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NEWS RELEASE

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AGLG RELEASES AUDIT ON WILLIAMS LAKE POLICING OVERSIGHT

Surrey – A performance audit of the City of Williams Lake’s management and utilization of the Municipal Policing Unit Agreement (MPUA) and its police budget oversight between 2010 and 2013 has found that there were opportunities to strengthen the City’s accountability and performance management under the agreement, Auditor General for Local Government (AGLG) Gordon Ruth said today.

“Overall, we found that City of Williams Lake staff and Council members were largely aware of enhancements included in the 2012 Municipal Police Unit Agreement and the authorities provided to them through the agreement,” said Ruth. “We did find a few areas where the City lacked awareness and understanding of the agreement. This included its ability to question RCMP expenditures they don’t understand or that lack adequate supporting information.”

The AGLG found that, during the audit work, City staff became more aware of provisions added to the MPUA regarding RCMP cost items and subsequently enhanced its cost monitoring practices. In addition, the City and the detachment worked cooperatively and communicated regularly on policing priorities, policing budgets and crime trends. Williams Lake also had a strong community policing effort.

The audit report released today on the AGLG website (www.aglg.ca) is based on a detailed examination of the City’s systems, practices and policies between 2010 and 2013, as well as relevant documentation and discussions with key management and staff.

“I hope our recommendations will help the City strengthen its governance and improve its oversight and stewardship of policing resources,” said Ruth. “We believe the City should increase staff and Council’s understanding of Williams Lake’s policing agreement and the authorities it provides the City. It should also consider establishing a structure such as a police committee to ensure sound oversight.”

“I’m pleased with Williams Lake’s positive response to the audit and its commitment to act on our recommendations,” said Mr. Ruth.

This is the AGLG's fifth and final audit on the topic Local Government Performance in Managing Policing Agreements and Police Budget Oversight. Overall, it is the 14th AGLG audit report released to date.

The office also recently released an AGLG Perspectives Series booklet on Policing Services Performance Assessment. The booklet provides a suggested framework for local governments to measure their success in overseeing policing services. It is the fourth AGLG Perspectives Series booklet released by the office, following booklets on the topics of: Oversight of Capital Planning & Procurement, Asset Management for Local Governments and Improving Local Government Procurement Processes.

The release of the Williams Lake audit report completes the audit process for the City. Prior to being finalized, the report was reviewed by the Audit Council, which has the statutory authority to provide the AGLG with comments to assist in completing each performance audit report.

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