

Business Plan

2023-24

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 2023-24.

Relationships are key to the Ministry of Government Relations' work in 2023-24 as we focus on improving quality of life in the province.

The ministry's relationship with municipalities ensures people live in safe and well-governed communities supporting economic growth. Our government is working in partnership with First Nation and Métis communities to build a thriving economy that benefits all people in Saskatchewan. We are honouring our commitment to advance economic reconciliation and strengthen First Nation and Métis participation in a growing economy.

Our connection to the Provincial Capital Commission, which includes Wascana Centre and Government House, inspires pride and fosters connections to Saskatchewan's capital city.

I have every confidence that, by working with our partners at all levels of government, our shared values and priorities will guide us towards a brighter future for Saskatchewan people. The key actions in this Business Plan will allow the ministry to proceed with dedication, determination and a commitment to excellence as we lay the foundations to strengthen our economy and communities across the province.

The ministry will report on progress made toward these key actions in our 2023-24 Annual Report.



2023-24 Budget Highlights

<p>1</p>	<p>\$298 million in record funding for unconditional municipality grants through the Municipal Revenue Sharing program. This fulfills the Government of Saskatchewan’s commitment to develop a predictable and sustainable revenue stream for municipalities.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>\$346.6 million to support community infrastructure projects through federal-provincial and federal-only programs. These projects grow our economy and improve quality of life for Saskatchewan residents.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>\$92.4 million in gaming grant payments to First Nations and Métis organizations to support Indigenous-led social and economic initiatives in Saskatchewan.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>\$100,000 for a pilot project to test automation and remote supervision of boiler installations that may inform future legislative amendments to reduce red tape and increase competitiveness of Saskatchewan industries.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>\$92,000 to develop resources and encourage shared service delivery strategies, including municipal district incorporation, to help Saskatchewan communities meet their legislative responsibilities.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>\$100,000 to develop an alternative compliance model for building permitting and inspections to streamline construction and encourage investment in the province.</p>

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 2023-24 annual reports.

Ministry of Government Relations Overview

Mandate

The Ministry of Government Relations is responsible for municipal relations; building and technical standards; 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.

Mission

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

Goal 1: Citizens live in safe and well-governed 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 including measures that improve the property tax and assessment system and tax fairness.
- Develop and distribute information and materials for building owners, industry, municipalities, building officials and other code users to ensure a smooth transition to *The Construction Codes Act* and adoption of the 2020 building, energy and plumbing codes.
- Implement a pilot project to test the automation and remote supervision of a boiler plant used in the agricultural sector.
- Develop the Alternative Compliance Model for Building Permits and Inspections to make it easier for investors to build large projects quickly while maintaining public safety.
- Work with industry and the Technical Safety Association of Saskatchewan to modernize and streamline gas and electrical safety legislation and regulations.
- Protect people and properties 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.
- Monitor three newly established initiatives: the Assessment Appeals Registrar, board of revision training and certification, and centralized board of revision to achieve fairer, consistent and effective property assessment appeal hearings.
- Engage stakeholders to develop meaningful and appropriate municipal public accounts requirements.
- Review program requirements compliance for provincially administered community grants.

- Train the municipal sector on public sector accounting standards for 2023-24.
- Review *The Subdivision Regulations, 2014* for improvements to facilitate economic growth in Saskatchewan.

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

Improve essential community infrastructure, services and strategies to attract investment.

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.
- Allocate \$1.5 million in the Targeted Sector Support Initiative with municipal associations to encourage inter-community collaboration, help build capacity, and promote good governance.
- 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 the creation of municipal districts and other forms of voluntary municipal restructuring.
- Negotiate with federal partners the renewal of infrastructure funding programs.
- Strengthen regional planning by supporting existing districts through education and training materials and encourage continued intermunicipal cooperation and partnerships.
- Review the Northern Capital Grants program to improve discretionary capital funding support for northern municipalities.

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.

Goal 2: First Nations and Métis fully share in Saskatchewan's benefits and opportunities

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

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

Engage First Nation and Métis communities and government partners 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.
- Connect northern communities to the mining industry through the Northern Saskatchewan Environmental Quality Committee and employment and business initiatives.
- Support and advise government ministries, Crowns and agencies on Indigenous engagement, priorities and opportunities.

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

Respond to priorities identified by First Nation and Métis leaders.

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

- Invest in and support initiatives through the First Nation and Métis Sponsorships and Community Partnership 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 for youth leadership, 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*

- Revise the *First Nation and Métis Consultation Policy Framework*. Manage the First Nation and Métis Consultation Participation Fund, which supports First Nation and Métis communities to consult with government on potential adverse impacts on Aboriginal and Treaty rights to hunt, fish and trap food or to carry out traditional uses of lands and resources on arising actions or decisions on unoccupied Crown land or other land where First Nations and Métis have a right of access for these purposes.

- Continue to 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 modernize approaches to improve First Nation land claim acquisition processes to deliver on the province’s legal obligations.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

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

- Number of engagements providing expertise on northern resource management to partners and clients, including community representatives, industry and regulators.

Respond to priorities identified by First Nation and Métis leaders.

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

Honouring government’s commitments

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

Goal 3: The Government Relations team demonstrates the 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 technology 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 implement the mandatory Indigenous Awareness training for ministry staff to increase understanding of the history and culture 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 ministry 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.

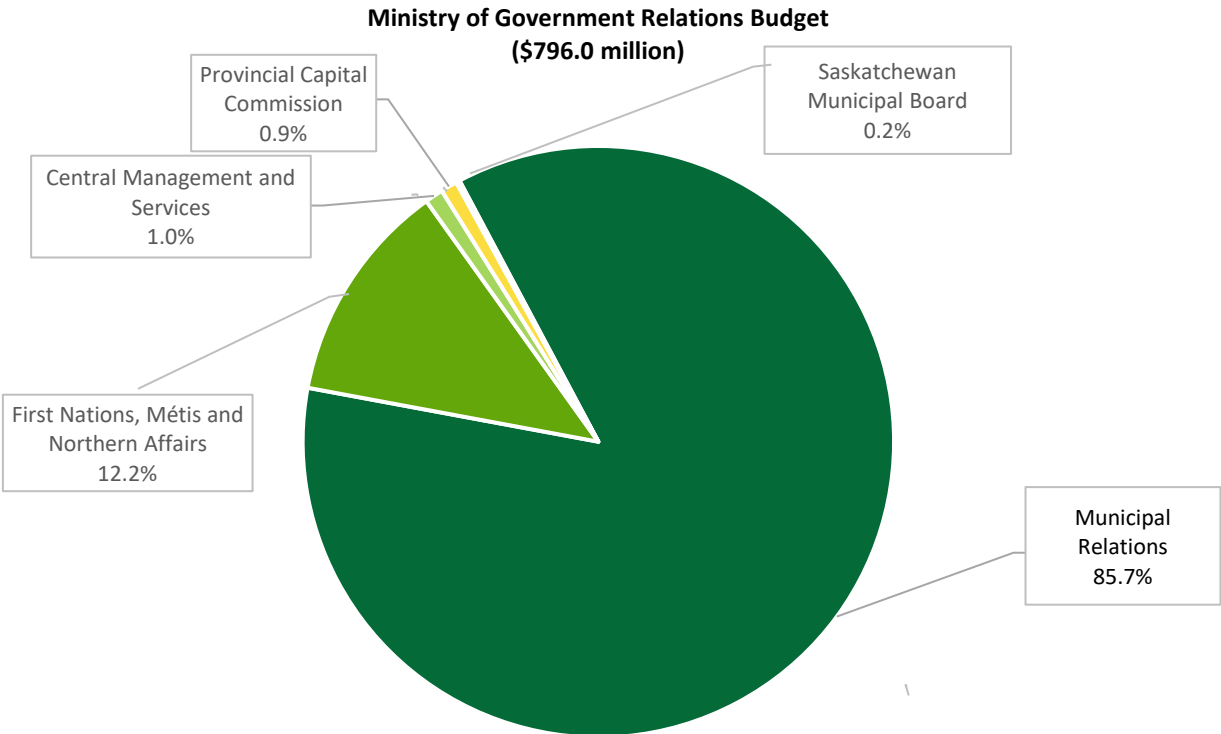
Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

High performing team

- Percentage of staff participating in learning and development opportunities.
- Percentage of staff who have undergone the Indigenous Awareness training.
- Increase engagement scores for the ministry's Employee Engagement and Culture Survey.

Financial Summary

Ministry of Government Relations 2023-24 Estimates	(in thousands of dollars)
Central Management and Services	\$7,579
Saskatchewan Municipal Board	\$1,886
Municipal Relations	\$682,017
First Nations, Métis, and Northern Affairs	\$97,182
Provincial Capital Commission	\$7,274
Total Appropriation	\$795,938
Non-Appropriated Expense Adjustment	100
Total Expense	\$796,038



Links to More Information

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