

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



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On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, I am pleased to present the 2006/2007 Annual Report. This past year was the ninth in AMM history and reflects the many activities and accomplishments of our organization over the past year.

The year's lobbying activities were largely devoted to addressing the need for more infrastructure funding. We welcomed the Federal Government's 2007 Budget announcement of a Building Canada Fund (BCF), including the four-year extension of the federal gas tax program. We worked tirelessly with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to ensure these funds improve the state of infrastructure for municipalities. Because the BCF will replace a number of existing infrastructure funding programs, we believe it will be an improvement, but without a detailed announcement we have been left with more questions than answers. It is my hope that by the time you read this an announcement will have been made so that this funding can begin to flow to our members.

Another top issue this year was fiscal balance, as we continued to draw attention to the growing disparity between municipal responsibilities and municipal revenues. There is indeed strength in numbers, and we partnered with Provincial and Territorial Municipal Associations across Canada to further explore this issue. The group hired Dr. Enid Slack to develop a comprehensive report on the roles, responsibilities, resources and relationships of Canada's municipal governments with their provincial and territorial governments. Dr. Slack will present her findings at the AMM 9th Annual Convention, and her report is sure to form the basis of our future lobbying activities toward achieving fiscal balance.

The AMM also spoke out on municipal challenges on the national stage over the past year. We were invited to present to the Senate Standing Committee on National Finance in

May and, in what was hailed as an "unprecedented example of working together", to address the annual meeting of Provincial-Territorial Ministers Responsible for Local Government in July. We used both opportunities to focus on infrastructure and fiscal balance – clearly our two top issues for 2006/2007.

While these national lobbying activities are indeed significant, a number of smaller victories we claimed here at home deserve mention. This year, the Province announced it would now cover the costs of inter-facility patient transfer, resolving an issue that had been on the AMM's books since 1999. The successful Neighbourhoods Alive! program was expanded to five additional communities, and communities hosting travelers stranded by inclement weather can now obtain financial assistance. These victories are even sweeter because they are the direct result of strong, member-driven lobbying.

We lobbied all provincial political parties during Lobby Days in April, and watched the Provincial Election unfold with great interest. We congratulate Premier Doer and his government on their re-election and look forward to following up on the many election promises, made by all parties during that campaign, that will benefit municipalities.

On a final note, I would like to bid farewell to former AMM Directors Bert Lagimodiere and William Danylchuk. Their contributions to the AMM were many and we wish them well in the future. Thank you also goes to the rest of the Board for their continued dedication and hard work throughout the year.

Finally, my greatest thanks, as always, goes to our membership. Your support over the past year is truly appreciated and is what drives us to do the important work that we do. As you read through this Annual Report, take pride in the accomplishments we achieved together during 2006/2007. You have earned it.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ron Bell". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Ron Bell, President