



**For Immediate Release**

## News Release

### Town of Edson responds to update from the Government of Canada on the issue of retroactive RCMP costs

**Edson, Alberta, April 5, 2023** – Council has responded to the federal government’s disappointing decision to pass unbudgeted and unaccounted for costs on to municipalities.

Despite months of municipal advocacy led by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), provincial-territorial associations and local leaders across Canada, the federal government has indicated in the most recent federal budget it will not be meeting the request to absorb the retroactive costs associated with the latest RCMP collective bargaining agreement.

Tuesday’s budget further confirmed that communities across Canada that are dependent on RCMP services for local policing, including Edson, are expected to cover these costs—a decision falling well short of the call from municipalities to fully absorb the costs.

*“Edson Council is deeply disappointed with the federal government’s decision to offload more costs on Canadian municipalities, at a time when they are confronting historic financial challenges due to the infrastructure deficit and other issues.*

*To be clear, Edson fully supports the RCMP; we receive incredible service and community consultation from our local detachment and believe in fair compensation for members. The problem arises when another level of government independently negotiates agreements which have major impacts on municipalities, with no stakeholder consultation and a refusal to share costs. This fails to demonstrate a commitment to respectful relations with Canada’s municipalities.”*

*-Edson Mayor Kevin Zahara*

Local governments were not at the table for these negotiations. The cost to the Town of Edson associated with these retroactive payments is expected to be \$493,658.74.

This decision is an example of a federal commitment that deeply impacts municipalities, without municipalities being properly consulted or involved. Municipal governments are paying a growing share of policing costs, but they cannot run deficits and have limited revenue tools. FCM has clearly reiterated the need for municipalities to be actively involved in any future processes regarding contract policing, calling this recent decision unacceptable. This is a position supported in full by the Town of Edson.

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