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Jyoti Gondek calls for a Fair Deal for Calgary from Alberta Government

Current funding model broken with almost 40% of property taxes paid by Calgarians being sent to provincial coffers

Calgary—The UCP Government, like every provincial government that preceded it, collects more taxes from Calgarians than it returns in the form of grants or returned investment. On average, almost \$800 million is collected by the City every year and then sent to the Province, with the hope some of it will be returned in grants. In 2019, Calgary only received about \$650 million back from the Province.

With assessment-based property tax as the only reliable revenue tool the provincial government has granted to the city, it stands to reason that it is also the only reliable way to ensure a fair deal can be struck quickly and efficiently. By allowing Calgary to keep a larger percentage of the property taxes collected, the provincial government would enable the city to address important infrastructure and operating funding shortfalls.

“Calgary has been left to fend for its residents with a dated and inefficient taxation model that relies almost solely on property taxes,” says Mayoral candidate Jyoti Gondek. “Because property taxes go up and down based on assessed value of buildings, and downtown buildings have depreciated dramatically with the collapse of the traditional energy sector, Calgary’s only predictable revenue stream has steadily decreased.”

“The amount of money that we remit to the Province is not inconsequential,” says Gondek. “If Calgary is to stabilize its economy and return to a place where all residents have access to the services they need, we need fair and predictable solutions. After massive cuts to previously established and promised infrastructure funding, and elimination of critical social supports for Calgarians in positions of vulnerability, the provincial government has placed the city in an impossible situation.”

This is the exact same argument that the Province of Alberta makes with the Government of Canada. Alberta pays more than it gets in return from Canada, just as Calgary pays more than it gets in return from Alberta.

“We are not arguing for more, but for fairness,” said Gondek. “The quality of life for Calgarians depends on it.”

¹ The City of Calgary Annual Report, 2019, page 73

To arrange an interview or for more information:

Jo Williams | 403-827-9820

media@jyotigondek.ca

JYOTIGONDEK.CA