

# Ministry of Government Relations

## Annual Report for 2020-21

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# Letters of Transmittal



Office of the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan

I respectfully submit the Annual Report for the Ministry of Government Relations for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Don McMorris".

Don McMorris  
Minister of Government Relations and  
Minister of First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs

The Honourable  
Don McMorris  
Minister of  
Government Relations  
and Minister of First  
Nations, Métis and  
Northern Affairs



The Honourable Don McMorris  
Minister of Government Relations and  
Minister of First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs

Dear Minister:

I have the honour of submitting the Annual Report of the Ministry of Government Relations for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J. Greg Miller".

J. Greg Miller  
Deputy Minister of  
Government Relations  
and Deputy Minister of  
First Nations, Métis and  
Northern Affairs

J. Greg Miller  
Deputy Minister of Government Relations and  
Deputy Minister of First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs

# Ministry of Government Relations Overview

The ministry is responsible for municipal relations, public safety, and First Nations, 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.

Ministry staff work in Regina, Saskatoon, La Ronge and Buffalo Narrows locations. The ministry's full-time equivalent (FTE) utilization in 2020-21 was 183.1 FTEs.

## Legislation

*The Amusement Ride Safety Act*  
*The Assessment Appraisers Act*  
*The Assessment Management Agency Act*  
*The Boiler and Pressure Vessel Act, 1999*  
*The Border Areas Act*  
*The Cities Act*  
*The City of Lloydminster Act*  
*The Community Planning Profession Act, 2013*  
*The Education Property Tax Act*  
*The Electrical Inspection Act, 1993*  
*The Electrical Licensing Act*  
*The Flin-Flon Extension of Boundaries Act, 1952*  
*The Gas Inspection Act, 1993*  
*The Gas Licensing Act*  
*The Government Relations Administration Act*  
*The Indian and Native Affairs Act*  
*The Local Government Election Act, 2015*  
*The Local Improvements Act, 1993*  
*The Métis Act*

*The Municipal Board Act*  
*The Municipal Expropriation Act*  
*The Municipal Grants Act*  
*The Municipal Tax Sharing (Potash) Act*  
*The Municipalities Act*  
*The Northern Municipalities Act, 2010*  
*The Passenger and Freight Elevator Act*  
*The Planning and Development Act, 2007*  
*The Rural Municipal Administrators Act*  
*The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Act*  
*The Saskatchewan Natural Resources Transfer Agreement (Treaty Land Entitlement) Act*  
*The Tax Enforcement Act*  
*The Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan Act*  
*The Time Act*  
*The Treaty Land Entitlement Implementation Act*  
*The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act*  
*The Urban Municipal Administrators Act*  
*The Urban Municipality Act, 1984*

View the ministry's 2020-21 Operational Plan at [www.saskatchewan.ca/government-relations](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/government-relations).

# Ministry of Government Relations COVID-19 Response Highlights

## Overview

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged government operations during the 2020-21 fiscal year. The expected operations of programs and services may have significantly changed as the Government of Saskatchewan worked quickly to support citizens and businesses. Annual reports for the 2020-21 fiscal year provide information on the impacts of COVID-19 and recognize the work of the Government of Saskatchewan in responding to the pandemic.

## Organization COVID-19 Response Highlights

- Continued to deliver programs and services remotely and by adopting virtual platforms when applicable.
- Provided immediate financial relief to municipalities by:
  - Fast-tracking 2020-21 Municipal Revenue Sharing (MRS) Grants payments to all compliant municipalities by paying the full amount in June, rather than in installments.
  - Combining the two Gas Tax Fund (GTF) payments into a single payment and distributing to municipalities in August following the federal government’s announcement that gas tax funding to provinces would be advanced.
- Supported Saskatchewan’s investment in municipal infrastructure projects by cross-training and redeploying 17 employees to the Municipal Infrastructure and Finance Branch to process a record-breaking volume of applications, agreements and payments towards:
  - The new Municipal Economic Enhancement Program (MEEP): \$149,631,238 towards 1,405 MEEP projects across 754 municipalities within five months.
  - The new Safe Restart Canada Plan: \$70 million aimed at supporting key pandemic relief efforts to over 700 municipalities.
  - Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP): Two new ICIP funding streams, one being the COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure stream.
- Supported the 2020 municipal elections by developing several resources, such as a “Best Practices” guide to hold safe elections during COVID-19, question and answer documents on mail-in ballots, and webinars. The ministry also facilitated the use of provincial election resources and unused personal protective equipment for local elections.
- The ministry co-chaired the Immunization Planning Municipal Advisory Committee, made up of representatives from Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, New North, City of Saskatoon, the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency and the Saskatchewan Health Authority. The Committee was responsible for considering immunization opportunities and challenges for the municipal sector and advancing recommendations to the Immunization Oversight Committee.
- Participated in regular meetings with the Saskatchewan Health Authority and partners, including Métis Nation – Saskatchewan (MN-S) and the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations to address COVID-19 issues specific to those populations. This included work of the Immunization Planning Indigenous Advisory Committee, representation from the MN-S, tribal councils and independent First Nations.

- The distribution of gaming revenues in 2020-21 was forecast to be minimal or zero due to casino closures. To mitigate the impact of this loss, the ministry distributed \$45 million in grants to First Nations and Métis entities.
- The ministry also distributed \$0.6 million to the Saskatchewan Conexus Arts Centre, which also forecasted revenue to be minimal or zero due to facility closures and cancelled events.
- The percentages of value for commercial, industrial, elevator, railway, resource and pipeline properties were reduced from 100 per cent to 85 per cent to improve tax fairness and recognize the COVID-19 challenges faced by businesses and industry.

# Progress in 2020-21 Ministry Goal 1

## Government Goals



## Ministry Goal

Communities are effectively governed and prepared to manage growth.

## Strategy

Enhance regional and municipal governance and planning to manage public services and economic opportunities and challenges.

## Key Actions

- Complete subdivision reviews to facilitate economic growth and development.
  - The subdivision of land is a key step for investment in economic growth as it precedes actual development. Through the Integrated Subdivision Approval Program (ISAP), the ministry ensures that future lots are suitable for development. This includes confirming infrastructure is available to service the 803 subdivision applications approved for 1,403 new commercial, industrial and residential lots, representing approximately \$210 million of development potential.
  - The ISAP program also ensured \$69 million worth of investment was safeguarded by approving 230 applications with conditions to prevent unsafe development.
- Update municipal acts to better protect municipal employees, strengthen ministerial authority, enhance local governance and accountability, and improve efficiency for local administrations.
  - Amendments to the *The Cities Act*, *The Municipalities Act*, and *The Northern Municipalities Act, 2010* were passed in July 2020 to better protect municipal employees, strengthen ministerial authority, enhance local governance and accountability, and improve efficiency for local administrations. The changes came into effect on January 1, 2021.
- Partner with municipal associations to enhance municipalities' regional co-operation and governance through the Targeted Sector Support (TSS) initiative funded through the MRS Program.
  - First introduced in 2019-20, the TSS initiative stems from recommendations made during the 2018-19 review of the MRS Program. The TSS initiative provides cost-shared grants, up to 75 per cent on eligible costs, to municipalities partnering to strengthen their core municipal responsibilities through projects focused on regional co-operation, capacity building and good governance.
  - Fifty-seven applications were received during the first intake of the TSS initiative in 2019-20. A steering committee evaluated applications in fall 2020 and awarded \$1.19 million of funding to 33 approved projects. The second intake for the TSS initiative ran from January to March 2021.
  - The ministry is working with the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association on the administration of the TSS initiative.

## Strategy

Leverage federal funding and provide funding to support provincial, municipal, and First Nations and Métis interests.

## Key Actions

- Support programs, projects and initiatives directed at good governance, legislative compliance and increased inter-municipal and regional co-operation.
  - Every year, the ministry administers the unconditional MRS grants to Saskatchewan municipalities based on the value of 0.75 of 1 point of the provincial sales tax from two years prior. In 2020-21, MRS grants totalled a record high of \$278 million. Beginning in the 2021-22 grant year, MRS grant payments will be withheld if a municipality does not meet new eligibility requirements.
    - In 2020-21, all municipalities were asked to submit a declaration on their compliance in six areas of municipal legislation targeted at good governance, accountability and transparency.
    - On March 31, 2021, 97 per cent (752 of 772) of municipalities completed the declaration and 5 per cent (38 of 752) of these municipalities reported non-compliance with one or more of the eligibility requirements.
  - The ministry continued to develop education and training resources for municipalities aimed at advancing regional co-operation.
  - Voluntary regional co-operation workshops that support municipalities to increase administrative and governance capacity, improve operational functions and build collaborative approaches to service delivery with their neighbours were postponed due to COVID-19.
- Administer the ICIP to support shared provincial, municipal, and Indigenous interests.
  - Saskatchewan will receive approximately \$896.3 million in federal funding under the program through five streams: Public Transit; Green Infrastructure; Community, Culture and Recreation Infrastructure; Rural and Northern Communities Infrastructure; and the COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure.
  - The ministry developed and opened the fifth COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream (CVRIS) for applications to respond to the immediate economic impacts of the pandemic.
  - The ministry is currently administering 191 projects that are approved or conditionally approved for funding with total eligible project costs of \$808.2 million. Another 32 projects with total eligible costs of \$142.6 million have been submitted for federal review and consideration.
- Ensure that provincially administered grants to municipalities meet program requirements.
  - The ministry extended the bilateral agreement for the Clean Water and Wastewater Fund (CWWF) and the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (PTIF) to December 31, 2022, to allow for project extensions. The ministry continued to work with recipients and the federal government to extend 18 projects and will continue to manage these agreements until complete.
  - In June 2020, the federal government announced that funding through the Gas Tax Program would be accelerated to help communities recover from the COVID-19 pandemic as quickly as possible, and to assist in their role to safely restart the economy. Saskatchewan's allocation of \$62.57 million for 2020-21 was received in full and the ministry distributed both instalments for 2020-21 to municipalities by August 2020. As of March 15, 2021, the ministry is managing 1,128 active project agreements through this program.
  - The ministry continues to administer and manage agreements under the New Building Canada Fund, which provides \$240.2 million in federal funding to two programs:
    - Small Communities Fund (SCF), which provides infrastructure funding to municipalities with fewer than 100,000 residents; and,
    - National Regional Projects (NRP), which provides infrastructure funding for medium to large infrastructure projects with regional or national significance.
    - The ministry continues to administer 38 active projects of the 82 total approved projects under the SCF and 32 active projects out of the 37 total approved projects under the NRP.

- The ministry received satisfactory compliance audits for the New Building Canada Fund, CWWF and PTIF and a satisfactory financial audit for the GTF for 2019. The ministry also submitted the 2019 Annual Expenditure Report to the federal government by December 31, 2020.
- Assist Estevan, Coronach and surrounding areas transition to new economic development opportunities for workers affected by the federally-mandated phase out of coal-fired electricity.
  - The first payments were allocated to each community in 2019-20 and both communities continue to identify projects to utilize their remaining funding.

## Strategy

Work with local governments to improve community sustainability.

### Key Actions

- Deliver advisory services to assist municipalities in meeting their legislated responsibilities.
  - The ministry quickly adapted their resources and ongoing advisory services to address changes and arising challenges associated with COVID-19.
  - The ministry supported the 2020 municipal elections by developing several resources, such as a “Best Practices” guide to hold safe elections during COVID-19, question and answer documents on mail-in ballots and change to the Resort Village general elections, an election scheduling tool, and pre-recorded and live election webinars. The ministry also facilitated the use of provincial election resources and unused personal protective equipment for local elections.
  - The ministry implemented a provincial order allowing municipalities to postpone their 2020 election due to a severe winter storm that blanketed much of the province on municipal election day. The following month, the ministry sent out a survey to municipalities on their election experiences, including the effectiveness of COVID-19 measures and questions regarding the rescheduling of local elections due to inclement weather. The results of the survey are available on Saskatchewan.ca.
  - Municipal Leadership Development Program materials were created outlining the roles and responsibilities of elected officials. These materials were distributed virtually at both the 2021 Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, and Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities conventions.
  - The ministry hosted nine webinars to support municipal administrators across the province and continue to revise online resources for municipal administrators to reflect the amendments made to *The Northern Municipalities Act, 2010*, *The Cities Act*, and *The Municipalities Act* in 2020.
  - In partnership with the Dispute Resolution Office of the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, the ministry hosted three pre-recorded webinars to support boards of revision’s understanding of administrative justice and tribunals, helping them better ensure a fair property assessment appeal system. These are posted on the website for future reference of Boards of Revision.
- Support municipalities in developing, implementing and enhancing asset management plans.
  - Under the renewed Gas Tax Program, municipalities are required to make progress towards developing and implemented an asset management plan. In addition, an option exists for unspent funds held by Saskatchewan from the original GTF agreement to be allocated to asset management capacity building efforts of the municipal associations as approved by Saskatchewan.
  - Municipalities have received funding for 62 capacity-building projects related to asset management. Another 21 projects are pending review and approval.
- Work with municipalities, Indigenous communities, and sector associations to increase local capacity and to support regional planning efforts.
  - Voluntary regional co-operation workshops were postponed this fiscal year due to COVID-19.

## Strategy

Ensure a fair and effective property tax regime.

### Key Actions

- Amended legislation and regulations to balance municipal and industry interests as it relates to road maintenance agreements.
  - Municipalities can enter into a Road Maintenance Agreement (RMA) with haulers, shippers or receivers of delivered goods. Municipalities often use RMAs in cases where there is concentrated heavy hauling from an identifiable source or there is heavy haul traffic that routes through a municipality where the hauler, shipper or receiver does not have a property tax base. Rates for RMAs and other regulations are set by the province.
  - The ministry consulted with stakeholders to amend *The Municipalities Regulations* related to RMAs, which were passed in February 2020. The amendments create a consistent, transparent and clear process for municipalities and industry to address the incremental costs associated with heavy hauling. The changes will come into effect on January 1, 2022.
- Support the 2021 property tax revaluation, including establishing percentages of value and property classes and continuing to improve public understanding of the property tax system.
  - A provincial revaluation updates property assessments every four years by determining new property values as of a specific base date. For the 2021 revaluation, this base date is January 1, 2019. This means all properties now reflect the value they had as of that date.
  - As part of each revaluation, the ministry supports the consideration of the percentages of value to be applied to the assessed values of property classes. In December 2020, the ministry announced the percentage of value for commercial, industrial, elevator, railway, resource and pipeline properties will be 85 per cent compared to 100 per cent set in 2017 when the previous revaluation occurred. This will be applied to properties starting in 2021 as part of the revaluation cycle across the province.
- Work with the municipal sector to renew the approach to the first level of property assessment appeals.
  - The ministry continues to work towards implementing improvements to the first-level property assessment appeals process for the 2023 property tax year to ensure fair hearings and clear decisions.

## Performance Measure Results

### Percentage of the population living in municipalities with official community plans

Official community plans set out policies to govern land use and development, outline the municipalities' economic growth strategies, encourage environmental stewardship, plan sustainable infrastructure, support recreational opportunities, and address community interests.

As of March 31, 2021, 91.97 per cent of the population lives in municipalities with an official community plan. This is a small increase from 91.5 per cent in 2019-20, and a major increase from the 75 per cent adoption rate in 2009-10.

### Number of sites approved with conditions to prevent unsafe development

Requiring subdivision developments to have proper disaster mitigation standards in place before sites are approved will limit impacts from potential disasters, such as slope instability and flooding.

There were 230 sites or \$69M of development approved with conditions required to mitigate risks associated with flooding.

# Progress in 2020-21 Ministry Goal 2

## Government Goals



## Ministry Goal

A team that understands, embraces, and demonstrates our commitment to excellence.

## Strategy

Ministry programs and services meet client needs.

## Key Actions

- Improve information sharing with municipal governments, citizens, and industry through a citizen-municipal-ministry digital interface.
  - The ministry continues to work towards development of a digital interface to improve information sharing.
- Amend *The Statements of Provincial Interest Regulations* and *The Dedicated Lands Regulations, 2009* to meet the needs of residents, investors and communities to keep Saskatchewan strong.
  - Amendments to *The Dedicated Lands Regulations, 2009* (DLR) came into effect on May 7, 2020. Dedicated lands include buffer strips, environmental reserve, municipal reserve, public reserve, and walkways and are, for the most part, administered by municipalities. The DLR provides a regulatory framework for planning and land-use decisions for the creation and use of dedicated lands. These amendments modernize the DLR and meet governments commitment to review business-related regulations at least once every 10 years.
  - Amendments to *The Statements of Provincial Interest Regulations* (SPI) came into effect on January 1, 2021. The SPI links provincial priorities with municipal land use planning decisions of various ministries, agencies, and Crown corporations. These amendments improve predictability for agricultural activities, strengthen relationships between municipalities and First Nation and Métis communities, encourage regional planning, and incorporate new topics such as climate resilience, economic growth, and community health for land use planning. To accompany the SPI amendments, the ministry:
    - Published a guide to assist municipalities and land use planners to adapt to the amended regulations;
    - Updated and published the Amending Planning Bylaws guide and Preparation and Adoption of New Planning Bylaws checklist in August 2020 and December 2020, to simplify and expedite the planning bylaw preparation process and subsequent review by the ministry; and,
    - Issued a draft copy of the revised Planning Handbook to stakeholders and rights holders for review and comment in February 2021. The final Planning Handbook will be published in the 2021-22 fiscal year.

- Repeal and replace *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act* with *The Construction Codes Act*.
  - *The Construction Codes Act* (CCA) was introduced in the fall 2020 legislative session. The CCA was passed after the end of the 2020-21 fiscal year on May 13, 2021. The CCA will come into effect on January 1, 2022, and will repeal and replace *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act*.
- Distribute gaming revenues as prescribed in *The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Act* and the 2002 Gaming Framework Agreement.
  - The distribution of gaming revenues in 2020-21 was forecast to be minimal or zero due to casino closures. To mitigate the impact of this loss the First Nations and Métis entities collectively received \$45 million in grants under Emergency Pandemic Support for First Nations and Métis entities in 2020-21.
- 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.
  - The ministry continued to provide core municipal services to District ratepayers as per *The Northern Municipalities Act, 2010*.
  - As a result of COVID-19, the ministry provided \$500 thousand to northern municipalities through New North to support information checkpoints at communities, advising and monitoring traffic.

# Progress in 2020-21 Ministry Goal 3

## Government Goals



## Ministry Goal

Safer communities that are better prepared for disasters and emergencies.

## Strategy

Improve and promote provincial and local emergency preparedness, risk mitigation, and recovery.

## Key Actions

- Advocate for the continued support of disaster mitigation projects under federal/provincial infrastructure programs.
  - The Provincial Disaster Assistance Program (PDAP) responsible for this key action was reassigned to the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety (CPPS) on November 9, 2020.
- Provide financial assistance to residents, municipalities and other entities through PDAP.
  - The Provincial Disaster Assistance Program responsible for this key action was reassigned to the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety (CPPS) on November 9, 2020.

## Strategy

Promote the construction, renovation, and safe operation of buildings, facilities and equipment in compliance with codes and standards.

## Key Actions

- Align building and construction standards between jurisdictions in concert with provincial and territorial counterparts to reduce trade barriers.
  - Ministry officials chaired a working group of federal, provincial and territorial representatives that developed a reconciliation agreement for the harmonization and timely adoption of construction codes. The agreement is complete and signed by the Government of Saskatchewan, Canada and 11 of the 12 Canadian jurisdictions. When fully implemented in 2028, this agreement is expected to add \$750 million to \$1 billion to Canada’s Gross Domestic Product.
  - Continued to work with federal, provincial, and territorial partners to limit the variations between the national codes and the construction codes utilized in each jurisdiction. Work focused on identifying leading practices and innovation in building materials, practices and design from the jurisdictions and harmonizing them with the national codes.

- Transfer gas, electrical licensing and inspection, and plumbing inspection to the Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan (TSASK).
  - Bill 180 received royal assent on June 2020 to transfer gas, electrical and plumbing functions to the TSASK.
  - Gas and electrical licensing transfers occurred on August 4, 2020. Gas and electrical inspection transfers were completed on February 1, 2021. Plumbing is expected to transfer to TSASK in late 2021.
- Modernize technical safety legislation and regulations to better reflect the delivery of services.
  - *The Construction Codes Act* (CCA) was introduced in the fall 2020 legislative session. The CCA will provide a new model for inspection options and greater flexibility for industry, municipalities and citizens.

## Performance Measure Results

### Percentage of the population covered by building bylaws

Building bylaws help to ensure people live and work in safe buildings. Ongoing efforts by the ministry, as well as inter-ministry and agency co-ordination, will increase the implementation by municipalities of building bylaws approved under *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act*.

Eighty-nine per cent of the population live in a municipality with a building bylaw. This remains unchanged from last year. *The Construction Codes Act* was introduced in fall 2020. When implemented, all municipalities without a building bylaw will be subject to a default bylaw.

# Progress in 2020-21 Ministry Goal 4

## Government Goals



A Strong Economy



Strong Communities



Strong Families

## Ministry Goal

First Nations and Métis residents fully share in Saskatchewan's benefits and opportunities, and Treaty and Aboriginal rights are respected.

## Strategy

Encourage and support engagement and collaboration between First Nations, Métis people and all levels of government to advance mutually beneficial priorities.

## Key Actions

- Invest in community-level First Nations and Métis projects to build strong communities.
  - The 2020-21 First Nations and Métis Community Partnership Projects budget focused on locally developed projects related to issues raised by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). Thirteen projects totalling \$402,053 were approved.
  - The ministry approved an additional four projects addressing issues such as food security, community wellness, youth leadership and youth entrepreneurship totalling \$59,740.
- Sponsor First Nations and Métis community events that promote intercultural understanding and reconciliation.
  - Communities were challenged in their ability to hold events in accordance with public health guidelines and restrictions. The ministry provided seven grants totalling \$45,750 to virtual community events.
- Build and support partnerships between government, industry, agencies and First Nations and Métis communities, which support community wellness and vitality in the north.
  - Ministry's COVID-19 response included supporting engagement with northern First Nations leaders through regular tribal council meetings and relevant agency-led committees.
  - The ministry continued to be the main strategic support for Embracing Life, a multi-agency table which addresses suicide through several northern initiatives such as training for youth leadership and resilience, highlighting northern success stories, and a social media platform.
  - The ministry leads the Assistant Deputy Ministers Working Group on Northern Priorities which brings together a range of provincial and federal ministries and agencies to discuss shared priorities in addressing northern needs.
  - The ministry continued to administer 12 Mineral Surface Lease Agreements with the Ministry of Environment and support engagement and build understanding of northern industrial developments through the office of the Northern Saskatchewan Environmental Quality Committee.
  - Co-ordinated the development of a draft northern youth leadership model for the Northern Development Ministers Forum. The model is intended to be used by member jurisdictions across

- Canada to test best practices in enhancing leadership skills among northern youth.
- The ministry's annual report on the northern socio-economic benefits of mining in the North has been delayed by the pandemic.
- Strengthen Government of Saskatchewan's engagement with First Nations and Métis residents and organizations.
  - Government continues working with Métis leadership and institutions such as the Gabriel Dumont Institute; service delivery agencies such as the Métis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan Inc., as well as Métis regions, locals, communities and individuals.
  - Files and meetings unrelated to the pandemic were carried out virtually. Limited in-person meetings were held in compliance with public health orders.
  - Government celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Northern Saskatchewan Environmental Quality Committee.

## Strategy

Co-ordinate and support government-wide implementation of the Duty to Consult policy, Treaty Land Entitlement Agreements, and facilitate other agreements.

## Key Actions

- Negotiate new Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) Agreements with Canada and First Nations.
  - Five TLE settlement agreements are in active negotiations.
    - The parties are finalizing three of the five draft settlement agreements. Once a draft is finalized, the First Nations will begin their ratification vote processes.
    - Three agreements should be finalized within the 2021-22 fiscal year.
- Build awareness of the province's legal obligations related to Treaty Land Entitlement and Duty to Consult.
  - One Duty to Consult session was delivered with 12 in attendance. COVID-19 prevented further sessions from being delivered. The ministry evaluated online training options throughout the year.
  - The ministry continued to advise ministries, Crowns and agencies on specific matters and publish community of practice newsletters related to Duty to Consult. The ministry also supported government to increase flexibility with consultation processes and timelines, recognizing that First Nation and Métis communities may have immediate priorities arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Performance Measure Results

### **Number of projects supported through the First Nations and Métis Community Engagement Project Fund**

The fund supports First Nations, Métis communities, agencies or non-profit organizations for qualifying projects that promote safe communities, strong families, student achievement, and/or economic growth. The number of approved projects demonstrates the level of community participation in building local capacity through innovation and partnerships.

Fifteen projects were approved for a total of \$431,793 in funding.

### **Number of events supported through First Nations and Métis Sponsorships**

These sponsorships are provided to First Nations and Métis community organizations or non-profit organizations to assist with public events that benefit Indigenous people in the areas of education, employment, professional development, cultural celebrations, or in the honouring of elders, knowledge keepers and veterans. The number of events sponsored indicates the level of support provided to improve community wellness and advance reconciliation.

Six events were approved for a total of \$35,750 in funding. Applications for event sponsorships were significantly less than previous years, which is assumed to be a result of COVID-19 public health orders that restricted events and gatherings.

**Number of grants provided under the First Nations and Métis Consultation Participation Fund**

First Nation and Métis communities that have received a notification from government that the Duty to Consult was triggered may apply for funding from the First Nations and Métis Consultation Participation Fund. The number of grants provided under this fund reflect the level of participation of First Nations and Métis communities in the consultation process regarding development and other initiatives that may adversely affect the exercise of Treaty and Aboriginal rights, and traditional uses.

Fifty-seven grants for a total of \$346,403 were provided to support the participation of First Nation and Métis communities in consultations with the government where a Duty to Consult was triggered.

# Financial Summary

Additional financial information can be found in the Government of Saskatchewan Public Accounts located at <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/#/categories/893>

## Financial Results

### Expense:

The 2020-21 appropriation budget was \$783.7 million. Actual expenditures were \$834.7M. This represents an increase of \$51.0M. This increase primarily reflects:

- an increase for the Safe Restart Program transfers (\$70.3 million);
- an increase for Treaty Land Entitlements reflecting adjustments to existing accruals (\$3.6 million);
- an increase for claim and program administration costs for the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program (\$3.0 million);
- an increase for Education Property Taxes (EPT) allowances for doubtful accounts (\$2.6 million);
- an increase for First Nation Gaming Agreement payments (\$0.8 million);
- an increase for the Saskatchewan Centre of the Arts (\$0.6 million);
- an increase for capital assets purchases (\$0.4 million); and,
- an increase for the Consultation Participation Fund (\$0.2 million);

partially offset by:

- lower than anticipated infrastructure grant payments (\$22.8 million);
- lower transfers to the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency (\$3.0 million);
- lower than anticipated GTF transfers (\$1.8 million);
- lower than anticipated municipal transfers (\$0.9 million);
- lower than anticipated Tax Loss Compensation transfers (\$0.2 million); and,
- net savings across the ministry, primarily due to vacancy management and operating savings (\$1.8 million);

### Revenue:

The 2020-21 revenue budget was \$749.6 million. Actual revenue was \$754.4 million. This represents an increase of \$4.8 million over budget. This increase is primarily attributed to:

- an increase to reclassify a portion of EPT to grants-in-lieu (\$11.5 million);
- an increase to First Nation Gaming Agreements account receivables set up for overpayments of gaming payments identified with 2019-20 reconciliation (\$6.6 million);
- an increase for EPT levy (\$6.0 million);
- refunds to the General Revenue Fund, primarily for PDAP and New Building Canada Fund, where actual amounts were lower than what was accrued in prior years (\$2.8 million);
- an increase to reclassify a portion of EPT revenue for trailer fees (\$0.6 million); and,
- miscellaneous revenue (\$0.2 million);

partially offset by:

- decreased net revenue to reflect reduced expenditures for infrastructure programs (\$22.9 million).

**Full-Time Equivalent (FTE):**

The 2020-21 FTE utilization for the ministry was 183.1 FTEs.

**Summary of Expenditures**

The following table summarizes budgeted versus actual expenses by subvote and subprogram. Variance explanations are provided for all variances that are greater than five per cent and \$100,000.

**Explanation of Major Variances:**

1. Vacancy management and miscellaneous operating under-expenditure.
2. Over-expenditure for a year-end accounting entry reflecting an increase in EPT allowances.
3. Under-expenditure reflecting PDAP accommodation costs in Government Relations' budget partially offset by leasehold improvements.
4. Over-expenditure reflecting adjustments to existing accruals.
5. Over-expenditure reflecting increased activity of the fund.
6. Over-expenditure reflecting 2019-20 year-end revenue numbers for Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation and Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority resulting in reconciliation payments.
7. Over-expenditure reflecting infrastructure projects progressing faster than anticipated.
8. Under-expenditure reflecting actual expenses for this program that wound down in 2020-21.
9. Over-expenditure reflecting final costs associated with the program.
10. Under-expenditure reflecting delays in project approvals and projects not progressing as quickly as anticipated.
11. Over-expenditure reflecting one-time federal program to stimulate the economy in response to COVID-19.
12. Over-expenditure reflecting costs associated with transferring Licensing to the Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan.
13. Over-expenditure reflecting costs to provide disaster assistance to claimants for 2020 and prior year claim adjustments.
14. Over-expenditure reflecting support for the Conexus Arts Centre due to the loss of revenue from the COVID-19 pandemic.
15. Over-expenditure reflecting capital costs for leasehold improvements at 1855 Victoria Avenue and for the acquisition of the Subdivision Online Application System.

<i>In thousands of dollars</i>				
<b>Subvote/Subprogram</b>	<b>2020-21 Budget</b>	<b>2020-21 Actual</b>	<b>Variance Over/ (Under)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Central Management and Services (GR01)</b>	<b>8,010</b>	<b>10,189</b>	<b>2,179</b>	
Minister's Salary	51	51	0	
Executive Management	1,009	775	(234)	1
Central Services	5,190	7,825	2,635	2
Accommodations Services	1,760	1,538	(222)	3
<b>First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs (GR12)</b>	<b>49,173</b>	<b>53,007</b>	<b>3,834</b>	
First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs	3,638	3,098	(540)	1
Treaty Land Entitlement	335	3,759	3,424	4
First Nations and Métis Consultation Participation Fund	200	375	175	5
Métis Development Fund	-	-	-	
First Nations Gaming Agreements	-	775	775	6
Emergency Pandemic Support for First Nations and Métis Organizations	45,000	45,000	-	
<b>Municipal Relations (GR07)</b>	<b>628,327</b>	<b>672,771</b>	<b>44,444</b>	
Urban Revenue Sharing	178,260	177,789	(471)	
Rural Revenue Sharing	79,257	79,321	64	
Northern Revenue Sharing	20,579	20,546	(33)	
New Building Canada Fund	45,000	54,696	9,696	7
Clean Water and Wastewater Fund	597	445	(152)	8
Public Transit Infrastructure Fund	-	137	137	9
Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program	56,000	23,678	(32,322)	10
Transit Assistance for People with Disabilities	3,787	3,697	(90)	
Grants-in-Lieu of Property Taxes	13,900	13,657	(243)	
Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency	11,388	11,388	-	
Municipal Relations	6,898	6,500	(398)	1
Gas Tax Program	62,571	60,742	(1,829)	
Regional Planning Authorities	90	-	(90)	
Municipal Economic Enhancement Program	150,000	149,852	(148)	
Safe Restart Program	-	70,323	70,323	11
<b>Saskatchewan Municipal Board (GR06)</b>	<b>2,014</b>	<b>1,662</b>	<b>(352)</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Public Safety (GR11)</b>	<b>88,935</b>	<b>89,226</b>	<b>291</b>	
Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency	85,223	82,197	(3,026)	
Building Standards and Licensing	877	1,166	289	12
Provincial Disaster Assistance Program	2,835	5,863	3,028	13
<b>Provincial Capital Commission (GR14)</b>	<b>7,206</b>	<b>7,826</b>	<b>620</b>	
Provincial Capital Commission	7,206	7,206	-	
Saskatchewan Centre of the Arts	-	620	620	14
<b>Total Appropriation</b>	<b>783,665</b>	<b>834,681</b>	<b>51,016</b>	
Capital Asset Acquisitions	-	(362)	(362)	15
Capital Asset Amortization	130	40	(90)	
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>783,795</b>	<b>834,359</b>	<b>50,564</b>	

\*On November 9, 2020, the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program and Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency were reassigned to the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety.

## Summary of Revenues

The ministry's major revenue relates to Education Property Taxes (EPT) and agreements with the federal government. All revenue collected is deposited in the General Revenue Fund. A summary of the ministry's 2020-21 budgeted revenue compared to actual revenue is presented below. Explanations are provided for all variances that are greater than \$100,000.

### Explanation of Major Variances:

1. Increased revenue primarily reflecting increased mill rates and assessment base growth for residential and commercial properties.
2. Increased revenue reflecting higher than anticipated subdivision applications.
3. Reclassification of a portion of EPT revenue for trailer fees.
4. Increased revenue reflecting an increase to First Nation Gaming Agreements account receivables set up for overpayments of gaming payments identified with 2019-20 reconciliation and refunds to the General Revenue Fund, primarily for the PDAP and New Building Canada Fund, where actual amounts were lower than what was accrued in prior years.
5. Reclassification of a portion of EPT revenue to grants-in-lieu.
6. Decreased revenue reflecting projects not being approved as quickly as anticipated and progressing slower than anticipated.
7. Decreased revenue reflecting projects not progressing as quickly as anticipated.
8. Decreased revenue reflecting actuals for the completed program.

<i>In thousands of dollars</i>				
Revenue Category	2020-21 Budget	2020-21 Actual	Variance Over/ (Under)	Notes
<b>Property Taxes</b>	<b>639,600</b>	<b>645,551</b>	<b>5,951</b>	
Education Property Taxes	639,600	645,551	5,951	1
<b>Other Licences and Permits</b>	<b>729</b>	<b>1,470</b>	<b>741</b>	
Subdivision Fees	550	679	129	2
Licencing Fees	179	156	(23)	
Other Rental and Leases	-	635	635	3
<b>Sales, Services and Service Fees</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>31</b>	
Debenture Authorization	40	69	29	
Miscellaneous Services	5	5	-	
Other Service Fees	30	25	(5)	
Documentation, Searches and Legal Services	-	6	6	
Freedom of Information	-	1	1	
<b>Other Miscellaneous Revenue</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>20,883</b>	<b>20,883</b>	
Refunds – Previous Year's Expenditures	-	9,370	9,370	4
Casual/Other Revenue	-	11,513	11,513	5
<b>Other Federal/Provincial Agreements</b>	<b>109,217</b>	<b>86,374</b>	<b>(22,843)</b>	
Gas Tax Program	62,571	62,571	-	
Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program	34,573	13,561	(21,012)	6
New Building Canada Fund	11,626	9,838	(1,788)	7
Clean Water and Wastewater Fund	447	244	(203)	8
Public Transit Infrastructure Fund	-	76	76	
Disaster Mitigation Assessment Reimbursement	-	84	84	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>749,621</b>	<b>754,384</b>	<b>4,763</b>	