

Regular Council May 10, 2016

Worked on Material
Item 8.4



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May 10, 2016

Mr. Al Kemmere, President
Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties
2510 Sparrow Drive
Nisku, Alberta T9E 8N5

VIA EMAIL

Email to: akemmere@aamdc.com

RE: Creation of a Centralized Authority for the preparation of Industrial Property Assessments

Dear Mr. Kemmere,

On behalf of Sturgeon County, I am writing to reinforce our concerns with the consideration by Alberta Municipal Affairs for the creation of a centralized assessment authority for industrial property assessments containing machinery and equipment, and request that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) strongly advocate against centralization in its discussions with the province in relation to the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA). I have copied others, including the membership of the Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association, and communities within AAMDC's Pembina Zone who may have similar concerns.

Sturgeon County does not support the creation of an agency responsible for industrial assessments within our municipality, nor do we consider this a solution that addresses stakeholders' concerns.

Sturgeon County would like to retain the current responsibility as we have been successful in providing fair and equitable assessments in an effective and efficient manner. The MGA has forwarded the philosophy of local government autonomy and local responsibility and accountability. We take this obligation very seriously. Sturgeon County has built strong relationships with industrial property owners, has invested in people and systems, and does not wish to be in an adversarial position if the need to appeal assessments conducted by a central agency arises should centralization occur.

We have reviewed recommendations by the Alberta Assessors' Association (attached letter and executive summary), and agree that the best way to achieve consistency would be to improve the clarity of the legislation and implement the well site equipment standardization report. We do not endorse the status quo, but will be recommending amendments to the MGA, the Machinery & Equipment Minister's Guidelines, and the Construction Cost Reporting Guide to clarify the definitions and terminology, and to update periodically in order to keep up with industry trends and economic times. We also believe that clarification and training, offered by Alberta Municipal Affairs, could enhance achieving the objectives found in the MGA.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide clarity on these matters.

Sincerely,

Tom Flynn
Mayor, Sturgeon County

cc Sturgeon County Council
Mr. Ed Gibbons, Chair, Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association
(ed.gibbons@edmonton.ca)
Mayor Gale Katchur, City of Fort Saskatchewan, member of the Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association Board of Directors
(GKatchur@fortsask.ca)
Reeve Wayne Woldanski, Lamont County, member of the Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association Board of Directors

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Mayor Roxanne Carr, Strathcona County, member of the Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association Board of Directors

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Mayor Karl Hauch, Town of Bruderheim, associate member of the Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association

(Karl.hauch@bruderheim.ca)

Deputy Mayor Louise Bauder, Town of Gibbons, associate member of the Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association

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Mayor Mel Smith, Town of Redwater, associate member of the Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association

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Mayor Jim Rennie, Woodlands County

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Mayor Gerald Soroka, Yellowhead County

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Mr. Neil Shelly, Executive Director, Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association

(neil@industrialheartland.com)
