

2009 Speech from the Throne Response

Edmonton, Alberta

Wednesday, February 18, 2009

Check against delivery

Hope and encouragement. These were the messages outlined in this year's Speech from the Throne.

The speech included plans to help Albertans meet the challenges of tough times and lay the foundation for future growth.

The Government of Alberta recognizes that times of economic uncertainty puts pressure on Albertans. We understand these challenges and are committed to working with Albertans to provide the necessary leadership to support them through such times.

In times like these, Albertans turn to their neighbours and communities for support. So, it goes without saying, that our communities must be strong; now, more than ever.

The Premier has stated his firm belief that strong municipalities are the key ingredient to strong communities. This shapes my ministry in everything we do.

Alberta is blessed to be made up of vibrant, inclusive communities. They are truly places to be envied.

They are places of opportunity, culture, and belonging, and places where citizens are supported, cared for, and feel safe. Above all, they are places that Albertans can be proud to call home.

To foster these strong communities throughout the province, the Government of Alberta remains committed to supporting municipalities through the Municipal Sustainability Initiative.

This initiative delivers on the Premier's commitment to build strong communities.

The funding is having a real impact to help our communities plan for the future. Throughout our great province, Albertans are enjoying the benefits of the Municipal Sustainability Initiative.

They are seeing new roads, recreational facilities, fire halls, and libraries.

And I need to emphasize the critical role libraries play in well-being our communities.

Especially in tough times, they are connectors to new jobs, and help new generations of Albertans become literate.

In addition to promoting strong communities, my ministry is committed to ensuring Albertans are safe and secure.

New building and fire codes are being finalized that reach a balance between safety, affordability, and technically sound practices.

These will buy time when there is a fire - for people to get out of their homes and for firefighters to respond.

We also know that training these first responders is a critical component of our emergency response system.

We need and we will support these volunteers who play an important role in our community.

Albertans will always need strong communities – and will continue to look to them for support.

My top priority is to ensure we have strong, sustainable municipalities to allow strong communities to thrive.

This is a priority for our premier, for my ministry, and for the Government of Alberta – today, and in the future.