



**Alberta Urban Municipalities Association**

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**Status of Resolutions  
Submitted for Debate at the 2005 Annual  
Convention**

## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005.A.1: AUMA GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the changes to the AUMA Guiding Principles, proposed by the AUMA Board of Directors, be endorsed by the AUMA General Assembly.

### **AUMA RESPONSE:**

AUMA's Guiding Principles have been changed accordingly, and are published on the association's website.

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## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005.A.2: MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT MUNICIPAL TAX RATE**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association requests the Government of Alberta to repeal Section 354(3.1) of the Municipal Government Act, R.S.A. 2000, as amended.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

#### Alberta Municipal Affairs:

The changes proposed in this resolution would have a significant effect on the assessment and taxation of manufacturing and processing machinery and equipment in the province.

Alberta Municipal Affairs recognizes that a robust economy can put strains on the financial ability of municipalities to respond to growth pressures. Because of these pressures, some municipalities believe that industry should pay a larger portion of the overall property taxes in Alberta. However, any suggestions that the provincial government amend the assessment or property tax legislation or regulations are not taken lightly. Any amendments to property assessment and taxation policies would require extensive study and consultation as part of a broader review – the planned major review of the *Municipal Government Act*. In the meantime, Alberta Municipal Affairs is committed to working with both industry and municipal stakeholders to develop solutions that will address the concerns of all parties within the existing legislative framework.

### **AUMA COMMENT:**

The review of the *Municipal Government Act* is expected following the final reports of the Minister's Council on Municipal Sustainability.

## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005.B.1: CONSISTENT DATES FOR THE ANNUAL AUMA CONFERENCE**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association take steps to have all conferences held during the same week in November each year.

### **AUMA RESPONSE:**

Event facilities are booked far in advance, and Convention dates are scheduled for all annual Conventions up to 2010. In reviewing and planning for Conventions beyond that date, this resolution will be taken into consideration.

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## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005.C.i.1: MOTORCYCLE OPERATOR LICENSES**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request the Alberta Government to amend the *Traffic Safety Act* to require all candidates for an operator's license to complete a vehicle appropriate driver training course that includes classroom as well as practical driving skills instruction; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** all newly licensed motorcycle operators be governed by rules and regulations contained in a graduated motorcycle operators' license program established by the Province of Alberta.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

No official response to this resolution has been received.

### **AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA staff discussed this resolution with consultants working on the Traffic Safety Initiative for the Department of Infrastructure and Transportation. No formal response has been received therefore AUMA will follow up with individuals working on the provincial Traffic Safety Initiative.

## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005.C.ii.1: SPECIAL FUNDING TO ENCOURAGE GREATER AFTER-HOURS COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL DIVISIONS' FACILITIES**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA request that the Government of Alberta give special funding consideration enabling School Divisions to mobilize resources needed to support and encourage greater after-hours community use within their facilities.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

No official response to this resolution has been received.

### **AUMA COMMENT:**

This resolution, contained within the 2006 AUMA Policy Statement on Municipal Infrastructure, was sent to the Ministers of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Community Development, Education, Finance, Infrastructure and Transportation and Municipal Affairs. AUMA will follow up with the Ministers of Community Development and Education for a formal response.

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## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005.C.ii.2: IRRIGATION DISTRICT BOARD REPRESENTATION**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Government of Alberta be asked to allow for municipalities and other users of irrigation systems, other than irrigators, to be represented on irrigation district boards as directors.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development:

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development reports that Section 30 of the *Irrigation Districts Act* allows for irrigation district boards to appoint members other than irrigators to its board, therefore the existing legislation already allows for what the AUMA is requesting.

During a public review of the legislation in the late 1990s, the MLA review committee determined that the composition of irrigation district boards could benefit from members with expertise in certain areas or specific skills, other than irrigation. This new provision was included in the *Act* to give the board flexibility in this area and has been utilized.

There is a second way that municipalities could be represented on an irrigation district board. If a municipality owns land with irrigation acres, and many do, then the municipality could have a representative run for election to the board. This has also happened in at least one instance and a representative of a town became a member of the irrigation district board.

### **AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA accepts this response.

## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005.C.ii.3: PHYSICIAN SHORTAGE**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association requests the Department of Advanced Education to fund the University of Calgary and University of Alberta in an appropriate manner that will allow for 150 physician student positions to be trained annually at each institution, with special consideration to those physicians with foreign credentials.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

#### Alberta Health and Wellness:

As part of government's efforts to facilitate and support the recruitment of physicians to rural areas, Alberta Health and Wellness continues to fund the Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan (RPAP). Information on the Alberta RPAP can be found at [www.rpap.ab.ca](http://www.rpap.ab.ca). In addition to financial support from the provincial government, addressing the issue of recruitment and retention of physicians in rural areas also requires the active engagement of local governments, community groups and businesses and the regional health authorities.

#### Alberta Advanced Education:

Advanced Education (AE) takes pride in facilitating increased learning opportunities across the province in health and other program areas. I am pleased to comment on the ministry's contributions to enhanced post-secondary program delivery in physician and other health programs, with particular attention to internationally-educated physicians and rural communities, as follows:

- Through the Access Growth Fund (AGF), AE supported the expansion of medical school enrolment by 26 new first-year student spaces at the University of Alberta (UofA) and 31 at the University of Calgary (UofC), commencing in Fall 2000. The first graduates of these expansions are now in residency training, some in rural Alberta.
- Ministry officials are now reviewing Accessibility Plans from Alberta post-secondary education providers for AGF support commencing in September 2006. Proposals include those submitted by the two provincial medical schools. The review of these plans may lead to increased medical student spaces and to an increased number of physicians available to practice province-wide, including in rural Alberta.
- The Alberta International Medical Graduate (AIMG) program, funded by Alberta Health and Wellness (AHW), is a provincial program for international medical graduates (IMGs) resident in Alberta. The program is based out of the UofC. Twelve family medicine and 16 specialty positions were offered for the 2006 intake of IMGs. The AIMG program has more than doubled in size since its inception. The Ministry understands that a further expansion is under consideration by AHW.
- Several health regions are also participating in the Western Alliance for Assessment of International Physicians (WAAIP) project, a one-year

demonstration pilot funded by Health Canada. WAAIP is developing a flexible competency-based assessment process for IMGs to enhance the capacity of regulatory bodies to access practice-ready IMGs.

- The Rural Physician Action Plan (RPAP) is an initiative funded by AHW to support the training of medical students and residents in rural Alberta communities, with the intent that these individuals will practice in these communities. The RPAP is one of Canada's only initiatives that focuses on the recruitment and training of physicians for rural practice.
- AE and AHW recently collaborated to establish and fund the Rural Medical Student Bursary Program, administered through the RPAP. The intent of this bursary program is to encourage students who come from a designated rural area to pursue a career in medicine, with recipients receiving reimbursement for the costs of university tuition and fees for each year during their medical studies. A maximum of 10 bursaries will be available annually.
- Since 1999, the ministry has also funded increased enrolment capacity in Health Care Aide, Licensed Practical Nurse and Registered Nurse programs, some of these initiatives specific to smaller, rural and/or Aboriginal communities across Alberta and delivered through alternate strategies frequently supported by community consortia and/or eCampus Alberta.

It is anticipated that a number of initiatives, policies and programs (both new and enhancements of current programs) arising from my *A Learning Alberta* review of advancing education in Alberta will be aimed at improving educational outcomes and overall quality of life for rural Albertans. In addition, elements of government's *Access to the Future Act* will directly benefit rural Albertans, including plans for a centralized application system and objectives to increase participation of disadvantaged individuals. The Ministry is committed to improving levels of post-secondary education participation and attainment for those traditionally under-represented in the system. Below are several initiatives to encourage post-secondary participation across Alberta (small rural communities included):

- AE's Raising Awareness Initiative employs strategies to promote the benefits of post-secondary education and the importance of early planning to students and parents. Early information and encouragement toward post-secondary education may persuade youth to pursue careers in health, apprenticeship and other areas, and possibly in rural Alberta communities.
- There are various student financial assistance options available for rural and remote learners. For example, bursaries targeted to northern residents include the Northern Alberta Student Supplement, the Northern Alberta Development Bursary and the Northern Alberta Development Council Bursary for Medical Students. AE is also discussing the development of a rural bursary program with the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation.
- The Government of Alberta has paid for tuition fee increases at public, board-governed institutions for 2005/2006.

Ensuring apprenticeship training remains affordable and accessible is a priority for the Government of Alberta. Student financial assistance, in the form of grants and loans, is available for eligible apprentices, as are a number of scholarships, including the Alexander Rutherford Scholarships, Registered Apprenticeship Program Scholarships and the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board Family of Scholarships.

The ministry and the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board are working with stakeholders to address the demand for skilled trades people and to encourage employers to hire and train apprentices. As a result, training options now include flexible instruction time and mobile/distance delivery, with a variety of these apprenticeship initiatives increasing both rural and Aboriginal participation (e.g. the NAIT in Motion mobile trailers that bring pre-trades training and apprenticeship training to rural locations and Aboriginal communities, the Youth Apprenticeship Project, Helping High School Students Find Their Place in the Trades, and CAREERS: The Next Generation). Additionally, the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board is examining ways to make journeyman to apprentice ratios more flexible.

**AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA accepts this response, and will continue to put forward the need for more trained medical professionals in all areas of the province.

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**AUMA RESOLUTION 2005.C.ii.4: TRAIL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request that the Province of Alberta develop a funding program accessible by volunteer non-profit organizations for the continued development of quality trail networks in the Province of Alberta.

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

Alberta Community Development:

We are constrained by our budget in accordance with the province's fiscal framework, and at this time have no new provincial funding to pursue a substantial new initiative such as a funding program accessible by volunteer non-profit organizations for the continued development of quality trail networks in the province. Any future funding for trails in the province may come out of the work of the Alberta Recreation Corridors Coordinating Committee that was recently announced on January 31, 2006.

**AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA accepts this response. AUMA has a representative on the Alberta Recreation Corridors Coordinating Committee, and that representative will continue to bring forward this position to the Committee.

## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005.C.ii.5: MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association urge the Government of Alberta to adopt the following definition of infrastructure for all programs designed to fund or address the municipal infrastructure crisis: “Infrastructure means fixed capital assets in Canada for public use or benefit”.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association urge the Government of Alberta to eliminate the requirement for matching municipal funds under provincial infrastructure programs.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

#### Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation:

Under the Alberta Municipal Infrastructure Program, Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation has used the following definitions:

- “Core Infrastructure” means municipal roads, bridges, public transit vehicles and facilities, water and wastewater systems and facilities, storm drainage systems and facilities, emergency service vehicles and facilities, and infrastructure management systems.
- “Other Infrastructure” means cultural and recreational facilities, community environmental and energy systems and facilities, solid waste management systems and facilities, municipal buildings, and other municipal physical infrastructure.

Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation has committed to conducting a review of all municipal grants. A review of the requirement for matching municipal funds will be added to the items to be considered in the review.

### **AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA accepts this response, and continues to press the Department to complete the review of municipal grants. A survey was issued in Summer 2006, but results have not yet been made public. The objective of the project was to review the infrastructure grant programs with the focus of addressing municipal infrastructure pressures.

## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005.C.ii.6: PHYSICIAN INCENTIVES**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** AUMA strongly urges the Government of Alberta to fully fund all aspects of health care in the Province of Alberta, including the recruitment and retention of health care professionals in smaller centers and rural communities, up to and including necessary funding for clinics, housing and staff.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

#### Alberta Health and Wellness:

While the Association's support for the expansion of medical seats in Alberta is appreciated, increasing existing seat numbers alone will not increase the number of physicians working in rural areas. When creating a rural stream, it is vital to develop an admission process that is conscious of rural life and activities. An undergraduate medical program that provides rural rotations and emphasizes rural and general practice, as well as a medical residency program that allows students to complete their residency in rural communities must be in place. The rural stream will be effective only if all three components are implemented together. Alberta Health and Wellness is working with Alberta Advanced Education and the universities' faculties of medicine to establish a new, feasible model for a rural medicine/Aboriginal medicine stream.

### **AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA does not accept this response as it does not address the request made in the resolution. AUMA will follow up.

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## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.ii.7: IMPLEMENTATION OF "PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT"**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request that the Government of Alberta pass the appropriate legislation to enact a "Parental Responsibilities Act" similar to the "Parental Responsibilities Act of Manitoba" and "Parental Responsibilities Act of Ontario".

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

#### Alberta Justice:

It appears this type of legislation is not widely used in Ontario and Manitoba and the social problem it is intended to address is not clear. At this time, the government has no immediate plans to proceed with a similar legislative initiative.

The safety of communities is a core business for the Ministry of Justice and much is being done in this area. Many AUMA resolutions have a connection to the safety of communities and will be taken into consideration as we take steps in this area.

### Alberta Solicitor General

The proposed *Parental Responsibilities Act* may have some merit. The Ministry hesitates to support more legislation without a solid understanding of its effectiveness. Since such legislation has been in place in Manitoba since 1996 and in Ontario since 2000, it is assumed that the maker of the resolution, or the AUMA itself, will have looked into the effectiveness of that legislation. The Ministry would appreciate receiving a copy of such evaluations.

### **AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA will ask the Alberta Solicitor General to carry out some research on the legislation of Manitoba and Ontario.

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## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.ii.8: RESERVING PROVINCIAL SURPLUS FUNDS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE DEBT RETIREMENT**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request that the Government of Alberta allocate on an annual basis, funds from the financial surplus of the Province to an ongoing Infrastructure Deficit Reserve Fund from which to fund future projects that will reduce the infrastructure deficit of municipalities over time.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

#### Alberta Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance:

Alberta Finance supports a consultative approach to municipal infrastructure. However, as the Minister of Municipal Affairs has indicated, when considering the issue of municipal revenue sources, it is important that municipalities and the provincial government first clarify the roles and responsibilities of each party through the work of his Council on Municipal Sustainability. This would also apply to your association's resolution on directing a portion of provincial surplus to an Infrastructure Deficit Reserve Fund, particularly since the provincial government is already providing \$600 million per year to municipalities, until 2009-10, to help them address their infrastructure needs.

#### Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation:

Currently the Government of Alberta has a Capital Account established for the redirection of excess natural resource revenue. When natural resource revenues exceed \$4,750,000,000, the excess dollars are directed to the Sustainability Fund. Once the Sustainability Fund exceeds \$2,500,000,000, the excess dollars can be directed towards the Capital Account. The Capital Account can be used to augment the province's annual Capital Plan, which is approved by Treasury Board.

This past year, significant per capita programs to fund municipal infrastructure have been made available. These include the Alberta Municipal Infrastructure Program, which will provide \$3,000,000,000 to municipalities over five years, and the New Deal for Cities and Communities which will provide another \$476,900,000 over five years.

## **AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA accepts this response, and continues to advocate for increased funds to address the infrastructure debt. For example, the following was recommended in AUMA's submission to the Province for its 2007 Budget:

Core Recommendation 3:

That the Government of Alberta retain \$600 million per year in its capital fund for the Alberta Municipal Infrastructure Program (AMIP) until such time as the municipal infrastructure deficit is eliminated.

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## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.ii.9: RAILWAY (ALBERTA) ACT**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request that the Railway Act (Alberta) be amended to provide as follows:

1. That the grass and weeds on all railway right of ways in Alberta in Urban Centers must be cut at least four times per calendar year.
2. That the railway companies be required to provide municipal offices with written proof that grass-cutting has occurred.

## **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

### Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation:

Only provincial railways operate under the *Railway (Alberta) Act*. Both Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Railways operate under the federal regulations and under Transport Canada's jurisdiction.

The *Railway (Alberta) Act* was developed to ensure that safety aspects of the provincial railway operations are adequately addressed. As this is not a safety related concern, it would not be addressed through the Alberta Railway Legislation.

The Track Safety Rules that both provincially and federally regulated railways operate under requires that vegetation on railway property that is on or adjacent to the roadbed must be controlled so that it does not affect inspection or equipment. This requirement would only require vegetation around track and equipment to be kept at a reasonable height and would not require that the grass on the entire right-of-way to be cut.

## **AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA accepts this response. AUMA will ask the resolution sponsor if they would like us to follow up with the Government of Canada.

## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.ii.10: TAX SALES COST**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request the Province to change the MGA to allow municipalities the ability to place the 5 per cent fee from the reserve bid onto the outstanding tax account at the time of final advertising of the parcel making the parcel ready for tax sale.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

Alberta Municipal Affairs:

Section 413(2) and section 553(f) of the *Municipal Government Act* already authorize the addition of costs to the taxes owing in respect of a parcel of land associated with tax recovery proceedings. Therefore, no amendment is required to address this concern.

### **AUMA COMMENT:**

The resolution requests that the fee be put on the tax account prior to the sale. As we understand it, the *MGA* says that it has to be done after the sale. AUMA will follow up with Alberta Municipal Affairs to ensure the intent of the resolution is understood.

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## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005.EXT.01: AMBULANCE TRANSITION**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) urge the Government of Alberta to provide a 3-year strategic plan for fully funding Ambulance services in Alberta by March 2006, and that Alberta Health and Wellness be requested to commit to working with AUMA to implement the plan; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA urge Alberta Health and Wellness to report to AUMA on the success and lessons learned from the pilot regions before the end of 2005; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA urge the Government of Alberta to assume both the responsibilities and resources associated with Ambulances services in Alberta.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

Alberta Health and Wellness:

The Ministry is unable to make any future funding commitments to ambulance services beyond those made for 2006/2007. The Ambulance Governance Advisory Council has completed its stakeholder consultation, and the findings will assist in developing the final recommendations on the future of ground ambulance governance and funding. The Council's final report is expected in spring 2006. Until the final report is complete, it is impossible to make long-term commitments regarding ambulance services.

**AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA does not accept this response. There are no clear answers forthcoming to the ambulance funding issue. The following was recommended in AUMA's submission to the Province for its 2007 Budget:

The Government of Alberta assume the responsibilities and resources associated with ambulance services.

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**AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 EXT.02: INCREASED FUNDING FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY HIGHWAYS**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association urge the provincial government to address the accumulating provincial highway infrastructure debt by allocating \$2.668 billion over 10 years to rehabilitate affected roads so that they reach acceptable standards;

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA urge the provincial government to form a task force that would investigate and prioritize new construction projects critical to enhancing primary and secondary highways in Alberta.

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation:

Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation recognizes the need to address the accumulating provincial highway rehabilitation needs and has been increasing funding from year-to-year. This requirement is reviewed on a yearly basis and is part of our five-year Capital Plan.

Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation has a process in place that would prioritize both new construction projects as well as projects that need rehabilitation. This process looks at a number of factors, such as new initiatives; preserving existing infrastructure; pressure points; and, input from municipalities when prioritizing projects to enhance primary (and former secondary) highways in Alberta. At this point, we do not anticipate a need to form a task group.

**AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA accepts this response, but will continue to request greater municipal input on this issue.

## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.iii.1: RURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA urge the Alberta Government to invest in a trust fund to partner with rural/small municipalities in providing bursaries to youth who remain or return to their community to start a business, trade or profession.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

#### Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development:

The bursary idea is a good one. The Alberta Northern Development Council currently sponsors a return service bursary for Alberta students training for jobs in high demand in northern Alberta. AUMA's bursary concept may be an effective tool to encourage young people to stay and build their futures in rural Alberta. The Ministry is working to determine the best way to create a positive environment for rural development and to work with rural communities to support locally developed initiatives, plans and projects.

#### Alberta Education:

The Government of Alberta recognizes the importance of rural Alberta in its contributions to the Alberta Advantage and is committed to working with rural communities and rural Albertans to foster a vibrant and sustainable future for the province. Alberta Education supports the Rural Development Strategy in a number of ways:

- The *Minister's Advisory Committee on Small and Rural School Programming* provides Alberta Education ongoing advice on curriculum-related issues, as well as promising practices that relate to schools in Alberta.
- The implementation of LearnAlberta.ca is a top priority that includes expanded use of technology to improve access, teaching, and learning in rural communities.
- Rural school jurisdictions and educational institutions are encouraged to work with community agencies to make their schools and facilities a hub of services for children, communities, and lifelong learning.
- Post-secondary institutions are encouraged to expand training opportunities for beginning professionals in rural communities and to encourage them to advance their careers in rural Alberta.

### **AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA accepts these responses.

## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.iii.2: APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** that the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association lobby the Province of Alberta to provide additional incentives and funding for unskilled Alberta workers to attract them into the apprenticeship program;

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the ratio of 1 Journeyman to 1 Apprentice be increased to 1 Journeyman to 2 Apprentices;

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that financial and other incentives are made available for Alberta employers which will make it attractive for them to hire and keep apprentices.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

No response has been received.

### **AUMA COMMENT:**

This resolution, contained within the 2006 AUMA Policy Statement on Social Infrastructure, was sent to the Ministers of Advanced Education, Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Community Development, Education, Health and Wellness, Human Resources and Employment, Justice, Municipal Affairs and the Solicitor General. AUMA will follow up with the Ministers of Advanced Education and Human Resources and Employment for a formal response.

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## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.iii.3: DRUG PREVENTION/ ENFORCEMENT**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association communicate to the Province of Alberta that inequities exist in the rules around municipalities accessing the prevention program funding and in the availability of police manpower to investigate illegal drug activity in smaller urban communities and rural areas,

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** these inequities should be addressed specifically for the small communities located away from the Cities of Edmonton, Calgary and Red Deer.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

#### Alberta Health and Wellness:

The Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC) is mandated to operate and fund programs and services that address alcohol, other drug and gambling problems and to undertake related research.

AADAC services in rural areas include prevention programs along with other services. AADAC also provides support to 40 drug coalitions, primarily in rural Alberta communities. The coalitions represent a groundswell of community action occurring across the province. These groups often unite in response to rising concerns about specific illicit drugs (e.g. crystal methamphetamine) and substance abuse in their communities. Recently, many groups have begun to foster support among community members; they acknowledge that people in communities look out for each other and reach out to those who are isolated and vulnerable; and they understand that when their community faces a threat, such as the growing presence of illicit drugs, the best solutions are found in the assets, strengths and capacities that are already a part of their community.

#### Alberta Education:

Government ministries work collaboratively with other agencies and stakeholders, including municipalities, to develop and implement strategies for addressing high-risk behaviours, such as illegal drug activity.

For example, Alberta Education supports school jurisdictions and schools in developing policies to address drug abuse and other high-risk student activities. The Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC) resource, *Developing substance abuse and gambling policies for Alberta schools*, supplied to all school jurisdictions in fall 2005 by Alberta Education, can help the jurisdictions to develop policies appropriate to the circumstances of specific schools, school jurisdictions, and communities.

Schools, parents, teachers, school jurisdiction administrators, community members, local agencies, and others can be major stakeholders in community-wide initiatives aimed at reducing drug abuse and other high-risk behaviour in children, youth, and adults. The AADAC resource, *Community action on drug abuse prevention*, can help guide community action to prevent illegal drug activity. This resource is available on the AADAC Web site at <http://corp.aadac.com>.

Alberta Education works with AADAC and other partners to ensure that schools, parents, teachers, and students have access to approved resources and drug abuse prevention programming on illegal drug activity. Approved lesson plans and resource materials are widely available on the AADAC Web site for use in school and community settings.

Several drug abuse task forces have been formed across the province, many of them in rural areas. In this way, communities can work collaboratively with ministries, agencies, and other stakeholders to ensure that issues such as the availability of prevention programs and police investigation of illegal drug activities are addressed in ways that are appropriate for their specific communities.

#### **AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA accepts this response. There are several recommendations in the September 2006 Report of the Premier's Task Force on Crystal Meth that relate to this resolution.

## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.iii.4: EXPANDED EMERGENCY PUBLIC WARNING SYSTEM**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request the Government of Alberta to provide 24-hour protection to our communities by expanding the Emergency Public Warning System to include telephones, cellular communication and web-based systems.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

#### Alberta Health and Wellness:

Health regions are responsible for ensuring emergency plans are in place for their regions and these are funded through their global funding budget. Alberta Health and Wellness works with federal agencies and with health regions to ensure that health emergency plans are co-ordinated at all levels. At the municipal level, emergency Management Alberta, Municipal Affairs is responsible for working with municipalities to administer training and disaster response programs and funding.

#### Alberta Municipal Affairs:

The Government of Alberta, in partnership with Industry Canada, initiated a project in 2005 to expand the Emergency Public Warning System to include telephones, cellular communication and web-based systems. Progress has been made in all three areas, with web-based systems performing particularly well in trials. This work is being conducted in conjunction with Industry Canada as part of a joint initiative using Alberta's Emergency Public Warning System as the framework for a national alerting system known as CANALERT.

### **AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA accepts these responses, and is working with the relevant ministries and private industry to be informed about CANALERT and SafetyNet.

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## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.iii.6: PROVISION OF DETOXIFICATION AND TREATMENT FOR DRUG ABUSE IN BOTH RURAL AND URBAN AREAS**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association support the development of additional detoxification and treatment facilities in rural areas to improve access to help for all Albertans, while providing a non-urban treatment option for those who reside outside of our major cities.

## **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

### Alberta Health and Wellness:

AADAC offers a broad continuum of treatment services that assists Albertans to improve or recover from the harmful effects of alcohol, other drugs and problem gambling. Services include community-based out-patient counselling, day programs, crisis and detoxification services, short-and long-term residential treatment and overnight shelter. Specialized programs are available for youth, women, Aboriginal people, business and industry referrals, and those with opioid dependency.

AADAC clinics, area offices, institutions and Funded Agencies are located in 48 communities throughout the province. Albertans have access to basic services in local communities where they live and work, with more specialized services available on a regional and provincial basis. AADAC extends its services through satellite offices and mobile teams through partnership with community agencies.

## **AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA accepts this response. There are several recommendations in the September 2006 Report of the Premier's Task Force on Crystal Meth that relate to this resolution.

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## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.iii.7: PROTECTING EMPLOYEES FROM SECOND-HAND SMOKE**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, strongly urge the Province of Alberta to enact legislation that prohibits smoking in all Alberta workplaces without delay.

## **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

### Alberta Health and Wellness:

The Alberta Tobacco Reduction Strategy led by AADAC on behalf of the Government aims to reduce tobacco use by Albertans, promote cessation amongst users and reduce exposure to second hand smoke.

The *Smoke Free Places Act*, which came into effect on January 1, 2006, protects a large portion of Albertans from the harms of second-hand smoke. This Act ensures that children under the age of 18 are not exposed to second-hand smoke in enclosed public spaces and indoor work places where minors have access. The *Smoke-Free Places Act* is a good first step for Alberta in protecting our children and youth from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke.

The Act establishes a minimum provincial standard for protection from second-hand smoke. Municipalities are encouraged to implement bylaws that surpass the provisions of the Act to further protect their citizens from second-hand smoke. Currently 86 Alberta communities have bylaws that provide some level of protection from second-hand smoke and 123 of these have 100 percent smoke-free public spaces and work places.

Alberta Human Resources and Employment:

The Alberta Legislature passed the *Smoke-Free Places Act* in May 2005, which came into effect on January 1, 2006. If municipal bylaws provide less protection from second-hand smoke, the *Act* prevails as the local policy

**AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA accepts these responses.

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**AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.iv.1: RECOGNITION OF NON-RESIDENT POPULATION**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA request the Government of Alberta to allow municipalities to recognize the non-permanent residents as part of the population used to determine Per Capita grant allocations.

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

Alberta Municipal Affairs:

Municipal Affairs recognizes that some municipalities face increased pressure on their infrastructure due to the influx of seasonal workers. For this reason, the Ministry has established criteria to allow these municipalities to increase their population counts by including the shadow population, if the amount is significant. Allowing this increase enables municipalities to qualify for increased grant eligibility where per capita formulas are used.

The criteria are as follows:

- The shadow population consists of temporary residents of a municipality who are employed or will be employed by an industrial or commercial establishment in the municipality for a minimum of 30 days;
- This population must be significant (a minimum of 1,000 or 10 percent of the permanent population); and
- The number must be verified annually by a count held between April 1 to June 30 to reflect current circumstances.

Alberta Solicitor General

The purpose of the proposal that per capita grant allocations include non-permanent residents is understood, but the following complications have been identified: 1) if the total pot is limited, this would mean a lower per capita rate, and 2) the same individual could be counted twice for grants. There is interest in hearing some alternative approaches that might deal with the issue.

**AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA files these responses. The AUMA Standing Committee on Municipal Governance will review this issue and develop potential solutions to the issue.

## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.iv.2: COMPREHENSIVE FIRE DEPARTMENT HIGHWAY PROTOCOLS**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association address this challenge by urging the Provincial Government to create standard levels of service for all responding Fire Departments and in addition agree to assume all liability issues arising from the attendance of highway incidents.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

#### Alberta Municipal Affairs:

Emergency services personnel in Alberta are municipal employees, and providing them with insurance coverage for any situation is a municipal responsibility. The Government of Alberta is therefore not in a position to assume liabilities surrounding highway and roadway incidences. A number of private insurance options are available to municipalities for insuring their emergency services personnel.

#### Alberta Health and Wellness:

Emergency medical, police and fire services are a municipal responsibility and as such any development of Emergency Response Protocols would be a municipal responsibility rather than a provincial one. However, in response to a need to protect emergency response workers on Alberta roadways, the *Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2005* was passed and came into force on October 31 2005. this law makes it mandatory to slow to 60km/h when passing emergency or tow vehicles and personnel.

### **AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA accepts these responses.

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## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.iv.3: MUNICIPAL INTERN PROGRAM**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request the Provincial Government to take immediate action to increase and fund the Municipal Intern Program.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

#### Alberta Municipal Affairs:

The Municipal Internship Program is coordinated by Municipal Affairs, in partnership with Alberta municipalities. The objective of the 12-month program is to provide recent post-secondary graduates with a year of training to start their careers in local government. The program helps municipalities recruit and train well-rounded leaders, who can progress into senior administrative positions. The Ministry provides financial assistance to municipalities willing to make the commitment of time and resources to host and train an intern.

Based on feedback from stakeholders, we have decided to expand the number of interns and the intake for 2006-2007 has been expanded from 10 to 15 interns.

The Ministry is also looking at other options for further expansion of the Municipal Internship Program, and will be consulting with AUMA and other municipal stakeholders on the more promising options.

**AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA accepts these responses. AUMA continues to advocate for an expanded and higher quality municipal labour force by working with municipal professional associations, and by supporting pilot projects such as the Assessor Internship Program.

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**AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.iv.4: PROVINCIAL SUPPORT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY INITIATIVES**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association urge the Government of Alberta, through the Energy Minister, to consider encouraging renewable energy alternatives through some form of incentives.

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development

Sustainable Resource Development applauds the proactive approach and direction your Association is taking towards the maintenance of environmental ecosystems through responsible stewardship and land use planning. Stewardship is a keystone to more effective management of Alberta's natural resources and environment. As AUMA points out in Guiding Principle 7, proactive environmental management is needed to support future societal health and prosperity. The Association is showing excellent leadership in establishing this direction.

Alberta Energy:

The Minister notes that the energy section of AUMA's Policy Statement has not changed from the previous version. The Ministry had the following response to the 2004 Policy Statement:

The preamble statement recognizes "energy as a key component of Alberta's economy" and the importance of "responsible development". However, the points that follow do not support the continued responsible development of our non-renewable energy resources. It is this development that makes energy a key component of our economy. If competitively priced, reliable energy for Albertans is desired, there is a need to continue developing oil sands, mining coal, drilling for oil and gas, and building power plants. These activities, and the multitude of secondary activities supported by them, deliver massive benefits to

Alberta municipalities and their citizens and should be recognized and supported.

Of note is the Association's 2005 convention resolution regarding provincial support of renewable energy initiatives. The approach set out proposes the use of public dollars to improve the competitiveness of one business at the expense of another. The Ministry does not support governments playing that role. Alberta has become Canada's leader in wind power generation as a result of putting in place a market structure that encourages alternatives and competitiveness without government financial incentives. As with the recent change to Alberta's unique natural gas rebate program, the Ministry will continue to look at effective and responsible ways to make Alberta a leader in renewable energy.

**AUMA COMMENTS:**

AUMA will continue to advocate the value of renewable/alternative forms of energy.

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**AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.iv.5: PROVINCIAL ROAD WORK**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA encourage the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation to communicate in writing the department's intent for road work that directly affects a municipality,

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** there be a commitment by the Province to the Municipalities for maximizing efficiencies for road construction and tie-ins going through the Communities.

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation Response:

The Minister informs the MLAs about upcoming roadwork that is under provincial jurisdiction. The municipality can get the information about upcoming roadwork by:

- Checking with the local MLA;
- By visiting Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation's Web site that announces all the tenders; or,
- Deal with the Alberta Roadbuilders and Heavy Construction Association as they track upcoming tenders for the Province and the municipalities.

The Minister actively listens to Municipalities at the AUMA conventions and through one-on-one meetings to maximize efficiencies for road construction and other local issues that affect them. The Minister has been dealing with municipal issues and will continue to do so.

## **AUMA COMMENT:**

AUMA write a letter asking again that written notice be send directly to affected municipal governments.

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## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.iv.6: PROVINCIALY EQUALIZED MUNICIPAL REVENUES**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA encourage the Minister of Municipal Affairs to consider a form of equalization that will distribute revenues derived from Power, Pipeline and Machinery and Equipment to the people as a whole within our Province; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** this revenue be distributed to municipalities in a form of equalization that would show fairness in the revenue intake.

## **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

### Alberta Municipal Affairs:

The provincial government has responded to similar resolutions in the past. As previously noted, there are costs and drawbacks as well as financial advantages arising from the location of oil and gas facilities, power generating facilities, etc. While these facilities do indeed provide tax revenue to the municipalities in which they are located, they also can increase infrastructure servicing costs, produce noise and odour, and create safety and evacuation hazards.

This resolution could have significant financial implications to many rural municipalities, which have a larger number of these types of regulated industrial property. This resolution would also require significant changes to legislation and regulations. Therefore, any amendments to property assessment and taxation policies would require extensive study and consultation as part of the broader legislative review that is being planned.

Alberta Municipal Affairs is committed to working with both industry and municipal stakeholders to develop solutions that will address the concerns of all parties within the existing legislative framework. The Minister's Council on Municipal Sustainability is reviewing a number of issues, including municipal sustainability, and is expected to bring forward recommendations that will address municipal financial concerns.

## **AUMA COMMENTS:**

The review of the *Municipal Government Act* is expected following the final reports of the Minister's Council on Municipal Sustainability.

## **AUMA RESOLUTION 2005 C.iv.7: ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY INEQUITY**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association requests the Government of Alberta and the Lieutenant Governor in Council to abolish subsection 9(3) of Matters Relating to Assessment and Taxation Regulation, A.R. 220/2004.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

#### Alberta Municipal Affairs:

The changes proposed in this resolution would have a significant effect on the taxation of manufacturing and processing machinery and equipment in the province.

Alberta Municipal Affairs recognizes that a robust economy can put strains on the financial ability of municipalities to respond to growth pressures. Because of these pressures, some municipalities believe that industry should pay a larger portion of the overall property taxes in Alberta. However, any suggestions that the provincial government amend the property tax legislation or regulations are not taken lightly. Any amendments to property taxation policies would require extensive study and consultation as part of a broader legislative review. This type of action is not expected to take place until the planned major review of the *Municipal Government Act* is undertaken. In the meantime, Alberta Municipal Affairs is committed to working with both industry and municipal stakeholders to develop solutions that will address the concerns of all parties within the existing legislative framework.

### **AUMA COMMENTS:**

The review of the *Municipal Government Act* is expected following the final reports of the Minister's Council on Municipal Sustainability.

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## **POLICY PAPER 2005.1: PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA 2005 General Assembly adopt the proposed changes, as amended, to the *MGA* that are contained in AUMA's *MGA* review, and urge the Government of Alberta to work with AUMA to implement the changes.

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

#### Alberta Municipal Affairs:

The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association's (AUMA) policy paper proposes significant changes to some existing provisions in the *Municipal Government Act* (*MGA*), and introduces a number of new principles, municipal powers and processes.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs has asked the Minister's Council on Municipal Sustainability to review the respective roles and responsibilities of municipalities and the provincial government. The Minister is looking to the council for recommendations on a number of issues, including roles and responsibilities, new municipal revenue sources, and intermunicipal relations. Also, input from other affected stakeholders will be needed on the Council's recommendations. It is important that this review by the Council (which involves the mayors of Edmonton and Calgary as well as the presidents of the AUMA and AAMD&C) be completed prior to undertaking a general review of the MGA since there is potential that some of the recommendations could have significant implications for the MGA.

The government will continue to seek input on specific MGA amendment proposals from the AUMA, AAMD&C, municipalities and other stakeholders during the review.

**AUMA COMMENTS:**

AUMA accepts this response, as the AUMA President sits on the Minister's Council that is working through these issues. The review of the *Municipal Government Act* is expected following the final reports of the Minister's Council on Municipal Sustainability.

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**POLICY PAPER 2005.2: ESTABLISHING EDUCATION AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MUNICIPAL ELECTED OFFICIALS**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the attached document: "Support for Effective Governance" be adopted to guide the implementation of a new education/training service offering of AMSC.

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

Alberta Municipal Affairs:

Municipal Affairs is pleased that the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association supports ongoing training and development opportunities for Alberta's elected officials, especially in the areas of governance and decision-making. We encourage Alberta's municipal associations to continue to identify and foster meaningful and timely education of their membership so citizens are effectively represented and municipalities are judiciously managed.

There are a number of areas where Municipal Affairs and the association can work together in the training of municipal officials and the Ministry will be working with the association on this matter.

## **AUMA COMMENTS:**

Alberta Municipal Affairs has provided a grant to AUMA and AAMDC to begin the program. A Scoping Study outlining a program and parameters for the program will be completed by December 2006, and courses will be offered in Fall 2007.

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## **POLICY PAPER 2005.3: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS: THE FINAL REPORT OF THE AAMD&C-AUMA ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ABORIGINAL ISSUES**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AUMA General Assembly endorse the recommendations from the Final Report of the AAMD&C/AUMA Advisory Committee on Aboriginal Issues:

1. That the AUMA and AAMD&C pursue appropriate arrangements with the Province of Alberta to ensure greater municipal involvement in Aboriginal issues that may affect them.
2. That the municipal associations (AAMD&C, AUMA and FCM) be informed about and consulted on federal and provincial Aboriginal policies and legislation.
3. That as appropriate, the Boards of Directors of the AUMA and AAMD&C organize membership education sessions on Aboriginal/First Nations issues at their respective conventions, and further that a resource package be assembled for the membership.
4. That Alberta Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development and Alberta Municipal Affairs be asked to assemble and maintain a list of resource people in the field of Aboriginal relations.
5. That the AAMD&C and AUMA continue the work of the present advisory committee by establishing a smaller implementation committee, with the goal of developing strategies and resource materials to help municipalities and Aboriginal/First Nations communities develop more effective working relationships and partnerships around common interests, in cooperation with the Province of Alberta and representatives of Aboriginal communities.

## **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:**

### Alberta Municipal Affairs:

Municipal Affairs will work with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development to assemble and maintain a list of resource people in the field of Aboriginal relations.

### Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development

This is a significant acknowledgement of the need to work together with First Nation and Aboriginal communities and AUMA and its membership is commended for taking the initiative to address this important priority.

The Ministry is committed to working with the AUMA to facilitate relations with First Nations and Aboriginal communities. The Ministry is confident that this is the start of a positive relationship between the AUMA and the department.

#### **AUMA COMMENTS:**

AUMA accepts this response. The AUMA and AAMDC have established a Working Group on Municipal-Aboriginal Relationships.