
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Technology, Trade and Economic Development

AGREEMENT WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS REACHED ON TILMA

VICTORIA – Technology, Trade and Economic Development Minister Ida Chong announced that the Province and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) have signed a joint letter of agreement formalizing the results of consultations with respect to the Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA) between British Columbia and Alberta. The TILMA will apply to local governments on April 1, 2009.

“Since last September, the provincial government has been consulting with the UBCM to address concerns raised by local governments with respect to the TILMA,” said Chong. “Thanks to much goodwill, we have agreed to certain additional provisions that reflect specific interests of British Columbia’s 189 local governments while ensuring that the full benefits of TILMA are realized through greater economic opportunities and competitively priced goods and services for British Columbians.”

Signed in April 2006, the TILMA came into force on April 1, 2007. It will take full effect on April 1, 2009.

“Over the past nine months, we have worked with the Province and agreed on a package of amendments to the TILMA that we feel goes a long way toward addressing the issues identified by B.C. local governments,” said UBCM president Susan Gimse.

Highlights of the agreement include:

- Land-use measures (e.g., zoning decisions) are excluded from the TILMA, provided they treat residents from British Columbia and Alberta the same.
- Procurement threshold levels for municipalities under the TILMA will be \$75,000 for goods and services and \$200,000 for construction (takes effect April 1, 2009). These levels also apply to academic institutions, school boards, and health and social service providers.
- Under the TILMA, the reconciliation of local government business licensing processes between B.C. and Alberta municipalities will be voluntary.
- A Consultation Agreement on Dispute Resolution will be drafted. It will require the Province to consult with any B.C. local government and the UBCM if a local government measure is ever the subject of a dispute resolution challenge under TILMA.

The TILMA strives to reduce and eliminate barriers to the free movement of people, goods, services and investments between British Columbia and Alberta. Canada’s most comprehensive inter-provincial trade agreement, the TILMA creates a market of almost 7.8 million people – the nation’s second largest economy.

More information on TILMA is available at www.tilma.ca and on the Ministry of Technology, Trade and Economic Development's website at www.gov.bc.ca/ecdev .

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