

September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011

City of Calgary

Thank you for the opportunity to share some of my thoughts on Alberta's municipalities and the position the provincial government should take when working with our communities. I believe that strong municipalities and municipal governments are the backbone of Alberta, and it is in the interest of everyone to ensure that our communities have the tools they need to operate effectively.

The next Premier will have to work with municipalities on a long-term, sustainable funding model that provides sustainability for municipalities while protecting the taxpayer. In the immediate term, I will continue with the current Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) grant funding to maintain stable municipal funding – but this is not a long term solution. Suggestions of an “MSI 2” program involving provincial grants or removing the province from the Education Property Tax are overly simplistic solutions that do not properly address underlying issues. I will work with municipalities on a new approach that will result in actual long-term fiscal sustainability.

A Ted Morton government would also work with municipalities to clearly identify municipal and provincial roles and responsibilities. Municipalities, like businesses, are often burdened by provincial regulation and the downloading of new responsibilities. I will work to reduce regulations and burdens that inhibit the operation of our municipalities. I believe that this could reduce the amount of revenue municipalities put towards provincial priorities, which could in turn be directed toward municipal priorities.

Finally, I look forward to working with municipalities with regard to land-use planning and transportation issues. Municipalities are perhaps best positioned to understand the needs of their region, and it only makes sense to include them in any regional planning and development process. I will ensure continued municipal participation in the development of regional land-use plans under the Alberta Land Stewardship Act and forge a closer working relationship on transportation-related matters.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to share my thoughts – I look forward to working with the City of Calgary!

Sincerely,



Ted Morton