



Alberta Urban Municipalities Association

Strategic Plan

As approved by the AUMA Board August 24, 2006

Message from the President

I am pleased to present the updated Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) Strategic Plan. As a 100-year old organization, it is important to start our second century off right and set a long-term strategic direction we can work together towards achieving.

The AUMA Strategic Plan is the cornerstone of advocating for member interests. Long-term thinking and planning will help keep AUMA future oriented and sustainable. It also helps demonstrate good governance of our organization and of Alberta communities.

In 2006 AUMA has linked its business plans with this updated Strategic Plan.

Thank-you to everyone involved in helping create the AUMA Strategic Plan. This document will help us serve Alberta's urban municipalities for many years to come.



Bob Hawkesworth
President

Message from the CEO

The AUMA Strategic Plan is a combined effort of many people who care about urban municipalities in Alberta. AUMA is a not-for-profit organization and is the umbrella organization for the separate entities of AMSC, AMSC Insurance Services Ltd. (AMSCIS), the supplementary pension trust fund APEX, and the insurance reciprocal MUNIX.

The AUMA Strategic Plan identifies six objectives municipalities are facing moving into the future, the roles for which AUMA will serve, and then describes the strategies that AUMA would implement to best help meet each municipal sustainability objective. Linking the roles and objectives provides the long-term strategic direction for the organization.

The 2007/09 Business Plan has been updated to meet the directions of the Strategic Plan. AUMA's elected representatives, management team, and staff will work together with communities to achieve the vision for AUMA, recognizing that the success of AUMA will enhance the quality of life in Alberta's urban municipalities.



John McGowan
CEO

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1. Vision

The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association is valued by our membership and trusted as a voice for urban municipalities.

2. Mission

The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association provides leadership in advocating local government interests to all orders of government and other organizations.

3. Core Values

The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) demonstrates its core values throughout all aspects of its business.

1. **Trust** – AUMA builds trusting relationships by acting with honesty and integrity.
2. **Reputation** – AUMA builds a strong positive reputation through reliability and consistency.
3. **Communication** – AUMA communicates appropriately and effectively with members.
4. **Responsiveness** – AUMA establishes networks through which it listens and responds to members.
5. **Transparency** – AUMA provides transparent and understandable service.
6. **Equity** – All AUMA Regular members are considered equal, each as an independent municipality.
7. **Unity** – AUMA values the participation of all members.
8. **Accountability** – AUMA is accountable for the decisions it makes

4. Operating Principles

AUMA is committed to:

1. Leading through excellence in *Stewardship and Governance Practices*
2. Leading through the *Empowerment of Members and Accountability of the Association*
3. Leading through effective *Marketing, Transparency of Actions, and Clarity of Communications*
4. Leading in *Service Delivery and Ethical Fairness*
5. Leading in setting of *Objectives, Measurement, and Results*
6. Leading by continual *Learning and Growth*

5. Introduction

AUMA is in the business of advocating for urban municipalities in Alberta by bringing municipal interests to other governments and related organizations. AUMA has built a strategy of networking with members to ensure municipal interests are understood. The focus on advocacy is to be solution-based rather than issued-based. AUMA is a leader in the development of solutions that help municipalities meet their needs into the future either by advocating a solution to other governments, advocating a solution to members and/or by building a business solution that helps resolve issues.

It is an exciting and meaningful opportunity to be involved in planning the future of a 100-year-old organization like AUMA. AUMA members, the Board of Directors, and staff, all helped to build AUMA's new strategic plan. It is the result of identifying desired outcomes for long-term municipal sustainability, and articulating how AUMA can best help achieve those outcomes. Through this, the overall strategic direction for the continued evolution of AUMA is established. This strategic direction will guide AUMA into the next 100 years, providing clarity and a foundation from which we can work together to achieve success.

The AUMA Strategic Plan provides the cornerstone for the AUMA planning framework (Figure 1). It provides the long range strategic direction for the organization and acts as an alignment checkpoint for new and existing activities.

The AUMA Strategic Plan provides the direction for the annual development of a three-year AUMA Business Plan. It also provides the appropriate linkages to the AMSC Strategic Plan. The AUMA Business Plan contains the organization's core businesses, goals, strategies, and performance measures.

The AUMA Business Plan guides the development of one-year Operational Plans for each AUMA Standing Committee. The Operational Plans contain the mandate and terms of reference for each AUMA Standing Committee as well as specific action plans.

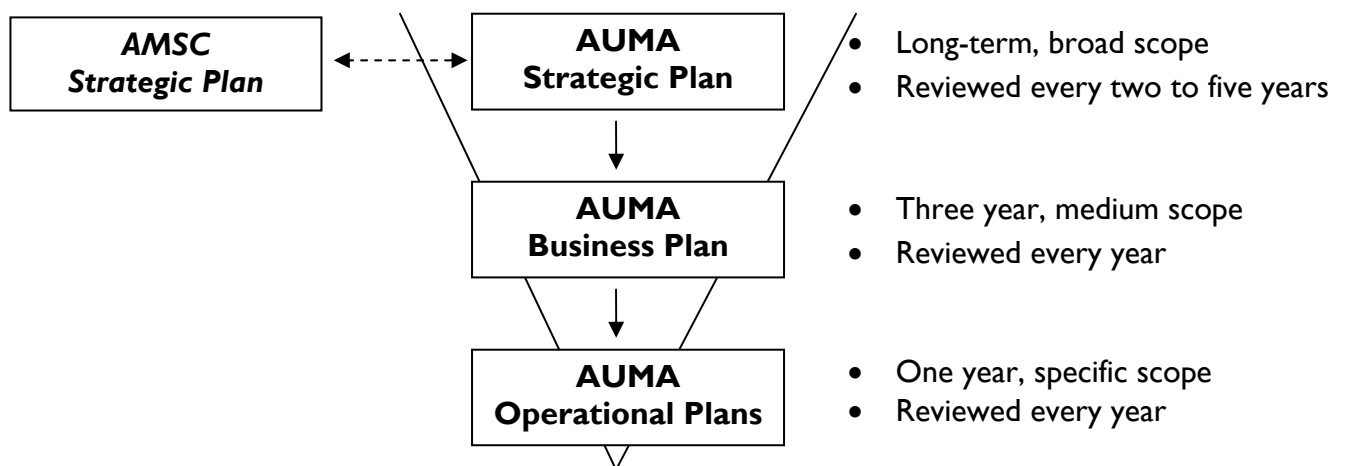


Figure 1: AUMA Planning Framework

6. Achieving Municipal Sustainability

As a result of feedback from municipalities and municipal leaders, AUMA has identified long-term strategic objectives and desired future outcomes for each.

1. Alberta Communities are Viable and Vibrant

Desired Outcome:

- ◆ Communities have the sustainable financial and human resources they need to provide affordable, cost-effective municipal public services and infrastructure
- ◆ Communities are experiencing economic growth and population increases
- ◆ Governments have found ways to align their efforts individually and collectively, resulting in more effective and efficient public services
- ◆ Progressive planning practices have made communities attractive and satisfying places to live

2. Alberta's Diverse Municipalities are Respected and Empowered

Desired Outcome:

- ◆ Urban municipalities are able to articulate sound solutions and common priorities
- ◆ There is understanding and trust among municipalities, governments, and citizens on the core responsibilities of municipalities
- ◆ Governance legislation and structures facilitate good relationships and effective partnerships among municipalities
- ◆ Relationships with other orders of government reflect municipal autonomy and self-reliance
- ◆ Governments, citizens, and businesses make effective use of information technologies

3. Alberta Communities are Safe, Healthy, and Caring

Desired Outcome:

- ◆ Communities are tolerant and caring places where citizens realize their individual potential, and form strong bonds of mutual support
- ◆ Housing is safe and accessible for citizens of all income and age ranges, and is not a financial burden to municipalities
- ◆ Communities have the capacity to successfully address issues of crime and well being
- ◆ Citizens have access to safe water and transportation systems
- ◆ Municipalities individually, or in regional partnerships, have the capacity to effectively respond to all types of incidents impacting their communities
- ◆ Communities have the means through which citizens can express their creativity and develop their cultural well being

4. Alberta Communities are Environmental Stewards

Desired Outcome:

- ◆ Communities have the leadership and capacity to think and act long term in maintaining or improving the environment while addressing the needs of their citizens
- ◆ Municipalities implement smart growth strategies for sustainable transportation systems and land uses and follow best practices for waste reduction, water, air, and land uses
- ◆ Municipalities encourage private investments in the development and implementation of environmental strategies
- ◆ Municipalities continuously improve the efficient use of energy and continue to switch to renewable sources of energy

5. Communities are Well Governed

Desired Outcome:

- ◆ Municipal governments are trusted and ethical
- ◆ Municipal governments lead an active democracy that incorporates meaningful citizen participation
- ◆ Citizens are knowledgeable about municipalities and engage their leaders in the development of positive community strategies
- ◆ Municipal leaders are well educated in their role as governors
- ◆ Well qualified citizens are interested and aspire to participate in the governance of communities

6. AUMA is solutions-based and an effective advocate for Members

Desired outcome:

- ◆ AUMA analyzes, interprets and advises members on relevant issues
- ◆ AUMA develops solutions to issues that can be acted on by governments, members, other stakeholders or AUMA itself
- ◆ Collective positions are presented to decision makers, members and stakeholders
- ◆ AUMA is an effectively and efficiently run organization
- ◆ Through its subsidiary AMSC, the AUMA indirectly provides a broad range of cost-effective business solutions that meet municipalities' specific and evolving needs, including sustainability

7. How will AUMA help?

AUMA has identified five roles it can play in moving into the future and the strategies that would be taken with each role. These roles are not mutually exclusive, for example there will always be an advocacy dimension to AUMA activities.

1. AUMA as an Advocate

Desired Strategies:

- ◆ AUMA explores municipal issues, researches options for solutions and works with other governments and municipalities to move issues to a solution forward
- ◆ AUMA meets with Government representatives to lobby and/or advocate for solutions that support municipalities
- ◆ AUMA advocates to municipalities to work together to build common solutions to issues and working together
- ◆ AUMA partners with other organizations that align to support meeting the sustainability objectives facing municipalities
- ◆ AUMA keeps informed, develops trust, and is easily accessible in developing solutions for a broadly-based member advocacy efforts
- ◆ The AUMA leverages the special supportive relationship linking advocacy and business efforts, between AUMA and AMSC, and within AUMA itself

2. AUMA as a Change Facilitator

Desired Strategies:

- ◆ AUMA develops, leads and supports solutions that help municipalities meet their sustainability objectives and the tools necessary to make changes to the solutions developed
- ◆ AUMA develops the internal resources and expertise to help municipalities meet the changing environment
- ◆ AUMA develops partnerships with other governments and the private sector to support the need for change within the municipal environment
- ◆ AUMA investigates and researches future municipal sustainability objectives and how municipalities can meet those municipal sustainability objectives
- ◆ AUMA brings experts to municipalities that provide change options for municipalities to meet sustainability objectives
- ◆ Through its subsidiary AMSC, the AUMA indirectly provides a broad range of cost-effective business solutions that meet municipalities' specific and evolving needs, including sustainability
- ◆ AUMA utilizes AMSC to create added value, through synergies inherent in the AMSC – AUMA relationship

3. AUMA as a Governance Supporter

Desired Strategies:

- ◆ AUMA develops the expertise to help municipalities govern effectively
- ◆ AUMA develops education and training programs that will build governance capacity of locally-elected decision-makers.
- ◆ AUMA researches and develops solutions that improve elected officials' decision-making capabilities and build trust in locally-elected officials
- ◆ AUMA develops legislative changes that support better governance and advocates those changes to government
- ◆ AUMA aligns the governance requirements for municipalities to meet their sustainability objectives
- ◆ AUMA develops methods and frameworks that help municipalities build good governance structures internally (including their own corporations, Boards or committees) or in regional efforts

4. AUMA as an Information Manager

Desired Strategies:

- ◆ AUMA provides useful, reliable information that is tailored to the specific needs of local government decision makers
- ◆ AUMA is the key player in the process of collecting, structuring, analyzing, and distributing the information members need to govern effectively

5. AUMA as a Network Participant

Desired Strategies:

- ◆ AUMA creates and manages networks relevant to municipalities' interests
- ◆ AUMA is a network manager, and members trust AUMA to identify, create, or shape the networks of organizations and stakeholders needed to ensure members' interests are aggressively pursued in an informed and consistent manner
- ◆ AUMA operates in a networked environment and plays a variety of roles depending on its strategic interests
- ◆ AMSC is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the AUMA, and therefore owned by members

The value proposition of AUMA in these roles to members is the assurance that their association, using informed individuals supported by good information, is (1) monitoring the internal and external environments to identify trends and developments that affect member interests; and (2) providing the tools and assistance needed to pursue those interests.

The economic model that supports AUMA in these roles will depend on prevailing circumstances and may include:

- Ongoing member support through annual dues.
- Subscription services for issue watch and assessment services.
- Issue or situation specific levies to address emerging issues that require a joint effort due to costs.
- Sponsorship funding for projects or events.

The five AUMA roles can be further developed based on scope of service and linkage to members (Figure 2).

- *Scope of service is the overall breadth of the service mix implied in each identified role.* For example, the scope of service implied in the role of information manager is broader than that implied in playing a specific role as a participant in a network linked to a specific issue.
- *Linkage to members is the nature of the relationship implied in each identified role.* For example, the linkage in the role of information manager is indirect in the sense that AUMA is providing information to a broad range of members through a variety of channels. The linkage to members where AUMA is a network participant is more direct, involving direct ongoing contact, likely over a considerable period of time, in order to make the network function.

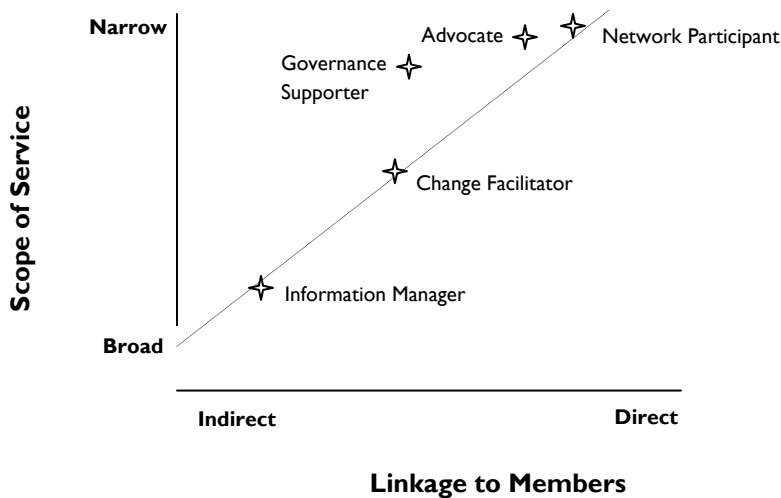


Figure 2: Scope and Linkage of AUMA Roles

8. Linking AUMA Roles and Achieving Municipal Sustainability

A direct relationship can be made between objectives and AUMA roles that show opportunities where they can best help achieve the desired outcome of each (Figure 3).

In addressing a particular objective, one of the AUMA roles will be primary, and two or more supporting. The primary role is the one through which AUMA is able to maximize value to members, and the supporting roles are other roles AUMA may play beyond the primary role and still provide value to members. No one sustainability objective or one AUMA role is more important than another.

The opportunities exist in using the most appropriate AUMA roles to best deal with each objective in a way that makes best use of limited time and resources, thereby maximizing the value of AUMA to members. This does not preclude addressing any one of the sustainability objectives with any one of the AUMA roles.

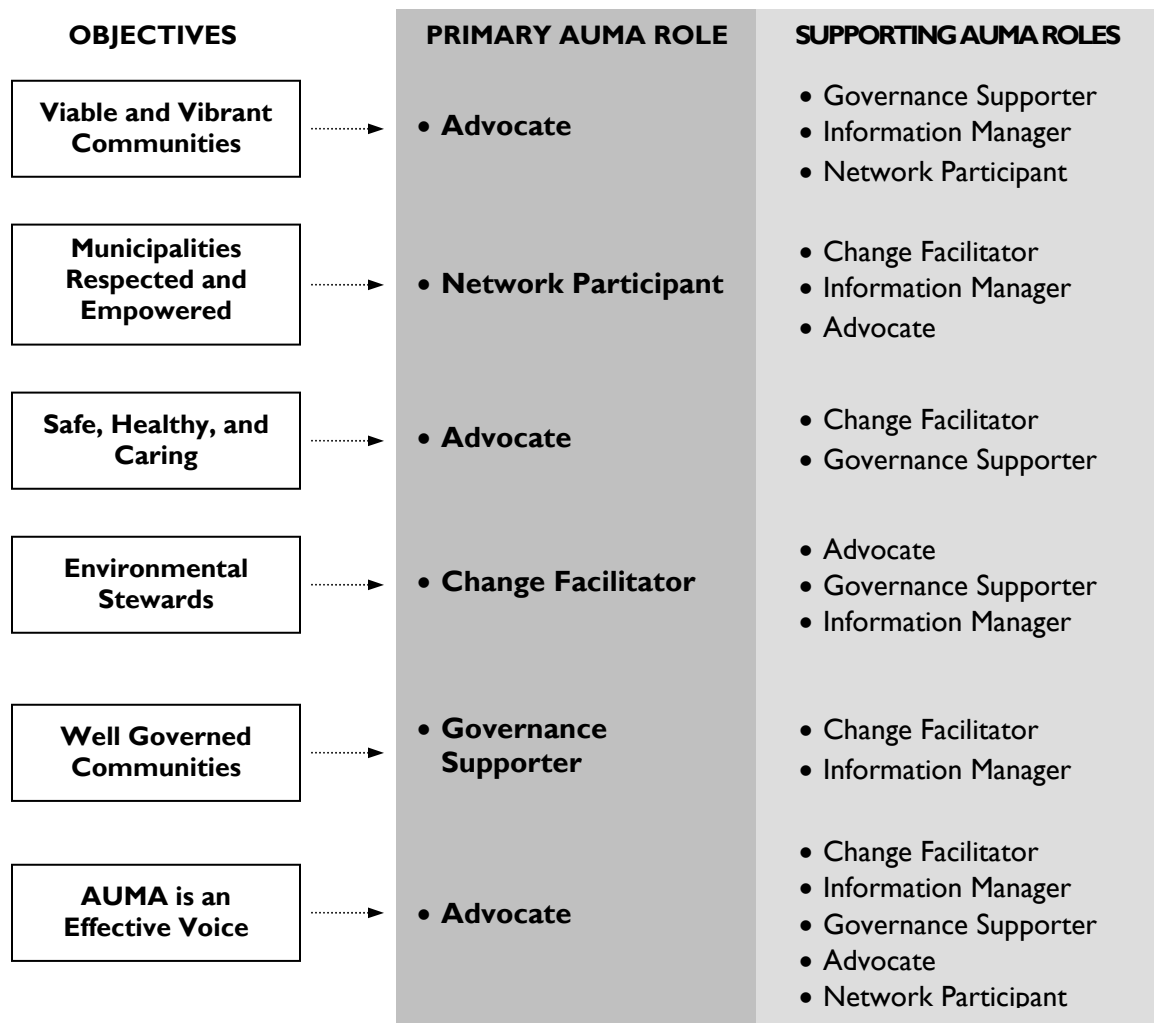


Figure 3: Potential Allocation of AUMA Roles in Addressing Objectives

9. Priorities

Given the opportunities where AUMA roles can best meet all these objectives moving into the future, and the reality of limited time and resources, priorities need to continually be established and confirmed in order for AUMA to be the most valuable possible to its members.

A formal way of priority setting is through the AUMA Business Plan and the AUMA Operational Plans (Figure 1). The AUMA Business Plan has a three-year horizon, is updated each year, and contains core businesses, goals, strategies, and performance measures. The AUMA Operational Plans have a one-year horizon, are created each year, and contain the mandate and terms of reference for each AUMA Standing Committee as well as specific action plans. These planning tools can be used to set and adjust priorities on a one- to three-year perspective.

The objectives and the role AUMA plays in helping municipalities meet them will be measured through the business plan performance measures approved by the Board.

For day-to-day priority setting, prevailing circumstances and current issues will dictate priorities to some extent. The key is to balance the needs of today with emerging issues of the future and dealing with non-urgent but important matters as well. In cases where there are competing priorities or divergent views among members, it is AUMA's responsibility to act in the best interest of all members.

In all cases, priority setting is subject to the governance and administration structure of AUMA. Formal decision-making is at the AUMA Board of Directors level. The AUMA Executive Committee, Standing Committees, Chief Executive Officer, and Management Team are all involved in priority setting as well.