

Business Plan

2024-25

Ministry of Government Relations

Saskatchewan! 

Statement from the Minister



*The Honourable Don McMorris
Minister of Government Relations
Minister Responsible for First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs
Minister Responsible for the Provincial Capital Commission*

I am honoured to present the Ministry of Government Relations Business Plan for 2024-25.

From year to year, our commitment to the people of Saskatchewan does not change. While we are steadfast in our determination to improve the quality of life of residents of this province, the ways by which we achieve this goal do change.

In the 2024-25 business plan, we demonstrate how we're evaluating our work and improving our service methods for the benefit of Saskatchewan citizens.

This year, we're investing more than ever in Municipal Revenue Sharing and providing additional funding to ensure timely taxable assessments. Through this support, we help municipalities ensure their residents live in safe and well-governed communities.

We are strengthening our relationships with First Nation, Métis and northern residents. We are supporting reconciliation and enhancing First Nation and Métis communities' participation in Saskatchewan's growing economy by building awareness of the revised *Saskatchewan First Nation and Métis Consultation Policy Framework* and reviewing its grant application process.

I'm proud of our relationship with the Provincial Capital Commission, and our work together to promote Wascana Centre and Government House as essential destinations in Regina.

We are guided by our desire to provide exceptional service to our partners, stakeholders and the citizens of Saskatchewan. Our commitment to excellence is in everything we do, and I am confident that our efforts will foster good governance, a strong economy, and an environment where Aboriginal and Treaty rights are respected. Saskatchewan is a fantastic place to live, work and raise a family in safe and affordable communities, and the Ministry of Government Relations is committed to supporting this both today and in the future.

The ministry will report on progress made toward these key actions in our 2024-25 Annual Report.

2024-25 Budget Highlights

1	A record \$340.2 million funding for unconditional grants for municipalities through the Municipal Revenue Sharing program. Since 2007-08, more than \$4.3 billion in unconditional funding has been allocated to municipalities.
2	\$348.6 million to support community infrastructure projects through federal-provincial cost-share programs. These projects improve the quality of life of Saskatchewan residents and support the building of strong, safe and sustainable communities.
3	\$91.2 million in gaming grant payments to First Nation and Métis organizations to support Indigenous-led social and economic initiatives in Saskatchewan.
4	\$1 million to the Consultation Participation Fund to support the Government of Saskatchewan's commitment to its duty to consult with First Nation and Métis communities on proposed projects while supporting economic growth.
5	\$12.3 million investment in the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency to enable timely taxable assessments. This supports the government's Growth Plan goal of keeping Saskatchewan's finances strong, maintaining a competitive tax environment and ensures the accurate collection of education property tax.
6	\$800,000 to support the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls + Community Response Fund for grassroots organizations and communities developing and delivering projects that contribute to preventing violence, building safety, and fostering the wellbeing of Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit people.

Government Vision and Goals

Saskatchewan's Vision

"... to be the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life."

>> Government Goals

A Strong Economy

Strong Communities

Strong Families

Saskatchewan's vision and three goals provide the strategic direction for organizations to align their programs and services to build a strong Saskatchewan.

All organizations will report on progress in their 2024-25 annual reports.

Ministry of Government Relations Overview

Mandate

The Ministry of Government Relations is responsible for municipal relations; building and technical standards; First Nation, Métis and northern affairs; and the Provincial Capital Commission. The ministry engages a diverse range of partners and stakeholders to plan for and respond to the opportunities and challenges of growth, provide leadership and direction so that integrated public services are available to communities and their residents, and support responsible governments.

Mission

Government Relations is dedicated to working with our partners and stakeholders to support and invest in municipal, First Nation, and Métis communities through the effective and efficient delivery of programs and services aimed at fostering good governance, a strong economy, respecting Aboriginal and Treaty rights, and promoting resident safety.

Goal 1: Citizens live in safe, well-governed and sustainable communities that support economic growth.

Strong local governments lead to strong communities. Municipalities are on the front lines of Saskatchewan communities and their work and decisions are connected to the high quality of life enjoyed by many in our province. Government Relations works to support local governments with investments and tools to serve their residents, stimulate the local and provincial economy, and partner with neighbouring communities, which leads to a vibrant and healthy Saskatchewan for all.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Draft effective legislation, regulations, codes, standards and frameworks that define and support municipal decisions and responsibilities.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Review municipal legislation and regulations for policy and process improvements that support good local governance, more community collaboration, administrative efficiency and local economic competitiveness.
- Develop and distribute information and materials to support property owners, industry, municipalities, building officials and other codes users in the construction of safe, healthy, habitable and energy-efficient buildings.
- Work with stakeholders to ensure legislation, regulations, codes and standards meet the needs of owners, municipalities, industry and regulatory officials.
- Protect people and property through the Integrated Subdivision Approval program.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Improve municipal transparency and accountability.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Support municipal administration and governance by helping municipalities meet their legislated responsibilities and strengthen local transparency and accountability.
- Support strong partnerships among municipalities through participation at sector events and facilitation of cross-sector meetings for information sharing and networking.
- Invest in the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency to ensure timely taxable assessments, sustaining municipal revenues and provincial education property tax revenues.
- Review program requirements compliance for provincially administered community grants.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Improve essential community infrastructure, services and strategies to support municipal sustainability.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Administer community infrastructure investments through government programs such as the Municipal Revenue Sharing Program, Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, Canada Community-Building Fund and Transit-Assistance for people with Disabilities Program.
- Allocating \$1.5 million in the Targeted Sector Support Initiative with municipal associations to encourage inter-community collaboration, help build capacity of core municipal responsibilities and promote good governance.
- Negotiate with federal partners the renewal of infrastructure programs, including the Canada Community-Building Fund.
- Govern and provide municipal services to northerners living in the unorganized areas in the north by acting as council for the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District.
- Review and approve community planning bylaws and subdivisions to support critical infrastructure and services.
- Support creation of municipal districts and other forms of voluntary municipal restructuring.
- Strengthen regional planning by supporting existing districts through education and training materials and encourage continued intermunicipal cooperation and partnerships.
- Support the adoption of energy-efficient building construction through the development of skills, capacity, quality and compliance with energy codes by industry, municipalities, First Nations, and building officials.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

Municipal transparency and accountability

- Percentage of municipalities that meet eligibility requirements for the Municipal Revenue Sharing Program.
- Municipalities complying with other governance and safety requirements including board of revision certification and appointment of building officials.
- Percentage of population covered under planning and building bylaws.

Government and community priorities

- Number of completed community infrastructure projects supported this year by ministry-administered grant programs.
- Number of approved community infrastructure projects supported this year by ministry-administered grant programs.

Construction safety

- Number of licensed building officials.
- Number of building bylaws reviewed and approved.
- Number of municipalities that have adopted their own building bylaw.

Goal 2: First Nation, Métis and northern communities fully share in Saskatchewan's benefits and opportunities.

Government Relations works toward this goal by continuing to build and strengthen relationships with First Nation, Métis and northern communities, organizations and other partners, as well as with provincial ministries, agencies, Crown corporations, federal departments and municipalities. This involves honouring government's commitment related to Aboriginal and Treaty rights and engaging with First Nation and Métis people on areas of mutual interest, including government policies and programs.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Engage First Nation and Métis communities and government entities to improve policies and programs.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Engage with leaders of First Nation and Métis communities and representative organizations on subjects of mutual interest.
- Build relationships with First Nation and Métis communities and industry for effective and meaningful consultations.
- Connect northern communities to the mining industry through the Northern Saskatchewan Environment Quality Committee, employment and business opportunities, and human service initiatives.
- Support and advise government ministries, Crowns and agencies on Indigenous and northern engagement, priorities and opportunities.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Respond to priorities identified by First Nation and Métis leaders, and northerners.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Invest in and support initiatives through the First Nation and Métis Sponsorships and Community Partnerships Projects funds and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls+ Community Response Fund.
- Support the Embracing Life Initiative to reduce the risk of suicide through northern initiatives such as training, emphasizing northern success stories, and providing tools to strengthen resilience and mental health such as a suicide prevention mobile app.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Honour government's commitments.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Support implementation of the revised *First Nation and Métis Consultation and Policy Framework*.

- Administer gaming profits based on the Gaming Framework Agreement and applicable legislation.
- Negotiate new Treaty Land Entitlement Agreements and lead provincial collaboration with First Nation partners and Canada to implement existing agreements and review approaches to improve First Nation land acquisition processes to deliver on the province's legal obligations.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

- **Engage First Nation and Métis communities and government entities to improve policies and programs.** Number of events and organized meetings attended where expertise on northern resource management is provided to partners and clients including community representatives, industry and regulators.
- Number of training sessions held for government officials to implement the revised *First Nation and Métis Consultation Policy Framework*.
- Number of meetings with First Nation and Métis communities and impacted organizations, including industry, on the revised *First Nation and Métis Consultation Policy Framework*.

Respond to priorities identified by First Nation and Métis leaders.

- Number of grants disbursed under the First Nation and Métis Sponsorships and Community Partnership Projects, and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls+ Community Response Fund.

Honouring government's commitments

- Number of grants and funding provided under the First Nation and Métis Consultation Participation Fund.
- Amount of funding distributed through gaming payments, based on the Gaming Framework Agreement and applicable legislation.
- Number of acres transferred to reserve status to meet land claim agreements obligations.

Goal 3: The Government Relations teams demonstrate our commitment to excellence.

A strong public service supports strong Saskatchewan communities. Government Relations works to uphold the Government of Saskatchewan's commitment to excellence by promoting innovation and collaboration in our work with partners, working transparently and efficiently, and investing in opportunities to better understand and serve all Saskatchewan citizens.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Support learning to work and engage with partners in a changing technology environment.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Co-ordinate learning opportunities across the ministry to increase familiarity with digital tools to engage with municipalities and fill gaps in professional competencies.
- Explore solutions to streamline program delivery and client communication.
- Monitor the online subdivision application process for continuous improvement to promote economic growth and safe development.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Support continuous improvement of a high-performing team.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Continue to enable ministry staff to access the mandatory Indigenous Awareness training to increase understanding of the history and cultures of Indigenous communities across Canada.
- Participate in events that recognize Indigenous commemorative and awareness days including National Indigenous Peoples Day and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.
- Coordinate learning and development opportunities to improve teamwork, collaboration and productivity among staff.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Support accountability and the efficient and effective use of government resources.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Ensure efficient and responsible use of resources.
- Improve information management throughout the ministry.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Demonstrate our commitment to excellence by prioritizing the one team approach to achieving ministry goals.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Support projects developed by ministry committees to improve culture, safety, wellness and productivity.
- Provide opportunities for staff to collaborate with other branches within the ministry, and government entities outside of Government Relations.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

Excellence in action

- Percentage of staff participating in learning and development opportunities.
- Percentage of staff who have taken the Indigenous Awareness training.
- Percentage of staff participating in ministry activities and events.

2024-25 Improvement and Innovation Highlights



1	The Ministry of Government Relations is building awareness of the revised <i>Saskatchewan First Nation and Métis Consultation Policy Framework</i> (CPF) and its associated fund. The grant process is being reviewed to improve service delivery and to allow the ministry to process grant applications within seven days of receipt. By building awareness of the CPF and its fund and providing prompt responses to grant applications, the Ministry supports First Nation and Métis community participation in the duty to consult process. This advances reconciliation, promotes economic investment and enhances First Nation and Métis communities' participation in Saskatchewan's growing economy, while building meaningful and productive relationships between First Nation and Métis communities, government and proponents.
2	The Community Planning Branch's Integrated Subdivision Approval Program uses an online portal to instantly receive subdivision applications, eliminating mail delays. The branch also identifies groups not using the portal and proactively offers training sessions to promote the portal's efficiency. An efficient subdivision approval process benefits Saskatchewan's economy by promoting growth and development.

Financial Summary

Ministry of Government Relations 2024-25 Estimates	(in thousands of dollars)
Central Management and Services	\$7,629
Saskatchewan Municipal Board	\$1,886
Municipal Relations	\$729,545
First Nations, Métis, and Northern Affairs	\$97,274
Provincial Capital Commission	\$7,274
Total Appropriation	\$843,608
Non-Appropriated Expense Adjustment	100
Total Expense	\$843,708

Links to More Information

- [Ministry of Government Relations](#)
- [Government of Saskatchewan Budget, Planning and Reporting](#)