

## Standing Committee on Finance (FINA)

### Pre-budget consultations 2012

## The City of Red Deer

### Responses

#### 1. Economic Recovery and Growth

*Given the current climate of federal and global fiscal restraint, what specific federal measures do you feel are needed for a sustained economic recovery and enhanced economic growth in Canada?*

Municipalities are key drivers in economic sustainability. We are responsible for creating the infrastructure and the quality of life amenities that create sustainable communities and attract new business and investment. We congratulate The Government of Canada on working with municipalities through a series of national roundtables to develop the next phase of infrastructure programs that will be key in leveraging this important economic driver. As our community continues to grow and we strive to build a sustainable community there are many opportunities for us to partner with the federal government and we hope this new program as setting the stage for this new partnership. The City of Red Deer will be considering a motion at its upcoming meeting to support the FCM 2013 campaign around a comprehensive national infrastructure program that asks the Government of Canada to

- Establish a broad based fund that supports existing infrastructure deficits and responds to the shortfall in new infrastructure funding; and
- To change the existing definition of infrastructure to include all quality of life facilities a community may determine is appropriate; and
- Not specify a specific delivery model; and
- Is supportive of local priorities across the country.

#### 2. Job Creation

*As Canadian companies face pressures resulting from such factors as uncertainty about the U.S. economic recovery, a sovereign debt crisis in Europe, and competition from a number of developed and developing countries, what specific federal actions do you believe should be taken to promote job creation in Canada, including that which occurs as a result of enhanced internal and international trade?*

As a municipality we are working on initiatives and programs with community partners to ensure we are considered a welcoming and inclusive community. We hope this makes Red Deer an attractive place for people considering immigrating to Canada and an alternative to some of the larger centers. Programs that support recent immigrants to Canada settle in our community would assist us in attracting immigrants. After a significant break we recently had a citizenship ceremony in Red Deer and would like to see this practice of having ceremonies here restarted. As the third largest city in Alberta this confirms to new Canadians we are a service centre and a place to call home.

#### 3. Demographic Change

*What specific federal measures do you think should be implemented to help the country address the consequences of, and challenges associated with, the aging of the Canadian population and of skills shortages?*

No comment

#### **4. Productivity**

*With labour market challenges arising in part as a result of the aging of Canada's population and an ongoing focus on the actions needed for competitiveness, what specific federal initiatives are needed in order to increase productivity in Canada?*

no comment

#### **5. Other Challenges**

*With some Canadian individuals, businesses and communities facing particular challenges at this time, in your view, who is facing the most challenges, what are the challenges that are being faced and what specific federal actions are needed to address these challenges?*

We are encouraged by the Government's recent initiative on municipal infrastructure and encourage the Government of Canada in working with municipalities in encouraging sustainable economic activity in our communities. Red Deer is facing challenges as a growing urban centre on the significant economic corridor from Calgary to Edmonton. Some of our community needs are around: • ensuring there is long term and properly funded affordable housing strategy • a national transportation strategy that includes high speed rail corridors, regional and urban public transit to facilitate the movement of people and goods in a sustainable manner. • a national infrastructure program that is comprehensive and non-competitive, recognizing local priorities. As a municipality we have responsibly managed and maintained our core infrastructure for projects such as water and waste water but would like to see project funding for quality of life projects such as arts or recreation centres that our city requires. These projects are as important as core infrastructure in attracting new businesses, investment and individuals to our city.