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TRANSITION COUNCIL

THE ALBERTA TRANSITION PLAN

A Practical Analysis of Alberta's Transition from Province to Independent Country

The Legal, Institutional and Operational Requirements for an Independent Alberta

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Executive Summary

A Practical Plan for an Orderly Transition

This Alberta Transition Plan examines a practical question: if Albertans ultimately vote to become an independent country, what would have to be done to make the transition to independence orderly, lawful and workable?

The central conclusion of the research is straightforward. Alberta would not be starting from scratch.

Alberta already has a functioning government, Legislature, ministries, courts, municipalities, police services, health and education systems, resource regulators, tax administration, infrastructure, businesses and professional workforces. Most of the

institutions and services Albertans rely upon every day already exist and operate in Alberta.

The principal transition challenge is therefore not to rebuild Alberta. It is to change the legal authority behind certain federal functions, transfer or bridge responsibilities now performed by the federal government, establish the sovereign functions Alberta does not presently have, and keep essential services operating throughout the process.

In many cases, what changes during a transition is not the service the public sees. What changes is the law, regulator, funding arrangement, government authority or international relationship behind it. Those changes can be planned, negotiated and implemented in stages; they do not all need to happen at once.

The same continuity principle applies to people. Thousands of federal employees live and work in Alberta, have built careers here and have families and communities here. Where the functions they perform will continue after independence, the practical objective should be to retain that experience wherever possible through negotiated transfers, recruitment, secondments or transitional service arrangements. For federal employees asking whether there can be a place for them doing the work they already know how to do after Day 1 of independence, the short answer is yes. Their knowledge and experience should be treated as an important part of Alberta's existing institutional capacity, not as something that must be replaced.

To examine the transition requirements and prepare this plan, 45 Albertans with experience and expertise across a wide range of fields contributed to the preparation and review of 21 topic-specific White Papers. Their areas of knowledge and experience included banking and currency, law, international trade, First Nations, defence, and treaty matters, transportation, borders, policing and other major areas of government and the economy. The White Papers examined what would have to continue, what would have to change, what would require negotiation, and what new functions Alberta would need if it becomes an independent country.

This plan brings that work together in one document. It summarizes the principal research findings and recommendations in a form intended to help Albertans understand, at a practical level, how a transition from province to independent country could be organized if Albertans vote to proceed.

The plan is deliberately focused on transition, not on designing the future policies of an independent Alberta. It does not attempt to decide what Alberta's long-term policies should be on matters such as taxation, policing, immigration, aviation or other areas of government. Those are democratic choices that would be made in the

future by Albertans and the governments they elect. The purpose of this plan is narrower: to identify what must be in place so that government, services, rights, payments, businesses and critical systems continue to function through the transition.

This plan also does not contain the detailed costing of the transition or the broader financial assessment of independence. That work is being completed separately, and a companion report examining transition costs and related financial issues is expected to be released in the coming weeks. Together, these reports are intended to give Albertans more information about the practical and financial questions involved before the October 19 referendum.

The plan recommends that the transition be organized in three practical phases.

The Transition in Three Practical Phases

The transition from a successful October 19th vote, through the preparation period leading to the 2027 independence referendum, and full independence can be understood in three broad phases.

Three Practical Phases — Alberta Transition Plan public roadmap

Phase 1 — Prepare and Verify Transition Work

After October 19 and before a spring 2027 independence referendum

During this phase, Alberta remains a province of Canada.

If Albertans vote on October 19, 2026 to proceed to the next stage, the period before the proposed 2027 independence referendum provides an important opportunity to prepare. The Government of Alberta can establish a transition task force, verify the work already completed, refine cost estimates, identify federal functions that would have to be transferred or replaced, develop draft negotiating terms, inventory assets and records, engage First Nations and other affected parties, identify required legislation and agreements, and begin readiness and contingency work.

This 2026-2027 phase is about preparation, not independence. No practical changes occur merely because transition planning is taking place. The purpose is to ensure that, if Albertans later vote for independence in the spring of 2027, Alberta is ready to begin serious negotiations and implementation work without unnecessary delay or uncertainty.

Phase 2 — Negotiate and Get Ready for Independence

After a successful 2027 independence referendum and before Day 1 of independence

For planning purposes, this plan uses the spring of 2027 as the assumed date of the independence referendum. A successful referendum would provide the democratic mandate for Alberta to proceed with the legal process of independence. It would not itself make Alberta independent on that day.

Alberta would then move from preparation to formal negotiation and implementation. Consistent with the *Reference re Secession of Quebec* and the *Clarity Act*, a clear majority voting in favour of independence on a clear question would trigger a constitutional obligation to negotiate, although it would not itself effect secession. This phase would include good faith negotiations with Canada and the provinces, constitutional implementation; First Nations and treaty processes; settlement of debt, assets and liabilities; transfer or replacement of federal functions; arrangements for trade, borders, pensions, banking, transportation and other shared systems; workforce and records transfers; international preparations; and testing of critical Alberta systems.

The existing Government of Alberta would continue throughout this period. There would be no need to create a second or parallel transition government. This proposed timetable provides for an initial intensive negotiating period after the referendum and uses the currently scheduled October 2027 provincial election as an important democratic accountability point. Negotiations would not automatically stop because an election occurs or because a particular date is reached.

Most importantly, Day 1 of independence would not mean an overnight change or sudden disruption. It would be the agreed date on which Alberta formally becomes independent, following a planned and negotiated transition and once the necessary constitutional arrangements are in place and the critical systems and services Albertans rely on are ready to continue operating.

Phase 3 — Stabilize and Implement Independence

Day of independence and the period following

On Day 1 of independence, Alberta's sovereign status changes and the Government of Alberta assumes the additional responsibilities of an independent country. For Albertans, however, the objective would be continuity and stability in daily life, with essential services, benefits, businesses and institutions continuing to operate. It is not the day on which every temporary arrangement, negotiation or administrative transfer must be finished; transitional arrangements can remain in place to ensure an orderly and practical transition.

After Day 1 of independence, Alberta would enter a stabilization and implementation period. Remaining transfers can be completed, temporary Canada–Alberta service arrangements can be replaced or extended where necessary, institutions can be refined, and systems can move from transitional to permanent arrangements.

This plan uses Day 1 plus 24 months as an outer planning horizon for temporary transition arrangements. It is not an automatic deadline requiring every temporary arrangement to end on that date. The objective of Phase 3 is to make the transition increasingly ordinary: fewer temporary arrangements, fewer unresolved transfers and progressively more functions operating under stable long-term arrangements.

The Constitutional Track for a New Alberta Constitution — A Separate Democratic Process

There is an important distinction between becoming an independent country and deciding the permanent constitutional design of that country. They are not the same process and they should not be placed on the same clock.

The independence transition is primarily about continuity and implementation: keeping government functioning, maintaining laws and courts, protecting rights, continuing public services and payments, establishing sovereign capabilities and completing the arrangements necessary for Day 1 of independence.

The permanent constitutional process asks a different question: what kind of constitutional system do Albertans want their new country to have? Questions about the permanent structure of government, the legislature, courts, rights protections, constitutional amendment procedures and other long-term institutions should not have to be finally decided before Albertans vote on independence.

The plan therefore places the development of Alberta's permanent constitution on a separate Constitutional Track, allowing that process to proceed deliberately and with meaningful public participation without delaying the transition to independence.

INDEPENDENCE TRANSITION	CONSTITUTIONAL TRACK
Phase 1: Prepare and verify	Constitutional research and options can be developed.
Independence referendum	The referendum does not approve a permanent constitution.
Phase 2: Negotiate and prepare for Day 1	Formal constitutional deliberations can begin once there is an independence mandate and sufficient clarity about the transition.
Day 1: Alberta becomes independent	Existing Alberta institutions continue under interim constitutional arrangements.
Phase 3: Stabilize and implement	Constitutional Conference develops the proposed permanent Constitution.
Transition arrangements are completed	Albertans vote on the proposed Constitution.
Transition End	Constitutional Commencement occurs when the ratified Constitution and permanent institutions are ready.

There would therefore be no constitutional vacuum. The existing Legislative Assembly, Premier and Cabinet, ministries, public service and courts would continue through Day 1 of independence under lawful interim arrangements. Permanent constitutional choices would be made separately through the Constitutional Conference and voter-ratification process described in this plan.

This separation allows the independence transition to concentrate on continuity, stability and implementation without forcing Albertans to decide every permanent constitutional question at the same time.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Continuity first. Change only what needs to change. Build what Alberta does not already have. Leave long-term policy choices to Albertans after the transition is secure.

What Does Day 1 of Independence Actually Mean?

For most Albertans, the practical test of a successful transition is to ensure ordinary life continues to work.

PRACTICAL QUESTION	TRANSITION OBJECTIVE
Who governs?	The same Government of Alberta continues. Day 1 expands its lawful responsibilities; it does not create an entirely new government.
Do the laws and courts still work?	Existing laws, rights, contracts, court proceedings, licences and government decisions continue through appropriate continuity arrangements.
Do people still get paid?	Government payroll, pensions and benefits continue through tested payment systems and appropriate transition arrangements.
Does banking still work?	Payments, deposits, mortgages, lending and financial services continue while the necessary sovereign regulatory and financial arrangements are put in place.
Can people and goods still cross borders?	Customs, immigration, transportation and trade systems are operational, with negotiated arrangements pursued wherever they are required.
Do businesses keep operating?	Existing businesses, facilities, contracts, professional workforces and licences continue wherever legally and practically possible.
Can Alberta trade with Canada and the world?	Trade systems, export certification, border processes and the necessary Canadian and international arrangements are operational.
Can Alberta act as a country?	Alberta has the necessary authority and capacity for borders, international relations, treaty management, national security and other sovereign functions.

This is why the plan treats Day 1 of independence as a readiness decision. For each critical function, Alberta should be able to answer: Who is responsible? Is there legal authority? Are the people, funding, records and technology in place? Does the system connect to the outside organizations it depends upon? Has the first real transaction been tested?

Alberta Will Not Be Separating From Its Neighbours

Independence would change Alberta's constitutional relationship with Canada. It would not change geography, family relationships, business networks, pipelines, railways, highways, banking relationships or the many other connections that exist between Albertans and Canadians.

For that reason, this plan assumes that a successful transition should seek a new cooperative relationship between Alberta and Canada, not the unnecessary disruption of existing relationships. Negotiations would therefore be expected to address such matters as trade, mobility, transportation, energy infrastructure, pensions, financial systems, public safety, legal cooperation, telecommunications, aviation, records and transitional public services.

Those arrangements are important negotiating objectives. They should not be treated as guaranteed outcomes before they are actually agreed. The same principle applies internationally. Alberta should prepare early for the recognition, agreements and technical relationships needed to operate as a country, while distinguishing between what Alberta can establish itself and what requires the agreement or recognition of Canada, another country or an international organization.

What Changes — and What Does Not

One of the most important findings of the transition research is that a change constitutional structure or regulatory authority over a service does not mean the service itself stops operating. In many cases, services can continue **without interruption**, while responsibility for their regulation, funding or oversight transitions from Canada to Alberta.

An airport does not cease operating because the national regulator changes. A bank branch does not disappear because the bank regulator changes. A hospital does not need to be rebuilt because a federal funding or regulatory relationship changes.

For every major service, the plan therefore asks five basic questions:

1. Who operates the service today?

2. Who employs the people?
3. What law or regulator gives it authority?
4. What records, payments, technology or networks does it depend upon?
5. What outside organization must continue to recognize or work with it?

Often, only one or two of those layers would need to change. The preferred transition method is therefore to continue what already works, transfer what can be transferred, negotiate temporary arrangements where cooperation is useful, and build new institutions only where Alberta genuinely requires a sovereign capability it does not presently have. Long-term policy redesign can then occur through ordinary democratic government after stability has been established.

The Proposed Sequence

The detailed timeline is set out later in this plan. In broad terms, it contemplates:

October 2026: If Albertans vote to proceed, intensive transition preparation begins.

Spring 2027: Albertans vote on the question of independence.

Following a successful independence referendum: Alberta finalizes its negotiating mandate and proposed terms and moves into formal negotiations and implementation planning.

Summer and fall 2027: An initial intensive negotiating period occurs, together with operational preparation and readiness work.

October 2027 provincial election: Albertans have an opportunity to hold the Government accountable for the course of negotiations and the proposed direction of the transition.

After the election: Negotiations and implementation continue as required.

Day 1: Independence occurs through the lawful settlement and implementation process when the required arrangements and critical systems are ready.

Following Day 1: Alberta stabilizes the new arrangements, completes remaining transfers and progressively replaces temporary transition measures with permanent ones.

Running beside this sequence — but not controlling the timing of Day 1 of independence — is the separate Constitutional Track leading ultimately to a proposed permanent Constitution, ratification by Albertans and constitutional commencement.

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Proposed Alberta Independence Transition *Sequence*

Illustrative public roadmap

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Phase 1 — Prepare and Verify

1 — October 2026
If Albertans vote to proceed, intensive transition preparation begins.

2 — Spring 2027
Albertans vote on the question of independence.

Phase 2 — Negotiate and Get Ready

3 — After a successful independence referendum
Alberta finalizes its negotiating mandate and proposed terms, then moves into formal negotiations and implementation planning.

4 — Summer and Fall 2027
An initial intensive negotiating period occurs, together with operational preparation and readiness work.

5 — October 2027 Provincial Election
Albertans have an opportunity to hold the Government accountable for the course of negotiations and the proposed direction of the transition.

6 — After the Election
Negotiations and implementation continue as required.

Phase 3 — Stabilize and Implement

7 — Day 1 of Independence
Independence occurs through the lawful settlement and implementation process when the required arrangements and critical systems are ready.

8 — Following Day 1
Alberta stabilizes the new arrangements, completes remaining transfers and progressively replaces temporary transition measures with permanent ones.

Separate Constitutional Track

Runs beside the transition sequence but does not control the timing of Day 1 of independence.

Constitutional discussion and drafting
↓
Proposed permanent Constitution
↓
Ratification by Albertans
↓
Constitutional Commencement

For illustrative planning purposes only.

The Purpose of This Report

This consolidated transition plan brings together research across the principal legal, financial, institutional and operational questions associated with a possible transition from province to independent country. It does not suggest that every negotiating outcome can be known in advance. Nor is that different from governing today: governments routinely make decisions in the face of changing national and international economic conditions, trade relationships, geopolitical events, financial markets and other circumstances beyond their control. The purpose of responsible planning is not to predict every future event, but to identify what can be anticipated, prepare for foreseeable risks and ensure Alberta has the capacity to respond as circumstances evolve.

Some decisions are within Alberta's control. Some would require agreement with Canada and provinces. Some require direct engagement and arrangements with First Nations or Metis collectivities. Others depend upon foreign governments, international organizations or private networks. A credible transition plan must distinguish between those categories rather than treating uncertain outcomes as either guaranteed or impossible.

The purpose of this Report is therefore to identify:

- what already exists and can continue;
- what legal authority would have to change;
- which federal functions would need to be transferred, bridged, replaced or newly established;
- what agreements would need to be pursued; and
- what critical systems must work on Day 1.

The ultimate objective is straightforward: If Albertans decide to become independent, the transition should be lawful, prepared and orderly — and ordinary life should continue while the machinery of government changes behind the scenes.

That is the organizing principle of this Transition Plan.

Principal Findings and Conclusion

The overall finding of this plan is that a transition from province to independent country would be complex, but capable of being planned, organized and implemented in an orderly way. Alberta would not need to recreate the society, economy or public institutions that already exist. Most day-to-day services are already deliv-

ered by Alberta institutions, municipalities, First Nations and Metis governments and organizations, private businesses and professional workforces. The principal work would be to preserve what already functions, transfer or replace federal responsibilities where necessary, maintain connections with Canadian and international systems, and establish the limited number of sovereign functions Alberta does not presently require as a province.

The research does not suggest that every negotiating outcome can be known or guaranteed in advance. Some matters would require agreement with Canada, First Nations, other governments, international organizations or private networks. But the required functions and dependencies can be identified in advance, assigned to responsible institutions, negotiated or bridged where necessary, and tested before Day 1 of independence. The practical measure of a successful transition is therefore not how much changes, but how much continues to work: government continues, courts remain open, pensions and benefits are paid, banks operate, businesses continue, goods and people move, and essential services remain available while Alberta assumes full constitutional responsibility for its own governance, finances and laws.

Research Note

This consolidated transition plan is founded on a series of 21 topic-specific working papers prepared with input from experts in their respective fields. Those working papers examine the principal legal, institutional, financial and operational issues that would arise in a transition from province to independent state, including constitutional process; courts and the legal system; regulatory frameworks; policing, corrections and public order; public finance and taxation; banking, currency and housing finance; public debt, assets and liabilities; pensions; citizenship and immigration; Indigenous peoples, treaty relations and Aboriginal rights; health and social programs; trade and economic relations; energy and natural resources; agriculture and food systems; transportation and communications infrastructure; and the sovereign functions associated with defence, borders, public administration, international relations, treaty succession and international trade.

The purpose of this Alberta Transition Plan is to bring that detailed work together in a single, accessible transition plan. It synthesizes and summarizes the principal findings, conclusions and recommendations from the underlying working papers, identifies the most important cross-cutting dependencies, and organizes the work into a common transition framework. The detailed working papers provide the supporting technical analysis; this plan is intended to give readers a practical overview of what would need to continue, what would need to change, what would require

negotiation with Canada or other parties, and what new sovereign capabilities Alberta would need to establish.

Contributors

This plan reflects the work of 45 individuals who contributed research, drafting, technical analysis, professional review and comment.

For the public report, the Alberta Transition Council has chosen to identify only its two Co-Leads. All other contributors are treated as anonymous in order to respect professional, employment and personal considerations.

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The anonymous contributors include professionals and subject-matter experts from a range of disciplines relevant to the issues examined in this plan. Their participation should not be taken to mean that any individual contributor authored, approved or endorses every statement, conclusion or recommendation

The Alberta Transition Council is grateful to all contributors for the considerable time, expertise and care they devoted to this work. All participated voluntarily and without compensation.

Introduction

Alberta in Perspective

The Executive Summary has set out the transition in three practical phases and has shown the permanent Constitutional Track separately. Before turning to the detailed chapters, it is useful to step back and consider the starting point for that roadmap: what is Alberta today, and what does that mean for the practical task of transition?

Alberta is not a small territory contemplating the creation of a modern society from scratch. It is a large, highly developed jurisdiction of more than five million people, with two major metropolitan centres, a sophisticated economy, modern public institutions, extensive transportation and energy infrastructure, an educated workforce, globally connected businesses and a mature system of government.

Geographically, Alberta is large by global standards, covering approximately 661,848 square kilometres. If Alberta were an independent country, it would rank at roughly 40th in the world by area—meaning it would be larger than about 80 percent of the world's countries. Its land area is nearly three times that of the United Kingdom, almost twice that of Germany or Japan, and substantially larger than France or Spain. Put another way, among the nearly 200 independent countries in the world, only about 40 have more territory than Alberta. Alberta is therefore not merely a large Canadian province; geographically, it is comparable in scale to a major sovereign state.

An independent Alberta would not be a demographic outlier among countries. With a population of more than five million people, it would be a mid-sized country by the standards of the many nations that successfully govern populations of only a few million people.

Alberta's economy is substantial as well. Parliamentary research reports Alberta's 2024 gross domestic product at approximately C$473.9 billion. Expressed in U.S. dollars at typical recent exchange rates, that places the Alberta economy in the broad range occupied by established mid-sized national economies and approximately within the world's top 50 economies. Alberta also has the highest gross domestic product per person among Canada's provinces.

Since Alberta became a province in 1905, well over 100 new countries have emerged around the world. The political map is not fixed: the modern international system has repeatedly accommodated the emergence of new sovereign states through decolonization, negotiated separation, constitutional change and the dissolution or reorganization of existing states.

Those numbers matter because they put the transition question into perspective. **Independence would not turn a small or undeveloped region into a country and then require its citizens to discover how to build an economy, construct cities, establish universities, organize hospitals, create courts or build roads. Those things already exist.**

Alberta already has a legislature and executive government; courts and a legal profession; municipalities; police and emergency services; hospitals and health-care institutions; universities and colleges; schools; regulators; financial institutions; pension and investment organizations; utilities; telecommunications networks; airports; railways; highways; pipelines; power generation; sophisticated agricultural, food processing, and energy industries; manufacturing, construction and technology businesses; and a large professional public service.

The physical province would not move. Calgary would remain Calgary. Edmonton would remain Edmonton. The highways, farms, homes, hospitals, businesses, pipelines, airports, power plants and communities would remain where they are. Independence is fundamentally a change in constitutional and legal authority, not a physical separation of the land from its neighbours.

That distinction is the starting point for this transition plan.

A Resource-Rich, Modern and Internationally Connected Economy

Alberta's economic position is unusual for a jurisdiction of its population. It has a strong economic foundation that provides significant capacity to support a transition to independence.

It possesses one of the world's major energy resource bases. Alberta government data describe the province as holding the world's third-largest proven oil reserves, with approximately 99 percent of those reserves located in the oil sands. Alberta is also a major natural-gas producer, an important agricultural producer, a centre for petrochemicals and energy services, and home to growing manufacturing, technology, financial, professional and logistics sectors.

Energy is therefore an important part of Alberta's economic strength, but it is not the whole Alberta economy. Provincial economic data show major contributions from agriculture, real estate, construction, manufacturing and numerous service industries in addition to oil and gas.

Alberta also possesses the infrastructure of a modern trading economy. The province maintains approximately 64,000 lane-kilometres of provincial roads and more than 4,800 bridges and interchanges. Its highways connect east and west across Canada and south into the United States. Its railway systems connect producers and manufacturers to Canadian ports, United States (U.S.) markets and the wider continent. Its pipelines connect Alberta energy to British Columbia, Ontario, the American Midwest, the U.S. Gulf Coast—including the major refining and petrochemical hub around Houston—and the U.S. West Coast, while also providing access to overseas markets.

Of particular importance is Alberta's economic orientation toward the U.S.. The U.S, is by far Alberta's largest international trading partner; Alberta exported approximately C$151.5 billion of goods to the U.S. in 2025. Alberta's north-south highway corridors were deliberately developed to connect the province efficiently with that market.

Alberta would remain immediately beside the U.S., one of the world's largest markets. Existing rail lines, highways, pipelines, commercial relationships and supply chains would not vanish because the constitutional status of Alberta changed. What would change is the legal framework governing their use: customs, trade agreements, licences, carrier recognition, immigration rules and international regulatory arrangements would have to be preserved, replaced or negotiated.

That is a recurring theme throughout this plan. The physical and commercial system generally already exists. Before the referendum, the focus is therefore on identifying and verifying the legal, governmental and external arrangements surrounding those systems (**Phase 1**). Following a successful referendum, the focus shifts to negotiating, transferring, building and testing what must change before Day 1 of independence (**Phase 2**). After independence, the focus is on maintaining stability and continuity while completing any remaining implementation work (**Phase 3**).

Canada Already Has a Constitutional Framework for Secession

There is another unusual feature of the Alberta question that distinguishes it from many independence movements elsewhere in the world.

Canada's own Supreme Court has already addressed how a province can lawfully become an independent nation.

In the 1998 *Reference re Secession of Quebec*, the Supreme Court of Canada held that a clear majority on a clear question in favour of secession would give democratic le-

gitimacy to the initiative and create a reciprocal constitutional obligation on the federal and provincial governments to negotiate. The Court emphasized that these are binding obligations under the Constitution of Canada. It also stated that determining what constitutes a "clear majority on a clear question" would be for the "political actors" to determine in the circumstances of a particular referendum.

The referendum itself would not make Alberta independent. That distinction is central to the three-phase roadmap in the Executive Summary: Phase 1 is preparation before the 2027 independence referendum; Phase 2 begins only if a successful referendum supplies the democratic mandate for negotiations and implementation; and Phase 3 begins on Day 1 of independence, once the lawful arrangements required to make independence effective are in place..

The Clarity Act and an Important Constitutional Disagreement

Following the *Reference re Secession of Quebec* case, Parliament enacted the federal *Clarity Act* in 2000. The *Clarity Act* claims to give the House of Commons an expanded role in a provincial secession referendum including assessing whether the question is clear and then later whether the vote results were of a clear majority. The *Clarity Act* further provides that the Government of Canada must not enter secession negotiations if the House of Commons concludes either that the question was not clear or that a sufficiently clear majority was not achieved.

There is, however, an important constitutional problem with the validity of these expanded federal roles. The Supreme Court did not say that the House of Commons gets to review and approve the wording a province chose to use in an independence referendum or whether the majority vote is clear. The Court made clear that the constitutional obligations identified in the Secession Reference are binding.

That distinction matters. Parliament cannot use an ordinary federal law like the *Clarity Act* to give the House of Commons the power to cancel a constitutional duty to negotiate that has otherwise arisen under the Constitution.

Quebec has expressly rejected Ottawa's broader interpretation. In response to the *Clarity Act*, the Quebec National Assembly enacted Bill 99, the Act respecting the exercise of the fundamental rights and prerogatives of the Québec people and the Québec State. Among other things, that law provides that 50 per cent plus one of the valid votes cast is a majority in a Quebec referendum and declares that no other parliament or government may impose limits on the democratic will of Quebecers to determine their political future.

The existence of this disagreement does not prevent practical transition planning. Nor does this plan need to resolve every potential constitutional dispute surrounding the *Clarity Act* in advance. **For planning purposes, the appropriate foundation remains the constitutional framework established by the Supreme Court: a clear democratic mandate on a clear question creates constitutional consequences and a reciprocal obligation to negotiate in good faith in accordance with the principles of federalism, democracy, constitutionalism and the rule of law, and the protection of minorities.**

The legal sequence contemplated by Canadian constitutional law can therefore be described in relatively simple terms:

1. Alberta asks its population a clear question about whether Alberta should cease to be part of Canada and become an independent country.
2. If the result demonstrates a clear majority in favour of secession, the constitutional duty to negotiate arises.
3. Alberta, Canada and the other constitutional participants negotiate the terms on which separation could occur.
4. Those negotiations address matters such as assets and liabilities, borders, Indigenous rights and interests, minority rights, institutional arrangements and the many practical transition issues identified in this plan.
5. The settlement is implemented through the constitutional amendments, legislation, agreements and operational measures required to make lawful secession effective. The Alberta Legislature, Premier and Cabinet, ministries, agencies, public service and administrative machinery continues to govern throughout the transition, through an election.

The purpose of the plan is not to make the political case for or against independence, but to identify, organize and explain the legal, institutional, financial and operational work that would be required if Albertans decide to proceed.

The Central Insight of This Transition Plan: We Already Know the Federal Functions

For many people, independence can understandably sound intimidating. The word itself can create the impression that Alberta would suddenly have to invent hundreds of unfamiliar institutions and build an entirely new country from scratch. That is not the practical problem Alberta would face.

Every function discussed in this transition plan is already being performed today either by the Alberta government or by the Federal government.

Someone already collects the federal income tax paid by an Alberta resident. Someone already regulates a federally chartered bank. Someone already issues passports. Someone already screens passengers at an airport. Someone already administers a federal pension payment. Someone already inspects railways. Someone already processes goods at the Canada-U.S. border.

This is enormously important from a planning and budgeting perspective. Independence does not create these functions; it changes who is responsible for delivering, regulating or overseeing some of them. In the case of federal oversight, that responsibility would move closer to the people, businesses and industries affected by those decisions.

The functions the Government of Canada provides for Albertans are known with a high degree of precision.

The transition question is not, 'What does a country need?' in the abstract. The practical question is, 'Who performs this function for Albertans today, how does it work, and what has to change so that it continues to work through without interruption as constitutional authority changes?'

In many cases, surprisingly little changes.

An Alberta hospital does not have to become a new hospital. A municipal fire department does not have to become a new fire department. An Alberta school does not have to become a new school. A privately owned telecommunications network does not have to be rebuilt. A bank does not need to close its Alberta branches and reopen them under a different name. Calgary International Airport does not need to be reconstructed. A railway company does not need to replace its locomotives. A homeowner does not need to replace a house or mortgage simply because the constitutional jurisdiction surrounding the contract changes.

Those systems already operate. The objective of transition planning is to keep them operating.

Other functions require a transfer of legal authority. Some require access to federal records or the recruitment or transfer of experienced personnel. Others may require Canada to continue providing a service temporarily while Alberta establishes a replacement. Networked functions—bank payments, rail transportation, aviation, pipelines and telecommunications, for example—require agreements so that systems on both sides of the new boundary continue to recognize and communicate with one another.

A smaller category of services would have to be built because Alberta does not presently require them: a sovereign foreign ministry, a national customs authority, independent treaty-making capacity and national defence command are obvious examples. Even in these areas, however, Alberta would not be starting without existing people, infrastructure, expertise or institutions on which to build.

The purpose of the Transition plan is to identify those differences rather than treating every federal function as though it must be recreated from zero. Across the three phases, the Report therefore uses a simple four-part operating test:

continue what already works;

transfer what must change hands;

negotiate continued interfaces where systems cross borders; and

build only the genuinely sovereign functions Alberta does not possess today.

A Simple Transition Test

CONTINUE	TRANSFER	AGREE	BUILD
Keep existing Alberta/local/private operations running.	Move legal authority, staff, records, funding or assets where necessary.	Secure continued recognition, access or interoperability across borders and networks.	Create only the sovereign capabilities Alberta does not possess today.

Transition as an Integration Project

There is a useful analogy in the commercial world.

When one large company acquires another, the purchaser does not normally demolish the acquired company and rebuild every function from scratch. It identifies what already works, determines which employees and systems need to continue, maps contracts and liabilities, transfers legal authority, integrates information systems, establishes new reporting relationships, negotiates arrangements with outside parties and carefully plans the date on which responsibility changes.

A sovereign transition is obviously more consequential than a corporate acquisition because it involves constitutional rights, Indigenous and treaty relationships, de-

mocratic legitimacy, international recognition and public law considerations that do not arise in an ordinary business transaction. But the operational comparison is useful.

Complexity does not mean uncertainty about everything, nor does it make responsible planning impossible.

The more thoroughly a transition is broken into individual functions, the less mysterious it becomes. Tax and pension administration, banking regulation, aviation safety and border administration are all established functions with identifiable processes and requirements, each of which was itself created, developed and implemented through deliberate preparation and institutional design, similarly to the approach in this plan.

Each has people, laws, records, facilities, technology, funding and external relationships that can be inventoried before Alberta transitions from a province to a sovereign country.

That is why the central objective of this plan is not dramatic institutional change on Day 1 of independence. It is the opposite: deliberate normality.

The measure of success would be that ordinary life continues while constitutional authority changes behind it.

THE OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Day 1 of independence should feel administratively uneventful. Alberta's legal status changes; ordinary life should continue because the functions, people, systems and fallback arrangements were identified and prepared in advance.

Independence Would Reset a Relationship, Not End One

Alberta independence would not eliminate Alberta's relationship with the rest of Canada. It would change the legal and governmental framework within which that relationship operates.

Geography makes and ongoing relationship both inevitable and important, and there would be significant benefits to both Alberta and Canada in maintaining

strong economic, social and practical ties.

Families cross provincial boundaries. Companies operate in multiple provinces. Railways and highways cross provincial lines. Electricity, telecommunications and financial systems are interconnected. Alberta products travel through British Columbia to Pacific markets and across Saskatchewan and Manitoba toward central Canada. Canadian goods travel through Alberta. Pension, professional, educational and personal relationships extend across the country.

Independence would therefore change the terms of Alberta's relationship with Canada, not bring that relationship to an end. Indeed, a negotiated relationship between two neighboring countries could preserve existing areas of cooperation while creating opportunities for new arrangements that better reflect their respective interests.

The important difference is where government authority and democracy accountably ultimately reside. In other words, it changes how government programs and services are administered, not how government programs and services are received.

Today, decisions within federal jurisdiction are made by Ottawa-based Canadian institutions accountable to voters across the entire country. Alberta participates in those institutions but cannot by itself determine their policy. Supporters of independence argue that this structure can leave Albertans unable to change national policies concerning matters such as taxation, criminal law, immigration, national environmental regulation or international trade even where a majority of Alberta voters strongly prefers a different approach.

Independence would change the location of final democratic accountability for those sovereign powers. Decisions assigned to an independent Alberta would ultimately be made by governments elected by Alberta voters, who could in turn remove those governments through Alberta elections.

That is the core democratic proposition behind independence. It does not require hostility toward Canadians elsewhere or an end to the close relationships that already exist. It asks a different question: which electorate should have the final authority to choose the government making decisions for Alberta in fields that are presently federal?

If independence occurred, Alberta and Canada could then negotiate how their existing relationship should operate under the new legal framework, including trade, movement of people, transportation corridors, pensions, policing cooperation, energy, financial systems, aviation, telecommunications and other matters of mutual

interest. **The objective would not be separation for its own sake, but a different political relationship that allows each country greater control over its own affairs while preserving cooperation where cooperation benefits both.**

Negotiation Would Occur in a Setting of Mutual Dependence

Those negotiations would not take place between one side possessing all the leverage and another possessing none.

Alberta would bring significant economic assets to the table: energy production, continental pipelines, major highways and rail corridors, agricultural production, a large export economy and extensive commercial relationships with the United States.

The rest of Canada would bring equally important assets: a large neighbouring market, access to ports and transportation corridors, existing national and international agreements, established financial and administrative systems and longstanding commercial relationships.

British Columbia illustrates the depth of that interdependence particularly well. Although British Columbia has direct access to the Pacific, it is effectively continentally landlocked by the Rocky Mountains when moving goods eastward to the rest of Canada and inland North American markets. More than $55 billion in British Columbia goods and products move east through Alberta's highways and rail corridors each year, along with more than 900,000 containers of consumer and industrial goods produced in Asia, landed at the ports of Vancouver and Prince Rupert, and then transported inland through Alberta. Alberta is therefore not simply another market for British Columbia; it is a critical part of British Columbia's land connection to the continent.

British Columbia is also heavily dependent on Alberta for critical energy supplies. The Trans Mountain pipeline originates near Edmonton and carries Alberta crude oil and refined petroleum products across British Columbia to Kamloops, Burnaby, Washington State and Pacific export facilities. The expanded system has approximately 890,000 barrels per day of capacity. British Columbia's largest refinery, the Parkland refinery in Burnaby, relies primarily on light crude delivered through Trans Mountain, while the pipeline also supplies refined petroleum products directly into the British Columbia market.

That dependence cannot realistically be replaced quickly. Alberta is deeply integrated into British Columbia's day-to-day energy supply, and developing substitute sources, infrastructure and transportation capacity would take substantial time and

investment. Likewise, British Columbia has a strong interest in preserving reliable access to Alberta energy because there is no readily available near-term replacement for that supply.

Ontario and Quebec are similarly integrated with Alberta and western Canadian energy supplies. The Enbridge Mainline originates at Edmonton and carries western Canadian crude oil, refined petroleum products and natural-gas liquids east through the continental pipeline network to Sarnia, Ontario, the centre of one of Canada's largest refining and petrochemical complexes. From Sarnia, connected pipelines supply refineries elsewhere in Ontario and carry crude east through Line 9 to Montreal. The resulting refineries produce the fuels on which the central Canadian economy depends—including gasoline for motorists, diesel for trucking, construction, mining and industrial equipment, and jet fuel for major airports. Federal authorities have described Line 5 alone as supplying roughly half of the feedstock used by Ontario refineries and about two-thirds of Quebec's crude-oil requirements, while Toronto Pearson is heavily reliant on fuels produced from this supply system.

This dependence extends beyond crude oil itself. Refineries supplied through the western Canadian pipeline system convert that feedstock into gasoline, diesel, aviation fuel, petrochemical products and other refined products that move throughout Ontario and Quebec. Line 9 supplies Ontario and Quebec refineries, while the Trans-Northern system distributes refined products to markets including Toronto, Ottawa, Kingston and Montréal. These are large, integrated systems built over decades; replacing western Canadian supply quickly would require alternative crude sources, transportation capacity and significant infrastructure changes. The Canada Energy Regulator has specifically concluded that an extended disruption to the Mainline—the principal connection between western Canadian production and central Canada—could create a significant challenge in meeting the region's refined-product demand.

The economic interdependence also runs westward. Ontario manufacturers and wholesalers sell billions of dollars of goods annually into Alberta and British Columbia, much of which moves across the western Canadian highway and rail network. Ontario manufacturers alone sold approximately $11 billion of goods directly to British Columbia in 2022, before accounting for wholesale trade or Ontario goods destined for Alberta and other western markets. For goods continuing to British Columbia and Pacific export gateways by land, Alberta forms part of the principal continental rail and highway corridor. Ontario therefore has its own strong economic interest in preserving reliable east-west transportation access through an in-

dependent Alberta, just as Alberta would have an interest in preserving access to Ontario and Quebec markets.

Alberta's economic interdependence with the rest of Canada extends well beyond transportation and energy. Alberta businesses and consumers purchase substantial amounts of goods and services from other provinces, and Ontario–Alberta wholesale trade alone exceeded **$124 billion last year**. Alberta is also an important part of Canada's financial system. Although the major banks do not publicly report provincial revenue figures, Bank of Canada data show approximately **$253 billion in personal and business deposits booked in Alberta by chartered banks**. These relationships run in both directions. Alberta benefits from continued access to Canadian goods, services, financial institutions and transportation networks, while businesses and institutions elsewhere in Canada have a substantial commercial interest in continued access to Alberta's consumers, deposits, resources and export economy. **This mutual dependence does not predetermine the terms of any future negotiations, but it provides strong practical incentives on all sides to preserve stable economic relationships and negotiate workable arrangements.**

This innate interdependence is significant for transition negotiations. Neither side has an economic interest in interrupting these corridors and trade relationships. It creates a powerful practical incentive for Alberta and Canada—and particularly Alberta and British Columbia—to negotiate durable arrangements preserving rail and highway transit, pipeline operations, port access, energy flows and the efficient movement of goods in both directions.

The same is true elsewhere. Alberta's crude-oil pipeline systems connect Edmonton and Hardisty with Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and U.S. refining markets. Those consuming markets value reliable Alberta supply; Alberta producers value reliable access to those markets.

The practical implication is not that either side should threaten the other. It is that there are powerful economic reasons for both sides to negotiate stable arrangements.

Canadian history provides a useful reminder. During the federal-provincial energy conflicts of the 1970s and early 1980s, Alberta under Premier Peter Lougheed used the province's ownership of and policy authority over natural resources as part of a much broader political and constitutional negotiation with Ottawa. The period ultimately produced negotiated energy arrangements and coincided with the entrenchment of provincial natural-resource authority in section 92A of the Constitution Act, 1867.

The lesson is not that the circumstances of the 1980s can simply be repeated. It is that economic interdependence creates reasons to negotiate—and that difficult Canada-Alberta disputes have historically been resolved in negotiated arrangements.

The Question This Plan Addresses

The detailed transition analysis that follows shows how the transition can occur if Albertans vote to proceed with independence.

How will laws continue? How will courts operate? How will salaries and pensions continue to be paid? How will money continue to move through banks? How will airplanes continue to fly? How will trucks and trains cross borders? How will homeowners keep their mortgages? How will businesses continue their contracts? How will First Nations rights and services continue while Nation-specific relationships are negotiated? How will hospitals obtain medicines? How will energy continue to reach markets? How will Alberta collect revenue? How will citizens continue to travel?

Once those questions are examined function by function, the transition becomes much less abstract.

Most of the people are already here.

Most of the physical assets are already here.

Most of the institutions are already here.

Most of the commercial relationships are already here.

Most of the trades and professional expertise are already here.

And every federal function that affects Alberta today is, by definition, already being performed somewhere by identifiable people under identifiable laws using identifiable systems.

That does not make independence automatic, inexpensive or risk-free. Negotiations could be difficult. External recognition matters. Some agreements would be indispensable. Indigenous and treaty issues require direct and careful treatment. Currency, debt, trade and investment outcomes matter enormously.

But those are reasons for disciplined planning, not reasons to treat the transition as unknowable.

PREMISE OF THE TRANSITION PLAN

A transition from province to independent country should be approached not as the creation of Alberta from scratch, but as the orderly transfer, continuation, and limited creation of governmental functions around a society, economy and institutional system that already exists. Phase 1 prepares and verifies; Phase 2 negotiates and gets ready; Phase 3 stabilizes and implements.

With the three-phase roadmap and separate Constitutional Track as the organizing framework, that is the perspective from which the chapters that follow should be read.

Selected references from white papers

- *Supreme Court of Canada: Reference re Secession of Quebec, [1998] 2 S.C.R. 217.*
- *Government of Canada: Clarity Act, S.C. 2000, c. 26.*
- *Statistics Canada / Government of Alberta: Alberta population and land-area statistics.*
- *Library of Parliament: Alberta economic and gross domestic product profile.*
- *Government of Alberta: Energy and minerals; provincial economic dashboard; transportation infrastructure; Alberta–United States trade profile.*
- *Canada Energy Regulator: Alberta and British Columbia energy profiles; Trans Mountain and refinery-market context.*
- *Alberta historical resources: Federal–provincial energy disputes during the Lougheed era and the development of section 92A.*

I

PART I

Transition Framework and Constitutional Implementation

A successful transition requires that lawful government authority, courts, regulation and public order continuing without interruption. The emphasis is legal continuity first, institutional redesign later.

1 Transition Framework and Guiding Principles

2 Constitutional Process

3 Courts and the Legal System

4 Regulatory Framework

5 Policing, Corrections and Public Order

CHAPTER 1

Transition Framework and Guiding Principles

A transition should be managed as one integrated program with a lawful mandate, a common Day 1 independence day cutover, a single interim governing structure, shared definitions and measurable readiness gates.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Alberta already has a functioning legislature, executive government, ministries, municipalities, courts, police services, health system, schools, resource regulators, tax administration, Crown corporations and a professional public service. The federal government operates a second layer over that system in areas assigned to Parliament by the Constitution or created by federal statute. The transition problem is therefore not comparable to creating a government in an unadministered territory. It is closer to transferring the responsibility for certain functions while preserving and building upon Alberta's existing government, institutions and systems.

The most useful way to plan the transition is to identify who currently performs each function and what, if anything, would need to change. Some functions are already provincial, some are federally governed but delivered locally, some are part of national systems that must continue to work across borders, and others are functions Alberta does not presently perform at all. Those categories require very different transition methods. A provincial function may need little more than a continuity statute. A locally delivered federal function may be transferred with staff, assets and records. A net-

worked function such as payments or aviation may require a service agreement. A sovereign function such as diplomacy requires a new institution.

A modern government is not one organization. It is a collection of institutions that perform different jobs. The Alberta Legislature passes provincial laws; Cabinet and ministries administer them; municipalities run many local services; courts resolve disputes; regulators issue licences and enforce technical rules; and private or community organizations often deliver the service that the public actually sees. Canada adds another legal and administrative layer in areas of federal jurisdiction. A transition therefore changes the administrative and constitutional relationship between existing systems; it does not erase the systems that are already functioning.

In practical terms, the first planning question for every service is whether anything must change at all. If Alberta already owns the facility, employs the staff, holds the records and has legal authority, the answer may be almost nothing beyond confirming that the existing authority continues through independence. If only one layer is federal—for example a regulator, a funding stream or a database—the plan should change that layer while leaving the rest of the service alone. Continuity is therefore something that can be deliberately planned and built into the transition, rather than simply assumed or left to chance.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The white paper recommends Day 1 of independence should therefore be treated as a controlled change of legal authority, not a mass replacement of service providers. The Government of Alberta keeps ordinary government running, brings continuity laws and negotiated Canada–Alberta instruments into operation, commissions only the sovereign offices that must exist by Day 1 of independence, and certifies that each critical function has an owner, budget, system, workforce and fallback. The public-facing objective is deliberate normality: legal authority changes first; service redesign comes later if elected institutions choose it.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Existing Alberta institutions, facilities, employees, contracts and service channels wherever lawful and practical.
What changes	Administrative and constitutional authority, selected federal statutes and regulators, federal funding flows, federal employment relationships and external representation.
What requires agreement	Debt/assets, records, cross-border systems, shared infrastructure and any temporary federal service that Alberta chooses not to duplicate immediately.

1.1 Secession Negotiation and Implementation Framework

The preferred path to independence is a principal negotiated secession agreement or coordinated set of agreements.

Under the proposed sequencing and conceptual timeline, an assumed successful referendum result on October 19, 2026 is followed by the Alberta Government activating its own Transition Research Task Force and completing intensive preparation for the six-month period through to the spring of 2027. If the proposed spring 2027 independence referendum produces a clear majority on a clear question, the Alberta Government could approve its negotiating mandate, finalize proposed terms, appoint negotiators and establish the negotiating machinery based on the work done by the Transition Research Task Force over the previous six months. Alberta could present its proposed terms and then conduct an Initial 100-Day Intensive Negotiation Phase with Canada, the provinces, and First Nations through September 20, 2027.

The purpose of the 100-day period is to establish a meaningful decision point in the negotiations before the planned October 18, 2027 provincial general election. Because Alberta general election campaigns typically run for approximately 28 days, September 20, 2027 serves as a strategic decision point rather than a fixed deadline for concluding negotiations. This would give those seeking elected office a clearer understanding of the circumstances, responsibilities and choices they would be campaigning to govern, while giving Albertans meaningful information on which to assess the candidates and make an informed choice about who they want to lead the next stage of the transition. Negotiations may continue throughout the election campaign and, if necessary, after the election.

Any agreement in principle reached by that stage should address the principal elements required for an orderly transition, including the proposed effective date of independence; the constitutional and legal implementation steps; the transfer or continuation of federal functions; the allocation of assets and liabilities; transitional service arrangements; access to records, information and data; and mechanisms for resolving matters that remain outstanding after Day 1 of independence. Day 1 of independence itself would be established through the negotiated settlement and subsequent legal and constitutional implementation process, rather than being determined by an arbitrary or predetermined number of days.

1.2 Constitutional and Legal Preconditions

Under the constitutional principles set out by the Supreme Court of Canada, a successful referendum does not itself transfer sovereignty or make Alberta independent. Independence would require lawful constitutional implementation consistent with the *Secession Reference*, any valid provisions of the *Clarity Act*, the negotiated settlement, and the Alberta legislation needed to give those arrangements legal effect. No date in the proposed sequence—including the September 20, 2027 Negotiation Decision Point or the October 18, 2027 provincial election—would by itself create sovereignty or determine Day 1 independence. It is also important to note that the Supreme Court did not give Parliament a prior veto over a provincial referendum question, nor did it say that Parliament alone has the final authority to decide whether a referendum result constitutes a clear majority on a clear question.

1.3 Negotiated Transition Principles

The transition plan repeatedly recommends continuity, mutual recognition and staged handover. Negotiations should focus first on the systems that promote continuity—law, payments, borders, trade, records, health, public safety, energy, telecommunications and aviation—while leaving permanent policy design to normal democratic processes after stability is established.

1.4 Continuity of the Government of Alberta

The transition model is continuation of the existing Government of Alberta, not creation of a second provisional or transition government. After the assumed successful October 19, 2026 referendum result, the Government of Alberta remains the ordinary government of the Province of Alberta while undertaking preparation. If the spring 2027 independence referendum succeeds, the Government of Alberta continues through the negotiation period. The October 18, 2027 provincial general election may or may not change the Premier, Cabinet or membership of the Legislative

Assembly through the ordinary democratic process, but the Government of Alberta as an institution continues without interruption. The government then in office confirms negotiating instructions and carries the process forward after the election. On Day 1 of independence, the Government of Alberta assumes the additional sovereign responsibilities allocated by the transition arrangements; no separate transition government is created. This continuity does not decide Alberta's permanent constitutional form.

1.5 Transition Governance and Intergovernmental Coordination

The Government of Alberta should maintain one master schedule, risk register, dependency map, budget-control system and negotiation/implementation agreement register. The Transition Research Task Force established after the October 2026 referendum can coordinate the pre-referendum research, potential negotiating positions, valuations and budgeting, contingency planning and cross-government readiness through to the spring 2027 independence referendum, including First Nations and treaty processes. After a successful spring 2027 referendum, the Government of Alberta should convert that work into an approved negotiating mandate, final proposed terms and formal negotiating machinery before the launch of the Initial 100-Day Intensive Negotiation Phase. After the October 18, 2027 election, the government then in office confirms instructions and continues the process. Domain teams retain technical execution responsibility, but records, identity, payments, border operations, legal continuity, public communications and external agreements need one accountable coordinating structure so that two domains do not make incompatible assumptions about the same system.

1.6 Day 1, Constitutional Commencement and Transition End

Day 1 is the independence date and sovereign legal cutover, not the date on which every negotiation or temporary arrangement must be finished. The transition and sequencing does not fix the actual independence day. Day 1 should be established through the settlement and implementation process when the required legal arrangements and critical operational systems are ready. The Government of Alberta should establish a process and timeline for consultation and development of a new constitution and any bill of rights.

1.7 Public Confidence, Market and Counterparty Assurance

Transition risk can arise from uncertainty even where the underlying physical service or commercial relationship remains unchanged. Transition planning should therefore include a structured confidence and counterpart-assurance program di-

rected to institutions whose decisions materially affect Albertans and the Alberta economy.

During the pre-referendum preparation period, this work should provide verified information to financial institutions, payment-system operators, pension administrators, insurers, institutional investors, credit-rating agencies, major employers, carriers, energy counterparties, exporters and relevant Canadian and United States regulatory counterparts concerning the transition framework, legal-continuity objectives, fiscal planning, expected decision points, data requirements and contingency arrangements.

The objective is not to obtain political endorsement and should not be presented as such. It is to reduce avoidable uncertainty by ensuring that counterparties understand what is expected to continue, which governmental layer may change and how external dependencies will be addressed. No agreement, recognition or service arrangement should be represented as secured until it has actually been documented.

Following a successful independence referendum, information channels should convert where appropriate into formal technical and implementation channels supporting negotiations and Day 1 readiness.

1.8 Identification of Critical Day 1 Functions

- lawful executive, legislative and judicial authority;
- revenue collection, treasury cash management and banking/payment continuity;
- pensions, benefits and government payroll;
- policing, corrections, emergency communications and border operations;
- health, public health, medicines and critical supply chains;
- energy, electricity, agriculture, trade and regulated-business continuity;
- telecommunications, internet, postal and aviation continuity;
- external legal voice, treaty management, sanctions/compliance and recognition.

1.9 Federal Function Disposition Register

In order to assist with orderly planning and project tracking, every material federal function affecting Alberta should have an identified Day 1 disposition, Alberta own-

er, legal instrument, workforce plan, records plan, funding source, external dependency, fallback and readiness status.

Selected references from white papers

- *Supreme Court of Canada: Reference re Secession of Quebec, [1998] 2 S.C.R. 217.*
- *Government of Canada: Clarity Act, S.C. 2000, c. 26.*
- *Government of Canada: Constitution Acts, 1867 to 1982, including the division of legislative authority and Part II (Aboriginal and treaty rights).*

CHAPTER 2

Constitutional Process

The transition plan separates continuity of the existing Government of Alberta from the creation of a new permanent constitution. That distinction avoids a legal or institutional vacuum, prevents the mistaken idea that Day 1 independence creates a new government, and preserves democratic choice about the eventual constitutional form.

The constitutional process has two related but distinct purposes.

The first is continuity: ensuring that Alberta has lawful, democratic and functioning government throughout the transition and on Day 1 of independence.

The second is permanent constitutional design: allowing Albertans to decide, through a separate democratic process, what the long-term Constitution and institutions of an independent Alberta should be.

These two tasks should not be confused. Alberta does not need to design an entirely new system of government before it can make an orderly transition to independence. The existing Government of Alberta structure and institutions provide the practical bridge, while permanent constitutional choices are reserved for the separate Constitutional Track.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Alberta already has the core institutions of a functioning government: an elected Legislative Assembly, Premier and Cabinet, ministries, a budget and treasury system, a professional public service and courts. Those institutions presently exercise authority

within Alberta's provincial jurisdiction. What Alberta does not currently possess is sovereign authority over matters that remain within federal jurisdiction or the full constitutional authority of an independent country.

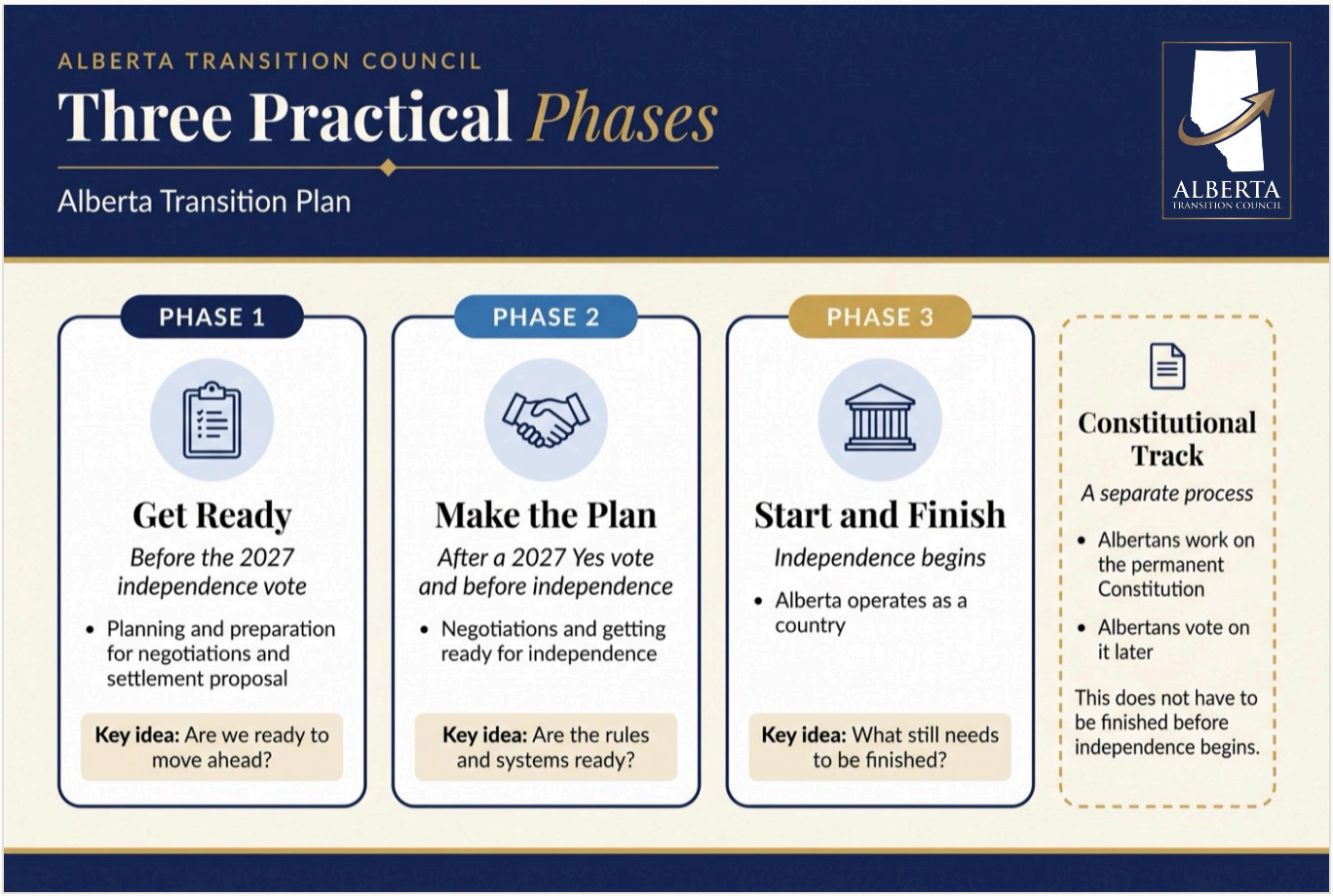
For that reason, this plan separates the three-phase independence transition from the permanent constitutional development track.

Phase 1 is the period of preparation before the proposed 2027 independence referendum. Alberta remains a province of Canada during this period.

Phase 2 begins only if Albertans provide a successful independence mandate in a 2027 independence referendum and is focused on negotiations, constitutional implementation and operational readiness for Day 1 of independence.

Phase 3 begins on the day of independence and is concerned with stabilizing the new arrangements and completing the remaining transition work.

The Constitutional Track answers a different question: what permanent system of government and constitutional rules should Albertans ultimately choose for their country?



The existing Government of Alberta institutions provides the bridge between these processes. A successful independence referendum would not instantly create a new legislature, court system or permanent constitution. During Phases 1 and 2, the existing Legislature, Premier and Cabinet, ministries, public service and courts continue while the transition is prepared and negotiated. On Day 1 of independence, those institutions would continue under the constitutional and legal arrangements implementing independence and would assume the additional responsibilities of an independent country.

There would therefore be no constitutional vacuum on Day 1. The immediate task is to ensure Alberta's existing institutions have clear and lawful authority to continue functioning without interruption, while the permanent constitutional structure is considered through the separate Constitutional Track.

The development of a permanent constitution would then proceed on its own track from the other aspects of the independence process. Constitutional research and public discussion can occur during Phases 1 and 2, but the independence referendum would not itself approve or bring into force a permanent constitution following a successful independence referendum in 2027, a Constitutional Conference or similar public process would address longer-term questions such as the permanent structure of the executive and legislature, the judicial system, rights protections, amendment procedures and other enduring institutions.

The resulting constitution would then be submitted to Albertans for ratification. The permanent constitution would come into force once it had been approved by Albertans and the institutions required to implement it were read (the "Constitutional Commencement"). This would not necessarily occur on Day 1 of independence.

The distinction can be stated simply:

Day 1 of independence determines when Alberta becomes an independent country. The permanent constitution takes effect later, once Albertans have approved it and Alberta is ready to implement it.

The two processes may overlap, but they operate on different clocks.

The Independence Transition Track

This process determines when Alberta becomes and independent country and prepares Alberta for that transition. It includes:

The October 2026 referendum

Activation of the government's Transition Research Task Force

The proposed spring 2027 independence referendum

Independence negotiations

The September 20 Negotiation Decision Point

The October 18 provincial election

Day 1 of independence.

The Constitutional Track

This process allows Albertans to consider, develop and approve the permanent constitutional system that would govern the new country over the long term. Unlike the independence transition, this process does not have fixed dates, but would operate on an approximately twelve-month timeline once commenced. It includes:

Constitutional research and public consultation

The Constitutional Conference.

A referendum allowing Albertans to approve the proposed Constitution

The Constitutional Commencement being the date on which the approved Constitution takes effect and once Alberta is ready to implement it.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The white paper recommends that during the interim constitutional period, the Government of Alberta continues as the functioning government. It is not replaced by a second provisional or transition government. Individual officeholders may change through elections, but the institutions of government continue.

The principal change is the scope and source of their lawful authority. Functions presently exercised by Canadian institutions would be transferred, continued temporarily, replaced or assumed by Alberta as provided by the transition arrangements.

Permanent constitutional choices are deliberately left for the Constitutional Track.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	The Legislature, Premier and Cabinet, ministries, public service and existing government machinery continue through the transition.
What changes	The source and scope of lawful authority expand as Alberta assumes sovereign and formerly federal responsibilities.
What is needed for Day 1 of independence	Interim constitutional and legal arrangements that keep government, courts, laws, rights and public finances functioning without interruption.
What is deliberately deferred	Permanent choices about the structure of government, constitutional offices, rights architecture, judicial design, fiscal rules and amendment procedures.

2.1 Interim Constitutional Continuity Arrangements

A successful independence referendum in 2027 would provide the democratic mandate to proceed toward independence. It would not itself bring permanent constitutional institutions into existence.

The same Government of Alberta should therefore continue through negotiations, the ordinary provincial electoral process, Day 1 independence and the interim constitutional period. The Legislative Assembly, Premier and Executive Council, ministries and public administration continue as institutions, although officeholders may change through the ordinary democratic and election process.

This approach avoids unnecessarily creating a second provisional government alongside the government Albertans already have. It also provides a clear chain of democratic accountability throughout the transition.

The purpose of the interim arrangements is not to decide Alberta's permanent constitutional future. The purpose is to ensure that government remains lawful, stable and functional while Albertans consider that future separately.

2.2 Interim Constitutional Framework

Before Day 1 independence, Alberta should have a clearly defined interim constitutional framework ready to take effect as part of the legal implementation of independence.

That framework should be deliberately limited to what is necessary for continuity and lawful government. Among other things, it should:

continue the Legislative Assembly, Premier and Executive Council, ministries and public administration;

preserve the independence and functioning of the courts;

maintain existing laws, legal rights, contracts, proceedings and governmental authorities unless lawfully changed;

preserve lawful appropriations, taxation and public-money authority;

provide express protection and non-derogation for Aboriginal and treaty rights;

provide authority for the temporary continuation or reception of federal laws that cannot safely disappear on Day 1 of independence;

establish the interim source and allocation of Alberta's sovereign legislative and executive authority; and

establish the process by which Alberta's permanent constitution will be developed and submitted to Albertans.

The interim framework should answer the questions that must be answered for Day 1 of independence, while deliberately avoiding permanent choices that do not need to be made during the transition.

For example:

INTERIM CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION	PERMANENT CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION
Who exercises executive authority on Day 1?	What should Alberta's permanent executive model be?
How does the existing Legislature continue?	What should the permanent legislature look like?
How do the courts retain lawful authority?	What should the permanent judicial structure be?
How are existing rights protected during transition?	What permanent constitutional rights framework should Alberta adopt?
How are laws and public finances continued?	What permanent fiscal or constitutional rules should apply?
How is government kept accountable during transition?	What permanent amendment and accountability mechanisms should the Constitution contain?

Edmonton should continue as the seat of the Government of Alberta throughout the interim constitutional period unless and until Albertans decide otherwise through the permanent constitutional process.

2.3 The Constitutional Track

The Constitutional Track should address matters such as:

the permanent structure of the executive;

the structure and powers of the legislature;

the permanent court and judicial-appointment system;

constitutional protection of rights and freedoms;

Aboriginal and treaty rights;

the relationship between provincial or national institutions and municipalities;

public-finance and accountability rules;

mechanisms for constitutional amendment; and

any other permanent institutions or constitutional offices Albertans decide should form part of the new constitutional order.

Preparatory research, comparative constitutional analysis and public education can begin during Phase 1 and continue during Phase 2. Formal constitutional deliberations should begin only after a successful independence referendum and once there is sufficient clarity about the transition for participants to make informed choices about Alberta's permanent institutions.

The preferred approach is therefore not to force a permanent Constitution onto the same timetable as Day 1 independence. Formal deliberations may begin during Phase 2 if the legal and political framework is sufficiently settled, or they may continue into Phase 3. The important point is that the constitutional process should not delay Day 1 independence merely because every long-term constitutional question has not yet been resolved.

Likewise, Day 1 independence should not force the constitutional process to finish prematurely.

This plan contemplates that, once commenced, a Constitutional Conference would operate on its an approximately twelve-month timetable. The Constitutional Conference would develop a proposed Constitution for Albertans to approve in a referendum. The Constitution would take into effect on the Constitutional Commencement date, once institutions are ready to assume authority.

None of those long-term choices should be treated as having been approved merely because Albertans voted for independence.

2.4 Allocation of Legislative and Executive Authority

During the transition, a clear and understandable chain of authority is key.

The existing Legislative Assembly, Premier and Executive Council should therefore continue as the Government of Alberta across Day 1 independence and throughout the interim constitutional period, exercising the additional sovereign authority provided by the constitutional implementation arrangements and Alberta transition legislation.

The October 2027 provincial election would remain an ordinary democratic election capable of changing or confirming the Premier, Cabinet or composition of the Legislative Assembly. It would not interrupt the institutional continuity of the Government of Alberta or require negotiations and transition work to begin again.

After Constitutional Commencement, legislative and executive authority would be exercised under the permanent constitution ratified by Albertans and by the institutions constituted under it.

2.5 Continuity of Existing Alberta Law

Alberta's existing statutes, regulations, orders, appropriations and administrative authorities should not lapse merely because Alberta's constitutional status changes.

A general Continuity of Laws Act or equivalent transition legislation should provide that existing Alberta law continues in force unless and until it is lawfully amended or repealed.

This is an important part of the continuity-first approach. Day 1 independence should not require Alberta to rewrite thousands of laws simply because their constitutional setting has changed.

Longer-term legislative reform can occur afterward through the normal democratic process.

2.6 Treatment of Existing Federal Law

Federal laws that presently govern activities in Alberta also cannot simply disappear on Day 1 independence where doing so would leave a legal or regulatory gap.

During Phase 1 and Phase 2, federal statutes and regulations affecting Alberta should therefore be inventoried and classified according to what must happen to them.

Some federal laws may no longer be relevant. Others may be replaced immediately by Alberta legislation. Some may need to be temporarily continued or adapted under Alberta authority until a permanent Alberta regime can be developed.

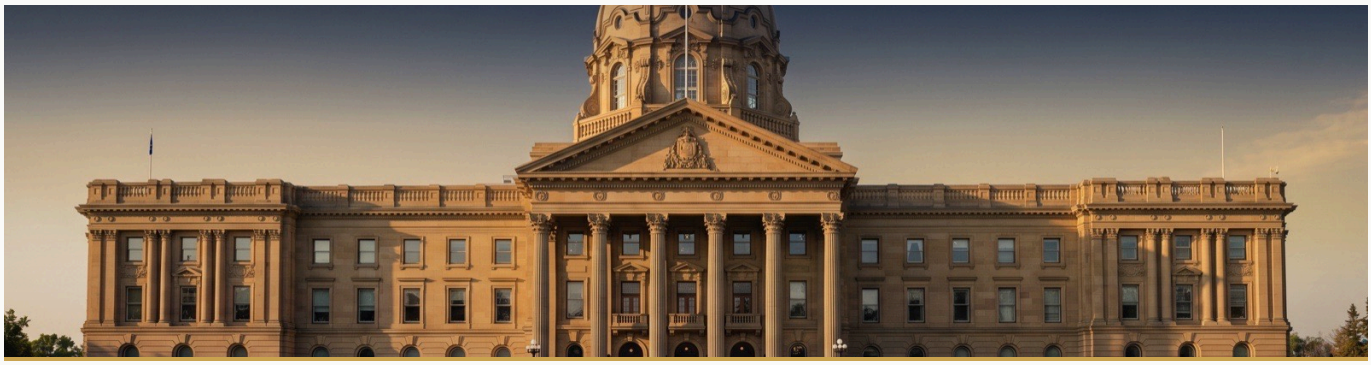
The objective should be continuity first, redesign later.

Where a federal rule presently provides the legal basis for an important activity—such as banking, aviation, transportation, criminal law, border services, telecommunications or product regulation—the transition plan should identify what legal authority replaces it, who administers it, and what happens if the permanent Alberta regime is not yet ready.

The public should therefore not think of Day 1 independence as the moment when the federal statute book simply disappears. It is better understood as a controlled legal transition in which necessary laws are continued, adapted or replaced in an orderly sequence.

Selected references from white papers

- *Supreme Court of Canada: Reference re Secession of Quebec, [1998] 2 S.C.R. 217.*
- *Government of Canada: Clarity Act, S.C. 2000, c. 26.*
- *Government of Canada: Constitution Acts, 1867 to 1982.*



CHAPTER 3

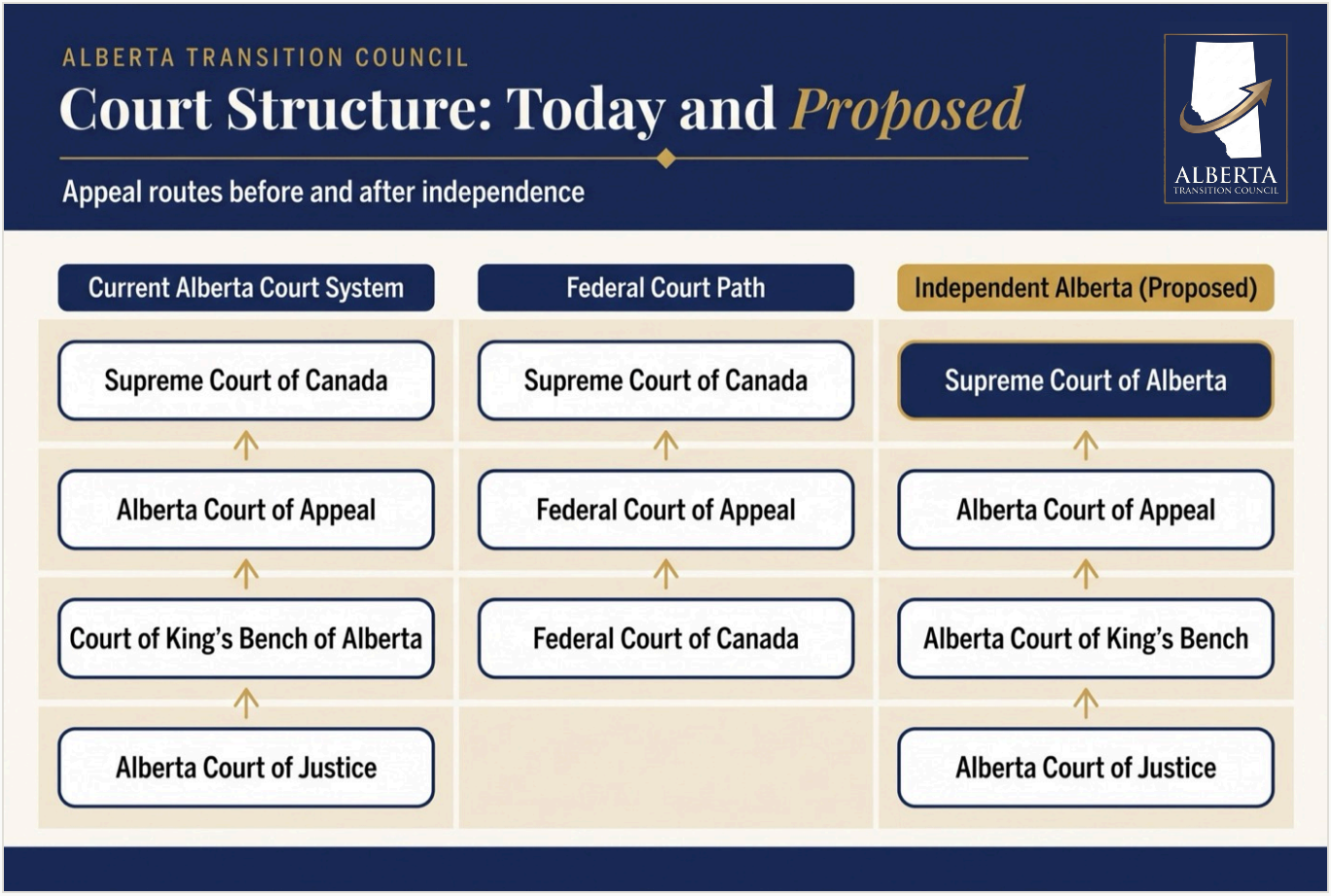
Courts and the Legal System

The legal-system analysis identifies the central Day 1 independence requirement as enforceability: laws, rights, contracts, proceedings, judgments and government decisions must remain capable of being applied and reviewed.

Current and Proposed Court Structure

Today, there are three levels of Alberta courts: Alberta Court of Justice, Alberta Court of King's Bench and the Alberta Court of Appeal. There are also three levels of federal courts: the Federal Court, the Federal Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada. Upon independence, A sovereign Alberta could transfer the authority currently exercised by these federal courts to its existing superior and appellate courts.

Alberta's Court of King's Bench could assume responsibility for federal matters that would fall within Alberta's jurisdiction, while the Alberta Court of Appeal could assume the appellate and final-review functions currently performed by the Federal Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada. This would allow Alberta to preserve its existing courts while expanding their legal authority, rather than creating an entirely new court system on Day 1 of independence.



HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY: DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

Alberta already has the physical infrastructure, personnel and institutions needed to operate a court system, including court buildings, registries, clerks, prosecutors, legal aid infrastructure, provincial judges and a large practicing bar. Criminal, civil, family and administrative matters are already heard every day in Alberta. The federal connection is not that cases are routinely tried or managed by the federal government. Rather, parts of Alberta's court hierarchy, judicial appointment system, criminal law and final appellate processes currently derive their authority from the Canadian constitutional order and legal system. Some court records and pending appeals may be held by, or depend on, Canadian institutions during the transition process.

A further distinction is useful: the court, the law and the justice system are not the same thing. A courthouse is a facility; a judge is an independent office-holder; a prosecutor represents the public in a criminal case; police investigate and execute warrants; corrections holds or supervises offenders; and a legislature writes much of the law. A transition can leave the same building and many of the same professionals in place while changing the legal source of their jurisdiction.

The primary risk on Day 1 of independence is therefore not a lack of courthouses, staff or legal professionals. It is ensuring that Alberta's courts and justice system have clear legal authority to continue operating without interruption. For a court system to function, all of its institutional, legal and operational parts must work together. These include the physical court and registry; the judge and staff; the law that gives the court jurisdiction; the rules of procedure; the police, prosecutors, lawyers and corrections system that carry out orders; and the appeal route above the court. Most of the physical and professional infrastructure already operates in Alberta. The transition task is therefore to ensure that the legal authority and appeal functions currently administered by the federal system continue without interruption.

A pending lawsuit or criminal prosecution should not have to start over because sovereignty changes. Continuity legislation can preserve the case, the evidence already filed, existing orders and limitation periods, while new Alberta law identifies which court hears the next step and where the final appeal goes. The genuinely external issues are narrower: extradition, recognition of Alberta judgments outside Alberta, access to Canadian records and formal government-to-government assistance in criminal investigations. Those matters require agreements, but they do not require rebuilding any courthouse or legal office.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The white paper recommends the plan preserve existing laws, rights, contracts, licences, proceedings and orders; deems judges and court officers to continue where legally supportable; maintains prosecution, corrections and civil enforcement; and establishes a clear appellate endpoint. Longer-term court redesign can follow. The hardest external questions are ongoing appeals, access to records, extradition, formal government-to-government legal assistance and recognition of Alberta judgments outside Alberta. Those are legal-cooperation questions, not reasons to rebuild the trial-court system from zero.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Court facilities, registries, staff, most procedures, active files and day-to-day hearings.
What changes	Source of jurisdiction, final appellate authority, judicial governance and international recognition mechanisms.
What requires agreement	Transfer of certain records/appeals and reciprocal enforcement, extradition and legal-assistance arrangements.

3.1 Continuity of the Courts

Existing court facilities, registries, staff, procedures and active cases should continue wherever possible. A new Continuity of Laws Act and Courts Act enacted by the Alberta Government would vest jurisdiction, carry forward proceedings and preserve the legal effect of prior orders and judgments.

3.2 Superior and Appellate Court Arrangements

The authority of each court must be clear from Day 1 of independence. The Government of Alberta currently appoints judges to the Alberta Court of Justice, while the Government of Canada appoints judges to the Alberta Court of King's Bench and the Alberta Court of Appeal.

To avoid any interruption, transitional legislation could provide that all existing federally appointed judges serving on Alberta courts continue in office, with their tenure and remuneration protected. The same legislation would confirm each court's jurisdiction and establish the applicable appeal routes.

3.3 Establishment of Final Appellate Jurisdiction

A sovereign Alberta would ultimately require its own final appellate authority similar to the role currently provided by the Supreme Court of Canada. The supporting transitional analysis leaves an important sequencing choice. Alberta could establish an interim final court of appeal for Day 1 of independence, using a temporary structure until the permanent Constitution determines the long-term court system. Alternatively, Alberta and Canada could negotiate arrangements allowing appeals that were already underway before Day 1—such as cases already before the Supreme Court of Canada or for which leave to appeal had already been sought or

granted—to continue to completion under the existing Canadian process, while new Alberta cases would follow the transitional Alberta appeal structure to the new Supreme Court of Alberta. The objective in either case is to avoid interrupting pending litigation while ensuring that Alberta has a clear and lawful final appellate authority from the beginning of independence.

3.4 Prosecution Services

Most criminal prosecutions in Alberta are already conducted by the Alberta Crown Prosecution Service. Alberta Crown prosecutors presently prosecute the ordinary Criminal Code caseload, youth prosecutions and provincial offences throughout the province. Federal prosecutors perform a more limited but important role, concentrated particularly in drug prosecutions and offences under federal regulatory statutes. The transition task is therefore not to create a prosecution service from scratch. Alberta already has the prosecutors, Crown offices, management structure, disclosure systems and courtroom experience required for the bulk of criminal prosecutions. The principal Day 1 independence change would be to expand Alberta's existing prosecution mandate to include the federal offences and prosecution responsibilities that would no longer be exercised by the Public Prosecution Service of Canada in Alberta.

3.5 Pending Litigation and Proceedings

Proceedings should carry forward in the same procedural posture, preserving limitation periods, interlocutory orders and appeal rights. Cases already in federal courts or the Supreme Court of Canada would require a negotiated transfer, completion or transitional appellate rule.

3.6 Recognition and Enforcement of Judgments

Alberta would not be starting from zero in this area. Canadian provinces already have established rules for recognizing and enforcing judgments from other provinces, and Canadian courts also recognize qualifying foreign judgments subject to safeguards such as proper jurisdiction, procedural fairness and public policy.

On Day 1 of independence, Alberta could continue these existing principles through continuity legislation while negotiating a reciprocal recognition agreement with Canada. The practical objective is simple: a valid Alberta judgment should remain enforceable against a person or assets in Canada, and a valid Canadian judgment should remain enforceable in Alberta.

3.7 Litigation and Proceeding Transition Schedule

A change in Alberta's constitutional status should not cause existing lawsuits, prosecutions, appeals, tax disputes, regulatory proceedings or arbitrations to start again.

No civil, criminal, regulatory or administrative proceeding should be required to restart solely because Alberta's constitutional status changes.

The practical objective is to preserve the position of every proceeding immediately before Day 1. Pleadings already filed remain filed. Evidence already admitted remains part of the record. Orders and judgments remain effective. Limitation periods, hearing dates and appeal rights are preserved. Where the same Alberta court can continue hearing the matter, the file should simply remain there. Where a proceeding is before a Canadian federal court or tribunal, the transition arrangements should identify whether that proceeding will continue to completion in the Canadian institution or transfer, without restarting, to an Alberta successor.

The governing principle should be that constitutional transition changes the source of legal authority where necessary; it should not erase the legal work already completed by the parties, courts or tribunals.

Selected references from white papers

- *Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH): 2019 Judgments Convention and HCCH materials on international recognition and enforcement of judgments.*

CHAPTER 4

Regulatory Framework

Regulatory credibility succeeds at interfaces—licence validity, inspection, standards recognition, public registries, enforcement and appeals. The recommended transition model is therefore continuity-first and recognition-led.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Regulation is one of the clearest examples of mixed jurisdiction. Alberta already regulates energy development, utilities, securities, workplace matters, many environmental activities, traffic, consumer matters, professions and numerous licences. Federal institutions regulate other layers: competition, federally regulated financial institutions, intellectual property, measurement standards, national product safety, nuclear matters, parts of transportation and cross-border certification.

A regulator is the public body that turns a law into day-to-day operating rules. It may issue a licence, approve a product or facility, inspect compliance, investigate a complaint, order corrective action, impose a penalty and provide or trigger an appeal process. Alberta already has many such bodies. The gap arises where the federal government is the present regulator or where an Alberta approval is useful only because other jurisdictions recognize the same standard.

The practical question is therefore not whether Alberta can "have regulation." It already does. The question is which federal regulatory functions are essential to the lawful use, sale or export of goods and services, and which existing Alberta body is closest to being able to assume them.

This is why a licence has two separate questions. First, is it still legally valid inside Alberta? Alberta can often answer that with a continuity law that automatically carries the existing licence forward for a defined period. Second, will Canada, the United States, an insurer, a buyer or another regulator accept that Alberta licence? Alberta cannot answer that second question by itself. It may require mutual recognition, technical equivalence or a service agreement. Keeping those two questions separate prevents unnecessary mass re-licensing while still identifying the real external dependency.

It is important to distinguish a domestic licence from external recognition. Alberta can decide that a previously valid licence remains valid inside Alberta. That does not automatically make a foreign government, insurer, bank, airline, food importer or professional body accept it. The first problem is solved by Alberta law; the second is solved by standards, evidence and negotiated or counterpart recognition.

TERM	PLAIN-LANGUAGE MEANING	WHY IT MATTERS IN TRANSITION
Law	The rule enacted by a legislature.	New Alberta continuity legislation can keep an existing rule in force even if the original Canadian statute no longer applies directly.
Regulator	The body that administers the rule in real cases.	Someone must be able to receive applications, inspect, decide, enforce and hear or route appeals on the first day.
Licence / certificate / approval	The document or legal status that says a person, product, facility or company may operate.	Mass re-application creates needless disruption; safe existing approvals can often be grandfathered temporarily. Grandfathering is common for new regulatory regimes.
Inspection / enforcement record	The history showing whether the holder complied with the rules.	A successor regulator may benefit from old records where they are not otherwise available.
Recognition / equivalency	Acceptance by another jurisdiction that Alberta's approval or standard is good enough for cross-border use.	Alberta can make a licence valid inside Alberta and seek recognition outside of Alberta or adopt other internation standards.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The white recommends the transition approach is continuation of use of recognized standards with the additional use of substitution before redesign. Existing Canadian

> technical standards, certificates, licences and approvals can be temporarily recognized under Alberta law while Alberta creates the minimum sovereign decision-making and enforcement capacity. In many areas, the permanent answer may still be to recognize external standards because manufacturers and exporters benefit from common North American rules. The important sovereign capability is the ability to decide what Alberta recognizes, enforce safety and market rules, and act when an external authority is unavailable.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Most existing Alberta regulators, industry licences and technical standards.
What changes	Federal-only regulatory authority must be assigned to Alberta institutions or bridged by recognition/service agreements.
What citizens/businesses notice	Ideally very little on Day 1 of independence: existing approvals stay valid, labels remain usable and regulators publish clear continuity guidance.

4.1 Continuity of Existing Regulatory Requirements

A new Alberta *Regulatory Continuity Act* should preserve designated licences, approvals, registrations, standards, inspections, orders and ongoing proceedings for a defined period. Businesses should not have to reapply for routine authority simply because sovereignty changes.

4.2 Transfer of Federal Regulatory Functions

Every federal regulator affecting Alberta should be mapped by function. Functions can then be assigned to an existing Alberta body, a new specialist office, a time-limited service agreement with Canada, or a recognition mechanism relying on credible foreign standards.

4.3 Establishment of Alberta Regulatory Bodies

Wherever possible, Alberta would expand the authority of its existing regulatory bodies such as Alberta Energy Regulator (AER), Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC), Workers Compensation Board (WCB) and Alberta Securities Commission (ASC). New regulatory bodies would be created only where Alberta does not already have

an institution capable of assuming responsibilities currently exercised by the federal government.

A limited number of new or successor bodies may be required in areas such as product safety and standards, competition and market conduct, weights and measures, intellectual property and insolvency interfaces and nuclear and radiation oversight.

4.4 Licensing, Permits and Certifications

The operating default should be grandfather first, review later. A mirrored registry, clear expiry and renewal rules and an appeal path are as important as the legal continuation clause because counterparties need to verify that an Alberta authorization is real and current.

4.5 Standards and Technical Regulation

Alberta can initially adopt Canadian and international technical standards by reference, then modify them after consultation. This reduces compliance cost and supports foreign recognition while avoiding a rushed creation of an entirely new standards catalogue. This is consistent with the approach currently used by Canada and other developed countries.

4.6 Regulatory Equivalency with Canada

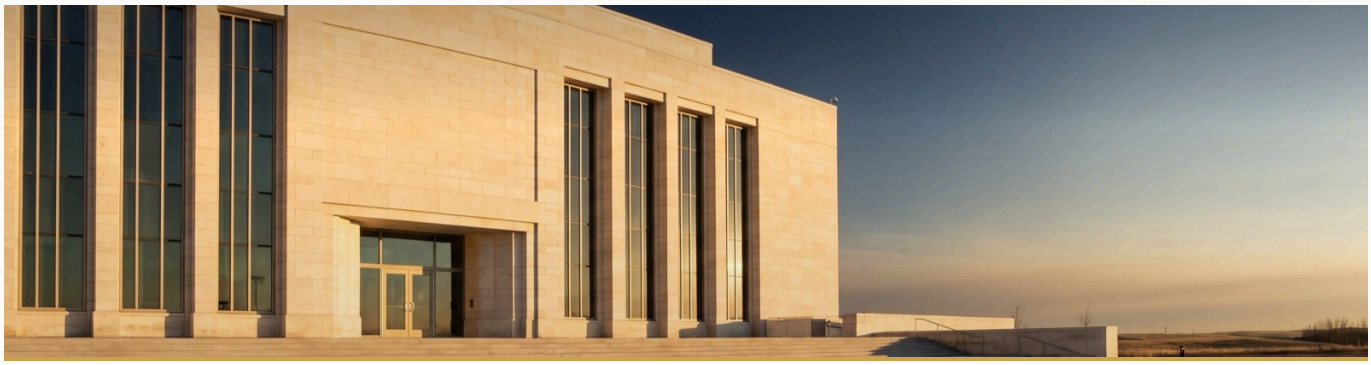
Mutual recognition with Canada is especially valuable where markets and supply chains remain integrated. Equivalency should be pursued where it reduces duplication without preventing Alberta from changing its domestic rules later through ordinary democratic processes.

4.7 Transitional Mutual-Recognition Arrangements

Priority agreements should cover high-consequence areas such as food, health products, energy interfaces, transportation, professional licensing and regulated trade documentation. Alberta can continue its own approvals domestically, and work with other jurisdictions on acceptance. A constitutional change should not require every safe, valid licence, permit, product approval, certificate or professional authorization to be re-applied for on Day 1. The preferred transition method is temporary recognition or grandfathering, followed by orderly review or renewal under Alberta authority.

Selected references from white papers

- *Government of Canada: Competition Act; Canada Consumer Product Safety Act; Patent Act; Trademarks Act; and Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act.*
- *Government of Canada: Weights and Measures Act and Electricity and Gas Inspection Act.*
- *Standards Council of Canada: standards, accreditation and conformity-assessment framework.*
- *Government of Alberta: Responsible Energy Development Act; Alberta Utilities Commission Act; Occupational Health and Safety Act; and Securities Act.*



CHAPTER 5

Policing, Corrections and Public Order

The public-safety test for transition is practical: emergency calls are answered, police respond under clear authority, investigations continue, court orders are executed, detainees remain lawfully held and civilian oversight continues.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Public safety in Alberta is already delivered by a mixture of municipal police, provincial sheriffs, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) contract policing, provincial corrections and federal institutions. Federal penitentiaries located in Alberta are not abstract Ottawa services: they are staffed by correctional officers, health professionals, parole officers, maintenance workers, administrators and other employees who work and live in Alberta. The public-safety and border analysis estimates thousands of such federal correctional employees in Alberta and this plan treats retention of experienced staff as a core transition assumption.

This matters because a change in employer (or in this case government authority) does not mean that the job or the service itself changes. A secure institution, its trained workforce and operating routines can continue if legal custody authority, employment, records, payroll, procurement and command relationships are transferred lawfully.

Public safety is a chain rather than a single agency. A 9-1-1 call is received by a local emergency communications centre, dispatched to the appropriate police, fire or medical service, and may then lead to an investigation, prosecution, court order, detention

or correctional sentence. Alberta already has municipal police services, provincial sheriffs, provincial corrections and emergency systems. The RCMP also provides contract policing in many Alberta communities, while federal institutions perform other policing and correctional functions.

The transition planning step is therefore to preserve each link in that chain. If a federally employed police officer or correctional employee is already working in Alberta, the Alberta Government can offer those employees continuing employment so that the skills do not need to be recreated. The important work is lawful commissioning, command, employer and payroll changes, records access, custody authority, collective-agreement and pension treatment, and continuing access to criminal information. Physical prisons, police stations, vehicles and dispatch systems can often continue while those legal and employment layers change behind them.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The white paper's proposed model expands Alberta's existing public-safety institutions into a unified structure rather than constructing a separate bureaucracy for the inherited federal functions. The most visible work - patrol, investigations, custody, parole supervision, court transport and institutional operations - should continue with the same facilities and, where negotiated or successfully recruited, many of the same people. For example, RCMP members can be offered to transition to become Alberta sheriffs and Alberta municipalities that currently contract the RCMP for policing services can transfer those contracts to the Alberta Sheriffs Police Service. What changes behind the scenes is commissioning, employer identity, pension and collective-agreement treatment, data access, command, policy and legal authority. Those are significant tasks, but they are narrower than creating a correctional workforce and prison system from nothing.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Operating facilities, many local police services, correctional routines, trained workforce and equipment.
What changes	Employer/commission, command structure, federal policing roles, legal custody authority and national intelligence interfaces.
What requires agreement	Transfer or access to federal facilities, staff, offender records, pensions, security data and cross-border law-enforcement cooperation.

5.1 Continuity of Policing Services

Alberta would need to assume responsibility for the policing functions currently provided by the RCMP under contract with the Province. One option is to expand the Alberta Sheriffs into a full provincial police service that could absorb these responsibilities, including the transfer or recruitment of experienced RCMP officers and civilian staff who already work in Alberta. Other provincial policing models could also be considered.

Whatever model is selected, policing services must continue without interruption throughout the transition. Local, rural, highway and specialized policing would need to remain operational, with clear legal authority for police officers, established command structures, continuous dispatch services and defined responsibility for each community and region.

5.2 Criminal Law Enforcement

Alberta would need to ensure that its criminal laws and enforcement powers continue without interruption after independence. A new Alberta *Regulatory Continuity Act* could adopt the Canadian Criminal Code and related federal criminal law statutes as Alberta law. This would preserve the criminal-law framework already understood and used by police, prosecutors, courts and the public until Alberta decides whether to amend or replace it.

The legislation would also confirm the continued validity of existing police powers, warrants, charges, disclosure obligations, bail orders and custody arrangements. Agreements with Canada and other provinces would maintain cooperation in areas such as investigations, prisoner transfers, extradition and the enforcement of warrants across borders.

5.3 Corrections and Detention

Alberta's existing provincial correctional system would provide the foundation for a unified corrections system after independence. The transition would also require Alberta and Canada to determine responsibility for federal inmates currently held in Alberta, federal correctional institutions located in the province, and the employees who operate them.

Transitional agreements and legislation would need to clearly address the transfer of institutions, staff, inmates and prisoner records, as well as responsibility for parole, probation, prisoner transportation and the continued enforcement of existing sentences.

5.4 Intergovernmental Law-Enforcement Cooperation

A renewed Canada–Alberta relationship would benefit from agreements on warrants, extradition, prisoner transfer, mutual legal assistance, criminal records, organized crime and cross-border investigations. Cooperation with U.S. authorities would also become a sovereign responsibility.

Selected references from white papers

- *Government of Alberta: Alberta Sheriffs and provincial public-safety operating framework.*
- *Royal Canadian Mounted Police: Alberta contract-policing and federal policing framework.*

II

PART II

Fiscal, Monetary and Financial Transition

A sovereign government provides the functions to collect revenue, manage cash, keep payments flowing, protect deposits, finance short-term needs and negotiate a credible settlement of debts and assets.

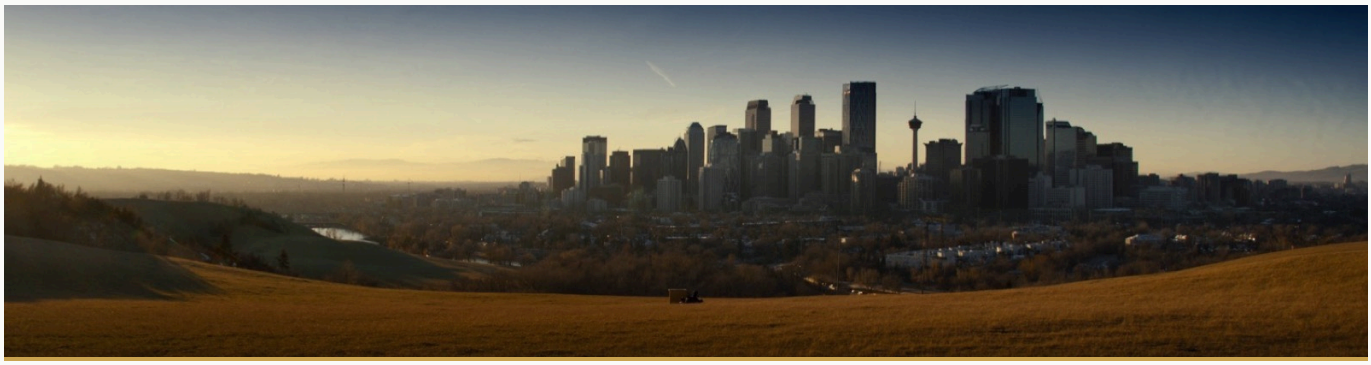
6 Budget and Public Finance

7 Taxation and Revenue Administration

8 Banking, Currency, Monetary and Housing Finance Arrangements

9 Public Debt, Assets and Liabilities

10 Pensions



CHAPTER 6

Budget and Public Finance

The budget work converts the transition into a controlled financial program. Its most important purpose is not to produce a single headline number, but to identify what Alberta would be responsible for paying, when those obligations arise, how they are funded and what financial controls are required.

Detailed transition costs, annual expenditure estimates and fiscal projections are being developed separately and will be published in a stand-alone budget and costing report following further review by economists. This chapter therefore focuses on the institutions, processes and financial capabilities required for transition.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Alberta already has a full provincial budget, Treasury Board, accounting systems, payroll, procurement rules, debt-management capacity and financial reporting. The transition would build on those existing institutions rather than create a public-finance system from scratch.

The key financial distinction is between Alberta's existing provincial spending and the additional responsibilities associated with functions now financed or administered federally. Those responsibilities may include ongoing program spending, administration, one-time transition expenditures, capital purchases and temporary service arrangements.

These categories should not be confused. A pension or benefit payment is program spending; the people and systems administering that payment are an administrative

cost. A one-time technology build is different from an annual operating cost. A budget estimate is also different from an appropriation or an amount actually spent. Cash timing is another separate issue. A government may have sufficient annual revenue but still require temporary financing if payroll, pensions, suppliers or debt payments fall due before related revenues are received.

Three financial words deserve plain-language treatment. “Treasury” is the government's central cash-management function. It ensures money is available when payments fall due. An “appropriation” is legal authority from the Legislature to spend public money for a stated purpose. A “budget estimate” is a planning forecast. It is not itself a contract, payment or legal authority to spend.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The white paper’s principal change would be that a larger share of public revenues and expenditures would be administered through the Government of Alberta.

Alberta would assume agreed federal responsibilities while also assuming taxing powers and revenue streams presently administered by Canada. The fiscal analysis must therefore consider both sides of the ledger: additional expenditures and additional revenues. The most sensitive period would be around Day 1 independence, when new payment obligations, revenue systems and financing arrangements must operate together. Budgeting is therefore as much about liquidity and timing as it is about annual cost.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Alberta's existing budget, treasury, accounting, payroll, procurement and debt-management systems.
What changes	Additional expenditure responsibilities, revenue streams and sovereign financing requirements.
What must be ready	Spending authority, cash forecasts, revenue collection, payment systems, borrowing capacity and contingencies.
Detailed costing	Published separately in the Budget and Costing Report.

6.1 Transitional Fiscal Framework

Transition financing should operate within Alberta's existing budget and Treasury Board framework.

During Phase 1, government should identify the financial responsibilities associated with each transferred or newly created function. During Phase 2, those estimates can be refined as negotiations determine which responsibilities Alberta will assume and which services may temporarily remain with Canada.

By Day 1 of independence, each critical function should have an accountable owner, lawful spending authority, an approved budget, an identified funding source and a cash-flow plan.

6.2 Identification of New Government Expenditure Responsibilities

Each federal function affecting Albertans should be reviewed to determine what financial responsibility would transfer to Alberta.

The review should distinguish between:

- spending Alberta already incurs;
- new program responsibilities;
- administrative costs;
- one-time transition costs;
- capital requirements; and
- responsibilities that depend upon negotiated arrangements.

This avoids counting existing Alberta spending as a new transition cost or confusing program payments with the cost of administering them.

6.3 Transitional Budget Requirements

Transition expenditures may include technology, data migration, recruitment, training, facilities, equipment, professional services and temporary service arrangements.

Each expenditure should be classified as one-time, temporary, recurring, capital, program spending or conditional upon a particular transition outcome.

That distinction allows the public to separate the cost of making the transition from the ongoing cost of government after the transition.

6.4 Government Cash Management

Treasury should maintain a detailed cash forecast linking revenues to payroll, pensions, benefits, suppliers, debt service and other major payments. The critical period is around Day 1 independence. If Alberta assumes a payment responsibility before the related revenues are fully available, temporary liquidity may be required. The practical test is straightforward: when an obligation comes due, Alberta must have both the legal authority and the cash available to pay it.

6.5 Borrowing and Financing Requirements

Alberta already borrows in domestic and international capital markets and maintains established debt-management and investor-relations functions.

Those capabilities would continue, but an independent Alberta would require clear sovereign authority for borrowing, debt issuance, repayment and financial-market operations.

Temporary financing should be based on actual cash-flow needs rather than a headline annual cost. Cash reserves, short-term borrowing and credit facilities could be used to manage temporary timing gaps.

6.6 Fiscal Stabilization Measures

Transition planning should include financial contingencies for delays, unexpected costs or revenue timing problems.

Possible measures include cash reserves, contingency appropriations, short-term credit, temporary service arrangements and staged implementation.

The objective is to prevent a temporary financial problem from interrupting an essential public service.

6.7 Government Accounting and Financial Reporting

Alberta's existing accounting, financial reporting and audit systems should continue throughout the transition.

Transition expenditures should be recorded in a common framework that clearly distinguishes estimates, approved spending, contractual commitments and actual cash payments. A single controlled financial record should also reduce double-counting and allow independent review.

6.8 Fiscal Credibility and Market Communications

Financial institutions, investors and credit-rating agencies would closely follow a transition. Government should therefore provide clear information about its fiscal framework, cash-management arrangements, borrowing capacity and the assumptions underlying the separate Budget and Costing Report.

The objective is not to suggest that every financial outcome can be known in advance. It is to demonstrate that the financial risks are identified and managed through established institutions and disciplined planning.

> Detailed transition costs, annual expenditure estimates, staffing costs, revenue projections and fiscal scenarios will be presented separately in an ATC Budget and Costing Report following economic review.

CHAPTER 7

Taxation and Revenue Administration

The Day 1 tax transition objective is to ensure the authority to assess, collect and enforce taxes and to manage cash even if permanent new tax policy is not yet redesigned.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Alberta already collects several taxes and levies through provincial Tax and Revenue Administration, including Alberta corporate income tax. The Canada Revenue Agency currently administers personal income tax and the federal consumption-tax system and also provides important data and benefit-delivery functions. Employers and financial institutions already transmit withholding and information through established electronic channels.

The practical transition challenge is therefore an expansion of an existing revenue administration, not the invention of the concept of tax collection. The work is establishing taxpayer accounts, employer remittances, assessments, refunds, audit, objections, information returns, data custody and the secure migration or reconstruction of records.

Tax administration is a process, not simply a tax rate. A law defines who owes the tax and how it is calculated. Employers and businesses withhold or collect amounts during the year. A revenue agency receives those remittances, maintains taxpayer accounts, processes returns, checks calculations, issues refunds or assessments, collects unpaid amounts and supports an appeal process. Banks and payroll providers are payment

channels in that system, while the government's records determine which account the money belongs to.

Much of the transition can therefore be designed so ordinary payroll and business routines change as little as possible. An employer can keep using the same payroll software and bank while the legal recipient and remittance account change. The important part is authoritative taxpayer data, account balances, instalments, carry-forwards, refunds, audits and information returns. If those records are transferred or reconstructed properly, tax administration can be moved in stages.

For an employee, the tax system is mostly invisible because the employer does much of the work. Payroll software calculates deductions, the employer sends the withheld money to the revenue authority, the employee later files a return, the revenue authority compares the return with information already received and then issues an assessment, refund or balance owing. Banks provide the payment channel; they do not decide the tax law.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

A transitional Alberta Revenue Service would take over the functions selected by Alberta law while preserving familiar filing dates, forms, withholding logic and payment channels as far as practical. A temporary collection or data-service agreement with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) could reduce risk, but the fallback must be an Alberta-controlled register and collection capability. The public objective is to avoid making the constitutional transition feel like a tax-software migration for every household and employer on the same day. Policy changes to rates or tax types are separate political decisions and should not be confused with the administrative requirement to collect revenue reliably.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Many employer payroll processes, taxpayer records concepts, bank payment methods and Alberta's existing tax administration.
What changes	Which government receives particular taxes, the statutory authority, data custody and administration of taxes now handled by CRA.
What requires careful staging	Personal income-tax and consumption-tax accounts, refunds/credits, withholding remittances and information-return systems.

7.1 Transition of Federal Taxing Powers

The transition agreement and Alberta legislation would need to establish when federal collection ends and Alberta collection begins, how liabilities are divided by tax period, and how returns, refunds, audits, objections and data are transferred. A cutover should avoid double taxation and gaps in liability.

7.2 Personal Income Tax

The transition plan proposes expanding Alberta's existing tax administration into an Alberta Revenue Service capable of personal income tax. Employer withholding and existing taxpayer identifiers should be reused where possible, with temporary rules preserving familiar remittance processes while Alberta systems mature.

7.3 Corporate Income Tax

Alberta already administers provincial corporate income tax, which provides a significant institutional starting point. The main transition tasks are expanding capacity, integrating federal tax-base information, aligning instalment and audit rules and ensuring cross-border tax treatment is clear to businesses.

7.4 Consumption and Sales Taxes

If a national Alberta consumption tax is used during transition, legislation, registration, invoicing, remittance, rebates and import treatment must be ready before cutover. The long-term rate and policy design are political choices and should not be confused with the operational requirement for a collectable tax base.

7.5 Excise Taxes and Duties

Fuel, alcohol, tobacco and other excise functions should be inventoried by product and collection point. Existing provincial systems can be reused where appropriate, while federal excise responsibilities would require Alberta legislation or transitional administration.

7.6 Customs Revenue

Trade policy should set tariff/classification rules, border officers should execute inspection and release, and the revenue authority should collect duties, import consumption taxes and excise amounts. This split prevents customs policy, policing and revenue collection from being concentrated in one unstructured agency.

7.7 Resource and Other Government Revenues

Resource royalties and provincial fees already provide established Alberta billing and collection systems. The transition plan should preserve those channels while separately building federal-function revenues and ensuring government entities continue receiving fees and charges under valid authority.

7.8 Establishment of Revenue Administration

The transition plan proposes an Alberta Revenue Service built on Alberta Tax and Revenue Administration and its existing tax-administration systems. Critical capabilities are taxpayer registration, assessment, collections, audit, investigations, objections/appeals, data custody, service channels and a resilient treasury interface.

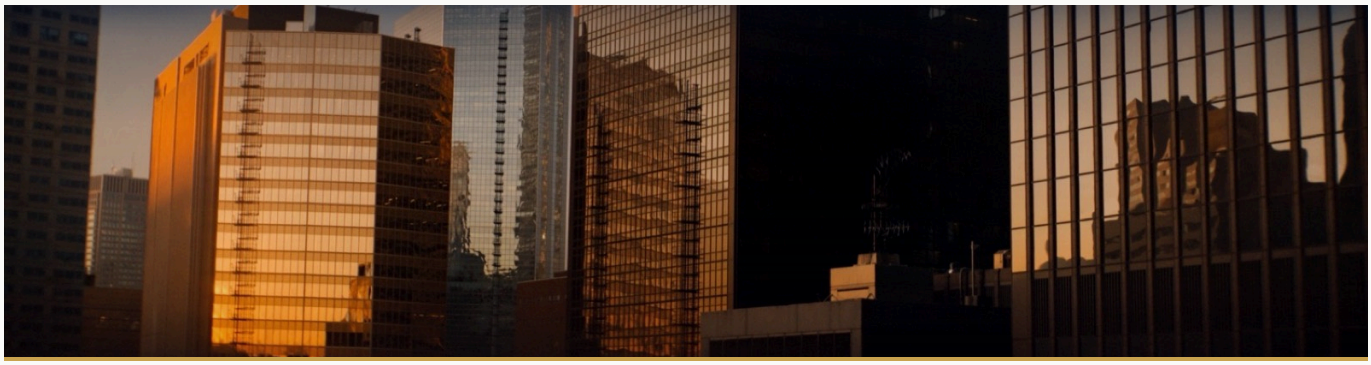
7.9 Transitional Tax Collection Arrangements with Canada

A cooperative agreement could allow temporary CRA collection or data services under defined terms while Alberta builds full capacity. A fallback requires Alberta-controlled taxpayer data, employer remittance channels, banking connectivity and a staged onboarding plan that does not depend indefinitely on federal systems.

Selected references from white papers

- *Canada Revenue Agency: agency functions, assessment, collections, audit, investigations and benefit-delivery materials.*
- *Government of Canada: Tax Collection Agreements and Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act.*

- *Government of Alberta: Tax and Revenue Administration / TRACS materials.*
- *OECD: Model Tax Convention on Income and on Capital.*
- *Public Accounts of Canada: federal revenue breakdown and tax-revenue context.*



CHAPTER 8

Banking, Currency, Monetary and Housing Finance Arrangements

The transition objective is to preserve financial stability and everyday continuity: deposits remain accessible, cards and transfers work, payroll clears, banks remain open, the chosen currency continues to function, monetary and liquidity arrangements support the financial system, and existing mortgages and housing-finance arrangements continue without unnecessary disruption.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Most banking activity experienced by Albertans is already delivered by private financial institutions, not by a federal department. The branch, mobile app, mortgage, credit card, commercial loan and back-office operations belong to banks or credit unions. The federal layer is principally the legal charter and bank safety-and-soundness framework for banks, federal deposit insurance for eligible deposits, national payment and clearing arrangements, and central-bank liquidity. Alberta also already has ATB Financial and a provincially regulated credit-union system including 11 provincially incorporated credit unions. The provincially created Alberta Credit Union Deposit Guarantee Corporation (CUDGC) currently guarantees 100% of deposits at Alberta credit unions.

Large Canadian banks also operate across national borders in the United States and other countries serving citizens of those countries. That experience is relevant because it shows that a bank can serve customers in more than one sovereign jurisdiction without moving its core technology or rebuilding every branch. It does not mean legal con-

tinuity is automatic: an Alberta banking licence, bank safety-and-soundness rules, deposit protection, clearing access and liquidity arrangements would still have to be settled.

Banking has at least four different layers. Private banks and credit unions provide the customer-facing service: accounts, loans, cards, branches, mobile applications and business banking. Regulators supervise whether institutions are legally authorized and financially sound. Deposit-protection arrangements protect eligible deposits if an institution fails. Payment and settlement systems move money between institutions, while a central-bank or emergency-liquidity function provides temporary cash to otherwise solvent institutions during stress.

Consider a normal purchase through a debit-card. The customer uses a card issued by a private bank; messages pass through a payment network; the customer's bank and the merchant's bank settle the amount; and both institutions operate under regulatory and deposit-protection rules. A change in the federal regulator arising from sovereignty does not require replacing the shop, the card terminal or the bank's computer system. It does require lawful banking authority, continued connection to payment systems and a credible safety net.

A bank branch is therefore only the visible front end of a much larger system. The teller, mortgage specialist and mobile app work for the bank; other institutions behind the scenes supervise the bank, protect eligible deposits, clear payments, supply liquidity and, in some mortgages, insure the lender against default. None of those institutions is interchangeable with the bank itself.

INSTITUTION / LAYER	WHAT IT DOES TODAY IN SIMPLE TERMS	WHAT A TRANSITION ACTUALLY HAS TO SOLVE
Private bank or credit union	Holds customer accounts, makes loans and mortgages, issues cards and operates branches and apps.	Keep customer contracts and accounts usable; give the institution lawful Alberta authority to continue operating.
Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI)	Federal prudential supervisor for federally regulated banks and certain other financial institutions. It watches capital, risk and safety-and-soundness requirements.	Alberta needs its own prudential authority for institutions under Alberta jurisdiction, or a negotiated supervisory bridge during transition.
Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation (CDIC)	Federal Crown corporation that protects eligible deposits at member institutions up to the statutory coverage rules.	Existing coverage and successor Alberta deposit protection must be implemented.
Payments Canada	Runs core Canadian payment-clearing and settlement systems used behind cheques, electronic transfers and other payments.	Alberta needs continued access or an interoperable replacement path.
Bank of Canada	Canada's central bank; among other functions it supports Canadian-dollar liquidity and financial-system stability.	If Alberta banks continue using Canadian dollars, liquidity and settlement arrangements must be negotiated or replaced with credible Alberta facilities.
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)	Federal Crown corporation involved in mortgage-default insurance, housing finance and securitization, and housing programs.	Existing insured mortgages and funding channels should be bridged where agreed while Alberta prepares a successor housing-finance capacity if needed.

This distinction explains why banking continuity is mostly a regulatory interface problem. Alberta does not need to create new bank branches. It needs to make sure the legal licence, supervision, deposit protection, payment clearing, liquidity and mortgage-insurance layers remain credible around the existing private banking business.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

For an ordinary customer, the Day 1 of independence result would be that the same account number, debit card, mortgage payment, payroll deposit and online login continue to work. Behind that apparent continuity, Alberta would need to decide the applicable currency, guarantee deposits under its jurisdiction, supervise institutions, preserve

> or replace access to payment systems, and provide emergency liquidity to solvent institutions.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Private banks, credit unions, branches, customer accounts, lending relationships and most technology.
What changes	Regulatory jurisdiction, deposit-protection rules, payment-system access and liquidity backstop.
What is not required on Day 1	A brand-new Alberta currency or rebuilding the commercial banking network from scratch.

8.1 Currency Options

The updated banking analysis uses continued use of the Canadian dollar as the initial Day 1 independence planning assumption because it minimizes contract, pricing and consumer disruption. Other possibilities—including use of the U.S. dollar, dual-currency arrangements or a future Alberta currency—remain longer-term or contingency choices. This transition plan does not select a permanent currency regime; it separates the immediate continuity decision from the later monetary-policy decision to be made by the independent Alberta government.

8.2 Transitional Use of the Canadian Dollar

Continued use of the Canadian dollar would minimize consumer and contract conversion at the outset. In order to guarantee access to Canadian payment infrastructure or central-bank liquidity, those operational arrangements must be negotiated separately.

8.3 Monetary Policy Options

Using another country's currency would mean importing that country's monetary policy rather than setting an independent policy rate. A sovereign Alberta currency could create policy autonomy later but would require a substantially more mature central-bank, reserve, payments and confidence framework than the Day 1 independence transition requires.

8.4 Central Banking or Monetary Authority Functions

The transition plan proposes an Alberta Monetary Authority responsible for financial stability, liquidity, payment oversight, bank supervision coordination and currency management. The permanent institutional form—central bank, monetary authority or a different model—can be decided after the transition architecture is proven.

8.5 Banking Regulation and Supervision

Alberta would need a lawful bank safety-and-soundness regime for banks and other deposit-taking institutions. Existing ATB and credit-union supervision provide a base, while national bank branches would require a clear licensing/grandfathering path and a predictable transition from federal to Alberta oversight.

8.6 Deposit Insurance

The analysis emphasizes public confidence in deposit safety. A transition agreement should clarify continuing federal coverage where applicable and Alberta should have a legally funded backstop for institutions under its jurisdiction. The exact coverage model and limits require actuarial and fiscal validation rather than relying on broad unverified planning assumptions. Alberta already has experience with deposit insurance with the 100% guarantee Alberta provides to Alberta credit unions through the Alberta Credit Union Deposit Guarantee Corporation.

8.7 Payments and Settlement Systems

Payment continuity is a major external dependency. The preferred low-disruption route is negotiated access to existing clearing and settlement systems; the fallback is staged domestic and correspondent-bank capability. Both require technical testing well before Day 1 of independence.

8.8 Financial-Market Regulation

Securities, market conduct, anti-money-laundering interfaces, payments compliance and cross-border correspondent banking must remain credible to financial institutions outside Alberta. Existing Alberta securities capacity through the Alberta Securities Commission can be reused while federal functions are mapped and replaced or bridged.

8.9 Financial Stability and Emergency Liquidity

A stable banking system also requires a source of emergency liquidity. Even a financially sound bank or credit union can face a temporary cash shortage if unusually large numbers of customers withdraw deposits at the same time or if normal funding markets are disrupted. A lender-of-last-resort facility provides short-term funding in those circumstances so that a temporary liquidity problem does not become an unnecessary bank failure.

During the transition, Alberta should therefore have a clearly funded and operational liquidity backstop available to qualifying financial institutions. As part of the transition, this could include continued access to Bank of Canada liquidity or a negotiated credit facility. Alberta should also prepare its own fallback through an interim Alberta monetary authority or central bank, supported where necessary by commercial credit arrangements with major financial institutions outside Canada. These are alternative arrangements that should be negotiated and tested before Day 1 of independence rather than assumed to be available.

8.10 Housing Finance, Mortgages and Real Estate Market Continuity

For homeowners, homebuyers, real estate professionals, developers and lenders, the starting point is that the visible real estate market is not a federal government service. Homes remain where they are. Alberta Land Titles already records ownership and registered mortgages. Real estate and mortgage-broker licensing are already regulated in Alberta. Banks, credit unions, appraisers, lawyers, builders and brokerages are private or provincial actors.

The main federal transition issue sits behind that market in housing finance—especially mortgage-default insurance, mortgage funding and securitization, and federal housing programs. The transition objective is therefore not to rebuild Alberta's real estate market. It is to preserve the contracts, titles, licences and financing systems that already work while securing continuity for the federal housing-finance functions on which part of the market depends.

How a home purchase and mortgage work today

A mortgage is a private loan secured against land. A bank, credit union or other lender advances the money and registers a mortgage against the property's title. Alberta Land Titles records the ownership and mortgage, while Alberta-regulated professionals handle the sale, financing and closing. Those core arrangements do not need to be recreated because Alberta's constitutional status changes.

For transition planning, the key principle is continuity: existing titles, mortgages, purchase contracts, deposits, appraisals, licences and closing procedures should remain effective unless they are lawfully changed. Transactions already underway when Day 1 independence occurs should be allowed to finish under clear continuity rules.

What CMHC does—and what a "CMHC mortgage" means

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) is a federal Crown corporation. It does not normally lend the money for a homebuyer's mortgage. Instead, CMHC provides mortgage-default insurance to approved lenders. The insurance protects the lender if the borrower defaults; it does not remove the borrower's obligation to qualify for and repay the mortgage.

Mortgage insurance is important because it allows qualified buyers to obtain financing with smaller down payments and can help lenders offer insured mortgages on more favourable terms. CMHC is not the only mortgage insurer. Private insurers such as Sagen and Canada Guaranty also operate in the Canadian market. CMHC also supports lender funding through securitization programs and plays an important role in multi-unit housing finance and federal housing programs.

These functions do not all have to be transferred in the same way. Some may be continued temporarily by agreement with Canada or CMHC; others may be provided by private insurers or an Alberta successor. The important Day 1 question is not which institution carries the familiar label. It is whether homeowners, buyers and lenders have a reliable and legally valid way to keep existing mortgages in force and finance new ones.

Existing mortgages on Day 1 of independence

Existing mortgages on Alberta property will remain valid and enforceable after Day 1 of independence. A homeowner will continue making payments to the same lender under the same mortgage contract and should not be required to re-qualify, refinance or replace the mortgage merely because Alberta becomes independent. The registered mortgage will remain on title until it is discharged in the ordinary way.

For mortgages already insured by CMHC, the preferred Canada–Alberta settlement should preserve the existing insurance coverage and claims-administration arrangements. Mortgage transactions, renewals and property sales already under-

way at Day 1 should likewise continue under clear contract, financing and land-title continuity rules.

> For a homeowner, the practical objective is simple: the same house, the same lender, the same mortgage contract and the same payment schedule continue through the transition.

Homebuyers and new mortgages after Day 1 independence

The more important forward-looking question is whether qualified buyers will continue to have access to mortgages after Day 1, including insured mortgages for buyers with smaller down payments. The transition plan should ensure that at least one workable mortgage-insurance route is operating before independence takes effect.

The least disruptive approach would be to negotiate a temporary arrangement under which CMHC continues servicing existing insured mortgages and, if agreed, continues selected mortgage-insurance or housing-finance services for a transition period. Alberta should also prepare a domestic fallback so that new mortgages can continue to be insured if CMHC eligibility ends. That fallback could involve an Alberta housing-finance successor, private mortgage insurers, a government guarantee structure, or a staged combination of those approaches.

There is no operational reason to force an overnight transfer of every existing CMHC-insured mortgage. A practical arrangement could leave the existing insured portfolio with CMHC while new Alberta arrangements are phased in. This would reduce the number of contracts and data files that must be transferred at once and give lenders and markets time to adjust.

Mortgage funding and multi-unit housing

Mortgage insurance is only part of housing-finance continuity. Banks and other lenders also rely on national funding and securitization systems supported by CMHC. Before Day 1 of independence, lenders should know whether Alberta mortgages remain eligible for existing funding channels during a transition period and what alternative funding arrangements are available if those channels change. The objective is to avoid a situation in which mortgages remain legally valid but lenders become uncertain about how to fund new Alberta lending.

Ordinary commercial mortgages are private contracts and should generally continue under normal contract and land-title continuity rules. Multi-unit residential housing requires more specific review because CMHC can provide mortgage insurance and federal project financing. Existing Alberta projects should therefore be identified in advance so that their insurance, funding, claims and administration either continue under an agreement or move to a defined Alberta replacement.

Day 1 housing-finance readiness

The housing market should not be treated as ready merely because existing mortgages remain legally enforceable. Before Day 1, the Government should be able to demonstrate that the following practical arrangements are in place:

READINESS ITEM	MINIMUM PRACTICAL RESULT
Existing mortgages	Contracts remain enforceable; no automatic acceleration, refinancing or requalification merely because sovereignty changes.
Existing CMHC-insured mortgages	Coverage, claims, premiums, data and servicing arrangements are confirmed for Alberta properties already insured.
New homebuyers	At least one operational route exists for insured mortgages—through temporary CMHC eligibility, private insurers, an Alberta successor or a combination.
Lender funding	Banks and other lenders know how new Alberta mortgages can be funded and which securitization or alternative funding channels remain available.
Land Titles, closings and professionals	Transfers, mortgage registrations, discharges and transactions already in progress continue; existing Alberta licences and brokerage authorities remain in force.
Multi-unit housing	Existing insured projects have a named administrator and payment/claims route, and new applications have a defined pathway.

Transition conclusion for housing finance

Housing finance matters because it touches one of the largest financial commitments most families make. But the practical starting point is clear: the house, title, lender, mortgage contract and Alberta's real estate professionals already exist. The transition work is behind the scenes—preserving contracts, continuing or replacing CMHC-related insurance and funding, and maintaining clear routes for new mortgages and multi-unit projects. If those arrangements are ready before Day 1 of independence, homeowners will make the same payments, sellers should transfer title

normally, and qualified buyers should still be able to obtain financing. That is the practical standard for housing-finance continuity.

Selected references from white papers

- *Government of Canada: Bank Act.*
- *Bank of Canada: Payment Clearing and Settlement Act oversight and designated payment-system materials.*
- *Payments Canada: Lynx and Automated Clearing Settlement System (ACSS).*
- *Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation: mortgage insurance, securitization and housing-finance programs.*
- *Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation; ATB Financial; and Credit Union Deposit Guarantee Corporation: deposit-protection frameworks.*

CHAPTER 9

Public Debt, Assets and Liabilities

Debt and assets should be treated as a negotiated settlement supported by evidence, not as a single arithmetic allocation. Operational continuity and access to records can matter more immediately than final ownership.

For transition purposes, operational continuity is also more urgent than final ownership. Alberta must be able to use the facilities, records, systems and infrastructure needed to keep government and public services operating even if some questions of ownership, valuation and financial settlement remain unresolved on Day 1 of independence.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Federal assets in Alberta include land, buildings, equipment, infrastructure, records and contractual rights used by many different services. Some are highly visible, such as defence installations, airports, penitentiaries and federal offices. Others are less visible but may be just as important operationally, including databases, maintenance records, leases, licences and contractual files.

Ownership and operation are not always the same thing. A facility may be owned by Canada but operated by another organization under a lease. A service may operate from a federal building while its employees could continue working under a different government. Alberta may need access to a federal database without needing ownership of the computer system that hosts it.

For that reason, final ownership and immediate operational access should be treated as separate questions. A temporary lease, licence, shared-use agreement, service agreement or authenticated copy of records may allow an important service to continue while governments negotiate final ownership and valuation.

The same distinction applies to debt and liabilities. The financial settlement determines who ultimately assumes agreed obligations; it does not determine whether an airport, prison, government office or data system can function on Day 1 of independence. Transition planning should therefore secure the facilities, records and operating rights needed for continuity while the broader balance-sheet settlement proceeds.

The word "asset" can also be misleading. Ownership, possession, operation, regulatory control and access are different things. Canada may own a building while someone else operates the service inside it. A private company may own equipment located in a public facility. Alberta may need records without owning the federal system in which they are stored. Reserve lands and other lands affected by Indigenous rights also require distinct legal treatment.

The first question should therefore be: what does Alberta need to keep the federal function operating? The question of final ownership can then be resolved through the settlement process.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The white paper recommends the transition should not require every disagreement over federal property to be settled before a service can continue. Alberta may ultimately seek ownership of particular federal lands, buildings, equipment, records or other assets, but operational continuity should come first.

Temporary leases, licences, shared-use arrangements, service agreements and staged transfers can keep facilities and systems operating while final ownership, valuation and liability issues are negotiated. In practical terms, the public test is simple: does the service continue to work while governments settle who ultimately owns the asset?

For the broader settlement, this Report uses a Territorial Asset Exchange as the preferred starting point for negotiations. In plain language, Alberta would focus first on obtaining ownership, control or secure use of federal assets and records located in Alberta, particularly those required to operate Alberta government and public services. Rather than attempting to claim a proportional interest in every federal asset located elsewhere in Canada, Alberta could use those more distant asset claims as negotiating value when settling debt, liabilities and other financial issues.

> A Territorial Asset Exchange is a negotiating approach, not an automatic rule that federal property simply becomes Alberta property. Each significant asset would still require review of legal title, associated liabilities, environmental obligations, Indigenous rights and interests, security requirements and operational needs.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Physical location and use of many facilities during a negotiated transition.
What changes	Legal title, financial responsibility, records custody and linked liabilities.
What can remain unresolved after Day 1 of independence	Final valuation and settlement, provided lawful interim operating rights are in place.

9.1 Principles for Allocation of Debt and Assets

The debt and assets analysis does not support using a simple per-capita share of federal debt as Alberta's final settlement formula.

Instead, the settlement should examine the broader financial relationship between Alberta and Canada, including federal assets and liabilities, records, historical investment, who benefited from debt-funded programs and infrastructure, contingent obligations, transition costs and Alberta's historical fiscal contribution to the federation.

The objective is not simply to minimize Alberta's share of federal debt. It is to reach a settlement that is fair, financially sustainable, legally defensible and credible to financial markets.

9.2 Allocation of Canadian Federal Debt

No final federal debt figure is recommended by this transition analysis. Before agreeing to any amount, Alberta would require a verified calculation workbook, a complete asset-and-liability register, legal analysis, creditor treatment, a financing plan and an agreed settlement methodology.

A simple per-capita calculation should nevertheless be maintained as a **comparison benchmark**, because Canada may propose that Alberta assume a share of federal debt based primarily on population. However, such an approach would ignore

Albertans' historical fiscal contributions, which should be taken into account in any fair calculation methodology.

Historical fiscal contribution

Any assessment of Alberta's share of federal debt should also consider Alberta's historical fiscal contribution to Canada.

For many years, Alberta taxpayers have contributed substantially more per capita to federal revenues than Albertans have received through major federal transfers and spending programs. Equalization is an important part of that historical relationship. The debt and assets analysis therefore recommends that Alberta develop a verified calculation of its historical over-contribution and use that evidence when assessing the fairness of any proposed federal debt allocation.

This should not be presented as though historical equalization-related contributions automatically create a legally enforceable debt owed by Canada to Alberta. Rather, the point is one of fairness in the overall settlement. If Alberta has already contributed disproportionately toward federal spending and toward servicing the debt accumulated to finance that spending, simply assigning Alberta a fresh per-capita share of that debt could fail to recognize what Albertans have already paid.

If Canada were to insist upon a population-based debt calculation, Alberta could also require an adjusted per-capita calculation which gives credit for Alberta's verified historical over-contribution to Canada.

In simple terms:

A per-capita debt calculation may show what Canada says Alberta should pay. An adjusted calculation should also ask what Alberta has already contributed.

The final settlement should therefore reflect the complete financial relationship rather than one population percentage.

9.3 Federal Assets Located in Alberta

The preferred Territorial Asset Exchange approach gives priority to federal assets and records located in Alberta or functionally necessary to Alberta's continued operation.

This includes more than ownership. Depending upon the asset, Alberta may seek legal title, operational control, long-term lease rights, shared use, replacement, compensation or reliable access to records.

Claims to federal assets elsewhere in Canada can remain part of Alberta's negotiating position but need not necessarily result in Alberta acquiring fractional ownership of distant assets. They may instead be exchanged, credited or waived where doing so produces a better overall settlement.

9.4 Crown Lands, Buildings and Infrastructure

Federal facilities should first be categorized according to how important they are to continued operations, before governments focus on final valuation.

Defence installations, policing facilities, airports, laboratories, offices, transportation infrastructure and other service-critical assets may require immediate operating access on Day 1 of independence even if ownership is still being negotiated.

A difficult valuation dispute should not unnecessarily interrupt a public service.

9.5 Government Corporations and Commercial Assets

Federal Crown corporations and commercial interests require entity-by-entity treatment.

The relevant question is not simply whether Alberta receives an ownership interest. Depending upon the organization, the appropriate result may be continued operation in Alberta, purchase or transfer of selected assets, replacement by an Alberta institution, or continuation of the Canadian entity providing services in Alberta under agreed commercial or transitional terms.

CMHC is a good example. Existing mortgages, mortgage-insurance contracts, securitization guarantees and federal housing-program commitments create functional and contractual issues separate from ownership of the federal Crown corporation itself.

The Canada–Alberta settlement should therefore distinguish between who owns CMHC and whether CMHC continues to provide particular housing-finance services in Alberta during a transition period.

9.6 Contractual Obligations

Government contracts, leases, procurement arrangements and guarantees should be inventoried and assigned according to the function they support.

Vendors and counterparties need early notice of which government will be responsible, who has payment authority and whether existing contractual terms continue

during the transition.

Where possible, contracts required for essential services should continue without interruption rather than being terminated and recreated solely because constitutional jurisdiction changes.

9.7 Guarantees and Contingent Liabilities

Contingent liabilities should remain separate from recognized recurring costs until a legal or negotiated event causes the liability to arise.

This is particularly important for guarantees, insurance obligations and other potential exposures whose value may be large but which may never result in an actual payment.

The same principle applies to mortgage-insurance and housing-finance guarantees. Alberta should not simply record CMHC's national insurance exposure as an Alberta liability. Any Alberta successor guarantee should be recognized when the covered portfolio, legal exposure, capital structure and government backstop have been defined and authorized.

9.8 Financial Settlement Mechanisms

The final Canada–Alberta settlement need not consist of one cash payment.

It could use a combination of asset transfers, assumption of agreed liabilities, financial credits, offsets, leases, shared-use agreements, service contracts, staged payments or other negotiated arrangements.

A package settlement may be particularly useful because debt, assets, pensions, records, taxation, transition costs and continuing service arrangements often affect one another. Resolving those issues together can create trade-offs that would not be available if every question were negotiated separately.

Whatever mechanism is used, priority should be given to assets, records and operating arrangements required for Alberta to function successfully on Day 1 of independence. Final valuation of less urgent items can continue afterward where necessary.

ALBERTA TRANSITION COUNCIL

How the Canada–Alberta Financial Settlement *Works*

A Three-Stage Process to Ensure Continuity, Clarity and Final Settlement

ALBERTA TRANSITION COUNCIL

1 Secure Operational Access

(Before Independence)

Alberta must have uninterrupted access to the financial resources and assets necessary to operate government and deliver essential services from Day 1 of independence.

- Cash and liquidity arrangements
- Records and data required to administer programs and services
- Access to federal payment systems and accounts
- Interim debt servicing arrangements

2 Negotiate Ownership and Valuation

(Transition Period)

Canada and Alberta negotiate the ownership and value of assets and liabilities transferred to Alberta, using agreed principles and methodologies.

- **Identify and inventory** – All potentially transferable assets, liabilities, records and contracts.
- **Determine value** – Use fair market value or other appropriate valuation methods.
- **Negotiate terms** – Resolve differences and agree on the value and treatment of each item.

3 Net into a Financial Settlement

(At or After Independence)

Once values are agreed, positive and negative items are netted together to produce a single financial settlement between Canada and Alberta.

+	Assets Transferred to Alberta
–	Liabilities Assumed by Alberta
+	Credits (Owed to Alberta)
–	Liabilities Owed to Canada
=	Net Settlement Amount

Settlement implemented through:

- Cash payments
- Debt assumption or retirement
- Transfer of remaining assets or contracts
- Mutual release and final accounting

Territorial Asset Exchange

Some assets are inherently tied to territory (e.g., land, buildings, infrastructure, natural resources). These are allocated primarily to Alberta as the successor within the territory.

- Assets located in Alberta's territory
- Allocated to Alberta
- Recognized in the final settlement

The Territorial Asset Exchange ensures Alberta retains the assets needed to serve its people and build its future.

Important Principle

Operational access (Stage 1) is not dependent on the completion of valuation and settlement (Stages 2 and 3).

This guarantees that government services and the economy continue without interruption.

Fair. Practical. Orderly.

This three-stage process ensures Alberta has what it needs on Day 1, while ensuring a fair and comprehensive financial settlement with Canada over time.

CHAPTER 10

Pensions

Keep pension payments going now, and sort out how the pension money and assets are divided later. The most important starting point for readers is that contributory pension benefits such as the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) are earned through contributions and are not dependent on continuing to reside in a particular province. A person who has qualified for CPP does not lose that pension simply because they move from one province to another or live outside Canada. In practical terms, the pension follows the beneficiary.

That distinction is important in considering an Alberta transition. The Day 1 independence objective is therefore straightforward: the right person continues to receive the right pension amount through a tested payment channel, while any longer-term issues involving administration, assets or successor arrangements are worked out separately.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Pension and public-payment systems are often perceived as a single federal cheque-writing function. Operationally, they are a combination of legal entitlements, contribution histories, beneficiary data, payment calculations, banking instructions, tax information, call-centre service and long-term asset and liability management. Alberta residents already receive payments into ordinary bank accounts; the physical delivery channel is therefore not the difficult part.

The more important issues are authoritative records and legal responsibility. Canada Pension Plan contribution records and plan assets are governed through federal and provincial legislation, while Old Age Security (OAS), the Guaranteed Income

Supplement (GIS) and other payments are separate federal programs. Final settlement of pension assets or administrative responsibilities can take longer than the need to make the next scheduled payment.

Pension and retirement-income systems are easier to understand if contributory pensions are separated from general-revenue benefits. CPP is a contributory pension: workers and employers make contributions over a person's working life, and the resulting pension entitlement is calculated under the plan rules. Once earned, that entitlement is not dependent on the recipient continuing to live in Alberta or elsewhere in Canada. OAS and GIS are different programs, financed from general federal revenues and subject to their own eligibility and residence rules. They may arrive in the same bank account, but they are not the same legal or financial program.

For any scheduled pension payment, four things matter: the person's legal entitlement, the records used to calculate the amount, the funding source and the payment file that sends the money to the correct bank account. A final division of pension assets can take time, but the next monthly payment cannot. The transition plan therefore puts beneficiary records, payment testing and a bridge payer ahead of final asset settlement. A recipient should not need a new bank account or a new identity merely because the government or institution administering the payment changes.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The white paper pensions analysis therefore separates payment continuity from final pension-plan settlement. Alberta will be capable of ensuring scheduled payments continue from an independently operable beneficiary file, with appropriate reconciliation and appeals, while negotiations concerning CPP participation or a comparable pension plan, asset transfers and reciprocal administration continue.

This is another example where the visible service can remain almost unchanged even though the legal and administrative arrangements behind it may change. For a pensioner, the practical objective is simple: their pension entitlement remains intact and their scheduled payment continues to arrive. The transition risk is not the need to create an entirely new way of paying pensioners; it is ensuring that records, legal authority and payment arrangements are in place so that the correct payment continues without interruption.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Beneficiaries, bank accounts, payment dates and accrued entitlements unless lawfully changed.
What changes	Legal payer, administration, contribution collection and eventually plan governance.
What need not be finished on Day 1 of independence	Final Canada Pension Plan / proposed Alberta Pension Plan asset settlement, provided payment continuity and legal authority are secured.

10.1 Canada Pension Plan Arrangements

A future Alberta pension plan and any CPP asset/liability transfer require statutory, actuarial and negotiated work. The transition analysis rejects treating CPP assets as ordinary federal Crown assets and recommends a payment bridge until transfer mechanics are complete.

10.2 Treatment of Accrued Pension Entitlements

Accrued contributions, earnings histories, disability records and survivor entitlements must be preserved. Any asset transfer should be matched to associated liabilities, with independent actuarial validation and transparent rules for people who have worked in multiple jurisdictions.

10.3 Establishment of an Alberta Pension Framework

Legislation, collection authority, investment governance, beneficiary administration and appeals would be needed before a permanent Alberta plan operates independently. The transition can begin with legal authority and payment capability even if actuarial settlement takes longer.

10.4 Federal Public-Service Pension Obligations

Federal employee pension rights should be negotiated separately from CPP and general debt. Employees transferring to Alberta institutions may need portability, service-credit recognition and clear responsibility for pre- and post-transition accruals.

10.5 Portability of Pension Benefits

Canada–Alberta portability would reduce disruption for mobile workers and retirees. Agreements should address contribution histories, totalization or reciprocal service credit, taxation of benefits, disability/survivor benefits and people residing on the other side of the new border.

10.6 Transitional Administration and Asset Allocation

The practical core is an Alberta-controlled beneficiary registry, payment file, banking details, identity verification, exception handling, call-centre capacity and appeals. Transition planning should prepare for three records cases: a complete federal data transfer; a partial transfer requiring reconciliation with Alberta, employer and claimant records; and a no-transfer fallback using lawful reconstruction and claimant attestation. Repeated payment rehearsals should occur before Day 1 of independence so the first real pension cycle is not the first system test.

10.7 No Missed Pension Payment Standard

A pension transition will be judged first by whether the next payment arrives correctly and on time. No person lawfully entitled to a transition-protected pension immediately before Day 1 of independence should miss a scheduled payment solely because governments have not yet completed an asset or administration settlement.

This standard does not determine the permanent design of an Alberta pension system or prejudge the final allocation of CPP assets and liabilities. It requires legal payer authority, a validated beneficiary file, payment instructions, funding, correction and appeal procedures, and an independently operable fallback.

ALBERTA TRANSITION COUNCIL

How a Payment Reaches an *Albertan*

The Payment Continuity Bridge — Legal Entitlement to Funds in Your Account

The process remains the same on Day 1. Alberta's government ensures every step continues without interruption.

1. **Legal Entitlement**
   Federal or Alberta law creates the right to payment (e.g., CPP, OAS, EI, AISH, salary, health benefit).
2. **Beneficiary Record**
   The recipient is identified in the appropriate program or payroll system with current details.
3. **Calculation & Eligibility**
   Eligibility is verified and the payment amount is calculated according to the applicable rules.
4. **Funding & Treasury**
   Approved payments are funded through the appropriate Treasury or consolidated fund.
5. **Payment File Transmission**
   A payment file is created and securely transmitted to the financial institution network.
6. **Deposit to Bank Account**
   The recipient's financial institution receives the funds and deposits them into the account.
7. **Reconciliation, Corrections & Appeals**
   Systems reconcile transactions; errors are corrected; and appeals or inquiries are handled.

Why Payments Continue on Day 1

- ✓ The legal right to payment continues under continuity laws.
- ✓ The operational systems, records, technology and payment networks continue to function.
- ✓ Alberta ensures immediate access to the data, systems and funds needed.
- ✓ Final asset division or adjustments with Canada can continue after Day 1 without disrupting payments.

Examples of Payments

Pensions (CPP, OAS, GIS, etc.)

Employment Insurance

Social assistance and disability benefits

Government salaries and supplier payments

Health and insurance reimbursements

The Bottom Line

Payments are about people, not politics. On Day 1, the law remains, the systems run, and the money keeps flowing to Albertans' accounts.

Continuity first. Settlements later.
Albertans are not asked to wait while governments work through ownership and valuation issues.

Key Principle: Day 1 independence is a test of operational readiness, not the completion of every final settlement. Everyone entitled to a payment will continue to receive it.

Selected references from white papers

- *Government of Canada: Canada Pension Plan.*
- *Canada Pension Plan Investment Board: investment mandate, governance and CPP fund administration.*

III

PART III

People, Rights and Social Program Continuity

For Alberta households, the transition is credible if legal status, Indigenous and treaty rights, health services, pensions and benefits remain clear and usable. For First Nations and Metis communities, continuity also means that land interests, governance, records, funding and rights-recognition processes do not fall into a legal gap.

11 Citizenship, Immigration, Legal Status, and Mobility

12 Indigenous Peoples, Treaty Relations and Aboriginal Rights

13 Health Care

14 Social Program Continuity

CHAPTER 11

Citizenship, Immigration, Legal Status, and Mobility

Immigration is both a people-status function and a border function. Alberta already has a provincial immigration selection program, but sovereign status would add passports, visas, admissibility, refugee adjudication and international information-sharing responsibilities.

A change in Alberta's constitutional status does not, by itself, alter the Canadian citizenship of any Albertan. Canadian citizenship is an individual legal status held under federal law. Under the Citizenship Act as it exists today, a Canadian does not lose citizenship simply because they live outside Canada, acquire another citizenship or reside in a particular province. There is no existing provision that automatically strips Canadian citizenship from residents of a province because that province becomes independent. Any different treatment would have to arise through lawful constitutional or legislative arrangements and would engage significant individual-rights protections under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The transition plan should clearly distinguish two questions that are sometimes confused: who becomes a citizen of an independent Alberta, and whether those individuals would retain their existing Canadian citizenship. Alberta would establish the rules regarding its own citizenship. Whether a person could retain Canadian citizenship would remain a matter of Canadian constitutional and citizenship law, together with any agreements reached between Canada and Alberta during negotiations.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Alberta already operates the Alberta Advantage Immigration Program (AAIP), a functioning provincial nominee program through which it nominates economic immigrants for permanent residence. Alberta also operates vital-statistics and provincial identity systems. Canada, primarily through Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), is currently responsible for citizenship, passports, visas and permits, refugee and protection processing, admissibility decisions and border entry.

Alberta would therefore begin the transition with existing experience in immigrant selection, identity records and public administration. However, it would need to assume or establish the sovereign immigration and citizenship functions that are currently performed by the federal government and that Alberta, as a province, does not presently require. Although the necessary legal authority and many of the relevant databases are currently federal, much of the administrative work is familiar. It includes identity verification, document intake, interviews, status decisions, inspections and customer service. The transition would therefore require both the expansion of Alberta's existing institutions and arrangements for the transfer or continued sharing of federal data. Alberta would also need international recognition of the citizenship, immigration and travel documents it issues.

Several different legal functions are often described under the common term "immigration." Citizenship determines who is legally recognized as a member of the country . Immigration status determines whether a non-citizen may live, work or study in the country, and, if so, on what terms. Border examination determines whether a person may enter. A passport confirms a person's identity and nationality for international travel. Refugee adjudication determines whether a person is legally entitled to protection.

These functions are connected, but each requires its own legal authority, administrative process and transition plan.

Alberta already performs some related work through provincial nominee selection, vital statistics and provincial identity documents. Canada presently controls citizenship, passports, visas and permits, refugee and protection decisions and most border-admission systems. This transition plan should therefore recognize existing residents and lawful statuses rather than requiring everyone to reapply.

> The new work is to establish Alberta legal authority, secure records and verification systems, create sovereign immigration and travel-document functions, and maintain recognition of existing status and documents during the transition.

FUNCTION	WHAT IT MEANS	WHY IT IS SEPARATE
Citizenship	Legal membership in the state and the rights/duties that follow from it.	A person can be a citizen without crossing a border on a particular day; citizenship law is not the same as border inspection.
Immigration status	Permission to live, work or study under defined conditions.	Status records and permits must survive the cutover even if the issuing government changes.
Immigration selection	Decision about who may qualify to immigrate under economic, family or other programs.	Alberta already performs some nominee selection, but sovereign selection would be broader.
Border admission	The decision made at a port of entry about whether a person or good may enter.	This is an operational enforcement function carried out at the border and depends on databases, law and officers.
Passport / travel document	A secure state-issued document used to establish identity and nationality for international travel.	Issuing a passport requires secure production and foreign recognition; it is not simply another provincial identity card.
Refugee / protection decision	A legal determination about protection obligations.	It requires a separate adjudicative process and international-law capacity.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The white paper transition plan builds outward from existing Alberta institutions rather than creating an immigration system from scratch. It preserves existing lawful statuses, temporarily mirrors familiar Canadian visa and permit categories, creates a civilian Alberta immigration authority for status decisions, and assigns front-line border and customs enforcement to Alberta Sheriffs Police Service (ASPS) Division 3 under the current transition design.

Existing CBSA and IRCC expertise should be retained or recruited where lawful. The genuinely new functions are sovereign citizenship administration, passport and travel-document issuance, protection-claim adjudication at country scale, and international security and admissibility information-sharing.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Existing residents, valid statuses, many local offices/ports, and Alberta's economic-immigration selection capacity.
What changes	Sovereign citizenship/status law, passport issuance, full visa/permit authority and admissibility systems.
What requires agreement/recognition	Data sharing, document recognition, mobility with Canada and international acceptance of Alberta travel documents.

11.1 Alberta Citizenship

Alberta would require legislation establishing who becomes an Alberta citizen on Day 1 of independence and who may acquire citizenship afterward.

The simplest transition approach would avoid requiring existing Alberta residents to go through a citizenship-application process. Day 1 legislation should identify which residents automatically acquire Alberta citizenship, which persons may elect it, and how citizenship is proved for voting, passports and other legal purposes.

These rules would determine who becomes an Alberta citizen. They would not themselves cancel anyone's existing Canadian citizenship. Whether a person retains Canadian citizenship would continue to be governed by Canadian law and any citizenship arrangements agreed upon by Alberta and Canada as part of the negotiated settlement.

11.2 Existing Canadian Citizenship

Canadian citizenship is a legal status held by each individual citizen. Under the Citizenship Act as it currently stands, a person does not lose Canadian citizenship merely because they move abroad, live in a particular province or acquire another nationality. Citizenship may be lost only through the specific processes established by law, including voluntary renunciation or revocation where citizenship was obtained through fraud, false representation or the concealment of material circumstances. The Citizenship Act does not presently provide for the automatic loss of citizenship simply because a province leaves Canada.

Understanding this distinction is important to planning an orderly transition. Alberta's independence would change its constitutional status and create an international boarder with Canada. It would not, by itself, cancel the Canadian citi-

zenship already held by individual Albertans. Any change to that citizenship would have to occur under Canadian law or through lawful arrangements forming part of the negotiated Canada-Alberta settlement.

The Clarity Act recognizes that citizenship could be among the matters addressed in negotiations leading to secession. That means the eventual Canada–Alberta settlement could address citizenship and dual-citizenship arrangements. But the Clarity Act does not create a statutory mechanism for citizenship revocation based simply on residence in Alberta.

Any attempt to terminate existing Canadian citizenship solely because a citizen remained resident in Alberta would also raise serious constitutional questions. Section 6(1) of the Charter protects every Canadian citizen's right to enter, remain in and leave Canada. Canadian citizens routinely live outside Canada without losing citizenship. A residence-based citizenship termination rule would therefore have to be reconciled with those individual mobility rights and justified under the Constitution. Section 15 protects citizens form discrimination based on national origin.

The practical planning assumption should therefore be continuity of existing citizenship unless and until lawful arrangements provide otherwise. Alberta should seek a Canada–Alberta agreement expressly recognizing existing Canadian citizenship and permitting dual citizenship.

11.3 Dual Citizenship

Canadian law presently permits dual citizenship. Accordingly, there is no inherent legal inconsistency in an individual being both a Canadian citizen and, after independence, an Alberta citizen.

The preferred transition objective should therefore be that eligible Albertans hold both citizenships. This would promote travel for families, employment, property ownership and cross-border mobility.

Because Canadian citizenship remains governed by Canadian law, however, Alberta cannot unilaterally guarantee how Canada will legislate following secession. The objective should be secured through the constitutional settlement and accompanying Canada–Alberta arrangements rather than assumed.

11.4 Status of Existing Residents

Anyone who is legally entitled to live in Alberta immediately before Day 1 should remain legally entitled to live there after independence. No one should lose their lawful status simply because Alberta's constitutional status has changed. A continuation statute should preserve all existing lawful resident statuses and establish a straightforward conversion, confirmation or renewal process. Residents should not be required to resubmit information or prove facts that are already contained in government records.

11.5 Permanent Residents

Existing permanent-resident records and conditions should be recognized temporarily while Alberta establishes its permanent immigration system.

Data transfer from federal immigration systems is a critical dependency. Alberta should also prepare a claims-based reconstruction process using passports, permits, tax records, employment records and other reliable evidence if federal records are incomplete or unavailable.

11.6 Temporary Residents and Foreign Workers

Work and study permits that are valid immediately before Day 1 should continue to be valid in Alberta after independence, subject to the same conditions and expiry dates. Transitional legislation could automatically recognize these existing Canadian permits as valid Alberta permits, avoiding any need for workers and students to reapply immediately.

Before Day 1, Alberta should provide clear guidance to employers, workers, students and educational institutions explaining how existing permits will be treated and what, if anything, they must do. Alberta would also need the administrative capacity to renew permits, monitor employer compliance and operate a temporary immigration program aligned with the province's labour-market needs.

11.7 Immigration Selection and Administration

The Alberta Advantage Immigration Program already provides Alberta experience selecting immigrants that meets its economic and labour-market needs. Its existing staff, systems and expertise could provide the foundation for a broader Alberta immigration authority.

Alberta would not need to design an entirely new set of visa categories and long-term immigration targets before Day 1. Where practical, it could initially adopt categories and requirements similar to those already used in Canada. This would provide familiar rules for employers, educational institutions, families and applicants while Alberta develops its permanent immigration system.

11.8 Refugee and Asylum Functions

As a sovereign country, Alberta would require a lawful process for receiving, deciding and reviewing claims for refugee protection.

The transition plan proposes that an Alberta Protection Claims Tribunal be operational by Day 1 of independence. The law establishing the Tribunal should give claimants a clear legal status while their claims are being decided, provide access to judicial review and preserve claims already underway. This would ensure that no claimant is left without legal status or a process for determining their claim during the transition.

11.9 Passport and Travel Documentation

The transition plan should avoid requiring all Albertans to replace their existing travel documents on Day 1 of independence.

Canadian passports already held by Albertans remain evidence of Canadian citizenship and remain subject to Canadian law, including their existing periods of validity unless the Canada-Alberta settlement or another lawful arrangement provides otherwise.

Alberta should introduce its own passport and travel document gradually. Alberta documents could be requested, when existing documents expire or when a person specifically requires proof of Alberta citizenship for international travel. This would avoid requiring the population to obtain new passports.

Alberta-issued documents would need to comply with applicable International Civil Aviation Organization standards and be recognized by other countries before they could be used as ordinary passports for international travel.

11.10 Canada–Alberta Mobility Agreement

A mobility agreement would be required for a renewed Canada–Alberta relationship. The preferred objective should be to preserve the ability of people to travel be-

tween Alberta and Canada with as little disruption as possible and would be subject to the Canada–Alberta settlement.

Selected references from white papers

- *Government of Alberta: Alberta Advantage Immigration Program.*

CHAPTER 12

Indigenous Peoples, Treaty Relations and Aboriginal Rights

The rights and interests of First Nations cannot be treated like ordinary government programs that can simply be transferred from Canada to Alberta. First Nations are constitutionally recognized rights-holders and treaty partners, not merely stakeholders in the transition.

A lawful transition must protect Aboriginal and treaty rights, reserve lands and related interests, Indian status, records, funding and everyday services. Each First Nation must also have a direct role in decisions affecting its rights, lands and future relationship with Canada and an independent Alberta.

Metis rights and institutions raise different legal and practical issues and require a distinct transition process. Alberta's eight Metis Settlements, including their lands, governments and legal framework, already operate substantially under Alberta law.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Alberta is home to 48 First Nations across Treaties 6, 7 and 8 and currently identifies 138 First Nations reserves. As of December 31, 2024, Indigenous Services Canada reported 143,241 people registered under the Indian Act in the Alberta region. Of those, 83,676, or 58.4%, were reported as living on reserve or Crown land, while 59,565, or 41.6%, lived off reserve.

> The number of people living off reserve is important. First Nations rights, legal status and access to services affect people throughout Alberta, not only those who live on reserves.

Many services in First Nations communities are already delivered locally. First Nation governments and organizations manage housing, employ staff, operate community facilities, administer or participate in education and social programs, and carry out economic development.

The federal government nevertheless retains extensive legal, financial and administrative responsibilities. It provides the governing legislation, program funding, status records, reserve-land administration and certain specialized services. However, federal responsibility does not mean that federal officials directly deliver every service in every First Nations community. Many services are administered by First Nations themselves using federal funding or under federal legal frameworks.

Nor should continuity planning assume that the current federal system is working well. There are significant and longstanding concerns about federal funding, service delivery, infrastructure, land administration and the fulfilment of Crown and treaty obligations. The purpose of the transition should therefore be to preserve essential services and legal rights without automatically reproducing the problems of the existing system.

Under section 91(24) of the Constitution Act, 1867, Parliament currently has authority over "Indians, and Lands reserved for the Indians." The Indian Act governs registration and status, reserve lands and certain governance matters. Legal title to most reserve land is held by the Crown for the use and benefit of the relevant First Nation. Indian Oil and Gas Canada administers and regulates oil and gas resources on First Nation reserve lands.

Alberta also already plays a major role. First Nations people use provincial health care, education, courts, policing, roads, environmental regulation and many other Alberta services although the division of responsibility may differ depending on the service, the person and whether the activity occurs on or off reserve. Alberta also has legal duties to consult First Nations when provincial decisions may affect protected Aboriginal or treaty rights.

Metis people have distinct rights and legal arrangements that must be considered separately. Alberta has eight Metis Settlements with their own protected land and governance system under Alberta law. The Metis Settlements General Council holds the fee-simple interest in Settlement lands. Settlement Councils, the provincial land registry and the Metis Settlements Appeal Tribunal already operate within Alberta's legal system.

The easiest way to understand this chapter is to separate three categories:

Rights. Aboriginal and treaty rights are constitutional rights. They are not ordinary government programs and cannot simply be transferred, altered or discontinued as administrative matters.

Land and legal relationships. This includes reserve lands, Crown responsibilities and treaty relationships with individual First Nations.

Everyday services. This includes housing, health, education, public works, benefits and local administration.

All three must continue through a transition, but they do raise different legal and practical issues and cannot be addressed through a single transition mechanism.

Because each First Nation is a distinct rights-holder and treaty partner, one First Nation might choose to maintain a close relationship with Canada, while another might prefer Alberta assume particular functions under a negotiated agreements. One First Nation's decision or agreement does not automatically apply to another.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

For First Nations, the change may not be the service people see. It may instead be the legal and financial system behind that service.

The transition would need to determine a number of issues which include: Which government is responsible? Who manages reserve lands? Who maintains status records? Who funds programs? Who carries out treaty obligations? And what happens when Alberta's current provincial boundaries become international boundaries?

Those questions cannot safely be answered by simply transferring every federal program or asset to Alberta. They would require direct negotiations with affected First Nations, as well as arrangements involving Alberta and Canada where their respective rights, obligations, lands, records or assets are engaged. Alberta's duty to consult—and, where appropriate, accommodate—First Nations would continue to apply where transition decisions may adversely affect asserted or established Aboriginal or treaty rights.

For Metis peoples, the institutional change may be more limited because much of the Settlement land, registry, local government and legal system already exists under Alberta law. The priority would be to protect those systems and existing rights while any longer-term changes are negotiated.

TRANSITION QUESTION	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	First Nation and Metis governments, local employees, community services, Metis Settlement institutions and ordinary provincial services continue wherever possible.
What changes	Responsibility for some federal laws, funding, records, reserve administration, treaty-related Crown functions and international borders.
What requires a First Nation decision	Changes to a First Nation's treaty or government relationship, reserve arrangements, federal Crown functions, modern treaty arrangements or self-government.
What can wait	Long-term program redesign, final settlement of every claim and permanent fiscal arrangements where a safe temporary arrangement can keep rights and services working.

12.1 The common Day 1 of independence rights guarantee

Every First Nation begins from the same basic protection: independence must not be used to reduce Aboriginal or treaty rights or interrupt essential services.

Existing rights, reserve interests, status records, harvesting rights, claims, court proceedings, program eligibility and services must continue until they are replaced by lawful negotiated agreements.

Treaty and Aboriginal rights themselves are not temporary transition arrangements. Aboriginal rights and the honour of the Crown do not simply expire because a transition period ends.

A non-derogation clause is simply a legal rule saying that nothing in the transition law may quietly reduce or weaken existing Aboriginal or treaty rights.

The transition plan will also distinguish between consultation and consent. For ordinary government decisions, existing legal rules about consultation and accommodation continue to apply. But where the transition contemplates a change to a First Nation's own treaty relationship, reserve arrangements or the government responsible for important treaty functions, it is only the First Nation that can initiate and request that change.

This does not mean every existing government program must stay exactly the same forever. It means rights and services remain protected unless a First Nation seeks to negotiate a new arrangement.

12.2 Treaties 6, 7 and 8 and Crown responsibilities

Treaties 6, 7 and 8 were signed before Alberta became a province. Their terms are not identical, but they include matters such as reserve lands, annual payments, harvesting rights and other promises.

Modern Canadian law does not treat these treaties like ordinary business contracts. Courts consider the honour of the Crown, the historical circumstances, Indigenous understandings of the promises and the goal of reconciliation.

The 1930 Natural Resources Transfer Agreement is a useful example. Canada transferred control of most Crown lands and natural resources to Alberta, but reserves remained under federal administration and treaty harvesting rights were protected.

The lesson is important: government responsibilities can change while Indigenous rights continue to be protected and upheld.

That question would have to be dealt with directly in negotiations among Alberta, Canada and the affected First Nations.

12.3 Four First Nation-by-First Nation options

The transition plan should not assume that all 48 First Nations will want the same arrangement.

The starting point for every First Nation is the same: protect rights and keep services working. Beyond that, each First Nation should be able to negotiate the relationship it prefers through its own lawful decision-making process.

No option should be forced on a First Nation. A First Nation that needs more time or does not agree with a proposed arrangement is not “holding up” the transition. It is exercising its right to make its own decision. Each of these negotiations will be consent-based and paced by each First Nation rather than by Alberta’s project schedule.

Option A — Keep the Canada relationship

A First Nation may want to keep its current relationship with Canada as much as possible.

That could include continued Indian Act administration, federal program funding, Indian status registration, Indian Oil and Gas Canada services and other federal arrangements.

But “nothing changes” would still require an agreement. Once Alberta becomes a separate country, Canada, Alberta and the First Nation would have to decide how federal services, access, borders and legal authority continue.

Canada could, for example, continue to own or administer certain reserve lands and services while the reserve remains inside Alberta.

A different possibility would be to negotiate that particular reserve territory remains Canadian territory. That would create additional questions involving borders, roads, policing, taxes, utilities and access.

Neither result would happen automatically.

Option B — Alberta takes over agreed federal functions

A First Nation may instead want Alberta to take over some functions that Canada performs today.

Canada, Alberta and the First Nation would agree on exactly which responsibilities move to Alberta and which remain with Canada.

Alberta would keep the familiar legal protections in place.

An Alberta First Nations Continuity Act could recognize existing Indian status, protect reserve interests, continue existing land and money rules, maintain current reserve tax treatment and protect Aboriginal and treaty rights.

Longer-term changes could be negotiated later if a First Nation requested.

Option C — A new treaty or self-government relationship with Alberta

Some First Nations may want to use the transition as an opportunity to move away from the Indian Act and negotiate a new relationship directly with Alberta.

A new agreement could deal with government powers, taxation, land management, services, resources, policing, courts and other matters.

The plan should not decide those terms in advance. They would be negotiated with the First Nation.

Any permanent agreement must also protect the First Nation against its terms being changed later by Alberta alone.

Option D — A mixed or gradual arrangement

A First Nation may prefer Canada to continue some services while Alberta handles others.

For example, Canada might continue status registration while Alberta funds certain infrastructure or education programs. Indian Oil and Gas Canada might continue operating while longer-term resource management arrangements are negotiated.

A First Nation might also simply want more time before making permanent choices.

A gradual approach allows decisions to be made after seeing how the new arrangements actually work.

The basic rule is simple: each First Nation decides through its own lawful process. Depending on the First Nation and the issue, that could involve Chief and Council, a community vote, traditional governance processes, Elders or another authorized body. Alberta should not create one voting rule for every First Nation.

12.4 Reserve lands: location, ownership and government control are different things

Reserve land is not the same as an ordinary federal building or piece of Crown land.

Under the current Indian Act, legal title is held by the Crown in trust for the use and benefit of the First Nation. The First Nation has a protected collective interest in that land.

Reserve lands should therefore never simply be placed into the general federal-assets category during Canada–Alberta negotiations.

The Day 1 rule should be simple: nothing automatically happens to reserve land merely because Alberta becomes independent.

No reserve, designated land, mineral interest or trust asset becomes Alberta property. It continues to be property held in trust for First Nations.

Legal title, territorial status, administration, minerals, roads, utilities and access should remain protected unless the affected First Nation requests a new arrangement.

The same applies to reserve oil and gas. Indian Oil and Gas Canada currently manages oil and gas on designated First Nation lands. It could continue temporarily, its staff and systems could move to a successor organization, or a First Nation could choose a different model.

First Nation reserve oil and gas continues as it is today and does not become Alberta Crown minerals.

12.5 How First Nation services work and what must continue

The best way to plan the transition is service by service.

If a First Nation already has a housing office, school, public works staff or health workers, there is usually no reason to replace them. The job is to make sure the

funding, legal authority and records behind those services continue.

SERVICE	HOW IT COMMONLY WORKS TODAY	DAY 1 GOAL
Housing	First Nation manages housing; Canada helps fund and finance it.	Keep the local housing system working and preserve funding and guarantees.
Community infrastructure	First Nation/local delivery with federal funding and provincial connections.	Keep funding, utilities, records and emergency coordination working.
Health	Alberta health system plus federal First Nations benefits and community programs.	Prevent gaps in benefits and community health funding.
Education	First Nation and provincial schools supported through different agreements and funding sources.	Keep schools open, students funded and records available.
Status / registration	Federal Indian Register and status-card system.	Keep existing status documents valid
Policing / justice	RCMP, First Nations policing, Alberta police and courts.	Keep police and justice services operating while long-term arrangements are negotiated.
Reserve oil and gas	Indian Oil and Gas Canada administers designated First Nation lands.	Keep leases, royalties, staff and systems working.

For every service, the same practical questions should be asked: Who employs the staff? Who owns the building? Who has the records? Who pays? Which law authorizes the service? And where does someone go if there is a dispute?

A promise that “the service will continue” is not enough. The people, money, records and computer systems must actually be ready.

12.6 Status, identity and records

Records are critical.

The Indian Register, status records, First Nation membership or citizenship lists, land records, claims files and financial records all need to remain available.

It is also important to understand that Indian status and First Nation membership are not always the same thing. Indian status is a federal legal status under the Indian Act. First Nation membership or citizenship may be determined separately by the First Nation.

No one should have to prove their identity all over again because Day 1 arrived.

Before Day 1, Alberta and First Nations should have secure access to the records needed to continue services and protect rights. Existing status cards and records should remain usable while any new documents are introduced gradually.

12.7 Borders, mobility and the Jay Treaty context

If Alberta becomes independent, its current borders with British Columbia, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories would become international borders unless another arrangement is negotiated.

That matters because treaty territories, reserve lands, families, jobs, schools, health services and ceremonies often cross those boundaries.

First Nations mobility therefore needs special treatment.

The 1794 Jay Treaty is part of the history of Indigenous movement across the Canada–U.S. border. Today, however, the actual rules come from modern Canadian and U.S. laws.

U.S. law gives certain American Indians born in Canada a special right to cross the border if they meet the legal ancestry requirement.

Canadian law also gives every person registered as an Indian under the Indian Act the right to enter and remain in Canada.

The important point is that special Indigenous border rules already exist today.

Alberta should therefore create a broad right of entry and return for people registered under the Indian Act and people recognized under future First Nation citizenship arrangements.

Alberta and Canada should also negotiate an Indigenous Mobility Protocol dealing with travel, work, study, family visits, ceremonies, reserve access and recognition of identity documents.

Where treaty harvesting rights cross the new international boundary, a separate agreement may also be required.

The goal should be simple: movement that is routine today should remain as routine after independence.

12.8 Harvesting, consultation and land-use continuity

Existing treaty hunting, fishing, trapping and access rules should continue during the transition.

Alberta police and enforcement officers must receive clear instructions so that the constitutional change does not create confusion in the field.

Existing consultation files and commitments should also continue. They should not have to start again merely because Alberta's constitutional status changes.

The same continuity principle applies to Metis harvesting and consultation systems.

12.9 Fiscal, tax and resource arrangements

First Nation taxation is different from ordinary Alberta taxation.

The current section 87 tax rules under the Indian Act, First Nation taxation powers, government funding, treaty annuities and reserve-resource royalties all require their own transition treatment.

The Day 1 objective is to prevent an unexpected change in taxes or funding.

The First Nations White Paper makes this especially clear: the transition plan does not propose changing the existing tax treatment of reserves simply because Alberta becomes independent. No new Alberta tax applying to reserves should appear indirectly or by accident.

Any future tax change affecting a First Nation should be dealt with openly through the proper legal and First Nation-specific process.

12.10 First Nations transition governance and decision rights

A First Nations Transition Secretariat should coordinate Alberta's work, but it should not control First Nations.

Its job should be to organize negotiations, keep track of treaty and service issues, coordinate discussions with Canada and make sure other Alberta departments do not make decisions affecting First Nations without proper First Nation involvement.

First Nations should also receive reasonable funding for their own independent legal, financial and technical advice. Participation is not meaningful if a First Nation does not have the resources to review what is being proposed. Funded independent capacity is part of the transition structure.

There should be Treaty 6, Treaty 7 and Treaty 8 tables, as well as a separate table for each First Nation.

Treaty organizations may help coordinate common issues, but they should not automatically be assumed to speak for every First Nation.

Some decisions also cannot be made by Alberta alone. Questions such as reserve territory, transfer of federal responsibilities and new treaty or self-government arrangements may require agreement among Alberta, the affected First Nations and Canada.

The transition plan should therefore treat "not yet agreed" as a normal and manageable situation.

If a First Nation needs more time, existing rights and services should continue under a temporary arrangement. Alberta's transition timetable should not force a First Nation to make a permanent choice before it is ready.

12.11 Metis rights, Settlement lands and governance

The Metis transition is different from the First Nations transition.

Much of the system already exists under Alberta law. Alberta's eight Metis Settlements already have protected land, local governments, a land registry and a specialized appeal tribunal.

The approximately 1.25 million acres of Settlement land are not Indian Act reserves and should remain legally protected without requiring everyone to re-register their land.

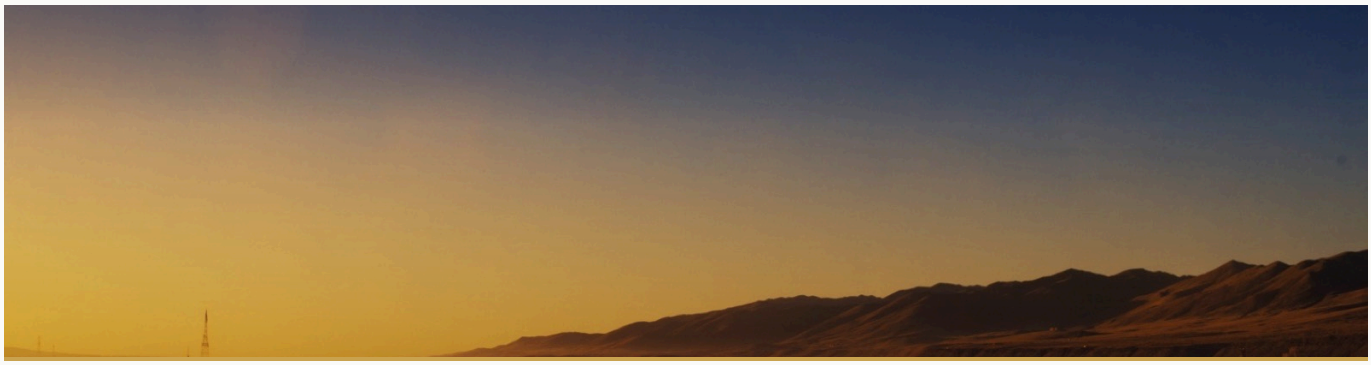
At the same time, there is no single Metis organization that should automatically be assumed to represent every Metis person or community in Alberta.

The Metis Settlements and MSGC, the Otipemisiwak Metis Government, credibly asserted communities and other Metis organizations have different roles.

Existing memberships, citizenship records, harvesting recognition, consultation arrangements, legal proceedings and agreements should continue. Any major change should be negotiated with the Metis government or community that actually has the authority to make that decision.

Selected references from white papers

- *Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada: Treaties 6, 7 and 8.*
- *Government of Canada: Indian Act, including ss. 2 and 18; Alberta Natural Resources Act / 1930 Natural Resources Transfer Agreement.*
- *Government of Canada: Constitution Acts, 1867 to 1982, including ss. 91(24), 25, 35 and 35.1.*
- *Supreme Court of Canada: Haida Nation v. British Columbia, 2004 SCC 73; Mikisew Cree First Nation v. Canada, 2005 SCC 69; R. v. Badger, [1996] 1 S.C.R. 771.*
- *Government of Alberta: Métis Relations; Métis Settlements; Métis harvesting rights; Indigenous consultation framework.*
- *Supreme Court of Canada: R. v. Powley, 2003 SCC 43; Alberta v. Cunningham, 2011 SCC 37; Daniels v. Canada, 2016 SCC 12.*



CHAPTER 13

Health Care

> Most health delivery in Alberta already operates through provincial institutions. The sovereign transition challenge is concentrated in federal money, health-product regulation, public-health interfaces, controlled substances, research/data and cross-border recognition. Most health-care services in Alberta are already funded, administered and delivered through provincial institutions. The main transition challenges would arise in areas where Alberta's health system currently depends on federal funding, regulation or coordination.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

A useful way to understand health care is to distinguish the delivery of care from the federal government's funding, regulatory and coordinating roles.

Alberta already operates or funds the core health-care system, including hospitals, emergency departments, emergency medical services (EMS), continuing care, laboratories and public-health services. It administers the provincial health-insurance system, pays physicians under provincial arrangements and regulates doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other health professionals. Much of the patient-record system also operates within Alberta. The federal government does not dispatch Alberta's ambulances, schedule nurses' shifts or manage the province's emergency rooms and hospital wards.

The federal government nevertheless performs several important functions that support or connect with Alberta's system. These include federal health transfers and bilat-

eral funding agreements; regulation of drugs and medical devices; laws governing controlled substances; national public-health, laboratory and emergency-stockpile networks; health research funding and data systems; and programs for eligible First Nations, Inuit and other specific populations, including the Non-Insured Health Benefits program.

These federal functions are important, but they generally operate behind the direct delivery of care. For most patients, health care is already an Alberta service.

A patient should therefore not need a new hospital, doctor or provincial health number simply because Alberta's constitutional status changes. The transition task would be to ensure that funding continues to reach the health system, medicines and medical devices remain legally available, public-health and laboratory information can still be exchanged, and every federal benefit program has a continuing payer or temporary replacement.

Reader diagram. Which parts of health care are already provincial and which interfaces change.

LAYER	TYPICAL CURRENT ROLE	TRANSITION TREATMENT
Patient care	Alberta hospitals, clinicians, emergency services and provincial insurance administration	Continue the delivery system.
Funding	Alberta health budget plus federal transfers and selected federal programs	Replace or bridge federal funding flows as responsibilities are allocated.
Products / public health	Federal medicine and device regulation plus national public-health interfaces	Recognize existing approvals and build or bridge the sovereign regulatory/data functions.
Special programs	Selected federal benefits and community-health programs, including First Nations and Inuit interfaces	Name a continuing payer and preserve eligibility, records and provider access.

Alberta's existing care-delivery system can continue operating while these federal financial, legal and regulatory connections are transferred, replaced or maintained through agreements.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The goal for Day 1 would be to keep Alberta's existing health-care delivery system operating without interruption while replacing or continuing the federal functions that support it. Hospitals, clinics, physicians, pharmacies and other health services would continue to operate as they do today.

Transitional legislation would preserve the legal status of existing medicines and medical devices, maintain professional licences, and ensure that payments to hospitals, physicians and pharmacies continue. Alberta would then develop its own public-health coordination, health-product regulation and data systems in stages, while maintaining necessary arrangements with Canada and other jurisdictions.

The largest immediate financial issue would be replacing federal health transfers or negotiating their continuation during the transition. The main operational risks would be maintaining the lawful supply of medicines and medical devices and continued access to public-health surveillance data. Alberta would not need to build an entirely new hospital or health-care delivery system.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Hospitals, clinicians, EMS, provincial health administration, professional colleges and most patient pathways.
What changes	Federal transfers, Health Canada/Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) functions, product regulation, selected data/reporting and federal benefit programs.
What patients should notice	As little as possible: the same care locations, providers and prescriptions remain available while authority changes behind the scenes.

13.1 Continuity of Health-Care Delivery

Hospitals, physicians, EMS, community care and provincial administration continue under existing Alberta structures. Day 1 of independence does not require a health-system redesign; patients will experience continuity of care while legal and funding authority changes behind the scenes.

13.2 Health-Care Financing

The transition budget must distinguish current Alberta health spending from federal transfers and new sovereign administrative functions. Any loss or change in federal transfers must be reflected in treasury cash planning; the long-term health funding model remains a provincial policy choice.

13.3 Transition of Federal Health Transfers

The analysis identifies the Canada Health Transfer and bilateral agreements as material existing flows. A negotiated bridge is preferable, but Alberta should be financially prepared for the possibility that federal transfers end when Alberta assumes full revenue and program responsibility.

13.4 Pharmaceutical Regulation

Existing approved medicines will remain lawful through a continuity statute. The health analysis proposes a lean Alberta medicines/devices authority that initially recognizes credible Canadian, U.S. and European approvals while building the capacity needed for sovereign pharmacovigilance and market oversight.

13.5 Medical Devices and Health Products

The same recognition-first approach can cover medical devices, diagnostics, natural health products and related inspections. The critical requirement is a valid legal chain for sale, recall, adverse-event reporting and importation—not a complete new scientific regulator on Day 1 of independence.

13.6 Public Health and Disease Surveillance

Alberta needs clear authority for surveillance, laboratories, reporting, emergency orders and cross-border outbreak communication. Existing provincial public-health capacity can be retained, but federal laboratory, data and international interfaces require agreements or expansion of existing Alberta Health roles.

13.7 Health Research and Federal Programs

Active research grants, clinical trials, ethics approvals and federal research infrastructure will be inventoried so projects do not fail solely because the funder or regulator changes. Transitional grant bridges and continuity rules may be more efficient than immediate creation of a full national research bureaucracy.

13.8 Interjurisdictional Health-Care Arrangements

Canada–Alberta reciprocal billing, patient referrals, professional mobility, emergency transfers, pharmaceutical supply chains and public-health information sharing would support continuity on both sides. Similar arrangements may be needed with U.S. institutions for specialized care and technical collaboration.

Selected references from white papers

- *Government of Canada: Canada Health Act.*
- *Health Canada: health-product regulation, approvals, safety and federal health-program materials.*
- *Public Health Agency of Canada: public-health surveillance and emergency-preparedness materials.*
- *Canadian Institutes of Health Research: federal health-research funding and program materials.*
- *U.S. Food and Drug Administration and European Medicines Agency: external regulatory-recognition reference systems considered in the Health White Paper.*

CHAPTER 14

Social Program Continuity

> The immediate priority is to ensure that every scheduled benefit payment continues without interruption. The transition plan therefore proposes a Payment Continuity Bridge, under which federal institutions could temporarily continue administering certain payments through service agreements while Alberta builds and tests its own records, legal authority, payment systems, claimant services and emergency procedures. The bridge would be successful if payments arrive on time and recipients can have errors corrected promptly.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Albertans receive a mixture of provincial and federal income-support payments. Alberta operates programs such as Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) and Income Support. Federal institutions administer Employment Insurance, federal child and disability-related benefits and other income-tested programs

Every benefit payment depends on the same basic administrative chain:

Legislation establishes who is eligible.

Government records confirm matters such as identity, income, employment history, age, family status or disability.

A computer system or caseworker calculates the amount payable.

Treasury sends the payment by direct deposit or cheque.

A service and appeal process corrects mistakes, addresses overpayments and handles exceptional cases.

A failure at any point in this chain can delay or stop a payment, even if the legal entitlement to the benefit continues.

The important federal dependency is access to records. Income-tested benefits often rely on CRA tax information, and Employment Insurance (EI) relies on federal employment, contribution, and payment records. Alberta could have the legal authority and money to continue a program, but without accurate records it may not be able to identify eligible recipients or calculate the correct payments.

A benefit payment is produced by a chain of administrative steps. The law defines eligibility. Records prove income, employment history, age, family status or disability. A computer or caseworker calculates the amount. A payment file sends the money to the person's bank account or issues a cheque. There is also a process for corrections, overpayments, appeals and people whose circumstances do not fit the automated rules. A failure at any one of those points can stop the payment even when the government intends the program to continue.

The transition therefore focuses heavily on records and payment operations. Alberta already runs provincial income-support programs and has treasury and payment capacity. Federal programs such as Employment Insurance and federal retirement-income benefits rely on federal records and administration. The lowest-risk approach is to preserve existing eligibility rules and payment schedules during the transition. Alberta would obtain or reconstruct the necessary records, test several payment cycles and maintain manual emergency procedures before assuming full responsibility. Major policy redesign should be deferred until payments are operating reliably.

A benefit payment also has a service chain. A statute creates eligibility; an administrator decides whether the person qualifies; a case file stores identity, income and family information; a payment engine calculates the amount; Treasury releases the money; a bank deposits it; and an appeal process corrects mistakes. A benefit can fail even when the legal entitlement survives if one of those operational links is missing.

That is why records and tested payment files are treated as infrastructure. The transition does not need to redesign every benefit on Day 1 of independence. It needs a lawful payer, reliable eligibility data, a working bank file and a way to correct exceptions so people receive the scheduled payment.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The social-program analysis therefore prioritizes a master Alberta-controlled benefit register, records transfer or reconstruction, and tested payment fallbacks. Existing Alberta payment and treasury capacity should be expanded before new agencies are created. The transition can preserve benefit schedules while final policy choices are deferred. For recipients, this is meant to look like a payer transition, not a redesign of every social program on Day 1 of independence. Any later decision to alter eligibility or benefit levels is an ordinary policy question for the Alberta government, not a technical requirement of independence.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Recipients, bank accounts, payment cycles and Alberta's existing social-program delivery machinery.
What changes	Administration and funding of programs now federal, plus control of the tax/benefit data used to calculate them.
What cannot fail	The payment file, direct-deposit/cheque rails, identity verification, arrears/overpayment rules and appeals.

14.1 Principles of Benefit Continuity

Existing beneficiaries will not have to re-prove eligibility solely because jurisdiction changes. Continuity rules will preserve entitlement and payment schedules during the bridge, with clear authority to correct over- or under-payments later.

14.2 Employment Insurance

EI requires contribution histories, claimant files, employer records, adjudication, appeals and payment systems. A transitional federal service arrangement could reduce risk, but Alberta needs a fallback model for records, benefit calculation, claimant service and direct payment if services end.

14.3 Old Age Security and Income Supports

OAS/GIS-equivalent payments are general-revenue benefits rather than CPP assets. They will need to be budgeted and administered separately from contributory pensions, with a validated beneficiary file and a clear decision about the level and legal basis of transitional replacement benefits.

14.4 Disability Benefits

Disability programs cross health, social services, tax and pension systems. The transition will preserve existing recipients, medical/eligibility records, direct deposits and appeal rights, while clarifying which Alberta program owns each benefit after Day 1 of independence.

14.5 Child and Family Benefits

Income-tested child and family benefits depend on tax data. The Revenue Service and social-program teams therefore need a common income/identity data model and a temporary calculation method that can produce payments even if federal benefit systems are unavailable.

14.6 Employment and Labour-Market Programs

Training, employment services and federal-provincial labour programs will be inventoried and assigned. Where Alberta already delivers services, the principal change may be funding and legal authority rather than creation of a new delivery organization.

14.7 Federal–Provincial Cost-Shared Programs

Every cost-shared program will be classified as continue, replace, negotiate or wind down. Alberta will avoid assuming that a federal funding stream survives independence while also avoiding automatic program cancellation before a replacement decision is made.

14.8 Transitional Benefit Administration

The core operational assets are a master beneficiary register, banking file, identity and income data, a calculation method, payment engine, correction and appeals process, call-centre capacity and manual emergency payments. Those are the hidden pieces behind a benefit deposit. Rehearsals should be run for multiple payment

cycles before Day 1 of independence, including cases where federal data are late or incomplete.

Selected references from white papers

- *Government of Canada: Service Canada benefit-delivery systems and federal social-program administration materials.*
- *Government of Alberta: Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program materials.*

IV

PART IV

Economy, Resources and Critical Infrastructure

The economy does not need to be rebuilt. The transition task is to preserve market access, legal certainty, energy and food flows, communications, aviation, rail and highway freight, and the regulatory interfaces that make existing commerce usable across borders.

15 Trade and Economic Relations

16 Energy and Natural Resources

17 Agriculture and Food Systems

18 Transportation

19 Telecommunications, Digital Infrastructure and Postal Services

CHAPTER 15

Trade and Economic Relations

> For trade, this transition plan treats Day 1 of independence as a "continuity machine": goods must move, documents must be accepted, payments must settle and major counterparties must know which Alberta authority can make binding decisions.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Trade is conducted primarily by private firms. Alberta producers, manufacturers, farmers, retailers, carriers, pipelines, warehouses, banks and insurers already make the commercial decisions and execute shipments. Governments create the legal framework around that activity: tariffs, customs, sanctions, export controls, trade agreements, technical recognition and dispute mechanisms.

This distinction is important because independence does not require government to recreate Alberta's customers, trucks, pipelines, sales teams or contracts. It requires government to keep the legal and border interfaces usable so those private relationships continue to function. The trade analysis emphasizes this "continuity machine" approach and gives the United States special importance because of Alberta's existing export concentration.

The scale of the existing trade relationship helps explain the priority. The updated trade analysis uses 2024 figures of approximately C$473.9B in Alberta gross domestic product, C$181.6B in merchandise exports and C$100.0B in merchandise imports. International merchandise trade was approximately 59.4% of gross domestic product; 88.5% of merchandise exports went to the United States and 76.1% of exports were resource-based. These figures do not dictate a trade policy, but they show established

trading relationships between Alberta, United States, the rest of Canada, and distant markets.

Most trade is carried out by private businesses. A producer finds a customer, agrees on a price and contract, arranges financing and insurance, hires a carrier and ships the product. Government does not create that commercial relationship. Government supplies the legal framework around it: customs rules, tariffs, sanctions, border procedures, product certificates, professional recognition and trade agreements that may give the transaction preferential treatment.

A shipment can therefore continue commercially while the government layer changes, but only if the new legal interfaces are ready. A truck may be physically capable of crossing the border, yet the load can still be delayed if the tariff classification, customs declaration, certificate or carrier identifier is not accepted. Conversely, an elaborate trade agreement is not enough if the customs computers or inspection procedures do not work. The transition plan treats market access as both a legal negotiation and an operational system.

This distinction is important because Alberta does not need to find new owners for every exporting business or recreate every supply chain. The transition plan must keep the rulebook, border documentation, certification and market-access interfaces working around private trade that already exists.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The immediate sovereign trade functions are known but critical: customs and tariff administration, export certification, U.S.-facing corridor management, exporter problem-solving, sanctions and export-control credibility, and market-access diplomacy. Alberta can reuse its existing trade and investment offices, sector relationships, regulators, budget systems and commercial logistics channels. It should build only the limited sovereign functions that are currently handled by the federal government or international bodies

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Businesses, commercial contracts, products, customers, transport operators and most private logistics.
What changes	Customs jurisdiction, tariff schedules, treaty status, sanctions/export controls and government-to-government market-access representation.
What requires external acceptance	Rules of origin, preferential tariff treatment, regulatory equivalence and access under trade agreements.

15.1 Canada–Alberta Economic Relationship

The economies of Canada's provinces especially B.C, and Ontario are significantly dependent on trade with Alberta and will remain a major market, supplier and transit partner. A Canada–Alberta economic agreement should therefore be an early negotiating priority, covering trade, customs cooperation, services, investment, energy, procurement, transportation, dispute resolution and practical border facilitation.

15.2 Internal Trade Arrangements

The current Canadian internal market would no longer automatically apply in the same way. Alberta can use its economic leverage to seek a broad reciprocal market-access agreement that minimizes new barriers and gives businesses a predictable rule set while allowing both governments to regulate within their jurisdictions.

15.3 Customs Union and Free-Trade Options

Possible models range from a customs union to a comprehensive free-trade agreement with independent tariffs. The Day 1 requirement is narrower: know which tariff schedule applies, who collects it, how goods are released and what interim origin rules allow current supply chains to continue.

15.4 Movement of Goods and Services

Commercial crossings, export certificates, trucking/air cargo interfaces, digital services and professional business services all require continuity. The trade authority should maintain a corridor operations centre capable of escalating bottlenecks with border, transport and foreign counterparts.

15.5 Movement of Labour

Business continuity benefits from an agreement allowing Canadians and Albertans to work across the border with minimal friction. Labour mobility should be coordinated with immigration status, social programs, tax residence and professional licensing.

15.6 Capital and Investment Flows

Investors need clear rules for ownership, corporate residence, securities listings, taxation, banking, contract enforcement and movement of funds. The transition should avoid capital controls or policy shocks unless a genuine emergency requires them and lawful authority exists.

15.7 Competition Policy

A basic competition and market-conduct function is required, but a full federal-style bureaucracy can be deferred. Existing Alberta regulatory and securities capacity can support a smaller initial office focused on anti-competitive conduct, consumer harm and coordination with trading partners.

15.8 Professional and Occupational Credentials

Mutual recognition of credentials with Canada would reduce disruption in medicine, law, engineering, trades, finance and other professions. Alberta can continue existing credentials domestically but needs reciprocal rules for people practicing on both sides of the border.

15.9 Business and Commercial Law Continuity

Corporations, security interests, insolvency, contracts, insurance and commercial dispute resolution must remain predictable. Continuity statutes and courts should preserve existing legal relationships while sovereign commercial statutes are replaced in stages.

Selected references from white papers

- *Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA).*
- *Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA).*
- *World Trade Organization: Article XII accession procedures and WTO accession framework.*

- *Government of Alberta: Trade and Investment: Alberta, 2024.*
- *Statistics Canada: interprovincial trade and business-barrier survey materials referenced in the Trade White Paper.*

CHAPTER 16

Energy and Natural Resources

> Alberta already regulates most resource development within the province. The major sovereign gap is at the external interface: interprovincial/international pipelines and power lines, export licensing, cross-border infrastructure, international market recognition and federal assets/functions.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY - IN PLAIN LANGUAGE

Alberta already owns or administers most provincially controlled natural-resource rights and already regulates much of the oil, gas, electricity, minerals and forestry lifecycle through bodies such as the AER, AUC and Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO). Producers already hold Alberta leases and licences, pay royalties to Alberta and operate under Alberta environmental and safety requirements. The federal role becomes more important when activity crosses provincial or international boundaries, involves federal lands, nuclear/radiological regulation or external trade and treaty interfaces.

That division means the core producing system does not have to be recreated. Wells, plants, pipelines inside Alberta, power markets, royalty systems, field staff and regulatory records remain where they are. The principal transition risk is getting products and inputs across borders and keeping outside operators, lenders, insurers and regulators confident that Alberta permissions remain usable.

The transition gap is concentrated where the activity crosses the present provincial boundary or falls within a federal field. A producing well can keep operating under

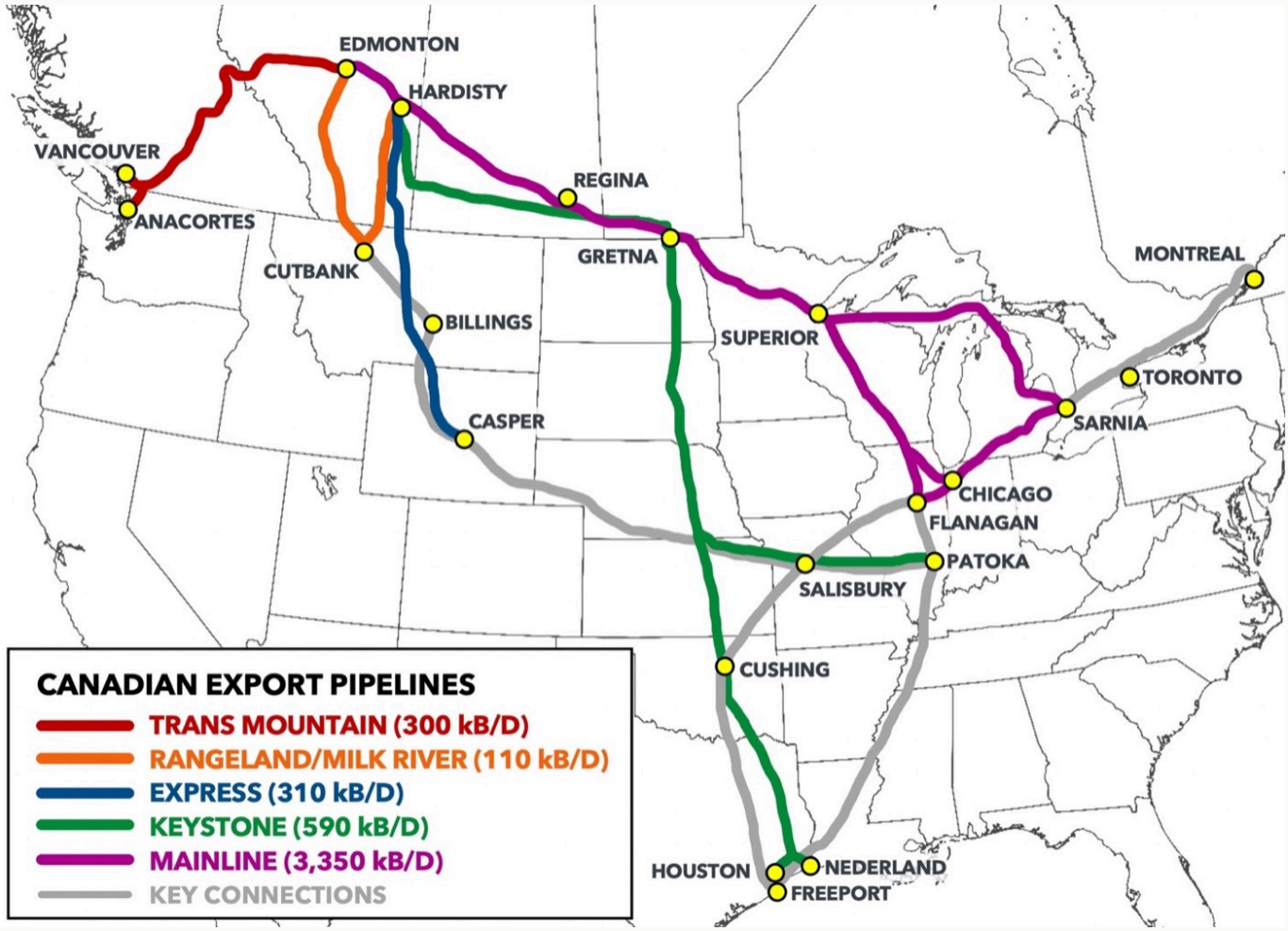
Alberta law while the legal framework for an interprovincial pipeline, electricity intertie, export authorization or selected federal environmental and nuclear function is transferred or replaced. This distinction matters because it means continuity of production is a different problem from continuity of export corridors. The latter requires agreements and recognition outside Alberta even when the physical pipeline or power line does not move.

Energy has several layers that are often confused. Alberta owns or administers many provincial Crown resource rights; private companies hold leases or licences and drill, mine, generate or process energy; the Alberta Energy Regulator and Alberta Utilities Commission regulate defined activities; the Alberta Electric System Operator coordinates the provincial electricity system; and pipelines or power lines that cross borders depend on additional interjurisdictional rules and counterpart cooperation.

The transition work is concentrated in the legal authority for formerly federal matters, cross-border corridors, export controls, emergency coordination and external recognition.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The energy plan accordingly keeps existing Alberta resource titles, licences and institutions in force, while adding sovereign cross-border, import/export and treaty capacity. Interprovincial and international pipelines, power interties and resource corridors require negotiated or recognized arrangements. The government must also plan for critical imported inputs and market access. In practical terms, the Day 1 of independence objective is not a new energy industry; it is the same industry operating under an Alberta sovereign legal chain with uninterrupted revenue collection and external corridor access.



Major pipeline systems moving Western Canadian energy.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Resource producers, Alberta leases, AER/AUC/AESO functions, royalty billing and most in-province infrastructure.
What changes	Federal cross-border pipeline/power functions, import/export authority, selected federal lands and nuclear/radiological oversight.
What requires agreement	Transit through Canada, U.S. recognition/market access, interties and treatment of federal assets/lands.

16.1 Oil and Gas Regulation

AER licences, approvals, data, safety rules, environmental obligations, land titles and royalty systems should continue with minimal change. Federal approvals affecting interprovincial or international facilities require negotiated transfer, recognition or bridging arrangements.

16.2 Ownership and Control of Natural Resources

Existing Alberta Crown leases and private rights should be preserved to avoid financing and title uncertainty.

16.3 Interprovincial and International Pipelines

Pipeline access is a priority both for Alberta and the regional economies that depend on Alberta's energy products. The transition agreement should address operating authority, tolls, safety, nominations, inspections, emergency response and continued access to Canadian and U.S. destinations.

16.4 Electricity Generation and Transmission

AESO and existing Alberta market operations provide a strong base. The principal transition need is reliable intertie operation and commercial/regulatory protocols with British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Montana and relevant Canadian/United States reliability bodies.

16.5 Energy Market Integration

Contracts, trading, insurance, banking, price reporting and market data should continue. Market integration is strengthened by maintaining familiar technical standards and providing counterparties with a clear legal basis for Alberta regulatory decisions.

16.6 Resource Export Arrangements

Export licensing and customs documentation should be ready before Day 1 of independence. The supporting research emphasize early technical engagement with the United States because it is Alberta's largest external market, while also preserving routes through Canada and other markets.

16.7 Environmental Regulation

Existing Alberta environmental approvals, monitoring and enforcement should continue. Federal environmental functions should be mapped by project and statute, with interim recognition or transfer for approvals already in progress.

16.8 Federal Energy Assets and Programs

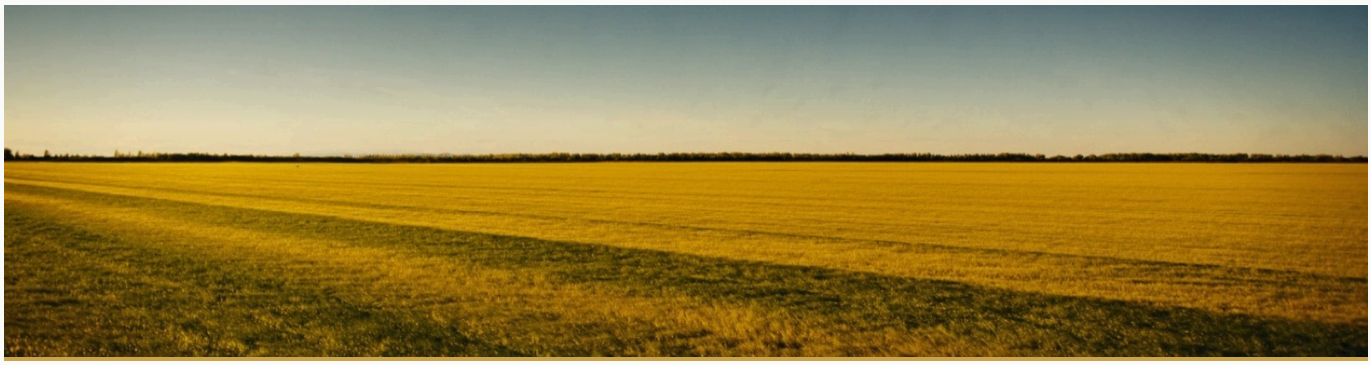
Federal research facilities, regulatory records, laboratories, program contracts and physical assets in Alberta should be identified in the Debt & Assets register. Operational access may need to be settled before final ownership.

16.9 Cross-Border Energy Cooperation

Energy continuity will remain mutually important to Alberta, Canada and the United States. Technical agreements can focus on safe and reliable flows, emergency coordination, standards, data and dispute resolution.

Selected references from white papers

- *Canada Energy Regulator: interprovincial and international pipeline jurisdiction and Canada-U.S. energy-market materials.*
- *Alberta Energy Regulator: lifecycle regulation of Alberta energy and mineral resource development.*
- *Alberta Electric System Operator: operation of Alberta's interconnected electric system and wholesale electricity market.*
- *Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission: nuclear-energy and nuclear-materials regulatory framework.*
- *Government of Alberta: forestry, water and natural-resource administration materials.*



CHAPTER 17

Agriculture and Food Systems

> Agriculture has a substantial existing Alberta delivery base through Alberta's department of Agriculture and Irrigation, Alberta's Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC), and other institutions. The principal gaps are the specific federally-regulated food-safety inspection for export plants, grain grading, animal/plant health, trade certification, supply-management interfaces, federal lending and the international legal framework surrounding St. Mary and Milk River irrigation water.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Alberta already has substantial agricultural administration. The Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) delivers crop insurance, farm income-stabilization programs, and agriculture lending, and Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation regulates provincially licensed processing including food-safety inspections at provincial plants. The federal layer is concentrated in functions that matter especially for interprovincial and international trade: Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) food, animal and plant-health functions; Canadian Grain Commission (CGC) grain grading and standards; national cost-sharing; and trade-linked supply-management arrangements.

This creates a much smaller transition gap than a reader might assume from the phrase "federal agriculture programs." Farmers do not need new land, barns, elevators, veterinarians or lending relationships simply because legal authority changes. The transition risk is whether certificates, grades, disease-control measures and quota/property arrangements remain recognized in the markets that buy Alberta products.

Agriculture also combines farm operations with government layers that are easy to confuse. Farmers, ranchers, processors, grain handlers, veterinarians, truckers and retailers perform most of the physical work. Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation and the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) already administer important provincial programs. Federal agencies are limited to export inspection, plant and animal health, grain and food certification, national cost-shared programs and trade commitments.

The transition need can therefore differ by product and destination. Food sold within Alberta may depend mainly on provincial rules, while a product entering another country may need a certificate issued by an authority that the importing country recognizes. That is why maintaining familiar technical standards and obtaining equivalence or recognition can be more important on Day 1 of independence than redesigning agricultural policy. Existing farms, elevators, processors and supply chains should continue while the certification and trade layer is secured.

Southern Alberta irrigation is also part of an international water system. Under Article VI of the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty, the St. Mary and Milk Rivers and their tributaries are treated as one system, with waters apportioned between Canada and the United States. The IJC's 1921 Order sets the detailed rules, administered jointly by Canadian and U.S. Accredited Officers using shared flow data, gauges, operating procedures and direct coordination with water managers.

Alberta is already part of that operating network. Alberta Environment and Protected Areas administers provincial water rights and works with irrigation districts, Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation and basin technical contacts. What Alberta does not possess today is Canada's treaty-party status or the federal appointment of the Canadian Accredited Officer. The transition task is therefore to preserve an existing technical and irrigation-management system while separately negotiating the international legal status around it.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The proposed approach is to keep AFSC and existing provincial delivery operating, grandfather current licences and grades, and build only focused sovereign functions for export food-safety equivalence, grain standards, animal and plant health and certification. A lean Alberta Food Safety Authority or expanded Alberta inspection mandate can initially adopt Canadian Food Inspection Agency-equivalent technical rules; an Alberta Grain Standards Office can preserve familiar grading and documentation while foreign recognition is secured. Supply management is currently administered jointly

by Alberta and Canada and could continue after Day 1 of independence, with any future changes determined later as part of broader domestic policy and trade negotiations. For St. Mary and Milk River water, the continuity-first approach and designate Alberta leads, and seek a recognized Canada-Alberta-United States bridge with IJC acknowledgement where possible.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Farm operations, AFSC delivery, most provincial inspection, elevators, processors, private supply chains, irrigation districts, and provincial water administration.
What changes	Federal cost share, export-plant inspection authority, grain/export certification, expansion of agriculture lending, some agricultural trade commitments, and the state-level international authority surrounding St. Mary/Milk apportionment.
What requires recognition	U.S./foreign acceptance of Alberta inspection and certificates; settlement of quota/trade arrangements; and Canada/U.S./IJC recognition of a St. Mary/Milk continuity bridge and Alberta's interim implementation role.

17.1 Agricultural Regulation

Provincial agriculture law and licensing should continue. A transition statute should also preserve federal food, grain and related licences temporarily while Alberta assigns inspection and certification authority.

17.2 Farm Support Programs

AFSC already administers major farm insurance and stabilization programs in Alberta. The operational transition is therefore mainly to replace the federal funding share and authority while keeping producer enrollment, claims and payment calendars stable.

17.3 Farm Credit Corporation and Agricultural Financing

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) is a federal Crown corporation and an important source of financing for Alberta farmers and agricultural businesses. Alberta also has an established agricultural lender in AFSC. The treatment of existing FCC financing

would need to be resolved before Day 1 of independence so borrowers face no disruption or change to their loan terms. One option would be for AFSC to acquire or assume FCC's Alberta loan portfolio, including associated mortgages, security and records. Alternatively, FCC could continue servicing existing loans for a transitional period under an agreement with Alberta. The preferred approach would be determined through negotiations before Day 1 of independence, with the objective of ensuring uninterrupted financing, loan servicing and enforceability of existing security.

17.4 Food Inspection and Safety

Export-eligible meat, poultry and food plants need uninterrupted inspection authority and recognition by importing countries. The transition plan therefore starts by continuing CFIA-equivalent technical standards and existing plant records while Alberta establishes a recognized inspection authority. The physical plant, workers and commercial contracts can keep operating; the transition objective is ensuring that the certificate accompanying the shipment continues to be accepted and is confirmed before Day 1 of independence.

17.5 Livestock and Plant Health

Alberta already performs significant livestock and animal-health functions, including surveillance, laboratory testing, disease control, quarantine and movement restrictions, and emergency response. To the extent these functions are currently shared with or performed by federal agencies, Alberta and Canada would need to establish transitional arrangements before Day 1 to ensure continuity.

17.6 Supply Management

Alberta and Canada jointly administer and regulate supply management in Alberta. The future of dairy, poultry and egg supply management is a policy and trade decision for the Government of Alberta. The transition requirement is to protect legal certainty for existing quota holders while negotiating how current quota and future market-access arrangements continue as well as compensation frameworks if the system is changed.

17.7 Agricultural Marketing Systems

Existing producer organizations, marketing boards, elevators and commercial relationships will continue. Any statutory authorities that depend on federal law should be identified and temporarily continued or replaced.

17.8 Export Certification

Alberta would need recognized veterinary, phytosanitary, meat-inspection and grain documentation. Existing Canadian certificates already in the pipeline should be grandfathered where counterparties agree, while Alberta certificates are phased in.

17.9 Canada–Alberta Agricultural Trade

A continuity protocol with Canada should address animal/plant health, inspection equivalency, quota, farm programs, transport interfaces and data sharing. U.S. recognition is also important for export plants and commodities.

17.10 St. Mary and Milk Rivers: Transboundary Irrigation Water

The St. Mary and Milk Rivers form part of a Canada-U.S. water-allocation system that directly affects southern Alberta irrigation. The physical and administrative system—including reservoirs, canals, gauges, water licences, irrigation districts and experienced Alberta personnel—already exists and should continue operating without disruption through Day 1 of independence.

The principal transition issue is the international legal and administrative framework. Alberta should preserve the existing apportionment procedures, natural-flow calculations and operational practices while negotiating with Canada, the United States and the International Joint Commission to ensure recognized continuity after independence. Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation and Alberta Environment and Protected Areas can continue their existing operational roles, supported by Alberta's international-relations and legal functions.

Any permanent changes to treaty arrangements, water allocations or infrastructure should be addressed after continuity has been secured. The Day 1 objective is straightforward: no interruption to irrigation water administration and no unilateral change to existing allocations or operating practices.

Selected references from white papers

- *Canadian Food Inspection Agency: food safety, animal health, plant health and export-certification functions.*
- *Canadian Grain Commission: grain quality, grading and export-certification framework.*

- *Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada: federal agricultural programs and market-support functions.*
- *Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909, Article VI, and International Joint Commission 1921 Order concerning the St. Mary and Milk Rivers.*

CHAPTER 18

Transportation

> Transportation is a network-continuity problem. Roads, tracks, terminals, airports, private carriers, employees and commercial contracts already exist. The transition task is to keep those systems safe and commercially usable while Alberta assumes or bridges the sovereign regulatory, border, investigation and international-recognition functions that are federal or intergovernmental today.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Rail, trucking and aviation are not single government services. Private railway and trucking companies move freight; airlines move passengers and cargo; airport authorities provide major airport infrastructure; shippers, terminals, warehouses, repair facilities, fuel suppliers, insurers and dispatch systems support those operations. Government supplies legal and safety frameworks around them. At Calgary and Edmonton International Airports, for example, the physical airport is operated by an independent not-for-profit airport authority under Alberta legislation, while Transport Canada, NAV CANADA, the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority and private contractors perform different regulatory, navigation and screening functions.

Alberta already owns and regulates its provincial highway network and already administers much of the commercial-carrier system: Safety Fitness Certificates (SFCs), carrier profiles and audits, commercial driver licensing, private inspection facilities, commercial-vehicle inspections, weights and dimensions, and oversize/overweight permits. Alberta also has an existing provincial railway regime. The rail analysis reports approximately 345 industrial railways, 7 heritage railways and 3 public railways under

Alberta regulation. That existing rail office is a meaningful institutional seed, but it is not currently scaled to regulate the federally governed main-line network.

Transportation is not one government service. Roads are largely public infrastructure, while most trucks, trains, aircraft, terminals and logistics businesses are privately or locally operated. Alberta already owns and manages the provincial highway system, licenses drivers and vehicles and performs substantial commercial-carrier regulation. Alberta also has its own railway regulatory base. In aviation, the two principal international airports are already operated by locally based airport authorities incorporated under Alberta law rather than by Transport Canada. The federal layer around those airports is primarily land/lease, regulation, aviation security, border and international-airspace responsibility, not routine terminal or runway management.

The practical result is that the transition should be mode-specific. Alberta needs to supply the legal authority to facilitate cross-border trucking and main-line rail, preserve safety and insurance recognition, and make the new international boundary workable. For aviation, Alberta would become the state counterpart for the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) system and would need internationally credible aviation law and oversight, while the same airport authorities and potentially the same air-navigation provider continue the visible service.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

Alberta would need to enact legal authority for main-line rail safety, economic fitness and shipper remedies, crossings, operating rules, inspections and enforcement. Alberta would need to transition the existing federal specialist capacity working in support of rail in Alberta into Alberta administration. Trucking is a narrower domestic transition because Alberta already performs much of the carrier-facing regulation; the important step is converting present extra-provincial status into international status and obtaining recognition from Canada and the United States. Aviation remains a mix of new sovereign regulation and negotiated continuity for airport land, air navigation, route rights and international recognition.

The Day 1 independence standard is therefore not institutional completeness. It is that trains, trucks and aircraft can continue operating safely, lawfully and predictably while the permanent policy regime matures.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Provincial highways, private railways and trucking companies, tracks, yards, terminals, airport authorities, employees, contracts, fleets, Alberta carrier systems and day-to-day operations continue wherever lawful and practical.
What changes	Alberta assumes full rail safety/economic authority, international motor-carrier status, transportation investigation authority, and the aviation/border functions required of a state. Vehicle standards and recalls are initially handled by recognition of Canadian and U.S. standards rather than a new Day 1 bureaucracy.
What requires agreement or recognition	Canada transit and bilateral carriage, rail interchange and port access; U.S. commercial-driver/carrier recognition and International Registration Plan (IRP)/International Fuel Tax Agreement (IFTA) participation; customs/trusted-trader systems; and aviation air-navigation, route and international-recognition arrangements.

WHO COORDINATES TRANSPORTATION DURING THE TRANSITION?

The updated air-road-rail plan deliberately avoids creating separate agencies for every mode. A temporary Transportation Transition Office within Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors coordinates readiness, Canada/United States/International Civil Aviation Organization negotiations and cross-modal dependencies, but it does not operate railways, trucking companies, airlines, airports or air traffic control. Permanent safety regulation, economic adjudication and accident investigation remain separated so the same body is not operator, regulator and investigator at once.

FUNCTION	PLANNED ALBERTA OWNER	WHY THE SEPARATION MATTERS
Transition coordination	Transportation Transition Office	Coordinates the program and external schedules; does not operate carriers or infrastructure.
Rail safety	Expanded Rail Safety Directorate	Extends Alberta's existing provincial rail platform to all railways in Alberta.
Truck/carrier safety	Existing Carrier and Vehicle Safety functions	Reuses Alberta licensing, carrier fitness, inspection and enforcement capacity.
Civil aviation safety	Alberta Civil Aviation Authority (ACAA)	Independent sovereign aviation regulator for certification, licensing, security oversight and international compliance.
Economic disputes	One independent transport adjudicator with modal panels	Handles rail fitness/service remedies and aviation licensing/passenger matters without duplicating tribunals.
Occurrence investigation	Independent Alberta Transportation Safety Board	Investigates causes and safety lessons separately from regulators and operators; a Canadian service bridge can be used temporarily.
Air-navigation delivery	Arm's-length contracted service arrangement initially	Keeps service provision separate from ACAA regulatory oversight; NAV CANADA continuity is the preferred bridge if agreed.
Customs/border enforcement	Alberta Sheriffs Police Service (ASPS) Division 3	Transport states operational requirements, while the border domain owns front-line customs and law-enforcement execution.

18.1 Road Transportation

Alberta's provincial and municipal road network does not have to be recreated. Highway construction, maintenance, snow clearing, traffic engineering and most ordinary road operations remain with the same Alberta and municipal institutions. The constitutional change is concentrated at the boundary and in the legal authority applied to cross-border commercial movement.

The new border must be planned as a corridor system rather than simply a set of booths. High-volume freight crossings need customs processing, inspection areas, advance commercial information, brokers, carrier identifiers, transit procedures, payment and release messaging, dangerous-goods capacity, contingency routes and operating hours matched to freight demand. Lower-volume crossings can use dif-

ferent service levels, but the network as a whole must be tested from shipper tender to delivery.

18.2 Commercial Vehicle Regulation

The most practical Day 1 rule is no mass re-licensing. Existing Alberta Safety Fitness Certificates should remain valid, with carriers now authorized to operate outside Alberta mapped into an interim international status. Carrier profiles and compliance histories should remain linked to the same operator. Existing commercial driver licences should be deemed continuing Alberta state licences without a new skills test solely because sovereignty changed; medical status, endorsements, restrictions, convictions and training records should carry forward.

Alberta should initially preserve National Safety Code (NSC)-equivalent rules for carrier fitness, driver qualifications, vehicle maintenance, inspections, cargo securement, hours of service and audits. Commercial-vehicle inspection certificates should remain valid for their normal term, and Alberta should preserve its network of licensed private inspection facilities. Weight, dimension, registration and oversize/overweight permit systems can continue under Alberta law, with reciprocal recognition negotiated for cross-border routes.

Vehicle manufacturing standards and recalls should be handled by recognition rather than duplication on Day 1. Alberta can continue accepting Canadian and United States vehicle standards and manufacturer recall notices, recognize compliant vehicles already in commerce, and name a responsible Alberta official to receive and publish recall information. The updated transportation analysis specifically defers creation of a permanent Alberta vehicle-standards and recall regime until a future Legislature decides whether one is necessary. This avoids using scarce transition staff to recreate a system whose technical outputs can continue to be recognized.

External recognition is critical. Alberta should obtain written Canada and U.S. recognition of commercial driver and carrier credentials, maintain interoperable hours-of-service and electronic-logging data, and seek successor or continuing participation in the International Registration Plan (IRP) and International Fuel Tax Agreement (IFTA). Temporary trip-permit and fuel-tax procedures can serve as a fallback, but they are less efficient than uninterrupted participation.

18.3 Rail Transportation

The two mainline railways that are currently regulated by the federal government, Canadian National Railway Company (CN) and Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC),

both currently operate across international borders in multiple countries.

The existing Alberta rail-safety platform can be expanded into a Rail Safety Directorate or equivalent expert regulator with authority over operating fitness, rules, safety-management systems, track and equipment, operating practices, crossings, employee qualifications, dangerous goods, inspections, enforcement and emergency orders. Existing Canadian certificates, insurance evidence, approved rules and technical standards can be recognized for an interim period, subject to Alberta verification and safety powers. Crews should not have to learn a new rulebook simply because the legal regulator changed.

Safety regulation alone is not enough. Alberta also needs a lean adjudicative home for the economic functions now supplied federally, including operating fitness, insurance, service complaints, access and crossing disputes, and line-transfer or discontinuance matters. Existing federal proceedings involving Alberta trackage should either be completed by the existing body or transferred under agreed rules so shippers and railways do not lose a forum at the cutover.

VIA Rail also currently provides interprovincial passenger rail service through Alberta. That service need not be disrupted by independence. Alberta, Canada and VIA Rail could establish arrangements before Day 1 of independence allowing existing passenger services to continue, including access to railway infrastructure and stations, operating rights, safety recognition and any necessary border or customs procedures. Longer-term passenger rail arrangements could then be addressed through normal transportation agreements.

Rail operations cross boundaries continuously. Canada-Alberta arrangements should recognize crew qualifications, rolling-stock and track inspections, operating rules, dispatching arrangements, interchange records and through service so a train does not require duplicative inspection or unnecessary crew substitution merely because it crosses the new boundary. Privately owned railway property should remain outside the general federal-asset division unless a genuine Crown interest is involved.

18.4 Aviation

Aviation is federally regulated today, but it is not operated as one federal government system. Transport Canada establishes and enforces most civil aviation safety and security rules, including aircraft certification and airworthiness, aircraft registration, airport and air-operator certification, and pilot and maintenance licensing. These rules apply across the aviation sector, including passenger airlines, cargo and freight operators, charter and air-taxi services, private and business aircraft, flight

training and general aviation. Aircraft accidents and serious incidents are investigated separately by the independent federal Transportation Safety Board (TSB).

Other aviation functions are already performed by separate organizations. Provincial airport authorities operate the major airports; airlines and private companies operate aircraft and ground services; NAV CANADA provides air traffic control and navigation services; CATSA manages passenger and baggage screening through private contractors; and CBSA processes international travellers and goods. This existing separation makes aviation well suited to a continuity-based transition.

The objective is therefore not to recreate Alberta's aviation industry. The airports, airlines, aircraft, pilots, maintenance organizations, air traffic controllers and other skilled personnel already exist. The transition task is to replace or bridge the federal legal and regulatory functions and secure continued international recognition before Day 1 of independence.

18.4.1 Who owns and operates Alberta's airports

The federal government does not own or operate Alberta's airport system generally. Most Alberta airports are municipally, regionally or privately owned and can continue under their existing ownership and management.

The principal federal property issues are concentrated at the major Calgary and Edmonton facilities. Calgary Airports operates Calgary International Airport and Springbank Airport under long-term arrangements with the Government of Canada. Edmonton Airports operates Edmonton International Airport under a long-term federal ground lease. These airport authorities are independent, not-for-profit corporations operating within Alberta's regional airport authority framework; they are not federal departments or Crown corporations.

Villeneuve Airport is different. Although originally built by Transport Canada, the federal government sold it to Edmonton Airports in 2000. Accordingly, Villeneuve does not present the same federal-land issue as Edmonton International.

This distinction simplifies the transition. The organizations that operate Alberta's principal airports already exist in Alberta. The main property issue is therefore the continuation, transfer or replacement of federal lease and ownership interests at the limited number of airports where they remain.

18.4.2 Airport operations and private aviation can continue

Airport authorities principally operate and maintain the physical airport: runways, taxiways, terminals, roads, facilities, commercial leases and capital projects. Airlines and private contractors separately provide aircraft operations, baggage handling, fuelling, catering, maintenance and many other services.

Independence therefore does not require Alberta to create a government department to operate airports. Existing airport authorities, municipal airports and private airports can continue operating. For federally owned or leased airport property, Alberta and Canada would need to settle the applicable leases or land interests before Day 1 of independence. Options could include continuation of the existing lease for a transitional period, assignment to an Alberta public owner or transfer of the underlying federal property as part of the broader asset settlement.

The same continuity principle applies to aircraft operators. Passenger airlines, cargo carriers, charter operators, air taxis, flight schools and private aircraft owners should continue using their existing aircraft, personnel, facilities and commercial arrangements, subject to recognition under Alberta's new aviation framework.

18.4.3 Air traffic control and navigation

NAV CANADA, not Transport Canada, operates Canada's civil air-navigation system. It is a private, not-for-profit corporation providing air traffic control, flight information, aeronautical information and navigation services to passenger airlines, cargo and charter operators, private aircraft and general aviation.

The preferred Day 1 independence arrangement would be an agreement permitting NAV CANADA to continue providing air-navigation services in Alberta while Alberta assumes the sovereign legal responsibilities associated with its airspace. This would allow existing controllers, systems, navigation aids and operating procedures to continue without unnecessary disruption.

18.4.4 Passenger and baggage screening

Aviation security is also divided between regulation and operations. Transport Canada establishes the regulatory framework, while CATSA, a federal Crown corporation, delivers passenger, carry-on and checked-baggage screening largely through private screening contractors.

The preferred transition would allow CATSA and its existing contractors to continue screening in Alberta for a defined period while Alberta establishes its own legal and

oversight framework. Alternatively, Alberta could contract directly with qualified screening providers using the existing workforce and infrastructure.

The objective is continuity of security standards, equipment and trained personnel rather than an unnecessary Day 1 replacement of functioning screening operations. Customs and immigration functions for international travellers would be addressed through the separate border transition described in Chapter 21.

18.4.5 The sovereign functions Alberta must establish

The principal new institutional requirement is a sovereign civil aviation regulator, proposed here as the Alberta Civil Aviation Authority (ACAA). It would assume responsibilities now performed principally by Transport Canada, including:

aircraft registration, certification and airworthiness;

airport and air-operator certification;

pilot and aviation-personnel licensing;

oversight of passenger, cargo, charter, private and other aircraft operations;

maintenance and safety standards;

aviation-security regulation;

dangerous-goods and enforcement functions; and

international aviation representation.

Existing Canadian certificates, licences, aircraft registrations and technical rules should be recognized for a defined transition period wherever practicable. Pilots, airlines and aircraft owners should not have to obtain entirely new credentials simply because the sovereign regulator has changed.

Alberta would also require an independent aviation-occurrence investigation function. Canada presently separates this responsibility from Transport Canada through the Transportation Safety Board. Alberta could establish an independent accident-investigation body or negotiate transitional investigative services with the TSB while building its own capacity. Maintaining independence between the safety regulator and accident investigator would preserve the existing institutional safeguard.

18.4.6 International recognition and technical continuity

Civil aviation depends heavily on international recognition and agreements. The global framework is established by the 1944 Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). International route and market-access rights are then established through air transport agreements between countries. For Alberta, particularly important existing arrangements include the 2007 Air Transport Agreement between Canada and the United States, commonly referred to as the Canada–U.S. Open Skies Agreement, and the Canada–European Union Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement, together with Canada's extensive network of bilateral air transport agreements with other countries. These agreements govern matters such as overflight, international routes, airline access, passenger and cargo services, safety and security.

Before Day 1 of independence, Alberta would therefore need to obtain the necessary international recognition and negotiate continuity, accession or successor arrangements, as appropriate, with Canada, the United States and other aviation partners. Alberta would also need to participate in the ICAO framework and maintain internationally recognized aviation safety, security and certification standards so existing international passenger, cargo, charter and other air services can continue without disruption.

Less visible technical systems must also continue. Pilots and airlines require authoritative aeronautical information, flight notices, airspace restrictions, navigation procedures, aircraft records and licensing information. These systems should be transferred, replicated or continued by agreement before Day 1 so that a legal or information gap does not interrupt otherwise functioning flights.

18.4.7 Day 1 aviation standard

The practical Day 1 test is simple. A traveller should be able to drive to the same Calgary or Edmonton airport, check in with the same airline, pass through a lawful security checkpoint, board at the same gate, use the same runway and air-traffic system, and clear a functioning border process when travelling internationally.

The same principle applies to cargo aircraft, charter flights, private aircraft and smaller airports across Alberta. Behind those familiar operations, the regulator, federal leases, screening authority and international legal arrangements may have changed. The purpose of the transition plan is to make those legal changes while keeping the aviation system operating safely and continuously.

18.5 Transportation Safety

Rail, trucking and aviation require a clear separation between operating regulation and independent occurrence investigation. Alberta should establish an independent transportation-safety investigation function, with a time-limited Transportation Safety Board service agreement if Canada is willing, so serious rail and aviation occurrences continue to receive technically credible investigation while Alberta builds permanent capacity.

Dangerous-goods rules should remain substantially equivalent on Day 1 across rail and highway modes. Classification, packaging and containment, documentation, training, security, emergency-response plans, permits and enforcement need sovereign legal authority but should not diverge abruptly from the standards carriers and emergency responders already use. Cross-border emergency contacts and mutual-aid procedures should be tested before cutover.

18.6 Interjurisdictional Transportation

A Canada–Alberta Transportation Continuity Agreement should be a priority schedule to the broader constitutional and economic settlement. Its surface schedule should cover reciprocal train and truck transit, bilateral carriage, cabotage rules, credential and inspection recognition, railway interchange and dispatch, terminal and port access, customs transit, insurance, dangerous goods, emergency cooperation and data. Its air schedule should address trans-boundary traffic rights, overflight, certificate recognition, safety/security cooperation and simplified passenger and cargo processing where achievable. Shared schedules can cover dangerous goods, safety investigation, customs and data. One integrated agreement reduces the risk that rail, trucking and aviation negotiate inconsistent rules for the same border and corridor system.

The United States requires a separate recognition workstream. Alberta should confirm commercial-driver and carrier recognition, customs processing, trusted-trader arrangements, IRP/IFTA participation, and rail interchange or equipment requirements rather than assume that rights currently available to a Canadian province will automatically transition to independence.

18.7 Border-Crossing Infrastructure

Commercial freight depends on systems as much as physical lanes. Customs and border readiness includes advance data, risk assessment, broker connectivity, carrier codes, payment, release messages, inspection protocols, bonded or in-transit procedures, trusted-trader status, agriculture or dangerous-goods interfaces, and an

outage fallback. A border facility is not operationally ready merely because a building and inspection lane exist.

Rail crossings need the same end-to-end approach. Customs data and inspection rules must fit railway operations without forcing unnecessary train stops or breaking interchange. Highway port staffing and inspection capacity should be based on freight volumes and commodity risks, with redundancy for major energy, agriculture, food and industrial corridors.

18.8 Federal Transportation Assets and Responsibilities

The asset transition should distinguish private transportation property from federal property or statutory interests. Private railway rights-of-way, yards, locomotives, rolling stock, trucks, terminals, warehouses, leases, mortgages and commercial contracts do not become Alberta public assets merely because the sovereign boundary changes. Federal airport lands, leases, inspection facilities, records, equipment or statutory rights require specific treatment under the debt-and-assets process.

ALBERTA TRANSITION COUNCIL

Transportation Transition at a *Glance*

Three Systems — What Stays the Same, What Changes, What Requires Agreements

ALBERTA TRANSITION COUNCIL

Alberta already has extensive transportation networks and experienced regulators. Day 1 continuity is built on what exists. Sovereign Alberta then assumes full authority and secures international recognition where required.

Transportation System	1. Who operates it now	2. What Alberta already does	3. What Alberta must add (sovereign functions)	4. What external agreements / recognition are needed
Road *Highways & Commercial Vehicles*	• Private carriers provide trucking services. • Alberta maintains provincial highways and roads. • Safety compliance and driver licensing under provincial authority.	• Regulates safety, weights, dimensions and commercial vehicle standards. • Issues driver's licences. • Maintains and operates the provincial road network. • Enforces traffic laws.	• Establish international road transport agreements. • Create and administer customs procedures for commercial vehicles. • Develop border inspection and information systems. • Join relevant international transport conventions.	• Bilateral/multilateral road transport agreements. • Recognition of vehicle standards, licences and insurance. • Customs and data exchange arrangements with neighbours. • Participation in international transport bodies.
Rail *Freight & Passenger*	• Private railways own and operate the network. • Canada sets national safety standards. • Passenger rail services operated by VIA Rail Canada.	• Regulates intraprovincial rail safety and crossings. • Works with railways on operations and investments. • Supports rail infrastructure development.	• Establish independent rail safety regulator. • Negotiate international rail agreements and access rights. • Create rail operating rules and certification systems. • Determine passenger rail policy and service arrangements.	• Cross-border rail service agreements. • Recognition of safety certifications and operating rules. • Access to U.S. rail network under negotiated terms. • Participation in international rail organizations.
Aviation *Airports & Air Services*	• Airports operated by federal authority. • Airport authorities manage facilities. • Transport Canada oversees safety and security.	• Operates and manages Alberta airports. • Regulates land-use, zoning and development around airports. • Provides emergency services. • Supports aviation industry growth.	• Establish civil aviation authority. • Assume air navigation services or enter service arrangements. • Issue aircraft registrations and aviation personnel licences. • Join ICAO and adopt international aviation standards.	• Bilateral air services agreements. • ICAO membership and compliance. • Recognition of licences, certificates and aircraft registrations. • Access to international routes and airspace arrangements.

Builds on what exists: Alberta already performs these functions today. **New sovereign functions:** Needed to operate internationally as an independent country. **External cooperation:** Requires agreements, recognition or participation by other states.

Key Principle. Private companies and existing infrastructure keep operating. Alberta adds the legal and international connections required for a sovereign transportation system.

Day 1 Continuity: Trucks keep moving. Trains keep running. Planes keep flying. Alberta already has the roads, rails, airports and the people to manage them. Sovereign Alberta builds on this foundation—adding international authority and agreements while keeping services running without interruption.

Selected references from white papers

- *Government of Alberta: Railway (Alberta) Act and provincial railway operating, incident-reporting and audit materials.*
- *Government of Canada: Railway Safety Act; Canada Transportation Act; Motor Vehicle Transport Act; and federal dangerous-goods framework.*
- *Transport Canada: National Safety Code; Commercial Driver Hours of Service Regulations; Canadian Aviation Regulations.*
- *Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention) and ICAO Annexes, including safety, airworthiness, facilitation, air navigation, security and dangerous-goods standards.*
- *International Registration Plan and International Fuel Tax Agreement.*
- *NAV CANADA; Canadian Air Transport Security Authority; and Transportation Safety Board of Canada: current aviation and transportation operating frameworks.*

CHAPTER 19

Telecommunications, Digital Infrastructure and Postal Services

> Telecommunications is an existing privately operated network system. The transition requirement is sovereign legal authority and continued interoperability—not rebuilding towers, fibre, data centres or customer networks.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Most telecommunications infrastructure in Alberta is privately owned and operated: mobile networks, fibre, towers, data centres, customer equipment and internet services. The federal role is primarily regulatory. The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) regulates telecommunications and broadcasting matters, while Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) manages radio spectrum, interference and related authorizations. Emergency 9-1-1 centres themselves are provincial/municipal, but carriers are subject to federal connectivity obligations.

The same distinction applies to numbering. Albertans use telephone numbers within the North American Numbering Plan (NANP), and calls route through carrier networks and shared technical systems. A change in sovereignty does not make the physical network disappear, but it can create uncertainty over who licenses spectrum, who regulates interconnection and who represents Alberta in the technical bodies that keep numbering and routing stable.

Telecommunications is mostly a privately operated network. Carriers own or lease towers, fibre, switches, data centres and customer equipment. Government decides different things: who may use radio spectrum, what telecommunications rules apply, how telephone numbers are coordinated, what emergency-calling obligations exist and how broadcasting policy operates. Radio spectrum simply means the limited ranges of radio frequencies used by mobile phones, broadcasting, satellites, public safety and other wireless services; two users cannot be allowed to interfere with one another on the same frequencies in the same place.

Because the physical network already exists, the transition should avoid unnecessary customer-facing changes. The same fibre, towers, subscriber identity module (SIM) cards, routers and phone numbers can continue if licences and interconnection arrangements are legally carried forward. The government work is to create an Alberta communications and spectrum authority, remain connected to the North American Numbering Plan, preserve emergency 9-1-1 routing to public safety answering points (PSAPs), and keep international and Canadian network interconnection functioning.

Two technical terms are especially easy to misunderstand. “Spectrum” is the regulated right to use particular radio frequencies without harmful interference; the government does not own a mobile carrier’s towers merely because it assigns spectrum. “Numbering” is the shared technical system that makes telephone numbers routable across networks; the regulator and industry coordinate it, but the telephone company still operates the customer network.

The transition therefore does not require a new cellular network. It requires an Alberta legal authority for spectrum and communications regulation, continued interconnection among private carriers, and continued participation in the technical numbering and internet arrangements that make calls and data reach destinations outside Alberta.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The telecommunications plan keeps existing numbers, licences, customer contracts and technical standards in force while Alberta establishes a lean communications regulator and spectrum authority. Large symbolic changes—a new country calling code, country-code internet domain or broad content-policy redesign—are deferrable. Postal services need their own sovereign legal owner because universal letter service, registered/legal mail, addressing, postal codes and international postal exchange are not supplied merely by the commercial parcel market.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Carrier networks, customer devices/contracts, fibre/towers, +1 phone numbers and most commercial internet/parcel service.
What changes	Regulator, spectrum authority, emergency communications rules, numbering representation and universal postal obligation.
What should be deferred	New calling code, ccTLD and non-essential content-policy redesign until connectivity is stable.

19.1 Telecommunications Regulation

The transition plan proposes a lean communications regulator focused on networks, interconnection, market entry, consumer protection, outages, emergency obligations and universal access. Existing carrier licences and customer arrangements should be deemed to continue while the new regulator reviews them.

19.2 Radio-Frequency Spectrum

Alberta would need licensing, interference control, equipment standards, public-safety priority and cross-border spectrum coordination. Existing federal authorizations can be deemed valid temporarily, but technical databases and international/border coordination are essential.

International and continental interoperability is externally paced. Alberta should seek continued participation or working arrangements with the North American Numbering Plan (NANP), coordinate spectrum with Canada and the United States, and establish representation in the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). These are not reasons to replace customer networks; they are the technical relationships that let existing networks continue to communicate outside Alberta.

19.3 Broadcasting

Broadcast transmission must continue, especially for emergency alerts. Broader cultural-content policy is a long-term political choice.

19.4 Internet and Digital Infrastructure

Internet Protocol (IP) transit, peering, Domain Name System (DNS), cloud services, fibre backhaul, data centres and satellite connectivity depend largely on commercial relationships. Government's role is to preserve legal certainty, competition, cybersecurity reporting, rights-of-way and resilience.

19.5 Postal Services

The updated transition design proposes a small Alberta Postal Authority (APA) or equivalent designated operator responsible for universal letter service, legal and registered mail, addressing and postal-code continuity, international postal interconnection and a carrier-of-last-resort obligation. Private parcel carriers should continue doing the commercial delivery they already perform, but they do not by themselves guarantee universal letter, rural/remote, legal-mail, addressing or international-postal functions. Alberta should seek useful Canada Post interchange or international-mail arrangements, while avoiding a single point of failure: the APA could also have an independently compiled Alberta address/postal-code registry, pre-arranged private carriage capacity, tested legal-mail custody and a bilateral/commercial international-mail fallback. Universal Postal Union (UPU) arrangements are externally paced and need not prevent interim bilateral or commercial routing.

For a general reader, the key distinction is that a sovereign postal service does not require Alberta to own a fleet of delivery vans or recreate a national retail post-office network. The state must guarantee the legal and universal-service functions; physical delivery can be contracted to existing carriers where they can meet the service standard. The current planning model assumes a lean authority, contracted delivery and an accommodation mechanism for residents who cannot reasonably use community pickup infrastructure.

19.6 Emergency Communications

9-1-1 routing and public alerting are non-negotiable readiness tests. Carriers, public-safety answering points and emergency authorities should conduct end-to-end testing before cutover, with fallback routing and a single escalation path.

19.7 Digital Identity and Government Systems

A sovereign government needs trusted identity, authentication and records services across tax, benefits, immigration, courts and licensing. The transition should avoid building separate identity systems in every domain and instead establish shared

standards, privacy controls and resilient credential services by expansion of existing Alberta government systems wherever possible.

Selected references from white papers

- *Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission: telecommunications, broadcasting, emergency-calling and public-alerting regulatory materials.*
- *Government of Canada: Telecommunications Act and Broadcasting Act.*
- *Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada: radio-frequency spectrum administration and technical-regulation framework.*
- *North American Numbering Plan / Canadian numbering administration materials referenced in the Telecommunications White Paper.*

PART V

Security, Borders and State Capacity

Statehood adds responsibilities for defence, border administration and federal-function public-service capacity. These functions must be civilian-controlled, legally bounded and integrated with the wider transition—not treated as stand-alone requirements.

20 Defence and National Security

21 Borders and Customs Administration

22 Public Service and Administrative Capacity

CHAPTER 20

Defence and National Security

> The defence analysis proposes a small transitional territorial force rather than attempting to reproduce the Canadian Armed Forces. This report retains the institutional requirements—civilian control, territorial protection, emergency support, security cooperation and accountability—while omitting controlled tactical and procurement detail.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Defence is one of the areas where the transition is genuinely more substantial because Alberta does not presently maintain a sovereign armed force. Canada operates military bases, command systems, aircraft, equipment, personnel and continental defence relationships that cannot simply be relabelled as provincial services. Alberta does, however, have a large resident pool of veterans, serving personnel, defence contractors, bases and infrastructure that can inform or support a transition.

The analysis therefore treats defence differently from health care or airport operations. Existing people and facilities can be reused only if there is a lawful transfer, recruitment or access agreement, and the military chain of command must be established anew under civilian authority.

Alberta does not presently have its own military chain of command, defence legislation, national-security decision structure or international defence relationships. Those functions cannot be created simply by renaming a provincial agency. A sovereign state needs a lawful civilian authority that decides when and how military power may be

used, a professional command structure and clear separation between military and civilian policing roles.

That does not mean every person, building or piece of equipment must be created from nothing. Experienced serving members and veterans live in Alberta, military facilities exist, and suppliers already support defence activities. Those are potential transition assets, but their use depends on lawful recruitment, transfer or agreements with Canada. The key reader distinction is therefore between redirecting physical and human capacity, which may be possible, and creating sovereign legal command, which is a genuinely new state function.

Defence should not be confused with policing or emergency management. Police enforce ordinary criminal and public-order law inside the country. Fire, ambulance and disaster agencies respond to civil emergencies. Intelligence and cybersecurity functions identify national-security threats. An armed force protects the state and supports defined national-security or emergency missions under civilian control. Some organizations cooperate, but their legal powers and accountability are different.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The updated defence planning model uses an initial 2,100-person footprint: 300 full-time Permanent members and a separate 1,800-member Territorial Force. The concept is deliberately territorially focused—command and control, sovereignty and surveillance patrols, critical-infrastructure protection, point security and domestic emergency support—rather than an attempt to reproduce the Canadian Armed Forces. The transition plan retains the public governance and staffing logic while omitting operationally sensitive tactics and procurement detail.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What can be reused	Veteran skills, selected facilities, local suppliers and potentially transferred equipment or personnel.
What must be new	Sovereign civilian authority, military command, legal mandate, rules of engagement and defence policy.
What requires agreement	Base withdrawal/transfer, continental air defence, procurement, intelligence and military-to-military deconfliction.

Two things make a defence force necessary. First, a new state needs a military counterpart to deal with other armed forces on issues such as alliances, airspace, search and rescue, disaster response, and the withdrawal of Canadian forces.

Second, Alberta would need to plan for contingencies like any new country for security risks including threats to critical infrastructure, cyberattacks, border or airspace incidents, and vulnerability that comes with being a new country.

20.1 Transitional Defence Arrangements

The Canada–Alberta agreement should address the status and withdrawal or continued presence of Canadian forces, bases, armouries, defence employees, equipment and sensitive records. Shared-use or phased arrangements can reduce security and employment disruption.

20.2 Defence Policy Options

Permanent defence doctrine, force size, alliance posture and spending are political choices for elected institutions. The transition requirement is narrower: credible territorial awareness, protection of critical infrastructure, emergency support and the capacity to coordinate with neighbouring states without displacing civilian policing.

20.3 Canadian Armed Forces Personnel and Facilities

Alberta-resident veterans and serving personnel represent a potential recruitment pool, but transfer cannot be assumed. Personnel rights, pensions, security clearances, equipment, leases, base ownership and environmental liabilities require negotiated treatment.

20.4 Allocation or Transfer of Defence Assets

Strategic assets should be inventoried separately from ordinary real estate. Debt & Assets should not trade away facilities required for an approved transition defence function before operational owners confirm whether they are essential.

20.5 Airspace and Aerospace Security

Civil air-navigation continuity and military air security are distinct but related. Alberta would need a lawful airspace/defence coordination arrangement and, if seeking continental defence cooperation, a negotiated relationship with Canada

and the United States rather than assuming automatic continuity in existing organizations.

20.6 Intelligence and National-Security Functions

A small civilian national-security and intelligence capability would need statute, defined mandates, privacy limits, judicial authorization where appropriate, independent review and secure information-sharing. Research completed for this plan repeatedly separates intelligence from ordinary law enforcement and military command.

20.7 Cybersecurity

Government networks, critical infrastructure and financial/telecom systems require a national cyber coordination function, incident reporting and external partnerships. Defensive resilience should precede any consideration of broader cyber capabilities.

20.8 Emergency Preparedness and Civil Protection

Military support should supplement, not replace, civilian emergency management. Wildfire, flood, search-and-rescue and critical-infrastructure emergencies should have clear request/command rules and interoperable communications.

20.9 Defence Cooperation with Canada

A renewed relationship could include air defence, search and rescue, training, procurement, intelligence, emergency support and deconfliction. The form and depth of cooperation would be negotiated and should remain subject to Alberta's constitutional and civilian oversight requirements.

Selected references from white papers

- *North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD): continental aerospace-warning and defence framework.*
- *North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): collective-defence and interoperability framework considered in the Defence White Paper.*

- *Government of Canada: Canadian Armed Forces structure and personnel context referenced in the Defence White Paper.*

CHAPTER 21

Borders and Customs Administration

> Border administration is a shared operating system involving immigration, customs policy, customs revenue, policing, trade facilitation, health/agriculture inspection and transportation. Clear division of responsibilities is essential.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Customs and border control are federal legal functions today, but their day-to-day execution occurs at real ports of entry using real officers, booths, inspection facilities, computer systems, scanners and commercial processes. CBSA officers working at Alberta airports and the United States border are not physically operating from Ottawa. Similarly, immigration examination at an airport is a local front-line service connected to national databases and federal decision rules.

This is a critical distinction for transition planning. Alberta must create sovereign border and customs authority, but it does not necessarily need to build every crossing facility or train an entirely new workforce from scratch. Existing infrastructure and experienced officers can potentially be transferred, seconded or recruited, while the government changes the legal commission, employer, uniforms, systems access and command.

A border crossing actually contains two different government decisions. Immigration decides whether a person may enter and under what status. Customs decides what goods may enter, what declaration is required and whether tax, duty, inspection, re-

strictions or enforcement apply. A traveller and a truck can therefore use the same physical port but go through different legal processes. Airports add the same functions for international passengers and cargo.

The booth or inspection lane is only the visible end of a much larger system. Commercial freight normally sends information before arrival so customs can identify the carrier, goods, value, origin and risk. Brokers, payment systems, permits, agriculture or dangerous-goods controls, inspection teams and release messages all have to connect. Alberta can reuse many existing crossing locations and potentially much of the front-line workforce, but the legal authority, data systems and Canada-Alberta operating rules must be ready before the border is truly functional.

ALBERTA TRANSITION COUNCIL

What Actually Happens at the *Border*?

Two Pathways. Multiple Agencies. One Seamless Process.

ALBERTA TRANSITION COUNCIL

Borders are more than a line on the map. They are managed processes that protect security, support trade and enable the free movement of people and goods—while respecting laws on both sides.

The Two Border Pathways

Person (Traveller) Pathway

1. **Identity Check**
   Traveller presents identity document. Verification of identity.
2. **Immigration / Status Determination**
   Assessment of admissibility and legal status. Entry authorization or refusal.
3. **Admissibility Security & Health**
   Screening for security, criminality, health and other inadmissibility factors.
4. **Decision & Entry**
   Admitted or refused. Record of entry/exit captured.

Responsible agencies: Immigration (IRSA), CBSA (immigration), ASPS (risk and intelligence), Health (as required).

Commercial (Goods) Pathway

1. **Advance Data & Notification**
   Carrier or importer submits advance information electronically.
2. **Customs Declaration**
   Goods classified and declared. Duties, taxes and fees calculated.
3. **Risk Assessment & Inspection**
   Risk analysis determines if release or examination is required.
4. **Revenue Collection**
   Duties, taxes and fees collected (or deferred as authorized).
5. **Release of Goods**
   Goods released to continue their journey into Alberta.

Responsible agencies: CBSA (customs), CRA (revenue collection), CFIA (food / agriculture), Health (as required), Transport (as required).

Multiple agencies. One coordinated process.

- **Immigration and Refugee Services Authority (IRSA)** — Sets immigration policy, determines who may enter or stay.
- **Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)** — Manages borders, customs, inspections and trade compliance.
- **Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)** — Collects duties, taxes and other amounts owing.
- **Alberta Sovereign Protection Service (ASPS)** — Provides risk assessment, intelligence and front-line security support.
- **Other Partners as Needed** — Health, CFIA, Transport, Fisheries and others support specialized functions.

Enabling across both pathways.

Information Sharing and Data Systems

Risk Management and Intelligence

Enforcement and Compliance

Infrastructure and Technology

Key Points

- ✓ People and goods are processed through different but coordinated pathways.
- ✓ Multiple agencies perform distinct roles at the border.
- ✓ Advance information, risk management and technology make borders efficient and secure.
- ✓ Day 1 continuity ensures these processes keep working.

Why this matters on Day 1. An independent Alberta maintains secure, efficient borders that support trade, travel, public safety and economic prosperity. Agreements with Canada and other partners ensure continued cooperation and smooth operations.

Continuity through cooperation. Alberta will negotiate new cooperative arrangements with Canada, the United States and other partners to ensure information sharing, joint enforcement and mutual recognition where needed.

Secure. Efficient. Enabled. A modern border system protects our people, supports lawful trade and travel, and strengthens Alberta's economy.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The current transition design assigns front-line customs and border law-enforcement execution to Alberta Sheriffs Police Service (ASPS) Division 3. That does not make Division 3 the owner of every border policy. Trade owns tariffs, classification and rules of origin; the Revenue Service collects duties and taxes; the civilian immigration authority owns visa/status decisions and protection referrals; agriculture and health regulators own specialized inspection requirements; and International Relations negotiates external customs and mobility instruments. Day 1 of independence succeeds when those separate owners work through one front-line border process.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What stays the same	Many existing ports, inspection lanes, local front-line skills and commercial traffic patterns.
What changes	Legal authority, customs/immigration rules, employer/commission, data systems and the status of Alberta-Canada movements.
What requires agreement	Canada-Alberta mobility/customs arrangements, data sharing, trusted-trader reciprocity and coordinated infrastructure operations.

21.1 Nature of the Canada–Alberta Border

A new international boundary would require legal treatment even if both governments choose a highly open mobility and trade regime. The objective should be to make lawful movement as low-friction as possible while preserving customs, immigration and security control.

21.2 Border-Control Options

Options include jointly coordinated facilities, pre-clearance, trusted-traveller/trader programs and separate Alberta processing. The transition plan should choose the simplest model compatible with the final Canada–Alberta trade and mobility agreement.

21.3 Customs Administration

Customs should be understood as three linked jobs. Trade policy decides tariff classifications, rates and rules of origin. ASPS Division 3 officers execute the law at the border by examining, releasing, referring or seizing goods. The Alberta Revenue Service collects duties and taxes and maintains the revenue record. Keeping those roles separate prevents a reader from assuming that one "customs agency" must contain every policy, tax and law-enforcement function.

21.4 Immigration Controls at Ports of Entry

Border officers require clear authority to verify identity/status and refer immigration decisions to the civilian immigration authority. Existing visas and permits should be recognized during transition, with watchlist and admissibility information-sharing in place before Day 1 of independence.

21.5 Movement of Citizens and Residents

The preferred policy objective is a broad Canada-Alberta mobility arrangement, but border systems must also function if rules are more restrictive. Citizens and residents need clear entry, residence, work and study rules. First Nations mobility requires an additional Indigenous-rights lens: current Canada-U.S. border movement already operates under special statutory rules associated with Indian status and the historic Jay Treaty context, and a new Alberta boundary could cut across reserve access routes, treaty territories and family networks. Section 12 therefore recommends a dedicated Indigenous Mobility Protocol rather than treating these movements as ordinary immigration cases.

21.6 Commercial Border Processing

Major commercial crossings require 24/7 staffing, customs release authority, brokers, payment capability, inspection coordination and real-time escalation. Trade and agriculture analysis treats uninterrupted freight movement as a first-order economic requirement.

21.7 Border Infrastructure

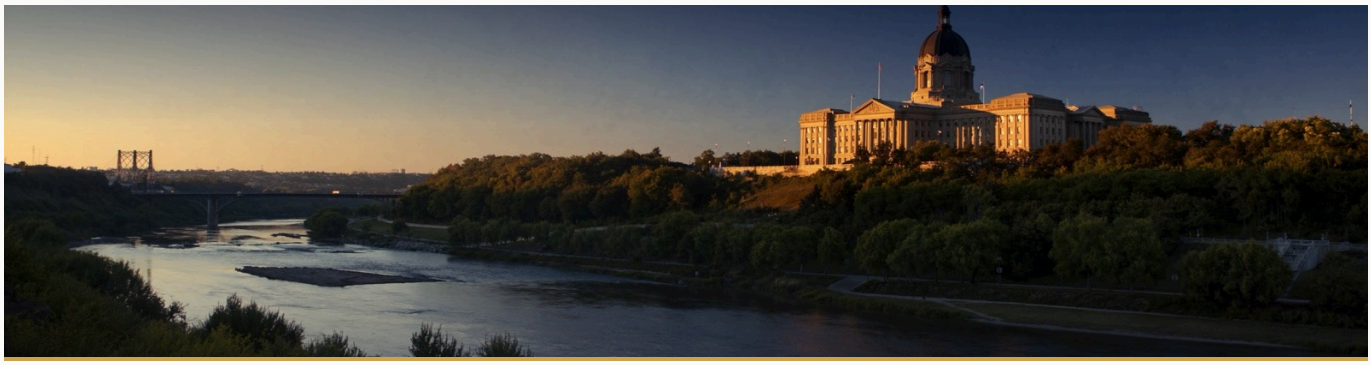
Physical facilities, inspection equipment, information technology (IT), secure communications and land ownership should be inventoried. Existing Canadian border sites may be shared, leased, transferred or duplicated depending on the agreement; the least disruptive workable arrangement should be preferred.

21.8 Joint or Transitional Border Arrangements

A time-limited joint or service-agreement model could preserve current processes while Alberta builds its own capacity. Any agreement should specify command, legal authority, data ownership, service standards, costs, dispute resolution and an exit/renewal process.

Selected references from white papers

- *Government of Alberta: Alberta Advantage Immigration Program.*
- *Canada Border Services Agency: Advance Commercial Information / eManifest commercial-reporting framework.*
- *FAST and C-TPAT trusted-trader and border-facilitation programs referenced in the Transportation White Paper.*



CHAPTER 22

Public Service and Administrative Capacity

> The transition is ultimately implemented by people, systems and records. Many functions can be assigned to existing Alberta ministries and agencies; others require selective recruitment, transfer or new teams.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

A large share of the “new state capacity” discussion is really a workforce-transfer and authority problem. Federal services delivered in Alberta are already performed by people with job knowledge, professional credentials and local roots: correctional officers, border officers, regulators, program administrators, technical specialists and service-centre staff. The transition plan should therefore distinguish a new function from a new workforce. A function may be new to the Government of Alberta even though the people who know how to perform it already work and live in Alberta today.

The closest private-sector analogy is an acquisition or transfer of a business unit: the operating team can continue while ownership, reporting lines, payroll and policies change. Government is legally more complicated than a corporate acquisition, however. Federal employees do not automatically become Alberta employees. Pensions, collective agreements, statutory appointments, security clearances, access to federal systems, privacy law and records custody all require lawful treatment. The analogy is useful for understanding continuity, but not as a substitute for the legal transition instruments.

For those current federal employees working in Alberta who are asking if they can keep their jobs after Day 1 of independence, the short answer is, yes.

For many functions the fastest transition is to retain, recruit or temporarily purchase the service of people who already know the job. That still requires careful legal and human-resources work. A person may need a new commission, security clearance, collective-agreement treatment, pension arrangement or system account before doing the same work for a new employer. Conversely, where an Alberta ministry already performs the function, no duplicate federal-style department should be created merely for institutional symmetry.

A "public service" is not every person who performs a public-facing function. A federal department employee is a public servant; an employee of a federal Crown corporation works for that corporation; an airport-authority employee works for an independent not-for-profit corporation; a screening officer may work for a private contractor; and a bank or airline employee works for a private company. Their transition treatment is therefore different even if all of them work in the same airport or office complex.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The practical staffing strategy should start with a function-by-function inventory of the current workforce and workplace. For each federal function Alberta should ask: how many employees are physically in Alberta; which positions are essential on Day 1 of independence; what facilities and systems do they use; which credentials or clearances must continue; and what employment offer, transfer, secondment or recruitment route is legally available? Existing Alberta ministries then absorb the function where possible. Only genuinely missing sovereign capabilities should trigger a new agency or large central build. This approach reduces cost, preserves institutional knowledge and makes the transition less disruptive for both employees and the public.

22.1 Identification of New State Functions

A master function inventory should list every federal responsibility Alberta will assume, the current provider, legal authority, data, systems, staff, facilities, budget, external dependencies and target Alberta owner. This becomes the basis for staffing and implementation rather than using generic public-service ratios.

22.2 Transfer and Recruitment of Federal Personnel

Where federal staff in Alberta perform functions that will continue, negotiated offers, secondments or recruitment may preserve experience.

A PRACTICAL EMPLOYEE-CONTINUITY MODEL

For a federal employee whose work continues in Alberta, the preferred design is a structured offer or transfer well before Day 1 of independence. The employee would be told the Alberta position, salary, recognition of prior service, pension/benefit treatment, workplace, reporting line and effective date. Where the same facility and function continue, the employee may perform essentially the same work on the next business day. The visible differences may be an Alberta appointment or commission, new credentials and email domain, a different payroll source and a different senior chain of command. The complex work is in the transfer agreement, not in teaching an experienced officer, inspector or program administrator how to do a job they already perform.

This model should not be overstated. The correct planning assumption is therefore "retain and recruit first, build and train the gap second," supported by a staffing reserve and knowledge-transfer plan.

22.3 Creation of New Ministries, Agencies and Authorities

New organizations should be kept to the minimum needed for sovereign functions. In many domains the faster approach is to expand an existing Alberta institution—Alberta Tax and Revenue Administration (TRA) / proposed Alberta Revenue Service (ARS), AFSC, AER, AESO, ATB Financial-linked financial capacity, provincial courts/justice administration—rather than create a parallel bureaucracy.

22.4 Federal Offices and Facilities

Operational need should drive treatment of federal facilities. Interim leases, shared use and service agreements may be more important on Day 1 of independence than immediate title transfer. Debt & Assets should maintain the controlling facility and records register.

22.5 Information Technology Systems

Systems should be classified as retain, clone, interface, replace or retire. Critical systems need data snapshots, identity/access controls, cyber testing, vendor continuity, backup operations and a clear cutover/fallback plan. Shared platforms should be preferred where several domains need the same capability.

22.6 Government Payroll and Human Resources

Government payroll must be tested as a critical payment system. Human resources (HR) teams need lawful appointments, compensation authorities, pension/benefit arrangements, security screening, union/collective-agreement treatment, onboarding and accurate employee records before staff are transferred or newly hired.

22.7 Transitional Service Agreements with Canada

Where Canada can continue a service more safely for a limited period—payments, records access, aviation, regulatory functions or program administration—a priced service agreement can buy time. Alberta should simultaneously build an exit capability so continuity is not dependent indefinitely on another government.

VI

PART VI

External Relations and International Transition

Domestic legislation can establish Alberta's authority within its own jurisdiction, but foreign recognition, international treaties, market access and technical acceptance must be secured through advance planning and advance negotiation.

23 International Relations and Diplomatic Affairs

24 International Organizations and Treaty Succession

25 International Trade and Market Access

CHAPTER 23

International Relations and Diplomatic Affairs

> Foreign affairs should be built for function before prestige: secure recognition, international treaty administration, Canada and United States working channels, trade and transport corridors, sanctions compliance and emergency consular capability first; expand the diplomatic network later.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Foreign affairs is another genuinely new sovereign function, but Alberta does not begin with no external relationships. The province already maintains international offices, trade relationships, energy and agricultural customers, business associations and ongoing contacts with U.S. states and other governments. What it lacks is the legal personality and institutional machinery to conduct diplomacy, exchange credentials, assume treaty obligations and provide full consular services as a country.

For an ordinary Albertan this distinction means foreign affairs is mostly a government-capacity build, not a change to everyday local service delivery. The first external priority is functional recognition of Alberta documents, trade, transport, sanctions compliance and official contacts.

Alberta already has international commercial relationships and trade offices, but a provincial trade office is not the same thing as an embassy or foreign ministry. A trade office promotes business and investment. A sovereign foreign ministry has authority to communicate formally with other states, negotiate and sign international agreements

under domestic authority, coordinate recognition, manage sanctions and export controls, issue diplomatic instructions and provide consular assistance to citizens abroad.

The early transition need is therefore functional rather than ceremonial. Alberta would need recognized officials who can speak for the country, establish formal channels with Canada, the United States and other priority partners, and solve practical problems affecting travel, trade, banking, aviation and citizens overseas. A large global embassy network is not required for that first stage. Existing trade offices and commercial contacts can be reused where helpful while formal diplomatic authority is built around them.

A trade office, embassy and consular service are not the same thing. A provincial trade office promotes investment and helps businesses. An embassy or diplomatic mission formally represents a sovereign state to another government. Consular services assist citizens abroad and deal with travel-document or emergency matters. Alberta can reuse commercial relationships and some office infrastructure, but it must create the sovereign legal authority behind diplomacy and consular protection.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The white paper analysis recommends a compact foreign ministry focused first on North America, recognition, treaties, trade corridors, sanctions/export controls and emergency consular capability. A global embassy network can be staged. Existing provincial trade offices can provide premises, staff experience and commercial contacts, but they cannot by themselves perform sovereign diplomatic acts. The transition therefore converts useful provincial assets into a legally recognized state function while avoiding the cost of copying Global Affairs Canada at full scale.

TRANSITION LENS	PRACTICAL MEANING
What can be reused	International offices, commercial contacts, trade specialists and existing U.S./global relationships.
What must be new	Treaty authority, diplomatic credentials, foreign ministry chain of command, consular powers and state-to-state representation.
What matters first	Recognition that keeps trade, travel, banking and regulatory interfaces working; prestige diplomacy comes later.

23.1 International Recognition

Recognition is not automatic and planning scenarios should not be treated as promises. Alberta would need a coordinated recognition strategy supported by a clear domestic legality chain, functioning institutions and credible commitments to rights, contracts, financial obligations and international norms.

23.2 Establishment of a Foreign Affairs Function

A lean foreign-affairs ministry should provide a single authoritative external voice, treaty management, diplomatic notes, consular escalation, sanctions/export-control coordination and whole-of-government clearance. Existing Alberta international offices and trade relationships can provide an initial platform.

23.3 Diplomatic Relations with Canada

Canada would be Alberta's most consequential bilateral relationship. A permanent diplomatic and intergovernmental channel should manage the continuing agreement architecture, disputes, mobility, trade, security, infrastructure and family/citizen issues after the transition machinery winds down.

23.4 Diplomatic Missions and Representation Abroad

The transition plan recommends a mission-light start focused on priority capitals and commercial/technical needs. Permanent properties and a large embassy network can be deferred; leased space, existing offices, shared facilities and travelling teams can provide early coverage.

23.5 Consular Services

A sovereign state needs emergency contact, assistance to citizens abroad, document support and coordination in crises. Consular capacity can begin with a central 24/7 unit and a small number of priority missions, supported by agreements or contractors where appropriate.

23.6 Diplomatic Property and Assets

Canadian diplomatic property abroad would not automatically become Alberta property. Alberta should budget for leases, secure communications and limited mission fit-out while any asset issues are negotiated separately.

23.7 Bilateral Relations with Key Partners

Priority should follow practical exposure: trade, energy, finance, aviation, agriculture, transboundary water, security and large Alberta communities abroad. The United States is necessarily central because of current trade patterns, but recognition and agreement outcomes must be treated as diplomatic objectives rather than assumptions.

Selected references from white papers

- *Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States (1933).*
- *United Nations: Treaty Handbook, including accession, provisional application, reservations, declarations and depositary practice.*
- *Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961).*
- *Charter of the United Nations.*

CHAPTER 24

International Organizations and Treaty Succession

> International legal continuity is a treaty-by-treaty and organization-by-organization program to work with other parties to achieve continuity before Day 1 of independence.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Canada is party to a large network of multilateral and bilateral treaties and is a member of international organizations on behalf of the country as a whole. Alberta currently benefits from those arrangements indirectly. This can create the impression that hundreds of domestic services would stop at the same moment if treaty status changed. In practice, treaty succession is a legal and diplomatic workstream layered over domestic continuity.

Many treaties concern highly technical matters - aviation, customs, health reporting, controlled substances, postal systems, judicial cooperation, trade or standards. The domestic institutions can often continue operating under Alberta law while the state pursues accession, provisional application, bilateral clarification or another recognized bridge.

An international treaty is an agreement between states or other international actors. Domestic services may rely on that treaty indirectly, but the treaty and the domestic operating rule are not the same thing. For example, an international aviation arrangement can affect whether airlines may operate across borders, while Alberta aviation law governs the domestic regulator and safety authority. A health-reporting treaty can

create a state-to-state obligation even though local hospitals continue under Alberta law.

Treaty succession therefore means determining what happens to Canada's international agreements as Alberta becomes a separate country: whether Alberta can succeed to an obligation, must accede as a new party, needs a bilateral bridge or must negotiate a replacement. This work can be prioritized. Agreements that affect immediate market access, safety, travel, payments or legal cooperation belong on the critical path; lower-impact treaties can be handled later without stopping ordinary domestic services.

The easiest way to understand treaty succession is to separate domestic authority from international acceptance. Alberta can pass a domestic aviation, postal or food-inspection law. That law does not by itself make another country accept an Alberta aircraft certificate, postal item or export certificate. International continuity requires a second legal or technical step with the external party.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The transition task is to inventory the treaty universe, identify the small number of instruments that are market- or safety-critical, and deal with those first.

24.1 International Legal Personality

International recognition and the effective legal transition would allow Alberta to conduct foreign relations as a country, but counterpart practice may develop unevenly. The transition plan should be able to operate under partial recognition while pursuing broader acceptance.

24.2 Membership in International Organizations

A master register should classify organizations by urgency, admission requirements, cost and operational importance. Technical bodies connected to aviation, telecommunications, postal service, finance, health and trade may have immediate practical value even before a broad diplomatic footprint is built.

24.3 United Nations Membership

United Nations (UN) membership is an important diplomatic objective but not a Day 1 operating requirement for most domestic services. The international-relations team should prepare the legal and diplomatic package while ensuring trade, consular and technical relations can function during the application period.

24.4 International Financial Institutions

Membership in institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank or Bank for International Settlements (BIS) may support long-term financial integration and credibility, but it can be sequenced after immediate bank, payment and liquidity arrangements are secure. Eligibility and accession terms require separate legal and diplomatic analysis.

24.5 Treatment of Existing Canadian Treaty Obligations

The transition plan proposes a treaty inventory and a continuity posture for high-impact instruments. Alberta should identify which obligations it wishes or needs to continue, which require accession or formal replacement/transfer of an agreement, and which depend on consent of Canada or other treaty parties.

24.6 Transitional Treaty Arrangements

Provisional application, bilateral continuity protocols and technical memoranda can bridge the period before formal accession. Any provisional commitment should have clear constitutional authority and later ratification rules.

Selected references from white papers

- *Charter of the United Nations.*
- *United Nations: Treaty Handbook and depositary practice for accession, provisional application, reservations and declarations.*
- *Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States (1933).*
- *World Trade Organization: accession framework for new members.*

CHAPTER 25

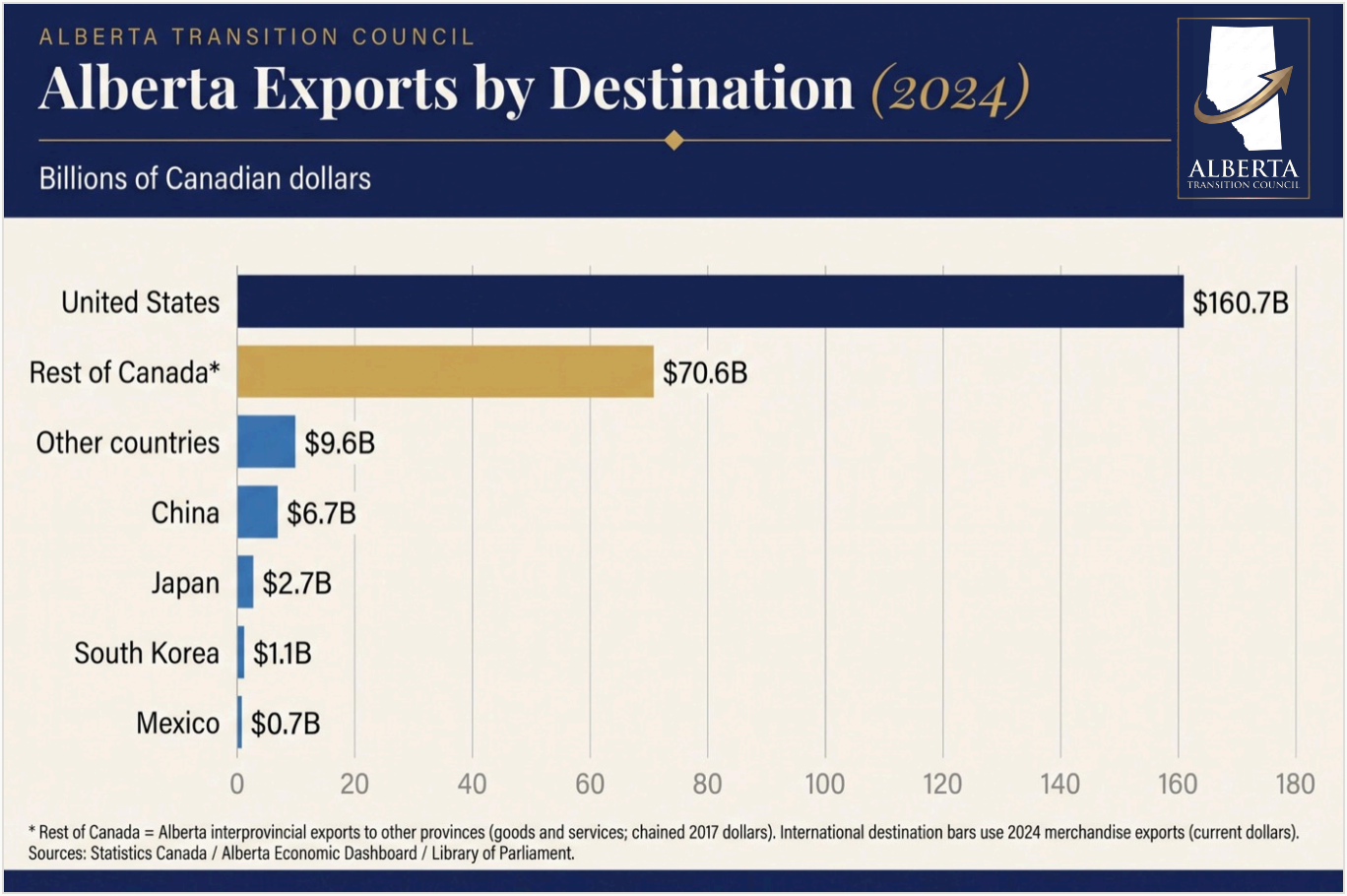
International Trade and Market Access

> International market access depends on both legal agreements and practical acceptance by customs agencies, regulators, banks, carriers, insurers and buyers. The transition should prioritize continuity of the highest-volume corridors first.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS TODAY

Alberta exporters currently trade under Canada's World Trade Organization (WTO) membership and Canadian free-trade agreements. The federal government negotiates those agreements and administers national tariff and trade-remedy rules, while Alberta firms actually produce, sell and ship the goods and services. Most commercial relationships therefore exist independently of the federal negotiating machinery, but their preferred tariff treatment and legal protections may depend on it.

The transition question is not whether Alberta suddenly has no customers. It is whether those customers and customs authorities continue to treat Alberta-origin goods under an acceptable legal framework while permanent arrangements are negotiated.



Alberta merchandise export concentration by destination

The World Trade Organization (WTO) and free-trade agreements set rules between governments, but customs agencies and private traders apply those rules shipment by shipment. A tariff is the customs charge applied to imported goods. A rule of origin determines which country a product is treated as coming from for purposes such as preferential tariff treatment. A product may also need a safety, health or technical certificate before a foreign authority will admit it.

For Alberta, the Day 1 objective is not to complete every possible trade negotiation. It is to make the legal route for priority commerce clear enough that a business, customs broker, carrier, bank and foreign border agency know how to process the transaction. Interim bilateral arrangements with Canada and the United States can therefore be more operationally valuable than waiting for a comprehensive long-term agreement. The physical customers, products and supply chains already exist; the government task is to keep their market-access rules usable.

Four trade terms should not be treated as synonyms. A “tariff” is a tax or duty applied to imported goods. “Customs clearance” is the border process that declares,

assesses and releases a shipment. “Rules of origin” determine where a product legally comes from for preferential trade treatment. A “trade agreement” is the broader international bargain that may reduce tariffs and set rules on services, investment, procurement, standards and dispute settlement.

WHAT THE TRANSITION WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE

The preferred strategy is to secure interim bilateral and sector-specific continuity wherever possible, especially with the United States and Canada, while preparing for WTO accession and longer-term free-trade arrangements. Energy may warrant a separate early instrument because of its scale and corridor dependence. Rules of origin, customs valuation, sanctions and certification must be clear enough for traders and brokers to act. A low-friction legal bridge can therefore be more valuable in the first months than an ambitious but unfinished comprehensive trade agreement.

25.1 World Trade Organization Arrangements

WTO accession or status requires international legal work and cannot be assumed. The trade analysis recommends preparing an accession path while relying in the short term on bilateral operational arrangements that keep priority commerce moving.

25.2 Existing Canadian Free-Trade Agreements

Canadian agreements do not automatically become Alberta agreements. For each major treaty, the team should determine whether succession, accession, a new bilateral agreement, or an interim continuity protocol is legally and politically available.

25.3 Canada–United States Trade Relations

Alberta’s economy is deeply connected to the United States, especially in energy and merchandise trade. U.S.-facing customs, regulatory recognition, banking and corridor arrangements should be a first-wave priority, coordinated with Canada because much physical infrastructure crosses Canadian territory.

25.4 Market Access for Energy and Agricultural Products

Energy requires pipeline, power and regulatory acceptance; agriculture requires inspection equivalency, grain/health certificates and quota treatment. Both domains

show why trade agreements alone are insufficient without functioning technical recognition at the border and in the market.

25.5 Customs and Rules of Origin

A Day 1 tariff schedule, classification/valuation rules and rules of origin are required even if Alberta seeks a future customs union. Starting with familiar Canadian structures can reduce disruption while negotiations determine permanent treatment.

25.6 Investment Treaties

Investor protection, expropriation standards, dispute resolution and non-discrimination may be addressed through trade/investment agreements. During transition, predictable domestic courts, property law and regulatory continuity are the first line of investment protection.

25.7 Transitional Trade Agreements

Short-form continuity protocols can address customs cooperation, temporary recognition of documents, trucking/aviation interfaces, food safety, energy flows and professional mobility while comprehensive agreements are negotiated. Every temporary agreement should have a duration, review process and permanent-workstream owner.

ALBERTA TRANSITION COUNCIL

Domestic Authority vs. International *Acceptance*

Two Tracks. One Goal: Operational International Continuity.

Alberta can establish **authority** within its borders on Day 1. International partners must recognize and accept that authority for Alberta's certificates, credentials and organizations to be effective abroad.

Track 1: Domestic Authority (Alberta can do this itself)

1. **Legislate** — Alberta enacts laws establishing the institution or function.
2. **Create institution** — Alberta government creates or designates the authority.
3. **Issue domestic credentials** — Licences, permits or certificates are issued under Alberta law.
4. **Enforce domestically** — Alberta's laws and courts apply within Alberta's borders.

Track 2: International Acceptance (Requires another party)

1. **Negotiate or request recognition** — Alberta negotiates or requests recognition from another state or international body.
2. **Meet external requirements** — Demonstrate that Alberta's standards, systems and oversight meet their requirements.
3. **Grant recognition or access** — Partner recognizes Alberta's authority, certificates or organization.
4. **Operational internationally** — Alberta's credentials and organizations are accepted and effective abroad.

Examples of Domestic Authority Alberta Can Establish.

- ✓ Passports and travel documents
- ✓ Driver's licences and vehicle registrations
- ✓ Corporate and professional regulation
- ✓ Court and lands registries
- ✓ Health, safety and environmental approvals
- ✓ Taxes, revenue collection and customs administration
- ✓ Government organizations and programs

These are effective within Alberta on Day 1.

Operational International Continuity.

Domestic authority + International acceptance = Alberta fully participates in the world.

Examples Requiring International Acceptance.

- ✓ Passport acceptance for travel
- ✓ Aviation safety and airspace access (ICAO)
- ✓ Recognition of vehicle and driver licences abroad
- ✓ Trade agreements and market access
- ✓ Postal services and international mail (UPU)
- ✓ Mutual recognition of professional qualifications
- ✓ Participation in international organizations and treaties

These require negotiation, agreements and recognition.

Key Principle. Alberta can act unilaterally to create domestic authority, but it cannot unilaterally create recognition abroad. International acceptance must be earned through cooperation.

Our Objective. Plan early. Negotiate proactively. Secure recognition. Ensure Albertans can live, travel, trade and work around the world without disruption.

Real World Examples.

Passports — Alberta issues passports. Other countries must accept them for travel.

Aviation — Alberta sets aviation rules. ICAO and other states must recognize them for flights to occur.

Trade — Alberta negotiates trade agreements. Other countries must agree to market access and rules.

Driver's Licences — Alberta issues licences. Other jurisdictions must recognize them for driving in their territory.

Postal Services — Alberta operates the mail. UPU and other postal operators must accept international mail.

Professional Qualifications — Alberta accredits professionals. Other states must recognize the credentials.

Two tracks. One future.

Domestic authority on Day 1. International recognition through partnership.
Operational continuity for Albertans everywhere.

PREPARED · PROACTIVE · RESPECTED · READY TO TAKE OUR PLACE IN THE WORLD

Selected references from white papers

- *Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA).*
- *Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA).*
- *World Trade Organization: Article XII accession procedures, GATT 1994, GATS, TRIPS and dispute-settlement framework.*
- *Government of Alberta: Trade and Investment: Alberta, 2024.*

VII

PART VII

Transition Sequencing and Implementation

The earlier Parts of this Plan identify what must continue, what must change and what new functions Alberta would need. Part VII brings that work together into a practical sequence for negotiation, implementation and Day 1 readiness.

26 Negotiation and Implementation Priorities

27 Transition Phases and Sequence

28 Conclusions and Principal Findings

Day 1 of independence is a legal and operational cutover within a longer transition. It is not necessary for every negotiation, asset transfer or temporary arrangement to be completed before independence takes effect.

CHAPTER 26

Negotiation and Implementation Priorities

The transition should concentrate first on matters that are necessary for legal continuity, essential services and Alberta's ability to function as an independent country on Day 1 of independence.

The key distinction is between:

- matters Alberta can prepare or implement itself;
- matters requiring agreement with Canada, First Nations or other parties;
- external arrangements or recognition that Alberta cannot create unilaterally; and
- matters that can safely remain open after Day 1 of independence.

This allows negotiations to focus on genuine dependencies rather than attempting to settle every policy or administrative issue before independence.

26.1 Principal Canada–Alberta Settlement

Following a successful independence referendum, Alberta should convert the preparation completed in Phase 1 into an approved negotiating mandate and proposed settlement terms.

The principal Canada–Alberta negotiations should address the matters necessary to establish the legal and practical framework for independence, including:

- the effective date and legal implementation of independence;
- continuation, transfer or replacement of federal functions;
- debt, assets, federal property, records and liabilities;
- citizenship, mobility, borders, customs and trade;
- pensions, benefits and federal employee matters;
- banking, payments and other shared systems;
- transportation, energy, telecommunications and other cross-border infrastructure; and
- transitional service arrangements and mechanisms for resolving matters remaining after Day 1 of independence.

First Nations treaty, reserve, rights and governmental relationships require direct First Nation-specific processes. Where Canada holds responsibilities affected by those arrangements, the appropriate process will require Canada, Alberta and the affected First Nation participation.

The proposed initial intensive negotiation period runs from spring 2027 to September 20, 2027. September 20 is a Negotiation Decision Point, not a deadline requiring negotiations to end. The objective is substantial progress and, where possible, an agreement in principle before the October provincial election. Negotiations may continue during and after the election.

26.2 Day 1 Priority Arrangements

Negotiating effort should be concentrated on arrangements that must operate by Day 1 of independence or have a reliable temporary bridge.

Priority areas include:

- constitutional and legal implementation;
- Aboriginal and treaty rights and First Nation-specific continuity arrangements;
- records and data required to administer government;
- taxation, treasury, banking and payment systems;
- pensions, benefits and payroll;
- citizenship, mobility, borders and customs;
- trade and transportation corridors;
- policing and legal cooperation;

- aviation and air navigation;
- energy and telecommunications interfaces;
- international recognition and essential market access; and
- temporary Canada–Alberta services where an immediate Alberta replacement is unnecessary or impractical.

These are not necessarily the issues that must be permanently resolved before Day 1 of independence. They are the issues for which a functioning legal or operational arrangement must exist.

26.3 Alberta-Controlled Implementation

Negotiations should proceed in parallel with work Alberta can control itself.

This includes preparing continuity legislation, establishing or expanding Alberta institutions, recruiting and training staff, developing budgets and procurement plans, preparing records and technology, continuing licences and approvals, and testing domestic systems.

Alberta should not postpone work it can lawfully perform merely because negotiations on related external matters remain underway.

26.4 Matters That Can Remain Open After Day 1 of Independence

Not every issue must be finally settled before independence.

Final valuation of some assets, longer-term service arrangements, detailed institutional redesign, selected international accessions and other matters can continue after Day 1 where a lawful temporary arrangement protects continuity.

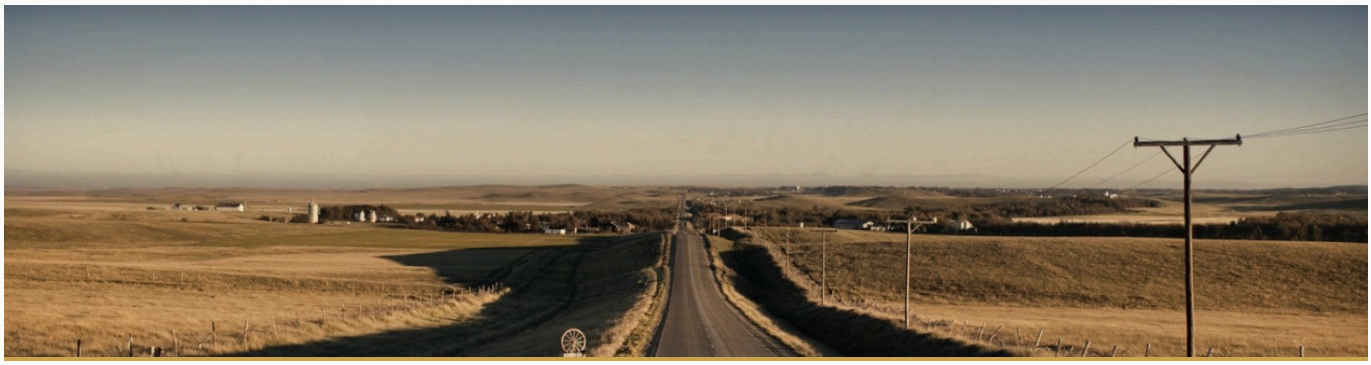
GOVERNING RULE

Resolve before Day 1 what must be resolved. Bridge what can safely be bridged. Finish the rest in an orderly way afterward.

Selected references from white papers

- *Supreme Court of Canada: Reference re Secession of Quebec, [1998] 2 S.C.R. 217.*

- *Government of Canada: Clarity Act, S.C. 2000, c. 26.*
- *Government of Canada: Constitution Acts, 1867 to 1982.*



CHAPTER 27

Transition Phases and Sequence

The plan organizes the transition into three practical phases. These phases provide an overall sequence rather than rigid boundaries. Individual negotiations, transfers and technical workstreams may overlap.

27.1 Phase 1 — Prepare and Verify

October 2026 to the spring 2027 independence referendum six month preparation period

If Albertans vote on October 19, 2026 to proceed, Alberta remains a province of Canada while intensive transition preparation begins.

The purpose of Phase 1 is to ensure that, if Albertans later vote for independence, Alberta is ready to move promptly into negotiations and implementation.

The principal Phase 1 work is to:

- verify and refine the Transition Plan and costing;
- identify remaining evidence gaps and dependencies;
- prepare Alberta's proposed negotiating positions;
- inventory federal functions, assets, records and personnel;
- prepare legislation, institutional designs and implementation plans;
- begin First Nations and treaty processes;
- identify required Canadian and international agreements; and

- prepare contingencies where preferred arrangements may not be available.

27.2 Phase 2 — Negotiate and Get Ready for Independence

Following a successful 2027 independence referendum until Day 1 of independence

A successful independence referendum provides the democratic mandate to proceed toward independence. It does not itself make Alberta independent.

Phase 2 converts preparation into negotiation and implementation.

The Government finalizes its negotiating mandate and proposed terms, negotiates the settlement and required continuity arrangements, completes the legal implementation work, establishes the necessary sovereign functions and tests the systems required for Day 1 of independence.

The proposed sequence uses summer and fall 2027 for an initial intensive negotiating period and uses the October 2027 provincial election as a democratic accountability point. The election does not automatically terminate negotiations. The Government then in office confirms its instructions and carries the process forward.

Phase 2 continues until the legal arrangements necessary for independence are in place and the critical functions required for Day 1 are ready.

27.3 Day 1 of Independence

Day 1 is the date on which Alberta legally becomes an independent country.

It should be established through the settlement and implementation process rather than by an arbitrary fixed timetable. Earlier parts of this plan identify the critical systems that must be ready before that cutover.

For most Albertans, the objective is that Day 1 be administratively uneventful. Government continues, laws and courts continue, payments continue, businesses remain open and essential systems continue operating.

Day 1 therefore marks a change in sovereign legal authority, not the completion of every transition task.

27.4 Phase 3 — Stabilize and Implement

Day 1 of independence and the period following

After Day 1, the focus shifts from preparing for independence to stabilizing and completing the new arrangements.

Phase 3 includes:

- completing remaining transfers of functions, records and assets;
- resolving matters deliberately left open at Day 1 of independence;
- replacing, extending or ending temporary Canada–Alberta arrangements;
- completing outstanding international arrangements;
- refining newly established Alberta institutions; and
- progressively moving from temporary transition measures to stable long-term arrangements.

The plan uses approximately Day 1 plus 24 months as an outer planning horizon for many temporary arrangements. It is not an automatic expiry date. Continuity and operational safety remain more important than ending a temporary arrangement simply because a date has been reached.

27.5 Proposed Transition Sequence

MILESTONE	PURPOSE
October 19, 2026	If Albertans vote to proceed, Phase 1 preparation begins.
October 2026	Planning assumption for activation of the Government transition task force.
Spring 2027 independence referendum	A successful result provides the mandate to move into Phase 2; it does not itself create independence.
Spring 2027	Government finalizes its negotiating mandate, proposed terms and negotiating machinery.
Spring 2027	Alberta presents its proposed terms and formal intensive negotiations begin.
Spring 2027 –September 20, 2027	Initial intensive negotiation and implementation period.
September 20, 2027	Negotiation Decision Point before the expected provincial election campaign; not a termination date.
October 18, 2027	Provincial election provides a democratic accountability point.
After the election	The Government then in office confirms instructions and negotiations and implementation continue.
Day 1 of independence	Independence takes effect when the lawful settlement and implementation requirements and critical readiness conditions are satisfied.
Following Day 1	Phase 3 stabilizes the new arrangements and completes remaining transition work.

27.6 Separate Constitutional Track

The permanent Constitution proceeds on a separate track and does not determine the timing of Day 1 of independence.

Alberta can become independent under lawful interim constitutional arrangements while the existing Legislature, Government, public service and courts continue. The permanent Constitution can then be completed through the separate Constitutional Conference, public ratification and Constitutional Commencement process described in Chapter 2.

KEY DISTINCTION

Day 1 of independence determines when Alberta becomes an independent country. Constitutional Commencement determines when the permanent Constitution chosen by Albertans takes effect at a later date.

Selected references from white papers

- *Supreme Court of Canada: Reference re Secession of Quebec, [1998] 2 S.C.R. 217.*
- *Government of Canada: Clarity Act, S.C. 2000, c. 26.*

CHAPTER 28

Conclusions and Principal Findings

The central conclusion of this plan is straightforward: an Alberta transition to independence would be complex, but it is capable of being planned, organized and implemented.

Alberta would not be starting from scratch. Most of the institutions, infrastructure, businesses, professional workforces and public services Albertans rely on already exist. The principal transition work is to preserve what already functions, transfer or replace federal responsibilities where required, maintain connections to Canadian and international systems, and establish the limited number of sovereign functions Alberta does not presently need as a province.

28.1 Principal Transition Challenges

The most difficult transition issues are generally not the public services Alberta already delivers. They are the legal, financial and external connections behind those services.

The highest-priority challenges include:

lawful constitutional implementation;

protection of Aboriginal and treaty rights and First Nation-specific arrangements;

access to federal records and data;

taxation, treasury, banking and payment continuity;

pensions and benefits;

citizenship, mobility, borders and customs;

trade and transportation access;

federal assets, liabilities and personnel;

aviation, telecommunications and energy interfaces; and

international recognition and market access.

These matters require early preparation because Alberta cannot control every negotiating or counterpart timeline.

28.2 What Must Be Ready for Day 1

Day 1 of independence should occur only when the legal arrangements necessary for independence are in place and the critical systems needed to keep Alberta functioning are ready.

That does not require every negotiation, asset transfer or long-term policy decision to be completed.

For each essential function, Alberta should be able to answer a few practical questions: Who is responsible? Is the legal authority in place? Are the staff, funding, records and technology ready? Are required external connections operating?

The practical test is whether the first real transaction will work: the pension payment arrives, the bank payment clears, the court order remains enforceable, the truck can cross the border, the aircraft can operate and the hospital can obtain the medicines it needs.

28.3 Work That Can Continue After Day 1 of Independence

Day 1 of independence is the beginning of independence, not the end of every transition activity.

Temporary service agreements can remain in place. Remaining records and assets can be transferred. International arrangements can continue to be completed. New institutions can be refined, and temporary systems can progressively be replaced by permanent ones.

The same principle applies to Alberta's permanent Constitution. Independence can begin under lawful interim constitutional arrangements while the separate Constitutional Track continues toward a proposed permanent Constitution, ratification by Albertans and Constitutional Commencement.

ALBERTA TRANSITION COUNCIL

Day 1 Readiness *Dashboard*

Essential Services. Institutions. Systems. Ready to Operate.

On Day 1 of independence, Albertans can expect continuity, confidence and stability. Government continues. Services continue. Life continues.

ALBERTA
TRANSITION COUNCIL

What will be ready to operate on Day 1

Government and Law
Alberta's government, laws and public institutions in control and functioning.
✓ Ready to operate

Courts and Justice System
Courts open. Judges appointed. The rule of law continues.
✓ Ready to operate

Payments and Social Programs
Pensions, benefits, salaries and supplier payments continue without interruption.
✓ Ready to operate

Banking and Payments
Banks open. Deposits safe. ATMs, debit, credit and electronic payments work.
✓ Ready to operate

Borders and Trade
Border services, customs and trade processes continue. Goods and people keep moving.
✓ Ready to operate

Transportation and Logistics
Roads, rails, airports, trucking and shipping continue to move people and goods.
✓ Ready to operate

Health and Public Safety
Hospitals, EMS, policing and emergency services continue to protect Albertans.
✓ Ready to operate

Communications and Digital Services
Telecom, internet, broadcasting and digital services continue without interruption.
✓ Ready to operate

What can continue after Day 1

Final Asset and Liability Valuation
Detailed valuation and allocation of assets and liabilities with Canada.

Permanent Institutions and Capacity
Building additional capacity, specialized agencies and long-term institutional frameworks.

International Accessions and Memberships
Accession to international conventions, organizations and technical bodies as required.

Ongoing Treaty and Agreement Work
Negotiations and implementation of treaties, agreements and cooperative arrangements.

Permanent Constitution Development
Public engagement and consideration to adopt Alberta's permanent Constitution.

Policy and Economic Development
Long-term policy initiatives to grow Alberta's economy and strengthen future prosperity.

Ready to operate on Day 1 | Continues after Day 1

The Bottom Line

Day 1 is a point of readiness, not the end of the journey.
Albertans will experience continuity, stability and confidence as Alberta takes its place in the world.

Alberta Transition Plan
Prepared. Responsible. Ready.

Ordinary life continues — under an Alberta government elected by Albertans, with full constitutional authority over our future.

PREPARED · RESPONSIBLE · READY

Overall Finding

The supporting research in the white papers does not suggest that every future outcome can be guaranteed. No transition of this scale could. What the research does demonstrate is that the governmental, legal, economic and operational functions required for an independent Alberta can be identified, assigned, planned, sequenced and tested in advance.

The transition should therefore be understood not as an unknowable leap, but as a substantial and manageable legal, governmental and operational undertaking. Its success would depend on disciplined preparation, lawful implementation, good-faith negotiations, protection of existing rights, credible contingency planning and an unwavering focus on maintaining essential services and economic continuity throughout the transition.

For most Albertans, the clearest measure of a successful transition would be that Day 1 of independence feels remarkably ordinary. Government continues to function. Courts remain open. Pension and benefit payments arrive. Banks operate. Businesses open their doors. Goods move. Transportation, communications and essential public services continue without interruption.

What changes is constitutional authority.

Ordinary life continues—but Alberta becomes responsible for its own future, under a government elected by Albertans and possessing the full constitutional authority of an independent country over its laws, finances, institutions and national decisions.

Selected references from white papers

- *Supreme Court of Canada: Reference re Secession of Quebec, [1998] 2 S.C.R. 217.*