

ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA BUILDING OFFICIALS

Committed to serving the public interest and the professionals that ensure safety in the built environment

The Association of Minnesota Building Officials is a non-profit organization representing individuals and municipalities with no financial interest in the content of construction regulations. Our interest is affordable public safety in the built environment and the efficient administration of construction codes.

The Association supports the use of building permit fees for the purposes for which they were collected; to administer the application of the Minnesota State Building Code. By statute, fees must be fair, reasonable, and proportionate and have a nexus to the actual cost of the service for which the fee is imposed.

Examples of acceptable use of building permit fees include the cost of employing people to administer the code; travel and training expenses of building department personnel; overhead, vehicle, and infrastructure costs of the building department; membership in applicable associations that support the mission of the building department; and, participation in the formulation of construction regulations that better balance the economic interest of the community with its need for a safe built environment.

The Association believes that the optimal method of ensuring the appropriate use of building permit fees is for the building department to be funded as an enterprise or special revenue fund. In the enterprise model, the building department retains control of the collected permit fee revenue and is directly responsible for all of its expenses. Inappropriate transfers to the general fund are thereby avoided and the building department is immunized to the problems associated with reduced local government budgets during times of healthy construction activity and the accompanying demand for services.

Failure to fund building departments appropriately potentially exposes municipalities to liability when an adequate number of trained personnel are not available to perform the inspections required by the Minnesota State Building Code.