



SPRING 2017



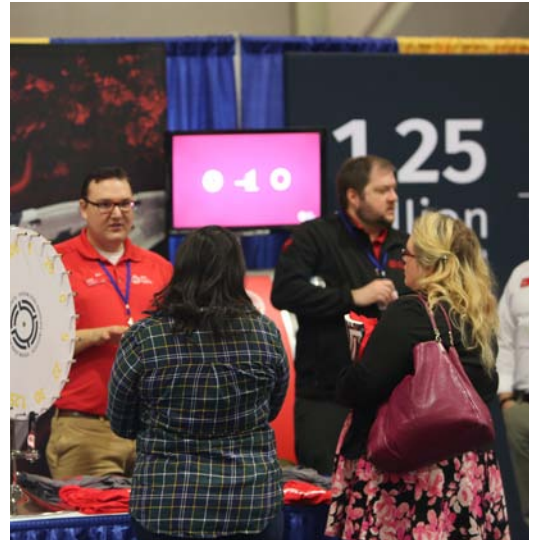
Convention Highlights  
*March 20 – 22, 2017*



## AAMDC TRADE SHOW

The AAMDC's annual trade show featured businesses and companies from around Alberta and beyond. This event is a tremendous opportunity for municipal council's and their staff to view the newest and best services that are offered to municipalities. This year's tradeshow sold out and additional booths were added to accommodate the increased demand. In total, 157 booths were booked including those displayed by AAMDC approved suppliers.







## PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

AAMDC President, Al Kemmere took the stage on Tuesday morning to open the AAMDC Convention and provide remarks on the direction of the association. One of the associations top priorities continues to be the review of the Municipal Government Act (MGA). Kemmere highlighted the ongoing processes underway by the Government of Alberta including the review of regulations and the introduction of new legislation expected in April 2017.

President Kemmere also discussed some of the challenges that agriculture producers are facing in Alberta from unpredictable weather and the inability for many producers to harvest their crop last fall. For those municipalities looking that are considering declaring an agricultural disaster, they are encouraged to use the Municipal Agricultural Disaster Declaration Guide developed by the AAMDC.

Another related item of interest for AAMDC members has been the ongoing work to implement the Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers Act (Bill 6). In 2016, six technical working groups were struck to gather industry input on a number of the changes. Feedback on the first two working groups that include changes to the Labour Relations Code and the Employment Standards Code are due April 3, 2017.

Climate change and the Alberta Climate Leadership Plan is another topic of focus for the AAMDC and rural municipalities. President Kemmere explained that the AAMDC is concerned about the requirement that municipalities pay the carbon levy, as this essentially requires residents to pay the tax twice: directly to the province and through increased costs for municipal services. The AAMDC has formed a Cli-

mate Change Advisory Committee, comprised of one member from each district, to undertake research and develop rural municipal perspectives on the carbon levy and other climate change-related issues.

Provincial and federal funding is always an important topic for rural municipalities. President Kemmere provided and update on the MSI, explaining that the AAMDC had began forming positions to advocate to the Government of Alberta on how the MSI should be allocated moving forward. He also touched on the new federal Investing in Canada program, stating that the AAMDC is advocating for funding through the program to be accessible to rural municipalities.

As resolutions form the backbone of the AAMDC's advocacy efforts, President Kemmere explained that the AAMDC will be undertaking a review of the Resolution Process Policy to ensure that the resolution process is as effective as possible moving forward. President Kemmere also reminded members to complete the AAMDC's satisfaction survey, as it helps staff and the board to improve their operations to better meet member needs.

President Kemmere closed with a reminder of the uniqueness of the AAMDC and its members. As a rural voice representing municipalities from border to border in all directions, the AAMDC has a unique position in Alberta, which comes with both opportunities and challenges. The AAMDC is proud to speak on behalf of rural municipalities, and could not form this strong voice without member input and expertise on the local impacts of government decisions. AAMDC members work with one another and their association, something that is critical to our success.



## LONG SERVICE AWARDS

Long service awards recognize rural elected officials and administrators who have shown their dedication to their municipalities through a long-term commitment to municipal government. This year's awards were presented to individuals who have served for nine, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, thirty, and forty years.



## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Erica Sigurdson was the AAMDC's Spring Convention Keynote Speaker. A regular on the CBC's *The Debaters* radio show and a stand-up comedian, Erica livened the mood with witty commentary and jokes that had the crowd in fits of laughter. Erica provided some great insight on life in Vancouver. Not surprisingly, it sounds more than a little different from rural Alberta!



## FCM UPDATE

Clark Somerville, President of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), brought greetings to the AAMDC delegates on behalf of the FCM and highlighted the need for strong, stable, and vibrant rural communities. With the federal budget set to be announced the next day, President Somerville discussed some of the key programs and areas of funding being sought by the FCM, including funding for infrastructure, rural internet access, and water and wastewater funding. The FCM is also launching two new programs with the assistance of funding from the Government of Canada; the Municipal Asset Management Program and the Partners in Climate Protection Program.

## ADDRESS FROM THE PROVINCE: THE HONOURABLE BRIAN MASON

The Honourable Brian Mason, Minister of Transportation and Minister of Infrastructure, addressed convention delegates on behalf of Premier Notley. Minister Mason spoke on a number of priorities for the Government of Alberta, including several addressed in the recent provincial budget. Minister Mason highlighted the investments that the budget made in supporting municipal infrastructure, explaining that twenty-six cents of every dollar spent in the capital plan was allocated to municipal infrastructure, more than any other infrastructure type. Minister Mason also explained that the current MSI structure would stay in place for several years as the Government of Alberta works with the AAMDC and other partners to redesign the program in the long-term, ensuring it is as simple, efficient, and as fair as possible.

Minister Mason emphasized the important role that the energy industry plays in Alberta's economy, and the need to balance its growth with environmental stewardship. He explained that the Government of Alberta is working closely with the federal government to reclaim more orphan wells, as well as continuing to collaborate in pursuit of new pipeline infrastructure to tidewater.

The address concluded with the assertion that the Government of Alberta views rural municipalities as valuable partners in protecting Alberta's environment while supporting continued growth in the energy industry. While Minister Mason acknowledged that the provincial government and rural municipalities do not always agree on the best approach or solution to an issue, we all want to support a strong and dynamic Alberta.





## MUNICIPAL CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION CENTRE

Staff from the Municipal Climate Change Action Centre (MCCAC) provided an overview of the programs that they offer to assist municipalities in increasing their energy efficiency. In addition to their TAME+ program, which supports municipalities in retrofitting their buildings to improve energy efficiency, and the Alberta Municipal Solar Program, which subsidizes the purchase and installation of solar infrastructure on municipal buildings, the MCCAC also highlighted their new TAME Express program for lighting retrofits, and their other resources such as benchmarking, their energy efficiency toolbox, and the introductory information to climate change and energy efficiency available on their website.



## CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PETROLEUM PRODUCERS (CAPP)

Ben Brunnen presented on behalf of CAPP, and provided an overview of the oil and gas industry in Alberta and its gradual recovery from the recent economic downturn. He followed up by explaining CAPP's current priorities, including expanding market access for oil and gas products, strengthening regulatory effectiveness, and encouraging investment in the oil and gas industry. Ben concluded by emphasizing the oil and gas industry's emphasis on investing in technology to mitigate the impacts of climate change while simultaneously growing and stabilizing the industry.



## BOARD GOVERNANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

To operate accountably, the AAMDC appoints a member-comprised Board Governance Review Committee every four years to research the AAMDC board's current governance process and recommend areas for improvement. The final step in the committee's process is to present their recommendations to the AAMDC membership, who then votes on whether they should be implemented. The committee presented nine recommendations on issues ranging from membership definitions to board member roles to compensation. All nine were endorsed by members, and the AAMDC will aim to implement each within the next year.

## PROVINCIAL MINISTERS

### *THE HONOURABLE SHAYE ANDERSON:*

Newly appointed Minister of Municipal Affairs, Shaye Anderson addressed the AAMDC convention for the first time as a Minister. In his address, Minister Anderson highlighted several important initiatives underway in his department including the ongoing review of the Municipal Government Act (MGA), the continuation of MSI funding in the 2017-18 budget, and the centralization of industrial assessment. The Minister also took the opportunity to recognize many of the contributions that rural municipalities and rural communities provide to Alberta including the expansion of agri-food processing industries, the highways and roads that provide vital access for Alberta's natural resources to reach markets, and the health facilities that keep Albertans healthy and cared for.



### *THE HONOURABLE KATHLEEN GANLEY:*

Kathleen Ganley, Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, discussed several legal- and policing-related issues facing the province and how her Ministry was addressing them. Most significantly, Minister Ganley discussed the upcoming federal legalization of recreational cannabis use, and the roles that the province and municipalities would play in regulation and enforcement. The province will be focused on distribution and enforcing cannabis impaired driving, while municipalities will play a role in building an safety codes and the siting of retail store locations.

Minister Ganley also provided updates on the Government of Alberta's work to address court backlogs through lobbying to the government of Alberta for an increase in federal judges and increasing the use of technology to improve the efficiency of courts.



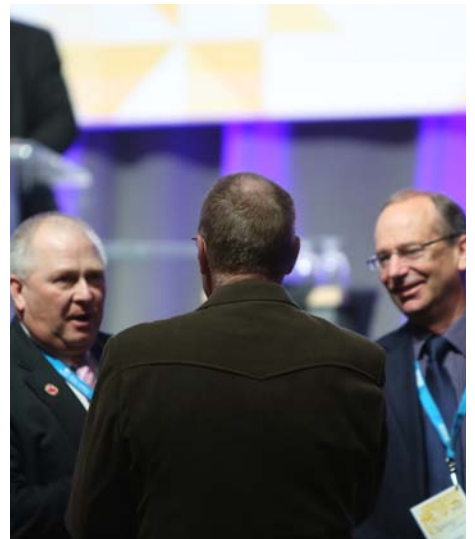
### *THE HONOURABLE DERON BILOUS:*

Deron Bilous, Minister of Economic Development and Trade, provided an overview of his Ministry's work to strengthen Alberta's economy. Minister Bilous talked about the important role of rural municipalities to Alberta's economic success, as well as the strategic value that the Government of Alberta places on municipal infrastructure, as evidenced by recent contributions made in the 2017-18 provincial budget.

Minister Bilous also highlighted various programs that the Government of Alberta offers to enhance economic growth, including the CARES program, support to Regional Economic Development Alliance (REDAs), tax credits given for investment in Alberta companies, and the Petrochemical Diversification Program.

Minister Bilous concluded by emphasizing the importance that the government of Alberta places on the construction of pipelines to tidewater, and the positive impacts that the Climate Leadership Plan has had in garnering support for the construction of the pipelines.







## BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Three breakout sessions were held at the AAMDC Spring Convention. They included:

### *Understanding the New Mandate: The Alberta Ombudsman and Municipalities*

Under the revised Municipal Government Act, the mandate of the Alberta Ombudsman has been expanded to include municipalities. This has caused some concern for municipalities because it was initially unclear how this would be implemented and what it would mean for municipal decision making. This workshop aimed to provide some added clarity and featured Alberta's Ombudsman, Peter Hourihan and Deputy Ombudsman, Joe Loran. Peter and Joe outlined the role of the Alberta Ombudsman and their goal to provide fairness to Albertans and how this would extend to municipalities. Ultimately, the Alberta Ombudsman is an option of last resort and does not have the authority to require an action but can provide recommendations to resolve conflicts when they arise.

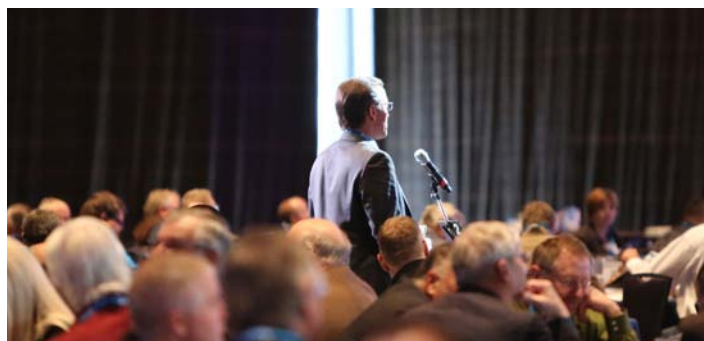
### *Getting Your Feet Wet: Municipalities and Wetlands*

Wetlands are an important component of our landscape, and municipalities are responsible for land-use decisions. Having access to tools and resources, and consistent policy direction to support informed decision making is an ongoing challenge in Alberta. Panelists Thorsten Hebben from the Government of Alberta, Theo Charette from CCP Environmental, and Michael Barr from the Alberta North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) provided an overview of the wetland policy and implementation tools, including the NAWMP Guide to Wetland Conservation in Alberta. Participants had an opportunity to engage in a Q&A and hear multiple perspectives from the panel regarding areas of interest specific to their municipalities.

### *We've Got Your Back: A Municipality's Guide to Insurance*

Proper insurance is critical to supporting the responsible operation of a municipality. In this session, Craig Pettigrew, AAMDC Manager of Insurance, and Lindsay Mickanuck, Manager of Claims for AAMDC, provided an overview of the insurance services offered by AAMDC, including the Jubilee and Genesis reciprocal insurance programs. Craig and Lindsay also explained the importance of different types of insurance for municipalities and provided interesting case studies relating to municipal liability and insurance.





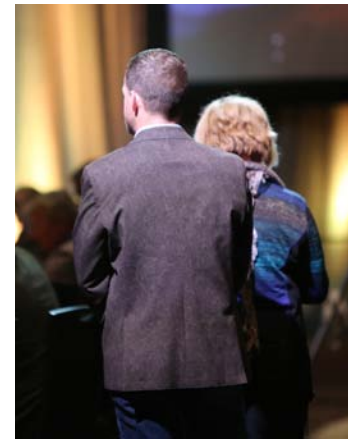
## RESOLUTIONS

The business portion of the AAMDC convention includes the resolutions session, which allows members to vote on resolutions brought forward by member municipalities. Each endorsed resolution becomes the marching orders of the AAMDC for three years. Active and past resolutions can be found on the AAMDC resolutions database at [AAMDC.com](http://AAMDC.com).

The following resolutions were endorsed at the AAMDC Spring 2017 Convention.

1-17S	Carbon Levy Exemption of Natural Gas and Propane for All Food Production Uses	8-17S	Oldman River Regional Services Commission Regional Planning Funding
2-17S	Amendments to Section 348 of the <i>Municipal Government Act</i>	9-17S	Legal Opinion for Species at Risk Proposed Policies
3-17S	National Broadband Strategy	10-17S	Modernization of Alberta Registry Agents
4-17S	Collection of Outstanding Taxes for Education Requisitions From the Province of Alberta	11-17S	Review of Standard Practices for Installation of High Tension Cable Barriers on Two-Lane Provincial Highways
5-17S	Secure Access to Natural Gas Pipelines		
6-17S	Addendum to the <i>Species at Risk Act</i>		
7-17S	Eradication of Bovine Tuberculosis and Brucellosis Prevalent in Bison Within and Surrounding Wood Buffalo National Park		

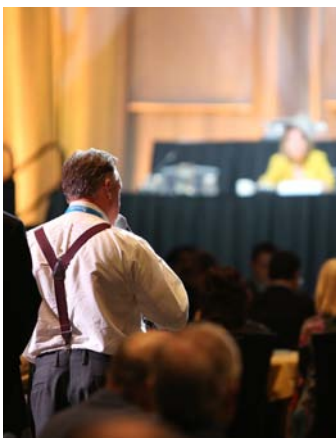
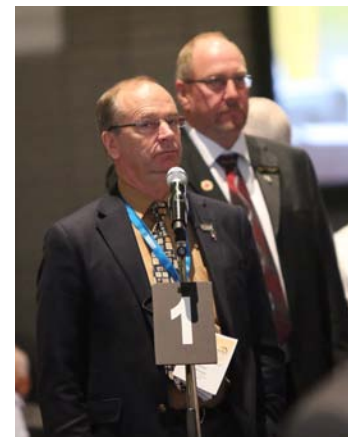
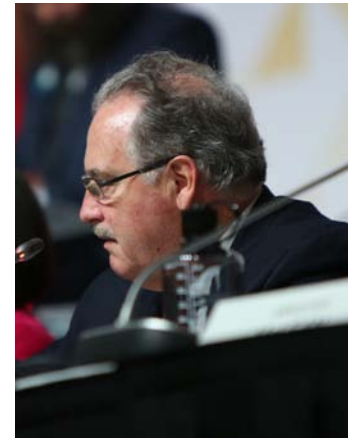




## MINISTERIAL FORUM

Once again, the AAMDC hosted members of the Government of Alberta Cabinet on our convention stage. The ministers addressed questions from AAMDC members on several topics, including:

- Seniors housing
- Timelines for environmental approvals of municipal infrastructure projects
- Rural ambulance coverage
- Wetland Policy
- Rural schools
- Rural broadband access
- Rural crime
- Rural housing
- Alberta Carbon Levy
- Farm and ranch safety legislation
- Regulations of solar farms
- Rural child and youth support
- Provincial road infrastructure
- Unpaid linear property taxes
- FCSS funding and programming
- Funding of Indigenous friendship centres
- Rural transit
- Trade corridors



# Convention Sponsors

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