



# 2008 AUMA Policy Statement on Sustainability and Environment



## Introduction

The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) provides value and leadership in advocating local government interests. The Sustainability and Environment Standing Policy Committee works to identify and recommend advocacy responses to areas of municipal interest related to water, energy, climate change and air quality, land use planning, waste management and municipal sustainability.

The AUMA Policy Statement on Environment and Sustainability is AUMA's position on environment and sustainability issues, as compiled from member resolutions adopted at the 2007 AUMA Annual Convention (Annex 1).

## Statement of Principles

AUMA Guiding Principle

<b>Principle 7.</b>	Responsible stewardship of our ecological systems is essential to the economic viability, quality of life, and sustainability of our community.
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As responsible municipal stewards the need to understand the environment is essential, as it is the foundation for a sustainable economy, and its social and cultural networks. The environment must be proactively managed, as it impacts our viability and social fabric.

This guiding principle permits municipalities to be flexible and responsive to individual circumstances, supporting the development of local strategies without restricting autonomy. To achieve results we must recognize and define our position on the environment. We need to think globally and act locally.

## Sustainability and Environment Principles for Policy Development

The AUMA clarifies its Sustainability and Environment Principles for Policy Development into five broad categories: water, energy, climate change and air quality, land use planning, waste management and municipal sustainability planning. Under each category, a general policy statement and principles is followed by more specific statements, and finally a list of any pertinent supporting resolution action items adopted at AUMA's 2007 Convention.

The Sustainability and Environment Committee will make advocacy recommendations to the AUMA Board of Directors based on these broad categories and principles, and on specific resolutions from members. The Committee will recommend direct action or request coordinated action with the Government of Alberta, other relevant organizations, and member municipalities to address action items in each category.

## Water

Alberta's quality of life, and life itself, depends on having a healthy and sustainable water supply for the environment, for our communities and for our economic well-being. Safe and healthy drinking water is critical to the sustainability of communities. Improvements to technology or processes required to ensure the physical well-being of citizens must be supported by funding and resources from the legislating body.

AUMA will:

1. Advocate for active Municipal participation in decision-making regarding water management and use to protect this crucial natural resource for future generations;
2. Continue to encourage conservation, re-use, and effective wastewater treatment as core policy and compliance roles for Alberta's municipalities; and
3. Support innovative practices designed to handle water as a renewable resource.

### **2007 Convention Resolution: Surface Water And Ground Water Used For Injection Flooding Of Oil Fields**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA requests that the Government of Alberta implement an immediate moratorium on new water licenses for deep well flooding with fresh groundwater, in settled areas of the province where groundwater **is and may be** required for human consumption; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA request the Government of Alberta to implement a 1 year timetable for the cancellation of existing water licenses that allow deep well flooding with fresh groundwater, in settled areas of the province where groundwater **is and may be** required for human consumption; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA draft a petition based on these two clauses and send it out to municipalities who **want to participate**, so that the will of the people can be expressed on this vital issue.

### **Resolution 2007: Increasing Septage Receiving Capability**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** AUMA request the Government of Alberta to expand the Alberta Municipal Water/Wastewater Partnership with more funding to improve the septage receiving capability at new and existing facilities; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** AUMA approach the Association of Municipal Districts and Countries (AAMDC) and the Alberta Onsite Wastewater Management Association (AOWMA) to join in the advocacy effort.

### **Resolution 2007: Water for Life Funding**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request that the Government of Alberta amend the Water for Life funding initiative to provide for equity in the ability to develop for both urban and rural municipal governments.

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request that the Government of Alberta review all funding grants and initiatives applying to both urban and rural municipalities to ensure that equity exists for both urban and rural municipal governments.

## **Energy**

Energy is a key component of Alberta's economy, and communities are important in the continued innovation, responsible development, and efficient use of these resources.

AUMA will:

1. Work to ensure that the energy costs of public facilities do not impede access to healthy lifestyles for citizens of all ages and incomes;
2. Continue advocating to lower regulated energy costs for communities and their citizens by intervening at EUB hearings;
3. Support energy efficiency and conservation initiatives and the continued development of Alberta's renewable energy;
4. Advocate for energy policy and utility agreements that will deliver efficiencies for municipal governments; and
5. Engage the EUB in a dialogue with Alberta municipalities to establish effective procedures for their involvement in EUB Hearings that deal with resource extraction within or adjacent to their communities.
6. Urge the Government of Alberta, through the Energy Minister, to encourage development and use of alternatively sourced electric generation through tax credits or other incentives that will make power generated from renewable sources competitive with power generated from traditional sources.

## **Climate Change and Air Quality**

Climate Change and air quality affects all Albertans, and practical solutions are needed to reduce the emission of air contaminants, greenhouse gases, and to address the risks of climate change.

AUMA will:

1. Continue working with Alberta Environment and agencies like the Clean Air Strategic Alliance (CASA) and Climate Change Central to develop strategies that monitor, improve, and protect air quality;
2. Encourage Alberta municipalities to participate in the FCM's Partners for Climate Change Program (PCP) and to establish emission baselines and reduction targets for their communities;
3. Pursue practical, economic, and proven practices that assist municipalities to reduce energy consumption and associated GHG and air pollutant emissions;
4. Pursue provincial and federal government funding to allow Alberta municipalities to offset the costs of measures that are effective in reducing municipal energy use and emissions; and
5. In cooperation with CASA, FCM, and others, support the development of training programs and technical exchanges for political leaders and key administrative staff to learn from the direct experience of municipalities in other jurisdictions.

## **2007 Resolution: Support for Municipal Climate Change Initiative**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request that the Government of Alberta take immediate action on climate change by providing financial support to municipalities that have developed local action plans to address climate change.

## **2007 Resolution: Visual Pollutants and Vehicle Emissions**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association requests the Government of Alberta to develop and implement province-wide standards to regulate gross polluting vehicles and visible vehicle emissions.

## **Land Use Planning**

Effective land use planning is essential to the long-term viability and sustainability of Alberta. How we plan, grow, and manage land within municipal boundaries affects all municipal citizens and their regional neighbours.

AUMA will:

1. Monitor, consult, and advocate for programs relative to remediation and reuse of Brownfields and contaminated sites;
2. Ensure fair and effective regulation of all businesses that store and handle petroleum and petrochemical products in Alberta;
3. Promote provincial accountability for their responsibilities within urban boundaries; and
4. Support responsible urban development planning and design in order to contribute to a reduction of the ecological footprint, and the overall sustainability of communities.

## **Waste Management**

Solid waste disposal and the methane emissions from new and existing landfills are significant and growing challenges for all Alberta municipalities. All communities can contribute to addressing and improving solid waste management so that Alberta is recognized as a world-class leader in solid waste management.

AUMA will:

1. Encourage responsible procurement and consumption practices by municipalities, other orders of government, and the private sector, with a focus on waste reduction and recycling;
2. Advocate that new technologies and regulations supporting waste avoidance be given the utmost priority as they are most effective in reducing the volume of community waste streams;

3. Support municipalities' participation in meeting provincial waste reduction targets as an effective means to reduce our ecological footprint, and recognize the need for provincial and federal financial and technology support in these efforts; and
4. Promote innovative approaches to waste avoidance, recycling, and re-use including: developing bio-diesel producing plants, drywall recycling, gasification, and lifecycle management. Advocate that the Government of Alberta extend Alberta's product stewardship programs to include high volume municipal waste streams (i.e. packaging, cardboard, paper products) and that any funding derived from such programs be redirected to municipalities to sustain and expand local recycling programs.
5. Advocate that the Alberta Government to amend applicable building codes to the equivalency of Built Green Alberta standards for new homebuilders, to ensure the future reduction of energy, water, waste, greenhouses gases, and the health and wellness of new home occupants are met.

### **Municipal Sustainability Planning**

AUMA initiated a Municipal Sustainability Planning project in July 2005, and has built a substantial set of resources and tools that are used as a guide to sustainability planning for municipalities ([www.msp.auma.ca](http://www.msp.auma.ca)).

AUMA takes a broad view of sustainability, suggesting that a municipal government should plan for sustainability by investigating and developing actions, integrating the five dimensions of sustainability (culture, society, environment, economy and governance) to provide a comprehensive and long- term plan for sustainable communities.

As we continue with the Municipal Sustainability Planning initiative, AUMA will:

- Maintain and add to the resources/tools on the MSP website ([www.msp.auma.ca](http://www.msp.auma.ca));
- Build partnerships with other governments and other organizations in encouraging and assisting municipal sustainability planning

### **2007 Resolution: Cumulative Effects of Development**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request the Government of Alberta develop a policy and regulatory framework which factors cumulative economic, social, environmental and health impacts of multiple developments in the approval process

### **Other Related Issues**

#### **2007 Resolution: Products Sales Restrictions**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association urge the Government of Alberta to impose a provincial sales restriction on cosmetic fertilizer-herbicide combination products for use by homeowners within municipalities by completing all the requirements necessary to support this action, including consultation with stakeholders.

## **2007 Resolution: Intervener Cost Reimbursement – EUB Hearings**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request the Government of Alberta to provide financial assistance to the MUSH sector (municipalities, universities, schools and hospitals) in Alberta to intervene in proceedings before the EUB in respect of proposed energy resource projects which may impact them, either through special grant funding or through changes to the cost recovery provisions of the relevant legislation.

## **2007 POLICY PAPER: Municipal Sustainability Initiative-Affordable Housing-Light Rail Transit**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) adopt the recommendations contained in the following Policy Papers:

1. Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI): Analysis and Recommendations
2. Affordable Housing Initiative: Analysis and Recommendations
3. Towards a Light Rail Transit Program: Analysis and Recommendations

**ANNEX 1**  
**2007 ADOPTED MEMBER RESOLUTIONS – Environment and Sustainability**

**RESOLUTION 2007.A.2 Surface Water And Ground Water Used For Injection Flooding Of Oil Fields**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA requests that the Government of Alberta implement an immediate moratorium on new water licenses for deep well flooding with fresh groundwater, in settled areas of the province where groundwater **is and may be** required for human consumption; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA request the Government of Alberta to implement a 1 year timetable for the cancellation of existing water licenses that allow deep well flooding with fresh groundwater, in settled areas of the province where groundwater **is and may be** required for human consumption; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA draft a petition based on these two clauses and send it out to municipalities who **want to participate**, so that the will of the people can be expressed on this vital issue.

**2007 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED**

**RESOLUTION 2007.C.ii.1 Increasing Septage Receiving Capability**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** AUMA request the Government of Alberta to expand the Alberta Municipal Water/Wastewater Partnership with more funding to improve the septage receiving capability at new and existing facilities; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** AUMA approach the Association of Municipal Districts and Countries (AAMDC) and the Alberta Onsite Wastewater Management Association (AOWMA) to join in the advocacy effort.

**2007 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED**

**RESOLUTION 2007.C.ii.6 Support for Municipal Climate Change Initiative**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request that the Government of Alberta take immediate action on climate change by providing financial support to municipalities that have developed local action plans to address climate change.

**2007 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED**

## **RESOLUTION 2007.EXT.01 Intervener Cost Reimbursement – EUB Hearings**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request the Government of Alberta to provide financial assistance to the MUSH sector (municipalities, universities, schools and hospitals) in Alberta to intervene in proceedings before the EUB in respect of proposed energy resource projects which may impact them, either through special grant funding or through changes to the cost recovery provisions of the relevant legislation.

**2007 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED**

## **RESOLUTION 2007.EXT.05 Water for Life Funding**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request that the Government of Alberta amend the Water for Life funding initiative to provide for equity in the ability to develop for both urban and rural municipal governments.

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**2007 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED**

## **RESOLUTION 2007.C.iii.1 Cumulative Effects of Development**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request the Government of Alberta develop a policy and regulatory framework which factors cumulative economic, social, environmental and health impacts of multiple developments in the approval process.

**2007 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED**

## **RESOLUTION 2007.C.iii.3 Visual Pollutants and Vehicle Emissions**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association requests the Government of Alberta to develop and implement province-wide standards to regulate gross polluting vehicles and visible vehicle emissions.

**2007 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED**

## **RESOLUTION 2007.C.iv.1 Products Sales Restrictions**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association urge the Government of Alberta to impose a provincial sales restriction on cosmetic fertilizer-herbicide combination products for use by homeowners within municipalities by completing all the requirements necessary to support this action, including consultation with stakeholders.

**2007 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED**

## **POLICY PAPER 2007.3 Municipal Sustainability Initiative-Affordable Housing-Light Rail Transit**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) adopt the recommendations contained in the following Policy Papers:

4. Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI): Analysis and Recommendations
5. Affordable Housing Initiative: Analysis and Recommendations
6. Towards a Light Rail Transit Program: Analysis and Recommendations

**2007 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED**