AAMDC Advocacy Report Card

Fall 2017

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Partners in Advocacy & Business

Prepared by the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties

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AAMDC Advocacy Report Card: Fall 2017

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INTRODUCTION

The Advocacy Report Card is divided into two sections.

Section 1 provides detailed information on the government response to the spring 2017 resolutions and includes the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) Board of Directors' reaction to the response as well as anticipated follow up.

Section 2 updates members by reporting on all active resolutions, grouped by advocacy area.

Definition of Terms

Following the adoption of resolutions at AAMDC conventions, resolutions are sent to the appropriate level of government for response. Once a response is received, the AAMDC labels the resolution with one of five indicators which determines the status of that resolution. The intention of providing a status for each resolution is to evaluate whether the government response meets the intent of the resolution. The status is not intended to reflect the AAMDC's advocacy efforts on a resolution.

Below are the descriptions of all resolution ranking statuses.

STATUS	DESCRIPTION
Accepted	Meets the AAMDC criteria as outlined in a) the resolution and b) as per the expectations of the Board of Directors.
Accepted in Principle	The development addresses that action is being taken to meet the intent of the resolution, but further action is required.
Accepted in Part	Some resolutions include multiple 'asks' in the operative clause. This status indicates that one of the 'asks' has been met while others require further action.
Intent Not Met	The intent of the resolution has not been met as outlined in the resolution or the current developments do not meet the approval of the Board of Directors.
Incomplete Information	The AAMDC has not received enough information to assign a status. Further follow-up is required for the AAMDC to make an informed decision on how to proceed.

SECTION 1: Government Responses to Spring 2017 Resolutions

The AAMDC recently received the Government of Alberta responses to the resolutions adopted at the spring 2017 convention. The following table provides an overview of the initial assessment to resolutions following the Government of Alberta's response. **The AAMDC emphasizes that this table only reflects the initial response received from the Government of Alberta and that advocacy efforts on all resolutions are in progress.**

REACTIONS AT A GLANCE

#	RESOLUTION NAME	STATUS
1-17S	Carbon Levy Exemption of Natural Gas and Propane for All Food Production Uses	Intent Not Met
2-17S	Amendments to Section 348 of the Municipal Government Act	Intent Not Met
3-17S	National Broadband Strategy	Accepted in Part
4-17S	Collection of Outstanding Taxes for Education Requisitions from the Province of Alberta	Intent Not Met
5-17S	Secure Access to Natural Gas Pipelines	Intent Not Met
6-17S	Addendum to the Species at Risk Act	Incomplete Information
7-17S	Eradication of Bovine Tuberculosis and Brucellosis Prevalent in Bison Within and Surrounding Wood Buffalo National Park	Intent Not Met
8-17S	Oldman River Regional Services Commission Regional Planning Funding	Intent Not Met
9-17S	Legal Opinion for Species at Risk Proposed Policies	Accepted in Part
10-17S	Modernization of Alberta Registry Agents	Accepted in Part
11-17S	Review of Standard Practices for Installation of High Tension Cable Barriers on Two-Lane Provincial Highways	Intent Not Met

Resolution 1-17S

Carbon Levy Exemption of Natural Gas and Propane for All Food Production Uses

MD of Willow Creek

Carried

Advocacy Target: Alberta Environment and Parks

WHEREAS the *Climate Leadership Implementation Act* effective January 1, 2017 states that every recipient shall pay a carbon tax on purchases of natural gas and propane; and

WHEREAS as purchasers, farmers cannot pass the additional cost of a carbon tax on to consumers or the international market; and

WHEREAS programs are in place through the Climate Leadership Plan to help farm operations reduce their emissions through efficiency upgrades; and

WHEREAS farmers use natural gas and propane for the production of food e.g. grain drying, irrigation, milk parlours, hog barns, chicken barns, greenhouses, etc.; and

WHEREAS farmers are exempt on marked fuel by way of the carbon levy exemption certificate; and

WHEREAS farmers create a tremendous carbon sink with their production of crops;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties appeal to the Government of Alberta to provide carbon levy exemption certificates for the use of natural gas and propane for all food production uses.

Government Response

Environment and Parks:

The Alberta Climate Change Office (ACCO) is working with Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (AF) and Alberta Treasury Board and Finance (TBF) to assess Resolution 1-17S. As part of this assessment, the ACCO is also exploring alternative solutions to address concerns brought forward by the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC).

AAMDC Reaction and Follow-up

Though it is positive that the Government of Alberta has indicated in its response that multiple ministries and the Alberta Climate Change Office are exploring alternative solutions to address concerns regarding the carbon levy that have been identified by the AAMDC, there is no indication that exemption certificates will be issued as requested in this resolution. The AAMDC's Climate Change Advisory Committee recognized the benefit that Alberta's agricultural lands serves as a carbon sink, and supports the need for continued advocacy for an exemption from the carbon levy on natural gas and propane used for food production. Due to the lack of commitment by the Government of Alberta in moving this forward, this resolution has been assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**. The AAMDC will continue to work with the government and monitor any resulting develops related to this issue.

Resolution 2-17S

Amendments to Section 348 of the *Municipal Government Act*

County of Two Hills

Carried

Advocacy Target: Alberta Municipal Affairs

WHEREAS Section 348 of the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) states:

> Taxes due to a municipality
>
> (a) are an amount owing to the municipality,
>
> (b) are recoverable as a debt to the municipality,
>
> (c) take priority over the claims of every person except the Crown; and

WHEREAS Section 284(1)(f) defines Crown as:

> "Crown" means the Crown in right of Alberta, and includes a Provincial agency as defined in the *Financial Administration Act* and an agent of the Crown in right of Alberta; and

WHEREAS the Agricultural Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) falls under the definition of Crown; and

WHEREAS in instances, the Crown may take priority over claims of every person; and

WHEREAS the AFSC has asserted that as a Crown corporation, they take precedence over municipalities in the recovery of taxes according to Section 348 of the MGA; and

WHEREAS Section 348 of the MGA has the potential to seriously impede municipality's ability to collect unpaid taxes; and

WHEREAS AFSC is a lending institution and has the ability to do their due diligence, therefore all risk should be burdened by all provincial taxpayers not just a municipality;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta amend Section 348 of the *Municipal Government Act* to reflect that no Crown lending institutions be allowed to take priority over any claims due to the municipality.

Government Response

Municipal Affairs:

As part of the *Municipal Government Act* (*MGA*) Review, Alberta Municipal Affairs (MA) has conducted extensive public and focused stakeholder engagement. This issue was not raised in any engagements that have occurred with either the public or focused stakeholder groups.

An amendment to Section 348 of the *MGA* would require substantial consultation with the federal government and its agencies, as well as other Alberta ministries and agencies.

Agreement by both levels of government to remove themselves from the order of priority would require substantial analysis and discussion, due to its likely ramifications beyond just property taxation.

As such, amendments to Section 348 of the *MGA* are not being contemplated at this time.

AAMDC Reaction and Follow-up

AAMDC members have been facing considerable challenges collecting unpaid taxes from property owners. These efforts are further frustrated by the hierarchy of claims that places municipalities at a significant disadvantage to collect unpaid property taxes against other liabilities that the property owner possesses. As indicated in the response from Alberta Municipal Affairs, amendments to Section 348 are not being considered at this time and therefore, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**. Where opportunities arise, the AAMDC will advance this resolution through the review of the *Municipal Government Act* and other avenues where discussions associated with unpaid taxes and property owner liabilities are discussed.

Resolution 3-17S

National Broadband Strategy

Parkland County

Carried

Advocacy Target: Service Alberta, Alberta Treasury Board and Finance, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission

WHEREAS broadband is recognized as an essential utility by communities and jurisdictions throughout the world; and

WHEREAS many rural, remote, and northern communities in Canada continue to be unserved or underserved by internet service providers; and

WHEREAS internet service in rural, remote and northern communities is slower, has less bandwidth and is more expensive than services in urban centres; and

WHEREAS many jurisdictions are implementing programs and initiatives that leverage network-based technologies to strategically improve services to residents, enable businesses to become globally competitive, incubate a knowledge workforce and enhance social capacity; and

WHEREAS the success of these communities is reliant upon the availability of high speed, high capacity bandwidth internet connectivity;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the governments of Alberta and Canada declare broadband an essential service; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the governments of Alberta and Canada provide direct funding and support to rural, remote and northern communities to ensure affordable access to, or the development of, high speed (100 Mbps and faster) community network infrastructure; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge Government of Canada develop a national broadband strategy; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that rural municipalities, internet service providers, education and health professionals, public safety organizations, and research and economic development authorities be actively involved in preparing the National Broadband Strategy.

Government Response

<u>Service Alberta</u>:

Service Alberta (SA) is supportive of the main principles in Resolution 3-17S and continues to be the voice of Albertans to the federal government on the need for a National Broadband Strategy.

Our government is working to make life better for Albertans, and understands the importance of access to government services and improved internet. While most Albertans have access to

some basic internet services, the government is fully aware of the internet challenges facing rural Alberta, such as increased demand, speed, and performance expectations. We have been listening and actively working with stakeholders, including Alberta municipalities and the federal government, to better understand these challenges and become part of the solution.

SA is also supportive with regard to establishing broadband as an essential service, but would note that the province does not have a role in this part of the resolution. The telecommunications industry is regulated federally, and the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) established a new universal service objective on December 21, 2016, under Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2016-496:

"Canadians, in urban areas as well as in rural and remote areas, have access to voice services and broadband Internet access services, on both fixed and mobile wireless networks."

The CRTC is also setting ambitious speed targets, and creating a fund that will invest up to $750 million over and above existing government programs, to support broadband infrastructure projects in areas that do not meet these targets. This funding is in addition to the Connect to Innovate federal broadband program, which received several Alberta applications for funding prior to the April 20, 2017, closing date. SA actively worked with municipalities and internet service providers (ISPs) on several applications.

We are encouraged to see the CRTC identifying broadband as a basic need for Canadians. In Alberta, we have clearly heard that rural leaders see broadband access as key to ensuring sustainable communities where businesses, youth, and local talent can thrive. While the CRTC has outlined preliminary views on their broadband policy and funding mechanism, they have also indicated that additional discussions are needed in 2017 to finalize these details. SA will be watching for final criteria to understand how Alberta communities can benefit, and what our government can do to support those efforts.

With the SuperNet operating contract expiring in 2018, our government has been looking at options for moving forward. We have considered the valuable stakeholder insights shared with us, and are positioning future contracts, such as SuperNet, to support broadband in rural Alberta, while also leveraging federal initiatives like the newly-announced CRTC broadband fund.

This government will be discussing our approach for the future of SuperNet and potential rural broadband supports in 2017. SA has committed to reaching out to both the AAMDC and the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association to ensure they are aware of our government's direction, and to offer assistance in updating their members.

We have heard the AAMDC's requests to engage with government, and will continue to communicate and work with our local governments as we move forward. SA supports Resolution 3-17S in advocating to the federal government that rural municipalities, ISPs, education and health professionals, public safety organizations, and research and economic development authorities should be actively involved in the preparation of any National Broadband Strategy.

Alberta Treasury Board and Finance:

The Alberta SuperNet is a broadband network that connects to rural and urban communities in the province. This network of fibre-optic cables and wireless connections reaches 429 communities across Alberta. Budget 2017 includes $31 million of funding for the SuperNet.

Increases to funding for broadband network support would need to be considered through the government's budget development process.

AAMDC Reaction and Follow-up

The Government of Alberta response indicates broad support of the resolution's call for increased action on the part of government and industry in enhancing rural broadband avaialbility and quality. The AAMDC is pleased with the direction that the Government of Alberta has taken to this point in prioritizing rural final mile connectivity in their development of a new operating agreement. The AAMDC has also been informed that the Government of Alberta is in the early stages of developing a provincial rural broadband strategy, which will include some level of input from the AAMDC and rural municipalities.

At the federal level, the AAMDC is pleased with the 2016 Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) that declared broadband as a basic telecommunications service, which is the telecommunications equivalent of an essential service, and empowers the CRTC to implement programs, policies, regulations and initiatives to improve broadband in underserved areas. As mentioned in the Government of Alberta response, one such initiative being undertaken in relation to the basic service declaration is a $750 million fund to enhance broadband in rural areas, to be funded by industry. The AAMDC has submitted input to the CRTC on how the fund should be structured, and expects to hear implementation details in the coming months. A second aspect of the CRTC's declaration of broadband as a basic service was to increase the threshold for underserved areas from those with service below 5mpps download / 1mbps upload to 50mbps download / 10mbps upload.

Despite the positive progress made recently by the provincial and federal governments related to enhancing rural broadband, the AAMDC is unaware of any federal initiative to develop a national broadband strategy. Therefore, this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Part** due to the federal declaration of broadband as a basic telecommunications service, which meets the intent of part of the resolution.

Resolution 4-17S

Collection of Outstanding Taxes for Education Requisitions From the Province of Alberta

MD of Spirit River

Carried

Advocacy Target: Alberta Municipal Affairs, Treasury Board and Finance

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta annually establishes the mill rate that the municipalities are required to collect and pay into the Alberta School Foundation Fund (education property tax) on properties assessed within the municipalities; and

WHEREAS each municipality can collect education property taxes along with other taxes to operate the municipality at various times during the year, and are therefore asked to submit payment quarterly to the Government of Alberta; and

WHEREAS some of these taxes become in default and are no longer collectible leaving the municipality to recover the amount owing through the seizure of land and assets; and

WHEREAS tax recovery through the seizure of land and assets is not always an option, particularly in relation to linear property such as on oil leases on leased property; and

WHEREAS this inability to exercise tax recovery processes on some linear property leaves the municipality with bad debt for the tax burden to operate the municipality along with the debt of the education property taxes that they are required to collect by the Government of Alberta; and

WHEREAS the municipality is only acting as an invoicing and collection agency for the Government of Alberta to collect education property taxes on their behalf;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta develop new tools or utilize existing mechanisms to ensure that municipalities that are unable to collect education property taxes through the tax recovery process be exempted from forwarding those uncollectible tax amounts to Alberta Education, or have the uncollectible amount refunded.

Government Response

Alberta Municipal Affairs:

Alberta Municipal Affairs recognizes that the non-collection of property taxes in arrears, particularly municipal and provincial property taxes levied against industrial property, has financial implications for some municipalities. This issue is likely to evolve, given the current economic conditions in Alberta.

In response to a previous AADMC resolution, Municipal Affairs convened an inter-ministry working group with representatives from Municipal Affairs, Alberta Treasury Board and Finance, Alberta Education, Alberta Energy, Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP), the Alberta Energy Regulator, and the AAMDC. The working group is exploring options to address the issue of uncollectable education property taxes related to linear property, specifically oil and gas.

AAMDC members are encouraged to communicate their concerns and ideas for solutions through their representative on this working group. Results of this work will be communicated to the AAMDC.

Alberta Treasury Board and Finance:

Treasury Board and Finance has no comments beyond those provided by Alberta Municipal Affairs.

AAMDC Reaction and Follow-up

The AAMDC appreciates the responsiveness of the Government of Alberta in forming a working group to address this issue in response to previous similar resolutions (3-16S, 5-15F). However, the AAMDC is becoming increasingly concerned with the time that has elapsed between the working group developing recommendations for addressing the issue of uncollectible taxes on industrial properties (early 2017) and the response from the Minister of Municipal Affairs as to what, if any, actions will be taken to address the issue. As many rural municipalities continue to experience similar or greater levels of industrial tax arrears in the current fiscal year, expedient action on this issue is becoming an even greater priority.

The AAMDC assigns this resolution a status of **Intent Not Met**, but will continue advocating for a Ministerial response to the working group's recommendation, and will consider amending this status if a response is received prior to the next round of resolution updates.

Resolution 5-17S

Secure Access to Natural Gas Pipelines

Lac La Biche County

Carried

Advocacy Target: Alberta Energy, Natural Resources Canada

WHEREAS sourcing of natural gas is a high priority of municipalities and natural gas co-ops in rural Alberta in order to serve our residents; and

WHEREAS high volumes of natural gas are available through privately-owned pipelines; and

WHEREAS rural municipalities and gas co-ops use privately-owned, high-pressure pipelines to supply natural gas to their customers and constituents; and

WHEREAS some privately-owned pipelines are being abandoned because they are no longer viable for the owner; and

WHEREAS rural municipalities and gas co-ops face additional costs and uncertainties because of these abandonments; and

WHEREAS these uncertainties limit cost-effective planning and expansion of natural gas systems for rural municipalities and gas co-ops;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties, in conjunction with the Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops and Gas Alberta, request the governments of Canada and Alberta to develop legislation and provide financial assistance to maintain certainty of access to natural gas pipelines for rural municipalities and gas co-ops in Alberta.

Government Response

Alberta Energy:

The Government of Alberta (GOA) will continue to work collaboratively with the AAMDC and other stakeholders to ensure their concerns are addressed in a timely and environmentally responsible manner.

In February 2014, a rupture occurred on a NOVA Gas Transmission pipeline near Rocky Mountain House. Emergency supplies of compressed natural gas were required to maintain service to Rocky Gas Co-op customers. Prompted by the 2014 pipeline failure, along with previous incidents, the National Energy Board (NEB) issued a safety order in March 2014 to TransCanada PipeLines (TCP) to inspect over 20 high-risk pipeline segments in Alberta by the end of 2015. TCP subsequently developed a long-term strategy to verify the integrity of the majority of its pipeline systems over the next 10 years.

In August 2016, TCP filed an application with the NEB for the Peace River Mainline Abandonment Project. There is no indication at the moment when the decision on this application will be made by the NEB. TCP has advised Gas Alberta and the Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops that there may be more supply pipelines that could be facing abandonment.

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry:

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry appreciates the concerns and uncertainty caused by the potential abandonment of privately owned natural gas transmission pipelines in Alberta. Since the Rural Gas Program began, the GOA has contributed over $500 million towards the rural

natural gas distribution system's capital costs. There has also been no reduction in the level of funding support since the budget was revised to $3.05 million in 2001. All distributors are able to access this grant funding, and all regions of Alberta where natural gas is readily available are supported equitably.

The GOA has challenged Gas Alberta and the Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops to identify alternative funding options on the decommissioning of transmission pipelines. These approaches may encourage the federation and its members to develop a strategic plan for the long-term sustainability of rural gas co-operatives. We also invite the AAMDC to work with its members' natural gas distributors and suppliers alongside engagement with government in seeking solutions to this issue.

AAMDC Reaction and Follow-up

The AAMDC recognizes the on-going funding to support the Rural Gas Program and although the Government of Alberta has challenged Gas Alberta and the Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops to identify alternative funding options on the decommissioning of transmission pipelines, the response lacks commitments of additional funding or legislative changes. As such, the resolution is deemed **Intent Not Met.**

Resolution 6-17S

Addendum to the Species at Risk Act

MD of Willow Creek

Carried

Advocacy Target: Environment and Climate Change Canada

WHEREAS Section 92. 13 of the *Constitution Act 1867* provides exclusive jurisdiction to the Province over property and civil rights; and

WHEREAS the Third Schedule of the *Constitution Act 1867* provides for the jurisdiction of the Central Government "to be the Property of Canada", namely

1. *Canals, with Lands and Water Power connected there-with.*
2. *Public Harbours.*
3. *Light Houses and Piers, and Sable Island.*
4. *Steamboats, Dredges, and Public Vessels.*
5. *Rivers and Lake Improvements.*
6. *Railway and Railway Stocks, Mortgages and other Debts by Railway Companies.*
7. *Military Roads.*
8. *Custom Houses Post Offices, and all other Public Buildings, except such as the Government of Canada appropriate for the Use of the Provincial Legislatures and Governments.*
9. *Property Transferred by the Imperial Government, and known as Ordnance Property.*
10. *Armouries, Drill Sheds, Military Clothing, and Munitions of War, and the Lands set apart for general Public Purposes." (which might include National Parks; added by writer); and*

WHEREAS Section 27(2) of the *Species At Risk Act* (SARA) states that Land Claim Agreements only apply to Aboriginals (Section 35, *Constitution Act 1982*); and

WHEREAS Section 58 (1) of SARA gives federal jurisdiction on federal lands; and

WHEREAS Section 61 (4) of SARA provides for federal jurisdiction over provincial laws it deems not to be sufficient; and

WHEREAS Section 62 of SARA states that the Government may acquire lands or interest in lands to accommodate Protection Orders, programs or designations; and

WHEREAS Section 64 of SARA states that the Minister may, in accordance with the regulations, provide for fair and reasonable compensation to any person for losses suffered as a result of any extraordinary impact of the application of….." (*The Minister then has total discretion of what defines 'extraordinary impact*');

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to request the Government of Canada to amend the *Species at Risk Act* to include an addition to Section 64 of the Act to be entered as 64 (1)(c), to read as follows:

> **"The Minister(s), before implementing any order, plan, program, or designation that affects any proprietary interest in lands, held by title or leased, by any individual, corporation or entity other than government, shall enter into an agreement to establish the compensation for the loss of interest in those lands including relative legal expenses, or the loss of productivity of those lands, and**

for greater certainty, no order, plan, program, or designation shall be in force until the agreement is ratified by all parties involved.”; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Government of Alberta reaffirm to the Government of Canada that any action, program, plan, order, or designation contrived by the federal government that affects any lands or properties that are not within the proprietary responsibility of the Government of Canada as set out in Schedule Three of the *Constitution Act 1867*, will have no force or effect and considered ultra-vires to the Supreme Law of Canada as referenced by Section 92.13 *Constitution Act 1867* and assuredly, Section 52 of the *Constitution Act 1983*.

Government Response

No response has yet been received from the federal government in regards to this resolution.

AAMDC Reaction and Follow-up

As no response from the Government of Canada had been received at time of reviewing this Advocacy Report Card, this resolution has been assigned a status of **Incomplete Information**. The AAMDC will continue to follow-up on this issue.

Resolution 7-17S

Eradication of Bovine Tuberculosis and Brucellosis Prevalent in Bison Within and Surrounding Wood Buffalo National Park

Mackenzie County

Carried

Advocacy Target: Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Parks Canada

WHEREAS nationally, wood bison are listed as Threatened under Schedule 1 of the federal *Species at Risk Act*, and designated as of Special Concern by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC); and

WHEREAS in Alberta, only free-roaming bison that occur within Alberta's Wood Bison Protection Area are considered endangered wildlife; and as such are recognized and protected under Alberta's *Wildlife Act*; and

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta's inability to formally protect all other free-roaming bison under the *Wildlife Act* leaves these animals vulnerable to year-round unregulated hunting, successful hunters at risk of harvesting wildlife with zoonotic diseases, and other wildlife and livestock at risk of contracting the diseases; and

WHEREAS the recently released draft Federal Recovery Strategy for the Wood Bison (2016) states the greatest threat to wood bison recovery is the prevalence of bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis; and

WHEREAS the historical and sustained availability of debilitated, diseased bison may have and could continue to artificially support a larger population of wolves; which in turn is likely to exacerbate the poor recruitment of all bison calves and other vulnerable species, within close proximity to Wood Buffalo National Park; and

WHEREAS Mackenzie County is located within direct proximity of Wood Buffalo National Park; thus the risk of diseased free-roaming bison transmitting bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis to domestic livestock is of immediate concern to all local beef producers; and

WHEREAS any bison sighted travelling west of Wood Buffalo National Park, towards the Wood Bison Protection Area, within 6 kilometers of Highway 35 is presumed diseased and therefore destroyed as a precautionary measure, in order to maintain the disease-free status of Alberta's only verified disease-free local population; and

WHEREAS the Alberta First Nations Food Security Strategy, released January 2015, found that efforts to increase northern Aboriginal food security; fundamentally includes the restoration and increase of sovereignty over local food systems, improved access to local food, including hunting of culturally traditional wildlife such as buffalo; and

WHEREAS in 1990, a Federal Environment Assessment Panel recommended completely eradicating all bison from Wood Buffalo National Park, followed by restocking with disease-free animals; and

WHEREAS in 2016, Environment and Climate Change Canada acknowledged that, at present, the only effective tool to successfully eradicate the threat of bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis from within and surrounding Wood Buffalo National Park is by depopulation;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties supports the depopulation of diseased bison as the only effective tool to successfully eradicate the threat of bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis from within and surrounding Wood Buffalo National Park; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge Alberta Agriculture and Forestry and Parks Canada to develop an effective measurable plan to successfully eradicate all diseased bison from within and surrounding Wood Buffalo National Park in order to prevent further disease outbreaks province-wide; that would inevitably have adverse effects for the national, provincial and local domestic cattle and beef industries.

Government Response

Agriculture and Forestry:

Resolution 7-17S has identified several factors that highlight the importance of risks associated with bovine tuberculosis (TB) and brucellosis spreading from the wild bison population in and around Wood Buffalo National Park to local livestock populations.

While there is no known link between disease in this northern bison population, and the recent detection in southern Alberta, the current TB investigation in cattle in southern Alberta has reminded us of the time and resources required for these investigations in livestock cases.

We have seen recent progress around Manitoba's Riding Mountain National Park, that may provide valuable insight for future direction with Wood Buffalo National Park. With that said, Manitoba faced a much lower prevalence of disease in the wild population, but also a much smaller buffer between wildlife and livestock. Thus, there were greater levels of interaction between the populations.

AF sees this as an important issue that requires input from a broad range of stakeholders with varying perspectives. Previous efforts to address this issue have highlighted its importance. Ongoing surveillance initiatives continue to monitor the situation, to ensure early detection should one of these diseases transmit to livestock or encroach on local wildlife populations.

Environment and Parks:

The GOA is participating in an initiative with the governments of Canada, and the Northwest Territories, to develop a strategy to eliminate the risk of disease transmission from affected bison. This strategy will be developed through a collaborative, consensus-based approach, including engagement with Indigenous communities and relevant stakeholders. Options such as risk management/ containment of diseased bison or depopulation will be evaluated, based on discussions and information exchanges with other jurisdictions and agencies. The draft terms of reference for a committee to develop this strategy are being reviewed by the Canadian Wildlife Directors Committee.

In 2016, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) conducted a risk assessment of the potential transmission of bovine TB and brucellosis from Wood Buffalo National Park bison to the cattle industry. This assessment concluded that the risk was insignificant. The CFIA continues to complete a thorough investigation of the recent case of bovine TB in southern

Alberta. Since the start of the investigation, AF has provided veterinary epidemiology expertise to the team that is conducting the analysis.

AF and AEP are examining and testing, where necessary, all suspect lesions from hunter kill cervids (elk and deer) for TB, as well as from the current cases in areas around southern Alberta. AEP has informed hunters in the affected area to submit suspect lesions for examination and testing. Even if there should be a significant perceived or estimated actual risk of disease transmission to other wildlife or livestock identified, the cost, logistical planning, consultation and probability of implementing a complete depopulation may be prohibitive.

While there continues to be pressure from various stakeholders to initiate actions, it is important to recognize that there is a broad range of stakeholders with varying perspectives, which includes the public and a large number of First Nations groups in the immediate vicinity of the park. Ensuring that all stakeholders are engaged prior to the determination of a position or policy approach regarding this issue is critical to establishing a fully transparent and consultative approach.

Environment and Climate Change Canada:

The following except is taken from a letter dated July 6, 2017 from Hon. Catherine McKenna:

> *Thank you for your letter of April 28, 2017, regarding bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis in bison within and surrounding Wood Buffalo National Park of Canada.*
>
> *I understand your concern with regards to the potential for transmission of bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis from herds in and around Wood Buffalo National Park to disease-free wood bison and cattle herds in neighbouring agricultural areas.*
>
> *While depopulation of diseased bison herds has been proposed as a solution in the past, it has never received widespread support from all stakeholders and governments. Finding a permanent solution to this issue remains a challenge due to the need to recover wood bison, which is a threatened species with major cultural significance to Indigenous people and Canadians in general. There is also the need to maintain the ecological integrity of its habitat in Wood Buffalo National Park while reducing the risk of disease transmission to neighbouring disease-free bison and cattle. I am encouraged to see ongoing cooperation among officials from the Government of Canada, Province of Alberta, and Government of the Northwest Territories as they explore a full range of options for the development of a long-term solution to the issue.*
>
> *I anticipate that recent undertakings, including a review of the effectiveness of the management zone between Wood Buffalo National Park and the Mackenzie Bison Sanctuary, as well as recent work by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to quantify the risk of disease transmission, will help to inform this process in the management of the issue. One remaining key priority is to ensure the early and full engagement of concerned Indigenous groups in the context of federal and provincial commitments to a renewed relationship with Indigenous people.*

AAMDC Reaction and Follow-up

This resolution specifically calls for the depopulation of diseased bison to eradicate the threat of bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis in the Wood Buffalo National Park area; however, responses from the provincial and federal governments do not indicate support for this level of action. Both the provincial and federal governments do indicate that continued effort is needed

to understand the risk of transmission, and note that this will involve consultation and engagement with multiple stakeholders.

Until such time that a formal consultation process is initialized to develop a strategy to address the eradication of diseased bison from the Wood Buffalo National Park area that would prevent further outbreaks, this resolution holds a status of **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 8-17S

Oldman River Regional Services Commission Regional Planning Funding

MD of Willow Creek

Carried

Advocacy Target: Alberta Municipal Affairs, Alberta Treasury Board and Finance

WHEREAS the Oldman River Regional Services Commission has provided 65 years of planning services to 42 southern Alberta member municipalities and nine non-member municipalities; and

WHEREAS the Oldman River Regional Service Commission facilitates regional cooperation and coordination of long range planning and decision making, provides a venue for regional strategic planning, solves issues through inter-municipal collaboration and creates an economy of scale for planning service delivery; and

WHEREAS the *Modernized Municipal Government Act* indicates that an increased level of collaboration and cooperation is valued; and

WHEREAS the Capital Region Board and Calgary Regional Partnership receive $3,000,000 each in yearly funding;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta provide long term, provincial funding to all municipalities for regional planning activities in a similar fashion to the Calgary Regional Partnership and the Capital Region Board.

Government Response

Alberta Municipal Affairs:

Growth Management Boards (GMBs) are designed to enhance regional collaboration and co-ordinated decision-making within the Calgary and Edmonton regions. Each board will be responsible for developing a 20-year Growth Plan (GP) that promotes an integrated and strategic approach to planning for future growth in these regions. This is in addition to the proposed requirement to develop a five-year servicing plan that will identify the services necessary to support the goals of the GP, and ways to optimize shared services to enhance the use of taxpayer dollars.

As outlined in Budget 2017, the GOA will provide funding to the GMBs through the Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) grant program, to ensure the GMBs have the resources they need to fulfill their mandate. To be clear, municipalities that are members of GMBs maintain the responsibility for administering direct land use planning services within their communities. MA does not provide additional funding to these participating municipalities to deliver this core municipal service.

The GOA recognizes that the Oldman River Regional Services Commission (ORRSC), and other regional municipal planning service agencies, provide quality land use planning, mapping, and subdivision services to their select member municipalities throughout the province. The province is pleased to have been able to approve a $500,000 project grant in March 2017 to a partnership of five regional municipal planning service providers, which includes the ORRSC, to create tools to support municipalities in developing municipal development plans.

Ongoing operating costs of municipal services are ineligible under the ACP, whether they are delivered by individual municipal departments, or through shared service agencies or commissions.

The province recognizes that some municipalities throughout the regions maintain their own land use planning departments, while their neighbours may choose to join shared service agencies as a practical option.

The ORRSC is a successful example of a shared service approach to municipal land use planning. Through robust membership, they have been able to realize cost efficiencies and expertise in service delivery to meet their member communities' ongoing land use planning needs. Operational delivery of municipal services, however, still remains ineligible under the ACP and other grant programs offered through MA.

Alberta Treasury Board and Finance:

TBF has no comments beyond those provided by MA.

AAMDC Reaction and Follow-up

This resolution requests "long term, provincial funding to all municipalities for regional planning activities in a similar fashion to the Calgary Regional Partnership and the Capital Region Board", but as outlined in the response provided from Alberta Municipal Affairs, funding offered through the Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) grant is not provided to meet the operational delivery of municipal services. ACP funding is instead provided to the Growth Management Boards (GMBs) to meet their legislated mandate. Though funding was provided to the Oldman River Regional Services Commission along with other regional planning service providers in 2017, this funding is not long term.

Given the differences between the GMBs and other planning bodies in the province, it is difficult to draw direct comparisons but given the lack of additional funding provided to regional planning organizations such as the ORRSC, this resolution is identified as **Intent Not Met.**

Resolution 9-17S

Legal Opinion for Species at Risk Proposed Policies

County of Warner

Carried

Advocacy Target: Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties

WHEREAS the Government of Canada have proposed *Species at Risk Act* policies in which they are currently accepting input until March 31, 2017; and

WHEREAS this Act and policies can have social and economic impact on any land use planning decision; and;

WHEREAS municipalities are responsible for land use planning as outlined in the *Municipal Government Act*; and

WHEREAS the *Modernized Municipal Government Act* has been tabled with expanded provisions related to the environment, which impacts species at risk; and

WHEREAS the proposed Policy Regarding the Identification of Anthropogenic Structures as Critical Habitat under the *Species at Risk Act*, the Policy on Critical Habitat Protection on Non-Federal Lands, and the Species at Risk Permitting Policy may have implications under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms for rural landowners and municipal land-use planning decisions;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) seek a legal opinion on the proposed *Species at Risk Act* policies to determine what effect that the proposed policies will have on municipal operations and the rights and freedoms of rural landowners;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that if the legal opinion determines that the proposed *Species at Risk Act* policies will negatively impact rural landowners, that the AAMDC proceed with further action to work with the provincial and federal government on these proposed policies to demonstrate the social and economic impacts of policy implementation on the rural landscape.

AAMDC Reaction and Follow-up

To fulfill the first part of this resolution, the AAMDC hired MLT Aikins to provide a legal opinion on the proposed Species at Risk Act Polices. The legal response identifies impacts for municipalities and rural landowners in regards to the policies, and AAMDC members should be aware of the implications some policies may have in regards to land-use planning and infrastructure project decisions. The legal response in its entirety is available on the AAMDC website.

As the obtaining the legal opinion addresses a portion of this resolution, it has been assigned a status of **Accepted in Part** and the AAMDC will continue to advocate on the importance of a socio-economic approach to policy implementation, as identified in the legal analysis.

Resolution 10-17S

Modernization of Alberta Registry Agents

Cardston County

Carried

Advocacy Target: Service Alberta

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta regulates the registry industry through the Registry Agents' Regulation by capping the fee amounts (as per Registry Agent Product Catalogue. Jan. 8, 2017, Alberta Government) for the largest volume of services provided by the Alberta registry agents, but these fees have not been adjusted in 11 years to reflect increases to the minimum wage or cost of living and inflationary increases in Alberta; and

WHEREAS Alberta registry agents offer essential professional, personalized, and secure over-the-counter and online services to clients near their homes, a fact of significant importance to aging rural Alberta clients with distance restricted driver's licences and/or without the ability to use the internet; and

WHEREAS registry agents are eager to develop a modernization plan to enhance services to Albertans in conjunction with Service Alberta and other stakeholders;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta recognize the vital role of Alberta registry agents in the delivery of essential government services to all Albertans; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of Alberta recognize the positive impact in rural Alberta communities, and work to strengthen their partnership with the Association of Alberta Registry Agents and local municipalities by:

- **Supporting the modernization of the registry agent industry;**
- **Expanding existing online services directly to Albertans through registry agents; and**
- **Ensuring the long-term sustainability of rural registry agents, including a fair and equitable fee model.**

Government Response

Service Alberta:
The Alberta registry services delivery model has largely remained unchanged since 1993, despite significant changes in the way citizens, governments, and businesses conduct transactions. Albertans have told us they want access to government services how, where and when they want.

To do this, SA is committed to improving Albertans' access to registry services through innovative service delivery methods and technology. Whether online or in the communities where they live, Albertans are looking for easy, secure, and affordable ways to access registry services.

SA recognizes that registry services are vital to the day-to-day activities of all Albertans, and that registry agents are woven into the fabric of the communities they serve. As Alberta's registry needs evolve, the ministry will continue to listen to stakeholders to ensure that the modernization of registry service delivery proceeds in the best interest of Albertans. Discussions

with key stakeholders such as the Association of Alberta Registry Agents, and the Alberta Motor Association about the future modernization of the registry service delivery system are important and will continue to occur.

SA also recognizes any future modernization of Alberta registry agents will be done with the core principle that access to in-person registry services in rural Alberta are essential, and must be preserved.

Registry agents earn revenue from service charges paid by Albertans to obtain GOA products and services. In some cases (e.g. driver's licenses, vehicle registration renewals, driver's knowledge tests, etc.), these service charges are regulated with a maximum the agent is allowed to charge. In other cases (e.g. driver's abstracts, birth certificates, corporate registrations, etc.), the service charge is not regulated by government and agents can determine the amount they charge.

AAMDC Reaction and Follow-up

The Government of Alberta response includes recognition of the vital role that registry agents play in supporting the quality of life of Albertans.

The AAMDC appreciates the Government of Alberta's prioritization of maintaining access to in-person registry services during any modernization process. However, the AAMDC will follow up with the writer of the resolution, Service Alberta, and other related stakeholders to consider the possibility of expanding online services and considering possible changes to the fee model to better support the sustainability of in-person registry services.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Part**, and the AAMDC will continue to advocate on this issue.

Resolution 11-17S

Review of Standard Practices for Installation of High Tension Cable Barriers on Two-Lane Provincial Highways

County of Barrhead

Carried

Advocacy Target: Alberta Transportation

WHEREAS the purpose of Alberta's provincial highway system is to provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods; and

WHEREAS the diversity of vehicles and equipment on Alberta's provincial highways ranges from vehicles operated by the general public to commercial, industrial and agricultural equipment; and

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta has identified High Tension Cable Barriers (HTCB) as the preferred barrier system and is a standard to replace the traditional guardrail systems where feasible; and

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta has conducted performance evaluations on the safety and operational performance of HTCB for use in medians between multi-lane roadways only; and

WHEREAS there is the potential for safety concerns created by having HTCBs installed on the shoulders (particularly both shoulders) of rural two-lane highways;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to review Alberta Transportation's Standard Practices for installation of High Tension Cable Barriers (HTCBs) on two-lane provincial highways to ensure Alberta has the safest possible highways.

Government Response

Alberta Transportation:

Where there are hazards, a mitigation strategy is required to reduce the severity of incidents where vehicles run off the road. If the hazard cannot be removed, relocated, or modified, the next best option is to protect drivers from it. High Tension Cable Barriers (HTCBs) are proven to prevent or reduce the severity of crashes where vehicles run off the road. They are the most forgiving barrier system available for reducing the severity of off-road crashes, provided a suitable operating space is available.

An October 2016 design guide available on the Alberta open government portal includes guidelines for an HTCB installation in the median and on the roadside. This bulletin includes guidelines such as the placement, and the height on undivided highways, considering wide loads, farm equipment, and nuisance hits.

As outlined in the bulletin, it is best to set HTCBs as far back from a road as practical in the interest of accommodating wide loads, farm equipment, and reducing the frequency of nuisance hits. This approach provides more lateral space and reduced barrier height compared to an installation at the edge of a road.

A suitable flat slope on the side of the road allows for an offset between the edge of a shoulder and the barrier system. If a flat slope is not available, an HTCB must be placed at the pavement's edge (the edge of the shoulder on unpaved roads).

Both the barrier height, and the lateral offset of an HTCB, affect the ability to accommodate wide loads and farm equipment. Designers have the following options:

- Offset the barrier as much as possible from the shoulder, while still providing deflection room for any hazards.
- Modify the slope in order to offset an HTCB down the slope. If the side slope cannot be flattened due to constraints, an HTCB can be placed at the shoulder break point. This is the same location where a conventional barrier system would be placed.
- Specify that an HTCB must be 840 millimetres in height or less. This height aligns with the new height requirement for W-Beam barriers. This option minimizes the likelihood of nuisance hits from wide-load vehicles, including farm equipment. AT has various HTCB products available that meet this height requirement.

On two-lane highways, motorists' ability to escape a cross-over (head-on) collision is not affected by the presence of an HTCB or a conventional barrier. In addition, HTCBs:

- do not cause snow drifting to the same extent as traditional barriers, which results in reduced run-off-road incidents and maintenance costs related to snow clearing;
- do not impede the movement of pedestrians and bicycles as much as that of conventional barriers on a road with a narrow shoulder; and
- occupy less space than a conventional barrier, allowing for a wider shoulder.

AAMDC Reaction and Follow-up

The Government of Alberta's response includes information detailing design options to ensure that HTCBs on two-lane highways are as safe as possible and do not impact snow removal or oversized vehicle travel on such highways. However, the resolution requests Alberta Transportation to review the current practices, which the response does not indicate a willingness to undertake.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met** and the AAMDC will continue to advocate on this issue.

SECTION 2: Advocacy Report Card

The following table is a summary of the AAMDC's current resolutions excluding the resolutions adopted in spring 2017 and detailed in Section 1. Recent developments on the resolutions are detailed below in the corresponding categories, and readers are reminded that although resolution statuses may remain unchanged, work on each resolution is ongoing. Each resolution has a three-year lifespan to reflect the nature of shifting government policy development and timelines associated with legislative changes and implementation.

RESOLUTIONS AT A GLANCE

CATEGORY	#	RESOLUTION TITLE	STATUS
AGRICULTURE	5-16S	Agricultural Opportunity Fund for Agricultural Research and Forage Associations	Intent Not Met
	10-16S	Genetically Modified Alfalfa	Intent Not Met
	7-15F	Agriculture Plastics Recycling	Intent Not Met
	15-15F	Management of Farm Development and Agricultural Leases	Intent Not Met
	6-15S	Management of Farm Development and Agricultural Leases	Intent Not Met
COMMUNITY SERVICES	11-16F	Stakeholder Participation in the Future of the Alberta SuperNet	Intent Not Met
	22-16F	Security of Canada Post Community and Super Mailboxes	Accepted in Principle
	11-16S	Provincial Funding for Municipal Public Libraries and Regional Library Systems	Accepted
	21-15F	Minimum Wage Increase	Intent Not Met
	5-15S	Review of Alberta Supernet Agreement with Axia Supernet Ltd.	Accepted in Principle
EDUCATION	12-16S	Provincial Funding for School Resource Officers	Intent Not Met
EMERGENCY SERVICES	12-16F	Wildland Fire Fighting Costs	Intent Not Met
	18-16F	Provincial Responsibility for Fire Costs on Occupied Public Lands	Intent Not Met

CATEGORY	#	RESOLUTION TITLE	STATUS
	8-16S	Provincial Funding for Regional Air Ambulance Services	Intent Not Met
ENERGY	5-16F	Continued Operation of Coal-fired Power Generation Plants	Intent Not Met
	13-16F	Northern Gateway Pipelines Support	Intent Not Met
	19-16F	Support for Multi-Stakeholder Task Force to Explore Value-Added Oil and Gas Opportunities	Accepted in Principle
	ER2-16S	Support for the Energy East Pipeline Project	Accepted
	24-15F	Alternative Energy Source – Solar Power	Accepted
ENVIRONMENT	1-16F	Alberta Environment Approvals for Construction Projects	Accepted in Principle
	2-16F	Exemption of Municipalities from Carbon Levy	Intent Not Met
	6-16F	Carbon Levy Exemption on Natural Gas and Propane Used for Agricultural Operations	Intent Not Met
	15-16F	Species at Risk and the Need for an Overall Socio-Economic Impact Assessment	Intent Not Met
	7-16S	Wildlife Damage Compensation Program	Accepted in Principle
	12-15F	Survey Requirements for Recreation Lease Renewals	Intent Not Met
	16-15F	*Species at Risk Act* (SARA)	Incomplete Information
	2-15S	Elk Quota Hunt	Accepted in Principle
	4-15S	Landowner Special License for Elk	Intent Not Met
	7-15S	Reinstatement of Commercial Fishing Quotas in Alberta	Intent Not Met
HEALTH & SENIORS	ER1-16S	Rural Physician Action Plan Funding	Accepted

CATEGORY	#	RESOLUTION TITLE	STATUS
	10-15F	Maintenance of Funding for Seniors' Lodging	Accepted in Part
INDUSTRY AND RESOURCES	10-16F	Funding Model for Sand and Aggregate Pit Reclamation	Intent Not Met
	14-16F	Conservation and Reclamation of Class 1 Gravel Pits	Accepted in Principle
	11-15F	Provincial Support for Municipal Aggregate Acquisition	Intent Not Met
	17-15F	Community Aggregate Payment Levy Rate Amendment	Accepted in Principle
MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE	3-16F	Implementation of the Centralized Industrial Property Assessment	Intent Not Met
	4-16F	Centralized Industrial Assessment	Intent Not Met
	17-16F	Capital Region Board Mandate Expansion	Intent Not Met
	23-16F	List of Municipal Electors	Accepted in Principle
	1-16S	Preservation of Linear Assessment for Rural Municipalities	Accepted
	2-16S	Notice Period for Adjustments to Linear Assessment Modifiers	Accepted in Principle
	3-16S	Recovery of Linear Property, Commercial Property, and Education Requisition Tax Arrears	Intent Not Met
	1-15F	Continued Provincial Funding Support for Municipalities	Accepted in Principle
	4-15F	AAMDC Participation in City Charters Discussion	Intent Not Met
	5-15F	Recovery of Linear Property Tax Arrears	Intent Not Met
	13-15F	Non-Profit Housing Organizations Borrowing from the Alberta Capital Finance Authority	Intent Not Met
	22-15F	Amendments to the *Municipal Government Act* Regarding Joint and Several Liability	Intent Not Met

CATEGORY	#	RESOLUTION TITLE	STATUS
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT	6-15F	Re-introduction of Bill 204 to Address the Matter of Adverse Possession	Accepted in Principle
	9-15F	Referrals on the Sales of Public Lands	Intent Not Met
	19-15F	Amendment to the *Municipal Government Act* to Provide for the Dedication of Environmental Reserves in Specific Cases	Intent Not Met
SENIORS	10-15F	Maintenance of Funding for Provincial Funding for Seniors' Lodging	Accepted in Part
TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	16-16F	Support for Continuation of Crude Oil Tanker Activity Along the Northern Coast of British Columbia	Intent Not Met
	7-16F	Vegetation Management on Alberta Provincial Highways	Accepted in Part
	6-16S	Creating a Residential Exemption to Roadside Development Permits	Intent Not Met
	2-15F	Enhanced Funding for Roads, Highways and Local Bridges in Rural Municipalities	Accepted
	3-15F	Local Road Bridge Opt-Outs Under *Navigation Protection Act*	Accepted
	8-15F	Land Acquisition Process for Crown Land	Intent Not Met
	20-15F	Capital Funding for Community Airports	Accepted
	23-15F	Alberta Transportation Highway Signage	Intent Not Met
	3-15S	Legal Opinion on the Jurisdiction of the Weed Control Act on All Railway	Accepted
	8-15S	Government Prioritizing Northern Alberta Highways	Intent Not Met
WATER	There are no active resolutions related to this issue.		
OTHER	8-16F	Resolution Process – Frequency of Similar or Duplicate Resolutions	Accepted
	20-16F	Casino Opportunities for Charitable Organizations	Accepted in Principle

CATEGORY	#	RESOLUTION TITLE	STATUS
	ER1-16F	Save Vegreville's Case Processing Centre	Intent Not Met
	4-16S	Improving Oversight of Delegate Legislation	Intent Not Met

AGRICULTURE

5-16S: Agricultural Opportunity Fund for Agricultural Research and Forage Associations

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request Alberta Agriculture and Forestry reinstate the 2014 Agricultural Opportunity Fund increase that was allocated for the agricultural research and forage associations.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response is somewhat unclear as it indicates that AOF funding was rescinded to $1.95 million in 2015/16 but was supplemented with "special funding" to provide a total of $3.95 million. Budget 2017-18 does not include any reference to the Agricultural Opportunity Fund, nor any reference to funding provided for agricultural research and forage associations. This resolution continues to hold a status of **Intent Not Met**.

10-16S: Genetically Modified Alfalfa

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that Alberta Agriculture and Forestry and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency work with Alberta's agricultural service boards, marketing groups, Forage Genetics Canada and other relevant stakeholders to prevent the introduction of genetically modified/engineered alfalfa to the province of Alberta until there is a marketplace and consumer acceptance in Alberta's export markets including China, Japan, the European Union, and the Middle East.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta deferred responsibility on this issue to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). In response to this resolution, the CFIA indicates that environmental safety assessments take into account the potential of the plant to become an agriculture weed or to be invasive of natural habitats; the potential consequences of gene flow to other plants; the potential to increase the activity of a plant pest; and the potential impact on non-target organisms and biodiversity.

CFIA notes that Roundup Ready (RR) (glyphosate tolerant) alfalfa was authorized in 2005, and alfalfa with reduced lignin was authorized in 2014 after undergoing safety assessments by the CFIA and Health Canada. The response from CFIA also explains that before varieties of alfalfa can be fully commercialized in Canada, they are subject to variety registration to ensure that varieties sold meet the definition of a variety and are accurately represented in the market; facilitate the seed certification process; provide tracking and tracing in commercial channels; and help ensure varietal identity and purity in the market. Proceeding with variety registration is a business decision that rests with the applicant.

In 2013, five RR alfalfa varieties were registered in Canada and in 2016, an alfalfa variety with both the glyphosate tolerance and reduced lignin traits was registered. Once a GM crop has been authorized for environmental release and obtained other appropriate regulatory approvals, including variety registration where applicable, it is considered to be like any other commodity crop.

The CFIA response emphasizes that the Government of Canada believes that the industry itself is best positioned to make decisions regarding plans to commercialize GM alfalfa in Canada and to implement stewardship programs to facilitate the coexistence of GM alfalfa with conventional types. Further, the response emphasizes that the Government of Canada believes that producers should have choice in selecting the agricultural practices, products and technologies that offer them the most benefits, both economic and environmental.

As the response from CFIA does not express any interest in preventing the introduction of genetically modified or engineered alfalfa, this resolution has been assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

7-15F: Agriculture Plastics Recycling

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that Alberta Environment and Parks develop a recycling program to provide for the collection and recycling of agricultural plastics in Alberta.

DEVELOPMENTS: The AAMDC believes that a coordinated, province-wide approach to end of life management for agriculture plastics is the most effective means of limiting the amount of agriculture plastics that end up in landfills. Currently, some rural municipalities have provided recycling options for this material, but due to its large size and limited recycling options, these programs are beyond the capacity of most municipalities.

The AAMDC has been collaborating with other municipal associations, AAMDC members, and with the Recycling Council of Alberta to explore options used in other provinces and will continue to identify opportunities for advocacy alignment. In recent months, the AAMDC has made progress with Alberta Environment and Parks and Alberta Agriculture and Forestry in emphasizing the need for an agriculture plastics program and anticipates that discussions will continue moving in a positive direction. Until a coordinated recycling program is developed, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**. The AAMDC will continue to work with other stakeholders and advocate for the formation of a program to enable the recycling of agriculture plastics.

15-15F: Management of Farm Development and Agricultural Leases

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that Alberta Environment and Parks transfer the management of farm development leases and agricultural leases to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response to this resolution indicates that no consideration is being given to transferring management of farm development leases from Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) to Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (AAF), mainly due to the fact that it would necessitate a significant shift in government structure and existing legislation.

While the AAMDC appreciates these administrative challenges, the current AEP responsibility is viewed as insufficient by AAMDC members, as the agricultural expertise is not housed in AEP. While the short-term administrative difficulties of such a shift may be significant, the AAMDC believes that the long-term benefits of the shift would be

significant for agricultural producers and rural municipalities. This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met** and the AAMDC will continue to advocate on this issue.

6-15S: Management of Farm Development and Agricultural Leases

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development transfer management of farm development leases and agricultural leases to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

DEVELOPMENTS: The government response indicates no willingness to transfer management of farm development leases and agricultural leases from Alberta Environment and Parks to Alberta Agriculture and Forestry. Although the AAMDC appreciates that the government of Alberta takes an integrated approach to public land management that involves collaboration between Environment and Parks and Agriculture and Forestry staff, AAMDC members believe that the agriculture expertise necessary to understand how market changes impact the financial ability of producers to operate is best understood by Alberta Agriculture and Forestry. As a result, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

11-16F: Stakeholder Participation in the Future of the Alberta SuperNet

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties lobby the Government of Alberta to establish a multi-stakeholder advisory committee to participate in a review of the existing agreement which expires on June 30, 2018 and make recommendations for the new agreement that would be effective July 1, 2018.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta's response indicates that they are not able to form a formal multi-stakeholder working group to inform the development of a new SuperNet operating agreement, mainly due to time constraints and the pace at which the process is moving. The AAMDC appreciates the willingness with which Service Alberta has shared information related to the new operating agreement, as well as the consideration that Service Alberta has shown for the importance of improving rural broadband access. The AAMDC hopes that this recognition is reflected in the new operating agreement. Despite the positive relationship that the AAMDC has with Service Alberta related to the SuperNet, it is disappointing that a working group that more directly integrates the perspectives of individual rural municipalities cannot be formed to better inform the process. This resolution is assigned the status of **Intent Not Met**, although the AAMDC looks forward to continuing to collaborate with Service Alberta on this matter.

22-16F: Security of Canada Post Community and Super Mailboxes

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that Canada Post work to increase efforts to enhance the security of community and super mailboxes including siting them in open and plainly visible locations in consultation with municipalities, increasing their ability to resist break-in attempts, and implementing a strategy to reduce illegal access and theft of mail from Community and Super Mailboxes.

DEVELOPMENTS: Canada Post's response indicates an intent to take action on relocating mailboxes, installing new, more secure mailboxes, and retrofitting existing mail boxes to increase their security and resistance to break-ins and tampering. The response also provides examples of current community engagement actions being taken by Canada Post to work with local law enforcement in Alberta.

The AAMDC is pleased with the planned activities and will follow up with Canada Post in the future to confirm that they are completed and to determine their effectiveness in preventing mail theft. At this point, this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle**..

11-16S: Provincial Funding for Municipal Public Libraries and Regional Library Systems

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta increase its funding for public libraries and regional library systems.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates an increase to library funding in the previous budget year as well as a smaller increase in the 2016/17 budget targeted to improve library services to on-reserve and on-settlement Indigenous populations at public libraries. While this contribution is appreciated, its specific nature may not address broader operating challenges faced by rural libraries and regional library systems.

The Budget 2017 Capital Plan includes $11 million dedicated to enhance Alberta's regional library system. As a result of this funding influx, this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted** and will continue to be reviewed in future provincial budgets.

21-15F: Minimum Wage Increase

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta to reconsider its intention to increase the minimum wage in Alberta.

DEVELOPMENTS: While the Government of Alberta response to this resolution indicates a willingness to consider and attempt to mitigate negative economic impacts that a minimum wage increase may have on businesses and public sector employers such as municipalities, it has recently passed the regulation that will schedule additional increases in the minimum wage that will rise to $15/h by 2018. As a result, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, and the AAMDC seeks to work with Alberta Labour to ensure that the increase does not negatively impact municipalities and businesses in rural Alberta.

5-15S: Review of Alberta Supernet Agreement with Axia Supernet Ltd.

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that Service Alberta not renew the Axia SuperNet Ltd. agreement until a complete examination of how the Alberta SuperNet can be managed in such a way as to promote a cost competitive, reliable, sustainable and Alberta-based solution for fibre optic internet services which meets the increasing demand for high speed internet service within the Province of Alberta with sufficient emphasis to rural connectivity.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta has developed an RFP for a new SuperNet operator when Axia's contract expires in 2018, and is in the process of developing a new operating agreement to ensure that the SuperNet better supports both pubic sector connectivity and rural development. As part of this process, Service Alberta has engaged the AAMDC and other stakeholders to better understand the current weaknesses of the SuperNet in connecting public sector institutions and supporting the development of rural broadband connectivity. At this point, the RFP has been distributed to three pre-approved vendors: Bell, Telus, and Axia. Service Alberta plans to have a new contract in place by the end of 2017.

Because Service Alberta has acknowledged flaws in the current SuperNet and challenges in how it is operated by Axia, and has expressed a commitment to improving SuperNet in the future, this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle**, and will be reviewed when a new operating agreement is signed.

EDUCATION

12-16S: Provincial Funding for School Resource Officers

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta to provide dedicated funding for school resource officers in rural area schools for the benefit of families and communities.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta's response indicates that providing school resource officers is a local school board decision for which existing provincial funding can be used. While the AAMDC appreciates the Government of Alberta's commitment to supporting local autonomy in relation to decisions on how provincial funding resources are allocated, rural school boards often struggle to fund core services and therefore, rely on cooperative agreements to provide school resource officers. Dedicated provincial funding would support the consistent presence of school resource officers in schools of all sizes across the province, and ultimately make for safer and more inclusive schools. As no dedicated funding was provided in Budget 2017 to support school resource officers in rural areas, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, and the AAMDC will continue to advocate on this issue.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

12-16F: Wildland Fire Fighting Costs

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to enter into mutual aid agreements with municipalities outside of the Forest Protection Area that do not involve a fee for service for provincially-controlled and paid-for wildland fire fighting resources.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government response highlights two important programs that municipalities have outside of the Fire Protection Area (FPA) but does indicate that the Minister is not obligated to reimburse costs to municipalities when they incur firefighting related costs from wildfires. Though Mutual Aid Resource Sharing Agreements may be widespread and the government response indicated that it is standard practice for Alberta Agriculture and Forestry to reimburse for wildfire suppression costs outside the FPA, AAMDC staff have interpreted the intent of the resolution to guarantee that the Government of Alberta enter into mutual aid agreements with municipalities to ensure all costs are properly reimbursed. Though there are programs to support the costs associated with wildfire suppression, the government response does not meet this intent and therefore, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met.**

18-16F: Provincial Responsibility for Fire Costs on Occupied Public Lands

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta amend Section 8 of the *Forest and Prairie Protection Act* by including occupied public lands to enable the reimbursement of firefighting costs on those lands.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates that because existing mechanisms allow municipalities to apply for partial reimbursement of wildfire suppression costs on occupied lands through the Municipal Wildfire Assistance Program. The AAMDC is concerned that this program does not guarantee municipalities reimbursement, and only reimburses up to 75% of their costs. As the resolution requests an amendment to provide municipalities with assurances that they will have these costs reimbursed, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

8-16S: Provincial Funding for Regional Air Ambulance Services

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta provide funds to local and regionally operated emergency response air ambulance services at the same ratio as Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society (STARS) funding.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta's response and continued inequity in funding for these services fails to address the request for equitable funding ratios between STARS and other air ambulance services. This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met** and the AAMDC will continue to advocate on this issue.

ENERGY

5-16F: Continued Operation of Coal-fired Power Generation Plants

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties requests the Government of Alberta to allow the continued operation of coal fired power generation plants while encouraging the coal industry and the electricity producers to explore alternate methods of utilizing coal for power generation and alternate uses for coal.

DEVELOPMENTS: The response from the Government of Alberta indicates that the transition away from coal fired power generation will continue forward as outlined in the Alberta Climate Leadership Plan. Though electricity generating companies are exploring the opportunity to convert existing coal fired units to natural gas, the extent to which this occurs is unclear and ultimately up to the electricity generating companies to decide. Even if this does occur, it is unclear how this will impact those communities that currently rely on coal fired electricity generation for employment and the tax base. Although the phase out of these facilities will continue over the next 12 years and impact will not be fully known until after that time, the Government of Alberta's response does not satisfy the intent of the resolution and therefore, it has been assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

13-16F: Northern Gateway Pipelines Support

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties advocate to the Government of Canada in support of the Northern Gateway Project and market access; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties collaborate with the Government of Alberta and other municipal associations to request that the Government of Canada conduct new consultations with Indigenous communities along the pipeline route prior to approving or denying the Northern Gateway Project; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties collaborate with the Government of Alberta and other municipal associations emphasizing the local, provincial, and national benefits that the Northern Gateway Project would provide and encourage support for the Project to be shared publicly.

DEVELOPMENTS: The AAMDC appreciates the Government of Alberta's response to this resolution, particularly their recognition of the importance of pipelines to support market access for Alberta's oil and gas industry. Unfortunately, as the government response indicates, the Government of Canada exercised their jurisdiction and directed the National Energy Board to dismiss the Northern Gateway Pipeline project application. Although the Government of Alberta's response is appreciated and an encouraging sign for future collaborative advocacy efforts related to market access, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met** due to the Government of Canada's decision.

19-16F: Support for Multi-Stakeholder Task Force to explore Value-Added Oil and Gas Opportunities

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to create a multi-stakeholder task force composed of representatives from industry, academia, non-governmental organizations, Indigenous communities, municipal government, the provincial government and the public no later than April 1, 2017 to make recommendations on how to grow and enhance value-added development in the oil and gas sector.

> **DEVELOPMENTS:** The Government of Alberta response indicates a strong interest in prioritizing value-added opportunities associated with Alberta's energy sector. As it relates to the intent of the resolution, the formation of the Energy Diversification Advisory Committee (EDAC) appears to be an encouraging step towards embracing a multi-stakeholder approach to diversifying Alberta's oil energy industry.
>
> For this reason, the AAMDC has assigned this resolution a status of **Accepted in Principle**, and will revisit it after determining the extent to which municipalities and other groups listed in the resolution are engaged in the EDAC's processes. According to the committee's website, the EDAC will provide recommendations to the Minister of Energy by fall 2017.

ER2-16S: Support for the Energy East Pipeline Project

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties demonstrate their support for the Energy East pipeline and inform the National Energy Board of this support;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties collaborate with the Government of Alberta and other municipal associations to emphasize the local, provincial, and national benefits that the Energy East pipeline would provide.

> **DEVELOPMENTS:** The AAMDC and the Government of Alberta stand in support of the Energy East Pipeline and through various channels, the AAMDC has brought this issue to the attention of our municipal counterparts in other provinces as well as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. The Government of Alberta's response indicates the delicate need to balance the development of Alberta's energy resources with our responsibility to be both social and environmental stewards. The Government of Alberta's support of the Energy East Pipeline makes them an important advocate of this energy project. Though the Energy East Pipeline's future remains uncertain, the AAMDC will continue to advocate for greater market access for Alberta's resources. This resolution is assigned the status of **Accepted**.

24-15F: Alternative Energy Source – Solar Power

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to provide initiatives in the way of subsidies or grants for solar energy technologies, and provide attractive micro generation rates to promote the transition from using fossil fuels to solar energy.

DEVELOPMENTS: The initiatives outlined in the Government of Alberta's Climate Leadership Plan and highlighted in the response to this resolution indicate a willingness from the province to develop policies and initiatives that will encourage municipalities to be leaders in solar power generation. Particularly encouraging is the commitment to funding allocated through the Municipal Climate Change Action Centre (MCCAC).

The Government of Alberta also released an updated version of the *Micro-Generation Regulation* in early 2017 which made generation from renewable technologies easier to install. Though not specific to municipalities, the province also released the Growing Forward 2 Program which funding towards solar photovoltaics on Alberta farms. This enables producers to conserve non-renewable fossil fuels and reduce carbon emissions, ultimately reducing the environmental footprint of Alberta's agriculture industry.

Energy Efficiency Alberta (EEA) was launched in January 2017, and will provide programs and funding to support transition to solar energy. The EEA recently announced a residential and commercial solar program that was made available in summer 2017 and provides rebates for the installation of solar photovoltaic systems.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted**.

ENVIRONMENT

1-16F: Alberta Environment and Parks Approvals for Construction Projects

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties requests that consideration be given to safety concerns related to delayed environmental approval processing and supports the creation of a process for municipalities to receive timely approvals from Alberta Environment and Parks with regard to construction projects.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response acknowledges the challenges that municipalities are facing in receiving timely approvals of works related to wetlands. The AAMDC is encouraged that Alberta Environment and Parks has identified this as a problem and is in the process of developing an updated regulatory process for road works impacting wetlands which will balance provincial and municipal needs regarding regulatory compliance and timeliness. The Government of Alberta has indicated that an Alberta Wetland Construction Directive and Alberta Wetland Construction Guide will be released in fall 2017. The AAMDC assigns this resolution a status of **Accepted in Principle**, and will monitor progress made.

2-16F: Exemption of Municipalities from Carbon Levy

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta to exempt all municipalities in Alberta from the carbon levy.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates that municipalities will not be provided an exemption from the carbon levy. Although the AAMDC appreciates the Government of Alberta's willingness to collaborate with municipalities to ensure that programs provided through Energy Efficiency Alberta and other bodies provide benefits to municipalities, there is still a concern that imposing the levy on municipalities will force an increase in municipal taxes and fees to maintain levels of service. The AAMDC's Climate Change Advisory Committee supported the need for a municipal exemption from the carbon levy, and as such, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

6-16F: Carbon Levy Exemption on Natural Gas and Propane Used for Agricultural Operations

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta amend the *Climate Leadership Implementation Act* to exempt farming operations from the carbon levy on natural gas and propane.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates that natural gas and propane used for agricultural purposes will not be exempted from carbon levy payments. The AAMDC appreciates the exemptions applied to marked gasoline and diesel for agricultural use, as well as other current and future tools implemented by the

Government of Alberta to assist agriculture producers in balancing energy efficiency with operational viability. However, as the response does not indicate a willingness to meet the intent of the resolution, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met.** The AAMDC's Climate Change Advisory Committee explored the impacts of the carbon levy on the agriculture industry and identified the need for continued advocacy for an exemption from the carbon levy on natural gas and propane used for food production. Advocacy on this issue will continue.

15-16F: Species at Risk and the Need for an Overall Socio-Economic Impact Assessment

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties works with the Government of Alberta in a timely fashion, to complete an overall Socio-Economic Impact Assessment based on all the species at risk recovery plans and retention plans currently affecting the operations of all industries in the Province of Alberta, including but not limited to oil and gas, forestry, agriculture, tourism and mineral exploration.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response summarizes the work done to date to develop strategies to comply with SARA as it impacts Alberta's caribou population, and acknowledges that socio-economic impacts of habitat protection formed a component of the recovery planning process. However, the response does not indicate a willingness to conduct a broad socio-economic impact assessment on all species at risk recovery plans in the province. Therefore, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, and the AAMDC will continue to advocate the need for a socio-economic impact assessment on species at risk recovery plans.

7-16S: Wildlife Damage Compensation Program

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) requests Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Justice and Solicitor General, and all other relevant government ministries to review the current staffing situation, program administration, budgets and funding source of the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program to ensure its effectiveness; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the AAMDC request the Government of Alberta to compensate producers for confirmed cases of wildlife predation when livestock are missing and wolves, bears or cougars have been observed in area.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta's response indicates that Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) is aware of the weaknesses of the current Wildlife Predator Compensation Program identified in the resolution and are undertaking a program review to address issues related to funding and to proving wildlife predation. The review will involve the participation of other ministries involved in administering the Program. In following up with AEP on this resolution, the AAMDC was advised that the ministry works collaboratively with Fish and Wildlife Officers in Justice and Solicitor General and the Alberta Conservation Association to deliver the Wildlife Predator Compensation Program. Compensation formulas for sheep and pigs have been adjusted to better reflect actual market values and are more responsive to market value changes. AEP noted that recent successes in reducing wolf predation of cattle on a provincial grazing reserve highlights the value of cooperation with stakeholders and that continued

work with the Alberta Beef Producers, grazing reserves, the Waterton Biosphere Association will ensue. This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle**, and the AAMDC will continue to monitor the issue.

12-15F: Survey Requirements for Recreation Lease Renewals

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties lobby the Government of Alberta to remove the requirement for municipalities to provide surveys of provincially owned land in order to renew recreational leases and to streamline the process for renewing recreational leases for municipalities.

DEVELOPMENTS: The AAMDC appreciates that that Alberta Environment and Parks will examine ways to reduce the costs of recreation lease surveys. However, the resolution requests a change to the legislation that requires the lease holder or applicant to pay for a survey. As the government has not expressed interest in reviewing this legislative requirement, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, and will continue to be advocated on by the AAMDC.

16-15F: *Species at Risk Act* (SARA)

Status: Incomplete Information

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties facilitate a round table discussion with representation from the federal Environment Minister and provincial Environment Minister to rebuild the current *Species at Risk Act* to improve it in a way that seeks a balanced and cooperative approach (economic, environmental, and social) to species protection that focuses on ecosystem protection; limiting impact on agriculture, industry, rural development, and land use in Alberta.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates a willingness to work with the AAMDC and the federal government to take a collaborative approach to aligning species at risk protection with the need to address social and economic impacts. This is encouraging and will be followed up on by the AAMDC. The AAMDC also provided input into the draft Species at Risk Act (SARA) policies that were released in 2016, noting that a balanced approach to protect species and their habitats needs to be considered to consider the social, economic and environmental impacts of these efforts.

Until a formal response from the Government of Canada is received, this resolution holds a status of **Incomplete Information.** The AAMDC is continuing advocacy efforts at the provincial and federal levels to move this issue forward.

2-15S: Elk Quota Hunt

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Resource Development implement an Elk Quota Hunt, based upon the principles of the former Chronic Wasting Disease Quota Hunt.

DEVELOPMENTS: The AAMDC appreciates the willingness of Alberta Environment and Parks to implement elk quota hunts and extend hunting seasons in order to address elk population growth. As the resolution specifically asks for an elk quota hunt based upon

the principles of the former Chronic Wasting Disease Quota Hunt, and this has not yet occurred, this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle**.

4-15S: Landowner Special License for Elk

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (ESRD) amend the Landowner Special License criteria to remove the requirement to enter in the draw process and that landowners of agricultural property with less than 160 acres qualify for the special license; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that ESRD permit Landowner Special Licenses to be used in any declared season within that Wildlife Management Unit.

DEVELOPMENTS: Although the response indicates a willingness to address the issue of landowner special licenses through a new game allocation policy, at this point there has been no policy change to address the resolution request. As such, this resolution has been deemed **Intent Not Met**, and will be revisited as the collaborative process for developing a new game allocation policy takes place.

7-15S: Reinstatement of Commercial Fishing Quotas in Alberta

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (ESRD) to reinstate the commercial fish quotas on all lakes that were not assessed by the Colby Report, and commence an assessment of each individual Zone, with stakeholder input, to determine the sustainability of Alberta's commercial fishing industry, to ensure that the lakes, the industry, and the food source are sustainable in the future for all Albertans; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that ESRD engages the stakeholders of Zone E, and reassesses the Commercial Fishing Industry and practices in Zone E.

DEVELOPMENTS: The government response asserts that the closure of Alberta's commercial fishing industry will not be reconsidered or evaluated on a zone by zone basis. As stakeholders in all zones were not provided an adequate opportunity to provide input in to the decision prior to closure, the AAMDC has deemed this resolution **Intent Not Met**, and will continue to advocate for a discussion on the viability of Alberta's commercial fishing industry that includes input from stakeholders in all zones.

HEALTH AND SENIORS

ER1-16S: Rural Physician Action Plan Funding

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties advocate that the Government of Alberta maintain the current provincial funding which is being provided to the Rural Physician Action Plan / Health Workforce for Alberta initiative.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates that RPAP will continue to be funded by Alberta Health and will continue to serve its mandate to the benefit for rural Albertans. This message is consistent with information received by the AAMDC through other advocacy avenues and the AAMDC would like to thank the AAMDC members for their direct advocacy on this issue as well.

In addition to the continuation of RPAP, Alberta Health has indicated that, as part of the RPAP review, the mandate of RPAP may be expanded to include other health professionals to ensure the full suite of health care professionals are available in rural communities. The AAMDC welcomes this tentative step and will take all additional opportunities to engage with Alberta Health on this issue.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted**.

10-15F: Maintenance of Provincial Funding for Seniors' Lodging

Status: Accepted in Part

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties lobby the Government of Alberta to return to review and finalize its review of the seniors lodge program, including increasing funding to the lodge program and removing or increasing its funding cap.

DEVELOPMENTS: This resolution has two purposes: to request the Government of Alberta to review and finalize the seniors lodge program review, and to increase funding to the seniors lodge program. As the program review has been provided to Alberta Seniors and Housing for finalization, the first request in the resolution has been met. However, the government's response gave no indication of any imminent plan to increase funding to the seniors lodge program, though funding levels for seniors housing in general saw an increase in the 2016-17 budget from $177 million to $324 million. This increase came largely through additional assistance to the Alberta Social Housing Corporation which provides affordable housing for both seniors and non-seniors. Budget 2017-18 budget saw a decrease of funding to the Alberta Social Housing Corporation to $262 million. Of this $262 million, however, $100 million is dedicated to seniors housing.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Part**.

INDUSTRY AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

10-16F: Funding Model for Sand and Aggregate Pit Reclamation

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties encourage the Government of Alberta, in reviewing the *Community Aggregate Payment Levy Regulation*, to explore opportunities to allocate a portion of future provincial funds received from the levy towards reclamation of orphaned and abandoned sites, should the current levy amount be adjusted to reflect current conditions and should provincial legislation be revised to better enforce the reclamation of gravel pits.

DEVELOPMENTS: The AAMDC is pleased by the Government of Alberta's willingness to improve management and regulations related to aggregate. In support of the regulatory review to support the review of the *Municipal Government Act*, the revised *Community Aggregate Payment Levy Regulation* was released in summer 2017 for public consultation, to which the AAMDC provided input. However, the government has not addressed the possibility of increasing provincial funding to municipalities to address reclamation of abandoned pits. Therefore, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met** and the AAMDC will continue to advocate on the need for funding to support reclamation of abandoned and orphaned pits.

14-16F: Conservation and Reclamation of Class 1 Gravel Pits

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta amend the *Code of Practice for Pits* to:

1. include an obligation for timely progressive reclamation including obligation deadlines that are enforceable; and
2. ensure securities reflect liability and provide sufficient incentive for progressive reclamation; and
3. ensure municipal land use and development approvals are obtained prior to the Province issuing pit registrations or accepting changes to existing pit registrations;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta maintain inspection and enforce compliance with the *Conservation and Reclamation Regulations* and the *Code of Practice for Pits*; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta amend the *Code of Practice for Pits* to put into place enforceable reclamation requirements for gravel pits established prior to August 15, 1978 so as to enhance the quality of life and opportunities for rural residents.

DEVELOPMENTS: The AAMDC appreciates the opportunity to be involved with other stakeholders through the engagement sessions offered by Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) to discuss pit reclamation and compliance requirements in early 2017. Recognizing that AEP will be drafting revisions to improve Alberta's pits program to address compliance and regulatory issues, the AAMDC assigns this resolution as a status of **Accepted in Principle** pending the results of this review. This resolution will continue to support AAMDC's advocacy efforts as revisions to the Code for Practice for

Pits are undertaken. This resolution status will be reviewed as additional information becomes available.

11-15F: Provincial Support for Municipal Aggregate Acquisition

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta to use its existing tools, statutes, and regulations to deal with disputes between municipalities sourcing aggregate and other Crown lessees to expedite municipal aggregate exploration.

DEVELOPMENTS: While the AAMDC appreciates the commitment made by Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) to review regulatory programs for sand and gravel pits it does not address the resolution request to better utilize existing policy and regulatory tools to protect municipal aggregate needs.

The Government of Alberta recently announced the *Alberta Aggregate (Sand and Gravel) Allocation Directive for Commercial Use on Public Land*, and a new Aggregate Land Request Process, which are effective as of September 1, 2017. The Directive outlines how aggregate resources will be allocated on public land and notes that the highest priority for allocation includes aggregate needed for public works such as public roads and projects constructed and maintained by or on behalf of the province or municipality. Provincial ministries and municipalities can submit aggregate requests, supported by aggregate requirements for the next ten years, which will be reviewed by Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP). Provincial agencies and municipalities will be expected to share their aggregate requirements with AEP, other municipalities and provincial agencies who are working in a specific area. This information will be used to develop a strategy to address the immediate and medium term needs for the broader aggregate public works in the specific area.

The AAMDC participated in engagement sessions offered by AEP to discuss pit reclamation and compliance requirements in early 2017, and emphasized the need for a provincial strategy to support the allocation of aggregate resources. Though there has been progress made to clarify access on public lands, until such time that tools are in place to support effective municipal aggregate exploration and a process to address disputes between municipalities and other Crown lessees, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

17-15F: Community Aggregate Payment Levy Rate Amendment

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta to renew the *Community Aggregate Payment Levy Regulation* and to update the maximum levy rate to reflect inflation and the increased cost of infrastructure upgrading and maintenance.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta underwent a review of the Community Aggregate Payment Levy (CAPL) regulation alongside other regulations as part of the Municipal Government Act Review process in 2016. During this review, the AAMDC advocated for an increase in the maximum levy rate to reflect increased costs of infrastructure upgrading and maintenance. The revised *Community Aggregate Payment*

Levy Regulation was released in summer 2017 for public consultation, which included a proposed increase to the maximum levy rate. The AAMDC provided input regarding the proposed increase and will revisit the status of the resolution once the regulation is finalized. Until that time, this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle** to recognized the proposed rate increase.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE

3-16F: Implementation of the Centralized Industrial Property Assessment

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties call upon the Government of Alberta to delay or repeal the establishment of the Centralized Industrial Property Authority and the creation of the Provincial Assessor until such time as the appropriate studies, pilot projects, and consultation with all effected property owners has been completed and analyzed so the effectiveness of such a policy may be fully understood;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties call upon the Government of Alberta to consult with the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties and the Alberta Assessors Association in order to answer the numerous procedural, policy and legal questions which arise from the decision to create the Centralized Industrial Property Authority under the newly created position of Provincial Assessor.

> **DEVELOPMENTS:** The Government of Alberta response does not indicate a willingness to delay or repeal the process of transitioning to centralized assessment for designated industrial property. The response indicates that the Government of Alberta received sufficient feedback in favor of the move to centralized assessment during previous MGA consultation opportunities to warrant the decisions being final. The AAMDC appreciates the Government of Alberta's willingness to share as much information as possible with municipalities related to procedural changes, but this does not address the intent of the resolution. With this in mind, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, and the AAMDC will continue to advocate on this issue.
>
> The AAMDC and several AAMDC members have been involved in the planning of the transition to centralized industrial property assessment with the intent to minimize the disturbance to municipalities and assessors.

4-16F: Centralized Industrial Assessment

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties lobby the Government of Alberta to leave the responsibility of industrial assessment with municipal governments and to provide local assessors with updated manuals and regulations required to perform the services they currently provide to municipalities for industrial assessment.

> **DEVELOPMENTS:** The Government of Alberta response does not indicate a willingness to leave the assessment of industrial property as the responsibility of municipal assessors. The AAMDC appreciates the Government of Alberta's willingness to share as much information as possible with municipalities related to procedural changes associated with centralization, but this does not address the intent of the resolution. With this in mind, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, and the AAMDC will continue to advocate on this issue.

17-16F: Capital Region Board Mandate Expansion

Status: Incomplete Information

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to direct the Capital Region Board to preserve their

current mandate as any mandate expansion beyond that mandate becomes governance that interferes with the governance of local elected officials and their roles.

> **DEVELOPMENTS:** The Government of Alberta response indicates that the Edmonton region's growth management board as established under the revised *Municipal Government Act* will likely exist with a broadened scope that includes service delivery, infrastructure, environmental issues, and economic prosperity. However, the response does not address the role that a potentially expanded GMB will have on the governance functions of individual municipalities that participate in it. The regulations that will outline the future of Alberta's GMB are currently under internal review by the Government of Alberta and are not expected prior to the October 2017 municipal elections. For these reasons, the AAMDC assigns this resolution a status of **Incomplete Information** and will clarify with the Government of Alberta when the details of GMBs began to be developed.

23-16F: List of Municipal Electors

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta to amend the *Local Authorities Election Act* to provide municipalities a practical and economical option to use a list of electors for proof of elector eligibility.

> **DEVELOPMENTS:** As outlined in the Government's response, municipalities have the ability to prepare a list of electors and may work with the Chief Electoral Office to prepare that list. However, the extend to which this is considered a 'practical' and 'economical' option is dependent on each individual municipality and their local capacity. Therefore, this resolution has been assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle**, and the AAMDC will follow-up accordingly to communicate options to members.

1-16S: Preservation of Linear Assessment for Rural Municipalities

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties continue to request the Government of Alberta to cease any consideration to redistribute linear taxation in any form, and allow rural municipalities the opportunity to continue to build partnerships with their urban neighbours that support services for all Alberta residents.

> **DEVELOPMENTS:** The Government of Alberta response indicates that the proposed *Modernized Municipal Government Act (MMGA)* does not include any changes to the distribution of municipal taxes. Under the proposed legislation, municipalities will continue to collect taxes on property types within their jurisdiction, including linear property. Any sharing of municipal tax revenues will take place through mandatory intermunicipal collaboration frameworks developed locally among neighbouring municipalities. As such, the AAMDC assigns this resolution a status of **Accepted.**

2-16S: Notice Period for Adjustments to Linear Assessment Modifiers

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta provide municipalities with notice of any

adjustments to its linear assessment modifiers well in advance of municipal budgeting processes.

> **DEVELOPMENTS:** The Government of Alberta's response indicates an understanding of the concern with the timing of assessment modifier adjustments and is willing to expedite notice of such changes when possible. However, the response gives no commitment to formally changing the provincial process for determining and communicating these adjustments. This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle**, and the AAMDC will follow up with members to determine whether the timing of notice has actually changed in upcoming years.

3-16S: Recovery of Linear Property, Commercial Property, and Education Requisition Tax Arrears

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) request the Government of Alberta to amend the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA), and other provincial legislation to broaden the tax recovery power of municipalities to collect linear property taxes by granting a lien in favour of the municipality as follows:

> A lien equivalent to that granted to the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) by s. 103 of the *Oil and Gas Conservation Act* (OGCA) that being: "on the debtor's interest in any well, facilities, and pipelines, land or interests in land, including mines and minerals, equipment and petroleum substances" and the power to garnish funds owed to the debtor;
>
> A lien which ranks in priority (or equivalent) to the lien granted in favour of the AER by s. 103(2) of the OGCA;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the AAMDC requests the Government of Canada to amend the federal *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act* to recognize municipal linear property taxes and other municipal non-property taxes as a secured interest in priority to other unsecured interests;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the AAMDC request the Government of Alberta to provide a credit reimbursement to compensate for the education property taxes that become uncollectable due to linear and commercial property bankruptcy.

> **DEVELOPMENTS:** In 2016, Alberta Municipal Affairs had convened an inter-ministry working group consisting of representatives from Municipal Affairs, Energy, Treasury Board and Finance, Education, and the AER. The purpose of this working group was to address the concerns identified in resolution 3-16S and resolution 5-15F. More specifically, the working group explored how the suite of tools available to municipalities to recover unpaid linear property taxes could be expanded, as well as possible legislative or regulatory solutions to relieve or exempt municipalities from paying provincial education property tax requisitions on linear properties in which the municipality has not been able to gather tax revenues from the property owner.
>
> Early in 2017, the working group completed their research and Government of Alberta staff internally developed options for the Minister of Municipal Affairs based on the working group's findings. At this point, the AAMDC has been informed that the options are still being considered by the Minister and decision-makers in other related ministries such as Energy and Education. The AAMDC is concerned that as the Government of Alberta continues to evaluate options, rural municipalities throughout the province face increasing financial challenges caused by unpaid linear taxes.

The AAMDC assigns this resolution a status of **Intent Not Met**, but will continue advocating for a Ministerial response to the working group's recommendation, and will consider amending this status if a response is received prior to the next round of resolution updates.

1-15F: Continued Provincial Funding Support for Municipalities

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties advocate for continued financial support to municipalities through the continuation of the Municipal Sustainability Initiative or similar program beyond 2018.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates a dedication of MSI funding beyond the 2018 timeline identified in the resolution; however, there is no clear long-term MSI strategy at this point though the program is currently under review. The AAMDC will continue to work with the province as the MSI program is renewed and will advocate for municipal funding to serve the wide range of municipal needs. This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle**.

4-15F: AAMDC Participation in City Charter Discussions

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of Alberta invites participation of the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties in city charter discussions.

DEVELOPMENTS: Through the review of the *Municipal Government Act*, the Government of Alberta has committed to working with Edmonton and Calgary to develop city charters that reflect their unique needs as metropolitan areas. The AAMDC has supported this process with the understanding that any additional tools or powers allotted to the two metropolitan areas would not come at the cost of the local autonomy of the neighboring rural municipalities.

The AAMDC believes that the development of city charters and the unique powers and responsibilities they will afford Edmonton and Calgary will impact surrounding municipalities in ways not anticipated by the cities and the Government of Alberta. The impacts of decision-making and planning within one municipality regularly spills across municipal boundaries, and the implementation of city charters will be no exception.

The AAMDC has taken the opportunity to provide comment on the proposed City Charter Regulations released in the summer of 2017. There are a number of additional powers and tools presented in the regulation that the AAMDC feels should be expanded to all municipalities in Alberta.

Other than this action, the AAMDC has not been involved in the city charter discussions, and assigns this resolution a status of **Intent Not Met**.

5-15F: Recovery of Linear Property Tax Arrears

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) requests the Government of Alberta to amend the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA), and other provincial legislation to broaden the tax recovery power of municipalities to collect linear property taxes by granting a lien in favour of the municipality as follows:

a) A lien equivalent to that granted to the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) by s. 103 of the *Oil and Gas Conservation Act* (OGCA) that being: “on the debtor’s interest in any well, facilities, and pipelines, land or interests in land, including mines and minerals, equipment and petroleum substances” and the power to garnish funds owed to the debtor;

b) A lien which ranks in priority (or equivalent) to the lien granted in favour of the AER by s. 103(2) of the OGCA; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the AAMDC requests the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to request the Government of Canada to amend the federal *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act* to recognize municipal linear property taxes and other municipal non-property taxes as a secured interest in priority to other unsecured interests;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the AAMDC request the Province of Alberta to provide a credit reimbursement to compensate for the Education Property Taxes that becomes uncollectable due to linear property bankruptcy.

DEVELOPMENTS: In 2016, Alberta Municipal Affairs had convened an inter-ministry working group consisting of representatives from Municipal Affairs, Energy, Treasury Board and Finance, Education, and the AER. The purpose of this working group was to address the concerns identified in resolution 3-16S and resolution 5-15F. More specifically, the working group explored how the suite of tools available to municipalities to recover unpaid linear property taxes could be expanded, as well as possible legislative or regulatory solutions to relieve or exempt municipalities from paying provincial education property tax requisitions on linear properties in which the municipality has not been able to gather tax revenues from the property owner.

Early in 2017, the working group completed their research and Government of Alberta staff internally developed options for the Minister of Municipal Affairs based on the working group’s findings. At this point, the AAMDC has been informed that the options are still being considered by the Minister and decision-makers in other related ministries such as Energy and Education. The AAMDC is concerned that as the Government of Alberta continues to evaluate options, rural municipalities throughout the province face increasing financial challenges caused by unpaid linear taxes.

The AAMDC assigns this resolution a status of **Intent Not Met**, but will continue advocating for a Ministerial response to the working group’s recommendation, and will consider amending this status if a response is received prior to the next round of resolution updates.

13-15F: Non-Profit Housing Organizations Borrowing from the Alberta Capital Finance Authority

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties lobby the Government of Alberta to allow housing foundations and other provincial and local non-profit affordable housing organizations to directly borrow from the Alberta Capital Finance Authority without impacting a local authority’s borrowing capacity.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response does not indicate any willingness to consider the possibility of allowing non-profit housing authorities to borrow directly from ACFA, which is the request made in the resolution. Under the current

framework, municipalities are unnecessarily included in the borrowing process for non-profit housing authorities, causing unnecessary administrative burdens, liability risk, and impacts to municipal borrowing limits. This resolution has been assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

22-15F: Amendment to the *Municipal Government Act* Regarding Joint and Several Liability

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties lobby the Government of Alberta to amend the *Municipal Government Act* to reflect one of the following regimes:

a) a system of pure proportionate liability; or

b) limit joint and several liability to only certain types of losses; or

c) limit joint and several liability to defendants whose fault exceeds a specified threshold or;

d) eliminate joint and several liability where the plaintiff is contributory negligent.

DEVELOPMENTS: In Bill 21: Modernized Municipal Government Act, no changes were made to joint and several liability. When addressed to the province though Alberta Municipal Affairs, Alberta Municipal Affairs indicated that this issue would be best addressed through Alberta Justice and Solicitor General but there has been no indication of further progress on this issue. This resolution will be assigned a status of **Intent Not Met.**

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

6-15F: Re-introduction of Bill 204 to Address the Matter of Adverse Possession

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties requests the Government of Alberta to place legislation before the Assembly, to amend the *Land Titles Act* to prevent the acquisition of lands acquired by adverse possession.

DEVELOPMENTS: The AAMDC is encouraged by Service Alberta's response, which supports the resolution and the need to eliminate the concept of adverse possession from the *Land Titles Act*. Further encouraging is a recent government motion calling for the abolishment of adverse possession in Alberta. The motion was unanimously approved by the all-party resource stewardship committee, and recommends that the government act to eliminate adverse possession in Alberta.

However, the resolution requests the reintroduction of specific legislation that would eliminate adverse possession, which has not occurred. As such, this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle**, and the AAMDC will monitor developments such as the reintroduction of Bill 204 or similar legislation.

9-15F: Referrals on the Sale of Public Lands

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties lobby the Government of Alberta to ensure that municipalities receive full compensation from the Government of Alberta, which would include proceeds from the sale of said public lands, in order to provide the required infrastructure to those said lands.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response makes no reference to the issue of costs incurred by municipalities to service previous Crown land that is purchased through public auction and developed. As such, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, and the AAMDC will continue to advocate on this issue.

19-15F: Amendment to the *Municipal Government Act* for the Dedication of Environmental Reserves in Specific Cases

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties advocate to the Minister of Municipal Affairs to amend Section 663 of the *Municipal Government Act* by the following addition:

(e) except when, in the case of when one lot is to be created from a quarter section of land or land is to be subdivided into lots of 16.0 hectares or more and is to be used only for agricultural purposes, the land to be subdivided is adjacent to the bed and shore of a water body where the municipality has adopted by bylaw a statutory plan that identifies the future development adjacent to the bed and shore of the water body for the purpose of providing public access, in which case the subdivision authority may require environmental reserve dedication pursuant to Section 664(1)(c)(ii)."

DEVELOPMENTS: The revisions to the *Municipal Government Act* do not include this specific wording nor the intent of the language. This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

7-16F: Vegetation Management on Alberta Provincial Highways

Status: Accepted in Part

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to restore funding for summer maintenance programs for its vegetation management (weed control and mowing) along provincial highways; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta to deliver a more effective maintenance program for vegetation management (weed control and mowing) along one, two and three digit highways in the province, which includes the herbicide application and other measures to control noxious weeds, prohibited noxious weeds and any unsafe vegetation on the full right of way; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request Alberta Transportation give the option in all districts of the province to enter into service agreements with municipalities for weed control.

> **DEVELOPMENTS:** The Government of Alberta response indicates a plan to resume full vegetation management practices along provincial highways in the summer of 2017. This response meets the first "ask" of the resolution, which is to restore previous vegetation management funding.
>
> The second "ask" in the resolution calls for not only the return of funding, but an improved vegetation management program compared to that previously utilized prior to the reduction in funding. At this point the Government of Alberta response indicates only a return to previous levels, and therefore does not meet the resolution's second "ask."
>
> The third "ask" in the resolution calls for Alberta Transportation to enter service agreements with municipalities for the actual delivery of vegetation management. The government of Alberta response indicates that this option will be considered, and may move forward based on further analysis of capacity and standards. The AAMDC is encouraged by this and will follow up with Alberta Transportation in the future.
>
> As the Government of Alberta response meets part of the resolution's intent, the AAMDC assigns this resolution a status of **Accepted in Part**, and will continue advocating on it in the future.

16-16F: Support for Continuation of Crude Oil Tanker Activity Along the Northern Coast of British Columbia

Status: Intent Not met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties advocate to the Government of Canada expressing support for continued tanker activity along the northern coast of British Columbia.

> **DEVELOPMENTS:** Shortly after the AAMDC's Fall 2016 Convention, during which this resolution was endorsed, the Government of Canada formally announced that they would introduce legislation to establish a moratorium on tanker traffic along B.C.'s north coast. According to the Government of Canada's website, "the moratorium will cover the Great Bear Rainforest/Great Bear Sea area: an area from the Alaska/B.C. border down to the point on B.C.'s mainland adjacent to the northern tip of Vancouver Island, and this includes Haida Gwaii. The new legislation will prohibit oil tankers carrying crude oil or

persistent oil products as cargo from entering or leaving ports and marine installations in this area."

Due to the this announcement, the AAMDC elected not to submit formal correspondence to the Government of Canada calling for the continuation of tanker traffic in the area, as the Govenrment of Canada made it clear that the matter was closed and a decision had been reached. Earlier in 2016, the AAMDC provided input to the Government of Canada on this issue by responding to this question that the Government of Canada posed to stakeholders:

> *What do you believe are the most important issues the Government should address in its plan to formalize a crude oil tanker moratorium?*

The AAMDC's response was as follows:

> *Placing a moratorium on any transportation mode or route is a drastic decision and should not be made without intensive analysis of local and national implications, projected future transportation needs and opportunities, and potential changes in technology that may render the moratorium unnecessary. Based on the discussion material that Transport Canada has shared with stakeholders, it is difficult to know the extent or level of analysis that has been undertaken to his point.*
>
> *The AAMDC understands the importance of considering and mitigating local environmental impacts of tanker traffic on BC's north coast. However, such a significant decision must consider both local issues and upstream/indirect issues that may be caused by a moratorium. While the intent of a moratorium is to protect a relatively localized ecosystem, the potential social and economic impacts may spread much farther. For example, the tanker moratorium effectively eliminates the development of Enbridge's proposed Northern Gateway pipeline from Bruderheim, Alberta to Kitimat, BC. For rural Alberta, the development of a pipeline to move crude oil from Alberta to a port facility for tanker transport to foreign markets is very important for the long-term sustainability of the oil and gas industry. While the moratorium is not directly related to the sustainability of the industry, it should not be placed into effect without considering the long-term impacts it may have on the industry. The formalization of a moratorium should be accompanied by a commitment from the Government of Canada to approve and facilitate the development of an alternative pipeline corridor from Alberta to a coastal port facility.*

This input was provided prior to the submission or endorsement of resolution 16-16F, as the AAMDC Board of Directors identified the potential tanker moratorium and the associated consultations as an emerging issue worthy of AAMDC input.

Due to the moratorium, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

6-16S: Creating a Residential Exemption to Roadside Developments

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta to amend legislation and/or regulations, including the *Highway Development Act* and the *Highway Development and Protection Regulations*, to

exempt the erection of fences, primary single family residences and associated residential property upgrades such as accessory buildings, under 200 square feet, and pools in subdivisions that have already been approved by Alberta Transportation from requiring roadside development permits in residential multi parcel subdivisions that have received Alberta Transportation approval at subdivision stage.

> **DEVELOPMENTS:** The Government of Alberta response indicates that the need for roadside development permits on parcels of land that have already been approved at the subdivision stage is necessary to ensure Alberta Transportation is apprised of development in the proximity of roads that may otherwise not be adequately communicated due to requirements in existing legislation. While the AAMDC appreciates Alberta Transportation's willingness to attempt to streamline the permitting process, the unwillingness of the Ministry to consider an exemption results in this resolution being assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

2-15F: Enhance Funding for Roads, Highways and Local Bridges in Rural Municipalities

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties lobby the Government of Alberta to increase and accelerate funding for rural road and highway construction and maintenance;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties lobby the Government of Alberta to reinstate funding for the maintenance and reconstruction of local bridges in the 2016 provincial budget, and sustain this funding in future budgets.

> **DEVELOPMENTS:** The AAMDC is pleased by the Government of Alberta's commitment to restore Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program (STIP) funding in the 2017-18 budget year, as well as their targeted STIP funding for the 2018-19 and 2019-20 budget years. The inclusion of a Local Road Bridge Program and the Resource Road Program sub-components within the STIP meets the intent of request for increased rural road funding in this resolution.
>
> Additionally, the Government of Alberta's 2017-18 Capital Plan identifies a steady projected increase in annual capital funding for provincial roads and bridges, from $450 million in 2017-18, culminating at $588 million in 2020-21. While this funding is not specifically targeted towards rural roads and highways, it is likely that rural funding will see a proportional increase as well. As such this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted.**

3-15F: Local Road Bridge Opt-Outs Under *Navigation Protection Act*

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties support the Government of Alberta's request to opt all existing local road bridges built prior to April 1, 2014 out of the Navigation Protection Act;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Alberta Transportation allow ninety days from the endorsement of this resolution for municipalities not wishing to have their local road bridges opted out of the Navigation Protection Act to communicate this request to Alberta Transportation.

DEVELOPMENTS: The AAMDC appreciated the opportunity to collaborate with the Government of Alberta in ensuring bridges managed by AAMDC members complied with the new *Navigation Protection Act*. This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted**.

The AAMDC is concerned with the federal government's review of changes made to the *Navigation Protection Act and* whether these will have impacts on municipalities. The AAMDC will be monitoring the review and providing input when possible.

8-15F: Land Acquisition Process for Crown Land

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to transfer care and control of all Crown lands required for construction of public roadways to the municipality at no charge and with no other consultations required.

DEVELOPMENTS: The government response indicates that revenue gathered through the sale of public lands is not accessible to municipalities for the purposes of road-building. This is somewhat unrelated to the purpose of the resolution, which is to provide municipalities with Crown land at no charge when it is needed to acquire rights of way to build or expand municipal roads. This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, and the AAMDC will advocate to Alberta Transportation and Alberta Environment and Parks on this issue.

20-15F: Capital Funding for Community Airports

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to reinstate funding for the Community Airport Program to a level that reflects the needs of municipalities to implement necessary and timely capital upgrades for community-owned public-use airports.

DEVELOPMENTS: The return of the Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program (STIP) in the 2017-18 budget year has allocated a $2 million for the Community Airport Program (CAP). During the process of redesigning STIP, the Government of Alberta consulted with both urban and rural municipalities to determine priority infrastructure types for funding. Rural municipalities that participated in the survey indicated that a relatively small proportion of overall STIP funding (approximately 10%) should be directed towards CAP. The $2 million allocated in 2017-18 is roughly aligned with this input. While this is slightly less than the amounts suggested in the survey, it is reasonably similar, particularly considering the high level of funding needed for roads and bridges which is also addressed in other STIP components. The AAMDC is also pleased that eligibility criteria under CAP has been expanded to include lighting. As such, this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted.**

23-15F: Alberta Transportation Highway Signage

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that Alberta Transportation enforce third party sign regulations within the development control zone;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that Alberta Transportation provide all municipalities with the sole authority to permit

and regulate electronic signs that are within the Alberta Transportation development control zone.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response to this resolution indicates that there is limited interest in addressing municipal concerns with unlicensed third-party signage within development zones. The AAMDC hopes that the Government of Alberta reviews these regulations to ensure they properly balance the interests of businesses, municipalities and road users and would look forward to participating in such a process. At a recent meeting with the AAMDC, the minister of Transportation committed to examining the issue in more detail and following up with the AAMDC on possible solutions. At this point, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

3-15S: Legal Opinion on the Jurisdiction of the Weed Control Act on All Railways

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties obtain a legal opinion on the jurisdiction of the *Weed Control Act of Alberta* for all railways, and that the opinion be shared with all of its member municipalities.

DEVELOPMENTS: The AAMDC obtained a legal opinion on the jurisdiction of the *Weed Control Act of Alberta* (WCA) for all railways. Generally speaking, the legal opinion indicates that federal railways within Alberta and provincially regulated railway lands must comply with the weed control requirements of the WCA. The legal opinion identifies that municipal inspectors have broad authority to enforce and monitor compliance under the WCA within geographical boundaries of each municipality and that activity undertaken by a federal railway company on its lands that are not integral to federal undertakings are subject to provincial legislation. Further, the legal opinion expresses that complying with the WCA will not impair the operation of any federal railways nor is there a federal law which directly conflicts with the provisions of the WCA in this regard. This resolution has been assigned the status of **Accepted**.

8-15S: Government Prioritizing Rural Alberta Highways

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties lobby the Government of Alberta to improve the condition of highway infrastructure in rural Alberta by setting them as a highest priority level for the province.

DEVELOPMENTS: While the Government of Alberta response acknowledges that a number of technical factors are taken into consideration when prioritizing highway maintenance and improvements, the response does not address the link between heavy industrial traffic and premature deterioration of rural highways highlighted in the resolution.

Provincial funding tools for municipally-managed rural roads such as the Well Drilling Equipment Tax and the Resource Road Program indicate that industrial activity in rural areas does rapidly strain rural roads. A similarly focused approach to addressing provincially-managed rural roads damaged by industrial traffic would strengthen the province's transportation system. This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

WATER

There are no active resolutions specifically focused on this topic.

OTHER

8-16F: Resolution Process – Frequency of Similar or Duplicate Resolutions

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Association of Alberta Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) Board of Directors review the AAMDC Resolution Process Policy with the objective of limiting the frequency in which resolutions that duplicate previously endorsed resolutions or deal with subject matter recently addressed through endorsed resolution are presented to the convention floor.

DEVELOPMENTS: The AAMDC initiated a thorough review of the AAMDC Resolution Process Policy in the spring of 2017 which involved engagement with the AAMDC's resolutions committee, members, board of directors, and parliamentarian. Based on input received, the policy has been amended and includes clarification on the process the Resolutions Committee can used to address the frequency of similar or duplicate resolutions being brought forward. The AAMDC Board of Directors approved the revised policy in summer 2017. The revised policy was shared with members notifying of the key changes, and is being implemented effective immediately. As the policy reflects the request outlines in this resolution, the AAMDC assigns this resolution a status of **Accepted**.

20-16F: Casino Opportunities for Charitable Organizations

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to change Alberta's charitable gaming model so as to provide equity to all charitable organizations in Alberta, by addressing the disparity between the funding provided, and the frequency of opportunities available to charitable organizations in major urban centers compared with those in rural communities.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission (AGLC) response indicates an acknowledgement that the current charitable gaming model is disadvantageous to charities operating in rural Alberta. The AAMDC is pleased that the AGLC is planning to revise the current model and hopes to be a part of the process. As such, this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle** and will be re-evaluated based when the review of the current model begins.

ER1-16F: Save Vegreville's Case Processing Center

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the federal department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship reconsider their decision to close the Case Processing Centre (CPC) in Vegreville.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Canada response provides the rationale under which Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada made the decision to relocate their case processing centre from Vegreville to Edmonton. Unfortunately, the letter does not indicate whether the Government of Canada conducted a local impact analysis on Vegreville and the surrounding rural areas, or whether potential community impacts were considered as a component of their decision-making process. Most importantly, the

response does not indicate a willingness to reconsider the final relocation decision. As a result, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

4-16S: Improving Oversight of Delegated Legislation

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta to enact a legislative requirement that all delegated legislation including regulations, orders in council, ministerial orders and codes, that are essential to the implementation of new or amending legislation, be submitted for review to the public and the legislature before final reading of the enabling legislation takes place.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response is not supportive of expanding the review of delegated legislation to the public and legislature. The AAMDC appreciates the government's willingness to consult on the MGA review and other recent legislation, but as the resolution requests an expansion of current consultation processes, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

CONTRIBUTORS

The Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties wishes to thank the Board of Directors members who provided content, input, and advice to this report card:

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