

# Police Cost Model Survey

## Police Costing Model Engagement Survey

A proposal for an updated police costing model for Alberta has been drafted. Please find it attached to the email that included the link to this survey. Stakeholder perspectives are now being gathered to ensure the model is appropriate for communities across the province. You are receiving this invitation because you:

- Are an elected or administrative representative of an Albertan municipality;
- Have an official role with the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA); or
- Have an official role with the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA).

Please provide your feedback by **October 15, 2019**.

Your opinions will help identify the needs of your community and provide information on how appropriate the proposed costing model is for your community or those you represent. Your feedback will also signal to the Government of Alberta (GoA) what aspects require further consideration. Information gathered from this written feedback will inform the next steps.

All responses are anonymous. This information is being collected under section 33(c) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and will be protected under the provisions of the Act.

If you have any questions about the collection and use of this information, please contact [JSG.PSDEngagement@gov.ab.ca](mailto:JSG.PSDEngagement@gov.ab.ca).

*The survey link is unique to you. Please do not forward to other individuals. If you have suggestions for others who should respond, please let us know and we can forward a survey link to them.*

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## The Proposed Model

Currently, 291 municipalities do not directly pay for policing through their municipal taxes. These communities account for one-fifth (20 per cent) of Alberta's population. Under the proposed costing model, these communities would begin paying a percentage of their frontline policing costs. Frontline policing refers to general duty, traffic, and general investigations, which account for about 62 per cent of all policing positions. In 2018-2019, the cost of frontline policing was \$232.5 million.

### Cost Distribution

The proposed costing model distributes costs based on two factors: equalized assessment and population. Equalized assessment would look at the annually calculated assessment value for the municipality to determine the relative resources to pay. The assessment value will be weighted at 70 per cent to determine part of the base cost distribution – the costs to a municipality prior to applying subsidies.

Using the most recent municipal or federal census data (as reported to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs), population would account for the remaining 30 per cent of the base cost distribution.

### Cost Modifiers

#### *Shadow Population*

The term "shadow population" refers to workers who generally live and pay property taxes outside of a community or municipality and are not included in local census data on which provincial per capita funding is based. However, these individuals use the same municipal resources and infrastructure as primary residents while they work there. A shadow population cost modifier would enable a subsidy for frontline policing costs. To receive a maximum five per cent subsidy, a shadow population would need to be recognized and officially reported to Municipal Affairs.

#### *Crime Severity Index*

The Crime Severity Index measures changes in the level of severity of crime in Canada from year to year. More serious offences have a greater impact on the index, which allows for comparisons across municipalities. In the proposed model, the Crime Severity Index average for all Alberta rural municipalities would be calculated and used as a baseline measure. A community with a higher crime severity index than the baseline would be eligible for a subsidy of 0.05 per cent per index point.

4%

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Your Role

Is your role elected or administrative?

- Elected
- Administrative
- Other

If you selected other, please provide further detail.

12%

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### Community or Agency

Which of the following best describes the community or agency you represent? The following questions will be based on your thoughts as a representative of this type of community or agency.

- Specialized municipality
- Summer village
- Village
- Town less than 5,000 population
- City or town between 5,001 and 14,999 population
- City or town between 15,000 and 49,999 population
- City or town larger than 50,000 population
- Special area
- Improvement district
- County or Municipal District
- Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA)
- Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA)

16%

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Type of Police Service

**What is the police service in your municipality or community?**

- Municipal Stand-alone Police Service
- RCMP

20%

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## Crime Severity Index

The Crime Severity Index measures changes in the level of severity of crime in Canada from year to year. More serious offences have a greater impact on the index, which allows for comparisons across municipalities. In the proposed model, the Crime Severity Index average for all Alberta rural municipalities would be calculated and used as a baseline measure. A community with a higher crime severity index than the baseline would be eligible for a subsidy of 0.05 per cent per index point.

How well would the proposed model's Crime Severity Index modifier align with the needs of your municipality or municipalities you represent? Keep in mind that this modifier means that if your Crime Severity Index goes down, so does the subsidy that you receive on your invoiced costs for policing.

Not at All   Slightly   Moderately   Very   Extremely

          

28%

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## Other Modifiers

### What other modifiers do you think are important to consider in a new cost model?

- Crime rate - based on number of incidents reported to police per 100,000 population representing total Criminal Code incidents, excluding traffic incidents and federal statutes such as drug offences.
- Location of detachment
- Remoteness of community
- Imported criminal activity from surrounding communities

### If you think other modifiers should be considered, please list them here.

1. detachments not operating at full contingent;  
2. detachment service area relative to municipality size; 3. ratio of police officers to citizens in detachment; 4. municipality's current commitment to enhanced policing and CPO's.

36%

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## Costing Model Affects

**How would a new costing model potentially affect your municipality? Please check all that apply.**

**If you are responding on behalf of AUMA or RMA, please consider how the majority of the municipalities you represent may be affected when answering the question.**

- The model would aid in providing a better level of police services to the municipality (or the municipalities) I represent if collected revenue is reinvested in public safety initiatives.
- The model would aid in addressing problems with crime in my municipality (or the municipality) I represent if collected revenue is reinvested in crime prevention initiatives.
- The model might enable my municipality (or the municipalities) I represent to have a greater say in the police service and police priorities. For instance, directly paying for policing may mean that the police service will be more accountable to my community.
- The model could provide funding to hire more police officers in my municipality (or the municipalities) I represent if collected revenue is reinvested in policing.
- The model would place an administrative burden on the administration of the municipality (or the municipalities) I represent.
- The model would be financially burdensome to my municipality (or the municipalities) I represent.
- No impact

**If you think there are other things about the costing model that will affect your community, please describe them here.**

If we are required to contribute to policing costs we may be forced to withdraw support for the enhanced policing position we are currently funding.

44%

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Municipality or Agency

**This survey requires a representative of a municipality, not a representative of AUMA or RMA, to respond to a few questions. Are you responding on behalf of a municipality?**

- Yes  
 No

48%

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### Benefits of a New Cost Model

Please select at least ... options.

What are the potential benefits of a new costing model?

- Policing costs will be more equitable among municipalities.
- Different levels of government will share the financial responsibility for the provision of police services.
- The funds collected could be used for public safety initiatives such as addressing rural crime.

If you think there are other benefits to the police costing model, please describe them here.

Unless there is a corresponding increase in police service levels in our municipality there is no benefit to us of with the new cost model. Rather, this initiative would simply be a downloading of costs from the province to municipalities.

68%

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## Collecting the Money

**With a new costing model where municipalities contribute towards their policing services, how should the funds be collected?**

Through a direct requisition which would allow municipalities to set, and identify on property tax notices, a tax rate for police services.

72%

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## Resources Needed to Address Crime

**What additional resources are needed in your municipality (or in the municipalities you represent) to address crime? Please be as specific as possible and each resource separated by a comma.**

Improve justice system (more judges, crown prosecutors and court space and timely prosecution of offenders), work programs for criminals, deal with mental health issues more effectively, and ensure RCMP detachments are always staffed at full complement.

76%

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## Priorities to Address Crime

**If a new cost model is implemented, what priorities do you think the Government of Alberta should focus on to best deal with crime in your municipality (or in the municipalities you represent)? Please check all that apply.**

- Better data collection on crime incidences, including publically available reporting.
- Creation of a provincially regulated police response system that would link all enforcement agencies to facilitate collaboration.
- Public education on how to report crime incidences.
- Public education on the complaints process for police services.
- A central arms-length complaints body for all police services across the province.
- Extension of the mandate of Peace Officers to supplement the work of police services.
- Policy for Crown Prosecutors when considering prosecution of property owners acting in self-defense in rural areas.
- Funds collected through cost recovery could go to general revenue for flexible allocation.

**If you think the government should address other priorities to deal with crime, please describe them here.**

1. Ensure funding collected from municipalities is directed to policing. 2. Ensure RCMP honor contractual obligations relative to staffing. 3. Mental health problems need to be addressed by mental health professionals rather than police officers.

84%

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### Percentage to Collect

The province is proposing to recover a percentage of frontline policing costs from those currently not paying. What percentage range is an appropriate amount of revenue to collect? Please note that under this model, some portion of the costs would need to be recovered.

- 15% to 30%
- 31% to 40%
- 41% to 50%
- 51% to 60%
- 61% to 70%

Why did you choose this percentage range? For instance, you could consider the implications of the revenues collected not meeting or exceeding the cost.

It should be 0% if there is no corresponding increase in police service levels.

92%

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## Considerations for Implementation

**Thinking about the implementation of the new police costing model, please describe any important matters that you wish for us to consider (such as budget cycles, impacts of a phased-in approach).**

1. Once service level improvements are considered as part of this initiative we would be pleased to discuss phase-in options. 2. Municipalities should be allowed to select their police service. 3. Province should consider establishing a provincial police service.

96%

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## Final Thoughts

**Do you have any additional comments regarding the proposed cost model?**

Unless there is an increased level of police service associated with this new model and municipalities are given an opportunity to influence police initiatives in their communities we are not supportive of paying for policing.

100%

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**Finish**

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