

A Synopsis of Budget 2001 and  
the 2001-2004 Alberta Government Business Plan



# THE FUTURE

MEETING PRIORITIES SHARING BENEFITS

Budget 2001

Synopsis



## MINISTER'S MESSAGE

In Budget 2001, the Klein government is focused on meeting the priorities Albertans have set for us and sharing the benefits of our prosperous economy.

Albertans said their priorities are:

- a debt-free future,
- the lowest overall taxes in Canada,
- a strong and healthy economy,
- access to a high-quality health system, and
- a leading-edge education system.

We are meeting these priorities and Albertans are seeing the benefits. For example:

- If resource revenues remain high, the debt could be eliminated sooner than expected. We are currently nine years ahead of the 25-year legislated requirement.
- Albertans enjoy the highest disposable incomes in Canada and Alberta has the lowest unemployment rate.
- Our province also has the best-educated workforce in Canada and among the highest life expectancies in the world.

As your government, we will continue to look at new and better ways of providing programs and services that meet your priorities and allow all Albertans to share the benefits. We will continue to enhance the quality of life of Albertans, while keeping our budget balanced and spending within our means.

We will also continue to be accountable to Albertans by setting goals and targets in our business plans and reporting on our performance.

This synopsis of Budget 2001 highlights the strengths of the Alberta Advantage for the coming three years.

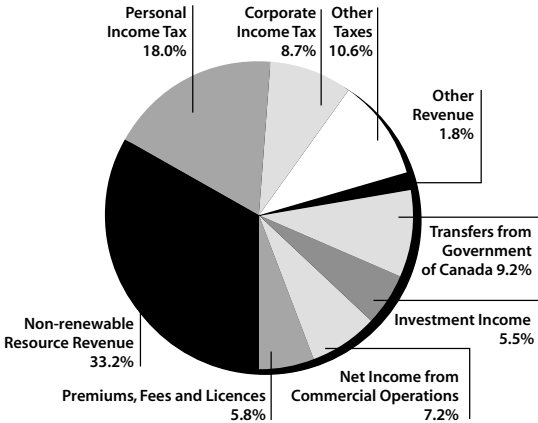
Patricia L. Nelson  
*Minister of Finance*

## PART A THE FISCAL PLAN

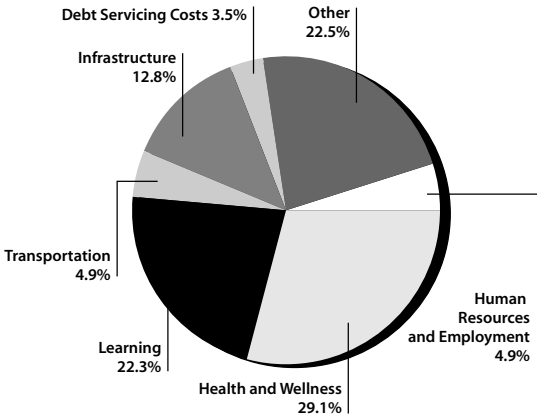
Budget 2001 is broken into two sections: the Government's Fiscal Plan and the Government's Business Plan. Part A of this brochure is a summary of the Fiscal Plan, in which we outline Alberta's:

- Fiscal Advantage – Albertans and their children will be freed from the burden of provincial debt.
- Tax Advantage – Albertans will continue to pay the lowest overall taxes in Canada.
- Economic Advantage – Alberta will continue to have a business climate that attracts investment and creates new jobs.
- Quality of Life – Albertans will continue to have a high quality of life.

## Revenue



## Expense



Total revenue for 2001-02 is budgeted at \$22.7 billion with total expense budgeted at \$21.6 billion. After deducting the \$274 million net increase in capital assets, the economic cushion is budgeted at \$817 million.

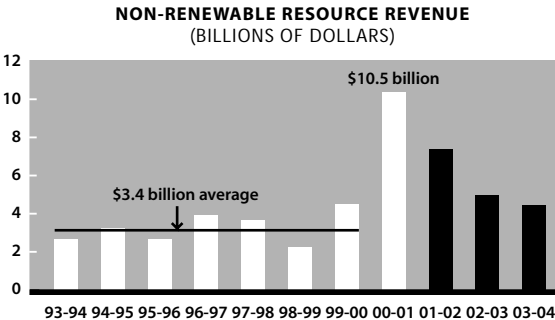
## ALBERTA'S FISCAL ADVANTAGE

Alberta's fiscal success since 1993 has been guided by five basic principles. The Klein government will continue to follow these sensible rules. As required by the *Fiscal Responsibility Act* and the *Government Accountability Act*:

- Budgets will be balanced every year.
- Debt will be repaid.
- Revenue forecasts will be prudent.
- Spending plans will be affordable.
- The government will be open and accountable to Albertans.

## Managing Revenue Volatility

An ongoing challenge for Alberta is budgeting and planning in the face of revenue volatility. In 1998-99, the oil price was US \$13.70 per barrel and the natural gas price was Cdn \$1.98 per thousand cubic feet. Last year, oil averaged US \$30.20 and natural gas averaged Cdn \$6.07. That resulted in a swing of over \$8 billion in resource revenue over just two years, from \$2.4 billion to \$10.5 billion.



The current spike in resource revenue has created high expectations about what the government can afford to do. However, past experience has shown that energy prices can go down as quickly as they have gone up. The government will continue its successful approach to managing revenue volatility.

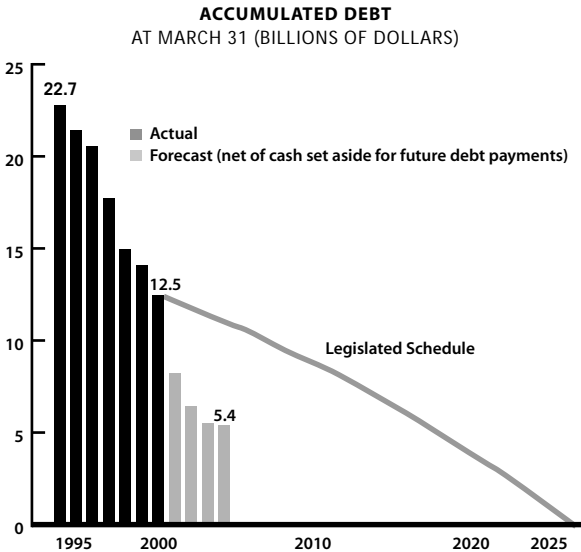
- Revenue will continue to be forecast on a prudent basis
- An economic cushion will be set aside to protect against revenue uncertainties
- Clear distinctions will be made between what tax cuts and spending are affordable over the longer-term and what can be afforded only on a one-time basis.

Budget 2001 forecasts oil at US\$25 per barrel and natural gas at Cdn\$5.03 per thousand cubic feet for 2001-02, declining to US \$21 for oil and Cdn \$3.44 for natural gas over the following two years.

## Creating a Debt-Free Alberta

Alberta could soon be debt-free. Over the four years from 2000-01 until 2003-04, debt will be paid down by \$7.1 billion. By March 31, 2004 the debt will fall to \$5.4 billion.

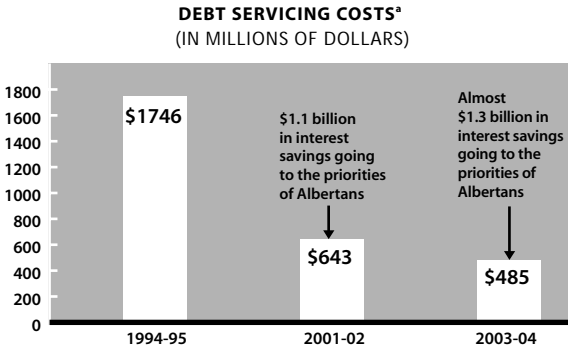
The projected debt paydown puts us nine years ahead of the legislated 25-year schedule. But if energy prices remain at the high levels projected by some private sector analysts, the debt could be completely eliminated by 2004.





## Debt servicing costs

As debt is repaid, interest costs on the debt decline. The net costs of servicing the debt are expected to decline from the peak of \$1.75 billion in 1994-95 to \$643 million in 2001-02.



<sup>a</sup> Net of interest earned on debt retirement funds

By 2003-04, net debt servicing costs are expected to drop to about \$485 million, almost \$1.3 billion less than in 1994-95. These interest savings free up money permanently for Albertans' priorities.

### ***It's Your Money Survey***

With the possibility of eliminating our debt in just two or three years, the government decided it was the right time to ask Albertans what their priorities will be when Alberta is debt free through the *It's Your Money* survey.

Albertans' opinions were clear. They said their top priority will be putting money back in their pockets through permanent tax reductions and one-time rebates. There was also support for saving some money for the future in years of exceptionally high revenue after the debt is repaid.

## ALBERTA'S TAX ADVANTAGE

In Budget 2001, Alberta's tax advantage rewards initiative, spurs economic growth and job creation, and leaves more dollars in Albertans' pockets.

Our tax advantages include:

- the lowest overall tax burden in Canada,
- no provincial sales tax,
- a new single-rate personal income tax system with cuts for Albertans at all income levels,
- low business taxes with more cuts planned for the coming years, and
- low property taxes,
- the lowest fuel taxes in Canada.

**It is anticipated that, by 2006, the combined effects of the personal and business tax cuts will increase the size of Alberta's economy by 3.2% or \$4.3 billion. That should produce over 40,000 new jobs for Albertans.**

### **Personal Income Tax**

Over the last eight years, the government has done a lot to strengthen the Alberta Tax Advantage. The beginning of this year saw the implementation of more than a billion dollars in cuts to personal income taxes. Albertans in every income group benefit from the reductions.

For example:

- In 2001, a one-income family earning \$30,000 with two children will pay almost 80% less in provincial taxes and health care insurance premiums than a similar family would pay, on average, in other provinces.
- Two-income families earning \$60,000 or \$100,000 with two children will both pay close to 40% less than similar families would pay, on average, in other provinces.

### **Business Tax Cuts**

Business taxes are also being cut. As part of a four-year plan to reduce business taxes in Alberta by \$1 billion, the government has cut the taxes Alberta business pays by \$286 million this year. Corporate income tax rates are being cut for all businesses, large and small, starting April 1, 2001.

## School Property Taxes

In addition to business and personal tax cuts, school property taxes have also been reduced. On January 1, school property taxes were cut by \$135 million to \$1.2 billion and frozen at this level for future years. The reduction will not result in a reduction in education spending – instead, a greater share of education costs will come from other government revenues.

### A DECADE OF TAX CUTS, 1994-2004 (MILLIONS OF DOLLARS)

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#### Savings for Individuals

Personal Income Tax	2,328
Alberta Family Employment Tax Credit	80
School Property Tax on Residential & Farm Properties	341
Savings for Individuals	2,749

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#### Savings for Business

Corporate Income Tax	956
Financial Institutions Capital Tax	40
School Property Tax on Business	247
School Property Tax on Machinery and Equipment	230
Aviation Fuel Tax	29
Railway Fuel Tax	19
Savings for Business	1,521

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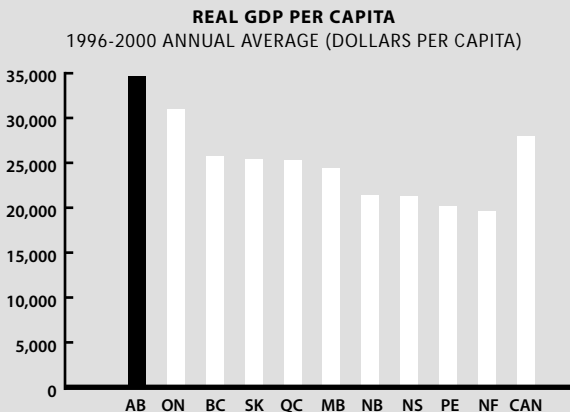
**Total Savings for Individuals and Business**      **4,270**

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*The difference in tax that would be paid in 2004 under the 1994 tax system and the amount that will be paid under the 2004 system when all cuts are phased in.*

## ALBERTA'S ECONOMIC ADVANTAGE

High energy prices led to a strong rebound in the energy sector in 2000. This helped Alberta's economy grow by an impressive 6.1% in 2000, the fastest growth among provinces. Continued strong economic growth of 4.8% is expected in 2001, spurred by personal and business tax cuts.



**The strong economic growth in 2000 reflected more than just a booming energy sector. Over the last eight years, Alberta's economy has become more diversified and less susceptible to volatile commodity price fluctuations. In 1985, the energy sector accounted for 37% of Alberta's GDP. In 1999, it accounts for just 21%.**

### **Energy Costs**

Albertans and Alberta businesses are receiving nearly \$4.3 billion in assistance with the higher-than-normal energy costs being felt across North America. The money for assistance programs is coming from the recent electricity auctions and some of the government's record resource revenues. These programs are providing a typical Alberta family with \$1,680 in energy cost assistance.

Through legislation, the government will continue to provide rebates on monthly natural gas bills when assistance is needed to help protect Albertans from high prices. This budget has set aside an additional \$125 million for potential continued shielding this year.

### **Agriculture**

Budget 2001 includes funding to provide urgently needed support this spring to agriculture producers across the province. As well, recommendations from the Crop Insurance Review will be implemented for the 2001 and 2002 crop years.

## Infrastructure

Since January 1997, close to 137,000 people have moved to Alberta to be a part of the Alberta Advantage. On top of the ongoing base budgets of over \$1 billion a year, an additional \$4.2 billion of one-time accelerated funding has been allocated to meet infrastructure needs from 2000-01 to 2003-04. In total, \$8.4 billion will be allocated over those four years for projects including:

- roads and public transit,
- construction of new health facilities and updating and expanding existing health facilities, including two new centres of excellence in cardiac, and bone and joint care,
- assistance with two new health research innovation centres,
- new schools, school modernizations and renovations,
- new post-secondary buildings, and upgrading and renovating existing facilities,
- water and wastewater facilities, including municipal projects, dam refurbishment and improvements to the irrigation network in southern Alberta,
- the Alberta SUPERNET, which will provide high-speed Internet services to 420 communities across the province, connecting every school, hospital, library and government facility, and
- the new Infrastructure Canada/Alberta Program with municipalities.

## ALBERTANS' QUALITY OF LIFE SHARING THE BENEFITS

The government can take advantage of short-term revenue spikes to accelerate debt payment, and fund energy shielding, agriculture support and infrastructure on a short-term basis. However, ongoing base spending increases must be affordable within longer-term base revenue growth that averages about 4% per year.

Alberta is increasing base spending by 13.4%, or \$2.3 billion, over the next three years, including a 6.3%, or \$1.1 billion, increase in 2001-02.

These spending increases are going primarily toward health and education, but also to strengthen communities, protect the environment, and support seniors, children and others with special needs.

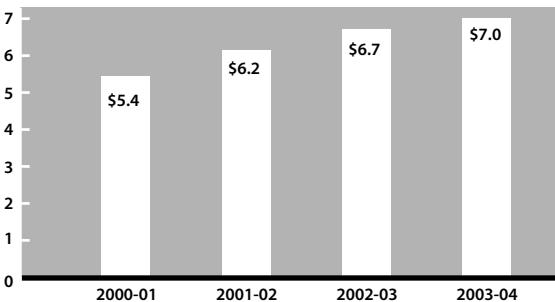


## Health and Wellness

In 2001-02, Health and Wellness will spend over \$17 million a day, every day on health care. Base spending by the ministry will increase by \$737 million, or 13.5% in 2001-02 and by \$1.5 billion, or 28.1%, over the next three years. \$390 million is being provided in 2001-02 for salary increases for physicians, nurses and other health workers, growing to \$835 million by 2003-04. The remaining funding increases of \$347 million, or 6.4%, in 2001-02 and \$694 million, or 12.7%, over the next three years will fund services including:

- organ and bone marrow transplants, major heart surgeries, and kidney dialysis,
- recruiting and retaining more physicians,
- increasing residency positions for rural family medicine,
- more MRI scans,
- expanding immunization programs,
- more high-cost drugs in treating cancer,
- enhancing the Breast Cancer Screening program,
- enhancing the Tobacco Reduction Initiative, and
- expanding children's health initiatives.

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS<sup>a</sup>**  
(BILLIONS OF DOLLARS)



<sup>a</sup> Base spending, excludes one-time spending

## Learning

In 2001-02, Alberta will spend over \$13 million a day, every day on Learning. Program spending by Learning will increase by \$343 million, or 7.7%, in 2001-02 and \$854 million, or 19.1%, over the next three years.

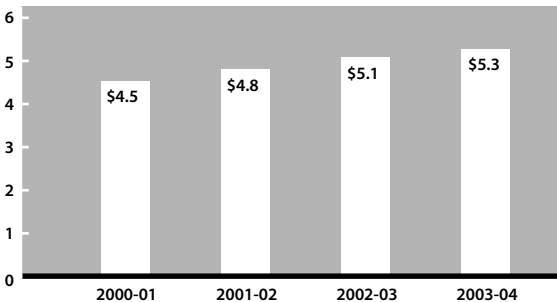
School boards will receive more money for:

- enrollment increases,
- teacher salary increases,
- per student operating grants for classroom priorities such as class sizes, and
- students with severe disabilities.

Post-secondary institutions will receive increases to:

- create 1,200 new post-secondary student spaces each year over the next three years in areas including health, business, teacher education, and information and communication technology,
- expand the number of apprenticeship spaces,
- increase base operational funding,
- address past funding inequities, and
- attract and retain top-notch faculty in critical areas such as medicine, computer science, engineering and business.

**LEARNING**  
(BILLIONS OF DOLLARS)



This government believes that financial need should not be a barrier to post-secondary education. With these significant spending increases, it is expected that post-secondary institutions will limit tuition increases. In addition, the government will provide students with over \$70 million through the Alberta student loan remission program in 2001-02. Funding for scholarship programs will increase by 43% to \$33 million by 2003-04.

## **Children**

Children's Services is receiving an increase of \$105 million, or 18%, over the next three years to support children at risk and respond to the recommendations of the Alberta Children's Forum and the Task Force on Children at Risk. Some of the major initiatives include:

- expansion of outreach services, and treatment and prevention programs to support the amended Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution Act,
- increased funding for the Alberta Partnership on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, and
- new programs focused on early intervention strategies and troubled youth.

## **Seniors**

Additional money will be spent to ensure seniors have access to the supports they need to live as independently as possible in a secure and dignified way, including:

- an increase of \$15 million over three years for lower-income seniors through the Alberta Seniors Benefit and Special Needs Assistance for Seniors programs, and
- funding to support 300 new seniors' lodge units each year for the next three years.

## **Support for those in Need**

More money for Albertans in need includes:

- an increase of \$54 million, or 18%, over the next three years for the Alberta Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) to support growing demand and costs per client,
- a 50% increase to \$18.7 million in 2001-02 for family and special purpose housing providers to assist with maintenance and operating costs, and
- \$13 million per year to address homelessness.

## **Protecting the Environment**

In our effort to preserve Alberta's pristine environment:

- in 2001-02, \$70 million has been allocated to address problems with underground petroleum storage tank sites, in addition to the \$10 million allocated in 2000-01,
- \$8.4 million has been allocated to determine the effects of air emissions on animal health, and
- Health and Wellness is contributing funds to a parallel study on human health effects.

## **Strengthening Communities**

- Increase provincial funding to the RCMP by \$16.4 million in 2001-02, and by \$24.5 million by 2003-04, to ensure an effective level of policing services in smaller communities and rural areas.
- Increase spending by \$4.7 million in 2001-02, and by \$7.4 million by 2003-04, to improve the legal aid system and ensure more low-income Albertans have access to it.
- Up to \$10 million will be provided in 2001-02 for the 2001 World Championships in Athletics to be held in Edmonton in August. This brings total provincial funding to up to \$40 million.

## PART B THE BUSINESS PLAN

Part B of this brochure is a synopsis of the 2001 to 2004 Alberta Government Business Plan. It is another way the provincial government is accountable to the people of Alberta. Business plans help government meet Albertans' priorities and share with them the benefits of the Alberta Advantage by setting goals based on the values of Albertans.

**The provincial government's success is based on meeting the priorities of its citizens. The job of government is to ensure that those priorities are reflected in its programs and services, and that the benefits reach all Albertans.**

Albertans value:

- Independence – making our own choices and finding our own paths, free of discrimination and unnecessary impediments.
- Innovation – trying new ideas and finding new ways of doing things.
- People – ensuring that all members of society, especially the most vulnerable, can participate fully in the life of the province.
- Fiscal Responsibility – living within our means, and making wise choices that reflect our needs and priorities.

Addressing these priorities is the focus of the government's 2001-04 business plan. The government's efforts will concentrate on:

- improving health care,
- striving for excellence in education,
- continuing the tradition of wise fiscal management and low taxes,
- caring for children and supporting seniors and families, and
- investing in infrastructure.

## **Our Goals**

The government's activities are focused on three core businesses: *People, Prosperity and Preservation*.

Key strategies have been set out for achieving these goals along with targets for measurement.

### **PEOPLE**

The goals for the *People* core business are directed at improving the quality of life in Alberta for individuals and their families through the government's priorities for health, education, our children, those in need, and Aboriginal Albertans.

### **PROSPERITY**

The goals for the *Prosperity* core business focus on protecting the quality of life in Alberta through the government's priorities for our economy, work force and work places, infrastructure, value-added industries, export trade, and financial and fiscal position.

### **PRESERVATION**

The goals for the *Preservation* core business reflect the government's priorities for community safety, our renewable resources, the environment, our natural, historical and cultural resources, and Alberta's relations with other levels of government.

**CORE BUSINESS  
PEOPLE GOALS 1-6**



## Goal 1

### ***Albertans will be healthy***

#### Key Strategies

- ensure Albertans get the care they need through accessible high quality health services
- prepare for future health needs through ongoing innovation, integration and coordination in health service delivery
- provide more services to people where they need them – in their communities and in their homes
- improve accountability and results in the health care system through clear expectations and better information
- focus on long-term health gains through increased emphasis on programs to prevent illness and injury, and protect and promote good health, as well as healthy active lifestyles

#### Targets

**Life Expectancy at Birth** Maintain or improve current life expectancy at birth and be among the top 10 countries in the world.

**Health Status** By the year 2003, 70% of Albertans aged 18-64 will rate their health as very good or excellent, and 80% of Albertans aged 65 or over will rate their health as good or better.

## Goal 2

### ***Our children will be well cared for, safe, successful at learning and healthy***

#### Key Strategies

- continue implementation of the Children and Youth Services Initiative with an emphasis on cross ministry initiatives to improve supports and resources to children, youth and families
- address the recommendations of the Task Force on Children at Risk and Children's Forum
- support Child and Family Services Authorities and other partners in the delivery of community-based, integrated services to children, youth and families, with an emphasis on early intervention, meeting the needs of Aboriginal children and providing transitions for youth
- provide a range of integrated health and related support services to identified students with special health needs registered in school programs
- continue to promote the Alberta Child Health Benefit which provides low-income families with the prescription drugs, dental, optical, and ambulance services that their children require
- introduce health strategies to address priority health issues, including low birth weight babies
- identify strategies for integrated mental health services to children, youth and families

#### Targets

**Well-Being of Children** To be determined once baseline is established.

## Goal 3

### *Alberta students will excel*

#### Key Strategies

- enhance school-readiness opportunities for children from birth to three years of age
- build a solid foundation for learning by focusing on early grades
- improve student learning by continuing to implement and evaluate the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement collaboratively with partners
- meet diverse learner needs by building capacity for a range of learning opportunities
- ensure that students' financial needs are not a barrier to participating in learning opportunities
- expand opportunities for youth to develop career preparation and employability skills
- improve assessment and reporting of learner achievement

#### Targets

**Educational Attainment** By 2003, 90% of Albertans aged 25-34 will have completed high school, and 60% will have completed post-secondary education. Maintain or improve inter-provincial ranking.

**Literacy and Numeracy Levels** 85% of Grade 9 students are expected to achieve the acceptable standard on provincial achievement tests in language arts and mathematics.

## Goal 4

### ***Albertans will be independent***

#### Key Strategies

- improve transitions for youth among school, further learning and work
- develop additional government-wide strategies through the People and Prosperity Initiative that help Albertans contribute to and share in Alberta's economic prosperity
- ensure up-to-date information is available to all Albertans on labour market needs, career preparation and opportunities for further learning
- continue efforts to get social assistance clients into the workforce by improving training programs and providing financial and health benefits

#### Targets

**Economic Status of Albertans** To be determined once baseline is established

## Goal 5

### ***Albertans unable to provide for their basic needs will receive help***

#### Key Strategies

- continue to improve income support services for Albertans who are unable to provide for their basic needs and require financial assistance
- sponsor initiatives which provide effective supports to Albertans with developmental and other disabilities, and promote their inclusion in community life
- provide financial assistance to lower-income seniors through the Alberta Seniors Benefit and Special Needs Assistance for Seniors programs
- facilitate the provision of appropriate seniors housing, and family and special purpose housing for Albertans most in need

- strengthen the coordination of provincial government programs and services for seniors, and develop a strategic framework and a 10-year action plan on the aging population through the Seniors Policy Initiative
- implement strategies to address homelessness in conjunction with municipal governments, local authorities, community groups and the private sector

## Targets

**Economic Status of Albertans** To be determined once a baseline is established

### Goal 6

***The well-being and self-reliance of Aboriginal people will be comparable to that of other Albertans***

## Key Strategies

- improve the health and well-being of Aboriginal people
- improve the educational attainment of Aboriginal learners to increase the collaborative participation of Aboriginal governments, organizations and people in the design and delivery of programs and services
- promote the appreciation and preservation of Aboriginal cultures in Alberta
- increase the participation by Aboriginal people in the Alberta economy
- clarify federal/provincial/Aboriginal roles and responsibilities

## Targets

**Aboriginal Well-Being** By 2010: the difference in life expectancy of Registered Indians in Alberta and all Albertans will be reduced by one year; the percentage of Aboriginal learners 15 years of age or older with high school completion will be 60% and 30% with post-secondary completion (comparable 1996 percentages were 52.2 and 24.9, respectively); the difference in employment rates of Aboriginal Albertans and other Albertans will be less than 10%.

**CORE BUSINESS  
PROSPERITY GOALS 7-14**

## Goal 7

### ***Alberta will have a prosperous economy***

#### Key Strategies

- continue to promote the Alberta Advantage
- continue implementation of the Economic Development Strategy to enable Albertans to meet future economic challenges
- develop a collaborative approach to regional economic development that builds on regional goals, priorities and strengths
- ensure the sufficient supply of skilled labour to meet Alberta's economic growth
- encourage investment and economic activity by maintaining a globally competitive tax regime
- implement the April 1, 2001 business tax plan changes; implement the 2002 tax plan step subject to affordability
- work with industry to attract domestic and international investment
- support the expansion of Alberta's tourism industry and promotion of Alberta as a world-renowned tourism destination
- improve the ability of start-up and early stage companies to access the capital they need to get their businesses up and running
- remove barriers to national and international trade and investment so Alberta businesses can compete in new markets

#### Target

**Gross Domestic Product** Three year annual average GDP growth rate of 4 to 6%.

**Job Growth** 295,000 new jobs in the six years ending December 2005.

## Goal 8

### ***Our workforce will be skilled and productive***

#### Key Strategies

- improve Albertans' ability to enter the workforce and keep pace with changing skill needs
- maintain a balanced long-term program of science and engineering research through the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Science and Engineering Research
- remove barriers that prevent people from moving easily from job to job or place to place in order to work
- build a strong Alberta public service through continued implementation of the Corporate Human Resource Development Strategy
- improve the knowledge and skills of Alberta youth, particularly as they relate to employability and the transitions between learning and work
- strengthen connections between school and workplace learning
- expand training opportunities in information technology, communications, education and health

#### Target

**Skill Development** 90% of employers satisfied with recent post-secondary graduates' skills.



## Goal 9

### ***Alberta businesses will be increasingly innovative***

#### Key Strategies

- expand Alberta's focus on research, knowledge and technology that results in viable commercial products, processes and services
- encourage the innovative application of new technologies by resource-based industries to sustain future competitiveness and resource bases
- encourage the development of private sector laboratories for food production and processing

#### Target

**Business Innovation** Alberta businesses use of the Internet will account for an increasing percentage of economic activity.

## Goal 10

### ***Alberta's value-added industries will lead economic growth***

#### Key Strategies

- use technology in targeted sectors to expand Alberta's value-added industries
- expand Alberta's economy by defining and taking action on key science and technology priorities
- expand in-Alberta opportunities for secondary processing of renewable and non-renewable resources
- facilitate the growth of value-added industries, especially in the agri-food, energy and forestry sectors

#### Target

**Value-Added Industries** Alberta's value-added industries will account for an increasing percentage of provincial GDP.

## Goal 11

### ***Alberta will have an effective and efficient infrastructure***

#### Key Strategies

- implement initiatives to ensure effective and innovative capital planning and funding of government supported infrastructure through the government-wide capital planning initiative
- promote cooperative initiatives among business and industry, government and municipalities to address the need for infrastructure development
- facilitate trade by improving key highway routes, including the North-South Trade Corridor
- work with local governments to strengthen rural and urban transportation partnerships and ensure that Alberta has a safe and efficient system of roads
- complete restructuring of Alberta's electric industry and manage the transition to a deregulated market
- protect Alberta's multi-billion dollar investment in physical infrastructure for educational institutions, health care, seniors' and social housing, irrigation, water management and other government programs through appropriate maintenance and upgrading
- develop a high speed, provincial technology network that will ensure high speed Internet and wide-area network availability so that all Albertans can access provincial government services
- develop and implement advanced telecommunications, infrastructure management, and information management systems for improved communications and service delivery

#### Target

**Infrastructure Capacity** 95% of rural sections of the National Highway System at level of service B or better upon completion of the North-South Trade Corridor, export gas pipeline capacity will exceed demand, and continue to increase industry and non-profit sponsored research.

## Goal 12

### ***Alberta will have a financially stable, open and accountable government***

#### Key Strategies

- continue to implement current fiscal policies of balancing the budget, orderly paydown of debt, low taxes, targeted spending and capital planning
- eliminate unnecessary regulations
- provide regular reports to Albertans on government goals, as well as financial and non-financial performance results
- provide efficient management of government resources and communications
- improve the efficiency and cost effectiveness of Alberta government administrative services through the Alberta Corporate Service Centre initiative
- improve Albertans' access to government information and services through the Alberta One-Window Gateway
- meet Albertans' requested needs for more information on government programs and services, and make it easier for them to give their feedback and opinions

#### Target

**Taxation Load** Maintain the lowest tax load on people and business among the provinces.

**Provincial Credit Rating** The highest blended credit rating among the provinces.

**Accumulated Debt** Reduce the March 31, 2000 accumulated debt by at least 13% by 2004-05 and eliminate it no later than 2024-25.

**Cost Of Government** Remain 5% below the average per capita government expenditure of the other nine provinces.

## Goal 13

### ***Alberta will have a fair and safe work environment***

#### Key Strategies

- promote high standards in the workplace for labour relations and workplace health and safety
- support community organizations undertaking educational initiatives that promote fairness and access, and that increase understanding and appreciation of the benefits of Alberta's growing diversity

#### Target

**Workplace Climate** The rate of person-days lost to work stoppages, and injury and disease will be among the three lowest of all the provinces.

## Goal 14

### ***Alberta business will increase exports***

#### Key Strategies

- implement Alberta's International Marketing Strategy to focus trade and investment efforts in targeted regions and industries
- improve Alberta's ability to compete and do business in global markets by expanding Albertans' understanding of world languages and cultures
- provide Alberta businesses with information/intelligence to identify emerging opportunities and enhance market access
- coordinate Alberta's participation in strategic international relationships and agreements with key trading partners

#### Target

**Export Trade** Increase international value-added exports to \$28.5 billion by the year 2004.

**CORE BUSINESS  
PRESERVATION GOALS 15-19**

## Goal 15

### ***Alberta will be a safe place to live and raise families***

#### Key Strategies

- protect human rights for all Albertans through the resolution of complaints made under the Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act
- augment crime prevention initiatives and review all aspects of policing
- enhance services for victims of crime
- expand youth justice initiatives including the Alternative Measures Program and Intensive Support and Supervision Program as alternatives to traditional justice sanctions
- build capacity in schools and communities to provide safe and caring environments
- improve support for families through family law reform
- investigate marketplace practices and take appropriate enforcement actions to ensure compliance with the Fair Trading Act
- partner with government, consumer groups, business associations and the media to increase marketplace awareness and education
- improve traffic safety through driver education, road safety awareness and motor carrier compliance
- assist municipalities in preparing for emergencies and responding to major disasters

#### Target

**Crime Rate** Reduce Alberta's crime rates below the national rates by 2005.

## Goal 16

### ***Alberta's renewable natural resources will be sustained***

#### Key Strategies

- provide clear, effective direction and guidelines for the use, management, regulation and development of Alberta's renewable resources
- reduce the impact of natural hazards such as fire, pests, drought and floods on property, people, and resources
- implement a long-term, environmentally-sustainable approach to agriculture and forest industry development that supports stable economic growth.

#### Target

**Renewable Resource Sustainability** Keep timber harvests at or below the annual allowable cut. Achieve sustainable crop yields of 0.92 tonnes per acre by 2004.

## Goal 17

### ***The high quality of Alberta's environment will be maintained***

#### Key Strategies

- ensure standards are acceptable to maintain the quality of air, land, water and ecosystems
- ensure public accountability for environmental management by clearly defining roles and responsibilities of federal and provincial governments, as well as industry
- provide predictable, consistent, and streamlined regulations for land use and resource management
- maintain current levels of public safety, resources, conservation and environmental protection through effective environmental monitoring and enforcement programs

- reduce Alberta's greenhouse gas emissions by developing climate change policies and programs while maintaining Alberta's economic advantage

Target

**Air Quality** Maintain air quality levels that are considered good or fair at all times.

**Water Quality** Bring river water quality downstream of developed areas in line with upstream conditions, while maintaining overall river water quality.

**Land Quality** Achieve sustainable crop yields of 0.92 tonnes per acre by the year 2004.

### Goal 18

***Albertans will have the opportunity to enjoy the province's natural, historical and cultural resources***

Key Strategies

- support and encourage the development of sport and recreation, arts, libraries and culture as essential characteristics in Alberta's quality of life
- preserve, protect and present Alberta's unique history and culture through programs, exhibits, historic sites and museums and interpretive centres
- coordinate and support a province-wide library system and continue the development and long-term sustainability of the Alberta Public Library Electronic Network
- protect and manage Alberta's parks and protected areas
- improve Albertans' understanding of their environment
- provide Albertans with opportunities to contribute to environmental protection and natural resource management



Target

**Heritage Appreciation** 1.1 million visitors per year to provincially owned historic sites, museums and Interpretive centres, and 8 million visitors per year to provincial parks and recreation areas.

**Goal 19**

***Albertans will work with other governments and maintain its strong position in Canada***

Key Strategies

- improve fiscal arrangements to ensure that federal revenues are shared fairly among the provinces
- ensure Alberta's interests are represented and protected in key federal programs and initiatives, and interprovincial and international negotiations
- work in partnership with local governments to promote healthy and sustainable communities throughout Alberta
- continue to promote a strong and united Canada

Target

**Intergovernmental Relations** Maintain Alberta government's public approval rating in federal-provincial relations equivalent to the average approval rating of the four nearest provinces.

## **CROSS MINISTRY INITIATIVES**

Many issues are not isolated to a single ministry. The government business plan also includes cross-ministry initiatives that involve cooperation across government.

There are four priority cross ministry initiatives for this business plan:

1. the Aboriginal Policy Initiative;
2. the Economic Development Strategy;
3. the Seniors Policy Initiative; and
4. the Children and Youth Services Initiative.

Work is also continuing on four key government administration priorities:

1. the Alberta Corporate Service Centre Initiative;
2. the Corporate Human Resource Development Strategy;
3. the Corporate Information Management/Information Technology Strategy; and
4. the Alberta One-Window Initiative.

*More detail about how the government intends to achieve these goals is included in the 2001-04 business plans of individual ministries. Quarterly updates will continue to be provided to keep Albertans informed about the progress made in achieving our plan. Results for 2001-02 will be available before the end of June 2002 in the Government Annual Report.*

[www.treas.gov.ab.ca](http://www.treas.gov.ab.ca)

For more information, please see the complete  
version of Budget 2001, *The Future... Meeting  
Priorities, Sharing Benefits*

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