

## What are other restructuring alternatives?

The **Municipal Government Act** provides other alternatives for local government restructuring. These include:

**Dissolution** - when a municipality gives up its status as an incorporated municipality to become a hamlet in a bordering municipality;

**Formation** - when a new incorporated municipality is established;

**Annexation** - when a municipality acquires additional lands from a bordering municipality; and

**Change of Status** - when a municipal district, village, town, city or specialized municipality changes to another type within this group.

## Where can I find out more about amalgamation and municipal government restructuring?

Contact staff at the Municipal Services Branch, Alberta Municipal Affairs:

**780-427-2225**

or toll free: **310-0000 (within Alberta)**

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**Government of Alberta** ■  
Municipal Affairs

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# THE AMALGAMATION PROCESS FOR ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES

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## AMALGAMATION

What is it?

What is the process?

What happens?

## What is municipal amalgamation?

Municipal Amalgamation is a legal process of local government restructuring established by the ***Municipal Government Act***. Amalgamation is when two or more municipalities join to become one newly formed, incorporated municipality.

## Why might municipalities amalgamate?

Municipalities consider amalgamating if they believe they can operate more effectively or efficiently as one municipality than they can as separate jurisdictions. Typically, they initiate amalgamation voluntarily.

In some cases, restructuring in the form of amalgamation may not be the best solution for local issues if other processes prove to be better options.

## How does the amalgamation process start?

Municipal amalgamation involves several steps mandated by the ***Municipal Government Act***. In most cases, representatives from the amalgamating municipalities have discussed the idea to ensure that the parties are interested before the first steps in this legal process occur.

Amalgamation can be initiated in one of two ways:

**By a municipal council:** A council can initiate negotiations to amalgamate with one

or more other municipalities. It does this by serving notice to the municipalities with which it wants to amalgamate, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and any other local authorities that may be affected by the proposed amalgamation.

**By the Minister:** The Minister of Municipal Affairs may initiate amalgamation if he or she believes that one new municipality will be more effective or efficient than the separate, existing municipalities.

## What else happens in the process?

Once the amalgamation process starts, representatives from each involved municipality begin the amalgamation negotiations.

They discuss the new municipality's governance structure, its finances, how it will provide municipal services, and how to manage the transition from the original municipalities to the new one.

Along with the negotiations, the amalgamating municipalities are required to conduct a public consultation process with their residents.

When the public consultation is complete and negotiations conclude, the municipalities submit a report to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. All the municipalities involved have an equal voice in the report, which must include:

- the proposal produced by the negotiations listing the matters of agreement, and disagreement;
- a description of the public consultation process; and
- a summary of the views expressed by the residents during the consultation.

The Minister will consider the report before deciding whether or not to recommend amalgamation to the Provincial Cabinet. If approved, the amalgamation comes into effect with the issue of an Order in Council.

## What happens after amalgamation?

The municipalities amalgamate to form a new municipality. To continue a representation structure residents are comfortable with, the new municipality can be divided into electoral wards that represent the boundaries of the original municipalities. The new municipality has its own new council responsible for all municipal governance and administration.