



## FEATURED:

### RMA Fall 2024 Endorsed Resolutions

Resolutions form an important part in identifying direction for the RMA's advocacy efforts. The RMA membership endorsed 17 resolutions at the RMA 2024 Fall Convention.

[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.

### Government of Alberta Announces Police Funding Model Cost Freeze

The Government of Alberta has announced a freeze on increases in municipal contributions to the police funding model for 2024, ensuring that municipalities will not face additional financial burdens related to RCMP service costs. This decision aims to provide stability for communities while ongoing reviews of policing and funding structures continue. The RMA is continuing to explore the PFM's impact on rural municipalities and will provide more information to members in the coming months.

[Learn more...](#)

Applications Open for the Ethnocultural Grant and Anti-Racism Grant Programs



## AGRICULTURE UPDATE

**Moisture Situation Update - November 13, 2024**

## JOB POSTINGS

RMA  
**Financial Analyst**

The Government of Alberta has opened applications for its Ethnocultural and Anti-Racism Grant Programs to support diversity, inclusion, and initiatives addressing systemic racism. Non-profits, Indigenous organizations, and educational institutions are encouraged to apply for funding. Submit your application today to promote cultural understanding and inclusion in Alberta.

[Learn more...](#)

## Government of Alberta Announces Rural Health Grants

The Government of Alberta has introduced new rural health grants to address the shortage of healthcare professionals in rural areas, including funding to support medical students who commit to working in these communities. This initiative aims to improve healthcare accessibility and quality for rural Albertans.

[Learn more...](#)

## The RMA Announces New Leadership and Board of Directors

The Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) announces Kara Westerlund as the new President, following her election at the organization's annual Fall Convention. Members also held elections for Districts 1, 3, and 4. These leaders will play a key role in representing their communities and working with RMA's leadership to address the evolving needs of rural municipalities across Alberta.

[Learn more...](#)

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## REMINDERS

### RMA Releases Final Report and Recommendations on Rural Municipal Infrastructure Deficit

Over the past several months, the RMA, in conjunction with Tantus Solutions Group, has undertaken an ambitious

#### Risk Advisor

County of St. Paul  
**Agriculture and Waste  
Supervisor**

Special Areas Board  
**Emergency Services  
Administrative Coordinator**

Town of Hinton  
**Health & Safety Assistant**

Town of Didsbury  
**Council and Community  
Relations Coordinator**

Safety Codes Council  
**Senior Policy and  
Engagement Analyst**

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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](#).

study to assess the current infrastructure deficit in rural municipalities. **The final report** in the RMA's four-part infrastructure deficit series outlines the overall deficit and provides a series of recommendations for government, rural municipalities, and the RMA.

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## Government of Alberta Announces Water Availability Engagement

The **Government of Alberta is seeking input** on new policies, regulatory tools, and potential amendments to the Water Act to increase water availability. The goal of the engagement appears to be to increase the amount of water available for use while protecting the aquatic environment.

## RMA 2023 – 2024 Annual Report Now Available

In adhering to the RMA's values of transparency and accountability, we are pleased to share our **2023 – 2024 Annual Report**.

## 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 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...](#)

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund - Now Accepting Applications

Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada has opened applications for the \$1 billion Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund (CHIF). Municipalities and Indigenous communities can now submit proposals for projects costing between \$1 million and \$100 million. Projects may be reviewed and approved at various times during the intake, which closes on March 31, 2025 for general applicants and May 19, 2025 for Indigenous applicants. For more details, visit [the CHIF website](#).

### MCCAC Updates

- **Village of Boyle purchases reusable ice sheet liner** - As part of the Community Energy Conservation (CEC) program, the Village of Boyle received a grant of \$18,750 from the Government of Alberta to help purchase a reusable ice sheet liner for the Boyle Millview Arena. The non-insulative liner, which is a printed nylon mesh, decreases the time required to build up the ice sheet and allows the ice plant to operate at a higher set point, resulting in energy savings and lower utility bills. Read the full MCCAC success story [here](#).
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## IN THE NEWS

- **Newly elected RMA President Kara Westerlund discusses her plans for her term, provincial-municipal relations and more**

- **Alberta signs onto U.S. energy pact**
- **Alberta dubs water-sharing agreements 'major success' as experts say challenges still loom**
- **Turning resources into new jobs and products**
- **Ensuring fair electoral representation for Albertans**
- **Increase funding or expect infrastructure failure, municipalities tell province**
- **Province will help rural municipalities with policing costs**
- **It's not just Edmonton and Calgary. Smaller places are facing an intense rental squeeze**
- **Strengthening restorative justice in Alberta**
- **Alberta hiring to restore land where fireguards were created in 2023 wildfire season**
- **Agricultural education receives government funding as food demand grows**



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# RMA Fall 2024 Endorsed Resolutions

Posted on: November 15, 2024

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Resolutions form an important part in identifying direction for the RMA's advocacy efforts. The RMA membership endorsed the following resolutions in Fall 2024:

**1-24F (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/1-24f-attraction-and-retention-strategy-for-rural-health-care-professionals/>)**

Attraction and Retention Strategy for Rural Health Care Professionals (*County of Stettler*)

**2-24F (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/2-24f-increased-funding-support-for-rural-family-and-community-support-services-programs/>)**

Increased Funding Support for Rural Family and Community Support Services Programs (*Vulcan County and Wheatland County*)

**3-24F (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/3-24f-collection-of-unpaid-municipal-property-taxes-by-way-of-royalties/>)**

Collection of Unpaid Municipal Property Taxes by Way of Royalties (*MD of Taber*)

**4-24F (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/4-24f-amend-municipal-government-act-to-designate-police-funding-model-levy-as-requisition/>)**

Amend Municipal Government Act to Designate Police Funding Model Levy as Requisition (*MD of Spirit River*)

**5-24F (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/5-24f-tax-credits-for-volunteer-firefighting-and-search-and-rescue-volunteer-services/>)**

Tax Credits for Volunteer Firefighting and Search and Rescue Volunteer (*Athabasca County*)

<b>7-24F (<a href="https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/7-24f-improved-water-license-approval-and-compliance-processes/">https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/7-24f-improved-water-license-approval-and-compliance-processes/</a>)</b>	Improved Water License Approval and Compliance Processes ( <i>Mountain View County</i> )
<b>8-24F (<a href="https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/8-24f-reinforcing-railway-fire-mitigation-procedures/">https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/8-24f-reinforcing-railway-fire-mitigation-procedures/</a>)</b>	Reinforcing Railway Fire Mitigation Procedures ( <i>MD of Lesser Slave River</i> )
<b>10-24F (<a href="https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/10-24f-full-time-24-7-home-care-support-in-lodges-supportive-living-accommodations/">https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/10-24f-full-time-24-7-home-care-support-in-lodges-supportive-living-accommodations/</a>)</b>	Full-Time (24/7) Home Care Support in Lodges/Supportive Living Accommodations ( <i>Beaver County</i> )
<b>11-24F (<a href="https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/11-24f-enhanced-brushing-along-powerlines-to-mitigate-wildfires/">https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/11-24f-enhanced-brushing-along-powerlines-to-mitigate-wildfires/</a>)</b>	Enhanced Brushing Along Powerlines to Mitigate Wildfires ( <i>MD of Lesser Slave River</i> )
<b>12-24F (<a href="https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/12-24f-accountability-in-the-establishment-of-an-independent-agency-police-service-in-alberta/">https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/12-24f-accountability-in-the-establishment-of-an-independent-agency-police-service-in-alberta/</a>)</b>	Accountability in the Establishment of an Independent Agency Police Service in Alberta ( <i>Thorhild County and County of Northern Lights</i> )
<b>13-24F (<a href="https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/13-24f-review-of-broadband-funding-application-processes/">https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/13-24f-review-of-broadband-funding-application-processes/</a>)</b>	Review of Broadband Funding Application Processes ( <i>Sturgeon County</i> )
<b>14-24F (<a href="https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/14-24f-post-traumatic-stress-disorder-coverage-for-community-peace-officers-under-the-workers-compensation-act/">https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/14-24f-post-traumatic-stress-disorder-coverage-for-community-peace-officers-under-the-workers-compensation-act/</a>)</b>	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Coverage for Community Peace Officers Under the Workers' Compensation Act ( <i>Brazeau County</i> )
<b>15-24F (<a href="https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/15-24f-member-committee-to-understand-the-criminal-justice-system/">https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/15-24f-member-committee-to-understand-the-criminal-justice-system/</a>)</b>	Member Committee to Understand the Criminal Justice System ( <i>County of Barrhead</i> )
<b>16-24F (<a href="https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/16-24f-wildlife-damage-compensation-program-amendment-to-include-coyotes/">https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/16-24f-wildlife-damage-compensation-program-amendment-to-include-coyotes/</a>)</b>	Wildlife Predator Compensation Program Amendment to Include Coyotes ( <i>Clear Hills County</i> )

**17-24F (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/17-24f-improved-grizzly-bear-management-to-ensure-human-livestock-and-wildlife-safety/>)**

Improved Grizzly Bear Management to Ensure Human, Livestock and Wildlife Safety  
(MD of Pincher Creek)

**18-24F (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/18-24f-renewable-electricity-and-grid-stability/>)**

Renewable Electricity and Grid Stability (Kneehill County)

**19-24F (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/19-24f-exemption-from-food-banks-canadas-standard-of-excellence-and-accreditation-requirements-for-small-and-or-rural-local-food-banks/>)**

Exemption from Food Banks Canada's Standard of Excellence and Accreditation Requirements for Small and/or Rural Local Food Banks  
(Brazeau County)

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The RMA will incorporate endorsed resolutions into advocacy efforts and will report back to the membership as developments are available. The above resolutions can be viewed on the **RMA Resolutions Database (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/RMA-Fall-2024-Endorsed-Resolutions-2.pdf>)**, or view the complete package of the endorsed resolutions.

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# Government of Alberta Announces Police Funding Model Cost Freeze

Posted on: November 15, 2024

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*The Government of Alberta is temporarily freezing the amount rural municipalities are responsible for paying through the Police Funding Model for front-line policing services in Alberta.*

The **Police Funding Regulation ([https://kings-printer.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=2020\\_007.cfm&leg\\_type=Regs&isbncln=9780779816033](https://kings-printer.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=2020_007.cfm&leg_type=Regs&isbncln=9780779816033))** introduced the Police Funding Model (PFM), which was phased in over several years. Rural municipalities that receive policing services under the Provincial Police Services Agreement (PPSA) paid an increasing share of their policing costs each year, reaching 30% in the 2023-24 fiscal year. The initial funding model was based on 2018 costs to provide more certainty as to the cost incurred by each municipality would be each year.

While the regulation was originally set to expire March 31, 2025, the Government of Alberta has extended it by one year to March 31, 2026. This means that municipalities will continue paying the same 30% towards front-line policing costs that they did in the previous year. This freeze is intended to allow time for the province to engage municipalities about future policing needs and models, and potential changes to the PFM. At this point, no information is available about the engagement process.

According to the Government of Alberta, after 2024-25, the municipal share will be required to be based on current policing costs, resulting in a proposed 39 per cent increase in costs for municipalities. RMA plans to consider this assumed cost increase for the new version of the PFM when developing positions during the engagement process.

RMA recently conducted a survey to better understand member experiences with the PFM in advance of the upcoming engagement process. Key findings have been summarized in a **What We Heard Report (<https://rmaalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/PFM-Survey-What-We-Heard-Report-2.0.pdf>)**. The RMA is continuing to explore the PFM's impact on rural municipalities and will provide more information to members in the coming months.

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# Applications Open for the Ethnocultural Grant and Anti-Racism Grant Programs

Posted on: November 15, 2024



*The Government of Alberta has opened applications for the Ethnocultural Grant and Anti-Racism Grant Programs*

The Government of Alberta has opened two grant programs to support community-driven initiatives that celebrate Alberta's diversity and address racism. Up to \$13.5 million over three years has been dedicated to help support community organizations and Indigenous communities promote the value and benefit of multiculturalism and intercultural connections.

## Ethnocultural Grant Program

Alberta's **Ethnocultural Grant program** (<https://www.alberta.ca/ethnocultural-grant>) has two streams to support community-led initiatives that promote Alberta's multicultural diversity and foster inclusivity, including by supporting Indigenous community organizations in celebrating and sharing their rich culture and heritage.

- Stream 1 provides up to \$50,000 for projects that create opportunities for intercultural connections with ethnocultural and Indigenous groups.
- Stream 2 provides up to \$15,000 for projects that create opportunities to celebrate diversity.

## Anti-Racism Grant Program

Alberta's **Anti-Racism Grant program (<https://www.alberta.ca/anti-racism-grant>)** has two streams to support community-led initiatives that help address and prevent racism and promote more inclusive and accepting multicultural communities across Alberta.

- Stream 1 provides up to \$5,000 for projects that promote awareness and the impacts of racism faced by Indigenous and racialized groups.
- Stream 2 provides up to \$10,000 to support community-led anti-racism projects.

Applications for both grant programs are now open and close January 24, 2025.

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# Government of Alberta Announces Rural Health Grants

Posted on: November 15, 2024



*The Government of Alberta announced two health grants for rural communities across the province*

The Government of Alberta (GOA) recently announced two new grants that are intended to provide funding for non-physician clinic team members and funds for municipalities to put towards clinic operations.

## Rural Team Recruitment Grant

The **Rural Team Recruitment Grant (<https://www.alberta.ca/rural-team-recruitment-grant-program>)** is open to rural community organizations and clinics to hire additional team members, other than a physician assistant or nurse practitioner, to increase clinic capacity. The intent is to:

- Support clinics so that they can see more patients
- Improve access to primary health care through team-based care

The grant will provide 50% of the total funding cost up to a maximum individual salary of \$145,000. The applicant must commit to provide the other 50%. The grant appears to provide funding up to 2026.

Applications for this grant close on **November 29, 2024**.

## Municipally Supported Clinics Grant

The **Municipally Supported Clinics Grant (<https://www.alberta.ca/municipality-supported-clinics-grant>)** is intended to improve patient access to primary health care through team-based care. Funding will be used to support rural municipalities to strengthen team-based models of care, which may include support for municipalities taking over clinic ownership or operations within their community. Rural municipalities must have established infrastructure and a defined need to apply or the program.

Applicants must provide a minimum of 50% of the total cost. The province will match costs up to \$200,000. Grant funds cannot be used to pay for existing staff salaries, operating expenses currently funded by another sources, or existing capital expenses.

Applications for this grant close on **November 30, 2024**.

## RMA Analysis

While these grants may provide a limited source of new funding for rural healthcare providers and clinics, they may ultimately place the a greater portion of local healthcare delivery costs onto rural municipalities in the long-term (especially in the case of the Municipally Supported Clinics Grant). While municipal ownership or funding of clinics has been an excellent solution in some rural communities, it should not be an expectation as healthcare is a provincial responsibility.

The window to apply for these grants is also very narrow and may cause challenges for RMA members to submit a successful application.

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# The Rural Municipalities of Alberta Announces New Leadership and Board of Directors

Posted on: November 7, 2024



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*The Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) elects a new President, Vice President, and a newly elected District Director to its Board of Directors to advance RMA's mission and advocate for rural communities.*

**November 7, 2024, NISKU, AB** – The Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) announces Kara Westerlund, Councillor of Brazeau County, as the new President, following her election at the organization's annual Fall Convention.

Kara, who has served as the RMA's Vice President since 2017, brings extensive experience and a strong commitment to advocating for Alberta's rural municipalities. As President, she will advance the RMA's vision of strengthening rural Alberta through effective advocacy and ensure rural voices are heard and addressed.

"I'm truly excited to step into this position and guide the RMA forward," Kara shared. "We have important work to do, but together, we are ready to tackle the challenges ahead. The solutions are here within our board, among rural elected officials, our administration, and the dedicated team at the RMA and their group of companies. By working together, we will move those solutions forward and make a meaningful impact for rural Alberta."

Kara succeeds Paul McLauchlin, who has led the RMA since 2020, guiding the organization through pivotal developments for rural communities. “Kara is going to be an outstanding leader,” Paul shared. “She’s not only a good friend of mine but also a true ally to rural Alberta. Kara brings a wealth of skill and experience, and I’m especially proud to acknowledge her as the first female President of the RMA—a significant milestone for our organization. With this dedicated team, we’re well-positioned to continue growing and supporting rural Alberta. I’m grateful for both our past and our future, and I’m confident we’re on the right path.”

Members also held elections for Districts 1, 3, and 4, based on the outcomes of the President and Vice President elections and the conclusion of current terms. These leaders will play a key role in representing their communities and working with RMA’s leadership to address the evolving needs of rural municipalities across Alberta.

The 2024-2025 RMA Board of Directors is as follows:

- Kara Westerlund, (Brazeau County), President
- John Burrows (Woodlands County), Vice President
- Jason Schneider (Vulcan County), District 1 Director
- Amber Link (Wheatland County), District 2 Director
- Josh Bishop (County of Wetaskiwin), District 3 Director
- Karen Rosvold (County of Grande Prairie), District 4 Director
- Kevin Wirsta (County of St. Paul), District 5 Director

The RMA remains steadfast in its mission to empower Alberta’s rural municipalities through advocacy, collaboration, and business services. With a blend of new and returning board members, the RMA will continue championing policies to promote sustainable growth and support effective local governance.

### **About the Rural Municipalities of Alberta**

The Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) is a trusted and independent association representing Alberta’s 69 counties and municipal districts. Since 1909, the RMA remains committed to empowering rural municipalities with strong, effective local



governance. Through dedicated **advocacy (<https://rmalberta.com/advocacy/>)** and a suite of valued business services, including cooperative procurement, insurance, and group benefits through the **Canoe Procurement Group of Canada (<https://canoeprocurement.ca/>)** and comprehensive coverage through **RMA Insurance (<https://rmalberta.com/insurance/>)**, we strive to strengthen and support rural Alberta. Learn more at **rmalberta.com. (<https://rmalberta.com/>)**

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