-2024-board-elections-declared-results-candidates-list/](https://rmalberta.com/news/rma-2024-board-elections-declared-results-candidates-list/)

# RMA 2024 Board Elections – Declared Results & Candidates List

Posted on: October 25, 2024



The RMA Board of Directors has staggered rotating board elections with three positions scheduled for election one year and four positions the next. Three RMA board positions were open for nominations as per the regular schedule for 2024: the President and directors for District 1 and District 4.

The nomination deadline for the 2024 available district director positions closed at 4:30 pm on October 21, 2024. Nominations for President closed October 7, 2024.

## Candidates for Regularly Scheduled Elections

There will be scheduled elections for the following positions at the 2024 Fall Convention:

- **President – Election to be held on Wednesday, November 6 at 1:00 pm in Hall D.** All elected officials from **RMA full member municipalities** (<https://rmalberta.com/about/members/>) are eligible to vote in this election. The following candidates are on the ballot:
  - John Burrows, Woodlands County
  - Ben Fadeyiw, MD of Bonnyville
  - Gene Hrabec, Beaver County
  - Jason Schneider, Vulcan County
  - Kara Westerlund, Brazeau County

- **District 1 Director – Election to be held on Thursday, November 7 at 10:30 am in Salon 4.** Elected officials from District 1 only (<https://rmalberta.com/about/members/>) are eligible to vote in this election. The following candidates are on the ballot:
  - John Kuerbis, Lethbridge County
  - Robin Kurpjuweit, Cypress County
  - Jason Schneider, Vulcan County
- **District 4 Director – Election to be held on Thursday, November 7 at 10:30 am in Salon 8.** Elected officials from District 4 only (<https://rmalberta.com/about/members/>) are eligible to vote in this election. The following candidates are on the ballot:
  - Winston Delorme, MD of Greenview
  - Karen Rosvold, County of Grande Prairie

## Candidates for Potential Alternate Elections

According to the RMA Elections Policy, a current board member who is midway through their term (i.e., one year into a two-year term) can submit a nomination package for the position of President or Vice President without resigning from their current board position. **As a result of nominations received for the position of President, a call for nominations for the positions of Vice President and District 3 Director was issued for a potential one-year term. The deadline for nominations for this secondary call closed October 21, 2024.**

- **Vice President – Election to be held on Thursday, November 7 at 8:00 am in Hall D, if needed.** All elected officials from **RMA full member municipalities** (<https://rmalberta.com/about/members/>) are eligible to vote in this election. **This election will only occur if the current Vice President is elected as RMA President and is pending proposed bylaw amendment to Section F are approved during the Annual General Meeting** (<https://rmalberta.com/news/rma-presenting-bylaw-amendments-at-2024-fall-convention/>). The following candidates are on the ballot:
  - John Burrows, Woodlands County
  - Robin Kurpjuweit, Cypress County
  - Gene Hrabec, Beaver County

As a result of nominations received for Vice President, and in alignment with the RMA Board Election Policy, a renewed call out for District 3 Director nominations was issued on October 22 via email directly to members of District 3. **The nomination deadline for this potential one-year position is Monday, October 28, 2024. The election for District 3 Director will only take place if the current District 3 Director is elected as RMA President or Vice President.**

Enquiries may be directed to:

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Source URL: [rmalberta.com/news/below-the-drill-week-5/](https://rmalberta.com/news/below-the-drill-week-5/)

# Below the Drill - Week 5

Posted on: October 25, 2024



*In a six-week campaign, the RMA will share how Government of Alberta policies have impacted municipal tax revenue*

In recent years, the Government of Alberta (GOA) has implemented several policy initiatives to reduce oil and gas industry costs at the expense of municipal revenue.

**Below the Drill** (<https://rmalberta.com/advocacy/below-the-drill/>) will share information on lost municipal tax revenue as a result of provincial government policies.

This week **Below the Drill explores the 35% reduction in shallow gas assessment** ([https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Below-the-Drill-Week5\\_0.0.pdf](https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Below-the-Drill-Week5_0.0.pdf)). As an incentive to operators of shallow gas wells and pipelines located primarily in southeastern Alberta, the Government of Alberta reduced the assessment on these assets by 35% beginning in 2019. This effectively reduced municipal taxes paid on these wells, causing municipalities to forgo expected tax revenue. The assessment reduction on shallow gas wells and pipelines cost RMA members \$25.4 million in taxes for the period of 2021-2023. Visit the **Below the Drill** (<https://rmalberta.com/advocacy/below-the-drill/>) website to learn more.

Watch for information shared through Contact, social media, and updates at [rmalberta.com/belowthedrill](https://rmalberta.com/belowthedrill) (<https://rmalberta.com/advocacy/below-the-drill/>).

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Source URL: [rmalberta.com/news/government-of-alberta-contemplates-legislative-changes-affecting-intermunicipal-collaboration-frameworks/](https://rmalberta.com/news/government-of-alberta-contemplates-legislative-changes-affecting-intermunicipal-collaboration-frameworks/)

# Government of Alberta Contemplates Legislative Changes Affecting Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks

Posted on: October 25, 2024



*The province has indicated legislative amendments impacting Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks (ICFs) are likely to be tabled during the Spring 2025 Legislative Session*

The Government of Alberta has informed the RMA that amendments to the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) pertaining to ICFs are expected to be introduced in the spring. If introduced, changes would likely impact municipalities that are either in the process of renegotiating their agreements or are required to do so in the near future based on a specific renegotiation date agreed to in their individual ICF(s).

As per *Ministerial Order No. 024/23*, which was enacted in April 2023, the standard for renegotiation of ICFs was extended from five years to seven years from the date in which initial ICFs were finalized. The ministerial order expires March 31, 2027, at which point the timeline for renegotiation will revert to five years as per s. 708.32(1) of the MGA. However, if specific renegotiation timelines are stipulated in agreements, they supersede those established by the Ministerial Order.

Given that any changes to the legislation would affect the negotiation process and resulting agreements, the Government of Alberta is recommending that municipalities that have ICFs with a renegotiation date falling prior to the extended

negotiation timeline of spring 2027, attempt to work with their municipal neighbours to reach agreement on delaying this process until spring 2027. This will allow municipalities a reasonable period of time to renegotiate future ICF agreements while ensuring alignment with the anticipated legislative amendments.

The RMA will keep members informed of any further developments relating to potential legislative changes affecting ICFs.

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Source URL: [rmalberta.com/news/government-of-alberta-announces-local-growth-and-sustainability-grant/](https://rmalberta.com/news/government-of-alberta-announces-local-growth-and-sustainability-grant/)

# Government of Alberta Announces Local Growth and Sustainability Grant

Posted on: October 25, 2024



*The province has introduced the new Local Growth and Sustainability Grant, a funding program which provides \$60 million over three years to municipalities to address growth pressures, emergent needs, and attract economic development opportunities*

The **Local Growth and Sustainability Grant (LGSG)** (<https://www.alberta.ca/local-growth-and-sustainability-grant>), first introduced in Budget 2024 with a total funding commitment of \$60 million over three years, is now accepting applications. The LGSG is comprised of two components: Growth and Sustainability.

## Growth Component

Municipalities with populations of between 10,000 and 200,000 people are eligible to apply for this component of the grant. The funding can be used for infrastructure projects that increase housing stock, stimulate economic development and tourism, address challenges associated with rapid population growth, or are linked to non-residential growth opportunities if private sector commitment is confirmed conditional to the construction of specific municipal infrastructure. The provincial government may provide grant funding of up to 50% of the project costs. Minimum project costs are \$1 million; there is no maximum project cost. Successful applicants may apply up to 30% of project costs from other provincial grant programs, allowing for "grant stacking." Eligible projects include:

- Roads and bridges

- Drinking water
- Storm water
- Solid waste management
- Wastewater
- Public transit
- Public safety and security
- Disaster mitigation and resilience

The program will have only a single intake; applications are now open and the deadline to apply is **November 29, 2024**.

## Sustainability Component

Municipalities with populations of below 10,000 people are eligible to apply for this component of the grant, designed to address urgent infrastructure needs that pose significant public health and safety risks. The Sustainability Component has no minimum or maximum project costs, however, eligible municipalities are required to contact the Minister of Municipal Affairs and demonstrate urgent need to advance their request. The Minister has sole discretion to award funds based on eligibility and availability of funds.

## RMA Analysis

While the LGSG represents a significant provincial investment in municipal infrastructure support, the RMA is concerned that the program parameters, particularly for the Growth component, will result in a disproportionate share of the funding being allocated to projects in urban municipalities linked to population growth at the expense of projects in rural municipalities linked to industrial/non-residential growth opportunities. During initial engagements on the LGSG, the RMA recommended that the Growth component be divided and that funding be set aside for projects accommodating non-residential growth. This is not the case, meaning that projects responding to residential and non-residential growth will compete against one another using very different evaluation metrics. The RMA is supportive of the consideration of whether a municipality has an up-to-date asset management plan as a factor in application evaluation; this was a core aspect of the RMA's recommended LGFF formula, and it is encouraging to see the province beginning to link asset management planning to grant funding.



The RMA does appreciate the province's approach to the sustainability component, as it represents an awareness on the part of the province that some municipalities, particularly those with limited capacity or financial resources, may encounter critical infrastructure failure with no local means to respond. While the LGSG is not a solution to address larger fundamental issues that place small municipalities in this position, it does help reduce the risk that an unexpected infrastructure crisis will lead to non-viability.

The RMA's ongoing **rural municipal infrastructure deficit** (<https://rmaalberta.com/reports-toolkits/rmas-rural-municipal-infrastructure-deficit-project/>) project demonstrates that rural municipalities are facing an infrastructure deficit of over \$17 billion. While the LGSG and other funding programs are appreciated, a large-scale partnership between municipalities and the province is required to meaningfully address this deficit.

## Applying

RMA members interested in applying can **find the LGSG program guidelines here** (<https://rmaalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/10-25-24-LGSG-Guidelines.pdf>).

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# RMA Submission Regarding Reclamation Securities for Renewable Energy Developments

Posted on: October 25, 2024



*RMA provided input to the Government of Alberta on the design of reclamation securities for renewable energy projects*

Environment and Protected Areas (EPA) is seeking input on the design of reclamation securities to be used with renewable energy developments. The **RMA provided written comments (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/RMA-Submission-on-Reclamation-Securities-For-Renewable-Energy-Developments.pdf>)** to EPA that draw on existing positions to respond to the specific questions posed in the consultation. In general, the RMA's comments focus on:

- Reclamation securities must be calculated using an approved methodology to fully fund the reclamation of renewable energy projects.
- Reclamation securities should be required to be held by the Government of Alberta, with the option for landowners to negotiate an additional security with the project developer if they wish.
- A dual-stream reclamation security system, in which landowners can choose to negotiate security privately or participate in the provincially-administered regime, will undermine the intent of the provincial model. Reclamation securities should not be negotiable; they should be determined and held by the

province due to the public interest value that properly-funded reclamation provides.

- Scrap value should not be a consideration in determining the amount of security required.

The RMA **previously provided a guide to support members** (<https://rmaalberta.com/news/rma-member-guide-on-reclamation-securities/>) in participating in the consultation, which ends on October 25, 2024.

The RMA will continue to participate in consultations regarding renewable energy projects and share these opportunities with members.

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Source URL: [rmalberta.com/news/applications-open-for-the-small-community-opportunity-program-2/](https://rmalberta.com/news/applications-open-for-the-small-community-opportunity-program-2/)

# Applications Open for the Small Community Opportunity Program

Posted on: October 25, 2024



*Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation opened applications for the Small Community Opportunity Program*

The Government of Alberta has opened applications for the second intake of the **Small Community Opportunity Program (<https://www.alberta.ca/small-community-opportunity-program>)** (SCOP), which will provide grants for non-profits, Indigenous and small communities to help build capacity in agriculture, small business, and local development.

The SCOP provides grants to tackle challenges and tap into opportunities in rural areas. Applicants may apply for grants between \$20,000 and \$100,000 for each project. The grant may fund up to 90% of eligible project costs and the applicant must fund at least 10%.

To be eligible for funding, projects must align with the **Economic Development in Rural Alberta Plan (<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/b3cb4a52-e3fb-4aeb-a69f-0d32a5a14eec/resource/b4342f56-6762-4fdb-85c0-2856ae599d77/download/agi-economic-development-in-rural-alberta-plan.pdf>)** and build entrepreneurship, mentorship and skills development, small business supports and/or partnerships, as well as interconnectivity and collaboration within the local community.

The RMA recently hosted a **webinar (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MvzUGz81MkQ>)** with representatives from Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation that provided an overview of the program, including eligibility criteria and an in-depth guide to the application process.

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