



City of Chestermere Inspection: Common Topics

It took time to release the inspection report

In order to take all necessary steps and ensure procedural fairness, municipal inspections take time. This one was conducted between mid-May and the end of August 2022. Alberta Municipal Affairs reviewed the report in September 2022. On November 2, the department and inspector presented the report to Chestermere City Council.

City council asked for and received extra time and submitted its feedback by December 9, 2022. The Minister carefully reviewed all of the feedback received. The Minister met with all members of Chestermere City Council in February 2023. Municipal Affairs hosted a public information session to release the report and Minister's directives on March 15, 2023.

The Minister's decision

The Minister considers that the City of Chestermere is managed in an irregular, improper and improvident manner. The Minister issued 12 directives through a Ministerial Order requiring the City to take action. The Ministerial Order for the directives is available through the Alberta government's website: www.alberta.ca/chestermere.

The Official Administrator for Chestermere

Because of significant governance concerns, in September 2022 the Minister of Municipal Affairs took the extraordinary measure of appointing an Official Administrator (OA) to supervise Chestermere and its city council. While an OA is in place:

- No bylaw or resolution that lets the municipality borrow money, or dispose of money or property, has any effect until the OA approves the bylaw or resolution in writing.
- The OA may disallow any bylaw or resolution within 30 days of it being passed.

An OA does not supervise or provide direction to municipal staff. The Minister appointed Douglas Lagore as OA until March 31, 2023, when a new OA is appointed or the contract is extended.

An inspection is different from an inquiry

The *Municipal Government Act* provides for municipal inspections and inquiries, which are separate processes. The Chestermere inspection is not an inquiry under the *Municipal Government Act*, nor is it a public inquiry under the *Public Inquiries Act*.

The Minister can dismiss a council, but only under certain circumstances

The inspection process and Minister's directives are not intended to be a punishment. They are intended to support council to provide good governance for the community. The Minister may only dismiss a council or any member of it, or a Chief Administrative Officer, if:

- a directive is not carried out to the satisfaction of the Minister, and
- the Minister considers that the municipality continues to be managed in an irregular, improper or improvident manner, and
- all reasonable efforts to resolve the situation have been attempted and were unsuccessful.

At that point, the Minister may make further orders, including withholding funding, suspending the authority to make municipal bylaws, assuming authority to make bylaws or policy in place of the council, or dismissing council members or the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

Chestermere's next steps

City council and the Chief Administrative Officers are required to report to the Minister on implementing the directives. Each directive has a timeline. The Minister and ministry will monitor progress, and council can ask the ministry for advice and support. An Official Administrator (OA) will supervise council until the end of 2023. The current OA will serve until a new one is appointed or the contract is extended.

More information

Alberta Municipal Affairs has posted the following information on its website:

www.Alberta.ca/chestermere:

- The inspection report
- The Ministerial Order issuing the Minister's directives
- The Minister's reasons for issuing the directives
- Other supporting documents