

Northern District Resolutions

CATEGORY 1

AMM Resolution #7001-2025

Derelict Buildings

Sponsor(s)

Thompson, City (Northern)

Department(s)

Manitoba Municipal and Northern Relations

WHEREAS derelict buildings are a blight on Manitoba municipalities, and constitute a public safety hazard in our communities; and

WHEREAS owners of these buildings are non-compliant with municipal by-law pertaining to property standards and public safety; and

WHEREAS *The Municipal Act* empowers municipalities to enact Derelict Building By-laws to address such properties that remain hazardous and unremedied; and

WHEREAS the processes required by *The Municipal Act* are time consuming and costly to municipalities, resulting in excessive use of staff, enforcement, fire & emergency services, policing resources, and legal fees, with legal proceedings often lasting multiple years while the public safety hazard persists; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOVLED THAT the AMM lobby the Province on Manitoba to work collaboratively with Manitoba municipalities to streamline the process of addressing derelict buildings in our communities, to ensure public safety.

CATEGORY 1

AMM Resolution #7002-2025

Tax Sale

Sponsor(s)

Thompson, City (Northern)

Department(s)

Manitoba Municipal and Northern Relations

WHEREAS municipalities are seeing property owners that are allowing deterioration of their properties to the point that they are no longer suitable for habitation; and

WHEREAS these owners also fall into arrears on their tax accounts, utility billings and enforcement costs which result in the property falling into the tax sale process; and

WHEREAS these properties are not bid on in tax sale primarily due to their condition, and then become the ownership of the municipality which causes considerable time for staff plus costs to demolish and remedy hazards with no recourse to recover costs except through the budgetary process; and

WHEREAS these owners can continue to own other properties in the municipality and face no consequences for their allowing deterioration of much needed housing;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to empower municipalities to hold negligent owners and corporations responsible for unpaid taxes and costs beyond the normal tax sale process.

CATEGORY 1

AMM Resolution #7003-2025

Forest Fire Mitigation

Sponsor(s)

Thompson, City (Northern)

Department(s)

Manitoba Municipal and Northern Relations
Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure
Manitoba Natural Resources and Indigenous
Futures

WHEREAS forest fires present a real and growing danger to the lives and livelihoods of all Manitobans; and

WHEREAS the changing climate is resulting in a massive increase in forest fires across Canada; and

WHEREAS these fires have resulted in billions of dollars of losses to residents, businesses, municipalities, and First Nations across the country; and

WHEREAS these fires often occur in unorganized territories in the province which do not fall within municipal boundaries; and

WHEREAS community Fire Smart programs, building fire breaks and deploying dedicated, locally based, value protection assets to protect communities and critical assets have proven effective in preparing and protecting municipalities from encroachment of forest fires;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to develop and fund a new program to support forest fire mitigation and protection efforts across the province; including the purchase of equipment and training on value protection assets, public Fire Smart education, as well as the design and construction of fire breaks; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT Manitoba make the necessary legislative changes to allow municipalities to apply to perform fire protection activities on Crown lands and within unorganized territories at no cost to the municipalities.

CATEGORY 1

AMM Resolution #7004-2025

Class 6 and 7 Soils

Sponsor(s)

Kelsey, RM (Northern)

Department(s)

Manitoba Environment and Climate Change

WHEREAS in the Province of Manitoba, reconnaissance soil surveys were completed between 1926 and 1996 and detailed soil surveys were completed between 1972 and 2022, classifying surface soils by their agricultural capability in accordance with the *Canada Land Inventory*; and

WHEREAS the soil classification from the *Canada Land Inventory* referenced in the *Planning Regulation*, the *Water Rights Regulation*, and the *Nutrient Management Regulation* are defined as: the mineral soils are grouped into seven classes according to their potentialities and limitations for agricultural use. Where Class 6 soils are capable only of producing perennial forage crops, and improvement practices are not feasible and Class 7 soils have no capability for arable culture or permanent pasture; and

WHEREAS Manitoba Environment and Climate Change through the Drainage and Water Rights Licensing Branch regulate drainage within the Province of Manitoba through the *Water Rights Act*; and

WHEREAS all persons including municipalities must obtain a valid and subsisting license as per the *Water Rights Act*; and

WHEREAS development of land cannot take place without obtaining a valid drainage license to construct pertinent development features such as roads and ditches; and

WHEREAS the Drainage and Water Rights Licensing Branch, as of 2019, has implemented an internal policy in which drainage licenses on Class 6 and 7 soils cannot be approved, for registrable or licensable projects; and

WHEREAS the term “registerable project” is defined, separately from other licensable projects for drainage works, in the *Water Rights Act*. These are typically minor or less impactful drainage projects, often involving surface or subsurface drains. Registration allows for a streamlined process compared to full licensing, but still ensures compliance with regulations; and

WHEREAS licensable applications for water control works are not restricted on Class 6 and 7 soils, only “registerable projects” are restricted per the *Water Rights Regulation*; and

WHEREAS municipalities recognize the need to restrict development in environmentally sensitive areas and critical/significant wildlife habitats such as wetlands and habitats for migratory species; and

WHEREAS *The Planning Act, The Planning Regulation, The Environmental Act, The Water Protection Act, The Water Rights Act, The Water Rights Regulation, and The Nutrient Management Regulation* do not restrict the issuance of Water Control Works Licenses on Class 6 and 7 soils; and

WHEREAS the municipalities recognize that some subclasses of Class 6 and 7 soils are strongly associated with presence of wetlands, however development of wetlands is already limited per the *Water Rights Regulation*; and

WHEREAS many subclasses of Class 6 and 7 soils are often viewed as desirable for rural subdivisions, lakeside cottage developments, and campgrounds due to their lack of agricultural capability, including soils which:

- Have a restricted rooting zone depth for crops,
- Contain poisonous plants to farm animals,
- Are heavily forested,
- Are affected by drouthiness (sandy and gravelly soils),
- Have high salinity,
- Have high groundwater table,
- Are too stony to permit cultivation, and
- Have a topographic slope of greater than 31%; and

WHEREAS the *Canada Land Inventory* soil classification system used in the reconnaissance and detailed soil surveys was published in 1965, this classification speaks only to agricultural uses, and predates current drainage practices and drainage regulations by 60 years; and

WHEREAS the Drainage and Water Rights Licensing Branch is applying this internal policy to all undeveloped lands on Class 6 and 7 soils, regardless of current zoning designations; and

WHEREAS many municipalities are experiencing significant loss of developable land, portions of which have already been designated/zoned for development, from the implementation of this internal policy; and

WHEREAS this internal policy is unnecessarily restricting development and the potential for increased tax-base of municipalities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to only enforce current limitations published in the Acts and Regulations, and remove the internal policy denying Water Control Works Licenses on Class 6 and 7 soils; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Province of Manitoba engage AMM to participate as stakeholders in the preparations of future internal policies within the Drainage and Water Rights Licensing Branch to adequately evaluate the impact of these internal policies on growth and future development.

CATEGORY 3

AMM Resolution #7005-2025

Radon Action Strategy

Sponsor(s)

Thompson, City (Northern)

Department(s)

Manitoba Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care

WHEREAS radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that comes from the soil and enters homes and buildings as a carcinogen that causes more than 3,200 deaths per year in Canada; and

WHEREAS non-smokers who have high levels of radon in their homes over their lifetime have a 1 in 20 chance of developing lung cancer, and for smokers this risk is 1 in 3; and

WHEREAS data from Health Canada shows that Manitoba has some of the highest indoor radon levels in Canada, with approximately one in four homes testing above the national guideline of 200 becquerels per cubic metre, which highlights the urgent need to address radon levels in the homes, public buildings, and workplaces in our province; and

WHEREAS prolonged exposure to elevated radon levels poses a serious and preventable public health risk to Manitobans across all communities and housing types and results in incalculable health care costs; and

WHEREAS many homeowners and tenants are unaware of the dangers of radon exposure or lack the financial means to conduct testing and undertake mitigation to protect their health, which can range from \$50 for a test kit to \$3,000 or more for professional remediation; and

WHEREAS there is currently no comprehensive provincial strategy in Manitoba addressing radon awareness, testing, mitigation, or financial support for residents, and there is a risk of this responsibility being off-loaded to municipalities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) lobby the Province of Manitoba to develop and implement a comprehensive Radon Action Strategy that includes:

1. Providing free or subsidized radon test kits to residents through public health agencies, schools, and libraries.
2. Establishing a provincial grant or rebate program to assist homeowners and landlords with the costs associated with radon testing and mitigation, prioritizing low- and moderate-income households.
3. Introducing a Manitoba Radon Mitigation Tax Credit, allowing residents to claim a percentage of certified radon mitigation expenses, making mitigation more affordable and accessible.

4. Requiring regular radon testing in schools, childcare centres, and social housing units, with results made publicly available and mitigation efforts undertaken where necessary to protect vulnerable populations.
5. Updating *The Residential Tenancies Act* to mandate radon testing and disclosure in rental properties, ensuring landlords address elevated radon levels to safeguard tenant health.
6. Collaborating with stakeholders to include radon mitigation measures in new home warranty programs, ensuring that new constructions meet radon safety standards and provide recourse for homeowners if elevated levels are detected.
7. Exploring regulatory changes to require radon testing and disclosure during real estate transactions and for rental properties.
8. Revising the Manitoba Building Code to assess the effectiveness of radon control standards and incorporate more protective measures from CAN/CGSB 149.11-2024, particularly in high-risk areas, to prevent radon infiltration from the outset.
9. Launching comprehensive education initiatives to inform Manitobans about the health risks of radon, the importance of testing, and the availability of resources for mitigation.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT AMM advocate for interdepartmental collaboration within the provincial government, engaging Manitoba Health, Manitoba Housing, and other relevant agencies, including the Manitoba Lung Association and CancerCare Manitoba, to coordinate efforts and resources across sectors in addressing radon exposure throughout Manitoba.

CATEGORY 1

AMM Resolution #7006-2025

Updating and Modernizing the Mental Health Act

Sponsor(s)

Thompson, City (Northern)

Department(s)

Manitoba Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care

WHEREAS Manitoba's *Mental Health Act* has not been significantly updated in many years and no longer reflects best practices in mental health care, crisis intervention, or public safety coordination; and

WHEREAS the Act places a disproportionate burden on the RCMP and municipal police services, requiring officers to apprehend, transport, and remain with individuals in mental health crises, often for extended periods in emergency departments or psychiatric facilities; and

WHEREAS the rising number of mental health calls is straining police resources across Manitoba, limiting capacity to respond to other public safety issues, and placing police in roles more appropriately filled by health care or crisis response professionals; and

WHEREAS other provinces have implemented more modern and flexible approaches that include mobile crisis teams, mental health transportation alternatives, and co-responder models that relieve pressure on law enforcement while improving outcomes for individuals in crisis; and

WHEREAS recent amendments to *The Mental Health Act* and *The Police Services Act* have introduced Institutional Safety Officers (ISOs), who may provide support in mental health response within designated facilities, but their deployment remains limited, and further integration is needed to maximize their effectiveness in reducing strain on police resources;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) lobby the Province of Manitoba to undertake a comprehensive review and modernization of *The Mental Health Act*, in consultation with municipalities, law enforcement agencies, health authorities, and Indigenous leadership; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM advocate for the following legislative and operational improvements:

1. Establish and fund Mobile Crisis Response Teams across Manitoba, staffed by trained mental health professionals and/or paramedics to respond to non-violent mental health emergencies, reducing the need for police intervention.
2. Develop a province-wide mental health patient transportation service that can be deployed in place of police officers for non-criminal, health-based apprehensions and transfers.

3. Limit the requirement for police officers to remain at health facilities with individuals in custody, once the facility has assumed care and no public safety risk exists.
4. Enable the use of virtual psychiatric assessments (telepsychiatry) as a mandatory step prior to transporting individuals—particularly youth—from rural and northern communities to urban psychiatric facilities, to ensure that hospitalization is clinically necessary and to reduce avoidable transfers.
5. Create regional Crisis Stabilization Units (CSUs) where individuals can be taken for assessment and care outside of emergency departments, helping to divert non-emergent cases from hospitals.
6. Expand mental health support programs in rural and northern communities, ensuring access to timely assessment and care without overreliance on RCMP transport.
7. Invest in community-based supports and preventive mental health services to reduce the number of crisis interventions required.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Province work with all partners to ensure legislative changes are accompanied by appropriate funding, training, and infrastructure development, so municipalities are not left to shoulder additional costs or responsibilities alone.