

Alberta's industrial and resource sector is extremely important to the province's continued economic growth and the viability of rural communities. Industrial development is often accompanied by environmental concerns, regulatory challenges, land use disputes and impacts on other types of development.

What is the AAMDC's position on the importance of having a municipal perspective on matters related to industry and resource development?

- Resource development is an important economic driver in Alberta and may have significant impacts on rural municipalities in balancing development and environmental priorities.
- In many cases, resource development requires the use of large tracts of land. As a result, rural Alberta is home to the majority of the province's resource projects (ex. oil and gas, aggregate extraction, forestry, agriculture).
- Municipalities should have the ability to balance demands of industry and resource extraction with environmental stewardship, planning and approval processes, and taxation levies.
- Taxpayers often approach municipalities with health concerns related to an industrial project (ex. odour, dust, noise, etc.). Municipalities should have the opportunity to have these concerns addressed by industry or the regulating body during the project planning stages.
- In order for municipalities and the resource sector to co-exist, policy and regulations relating to approvals, compensation, rights-of-way, safety, and pipeline alignment negotiations must be fair and consider the municipal perspective regardless of the regulating authority (provincial or federal).

What financial considerations do rural municipalities have with respect to industry and resource development?

- As many industrial developments are located within rural municipalities, a fair proportion of the economic benefits should be received by the municipality to address environmental management and infrastructure challenges resulting from industry activities.

- Landowners must be properly compensated by the-business/industrial sector for providing land to be used for extraction, processing, and transportation.
- Properly assessing industrial properties requires local knowledge and expertise that municipal assessors have developed over several years. Centralizing the assessment of designated industrial properties may compromise this local knowledge and result in inaccurate assessments, in turn compromising the financial viability of rural municipalities.

What collaborative relationships are essential to rural municipalities in matters relating to industry and resource development?

- Municipalities work within legislative and regulatory parameters in approval processes for industry and resource development (ex. Alberta Energy Regulator requirements).
- Municipalities must have a guaranteed voice in the planning and approval of resource development projects that have local impacts.
- Industry must be willing to work with municipalities to design projects that will benefit rural communities through job creation while mitigating impacts on municipal infrastructure and the local environment.
- As the province transitions towards renewable energy projects, the government of Alberta must work with rural and small urban municipalities to mitigate the local negative impacts and harness the local opportunities associated with this transition.
- The approval process for industry activities must be coordinated between the provincial government and municipalities (ex. approvals required for aggregate activities on public versus private lands). Duplicated efforts and inconsistent practices may result in increased costs and inefficient use of resources.

How does the work of the AAMDC support the sustainability of industry and resource development in Alberta?

- The AAMDC is actively involved in various committees that seek to balance industrial development with environmental stewardship (ex. Clean Air Strategic Alliance, Alberta Water Council, Government-Industry Joint Geophysical Steering Committee).

What current industry and resource development related issues are impacting rural Alberta?

Oil and Gas Development

- Oil and gas development projects must proceed in a way that causes minimal damage to the environment, including impacts on water quality. Municipalities must have the ability to voice concerns about such environmental issues, both during the project review stage and when projects are operational.
- Rail is becoming an increasingly popular method of transporting oil products and the safety and regulatory challenges associated with this transition have been pushed to the forefront.

Aggregate/Gravel

- Municipalities often compete with the provincial government and the private sector for aggregate resources. A fair allocation process is necessary to ensure that adequate resources are available for municipal and provincial infrastructure needs.
- Recognizing that there is a need to protect environmentally sensitive areas, access to aggregate resources is essential for continued construction of infrastructure projects that provide public benefits.
- As regional plans are developed under the Land-use Framework, municipalities should be active participants to raise awareness of aggregate needs, support future community growth and develop strategies to ensure a sustainable supply of aggregate for future public works purposes. Aggregate resources should be included in regional plans developed under the Land-use Framework.
- Municipalities should have first right at no cost to gravel resources on or under municipal road allowances for the purposes of municipal road maintenance and construction.

Forestry

- Forestry is an important contributor to a diversified provincial economy. The AAMDC supports sustainable forest management that provides ecological, economic and social opportunities.
- Ensuring that Alberta's forest products have access to markets is essential in supporting the industry and provincial and federal economies.
- The forestry industry is susceptible to devastation caused by pests such as the Mountain Pine Beetle and wildfires. Continued investment in the forestry sector is essential in growing the industry and the communities that support it. Municipalities work with government, industry, residents and landowners through programs such as FireSmart to plan and mitigate risks of wildfire.

Air Quality

- Alberta is a resource-rich province where diverse industries operate and new development is ongoing. These activities may impact air quality and reasonable measures should be implemented to ensure that they do not cause undue harm to human health or the environment.

For more information, visit www.aamdc.com for **reports** and an online, searchable **Resolution Database** which includes information on all active resolutions and emerging issues related to industry and resource development.

AAMDC reports specifically related to the position statements identified in this document include:

- ***Got Gravel? Strategies to Secure Gravel for Rural Municipalities – Part 1: Summary Report***
- ***Got Gravel? Strategies to Secure Gravel for Rural Municipalities – Part 2: Technical Report***

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