

AMM announces the *First Annual* MUNICIPAL INNOVATION AWARD



RM of Portage la Prairie Reeve Jim Knight (L) and City of Portage la Prairie Mayor Ian Mackenzie (R) accept the first annual Municipal Innovation Award from AMM President Ron Bell.

All municipalities have experienced change since their incorporation. For some, this change has meant continued growth and prosperity. For others, change has meant new approaches are needed for long-term sustainability. For this reason, the AMM in consultation with the department of Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade, developed the Tools For Change toolkit to help municipalities assess the health of their municipality and look at ways of improving how they do business.

The Municipal Innovation Award, given out for the first time at this year's Municipal Officials Seminar, is part of the Tools For Change initiative and is designed to recognize excellence in municipal practices that improve governance, administration, service delivery, or inter-municipal cooperation. Submissions were evaluated based on a number of criteria, including complexity and creativity, overall impact, community support, and regional cooperation.

In presenting the award, AMM **President Ron Bell** noted that, "What ultimately worked in favour of the winning submission was the larger, lasting impact it will have on all of Manitoba; not just now but well into the future."

This year's recipient of the first annual Municipal Innovation Award is the City and Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie's Tax Sharing Agreement. On December 18, 2000, the City and RM of Portage la Prairie signed the agreement to coordinate economic development initiatives across the region and jointly attract new industry to the area. Through this agreement, the two municipalities share all increases in commercial and industrial property taxes on a 60:40 basis, with the host municipality receiving 60%. This agreement contributed to Simplot's decision to locate a potato processing plant in the RM of Portage la Prairie, which created 230 jobs for the region. These two municipalities have the distinction of establishing the first agreement of this kind in Manitoba, while enabling both municipalities to jointly market the benefits of the region and to focus on their mutual strengths.

In accepting the award, both **Mayor Ian Mackenzie** of the City of Portage la Prairie and **Reeve Jim Knight** of the RM of Portage la Prairie acknowledged the hard work of their CAOs and councils in achieving the Tax Sharing Agreement. Mackenzie said the agreement was the result of "the collaboration of many heads, minds and hearts". He also noted that both municipalities had to learn that cooperation was a two-way street. Reeve Knight added that it is easy to step back into not getting along with your neighbor. "Don't let it happen," he advised.

Mayor Mackenzie closed his acceptance speech by noting that, "This occasion will always be a tribute to both of our councils." ❖

There were four other excellent submissions for the 2005 Municipal Innovations Award, including the following:

Better Municipal Business Practices

Rural Municipality of Macdonald:

Radio Frequency Remote Read Water Meters

Since 1989, the RM of Macdonald has been extending water pipelines to villages and rural areas across the municipality, and now provides services to virtually the entire area including 1,718 customers in rural and urban locations. With such a widespread system, the inefficiency of accessing each location to read water meters and concern for the decreasing accuracy of the meter readings soon became apparent. For this reason, the RM chose to install the radio frequency remote read water meters to improve efficiencies in the system and effectively manage the resources of the municipality and water utility in a way that protects the interests of the utility and its consumers. The collection of accurate meter readings will facilitate water rate studies and possible water conservation initiatives.

Town of Rosburn:

Residential-Commercial Incentives

To respond to several commercial closures over the previous 15 years, the Town of Rosburn and the Rosburn Chamber of Commerce developed a series of incentives for residential and commercial property, effective January 2003. New residents and business owners are eligible for incentives such as credits on water billing charges, property taxes, garbage collection fees and also receive passes to the curling club, golf club and family skating events. In each of the two years that the incentives have been in place, 10 new residents took advantage of the program and more children were enrolled in the local school. The Town of Rosburn successfully attracted individuals and families from across Manitoba and Canada, and ongoing interest in the program indicates potential for future achievements.

Service Sharing Agreements

Town of Lynn Lake:

Demolition/Refurbishment/Renovation Project

Mine closures have had a significant impact on the population decline in the Town of Lynn Lake, leaving widespread unemployment and a deteriorating housing stock. The Town of Lynn Lake undertook a training project in conjunction with the Marcel Colomb First Nation and the provincial departments of Employment & Income Assistance and Employment & Training to ensure that the project would attract workers from the First Nation and social assistance recipients. Since the First Nation was soon building a new reserve 20 km. from the Town, the project allows participants to learn skills that can be applied to housing construction and maintenance on the new reserve. As well, the training projects have resulted in the demolition of derelict housing and the renovation and provision of habitable low- to moderate-income housing for the community.

Rural Municipality of Armstrong:

Sewage Disposal Service Sharing

As a solution to a sewage disposal problem that impacted the entire municipality, the RM of Armstrong approached several neighbouring municipalities to propose service sharing agreements. The RM of Armstrong had examined the feasibility of building a central sewage lagoon, but concluded that it was cost prohibitive and inefficient due to the significant distances that some individuals would have to travel to dispose of their sewage. An alternative solution was implemented in July 2002, when the RM of Armstrong finalized service-sharing agreements with the RMs of Gimli and Coldwell and the Towns of Arborg and Teulon. These agreements have improved service to residents and businesses for sewage hauling and will result in long-term savings for all of Armstrong's rate-payers, while assisting to defray the costs of established sewage lagoons in other municipalities.

 Federation of Canadian Municipalities
Sustainable Communities
National Conference and Trade Show

February 2 - 4
2006

Ottawa, Ontario
Fairmont Château Laurier
and Government Conference Centre

It's all about results!

We want to showcase your municipal results in sustainable community development at the 2006 Sustainable Communities National Conference and Trade Show!

Please send us your ideas!

Making the Conference a success depends on your valuable input. Please send us your ideas and suggestions for conference themes, speakers and sessions to: pcp@fcm.ca or contact Devin Causley at (613) 241-5221, ext. 370.

LAGOON CLEANING & DREDGING



DREDGING FOR WIDE RANGE OF APPLICATIONS



SUB-SURFACE INJECTION FOR MUNICIPAL WASTE, OR BIOSOLIDS



TRANSPORTATION OF SLUDGE

ASSINIBOINE INJECTIONS LTD. specializes in providing several waste handling services to the industrial and municipal sectors.

- * Dredging of sediments from lakes, rivers, settling ponds and lagoons.
- * We also pump or dredge to geo tubes for sludge and sediment drying.
- * Lined and unlined lagoons or ponds.
- * Spreading and hauling of lime and biosolids.
- * A full turn key service which includes environmental license, field analysis, and project management.

For a **FREE** cost estimate and proposal call: **Ron**

Phone
204-749-2123



Fax
204-749-2109

Rathwell, MB

E-mail: info@lagooncleaning.com
Cell: 204-745-7235 or 204-745-8310