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FCM responds to update from the Government of Canada on the issue of retroactive RCMP costs



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The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) responded today to the federal government's disappointing decision to pass unbudgeted and unaccounted for RCMP costs on to municipalities.

Despite months of municipal advocacy led by the FCM, provincial-territorial associations, and local leaders across Canada, the federal government has indicated in the 2023 Budget that it will not be meeting the request to absorb the retroactive costs associated with the latest RCMP collective bargaining agreement.

Yesterday's budget further confirmed that communities across Canada that are dependent on RCMP services for local policing are expected to cover these costs, and offered details on a repayment period for

municipalities. This falls well short of the call from municipalities to fully absorb the costs.

“Municipalities have been crystal clear,” said FCM president Taneen Rudyk. “Local governments were not at the table for these negotiations. And while cost estimates were provided to some municipalities, these turned out to be far below the final agreement’s increase over six years, with retroactive pay going back to 2017.”

“The federal government’s refusal to absorb these costs – which were essentially negotiated with municipal money but not with municipal input – is not acceptable. Municipal councils will be forced to make incredibly tough decisions, such as making cuts to essential services or passing the bill along to residents, at a time when Canadians’ concerns about local safety and the cost of living are already rising.”

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.

Communities across the country are facing significant costs associated with this decision of the federal government. Outlined below are cost **estimates** shared by some:

- City of Moncton, NB: \$5.7 million, population 79,470
- Town of Hinton, AB: \$750,000, population 9,882
- City of Portage la Prairie, MB: \$800,000, population 13,270
- City of Vernon, BC: \$3.4 million, population 44,519

FCM is clearly reiterating the need for municipalities to be actively involved in any future processes regarding contract policing.

“This situation cannot occur again,” said Rudyk. “Going forward, municipalities must be properly consulted on issues related to policing costs given the municipal responsibility to keep our communities safe.”

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) unites more than 2,100 local governments at the national level, representing more than 92 per cent of Canadians in every province and territory.

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