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ALBERTA'S LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

People in Community Seeking Goodness

Walter Walchuk



ALBERTA'S LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Walchuk

Alberta
MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

A COMPREHENSIVE, THREE PART STATEMENT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ALBERTA

For elected officials, administrators, educators, students
and citizens

PART ONE: HISTORIC OVERVIEW

“The nineteenth century was a time of great evolution in the form
of local government.”

“Alberta was the third province to create a Department of
Municipal Affairs . . . December 20, 1911.”

“In reviewing the last 25 years, one cannot help but be
overwhelmed by the changes and the increases in provincial
funding of programs delivered by municipalities.”

PART TWO: THE PRESENT SITUATION

“There are 374 ‘municipalities’ in the province of which 296
are urban”

“Alberta is the only province in Canada to provide for separate
Metis Settlements.”

“. . . a list of 37 current municipal issues.”

“While ‘peace, order and good government’ is being achieved to a
considerable degree by local government in Alberta, it has been
20 years since the last major review of the key Municipal
Government Act.”

PART THREE: A POSITIVE FUTURE

“local assemblies of citizens constitute the strength of free nations”
(Alexis de Tocqueville).

“. . . consider this an age of relationships.”

“. . . visions of the future point to . . . cooperative
democracy . . . a new kind of servant leader”

“People in community seeking goodness . . . persons in fraternity
coming to know themselves through unselfish service.”

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People in Community Seeking Goodness

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FOREWORD

As a department of government, Alberta Municipal Affairs is celebrating 75 years of service to the people of the province and of support to their municipal governments. Only a minor part of the history of the department is related to its organizational evolution. The major part is related to the history of municipal government in Alberta

The department, therefore, commissioned Walter Walchuk to prepare a report which would present snapshot reviews of municipal life in the past and at present and speculate on issues that might evolve over the next quarter century. In addition to an anniversary publication, the report is expected to serve as resource material for the Municipal Statutes Review Committee in its review of the process of municipal government in this province.

The opinions expressed in the report are those of the author and may not necessarily be supported by the department. They are, however, both thoughtful and thought provoking.

Alberta Municipal Affairs hopes this study will contribute to reflection and discussion on the important role of municipal government in the lives of Albertans in the past, now and in the future.

Archie R. Grover
Deputy Minister
Alberta Municipal Affairs

November, 1986

PREFACE

It is right to celebrate anniversaries. In this instance the focus of the party could legitimately be on the celebrant, Alberta Municipal Affairs, its achievements and those of its former and present staff. However, it has been decided to commemorate a legislative action of 75 years ago by focussing on local government - the institution which the department serves. Hence this study and the Municipal Statutes Review Committee for which the study is a resource document.

All of us are aware of our nation's British and French heritage. But how has this had an impact on our form of local government? Most of us would recognize the significance of the years 1867 and 1905 in terms of the birth of a nation and of a province but few can give the year of approval by the Dominion Parliament of an elected North West Territories Council - 1888. Yet it was this council and its predecessor of appointed and elected legislators that enacted the first laws for municipal government, schools and other public institutions in what is now the Province of Alberta.

Of the three parts, Part One - History, took the longest time to research and write. But much of it was new and interesting to me and it seemed important to be very clear on where we have come from, to know the origins of our laws and attitudes about local government, before we could begin to reflect on changes. For those with limited time you may wish to read only the overview to Part One and leave the remainder for later reference.

The challenge of Part Two - The Present Situation was to not only document the types and functions of local *municipal* government but to cover several boards and associations that govern the provision of a particular service at a local or regional level. While these *single-purpose* governments may be less visible than municipal councils, they must be recognized as important components of *local* government.

The list of issues in local government that conclude Part Two is extensive. After reading these one might become defensive, to argue for the status quo, to exclaim "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." But governments are "broke" to a lesser or greater degree. Re-reading the 37 issues you may be inclined to agree with the suggestion that much of what we do is a continuation of a good policy developed for an earlier time that is no longer relevant.

To what forms of local government do we move? Part Three - A Positive Future is a personal odyssey into the 21st century reflecting my own bias and understanding of a positive future. It begins by providing a context for change. From ancient Athens, to the Magna Carta, to the French Revolution, and to our own legislation in the early 1900's, we can trace a progression to individual equality. The ways in which the systems of local

government are manifest in Europe and elsewhere however, are very broad. The trend to devolution of powers and responsibilities from the national to local/regional level is recognizable not only in these countries but in the United States and Canada.

This shift is one of many responses to the conditions in the world today. For more than 20 years we have been moving out of one system of thought to another, from an industrial era to a post-industrial era or new age. The “hurts” in world cultures, summarized in Chapter 25, are recognizable to most. Taken together, they demand our concerted study and action. The directions that we must move (Chapter 26), a subject of concern for an increasing number of futurists, are being more clearly defined.

What are the implications to our form of local government...or to people in the provincial system, appointed and elected, who have the ability to retard or advance the effectiveness of local governance systems?

I have already referred to the progressive equalization of people over the past several millennia. We have come from master/slave, feudal lord/serf, king/subject and employer/employee relationships and are now shifting to a synergic citizen/citizen relationship where cooperation is the key. Our goal is self-awareness and self-realization achieved through self-directed service to others. The role of government is to guide and inspire citizens in this journey or awakening.

However, the ideals of our form of government, a representative, constitutional democracy are not widely known. More significantly, we are at a time in our evolution that points to some new directions in how we implement “rule by the people”. Adversarial democracy needs to become cooperative democracy; individual freedom must complement, not oppose social, economic and political equality.

We all have an important role to play - specially the elected official and public sector employee. Mortimer J. Adler, in his recent book, *A Vision of the Future*, cautions:

“One of the chief defects in such democracy as now exists on paper or in practice in the United States, and in other societies under constitutional government, stems from the failure on the part of a large majority of the citizens to understand, and their tendency to shirk, the obligations of the high office they hold - its privileges and opportunities as well as its duties.” (p. 227-228)

In the years ahead we must make the opportunities for ourselves and our fellow citizens to be given refresher courses on democratic ideals. There is an inverse relationship between the extent that these are in our hearts and minds, and the length of our law book.

The two final chapters are fiction! But if any of the ideas seem plausible solutions to our problems then we should make them the subject of today’s agenda and not tomorrow’s.

As this report was being prepared, responsibilities for housing and native affairs were added to the Department of Municipal Affairs. This study covers these functions in only a limited way. This includes some current staff and budget data and a listing of Indian Bands in Alberta.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge:

- The support of administrators in Alberta Municipal Affairs in the creation of this study and the necessary assignment of funds - Ian Wight, Tom Lauder, Tom Forgrave, Archie Grover and the Minister at the time of study approval, the Honourable Julian Koziak, and the present Minister, the Honourable Neil Crawford.
- The helpful comments provided by reviewers - Bettie Bayrak, Louise Tebbitt, Tom Forgrave, Jack Fleming, John McGowan, Bill Ashton, and Libuse Kuzel of Alberta Municipal Affairs and, for some sections of Part Three, those of Elizabeth McClintock and Kevin Giles of Alberta Advanced Education.
- A number of people in the department, its associated boards, other provincial departments and various associations - municipal and single-purpose - who provided information and often took the time to review sections relevant to their input.
- Family and friends, especially those at the morning coffee break in the Jarvis Building, who allowed themselves to be used as a testing ground for ideas.
- The fine technical assistance of Jerry Comeau and Karen Weitzel in preparing maps and graphs and of Tony Sykora in the photo-lab.
- The special thoughtfulness and assistance provided by Margaret Suelzle and Sharon Barr in typing, by Carol Schellenberg in editing and researching, and by Piers Churchill in the graphics and arranging for typesetting and printing.

Walter Walchuk
October 1986

ALBERTA'S LOCAL GOVERNMENTS: PEOPLE IN COMMUNITY SEEKING GOODNESS

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Part One: Historic Review

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**INTRODUCTION**

In the initial design of this review of local government the idea was to do “snap shots” of the past, present and future. For the history part these were to begin with the year 1912, the first year of operation of a new Department of Municipal Affairs, and then for each 25th year thereafter – 1937, 1962 and the present. There would also be one for 25 years hence – the year 2012. The first adjustment to the plan was to shift the first snap shot back another 25 years to 1887, a formative time in respect to municipal legislation. As events, attitudes, legislation and statistics were gathered for the four specific time periods questions invariably arose. “When did this piece of legislation get enacted?” or “Where did that tradition start?” It was decided to supplement the “stills” with the story of the intervening years. Indeed, the search for roots became such an interesting one that two short chapters on the history prior to 1887 were also developed.

The author of a recent book *Rules of Thumb*¹ suggests that “a good rule of thumb will turn information that you have into information that you need”. The major source of information for this study was the Department of Municipal Affairs library supplemented by the Alberta Museum and Archives in Edmonton and a personal collection of books on local government. The major publications available on local government in Alberta and which can be used by those interested in more detail are: Eric Hanson’s *Local Government in Alberta*, published in 1956; Bettison, Kenward and Taylor’s book *Urban Affairs in Alberta*, 1975; the Department History Series done on Municipal Affairs in 1984 by Alberta Culture and Jack Masson’s recent book *Alberta’s Local Governments and Their Politics*. Documents pertaining to conventions of the municipal associations in and around the “snap shot” years proved useful as did a review of all the back issues of the *Alberta Municipal Counsellor*² and some of the department’s earlier annual reports.

More notes were taken in the course of the research than are presented here. Because the focus was on local municipal government one will find only limited reference to school, hospital, board of health, library or other single-purpose local government forms. On the other hand, because this review commemorates the 75th anniversary of the Department of Municipal Affairs some material is presented which is pertinent to its functions and organization. Photos and examples have been chosen without bias. Finally,

the material presented in this history will hopefully not be in error or at variance with the readers' awareness of events or upset a historian with his or her more finely honed skill in writing of the past.

The following summary is intended to introduce the report and to permit those who wish to skim some chapters to more quickly find that which would be of interest.

CHAPTER TWO – OUR EUROPEAN AND EASTERN CANADIAN HERITAGE

The form of local government in Alberta today reflects our strong former ties with Britain. Canada was governed as a colony and our early immigrants from England and Scotland brought with them customs and forms of local governance that remain here today.

The French system of government tended to have considerable power in the central government with field administrators supervising local government. All forms of local government – small or large, rural or urban, treated alike. The British system distinguished between rural and urban giving the latter more freedom and power. Elected officials acting as local councils had the power to govern as compared to the strong mayor approach of the French.

Neither France nor Britain wished to transfer power to their colonies in the early stages of Canada's settlement. However, not too long after the Anglo-French rivalry shifted in Britain's favour in 1793, the pressure was on for some form of locally elected councils. Although the first municipal charter was given to Saint John (New Brunswick) in 1785, it was in the 1830's that Montreal, Quebec City, York (Toronto) and others received their charters. The first drafts of legislation, considered by the British Parliament in 1840 to unite Upper and Lower Canada into the provinces of Canada, made provision for local government. However, it was decided that the responsibility of establishing local governments would best be left to the legislatures about to be created.

The 1849 Municipal Act enacted by the Ontario legislature was a model for other parts of Canada although the provision for two levels or classes of municipalities was not considered appropriate in the West.

CHAPTER THREE – LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE NORTH WEST TERRITORIES BEFORE 1887

In Western Canada, the native population related initially to fur traders and a form of administration by the Hudson's Bay Company. When rule by this company passed to the British Crown in 1869 there was already in

place a local judicial system tied to eastern Canada. The establishment of an appointed Territorial Council for the west beyond Manitoba in 1875 permitted elected representatives when an area's population reached 1,000 people. The Territorial Council, based in Battleford and then Regina, established forms of local government. In 1883, the year that Ottawa gave the council power to enact ordinances respecting municipalities, the North-West Municipal Ordinance was passed. The ordinance was based on Ontario legislation but excluded that province's concept of counties. Initially, the most popular forms of local government in the west were school districts. In 1885 there were 59 school districts but only a handful of municipalities.

CHAPTER FOUR – 1887 – A DESIRE FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT

Immigration to Canada was now in the vicinity of 85,000 people per year. The population of the Territories now consisted of about 80,000 people with one-quarter of these being Indians on reserves. The Riel Rebellion of 1885 was still fresh in the minds of many. Ottawa was now much more sensitive to hopes for local self-determination and in 1888 gave the Territorial Council the right for all its members to be elected.

There were five principal ordinances respecting local governance in place in the Territories in 1887 – the School, Herd, Fire, Municipal and Statute Labor Ordinances.

The 1887 population of Alberta of about 17,000 included a mainly Metis community at St. Albert of 1000 people.

CHAPTER FIVE – 1887 to 1912

OUTSIDE INFLUENCES AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

The similarity in the pattern of development and the geographic proximity of the United States were now the more dominant influences in the approaches to local government taken in Canada. The most dominant theme was the desire for efficiency and business-like approaches to municipal administration. This was a reaction to the graft and corruption being experienced in many American cities in the late 19th century.

In the early years local governments in Alberta raised funds through taxes on real property, personal property, income and/or a poll tax levied on every person. Farmers could pay off some or all of their taxes by working on municipal roads. In addition to the creation of villages, towns and cities through general legislation or by special charter, there were a number of small and large (more sparsely populated) local improvement districts established. The effect of increasingly aggressive national immigration policies and settlement of the west was especially felt in Alberta in the 1906-1912 period.

CHAPTER SIX – 1912 – A NEW DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

When Alberta was made a province in 1905 the responsibility for local government affairs was part of a Department of Public Works. Partly as a result of the need to ensure legislation suitable to the times and partly due to the example provided by the Saskatchewan government, the province created a Department of Municipal Affairs on December 20, 1911. It came into effect at the beginning of 1912 and was required to provide direction to the implementation of new municipal legislation passed early in 1912. The most notable change was the extension of self-government to rural areas in Alberta: 55 rural municipalities came into existence on December 9, 1912. The Department staff (39 full time and 12 part time people as of 1913) was extremely busy that year not only due to the implementation of new legislation but also in the administration of existing Acts including some levying and collection of taxes. Books and records of every municipality were inspected at least once every year. A common feature of assessment was broad support of site value taxation which excluded assessment of improvements. Pressure for subdivision regulations was put off by a promise of government-sponsored regulations in 1913.

CHAPTER SEVEN – 1912 to 1937 – A TIME OF DIFFICULTY

The excitement of developing good legislation in a period of rapid growth gave way to a time of severe difficulties brought on by depressions, a great war and many years of poor crops. The number of rural municipalities – those with self-government – continued to grow. However, much of the legislation in this period related to the imposition of financial controls on municipalities, broadening their tax base, cleaning up the excessive subdivision of lands and assisting in especially difficult situations such as the consolidation, under provincial control, of the financially strapped municipalities now known as the Special Areas.

The concept of city charters continued throughout this period although there was some discussion in the early 1920's about a uniform city Act. The number of rural municipalities and local improvement districts continued to increase. In addition to school districts there were: library boards as of 1912; local or district hospital boards as of 1919; and, drainage districts as of 1921. The first board to supervise the issuance of municipal debentures was the Board of Public Utility Commissioners created in 1915. Legislation to assist the effective administration of the border community of Lloydminster was passed in 1921.

In respect to municipal planning the first Planning Act was developed in 1913. It was hurriedly passed on the last day of the legislative sitting and was never really an important element – growth was not an issue after

1912. The Planning Acts of 1928 and 1929 were much more significant, providing for municipal zoning bylaws, a provincial Planning Advisory Board and district commissions. However, the depression of the 1930's limited provincial support of the planning function. The position of a Provincial Director of Town Planning was not filled upon becoming vacant in 1932.

The economy of the 1930's affected more than the planning function. The municipalities were increasingly burdened with rising welfare related payments and a declining assessment base. Their pleas for provincial assistance may have been heard but were usually not answered. One can understand this stance given that when the Social Credit party formed the government in September 1935, one of the Premier's first actions was to travel to eastern Canada to borrow money and get a grant from Ottawa. There was not enough money in the Treasury upon which to issue the next month's provincial staff pay cheques.

CHAPTER EIGHT – 1937 – RELIEF WAS A BURDEN

The overwhelming theme of a "snap shot" for 1937 is a system of municipal governments continuing to operate but on the leanest of budgets and programs. Relationships with the new provincial government were strained. The resolutions of the urban and rural associations of 1937 focussed on provincial assistance in social welfare programs and the flow of revenue to the municipalities. Both Edmonton and Calgary had to ask for adjustment to their schedule for repayment of debenture debt to avoid bankruptcy. While the long term outcome of the financial crisis was the increasing transfer of responsibility to the provincial and federal governments, the rural municipalities were not necessarily in support of centralization. They believed, for example, that because of their knowledge of a family's situation, they could more wisely deal with welfare payments. There was not much new municipal legislation in 1936 or 1937 but legislation was being drafted in several areas for consideration in 1938.

CHAPTER NINE – 1937 to 1962 – CONSOLIDATION THEN GROWTH

The period 1937 to 1962 had two over-riding themes. The first was consolidation – of school districts, municipal districts, improvement districts, and school and municipal functions into counties, and city charters into a City Act. The second theme was a response to the very rapid growth of the province with substantially revised planning legislation, a New Towns Act and new arrangements for municipal financing.

In 1938 the six special areas in southeast Alberta were consolidated under the administration of a three person board with powers of a municipal council. Several Metis settlements were established under the Metis

Population Betterment Act. The 3,771 school districts of 1936 were combined into 50 divisions by 1941. The 143 municipal districts of 1941 were reduced to 60 by 1944 and 28 in 1962. Of the 216 improvement districts in 1941, 50 remained in 1962.

The rapid growth of the province from 1947 onwards required new planning legislation. The amendments of 1948 and 1950 and the consolidation of the Planning Act in 1953 emphasized the need to achieve an efficient pattern of physical development. Interim development control was provided for pending the adoption or revision of zoning bylaws. The processing of the increasingly large number of subdivisions was guided by detailed subdivision and transfer regulations. Approval authority was extended to the Edmonton and Calgary District Planning Commissions in 1953.

Municipal-provincial financial affairs were guided for a time by a major report prepared by J. W. Judge, the Department of Municipal Affairs' Deputy Minister, in 1948. It was recognized that the local tax base was limited and that the province had the resources to accept greater responsibility for public welfare. A system of unconditional grants to all municipalities was introduced in 1951.

Toward the end of this 25 year period the Provincial Municipal Advisory Committee met regularly and provided an effective focus for dealing with (usually) the financial issues.

The County Act of 1950 brought the option of rural municipalities combining school and municipal functions under one elected council. An initial hope of the Minister of Municipal Affairs to include hospital functions in the county form was not fulfilled. The Cities Act of 1951 brought the seven cities operating through separate city charters under one act. The development of resource towns was guided by a New Towns Act of 1956.

CHAPTER TEN – 1962 – CONTINUING GROWTH

In contrast with 1937, the year 1962 reflects a period of continuing prosperity. Oil and agriculture were strong and municipal inspectors were so busy that for the first time in a number of years an inspection was not completed in each of the 300 municipalities that year.

But there were tensions and concerns. Municipal officials were concerned with the increasing property taxes while elected provincial leaders were cautioning municipalities against relying too much on provincial funds lest local autonomy be threatened. A big topic in 1962 was education funding, arising from the establishment of the School Foundation Program in 1961. Municipal financing of growth was also in the forefront. There was a lot of discussion, especially at the municipal association conventions, but no unanimity in the desired approaches to raising the funds needed to finance growth.

Eighteen Acts relating to Municipal Affairs were dealt with by the legislature in 1962. There was an Act to permit the creation of an urban county, and a Local Authorities Pension Act that applied to municipal, school and hospital employees. A program to assist in the financing of local recreation facilities and the creation of the Northern Alberta Development Council were announced. While a new Planning Act was drafted in 1961 it was held back by the Minister until 1963 to ensure a balance between individual and community rights. The staff of the department had grown to 346 people.

CHAPTER ELEVEN – 1962 to 1986 – A RICH TAPESTRY

As this history comes closer to the present the supply of reference material increases. So does one's own personal recollection of events. It seemed natural, in the main text, to prepare a few more pages on this last period of the review.

One of the highlights over the last 25 years was the "rise and fall" of federal involvement in municipal affairs. Beginning with the National Housing Act of 1964, the federal government developed programs in urban renewal and public housing. For a time there was a Ministry of State for Urban Affairs and a federal task force examining the problems and prospects of urban Canada.

Several of the federal funding programs were eventually merged in the late 1970's into an urban infrastructure program and available funding declined. The federal impetus forced the province to develop an administrative structure and a provincial Housing Act to guide the application process and give authority to cost sharing of approved projects.

At the provincial level there were a number of review committees and task forces established mostly to consider the issues of how to plan and finance the rapid growth of the province. The provincial Municipal Advisory Committee was effective throughout most of the 1960's. With the change in government effective in September 1971, the Task Force on Urbanization and the Future was phased out while the Farran Task Force and the Alberta Provincial Municipal Finance Council were phased in. In the early 1970's the provincial policy on municipal finances was to bonus those communities which were able to limit their expenditure increases. However, throughout the 1970's there were a variety of capital grant programs developed such as the capital city and other urban parks programs to finance needed or desired infrastructure. All of this culminated in a \$1 billion Municipal Debt Reduction Program in 1979. The changing economic times of the 1980's have limited the development of new programs. The December 1985 report of the Grant Structures Review Committee presents a recent statement of

a review of 80 provincial transfer programs to municipalities. Recommendations include: annual adjustments for inflation; transfers based on population; coordination of programs; and transfers for purposes easily understood by the public.

In respect to planning, the main items over the last 25 years include: a changing composition and role of the Alberta Planning Board, the requirement for regional and general municipal plans, continued devolution of subdivision approval authority and the merging of development control and zoning bylaw systems. New Planning Acts were passed in 1963 and 1977.

There was a major review of municipal government legislation in 1966 and 1967 leading to the passage in 1968 of the Municipal Government Act and the Municipal Election Act. Several Acts were consolidated and municipalities, except for counties, improvement districts, and Special Areas, came under the same Acts. The Communal Property Act respecting Hutterite communities was repealed in 1973. In 1974 a Northeast Alberta Commission was established. In 1978 several communities in the Crow'snest Pass area were amalgamated. Studies in 1978-79 on Banff and Jasper did not lead to any basic changes in the federal, provincial or local roles in the governance of these communities. A review of the Metis Betterment Act and regulations, by a joint Metis-government committee chaired by Dr. Grant MacEwan, began deliberations in 1982 and reported in 1984, recommending considerably more autonomy and responsibility for the Metis Settlements. A review of "conflict of interest" matters was initiated in 1984 and amendments have been prepared for consideration by the legislature. A review of municipal government legislation was announced in April 1986. A committee is to be selected with an anticipated report date of January 1, 1988.

In the 1973-75 period there was an internal review and restructuring of the Department of Municipal Affairs. Although there have been some changes in the decade since then the essential elements of the structure remained intact until May 1986 when responsibilities for housing and native affairs were added.

References to Chapter One

1. Tom Parker, *Rules of Thumb*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1983.
2. The title changed from *Alberta Municipal Counsellor* to *Municipal Counsellor* as of January 1975.

Chapter Two

OUR EUROPEAN AND EASTERN CANADIAN HERITAGE

INTRODUCTION

The legislation governing municipal government in Alberta was strongly influenced initially by approaches developed in the homelands of early arrivals. It was also affected by legislation developed in the more settled parts of Canada and by some American experience of corruption by bosses and their machines. The transfer of legislative forms and experience was in most instances surprisingly quick, but once established, amendments and major reviews of legislation were based more on local needs and attitudes.

EUROPEAN ANTECEDENTS

The concept of a legal entity separate from its constituent members had its origin in Roman Law.¹ The mandates or charters were given to companies and communities by the crown, nobility, the church or parliaments. Some European cities had a form of representative or limited representative government as early as the 10th, 11th and 12th centuries. This history can be traced back to England and the time of the Norman Kings and to Scotland in the early 12th century when local management of local affairs was first exercised. It can also be traced to France, where limited representative government was in existence as early as in English cities, and to similar developments in Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Finland. In India and Sri Lanka a form of limited representative government existed in many villages before it developed in European cities.² In these times, leadership in the communities was typically concentrated in the hands of leading families or sometimes in guilds.

In Scotland in the period 1450 to 1707, 350 municipal charters were granted. It was a time when merchant guilds and councils of burgesses took upon themselves the ordering of local affairs – a tradition of self-rule that provided the framework for Scottish local government.³ Issuing separate charters for each locality meant variation in powers, size and form of administration. Urban areas usually had rights and freedoms which were not available to rural or sparsely populated ones.

The nineteenth century was a time of great evolution in the form of local government. In France, at the time of the French Revolution, the Constituent Assembly passed laws (1789 and 1790) that abolished the

historic provinces. In 1800 Napoleon redrafted the system of local government to one which continues in its basic form today. A key element was a “uniform pattern” of municipalities – whether rural, village, town or city, they had the same legal status although areas of low density or low population could have varying degrees of assistance from a central authority or higher unit of government.⁴ Provinces were more an administrative convenience for the national government.

England had a “diversified” system of local government wherein a legal distinction was made between rural and urban areas – the urbans were granted a broader competence in handling their affairs. In England, legislation in 1835 provided for councils periodically elected by inhabitants with responsibility for setting local rates. This legislation and another Municipal Corporation Act in 1882 reformed many of the autonomous boroughs through the abolishment of political abuses, the extension of the right to vote to ratepayers, and the separation of justice from the administration of local affairs.

In Scotland the middle class population was given the right to elect councils in 79 of the larger boroughs in 1833. At this time application for borough status could be submitted by communities with at least 2,000 people. Residents of the more rural areas were allowed to elect county councils. Education was a responsibility of separately elected school boards in the period 1872 – 1918. In 1900 there were 100 borough councils, 33 county council, 869 parish (limited power) councils and almost 1,000 school boards.⁵

The Prussian system of local government, which was subsequently adopted in varying degrees in Germany, Austria, Netherlands, Russia, Hungary and others, had a peculiar characteristic of a council-board form where the administrative board consisted of a small group of elected officials.

Comparing the evolution of English and French systems in the 19th century the English local governments had a relatively high degree of autonomy vis-a-vis the central government ministries. They also had all powers vested in the council, used committees extensively, lacked a strong chief executive (mayor) and lacked a system of central field administrators supervising local government.⁶

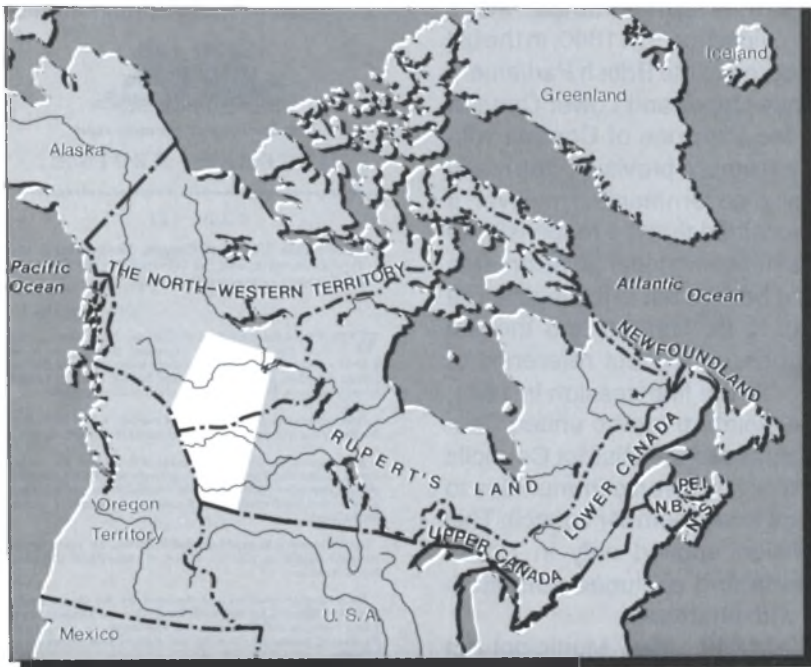
Another feature of the English system of local government, as exported to the nations in the British Empire including Canada, embodied the principle that local authorities had only those powers granted to them by an act of parliament. Anything done outside these powers was beyond the competence of the local authority or “ultra vires”.

CANADIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT HISTORY

Canada was first colonized by French settlers. Early attempts at some form of local self-government included the election of a mayor and two

aldermen at a public meeting in Quebec City in 1663, and the submission of a formal proposal by Frontenac to France in 1672 for a municipal council of three aldermen of whom the senior should act as mayor. These were not approved in Paris, as they were incompatible with its centralist policy. Even the office of syndic or deacon, which represented citizen interest or presented petitions, was ordered suppressed.⁸ The central government appointed administrator maintained strong control over local affairs through a system of local agents.

The Anglo-French rivalry in Canada shifted in Britain's favor in 1760 by the capitulations of Quebec and Montreal and "ended" in 1763 when all remaining French lands were ceded to Britain. But the British did not seem any more sympathetic toward local self-government. In the British Constitutional Act of 1791, which gave Upper and Lower Canada separate and representative governments under the considerable power of a lieutenant governor, there was no support for the creation of municipal authorities. One can understand the reluctance of the British in giving power to municipalities considering that town hall meetings were one of the causes



Canada in 1825. The vast western territory was owned by the Hudson Bay Company. Settlement was concentrated in upper and lower Canada with very few people other than natives in the west.

Credit: Adapted from the Atlas of Alberta, 1984.

Figure 1.1

of the American Revolutionary War. In 1812 attempts by residents of Kingston to create a municipal council were rebuffed by the Legislative Council of Upper Canada. However, there was significant movement to local self-determination in 1816 with the passage of the first Public School Act. It provided for three trustees to be elected to administer a school. In 1832 Brockville was given a limited amount of responsibility by being able to elect four members of a Board of Police (who in turn nominated a fifth) with the president selected internally. In the same year, Montreal and Quebec City obtained municipal charters. The Town of York (Toronto) received its charter in 1834.

In the Maritimes, Saint John, New Brunswick was incorporated relatively early in 1785. This was shortly after the arrival of 5,000 United Empire Loyalists – mostly of the New England “town hall” persuasion.

For the most part, local government was restricted and very often limited, especially in rural areas, to justices or magistrates “managing local matters pretty well as they pleased”.⁹

By 1839, however, Lord Durham, in a report to British legislators, stated it was of “vital importance” that a sound system of municipal institutions be provided for.¹⁰ In 1840, in the bill presented to the British Parliament to unite Upper and Lower Canada into the Province of Canada with one assembly, provision was made for local governments. However, it was decided that the responsibility of establishing local governments would best be left to the legislature about to be created and the Act was passed without reference to them. At the first session in 1841, the legislature for the united Canadas passed the District Councils Act which allowed communities to elect a three member council. This provision applied only in Upper Canada and excluded communities with charters.

In 1849 a new Municipal Act provided for two classes of municipalities:

- (a) cities, towns, villages and townships;



ANNO TRICESIMO ET TRICESIMO-PRIMO

VICTORIÆ REGINÆ.

.....
CAP. III.

An Act for the Union of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, and the Government thereof; and for Purposes connected therewith.

[29th March 1867.]

WHEREAS the Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick have expressed their Desire to be federally united into One Dominion under the Crown of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, with a Constitution similar in Principle to that of the United Kingdom :

And whereas such a Union would conduce to the Welfare of the Provinces and promote the Interests of the British Empire :

And whereas on the Establishment of the Union by Authority of Parliament it is expedient, not only that the Constitution of the Legislative Authority in the Dominion be provided for, but also that the Nature of the Executive Government therein be declared :

And whereas it is expedient that Provision be made for the eventual Admission into the Union of other Parts of British North America :

Be it therefore enacted and declared by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, as follows :

I.—PRELIMINARY.

The British North America Act, which united Canada in 1867, gave the provincial legislatures exclusive responsibility in matters of municipal institutions.

- (b) counties made up of townships, villages and most towns (cities were excluded).

This form generally remained intact in Ontario for 100 years. Baldwin, the author of the legislation, viewed the 1849 Act as a school of democracy.¹¹ It is considered to be a sort of "Magna Charta" of local government in Canada in that it formed a prototype of legislation in other provinces.¹²

In 1867 the British North America Act, which united Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, was passed. The form of government chosen for the new Canada was a combination of the British Parliamentary system of cabinet government with a unique Canadian adaptation of the federalism then operating in the United States. The responsibility for local government continued to reside with provincial legislatures. It is well to note the American influence because experiences in urban America were of increasing relevance to Canadian legislation and to forms of administration adopted by Canadian municipalities.

References to Chapter 2

1. Ian M., Rogers, *The Law of Canadian Municipal Corporations*, Carswell Company, Toronto, 1985, p. 30.
2. For an extensive review of the history and current (up to 1969) forms of local government throughout the world see *The Structure of Local Government, A Comparative Survey of 81 Countries* by S. Humes and E. Martin, International Union of Local Authorities, The Hague, Netherlands, 1969.
3. *ibid.*, p. 617.
4. *ibid.*, p. 66.
5. James G. Kellas, *Modern Scotland*, George Allen and Unwin 1980, p. 116.
6. *op. cit.*, p. 39.
7. Hon. Horace Harvey, "Some Notes on the Early Administration of Justice in Canada's Northwest," *Alberta Historical Review*, Nov. 1953.
8. T.J. Plunkett and G.M. Betts, *The Management of Canadian Urban Government*, The Institute of Local Government, Queens University, Kingston, 1978, p. 46. See Chapter 3, "The Development of the Local Government System", for details especially pertaining to Eastern Canada.
9. *ibid.*, p. 52.
10. *ibid.*, p. 44, Lord Durham believed that it was important that citizens accept responsibility in administration of local affairs if they were to subsequently undertake the more significant task of providing responsible government in the then British colonies.
11. *ibid.*, p. 101.
12. I.F. Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

Chapter Three

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES BEFORE 1887

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, some history on the development of local government in England and Scotland was provided because many of those involved in the municipal legislation in eastern Canada were of that nationality. Many legislators and those involved in the justice systems of western Canada in the 19th century were also of similar background. Words such as reeve, alderman, councillor, township and aspects of the legislation such as terms of office and the existence of school boards can be traced to a considerable degree along channels relating to the place of origin of these settlers.



"In western Canada, the native population related initially to fur traders and a form of administration by the Hudson's Bay Company." These natives are bringing furs to the HBC in Pincher Creek — 1882.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta; Brown Collection B2426.

RUPERT'S LAND

The history of white man's government in Canada's west dates back to 1670 when Charles II gave away "all lands watered by streams flowing

into Hudson's Bay" to his cousin Prince Rupert and his companions by granting them a charter in the name of "The Governor and Company of Adventurers Trading into Hudson's Bay". This was confirmed in a British Act of Parliament in 1690. The Governor and his council had the power to judge on civil or criminal matters "within any of the countries, lands or territories hereby granted".⁷ The difficulty of bringing offenders to justice (the offences sometimes arising from competition and feuds between the two major rival companies trading with the Indians) led to Imperial legislation extending the jurisdiction of the courts of the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada westward.

The first white man in what now forms Alberta was Anthony Henday of the Hudson's Bay Company who travelled from York Factory to some point in the Red Deer country in 1754-55. As the white population increased (estimated at 5,000 in 1835 in what was then referred to as the Territories) mechanisms were eventually put in place for a more local judicial system – namely, a council consisting of three clergy and ten laymen and a magistrate in each of the four districts in the territories with the power to try minor civil and criminal cases.¹

NORTH WEST TERRITORIES

In 1869 this vast territory passed from the rule of the Hudson's Bay Company to the British Crown, and on July 15, 1870 a Province of Manitoba and the North West Territories became part of the Dominion of Canada. Initially, the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba and his council of eleven members administered the Territories. However, by 1875 Ottawa gave the lands west of Manitoba their own Lieutenant Governor and a five member appointed council. After a brief residency of several years in Battleford, the Territorial council settled in Regina. The Dominion legislation which provided for the Territorial council allowed expansion of the council to include elected members. Each one would represent an electoral district of 1,000 square miles which had at least 1,000 people. When the number of elected representatives reached 21 the appointed council would cease and the elected members would form the legislature for the North West Territories. The first elected member joined the council in 1881 and by 1886 there were 14 elected and six appointed ones.

The 1875 Act Concerning the Organization of the North West Territories also provided for Protestant and Roman Catholic separate schools and for taxation for local and municipal purposes. The Dominion Land Act of 1872 provided for the survey of townships and for two sections of land from each township to be set aside for school purposes.

By an Act of the Dominion Parliament the Royal Northwest Mounted Police was created in 1873. By 1877 there were 329 members of the force in the Territories. The Indians numbered about 30,000 at this time.²

In 1883 the Lieutenant Governor and the Territorial council were given power by Ottawa to enact ordinances respecting municipalities and indeed did so in the same year. E. J. Hanson suggests they “borrowed a leaf” from the Ontario Baldwin Act; however, excluding that province’s concept of counties.³ The Town of Regina was the first municipality to be incorporated under the North West Municipal Ordinance of 1883. It was followed by four rural municipalities in Saskatchewan and by Calgary in 1884. Although a petition for Edmonton’s incorporation was presented at about this time by Frank Oliver, Edmonton’s representative on the Territorial council, it wasn’t effected until 1892, when the requisite population of 1,000 had been achieved. Edmonton was the third town to be incorporated. No rural municipalities were organized in Alberta under this ordinance.

In 1884 an ordinance providing for the Organization of Schools in the North West Territories was passed. The first district was operational in Edmonton in the same year. By the end of 1885 there were 58 public and one separate school districts and the number growing rapidly. It was the most significant and extensive form of local government in the territories for a decade or so. The school districts were quite small – 12 to 16 square miles in area. They combined urban and rural territory and levied and collected their own taxes to supplement dominion and territorial government grants.

There were other forms of local government that area residents could develop related to the establishment of districts to accomplish specific purposes. One was the herd district to deal with stray cattle and horses. Pursuant to an ordinance passed on October 4, 1883 herd districts could be established upon a petition by two-thirds of the male occupants over 21 years of age and resident for three months in an area of 122 square miles. Not many were structured. Another was fire districts (1886) which could be formed, upon petition, to appoint one or more fire guardians to help

An Ordinance Respecting Municipalities.

[PASSED 4TH OCTOBER, 1883.]

Be it enacted by the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories, in Council, as follows:

1. Unless otherwise declared or indicated in this Ordinance, wherever any of the following words occur they shall have the meaning hereinafter expressed, namely, the word

(1) “Municipality” shall mean a group of not less than four contiguous Townships, forming either a square or a parallelogram, except in cases where Indian reservations interfere, or except where one or more such Townships are broken, or fractional, or abut on meridian lines, or special surveys or gores exist, and shall mean any locality, the inhabitants of which are incorporated or are continued or become so under this Ordinance;

(2) “Council” shall mean the Municipal Council;

(3) “Land” or “lands,” “real estate,” “real property,” shall respectively include lands, tenements and hereditaments or all rights thereto or interest therein;

(4) “Electors” shall mean the persons entitled for the time being to vote at any Municipal election or in respect of any By-law in the Municipality, ward or polling sub-division, as the case may be;

(5) “Chairman” shall mean the head of the Council, or the person elected to fill that position for the time being;

(6) “Owner” or “proprietor” shall mean the person who has the ownership or use of any taxable property, or has an agreement for the purchase of the same;

(7) “Occupant” denotes all persons who possess, hold or occupy any land under any title whatsoever, or even without a title, or are occupying lands of the Crown under any style of location, agreement or tenure whatever;

(8) “Lot” shall mean a piece or parcel of land subdivided for the purposes of sale in smaller parcels, and shall include the buildings or other improvements thereon.

2. The Lieutenant-Governor, or the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, may, by proclamation, establish Municipalities, on a petition of two-thirds

Enacted by the Northwest Council in 1883, this first Municipal Ordinance of the Northwest Territories was similar to Ontario’s, excepting the county concept of that province.



The Northwest Territories Council in 1884. An ordinance providing for the organization of school districts was passed during this year.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Photograph Collection A10611.

suppress fires which occasionally spread rapidly across the prairies. Again not many were established. A third and eventually more popular form were the statute labor districts under the Statute Labor Ordinance of 1887 which provided for the local taxation or performance of labor for the construction of roads in an area.

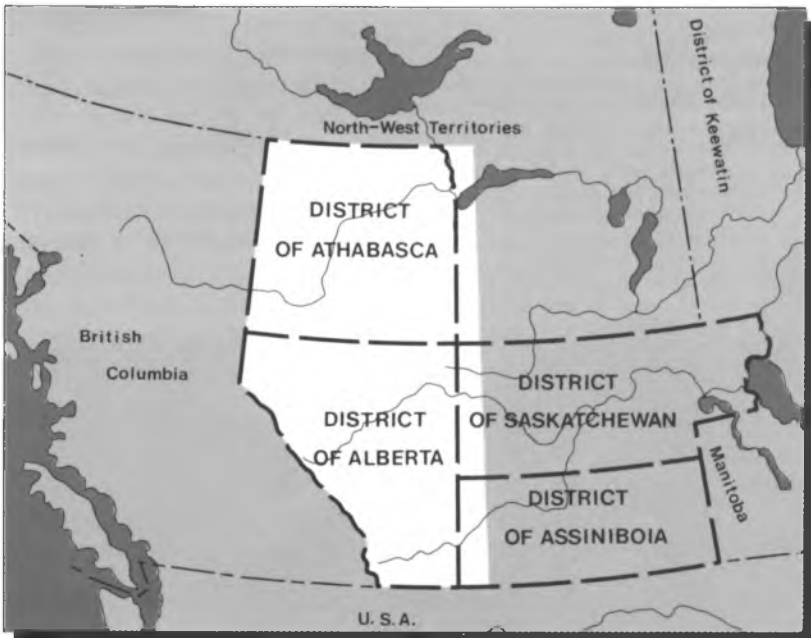
References to Chapter Three

1. Hon. Horace Harvey, "Some Notes on the Early Administration of Justice in Canada's Northwest", op. cit.
2. A.O. MacRae, *History of the Province of Alberta*, The Western Canada History Co., 1912, p. 257.
3. E.J. Hanson, *Local Government in Alberta*, McClelland and Stewart, 1956, p. 8.

Chapter Four

1887 – A DESIRE FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT**INTRODUCTION**

In 1882 the districts of Alberta, Assiniboia, Athabasca and Saskatchewan were created within the North West Territories. Of a total territorial population of about 78,000 in 1884, approximately 20,000 were Indians living on Reserves.¹ In 1887 things had settled down after the Riel Rebellion of 1885, and agricultural production was expanding. In a survey taken in 1887, the Lieutenant Governor reported that on the basis of 168 townships heard from, there were 76,384 acres under cultivation with 44 percent in wheat, 39 percent in oats, 11 percent in barley and seven percent in roots. In that season 16,596 acres had been broken.² The buffalo had practically disappeared.



The four districts of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Assiniboia and Athabasca were created within the North West Territories in 1882.

Credit: Adapted from the Atlas of Alberta, 1984.

Figure 1.2

Immigration to Canada was now reaching an annual rate that was typical of many years in the next century – in 1887, 84,526 people migrated

to Canada. In addition to people from Europe, Alberta was the destination of a small group of Mormons who migrated from Utah and Idaho to south-east Alberta in 1887. Throughout the west there was a general prohibition against the sale of liquor.

Calgary was now on the CPR main line (completed in 1883) and a terminus for a mail and stage line to Edmonton. In 1883 Edmonton was described as an outpost where Indians traded and few white men dwelt; however, by 1887 it was a small, flourishing town.

POPULATION

Alberta's population in 1886 was as follows:³

	Male	Female
Edmonton District	2,890	2,726
Calgary and Red Deer	3,030	2,437
Macleod	2,422	2,081
Medicine Hat	495	237
Total by sex	8,827	7,481
TOTAL	16,308	

Figure 1.3



St. Albert was one of the early predominately Metis settlements in the North West Territories. The Roman Catholic Mission is seen in the background of this 1895 picture, an indication of part of the heritage of the Metis people.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Brown Collection B9516.

In 1888 St. Albert was a large community of 166 families totalling 1,000 people of which 860 were Metis, 113 French speaking Canadians, 15 English speaking and 12 newly arrived from France. Lac Ste. Anne, Lac La Biche and Victoria were also major Metis settlements.⁴

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In 1887 there were five principal ordinances in place respecting local governance. These were the School, Herd, Fire, Municipal and Statute Labor Ordinances,⁵ the last of these being approved in 1887. The most popular form was the school district and these were being developed rapidly. In 1887 there were in the whole of the Territories four public, 102 Protestant and 21 Roman Catholic school districts with an attendance of 75; 2,410 and 690 pupils respectively.⁶

The Towns of Calgary and Regina were already incorporated and the Town of Moosomin was added to the list in 1887. There were in existence a few incorporated rural municipalities in the District of Assiniboia.

Incorporation was a topic for local discussion in several communities including two in southern Alberta. A review of the Lethbridge News published in the late 1880's indicates that residents of Lethbridge, which was only surveyed in 1885, were reviewing the process and merits of incorporation in 1887 and 1888. Incorporation came in December 1890. In respect to Macleod the first lots were laid out in 1883. An editorial in the Macleod Gazette, Issue No. 29, in 1887, urged the town's incorporation (which came in January 1893).

This "Bill of Rights," or what may be termed the "Rebel Platform," published in the Toronto *Mail* of April 13, 1885, though here condensed, makes the following among other demands:

1. That the half-breeds of the Northwest Territories be given grants similar to those accorded to the half-breeds of Manitoba by the Act of 1870.

2. That patents be issued to all half-breeds and white settlers who have fairly earned the right of possession to their farms; that the timber regulations be made more liberal; and that the settler be treated as having rights in the country.

3. That the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan be forthwith organized with legislatures of their own, so that the people may be no longer subject to the despotism of Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney; and, in the proposed new provincial legislatures, that the Metis shall have a fair and reasonable share of representation.

4. That the offices of trust throughout these provinces be given to residents of the country, as far as practicable, and that we denounce the appointment of disreputable outsiders and repudiate their authority.

5. That this region be administered for the benefit of the actual settler, and not for the advantage of the alien speculator; and that all lawful customs and usages which obtain among the Metis be respected.

6. That better provision be made for the Indians, the parliamentary grant to be increased, and lands set apart as an endowment for the establishment of hospitals and schools for the use of whites, half-breeds and Indians, at such places as the provincial legislatures may determine.

7. That the Land Department of the Dominion Government be administered as far as practicable from Winnipeg, so that settlers may not be compelled, as heretofore, to go to Ottawa for the settlement of questions in dispute between them and land...

The Riel Rebellion of 1885 demonstrated a demand on the part of the Metis for a more local government.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Brown Collection B1678.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES COUNCIL

At this time in the history of government in the North West Territories the Lieutenant Governor had considerable authority. In presiding over the council in Regina, he had the sole power over expenditure of public funds. Even at the local level all bylaws of a municipality creating debt not repayable within a year required the Lieutenant Governor's consent.

While the Territories council was providing for the creation of institutions to guide local affairs, it was also seeking Ottawa's approval for a fully elected Territorial council. Their discussions, available in the record of the sittings of their assembly in 1886 and 1887, were fruitful and Ottawa provided for this in 1888.

Up to 1886 there were no representatives to the Dominion Parliament from the Territories. In that year, perhaps partly because of their mishandling of the events leading to the Riel Rebellion of 1885, direct representation was provided for. The "Anglo-Saxon spirit of representation and rule by the people, of the people and for the people"⁷ was confirmed in this provision. Incidentally, another action by the Dominion government in 1887 was the passage of the Rocky Mountain Park Act establishing Banff and Jasper as train and park service towns. They were to be entirely under federal jurisdiction and an important policy was land lease, not sale.

The 1887 records of the North West Council indicate the following additional actions of relevance to local government:⁸

1. A petition was presented on behalf of the municipal council of the Town of Regina requesting an amendment to the Municipal Ordinance to increase the number of elected councillors from four to six. It was referred to committee.
2. A Bill to legalize a certain bylaw of the municipal council of Wolseley and the debentures issued thereunder was passed.
3. A committee was established to consider "several questions relating to the Metis of the Territories". There were problems in the distribution of scrip, a certificate of entitlement allotting land to the Metis. A resolution in this regard was subsequently passed.
4. A resolution was forwarded to the Privy Council in Ottawa requesting that a grant of \$10,000 be provided to agricultural societies to aid in carrying out the Fire District Ordinances. In a letter from Ottawa dated November 29, 1887, the Secretary of State turned down the request as it was deemed a "purely local and municipal object".



NORTH-WEST LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1886.

1. Lieut.-Governor Durney	8. Hayter Reid	9. David F. Jelly	13. Senator Perley	17. A. E. Forget
2. Judge Richardson	9. H. S. Cayley	10. Major Irvine	14. Chas. Marshall	18. Jimmie McAra
3. Judge Buchanan	7. Robert Crawford	11. J. C. Secord	15. Owen E. Hughes	(first page of Hou-
4. John O. Turill	8. James Ross	12. J. D. Lauder	16. Sam. Cunningham	x Lord Boyle

The Lieutenant Governor, shown here with the North West Legislative Assembly, had sole power over expenditure of public funds. During this year, while still providing for the creation of institutions to guide local affairs, the Council began to seek Ottawa's approval for a fully elected Territorial Council. This was achieved in 1888.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Brown Collection B6651.

5. In response to an earlier resolution of the North West Council, Ottawa advised that they were indeed selling federal lands in the vicinity of developing towns (the council wished these lands to be available for development and for taxation) and confirmed that CPR lands were taxable.

The ninth and last session of the North West Council closed on November 19, 1887. Henceforth, with the election of representatives in 1888, the Territories were governed by the legislative assembly.

References to Chapter Four

1. Speech of Lieutenant Governor, from the North West Territories Council of 1884.
2. Journals of the Council of the North West Territories, 1877.
3. A.O. MacRae, op. cit. p. 396.
4. In the early 1850's there were about 15,000 Metis in Western Canada. Coming from French, Scottish or English fathers and Indian mothers they were all Christian, most of them Catholic. In 1842 the Metis and Cree asked that a permanent settlement be established for them. In 1843 a Father A. Thibault gathered about 40 families and settled in what is now Lac St. Anne. Father Lacombe came as a replacement in 1852 and subsequently moved the site closer to Edmonton and onto better land in 1861. See A.M. Dechane, French Participation in Early Alberta, *Alberta Historical Review*, October, 1954. See also Father Alexis Tetreault, OMI, Historic St. Albert, *Alberta Historical Review*, April 1954.
5. The Statute Labor Ordinance provided for the formation of districts outside of existing municipalities to permit taxes to be imposed for road construction. A key requirement was there had to be at least 50 people residing in an area not exceeding 144 square miles. An overseer was selected by residents to supervise activities. Residents could pay cash or perform road labor. Specific procedures were provided for: notices to be posted, petitions of objection, selection of the returning officer, the calling of a public meeting and opening of a poll for two hours to elect an overseer, a two year term for the overseer, formal notice to be published in the Gazette, assessing of residents, corporations and partnerships, the rate of tax or labor equivalent, levying of fines for non-performance and remuneration of overseer.
6. Journals of the Council of the North West Territories of Canada, 1877.
7. A.O. MacRae, op. cit., p. 396.
8. Journals of the Council of the North West Territories of Canada, 1877.

CHAPTER FIVE

1887 TO 1912 – OUTSIDE INFLUENCES AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES**INTRODUCTION**

Settlement of Canada's prairie had a westward flow – from Manitoba, through to Saskatchewan, where it began in earnest in about 1896, to Alberta where it peaked in the period 1906 to 1913. Alberta's population of 16,300 in 1886 grew to 170,000 in 1905 and to 400,000 by 1914.

While the English tradition was paramount in the early evolution of local government in Canada and the United States, increasingly the sharing of experiences amongst the provinces and the issues of American communities and approaches of their legislators became the more important determinants of local government in Alberta. For example, Ontario had a Commission on Municipal Institutions in 1888 and found it more profitable to examine U.S. trends than British ones. This is understandable in terms of physical proximity but also the growth and changes of American towns and cities in ways common to Canadian experience.



Edmonton's Commission Board — 1912

In response to the high degree of corruption, an approach by some American cities was to implement a Commission Board type of government. Subsequently, this form was adopted by some cities in Alberta.

Credit: City of Edmonton Archives.

THE AMERICAN INFLUENCE

During this period, legislation of provinces east of Alberta influenced the form, content and timing of municipal legislation, especially that of self-government for rural areas. As a result of the situation in the United States there developed a heightened awareness of the potential for corruption in local politics. This was evidenced in provincial legislation in the quite severe limitations on borrowing and taxing powers of local government and on an openness to new ideas. American influences were also evident in the form and structure of government adopted by towns and cities. One can understand why efficiency and business-like management were key objectives in local government, given reviews such as the one by M.J. Bryce who, writing in 1888, noted that American city governments were burdened with debt and sodden with corruption and inefficiency. He said: "The municipal tradition was rotten" and "the worst in Christendom". Newly arrived immigrants provided a natural core of support for the bosses and their machines.¹ By 1890 that country had embarked on its great era of reform toward better municipal government.

THE DISTRICT AND PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

The following provide a framework for the brief chronology of some key events or items of legislation dealt with in the 1887-1912 period:

1. Some of the more important issues that concerned the Territorial Government were "better terms" with the Dominion Government, the question of public versus private schools and the power of the Lieutenant Governor versus that of the elected council. It is interesting to note that "from 1888 through 1905 the Territorial Government operated along strict non-party lines. Party politics came to the province only after incessant pressure from the federal parties to create party organizations."²



This sign in Edmonton c. 1910, proclaiming "free homes for millions", reflects the open policies in effect during this time regarding immigration. A great influx to Alberta began about 1905.

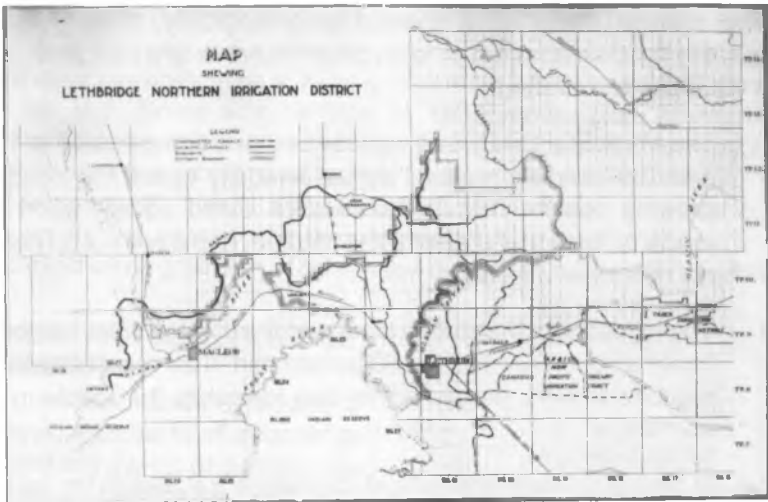
Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Photograph Collection A10933.

2. The years 1890-97 were very lean in a large portion of Alberta due to a dreadful drought.
3. Expansion and development of the west was fostered by active federal policies to increase immigration, especially beginning in 1896 with a new Federal Minister of the Interior, Sir Clifford Sifton, and through extensive granting of land (55 million acres eventually) to a variety of companies for development of rail facilities.

The following material, presented chronologically, presents some highlights in the development of local government in what became, after 1905, the Province of Alberta.

- 1888** The Municipal Ordinance was revised and consolidated in 1894 and 1897 and thereafter “almost annually to suit the needs of growing communities.”³ Taxes were levied equally upon real property, personal property and income; and a poll tax on people not otherwise assessed.
- 1890** The functions of the statute labor and fire districts were combined under an overseer and the 50 person minimum requirement was reduced to eight people within one township, 16 people in two townships.
- 1892** In connection with the School Ordinance a clause in the spirit of Henry George’s theories was introduced i.e. the principle of site value taxation where the tax on unimproved land is the same as that on land with buildings; no assessment was to be levied on buildings or other improvements.
- 1892** The railway from Macleod to Calgary and to Edmonton was completed.
- 1893** The law respecting fire and statute labor districts was revised lowering the size requirement to that of a single township. The first district was finally organized in Alberta – Statute Labor and Fire District No. 2 in Clover Bar east of Edmonton (there were 36 by 1896).
- 1893** The law regarding “unincorporated towns,” first provided for in 1888, was amended to now define such a town as a place not exceeding 320 acres with not less than 10 dwellings. Upon petition and approval by Lieutenant Governor the unincorporated town could elect an overseer at a public meeting to be its administrative officer.

- 1893** Calgary was the first city to be incorporated. A council of six was elected representing three wards. Taxes were levied on rateable property and income with some basic exemptions, plus a poll tax of \$2.00.
- 1894** An ordinance respecting irrigation districts was passed. Trustees were to be elected for three year terms – one annually.



Irrigation Districts, one of the many forms of single-purpose government in Alberta, were first provided for in an 1894 Ordinance. Any early districts have long been disbanded and all existing districts have been formed under the 1915 Irrigation District Act. The Lethbridge Northern was first formed by the farmers of the area (c. 1919), but later taken over by the government when financial problems arose.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Pollard Collection P831.

- 1894** The need for municipalities to seek Lieutenant-Governor approval for creating debt was replaced with a limit on borrowing (to 10 percent of assessment) and the need for two-thirds of the rate-payers to approve debt not repayable within the current year.
- 1895** The destruction of noxious weeds became an added responsibility of statute labor districts (“fire” was dropped from the name). This and other amendments represented encouragements by the Territorial Legislature for local organization “in methods so necessary for the promotion of self-reliance.”⁴
- 1895** The ordinance on unincorporated towns was repealed and replaced by the Village Ordinance. The areas of responsibility were expanded.

1897 The statute labor districts were enlarged and renamed local improvement districts. The requirement now was a minimum of twelve residents in an area not to exceed 72 square miles. The Commissioner of Public Works of the Territories provided general supervision in the raising of revenues and road work in conjunction with the overseer and an elected council of three to six people. In 1901, 1903, 1907 and 1908 additional amendments were made increasing the size of the district, its council's powers and/or the rate of assessment permitted.

1897 The first reference, in an amended Village Act, to "hamlet" – a place with five or more occupied dwellings within an area of half a square mile.

1897 A Local Improvement Branch was set up in the Department of Public Works to supervise the rapidly growing numbers of local improvement districts.

1898 Revisions to the Village Act provided for greater powers of taxation, e.g., a poll tax of \$1.25 on every male over 18 not otherwise assessed and a dog tax of one or two dollars. The overseer was now allowed to earn annually up to \$100 plus 2½ percent of all money passing through his hands.

1899 The Territorial government established large local improvement districts to facilitate road construction in sparsely populated areas.

1901

CHAPTER 42.

An Ordinance to Incorporate the Town of Red Deer.

[Assented to June 18, 1901.]

Preamble WHEREAS application has been made by petition of the voters of the Village of Red Deer for an Ordinance to incorporate the said village a municipality under the name of the Town of Red Deer;

Therefore the Lieutenant Governor by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the North-West Territories enacts as follows:

Incorporation 1. From and after the coming into force of this Ordinance the west half of section 16 and all those portions of the east half of section 17, the south-east quarter of section 20 and the south-west quarter of section 21 lying south of the Red Deer river all in township 38 range 27 west of the Fourth Meridian in the District of Alberta in the North-West Territories containing six hundred and fifty-four and one-half acres more or less are hereby erected and incorporated into a town municipality under the name of the Town of Red Deer.

Application of Municipal Ordinance 2. Except as hereinafter specifically provided the provisions of *The Municipal Ordinance* and amendments relating to town municipalities are hereby incorporated with and form part of this Ordinance.

Qualification of voters at first election 3. The persons qualified to vote for the first mayor and council shall be men, unmarried women and widows over twenty-one years of age who are assessed upon the then last revised assessment roll of The Red Deer Public School District No. 104 of the North-West Territories in the area of the town hereby created for income or personal property for \$200 or upward or who are named upon the said assessment roll either as occupant or owners of real property held in their own right or in the case of married men held by their wives for \$200 or upward.

Assessment roll of school district 4. The council of the Town of Red Deer may adopt the then last revised assessment roll of The Red Deer Public School District No. 104 of the North-West Territories in the area of the town hereby created for the levying and collecting of the rates required for the year 1901.

Until 1901 towns were incorporated by Acts of legislation, or charters, like this one for Red Deer. After 1901, towns were incorporated by an Order-in-Council and/or proclamation. Six towns in Alberta received charters, four of which later became cities. These towns were: Lethbridge (1890), Macleod (1892), Medicine Hat (1898), Strathcona (1899), Cardston (1901) and Red Deer (1901).

- 1903** The small local improvement districts were reorganized (now 72) to encompass three to six townships with decisions on revenue and expenditures now made by the elected council rather than at an annual meeting – a major step in the journey to rural self government.
- 1903** Provision was made for incorporating towns where the population exceeded 400.
- 1904** Edmonton was incorporated under a city charter; the Commission Board system was introduced by Edmonton in 1904 and by Calgary in 1908.⁵
- 1905** Alberta was made a province effective September 1, 1905.



The opening of the first Legislative Assembly on March 15, 1906, following Alberta's establishment as a province the preceding year.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Brown Collection B6667.

- 1906** Land Titles Act required that streets be at least 60 feet wide and that access from a lane at least 20 feet wide be provided to each lot.
- 1907** A new Village Act was enacted. A council of three replaced the overseer. A minimum of 25 homes required. Maximum rate of taxation set at 10 mills;⁶ income from any source now exempt.

The start of inspection of district records by inspectors appointed by the Tax Commissioner, who was also the head of the Local Improvement Branch of the Department of Public Works.

Individual councillors deeply resented any interference in their respective townships. The District of Lorne, now in the County of Lacombe, approved the following:

“Resolved that all taxes collected remain in their respective divisions” and “Resolved that every councillor have charge of all work in his respective division and that all cash collected be expended according to his own judgement.”⁷

The Public Health Act required each municipality to set up a local health board; in rural areas, health districts were to be established. Local property taxes were to be the basis for support of the hospital system.

A uniform rate for school taxation in unorganized rural areas was established.

The province was now gaining population rapidly. A speculative land market, the many requests for creation of districts and a growing dissatisfaction with existing legislation led to several new Acts being passed including one creating a new Department of Municipal Affairs in 1912.

References to Chapter 5

1. J. Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*, 1888, as quoted by John Dearlove in *The Reorganization of British Local Government*, 1979, p. 191.
2. Jack Masson, *Alberta's Local Governments and Their Politics*, Pica Pica Press, University of Alberta, 1985, p. 290.
3. John Blue, *Alberta Past and Present*, Pioneer Publishing Company, 1924, p. 161. Chapter 10 is a review of municipal government in the North West Territories and Alberta from the 1870's to 1924.
4. From a statement by Lieutenant Governor MacIntosh in 1893 upon passage of an amended Statute Labor and Fire Ordinance. See J. Masson, *op. cit.*, p. 84 for the full reference.
5. The Commission Board form of government that developed in the United States began with a proposal in 1903 for an amendment to a municipal charter (for Galveston, Texas, a city severely ravaged by a hurricane in 1900) of three state nominated people and two elected commissioners to both set policy (council duty) and manage (administrative responsibility) day-to-day affairs. The state revised the proposal to require all five people to be elected. This form has not proved popular with perhaps only four to five percent of the American cities using it at one time. Galveston dropped the system in 1974. In the adaptation by Edmonton (1904) and Calgary (1908) there were very considerable variations to the American design. For example, in Edmonton there were two appointed commissioners – one for finance and one for public works – who with the mayor as Chairman formed the Commission Board. An elected council provided policy direction. The city's Commission Board, which expanded to a board of four to five people in the last 15 years, was recently replaced with a City Manager form. See John Dearlove, *The Reorganization of British Local Government*, Cambridge University Press, 1979, p. 204 for background on the Commission Board form in the United States.
6. A mill is 1/1000 of a dollar of assessed value.
7. *Story of Rural Municipal Government in Alberta, 1909 – 1983*, p. 189.

Chapter Six**1912 – A NEW DEPARTMENT OF
MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS****INTRODUCTION**

The year 1912 was a very significant one from the perspective of local government in Alberta. Several major new Acts were passed to guide the rapid growth then being experienced. One of these, although actually assented to late in the previous year (December 20, 1911), created a new Department of Municipal Affairs. Other events of note: Calgary had its first great Stampede and hired its first planner; Edmonton and Strathcona amalgamated; the taxation of land value, excluding improvements, seemed to be widely supported;¹ six thousand copies of the Rural Municipality Act were distributed; the first settlers in the Falher, Girouxville, Donnelly area arrived from Quebec; and, the Alberta legislature was active in amending some of the charters under which the cities and some towns operated.

PRECEDENTS TO NEW LEGISLATION

The legislation adopted in Alberta in 1912 seems to have been prepared in the tradition of the day, without full disclosure to municipal politicians. For example, at the October 25 and 26, 1911 meeting of the Union of Alberta Municipalities its secretary-treasurer noted that “the establishment of a Municipal Bureau is presumably one of the features of our new Municipal Bills”.² However, in a memo concluding the minutes of that annual meeting it was noted that the conference resolutions were discussed with the Solicitor General and the legislative committee “resulting in most cases in a modification of the new Town Act before its final passing”.³

Important roots to the legislation of 1912 are to be found in the North West Territories Assembly decision of 1904 to undertake a study of the whole question of the organization, administration and financing of municipal units under its jurisdiction. With the split into two provinces effective September 1, 1905, the Province of Saskatchewan (which had been experiencing much greater pressures of growth) appointed a commission to complete the study in 1906. The commission recommended a system of municipal institutions and in 1908 Saskatchewan enacted the City Act, the Town Act, the Village Act and the Municipal Commissioners Act which established the first provincial department in Canada to deal with municipal matters. Their Rural Municipalities Act was passed in 1909.



The Legislative Building as it nears completion in this 1912 photograph. Fort Edmonton can be seen in the foreground.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Brown Collection B6609.

Alberta was now in the midst of a growth phase which its neighboring province had just gone through. Annual immigration to Canada in the 100,000 to 150,000 range in the last decade or two was getting ever higher. Immigration in 1912 was 375,765 people and peaked to the highest level ever in 1913 to 400,870 people. By 1911, rural areas were swamping the provincial government with requests to establish rural municipalities modelled along the lines of those in Saskatchewan.⁴ A real estate boom began in Edmonton in the summer of 1911. By 1912 there were 400 real estate offices in a city of 31,000. Building permits in that year totalled \$14,000,000 – a record to stand for 34 years.⁵

The east-central part of Alberta which was later to be given unique status as “Special Areas” was opened to homesteaders in 1908-09. Its population of 187 in 1906 grew to 11,039 in 1911. Resident ranchers “watched in horror” as eager but inexperienced easterners and immigrants ploughed up the fragile grasslands made available for settlement by a distant national government fueled by eastern industry looking for expanded markets.⁶

THE DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

Alberta was the third province to create a department to deal with municipal affairs – preceded by Manitoba as well as Saskatchewan. The

legislation was assented to on December 20, 1911, the same day as the appointment of Mr. Archibald J. McLean as the first Minister of the Department. The Deputy Minister, Mr. John Perrie was appointed on December 21, 1911. Formal notice of these decisions were published in the Alberta Gazette dated December 30, 1911. The core of the new department was the Local Improvement Branch of the Department of Public Works. Information on the number of people involved in the transfer has not been located but by 1913 there were 39 full time and 12 part-time staff in the department. The prime responsibilities were to administer the Town, Village, Rural Municipality and Local Improvement Acts, to levy and collect local improvement taxes in unorganized areas and education taxes levied on lands outside organized school districts and to assist villages, rural school districts and local improvement districts in the collection of tax arrears. The department also had the responsibility of inspecting the books and records of every municipality at least once each year.

At the close of 1911 there were:

cities	6 (including Strathcona)
towns	42
villages	65
improvement districts	227
school districts	1,784

At the close of 1912 there were:

cities	5
towns	46
villages	73
rural municipalities	55
improvement districts	90

1911-12

CHAPTER 11.

An Act respecting the Department of Municipal Affairs.

(Assented to December 20, 1911.)

HIS MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Alberta, enacts as follows:

1. This Act may be cited as "*The Department of Municipal Affairs Act*."
2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, the expression "municipality" includes cities, towns, villages, rural municipalities, and also local improvement districts.
3. There shall be a department of the public service of the province to be called "The Department of Municipal Affairs," over which the Member of the Executive Council appointed by the Lieutenant Governor under the seal of the province to discharge the functions of the Minister of Municipal Affairs for the time being shall preside.
4. The Minister of Municipal Affairs shall be entrusted with the powers and charged with the duties which by any law in force in the province belong to the office of the Minister of Municipal Affairs.
5. The Lieutenant Governor in Council may appoint a Deputy Minister and such inspectors, clerks, assistants and other officers as may from time to time be required and provide for the remuneration of the same, and such deputy, inspectors, clerks, assistants and other officers shall do and perform all such acts and things relating to the business of the department as they may from time to time be directed to do and perform by the Minister.
6. Subject to the provisions of the various Acts from time to time in force in Alberta respecting municipalities the Minister of Municipal Affairs shall have power to make and enforce regulations governing the methods of bookkeeping, accounting, recording and auditing to be used in the municipalities of the province; and to procure and issue to the said municipalities sample sets of books and forms which he may deem necessary for the proper carrying out of the said regulations; and to make and enforce regulations respecting such other matters and things as shall in his opinion be conducive to a thorough and systematic conduct of the affairs of the municipalities by the treasurers and other officers thereof.

1143

This three-page Act of late 1911 created the Department of Municipal Affairs.

Figure 1.4

NEW LEGISLATION

The Town Act, assented to on February 16, 1912 repealed the Municipal Ordinance of 1898 and amendments thereto. It applied to all towns except those which were incorporated by special ordinance or charter although these could now apply for inclusion. The councils were to consist of a mayor and six councillors elected at large for two year terms. Elected officials were required to be male and owners of freehold estate of over \$500. Council powers included the appointment of the Chief of Police, acting as a court of revision in respect to the voters list. They could also pass money bylaws for contracting debt, not to exceed 20 percent of rateable property. Assessment for municipal and school tax purposes applied to rateable land only, i.e. it excluded improvements. This feature was also common to the Rural Municipal and Village Act. To help convey the content of the Act it might be of interest to know that the 107 pages of the Act were about equally divided into:

- (a) municipal election procedures
- (b) powers and duties of the council
- (c) money bylaws
- (d) assessment and taxation; and
- (e) definitions, boundaries, legal actions, penalties and inquires of council or councillor actions.

The Village Act of 1907 was amended in only a minor way in 1912. This included broader powers to grant special franchises for the taking of census and the issuance of debenture borrowings. Application for town status required a two-thirds majority support of the electors with a minimum population of 700 rather than the 400 people previously required.

The Rural Municipality Act, assented to on February 11, 1912, represented a significant advancement in rural self-government in Alberta. Fifty-five rural municipalities came into existence effective December 9, 1912. Many, but not all, were willing participants. These municipalities and the 90 new local improvement districts were created out of the 227 now dissolved local improvement districts. The boundaries of the rural municipalities were based on an area 18 miles square (324 square miles) and required a population of at least one person per square mile. Five councillors were to be elected at large for one year terms although there was an option of election on a division or ward basis upon a two-thirds support of the electorate. The division basis was almost always preferred. The hope of the Department of Municipal Affairs was that improvements in a rural municipality, especially roads, be "under the control of the council of the district as a whole"⁷. Notwithstanding the provincial view, the rural municipality of Grande Prairie, at its first meeting, decided that "the five councillors act

as road commissioners and that each commissioner look after the roadwork in his part as he sees fit".⁸

Some of the other features of the Act included: the reeve be selected by the councillors at their first meeting; clear guidelines be provided on payment to the reeve and councillors for laying out and inspecting work; and officers, employees and agents of the municipality be personally liable for any damages arising from default or neglect to discharge duties. The council had power to provide for health needs of residents, aid to hospitals and relief to needy persons. Also, council could not grant a bonus or exempt from taxes any person or business and the municipality could band with others to form a hail insurance district. Many of the new rural municipalities became operational in the first week of January 1913.



The Legislative Assembly of 1912 beginning a session involving a great deal of work on new and revised legislation relating to local government.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Public Affairs Collection PA6504.

Amendments to the Local Improvement Act in 1912 provided for the winding up of the 227 districts then in existence and gave power to the Minister to create new local improvement districts. There were no amendments to the powers, duties or procedures which were previously given to districts in the Local Improvement Act of 1907.

Several other items which were dealt with by the legislature in 1912 relating to municipal affairs included:

- (a) The passage of the Controverted Municipal Elections Act – An Act Respecting the Punishment of Corrupt Practices at Municipal Elections and the Trial of Controverted Municipal Elections. One

of the elements in the definition of bribery included the conveying of voters to and from polls!

- (b) The Early Closing Act allowed councils of cities and of towns over 1,000 to establish bylaws for store closure where closure could not be earlier than 6:00 p.m. except for one day which could not be earlier than 12:00 noon. The bylaw required Lieutenant Governor approval who also had power to revoke such bylaws.
- (c) An Act providing for the union of the Cities of Edmonton and Strathcona was assented to on December 20, 1911 and effective July 22, 1912. It provided for a mayor and 10 aldermen.
- (d) Concern of the 32 representatives attending the Union of Alberta Municipalities convention in 1911 respecting subdivisions which sometimes proliferated well beyond urban municipal boundaries and/or ignored topography, may have been instrumental in the introduction of a private Bill to prescribe minimum standards of subdivision design. It was withdrawn when the government indicated they were preparing their own comprehensive subdivision regulations.¹⁰ (Approved in 1913)
- (e) There were thirteen private Acts incorporating rail companies which intended to provide urban passenger service in, or in the vicinity of, a variety of communities, e.g. Bassano, Cochrane, Crowsnest, Edmonton, Carbon, Magrath, Medicine Hat.
- (f) The Public Libraries Act provided for local boards.



Archibald J. McLean — First Minister of Municipal Affairs 1911-1912.

Credit: Department of Municipal Affairs.



John Perrie — First Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs 1911-1919.

Credit: Department of Municipal Affairs.

The year 1912 was an extremely busy one for the new department especially in respect to the reorganization of government in rural areas, the giving of advice in respect to the new Town Act and the incorporation of 11 villages and five towns. The Deputy Minister was very positive about the benefits of the annual conventions of the urban and rural municipal associations and advised the Minister that “many of the resolutions passed will be recommended as amendments to Acts affected”. He continued:

*“in a large new province such as this, with so many diversified interests, there is likely to be a great many municipalities, both rural and urban, carrying on business within the province within a few years. Diversity of interest will lend to many different municipal problems and we must realize that the work of this department and the work of those who are interested in municipal matters throughout the province is only commencing”.*¹¹

Population growth in the province slowed and with World War I, some poor crop years in the 1920's and the drought and depression of the 1930's, the pace of community development in the years following 1912 was not quite as great as may have been anticipated. However, a strong foundation of a new department and a system of municipal governments had, in the meantime, been put into place.

References to Chapter 6

1. The 1912 Annual Report of the Department of Municipal Affairs, p. 6 notes that at the eighth annual convention of the Union of Alberta Municipalities held at Innisfail in September 1912, a provision in the Town Act for assessment of land values only was supported by the delegates. Notwithstanding this position, the Town Act as well as the Rural Municipal Act and the Village Act were subsequently amended to permit and eventually require assessment of improvements.
2. *Report of the Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Convention*, Union of Alberta Municipalities, October 25 and 26, 1911, p.12.
3. *ibid.*, p. 54.
4. *Story of Rural Municipal Government in Alberta, 1909 to 1983* by A.A.M.D. and C, 1983, p. 231.
5. "The Edmonton Boom of 1911-12" by J. G. Niddrie, *Alberta Historical Review*, Vol 13, No. 2 Spring 1965.
6. *Special Areas of Alberta, Origins and Development* prepared by L. S. Martin for G. E. Taylor, M.L.A., Government of Alberta, 1977.
7. Annual Report of the Department of Public Works for 1911 dated March 26, 1912, p. 154.
8. *Story of Rural Government in Alberta, 1909 to 1983*, AAMD & C, p. 72.
9. An amendment to the Edmonton Charter added "except that women shall be eligible to be elected as school trustees" while only males could be elected to city council.
10. J. David Hulchanski, *The Origins of Urban Land Use Planning in Alberta, 1900 – 1945*. Research Paper #119, Centre for Urban and Community Studies, p. 9. It should also be noted that some elements important to planning were in city charters. For example, the Edmonton Charter (Office Consolidation of 1913) required that five percent of all lands to be annexed are "to be used as public parks or open spaces or for such other civic purposes as the council may deem most expedient", p.5.
11. Annual Report, Department of Municipal Affairs, 1912, p.6.

Chapter Seven

1912 TO 1937 – A TIME OF DIFFICULTY

INTRODUCTION

The excitement of developing good legislation in a period of rapid growth gave way to a time of severe difficulties brought on by depressions, a great war and many years of poor crops. The number of rural municipalities – those with self government – continued to grow. However, much of the legislation in this period related to the imposition of financial controls on municipalities, broadening their tax base, cleaning up the excessive subdivision of lands and assisting in especially difficult situations such as the consolidation, under provincial control, of the financially strapped municipalities now known as the Special Areas.

For the first several years the department was guided by a Deputy Minister whose annual reports were a delight to read. They were timely and informative. The text greatly exceeded the number of pages allotted to tables. In contrast, annual reports after his tenure provided only a three or four page written synopsis of the 40 to 50 pages of financial tables which followed. John Perrie died in office on December 10, 1919.

A key element of the historical overview component of this study is a description of the legislation adopted. However, in the period 1912 to 1937 there were many new Acts, amendments and complete rewrites of existing ones. The following notes are provided to give a general sense of the activities. Dates and details are often omitted with an assumption that the bibliography provided will assist those needing more.

RURAL MUNICIPALITIES

Their number continued to grow in the earlier years of this period. When their name was changed to municipal districts in 1918 there were 167 of them and 189 improvement districts. On December 31, 1936 there were 161 municipal districts and 240 improvement districts. Residents of the rural areas were sometimes chided to get involved to ensure good government. At other times they were encouraged to persevere in the “adverse and abnormal conditions”. John Perrie, in his 1916 Annual Report wrote:

“The sacrifices that have been required by the strenuous times through which we are passing, both by the individual and the municipalities, have been productive of much good in the bringing of people together and encouraging a healthy state of cooperation, without which it is impossible to have a successful municipal administration.”

The year 1916 also brought standard forms for municipal recordkeeping and reporting by municipal auditors.

“In a new province settled by people from all parts of the world, with different ideas, the necessity of having a uniform method of carrying on business and of having municipal offices inspected from time to time can be readily appreciated.”²

The Improvement Districts Act of 1918 was updated in 1921 and 1927 and again in 1947. The Municipal District Act, the new name of the Rural Municipalities Act as of 1918, was replaced by a new Municipal District Act in 1926. The rural districts were often provided with legislation pertinent to their needs, e.g. the Seed Grain Act of 1918 which provided loans to farmers in order to purchase seed grain and the Municipal Hail Insurance Act (1918) which allowed rural municipalities to band together to provide hail insurance. The municipalities’ authority and willingness to assist farmers sometimes left them with the bill. The great hay loss of 1919 (cold winter) and 1920 (dry summer) led to some municipalities importing hay from as far away as Manitoba but at least one district had to assume a large debt on account of the feed that was not paid for.³



Municipal organizations have long played an important role in local government. Yearly conventions, like this one of the UAM in 1925, discuss and pass numerous resolutions for consideration by the government. These often become incorporated in new and changing legislation.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Photograph Collection A5483.

VILLAGES AND TOWNS

Many urban municipalities also shared the condition of rural municipalities of this period of excessive debt, unpaid taxes, a welfare roll, and responsibility for hospital care. The province responded to the burdensome financial problems of many municipalities through the creation of a Public Utilities Commission in 1915 to approve municipal debentures and of a Municipal Finances Commission in 1920. All municipalities, including cities, were prohibited in 1913 from granting bonuses of any kind to any industry.

The economic downturn of late 1912 was still being felt three years later when the department advised:

“...the real purpose of municipal government is to look after the everyday needs of the municipality and not to mortgage the future for the purpose of being prepared for problematical growth or development which may or may not materialize” (1915 Annual Report, p. 1).

The site value tax limited the municipalities' ability to raise revenue through the use of site value taxation. In 1916 municipalities were allowed to include improvements – up to 60 percent of their value only. Also, villages could now have a business tax in common with towns. The abnormally high assessments which municipalities placed on land, due to the limited tax base and/or economic conditions, led to a legacy of arrears. Legislation in 1921, however, brought smooth payment of outstanding tax bills. New Acts for both towns and villages were passed in 1927. In 1934 a new Town and Village Act was passed which simplified procedures and provided uniform standards for both sizes of communities.

CITIES

In 1912 there were five cities, each operating under a charter approved by either the North West Territories or Alberta government. The list included Calgary (September 15, 1893), Edmonton (October 8, 1904) and Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and Wetaskiwin all on May 9, 1906. Red Deer was added on May 23, 1913 and Drumheller on April 30, 1930. These charters were often quite lengthy and each one the subject of almost annual amendments by the legislature. For example, the Edmonton Charter (Office Consolidation) of 1913 was 157 pages long and the amendments in the years 1915 to 1919 were each 10 to 33 pages long. The charters gave the cities (and one or two towns for a time) freedom to determine their organizational structure, powers and duties of mayor, council and staff, election procedures, procedures for borrowing, assessment and taxation, expropriation, enquiries and the like. Sometimes the content reflected council's general municipal plan type of intentions, i.e., “the present service and

lines of the Edmonton municipal street railway on the south side of the river shall be extended so as to serve the University of Alberta".⁴

The freedom in a charter allowed, in the City of Edmonton, women to be elected to the school boards in 1912 although they were not permitted to run for city council. By 1916 the province had amended the appropriate legislation to allow women to run for any municipal council. Individual charters did not necessarily make things any easier financially, e.g., 70,000 lots reverted to the City of Edmonton between 1918 and 1920.⁵ By 1919 Calgary owned two-thirds of the land within its boundaries.

The "annual pilgrimages"⁶ the cities made to the legislature for amendments were accepted; "...if they wish such legislation, it is nobody's particular business to object".⁷ However, it "makes it impossible for uniformity".

In 1921 the department's Annual Report stated "it would not be amiss to point out that a uniform charter for all these cities would at this time be desirable" (p. 7). The 1923 Annual Report advised that conferences were held with the cities and "some progress made to a Uniform City Act". One was finally passed in 1951.

LEGISLATION

Some of the other major Acts relevant to local government in this 25 year period include:

- (a) the appointment of a Board of Public Utility Commissioners in 1915 to supervise debenture borrowings
- (b) Supplementary Revenue Act of 1918 which provided for an additional tax on every dollar of assessed valuation by the province to fund school construction and a board to equalize assessments

1930

CHAPTER 64.

An Act constituting The Charter of the City of Drumheller.

(Assented to April 3, 1930.)

HIS MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Alberta, enacts as follows:

SHORT TITLE.

1. This Act may be cited as "*The Drumheller Charter*."

INTERPRETATION.

2. In this Act, the term—
 - (a) "Burgess" shall mean an elector who is entitled to vote in respect of land;
 - (b) "Business" shall include any trade, profession or calling, occupation or employment;
 - (c) "Council" means the municipal council of the said city;
 - (d) "Elector" shall mean a person entitled to vote at municipal and school elections in the said city;
 - (e) "Felony" shall mean any indictable offence which under *The Criminal Code* is punishable with death, or imprisonment for a period of five years or over;
 - (f) "First election" shall mean the election of Mayor and councillors first held after the passing of this Act;
 - (g) "First meeting" shall mean the first meeting of the council of the City after a first or general election;
 - (h) "Hawker" or "pedlar" shall mean any person who, whether as principal or agent, goes from house to house selling or offering for sale directly or indirectly any merchandise to any person, not being a wholesale dealer in such merchandise, or offers or exposes for sale to any person by means of samples, patterns, cuts or blue prints, merchandise to be afterwards delivered in or shipped into the City or sells merchandise upon the streets or roads or elsewhere than at a building which is his established place of business, but shall not include any person selling meat, fruit or other farm produce which has

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The last city charter to be granted in Alberta was to Drumheller in 1930. Drumheller is still considered a city even though its population is below the required size, now 10,000 people.

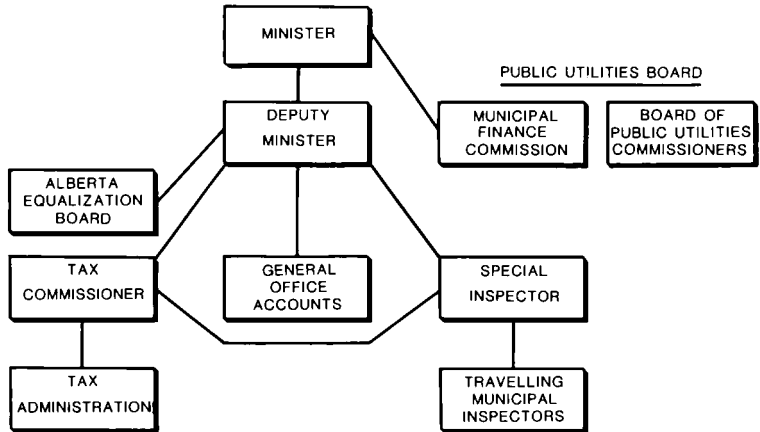
- (c) Municipal Hospitals Act in 1919 required incorporated and non-incorporated communities to establish hospital boards and districts
- (d) the first Tax Recovery Act in 1919 to facilitate impounding of land, etc., where taxes were in arrears
- (e) a Border Areas Act in 1921, respecting the administration of Lloydminster
- (f) a Drainage District Act in 1921 under Public Works to provide for a locally elected council and a provincial drainage council to guide and fund drainage improvements in rural areas
- (g) citizen advisory councils established in Banff in 1921 and in Jasper in 1927
- (h) the establishment of a board in 1927 to administer the Tilley East Area (Special Areas)
- (i) the Town of Lloydminster, Saskatchewan and the Village of Lloydminster, Alberta amalgamated into a central municipal authority in 1930
- (j) an Act passed in 1932 to introduce taxation of pipelines and well casings for provincial purposes.

The first Town Planning Act, passed in 1913, contained provision for planning schemes to be approved through by-law of municipal councils and ratified by the Minister of Municipal Affairs.⁸ Part of the purpose of this Act was an attempt to control land speculation; the municipality was entitled to recover one-half of the amount of the increase in land value resulting from the scheme.

There was no action in respect to planning schemes, even with the preparation in 1915 of regulations to facilitate them. Responsibility for the planning function was transferred to the Department of Public Works with the passage of the Town Planning and Preservation of Natural Beauty Act in 1928. Its impetus came from Premier Brownlee, inspired by a visit to Europe, and the United Farm Women of Alberta who wanted to protect the countryside from commercialization – billboards, gas stations and the like. This Act which did not rescind the 1913 Act, did provide for a Provincial Planning Advisory Board. A director of town planning was hired, and in 1929 a new and substantially improved Act was passed, repealing the Acts of 1913 and 1928. The origins of the present land use planning system are found in this new Town Planning Act. Important components that survive today include: ideas concerning preservation of natural beauty; effective planning and zoning enabling legislation; and a comprehensive system of local, regional and provincial planning instruments and agencies.⁹ By 1932 when the director's position became vacant, 20 planning commissions

and the provincial board were established. Accomplishments at the municipal level were limited to the adoption of zoning bylaws in 19 municipalities by 1937. Responsibility for planning shifted to Municipal Affairs with the new Act in 1929, to Public Works in 1934 and back to Municipal Affairs in 1948.

MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AS OF 1922



Source: Alberta Culture Departmental History Series, Municipal Affairs 1984

On January 1, 1922 there were 95 permanent and eight part-time staff in the department.

DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

The formal annual reports are relatively silent on the organization structure and staffing of the department in this period. The 1915 Annual Report was unique in that it had some pictures including ones of the Minister, the Deputy, the chief clerk, cashier, three inspectors and a wild lands tax clerk. By 1920 the department was administering the municipal Acts, Educational Tax Act, Wild Lands Tax Act, Municipal District Seed Grain Act, Municipal District Relief Act, the Municipality Finances Commission Act, Soldiers Home Tax Exemption Act, the Subdivided and Other Properties Act and the Tax Recovery Act. On January 1, 1922 there were 95 permanent and eight part-time staff which dropped to 76 permanent and four part-time staff by 1924 and to 68 permanent staff by 1926.

References to Chapter 7

1. John Perrie in his report of 1914 noted that indifference of electors can be a problem but was gratified "that more and more attention is being given by local organizations to matters of public health, safety, social and general welfare of the people of the county".
2. Department of Municipal Affairs, 1916 Annual Report, p.30.
3. *Story of Rural Municipal Government in Alberta, 1909 to 1983*, AAMD & C, as recounted in the history of County of Vermilion River in respect to L.I.D., 36-C-4, p. 269.
4. *The Edmonton Charter* (Office Consolidation) Chapter 23 of the Statutes of Alberta, 1913, p. 150.
5. T. J. Plunkett and G. M. Betts, *The Management of Canadian Urban Government*, p. 22.
6. Department of Municipal Affairs, 1923 Annual Report.
7. *ibid.*, 1917 Annual Report.
8. This first Alberta Planning Act had its roots in the 1909 British Housing and Town Planning Act and was more or less a copy of the New Brunswick Town Planning Act of 1912. See *The Origins of Urban Land Use Planning in Alberta, 1900-1945* by J. David Hulchanski, University of Toronto, 1981, p. 20.
9. J. D. Hulchanski, *op. cit.* p. 35.

Chapter 8

1937 – RELIEF WAS A BURDEN



INTRODUCTION

A review of the annual reports of conventions of the two municipal organizations in Alberta dating from 1928 to 1937 indicates that the key concern was taxation. Not only was it a time of drought and very poor crops but of low prices for agricultural commodities. Some of the responsibilities of local government to provide welfare and health services for their residents were not seen as a problem under normal conditions. But now they were financially starved. Mr. A. Smeaton, a councillor from Lethbridge and president of the Union of Alberta Municipalities, in his speech to their convention in June 1937, summarized the situation in this way:

So today in 1937, the main issues agitating the minds of our municipal councillors...(are) questions of relief and the almost impossible financial burden imposed on the municipalities, particularly cities and larger towns, by the refusal of the federal and provincial governments to assume an obligation which is rightfully theirs.¹

The subjects of discussion at the convention of the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts also dealt in the main with the financial condition of

their member municipalities. The history of this period, as written by rural municipalities, tells of fish, beans, cheese and apples being donated from out of the province and that relief payments were the heaviest expenditure of many municipalities. The recorder of the history for the M.D. of Spirit River wrote:

“All other expenditures were kept to a bare minimum in order that welfare and health services could be provided.”¹²



Displays such as this one during Stettler Better Health Days (1937) demonstrate the importance of health and welfare during this time. Due to the economic conditions and lack of support from other orders of government, the essentials of health and welfare were the major areas of expenditure for the financially stricken municipalities.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Photograph Collection A10767.

Another element that should be mentioned in an introduction to the “snapshot” of 1937 is that the Social Credit party formed the government in provincial elections in 1935. The Ministers were new to their task and their relationships with municipal officials, municipal associations and staff in their own departments needed time to develop. In some ways, relationships were strained. Requests for legislation by municipal associations in 1936 initially went unanswered but many new and amending Acts were eventually enacted. But the difficult time which all were going through had its purpose. “If we are to profit by the knowledge and wisdom we have thus so dearly purchased we must proceed to build a sounder social structure”. (Paul L. Fernalls, President of the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts, 1938 Convention Programme.)

MUNICIPALITIES

The number and type of municipalities in the province were relatively static in the 1930's and population shifts were relatively minor.

Estimated Population, 1933 – 37*

Year	Cities	Towns	Villages	Municipal Districts
1933	193,819	50,628	36,113	368,569
1934	194,453	50,946	37,256	374,779
1935	198,382	50,998	36,994	374,401
1936	199,434	48,951	35,626	348,296
1937	201,327	51,415	36,184	377,294

*1936 Dominion Census data is used for 1936.

Figure 1.5

There were some increases in total population of the seven cities and 158 municipal districts but population remained constant in the villages and towns. The number of municipalities in 1936 and 1937 with comparisons for 1905 and 1912 are presented below:

Number of Municipalities

	1905	1912	1936	1937
Cities	2	5	7	7
Towns	15	46	52	53
Villages	30	73	146	146
Rural Municipalities		55	161	158
Active I.D.'s*		240		

*Districts where taxes were actually levied

Figure 1.6

DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

In 1937 the department was responsible for the administration of about 20 different Acts, plus nearly 40 other Acts which had some bearing on its work. The Acts which were of greatest concern to municipalities at this time, at least as seen through the association conventions, were the group of 40, especially those relating to public health and relief.

UNION OF ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES

The 1937 convention of the Union of Alberta Municipalities was held at the Macdonald Hotel in Edmonton on June 10 and 11. The room rate was \$2.50 per day, \$3.50 with bath. Of the 44 delegates, 30 were locally elected officials, eight were municipal officials and six were provincial employees. The main concerns related to the long depression. To quote the Vice President of the Union in an address to the convention:

"The burden of unemployment and its concomitant evils is more than we can bear."⁴

A second concern was that provincially elected officials were not responding to submissions, to requests for draft bills or to calls for meetings with the association executive. Another matter surfaced strongly at the convention: "A number of delegates came here specifically for this purpose, to get taxation of Calgary Power"⁵. The mill rate at that time on transmission lines was a very nominal five mills levied by the province with only 10-15 percent being passed on to municipalities. Solutions to the issues of the day ranged from "pluck the necessary feathers where they can be obtained with the minimum of squawking"⁶ to a presentation made by Calgary alderman entitled "Farm Settlement as a Solution of Unemployment"⁷. Calgary's problem was that of a population of 83,000 people, some 3,080 families were on married relief receiving an average of \$500 per year. Its tax rate of 52 mills was one of the highest rates in Canada and assessment had dropped from \$129 million to \$57 million. Some of its relief bill was capitalized that year. Both Edmonton and Calgary had to ask for adjustment to their bonded obligations to avoid bankruptcy. In addition to the normal pattern of resolutions for provincial action, the concerns of municipally elected officials in 1937 and 1938 were also channelled federally in response to Ottawa's establishing a Royal Commission "to investigate the whole system of taxation in the Dominion".



Lucien Maynard — Minister of Municipal Affairs 1937-1943. Mr. Maynard ran unsuccessfully as an Independent in the December 11, 1985 by-elections in Edmonton Whitemud.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Photograph Collection A2764.



Residents of urban areas were faced with numerous problems. These workers are staging a hunger march in Calgary (1932) protesting unemployment and the necessity of accepting charity.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Photograph Collection A9216.

Of the 17 resolutions passed in 1937, the main ones were:

1. A brief be prepared aimed to the Royal Commission via a provincial committee on the whole field of taxation insofar as it affected municipalities, with particular reference to: real property being taxed for services rendered to it; allocation of social service responsibility going with adequate revenue; and a division of the field of taxation regarding to ability to pay.
2. Municipal responsibility for social services be limited with the excess borne by the provincial government. It should be clarified that during the 1930's municipalities were partly or wholly responsible for a number of functions which are now with the provincial or the federal government. This includes mothers' allowances, mental defectives hospitalization, tubercular patients, health districts, old age pensions, direct unemployment relief and care for indigents and neglected children.
3. A provincial Public Works Program be initiated employing those presently on relief.
4. Assessment and mill rates for power companies be the same as for rail companies.
5. Town and village councillors be elected for three years with two elected each year rather than three elected each year for two years.

6. "The federal or provincial governments should be approached regarding the provision of a home for Aged Indigent Women, who are alone in the world with no one to care for them".
7. The 1936 amendments to the Relief and Public Welfare Act be reversed, returning to the province the responsibilities of relief payments to transients. In addition, the residency requirement be standardized to one year before a municipality would provide social services. (The potential recipient would be either self-supporting or a provincial responsibility in the first year.)
8. A special resolution presented to the convention on behalf of four Edmonton groups (Chamber of Commerce, etc.) requesting "remedial legislation in the form of a uniform city charter defining the sphere of municipal government and the scope of municipal taxation" was approved. A key concern was a fair sharing of social service responsibilities with municipal access to income, poll, household and service taxes.

ALBERTA ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS

The annual convention of the rural municipalities was held in Edmonton in November 1937. For this association the year 1937 began with a meeting of its executive and the premier and several members of the Cabinet in January. The 40 resolutions from its 1936 convention were presented. The government agreed to provide formal answers. As of October 1937 none had been received. The 1936 resolutions focussed, as might be expected, on the financial burdens and difficulties in administering social welfare programs. Their position was not one of centralizing or transferring responsibility. Because of their local view, they believed they could more wisely deal with the distribution of income related benefits where some discretion was required.

The agenda for the 1937 convention ultimately passed 51 resolutions. Most were in some way related to social welfare programs and the flow of revenue to the municipality. They often mirrored the resolutions of the urban municipalities but in addition, expressed concern or proposed action on: tree cover in rural areas, tax arrears and land sale, imprisonment of fathers who neglect child support payments, road restrictions in poor weather, sharing of bridge upgrading cost, a 50 percent share of vehicle license fees including bus licenses, a \$4.00 annual poll tax on farm workers, provincial payments to Doukhobours and Metis, extension of right to vote, elimination of taxes on land put back into grass, support for a national wheat board and a reduction in the interest rates which were two percent to eight percent higher than in eastern Canada. The resolutions from this convention were discussed with the government on January 26, 1938 "with

the majority of cabinet being present". It was reportedly a good meeting and full consideration was promised. Indeed, a review of the formal responses by the government in October 1938 indicated that at least three-quarters of the resolutions were supported with most of them actually legislated in 1938.



Residents of rural municipalities were no better off than their urban counterparts. The end of this period was a time of drought, poor crops and low prices for agricultural commodities. These farmers from St. Paul are demonstrating in Edmonton (1932) for government aid.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Photograph Collection A2285.

LEGISLATION

New legislation relevant to municipalities was minimal in 1937. The City Charters for Wetaskiwin, Red Deer, Calgary and Edmonton were amended – a variety of minor matters. The Municipal Districts Act was amended in respect to administration of land in tax arrears, a \$5.00 per diem for elected officials, an option of three year terms for councils and ministerial approval was now required on some by-laws. There were minor adjustments to tax recovery and tax arrears consolidation Acts, Acts to ratify agreements between two towns and an adjoining rural municipality to provide hospital facilities and an Act to provide a mechanism for the Magrath Irrigation District to achieve financial stability. There was an Act in effect for one year to guarantee any municipal or school board bank loans. A Planning Act amendment required the approval of the Town and Rural Planning Advisory Board for subdivisions with more than 10 lots. Undoubtedly, a lot of work was going on behind the scenes. In 1938 legislation was adopted in respect to relief, Metis settlements and Special Areas.

Bretton Alta June 14/37

Dept of Municipal Affairs
Edmonton

Dear Sir:- I would
like to know if I can
consolidate my taxes
as I am out of work
for over five years
and that is why I am
unable to keep up with
my taxes.

I am not trying to
get out of paying but
I did not get any
relief of any kind.
hoping to hear from
you.

I remain

P.S.
Sincerely Arthur W. Blair
as small Payne Bretton
as you can make. Alta
a.B.

People, especially farmers, were often not able to pay their taxes. This letter is typical of the vast number the Department received requesting consolidation of taxes which allowed people to make payments on the total accumulated taxes they owed.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: 78.133 944b

It would likely be a fair summary to say that the year 1937 was the most difficult of all for most municipalities in their history. Crops were poor, prices low, the provincial treasury bare, municipal relations with the province at the elected level strained, mill rates as low as they could be dropped and relief demands great.

References to Chapter 8

1. Union of Alberta Municipalities, Report of the Proceedings of the 33rd Convention, June 10 –11, 1937, p. 36.
2. *Story of Rural Government in Alberta*, 1909 to 1983, AAMD & C, p. 515.
3. Jack Masson, in his recent book on local government, provides an interesting account of how the strong anti-party bias of the new Social Credit elected in 1935 led to some conflicts with municipally elected officials. One of the positions of the movement or party was for recall of an elected member of the legislature upon a petition signed by a stated percentage of all the voters in the constituency. Five municipal councillors who successfully ran in the December 1935 provincial election were previously required to sign documents agreeing to vote as a bloc and espouse Social Credit principles in the administration of their municipality. Premier Aberhart gave them written and verbal instructions on how to vote, e.g. against an increase in municipal unemployment relief and, in respect to three of the councillors from Calgary, against a proposal of their council to tax provincial businesses. In the meantime, the position of the party led to the passage in March of 1936, of “An Act Providing for the Recall of Members of the Legislative Assembly”. Three of the five bolted and were expelled from the party. Attempts to recall the Mayor of Taber, one of the five, were unsuccessful when it was noted that the Act required “66 $\frac{2}{3}$ ” percent of the voters to sign the petition. In the summer of 1937 “a coalition of Liberals and Conservatives in Premier Aberhart’s district of Okotoks – High River made an attempt to recall him. “In October 1937, the Act was quietly repealed and the repeal was made retroactive to April 3, 1936, to ensure that the attempt to recall the Premier was doomed to failure”. (Masson, p. 337-8).
4. Union of Alberta Municipalities, 1937 Convention Proceedings, p. 12.
5. *ibid.*, p. 75.
6. *ibid.*, p. 64 in a presentation entitled “Equitable Taxation” by A. E. Ottewell, Registrar of the University of Alberta.
7. *ibid.*, p. 79. In fact, there was a national farm settlement program already in place. From its initiation in Alberta in 1933 to October 1936 there were 681 families placed on farms with 456 families still on the land (p. 81).

Chapter Nine

1937 TO 1962 – CONSOLIDATION THEN GROWTH

INTRODUCTION

The period 1937 to 1962 has two over-arching themes. The first is consolidation of school districts, municipal districts, improvement districts, and school and municipal functions into counties, and of city charters into a City Act. The second theme is a response to the very rapid growth of the province with substantially revised planning legislation, a New Towns Act and new arrangements for municipal financing.

SPECIAL AREAS¹

The drought conditions of the 1930's were especially damaging to the unique farming area in southeast central Alberta. By 1938 there were six special areas that represented districts where impoverished municipal and school districts were disorganized and each was put under the administration of a provincially appointed "fieldman". The Special Areas Act of 1938 consolidated administration under a three person board with powers of a municipal council. Previous attempts to give assistance to this area were sporadic and split between a variety of jurisdictions. The board was very effective in the objectives of assisting people in relocating, increasing average farm size, regrassing (only five percent of the area is deemed profitable for wheat production), increasing water storage and the like. Responsibility for the Special Areas was transferred from Municipal Affairs to Lands and Mines in 1938 and transferred back in 1948. An advisory council of 18, appointed by the minister, was established to assist the board in 1939 and held its first meeting in January, 1940.

Population of Special Areas

	Rural	Urban
1921	3,658	26,031
1936	3,038	14,967
1961	5,256	8,799

Figure 1.7

Revenue of Special Areas (\$000)

	Taxes	Rents	Mineral	Grants
1941	421	96	—	170 +
1961	1,745	633	23	271

Figure 1.8

METIS SETTLEMENTS

In response to a lobby of the provincial legislature by a Metis association the province appointed a commission in 1934 to conduct an enquiry into the living conditions of the Metis people in Alberta. The report of the "Half-Breed Commission" or Ewing Commission in 1936 noted "an unfortunate state of affairs" including hunger, very limited health services, no schooling, inadequate accommodations and poverty. The commission recommended that the Government of Alberta develop schemes for settlement of members of the association in colonies for purposes of "agriculture and particularly stock raising"² and to assist the Metis with education and health problems. On November 22, 1938 the Metis Population Betterment Act was passed providing for colonies as recommended. The Metis formed settlement associations and developed constitutions for management of affairs. Twelve settlements were also created – eight of these in 1939. Four settlements were subsequently disbanded but there are still eight active settlements. Metis matters were initially a responsibility of the Minister of Public Health. It established a Metis Development Branch in 1944. The branch was transferred to Municipal Affairs in 1980, and in this year the name 'colony' was changed to 'settlement'.

SCHOOLS

In 1936 legislation was passed to enable the amalgamation of school districts into larger school divisions. In some instances up to 60 districts (in rural areas, villages or towns) were combined into one division. The 3,771 school districts of 1936 were combined into fifty divisions by 1941.

School government is an important form of local government and warrants considerable attention. However, an adequate explanation of the evolving pattern of jurisdictions would be lengthy and school matters have been the focus of a recent Department of Education report and hearings involving the presentation of over 350 briefs. For the purposes of this report it would be sufficient to say that as of 1960-61 there were the following type and number of school jurisdictions in Alberta:

Public School Boards	
Counties	17
Divisions	42
Independent Districts*	
Cities	9
Other	60

Figure 1.9

Separate School Boards	9
Independent Districts*	77
Cities	28
Other	<u>28</u>
Consolidated School Boards	
Total	242

*Districts that have not been unified into school divisions or counties. They are composed of city, town and village districts.



The first Local Improvement District Advisory Council (I.D. 10 now M.D. 99) is shown here in 1957 with the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The concern for and involvement with self-government in these areas were well established long before an official organization was formed in 1975. In fact, the statute labor and fire districts were the forerunners of the Local Improvement Districts. Left to right: (back) C. Skocdople, S. Forsyth, A. Robinson, A.R. Isbister; (front) C. MacGregor, H. James, A.J. Hooke, A.W. Morrison, E. Osterman.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Public Affairs Collection PA2538/1

MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS AND IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

Amendments to the Municipal District Act in 1941 and to the Improvement Districts Act in 1942 promoted the establishment of larger districts. There were 143 municipal districts in 1941, 133 in 1942, 60 in 1944 and 28 in 1962. Of the 216 improvement districts in 1941, 50 remained in 1962.

PLANNING

The Planning Act of 1929, while an advanced piece of legislation when enacted, needed revision to accommodate the growth of the province after

World War II. Amendments in 1948³ provided for interim control of development not under a zoning bylaw (that is, municipal council decision on each development application and at that time ministerial approval as well). They enabled a municipality to require building permits for new construction. As a result of the large amount of activity in and around the City of Edmonton, additional amendments were passed in 1950. While the 1929 Act was in response to concerns about conservation and public nuisances, the impetus now was to achieve an efficient pattern of physical development by ensuring that the necessary physical infrastructure was in place and that enough land was available. Technical planning boards could be established to assist municipal councils. District planning commissions, first provided for in a way in 1929, could be formed upon initiative of area municipalities. The first district (now regional) planning commission was established in the Edmonton area in 1950 and others followed: Calgary – 1951; Red Deer – 1952; Medicine Hat – 1954; Oldman – 1955; Peace River – 1958; and Battle River – 1960. The Cities of Edmonton and Calgary established town planning departments in 1949 and 1950 respectively. The focus of planning was on zoning bylaws, interim development control and subdivision development using provincial regulations to “replot” old subdivisions of vacant or mostly vacant land and to create residential areas based on the concept of a neighborhood unit.

In 1953 the Act was reorganized and rewritten for clarity. To speed processing, subdivision approving authority was extended to the Edmonton and Calgary District Planning Commissions. The following table, taken from M. Gordon and J. D. Hulchanski, *The Evolution of Land Use Planning Process in Alberta, 1945-1984*, summarizes the nature and extent of planning activity in the province in the period 1944-61.

LAND USE PLANNING IN ALBERTA 1944-1961

	Subdivisions Approved	New Zoning Bylaws	Town Plans or General Plans	Interim Development Orders
1944	109	6	-	-
1945	191	13	-	-
1946	244	2	-	-
1947	43	4	1	-
1948	282	na	-	-
1949	326	8	-	-
1950	335	2	-	1
1951	340	13	-	13
1952	462	3	1	6
1953	696	4	1	3
1954	614	11	1	2
1955	680	7	-	14
1956	701	8	-	na
1957	863	15	1	8
1958	912	7	-	-
1959	1,103	10	-	22
1960	755	na	na	14
1961	774	104	na	10

Source: Province of Alberta, *Alberta Reports of the Department of Municipal Affairs* 1951-1961, and *Annual Reports of the Department of Public Works* 1944-1951.

Note: Figures are for the year beginning April 1 and ending March 31.

Figure 1.10

It is interesting to note that the Provincial Planning Advisory Board sponsored the first Alberta Planners Conference in 1955 as well as the first national planners conference, with seven provinces represented, in 1956.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON TAXATION, 1948

By order of the Lieutenant Governor in Council dated July 22, 1947 a one-man commission was established to make “an inquiry into the taxation imposed by the Province and by municipalities, urban and rural, pursuant to any power of taxation under any statute of the Province” and in particular to:

1. allocation of responsibility to provincial and to municipal government
2. revenue distribution to enable discharge of responsibility
3. present measures to simplify and make equitable the tax system
4. examine municipal revenues and expenditures including reference to schools, hospitals, social services and public works as well as municipal assessment and taxation.



J.W. Judge was the Department's Deputy Minister from 1944 to 1956. In 1948, Judge was appointed the Commissioner on Taxation, an issue of great concern during the earlier part of this period. Judge later became head of the Alberta Municipal Financing Committee.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Public Affairs Collection PA778/1

The commissioner was J. W. Judge, the Deputy Minister of the Department of Municipal Affairs. He and his two assistants, from outside the department, heard a total of 66 briefs throughout Alberta. His 90 page report, presented in 1948, contained 26 recommendations. Six related to assessment, including a broader role for the province in assessments and payment in lieu of taxes on crown properties. Four related to school funding – that there be a minimum school grant of \$6.85 million annually and an additional annual grant of \$1.65 million. There were seven recommendations in regard to the distribution of the cost of various social services: indigent relief, hospital and medical care, mothers allowance and child welfare proposed to be 20 percent municipal and 80 percent provincial, homes for the aged at 50-50 percent, and old age and blind pensions and mental illness expenses be a wholly provincial responsibility. There were four recommendations respecting roads. Two of these proposed that provincial highways in towns and villages be built and maintained by the province and that municipalities receive 25 percent of the motor vehicle license and fuel oil tax revenues. Finally, repeal of two Acts, the Wild Lands Tax Act and the Crown Cultivation Leases Act, was recommended as was the appointment of a permanent tax commission and a co-terminous boundaries committee.

Determination of the extent or date of the implementation of each of these recommendations was not made. However, in the few years immediately following, legislation passed by the province did reflect the thrust of the conclusions that the local tax base was limited; the province must accept a greater responsibility for public welfare; and the need for effective local administration. The 1954 annual report for the Department of Municipal Affairs noted “His (J. W. Judge) report in 1948 had much to do in shaping the present municipal structure of finance and taxation”.

ASSESSMENT

To recap some history with regard to assessment, the Supplementary Revenue Act of 1918 called for the establishment of the Alberta Assessment Equalization Board. Its role was to assist in insuring an equitable funding mechanism for school construction based on local tax assessments. The first chairman of the five member board, appointed in 1920, was the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs. The powers of the board were expanded in 1922 and again in 1929 when it was renamed the Assessment Equalization Board. Its 1929 role was to hear appeals from a court of revision, establish equalized assessments and generally advise the Minister. In 1935 a Director of Assessment and Inspectors was given power to hear and determine appeals from a court of revision, establish equalized assessments and

enter on any land, inspect and make new assessments. The new government transferred responsibility from the Alberta Assessment Commission to the Public Utilities Board in late 1935. Assessment of industry, and power and pipelines were the subject of Acts in 1925 and 1937, and 1929 and 1933 respectively. The Assessment Act of 1938 provided for a uniform approach to be used by all local governments, I.D.'s and Special Areas (except cities). Some specifics included farmland being pegged for assessment purposes at \$15 per acre, the exemption of farm buildings, other buildings in rural areas at 66 $\frac{2}{3}$ percent of fair actual value and buildings in urban areas (except cities) at 0-100 percent of value as directed by council. In the years to follow the assessment manuals were updated and expanded including revisions to the farmland base and the base year to be used for construction costs. In 1949 the Department of Municipal Affairs began a policy of preparing assessments for municipalities upon request. This marked the beginning of a marked increase in the assessment staff – from a few needed to do assessments in areas under provincial jurisdiction to a staff of 37 by 1952, of which 24 were assessors.



The Assessment Equalization Board in 1958, the year after amendments to legislation provided for its establishment. The Equalization Board is responsible for factoring to a common level of value all property assessments in the province. Left to right: E.J. Hanson, J.B. Laidlaw, J.H. Toderick.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Public Affairs Collection PA2535/1

In 1957 amendments to assessment legislation provided for two boards:

1. Alberta Assessment Appeal Board which had duties and responsibilities transferred to it from the Public Utilities Board; and

2. Alberta Assessment Equalization Board.

Also, the Industries Assessment Act of 1937 was repealed. Special concessions could no longer be granted to new industries. In 1958 land was to be at 100 percent and buildings at 60 percent of fair actual value. There was a levy of four mills on equalized assessments for hospitals. In 1961 municipalities could exempt manufacturing machinery and equipment as a source of municipal tax revenue although assessments were required for equalized assessment purposes. In the same year, the School Foundation Program, 32 mills on equalized assessment, was instituted. Valuation of provincial property was initiated in order that grants-in-lieu of taxes could be paid. The Electric Power and Pipeline Assessment Act allowed, for the first time since 1929, the taxation of pipe and power lines by rural municipalities and eliminated the restrictive rate of 10 mills levied by urban municipalities.

1950

CHAPTER 15.

An Act to provide for the Establishment of Local Government Units to be Known as Counties.

(Assented to April 5, 1950.)

COUNTY ACT

The County Act of 1950 gave responsibility for both the school and municipal functions to the same elected council. Some of the preliminary proposals by the Minister of Municipal Affairs had also included responsibility for hospitals by the county government but this was excluded from the final legislation. There was to be a county board of education consisting of not less than three members of the county council and a number of school representatives elected to the board on the basis of educational units.

One of the motivating forces for the movement to the county form was the frustration which municipal districts had in holding down taxes with increasingly higher requisitions coming from hospital and school districts.⁴ The development of closer relationships between these bodies was initiated in 1946 when legislation required school boards and local council to send a member to each others meetings.

HIS MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Alberta, enacts as follows:

Short Title.

1. This Act may be cited as "The County Act". Short title

Interpretation.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—
 (a) "Minister" means the Minister of Municipal Affairs; Interpretation
Minister
 (b) "municipality" means any municipal district, improvement district or special area; "municipality"

Formation of Counties.

3.—(1) The number of counties to be formed pursuant to the provisions of this Act shall not exceed four. Number of counties
 (2) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may proceed to form a county in any area pursuant to the provisions of section 4 only after receiving a resolution to do so from the council of a municipality or from the board of a school division which comprises the major part of the said area. Formation of counties
 (3) Immediately after the expiration of four years from the date of the formation of any county the county council shall conduct a plebiscite of the electors to determine whether they are in favour of the continuation of the county or whether they desire to revert to the previous form of government. Plebiscite re continuation of county
 (4) The Lieutenant Governor in Council shall make such regulations and orders and shall do all things necessary to give effect to the decision of the electors as determined by the plebiscite. Regulations giving effect to plebiscite
 4.—(1) The Lieutenant Governor in Council from time to time by order may,— Lieutenant Governor in Council may
 (a) establish in any area a local government unit to be known as "The County of _____", No _____, "county and its boundaries"
 and fix its boundaries;

First provided for in 1950, counties, like municipal districts, are responsible for governing rural residents of an area. However, a county has the additional responsibility of school functions of both the rural and urban areas within its boundaries.

The first two counties were incorporated in 1951, and by 1962 there were 20 counties. Only one county has reverted to its previous municipal district form, the County of Sturgeon in 1965.

CITIES ACT

One of the outcomes from the royal commission on provincial-municipal relations, established in 1947, was the adoption in 1951 of the City Act. The system of separate city charters requiring almost annual amendments by the provincial legislature was done away with. The seven cities in existence at that time were now under one Act.⁵ Camrose became a city in 1955, Grande Prairie in 1958 and Lloydminster in 1958.

MUNICIPAL ASSISTANCE GRANT

In 1951 a system of unconditional grants to all municipalities was introduced. Originally, responsibility was given to the Provincial Treasurer but perhaps because of difficulties in devising a uniform formula to allocate funds as proposed, the responsibility was transferred to Municipal Affairs. A new Municipal Assistance Act was passed in 1953 providing for a fund equal to 50 percent of the fuel oil tax. The allotment was divided into two parts, urban and rural, and distributed unconditionally to urban areas on the basis of population and to rural areas on the basis of area and population.

LOAN ASSISTANCE

In 1950 the province passed an Act to provide for loans to be issued out of its general revenue to municipalities. The funds, restricted to self-liquidating projects, were provided at an interest rate of two percent. A total of five million dollars was authorized. In 1953 the Municipal Capital Expenditures Loans Act established a \$100 million loan fund with \$25 million allocated to the first year. The interest rate was set at three and one-half percent. In 1956 the Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation (AMFC) was established. It was to be "a non-profit corporation to assist in municipal financing by purchase and sale of municipal securities at lowest possible cost, and to provide a convenient and accessible means to the people of the province of investing in the debentures and other securities of provincial municipalities".⁶ Its first president and chairman (1956-62) was J.W. Judge. The source of funds was initially the Alberta Treasury. This was supplemented by outside or general bond market sources in the period 1959 to 1970. In 1966 the province began assigning much of its share of Canada Pension Plan funds to the AMFC, and in 1977 the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund became a source of funds. To date the Corporation has loaned \$7.6 billion.



The Co-Terminous Boundary Commission, shown here in 1954, had the task of decreasing the overlapping boundaries of the numerous local government areas, i.e. school, hospital, municipal, etc., and to make them more coterminous. Left to right: unknown, A. Morrison, unknown, M. MacKay, unknown. R. Brown.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Public Affairs Collection PA3173/1

CO-TERMINOUS BOUNDARIES COMMISSION

Following another of the recommendations of the 1948 Commission on Taxation, a Co-Terminous Boundary Commission was appointed on March 2, 1953. Its role was to review the boundaries of school administration and local government to increase the extent to which they were co-terminous. The problem of overlapping boundaries was especially bothersome in southern Alberta. The five member commission prepared three interim, and a fourth and final report in December 1954.

As a result of this commission's work, 57 counties and municipal districts became 50 governing units of which 36 were entirely co-terminous with education boundaries. In the other 14 municipal districts the school districts were somewhat larger containing area within adjoining improvement districts or the Special Areas.

NEW TOWNS

Oil exploration and discoveries in the late 1940's and 1950's brought a need to develop new communities. Initially, the Provincial Planning Advisory Board was actively involved, e.g. development of the Drayton Valley

Plan in 1953 and 1954. In 1956 the New Towns Act was passed. It provided for a provincially appointed board of one to seven people, with powers similar to a municipal council, to guide development of (new) towns experiencing unusually high growth, without a viable tax base in the early years of development. Provision was made for the province to assume responsibility for debenture debt until incorporation and budgets were to be approved, as of 1961, by the Local Authorities Board. The communities that were designated as new towns included Cynthia in 1956 (reverted to hamlet in 1959), Drayton Valley in 1956 (a town in 1957), Hinton in 1956 (a town in 1958), Lodgepole in 1956 (a hamlet in 1970), St. Albert in 1957 (a town in 1962 and a city in 1977), Swan Hills in 1959 (a town in 1967) and Whitecourt in 1961 (a town in 1971). Five additional communities were designated as new towns in the 1960's – Fort McMurray, High Level, Grande Cache, Rainbow Lake and Fox Creek.

MISCELLANEOUS

There were several other items in the 1950's related to local government that warrant mention:

- (a) Royal Commission on the Metropolitan Development of Calgary and Edmonton was appointed on July 19, 1954. The five member commission, headed by G. F. McNally, held 21 days of public hearings in Calgary and 47 days in Edmonton. Its recommendations, tabled on February 16, 1956, related mostly to matters of municipal boundaries.
- (b) The Alberta Housing Act of 1955 provided a means by which municipalities could obtain financial and technical assistance from provincial and federal governments to develop their public housing and urban renewal schemes.
- (c) The Municipal Winter Works Incentive Program, initiated by the federal government in 1958, involved several hundred projects in Alberta municipalities each year prior to its discontinuation in 1968. It was reported that within three months of the inception of this program some 350,000 people were employed under it across Canada – positive testimony of local government responsiveness.
- (d) In 1961 the Local Authorities Board was established to relieve some of the increased responsibilities of the Public Utilities Board.



The more prosperous times of the province are characterized by an increased emphasis on finances. The Board of the Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation, shown here in 1957, was responsible for providing assistance in municipal borrowing. Left to right: J.W. Judge, E.J. Hanson, A. Ellis, K. Hawkins, C.P. Hayes, J. Hodgson.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Public Affairs Collection PA956/1

In the 25 year period 1937 to 1962, the financial condition of the province had changed considerably. When the Social Credit government took over in September 1935 there was not enough in the government's bank account to pay the wages and salaries of its employees for the month of October. In 1936 the province defaulted on \$3.6 million of debt and passed legislation which had the effect of cutting in half the interest on its remaining debt. One can understand the lack of provincial response in 1936 and 1937 to municipal requests for financial assistance. By the late 1940's the province was approaching a debt free situation – indeed a surplus was beginning to build. Thereafter, the focus of provincial-municipal relationships had shifted to the financial, planning and administrative (government form and municipal boundaries) aspects of accommodating growth.

References to Chapter Nine

1. For a history of Special Areas see L.S. Martin, *Special Areas of Alberta, Origins and Development*, prepared for Gordon Taylor, M.L.A., 1977. Another history, prepared under the auspices of the Special Areas Board, will be available in 1986. These histories would refer in detail to earlier legislation such as the Tilley East and Berry Creek Areas Act of 1935.
2. A history of the Metis in Alberta includes Metis settlements involving Father Lacombe at Lac Ste. Anne and St. Albert about 1860 and a request by Father Lacombe for a settlement, agreed to by the federal government in 1895-96 near the present town of St. Paul. The new settlement had some initial successes. However, a fire destroyed their school in 1905 and there were some crop failures. In 1909 it was decided to open the area to non-Metis settlers. It was a decision made not by the Metis settlers or by the government, but it seems by the members of the church corporation holding the 99 year lease on behalf of the Metis. They were persuaded, perhaps by the federal government as suggested by Grant MacEwan, to open the four townships to accommodate a group of French Canadians. The St. Paul Des Metis Reserve was officially opened for homesteads on April 10, 1909. See pages 134 to 137 in *Metis Makers of History* by Grant MacEwan, 1981.
3. In 1948 the responsibility for the planning function was transferred back to Municipal Affairs where it remains presently.
4. Jack Masson, *op. cit.*, p. 93.
5. The City Act also placed the cities under provincial assessment legislation although the City of Edmonton was allowed to keep residential dwellings at 50 percent with all other buildings at 60 percent of fair actual value. The combined population of the seven cities in 1951 was 341,957.
6. Statutes of Alberta, 5 Elizabeth II, 1956, p. 13.

Chapter Ten**1962 – CONTINUING GROWTH****INTRODUCTION**

The year 1962 was one of continuing prosperity. From an agricultural point of view it was excellent, even better than the previous good years. The oil patch was strong and oil based revenues accruing to the provincial treasury were high. Many municipalities were continuing to grow (Alberta had the highest provincial rate of population increase in the 1951-61 period at 42 percent). The President of the Union of Alberta Municipalities noted in his October 1961 annual convention speech that “we have lived in a very flushed economy in the last 15 years”. The Director of the Department’s Municipal Inspection Branch summarized 1962 as a very busy year “so much so that for the first time in a number of years inspectors have been unable to complete an inspection of each and every one of the 300 municipalities in the Province”. But there were tensions and concerns. Municipal officials were concerned with the increasing use of the property tax as a base for financing local services. Not only were they finding it difficult to pay for the costs of growth, but in 1961 the province had instituted the School Foundation Program that required municipalities to collect and forward to the province 32 mills on equalized assessment. Municipal requests for more funding, especially from “provincial” sources, were rebuffed: “I find it almost beyond comprehension that...trustees, councillors...(are) crying publicly that senior governments should provide more and more of the municipal revenue...; these same people should beware of the threats to local autonomy” (Provincial Treasurer E. W. Hinman, April 1962, Budget Speech).

For the most part, there were many examples of municipal needs being met by a responsive provincial government. This was in part due to the frequent and effective meetings of the Provincial Municipal Advisory Committee.

MUNICIPAL STATISTICS

The number of municipalities and total population by category as of the spring of 1962 was as follows:

9	cities	669,876
90	towns	197,642 ¹
158	villages	49,425
1	Alberta portion of Lloydminster	<u>2,944</u>
258	Total Urban	919,937
20	counties	146,213
28	municipal districts	180,606
49	improvement districts	81,969
2	special areas	<u>8,799</u>
99	Total Rural	417,587
357	Total Alberta ²	1,337,524

¹ Excluding Jasper, Banff and Waterton

² Under the Municipalities Assistance Act.

Figure 1.11

In 1951 the provincial population was equally split between rural and urban but by 1962 the ratio had shifted to 70 percent urban.

PROVINCIAL MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Provincial Municipal Advisory Committee (PMAC) was established by Order-in-Council on January 27, 1959. There were two representatives on the committee from the Union of Alberta Municipalities (UAM), two from the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMD&C), one from government and one other. The government representative was the Minister of Municipal Affairs and the "other" in 1962 was the Minister of Industry. The purpose of the committee was:

"to study and make recommendations to the Government of Alberta upon any matter that affects the economy, good government and welfare of the municipalities and their residents...including any matter (within the above) which the executive of UAM and AAMD&C and Executive Council of the Province may request the board to study".

From its inception to December 1962 the committee held a total of 28 meetings. Subjects discussed included industrial and pipeline assessment (at nine meetings), the School Foundation Program (at three meetings) a local authorities pension plan, hospital districts, exemptions from taxation, county issues and municipal assistance grants. The committee was seen by all participants to be very effective and continued to meet until about 1970.

SCHOOL FOUNDATION PROGRAM

Although the Program was put into effect in 1961 it warrants review because educational financing was probably the most widely debated

municipal issue in 1962. The Program provided for improved funding for schools throughout the province based on general revenues of the province and a levy of 32 mills on equalized assessment. (There was already a levy, as of 1958, of four mills collected for hospital purposes.) In 1961/62 a total of \$103 million was raised for education purposes, consisting of \$52.5 million from the levy of equalized assessment and \$50.5 million from general revenue. Of a total of 200 school boards, 107 were able to balance their budget with the revenues received from the fund, 52 needed a local requisition which did not have the effect of raising the mill rate on equalized assessment and 41 made local requisitions which raised the mill rate on equalized assessment above what it was in 1960.

Municipal responses tended to be in the vein of “we have a serious problem with loading the burden of education financing on the property tax”.¹ Panel discussions at the annual conventions of both associations reviewed various options – sales tax, income tax, etc., in order to generate funds needed to accommodate growth. One of the key defenders of the provincial stance, the Provincial Treasurer, suggested “the alleviation of any discontent may be more readily accomplished by lessening the desire than by catering to the appetites”.² The position of the Minister of Municipal Affairs, A. J. Hooke, was a clearly stated one of cautioning municipalities about going into debt³ and getting involved in things better left to individual enterprise.⁴ While his position wasn’t always accepted⁵, the alternatives of the provincial and federal government raising taxes were not necessarily supported by municipal politicians either: “They can think of so many ways to spend it before it gets back to us”.⁶

THE URBAN COUNTY

As of late 1961, there were 17 counties with three more to come into existence at the beginning of 1962. The Minister of Education, A. O. Aalborg, and the Minister of Municipal Affairs, A. J. Hooke, as well as the head of AAMD&C were highly supportive of the county system. The two Ministers had recently approved the publication of a booklet on the county experience “After Ten Years” and were now very supportive of the extension of the county system into the urban areas. In a radio address in December 1961, Mr. A. J. Hooke argued:

“I believe those who levy local taxes should be the same people as those who decide how local revenues should be spent. I believe it is easier to place responsibility for the level of a mill rate where the same authority is in charge of all local spending.”



Devon (1983) – the only urban county at present. The urban municipality is responsible for municipal and school functions.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Photograph Collection A9681

In order that school trustees and urban councillors might give the urban county concept “their most serious, fair-minded consideration”,⁷ the government enacted the Municipal and School Administration Act in 1962. Later that year, two urban areas held plebiscites on a shift to the county form. In one of the two instances, there was support for the shift and on January 1, 1963, Devon became the first urban county and the only one existing today. Residents of Bowness had opted to retain separate administrations.

ALBERTA ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS AND COUNTIES (AAMD&C)⁸

The 1961 convention, held in November, had a total registration of 586 of which 267 were voting delegates. Often wives of these delegates and other non-voting visitors attended as well. Thirty-three resolutions were approved for submission to the government. (The 1961 convention handbook contained a picture of a Mrs. S. Atkinson, a member of the council of the County of Lacombe, the first woman councillor of a rural municipality.)

The 1961 resolutions were presented to the Premier and some of his Ministers in January 1962. The formal provincial response of July 1962 noted support or action on a number of the resolutions relating to the County Act, assessment appeals, election dates, hospital board representatives, provincial administration of farm loans, discount of prepayment of taxes and municipal rather than provincial ownership of public reserves. A few items relating to the county school committee and the taxation of homes

on small holdings were referred to the PMAC. Several resolutions were rejected – an expansion of the municipal secretaries course to include new councillors, uniform school teacher salaries and more assistance for culvert construction.



The municipal associations continue to play a major part in local government and its related issues. At the 1963 convention of the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties, shown here, education costs were a major topic of discussion.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Public Affairs Collection PA2552/1

The 1962 AAMD&C convention passed 27 of 33 resolutions presented. The provincial response to some was favorable: owners addresses on land titles, a request to not tax farm buildings, workman's compensation for members of municipal boards, dugout locations and title of county chairman to be reeve. Those not supported included a request to reverse the basis for calculating municipal assistance to a percentage of the fuel oil tax, a shift of the cost of education onto something other than the property tax, work for welfare, a maximum, for certain loan purposes, of \$30,000 on farms purchased, restrictions on telephone pole locations, a reduction in crop insurance premiums and that all councillors sit on the court of revision.

UNION OF ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES (UAM)

The focus of the 1962 UAM annual convention, held in Red Deer was clearly on education financing. In the previous year H. Carl Goldenberg, a municipal finance expert from Montreal had addressed the convention on this topic. Now it was a panel of five people – two city aldermen, a school board chairman, a private sector executive and the Hon. E. W. Hinman, Provincial Treasurer. Fifteen pages of the proceedings were needed to report the presentations and discussion. Positions ranged from a tax on primary earnings (before income, sales, etc., taxes) to the use of any provincial level tax other than one based on the property tax. The Minister responded: "I am far from convinced that the property taxes have reached confiscatory levels or that it is necessarily desirable to alleviate the property tax by instituting other forms of taxation".⁹ Nonetheless he did offer an alternative involving local support of the physical school plant, a base level of support through the Provincial Education Fund drawing on personal

and corporate income taxes and a sales tax with further local support beyond the base provided by the Fund. Further, the province supported completely a system of regional trades and business schools. An eight page presentation the next day by the Hon. A. J. Hooke covered a variety of issues in respect to municipal finance, debt, federal-provincial tax sharing, sales tax, to which he was opposed and income tax which he supported. He concluded: "I commend to you a study of the issuance and control of money"¹⁰ A resolution requesting the province to "assume the full cost of education and that they impose a tax of their own choice to raise the funds...not to be levied against real property"¹¹ was tabled. A consensus could not be reached.

Another matter discussed at both the 1961 and 1962 annual conventions was the creation of a full time office for the UAM. It was finally agreed at the 1962 convention to implement a rate increase over two years to develop a fund of \$17,000 needed for such an office.

The 1962 convention considered 32 resolutions of which 24 were carried with 21 directed to the province. Twelve of these requested changes to legislation with several asking for the Town and Village Act to give powers equal to those in the Cities Act. Others proposed streamlining of subdivision processing and legalization of sweepstakes. Nine dealt with funding or services provided by the province such as road inspections and qualified personnel in probation for juvenile delinquents, urban park development and regional staffing of the Cultural Activities Branch.

Considerable effort was made in respect to locating the provincial response to these resolutions. No record of this response could be found.

LEGISLATION

Eighteen Acts relating to municipal affairs were dealt with by the legislature in 1962. There was a new Local Authorities Pension Act that applied to municipal, school and hospital employees, an amendment to permit grants-in-lieu of taxes on provincial gaols, the elimination of the 50¢ a day charge on municipalities for residents cared for under the Mental Defectives Act, an increase from 50 percent to 75 percent in the portion of cost to be paid by municipalities for re-assessments, valuation for tax purposes of street lighting and transportation systems, provision for municipal appointment of soil conservation officers, and permits for top-soil removal. There were also some amendments to the Municipal District Act and the Town and Village Act respecting councillors and unpaid taxes, dangerous buildings, mobile home licenses and procedures for a municipal plebiscite.

Late in the year, as part of a second five year plan, Premier E.C. Manning announced the intended implementation of a program to assist in the financing of local recreation facilities and the creation of the Northern

Alberta Development Council “to plan, promote, coordinate and advise on practical measures to foster and advance northern development”¹².



The growing role of planning in local government is evidenced by such Town Planning Conferences as this one in 1959. Cornelia Wood is the speaker. Four years previously Alberta had sponsored its first planning conference and in 1956 sponsored the first national one.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Public Affairs Collection PA255111

A Bill on a new Planning Act, ready in the fall of 1961 and intended to have been presented in 1962, was not presented until 1963. The Minister was concerned that the legislation give power to municipal councils, not planners, and that “individual rights (be) retained so long as it does not interfere with the rights of the public as a whole”.¹³

DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

The Deputy Minister, A. W. Morrison, noted the following in his review of the year:

- strong economy and mill rates are rising but municipalities are in a generally sound condition
- as one who worked closely with the PMAC he was impressed with the diligence of their work and the contribution it was making
- there existed “good relations and a spirit of cooperation” between the department and local government.

Special Areas Board

- new lease appraisals done in 1961 were implemented in 1962
- 250 miles of high grade road built, 86 miles gravelled
- dry spring but rains of July and August provided for excellent recovery
- 6,000 cattle in community pasture
- an Agricultural Service Board in operation for the first time in 1962
- 60 percent of land area is grazing lease



Alfred J. Hooke – Minister of Municipal Affairs, 1955-1964.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Public Affairs Collection PA1657/4

Assessment Commission

- much effort spent in production and maintenance of the Provincial Assessment Manual
- re-assessments in 52 urban and rural municipalities in 1961-62
- staff participated in the inaugural meeting of the Alberta Assessor's Association

Assessment Equalization Board

- prepared equalized assessments in respect to all municipalities and apportioned those assessments amongst school and hospital districts
- three more years required to complete study of assessment sales ratios in all municipalities (80 completed to date)

Alberta Assessment Appeal Board

- the report of the 1962 activities was very general: "a good year"
- the 1963 summary indicates the Board heard appeals on 1,150 items; it was in contact with municipal officials in over 100 municipalities



The Alberta Assessment Appeal Board (1959), established by Legislation in 1957, holds inquiries and conducts hearings of assessment appeals from courts of revision. Left to right: D.E. Mills, E.F. Breach, J.H. Toderick, J.B. Laidlaw.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Public Affairs Collection PA2554/1

Tax Recovery Branch

- completed the task of sending notices and handling appeals related to new assessments for leasehold lands in Special Areas
- tax recovery lands, especially sub-marginal land suitable for live-stock, were selling well
- increase in sale of urban land but falling in small villages and hamlets
- very few defaults under the Farm Purchase Credit Act

Accounts Branch

- provincial Data Processing Centre in operation; vehicle licensing done, payrolls and accounts payable in process and the branch was looking forward to converting assessment, taxation and lease rental in I.D.'s and Special Areas to the provincial Data Processing Centre in 1963

Field Service Branch

- completed general assessments in nine I.D.'s
- 30 hearings of the court of revision for annual and general assessment in I.D.'s were held
- 23 Farm Purchase Boards were operating in I.D.'s
- new advisory committees were established in seven I.D.'s bringing the total number of committees to 17
- one new Agricultural Service Board established bringing the total to eight
- involved in implementing the new recreational facility grant program in I.D.'s
- field staff regularly served on health unit boards, district planning commissions, interim development boards

Assessment Branch

- completed general assessments on behalf of 54 towns and villages, Banff and Jasper and the City of Medicine Hat
- completed annual assessments in 180 towns and villages and Grande Prairie and Wetaskiwin
- general or annual assessments were done in five communities in the North West Territories
- assessed electric power, pipeline and AGT installations
- hoped that by end of 1963 all urban municipalities will be on 1959 manual

Personnel Office

- staff increased by 13 to 346 at the end of the year
- handled 47 appointments and 34 resignations
- considerable time spent converting to computer system

Municipal Inspection Branch

- a very busy year partly due to revised financial statement for municipalities
- handled 920 Winter Works applications
- one new summer village incorporated; two villages changed to town status; New Town of St. Albert changed to town status; Devon became an urban county; and two new counties as of January 1, 1963

Clearly, the early 1960's were good years. In presenting a blueprint for action for "the years immediately ahead" Premier E.C. Manning wrote:

*the Province of Alberta today enjoys a position of leadership and a record of achievement unsurpassed elsewhere in Canada. Our economy and social structure is established on strong and enduring foundations and our people can look forward with confidence to a future of continued progress and development.*¹⁴

References to Chapter Ten

1. J. M. McKay, President of the AAMD&C at the 1962 UAM convention, p. 16, in the UAM 1962 convention proceedings.
2. *Alberta Municipal Counsellor*, November 1962, p. 7.
3. In a 1962 speech to UAM, Hon. A. J. Hooke noted that municipal debt in Alberta was increasing rapidly:

1913	\$45 million
1947	\$32 million
1952	\$84 million
1957	\$226 million
1960	\$465 million of which \$261 million was self-liquidating.
4. The December 1961 issue (p. 6) of the *Alberta Municipal Counsellor* reported on a presentation by the Hon. A. J. Hooke to the UAM that "He saw the function of government as doing for people collectively what they can't do individually and added that governments should go no further than to create an atmosphere where individual enterprise can do many things now expected of governments."
5. A speaker at the 1962 UAM Conference commented "after listening to Mr. Hooke this afternoon, I don't know what he said, but I will tell you this, what he said leaves us in exactly the same position that we were in before we came to this convention...they are going to do nothing about the tremendous burden on property owners" p. 57 of the 1962 UAM Annual Convention proceedings.
6. *ibid.*, p. 59.
7. *Alberta Municipal Counsellor*, January 1962, p. 7.
8. As of 1961 the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts became the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties.
9. *op. cit.*, p. 27.
10. *ibid.*, p. 53.
11. *ibid.*, p. 91.
12. *Alberta Municipal Counsellor*, January 1963 p. 1.
13. *Alberta Municipal Counsellor*, December 1962, p. 3 quoting the Minister's presentation to the UAM in October 1962.
14. *Alberta Municipal Counsellor*, January 1963 p. 4.

Chapter 11

1962 TO 1986 – A RICH TAPESTRY**INTRODUCTION**

This history of local government has now reached a time in which a number of the readers will have their own history of personal involvement in local government. Each will have memories of highlights that hopefully can be woven back into the tapestry of which only an outline is presented here.

The subject areas that have been chosen to form the basis of this chapter include: the rise and fall of federal involvement in urban affairs; continuation of the story of the evolving provincial-municipal financial relationship; new legislation; and the reorganization of the Department of Municipal Affairs.

FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT IN URBAN AFFAIRS

As provincial governments have the paramount position with respect to local government, one can understand the very limited position which



The Alberta Housing and Urban Renewal Corporation (its first Board of Directors in 1967 is shown here) was an example of the cooperative effort of the federal, provincial and municipal governments dealing with the housing issue. This was the beginning of a period of active federal involvement in local affairs. Left to right: F. Byrne, W. O'Rielly, A. Morrison, N. Dant, R. Ellis, K. Newman, J. Stirton.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Public Affairs Collection PA2537/1

the federal government has taken regarding municipal or municipal-provincial issues. However, this changed in the 1960's. From a base of involvement in housing through the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation established in 1946, the federal government passed a National Housing Act in 1964. Responding primarily to the need for renewal of aging neighborhoods in eastern Canadian cities, the federal government established a grant program to cover 75 percent of the cost of preparing urban renewal studies, 50 percent of the cost of implementing approved schemes and a 90 percent loan for the construction of public housing. To enable municipal governments to participate in this program, the province established the Alberta Housing Advisory Committee in January 1965 with two people each from the federal, provincial and local orders of government. As the program grew, administration was shifted from Municipal Affairs to the Alberta Housing and Urban Renewal Corporation (AHURC). Its first Board of Directors, named in May 1967, were six Deputy Ministers reporting through the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The Alberta Housing Act, in its rewrite effective May 2, 1968, provided for "land assembly projects" – AHURC could now acquire, service and market land for housing. The Executive Director of the Corporation was the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs.¹

The federal government continued its exploration into urban issues in the late 1960's with the establishment of a federal task force (Hellyer). They also commissioned studies under Dr. Harvey Lithwick published as "Urban Canada: Problems and Prospects" and created the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs in 1971. In 1972 and 1973 two tri-level conferences on the general theme of managing urban growth were held. The hope was that the three orders of government would develop a united stand on urban issues with each having a clearly defined role. Except for a report of a 1976 conference related to the Task Force on Public Finance (which had no recommendations), these conferences did not succeed.

After several years of operation the federal urban renewal programs and some other related ones were transformed into a smaller urban infrastructure development program. The Ministry of State for Urban Affairs was dismantled in 1979.

The Alberta Housing Act of 1970 renamed the AHURC the Alberta Housing Corporation and added to it the authority to develop or sponsor the development of senior citizen housing projects. Amendments in 1972 allowed municipalities to deal directly with the Corporation and the position of Executive Director shifted to the Deputy Provincial Treasurer. In 1974 the structure of the Board of Directors was revised to now provide for a president; members included the Minister of Municipal Affairs as chairman, the Deputy Provincial Treasurer and other members as appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. In 1975 responsibility for the Alberta

Housing Act and Senior Citizen Housing Act was transferred from Municipal Affairs to the Department of Housing and Public Works.

MUNICIPAL-PROVINCIAL FINANCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

For almost a decade after its inception in 1959, the Provincial-Municipal Advisory Committee was an effective mechanism in the sharing and resolution of concerns. Due to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Hon. A. J. Hooke, moving to another portfolio in 1967 and considerable change in the membership of the committee over the next few years, its effectiveness diminished to the point where it was finally dissolved in 1971. During its life the committee had 83 meetings.



The Provincial Municipal Advisory Committee, shown here in 1970, was set up in 1959 to facilitate discussions between the UAM, AAMD&C and the Executive Council in respect to studies and recommendations on municipal matters and legislation. Left to right: E. Barrett, unknown (in front), F. Colborne, R. Brown, R. Parker, unknown.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Public Affairs Collection PA6416

The Municipal Assistance Grant, at one time set at one-half of the proceeds of the gasoline sales tax, had reached \$16.5 million in 1964. In December 1965 the Premier announced that the grant would now be equal to one-third of the royalties from oil and gas development. This was part of a package of increased funding for municipal government including also additional funds for freeways, expressways and provincial highways within urban municipalities and for education. In the latter instance the grant was effected through the Homeowners Tax Discount Act. Direct and indirect assistance to municipalities was increasing yearly and reached \$176,500,000 in 1966-67, or 26 percent of the provincial budget. In com-

parison, all property taxes levied in the province that year totalled \$150 million.

In addition to the PMAC, another committee active in the early-mid 1960's was the Public Revenue and Expenditures Committee. Announced by the Premier in November 1962, its 13 members represented municipal government, school administration and business; members from the agriculture and labor sectors were appointed a year later. The committee's final report, tabled in March 1966, presented the following recommendations with respect to municipal government:

1. in view that only 24 of 49 local improvement districts had advisory councils, "missionary work" by field staff be done in those districts without advisory councils; "democratic, local self-government can ill afford such vacuums"²
2. in view of the "very definite reservations regarding three separate branches in Municipal Affairs entrusted with assessment" (Equalization Board, Assessment Commissioner and the Assessment Branch) it was proposed there be established an Assessment Commission reporting to Executive Council
3. that an assessment committee be established to look at a variety of concerns including "part-time farmers who build near their urban places of work, erect substantial residences and are able to avoid taxation by qualifying as farmers"³ and summer village assessment
4. that the "Special Areas" were poorly named and the committee could "see no valid reason why the Special Areas could not be brought under the county form of local government"⁴
5. that district engineers be attached to municipalities on the basis similar to school superintendents hired by the Department of Education were attached to school divisions and counties
6. reduce standard of road construction in some areas
7. promote the formation of counties
8. that I.D. advisory committee members combine their convention with that of municipal councillors
9. there be greater continuity in the membership of the PMAC such as three year terms.

The focus shifted to the development of new municipal legislation in 1966-68, then to a joint committee of provincial and municipal assessment officials to study certain assessment and taxation procedures in 1968-70 followed by the establishment in October 1971, of a Task Force of five MLA's headed by Roy Farran, to study taxation. The report of the latter group led to the Property Tax Reduction Plan of 1973 wherein:

1. all local health costs (\$5 million) and hospital costs (\$7 million) and the major portion of education costs were no longer to be recovered through residential property taxes
2. the province assumed another 10 percent of social assistance costs (\$2 million)
3. a new Municipal Assistance Grant providing \$14.5 million more with a bonus (\$19.5 million) to municipalities who kept their annual budget increases to under 7½ percent. An additional \$10 million over five years was provided in 1973 to Alberta towns and villages for streets.

The Municipal Interest Subsidy Program was introduced in 1974. It subsidized eligible loans, down to eight percent, made to municipalities by the Alberta Municipal Finance Corporation.

In October 1974 the Premier announced the creation of a 10 member Alberta Provincial Municipal Finance Council. It would be an ongoing consultative, coordinating and planning vehicle working on problems of:

1. delivery of services – provincial or municipal
2. funding of capital works in growing municipalities
3. municipal assessment and taxation, and
4. matters raised in the Government Task Force (Farran) on Provincial-Municipal Fiscal Arrangements of December 1972.

In 1975 up to \$75 million was set aside for Edmonton's Capital City Recreation Park of which \$40 million was earmarked for improvements in the vicinity of the government centre. Subsequently, a major urban parks program was funded by the province for Calgary, and in 1980, a \$57 million parks program was announced for five other cities in the province.

Notwithstanding the decentralization policy of the Progressive Conservative party and the hope that municipalities would limit budget increases, municipal indebtedness grew considerably in the 1970's. This led ultimately to a \$1 billion Municipal Debt Reduction Program in 1979. The grant of \$500 per capita, funded by provincial surpluses, was to repay existing municipal debentures with interest rates of eight percent or more. In addition, a Revolving Trunk Servicing Fund was set up under Housing and Public Works. Effective May 1979, its purpose was to increase the supply of serviced lots and to help municipalities finance their growth. To date, \$49.7 million has been loaned to municipalities under this program.

A report commissioned by the AUMA⁵ in 1979 on the "fiscal relationship between local and provincial government"⁶ had as its greatest concern the rise in conditional assistance to municipalities. Outstanding debentures of hospitals and nursing homes were paid off in 1980. Also in 1980 a Municipal Housing Incentive Program was announced. It provided a grant of \$1,000 to \$2,000 to the municipality for each unit of medium and high density housing developed over and above a recent historical average.

From October 1981 growth in the province slowed considerably; indeed, population declined in some areas. In the last five years many of the funding programs remained more or less the same although the formula or rates may have been adjusted. A major program to assist in the construction

of water and sewage facilities initiated in 1979 was adjusted in 1981. The grant formula was revised to \$2,100 per capita for communities over 600 people with a larger per capita grant for smaller centres. It was adjusted again in late 1983 to 75-25 percent provincial-municipal sharing for the first 600 persons and 50-50 thereafter – to 100,000 people. The program does not apply to Edmonton and Calgary.

Some programs were phased out such as the interest shielding program wherein shielding was withdrawn on new debentures in 1983. Reduced interest expense on debentures funding the shielding program allowed the development of the AMPLE (Alberta Municipal Partnership in Local Employment) Program. Beginning in 1987, the grant program will direct \$500 million to Alberta municipalities over about eight years for job creation.

The fall 1981 convention of the AUMA rejected a proposed⁷ 2.8 per litre gas tax but asked instead for eight percent of the \$64 billion the province expected to receive from oil and gas production levies over the next five years. The Advisory Committee on Provincial Municipal Fiscal Relations, active in 1981 and 1982, was directed in its review not to discuss a

1979

CHAPTER 21

THE MUNICIPAL DEBT REDUCTION ACT

(Assented to June 29, 1979)

HER MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, enacts as follows:

1 In this Act,

- (a) "by-law", with reference to an improvement district or special area, means an order of the Minister;
- (b) "council" means
 - (i) the council of a city, town, village, summer village, municipal district or county,
 - (ii) the board of administrators of a new town, or
 - (iii) the Minister, in respect of an improvement district or special area;
- (c) "debenture" includes a loan made by the Provincial Treasurer to a new town pursuant to section 19 of *The New Towns Act*;
- (d) "debt shielding agreement" means an agreement made between the Minister of the Environment and a municipality under the authority of Order in Council numbered O.C. 348/77 or O.C. 349/77 made pursuant to *The Department of the Environment Act*;
- (e) "eligible debt" means the eligible debt of a municipality determined in accordance with section 4;
- (f) "Financing Corporation" means the Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation.

One billion dollars was distributed to Alberta municipalities under the 1979 Municipal Debt Reduction Act. The total accumulated debt for all municipalities decreased from \$1.8 billion in 1978 to \$1.5 billion in 1979. Since then the total municipal debt has steadily increased and by 1984 was \$4.5 billion.

sharing of income tax or resource revenue. Included in the recommendations of this committee was one proposing a review of grants to municipalities. Accordingly, a Grant Structures Review Committee, representing the urban, rural and improvement districts associations and Municipal Affairs, was announced in early 1984. Its report was released in December 1985, following an examination of more than 80 provincial grant programs.

The 87 recommendations were grouped into three categories of "General Policy", "Program" (pertaining to 14 provincial departments) and "Long Term". Included in the first category were six recommendations for annually indexing all transfer programs for inflation, that the amounts be announced in a preceding year, that program and policies affecting municipalities be coordinated at the provincial level, that municipalities develop a single point of contact with the province and that the transfer programs be easily understood by the public and they not differentiate according to municipal status.

There were 75 recommendations dealing with specific transfer programs which provincial departments were currently administering. There were recommendations for continuation, cancellation and amendment.

The six long term recommendations related to the establishment of an Alberta Partnership Transfer Program by April 1990. Seven existing transfer programs including the Municipal Assistance Grant (MAG), law enforcement, recreation/culture, family and community support and transportation grants would be combined and, except for the MAG, funds transferred, based on a per capita basis where the municipality was offering the program. The annual allocations would be inflation-sensitive and the inclusion of other existing transfer programs would be the subject of ongoing discussions.

The round table discussion process used by the committee, especially with the departments responsible for the individual programs, has led to a considerable consensus in the programs area. Consequently some recommendations have already been, or are in the process of being, implemented. The report is with the government, awaiting the receipt of the compiled reviews of all involved departments, including Treasury.

The Alberta Municipal Partnership in Local Employment (AMPLE) Program announced in April 1986, will provide about \$500 million to Alberta municipalities over the next eight years. Beginning in 1987 at about \$15 per capita and rising to \$20-25 thereafter, the source of funds is the interest saved by the province in refinancing debt incurred in the municipal debenture interest rebate program. The transfers will be unconditional although the intention was to create jobs in areas such as municipal infrastructure repair or replacement. The program is a direct response to recommendations of the Grant Structures Review Committee.

Another recent committee related to financial aspects was one announced in November 1984 on municipal debt guidelines. Its five mem-

bers, working in conjunction with a consulting firm, presented its report in December 1985. Recommendations on maximum levels of debt for all municipalities, excepting those with an "A" rating, were adopted by the government on April 1, 1986.

PLANNING

The new Planning Act of 1963 presented "very few changes in the institutional framework of land use planning and sought instead to clarify and simplify the Act's provisions"⁸. Given the rapid growth of the province, one can understand a continued emphasis on the provision of roads, utilities, schools and other necessary services in a properly coordinated and economical manner. The composition of the Provincial Planning Board was changed to now include people who were not representatives of provincial departments. Its responsibilities included coordination of the regional (formerly district) planning commissions and an appeal function. Regional planning commissions were now to prepare regional plans and preliminary regional plans as development control devices. In 1968 the commissions were delegated subdivision approval authority for all municipalities in their regions as opposed to their previous authority for only some municipalities. All regions were now required to complete regional plans by 1972. Some adjustments to the formula for funding the commissions were instituted in 1972. The previous formula of 60 percent provincial and 40 percent commission members was changed to one with all municipalities, members or otherwise, contributing on the basis of a mill rate that varied between different classes of municipalities. The province picked up the remainder through the Alberta Planning Fund. The net effect was increased provincial support – from about 50 percent in 1964 to 60 percent in 1972 to now almost 70 percent.

Work on a rewrite of the Planning Act began in 1972 with a discussion paper released in 1974. In the same year the Alberta Land Use Forum was created. Its three members commissioned 30 reports in areas such as urban use of agricultural land, the family farm, foreign ownership, and factors affecting the cost of land. The Forum's recommendations in 1976 were not acted upon by the Cabinet. In early 1977 a draft planning Bill was introduced and, following some 100 amendments, was passed in November 1977. The thrusts of the new Act included streamlining the development approval process, eliminating the two land use control systems (zoning and development control) in effect in Edmonton and Calgary, some increased authority to municipalities and increased public participation in land use planning. All commissions were required to complete regional plans by December 31, 1982. The revised Subdivision and Transfer Regulations as well as the Planning Act came into force on April 1, 1978.



The Provincial Planning Advisory Board, first provided for in the 1929 Planning Act, is shown here in 1959, a period of growth requiring planning's "continued emphasis on the provisions of roads, utilities, schools and other necessary services in a properly coordinated and economical matter". The Board's responsibilities included coordinating district planning commissions and hearing planning-related appeals. Left to right: A.W. Morrison, H.L. Hogge, R.M. Putnam, C.W. Lester, J.H. Holloway, V.A. Wood, J.W. Chalmers, R.M. Rookwood.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Public Affairs collection PA2547

To assist in the work of the regional planning commissions, the 18 member Alberta Planning Board has provided some policy guideline documents e.g., for rural industrial land use, regional plans and agricultural land. There have not been many amendments to planning legislation since 1977 although there is presently a review to determine the need for amendments to the Planning Act and the Subdivision Regulation.

LEGISLATION

In 1965 the Provincial Municipal Advisory Committee recommended there be a review of existing municipal statutes. In 1966, William Isbister, Assistant Chief Municipal Inspector of the Department of Municipal Affairs and Stan Ross, an Edmonton lawyer, were appointed to undertake this review. It was hoped that there might be one consolidated Act. Their recommendations were discussed at the fall 1966 AUMA convention and at a special session of 127 delegates of the AAMD&C on January 12, 1967. Some of the Ross and Isbister recommendations were:

1. A single municipal Act (excluding the Planning Act). The hope was that 2000 clauses in 10 Acts could be consolidated into about four hundred clauses in one Act.
2. An assessment and taxation Act.
3. A number of recommendations respecting municipal councils, e.g., their size, and that the reeve be elected at large.
4. That "the legislation be drafted to give municipal councils the widest possible authority over matters within their jurisdiction". This approach, it was suggested, would have an added benefit of eliminating the many annual amendments to legislation.
5. A municipal appeal board to hear grievances by citizens of any municipality. This board would merge with the Provincial Planning Board.
6. Citizens could appeal municipal rates to the Public Utilities Board.
7. That there be ample provision for municipalities to cooperate with school, hospital and other boards.
8. Provision for monthly payment of taxes.

Arising from these recommendations and ensuing discussions, Bill 50 "An Act Respecting Municipal Government" was prepared and released in February 1967 for a one year review period. It was subsequently decided to separate out the election procedures and hence two Acts, the Municipal Government Act and the Municipal Election Act, came into effect on June 1, 1968. Six existing Acts were repealed.⁹ The councils of all local municipal governments, with a few minor exceptions, now had the same powers regardless of size or status. Other provisions of the Municipal Government Act included new powers to encourage improved medical services, to renovate and rehabilitate existing capital assets, to regulate store hours, to create and use reserve funds, and to modernize their administration procedures by use of an executive committee. Initial proposals for a municipal appeal board and for monthly payment of taxes were not included in the new legislation.

The Municipal Election Act now provided for a lowering of the voting age to 19 years, the use of voting machines, three year terms for mayors and councillors with all being elected at one time, the removal of the need of property qualifications to hold municipal office and the option to use a system of registration of voters in preference to the present system of enumeration.

Some other amendments in that year pertained to governance at the local level including an increase in the potential size of a library board from five to seven people to now five to 10 people. Their term of office was also to be three years and the mayor no longer needed to be a member.



Stan Ross, Q.C. and Bill Isbister, Assistant Chief Municipal Inspector, the two-man committee responsible for recommending changes in municipal legislation in 1966.

Credit: Department of Municipal Affairs.

The Irrigation Districts Act of 1968 repealed and replaced an existing Act. It represented a consolidation of existing legislation and brought a uniformity of administration and procedures with other municipal legislation. In the same year, the School Act was amended to reduce the voting age from 21 to 19 years. The Improvement Districts Act provided that an Indian Reserve not be a part of an improvement district for any purpose whatsoever.

In 1983 a new Local Authorities Election Act was passed replacing the Municipal Election Act of 1968. The Act provided for more detailed regulation of election, voting, post-vote and recount procedures and the conduct of individuals involved in local elections.

TASK FORCE ON URBANIZATION AND THE FUTURE

There was a Task Force on Urbanization and the Future which was operational in 1971 and 1972. Guided by a board of four mayors and two cabinet ministers, six regional committees and a paid staff, this group's focus was to examine "aspects of urbanization which were of concern to the people of the province".¹⁰ Recommendations of the regional committees were more in the organizational areas involving the operation of

regional planning commissions, community economic development in slow growth areas, i.e. the Drumheller area, and urban government in the Edmonton Metropolitan Area.

NORTHEAST ALBERTA COMMISSION

A Northeast Alberta Commission was formed in June 1974 to ensure the effective planning and provision of public services and facilities in northeast Alberta – an area affected by major oil sands developments. The commission was phased out and its one commissioner retired in 1983.

CROWSNEST PASS

In 1978 the provincial government enacted the Crowsnest Pass Municipal Unification Act. The Towns of Blairmore and Coleman, the Villages of Bellevue and Frank and Improvement District No. 5 were amalgamated into a single municipality. A five year review of the amalgamation, as required by the Act, was carried out by department staff in 1983. One of the major conclusions was that “the unification of the Crowsnest Pass communities has undoubtedly been a success in terms of upgrading the housing and municipal services in the region to standards which are as good as any other Alberta centre of similar population size”¹¹. Recommendations were made on the operation, continuation or phasing out of special provisions of the Act such as one-time and regular grants.

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

There had not been an incorporation of an improvement district since 1958 when in 1980 the Provincial Cabinet stated its intention to increase local responsibility and decision-making in the I.D.’s with the following objectives in mind:

1. Generate a sense of self-reliance and local responsibility.
2. Make decisions and provide services closer to the people who will benefit.
3. Spend more time involving largely native communities in provincial programs and in the process of local government.
4. Transform the improvement district offices into useful contact points for provincial programs, as well as acting like any other municipal office.
5. Remove inequities in taxation and development over a period of years.
6. Devote more time to the policy of encouraging incorporation wherever practicable.

As a result, the responsibilities of the advisory councils increased substantially, more district offices and sub-offices were created, especially in northern areas, and the role of the Edmonton office became one of support rather than direction. Property taxes for municipal purposes were increased to a level comparable to those in neighbouring municipalities, especially for those improvement districts closer to incorporation. The additional taxes raised were used to bring about a dramatic increase in the number and range of services, raising the improvement districts up to a level comparable to that in the neighbouring incorporated rural municipalities. Two improvement districts incorporated on January 1, 1985 – I.D. 1 became the Municipal District of Cypress No. 1 and I.D. 10 became the Municipal District of Clearwater No. 99. Effective January 1, 1983 I.D. No. 5, Kananaskis Country, was created – mostly a split from I.D. No. 8.



Alberta is unique in being the only province to provide for settlements for the Metis people. Some members of the Metis Association are shown here at their first meeting with the MLA's in 1932. As early as the Riel Rebellion, the Metis have expressed a keen interest in self-government.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Photograph Collection A6487.

METIS

A committee to review the Metis Betterment Act and Regulations was appointed on March 31, 1982. Its five members, representing the department, the Metis and the broader community, were asked to study and make recommendations to the Minister of Municipal Affairs that would allow for the political, social, cultural and economic development of Metis Settlements. The committee presented its report in mid 1984. Its chairman,

Grant MacEwan, noted that the report attempted to ensure that any proposals for new legislation would place major responsibility for the development of settlements firmly on the shoulders of the settlements themselves.¹² In June 1985 the provincial government passed a resolution which declared an intent to have title and constitutional protection eventually granted to Alberta's Metis Settlement lands. Subsequent to these initiatives, discussions are continuing, involving the Metis Federation, on the best systems for governance in the settlements and on replacing the 1938 Metis Betterment Act with a new Metis Settlements Act.¹³

IN HARMONY

Some continuing concerns with "conflict of interest" led to the creation of a three member committee in November 1984. Its final report "IN HARMONY: The Public Interest and the Private Interests of Alberta Municipal Councillors" was presented in November 1985. Amendments to the Municipal Government Act and the Local Authorities Election Act were prepared for consideration by the Legislature in respect to such matters as qualifications of members of a local council, councillors doing business with the municipality; voting on matters in which the member has a direct or indirect interest, disclosure of interest, absence and failure to disclose.

THE HUTTERITES

Not yet mentioned in this historical overview are the Acts, regulations or debates surrounding the development of Hutterite communities in the province. However, in view that the Minister of Municipal Affairs was for a time responsible for certain legislation related to these communities, a short review is presented.

The first Hutterite community settled in Canada in 1899, the same year that the federal cabinet passed an order in council exempting their members from service in the military and allowing for their own schools. Expansion of the size and number of communities led the Alberta government to enact the Land Sales Prohibition Act in 1942. Sale to Hutterites and "enemy aliens" was prohibited. Declared "ultra vires"¹⁴ in 1943, the Act was amended in 1944 deleting reference to the offending word "aliens". In 1947 the Communal Property Act was passed limiting the size of colonies to 6,400 acres and prohibiting their expansion south of Calgary and their development within 40 miles of each other. A board was established in 1960 to hear application for expansion or development of new communities. The Act was repealed in 1973 following the recommendation of a select committee in 1972. A primary concern was that the Act violated

the spirit of the Alberta Bill of Rights. The committee's suggestion of a need to promote understanding and cooperation led to the appointment of a Special Advisory Committee on Communal Property and Land Use in February 1973. A major function of the new committee was to assist the Hutterite Brethren in making the transition from dependence upon the former Communal Property Control Board for decisions about land transactions to responsibility for their own decisions. The committee was disbanded in 1976. The Department of Municipal Affairs maintains, for statistical reference purposes, a list of the number and size of colonies in the province.

DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

In 1973 the Deputy Minister, Bill Isbister, directed that an organizational review committee be established. The internal committee of four people¹⁵ contacted many elected and appointed municipal officials as well as internal staff. Its report of 1974 recommended a department structure "of operating divisions which are made up of branches which share a common orientation"¹⁶. The reorganization, implemented in 1975, created three new divisions:

Assessment Services

Municipal Administrative Services (including an Improvement Districts Administration Branch); and

Planning Services.

The Finance and Administration Division was already in place.

The departmental support functions of Personnel Administration and the department solicitor reported to the Deputy Minister. The Communications and Public Affairs unit was initially connected to Municipal Administrative Services. (As of 1979 it reported to the Deputy Minister and presently is part of Finance and Administration.) Also reporting to the Deputy Minister were the chairmen of the Special Areas Board and the Assessment Equalization Board. Boards that had a judicial or more "political" role, namely the Provincial (Alberta) Planning Board, Local Authorities Board and the Assessment Appeal Board reported to the Minister. One of the major changes since 1975 was the addition of the staff formerly with the Task Force on Urbanization and the Future. Named the Special Projects and Policy Research Branch it first reported to the Deputy Minister and now is within the Municipal Administrative Services Division.

The Inter-Agency Branch, the fourth in the Planning Services Division, was created in 1977 to provide support for the Minister and the Alberta Planning Board with respect to provincial planning policy.

In 1980 the Improvement Districts Operations unit of the department was established as a division and a new organizational structure adopted. Its upgrading and reorganization was part of a provincial cabinet approved plan to increase the extent of local self-government in the improvement districts.¹⁷ Provision was made to include, for the first time, a Metis Development Branch transferred to the department from Social Services and Community Health. Also added from the Municipal Administrative Services Division, was the Land Tenure Secretariat, a special program to provide land for residents in the Green Zone in northern and western areas of Alberta.

MISCELLANEOUS

Over the past 25 years there were a number of events, changes in legislation, committee reports and the like that, while important, did not fit into the structure of this chapter giving the highlights of this period. The following is a miscellaneous listing of notable or interesting items:

1. The UAM opened its first central office in Edmonton on June 20, 1965.



One of the first Local Authorities Board meetings in 1961. The Board relieved the Public Utilities Board of duties such as municipal boundary adjustments, assessment and approval of borrowings and taxation exemptions. Left to right: W. Elliot, I. Morris, C. MacGregor, A. Wetter.

Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta: Public Affairs Collection PA2559/1

2. The Local Authorities Board, split off from the Public Utilities Board in 1961, was and continues to be responsible for a number of functions related to municipal boundary adjustments, assessment and approval of the issuance of school and municipal borrowings and consideration of applications for exemptions from property taxation. In 1978 the board's powers and duties were amended through a new provision in the Municipal Government Act giving the Lieutenant Governor in Council authority to ratify, add conditions, vary or disapprove any board orders.¹⁸
3. The Preventive Social Services Act, effective July 1, 1966, provided for 80 percent provincial support of preventive social programs. An important feature was that the "program involve local people and that it grow from the grass roots up."¹⁹ Provision was made for municipalities to share costs and to deliver the program as one unit.
4. Swan Hills (population 1,521) was one year old on January 1, 1968 when it became the second urban county in the province. However, the county was dissolved and municipal council and school board activities separated effective May 31, 1972. The citizen plebiscite, mandatory after four years of operation and which led to the dissolution, had a total of 33 people voting with 19 against and 14 for retention.
5. The New Town of Grande Cache became an urban county on July 15, 1969. In 1976 it reverted to new town status until 1983, when it was established as a town.
6. Assessment services to the Northwest Territories were phased out in 1982 after 20 years.
7. The concept of cooperation between rural areas and small communities on economic development matters was initiated in 1972. As a result of the work of the Task Force on Urbanization and the Future, the Regional Resources Project #1 was developed. It focused on economic development and housing improvement in the Carbon area. In light of this project's success, the Department of Tourism and Small Business funded a Rural Business Projects Program to assist municipalities in promoting local economic development. Projects were begun in seven areas: Lac La Biche (1974); Crowsnest Pass (1975); Mundare (1975); Buffalo Lake (1976); Northwest Region (1977); High Prairie (1977/1978); and Smoky River (1977/1978).
8. The Banff-Jasper Autonomy report was completed by department staff and tabled in the Legislature on April 7, 1972. A subsequent report into local government issues in the Banff and Jasper

National Parks was initiated in 1978. The ensuing report in 1980 presented information on conditions for incorporation, boundaries, size and form of the town council, allocation of responsibilities among levels of government, disposition of existing capital assets and estimates of revenues, expenditures and taxation under incorporation. Proposals for a plebiscite regarding local self-government were not pursued pending resolution of residents' concerns with federal land lease policy in the townsites.

9. In 1979 the Municipal Election Act was adopted by the Minister as the guide for the selection of improvement district advisory council members.
10. The Alberta Association of Improvement Districts was established in 1975. The following year its name was changed to the Improvement Districts Association of Alberta. Its purpose was to serve the interests of the improvement districts and rural Alberta in general, and to provide input into provincial and federal decision making in much the same fashion as the two main associations for the province's incorporated municipalities. In recent years, the association has participated as an equal partner with other municipal associations on several joint government/municipal committees, such as the Grant Structures Review Committee.
11. In 1978 the Urban Advisory Group (now the Policy and Research section) was given responsibility to improve interdepartmental coordination in the development and implementation of urban policy in Alberta. A proposal for an Urban Affairs Coordinating Council of the Deputy Ministers of 14 departments was not put into effect.
12. The Edmonton Annexation Application, confirmed by cabinet in 1981, took effect on January 1, 1982.
13. Library grants through Alberta Culture were increased in 1981 from \$3.00 to \$3.33 per capita for municipal libraries, to \$2.22 per capita for regional libraries and \$3.00 per capita for community libraries.
14. The concept of Business Revitalization Zones was established in 1983. Municipal councils could now pass a levy to fund improvements in an area.
15. Regional landfill regulations were modified in 1983; boards of health were given increased responsibility vis-a-vis Alberta Environment.
16. Amendments to the County Act in 1984 provided for a town incorporating as a city to remain as part of the county school division.

17. The Special Areas Board was incorporated in 1985; more authority could now be delegated by the Minister.
18. A committee to look at development charges and off-site levies was established in 1985.
19. The Environment Council of Alberta presented a report on agricultural land in 1985 including recommendations that permits be required to clear agricultural land and that subdivisions within certain distances of urban centres not be prohibited.
20. The Capital Region Sewage Commission was established in 1985 to oversee operations of a \$146.5 million sewage treatment system serving ten member municipalities in the Edmonton Region.
21. In January 1986 a municipal insurance committee representing the AUMA, AAMD&C, five cities not involved in AUMA insurance program, the Treasury Department, the province's Superintendent of Insurance and Municipal Affairs was established.
22. A review of municipal government legislation was announced in April 1986. A committee is to be selected in 1986 and its report is submitted by January 1, 1988.

CONCLUSION

In reviewing the last 25 years one cannot help but be overwhelmed by the changes and the increases in provincial funding of programs delivered by municipalities.

On the other hand, the structures determining the nature of local government have not changed significantly. The power or role of boards at the provincial level such as the Local Authorities Board, Alberta Assessment Appeal Board, Alberta Planning Board and Special Areas Board, and assessment law, planning law and municipal government legislation remains as it was in the 1960's. The province has continued to be sensitive to municipal concerns but, in dealing with these as they arise, there has been little focus on broader issues, policies and philosophies respecting local government. Are municipal governments really a third order of government or a special interest corporation with concerns for land development and its taxation?²⁰ In the last few years there has been a definite increase in the openness toward exploring some of the more difficult, longer-term issues. These include rekindling interest in I.D. incorporations, reviewing Metis settlement legislation and policy, incorporation of the Special Areas Board and the setting up of several provincial-municipal review committees such as those on debt guidelines, transfer payments and conflict of interest. In the development of legislation there is more likely to be good consultation with municipal associations – a form of partnership. The formation of the Municipal Statutes Review Committee certainly represents this – the first major review of municipal government legislation since that in 1966-68 by Ross and Isbister.

References to Chapter 11

1. This information gathered from the following issues of *Alberta Municipal Counsellor*: December 1964, January 1965, May 1967, June/July 1968.
2. *Alberta Municipal Counsellor*, June 1966, p. 6.
3. *ibid.*, July/August issue, p. 5.
4. *ibid.*
5. In 1966 the Union of Alberta Municipalities (UAM) changed its name to the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA).
6. The authors were Dr. Richard Plain and Dr. McMillan of the University of Alberta.
7. A committee of six people was previously established by the Minister, Marvin Moore, to investigate potential sources of income for Alberta municipalities.
8. *The Evolution of the Land Use Planning Process in Alberta, 1945 – 1984*, Michael Gordon and J. David Hulchanski, University of British Columbia researchers supported by Alberta Municipal Affairs, 1984, p. 26.
9. The proposed Bill 50 called for the City Act, the Town and Village Act, the Municipal District Act and the Controverted Elections Act to be repealed. In the final legislation, the Municipal Elections Act repealed the Controverted Elections Act and the Municipal Government Act repealed the other three plus the Early Closing Act and the Houses of Public Accommodation Act.
10. The Task Force on Urbanization and the Future, *Task Committee Reports*, 1972, p. 4.
11. Alberta Municipal Affairs, *Municipality of Crowsnest Pass Five Year Review*, December 1983, p. 41.
12. *Municipal Counsellor*, Sept/Oct 1984.
13. The Metis Settlement Councils are like municipal governments overseeing public works projects and delivery of local services. But there are other concerns and responsibilities such as the preservation of a lifestyle, land security and determining who will live on settlement lands. Proposals for their local government include a senate of five elders who would perform as an appeal body to the settlement councils. With respect to the current studies, the intention is to have the

final proposals reviewed by a government committee of cabinet ministers and MLA's. The Metis Federation would be advised of the committee's recommendations before new legislation is drafted. Federal House of Commons and Senate approval may be required.

14. ultra vires: not authorized; outside jurisdiction.
15. The committee consisted of William A. R. Barry of the provincial government's advisory services; J. B. Laidlaw, the Assessment Commissioner; J. M. Fleming, the Chief Municipal Inspector; and R. D. Fraser, Personnel Director of Municipal Affairs.
16. *Alberta Culture, Departmental History Series, Municipal Affairs, 1984*, p. 57.
17. Some elements of the plan included dramatic increases in services, the raising of taxes up to levels in neighboring municipalities, training for I.D. councils and decentralization of decision making. Prior to this time the most recent incorporation of an I.D. was in 1958. Subsequently, two I.D.'s were incorporated on January 1, 1985: I.D. 1 became the Municipal District of Cypress and I.D. 10 became the Municipal District of Clearwater. Studies are presently underway respecting the incorporations of additional I.D.'s.
18. See the November 1965 issue of the *Alberta Municipal Counsellor* for an article on the Local Authorities Board and an overview of annexation related legislation since 1898.
19. *Alberta Municipal Counsellor*, January 1967, p. 4.
20. See Warren Magnussen, "The Local State in Canada: Theoretical Perspectives" in *Canadian Public Administration*, Winter 1985 for a discussion of the nineteenth century ideology of a central, autonomous government at the local level as compared to alternative theories of local government as a collection of limited special purpose agencies or a local apparatus of the province.

A black and white photograph of a control room. In the foreground, there are several operators seated at consoles, working. The room has a curved wall and a ceiling with a grid of lights. The overall atmosphere is busy and technical.

Part Two: The Present Situation

Chapter Twelve**INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW****INTRODUCTION**

Part One of this report outlines the development of the local government structure in Alberta. Based on patterns developed in Britain and eastern Canada, the North West Territories Council enacted ordinances in the 1880's providing for elected boards and councils to administer school and municipal functions. The paramount role of provincial governments in providing the framework for local government in Canada has resulted in somewhat different forms evolving over the last 100 years in each province.

The purpose of this part is to outline the present situation in Alberta respecting local government. The "snap shots" taken in the years 1887, 1912, 1937 and 1962 indicate the great differences as well as some similarities between these periods and the present.

From an economic point of view, the province is presently being buffeted quite severely by low and volatile oil prices and by low world prices for grain. While average income for the employed is high in comparison to other Canadians, unemployment at 11-13 percent is also about the highest in the nation. Subdivision and building activity is very low. There is an important need for economic development strategies at both the local and provincial level.

The society-at-large seems to be in a period of great change. There is a general disenchantment with government. World tensions and the absence of peace, a polluted environment, and the weakness of the "social contract" between people in supporting and caring for each other represent the mood of the times for some. Decentralization, privatization, the rise of the voluntary sector, the desire to strengthen family, and the shift from a fragmented perspective to one of wholeness are some other elements of the present condition.

The format of this second part of the study is to:

- (a) describe the number and type of local municipal governments in the province including a description of some unique situations such as the Special Areas, the Banff and Jasper townsites and Lloydminster;
- (b) review other governments at the local and regional level. This includes boards and commissions to which members are elected directly or to which elected members are appointed. It covers their creation and operation (mandatory or optional) provided for by provincial law;

- (c) review the organization and duties of the Department of Municipal Affairs and related provincial boards;
- (d) summarize Acts administered by Municipal Affairs and list other Acts which significantly impact local government; and
- (e) explore the issues, strengths and trends in local government as seen in recent municipal association conventions, and as garnered from recent policy documents, the press and from a variety of meetings with some departmental staff.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN – URBAN MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS

There are 374 municipalities in the province of which 296 are urban – the cities, towns, villages and summer villages. Together they contain almost 80 percent of the provincial population. The 16 cities are very dominant in respect to percentage of the population, containing 65 percent. Each is governed by a mayor and council of six to 14 aldermen. The City of Lloydminster, on the Alberta/Saskatchewan border, is the only municipality still operating with a provincially approved charter.

The 108 towns of Alberta, normally between 1,000 and 10,000 people, contain 13 percent of the provincial population. A town is governed by a mayor and six councillors all elected at large. One of the unique towns is the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass, formed by special legislation in 1979 through unification of several municipalities. Another is the New Town of Rainbow Lake run by a chairman and a board.

The 122 villages are governed by a council of three or, if desired, five councillors, one of whom shall be mayor. Village populations range from about 100 to 1,000.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN – RURAL MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS

There are 78 rural municipalities: counties and municipal districts (50), improvement districts (19), Metis Settlements (8), and Special Areas (1) containing 443,000 people or 19 percent of the provincial total. The county form of government brings school and municipal administration under one council. Improvement districts are rural areas without full local self-government. The National Park improvement districts are unique in that the federal, rather than provincial government provides the administration. The communities of Banff and Jasper have their own elected school boards with municipal matters guided by advisory councils as of 1986. Alberta is the only province in Canada to provide for separate Metis Settlements. The Special Areas in southeast Alberta are governed by a provincially appointed advisory council of 13 and an administrative board of three people. Indian Reserves, which together contain about 43,000 people, are a federal matter and are not considered as municipalities.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN – LOCAL AND REGIONAL SINGLE-PURPOSE GOVERNMENTS

The 13 local/regional single-purpose governments reviewed in this chapter are provided for through provincial legislation. Their implementation and/or the involvement of residents or municipalities may be mandatory or optional. These governments also vary in the way that members of the board or council are chosen. The first three, and the oldest – school boards, irrigation districts and drainage districts – have elected boards. Board members of hospital districts may, at the option of the municipality(s), be appointed or directly elected. The boards for the hospital districts, health units, regional planning commissions, and municipal and regional libraries consist of appointed members who may be elected officials or sometimes selected from the community at large. There is considerably more freedom in the establishment of police commissions, regional waste management authorities, regional services commissions, rural business projects and regional recreation boards. All of these single-purpose governments, except the regional recreation boards as of the early 1980's, benefit in some way through grants from the province. The Northern Alberta Development Council is a unique regional body assisting in the provision of programs and services in the sparsely populated northern part of the province.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN – THE DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

When this study began, Alberta Municipal Affairs consisted of four main operating divisions and three units providing administrative services. It had a budget of \$38 million in 1986-87, mostly to cover the cost of the 675 staff, and distributed about \$330 million through several grant programs. As a result of the addition of the Housing Department and some responsibilities for Native Affairs the number of permanent staff position increased to 836 and the approved budget now totals \$657 million.

Assessment Services maintains an assessment manual and prepares assessments for 310 municipalities, as well as pipeline and power assessments throughout the province. Improvement Districts and Native Services provides municipal services in improvement districts and Metis Settlements and is responsible for coordination and analysis of Metis and Native issues generally. Municipal Administrative Services assists municipalities through its advisory, inspection, information and research services, the distribution of grant funds to municipalities and citizens. Planning Services assists in the development of land use planning policy and provides a planning service to areas outside of regional planning commissions and to the Alberta Planning Board. The housing division provides financial and in some cases training assistance for new home construc-

tion, home improvement and rental housing, with an emphasis on lower income and senior citizen households. The other units are Finance and Administration, Corporate Communications, Personnel and the department solicitor.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN – BOARDS

The Alberta Assessment Appeal Board hears appeals from decisions of authorities such as municipal governments and the chief provincial assessor on assessment of property. The role of the Alberta Assessment Equalization Board is to factor to a common level of value all the property assessments throughout the province. The Alberta Planning Board is responsible for the administration of the Planning Act and related regulations including approval of regional plans, the hearing of subdivision appeals and funding of regional planning commissions. The Local Authorities Board authorizes municipal and school debenture borrowing and makes recommendations on annexation or separation of land as well as several other functions of a financial or property tax nature. These boards operate independently of the department but are closely related in respect to the functions which the department administers.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN – MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS STATUTES AND OTHERS

The department administers the Municipal Government Act, Local Authorities Election Act, County Act, Municipal Taxation Act and Planning Act, and 36 other Acts. The more significant ones are summarized in this chapter. There are also a number of private Acts. These are often quite dated and usually pertain to the granting of certain authority to a municipality.

A computer search was made of other provincial statutes that refer to municipal governments. A list of 43 from the comprehensive list of 197 different statutes is provided.

CHAPTER NINETEEN – ISSUES

This chapter reviews the resolutions that were considered at recent conventions of the three municipal associations in the province, the provincial response to these and a list of 37 current municipal issues. The concerns of the urban association were more financially oriented (20 of 47) while those of the rural association were more related to legislative amendments (21 of 31). Resolutions of the spring 1986 conventions for the rural and the improvement district associations have not yet been

responded to. The resolutions are broad ranging and many departments assist in the preparation of responses.

The issues are categorized into:

- the broader issues of our times, e.g., does our style of governance allow the long-run issues of our society to be studied? in a period of restraint are the policies of the three orders of government sufficiently integrated? and, should local governments be recognized in a constitution?
- local government issues, e.g., how important is it to have local self-government in Banff, Jasper, the Special Areas and the Improvement Districts? is the rural/urban boundary split any longer a rational model? could the assumption that municipalities can only undertake those functions expressly provided for in law be reversed? and, would the quality of one government improve by limiting the number of consecutive elected terms of office?
- some specific issues, e.g., can a (desirable) shift to market value assessment be implemented more quickly? can school boards be more sensitive to financial implications? does the existence of three municipal associations serve local and provincial needs best? and, is there a need for the function of the municipal inspector to shift to one of encouragement of and education for effective local government?

While “peace, order and good government” is being achieved to a considerable degree by local government in Alberta, it has been 20 years since the last major review of the key Municipal Government Act. There is, therefore, a challenge to freely explore the issues and develop new legislation based on our clearest vision and highest ideals.

TABLE 1
ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES, 1986

Type	Number	Elected Officials	Percent of Total Elected Officials	1985 Population	Percent of Alberta Population
URBAN					
cities	16	136	6.7	1,524,630	64.4
towns	108	757	37.1	304,807	12.9
villages	122	485	23.7	47,274	2.0
summer villages	50	147	7.2	3,366	0.1
sub-total	296	1,525	74.6	1,880,077	79.4
RURAL					
municipal districts	20	132	6.5	109,855	4.6
counties	30	220	10.8	252,202	10.7
improvement districts	14	113 ¹	5.5	59,101	2.5
National Park I.D.s	5	n/a ²		11,131	0.5
Metis settlements	8 ³	40	2.0	4,820	0.2
Special Areas	1 ⁴	13 ¹	0.6	6,042	0.3
sub-total	78	518	25.4	443,151	18.7
Municipalities Total	374	2,043		2,323,228	
Indian Bands	43	n/a		45,722 ⁵	1.8
TOTAL			100.0	2,368,950	100.0

¹ Although members of the advisory council are elected their position is confirmed through appointment by the Minister of Municipal Affairs

² Banff and Jasper elect six and eight school trustees respectively who are responsible for some functions normally administered by a municipal council

³ The Metis Settlements have not traditionally been included in a listing of Alberta's municipalities. However, since settlement councils have as much, if not more authority than improvement district councils, the eight settlements are included hence increasing the count from 366 to 374.

⁴ While formally there are three Special Areas, there is only one board and one administration.

⁵ As of May 1986.

Chapter Thirteen

URBAN MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS

INTRODUCTION

A municipal council is empowered to undertake a variety of activities and actions as provided for within provincial statutes and regulations. This includes:

- passing bylaws, policies and regulations for:
 - the peace, order and good government of the municipality,
 - promoting the health, safety, morality and welfare of it, and
 - governing the proceedings of the council, the conduct of members and the calling of meetings;
- establishing an administration to carry out the responsibilities of the municipality;
- entering into agreements including those with other municipalities or school districts;
- raising funds through property and business taxes, borrowing, fines and fees for service provided;
- adopting plans and regulations for the use and development of land; and
- providing a variety of services.

Service might include the following:

police	land/housing/building rentals
fire	gas production/distribution
disaster services	electrical
ambulance	production/distribution
storm sewers and drainage	family and community support
water supply and distribution	services
sanitary sewage and treatment	day care
garbage collection and disposal	cemeteries
bylaw enforcement	municipal planning, zoning,
roads, streets, walks, lighting	development
airports	recreation programs
public transit	parks and facilities
community/agricultural services	cultural facilities
subdivision development	convention centre
public housing	telephone system
	other.

The direction as to the manner in which these services and other functions are carried out may be mandatory/statutory, permissive or a combi-

nation of these two. A separate chapter on statutes administered by Municipal Affairs and other departments is provided. Probably the most important ones are the Municipal Government Act, the County Act, the Local Authorities Election Act, the Municipal Taxation Act, and the Planning Act.



The City of Calgary (1985), one of Alberta's two largest urban municipalities.

CITIES

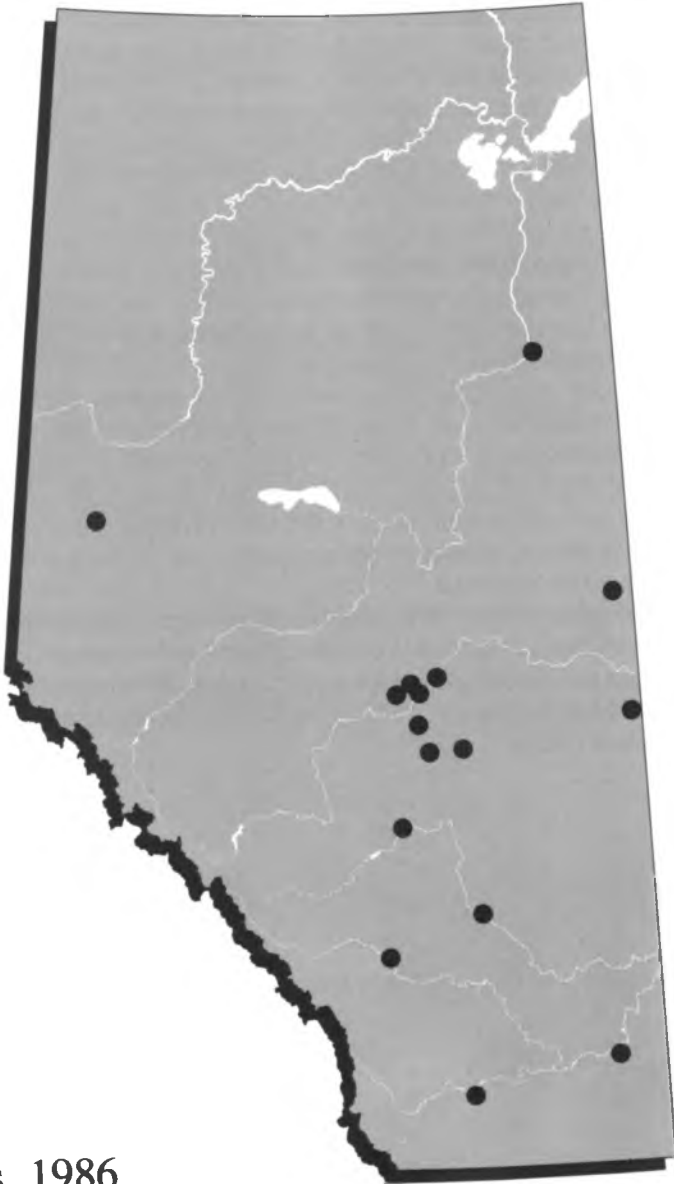
There are 16 cities in Alberta that have been granted city status.

There is no other municipality that is presently qualified to become a city except for the hamlet of Sherwood Park which is of sufficient population size, i.e., with over 10,000 people, but its residents have chosen to remain within the urban/rural County of Strathcona. The Town of Brooks is closest with 9,400 people.

Cities may establish ward systems with the same number of councillors in each ward. Candidates, or those elected to the municipal council, are not required to be resident of the wards they represent.

Cities are governed by a mayor who is elected at large and an even number of councillors or aldermen numbering between six and 20. Elections for cities and all other local government units are held every three years.

In respect to the size of the 16 city councils, nine have six aldermen, five have eight aldermen, Edmonton has 12 and Calgary has 14. Including the mayors there are a total of 136 elected city officials.



Cities 1986

The City of Lloydminster is guided by special legislation dating back to 1923 (Border Areas Act). In 1930 the Town of Lloydminster was established combining the town (1907) in Saskatchewan and the village (1906) in Alberta. A town charter, adopted at the same time, outlined the specific powers and duties of the new town council. The present charter, a city charter as of 1958, is 122 pages long and, in essence, the equivalent of a Municipal Government Act. The city council consists of a mayor and six councillors (variable to 20 with elector approval) elected for three year terms. There is a Lloydminster public school district which also includes some adjoining rural lands in both provinces and a separate school district. Some Alberta Acts apply to the Alberta side, e.g. grants-in-lieu, Alberta Government Telephones and school legislation (excepting that school trustees are elected, as of 1982, in accordance with the Saskatchewan legislation). Saskatchewan property assessment land and the Saskatchewan Planning Act apply throughout, except Alberta subdivision and replotting procedures apply to the Alberta portion of the city. Annexations to the city, according to the charter, require approval by two-thirds of the landowners involved and by the municipal council. Subsequently, an annexation committee representing the two provinces can be established to prepare a recommendation for consideration by the governments of each province for approval.

The 16 cities contain 65 percent of the provincial population. Some of the financial data presented in summary form at the end of chapter 14 is for 1984 and hence includes in the town category the three cities of Airdrie (city status as of January 1, 1985), Fort Saskatchewan (July 1, 1985) and Spruce Grove (March 1, 1986).

TABLE 2
ALBERTA CITIES AND POPULATIONS

Municipal Name	1985 Population¹	Municipal Name	1985 Population¹
Airdrie	10,431	Leduc	12,926
Calgary	625,143	Lethbridge	59,901
Camrose	12,751	Lloydminster	10,557 ³
Drumheller	6,671 ²	Medicine Hat	41,717
Edmonton	560,085	Red Deer	52,620
Fort McMurray	36,810	St. Albert	35,897
Fort Saskatchewan	12,474	Spruce Grove	11,569
Grande Prairie	25,056	Wetaskiwin	10,022
Cities Total (16)	1,524,630		

¹ The population figure is the most recent federal census or a city census undertaken since 1981 and is the figure upon which population related provincial transfer payments to municipalities are based.

² In the 1951 City Act the minimum population requirement was 5,000.

³ Alberta population only.

Figure 2.3

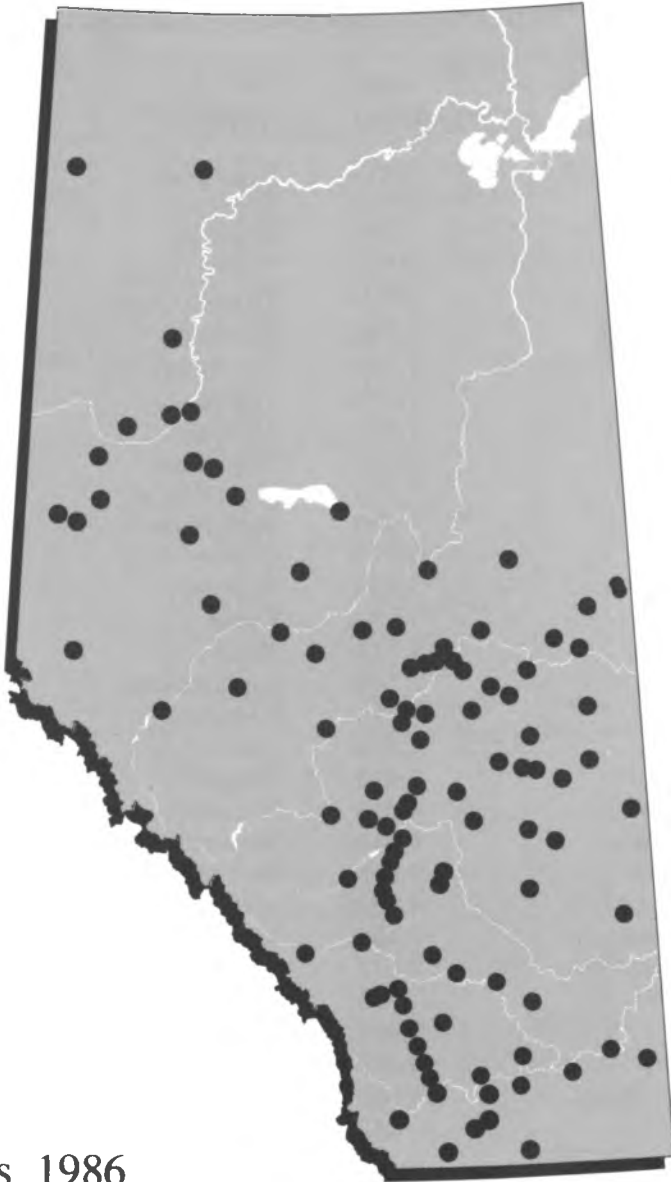
TOWNS

A town can be formed when a village contains at least 1,000 people (700 were needed prior to 1968) and may exceed 10,000 people unless it requests a shift to city status. Under the Municipal Government Act a town is governed by a mayor and six councillors. The mayor, as in cities, is elected at large. The ward system is not an option available to towns, villages or summer villages. However, the Municipality of Crownsnest Pass, often categorized as a town, has three wards. It was formed in 1979 through the unification of several municipalities by the Crownsnest Pass Municipal Unification Act. This council consists of a mayor (elected at large) and three councillors per ward. The size of the council is adjustable by municipal bylaw and can range from six to 20 councillors.

Councillors are required to be resident in their ward for six months preceding nomination day.

There are a total of 757 elected town officials. This includes Rainbow Lake, presently the only new town. It is run by a chairman and a board of four administrators. The New Towns Act provides for a board of up to seven people to exercise the council role within a framework of supervision by the Alberta Planning Board, the Local Authorities Board and the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

The following is a list of the 108 towns as of June 1986 and their populations. Towns contain 13 percent of Alberta's population.



Towns 1986

Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.4

TABLE 3
ALBERTA TOWNS AND POPULATIONS

Town	1985 Population	Town	1985 Population
Athabasca	1,933	Fox Creek	1,978
Barrhead	3,849	Gibbons	2,620
Bashaw	875	Gleichen	381
Bassano	1,230	Grand Centre	3,506
Beaumont	3,723	Grande Cache	4,624
Beaverlodge	1,937	Granum	399
Black Diamond	1,450	Grimshaw	2,645
Blackfalds	1,614	Hanna	3,036
Bon Accord	1,425	Hardisty	600
Bonnyville	5,223	High Level	2,852
Bow Island	1,499	High Prairie	2,580
Bowden	983	High River	5,114
Brooks	9,421	Hinton	8,904
Bruderheim	1,238	Innisfail	5,435
Calmar	1,137	Irvine	360
Canmore	4,012	Killam	1,001
Cardston	3,546	Lac La Biche	2,242
Carstairs	1,725	Lacombe	5,954
Castor	1,123	Lamont	1,673
Claresholm	3,493	Magrath	1,576
Coaldale	4,819	Manning	1,262
Cochrane	4,044	Mayerthorpe	1,475
Cold Lake	2,805	McLennan	1,176
Coronation	1,268	Milk River	894
Crossfield	1,401	Millet	1,428
Crowsnest Pass	7,577	Morinville	5,273
Daysland	709	Mundare	655
Devon	3,931	Nanton	1,671
Didsbury	3,219	Okotoks	4,981
Drayton Valley	4,982	Olds	4,932
Eckville	842	Oyen	1,007
Edson	7,110	Peace River	6,043
Elk Point	1,208	Penhold	1,588
Fairview	3,234	Picture Butte	1,562
Falher	1,188	Pincher Creek	3,712
Fort Macleod	3,139	Ponoka	5,221

TABLE 3 (Continued)
ALBERTA TOWNS AND POPULATIONS

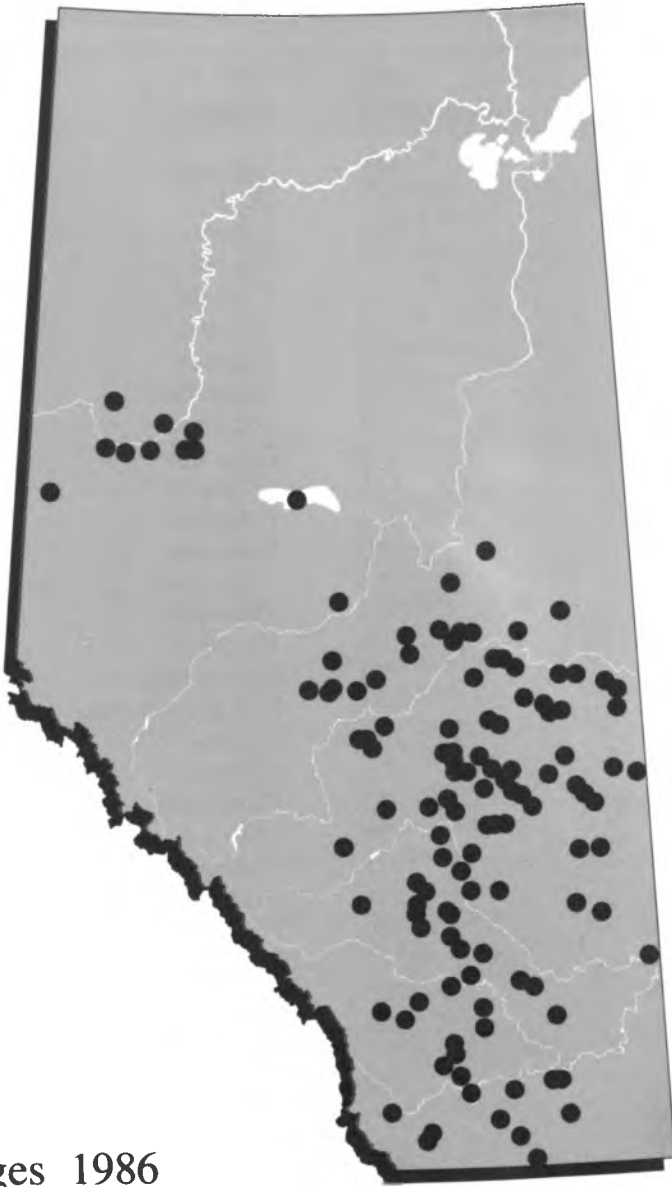
Town	1985 Population	Town	1985 Population
Provost	1,779	Swan Hills	2,497
Rainbow Lake	1,004	Sylvan Lake	3,779
Raymond	3,145	Taber	6,384
Redcliff	3,814	Three Hills	3,539
Redwater	2,197	Tofield	1,560
Rimbey	1,906	Trochu	880
Rocky Mountain House	5,126	Turner Valley	1,298
Sedgewick	923	Two Hills	1,330
Sexsmith	1,912	Valleyview	2,232
Slave Lake	4,838	Vauxhall	1,076
Smoky Lake	1,165	Vegreville	5,251
Spirit River	1,104	Vermilion	3,818
St. Paul	5,052	Viking	1,238
Stavely	548	Vulcan	1,507
Stettler	5,136	Wainwright	4,597
Stony Plain	5,291	Wembley	1,209
Strathmore	3,530	Westlock	4,432
Sundre	1,750	Whitecourt	5,408
		Towns Total (108)	304,807

Figure 2.5

VILLAGES

Villages may be formed upon request by the majority of owners in a community with at least 75 occupied dwellings. Alberta villages range in population from less than 100 to over 1,000 people. They may apply for town status when the population exceeds 1,000 people. The council of a village shall consist of three councillors (or five if authorized by bylaw and if the village population exceeds 250), one of whom shall be mayor. As of March 1986 there were 485 elected village officials. There was a council of three in 62 villages and of five in 60 villages.

The following is a list of the 122 villages in Alberta as of June 1986 and their populations. Villages contain two percent of Alberta's population.



Villages 1986

Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.6

TABLE 4
ALBERTA VILLAGES AND POPULATIONS

Village	1985 Population	Village	1985 Population
Acme	492	Delburne	564
Alix	837	Delia	239
Alliance	208	Derwent	132
Amisk	217	Dewberry	187
Andrew	569	Donalda	256
Arrowwood	154	Donnelly	407
Barnwell	373	Duchess	417
Barons	334	Eaglesham	201
Bawlf	368	Edberg	150
Beiseker	648	Edgerton	389
Bentley	874	Elnora	262
Berwyn	674	Empress	254
Big Valley	360	Entwistle	468
Bittern Lake	153	Evansburg	784
Blackie	343	Ferintosh	155
Botha	190	Foremost	617
Boyle	703	Forestburg	973
Breton	534	Fort Assiniboine	214
Burdett	262	Gadsby	56
Carbon	438	Galahad	182
Carmangay	272	Girouxville	325
Caroline	431	Glendon	471
Cayley	232	Glenwood	297
Cereal	258	Grassy Lake	211
Champion	380	Hairy Hill	72
Chauvin	371	Halkirk	160
Chipman	281	Hay Lakes	318
Clive	365	Heisler	212
Cluny	111	Hillspring	220
Clyde	406	Hines Creek	529
Coalhurst	1,273	Holden	430
Consort	672	Hughenden	263
Coutts	400	Hussar	173
Cowley	304	Hythe	681
Cremona	410	Innisfree	255
Czar	188	Irma	475

TABLE 4 (Continued)
ALBERTA VILLAGES AND POPULATIONS

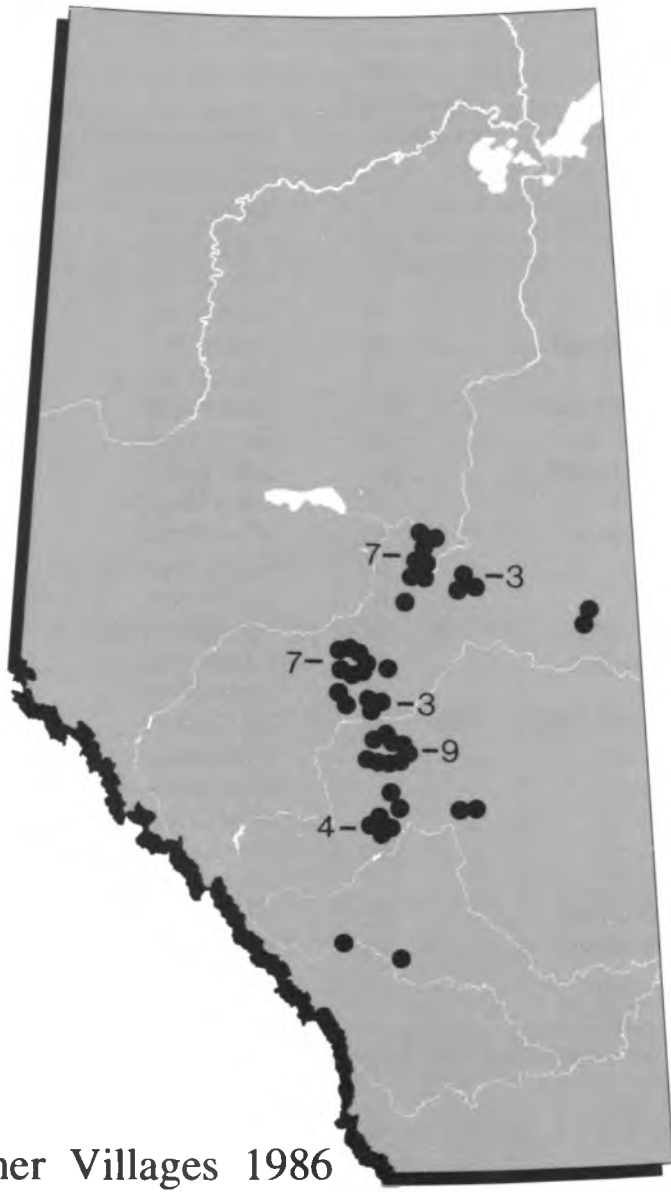
Village	1985 Population	Village	1985 Population
Irricana	726	Rockyford	292
Kinuso	285	Rosalind	197
Kitscoty	613	Rosemary	328
Lavoy	134	Rumsey	93
Legal	1,042	Rycroft	734
Linden	461	Ryley	544
Lomond	204	Sangudo	405
Longview	292	Standard	379
Lougheed	261	Stirling	790
Mannville	799	Strome	281
Marwayne	500	Thorhild	566
Milo	117	Thorsby	737
Minburn	143	Tilley	358
Mirror	552	Torrington	230
Morrin	267	Veteran	318
Munson	148	Vilna	353
Myrnam	423	Wabamun	705
Nampa	435	Wanham	266
New Norway	309	Warburg	552
New Sarepta	461	Warner	486
Nobleford	547	Warspite	96
Onoway	669	Waskatenau	286
Paradise Valley	190	Wildwood	450
Plamondon	271	Willingdon	404
Radway	194	Youngstown	297
		Village Total (122)	47,274

Figure 2.7

SUMMER VILLAGES

A summer village can be formed upon a request of the majority of owners in a summer resort with at least 50 dwellings each of which was occupied at any time in the previous six months. Generally, the provisions related to a village apply to a summer village except that in the latter, elections and annual meetings are required to be held in the summer. Those who own property in the summer village (proprietary electors) and others over 18 resident in the village on election day are entitled to vote. However, electors for school representation, if any, must be defined as resident.

There are a total of 147 elected summer village officials; 46 summer villages have a council of three and two have a council of five. The following is a list of the 50 summer villages and their populations.



Summer Villages 1986

TABLE 5
ALBERTA SUMMER VILLAGES AND POPULATIONS

Summer Village	1985 Resident Population	Summer Village	1985 Resident Population
Alberta Beach	513	Nakamun Park	11
Argentia Beach	3	Norglenwold	113
Betula Beach	8	Parkland Beach	27
Birchcliff	53	Pelican Narrows	65
Bondiss	44	Point Alison	3
Bonnyville Beach	60	Poplar Bay	41
Castle Island	5	Rochon Sands	51
Chestermere Lake	550	Ross Haven	59
Crystal Springs	43	Sandy Beach	78
Edmonton Beach	327	Seba Beach	124
Ghost Lake	42	Silver Beach	30
Golden Days	46	Silver Sands	72
Grandview	53	South Baptiste	65
Gull Lake	80	South View	33
Half Moon Bay	42	Sundance Beach	14
Horseshoe Bay	10	Sunset Beach	36
Island Lake	81	Sunset Point	99
Island Lake South	43	Val Quentin	107
Itaska Beach	6	Waiparous ¹	
Jarvis Bay ¹		West Baptiste	17
Kapasiwin	4	West Cove	46
Lakeview	22	Whispering Hills	13
Larkspur	7	White Gull	18
Ma-Me-O Beach	82	White Sands	2
Mewatha Beach	27	Yellowstone	91
		Summer Village Total (46)	3,366

¹ These two summer villages were incorporated effective Jan. 1, 1986

ALBERTA URBAN MUNICIPALITIES ASSOCIATION

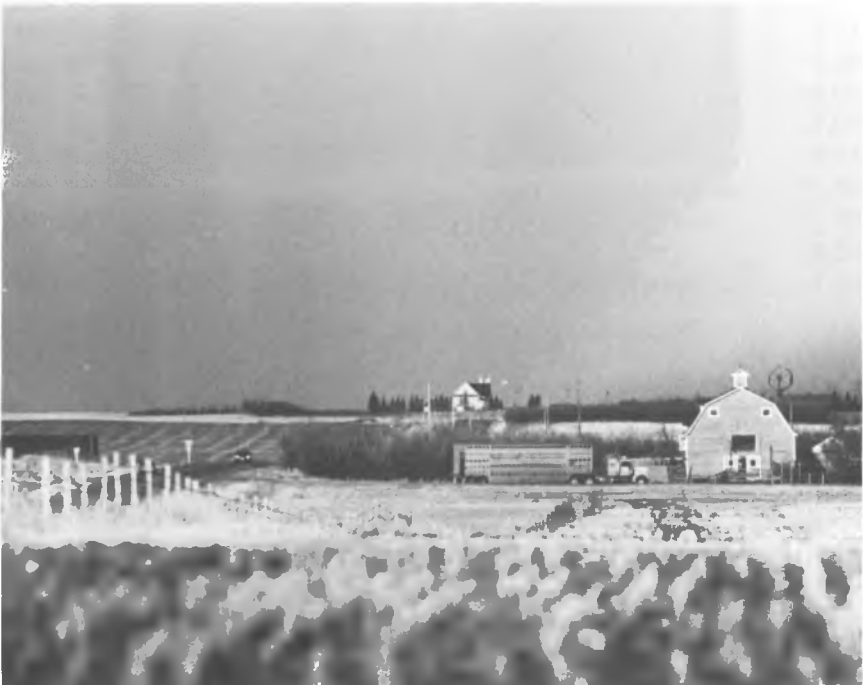
The "voice" of the cities, towns, villages and summer villages is the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association. Operating with a staff of eight people and a budget of \$486,000 in 1985, the Association's main functions include: coordinating the annual convention; providing a direct service to members including an employee benefits program, a general insurance program and an employee/labor relations service; and a broad activity related to the improvement of local government through providing input or comment on existing or proposed legislation and a research and educational service. Its expenses are met through levies on members, interest earnings and an annual provincial grant of \$40,000 (1985).

Chapter Fourteen

RURAL MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS**INTRODUCTION**

The five forms of rural government in Alberta – municipal districts, counties, improvement districts, Metis Settlements and Special Areas – contain about 19 percent of the provincial population. The last three noted are in more developmental phases subject to greater provincial authority and guidance than are the other rural and urban forms. Although the communities of Banff and Jasper are, technically, improvement districts they and the other three national park areas are presented separately.

The designation “rural” should not be interpreted to include farm or resource based areas only. That is, some of these municipalities contain substantial country residence populations; the County of Strathcona contains the populous hamlet of Sherwood Park.



This scene, from the Municipal District of Rocky View (1985), is typical of many of the rural municipalities in Alberta.



Municipal Districts 1986

Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.10

MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS

A municipal district (M.D.) is a government form in rural areas of the province. It includes farmlands as well as unincorporated communities such as hamlets and rural residential subdivisions. The council consists of one councillor per electoral division, one of whom shall be elected by council as reeve. Presently the number of electoral divisions varies from four to 11 with the most common being seven. As of March 1986 there were 132 elected municipal district officials.

The following is a list of the 20 municipal districts in Alberta and their populations. The municipal districts contain almost five percent of the provincial population.

TABLE 6
ALBERTA MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS AND POPULATIONS

Municipal District	1985 Population	Municipal District	1985 Population
No. 1 Cypress	4,703	No. 52 Provost	2,708
No. 6 Cardston	4,292	No. 61 Wainwright	3,874
No. 9 Pincher Creek	2,970	No. 87 Bonnyville	9,808
No. 14 Taber	5,637	No. 90 Sturgeon	13,979
No. 26 Willow Creek	4,534	No. 92 Westlock	7,059
No. 31 Foothills	9,685	No. 99 Clearwater	9,210
No. 34 Acadia	604	No. 130 Smoky River	2,858
No. 44 Rocky View	16,703	No. 133 Spirit River	891
No. 47 Starland	2,109	No. 135 Peace	1,520
No. 48 Kneehill	4,831	No. 136 Fairview	1,889
		Municipal District Total (20)	109,855

Figure 2.11

COUNTIES

The rules that apply to municipal districts generally apply to counties. That is, there is a council which governs a rural municipality. However, in addition to the county council, there is a board of education consisting of county councillors and elected representatives of the villages, towns, cities and other areas that become members of the board of education. School budget estimates are recommended by the board of education for approval by the county council. School representatives are entitled to vote as members of the county council only when the annual board of education estimates are dealt with.



Counties 1986

Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.12

Typically, a county will have seven councillors, one of whom is elected by its members as reeve, but the range is from five to 11. As of March 1986 there were 147 elected councillors in the 30 counties.

Over the last three years Alberta Municipal Affairs, Alberta Education, the AAMD&C and interested citizens have been engaged in a review of several sections of the County Act. Responses to department-prepared proposals have ranged from leaving the Act as it is to its repeal. At the last meeting of participants in December 1985, the major issues were:

- (a) clarification of the roles of the council and the board of education with respect to school matters;
- (b) the scheme of representation on the board of education; and
- (c) the encouragement of cooperative, common service provision to the municipal and school activities.

It remains with the province to develop further proposals or legislative amendments with respect to the county system.

The following is a list of the 30 counties in the province and their populations. They contain 11 percent of Alberta's population.

TABLE 7
ALBERTA COUNTIES AND POPULATIONS

County	1985 Population	County	1985 Population
No. 1 Grande Prairie	12,078	No. 18 Paintearth	2,495
No. 2 Vulcan	3,626	No. 19 St. Paul	6,352
No. 3 Ponoka	7,536	No. 20 Strathcona	48,024
No. 4 Newell	6,199	No. 21 Two Hills	3,380
No. 5 Warner	3,460	No. 22 Camrose	7,564
No. 6 Stettler	5,092	No. 23 Red Deer	13,664
No. 7 Thorhild	3,323	No. 24	
No. 8 Forty Mile	3,506	Vermilion River	7,533
No. 9 Beaver	5,347	No. 25 Leduc	13,296
No. 10 Wetaskiwin	9,026	No. 26 Lethbridge	8,185
No. 11 Barrhead	5,517	No. 27 Minburn	4,041
No. 12 Athabasca	5,936	No. 28 Lac Ste. Anne	7,722
No. 13 Smoky Lake	2,910	No. 29 Flagstaff	4,507
No. 14 Lacombe	8,783	No. 30 Lamont	4,687
No. 16 Wheatland	5,631	No. 31 Parkland	23,950
No. 17 Mountain View	8,832		
		Total (30)	252,202

ALBERTA ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS AND COUNTIES

The incorporated rural municipalities are members of the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties. The Association's objects are to promote the interests of its members, bring about their economical and efficient administration, promote and guide the improvement of federal and provincial legislation affecting municipalities and to protect municipal districts and counties from impairment in status, capacity or powers. In carrying out these functions the Association sponsors a spring and fall conference, organizes committees to review certain concerns such as rural non-farm assessment, meets with provincial officials and staffs and, through its executive, maintains contact with a variety of other organizations by attending their conferences.

The Association operates an insurance company for regular and associate member organizations and a trading division which coordinates bulk buying by members. The Association's expenses are met essentially through membership fees and an annual provincial grant of \$20,000 (1985).

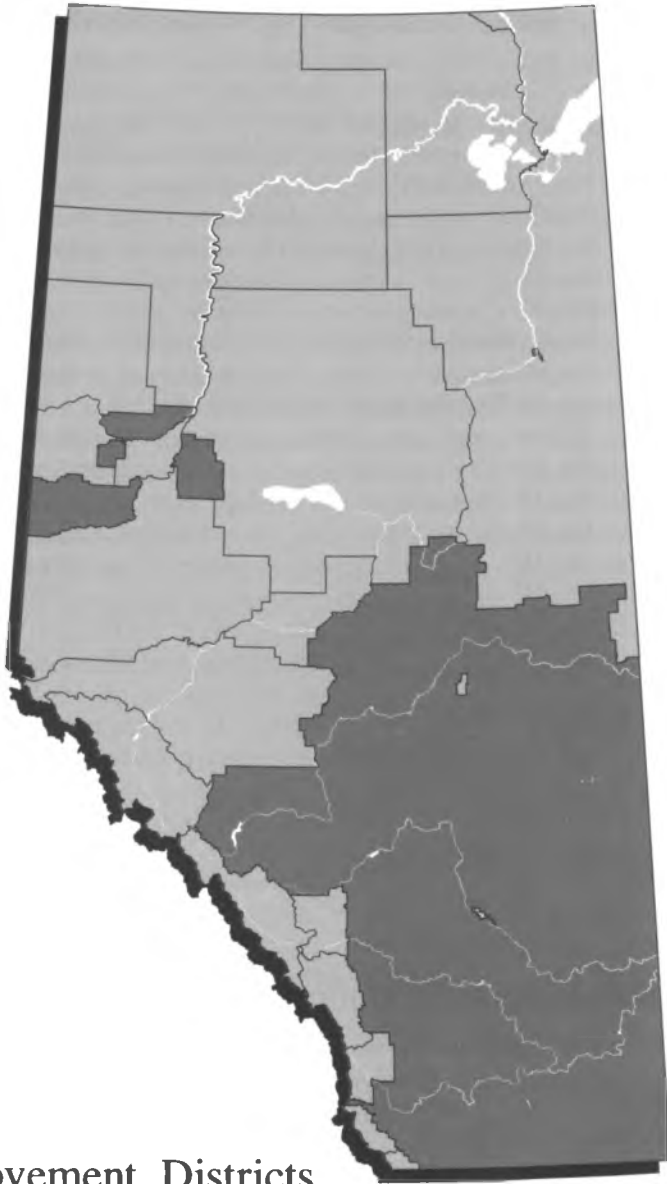
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

The provincial government, through Alberta Municipal Affairs, is responsible for all functions of local government in the improvement districts including the levy and collection of taxes. The residents of an improvement district (I.D.) elect representatives, who are subsequently appointed by the Minister, to an advisory council which assists in the administration of each district. While there were no I.D.'s incorporated as M.D.'s from 1958 to 1985, there have since been two incorporations and study and discussion are proceeding on three more.

Five of the 19 I.D.'s are national parks – Banff, Jasper, Waterton, Elk Island and Wood Buffalo. The federal government has the primary responsibility in these areas except for school affairs. I.D. 5, Kananaskis Country, is under the administration of Alberta Recreation and Parks, although some administrative assistance is provided by Alberta Municipal Affairs.

There are a total of 113 people elected/appointed to the advisory councils of the 13 improvement districts. Each improvement district has one advisory council, except I.D. 17 which has four councils and I.D. 18 which has three due to their large geographic areas. The council, generally consisting of seven to 10 members, guides the activities of the improvement district manager and his staff. They in turn operate within a departmental framework of regional directors, an Assistant Deputy Minister and Deputy Minister. The formal power rests with the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and the Treasury Department performs the banker's role.

The improvement districts and their populations are listed below.



Improvement Districts 1986

Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.14

TABLE 8
ALBERTA IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS AND POPULATIONS

Improvement District	1985 Population
I.D. No. 4 Waterton	176
I.D. No. 5	122
I.D. No. 6	119
I.D. No. 7	1,180
I.D. No. 8	1,158
I.D. No. 9 Banff	6,949
I.D. No. 12 Jasper	3,970
I.D. No. 13 Elk Island	36
I.D. No. 14	8,119
I.D. No. 15	2,670
I.D. No. 16	5,350
I.D. No. 17	12,041
I.D. No. 18	9,605
I.D. No. 19	1,757
I.D. No. 20	3,000
I.D. No. 21	2,979
I.D. No. 22	4,250
I.D. No. 23	6,563
I.D. No. 24 Wood Buffalo	188
I.D. Total (19)	70,232

Figure 2.15

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA

The Alberta Association of Improvement Districts was established in 1975 as an organization to assist in the education of and to represent the interests of improvement districts and their advisory council members. Within an annual budget of approximately \$100,000 (1985) the Association sponsors an annual conference and some workshops. Regular meetings are held of its executive and of its executive with regional and provincial associations or committees. Its funding is essentially through requisitions from improvement districts.

BANFF AND JASPER

The situation with Banff and Jasper is unique. The Act of 1887, creating the townsites of Banff and Jasper, and the National Resources Transfer Agreement of 1930 give Alberta "limited and carefully circumscribed jurisdiction"¹. Management of the townsites is provided by the park superintendent and a townsite manager. In the 1920's citizen advisory committees were established in both townsites. Over the years school boards have been established which, with the authority of the Minister of Education, have taken on some additional responsibilities such as library, recreation and social services. Provincial Acts have been amended to allow the school boards to levy taxes to cover the municipal portion of operating these functions. More recently, especially since 1970, there have been several periods of discussion and a few local plebiscites respecting local self-government. In 1970 the two school boards facilitated and signed a resolution to the federal government stating it was "the unassailable right of Canadian citizens to have local self-government"². This resolution had the unanimous support of the Alberta legislature.³ A major report of Alberta Municipal Affairs in 1972 stated "We have arrived at the conclusion that the communities of Banff and Jasper are financially and otherwise capable of operating as autonomous towns"⁴. While a plebiscite of Banff residents in 1970 showed overwhelming support for incorporation, a 1977 plebiscite showed the residents to be against this action.

Another report was completed by Municipal Affairs in 1980, and discussions were held reviewing the issues and various approaches that might be taken on the matter of incorporation. However, residents' concerns with federal land leasing policy in the townsites were so great that at public meetings in 1982 they overwhelmingly rejected the holding of a plebiscite without a prior resolution of the lease issue.

In 1984 the federal Minister of the Environment approved terms of reference for the Jasper Townsite Committee which provided for the members' election in a manner similar to that of municipal councillors. The committee is advisory to the park superintendent. The approach to be taken in Banff, based on the terms of reference approved in February 1986, is for the expansion of the seven member school board with six additional elected members. This expanded group, the Banff Municipal Committee, would be advisory to the parks superintendent and would review community plans, major development proposals, enforcement, business licenses, utility rates, capital improvements, traffic management and financial statements. It would also "continue to investigate and make recommendations with respect to future steps towards possible municipal self-government for the Banff Townsite"⁵.

The Jasper community has continued its discussion of local government and in March 1986 submitted "A Planning Framework for the

Evolution of Local Autonomy for the Town of Jasper". Supported by both the Jasper School Board and the Jasper Townsite Committee, the report reviews and presents recommendations in seven areas:

- (1) leases,
- (2) park environment,
- (3) incorporation,
- (4) provincial and federal role,
- (5) annual community lease payment,
- (6) transfer of federal assets and
- (7) decision-making process.

Ideally, the report proposes there would be a plebiscite in September 1986 with incorporation following.

The federal Minister of Environment established a task force in April 1985 to review lease policy in federal parks in Alberta and British Columbia. The five members of parliament, under the chairmanship of Gordon Taylor, M.P., Bow River, completed their report, "Land Rental in the National Parks", in December 1985. It concluded "there is no continuity, equality or justice in the various lease rental charges made by Parks Canada to either commercial or residential properties".⁶ One member of the committee summarized their findings: "The lessees have been subjected to a shameful history of oppressive bureaucracy which has in some cases amounted to deceit and bribery".⁷ They recommended a series of adjustments to the land lease policy, some specific actions to correct some past injustices and that the Banff and Jasper townsites incorporate.

METIS SETTLEMENTS

There are eight Metis settlements in Alberta covering a total area of 1.25 million acres (0.5 million hectares). There are presently almost 5,000 Metis residing in the settlements, up from 700 in 1940, 1900 in 1961 and 3,000 in 1971. There are about 60,000 Metis living off the settlements in Alberta.

Administration and delivery of services in the settlements is carried out through the Metis Development Branch of the Improvement Districts Operations Division. Each settlement has an advisory council of five people. Members of the council are elected for two years with half elected annually. The chairman is selected internally. The branch is currently assisting in the training of Metis administrators and the development of administrative policies that would be helpful in facilitating self-government in the settlements. Land surveys are currently underway to define the settlement boundaries. The population and area of the eight settlements are:



Metis Settlements 1986

Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.16

TABLE 9
METIS SETTLEMENTS, 1985

	Population	Area	
		Acres	Hectares
Paddle Prairie	1,048	403,200	163,173
Big Prairie	347	203,360	82,299
Gift Lake	552	207,360	83,917
East Prairie	357	80,640	32,635
Kikino	815	110,800	44,840
Caslan (Buffalo Lake)	679	85,760	34,707
Elizabeth	521	63,360	25,641
Fishing Lake	501	93,890	37,997
	4,820	1,248,370	505,209

Figure 2.17

The report of the committee established to review the Metis Settlement Act and Regulations Order in March 1982 was tabled in July 1984. The focus of the 71 page report is to chart a new direction for the development and governance of the Metis settlements, one that is away from the "largely paternal nature of the 1938 Act".⁸

The recommendation on government in each settlement was for a council of five, elected for staggered terms of up to three years in a manner which would require an annual election of two members. The chairman would be selected annually. The settlement council would have exclusive legislative authority in respect to bylaws on hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering. After second reading, every bylaw would go before a community meeting for approval prior to third reading. Money bylaws would be dealt with as provided for in the Municipal Government Act. There would also be a senate of five elders elected for five years, one each year, with its chairman selected from within. The senate would be advisory to the council on:

- (a) membership in settlements
- (b) land allocation to adult members
- (c) other matters as determined by the council.

The matter of land was of some concern. There was a desire to firmly establish the boundaries of the settlements and vest title to the settlements. It was recommended that boundaries be adjusted, not by unilateral provincial order, but at the request of the settlement council, with agreement by 90 percent of the adult members and the support of the majority of the other settlements. Issues relating to the ownership or benefits accruing from mines and minerals are presently before the courts. Adult

members would be issued renewable certificates to occupy allotted lands for up to five years. Benefits from sand, gravel, timber or other resources would accrue to one common trust fund.⁹ The fund would be administered by a board comprised of one person from each senate of elders and one additional person appointed by the councils. Resource related resolutions would require approval of 70 percent of the councils and at least 70 percent of all adult settlement members.

Settlement councils would be guided by the following definition of Metis: an individual of aboriginal ancestry who identifies with Metis history and culture. Councils would have the authority to terminate membership.

Settlements would be treated as any other municipality for grant and other purposes.

In June 1985 the legislature passed a resolution committing to seek an amendment to the Alberta Act granting title to existing Metis Settlement lands to the Metis Settlement Associations. This would be undertaken once the Metis representatives have defined criteria for membership and land allocation in settlements, the composition of democratic governing bodies, and a revised Metis Betterment Act has been adopted.

The Metis group working on these matters met with the Premier in January 1986 to report on their progress. They indicated their intention to present recommendations on the agreed matters to elected representatives of the province in the near future.

SPECIAL AREAS

Special Areas is a rural area in southeast Alberta administered by a board of three people appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Technically, there are three Special Areas within the district being discussed but for simplicity and in accordance with common usage these will be referred to as one unit. The Special Areas Act of 1938 has more or less remained intact although there were some amendments in 1966 and 1985. An advisory council of 13 is elected in accordance with the Local Authorities Election Act.

The population of the Special Areas is 6,042 with an additional 6,000 people resident in the seven urban municipalities within its border. The land area of about five million acres is comprised of two million acres of privately held land, one and one-half million acres of crown land and one and one-half million acres of tax recovery land. The land in the latter category was returned to the government through non-payment of taxes in the difficult years of the 1920's and 1930's. Reversion of land to the crown also allowed other debts of the farmers to be wiped out. Subsequently, some lands were sold back to former owners, but lending institutions' concerns led to a general policy of long term leases. Policies were

implemented to permit sale of the "home quarter" to area farmers. With many farmers operating on leased land and consequently limited in their capacity to borrow funds, the sale policy of tax recovery land was developed in 1981. Each resident farmer is now allowed to purchase \$8,000 of assessed value farmland, or about one section, if they have leased it for at least three years. The crown land in the Special Areas is under the jurisdiction of the Special Areas Board¹⁰ and is not intended for sale.

The three members of the board were full time until 1981 when only the chairman remained full time. The other two members, representing the advisory council, are now appointed on a part-time basis. Policy decisions are made by the board; administration is carried out by the board chairman and three directors.

In addition to the advisory council,¹¹ there are road committees of four or five people in each of the 13 subdivisions. Members of these committees are elected and meet annually under the chairmanship of the advisory council member for the area. The Special Areas Board and staff review the road programs for the whole area and establish priorities.

The board has a history of not overspending. Indeed, it has never borrowed money, choosing to reduce services when times were tough. Generally, operating surpluses are planned for every year. The combination of constraint, the debt reduction and other grants programs, entitlement to revenue from lease of crown land and sale or lease of tax recovery land has put the Special Areas in a very healthy financial position. At the end of 1984 cash and short-term investments totalled almost \$13 million.

There are a number of agreements between the Special Areas and the urban municipalities within. These agreements cover fire protection, ambulance, library, recreation, regional waste collection, some limited family and community services and the development and operation of medical centres. The boundary for the local board of health is co-terminous with the Special Areas. Requisitions for school support are made by six different divisions.



Special Areas 1986

Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping Figure 2.18

The Special Areas is also involved in the Prairie Association for Water Management, which has membership extending from the City of Calgary to Kindersley, Saskatchewan. The Association will examine, in concert with government agencies, rural and urban needs and develop water resource plans and strategies.

There is a sense of success amongst the board members that should be shared. This would facilitate the replication of some of these positive features elsewhere and ensure that the present strengths are carried forward in the administration of the area. Some of the factors or elements mentioned in discussions with the board included:¹²

1. a sense of flexibility in the system in which they operate
2. the absence of a sense of personal gain
3. time and flexibility to deal with people on a one to one basis
4. people seldom demanded more than they could afford
5. the two to three day conferences of the advisory council held each spring and fall seem to work well
6. resolutions of the advisory council are passed to the board which carry out the needed research and implementation
7. a stable (not transient) population
8. fortunate with the choice of successive executive officers.

INDIAN RESERVES

To complete the picture on settlement in Alberta the list of 43 Indian bands (90 reserves) and their population is provided. Effective May 26, 1986, the responsibility for Alberta Native Affairs, Programs Unit, was placed with the Minister of Municipal Affairs. An Indian reserve is not a part of any municipality whatsoever. The British North America Act, 1867, place exclusive legislative authority on matters related to Indians, and land reserved for Indians, with the national parliament, there are no Alberta statutes respecting native affairs.

The reserves, which range in size from 1,089 acres (441 ha) to 354,667 acres (143,532 ha), have a total area of 1,622,630 acres (656,669 ha). All but two of the smallest reserves are occupied.



Indian Reserves 1986

Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.19

TABLE 10
ALBERTA BAND POPULATION
as of May 1986

Fort McMurray District		Edmonton/Hobbema	
Cree	1,102	Alexis	762
Fort Chipewyan	337	Alexander	779
Fort McKay	249	Louis Bull	821
Fort McMurray	162	Enoch	943
Janvier	295	Paul	933
	<u>2,145</u>	Montana	454
		Ermineskin	1,623
		Samson	<u>3,146</u>
			9,461
Southern Alberta District		Fort Vermilion District	
Blackfoot	3,389	Boyer River	342
O'Chiese	398	Tallcree	399
Sarcee	761	Little Red River	1,703
Chiniki (Stoney)	831	Dene Tha'	<u>1,499</u>
Sunchild	496		3,943
Bearspaw (Stoney)	828		
Wesley (Stoney)	899		
Blood	6,479		
Peigan	<u>2,007</u>		
	16,088		
Lesser Slave Lake		St. Paul District	
Horse Lake	213	Beaver Lake	332
Driftpile	844	Saddle Lake	4,391
Duncan's	62	Cold Lake	1,104
Grouard	97	Frog Lake	1,019
Lubicon Lake	180 ¹	Kehewin	932
Sawridge	38 ¹	Heart Lake	<u>108</u>
Sturgeon Lake	895		7,886
Sucker Creek	753		
Swan River	286		
Bigstone Cree	2,095		
Whitefish Lake	<u>736</u>		
	6,199		
TOTAL ALBERTA	45,722		

¹ As of August 1984

Figure 2.20

MUNICIPAL FINANCIAL DATA

A series of tables has been prepared to provide some broad data on municipal finances. The tables are sufficiently self-explanatory to give the reader an awareness of some of the recent trends and the current (1984) revenue and expenditure patterns of Alberta municipalities.

Table 1
**REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES
 FOR URBAN MUNICIPALITIES, 1984**

GENERAL OPERATING FUND – 1984

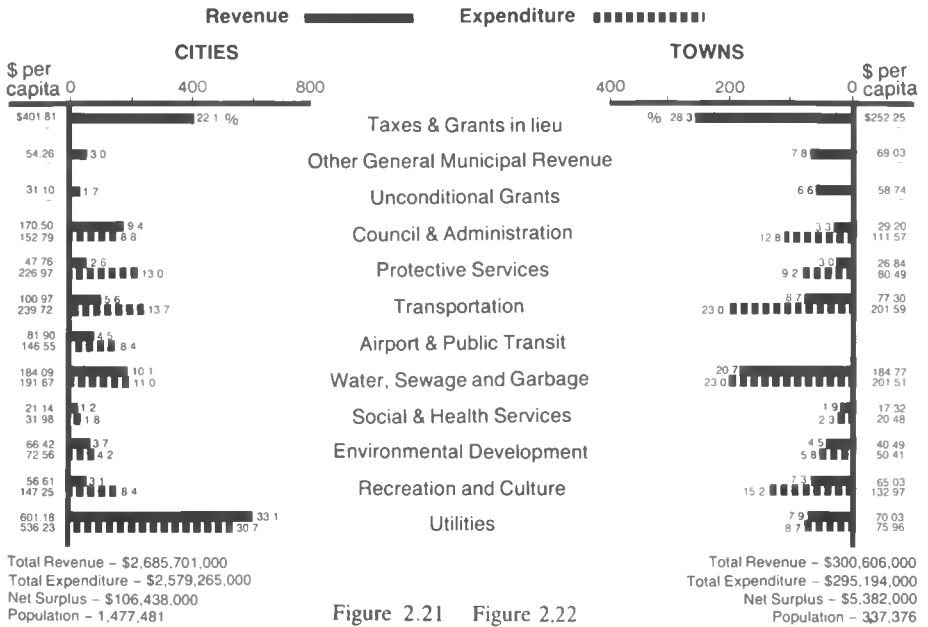


Figure 2.21 Figure 2.22

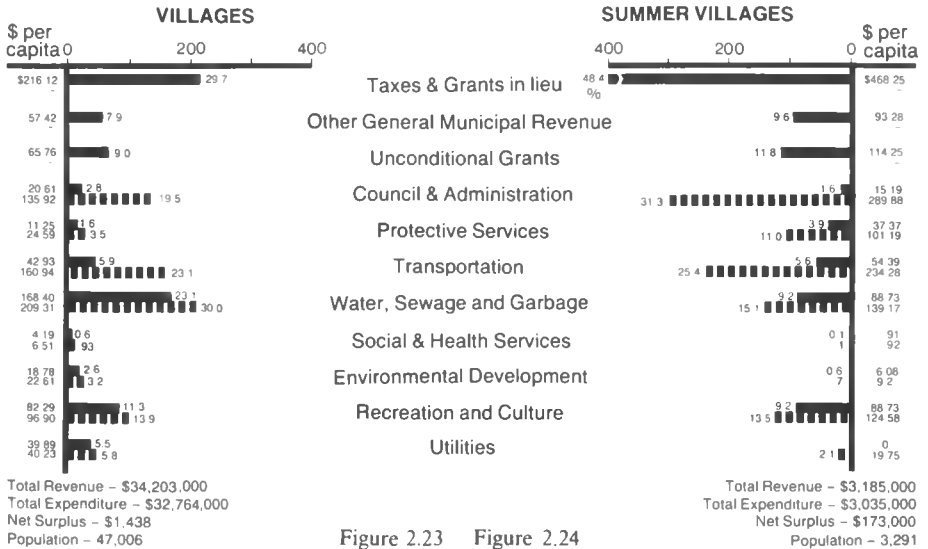


Figure 2.23 Figure 2.24

Table 2
**REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES
 FOR RURAL MUNICIPALITIES, 1984**

GENERAL OPERATING FUND - 1984

Revenue Expenditure

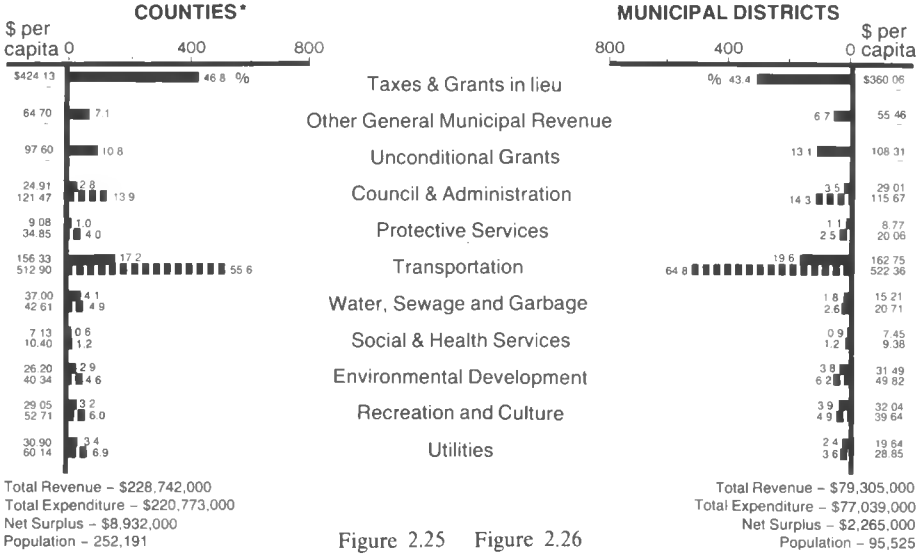


Figure 2.25 Figure 2.26

* Includes County of Strathcona

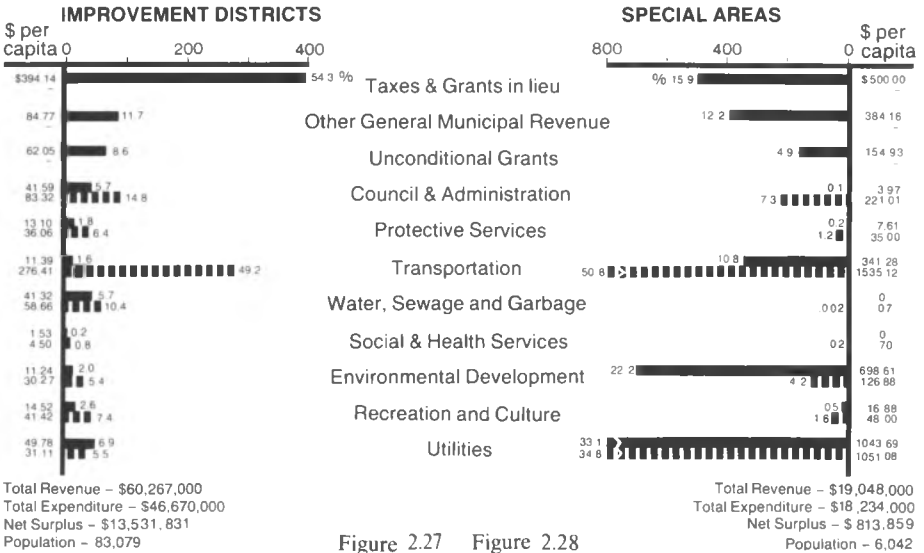


Figure 2.27 Figure 2.28

Table 3
AVERAGE EQUALIZED ASSESSMENT

	Per Capita	Per Dwelling Unit	Per Road Kilometre	Per Kilometre Squared
Cities	\$ 8,905	\$22,254		
Towns	6,192	17,515		
Villages	4,814	12,800		
Summer Villages	21,418	10,491 *		
School Districts/ National Parks	13,422	46,521		
Counties	11,787		\$35,634	\$23,718
M. D.'s	13,919		45,927	15,810
I. D.'s	21,766		69,006	3,471
Special Areas	31,185		23,001	9,189

* Per summer village parcels with residence.

Figure 2.29

Table 4
COMBINED CAPITAL FINANCES APPLIED*, 1984

	Finances Applied (\$000)	Per Capita
Cities	\$1,343,000	\$ 909
Towns	150,000	445
Villages	20,000	428
Summer Villages	9,000	270
Counties	43,000	170
M. D.'s	14,000	147
I. D.'s	23,000	274
Special Areas	1,000	188
Total	\$1,595,000	\$2,831

* Capital expenditures.

Figure 2.30

Table 5
ALBERTA MUNICIPAL DEBT, 1974-84

	Yearly Debenture Debt (\$000,000)	Total Accumulated Debt (\$000,000)
1974	\$174	\$ 885
1975	252	1,093
1976	274	1,325
1977	307	1,570
1978	340	1,825
1979	441	1,591
1980	650	2,191
1981	724	2,886
1982	947	3,760
1983	582	4,185
1984	551	4,563

Figure 2.31

Table 6
ALBERTA MUNICIPAL DEBT, 1984

	Debenture, Bond And Mortgage Debt (\$000)	Total Accumulated Debt (\$000)	Accumulated Debt Per Capita
Cities	\$830,751	\$3,945,035	\$2,670
Towns	20,483	367,087	1,088
Villages	2,346	40,982	872
Summer Villages	—	911	277
Counties	19,788	198,214	786
M. D.'s	743	5,317	56
I. D.'s	357	5,828	70

Figure 2.32

References for Chapter Fourteen

1. J. Masson, *Alberta's Local Governments and Their Politics*, 1985, p. 114.
2. *Banff-Jasper Autonomy Report*, March 1972. See Appendix.
3. *Ibid.*, The resolution was dated March 31, 1970.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
5. "Agreement with regard to the Terms of Reference for the Banff Municipal Committee" signed by the Federal Government and the Board of Trustees of the Banff School District on February 4, 1986.
6. Barbara Sparrow, M.P., in the report of the Land Rental Committee of the P.C. Task Force, *Land Rental in the National Parks*, December 1985, p. 24.
7. Blaine Thacker, M.P., *Ibid.*, p. 24.
8. From the covering letter in the *Report of the MacEwan Joint Metis-Government Committee to Review the Metis Betterment Act and Regulations*, 1984.
9. There are presently two provincially administered trust funds for the Metis Settlements. The first is the Metis Settlement Trust which was established with municipal debt reduction funds. The \$400,000 remaining is available generally for capital purposes. The fund is settlement specific; two settlements are entitled to about three-quarters of the funds remaining.

The second fund is the Metis Betterment Trust. Since its inception in the 1940's, it has grown to about \$1 million in 1980 and to just over \$5 million in March 1986. These funds, which accrue primarily from the granting of surface rights, are distributed by the Minister following annual recommendations of the Settlement Association and individual advisory councils. Disbursement is shifting from an individual project application basis to quarterly payments and quarterly settlement reports. About \$500,000 is being expended from the fund this year primarily for community buildings and recreational facilities that are available to all settlement members.
10. The administration of Crown lands in improvement districts remains with Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, Public Lands Division.
11. Members are often on the council for many years; elections are often not contested.
12. From a meeting the writer had in Hanna with the Board and senior executive on April 23, 1986.

Chapter Fifteen**LOCAL AND REGIONAL SINGLE-PURPOSE GOVERNMENTS****INTRODUCTION**

This report, while focussing on local municipal government and administration of areas by Alberta Municipal Affairs, would not be complete without an examination of other governing boards at the local and regional level. There are some to which representatives are elected directly and others to which municipal councillors and the public are appointed. Some of these single-purpose boards are mandatory while others are introduced through decision at the local level. All of these need to be considered in a discussion of a long-term vision or strategy for local government in Alberta. There are other inter-municipal arrangements administered by boards or committees, e.g. the provision of ambulance and fire protection services that are excluded here because they are optional and receive no incentive grants from the province.

SCHOOL BOARDS

The most significant local governing board outside of a municipal council is the local school authority. As with local governments, there are a variety of forms of school authorities. They are differentiated on the basis of religion, type of organization, size, grade and/or operator. The following table shows the types and number of school authorities in Alberta as of May 1986, while the enrollment is as of September 30, 1985.

The first eight categories of authorities in Table 11 are those which have elected boards. There are a total of 1,102 trustees serving in 169 districts. They are elected in accordance with the Local Authorities Election Act at the same time and in the same way as municipal councillors.

School jurisdictions and their boards of trustees, as with municipalities, are established as corporations. Basic powers of the board include the provision of educational services and facilities, the borrowing of funds for operating and capital purposes, the ability to enter into contracts and the requisitioning of municipalities for funds to be collected through a school tax levy.



School Jurisdictions 1986

Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.34

TABLE 11
ALBERTA SCHOOL AUTHORITIES, TRUSTEES AND STUDENTS

	Number of Authorities	Number of Trustees	Pupils Gr. 1-12	Early Childhood Services
County	30	376	79,510	1,424
School Division	30	206	63,006	1,744
Public School District	33	174	196,480	7,841
Roman Catholic Public School District	2	10	1,261	182
Protestant Separate School District	3	13	5,562	77
Roman Catholic Separate School District	68	308	44,967	3,264
Regional School District	1	5	420	66
Consolidated School District	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>505</u>	<u>13</u>
Sub-Total	169	1,102	421,711	14,611
Provincial Government – Jail	4			
Provincial Government – Other	20			
Department of National Defence	4	3	1,533	95
Federal Jail	1			
Department of Indian Affairs	<u>7</u>			
Sub-Total	36			
Private Schools	171		13,627	
Early Childhood Services Operators	<u>234</u>	—	—	<u>4,079</u>
Sub-Total	406		436,871	18,785

Source: Alberta Education

County

The 30 counties in Table 11 represent the rural counties. The urban County of Devon has been included in the public school district category.

There are 376 elected representatives serving on the school boards in the counties – an average of 12.5 members per authority. This is high in comparison to all other school boards as it includes 220 councillors elected to the county council. There is an average of five people elected in each county to serve solely as school trustees.

The county board of education consists of not less than three members of the county council and of school representatives elected in educational units. These units can include towns, cities, villages, summer villages and school districts that are considered part of the county school system. The school interests of residents in rural areas and hamlets (excepting the hamlet of Sherwood Park) are represented by the county councillors. Representation is based on population but the formula can cause more school representatives to be elected than the number of councillors in the county. In the few counties where this does occur, a system of rotation of school representatives is required as the number of town and village representatives cannot exceed the number of electoral divisions in the county. If a separate school supporter was elected to council, he could not serve on the board of education.

School Division

The 30 school divisions in the province could be roughly equated with the municipal districts in Alberta. The divisions, created as a result of the amalgamations of small, rural districts in the 1930's, also extend into improvement districts and the Special Areas. To protect rights to education gained in the founding legislation of the North West Territories and the province, the small, original school districts cease to function when formed into a division but residents continue to have the right to re-establish the original district.

The board of the division is usually composed of three to nine trustees elected from electoral divisions. However, the large Northlands Division has 24 trustees. There are currently 206 trustees elected to serve in school divisions, an average of seven people each.

Public School District

The school district is the basic building block in the local school structure in Alberta. As of 1981, there were 4,362 school districts in existence, of which 4,237 had been amalgamated into school divisions or counties. The school districts that remain active today are generally in the larger

urban communities in the province. There are 174 trustees elected to serve on the 33 boards of public school districts – an average of 5.3 trustees per board. Five of these are not operating schools but still have trustees elected to administer tuition agreements with an operating authority.

Roman Catholic Public School District

It is now the general practice that the first school district formed is deemed to be non-denominational and the religious minority, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, has the right to establish a *separate* school district. However, in the case of two areas, St. Albert and Morinville, the Catholic community formed the first school districts and were named Roman Catholic *Public* School Districts. Each of these districts has five trustees.

Protestant Separate School Districts

The three districts in this category are St. Albert, Glen Avon (includes the town and vicinity of St. Paul) and Smithreade, a small rural district. There are five trustees elected in St. Albert and Glen Avon, and three in Smithreade.

Roman Catholic Separate School Districts

There are 57 operating Roman Catholic Separate School Districts and another 11 with elected boards that are not operating schools. The boards in the smaller communities often have three trustees while those in the larger ones, such as Fort McMurray, Sherwood Park, Edmonton and Calgary, have seven and Lakeland has eight.

Regional School District

The St. Paul Regional High School District No. 1 involves the County of St. Paul, the Town of St. Paul and Glen Avon. These jurisdictions have formed a regional school district to operate a high school. A tuition fee system is used to transfer funds from the contributing school jurisdictions while provincial grants based on served pupils are paid directly to the regional school district. There are five trustees, selected by each of the participating boards, serving on the regional board.

Consolidated School District

Consolidated School Districts are historic anomalies that do not quite fit the pattern outlined above. The Falher Consolidated School District,

within the boundaries of the High Prairie School District, consists of three school districts which amalgamated a number of years ago to provide educational services to the residents of the area. The Barons Consolidated in southern Alberta operates two small schools with Grades 1 to 10, serving 75 students. These districts each have five elected trustees.

Special Education Institutions

The province is responsible for arranging schooling in the four provincial jails and the three federal jails in Alberta. Increasingly, the actual operation is contracted out to a school authority in the area, e.g. the Edmonton Public School Board is contracted to provide the education function at the provincial Fort Saskatchewan correctional center.

Other special educational institutions include the Alberta School for the Deaf, the Correspondence School and Youth Assessment Centres, small assessment/detention centres intended for shorter (60-90 days) stays by youths.

There are four school authorities operating on federal Department of National Defence bases in Alberta. While the Base Commander has ultimate responsibility, there may be a board of individuals, who in many respects function as trustees, to assist in providing policy and administrative assistance. These schools use Alberta teachers and curriculum with both federal and some limited provincial funding.

The school function on Indian Reserves can be provided through federally operated schools, schools administered by the band or schools operated under contract by an adjoining school district, e.g. Northlands School Division has contracts with some bands. There may also be contracts to enable band youth to attend schools in adjoining districts. There is no funding from the province; financial support is wholly from the federal government.

Private Schools

There are 171 private schools operated by societies. They are not school jurisdictions and there are no public elections of board members. There are four categories of private schools.

Category One – These operate as regular schools but may have a religious component. They do not have access to local taxes through requisitions but are funded to some degree by the province. Additional revenues are gathered by way of tuition fees charged to parents and, in some cases, donations.

- Category Two – These were initially developed to serve handicapped youth. There are only a few left.
- Category Three – These are schools certified to teach a language that is not likely available in the regular school system; usually operates on a limited basis.
- Category Four – These do not have certified teachers and do not receive funding from the province. The curriculum is approved. Most of the Mennonite schools in the province are in this category.

Early Childhood Services (ECS)

To facilitate/promote the involvement of parents and the community in education of children for the one year prior to entering school, 277 privately operated kindergartens have been established. At present, there are 105 school boards operating ECS centres serving 14,706 children as compared to 4,079 children served by the private societies and private schools.

ALBERTA SCHOOL TRUSTEES ASSOCIATION

The Association, begun in 1907, currently has a staff of 43 people with a 1986-87 operating budget of \$2.5 million. Its purpose is to provide a unified voice for school trustees and to facilitate their greater participation in decisions that affect education. The key functions include:

- assisting member boards on all employee relations matters. The Association is involved directly or indirectly in 86 teacher and 65 CUPE contracts;
- educational advocacy through identification, analysis and presentation respecting legislation and other policies;
- promoting improved local governance of education through school system reviews, school board development and program planning;
- a publication and communications service providing a magazine, newsletters and resource material;
- planning and facilitating the annual convention including the processing of resolutions and coordination of zone and metro council meetings;
- a legal services unit providing direct counsel to member boards who are either commencing or defending legal actions before the courts or assisting in any other legal matter of concern; and,
- co-sponsoring, with the Alberta Teachers Association, an employee benefit plan for 34,000 employees in Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

IRRIGATION DISTRICTS

An ordinance allowing farmers to organize into irrigation districts was first passed in 1894 by the North West Territories Legislative Assembly. Focused in southern Alberta, there are now 13 districts ranging in size from 1,319 to 328,063 acres (533 to 132,765 ha). Their boundaries do not coincide with municipal boundaries.

Each district is guided by an incorporated board with the responsibility of operating and maintaining the irrigation system. The board is also responsible for developing and approving development plans, requesting financing, and establishing annual water rates.

In accordance with the Irrigation Act of 1980, the size of the board varies from three to seven depending on the acreage in the district. It also specifies that board "directors" be directly elected by the water users for a maximum three-year term.

Irrigation districts receive authorization for the diversion and use of water pursuant to the Water Resources Act.

The area served by the districts has been increasing by about 20,000 acres (8,000 ha) per year over the last several years. Total irrigated acreage, as of December 1985, was 1,143,349 acres (462,707 ha).

Rehabilitation of capital works in the districts are cost-shared with the province and the districts on an 86/14 percent basis. The water rates vary between districts but are the same to each water user within the district (with exceptions in two districts where part of the rate is based on the water pressure available). The rates charged cover all operation, maintenance and administration costs as well as the district's portion of the capital works program. Fairly extensive land holdings by one district permit it to subsidize the water rates with lease rental income.

The 95-page Irrigation Act outlines in some detail the powers and duties of the boards and the manner in which assessments and water rates are to be established.

The Act also provides for the establishment of the Irrigation Council. It shall consist of not less than seven people, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, to serve "at pleasure". Of the seven members presently on the council, two are staff from Alberta Agriculture and Alberta Environment, and five from the public.

The council, which meets one day each month, has considerable powers vis-a-vis the districts. It approves long-range rehabilitation plans, annual capital projects, petitions for the change of area of a district, district water rates and other bylaws of the districts. It is advisory to the Minister of Agriculture on irrigation matters. The \$30 million available from the province for capital works is assigned to the districts on the basis of a formula. Funds are distributed following approval of specific programs. As the following table indicates there is considerable ongoing expansion of the area of land under irrigation.



Irrigation Districts 1986

Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.35

TABLE 12
IRRIGATION DISTRICTS
ACREAGE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS

	Acres	Area ¹ Hectares	Capital Budget (prov. share only) ²
1975-76			\$2.0 million
1976-77	933,620	377,831	7.0 million
1977-78	982,798	397,733	10.7 million
1978-79	1,005,824	407,051	10.8 million
1979-80	1,009,954	408,723	10.9 million
1980-81	1,037,173	419,738	15.2 million
1981-82	1,061,736	429,679	21.0 million
1982-83	1,087,308	440,028	27.6 million
1983-84	1,109,429	448,980	32.8 million
1984-85	1,123,793	454,793	25.0 million
1985-86	1,143,349	462,707	30.0 million
1986-87			30.0 million

¹ This data is for year-end 1976 to 1985

² The provincial government contributes 86 percent of projects eligible for funding under the rehabilitation program

Figure 2.36

DRAINAGE DISTRICTS

The drainage districts of central Alberta represent another single-purpose form of local government. Three trustees are elected annually to guide the operations of each district. Four of the present nine districts in the province were initiated in the 1918-22 period and the other five in the 1940's and 1950's. Their purpose relates to land drainage, flood control and lake level stabilization for which the trustees can borrow money and set rates. Drainage districts obtain approval to operate drainage works pursuant to the Water Resources Act.

The number of members/voters in each district averages 66 with the largest having 170 ratepayers. Typically, an annual meeting is held for discussion of issues and policies and election of trustees. Six of the nine districts are wholly within individual municipalities. Three of these are each split between two municipalities. The districts range in size from 3,520 to 56,320 acres.

The 67-page Drainage Districts Act also provides for a three member drainage districts council appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. The council has fairly extensive powers vis-a-vis the district boards. It must approve expenditures and rates and can require from a board all information on anything done or proposed. Two staff from Alberta Environment presently form the council.

The most recent budget data indicates the following revenues and expenditures:

TABLE 13

DRAINAGE DISTRICTS – REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES 1985

Revenues		Expenditures	
Drainage rates	\$ 92,480	Construction	\$247,277
Provincial Grants	191,680 ¹	Other- administration, office expenses, bank charges, etc.	49,104
Other	10,465		
TOTAL	\$294,625		\$285,916

¹ The grant formula, essentially for capital works, has recently shifted from 75 percent (provincial) and 25 percent (district) to 86 percent – 14 percent.



Drainage Districts 1986

Drainage districts continue to provide an important function to a small group of ratepayers. However, most rural drainage works in the province are now carried out by local rural municipal authorities in concert with appropriate provincial departments.

HOSPITAL BOARDS

The Minister responsible for hospitals may designate areas in Alberta as hospital districts, auxiliary hospital districts and nursing home districts or any combination of these. From the time of the first hospital district in 1918, the number of districts has increased, and their responsibilities have expanded. There continues to be change, even in the last four years, as noted in the table below.

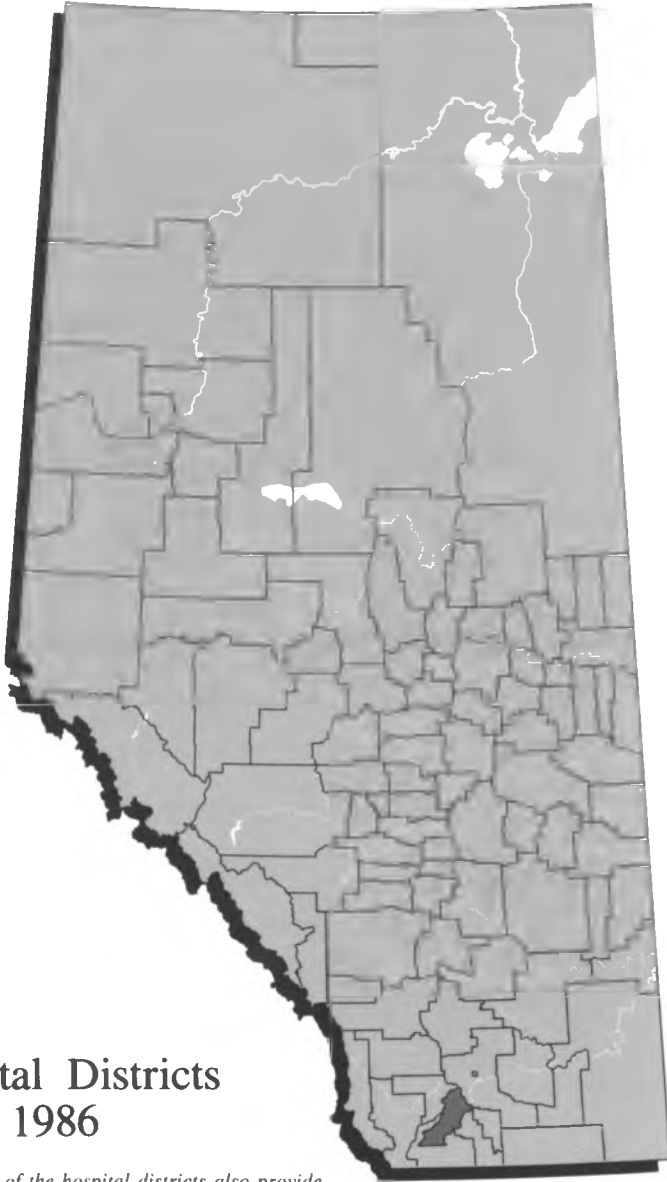
TABLE 14

HOSPITAL, AUXILIARY HOSPITAL AND NURSING HOME DISTRICTS

Districts	March/82	May/86
Municipal & General Hospital Districts	49	40
General Hospital/Nursing Home Districts	15	4
General Auxiliary Hospital/Nursing Home Districts	29	57
Auxiliary Hospital/Nursing Home Districts	13	9
Auxiliary Hospital Districts	—	1
Nursing Home Districts	4	4
Inactive Districts	8	7
(districts without established boards)	118	122

Figure 2.39

The Hospitals Act outlines the composition, powers and duties of district boards. Each board, which is incorporated with its own bylaws, has five to 11 members appointed by member municipalities. In 1971 the process for determining board membership changed from election to a combination of election and appointment. That is, the municipality in which the ward is located or the municipality with the largest population within a ward has the option of deciding on whether ward representatives will be appointed or elected. The Municipal Election Act is the general guide for the election process. About one quarter of the boards consist of appointed members, one quarter consist of directly elected members and the remainder have a combination of appointed and directly elected members. The boards have the responsibilities of establishing policies, approving plans, proposing budgets and hiring the executive officer. All costs, capital and current, are covered by the provincial government from



Hospital Districts 1986

Note: Some of the hospital districts also provide auxillary and nursing home services. The districts that provide a nursing home and/or auxillary hospital function only are not mapped here. See Table 14.

Source: Alberta Hospitals

Figure 2.40

general revenue. Land acquisition and some related site improvements remain a municipal responsibility. To fund this expense, a mill rate may be imposed by the board on its member municipalities as a supplementary requisition. If necessary the Minister may order a plebiscite under the Local Authorities Election Act in respect to construction of a facility, or the operation, amalgamation or dissolution of the district.

The degree of autonomy available to the boards has increased over the last several years. A provincial policy has been established that permits operating surpluses to be retained to a maximum of one percent of budget or \$25,000 (whichever is greater) on an annual basis. On a cumulative basis up to 10 percent or \$250,000 can be retained. Deficits are not funded by the province. The total budget for hospitals (excluding medical care) in Alberta in 1986/87 is \$1.869 billion with \$1.645 billion allocated to boards.

Another of the recent trends has been the establishment of hospital foundations to assist in raising funds or to further health care education in the community. Some guidance to the establishment and operation of foundations and the responsibilities of its trustees are outlined in the Hospitals Act.

As with municipal governments and schools, there are some unique situations respecting the operation and control of certain hospitals. These special situations include teaching and research hospitals, specialized hospitals, some hospitals which are owned by religious or church affiliated organizations and three hospitals owned by the municipality.

The boards of all hospitals, auxiliary hospitals and most nursing homes are members of the Alberta Hospitals Association. The Association, funded by a fee proportional to a board's budget, has a staff of 75 people. The Association acts as a spokesperson to the government and the public. It also provides a variety of services to its members such as education programs, consulting services, information and computer services, a general insurance program, group tendering, and employee relations including bargaining with the unions. The annual two and one-half day convention draws 1,300 to 1,400 board delegates. Total delegates may range from 2,500 to 3,000 people if trade show attendance and delegates attending conferences of allied groups or associated professions being held at the same time were included.

HEALTH UNITS

The first local board of health in Alberta was established in Edmonton in 1892. In 1907 the Public Health Act provided for a provincial board of health and 10 health districts. However, except for Edmonton and Calgary, these health districts were not established; responsibility for providing

health services remained with individual municipalities. While two demonstration rural health units were established in 1931 in Okotoks/High River and Red Deer there was limited growth of health units until the 1951 Health Unit Act. By 1956 there were 18 health units in operation. Local councils were requisitioned for a sum equal to two-thirds of the amount contributed by the province. In 1973 the province assumed 100 percent of the cost of the health units. This includes current or operating expenses as well as capital expenses sometimes incurred in the construction of health unit offices.

In 1977 a review of the legislation was initiated. A major position of the province in developing a new Act was "the desire to have local boards more accountable and more involved".¹ A new Public Health Act, replacing six existing Acts including the Health Unit Act, was assented to on May 31, 1984 and proclaimed on August 1, 1985.

There are 27 health units in Alberta covering all but some Indian Reserves and a small sparsely population area in northern Alberta served directly by the province. The boundaries of three of the health units, Edmonton, Calgary and Lethbridge, are co-terminous with the municipality. The board in these instances must consist of five to 11 members with at least one being an elected councillor and one being a member of the public. For the remainder, a system of wards is established where two or more municipalities compose the health unit. The municipality with the largest population in the ward appoints the member in consultation with the other council(s) and if one municipality has the largest population in two or more wards, one of its appointees must be an elected councillor.

The provision for members of the public to be appointed to health unit boards is a new provision of the Public Health Act, except for Edmonton and Calgary which have always had citizen members.

Members of a local board are appointed for a term of not more than three years. The board is a corporation. It meets at least eight times per year and submits an annual report to the Minister. Where the boundaries of the health unit are co-terminous with the hospital board, the hospital board may, within the agreement of member municipalities, also be the local board for the health unit. Indian reserves may be within a health unit. Under the new Act, a broader range of appeals can be made to the local board. The former provincial Board of Health was abolished and a new Public Health Advisory and Appeal Board established, consisting of seven to 11 people. It advises the Minister on matters pertaining to public health and hears appeals on decisions made by local boards. In respect to appeals, the provincial board has the powers and duties of a commissioner under the Public Enquiries Act. It may confirm, reverse or vary the decision of the local board and is required to provide a report in writing to the appellant and the local board. With the new Act, the composition of the



Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.41

provincial board has shifted from senior provincial department staff to members of the public. The board may hear 10 to 12 appeals per year.

The province continues to provide 100 percent of the funding to health units which, in 1985-86, amounted to \$93 million. Funding requests are based on the following programs: community health, home care, dental and environmental, auxiliary health services, administration and capital/accommodation. Following provincial approval, up to four percent of a unit's budget for a program can be moved, by the local board, to another program. Also, annual surpluses of up to 10 percent of budget or \$250,000, whichever is greater, can be retained by the health unit.

The Health Unit Association of Alberta was established in 1970. It is supported by the health units, and its membership consists of the 27 health units, each of which has three votes (six each for Edmonton and Calgary). Its original purpose was to provide a common voice for health units and assist in labor/management issues. Present functions include involvement in amendments to legislation and regulations, and providing data and studies for health units on current issues such as insurance needs.

There is a long-range planning committee to review community health needs consisting of two doctors, two provincial staff, and representatives of the health unit association. Additional liaison is provided through quarterly meetings of the executive officers of the health units and provincial program directors.

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS

The 10 regional planning commissions encompass most of the settled area of Alberta. Together they serve about two million people or 90 percent of the population of the province. Lloydminster and Fort McMurray are two large centres not within a regional planning commission.

The essential purpose of the commissions is to provide a regional land use planning service.

Commissions are established as corporations by regulation of the Lieutenant Governor in Council pursuant to the Planning Act. The order-in-council defines the boundaries of the commission, the member municipalities and the number of members each may appoint to the commission. Depending on the size of the municipality, it may be represented by one or more of its council members or by a representative of another municipality designated to represent several smaller municipalities. The Minister appoints members to represent the Special Areas and improvement districts. The term of office for individual members is specified by their respective councils. Commission members select their chairman from among themselves.



Regional Planning Commissions 1986

Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.42

The following are the major responsibilities of the commissions:

- the preparation and adoption of a regional plan which regulates land development within the region;
- the preparation of other statutory plans, such as general municipal plans, upon the request of a municipality
- the offering of advice and assistance to municipalities on various planning related matters
- the review and approval of subdivision applications except where authority has been given to the municipality; and
- the encouragement of public interest in the planning process.

The Planning Services Division of Municipal Affairs provides planning services on request to municipalities outside commission jurisdiction.

The commissions are financed by monies obtained from the Alberta Planning Fund. The fund is financed

- (a) by an annual mill rate requisition on all municipalities, improvement districts and Special Areas in the province; and
- (b) a provincial contribution from general revenues.

When the fund was first established in 1972, the provincial contribution was 72 percent of the fund. This rose to a high of 85 percent in 1977 and subsequently fell to 61 percent in 1985-86.

As the following tables indicate, there is considerably less activity in the commissions. The regional plans are all adopted and population growth issues have given way to downtown/main street revitalization programs and economic/employment development studies.

TABLE 15
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS
SUBDIVISION ACTIVITY, STAFFING, AND FUNDING
1975 to 1985-86

Year	Number of Subdivision Applications ¹	Number of Subdivision Appeals ²	Number of Staff	Planning Fund Contribution/ Grant (millions)
1975	2,579	–	188	\$ 3.6
1976	4,176	553	223	4.5
1977-78 ³	4,318	627	241	5.3
1978-79 ⁴	3,739	644	242	6.5
1979-80	3,830	626	257	6.7
1980-81	3,632	670	262.5	8.0
1981-82	3,354	746	262.5	10.5
1982-83 ⁴	2,580	448	273	12.0
1983-84 ⁴	2,052	362	248.5	12.0
1984-85	1,599	196	221	9.8
1985-86	1,706	181	197.5	10.5

¹ The authority for approving subdivision applications was once held only by the Cities of Edmonton and Calgary and the regional planning commissions. However, in 1980 all municipalities were given the right to apply for subdivision approval authority. To date, six additional cities, two counties and one municipal district have been granted this authority.

² The number of appeals in the Calgary Regional Planning Commission for the period 1978-81 is not known. There were 82 appeals in 1977-78 and 83 in 1981-82.

³ The reporting period shifted from a calendar year to a fiscal year ending March 31. This period covers 15 months.

⁴ New regional commissions added: Palliser in 1978-79; Yellowhead in 1982-83; and Mackenzie in 1983-84.

Figure 2.43

LIBRARY BOARDS

In 1907 the legislature approved a Bill presented by Premier A.C. Rutherford respecting the establishment of public libraries. Municipalities could levy up to one mill for library purposes and the Department of Education could provide a matching grant to each public library up to \$300 for book purchases. By 1921 there were tax supported public libraries in 13 cities and towns of Alberta. Pressure for complete revision of the Public Libraries Act in 1930 led to an Act in 1931 which provided for inter-library agreements and authorized associations to provide public library services and receive grants. By 1946 there were 46 non-profit, volunteer-based association libraries with the number of municipal libraries declining to eight. By 1952 there were 123 associations and 23 municipal libraries. There was renewed interest in the 1960's in municipal libraries; by 1970 there were 74 with most participating in a provincial per capita grant system. The first rural municipal library board was formed the same year in Fairview. Regional library systems, first discussed in the 1930's and experimented with briefly in a few areas, did not evolve into permanent operations until the development of the Parkland system based in Lacombe in 1959 and the Yellowhead system in Spruce Grove in the 1970's.

A new era for Alberta's libraries began in 1980 with more grants to municipal libraries, encouragement of municipally-based regional systems, the availability of development grants to lay people involved in developing library systems, increased benefits to libraries involved in resource sharing, and improved services to Albertans with special needs – the handicapped and those with varying language preferences. There are presently 230 municipal library boards, 23 community operated libraries and four regional systems.

The Libraries Act, 1983, provides for a municipal library board of five to ten people, to be appointed by the municipal council. No more than two are to be municipal councillors. Library boards throughout Alberta typically have seven members, of which one is a municipal councillor. Only a few councils decide to have none or two of their members on the board. Appointees are eligible for three consecutive three-year terms except where additional consecutive terms are ratified by two-thirds of the councillors.

Regional boards consist of one person appointed by each member municipality and member school authority, two members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council and additional members appointed by the Minister. The four regional systems have the following board membership:



Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.44

TABLE 16
REGIONAL LIBRARY BOARDS MEMBERSHIP

Regional Library System	Ministerial Appointees	Cabinet Appointees	Total Board Members
Peace	7	2	26
Yellowhead	8	2	28
Parkland	6	2	16
Marigold	0	2	37

Figure 2.45

Provincial operating support of municipal libraries is \$4.04 per capita. In a regional system, the grant is \$6.74 per capita with \$4.04 going to the urban municipality and the balance sent directly to the regional system. The rural municipality usually permits the regional system to receive the whole of its \$6.74 per capita grant. The Grant Structures Review Committee recommended in its recent report that the provincial library grant be increased and that it not be absorbed in the initial enhanced municipal assistance grant concept.

There is an Alberta Library Trustee Association dating back to 1971. One of its current programs involves local board development and education through training sessions in its nine districts.

There is also an Alberta Library Board of seven members who are advisory to the Minister on expansion, development, coordination and encouragement of libraries and library services in Alberta. Members are appointed at large from across the province for no more than two consecutive three-year terms. This board sponsored a major seminar in October 1983, on the theme "Libraries 2000".

POLICE COMMISSIONS

There are nine municipalities in Alberta with their own police forces and police commissions.

The policing service throughout rural Alberta and in communities of less than 1,500 people is provided by the RCMP in accordance with an agreement between the governments of Alberta and Canada. Urban areas with more than 1,500 people have the option of entering into agreements for service by the RCMP or of developing their own police force. Sixty-one municipalities have chosen to enter into agreements for RCMP service. If a municipality has its own police force it must establish a police commission. Other municipalities have the option of creating a police commission,



Police Commissions 1986

Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.46

but the number is not known as there is no requirement for reporting this information.

In accordance with the Police Act, the police commission consists of three to 12 members. If the commission has four members or less, one of them may be a council member or a municipal employee. If it has five or more members, two of them may be members of council or municipal employees, but in neither case may the council member or municipal employee be chairman. Members are appointed for three year terms and may be re-appointed.

The commission is responsible for the maintenance of law and order in the urban municipality, subject to the responsibility of the Attorney General of Alberta for the administration of justice and enforcement of Alberta laws. More specifically, the commission's role is one of policy while the direction of the force is the responsibility of the chief of police.

The provincial operating grant for law enforcement has two dimensions: \$12.00 per capita is provided to those urban municipalities over 1,500 people that have signed agreements for service by the RCMP, \$18.00 per capita to those urban areas with their own police force. This latter group includes Calgary, Camrose, Coaldale, Edmonton, Lacombe, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Redcliff and Taber.

The provincial Law Enforcement Appeal Board, consisting of a chairman who is a member of the judiciary and two others, has a general responsibility of hearing appeals from:

- (a) citizens who are not satisfied with the resolution of complaints lodged with a local police chief; and
- (b) police officers against the findings of internal disciplinary proceedings.

Citizen complaints in areas with RCMP service do not have an avenue of appeal, although one involving a provincial/national board will become operational later in 1986.

The Law Enforcement Appeal Board meets for about four weeks a year with perhaps 20 hearings each year.

There is an Association of Police Commissions of Alberta composed of members of local police commissions although the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association provides some coordination in contract negotiations and policy development.

In May 1985, Bill 59, a revised Police Act, was tabled in the Legislature. However, the legislative session was concluded before the Bill was dealt with. Some of the amendments proposed would:

- allow for the establishment of a regional police commission where two or more municipalities (urban or rural) agreed to jointly provide a police service, subject to the prior approval of the Solicitor General

- allow a municipal council to revoke the appointment of a member to a police commission "for cause" only
- require a commission to prepare its budget annually for council approval of the total budget. The commission would be responsible for allocating the funds provided for under the budget
- where the municipality has contracted for outside police service it may establish a municipal police advisory committee to oversee the agreement and perform a liaison function with the force providing the service.

No further action on Bill 59 has been taken to date.

REGIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES

To facilitate environmentally sound regional waste management throughout the province, a provincial grant and technical services program has been established. In operation since 1975, the Alberta Waste Management Assistance Program provides 100 percent funding for land acquisition and 100 percent of the initial capital costs of the waste management systems. This assistance is provided where two or more urban municipalities and one or more rural municipalities have agreed to form a regional authority. Cities in excess of 100,000 people are excluded from participating in this program.

Section 113 of the Municipal Government Act, which deals with municipal councils making agreements with other municipalities or school boards, provides the legislative framework for the regional authority. Each council is required to appoint one or more of its members and any equal or lesser number of other persons to a joint committee. The committee is to be delegated the power to construct, maintain, control and manage the system.

As of June 1986 there were 20 regional systems, 14 of which were operating regional landfills, and six scheduled to start in 1986. Four regional systems were into the design and construction phases. Other regions are considering involvement in area-wide systems and it is possible that another 20 – 30 systems may eventually be established. Of the 16 cities, only Camrose and Drumheller are within regional systems; Lethbridge has been assisted through the development of regional transfer stations connected to a privately operated landfill. The budget of Alberta Environment for this program was \$2.2 million in 1985/86. Operational costs of the systems are assumed by the local authorities.



REGIONAL SERVICES COMMISSIONS

The Regional Municipal Services Act of 1981 (proclaimed on December 12, 1983) provides for the establishment of commissions "to provide water, sanitary and storm sewerage and waste management services, or any of them, with respect to more than one municipality". On the establishment of the commission, the Minister designates the municipalities that may appoint members to the board of the commission and the number of representatives each may have on the board. The chairman of each commission is appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

To carry out its objectives the commission may hire staff, and acquire, construct and/or operate one or more of the services. Annual reports are to be filed with each municipality and the Minister. The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations governing the acquisition of municipal utility operations and may authorize grants or loans to the commissions. Disputes between commissions or a commission and a municipality may be taken to the Public Utilities Board.

There are now six regional services commissions in Alberta. One is a regional waste management authority based in the Special Areas. The others are all in the Edmonton region. Four are regional water boards with four to five members each. The fifth, a waste water treatment commission, has 12 member municipalities (excluding Edmonton). One other commission, which would deliver a water and sanitary service in the Cold Lake/Grand Centre area, is on the drawing board. Several other municipalities are considering this approach for the provision of services.

RURAL BUSINESS PROJECTS

There are presently eight Rural Business Projects throughout Alberta. The first, which began operations in September 1972, was administered by Alberta Municipal Affairs until recently. The others were developed with the assistance of the Regional Business Development Branch, now with Alberta Economic Development and Trade.

Each project involves cooperation between communities with small populations to foster a basic level of business services and enhance the economic well-being of the region.

Each member community is required to make a minimum contribution of \$300 per year to the hiring of a coordinator for the project. The province contributes approximately \$35,850 annually to each project. The budgets of the projects for 1985-86 ranged from \$42,623 to \$103,729. The provincial contribution varied from 35 percent to 90 percent of the budget of each project.

The board members are often representatives of organizations in the area concerned with economic development as well as the municipalities.



Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.48



Rural Business Projects 1986

Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.49

REGIONAL RECREATION BOARDS

Stemming from special financial assistance provided by the newly formed Alberta Department of Youth toward a regional recreation system amongst Crowsnest Pass communities in 1967, Alberta Regulation 198/68 was passed in 1968 providing for financial assistance to all regional recreational systems. "The regional recreation concept offered small municipalities the opportunity to cooperate with one another and provide a level of service not possible independently".² By the end of 1968 there were nine regional boards. The grant, remaining at 65 per capita for many years, was given only to participating municipalities of less than 15,000 people. In 1975 the capital grant to municipalities for recreation facilities was increased by 10 percent if the project was a regional facility serving more than one municipality. This bonus was eliminated in 1978, and the small per capita annual grant was withdrawn in the early 1980's.

At present there are about 170 town/district and 10 municipal district/county-wide systems. The first type of system usually involves a town or village and a portion of the surrounding rural municipality. In 1982, 80 percent of all town/district systems involved only two municipalities. The second type of system generally involves the whole of a rural municipality and some or all of the urban municipalities therein.

The agreements provide for a regional board and the facilities, parks and/or recreational programs that are to be part of the system.

NORTHERN ALBERTA DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

The Northern Alberta Development Council is a unique regional body established in 1970 "to investigate, monitor, evaluate, plan and promote practical measures to foster and advance general development in Northern Alberta". The Council "may investigate the requirements of the people resident in Northern Alberta and make recommendations in respect of:

- (a) social and economic development



Source: Alberta Bureau of Surveys and Mapping

Figure 2.50

- (b) development of communities and service delivery; and
- (c) development of government services and programs”.

There are 10 members on the council (eight to 10 are required), two of which are M.L.A.'s of the region. One M.L.A. serves as chairman. The other members, appointed annually by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, usually have had some form of community involvement in their areas. For example, the mayor of Fox Creek is a current member.

The Northern Alberta Development Council, through its forums for discussion and coordination, fulfills a significant role in the provision of programs and services that might otherwise not be available to this disparate, generally sparsely populated region.

The staff assisting the council are part of a unit called the Northern Development Branch. The branch, headquartered in Peace River, is also responsible for administering the Northern Development Agreement, a joint program of the provincial and federal governments (\$20 million each). The Minister in charge of the branch is Al Adair, now Minister of Transportation and Utilities.

References for Chapter Fifteen

1. Health Unit Association of Alberta, *Health Units of Alberta Board Member Reference Manual*, 1985, p. 14.
2. Alberta Recreation and Parks, *Regional Recreation Study*, 1983, Draft Report, p. 5.

Chapter Sixteen

THE DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION

The appointment of Cabinet ministers after the provincial election in May 1986 placed the Department of Municipal Affairs, the Department of Housing, the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the programs unit of Native Affairs under one Minister. This amalgamation is reflected in the organization chart, function description, staffing and budget information presented in this chapter.



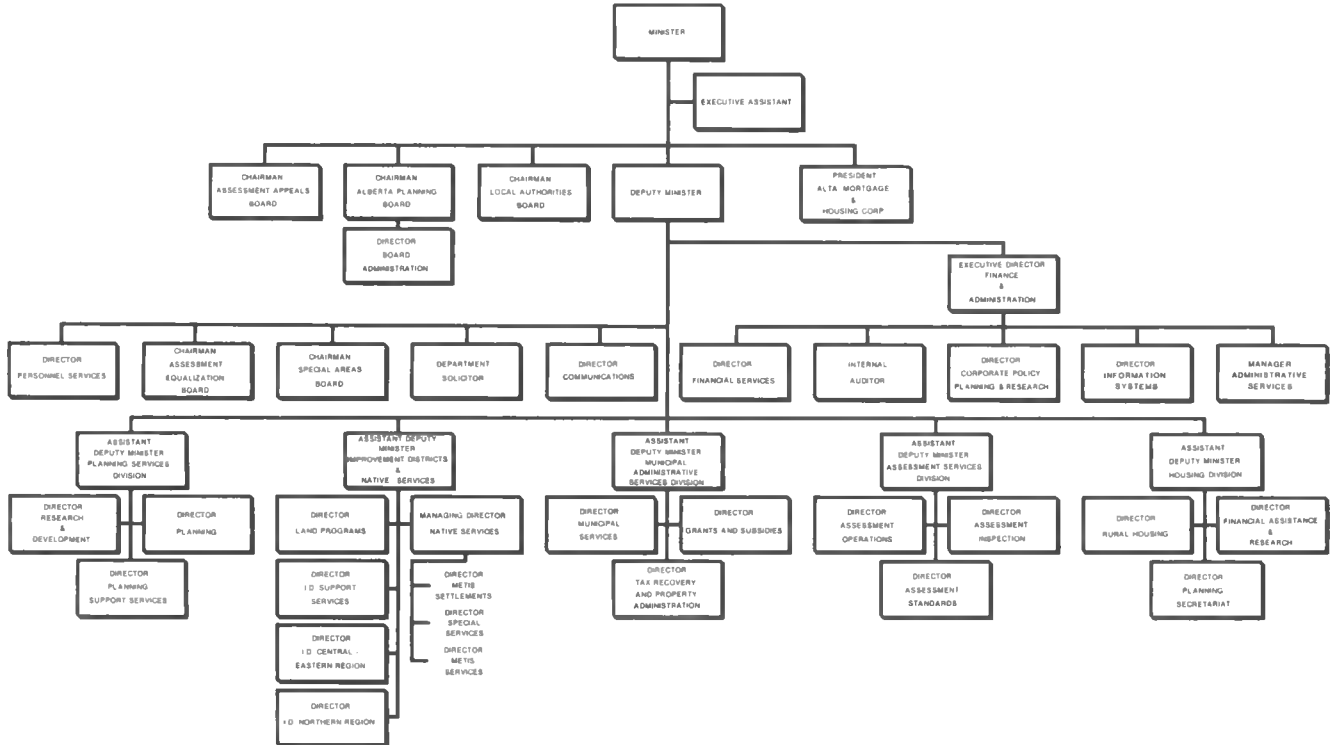
The Executive of the Department of Municipal Affairs in December 1985. Left to right: Robin Ford (Improvement Districts and Native Services), Jack Thomas (Planning Services), Bob Leitch (Finance and Administration), Tom Forgrave (Municipal Administrative Services), Archie Grover (Deputy Minister), Rene Gagne (Assessment Services). Missing: Bruce Schick (Housing Division)**

** In May, 1986, the Department of Housing became the Housing Division of Municipal Affairs and the programs unit of Native Affairs became a branch of the Improvement Districts division.*

ORGANIZATION CHART

There are five boards and one corporation related in some way to Municipal Affairs. Two boards report to the Deputy Minister and two boards

MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



and the corporation report to the Minister. The Local Authorities Board formally reports to the chairman of the Executive Council although personnel and administration assistance is provided by Municipal Affairs. Four of the boards are described in Chapter Seventeen; the Special Areas Board is reviewed in Chapter Fourteen.

The five main operating divisions of the department are Assessment Services, Improvement Districts and Native Services, Municipal Administrative Services, Planning Services and Housing. There are four units that provide a department-wide service – the Finance and Administration Division, the Corporate Communications Branch, the Personnel Administration Branch, and the department solicitor. The budget for 1986/87 provides for a permanent staff of 836 people and an expenditure of \$657 million.

ASSESSMENT SERVICES DIVISION

This division (258 staff positions¹), through its three branches, provides information and experienced personnel to municipalities, prepares an assessment manual which is used by private and public assessors throughout the province, and coordinates assessor training.

The Assessment Inspection Branch (eight staff positions) offers information and advice on assessment to municipalities, assessors and rate-payers. Branch inspectors review assessment procedures with a municipality to ensure they are equitable and conform with provincial laws. The branch helps both the local courts of revision and the Alberta Assessment Equalization Board by providing research, verifying information and sometimes making recommendations.

The Assessment Operations Branch (226 staff positions) provides qualified assessors to a number of Alberta municipalities for the preparation of assessments. This excludes 34 municipalities, that is, most of the cities and a number of rural municipalities, generally in the vicinity of Edmonton and Calgary, which have their own assessment staff. The department assessors also prepare pipeline and power assessments throughout the province.

The Assessment Standards Branch (22 staff positions) researches current assessment and taxation issues and trends. The branch produces a manual which describes assessment procedures and provides current price indexes. The manual is generally printed every five years and is kept up-to-date through a quarterly supplement. The branch also coordinates training programs for assessors at the provincial and local level and designs the content for assessment programs and refresher courses in the province. The branch sponsors an annual symposium for senior assessors, arranges special workshops on assessment and taxation for other interested groups, and recruits through career presentations to post-secondary institutions.

The 1986-87 budget for the division is:

Assessment Inspection and Advisory	\$ 1,019,000
Assessment Research	1,438,000
Assessment Operations	<u>10,404,000</u>
	\$12,862,000

Figure 2.51

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS AND NATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

This division (138 staff positions) promotes local government and provides municipal services to improvement districts and Metis settlements. These areas cover almost 70 percent of Alberta.

The division has seven branches including the Land Programs Branch, the Native Services unit with three branches, a Support Services Branch, and two branches headed by regional directors, one for northern Alberta and the other for central/eastern Alberta. The delivery of local government services is facilitated through 16 improvement district field offices and eight settlement offices.

The Land Programs Branch (eight project positions) is involved in establishing a land administration system in remote communities and in facilitating the transfer of Crown land in these communities to the improvement districts themselves.

As a result of the transfer of certain Native Affairs responsibilities to Municipal Affairs a Native Services unit with a managing director and three branches was established.

The Metis Settlements Branch (19 staff positions) has general and trust fund administrative responsibilities for Alberta's eight Metis settlements. The branch maintains a membership and land registry system for the land in the settlements, monitors oil and gas surface rights activity and collects any surface rights revenue. A key focus is the training of local administrators, development of community infrastructure, and promoting the settlements' interests in their contacts with other departments. The branch administers three trust funds.

The newly-created Metis Services Branch (15 staff positions) will be responsible for issues respecting Metis people off-settlements and will assist in the development of a broad policy framework for all provincial programs and services to Metis people and urban natives. The branch will work with line departments in the development of strategies to extend services to native people. The branch will also be responsible for the finance and administration activities of the native services unit.

The Special Services Branch, (four staff positions), also newly formed, will be a focal point for monitoring the provincial government's involvement with Treaty Indians including analysis of aboriginal constitutional

matters federal/provincial coordination and the formulation of a broad policy framework for programs and services to status Indians.

The Support Services Branch (19 staff positions) provides advisory services and support to the division and district offices on property assessment and taxation, accounting and budgeting, planning and development, and municipal engineering services.

There are 75 staff in the administration of improvement districts. The managers of seven improvement districts and one of part of I.D. 17 in northern Alberta report to a regional director who works out of Peace River. The regional director for the central/eastern improvement districts, who is located in Edmonton, administers three improvement districts and part of I.D. 17. The managers of the remaining improvement districts report directly to the Assistant Deputy Minister.

The 1986-87 budgets for the branches of the division are:

Land Programs	\$ 470,000
Metis and Native Affairs	5,950,000
Support Services	979,000
Improvement Districts Administration	<u>2,508,000</u>
	\$9,907,000

Figure 2.52

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

This division (60 staff positions) acts as the focal contact point with respect to general municipal and financial administration. The three branches develop and support local government through distribution of grant funds, by giving advice and helping with concerns involving other government departments. The division also ensures municipal councils comply with the laws which govern the way local government is managed.

The Grants and Subsidies Branch (19 staff positions) administers the following grant programs for municipalities and individuals:

Program	1986-87 Estimates
Property Tax Reduction	\$ 66,601,000
Senior Citizens Renter Assistance	42,820,000
Senior Citizen Accommodation	
Municipal Tax Grant	800,000
Municipal Debenture Interest Rebate	120,000,000
Unconditional Municipal Assistance Grant	101,658,742
Municipal Anniversary Recognition ¹	
Edmonton Annexation Transitional Assistance	<u>1,842,149</u>
	\$333,721,891

¹ Included in unconditional municipal assistance grant; varies from \$5,000 to \$22,000 per year

Figure 2.53

The Municipal Services Branch (30 staff positions) seeks to improve municipal administrations and develop viable local governments through its advisory, inspection, information and research services. Branch staff annually inspect all municipalities, except cities,² to help local councils and staff meet legislative standards. Inspectors can also help with local administrative or financial concerns and issues.

Training programs for municipally elected and appointed officials are developed by this branch in cooperation with various educational institutions. It also places graduates of post-secondary educational institutions in municipal jobs around the province for a one-year term.

A Finance and Research Section of this branch maintains all statistics on municipalities, sets accounting standards and procedures, and provides municipal financial advice and data upon request. It also provides research and advice on many other issues which concern the department and municipalities. It may deal with topics such as local incorporation, local options for setting up joint programs and administration, or the level and quality of local services. This group also reviews department policies and programs including provincial/municipal fiscal arrangements.

The Tax Recovery and Property Administration Branch (nine staff positions) has both advisory and administrative functions. Its advisory functions include assisting municipalities and ratepayers primarily in the situations where land has been, or may be, forfeited for non-payment of taxes. The administrative responsibility involves the recording of tax recovery property in the improvement districts and its use, lease or sale. The branch is also responsible for collection of all agricultural relief advances issued to farmers in the improvement districts and for recommendations to the Agricultural Relief Adjustment Board where compromised settlements or write-offs are deemed appropriate. Payments to farmers under the Agricultural Relief Advances Act have not been made since 1972.

The 1986-87 budgets for the three branches of the division are:

Grants and Subsidies	\$ 658,000
Municipal Services	1,569,000
Tax Recovery and Property Administration	273,000
Administrative Support (Division head and Regional Services Commissions)	<u>530,000</u>
	<u>\$3,030,000</u>

Figure 2.54

PLANNING SERVICES DIVISION

This division (70 staff positions) assists in the development of land use planning policy and provides land planning services, including research

and advice to regional planning commissions, government agencies, municipalities of the province not served by regional planning commissions and the Alberta Planning Board.

In mid 1986 the former inter-agency planning branch and the research and development branch were amalgamated to form the present Research and Development Branch (13 staff positions). It studies and gives suggestions about government policy dealing with Alberta's growth and development. Such policy may address resource development, industrial growth or other issues. The branch helps planning commissions and other groups develop policy and resolve land use planning concerns. Staff also work closely with the Alberta Planning Board, advising on regional plan reviews, land use planning policy and other matters which have a broad impact on the province. Finally, the branch helps to develop and train staff at the local and regional levels through planning skills seminars and workshops, and prepares information to help the public better understand Alberta's planning system.

The Planning Branch (40 staff positions) provides a complete land use planning service to municipalities which do not belong to a regional planning commission. It administers the Alberta Planning Act, prepares a wide range of land use plans and planning documents, and acts as a sub-division authority.

The Planning Support Services Branch (14 staff positions) provides administrative and technical help to the rest of the division so it can deliver its services to the public. Branch support includes drafting, engineering, map reproduction and administration.

The 1986-87 budgets for the three branches within the Planning Division are:

Research and Development	985,000
Planning Branch	1,949,000
Planning Support	<u>752,000</u>
	\$3,686,000

Figure 2.55

HOUSING DIVISION

The Housing Division (129 permanent and 75 project positions) provides financial and in some cases training assistance for new home construction, home improvement and rental housing for over 20,000 lower income households annually. The division also conducts market research and analysis, policy studies and technical research and development in the field of housing.

The division consists of three branches: the rural housing branch, financial assistance and research branch and planning secretariat.

The Rural Housing Branch (64 permanent and 16 project) delivers the rural and native housing program and the rural emergency home program, primarily in northern Alberta.

Program	1986/87 Estimates
Rural and Native Housing	\$ 4,000,000
Isolated Communities Housing	1,592,000
Metis Settlement Housing	1,200,000
Rural Home Repair	225,000
Northern Water and Sewer	500,000
	<u>\$ 7,517,000</u>

Figure 2.55a

The Financial Assistance and Research Branch (38 permanent and 56 project positions) administers grant programs in the areas of home improvement, mortgage assistance and financial incentives for rental housing. The branch is also responsible for technical research and development and for educational support in the areas of housing and land development.

Program	1986/87 Estimate
Housing Registry	\$ 304,000
Innovative Housing Grant	650,000
Rental Investment Incentive	5,000,000
Senior Citizens Unique Homes Assistance	850,000
Alberta Pioneer Repair	700,000
Seniors Home Improvement	27,300,000
Home Adaptation	150,000
	<u>\$34,954,000</u>

Figure 2.55b

The Planning Secretariat (34 positions) provides policy and planning services for both the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation (AMHC) and the housing division.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

This division (107 staff positions) is responsible for providing support services and financial controls through three branches – Financial Services, Central Services and an internal audit unit. The 1986-87 budget for the division is \$7,097,000.

PERSONNEL BRANCH

This branch (18 staff positions) is responsible for the administration of the *personnel programs*, providing personnel consultant services to department management, and advising and guiding all department employees on personnel matters.

DEPARTMENT SOLICITOR

Staffed by a lawyer from Alberta Attorney General, the office supplies legal advice and written opinions related to legislation administered by the department, reviews and prepares contract documents and represents the department and associated boards in court.

TABLE 17
ALBERTA MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS STAFF AND OPERATING BUDGET

	1986 Permanent Staff Positions	1986-87 Budget
Minister's Office	3	365,000
Assessment Services	258	12,862,000
Improvement Districts and Native Services	138	9,907,000
Municipal Administrative Services	60	3,030,000
Planning Services	70	3,686,000
Housing	129	3,985,000
Finance and Administration (Includes Deputy Minister's office)	123	9,001,000
Personnel	18	482,000
Special Areas Board	10	462,000
Alberta Assessment Appeal Board	5	329,000
Alberta Assessment Equalization Board	4	186,000
Alberta Planning Board	10	720,000
Local Authorities Board	8	512,000
SUB-TOTAL	836	45,527,000

Note: This table, in summarizing some salary and operating costs, excludes the grant and subsidy programs; the estimates approved by the legislature for the department total \$657 million for 1986/87.

Figure 2.56

References for Chapter Sixteen

1. The staff figures represent permanent positions as of September 1, 1986.
2. Cities have been exempted from annual inspection since the service or function was first introduced in 1907. However, the Deputy Minister and the Assistant Deputy Minister in charge of this branch meet annually with senior administrators of each city.

Chapter Seventeen

BOARDS

INTRODUCTION

Although there are five boards connected with Alberta Municipal Affairs, only four are reviewed in this chapter. The discussion of the Special Areas Board has been included in Chapter Three, Rural Municipal Governments. Its role and responsibilities are more akin to those of a rural administration and of improvement districts than of the province-wide responsibilities of the four boards reviewed below.

ALBERTA ASSESSMENT APPEAL BOARD (AAAB)

The key functions of this Board are:

- (a) to hear appeals on decisions of the court of revision of a municipality, irrigation districts, or the person designated by the Minister to deal with complaints in any improvement district; and
- (b) to hear appeals by a municipality from all orders of the Assessment Equalization Board and from assessments made by the Chief Provincial Assessor (essentially electric power and pipeline assessments) and the Assessment Commissioner (who can order or overturn any assessment).

The appeals from decisions of courts of revision can be related to property, business tax, or local improvement assessments and mobile home licensing valuations.

There is no statutory appeal from decisions of the Board. Decisions of the Board can be challenged by a prerogative remedy such as certiorari – where a higher court examines the records of a matter of a lower court or tribunal and may make such corrections as it determines.

At present there are four permanently appointed full-time members on the Board and two others who assist on a full-time basis for several months of the year. The Board is often divided into two divisions for hearings given the large numbers of items presented.

The Board members are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council with salaries established by the Personnel Administration office. While there is a fair degree of contact with the Deputy Minister, the Board is a quasi-judicial¹ tribunal whose function must be clearly separated from administrative departments. Hearings of the Board are held pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act. Written decisions are required if either party requests one. Of the 1,000 appeals heard in a year, approximately 40 to 50 are written up with the remainder dealt with directly at the hearing.

The following table indicates the number of appeals to the Board over the last 10 years. The relatively higher number of appellants in the last four years is likely due to a number of community-wide general assessments as well as the downturn in the economy.

TABLE 18
APPEALS HEARD BY THE
ALBERTA ASSESSMENT APPEAL BOARD

Fiscal Year	Appellants	Items
1975-76	646	1,796
1976-77	896	1,343
1977-78	575	1,224
1978-79	458	1,143
1979-80	717	1,655
1980-81	829	2,448
1981-82	546	2,656
1982-83	752	2,992
1983-84	845	4,585
1984-85	874	2,954
1985-86	1,045	4,881

Figure 2.57

ALBERTA ASSESSMENT EQUALIZATION BOARD (AAEB)

The need for an assessment equalization board dates back to the 1918 Supplementary Revenue Act, which provided for a board which would equalize assessment to form an equitable basis for an additional provincial property tax for use in funding school construction. The function was absorbed within the Assessment Division in the 1930's. In 1957 the current board was created and in 1961 its function enhanced with the introduction of the School Foundation Program.

The Board has five members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Presently, the chairman is the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Assessment Services Division; the vice chairman, an employee of Alberta

Municipal Affairs, with the remainder of the Board consisting of one representative each from Alberta Education, the AUMA and AAMD&C. This is not a quasi-judicial Board as are the Local Authorities Board, Alberta Assessment Appeal Board and the Alberta Planning Board.

The function of the Board is to factor to a common level of value all the property assessments throughout the province in order that some education and a limited amount of hospital costs might be fairly allocated to all properties. Formally, this is done through the issuance of an order early in each calendar year. The 1986 mill rate for the school foundation program fund was 14.7 mills. On an assessment base of \$9.6 million, \$141 million was raised for distribution through the program. Total equalized assessment used by municipalities and school districts for supplementary school requisitions (now including residential property) was \$20.6 billion in 1986.

The Alberta Assessment Appeal Board has had few appeals over the years to the orders that have been issued on equalized assessment. In large part, this has been due to the existence of regulations which outline fairly rigorously the manner in which calculations are to be made.

There is a lag of about two years between property value adjustments and equalized assessment. Hence, the economic downturn in late 1981 was not reflected in equalized assessment until 1983 and 1984.

TABLE 19
EQUALIZED ASSESSMENT - ALBERTA

PERCENT INCREASE OVER PREVIOUS YEAR	
1978	17.4%
1979	17.5
1980	35.4
1981	36.6
1982	23.0
1983	13.8
1984	2.7
1985	-7.3
1986	-4.2

Figure 2.58

ALBERTA PLANNING BOARD (APB)

The Alberta Planning Board is composed of persons appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council to serve "at pleasure". Presently, there are 19 members of which 10 are from the general public, and the remain-

der are senior staff representing eight provincial departments. The chairman is the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs. For the purposes of administration and finance, the Board comes under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

In general, the Alberta Planning Board is charged with the administration of the Planning Act and any regulations made pursuant to this Act.

The Planning Act permits the Board to operate with a quorum of three members. It may have two or more committees or panels operating simultaneously, each with the full authority of the Board.

To facilitate the handling of matters coming before it, the Board has formed four permanent committees:

- (a) Executive Committee: deals with all policy matters; it consists of the Board chairman, the three vice-chairmen, and the Director of Administration.
- (b) Appeals Committee: hears all appeals on matters of subdivision, amendments to regional plans and referrals on inter-municipal disputes and on non-conformity with the regional plan; this and the remaining two committees are chaired by a vice-chairman and all members serve on it on a rotational and as "available basis".
- (c) Finance Committee: is charged with the administration of the Alberta Planning Fund, the approval of contributions to the operating budgets of the regional planning commissions and the approval of such other expenditures for planning projects and studies as may be required from time to time.
- (d) Planning and Research Committee: deals with regional plans, plan cancellations, special planning projects and studies, considers applications for the waiver of the requirements of the Subdivision Regulation and the Planning Act as well as the extension of subdivision approvals.

In the conduct of its hearings, the Board is subject to the Administrative Procedures Act. There is provision in the Act for decisions of the Board to be appealed to the Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta on questions of law or jurisdiction.

The Board has the responsibility, under the New Towns Act, to consider applications for the development of new towns. After consideration of surveys, maps, economic, engineering and land planning studies, the Board may recommend the formation of a new town to the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Upon approval of the new town, the Board takes on the further responsibility, in concert with the new town administrators, of its planning and development.

TABLE 20
ALBERTA PLANNING BOARD ACTIVITY
1975-76 to 1985-86

	Division Appeals	Board Orders	Hearing Days
1975-76	609	1,016	68
1976-77	883	1,542	77
1977-78	945	1,624	93.5
1978-79	886	1,569	116
1979-80	1,052	927	114
1980-81	1,348	811	130
1981-82	829	996	120
1982-83	609	584	83
1983-84	475	449	73
1984-85	326	318	53
1985-86	336	365	52.5

Figure 2.59

LOCAL AUTHORITIES BOARD (LAB)

The history of approval for the issuance of municipal debentures dates back to 1915 when the Board of Public Utility Commissioners was established. Municipal annexations were dealt with mainly by the Minister of Municipal Affairs although some were within the jurisdiction of the Lieutenant Governor in Council. In 1929 ministerial approval for annexations was transferred to the Board of Public Utility Commissioners, followed by the transfer of the Lieutenant Governor's authority in 1934. In 1961 the Local Authorities Board was formed and the responsibilities for annexations and local authority debt creations and management were transferred to it from the Public Utilities Board.

The Local Authorities Board responsibilities now include: consideration of applications by local authorities for authorization of debenture borrowings; use of surplus debenture funds; inquiring into the affairs of local authorities where financial difficulties are involved; authorization of financial programs for new towns; recommendations to the Lieutenant Governor in Council respecting applications for tax exemptions; applications for compromise of tax arrears; appeals on local improvement special assessment; annexation or separation of land and applications for approval to acquire lands.

The Board was recently represented on the Debt Guideline Steering Committee and will administer the borrowing limits that have now been established with regard to individual municipal applications.

The members of the Local Authorities Board are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. The Local Authorities Board Act provides

for up to six members – a provision made to accommodate the one-time additional Board of three appointed to hear the Edmonton annexation application in 1980.

The decisions of the Board are final, except appeals can be made to the Court of Appeal on questions of jurisdiction or law. The Municipal Government Act provides that the Board's orders relating to annexations must be approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, who may approve the order, prescribe conditions that the order is subject to, vary the order (as occurred in the Edmonton annexation in 1981), or disapprove the order. The Lieutenant Governor in Council may also, by order and without referral to the LAB, annex territory and prescribe conditions. This has been done on only two or three occasions involving minor boundary adjustments.

The Local Authorities Board is a quasi-judicial and independent Board and is subject to the Administrative Procedures Act. The Board's annual reports are filed with the President of the Executive Council (the Premier). Various internal reports of the Board's activities are made available to the Minister of Municipal Affairs for his information and his office is the channel for recommendations to the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

The activities of the Board over the past 10 years are outlined below.

TABLE 21
LOCAL AUTHORITIES BOARD
BOARD ORDERS ISSUED
1976 – 1985

	Debentures			Annexations
	Municipal	School	Total	
1976	599	58	399	60
1977	683	43	698	57
1978	645	67	712	94
1979	716	86	802	78
1980	787	133	920	77
1981	764	158	922	47
1982	483	196	679	27
1983	330	115	445	15
1984	212	148	360	19
1985	238	161	399	19

References for Chapter Seventeen

1. A quasi-judicial board or tribunal makes decisions affecting people's rights in a judicial manner and is guided by its own ideas of policy and expediency.

Chapter Eighteen**MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS AND OTHER STATUTES****INTRODUCTION**

It is a real challenge to provide an inventory of the legislation relevant to the operation of local government in Alberta. One approach would be to list the legislation for which Alberta Municipal Affairs is responsible. A recent list indicates there are 41 such Acts.

To this catalogue, one should, however, add legislation that provides for single-purpose governing boards at the local level, e.g. school boards, irrigation districts and drainage districts. Also, there is legislation which in other ways directs the manner in which a municipality is to carry out its functions.

In addition to the statutes, there are a variety of regulations or manuals authorized by the Acts, e.g. Subdivision Regulation, which significantly affect the operation of local government.

Finally, there are also about 30 private Acts dating back to the 1890's which relate to municipalities. Many were enacted to give powers to municipalities not available to them at that time, e.g. to borrow more funds than permitted, and now are of no more than historical interest. Others were passed to establish municipalities and six are charters of cities and towns, e.g. Edmonton, Calgary and Drumheller. While these were not formally rescinded with the passage of the City Act in 1951, the 1968 Municipal Government Act seemed to remove any powers the charters may have continued to provide.

MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS ACTS

The following is an alphabetical list of 41 Acts for which the department is responsible. The more significant ones are highlighted with some explanatory text. The length of each in terms of the number of pages and the number of regulations pertaining to them are also noted.

AGRICULTURAL RELIEF ADVANCES ACT, 1936, 12 p., 1 Regulation

Provides for the granting of advances for acquiring seed grain, fodder, feed grain, fertilizer, fuel oil and lubricating oil in order to assist those farmers who, by reason of circumstances beyond their control, are unable to provide themselves with commodities outlined by the Act.

ALBERTA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION ACT, 1984, 17 p., 2 Regulations

A successor to the Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation Act, 1976, and the Alberta Housing Act, 1970 this Act outlines the establishment, powers and duties of the Corporation. It may enter into agreements with the Government of Canada (National Housing Act), insure housing loans, acquire and service, land and design, construct and manage housing units.

ASSESSMENT APPEAL BOARD ACT, 1957, 8 p., no Regulations

Provides for the establishment of the Alberta Assessment Appeal Board, the appointment of its members, the procedure to be followed on hearing assessment appeals; the powers, authority and jurisdiction of the Board.

BORDER AREAS ACT, 1921, 4 p., no Regulations

An Act that authorizes a municipality located in Alberta and adjoining the provincial border to enter into agreements with municipalities in other provinces for the provision of any institution (hospital, school, library, show building), works construction and improvement or services for inhabitants of the respective municipality.

Calgary-Canadian Pacific Transit Agreement Act, 1979

Calgary (City of) and Calgary Power Agreement Act, 1980

Calgary (City of) and Calgary Power Ltd. Agreement Authorization Act, 1972

Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Limited, An Act to Authorize and Permit the City of Calgary to Enter Into a Certain Lease, 1961

COUNTY ACT, 1950, 16 p., 1 Regulation

Provides for the establishment of a local government unit, which incorporates the whole or any part of an existing municipality or school division that is within its boundaries to be known as a county. Municipal administration is under the authority of the Municipal Government Act and the school administration is under the authority of the School Act.

CROWSNEST PASS MUNICIPAL UNIFICATION ACT, 1979, 11 p., 3 Regulations

Provides for the Municipality of Crownsnest Pass by amalgamation of the Towns of Coleman and Blairmore, the Villages of Frank and Bellevue and part of I.D. 5.

DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS ACT, 1912, 6 p., 5 Regulations
Outlines organization, supervision and responsibilities of the Minister and the department.

Edmonton (City of) and Calgary Power Ltd. Agreement Validation Act, 1961

Edmonton – Meadowview Agreement Act, 1968

ELECTRIC POWER AND PIPELINE ASSESSMENT ACT, 1961, 9 p., 12 Regulations

Defines and assesses oil and gas pipelines and works, certain electric power systems and cable television systems.

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS ACT, 1965, 17 p., 3 Regulations

An Act to provide for the governing of the unincorporated areas of the Province of Alberta, namely the improvement districts.

LLOYDMINSTER MUNICIPAL AMALGAMATION ACT, 1930, 6 p., 7 Regulations

Provides for the administration of Lloydminster by Charter and the Charter establishes the administrative procedures.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES BOARD ACT, 1961, 31 p., 3 Regulations

This statute provides for the composition, responsibilities and authority of the Board.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES ELECTION ACT, 1983, 52 p., 8 Regulations

Provides election procedures for municipal, school and hospital authorities.

LOCAL TAX ARREARS CONSOLIDATION ACT, 1935, 13 p., 3 Regulations

Provides a means whereby taxpayers may retire their property tax arrears by installment payments.

Medicine Hat (City of) Gas Purchase Act, 1959

Medicine Hat Power Plant Extension Act, 1952

METIS BETTERMENT ACT, 1938, 1970, 13 p., 16 Regulations

This Act provides for the creation and administration of eight settlements on Crown land set aside for the exclusive use and occupation of Metis people in Alberta.

METIS BETTERMENT ACT RESTORATION ACT, 1982

Restored the Metis Betterment Act, 1970, which had been replaced by a Metis Betterment Act, 1980. Also provided for a Metis Settlement Trust Fund.

Mewata Park Enabling Act, 1956**MUNICIPAL AND PROVINCIAL PROPERTIES VALUATION ACT, 1961,
4 p., 6 Regulations**

An Act to identify properties owned by the Crown in the right of either Canada, Alberta or a municipality and to prescribe the method of calculating a valuation of the property for the purposes of equalizing assessments, calculating grants to be paid in lieu of taxes, calculating other grants to municipalities and for other purposes.

**MUNICIPAL AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION ACT, 1962, 9 p., no Reg-
ulations**

To provide, subject to the approval of the electors, for the merger of the municipal administration of a city or town and the school administration of the corresponding city or town school district in the manner provided in the Act (urban county).

**Municipal District of Clearwater No. 99 Incorporation Act, 1980, 6 p., 2
Regulations****Municipal District of Cypress No. 1 Incorporation Act, 1984, 4 p. no Reg-
ulations****MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1968, 195 p., 6 Regulations**

Provides for the incorporation of different classes of municipalities in accordance with pre-determined criteria. Establishes the guidelines and provides the authority under which the council may legislate for the administration of the municipality.

MUNICIPAL TAX EXEMPTION ACT, 1965, 6 p., no Regulations

An Act to identify who may apply and the procedure to follow when applying to the Lieutenant Governor in Council for an exemption from assessment and municipal property tax. The Act also directs the Lieutenant Governor in Council and the Minister of Municipal Affairs in amending any private Act which grants an exemption from assessment and taxation.

MUNICIPAL TAXATION ACT, 1967, 87 p., 48 Regulations

Controls and regulates level of assessments for real property throughout the Province of Alberta. An Act which defines the property subject to assessment and taxation and sets forth the procedures to be followed in assessing and levying a tax for the purposes of municipal property tax, a municipal business tax, and a municipal special local improvement tax or a special local benefit tax.

MUNICIPALITIES ASSESSMENT AND EQUALIZATION ACT, 1951, 9 p., 8 Regulations

An Act which defines the duties and responsibilities of the Assessment Commissioner and defines the purpose, structure and duties of the Assessment Equalization Board.

NEW TOWNS ACT, 1956, 7 p., no Regulations

The enabling powers under this Act cover the concept and the establishment of new towns peculiar to the needs of a settlement developing quickly in a new or resurgent resource area. The Act also regulates the administration, organization, planning and the financial programs.

Northeast Alberta Regional Commission Act, 1974 (commission no longer in existence), 4 p., 1 Regulation

PLANNING ACT, 1977, 81 p., 191 Regulations

The purpose of this Act, and the regulations pursuant to it, is to provide a comprehensive mechanism whereby plans, bylaws and related measures may be prepared and adopted to:

- (a) achieve orderly, economical and beneficial land development and patterns of human settlement, and
- (b) maintain and improve the quality of the physical environment of settlements in Alberta.

PROPERTY TAX REDUCTION ACT, 1973, 20 p., 6 Regulations

Provides for assistance to reduce the burden of property taxes on the family home and the family farm and for assistance to municipalities. Also includes rules for determining official population.

REGIONAL MUNICIPAL SERVICES ACT, 1981, proclaimed 1983, 9 p., 8 Regulations

An Act that provides for the establishment and operation of regional services commissions within the province. The establishing regulation may authorize a regional services commission to provide water, sanitary and storm sewage and waste management services or any of them to the member municipalities.

SENIOR CITIZENS HOUSING ACT, 1970, 13 p., 1 Regulation

This Act provides for the creation of housing foundations which manage senior citizens lodge accommodation developed by Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation. It outlines responsibilities of the foundations and the sharing of the costs associated with lodge operations.

Smoky Lake (Town of) Gas Utility Act, 1964

SPECIAL AREAS ACT, 1939, 9 p., 30 Regulations

Establishes the three special areas and authority for the appointment of a three-man Board.

TAX RECOVERY ACT, 1938, 21 p., 1 Regulation

To ensure the protection of the rights of taxpayers and the interest of municipal taxing authorities in tax recovery procedures.

OTHER STATUTES

There are a host of statutes other than those administered by Municipal Affairs that direct or guide the actions of municipalities in Alberta. A number of these have already been mentioned in respect to the various boards and commissions that exist at the municipal and regional level.

In an attempt to determine the extent to which municipalities are impacted by other public statutes a computer search involving a few key words was made. The first search was for all instances of the use of "municipal district". There were found to be 95 statutes in the province with this phrase. The second search was for "municipal" but excluding "municipal district". This run indicated that there were 170 Acts with municipal, municipality, etc., in the text. The third search involved all the following words: city, town, village, summer village, new town, county, local authority, hamlet, special area and improvement district. This run produced a list of 131 statutes. Altogether there are 197 different statutes involved in the three lists. The following list of 43 represents those with the more significant impacts on municipal operations based on their known content and frequency of use of the above terms.

Agricultural Service Board Act	Motor Transport Act
Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation Act	Municipal Debentures Act
Cemeteries Act	Northern Alberta Development Council Act
City Transportation Act	Off-Highway Vehicle Act
Crown Property Municipal Grants Act	Plumbing and Drainage Act
Department of Environment Act	Police Act
Drainage Districts Act	Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act
Electoral Boundaries Commission Act	Public Health Act
Expropriation Act	Public Highways Development Act
Family and Community Support Services Act	Public Lands Act
Fire Prevention Act	Public Safety Services Act
Forest and Prairie Protection Act	Public Utilities Board Act
Gas Utilities Act	Rural Gas Act
Highway Traffic Act	School Act
Historical Resources Act	Social Development Act
Hospitals Act	Soil Conservation Act
Insurance Act	Surveys Act
Irrigation Districts Act	Uniform Building Standards Act
Land Titles Act	Water, Gas, Electric and Telephone Companies Act
Libraries Act	Water Resources Act
Liquor Control Act	Weed Control Act
Lloydminster Hospital Act	

CHAPTER NINETEEN

ISSUES

INTRODUCTION

In each of the “snapshots” taken at the 25 year intervals over the last 100 years, there was a section on local government issues of the day. Usually these consisted of the resolutions of the two municipal associations and the responses of the provincial government. For the snapshot of 1986 this pattern will be followed again including now the resolutions of a third association, the Improvement Districts Association of Alberta. In addition, there is the opportunity of trying to capture the issues:

- (a) as seen by some of the people presently involved in local government, especially at the provincial level;
- (b) as gleaned from some current provincial and federal studies touching on the subject of local government; and
- (c) as noted in the Alberta press.

The list below is a rather wide-ranging one categorized, without rigorous reference to source, into:

1. municipal association resolutions;
2. legislative issues of our times
3. local government issues; and
4. some specific issues.

The general intention of this listing is to give an indication of the nature and extent of the present concerns with local government. This would set the stage for *Part Three – The Future* in which these would be resolved through a reflection and discussion of “what ought to be”.

1985 AUMA Convention

There were 49 resolutions approved for submission to the provincial government at the 1985 AUMA Convention held in Jasper from September 25 – 28, 1985. There were 20 resolutions relating to increased funding or the broader use of existing funding programs, 27 related to amendments to legislation and two asked for studies. The Minister of Municipal Affairs responded to the AUMA in May 1986.



Julian Koziak, then Minister of Municipal Affairs, addresses the 1985 Convention of the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association.

RESOLUTIONS – 1985 AUMA CONVENTION

CATEGORY	RESPONSES
1. Increased funding or broader use of funds (20 resolutions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 15 not supported (not in accord with move to unconditional grants, use of AMPLE funds) – three to be studied (bylaw enforcement, cost sharing of housing program, social service funding) – one supported (collection of traffic fines) – one already undertaken (provincial grant-in-lieu re: non-profit housing)
2. Amend legislation (27 resolutions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 15 not supported (ambulance standards, pasturization, retail hours as a municipal responsibility) – four to be studied (standard date of March 31 for requisitions, taxing of increased value from public improvements, sidewalk clearing) – four referred to next review of the Municipal Government Act (public utility rates, canopies overhanging public property, taxation of urban farmland, petitions) – three supported (removal of six percent federal tax on certain materials, library grant regulations and distribution of interest savings) – one referred to next review of the Planning Act (date of Planning Fund payment)
3. Studies desired (two resolutions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – one is ongoing (ability of municipalities to respond to requests for preventive work where child neglect or abuse is likely) – one not supported (no unanimity for study of regional planning commissions).

1985 AAMD&C Convention

The fall 1985 convention of this association was held in Edmonton from November 11 – 15, 1985. Twenty-nine resolutions were forwarded for provincial consideration and were responded to in the following manner.



Members of the executive of the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties at the 1985 Convention. Left to right: Dick Papworth, John Glazier, Joe Smith, Jack Edworthy - Executive Director (Speaker), Wallace Daley, Steve Shwetz, Glen Clegg.

RESOLUTIONS – 1985 AAMD&C CONVENTION

CATEGORY	RESPONSES
1. Increased funding or reduced taxes (five resolutions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – two already undertaken (farm interest rate shielding and farm fuel and fertilizer costs) – two supported (federal fuel tax; road expenditures) – one not supported (temporary residents in hamlets).
2. Changes in legislation, regulation of policy (21 resolutions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – three supported (groundwater policy, hospital requisition, RCMP recruits) – five to be studied (bylaw advertising, parcel access, utility billing, insurance) – three referred to next review of the Municipal Government Act (approval by land title interests, summer village incorporation) – nine not supported (regional planning commission decisions and rural representation, store hours, imperial measure, use of abandoned rail lines) – one partially supported (underground power to oil well sites on farms).
3. Studies desired (3 resolutions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – three supported (driving of emergency vehicles; cost of employee benefits; meeting on municipal bylaw enforcement).

This association also held a spring 1986 convention at which 20 resolutions were passed for provincial consideration. Eleven of these dealt with amendments to legislation or provincial government policy, e.g. ambulance standards, municipal liability limits, groundwater recharging, approval authority on parcel access, use of reserves from municipal subdivision and restrictions on separate school district formation. The remaining nine resolutions called for increased provincial financial support of ambulance service, libraries, paving of secondary highways, drainage works, education and farm operations. Responses to the resolutions have not yet been forwarded. Five of the 20 resolutions dealt with matters under

the jurisdiction of Municipal Affairs. Nine other provincial departments need to be canvassed for the development of responses. These are reviewed and transmitted by the Minister of Municipal Affairs to the association.

Improvement Districts Association of Alberta

The annual conference of the Advisory Councillors of the Improvement Districts Association of Alberta was held in Edmonton from March 4 – 6, 1986. Eighteen resolutions were approved for provincial consideration. Responses have not yet been forwarded by the province.



Then Minister of Municipal Affairs, Julian Koziak, and Deputy Minister Archie Grover, listen attentively to concerns of the Improvement District representatives at their Convention in March 1986.

RESOLUTIONS – 1986 IDAA CONVENTION

CATEGORY	ISSUES
1. Funding related (five resolutions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increase in per diem rate for councillors (\$90 to \$100) and for members of boards - interest rate shielding on farm loans - temporary residents in hamlets included for grant purposes - province pay 85 percent of education costs
2. Legislation related (eight resolutions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dust control costs on roads shared by adjoining residents - flexibility in discounts/penalties regarding tax payments - groundwater diversion applications come to municipality - 50 percent rural membership in regional planning commissions - summer village incorporation should require hearings - delay implementation of new rural assessment policy - association be represented on education funding committee - oil industry development applications referred to municipalities.
3. Funding/legislation related (five resolutions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - allow sale of provincial stockpile of gravel to residents - review/limit insurance claims against impact of municipal works (Municipal Government Act, s. 137) - AGT – expand toll-free area and private line service - opposed to sharing of power/pipeline assessment provincially.

In addition to the issues which have surfaced at the recent municipal association conventions there are other local government issues being expressed. Some of these are noted by provincial staff involved in local government or responsible for its legislation, some pertain to discussions

or recommendations in recent government reports and others are gathered from newspapers from around the province. It is not a conclusive list given the need to yet recognize the most important concerns of local governments and citizens. However, it should assist in outlining the potential breadth and depth of a review of municipal law respecting municipal government institutions.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES OF OUR TIMES

1. There seems to be a tendency to use legislation as the mechanism or route to solve problems. Are we over-legislated? Maybe a stronger society would have fewer pages of law? That is, the laws would be written in the hearts and minds of the people.
2. Can legislation which is administrative in nature shift to a style which is more general or policy oriented?
3. Does our style of governance allow the long-run issues of our society to be adequately studied and solutions implemented? Or does the focus of councils extend to the next election; the taxpayer to the next tax notice?
4. At the present time local governments are viewed as corporations with citizens as the shareholders. Has the role of local municipal government been sufficiently defined and its maturity advanced to enshrine this order of government in the Canadian constitution in the same way that the provincial and national governments are? Might there be an intermediate step involving recognition in a "provincial constitution".
5. As downsizing and privatization are pursued by the provincial and federal governments, what impact will this have on local government and on the local non-profit sector? Are the revenue sources of local government adequate to meet the potential increase in the burden from the shift in responsibility?
6. In a continuing period of constraint are the laws, policies and programs of the three orders of government sufficiently integrated?

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ISSUES

7. There are a number of areas in Alberta without local municipal government, i.e. Banff, Jasper, the Special Areas and Improvement Districts. Is the existence of some form of local municipal government in all areas of the province of paramount importance, superseding

concerns with financial viability? Is there a vision of an ideal respecting local municipal government supported by policies and plans?

8. In view that the needs of urban and rural residents are becoming increasingly similar, e.g. health, social, educational, cultural, retail, recreational and other services, is the boundary separating urban from rural areas any longer a rational model? Would a boundary that reflects a more comprehensive community of interest deal better with the harmful effects of inter-municipal competition for industry and of acrimonious annexation debates? Would the needs of the farmer for off-farm income and/or fair pricing of agricultural products be given greater recognition through more rural/urban resident interplay and cooperation through a combined local government?
9. Local government legislation generally prohibits the involvement of a municipality in a matter unless expressly provided for in law. Might provincial legislation more wisely provide for action on local needs if the reverse were true, that authority could be assumed unless expressly prohibited by Canada's Constitution Act, 1982, or by provincial statute?
10. There is broad consensus of the need for the major review of municipal statutes initiated in 1986. It has been 20 years since the last major review of the key statute, the Municipal Government Act. Are there better systems for review and amendment, e.g. should there be a more significant *ongoing* emphasis on the maintenance of good legislation given the responsibility of the province in creating and monitoring the forms of local government? Might the review process be designed to emphasize a pro-active rather than a re-active stance?
11. The provincial government's response to requests for amendments is often that they will be considered when the Act is next opened for amendment. This is to minimize approval of hasty, rather patchwork amendment(s) every year. However, this may also mean that good resolutions are shunted aside while inequitable or poor practices continue. Can the amendment process be streamlined to provide for these often minor but beneficial amendments while maintaining the integrity and unity in the Act? This suggestion may not apply to the Municipal Government Act as it is opened almost every year.
12. Do we need the variety of local municipal government forms – Alberta has nine, while most other provinces have three or four, can fewer basic forms be legislated with considerable local option on details?
13. Are the varying provincial requirements for the local and regional single-purpose governments, boards and commissions desirable? Are

they all still needed? Are new ones needed? Is their relationship to elected municipal councils appropriate? Should regional associations be built by voluntary municipal association or imposed through detailed provincial statutes?

14. To what extent are local municipal and single-purpose governments to be considered as an arm of the provincial government delivering programs decided at the provincial level?
15. The involvement of local municipal government, regional planning commissions, and rural business projects in economic development and job creation, probably the single most important issue in the province and nation at this time, are not coordinated or guided by a provincial policy on their respective roles. As an alternative to provincial direction, do these authorities have the freedom to cooperatively establish roles in this and related issues?
16. It has been the policy in non-profit organizations and, to an increasing extent, in some of the local/regional single-purpose governments in Alberta, to limit the number of consecutive terms of office of board members. Is there merit in carrying over this approach to other orders of government?
17. There seems to be a lack of involvement in local government as registered in the small percentage of residents voting in elections, in the infrequent use of public referenda and seats filled by acclamation. To what extent is this a problem? Is it due to fragmentation of local government responsibility, its inability or lack of power to act, the absence of direct responsibility for raising all funds and/or the lack of general awareness of the role of local government in strengthening society? Alternatively, are people generally satisfied with local governments?
18. There is currently a staff of about 10 people providing the inspection service to all municipalities, excluding cities. These have not been inspected since this service was first provided in 1907. However, cities now represent 65 percent of the population of the province. Is there a better form of advisory assistance which Municipal Affairs could usefully provide to cities? Is a separate branch in the department required?
19. The 1985 resolution of the Alberta Legislature respecting Metis settlements proposes to give them rights and powers for local governance beyond those presently available to other Albertans at the local level. Can these concepts be extended to other local governments? Would differences in local powers be in contravention of the equality guar-

anteed in the Charter of Rights in the Constitution Act, notwithstanding the recognition given to aboriginal peoples (defined to include Metis)?

20. Eighty to 90 percent of the delegates at rural municipal association meetings are male. Does the form of governance unfairly restrict involvement of some people, in both rural and urban government, because of age or sex?
21. What is it that drives municipalities to typically base about a third or more of their conference resolutions on more financial aid from the province? Is it greed, poverty or the drive of their ratepayers for expanded local services?
22. There are a variety of routes and levels of appeals to provincial authorities against decisions made at the local/regional level. Can consistent policies be developed on the extent of appeal rights? Can appeals be devolved to a sub-provincial level, e.g. to a local senate along the lines of the senate proposed as an avenue of appeal to individual Metis settlement decisions or to a municipal ombudsman?
23. The wealth of Alberta municipalities varies. To what extent is this due to provincial laws which distribute or do not distribute non-residential assessment? Can approaches for sharing assessment be refined to encourage intermunicipal agreements and hence foster economic development at a regional scale, a scale where home and work are within daily commuting distance?

SOME SPECIFIC ISSUES

24. There are some inter-municipal boundaries that need to be reviewed in a manner similar to that of the Co-terminous Boundaries Commission of the early 1950's. Some rural municipalities may be more effective units if enlarged.
25. Is the rural drainage function in the drainage districts best handled by single-purpose, grass roots governments or merged with other functions under the jurisdiction of the local municipal councils?
26. There is a considerable subsidy of the property assessment service offered by the provincial government to municipalities. Does this facilitate privatization or devolution to the local level?
27. Is the level and quality of assistance available to municipalities equitable? Is it fair that cities, and sometimes just Edmonton and Calgary, be excluded from participating in certain provincial grant programs,

- e.g. all municipalities except cities, receive a grant for preparing a general re-assessment; all but Edmonton and Calgary can receive grants for a regional waste disposal system.
28. The system of property assessment seems unnecessarily complicated. Can the shift to market value assessment, seen as desirable by many in the industry, be implemented more quickly?
 29. Is there some way to increase sensitivity of local school boards to the tax burden of school operations? Presently, local school boards requisition municipal authorities who in turn send out the tax notices and collect the funds.
 30. There are presently three municipal associations: one for urban, one for the rural; and one for the improvement districts. Councillors of the Special Areas are not formally a part of any association. Does this fragmentation serve local and provincial needs best? Does the one councillor, one vote procedure on resolutions at conventions, adequately reflect the population represented by the councillors, especially those from the cities?
 31. The direct provincial support of municipal government associations and single-purpose local/regional associations varies. For example, the health and hospital associations are wholly funded by the province via hospital and health unit requisitions while the municipal associations are funded mostly by the member municipalities.
 32. There is a sense that the provincial inspection function has to shift to include a much greater role in the encouragement and education of effective local government.
 33. The courts are perceived to be placing increasingly rigorous procedures on some provincial appeal bodies. These procedures are often viewed as inhibiting quick, effective, and low cost handling of some appeals.
 34. Some of the provincial policies respecting local government are adopted by the Cabinet through a process known as "Requests for Decision". This material is sometimes confidential thereby inhibiting its communication and understanding.
 35. The land banking undertaken by a variety of municipalities in the late 1970's and early 1980's will mean, with the absence of land sales, considerable difficulty for some municipalities in the near future. The nature of the loan agreements with Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation does not require the potential for indebtedness to be noted on the municipalities' financial statements.

36. Are regional planning commissions being guided by an over-protective Alberta Planning Board? Is the strong stance of the Board necessary to ensure the needs and interests of member municipalities are adequately reflected in decisions of the commissions? It is interesting to note that there is no association of commissions as there are with hospital boards and some other regional bodies. The annual conference which many commission members attend is a conference of the Alberta Planning Board and not a conference of the commissions.
37. The regional planning commissions do not cover all parts of the province. Is the policy of the province to continue to provide the planning service to the areas without commissions? Should there be regional plans for these areas even if they are not in a commission?

CONCLUSION

The list of issues is presented in the spirit of promoting a friendly and healthy debate of the form and nature of local government in the province. They are not intended to represent the “left” or “right” of the political spectrum. Some of them may threaten existing positions of employment or authority. However, the over-riding concern is that there are problems and issues in our society that are more likely to be resolved with wisely developed structural changes in government form. Providing the freedom to question existing practices and to speculate on desired options is a first step to that better design.

The listing of issues is not to suggest there are no strengths in the way we provide for local government in Alberta. Indeed, if the objective was “peace, order and good government” one could generate an extensive litany where this is presently being achieved.

There is a challenge, however, to reflect on the current condition with a view to developing new legislation based on vision and ideals – which could end in amendment of existing law or bold new initiatives – appropriate for the future municipal government in Alberta.



Part Three :
A
Positive
Future

Chapter Twenty**INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW****INTRODUCTION**

The search for better local government can take many paths. To one who may not want to repeat the mistakes of the past, the preference would be for a historical analysis drawing out the finest times as examples for today's use. Another approach might be to study the writings of the "wise" men and women of the past. Alternatively, the legislation of other countries could provide useful reference points. Yet another approach would be to examine municipal legislation in the other provinces and the territories. With similar roots and sharing one national perspective, the knowledge of how these have dealt with this topic would seem to be especially relevant.

To some extent all of these approaches will be discussed. However, the path for the greater part will be one which is wide and not well defined. Over the last 20 – 25 years there has been an increasing number of people who, in reflecting on the condition of our society, have found much that is wanting. Having defined or noted the concerns, the desire for better ways has led them to inspired action or writing or both. A number of networks have developed connecting these people who are known as "futurists" or "new agers". Through conferences, books, articles, and actions, some common themes on new directions have evolved. These will be noted and used as a background or base upon which are developed some elements of a desired structure of local government.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE- LOCAL GOVERNMENT- ANCIENT ATHENS TO TODAY

Although the form of government developed in the Greek city-states would be considered flawed by today's standards, it presented many elements that would be included in a current list of ideals of a democratic system, i.e. citizen equality, elections, unpaid service, and limited terms of office. Wealth was not to be a factor in the qualification to serve. With the decline of the autocratic Roman Empire early in the fifth century, western society shifted to rulership by feudal lords, kings, oligarchies and dictators. The church also had a significant role, especially in the fifth to fifteenth centuries. The growing capitalism and budding sense of local authority, formalized in municipal charters in the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, was followed in the nineteenth century by the widespread intro-

duction of democratically elected governments. The vote was extended to all adult residents in the twentieth century.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO – VIEWS ON THE FORM AND NATURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

This chapter is a collection, of quotations without comment, from the writings of: Aristotle; Alexis de Tocqueville; Lord Durham; the Lieutenant Governor of the North West Territories (1893); John Perrie; municipal association statements; A. J. Hooke; Lewis Mumford; Jack Masson; Willis Harmon and Hwa Yol Jung. This chapter also contains Aristotle's 11 point summary of democracy.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE – LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN OTHER NATIONS

There is a great variety of structures of local government throughout the world. This chapter presents a synopsis of the current situation in Europe with highlights on the Republic of Ireland, Scotland, Britain, Switzerland and the United States. The general trend is to the devolution of powers to the local level. A partial exception would be Britain where the Conservative central government has recently abolished seven metropolitan councils, mostly Labor Party dominated.

The concept of city charters remains quite common in the United States and Europe. Several European nations provide for local government in national constitutions. An excerpt on local government in the Japanese Constitution is provided.

After a lull of about 15 years, there is some resurgence in the study of local government throughout Canada. Each province is briefly reviewed as to its current form of local government, some of the past and current studies that have been undertaken and new legislation passed. The most current significant review is probably the one currently being undertaken in Quebec by the provincial department responsible for municipal affairs as well as an independent review sponsored by the Union des Municipalites de Quebec. In Manitoba, a study committee recently tabled its report containing 73 recommendations on government in Metropolitan Winnipeg. The government of the Northwest Territories will likely be tabling revised legislation in its fall 1986 session.

The Macdonald Commission report of 1985 is reviewed and several references to local government are presented; the theme is increased local powers, increased funding to municipalities and few autonomous boards that act independently of local government.

The delegates to the 1986 convention of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities dealt with a variety of resolutions from across the country and with policy reports submitted by several of its task forces.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE – A STUDY OF FUTURES – THE ISSUES

A total of 21 world-scale issues are presented. These reflect items that are typically noted by futurists as driving forces for change. The issues are:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. continuing international conflict with the potential for atomic warfare | 11. inequality – racial, sexual |
| 2. pollution of air, soil and water | 12. consumerism and high consumption |
| 3. environmental degradation. | 13. excessive growth of government |
| 4. hunger | 14. drug and alcohol abuse |
| 5. rising unemployment | 15. sexual mores |
| 6. poverty | 16. the weakening of the family unit |
| 7. energy and mineral shortages | 17. technology without values |
| 8. species extinction | 18. leadership |
| 9. crime | 19. perceptions of reality |
| 10. third world debt | 20. human values |
| | 21. our spiritual nature. |

Each item on the list is not, in itself, likely to surprise anyone or cause one to change individual practices. Taken together, however, they are sufficient to cause some futurists to predict societal collapse unless there are significant shifts in these trends.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX – DIRECTIONS FOR A POSITIVE FUTURE

Nineteen directions are presented for consideration:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. to understand and develop synergy (cooperation and win-win solutions) | 10. generalists |
| 2. servant leadership | 11. stewardship |
| 3. creative living and full employment | 12. creativity |
| 4. decentralization | 13. long-term view |
| 5. self-reliance | 14. income distribution |
| 6. organizational structure (horizontal, shared ownership) | 15. conserver society |
| 7. entrepreneurship | 16. soft energy path |
| 8. education; learning to learn | 17. health promotion |
| 9. networking | 18. mind and expanded consciousness |
| | 19. spirituality. |

Again, as with the issues, any one direction for change is not in itself going to bring the ideal society. Collectively, they represent a comprehensive response to the issues of the previous chapter.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN – THE AGE OF RELATIONSHIPS

The age that we are now upon has been given a variety of names – the third wave, communications era and post-industrial society. This chap-

ter proposes that a more useful image might be to consider this an age of relationships.

There would be four main aspects of such an era:

1. an awareness of self
2. our relationship with others;
3. our relationship with nature; and
4. our relationship with God.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT – DEMOCRACY AND GOODNESS

Governments exist because we do not consider ourselves sufficiently wise to make decisions that promote our own self-realization and the welfare of others. The democratic form of government means rule by the people. We need to explore the historic definitions of democracy because what has been implemented has varied considerably from the ideal. More importantly, the current world conditions and new visions of the future point to adjustments in the historic ideal.

This includes:

- a shift from competitive democracy to cooperative democracy;
- the individual as the focal point;
- building governments from the smallest base to the larger; and
- the development of a new kind of servant leader.

“People in Community Seeking Goodness” is explained – persons in fraternity coming to know themselves through unselfish service. Governments would inspire us in this journey.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE – 2012 A.D.

This chapter is a short story of two local government interns about to begin a six month work experience with Alberta Municipal Affairs in the year 2012 A.D.

Some of the significant changes include:

1. an increase in the number of municipalities
2. the existence of two kinds of municipalities
 - incorporated municipalities (the majority)
 - special-purpose municipalities, each approved by the legislature, with the significant power of controlling the right of membership in the municipality;
3. considerable involvement of the private, non-profit and volunteer sector in service delivery;
4. inter-municipal servicing agreements are common; and
5. considerably reduced and newly formatted legislation.

CHAPTER THIRTY – THE HISTORY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ALBERTA, 1987-2011

This chapter is written from the perspective of a researcher in 2012 A.D. It represents, for the most part, a positive vision for local government and the Department of Municipal Affairs. The text provides the background to some of the ideas presented in the previous chapter and develops some additional directions. Some of the latter ones are:

- greater involvement of women in local municipal councils, considerable expansion of “civics” in the school curriculum and the extension of voting rights to persons 14 years and older;
- shifts in responsibilities of the department to knowledge development, and from regulation and control to promotion and training;
- departmental support in the experimentation of new techniques in local governance; and
- few municipal level appeals to provincial boards.

The footnotes to this chapter provide an additional basis for the ideas, often referring to beginning trends noticeable in the mid-1980’s.

Chapter Twenty-One**LOCAL GOVERNMENT: ANCIENT ATHENS
TO TODAY****INTRODUCTION**

The limited information and sweeping generalizations offered in this brief chapter represent one perspective of the past. The glories achieved in the ancient city-states should not overshadow the lack of status given to women. At their height Athens and Rome are said to have been “men’s clubs with slaves”. However, one can discern epochs or phases in the movement of society. A recent interpretation equates these stages to the patterns that exist in our own lives.¹ Using St. Augustine’s stages in the *City of God* and developmental psychologist Erik Erikson’s stages of childhood and society, Roy Jackson concludes there are five stages (meaning, force, justice, economics and persons) in the advancement of western society. The meaning phase (establishment of language, religion, tribes, divine kings) ended with the rise of the Greek city-states and Roman Empire. Having moved through the next three phases in the two thousand years since, we are now in the persons phase. In this phase, equivalent to Erikson’s “integrity” and “wisdom” stage, we move beyond the material concerns of adulthood. With “communitarian social institutions” such as cooperatives and guided by persons seen as teachers, participators and nurturers we will be able to move into self-realization.

ATHENS

Athens in the fourth and fifth centuries B.C. is a common beginning point for a study of ideals. Pinnacles for mankind were reached not only in community life and organization but in religious thought, medicine, literature, ethics, drama and athletic development. At its height, Athens had 40,000 male citizens, 150,000 free people consisting of women, children and traders, and 100,000 slaves. Leadership was provided by a town council made up of a large committee of the male citizens. They were elected annually. On the basis that all citizens were equal, a variety of municipal positions for annual or shorter terms were assigned by lot. Boards were established to guide some functions such as control of the army and management of finances. Service in these boards, councils, and juries was unpaid. A variety of leagues of Greek cities existed with the best known being the Boeotian Confederacy of 447 – 386 B.C. It was a well organized federal system with a council of 660 members, a treasury and a federal court.

It was common in these times for a city to give its citizenship to another city or town. These were often populated by residents of the main community which may have been growing too large vis-a-vis the agricultural production of the surrounding countryside. Tied by citizenship, these communities remained separate and self-governing.

This combination of local autonomy and representative federal government was not to last. Wars among cities and attacks from outside, combined with the "Kings Peace" of 386 B.C. that forbade cities from joining a federation, were major factors. Excesses in the building of Athens in terms of raiding other's treasuries, the use of slaves, the exclusion of the rising middle class of traders and craftsmen from full citizenship and the inability to pass from direct democracy to representative local government were other factors in the decline of this first major experience with democracy.²

There are many other aspects of life in the 168 Greek "cities" studied by Aristotle that could be beneficially explored, e.g. the wages of craftsman and physician were the same³ and many urban citizens also had country residences or farms providing a form of urban-rural unity. Indeed, Mumford concludes: "The recovery of the essential activities and values that first were incorporated in the ancient cities, above all those of Greece, is accordingly a primary condition for the further development of the city in our time".⁴

EVOLUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

With the decline in Greece, the nature of government and leadership moved into centuries of rulership by dictators, kings, or oligarchies. The Roman Empire, spanning from the third century B.C. to the fourth century A.D., didn't have much to contribute in the way of ideals. Guided by autocratic emperors residing in a city that revelled in perverse spectacles, the empire finally collapsed in 410 A.D.

In the meantime a new dimension, a Christian church, was added to the pattern of leadership. Although conditions varied considerably from city to city or nation to nation, the church hierarchy now took on an increasing role in feeding the hungry, nursing the sick and old, and protecting the rights of serfs and prisoners. In the fifth century and beyond, the Germanic conquerors of the Roman Empire often entrusted the local church with important civil authority and the power to hear certain appeals. In Spain, the bishops reviewed court cases and collected taxes. The monastery, from the fourth century, became the community where idealistic Christian values were practiced, where the scriptures and other writings were copied and studied.

However, violence and terror often gripped many European communities in the fifth to eleventh centuries because of Nordic invasions. A pre-

dominant feature of local government in these Middle Ages was a local chieftain or lord ruling from a walled community over a limited territory.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the safety of the fortified town supplemented by the broader protection offered by royalty fostered the growth of the market and a new class of merchants. If bargaining with the bishop or feudal proprietor was successful, the town residents could obtain the privileges of a municipal corporation. The period of the eleventh to fourteenth centuries was significant in terms of local government because of the fairly widespread granting of freedom to towns and cities in the form of charters. Serfdom gave way to free craftsmen and merchants paying rents to the landed proprietor. Population increased considerably; in some instances charters were given to small communities by the landlord in the hope that with growth the residents would become a sort of standing army to protect his territory. The first bylaws or resolutions which the towns or cities passed often related to the granting of privileges for trading or manufacturing, a kind of early economic development policy. The growth of the craft guilds was followed, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, by the beginnings of the universities. Central or national authorities strengthened.

The Magna Carta of 1215 A.D. in England was a significant element in the evolution of democracy because it limited the power of the king.

From the thirteenth to sixteenth century, Florence became the center of the Renaissance. Urban residents, because of their success in art and crafts, often treated their rural neighbors as backward and half-witted dependents. In Italy, the municipalities did not give citizenship to the peasants.⁵ In this period "most of the basic units of local representative government in the rural areas of Europe found their origins in the parish church councils."⁶

The fifteenth to eighteenth centuries were characterized by growing capitalism and nation states under ruling families. In most countries economic privileges were now granted by the state rather than the king or city. Vestiges of democracy were limited. The French National Assembly which had not met since 1614 began to meet again in 1790. The goods economy gave way to the money economy and taxes could be more easily imposed by increasingly powerful nations. National bureaucracies surfaced. The nineteenth century brought the widespread introduction of democratically elected national and local councils. The privileges of voting and holding office, previously restricted to male citizens were given to all adults in the 20th century. With only a very few exceptions, e.g., Switzerland, local governments were placed in a subservient position to national governments.

References for Chapter Twenty-One:

1. Roy Jackson, "St. Augustine's 'Education of the Human Race': As a Guide for Forecasting", *Futures Canada*, Spring 1986, p. 22-25.
2. Lewis Mumford, *The City in History*, Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1961, p. 126-204.
3. *ibid.*, p. 165.
4. *ibid.*, p. 569.
5. *ibid.*, p. 338.
6. S. Humes and E. Martin, *The Structure of Local Government, A Comparative Survey of 81 Counties*, The Hague, 1969, p. 52.

Chapter Twenty-Two

VIEWS ON THE FORM AND NATURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**INTRODUCTION**

While the world continues to evolve to a greater experience of equality between all races, between the rich and the poor, and between men and women, the essentials for a democratic state – where all citizens are free and equal – have been written about for centuries. This chapter is a synopsis of statements of ideal made by several people beginning with Aristotle.¹ Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, a classic in American politics, provides some of the same principles. A Canadian example, or more correctly perhaps, a British example, is Lord Durham, the author of the "Magna Carta" for Canadian local government. Some Alberta-based examples pointing to the desirability of strong, self-reliant and comprehensive local government are also provided. Lewis Mumford, an American urbanist and philosopher reinforces this theme. While subsequent chapters will expand on directions for the future, it seems appropriate to close with a current view by Jack Masson, a professor at the University of Alberta, and some thoughts by two futurists on the process of change.

QUOTATIONS WITHOUT COMMENT

"Our own observation tells us that every state is an association of persons formed with a view to some good purpose."

Aristotle, *The Politics*, 335 B.C. (approximately) translated by T. A. Sinclair, Penguin Classic, 1962, p. 25.

"The foundation of the democratic constitution is liberty. Another is the 'live as you like' principle...from this comes the principle of not being ruled, not by anyone at all if possible, or at least only in alternation."

Aristotle, *Ibid.*, p. 236.

"...the gradual and progressive development of social equality is at once the past and future of (our) history...".

Alexis de Tocqueville, from *Democracy in America*, 1904, 1835.

"Local assemblies of citizens constitute the strength of free nations."

de Tocqueville, *Ibid.*, p. 49.

"A nation may establish a system of free government, but without the spirit of municipal institutions it can not have the spirit of liberty."

de Tocqueville, *Ibid.*, p. 49.

“It is important to remember that they (the New England townships) have not been invested with privileges (from the state) but that they have, on the contrary, forfeited a portion of their independence to the State.”

de Tocqueville, *Ibid.*, p. 53.

“I have heard citizens attribute the power and prosperity of their country to a multitude of reasons, but they all placed the advantages of local institutions in the foremost rank.”

de Tocqueville, *Ibid.*, p. 84.

“...to my mind the end of a good government is to ensure the welfare of a people, and not to establish order and regularity in the midst of its misery and its distress.”

de Tocqueville, *Ibid.*, p. 89.

“The establishment of municipal institutions for the whole country should be made a part of every colonial constitution; and the prerogative of the crown should be constantly interposed to check any encroachment on the functions of the local bodies, until the people should become alive, as must assuredly they almost immediately would be, to the necessity of protecting their local privileges.”

Lord Durham, High Commissioner and Governor-General of the provinces of Upper Canada, Lower Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland, 1839. From *Lord Durham's Report on the Affairs of British North America*, edited by Charles Lucas, 1912, reprinted 1970, p. 219.

“He regarded, and rightly regarded, municipal and parish work as a training ground for higher politics, and he criticized the action of the British Government in giving to the people of lower Canada (Quebec) representative government without at the same time giving them municipal institutions.”

Charles Lucas on Lord Durham, *ibid.*, p. 216.

Durham advocated strong municipal institutions...”as a necessary check upon the general legislature which he proposed to call into being (the uniting of the two Canadas)...to remove from the general legislature of the future the opportunities for local jobbery.” (Jobbery seems to have meant the giving of special privileges, grants, or facilities to those resident in an elected provincial representative’s riding – Author.)

Charles Lucas, *ibid.*, p. 217.

“He saw the value of local government as a means of developing the citizen’s experience in political management. He assumed that it was necessary for citizens to accept responsibility for the conduct of local affairs

first before they could undertake the larger task of responsible government in the then British colonies.”

T. J. Plunkett and G. M. Betts, *The Management of Canadian Urban Government*, 1978, p. 44 on Lord Durham.

“Thus, without unduly creating machinery for excessive taxation, an element likely to encourage organized local improvement has been introduced, and will no doubt result in methods so necessary for the promotion of self-reliance.”

Lieutenant-Governor MacIntosh of the North West Territories in 1893 upon passage of an amended Statute Labor Districts Act.

“The greatest curse of any municipal organization is the indifference of the electors. No municipal organization can be successful unless the electors of the municipality live up to their opportunities and their responsibilities.”

John Perrie, Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, from the Department's Annual Report, June 15, 1914, p. 6.

“The end of the year marked the end of a three year period of rural municipal organization and it is gratifying to note the progress that has been made in bringing about better conditions through the increased powers of local self-government. There is ample evidence to show that these self-governing powers have been found not only very useful but very necessary, and the three years' experience has, I think, confirmed the ratepayers in their opinion that it was in their interests to ask that these powers be given them.”

John Perrie, Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, in his Annual Report for 1915 dated March 7, 1916, p. 1.

“When we ask a senior government to assume responsibilities which are naturally ours it is a confession of weakness, and of a willingness to surrender the control of our affairs.”

Paul L. Farnalls, President of the Union of Alberta Municipalities at their convention in 1937.

“The purpose of organized society should be to secure for the individual the greatest possible measure of those things which add to the satisfaction of living.”

Alberta Association of Municipal Districts brief to the Relief Committee of the Alberta Legislature, June 10, 1937, p. 36 of the 1937 convention document.

“The power to tax is the power to destroy and if that power be placed in the hands of those who make no direct contribution; whose sole concern is the securing of greater privileges, we have placed in their hands the power to destroy society as now constituted.”

Alberta Association of Municipal Districts, *Ibid.*, p. 37.

“The county system of local government is based on the principle that there should be one local or civic government for all local or civic purposes.”

A. J. Hooke, Minister of Municipal Affairs at 1961 UAM Convention.

“Freedom for self-direction is necessary for growth, though this brings with it the possibility of sin, error, crime, imperfection, failure: the price that the living must pay for breaking the civil bonds that would keep them safely undeveloped – easy to handle and shape.”

Lewis Mumford, *The City in History*,² 1961, p. 177.

“We must now conceive the city, accordingly, not primarily as a place of business or government, but as an essential organ for expressing and actualizing the new human personality -- that of ‘One World Man’. The old separation of man and nature, of townsman and countryman, of Greek and barbarian, of citizen and foreigner, can no longer be maintained: for communication, the entire planet is becoming a village; and as a result, the smallest neighborhood or precinct must be planned as a working model of the larger world. Now it is not the will of a single deified ruler, but the individual and corporate will of its citizens, aiming at self-knowledge, self-government, and self-actualization, that must be embodied in the city. Not industry but education will be the center of their activities; and every process and function will be evaluated and approved just to the extent that it furthers human development, whilst the city itself provides a vivid theater for the spontaneous encounters and challenges and embraces of daily life.”

Mumford, *ibid.*, p. 573

“Rather than taking a paternalistic stance toward local government, the province should treat local governments as equal partners. Only by establishing this kind of relationship can the provincial government implement a province-wide policy while simultaneously maintaining a commitment to local autonomy and grass-roots democracy.”

Jack Masson in *Alberta's Local Governments and Their Politics*, 1985, p. 127.

“No fundamental change has ever taken place that was led from the top.”

Willis Harmon at a Spring 1986 Conference on
Values in Social Services, Edmonton.

“In the end, there is no science of the future since the future is unpredictable. That is, it is made by us as responsible agents. The future, as history, will indeed be of our own choosing and making.”

Hwa Yol Jung, Ph.D., Professor of Political
Science, Moravian College, Bethlehem, Penn.
Ecospirit, Vol II, No. 1, Moravian College.

References for Chapter Twenty-two:

1. Aristotle was a philosopher, teacher, student of Plato and a resident (but not citizen) of Athens in the 4th century B.C. Considered the father of democracy, his 11 point summary of democracy from *The Politics*, 335 B.C., is presented below. Taken from the Penguin Classic by T. A. Sinclair, 1962, p. 237-8.

“From these fundamental principles, and in particular from the principles of ruling and being ruled, are derived the following features of democracy:

1. Elections: all citizens eligible for all offices;
 2. rule: all over each and each in turn over all;
 3. offices filled by lot, either all or at any rate those not calling for experience or training;
 4. no tenure of office dependent on the possession of a property qualification or only on a very low one;
 5. the same man not to hold the same office twice or only very rarely — a few permitted exceptions, notably offices connected with warfare;
 6. short term of office for all offices or as many as possible;
 7. jury-courts all chosen from all the citizens and adjudicating on all or most matters and always on the most important and far-reaching, such as those affecting the constitution, investigations, contracts between individuals;
 8. the Ecclesia or Assembly is the sovereign authority in everything, officials having no sovereign authority in everything, officials having no sovereign power over anything except quite minor matters, or else the Council is sovereign in matters of greatest importance;*
- Next
9. payment for services, in the assembly, in the law-courts, and in the offices, is regular for all (or at any rate the offices, the law-courts, council, and the sovereign assemblies, or offices, where it is obligatory to have meals together).
- Again
10. as good birth, wealth, and culture are the marks of the rule of the few, so their opposites, low birth, low incomes, and low tastes are regarded as typical of the rule of the people.
 11. Perpetual tenure of office is not favoured by democracy; and if any perpetual office remains in being after an early revolution, we note that it has been shorn of its power and its holders selected by lot from among picked candidates.
- These are the general characteristics of democracies. And from the idea of justice that is by common consent democratic, that based on numerical equality, springs the most

thoroughly democratic democracy of the demos; equality such that rich and poor exercise exactly the same influence in government, no individuals having sovereign power but all together on an equal and numerical basis. In this way, so they think, they can create equality and freedom in the constitution.

*The council is of all offices the most democratic so long as all the citizens do not receive lavish pay; for lavish pay all round has the effect of removing its power from this body also; for the demos, when well paid for its services, insists on handling all disputed issues itself, as has been explained in the discussion preceding this.

2. This was Mr. Mumford's 20th book spanning 40 years of writing including *The Story of Utopias*, 1922, *Values for Survival*, 1946, and *The Transformations of Man*, 1956.

Chapter Twenty-Three**LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN OTHER NATIONS****INTRODUCTION**

One cannot but be overwhelmed by the variety of structures for local government that exist in other countries. Two excellent, though somewhat dated, source documents prepared by the International Union of Local Authorities run 674 and 224 pages.¹ However, assuming that one could capture a sense of what existed elsewhere, there would remain the task of understanding how practice might differ from the law and in what direction changes in local government were tending. The sense one gets from reviewing foreign practice is that the changes that may be suggested locally have likely been tried or are in practice elsewhere.

For example, a number of nations have provided for local government in national constitutions, e.g. Austria, Denmark, Italy, Germany, France and Japan.² Municipalities in Canada, the United States and Britain generally have only those powers delegated by the national, state or provincial authorities. For the citizen in many European countries, the local order of government provides a deep-rooted sense of power and tradition. In Germany and the Scandinavian countries the view is that: "Tasks should be undertaken at lower levels than at higher levels in society whenever the lower level is competent to undertake them, and that the higher level should defend and support the lower level to ensure that it has sufficient means to undertake them."³

In some European countries there is a career ladder between local government to regional, provincial or national office. For example, in France over one-half of the deputies in the 1978 and 1981 French National Assemblies were also "maires".⁴

In Spain and Portugal the provincial governor is the dominant factor in local government affairs. The mayor, a political appointee of the sole party in power, wields considerable authority. A weak municipal council is elected in part by heads of families and in part by trade and vocational groups.⁵

The mayor is centrally appointed in a variety of other countries – sometimes an experienced administrator (Netherlands) and at times a councilman recommended by the majority party or coalition of the council.

A fairly popular tradition is for the mayor to be chosen by the council, e.g. West Germany. The United States and Canada provide the examples for popularly elected mayors.

In the communist bloc countries of eastern Europe the party wields considerable power over local affairs, e.g. in early 1986 the head of the

Communist Party for the Moscow area changed and 10 days later a new mayor of Moscow as announced. Nominees to a weak council may be selected by factory or vocational associations; only as many candidates are selected as there are seats to be filled. Powerful committees or boards of appointed people may guide many operations that would be in the private sector elsewhere.

The system of political parties receiving a share of the seats – proportional representation – is now the norm in France. In Germany, 60 cities of over 100,000 people had set up local area councils by 1982. Over half of these were directly elected and had some decision making powers on local matters.⁶ In Italy, there are zonal councils in the big cities set up under the provisions of a national statute. Yugoslavia has elected neighbourhood councils who, with work-place councils, send delegates to higher level governments.⁷ Amsterdam, a city of 3/4 million people, has embarked on a program of dividing the city into 16 autonomous new municipalities. The first two communities of 30,000 and 80,000 were created in 1982 but a hold has been put on more separations until 1987. There have been some problems in implementation, such as separating functions and staffs, and the national government has yet to affirm its support through a redrawing of some provincial boundaries.

With the fall of totalitarian dictatorship after World War II, some European countries developed constitutions with strong checks against over-centralization. Portugal and Spain are currently devising a system of democratic local government,⁸ and the building of local powers to counter-balance the centre is continuing in France and Italy.⁹

The changes in Portugal include the creation of five regional coordinating commissions funded by a national ministry. The commissions have a limited governmental role but considerable freedom of action; they are not a planning agency but a coordinating one. Technical support groups consisting of government staff and socio-political leadership assist groups of municipalities in implementing agreed arrangements for service delivery.

Privatization is a current trend in some areas. An example would be the continued expansion of the Falck Rescue Corps. In Denmark since 1906, the company provides a fire fighting, ambulance and sea rescue service and now a handicapped van service to some adjoining and southern European countries. In 1982 it had a budget of \$150 million U.S., 6,500 employees, 3,000 vehicles and 134 stations.¹⁰

The following synopses of Ireland, Scotland, Britain and the United States are provided given the special relationship these have had with our form of government. Switzerland is included as a unique and hopefully interesting exception to “normal” intergovernmental relationships.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

The key features of the system of local government in Ireland are: tight control by the central government, i.e. the local areas have no inherent powers of self-government; the political party system is strong and vertically integrated – 102 of the 166 members of the national House of Commons serve on local councils; the 27 county councils have from 21 to 46 members and are elected by proportional representation; the mayor is usually selected by the majority party although it could also be through rotation; the mayor is more a chairman of a council who usually does not meet with the chief administrator prior to a council session; within a system of municipal and county councils, the appointed county manager is relied upon heavily for administration as well as policy development; the county manager, who is also the manager of all other local authorities within the county, is recommended by a national appointments commission who, if not affirmed by the county council within three months, is automatically installed in the position. In a similar vein the county manager is responsible for appointing other senior administrators but these can only be people recommended by the appointments commission. A dissatisfaction with the current system as seen by the county managers is that councillors spend little or no time initiating and developing policy. Both the county managers and councillors would like more freedom for self-government.¹¹

SCOTLAND

A major series of reforms in the local government structure were initiated in 1973. The study committee in 1969 concluded:

We discovered that generally speaking a community could best be defined in terms of an area focusing on a town which forms its main centre and to which the inhabitants of the area travel for business, shopping and recreation. In this concept of community the distinction between town and country cannot be maintained. Communities exist in different sizes and levels. We found that there are four different levels. We call them the parish, the locality, the shire and the region."¹⁴

A "nested" system of three levels that was finally implemented involved regions made up of districts which were in turn made up of community councils. The most powerful of these is the region.

BRITAIN

While most other countries in Europe have been involved in decentralization, since 1979 the national government in Britain has been flexing increasing authority in the activities of local government. In an economy

buffeted by high unemployment, and a political system where many local authorities are labor-controlled and the central government is Conservative, the relations between the two are extremely strained.¹⁵ The inability of the national government to control actions, especially of the Liverpool Metro Council and the Greater London Council,¹⁶ finally led it to abolish the six metropolitan councils and the Greater London Council in 1986. The legislation provided for some functions to be transferred to local governments, a direction also championed by the Liberals and the Social Democrats,¹⁷ and some to a number of appointed special-purpose boards. The absence of a metropolitan plan was not of too much concern given that the one for London had originally been proposed in 1972, had 28,000 objections filed to it, and when finally adopted in 1979 was considered to be of "doubtful quality and relevance".¹⁸

SWITZERLAND

The Swiss system is quite unique. There are 26 cantons with a high level of autonomy. Its citizens possess extensive rights of co-determination, i.e. reference to referendum. An amendment to the federal constitution requires the agreement of the majority of the cantons. The nation has a multi-lingual, multi-national character.

Although local government is not mentioned in the federal constitution the 3,072 municipalities (60 percent of them have less than 1,000 people) are given quite extensive and important legal power by the cantons. The main sources of income for the cantons are national transfer payments (rising to 65 percent of the federal budget in 1980) and income, property and inheritance taxes. The small size of many of the municipalities has led to considerable inter-municipal cooperation on service delivery. This has preserved the independent character but in some instances the administrative machinery is removed from democratic control.¹² There is increasing concern with the present system, primarily with the distribution of responsibilities. The majority of the proposed changes point to decentralization.¹³

UNITED STATES

The American system of local government is akin to the Canadian one in that the municipal corporations have their powers given to them. However, the concept of charters remains more strongly embedded in the United States. There are special act charters (each local government has its own), general act charters (some options are given on how to manage within a population range) and home rule charters (the municipality can do what it wants unless prohibited). About one-half of the states provide for

home rule in their constitutions and another dozen provide for home rule upon approval by the state legislature. Two-thirds of the cities over 200,000 have home rule. The states can and do restrict certain areas as being of state-wide concern.¹⁹ There are 35,700 general municipal governments and 50,000 school and special-purpose governments in the United States.²⁰

Some recent trends indicate the states in most cases are “giving local governments increasing amounts of autonomy, authority and resources enabling them to more effectively deal with their problems”.²¹ State aid to municipalities is increasing at the same time as they are giving local governments greater flexibility in raising and spending revenues (e.g. general sales and fuel sales tax at local option) and how they administer their operations. The federal role in urban and other municipal matters, given the mounting deficit, is being lessened.

As a final note to this section on experience in other countries, economic constraints have meant increased use of consultants as compared to in-house staff. In Germany and Sweden, the consultant capability is being increasingly provided by national or provincial associations of municipalities.²²

References to Chapter Twenty-Three

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A. F. Leemans, *Changing Patterns of Local Government*, The Hague, 1970.
2. Excerpts on local government from the Constitution of Japan
 "ARTICLE 92. Regulations concerning organization and operations of local public entities shall be fixed by law in accordance with the principle of local autonomy.
 ARTICLE 93. The local public entities shall establish assemblies as their deliberative organs, in accordance with law.
 The chief executive officers of all local public entities, the members of their assemblies, and such other local officials as may be determined by law shall be elected by direct popular vote within their several communities.
 ARTICLE 94. Local public entities shall have the right to manage their property, affairs and administration and to enact their own regulations within law.
 ARTICLE 95. A special law, applicable only to one local public entity, cannot be enacted by the Diet without the consent of the majority of the voters of the local public entity concerned, obtained in accordance with law.
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19. Jay S. Goodman, *The Dynamics of Urban Government and Politics*, 1980, p. 48.
20. Alan Norton, *Ibid.*, p. 37.
21. Jay Muzychenko, "State Action Affecting Local Government: Redefinition of Relationships", *The Municipal Year Book*, 1986, International City Management Association, p. 57-64.
22. S. George Rich, *Ibid.*, p. 33.

Chapter Twenty-Four**LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN CANADA****INTRODUCTION**

The momentum for studies, commissions and new provincial legislation across Canada was strong in the 1950's and 1960's but has abated considerably since the beginning of the 1970's.¹ Most recently, however, there seems to be a fresh interest to study and a preparedness to implement new approaches in local government. The following is a brief review of the nature of local government in each province and some of the recent changes made or being contemplated. It concludes with some references to the "Municipalities" section of the Macdonald Commission and to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and its most recent convention.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

In 1966 a little more than one percent of the area of the province was within an incorporated municipality. Since then 28 regional districts have been established with all but the northwest corner of the province now covered. The board of each district consists of representatives from incorporated municipalities and unorganized territory. The districts have only a few formal responsibilities such as the preparation of an official plan and building inspection. Essentially, it's up to the members to decide what services they wish the regional district to provide.

The Union of British Columbia Municipalities, at its 1983 Convention, approved a list of 22 basic policies or stances that it would use in forging improvements to local government in that province. Concerns for a limited revenue base, an unresponsive legislative system, inadequate local authority and blurred lines of jurisdiction were key issues at which the policies were aimed.

ALBERTA

There are 374 municipalities in the province of which 296 are urban – the cities, towns, villages and summer villages; and 78 rural municipalities – municipal districts and counties (50) which have local self-government, and improvement districts (19), Metis settlements (8), and Special Areas (1) that are administered by the province and local advisory councils.

The highlight in Alberta is the announcement of a nine-member committee to review all of the legislation affecting the process of local government in the province. The committee, to consist of representatives



Mrs. S. Purshkie
(Recording Secretary)

Mr. E. Briscoe
(County Secretary)

Mr. W. Thomas
(Reeve)

Mr. E. McGhan
(Chief Commissioner)

Mr. D. Bell

Mrs. I. Evans

Mr. E. Marsch

Mr. A. Schindeler

Mr. R. Hurley

Mr. J. Common

Mr. T. Massey
(Director of Training)

Mr. D. Pommen
(Associate Commissioner)

Ms. D. Horton
(Not Present)

Also in the picture are Mr. R. Powell, Associate Commissioner and Mr. D. MacPhail, Director of Corporate Planning (upper left).

The Council of the County of Strathcona in session on September 23, 1986. One of this County's unique characteristics is the relatively harmonious blending of urban and rural development in one municipality.

Photo Credit: Piers Churchill

of the three municipal associations, a member of the legislative assembly and three members of the public, is to submit its final report by the end of 1987.

A theme of the last 25 years has been on financing community infrastructure and other elements related to growth. Even with the economic downturn, the issue of municipal finance has continued to warrant attention. For example, a Grant Structures Review Committee examined more than 80 provincial grant programs in 1984 and 1985. Its 87 recommendations pointed not only to improvements in specific financial matters but on relationships and communication between the province and the municipalities.

Other items include a new Local Authorities Election Act in 1983 (updating the Municipal Election Act of 1968), a report by a three-member committee in November 1985 on the public and private interests of municipal councillors, a trend to incorporation of improvement districts, the review of legislation respecting Metis settlements and, most recently, a renewed involvement in efforts for self-government by the communities of Banff and Jasper.

SASKATCHEWAN

Municipal affairs in this province are guided by two provincial departments – Saskatchewan Urban Affairs and Saskatchewan Rural Development. In addition to the normal legislation for urban and rural municipalities, the province has had in place for the last few years the Northern Municipalities Act to provide for autonomous local government to urban communities in northern Saskatchewan. The last major review of legislation for the urban municipalities was in 1980; a review of rural law is currently underway with the report scheduled for August 1986. A report on resort communities is expected to be completed in 1986.

MANITOBA

Much effort has been given over the years to the organization of metropolitan Winnipeg. The most recent analysis was by a City of Winnipeg Act five-member Review Committee. The committee, appointed on April 11, 1984, received briefs, conducted public and private interviews and commissioned research projects on some issues. The 73 recommendations contained in their report of November 30, 1985, pointed to more authority for the mayor, an executive committee recommended by the mayor and appointed by council, and removal of specifics on administrative structure from the provincial statute. The community committees would be retained, albeit reduced to six with four wards each and hence a council of 24 rather than the current 29.

ONTARIO

The last major review of municipal legislation in Ontario in the 1960's led to the initiation of regional government. This upper tier consists of lower tier or municipally elected representatives. About one-third of the population of the province is within the eleven regional governments now in place and another one-third in Metropolitan Toronto. Recently amended legislation includes a Planning Act (1983), Municipal Conflict of Interest Act (1983) and a Municipal Tax Sales Act (1984). A committee is currently working on municipal election procedures and another is reviewing

accountability and representation in Metropolitan Toronto. There is an ongoing process of modernizing the legislation including removal of sections of Acts no longer needed, broadening municipal authority, eliminating status differences between municipalities and reducing the necessity for appeals to "higher" levels.

QUEBEC

The system of local government in Quebec had evolved, by the 1960's, to one of considerable fragmentation. Ninety percent of the 1,600 municipalities had less than 5,000 people; 50 percent had less than 1,000 people.² While there has been consolidation of schools and new networks of health and social services, municipal amalgamations or annexations have been much more limited.

In the 1970's, second tier, indirectly elected "urban communities" were created in the Montreal, Quebec, Hull and Chicoutimi areas. In 1979, 92 regional county municipalities (which replaced county municipalities) were established consisting of area municipalities outside the 'urban communities'. Their prime function was the preparation and implementation of a regional land use development plan.

In the summer of 1984, the Quebec government gave the Minister of Municipal Affairs a mandate to revise municipal legislation with the goal to modernize and simplify. The first such review since the Municipal Act, 1916, and Cities and Towns Act, 1922, it is scheduled to be completed by 1990. There was a strong reinforcement for renewal in October 1985 when the Union des Municipalites du Quebec (the provincial association of municipalities) created an Inquiry Commission. It is the "first time that the third level of government has set up its own commission, appointed its commissioners and paid for the exercise itself". Under the chairmanship of Jacques Parizeau, a former provincial Finance Minister, the commission visited all regions of the province between February and June 1986. In response to the main question "What should and will the municipalities of tomorrow be like?" the commission has received 175 written briefs and heard a large number of oral presentations. Its report is expected by September 30, 1986.⁴

NOVA SCOTIA

The 1974 Graham Commission on Education, Public Services and Provincial/Municipal Relations recommended replacing all cities, towns and rural municipalities with 11 one-tier counties. Due probably to the vast and comprehensive magnitude of the change and the absence of alternatives, no recommendations were implemented. Instead, a 1978 white

paper, "New Directions in Municipal Government in Nova Scotia", produced through discussions between the Department of Municipal Affairs and Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, has provided a base for gradual adjustments.

A recent study of municipal bylaw procedures – this is the only province where all municipal bylaws require ministerial approval – recommended considerable but not complete local autonomy. The suggestion is currently being reviewed. While there have been discussions on combining the Municipal Act (rural) and the Towns Act and dividing the assessment statute into provincial assessment and municipal taxation, no major reviews have been initiated.

Cities have their own charters. In the last few years Halifax, Dartmouth and the County of Halifax have been cooperating as a regional authority to operate a regional jail, a regional transit system and a regional sanitary land fill operation.

NEW BRUNSWICK

Implementation of a 1963 study, focussing on municipal/provincial finances, resulted in the transfer of justice, welfare and health functions to the province, a reduction in the number of school districts from 422 to 33, complete provincial funding for education, market value assessment, abolishment of 15 single-tier rural counties and, in partial compensation, the creation of 90 new villages. Unincorporated areas, which presently include 250,000 people or one-third of the provincial population are served directly by the province. A "Review of New Brunswick's Unconditional Grants to Municipalities" was completed in 1986.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

A review of local government legislation was carried out in 1983. Five statutes were subsequently consolidated under a Municipalities Act.

NEWFOUNDLAND

Studies in 1974 and 1977 proposing a two-tier system of local and regional governments were not supported. The Municipalities Act of 1979-80 provided for regional governments without the need for further legislative approval although none have yet been proclaimed. Additional amendments have provided for more local autonomy and fiscal responsibility and less provincial control.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

The Territories have a population of 45,000 people with about equal portions of southern (white), Inuit (Eskimo) and Dene (Indian). The white-

oriented communities tend to be organized as cities, towns and villages, the Inuit ones as hamlets and Dene as settlements.⁵

Recent studies of the Municipal Act and Taxation Act by the Territories' Local Government Department indicate these will be replaced by a Local Government Act, a Local Authorities Election Act and a Property Assessment and Taxation Act. To be tabled, hopefully, in the fall 1986 session of the government of the Northwest Territories, the legislation will provide for cities, towns and villages, incorporated hamlets with limited powers, settlements and charter communities.

The charter communities concept, if adopted, would provide a kind of do-it-yourself local government constitution and would involve negotiations with the Territories government and local plebiscites. There may be some common provisions for all charter communities.

MACDONALD COMMISSION

The report of the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada in 1985 had a 12-page section on municipalities. Some of its conclusions were:

"Detailed legislation has added great complexity to local administration." p. 375

"(We) suggest each provincial government systematically examine relations between itself and its local governments." p. 377

"Commissioners see no impediment to a single province seeking an amendment to the Constitution Act – that would specify the constitutional status of one or more cities within its boundaries." p. 377

"Although commissioners do not recommend changing the constitutional status of local governments, the federal and provincial governments should increase the involvement and responsibility of local authorities." p. 481

"Commissioners recommend that provinces consider adopting special procedures for changing local responsibilities, e.g. a two-thirds majority approval of members of the provincial legislature or a province-wide referendum." p. 377

"That the provinces examine ways to designate a specific portion of income or sales tax revenues for local government financing. Commissioners believe that revenues to local governments should be increasingly unconditional." p. 481

"A considerable reduction is desirable in the number of special-purpose bodies, such as planning boards that are created by the provinces to act independently of local governments." p. 383

"Canada's major cities should be provided with the legal, financial and institutional means to fulfill their economic development role." p. 481

The recommendations of the commission are available for whatever consideration individual Canadians and institutions are prepared to give.

FEDERATION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES

The national association for Canadian municipalities has, in the last three years, established a task force structure to focus on policy development in a "sustained, pro-active and aggressive manner".⁶ The reports of the 15 task forces have covered municipal infrastructure, national transportation policy as it impacts municipalities, grants-in-lieu of taxes, housing, issues of small urban and rural areas, labor relations, energy, arts, culture and heritage, crime prevention, financing municipal governments, social policy, race relations, pornography and prostitution, municipal aid and trade (twinning) and intergovernmental consultation.

Some resolutions considered at the 1986 convention included:

"Encourage small and rural municipalities to adopt a self-help approach to their futures and opportunities for growth and development."

"That the provinces dedicate a specific portion of income or sales tax revenues for local government financing."

"That, to the extent possible, provincial governments shift their municipal financing arrangements to provide unconditional funding rather than conditional grants."

"Encourage member municipalities to establish twinning relationships with communities in Canada and in foreign countries."

Resolutions were directed not only to provincial and federal governments but to member municipalities encouraging their adoption of worthwhile policies.

References for Chapter Twenty-Four

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3. John Sewell in the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, June 4, 1986.
4. See the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrator's *Bulletin*, June 1986, Vol. 13, No. 1, p. 7.
5. David Michener, "Local Government Innovations in the North", *Municipal World*, April 1985.
6. Alderman Ron Cromwell, President of FCM, in the forward to the report *Policy Development: Task Force Reports, Resolutions*, 1986, presented to Federation's 49th Annual Conference.

Chapter Twenty-Five**A STUDY OF FUTURES – THE ISSUES****INTRODUCTION**

The municipal planner of the early 1960's would approach the task of developing a community general plan by examining past trends in population, land use, transportation, etc., and project these into the future. The planner of the mid 1970's would develop several scenarios and suggest the municipal council adopt a flexible implementation strategy.

Today, the approach is different again. It is increasingly one of determining the "hurts" or issues, establishing the desired vision, confirming the values (such as prudence and honesty) that are to guide action and agreeing on a specific plan in order that all can work together to achieve the hoped for condition. This way of looking at the future is only a very small aspect of a series of transformations affecting our culture.

In this chapter, the issues of our age are presented. They are the driving forces for change. This is followed by a review of the ideas being discussed and/or implemented: the futurists' positive future. It will close with the suggestion that we are entering the third age, the age of relationships – following those labelled as the agricultural and industrial eras.

SOCIETAL ISSUES

In the sixth century B.C. and onwards not only Greek, but Chinese, Indian and Western societies were increasingly concerned with existing conditions. As Mumford puts it, there was an "over emphasis on power and material goods, its acceptance of grade and rank and vocational divisions as eternal categories; and along with this, the injustice, the hatred, the hostility and the perpetual violence and destructiveness of its dominant class-structured institutions."¹ Consequently, many new religions and new philosophies were born.

The issues of our culture are reminiscent of these but yet substantially different. The beginnings of our awareness of dark clouds, it is suggested, goes back to the early 1960's and the "flower children" of Haight-Ashbury in San Francisco, the assassination of President Kennedy, and the fresh air symbolism of the Second Vatican Council.

A review of futures literature points to the following list of current issues.

1. Continuing international conflict with the potential for atomic warfare.

The main (potential) combatants would be the United States and the USSR. However, the ideological conflicts in Central and South America and

potential access to atomic weapons by unstable Third World countries heighten current concerns. Militarization and purchase or gifts of weaponry continue at high levels.

2. Pollution of air, soil and water.

We are continuing to develop a better awareness of the gravity and long-term impact of industrial pollution, the use of chemicals and gases and transportation related pollution (car, truck, airplane). In agriculture, we are coming to recognize that we are not farming but mining our soil.

In respect to the critically beneficial ozone layer surrounding the earth, recent findings indicate its continued thinning and a hole in the Antarctic area. Acid rain and problems with disposal of hazardous wastes are other examples of the pollution issue.

3. Environmental degradation.

In addition to poisoning our environment (in no. 2) we are degrading what we have by other forms of abuse. Our excessive draw on underground water has led to falling water tables and salinification (salt water seeping into underground fresh water sources). Our continued removal of tree cover and overgrazing is limiting the earth's ability to produce oxygen and cleanse air.

4. Hunger.

While initially perceived as a problem of limited world production, it is now seen as being related to distribution, income and national policies such as those which promoted the growth of export crops rather than foods for local consumption.

5. Rising unemployment.

World levels of unemployment and severe under-employment have been rising since the early 1950's – from two percent to as high as 20 percent, in some cases. It is estimated that 600 million were unemployed in 1984 (or one-quarter of the adult world population) with 35 million unemployed in eight European countries, Canada and United States. Canada has about 1.2 million unemployed. Alberta's unemployed vary from 120,000 to 150,000 people. Few countries in the world have unemployment of less than five percent; e.g., Austria, Sweden, and Japan. Minorities and youth are being especially hard hit.

6. Poverty.

The issue of poverty is related to unemployment and hunger, noted above, and to low wages and low product prices. Not only is the degree of poverty increasing in the Third World (partly related to high oil prices) but is increasingly evident in western nations. A crisis in many American cities

is the increasing number of homeless street people. A “permanent underclass” seems to be in the making.

7. Energy and mineral shortages.

The declining supply of some resources, increasing population and the shock of the high oil prices of the 1970's has sensitized the world to the fact that there are limits to supply. The production of atomic power has often required considerable national subsidy and, because of accidents and citizen concerns for safety, is no longer viewed as the favored future supplier of energy.

8. Species extinction.

“Of earth's five million species, we could well lose at least one million by the end of the century we are already losing one species per day...².” These are irreversible losses of plants and animals that have and can continue to sustain mankind. More significantly, this loss represents our disrespect for life: we destroy the species' invaluable habitat to satisfy short-term consumer demands.

9. Crime.

Often related to poverty, unemployment, and drugs, the concerns are with what seem to be long-term increases in murder and crimes of violence and the need for increased expenditures for policing. Our sense of safety or security, in cities and certain airports for example, is declining.

10. Third World Debt.

Estimated at \$900 billion, the inability or unwillingness of some countries to repay their debt is seen by some to be the factor which could collapse the world's financial system. This potential instability is increasingly pushing world trade toward a barter system – 25 percent of imports/exports are now in this category.

11. Inequality – racial, sexual.

There is a considerable range in the degrees of inequality throughout the world. For example, the views held by white people of native populations in some countries may be described as benign paternalism, but in others prejudicial views may lead to oppressive, physically enforced measures for racial segregation.

Many societies in the world place women in subservient positions while others have grown to provide equal pay and access to jobs and freedom of association. Inequalities of whatever degree point to unnecessary conflict.

12. Consumerism and high consumption.

Satisfaction in life through consumption is viewed to be the religion of a number of cultures including our own.³ The western nations consume, proportionately, a considerably greater measure of the world's resources. Often, the corollary to consumption is debt.

13. Excessive growth of government.

If one views the purpose of government as regulating the relationships of people, the need to assign up to 40 percent of the resources to government, as it is in some nations, is seen as excessive. It would be well to recognize the inherent goodness of a society where its citizens are prepared to give a third or more of their wealth for societal needs and for redistribution to others in need. However, the proliferation of laws and regulations, coupled with the increasing individual dependency on the state and loss of self-reliance and self-determination, are seen as issues connected with a large government sector.

14. Drug and alcohol abuse.

There continues to be an increase in drug consumption, legal or illegal, especially by the young, in most areas of the world. However, government revenue through sales taxes on legal sales, inflow of western currency from the export of illegal product or the provision of jobs inhibit action to reduce production or consumption.

15. Sexual mores.

Our perceptions of worthwhile standards for heterosexual relationships are being challenged and often dispensed with. Freedom of action for some is bringing fear to others, i.e. the increase or rise in new sexually transmitted diseases.

16. The weakening of the family unit.

There is an increasing incidence in our culture of parents walking away from family responsibilities, a tendency for violence, and for parents to give the nurturing of children and the strengthening of family a lower priority than personal development. In Canada, as compared to other western nations, we focus much more of our home-help or homemaker resource on seniors than we do on family.⁴

17. Technology without values.

The generally held view of the last few centuries that the development of new technological devices or systems meant progress has permitted their easy introduction. However, increasingly we are coming to recognize their often considerable, negative effects. Research in the bio-medical field involving or leading to the use of human embryos is an especially conten-

tious issue. Profit and competition often mean implementation of new technology without full reflection by society on the consequences.

18. Leadership.

There is a world-wide absence of effective leadership – by individuals or groups. Institutions and corporations are taking the short-run view. Leadership by assemblies of elected people, the single most important example to individual action is fractious and similarly short-run in its decisions. Within organizations, top-down systems of authority and decision-making do not foster creativity, cooperation or self-expression.

19. Perceptions of reality.

It is increasingly difficult to integrate the para-normal, psychic phenomena, dreams, mysticism, the subconscious, and synchronicity of events and thoughts with the rational objective place we believe the world to be. This creates unnecessary conflict between people who hold differing views on these matters and limits the use of potentially beneficial systems or techniques.

20. Human values.

Our societies are increasingly seen as weak, given the emphasis to materialism and greed, and without a balancing set of values that maintain or build the social fabric of human relationships. What are these values? How do we shift from judging to caring?

21. Our spiritual nature.

Questions of: Does God exist? or Do we have a soul? have been and are still being frequently responded to in the negative or “who cares”. The dogma and rules of some religions are seen to be increasingly constraining people, often to a past no longer relevant.

CONCLUSION

While not a conclusive list, the issues noted above are seen as the driving forces for change, a new order, a new age.

All of the above concerns are evident to some degree in Alberta. Our most critical one, based on citizen polls over the last few years, is unemployment. It is a visible and measurable issue. However, there are two other issues that we can not document or measure as readily but may be more significant causal forces for change namely, the dearth of effective leadership and human values that do not foster community.

References for Chapter Twenty-Five

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2. Norman Myers, "Vanishing Plants and Animals: The Mega-Extinction of Species", in *Through the 1980's, Thinking Globally, Acting Locally*, edited by Frank Feather, World Future Society, 1980.
3. Gunnar Alder-Karlsson, "The Unimportance of Full Employment", *Ibid.*, p. 216.
4. Report on the Seventh Congress of the International Council of Homehelp Services held in France in July, 1985. Family Services Association of Edmonton document, September 1986.

Chapter Twenty-Six**DIRECTIONS FOR A POSITIVE FUTURE****INTRODUCTION**

The conditions discussed in the previous chapter are a result of our past actions and it will be our present thoughts and decisions that will move us to the next stage. What changes in perception, beliefs and actions must we make for a positive rather than a worsened future?

THE COLLECTED WISDOM OF TODAY'S "PHILOSOPHERS"**1. Understand and develop synergy.**

Synergy means "the working together of unlike elements to create desirable results unobtainable from any combination of independent efforts".² It is people working cooperatively to achieve more than they could individually. The shift from competition to cooperation is noted first because it is easy to understand and because competition pervades so much of our society.

A cooperative relationship calls for openness of our position (both how we think and feel), trust, a sense of equality between those participating, and an openness to an ongoing relationship, recognizing it is difficult to establish and maintain.

Each of us has power and we can develop synergic relationships where people are seen as colleagues and allies. In the past we have usually used our power in directive or coercive ways where people are seen as tools or adversaries. Alternatively, we assume or take a "no power" position where we believe we do not or can not affect the behaviour of others. Often the pain of living in our culture is a result of a relationship between persons or groups who use directive power and those who assume a no power position. One fights to keep it and the other desires it.

Another way of looking at the nature of our relationship is to think in terms of a "win-win" or "all-win" approach. The model from which these words come assumes five levels in the quality of a decision.

QUALITY OF DECISION

Type	Example
All-Win	New municipal legislation which guides the provision of honest, creative, participatory and effective local government where people work together for their own benefit as well as to serve the needs of those outside their community. Less resources – human, physical and financial – are needed at both the provincial and local levels to ensure personal, community and world development.
Win-Win	The above except that our advancement is at the expense of, or without benefit to, places outside Alberta.
Win-Lose	New municipal legislation finally drafted and enacted to serve “provincial” needs that does not have the support of the majority of municipalities or it pits the “urbans” against the “rurals”, or benefits accrue inequitably. (The win-lose pattern is our society’s norm.)
Lose-Lose	Neither the municipalities nor the province achieve the desired form of legislation.
All-Lose	The above and the embitterment, negativity and poor legislation become models for action elsewhere.

2. A new pattern of leadership – servant leaders.

The dearth of great leadership was noted earlier. New directions in leadership point to a focus on service and a greater sharing of the leadership function (many small leaders). Robert Greenleaf, in one of the most influential books among futurists in the last decade, *Servant Leadership*, suggests that servant leadership

“... begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from the one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions.”³

Leadership implies a foresight and a deep sense of mission. To be continually reacting to immediate or crisis situations is not to lead. Another attribute of servant leadership is that people lead when “called” to do so and that we do not follow non-leaders or those seeking their own ego fulfillment.

The concept of servant leadership is expanding because we recognize, in a profound way, that our greatest joys in life come through experiences of unselfish service. Yet, much education for improved leadership, including the re-education of existing leaders, is required.

3. Work and employment.

So much of who and what we are has come through our work. It has also been the prime or only source of income for most people. In the process of searching for solutions to unemployment we are re-defining the concept of work. The most prevalent new policy for full employment is based on our understanding that the production of goods and services no longer requires everyone to work 33 to 40 hours or more per week. Technological advances, especially through the use of the micro chip, the satisfaction, over the past three decades, of many demands for consumer and capital goods and changing concepts about consumption, e.g., “voluntary simplicity”, mean more time for other things. This may include voluntary activities, play or amusement and rest or meditation. Hence, rather than 90 percent or so working and the other 10 percent forced into idleness, all could work 25 to 35 hours. This is seen as being achieved in a variety of ways including a reduced work week, educational leave and job sharing. The decline in income could very well be matched by a corresponding decline in taxes because of a reduction in the payment of welfare and other benefits, a larger volunteer component and a healthier less-stressful society.

Other structural changes for fuller employment include less tax benefits for using money capital and the world’s natural resources, and more tax benefits to the employment and improvement of human capital.

Another element is our reconceptualization of work and shifting to the idea of creative living. The work that each of us would do would be based more on our skills, abilities and needs, given the stage of our personal development process. We would be given greater assistance in recognizing when we were in a position that no longer benefitted our growth, our organization or our community. When we found our proper niche we would be fulfilling a basic need to create and consequently would feel needed and valuable. This principle, when matched with a greater equality in income, would result in more jobs being done well. In summary, a new age society would increasingly strive to provide each citizen with access to work which provided an income sufficient to maintain dignity.

4. Decentralization.

One of the 10 new directions transforming our lives described in *Megatrends*⁴ is a move from centralization to decentralization. E. Fritz

Schumacher's books, *Small is Beautiful* and *A Guide for the Perplexed*, point to systems and technology of appropriate scale, of human scale.

The drive to maximize personal profit and power has brought considerable centralization in political systems, corporations, institutions and production. Downsizing, evident now for more than a decade, has surfaced in more local autonomy, the very rapid rise in the number of small firms, the creation of alternative educational and other institutions, and a greater acceptance of cultural and regional diversity. It means shifting from giant power stations to a multitude of alternative "soft" energy sources or from decisions made at the top to decisions made on the shop floor or in the branch. The movement from giantism is seen as giving more freedom for individual expression and reducing the sense of being overwhelmed by one's environment.

5. Self-reliance.

The shift from having others do it for us – institutions, government, the corporation – to doing it for ourselves is, in a sense, a shift to a concept more strongly held in previous times, such as in the earlier part of this century. Akin to decentralization, self-help means taking charge of one's life, to be responsible, for example, for one's own health. Home-birthing, home-schooling, home-businesses, home gardening and home-crafting are recent revivals of past self-reliant activities. Self-help groups with expert, caring guidance are found to be especially effective in dealing with social/psychological issues. The failure of systems or governments to deal effectively with our needs, such as long-term employment, are reinforcing our desire for self-reliance. The broader, communal interest is not forgotten in our search for a self-reliant life style. However, the scale at which we now decide to help ourselves is reduced from national to provincial, from provincial to regional or municipal, or from city to neighborhood. This would be an expression of a main theme of the futures literature, i.e. think globally, act locally.

6. Organizational Structure.

The essential change in organizational structure is from one with a hierarchical system to a horizontal/network/shared ownership style. The traditional pyramid form of structure forced decisions to the top, required a mid-management to manage or package information flow and limited individual initiative at the lower levels. Power came from the position one held in the structure. Now the task of supervisor or manager is seen as one of facilitator. Decisions are made by those with knowledge and competence. The skills of a line worker or the one who has direct contact with the public or client are viewed as being as valuable as those of the coordinator or facilitator.

Another significant shift in business organization is the one to cooperative ownership and worker democracy. An example that is being more frequently referenced is Mondragon, Spain. There, over the past 25 years, about 100 firms employing more than 20,000 workers have been established. Each employee is a co-owner of the company having invested, by the end of the third year, an amount equal to the annual salary of the lowest paid worker or about \$10,000 U.S. The management team is chosen by a company board of directors consisting of worker representatives.

7. Entrepreneurship.

There has been a phenomenal increase in the number of new firms created. It is these and other small firms that have provided many of the new jobs. In the United States in the 1970's the 1,000 largest firms have collectively provided almost none.

Entrepreneurship and the small firms are seen as giving people more control over their work environment. The manager/worker is often the owner. This brings long-term advantages of a greater distribution of financial capital throughout the population.

In the larger firm the term "intrapreneurship" is used to describe a corporate structure with greater individual or group freedom for decision making. A similar extension of the concept is beginning to find its way into government bureaucracies.⁵

8. Education: learning to learn.

The industrial era method of education focussed on memorizing information and regurgitating it at exam time. In more polite terms, it was training people to accept authority without question and to become used to routine. The new direction is for the teacher to enable the student to find sources to explore, to choose, to develop individual and group patterns for creative learning. The considerable research on left brain/right brain patterns in human functioning point to an education system which must accommodate the full range of human interests including social, artistic, and intuitive skills.

Education is increasingly being looked at as an ongoing process. The idea that one can go to college or university after high school to get a life-time inoculation against ignorance is no longer valid. Given the rapidly changing technology and societal needs people will increasingly shift from one career to another. "Work experience" is being increasingly integrated into the formal learning structure. The amount of "non-credit" education is increasing.

More of us will become educators for short periods, teaching what we know from experience. But even in these situations the teacher will also be a learner; the relationship will not be hierarchical.

9. Networking.

Corresponding to the societal shifts from dependence to independence is the development of networks. They connect people in a variety of ways (electronic mail, meetings, publications), in a variety of topic areas (computer software, transformational lifestyles), in a variety of environments (the shop floor, bureaucracies) and can be local or international.

Networks are learning systems of the highest order connecting people without reference to rank and of varied backgrounds but of like interests for a time. They are supportive, synergetic and organic. Connections to the most up-to-date source for information – more current than books and articles – can be made quickly.

10. Generalists.

The past emphasis in our culture on specialists and the failure of specialists to address the complex inter-related problems facing society is leading to a critical need for the education and development of more “generalists”. People within an existing profession are reaching out to allied fields, and new professions are developing. Societal problems such as unemployment are being increasingly looked upon not only by people skilled in economics but also in the sociology and psychology of the unemployed. Holistic approaches are promoted by individuals with generalist knowledge or by specialists working well within a group.

11. Stewardship.

Stewardship contrasts with ownership and having dominion over the resources and species of the earth. It implies our responsibility for caring, for leaving our environment in a better condition than we found it.

12. Creativity.

For all our knowledge and wisdom we do not know where ideas come from. Increasingly, the literature refers to the collective unconscious, or a similar label of a region accessed by mankind for heightened awareness or breakthrough insights. An essential condition for such creativity is freedom-political, economic, psychological, religious and cultural. Ideas for new directions for our societies, the work place or family are recognized as coming not only from experience and training but from a connectedness with this higher, universal wisdom. Training methods such as the power of suggestion and affirmations, individual and group meditation and imagery are being increasingly developed to assist people in advancing to a higher level of awareness.⁶

13. Long-term.

The annual profit and loss statements of industry and the annual budget statements of almost all organizations including government have tended

to confine society to a short-term view. Given limited tenure in our positions, on average about five years, our ego drives us to show visible and immediate successes to others. The costs of the short run are often absorbed by others – our neighbours of today or tomorrow, e.g. abandoned chemical dumps. A healthy society is one that would give recognition to the longer term – to the next seven generations.

14. Income distribution.

The guaranteed income concept first proposed in the early 1960's is making a return. The recent Macdonald Commission was positive about such an approach in Canada. Other concepts are being developed such as the earning of credits for (volunteer) jobs done that could be exchanged for education or other purposes.

In situations where our varied talents and abilities are given in service to others, there is an equality in what has been provided. A day of one person's labor is equal to that of another – a common exchange in barter situations.

Indeed, reducing the salary between the highest and lowest paid person in an organization, about 10 or 12 to 1 in Canada and United States, is seen as a policy which leads to a greater sense of cooperation and team effort. In Japan, the salary ratio is 5 to 1.

A special case is the Mondragon area of Spain where the salary differential is 3.8 to 1 with an objective of reaching 3 to 1.

Another direction for attacking poverty is for the ownership (stewardship) of financial and other non-human resources to be given less weight or importance, that is, a reduction in the interest rate. We could reduce the benefit of using financial capital through changes in the income tax structure or by investors deciding to accept lower interest rates for "right" investments.

There are also suggestions that wage or salary income would be related more to need than position, e.g., the young family needing shelter. The ideal, it is suggested, would be a situation where all do what they are internally guided to do with no income. People would provide goods and services to each other out of a sense of community, out of love. Clearly, this is an ideal from which we are far removed but it is being increasingly lived out in certain, unique communities. Indeed, we do find this presently in acts of volunteerism in our own culture.

15. Conserver Society.

The recognition of limited resources and a limitation on the ability of the earth to cleanse itself of mankind's actions has introduced an ethic of re-

use, consumption with care and a sense of conservation. Growth in the limited, profit-making sense is no longer the objective. Rather, the hope is to develop a society which is self-sustaining and in harmony with that which can be provided by mother earth. More of a good is not necessarily considered a better condition.

It is increasingly recognized that the market economy or business sector (fourth order) is only possible because there is a (third order) base of facilities and organizations provided through the public sector. In turn, this is supported by an informal economy (second order) based on cooperation and volunteerism in households and elsewhere, all of this being ultimately sustained by the renewable and non-renewable resources of the planet (first order).

16. Soft Energy Path.

There have been a variety of effects from the shift in the price of oil from \$3.50 a barrel in the early 1970's to \$30.00 several years later. In part, the impetus was to reduce oil/energy consumption through increased building insulation, improved motor vehicle mileage, etc. However, there has also been a shift to alternate energy sources such as solar, wind, geo-thermal, river-flow hydro and tidal. Most alternatives are small scale, not capital intensive and capable of being constructed and maintained locally. Much remains to be done. Amory Lovins, energy specialist and head of the Rocky Mountain Institute in Colorado, uses the common household refrigerator as an example where the use of current technology in new refrigerator design could substantially reduce electrical energy consumption nationally and consequently the need to construct new plants.

The volatility of oil prices in 1980's is reinforcing the societal shift to self-reliance.

17. Health Promotion.

Futurists recognize two dimensions to a healthier society. First, individual action for good health including a preventative program of proper diet, exercise, and rest; and second, an expanding awareness of what our bodies consist of and consequently new methods of health maintenance and curative procedures. Acupuncture, touch therapy and bio feedback are only a few of a host of rediscovered or new approaches being added to and sometimes replacing existing medical procedures. At the same time that health care costs are reaching crisis proportions, we are learning that our state of mind and our attitudes are the base for many of our illnesses.⁷

18. Mind and Expanded Consciousness.

It is through the transformation of the mind that society will be able to take its next evolutionary step. Our ability to achieve new heights is because

they were first thought possible in the mind. Increasing knowledge about the way in which the brain works supports ideas and concepts of pioneers, such as Carl Jung and Teilhard de Chardin, about the collective unconscious or collective soul, racial memory and the evolution of mind. The spiritual perspectives of the East have been especially significant in supporting and expanding a new awareness of what we are and of our potential. What might be seen by some as witchcraft or miracles of the religious type are viewed by others as acts capable of being performed by each of us, given the proper guidance. Fire walking, originally performed only by adepts or shamans of some societies, is now being achieved by hundreds in North America after taking a weekend seminar.⁸ Concepts of mind, written about in esoteric literature or held by members of secret or limited memberships societies are being more widely discussed, tested, adapted and affirmed. And yet, it is suggested individual achievements in heightened states of consciousness represent only a small part or the beginning phases of what is possible when groups or the whole community undertake to work in unity.⁹ It is our own choice probably coupled with a concern for unwise use that limits a shift to these new potentials.

19. Spirituality.

The one element that connects all cultures is a sense of spirituality. Fragmented, demystified and often overtaken by man-made rules, the religions of the west are in the process of being transformed. The shift is from religions that have divided to a spirituality that unifies; from hierarchical, authoritative religious organizations to parish councils and house-based prayer groups; from a detached, powerful and vengeful God to a loving Father-Mother Creator; and from sinners to sons and daughters, each with a soul or spirit that was, in the first instant, created pure. Willis Harmon provides some other characteristics of the new spirituality: we are all invisibly connected; there are dimensions transcending time and space; individual lives are meaningful; and, grace and illumination are real.¹⁰ The increasing openness (or is it the increasing incidence?) of life after death experiences confirm an existence beyond that of our material world. Our concepts of time and of progress are being overtaken by visions of an eternity that is possible now.¹¹ "The kingdom of heaven is within."¹²

From a perspective of the last few hundred years the western nations have promoted material growth and technological change while the eastern ones (India, China, Southeast Asia) have focussed on spiritual development. At the moment, our spirituality is being enhanced by eastern traditions; eastern societies are being challenged to show greater concern for the material welfare of its citizens.

FUTURES CONCLUDED

This synopsis of the futures literature is brief. It may be perceived as an inadequate basis for informed discussion on its implications for the future of local government. However, the volume of books and articles is so large that even to keep up with summary documents is difficult.¹³ The transformation in our learning in some fields has been completely ignored, e.g. the impact of mind on sub-atomic particles. Other subject areas have been given very little mention such as the establishment of new communities to attempt to live out new directions. Another most important element is that of process – how to get from the first phase of new knowledge, to the second phase of belief in the new way, to the next of changing one's own actions and, finally, to the last phase of a societal shift to the better way.

To assist in trying to capture a greater sense of the era which we are now into and to provide a more solid foundation for the vision of local government over the next 25 years, we will explore, in the next chapter, this period as being the Age of Relationships.

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Chapter Twenty-Seven**THE AGE OF RELATIONSHIPS****INTRODUCTION**

There is general agreement that we have entered the third wave (Tofler) or age. The agricultural era was followed by the industrial era but what we are now entering is so broad and significant that finding the right word is an interesting dilemma. The titles of new age, Naisbitt's information society, the post-industrial society of Daniel Bell or the communications era of Robert Theobald in the 1970's are either uninformative or limiting. Also, to look at mankind's history as consisting of only three ages is to gloss over a number of important cycles or phases, e.g. the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Reformation, or the Age of Reason. In attempting to put into perspective all of the changes that are being thrust upon us and knocking us off balance, it seems important to explore the present phase of our evolutionary journey from one more perspective. Consider this as an age of relationships consisting of four dimensions – the "I" or individual component, our relationship with others, our relationship with nature, and finally, our relationship with God.

THE "I" DIMENSION

This aspect encompasses all that we know and learn regarding what a human being is and who we are, compared to others of our species. The shift in our understanding of "homo sapiens" covers the spectrum of body, mind and spirit as well as the way in which we relate to each other. One of any number of examples of the paradigm shift in our understanding of "I" is in the awareness of energies that extend beyond the body, that can be felt or recognized by most people after training and which can be altered by practitioners to assist in healing.¹ Greater awareness of left brain/right brain responsibilities, personality typing (the 16 of Carl Jung, the nine in the the Sufi-based Enneagram and the 12 of astrologers), effects of attitude on health and a host of other dimensions of who and what we are is providing a base for the re-structuring of organizations and societies. The developing concept by those in the peace movement is that if there is to be peace in the world then we must first find peace within. This principle can be extended to others that we might wish to see in local government, e.g., if we want to develop self-sustaining communities then each must first develop and live out self-reliant attitudes.

THE “WE” RELATIONSHIP

New concepts (and the re-discovery of others) that make for better human relationships abound. A new kind of leadership is emerging. Power is being viewed in terms that build for better human relationships, e.g., relationships based on cooperation and citizenship are more important than those based on consumption. The development of new approaches and training for improved relationships in families, among friends, in churches, corporations, social and educational institutions, labor unions, governments and among countries, all fall into this category of “we” relationships.

A major debate of the past two centuries has been between capitalism and socialism. Capitalism favors individual freedom over societal equality while socialism would place more importance on social equality than on individualism. The focus of both is on the distribution of wealth, on goods, on matter and on the power which ownership represents. The “third way” is beyond the left-right political debate which these two approaches foster and places the relationship between people as the most important factor. We would relate to each other with sensitivity and care.

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO NATURE

Within this component would fall all of our concerns and developing knowledge about our natural environment and how we might live with it in greater harmony. One of the new words in this field is “bioregion...a place that has a continuity of watersheds, river valleys, continuity of landforms, of climate, of native plants and animals, and that had in the past, by at least some people, been defined as a home place”.³ These bioregions are seen as “natural” countries providing an improved rationale for drawing boundaries to the geo-political boundaries drawn through war or drawn by past governments and based on limited information. Another new term is “deep ecology”, coined by a Norwegian philosopher named Arne Naess in the early 1970’s. It describes an attitude or approach which identifies causes (“deep”) as compared to controlling symptoms (“shallow” or “reform”).⁴ With ecology defined as the study of relationships among organisms in their environments,⁵ the scope for dialogue is indeed very broad. Consider, for example, the awareness that our natural environment teaches us values important for improved person to person, and person to nature relationships, e.g., that all things are interdependent; in process and changing; and that there is a recycling of nutrients or energy within systems.

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO GOD

The separation of church and state is a deeply rooted political philosophy especially noticeable in western governments since the 16th cen-

ture. Many might therefore feel uncomfortable with references in this report to God or spirit. However, one is buoyed in this philosophical dialogue to be holistic, and to remind ourselves that the way-showers or sages of our past and present times consistently refer to the existence of knowledge, wisdom, order, love, grace and reality that is beyond what our physical senses tell us.

Western spirituality focuses on a creator God. For some, the writings in the Old Testament form the basis for understanding the relationship between God and his people. For others, the New Testament provides a supplement and a modification to these earlier writings through the life-story of Jesus the Christ, of God becoming man.

We are given the freedom of working in harmony or in opposition or ignorance of the guiding power of God. Through study, reflection, prayer and our relationship with nature and other people we are guided to find our eternal unity with God. In the same way that nature teaches us values, scripture is a source of values for spirit-filled living, e.g., patience, hope, faith, forgiveness, honesty, responsibility, humility and sacrifice.

In contrast, eastern spirituality focuses on the existence of a material or aetheric force in all matter. For example, in Chinese thought (Confucianism and Taoism) there is a power, "ch'i" which links the inorganic, organic and human; it fills the universe.⁶

In the tradition of the west we find that the Canadian Constitution begins with "Whereas Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law". The Alberta Legislature opens its daily sessions with a prayer as do many municipal council meetings. Indeed, it could be suggested that, if the first principle for societal transformation is for the desired change to take place in us individually, then the second principle would be that the hopes and dreams of our society be put into prayer.

The importance of the fourth, the God dimension, cannot be overstated. Willis Harmon suggests the conflicts we see between the left and right of the political spectrum might well become conflicts between those with a spiritual versus those with material bent.

Whatever word is used to describe the age through which we are moving (Theobald now calls it the compassionate era),⁶ it is agreed there is much yet to be learned, to be discovered, to be shared and to be implemented. If some of these ideas seem inappropriate or incomplete, time and our own searching elsewhere will surely correct or substantiate them.

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Chapter Twenty-Eight**DEMOCRACY AND GOODNESS****INTRODUCTION**

If one considers that the first major evolutionary step to the achievement of an ideal political system was the writings and achievements of the Greek city-states in the fourth and fifth centuries B.C., and the second step was the rise of the democratic states of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, then we are in the midst of experiencing and re-thinking what will likely be considered as a third step. Now, if the directions for change in Chapters 27 and 28 were to be supported, how would this change the nature of our local governments?

THE STATE

The state is that order of society beyond the units of family, tribe and village. In terms of historical progression these three were followed by the city-state and the larger nation-state.

The state is sovereign and independent; no other state rules over it. A constitution symbolizes statehood.

The perennial question: "Which is supreme – societal welfare or individual happiness?" would be answered by Plato in favor of the state; by Aristotle, in favor of the individual.

Adler supports Aristotle:

When the state is correctly conceived as made for man, not the other way around, it seeks to facilitate the pursuit of happiness. It does so both directly and also indirectly by promoting the general welfare, participation in which confers on individuals external goods they could not otherwise obtain for themselves.¹

Ideally, individual goals and actions would be in harmony with the broader community interest and vice versa.

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

What is the purpose of government? Governments exist because we do not consider ourselves sufficiently wise to make decisions that promote our own self-realization and the welfare of others. The stronger society, consisting of people who frequently make the right decisions, would have less need to pass laws and regulations.

The structures that states use as a framework for laws vary. The main systems are monarchy, dictatorship, oligarchy and democracy (republics

with “rule by the people” are sometimes separated as well). Each of these are capable of leading people to self-fulfillment. For example, Thomas Aquinas wrote “A Kingdom is the best form of government so long as it is not corrupt.”² More often, through experience, democracy is seen as the ideal form of government. The Greek words *demos*, meaning people, and *kratos* meaning rule or authority form the word *democracy*. It can be *direct* democracy, as in ancient Athens and New England town hall meetings, or *representative* democracy where we elect people to represent us.

The elements of a representative democracy, as western society practices it, are:

- individual equality
- freedom – of expression, association, assembly and petition
- free elections
- majority rule
- political parties
- division of power
- a constitution (and bill of rights)
- private organizations.³

It has previously been noted that the democracy of Athens limited citizenship by excluding slaves, women and others. The democracy of the United States, although designed on freedom and equality, as Marilyn Ferguson suggests, has “metamorphosed into an expansionist, materialist, nationalist, and even imperialist vision of wealth and domination – paternalism“.⁴

The transformation in our definition of democracy that is now taking place is one which builds on or reinforces many of the ideals previously enunciated, but is supported by the following eight fundamental directions for change:

1. A shift from the competitive nature of the party system, which exists in almost all western democracies, to a cooperative system of citizens elected on the basis of individual merit. (Our provincial and national constitutions do not make reference to the requirements of a party system.)
2. A respect for the individual as the focal point of wisdom and power, a recognition of “Vox populi vox Dei” - Latin for “The voice of the people is the voice of God”. “Democracy...is not a political state but a spiritual condition“⁵.
3. A shift away from the real or perceived condition of a nation-state dispensing power to lower levels of government to a situation where citizens build their communities of interest to broader levels of associations or governments from the family, to the extended family and

friendship ties, to the community, to the municipality, to the (bio)region, to the nation and beyond. The growing desire for freedom at less than the nation state is reflected in the conflicts around the word – 50 of the 54 wars that were tabulated in early 1986 were *intrastate* not inter-state.⁶

4. A recognition that one element of our purpose for existence is to serve our fellow human being, be it at the individual or international level.
5. The tyranny of the majority by the minority or vice versa would be replaced by consensus building. “Together we can solve the problem. *It* is our opponent, not each other.”⁷
6. Leaders with integrity and servant leadership styles are encouraged.
7. Our relationship to that which sustains our physical existence – nature – is one of stewardship/partnership.
8. Our visions for the future and the values which would guide our actions would be reflected in local and provincial as well as national charters or constitutions.

This list, perhaps incomplete, is not given to prescribe but rather to stimulate a broader discussion on the form of local government best suited to our needs.

PEOPLE IN COMMUNITY SEEKING GOODNESS EXPLAINED

While much of what has been written in this and the previous chapter is directed to explaining the above phrase in the book’s title it may be worthwhile to conclude this section with a brief definition. “People in Community” means the union of free and differentiated persons in fraternity.⁸ “Goodness”, a term used by a variety of writers ranging from Aristotle, Plato and Adler, could be defined as “people coming to know themselves through actions guided by unselfish motive”. Government would provide an essential structure by and within which people would be facilitated, encouraged and, indeed, inspired in their quest.

A critical element in our individual pursuit of happiness would be a minimum income and a guarantee of some productive work; we must feel that we have earned the right to receive the income. It is essential for self-esteem.⁹

The remaining two chapters present one version of local government and Alberta Municipal Affairs over the next 25 years. Some may consider the view to be excessively hopeful. Perhaps! But the alternative is to promote fear and maintenance of the status quo. We can do better.

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9. "As more than a hundred studies made during the past twenty years show, what workers want most 'is to become masters of their immediate environments and to feel that their work and they themselves are important – the twin ingredients of self-esteem'." George C. Lodge, *The New American Ideology*, 1976 as quoted by the Craigs in *Synergic Power*, p. 120.

Chapter Twenty-Nine**2012 A.D.**

Carol and Guy rode the elevator to the 11th floor of the Jarvis Building. They were arriving for the first day of a six month work experience program with Alberta Municipal Affairs. Carol, a 20 year old, was just completing her first year of an extensive training program leading to a certificate in Societal Organization at the University of Jasper. She was very excited. Her shyness could not suppress a visible anticipation of working with a variety of experienced municipal organization specialists. Her new found skills would surely be put to good use in the city of Olds (population 17,000) where she worked as a researcher in the Department of Community Events.

Guy had experienced days like this before. Now 45 years of age, he was in the process of making another career shift, this time from the private to the public sector. A specialist in the drafting of simplified contracts and agreements, especially in the import/export sectors, he was now going into the expanding field of inter-jurisdictional agreements. This included agreements between local governments, and between a local government and the variety of private and non-profit organizations, providing what were once municipal government services.

Marji warmly welcomed the two into her office. After more than 20 years with the department, she understood the importance of a good beginning orientation for interns. So did the Coordinating Group that headed the department, and that was why someone of Marji's background and skill was assigned to perform this function. But it was also a natural and enjoyable progression for her to be in this role now.

Marji outlined to Carol and Guy the plan for this day of orientation. It would begin with an explanation of the pattern of local government in the province, the manner in which services were provided, the role of municipal councils, and the variety of experiments and tests of council meeting formats and voting procedures being carried out by several municipalities. The second topic was provincial legislation – that which was in place as well as what the small permanent legislation review committee was presently working on. After lunch they would view a video on the department explaining its mission, staffing, budget and the various social and educational functions. Another staff member would then explain the use, file contents, and inter-connects of the laser-based compu-desk. At about 3:00 p.m., there would be an opportunity to meet with a number of other staff at the weekly story-telling and “Thistle Wreath” award session².

“Here is a packet with some information you should find useful,” continued Marji. The first item was a map of the province. The two interns were impressed by the appearance of holographic color overlays that appeared as the map was tilted.

“What do the different colors represent and why do the boundaries change?” asked Guy. Marji explained that there were now over 600 legally constituted municipalities. That is, they had gone through the process of defining their mission or vision, the system of citizen involvement, the form of administrative structure, and the basic policies of the council. Several other municipalities were in the process of being formed, mostly a splitting off of new municipalities in some of the high growth areas.

The different colors represented services which municipalities provide – sometimes individually but often in conjunction with adjoining areas.

The second map in the packet was quite similar to the first. Noted Marji, “It maps the delivery of locally based services by companies, cooperatives, non-profits and volunteer groups. These organizations are under contract to a municipality, or a group of them, and are especially useful in providing services where municipalities are in disagreement over boundaries or how much of a service to provide. “The small laser disk in the packet has all the details on services you might ever want.”

“Could you expand on the structure of local government in the province?” Carol queried.

“Oh sure,” said Marji. “There are only two types of municipalities now as compared to the several that existed more than a decade ago. The vast majority are standard incorporated municipalities. They vary considerably in size and have significant freedom in operation such as deciding on the number of councillors and the manner in which the mayors are selected, that is, at-large or internally by the councillors. The most important task of the council, as you may know, is to provide an umbrella-like coordinating responsibility for all of the local governmental functions such as education and work facilitation, wellness institutions, roads, utility services and the like. It is an important leadership function in the community and most of the councillors have previously served in one or more of the service-providing agencies. The laser disk will explain how most councils go about their task including the use of the three to four member mayor, deputy-mayors system. A lot of the councils have shifted to the concept of spring and fall sittings. The bi-weekly meetings only take one to two hours. Most councils found they could do this when sound policies were in place – administrators and councillors knew the value of team work in creating policies and understood the need for administrative freedom to implement them.”

“What is the second type of municipality?” asked Carol. Marji explained.

“There aren’t many of them – about 55 scattered throughout the province. Their populations are quite small with none over 5,000 but in land area some are quite large. On the first map they are in the color green.”

Guy interjected, "Are these not all settlements of Indian and Metis people?"

"You are partially correct," continued Marji. "A majority are communities of predominantly aboriginal people but 12 of them, established over the last 20 years, are not limited to a cultural or ethnic grouping."

"But what is special about them?" enquired Carol.

"Probably the most unique feature," continued Marji, "is that the people in these communities have the right to determine who can live within their boundaries. It is a significant responsibility; a power that is given only after considerable review by the legislature. The reason for these communities is that they are experimenting or attempting to live out a special lifestyle or method of social organization. The ones that exist presently are non-racial, either focussed on a social/political philosophy or on eco/spiritual principles, and are generally operating within a framework of wholeness. Some of them don't even use money within their borders. They have given us many ideas and principles on community organization and how to live in greater harmony with each other and nature. Over the years several special category municipalities have failed, but even in these instances much has been learned."

For provincial legislation, Marji referred them to knowledge stored in the compu-desk. There were some enquiry routines that they could initiate to give themselves a good grounding in the orders of legislation.

"Years ago," said Marji, "there were many different Acts or Statutes and a variety of more detailed regulations. This system was changed over a period of several years early in this century."

"I recall," said Guy, "that there was considerable debate in the province. Many provincial civil servants were fearful of their departments and their jobs disappearing."

"Yes, and while it did result in some of this happening, the transition was really much smoother than originally thought possible. The positive attitudes that most had to the changes and the availability of the many skilled 'creative living' job specialists were keys in the shift."

Carol enquired, "How do the two systems differ?"

"Well," said Marji, "the old system of legislation filled 14 volumes, was often out-of-date or no longer relevant, and each Act was quite specialized. The new system has four 'orders'. It represents a holistic approach beginning with statements of vision on where we as a province want to go and what we believe our role to be within Canada and in the global scheme of things. This is the first order. Around here we call these the "Arrows" because they point the direction. The second order we have nick-named the "Bars" because they define the limits beyond which provincial staff, businesses, organizations, governments and individual citizens should not go. This order would contain the policies on conflict of interest for elected

municipal and provincial officials, for example. They are not laws in the strictest judicial sense but they give some definition to the boundaries of prudence and ethics.”

“But what of the other two orders of legislation?” enquired Guy.

“Well, the built in knowledge system of your compu-desk will guide you through a review but essentially the third order provides details on specific areas of provincial involvement or responsibility, such as directions for the 12 provincial departments and on local government organization. The fourth order, and this is a fairly small one, gives specific guidelines to action in sensitive or new subject areas. The fourth order regulations must be specifically re-enacted every five years; the majority tend to lapse. It is often a learning situation for those directly responsible for the function in the provincial government as well as for citizens, municipalities or organizations that may be affected.”

The morning had gone quickly. Joining them for lunch was Nicolai, a member of the legislative review team. He was one of the international exchange staff. His assignment involved working with several municipalities that were exploring new forms of consensus building – not among council members themselves because excellent techniques were now generally in place – but between the public and the council. He was nearly finished drafting third order legislation on the subject.

After lunch the two interns viewed a video on the department, its mission, staffing, organization, budget and the nature of the relationships with municipalities and other agencies.

“After all these years of holographic video, I still marvel at the feeling of being right there with the person speaking,” said Guy.

“The film tour from office to office was extremely brief yet I felt an almost intuitive appreciation of what each group of people was doing,” responded Carol. “Must be the new consciousness raising principles we discussed in our last semester.”

Irene was soon there to take them to their compu-desks. The explanation of their operation went smoothly.

“I see there is considerable amount of data available on the various municipal operations including what the business and non-profit sectors are doing for local government.” noted Guy.

Irene responded, “As you noticed in the video, a major function of government today and of this department is to provide a good base of knowledge. All of these organizations want to know the system of which they are a part as well as to check the effectiveness of their operations in comparison to others. The department staff design and maintain the systems and train people in their use.”

It was nearly 3:00 p.m. and time to socialize a little with others of the department. They would be introduced to all staff members who were

present and get another chance to meet with their mentors who would be guiding their work experience over the next several months.

Carol enjoyed the case studies by the three planners on their individual experiences in leading village based groups in visioning processes on ecology.

But Guy was perplexed about the selection of the assessor for the “Thistle Wreath” award.

“What kind of tax was the ‘environmental back pockets’ tax?” he mused. “It has taken her several years to design and is said to be working well so far.” He made a mental note to followup on the tax with the property use impacts section.

The next morning, as the two interns leafed through the package Marji had given them, they came upon a short report headed, *A Recent History of Local Government in Alberta, 1987 to 2011*. They spent the remainder of the morning reading it.

“Decision makers were off considerably in their attempts to minimize the weakness of society in the late 1980’s, as evidenced by the considerable pain that had set in by the early 1990’s,” suggested Carol.

“But they showed considerable wisdom in the broad thrust of legislative amendments on personal empowerment, flexibility, and ecological wholeness in 1993,” suggested Guy.

“Why did it take so long to make the necessary changes?” queried Carol.

Guy didn’t have a ready answer.

References for Chapter Twenty-Nine

1. Mortimer J. Adler, *A Vision of the Future, Twelve Ideas for a Better Life and a Better Society*, 1984, p. 165.
2. The “Thistle Wreath” award continued a tradition of ancient Greece where the highest honor given by the state to a citizen was a laurel wreath. Laurel was a common, wild plant and without value, i.e. the recipient’s contribution was beyond value.

READER'S NOTE

Chapter 30 is a history written in the year 2012. It was one of the background documents provided to Carol and Guy, the local government interns of Chapter 29.

A HISTORY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ALBERTA 1987 to 2011

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The theme of transformation in the 1970's and 1980's continued for the remainder of the century. Pains of change were clearly evident: as Alberta Municipal Affairs downsized and shifted from a role of regulator to one of coordinator and promoter of good government; as municipal governments broadened their involvement, and single-purpose government institutions found their interdependence; and as the flow of grants between the orders of government declined. The experience of this, the twenty-first century, has been positively influenced by the greater awareness of self and our relationship to place. Enhanced awareness of values has allowed opposing views to be more easily transformed into a philosophy of "In essentials, let there be unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, charity."¹

POPULATION GROWTH AND DISTRIBUTION

The population increase of one million over the last 25 years to approximately 3.5 million people did not take place evenly. There was a

significant increase in the early 1990's primarily due to resource and agricultural industries finding a secure footing again. The second boost, and one still being felt, relates to the invitation Alberta and the nation extended to peoples around the world.²

The distribution of the population has not been a shift from one area to another – many of the communities existing in 1987 have increased somewhat. The biggest change has been the substantial increase along the Rocky Mountain Foothills. Spurred by the development of the coal resource, extended stay tourism³ and the high speed levi-train,⁴ a number of new communities have now developed in this area. The tar sands districts and rural areas generally have also experienced noticeable increases in population. The continued shift to part-time farming, the decline in the size but increase in the intensity of the average farming operation have contributed to this as well as the new pockets of pedestrian-oriented hamlet or village-like settlements.

SOCIAL ECONOMICS

The turmoil of the 1980's and the inability of economists of the day to provide any effective strategy for stability and full employment almost led to their demise as a profession. However, their evolution to a value based philosophy (a return to their roots, in part) brought the study of social economics back into favour.

The factor that most facilitated the return to an unemployment rate of three percent by 1995, although helped by strengthening oil and grain prices, was that resolution of the unemployment issue was given priority.⁵ Not only were the full range of policies implemented quite widely, such as reduced hours of work, reduced income differential, part-time work and job sharing, but leadership in their introduction was provided by local and provincial governments and allied institutions such as those in education and health care.

Audits of imports initiated by the two larger cities indicated the sectors where funds were flowing out of the community. Surprisingly, one of the largest, unsuspected outflows was the financial one, i.e. savings, pension funds of Edmontonians and Calgarians were being invested elsewhere. When the people recognized the impact of these flows on local interest rates and loan availability, they began to shift their funds to more local purposes.⁶

In the search for import replacement, they found that the expenditure of about \$50,000 locally meant one new full-time job for a year. Business interests in Red Deer even considered an automobile plant, because of the reductions in economies of scale, as early as 1990.

The other significant shift was the greatly increased municipal role in dealing with social economic issues. There was a more intensive look at

the natural advantages of each community or region and the purpose or role each served within the greater scheme of satisfying the needs and wishes of others. New industries based on solar energy and the agricultural sector were especially prevalent in sustaining the smaller communities. Although unemployment is not now an issue, helping people to focus on the best time for a job change and to which sector still remains a difficult task.

MUNICIPAL LEGISLATION

The review of municipal legislation in 1986 and 1987 led to the Municipal Act of 1988. One of the innovations included a preamble or introduction which highlighted the goal of democratic local self-government and the broad responsibility of the Department of Municipal Affairs in facilitating and encouraging this throughout the province. At that time there were a number of areas, mostly rural but also Banff and Jasper, that did not have such government.

The new Act was considerably shorter and some sections of other Acts were eliminated. The types of municipalities were reduced from the nine then existing to the two of "incorporated" and unincorporated", with the direction that the latter be guided to incorporate. Increased local government power was matched with fewer appeals on property and financial matters. This shift was accompanied by a demonstrated improvement in the process of local decision making. This was partly due to the increased sense of local responsibility. But there was another factor. The review process of the previous two years had highlighted the need for elected officials to be more cognizant of particular interest groups.⁷ Bullied by vocal minorities, councils often gave in; the majority would suffer silently.

The efforts in 1986 to 1988 pointed to the need for a much broader review involving not only the 25 major Acts administered by the department but the more than 100 other significant Acts and regulations that impacted local government. A review committee, with a life of five years, was given the task. Its principal mandate was to examine in much greater detail the "umbrella" concept of local government. Many people involved in single-purpose governments, as well as local councillors and provincial MLA's, were not quite prepared to extend the powers of local government to include responsibility for single-purpose governments in 1988. Indeed, some were openly hostile. The review committee took the approach of researching and exploring models, and implementing new concepts in experimental situations. Municipalities, singly or in groups, applied to be test sites. At the conclusion of the five years, after many successful and a few not so successful experiments, much had been learned about what worked best and in what circumstances. The legislation of 1993, imple-

mented after the built-in consensus building process of the experimental phase, was a model for other provinces and nations for many years. Good local government legislation was a legitimate export industry.

For the municipal council to effectively guide the provision of local services in a comprehensive way, it had to shift to a policy perspective. Assisted by specially trained facilitators, councils developed the broad policies that the 1993 legislation required of them. It was a time of increased excitement in municipal elections. Some functions, especially socially-oriented ones, were transferred from the province.⁸ Transfer payments declined while significant portions of the liquor sales and motor vehicle registration revenues were assigned directly to municipalities. Also, there was a direct transfer of three percent of all individual and corporate taxes to municipalities.

The legislation of 1993, because of the well thought out process leading to its enactment, remained essentially intact until 2004 when the system of four orders⁹ was implemented. The role of local governments within the federal-provincial and non-profit sector was clarified. This last major amendment to legislation has been especially useful in guiding the continued shift to self-reliance, and governmental functions being provided by community groups or through family and friendship ties.

LOCAL GOVERNANCE

The 374 municipalities that existed in 1986 were divided into four urban classes and five rural ones. The urban classification generally related to population and the rural ones related to the degree of local self-government. The Municipal Act of 1988 established a target of incorporated municipalities throughout the whole of the province by 1990. "Special Areas" was the first to incorporate.

While many improvement districts, one of the other rural forms of government administered through the province at that time, did incorporate in the following two years, a number of problems arose in their administration of rural, forested lands. The solution came about through a unique synergy. The Indian and Metis communities in the province were, at the time, strongly expressing their desire for self-determination. In respect to the Metis, this was finally agreed to in 1990 with an amendment to the Municipal Act of 1988. The agreements for self-government for the aboriginal peoples under the Canadian Constitution were included about the same time. In addition to providing for their own unique style of local government on reserves and settlements, some Indian Bands, Metis Settlements and other local residents accepted specific and limited responsibilities for administering adjoining provincial green zones. This initial transfer of function was very successful and over the next 20 years all

sparsely populated areas of the province were placed under the trusteeship of predominantly aboriginal peoples. This race of original inhabitants was now especially appreciated for its sensitivity and awareness of land and nature.

All land use decisions in these zones require trustee approval. The 27 "zones" are akin to bio-regions. Representatives of each zone meet often as a provincial association. Perhaps even more significantly, over the last several years the regions of river basin, vegetation and animal habitat have been used as a basis for the development of policy. Other provinces are now developing this form of "wild lands" administration as are other countries with similar situations.¹⁰ Incidentally, the 80 percent unemployment rate on many reserves has been substantially reduced as have other allied problems.

Local self-government came to Banff and Jasper in 1990, after more than 100 years under federal jurisdiction. The renewed citizen and community interest for incorporation in 1985 and 1986 was strongly supported by the provincial government and Ottawa finally agreed.

The number of municipalities has grown to 625, a trend not in keeping with that of consolidation popular a few decades ago. In addition to the incorporation of new communities in the intensive agricultural zones, the tar sands area and a number of former hamlets, there have been a variety of new municipalities with both urban and rural components. There have even been a few new municipalities as a result of de-annexation and the separation of significant cells or communities previously amalgamated. The greatest increase was of course in the eastern slopes, especially between the cities of Hinton and Canmore – there are now 60 municipalities where there were once six. Many are tourist oriented.

The many examples of direct or communitarian democracy among Alberta municipalities are a result of both the experimentation initiated after the 1988 Act, and also by the unique "special-purpose" municipalities each established by the legislature. This was first provided for in 1997. It was recognized that for our culture to advance we had to allow, indeed, encourage groups of people to experiment in the pursuit of inner promptings, and their collective wisdom. It was a natural progression from the small, new age communities that were springing up in the previous two decades and of the four larger international examples of Findhorn, Scotland; The Farm, Tennessee; Arcosanti, Arizona and Auroville, India.¹¹ Approval by the legislature was required in each specific instance given the unique powers they are given – on land holding, issuance of permanent residency certificates and the like.

CITIZENS IN DEMOCRATIC LOCAL GOVERNMENT

It was a surprise to many citizens in the western culture in the late 1980's to recognize that democracy was really quite a new form of

government, i.e. an eighteenth century innovation, notwithstanding the roots dating back to the Greek city-states. Another surprise was that the ideals originally established for a representative democracy were being abused by the forms and traditions that had evolved. In many ways, the words aristocracy (rule by a small elite) and oligarchy (rule by some) would have better described some of the systems then in place.

As mentioned, the review of 1986 and 1987 provided considerable citizen interest in good government. The global, national and local problems were indeed significant and the unique role of government in providing leadership by example and encouragement was beginning to be recognized.

It was not surprising, therefore, that political parties began to lose allegiance as a new style of elected servant leader began to emerge. Today, first order legislation does not ban local political parties because association is a basic human freedom. Yet, many in the mid-1980's considered the party system to be essential to effective local government.

There are a few other significant changes over the last 25 years that have been positive factors in the renaissance of local government. Women represented only 10-15 percent of those in elected positions in local government in 1986. Although there were no prohibitions against their participation, the societal tendency at that time pointed to left brain or male-oriented approaches – that is, competitive, scientific and structured. As society shifted to social and non-material values, the need for a more feminine or balanced elected council began to emerge. While the election process does not force or guarantee an equal number of males and females on each council, the provincial total of municipal elected officials now shows nearly a balance among the sexes.

Another significant trend, not anticipated in 1986, was the decline in the voting age from 18 years of age to 17 years of age in 1993 followed by additional yearly increments in 1998, 2004 and 2010, to 14 years of age today. As society recognized the wisdom of simple, intuitive solutions to problems, a hallmark of the young, it was decided to tap this in the election process. A pre-condition of the change was a considerably improved “civics” content in the school system. Based on the experiments that were carried out in several communities prior to province-wide implementation, another benefit of the younger voter was their limited attachment to the old or current way of doing things. In the further reductions to 14 years of age, adults have benefitted by a greater connectedness to their own youth. This focus on personhood in government has led to teenagers serving on business and non-profit boards. Incidentally, there has been a corresponding decline in physical abuse against the young with the reduction in voting age.

A few decades ago the predominant theme was to re-learn and re-define the ideals of a representative democracy. The phrase “participa-

tive democracy” was surfacing but its meaning was not clear. Would it mean a decentralization of larger municipal councils to area councils or was it decision by citizen plebiscite, or private sector polls? While both of these forms are indeed more prevalent today, the greatest shift is in the attitude, training and experience of the elected official. As a result, each councillor has a strong sense of the important council responsibility in providing leadership in the community. Also Roberts rather formal and stultifying *Rules of Order* have been largely replaced by “open space”¹² meetings. Finally, councils are more involved in developing policies at a measured pace, policies that are readily implementable because of the process of extensive consensus building that had gone on prior to formal approval.

THE DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

One hundred years after its origin this department continues to provide a most important service to the people of Alberta. The focus is on service to local communities and improvement of their quality of operation and not on service to a profession or the institution. The Municipal Act of 1988, in its four page preamble, provided a most important statement of vision of freedom, justice, and equality and outlined the roles that local government and provincial departments, especially Municipal Affairs, should undertake in their pursuit of this vision. The impact on the department in the five years that followed was to open up a much more intensive exploration into new models and new ways of how the department might best provide a service, on how municipalities could improve their methods of operation and on possible improvements to the Municipal Act of 1988. One of the factors which lifted the department staff out of an attachment to the status quo was the agreement by Cabinet to permit one-half of the savings of staff and budget resulting from better organization to be retained within the department for other uses for five years.¹³

Using the structure of the department as it existed in 1986, the following shifts in responsibility have taken place over the last 25 years.

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Following the Municipal Act of 1988, this division was requested to establish an interdivisional Municipal Governance Review Team. Its five year mandate for more comprehensive legislation involved other staff in the department, municipal staffs, the municipal associations, and elected municipal and provincial officials. Staff from other departments that were responsible for some of the single-purpose governments also participated. As noted earlier, there were a considerable number of experiments

and pre-tests of new methods through the province prior to the drafting and enactment of the 1993 legislation that greatly extended the umbrella concept of local government.

The division has also undertaken to provide a variety of new services, many of which were based on municipal requests:

1. An ever-increasing involvement in the education not only of municipal administrators and municipal elected officials but of school and post-secondary students. There is now a real alliance between the department, educators, municipal associations and the private consultant sector in the preparation of training material and the offering of courses.
2. Municipal Involvement Week, begun in 1986, has evolved into a festival of activities celebrating a variety of elements such as the advances or improvements in local governance made over the last year. Our celebrations in this 100th anniversary year of 2012 have captured an international audience.
3. A new unit was established in 1993 to assist municipalities in drafting intermunicipal agreements and municipal charters.
4. Data gathering has become more selective, more comprehensive and synthesized into a knowledge base. It is available to municipalities, researchers and students.
5. In recognition that good government required a greater investment in the function of looking ahead, the Research Unit of the division was given considerable “think tank” responsibilities in 1994.¹⁴
The division’s name changed to Local Governance Services in 1997.

PLANNING DIVISION

The limited growth in the province and the increasing tendency to box in the planner’s role led to considerable downsizing in municipal and provincial staffing in the 1980’s. However, the continued citizen interest in the environment and of our relationship to land and nature led to a major provincial conference on “place” in 1989. It was recognized that there were considerable constraints to holistic solutions in physical design because of the complex regulatory and single vision, profit orientation. Planners embarked on a re-education of how people related to and were impacted by their surroundings. Although some planners then took on a broader public role as educator and reformer – as planners had done in certain decades previously – the more significant development was their involvement in the planning and development of the many new style communities

of the last two decades. Their success in working with the citizen client is found in the designs of buildings and spaces that support human values, an “urban countryside” that:

is neither urban nor rural in the old sense, since houses, work places and places of assembly are set among trees, farms, and streams. Within that extensive countryside, there is a network of small, intensive urban centers. This countryside is as functionally intricate and interdependent as any contemporary city. . . .Most people no longer think of “home town”, but of “home region”. Each region is developed in its own way.¹⁵

The sections within the division are not structured to relate to areas of the province as they were in the mid-1980’s but to skill orientation such as the social-psychology of design and space planning decision processes.

ASSESSMENT SERVICES

In 1989 a group of private sector appraisers and assessors proposed to the Minister of Municipal Affairs the privatization of the provincial assessment function. The key to the proposal was a change to market value assessment – using existing computerized sales data. While the proposal was not successful because of a number of unresolved issues primarily in the farmland and urban fringe categories, the new Assessment Act of 1991 eliminated the complicated Assessment Manual approach. A major unit of the division continues to coordinate assessments for many municipalities focussing especially on the question of whether current sales reflect area or district value shifts.

With the introduction of the three percent income tax transfer to municipalities, this division took on the broader responsibility of studying and advising on intermunicipal financial equity. One of the major computer data bases available to all municipalities is a comprehensive comparison of municipal tax and revenue policies. However, because so much more of the local service function is provided on a volunteer basis and by the non-profit sector, the whole matter of taxation and revenue is less significant than in previous years.

The “Environmental Back Pockets” tax, only recently implemented, is a monthly tax paid by operators or industry which produce a negative impact on the environment. The burdens for the clean up had previously been paid for by others – money coming out of their back pocket.

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT AND NATIVE SERVICES

The move to local self-government by improvement districts, as directed in the Municipal Act 1988, was essentially completed by the mid

1990's. The resolution of the form of government that was to be given to Indian Reserves (Federal) and Metis Settlements (Provincial) was also achieved in 1990's and they were incorporated as "special-purpose" communities. Today, they continue to maintain that status although many have decided to provide for some municipal services in conjunction with adjoining municipalities. The function of the division in facilitating incorporation was so reduced by 2004 that the small remaining unit, solely concerned with fostering the development of local government in the more isolated areas of northern Alberta, merged with Local Governance Services.

ADMINISTRATION

The functions of this unit continue to focus on information gathering and dissemination, computer systems design and personnel administration. A few significant changes include a much enhanced "creative work unit" to assist staff in their job choices and in facilitating staff exchanges and secondments.

DEPARTMENT SOLICITOR

Considerable effort was given to the drafting of the Municipal Act in 1988. Additional assistance was needed in the comprehensive review leading to the legislation of 1993. As the amount of legislation declined and the content shifted from regulatory to visions and values, the focus of expertise also changed. The role today is as much philosopher as it is lawyer. Also, the nature of the legal task has shifted from the material aspects of property rights and assessment to social and political aspects such as the rights that citizens have for participation in decision processes and to environmental protection. Skills of mediation and arbitration are highly valued.

COORDINATING GROUP

The department is administered by a group of three people chosen by a process that involves self-selection, rotation, staff choice and ministerial prerogative. Their responsibilities are both departmental and specific. The latter ones are divided into internal administration, long-term perspectives and outside liaison. The individual with the liaison responsibility is usually given the role of "first among equals" in meetings of the Coordinating Group and carries the ceremonial title of Deputy Minister.

Salaries for those in the Coordinating Group do not exceed those of other experienced coordinators or skilled specialists in the department.

BOARDS

As part of the movement to decentralization, the rights of appeal on a municipal decision to the provincial order of government were either minimized, eliminated, or allowed to be appealed to a local senate, if one existed. Within this general trend the Alberta Planning Board, the instigator of the conference on "place" in 1989, shifted its focus in the early 1990's to a promoter of human-based design.

In 1997, the four boards in existence in 1986 were combined into the Municipal Ombudsman Office with responsibilities for mediation of inter-municipal conflicts on a variety of land-people issues and with some minor appeal functions.

CONCLUSION

There is an ebb and flow or cycle to things in our world. The last 25 years has been a time of searching and testing for improved forms of local democracies. The issues of the 1980's were so great that some societal analysts felt a violent upheaval or disaster was required to shock people into a more healing way of life. However, there were many in the province who, recognizing the important role of government in providing leadership, have served with distinction in exploring and promoting better systems and approaches. A sense of balance was restored. Today, we look to yet greater heights in the fulfillment of a vision of self-governance.

References

1. B. H. Roberts as quoted by Dr. B. Barlow in "In Non-essentials Always Seek Liberty", *Marriage Encounter*, July/August 1986, p. 12.
2. The concept was to permit the entry of people from every nation who wished to continue the experiment and example of the nation called Canada. World peace was the objective and the hope was that representatives of every race and nationality would live a unique multi-cultural life here. Canada is one of this year's nominees for the Nobel Peace Prize.
3. One of the results of the trend to shorter work periods has been more people taking extended sabbaticals or rest periods. The attractiveness of the foothills area, especially to those in more densely populated regions of the world, has led to a boom in the development of communities with facilities and services catering to "extended stay" tourists. With an average stay of 4.8 months in the year 2010, they have the option of residing in specialized communities, much like the ancient Greek communities of Olympia, Delphi and Cos in the fourth century B.C., i.e. in athletic development, spiritual direction and in providing a centre for Hippocrates and other physicians and healers. The most recent tourist brochure outlines 16 specialized communities serving a full range of interests, everything from golf to highland herbalism.
4. The construction of the high speed train between Edmonton and Calgary was quite successful. High usage and new low-cost technology were the main factors that permitted the system to be expanded to serve Jasper, Banff and other communities. The 1,100 kilometre circle route can be covered in four hours at an average speed of 275 km per hour.
5. The model was Sweden, Norway and Austria where the unemployment rate in 1985 was less than four percent. This had been the case for many decades up to this time. The key in these countries was that strategies for full employment were given priority over interest rates, wage rates, and other issues.
6. The community also recognized the futility of high residential, commercial and industrial vacancy rates. That is, the interest expense which the community had to shoulder for the mortgage was either a payment to lenders outside the community, or the locally-placed mortgage reduced the supply of funds that would otherwise be available.

7. Desmond M. Conner in the June 1986 issue of his journal *Constructive Citizen Participation* noted:

Single interest groups are increasingly making a mockery of the democratic process. Whether the issue is pesticides, nuclear waste, herbicides, garbage disposal, abortion or some other concern, the particular interest groups (PIGS?) ignore the needs of the larger community and fail to engage the other elements of the community in any kind of constructive dialogue.

In many cases, of course, these commando tactics are very successful in achieving their objectives. By outflanking the conservative interests and enlisting the support of the media, the group intimidates the target of the campaign so that the organization suspends or modifies the activity in question.

After this has happened several times, the long-suffering silent majority feels quite discouraged. The new barbarians have made a shambles of the traditional way of doing community business. The group naturally claims to be acting on behalf of the silent majority and claims its support. Those who oppose the group also claim the silent majority – shades of Animal Farm, where the pigs took over the society!

His solution was to “foster strong community organizations and encourage them to work with each other so that the capacity of the community as a whole to make decisions for its members is enhanced”.

8. The provincial to municipal transfer was paralleled by a shift in responsibilities from the national government to provincial and local governments, to the private sector and to non-profit societies. The talk of separation by Quebec and the west in the 1970's and 1980's was essentially found to be a desire for self-government *within* nationhood.
9. This was a complete revamping and consolidation of provincial statutes into four orders or levels. The first consisted of missions or visions, the second included the “boundaries” for action, the third contained guidelines for broad plans to be implemented by provincial departments, often in concert with local governments and others, and the fourth order consisted of details and specifics that had a “shelf life” of five years unless specifically re-enacted.
10. Kevin Lynch, *A Theory of Good City Form*, 1981, in a 30 page overview of his utopian vision for communities from a planner's perspective wrote:

the intensively urbanized central areas and major transport routes are held by local or regional governments, while all the remaining space is in the hands of special regional trusts.

These regional land trusts, self-perpetuating but subject to public supervision, are in some sense almost religious bodies. They conserve basic environmental resources, protect the variety of species, and keep the environment open for future use. They are not preservation societies, however. They look on themselves as very long-term managers, concerned neither with “development” nor with “preservation”, but with smoothing perturbations, keeping settlement fluid, avoiding dead ends. They are trustees for the non-represented – for other species and for future human generations – whose motives are obscure and whose chances must be preserved. They do little planning and exert little control, except to assure this. They have the power and the narrow-mindedness of concentrated purpose. They parcel their lands out among stable resident groups where they can. They feel themselves as belonging to the land, as much as the land belongs to them. p. 296.

11. The communities of Findhorn, The Farm, Arcosanti and Auroville were initiated in the 1960's and 1970's with an ideal or purpose in mind. The beginnings of Findhorn were steeped in esoteric communication with nature devas (spirits). The community evolved, by 1986, into an international training centre on new economics, better relationships and planetary healing.

The Farm, which began as a home to a few busloads of counter-culture youth from California in the mid-late 1960's was home to 1,500 people by the mid-1980's. Its approaches to birthing in its own community were seeds that led to considerable changes in approaches to birthing throughout North America. (It is one community that found it had to install a gate at its entry.)

Arcosanti was an architect's version of a holistic community in a desert environment. Built by a lot of volunteers who paid to work on its construction, the buildings were especially oriented to solar use and designed to foster a strong sense of community.

Auroville was an international community set in rural India. Based on a particular spiritual philosophy, Auroville's residents provided considerable impetus to the district's sense of self-reliance through such things as tree planting (one million by 1980) and small scale agricultural operations.

12. Roberts "Rules" assumed adversary relationships existed between people and, indeed, the procedures promoted win-lose outcomes. New "open space" processes, developed over many years by many municipal councils in Alberta working with a special interdisciplinary team from the University of Alberta, promote consensus building through an openness to hear others' view and the use of concepts of shared power. A dated but still relevant reference is Michael Ray's *Powerful Partnerships, Principles of Power Sharing*, 1985.
13. The total department budget continued to decline by the required two percent per year. The trends in the last 15 years to the right person doing the right job, greater equality in job pay between classes and experimentation with client based (i.e. local government) performance reviews have given a whole new approach to budgeting. The focus is on how little we can get by with in order that new priorities might be accommodated.
14. See "Foresight in Government – A Necessary But Rare Component" by Eric Solem in *Futures Canada*, Spring 1986, which suggests that foresight (looking ahead) is both precious and scarce.
15. Kevin Lynch, *A Theory of Good City Form*, 1981, p. 294.

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About the author...

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Photo Credit: Tony Sykora

A continuing interest is planning for the future - "what ought to be". He has attended a variety of futures conferences in the last decade and is a member of an international network of Consultants for a Positive Future.

Walter presently lives in Edmonton with his wife and two teenagers (but can be sometimes seen in a farmer's role near Busby, northwest of Edmonton).

