

# Preparing for your MLA meeting

Being an elected Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) can be a very busy job so although they are keen to meet with you, you may only get 15 to 30 minutes of their time.

Don't be concerned if they seem distracted – they are.

They are constantly being lobbied by all corners of society as government is big and regulates a lot of business.

Meetings with MLAs to date reveal that they have very little insights into the highway program and how it is managed. They are not aware of the amount of budget cuts over the last 15 years. (Maintenance is down 30% from 2010 once inflation is accounted for.)

They and their constituents do see the change and MLAs are feeling the heat over road conditions and bridge restrictions.

Your MLA is not privy to any more information explaining the capital program and condition of highways than we are. They too are frustrated. They may ask for help in lobbying for a project in the constituency.

Perhaps the most important message to convey is that the whole system has need and big change is necessary or they will only get unfulfilled promises.

Having only a short amount of time it is important that you try not to get trapped down a rabbit hole.

The most common is to debate some “quick win” solution that really isn't and requires a lot of explanation.

We have proposed solutions but face daunting challenges of the Red Tape of internal government processes being the twin tyrannies of:

1. micro financial control by central entities that are removed from the business
2. culture of risk aversion and willful blindness to the impacts on costs.

The objective of your meeting is to raise awareness of the magnitude of the problems we face and that they need serious policy attention. Only when they understand the magnitude of the problem will they be really interested in diving deep into solutions.

Invite them out to see a project, meet your employees, come to a BBQ or an ARHCA golf game. We want to help them so let's keep the conversation going.

# Alberta's Highways, Rural Roads and Bridges - 2026

## Key Messages for Alberta MLAs (Refer to Slide Deck)

- Good Roads Cost Less – timely repair avoids expensive reconstruction.
- Budgets for services like healthcare have risen dramatically over the last 15 years while maintenance and rehabilitation programs have been cut.
- Transportation funding to Rural Municipalities (Counties and MDs) has been cut by 75% since 2010.
- Alberta is spending far less than needed and spending less efficiently.
- Systemic problems need comprehensive reforms to create transparency, accountability and certainty.
- Pavement conditions are degrading and thousands of bridges need work.
- Constraints on TEC budgets and portfolio management is killing productivity in procurement and delivery – internal **Red Tape** is costing taxpayers more. Until you change policy you will continue to get less for more.
- For example, in last 5 years, TEC was unable to get \$991 million of budgets actually tendered out. That is 20% left on the table - nearly one full year of budget not used.
- Industry needs certainty to justify investing in people and equipment.
- Contractors need a reliable multi-year pipeline with reliable funding commitments.
- Contractors are reducing their investment in Alberta, selling out or just winding up.
- **Capacity is being reduced in response to government cutbacks.**
- History will be repeated: return of funding will be too late; costs will escalate; the bleeding will take years to be stopped and reversed.
- Taxpayers will see continued deterioration in both highways and bridges.
- Alberta needs to use a business approach to run an asset management business.
- Industry is ready to offer Government solutions.
- Please listen to industry.