

2005 - 06

Quick Facts

- First budget in 12 years that did not have to commit resources to debt reduction, as Alberta eliminated its debt in 2004-05.
- Alberta recorded a surplus for the twelfth consecutive year. The **\$8.7 billion surplus** was primarily committed to meeting infrastructure requirements and savings.
- **\$2.7 billion** was deposited in the Heritage Fund and other endowments, including the new advanced education endowment.
- **Revenue was \$35.9 billion**, \$6.3 billion higher than in 2004-05, due primarily to record non-renewable resource revenue, which reached \$14.3 billion.
- **Expense was \$27.2 billion**, \$2.9 billion higher than in 2004-05. The increase was mainly due to higher municipal infrastructure support, health and education spending, and natural gas rebates.
- The **Capital Plan** supported **\$3.7 billion** in capital projects, an increase of 31.7% from 2004-05, making Alberta's per capita spending on infrastructure about three times the average of other provinces. This included:
 - \$1.1 billion for municipal infrastructure support;
 - \$769 million for provincial highways;
 - \$631 million for health facilities and equipment;
 - \$434 million for school projects and post-secondary facilities;
 - \$794 million for other support including centennial projects, housing, and water infrastructure.
- **Education expense was \$6.9 billion**, an 8.4% increase from 2004-05. The basic education system benefited from increased funding to hire 435 teachers in the 2005-06 school year to reduce class sizes and retain the 1,250 teachers hired in the previous year. Support for post-secondary facilities was increased by 13.9%.
- **Health expense was \$9.7 billion**, a 7.2% increase from 2004-05, reflecting higher funding for health services, physician services, prescription drug costs, and information technology systems.
- **\$2.7 billion** was provided for social services, including increases of 23% for AISH and 27% for seniors benefits.
- Albertans and Alberta businesses continued to pay the **lowest overall provincial taxes in Canada**, and **\$1.3 billion** was provided to Albertans through the *Alberta 2005 Resource Rebate*.
- Alberta's **economy grew by an estimated 4.5%** in 2005, outperforming every other province for the second consecutive year. The province also had the **lowest unemployment rate** and the **highest personal disposable income per capita** among the provinces.

Measuring Up Highlights

As part of the government's commitment to being open and accountable, 2005-06 Measuring Up reports the outcomes of various performance measures and strategies established under the 14 goals in the 2005-08 Government of Alberta Business Plan, published as part of Budget 2005.

- » 65% of Albertans surveyed rated the overall health system as excellent or good.
Target: 65%
- » 78% of Albertans rated their access to physician services as easy or very easy.
Target: 85%
- » 78% of all students in Grade 9 achieved the acceptable standard on Provincial Achievement Tests in Language Arts.
Target: 81%
- » High school completion rate for Albertans aged 25-34 was 91%.
Target: 90% or higher
- » 87% of Albertans aged 25-34 with a post-secondary diploma or certificate were employed.
Target: 88%
- » 79% of Albertans were satisfied that most adult Albertans are able to access the education or training they want.
Target: 73%
- » 95% of schools and 90% of post-secondary facilities were estimated to be in fair or good physical condition.
Target: 95% and 86%
- » Sponsored research at Alberta universities increased by 11.4% to \$650.5 million in the past year, and has almost doubled since 2000.
Target: \$606 million
- » Albertans had the highest average personal disposable income per capita among the provinces.
- » Alberta had the lowest total provincial and municipal tax load among the provinces.
- » Alberta's three-year average growth rate (real GDP) was 4.0%, the highest among the provinces.
- » Total goods exported grew by 18.5% to an estimated \$79.2 billion in 2005.
- » 98.5% of visitors were satisfied with their experiences at provincial historic sites, museums, and interpretive centres.
Target: 99%