



January 8, 2018

Honourable Amarjeet Sohi
Minister of Infrastructure and Communities Canada
PO Box 8777, Postal Station T
Ottawa, ON K1G 1C0

Dear Minister Sohi:

Each year at our annual Convention, AUMA members discuss and vote on proposed resolutions related to matters that impact municipalities, but require action by other orders of government. Enclosed for your response is the 2017 resolution that pertains to your ministry:

- AUMA Resolution 2017.B6 - Cell Phone Towers.

We look forward to your response to this resolution.

If you wish to review the resolutions pertaining to other ministries, they can be found on our website at: <https://auma.ca/advocacy-services/resolutions/resolutions-library>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Morishita', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Barry Morishita
AUMA President

Enclosure

WHEREAS telecommunication is vital to the national economy and security and is the jurisdiction of the Federal Government and through this Federal jurisdiction telecommunication towers locations are approved by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED for short, formerly Industry Canada) based on guidelines for telecommunication towers for site selection and public consultation;

WHEREAS municipalities encourage telecommunication providers to participate in planning of new communities, establishing appropriate locations and promoting co-location to minimize the total number of telecommunication tower sites encouraging efficient land utilization;

WHEREAS municipalities strongly encourage locations on existing structures or buildings in established communities and the use of design features, colour and landscaping to screen telecommunication facilities; and

WHEREAS municipalities encourage the location of cell phone towers be identified early in the planning and development process and in a manner which minimizes the effects on residents, lessens visual impact, and respects natural and human heritage features and sensitive land uses to the greatest extent possible.

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association urge the Federal Government to require telecommunication companies work in partnership with municipalities early in the planning process to select, not just identify, the location of future telecommunication facilities.

BACKGROUND:

As per Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada's website, "the demand for wireless services is growing, and is expected to continue as more and more Canadians use smartphones and other mobile devices. To accommodate this demand, more towers will be needed."

Wireless companies have been working with municipalities in the site selection process and are required to clearly notify and consult with the public. During this process municipalities often hear concerns from residents regarding cell tower locations. Common concerns include health considerations, aesthetics and negative effects to property values. Balancing these concerns can be challenging when residents also expect good wireless service.

Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) has set out in their guidelines very explicate expectations related to health and safety standards, public consultation, settling disputes and siting decisions. Municipalities strongly supports ISED's push for wireless providers to co-locate therefore reducing the number of sites. Municipalities also endorses the "Antenna System Siting Protocol Template" that the Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities launched in February 2013.

There are areas for improvement in the planning process of new neighbourhoods. One area includes wireless providers participating in the planning process to identify sites before development occurs. Identifying land uses and utilities in the planning approval process would minimize the 'not in my backyard' (NIMBY) effect in the site selection process as all planning processes include public consultation. It is also important for wireless

companies to be more aware of the aesthetics that can be linked to negative effects to property values. Wireless companies have demonstrated very unique and creative ways to blend towers into the areas surrounds. It is time that they are more aggressive about aesthetic features of their towers especially in residential areas.