

Editor's note: Beginning this issue, The Leader will profile a provincial government department from time to time. The AMM meets with provincial departments regularly to forward our members' interests and issues. To further enhance this spirit of cooperation between the province and municipalities, we think that it is important for our members to have more of an "insider's view" as well. It only makes sense that we are kicking off the first installment of "Meet your Provincial Department" by introducing you to the department that works most closely with AMM members – Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs.

Meet Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs

The Honourable Steve Ashton, Minister
Linda McFadyen, Deputy Minister



Municipalities and Intergovernmental Affairs have a long history of working together – since 1873 in fact! First established as the Office of the Municipal Commissioner, Intergovernmental Affairs continues to be the Department that advocates for Manitoba municipalities within the Provincial Government.

Municipalities, and the way they operate, have changed considerably over the last 134 years. At one time, the municipal legislation was very prescriptive; municipalities were told what to do and how to do it. The Department oversaw every aspect of municipalities' everyday operations.

Municipalities have matured and their environment is much different. The municipal legislation is very flexible and enabling; municipalities have significant authority and discretion over how they run local affairs.

As a result, the Department's role has also changed. The Department now works with elected and appointed municipal officials to build decision-making capacity, be accountable to citizens, and to provide the tools municipalities need to address new and emerging issues. The Department's role has also expanded, and includes programs to develop safe, healthy and sustainable neighbourhoods and communities.

Intergovernmental Affairs is divided into three key areas to deliver services through regional offices.

Provincial Municipal Support Services Division

Laurie Davidson,
Assistant Deputy Minister

The Provincial Municipal Support Services provides the following services:

- **Advisory and consulting services (Municipal Finance and Advisory Services Branch, Denise Carlyle, Director).** Works with councils and CAOs on various local governance issues including budgeting, capital borrowing, conflict of interest, public accountability, restructuring, and meeting administration. Municipal Service Officers (MSOs) deliver training on a variety of issues at AMM and MMAA conventions. A wide variety of resource materials have been developed, including the annual *Statistical Information for Municipalities*, *The Municipal Act Procedures Manual*, and *A Guide to Hiring Your Chief Administrative Officer*.
- **Funding to municipalities (Municipal Finance and Advisory Services Branch, Denise Carlyle, Director).** Provides municipalities with funding to help address operating and capital priorities. Funding includes a share of income and fuel tax revenues under the Building Manitoba Fund, and Video Lottery Terminal revenues. The

Department also distributes federal gas tax funding to municipalities.

- **Property assessment services (Assessment Services, Mark Boreskie, Director).** Delivers property assessment services efficiently and effectively to municipalities. Up-to-date and accurate assessment rolls, which provide the basis for property taxation, are delivered annually to municipalities. Support for the assessment appeal process is also provided, both through training support to Boards of Revision and defending assessment appeals at the Boards of Revision and The Municipal Board levels.
- **Support to municipalities' property tax systems (Debbie Champagne, Information Systems).** Prepares municipalities' annual property tax bills, enabling municipalities to take advantage of economies of scale and deliver tax bills efficiently and effectively.
- **Legislative renewal (Lynne Nesbitt, Head, Policy and Legislation).** Ensures *The Municipal Act* and its regulations provide municipalities with the authority needed to operate efficiently and effectively. Amendments have been made to *The Municipal Act* over the last few years (e.g., expanded tax credit and grant authority). As well, new municipal election legislation was introduced in 2006.



Municipal Services Officers Don Reid, Linda Baleja and Gail Anderson delivered greetings from the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs at the 2006 AMM Annual Convention.

Community Planning and Development Division

Claudette Toupin,
Assistant Deputy Minister

The Community Planning and Development Division provides the following services:

- **Approval of development plans (Bob Grodzik, A/Director, Provincial Planning).** Supports municipalities in making sound decisions for how land is used, including the review and approval of new development plan by-laws and by-law amendments.
- **Land use planning advice to municipalities and planning districts (David Neufeld, Director, Community Planning).** Assists municipalities and planning districts in the preparation of Development Plans Zoning By-laws, among other development applications, and approves sub-division applications.
- **Legislative renewal (Bob Grodzik, A/Director, Provincial Planning).** Ensures that *The Planning Act* enables municipalities to address new and emerging planning issues, such as for example, livestock or infrastructure renewal. A completely new *Planning Act* was developed in 2006, and the Provincial Land Use Policies are currently being updated.
- **Neighbourhoods Alive! (Jon Gunn, Director, Urban Development).** Provides funding to community organizations in Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson to revitalize vulnerable neighbourhoods. NA! is expanding to Dauphin, Flin Flon, Portage la Prairie, Selkirk and The Pas.

Emergency Measures Organization (EMO)

Chuck Sanderson, Executive Director

EMO is responsible to plan provincial government emergency management programs and coordinate provincial government response to emergency/disaster events. EMO works with all levels of government, in particular municipalities, as well as other agencies, the private sector and the public to promote and coordinate emergency preparedness. EMO works closely with municipal elected officials and emergency management personnel to create local emergency plans and programs, as required by *The Emergency Measures Act*.

The Recovery section within EMO administers the Provincial Disaster Financial Assistance program, assisting individuals and communities with post-disaster recovery as well as working to build community recovery capacity in the long term. EMO also administers *The Emergency 911 Public Safety Answering Point Act*.

In conclusion

Intergovernmental Affairs has a long history of working with the AMM and municipalities towards our common goal: strong municipalities in a strong Province. We look forward to many more years of working with you, and to build and strengthen the close working relationships and partnerships that we have developed over the years.

For more information about Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs and our programs, please visit our website at www.gov.mb.ca/ia/ or talk to our staff located in communities across Manitoba. ♪



Miller Environmental Corporation

Contact Miller Environmental Corporation to help organize your community's household hazardous waste event. With over 10 years experience in the development and management of household hazardous waste programs, Miller Environmental Corporation can help create and plan events that will provide an ongoing waste management system to serve your community's waste collection needs.

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE PROGRAM



Household Hazardous Wastes (HHWs) are materials commonly used in and around residential households that contain toxic substances. These include household cleaning products (drain cleaners, oven cleaners, floor and furniture polish); painting products (paints, stains, finishing products and thinners); automotive products (motor oil, old gasoline, anti-freeze, car batteries, transmission, brake and steering fluids, solvents); garden products (fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides); hobby supplies (solvents, photo chemicals); and pool supplies (chlorine).



Tel: 204-925-9600

Serving Municipal Councils who serve Manitobans

Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs works with municipal councils to assist you in building strong and safe municipalities all across Manitoba. We are proud to provide:

- advisory services on administration and operations, finance and other municipal issues
- funding support for operating and capital priorities
- property assessment services
- advisory services on development plans, zoning by-laws, subdivisions, and livestock operation policies
- support for emergency planning and preparedness

We look forward to working with you and your municipality. Contact us today and find out how we can be of service by visiting our website at www.manitoba.ca/ia

