



2007 AUMA Policy Statement on Municipal Governance

Introduction

The AUMA provides value and leadership to its members. To that end, the Standing Committee on Municipal Governance reviews and suggests changes to provincial legislation governing municipal governments, works towards improved inter-municipal and inter-governmental relationships, and attempts to find innovative solutions to the cash-crunch faced by most member municipal governments.

The AUMA Policy Statement on Municipal Governance is a formal account of AUMA positions pertaining to municipal governance, as compiled from member resolutions adopted at the 2006 AUMA Annual Convention. The member resolutions addressed in this statement can be found in Annex 1.

Statement of Principles

AUMA Guiding Principles:

Principle 1.	Municipal Governments must have the fiscal capacity to fulfill their mandate through: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• primary access to the property tax base; and• sustainable, predictable, long-term sources of revenue
Principle 2.	The federal and provincial governments have sole responsibility for direct income redistribution programs and services.
Principle 3.	The primary focus of urban government is to provide locally oriented services to property and people.
Principle 4.	Each local urban council will maintain responsibility for the establishment of local standards of services to property and people
Principle 5.	Any new standards or requirements imposed by the provincial or federal orders of government must be fully funded by that order of government.

Principle 6.	Amendments and changes to legislation and regulations relating to municipal governments shall only proceed when AUMA has actively participated and agreed, through meaningful input in a review process.
Principle 7.	Responsible stewardship of our ecological systems is essential to the economic viability, quality of life, and sustainability of our community.
Principle 8.	Quality infrastructure is critical to supporting healthy, financially sustainable communities, and strengthens the quality of life for all Albertans, and is the foundation for the Alberta Advantage.

Municipal Governance Principles:

Good governance is key to broad sustainability of Alberta’s municipalities.

Amendments to the *Municipal Government Act* must provide enabling powers to allow municipalities to act and operate individually and collectively, and provide adaptability and flexibility to accommodate different types of governance and service delivery.

Every municipal government must have adequate powers and financial and legal resources that other orders of government cannot alter unilaterally.

Municipal governments require the financial capacity to fulfill their mandates, and the services for which they are responsible should be financed through local taxation, fees and other revenue and a defined portion of provincial and federal taxes and fees

Municipal governments require sustainable, adequate and equitable resources. The property tax is not sufficient to fund all infrastructure and services that municipal governments develop, provide and maintain.

Effective engagement is needed on matters of mutual interest, including consultation by the Provincial Government on:

- (i) proposed changes to local government legislation;
- (ii) proposed changes to revenue transfers to municipalities; and
- (iii) proposed changes to provincial programs that will have a significant impact in relation to matters that are within municipal authority.

The building of positive inter-municipal relationships requires a common understanding of the roles of different types of municipal governments, and the development of provincial guidelines for land use.

Municipal governments require an improved and more effective relationship with other orders of government, one that is respectful, co-operative and aims to better the lives of citizens and their various communities.

Municipal governments see tremendous opportunity for co-operation and partnerships with First Nations/Aboriginal communities, in achieving a high quality of life for all Alberta citizens.

Municipal governments can and will be pro-active in providing a formalized education and training program for elected municipal officials through their municipal association.

AUMA Requests

With regard to municipal legislation, AUMA requests that the Government of Alberta:

- 1) approve the proposed changes to the *MGA* that are contained in AUMA's *MGA* review adopted by AUMA in 2005, and work with AUMA to implement the changes (POLICY PAPER 2005.1);
- 2) give priority to the work of the Minister's Council on Municipal Sustainability so that Alberta municipalities might continue to satisfy their mandate (RESN 2006.C.ii.14);
- 3) amend the "general ministerial powers" portion of the *MGA* to ensure that municipal councils are fully accountable to their electorates, and put in place enhanced processes that enhance objectivity in carrying out inspections of municipal governments (POLICY PAPER.2006.2);
- 4) amend the *MGA* to enable municipalities to impose inclusionary zoning on selected developments through their local land use bylaws (RESN 2006.C.ii.17);
- 5) amend the *MGA* to reduce the possible exposure of municipalities for actions taken when responding to emergencies or providing services inside and outside the municipality, including limiting the exposure to those situations in which the municipality can be shown to be grossly negligent; and that the Government of Alberta provide a Provincial risk management process including the establishment of a large loss insurance fund for use by those insured against small and medium losses and to provide a process to encourage municipalities to insure against small and medium losses with access to the large loss fund only if they do so (RESN 2006.C.iv.7).

With regard to municipal revenues and taxation, AUMA requests that the Government of Alberta:

- 6) ensure general unconditional municipal assistance grants are delivered to municipalities as a fair and equitable means of distributing Alberta's wealth to every municipality to enhance the delivery of municipal services (RESN 2006.C.ii.18);
- 7) update the linear property rates and keep the rates current thereby addressing the existing inequity associated with the present situation (RESN 2006.A.2);
- 8) continue the Targeted Assistance Program for 2007 and beyond with only two factors: a maximum equalized assessment per capita (or per parcel for Summer Villages) and a minimum grant allocation, to support those municipalities with low equalized assessments (POLICY PAPER 2006.1);
- 9) provide municipalities with the authority to levy and collect the accommodation tax for economic development and tourism initiatives (RESN 2006.C.ii.2);

With regard to inter-municipal planning and land use, AUMA requests that the Government of Alberta:

- 10) make inter-municipal development plans (IDPs) mandatory (RESN 2006.A.3);
- 11) work with the municipalities to develop an expedient and fair process to transfer/sell crown land to the municipalities who require this land for the development of residential, commercial and industrial land; and that land for affordable housing initiatives be transferred at no cost to municipalities (RESN 2006.EXT.1);
- 12) expedite all current urban annexation applications to ensure those municipalities can meet their long term planning needs; and if urban municipalities cannot accommodate growth demands within their boundaries, that those boundaries must be immediately expanded to accommodate the demand for urban-style development (RESN 2006.EXT.2);
- 13) take a lead role in developing a strategy—to implement the recommendations in the Policy Paper *Cost-sharing for Success: A Pro-active Approach* developed by the AAMDC/AUMA Rural/Urban Cost-sharing Task Force (RESN 2006.C.v.5);
- 14) 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 (RESN 2006.C.v.1);
- 15) address the following concerns in the upcoming revision to the Alberta Building Code:
 - spatial separation (distance apart) between buildings as it relates to construction materials and building design;
 - determination of height limitations and fire safety system requirements for combustible multi-family buildings based on occupied levels and physical height; and
 - safety concerns related to engineered wood floor systems when exposed to fire.

And that there be interim code changes (Standata) issued on or before December 30, 2006 in support of the issues raised (RESN 2006.C.v.3).

With regard to community safety and policing legislation, AUMA requests that the Government of Alberta:

- 16) amend legislation to allow municipalities with a population under 5000 to utilize photo radar and to receive fine revenue only to offset operating costs of the service (RESN 2006.C.ii.10);

- 17) change legislation to allow municipalities the choice of applying for permits and authority for their municipal Special Constables to carry side-arms as part of their personal protection gear, upon receiving appropriate formal firearms training (RESN 2006.C.iii.1);
- 18) amend the Alberta *Police Act* and *Police Service Regulation* to include a broader set of disciplinary tools available to Chiefs of Police in order to allow more effective and timely discipline (RESN 2006.C.iv.5).

With regard to healthy communities, AUMA requests that the Government of Alberta:

- 19) amend the *Smoke Free Places Act* to prohibit smoking in all indoor public places within the Province of Alberta (RESN 2006.C.iii.2).

AUMA requests that the Government of Canada:

- 20) significantly increases the penalties for those convicted of the production and/or distribution of illegal drugs (RESN 2006.C.iv.3);
- 21) implements changes to the federal income tax system for rental investment that encourage the development of affordable rental housing units (RESN 2006.C.iv.8).

ANNEX 1
2006 ADOPTED AUMA MEMBER RESOLUTIONS – Municipal Governance

Policy Paper 2006.1: Alberta Municipal Affairs Targeted Investment Program

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT AUMA request Alberta Municipal Affairs continue the Targeted Assistance Program for 2007 and beyond with only two factors: a maximum equalized assessment per capita (or per parcel for Summer Villages) and a minimum grant allocation, to support those municipalities with low equalized assessments.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED

Policy Paper 2006.2: MGA Review – General Ministerial Powers

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AUMA 2006 General Assembly adopt the proposed changes to the *MGA* that are contained in the “AUMA *MGA* REVIEW Related to the General Ministerial Powers in the *MGA*”.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED

Resolution 2006.A.1: What Defines an Urban Municipality?

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, for the benefit of the public interest of all Alberta, define what an urban community is and how it is different from a rural municipality, and then request the Province of Alberta to incorporate these definitions into legislation.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2006.A.2: Linear Property Rates

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request the Government of Alberta to update the linear property rates and keep the rates current thereby addressing the existing inequity associated with the present situation.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2006.A.3: Mandatory Requirement for Inter-municipal Development Plans

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association communicate to the Government of Alberta that Inter-municipal Plans between urban and rural municipalities be mandatory.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2006.C.ii.2: Tourism Levy Tax

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT AUMA petition the Provincial Government to provide authority to municipalities to levy and collect the accommodation tax for economic development and tourism initiatives.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2006.C.ii.10: Photo Radar

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipal Association petition the Government of Alberta to amend the legislation to allow municipalities with a population under 5000 to utilize photo radar and to receive fine revenue only to offset operating costs of the service.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED as amended

RESOLUTION 2006.C.ii.14: Municipal Fiscal Sustainability

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association urge the Government of Alberta to give priority to the work of the Minister's Council on Municipal Sustainability so that Alberta municipalities might continue to satisfy their mandate.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2006.C.ii.17: Inclusionary Zoning for Affordable Housing

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request the Government of Alberta amend the *Municipal Government Act* to enable municipalities to impose inclusionary zoning on selected developments through their local land use bylaws.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2006.C.ii.18: Provincial Targeted Investment Grant

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT AUMA request the Government of Alberta ensure general unconditional municipal assistance grants are delivered to municipalities as a fair and equitable means of distributing Alberta's wealth to every municipality to enhance the delivery of municipal services.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2006.EXT.01: Purchase of Crown Land

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request the Government of Alberta to work with the municipalities to develop an expedient and fair process to transfer/sell crown land to the municipalities who require this land for the development of residential, commercial and industrial land; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT land for affordable housing initiatives be transferred at no cost to municipalities.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED as amended

RESOLUTION 2006.EXT.02: Provincial Freeze on Development

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Government of Alberta be urged to expedite all current urban annexation applications to ensure those municipalities can meet their long term planning needs; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Government of Alberta be urged to adopt the position that if urban municipalities cannot accommodate growth demands within their boundaries, that those boundaries must be immediately expanded to accommodate the demand for urban-style development.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED as amended

RESOLUTION 2006.C.iii.1: Special Constables and Side-Arms

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request the Government of Alberta to change the legislation to allow each municipality, those who wish to, the choice of applying for permits and authority for their municipal Special Constables to carry side-arms as part of their personal protection gear, upon receiving appropriate formal firearms training.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED as amended

RESOLUTION 2006.C.iii.2: Prohibit Smoking in Public Places

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association urge the Government of Alberta to amend the *Smoke Free Places Act* to prohibit smoking in all indoor public places within the Province of Alberta.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED as amended

RESOLUTION 2006.C.iv.3: Punishment for Drug Production and Dealing Convictions

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request that the Government of Canada significantly increase the penalties for those convicted of the production and/or distribution of illegal drugs

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2006.C.iv.5: Tools that would Allow the Chief of Police to Foster Ethics and Professionalism

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association requests the Government of Alberta to amend the Alberta *Police Act* and *Police Service Regulation* to include a broader set of disciplinary tools available to Chiefs of Police in order to allow more effective and timely discipline.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2006.C.iv.7: Municipal Risk Management Processes in Alberta

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- the AUMA request that the Minister of Municipal Affairs initiate changes to the *Municipal Government Act* to reduce the possible exposure of municipalities for actions taken when responding to emergencies or providing services inside and outside the municipality, including limiting the exposure to those situations in which the municipality can be shown to be grossly negligent; and

- the AUMA request the Minister to provide a Provincial risk management process including the establishment of a large loss insurance fund for use by those insured against small and medium losses and to provide a process to encourage municipalities to insure against small and medium losses with access to the large loss fund only if they do so.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 2006.C.iv.8: Federal Income Tax on Rental Housing

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request the Government of Canada to implement changes to the federal income tax system for rental investment that encourage the development of affordable rental housing units;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association forward this request as an AUMA-sponsored resolution to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED

****Also included as part of the Policy Statement on Community Infrastructure****

RESOLUTION 2006.C.v.1: Environmental Building Standard for New Residential Housing

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association urge 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.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED

****also part of the Policy Statement on Environment & Sustainability****

RESOLUTION 2006.C.v.3: Alberta Building Code Changes

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association request the Government of Alberta to address the following concerns in the upcoming revision to the Alberta Building Code:

- spatial separation (distance apart) between buildings as it relates to construction materials and building design;
- determination of height limitations and fire safety system requirements for combustible multi-family buildings based on occupied levels and physical height; and
- safety concerns related to engineered wood floor systems when exposed to fire.

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT there be interim code changes (Standata) issued on or before December 30, 2006 in support of the issues raised.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED as amended

RESOLUTION 2006.C.v.5: Urban/Rural Cost-sharing

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association urge the provincial government to take a lead role in developing a strategy to implement the recommendations in the Policy Paper *Cost-sharing for Success: A Pro-active Approach* developed by the AAMDC/AUMA Rural/Urban Cost-sharing Task Force.

2006 Convention: Resolution ADOPTED