

# *Tools for Change* revisited

## What can this invaluable tool do for your municipal government?

by Erin Boutang, AMM Policy Analyst

The AMM recognizes that Manitoba's municipalities are changing. Some municipalities' populations are aging or declining, while others are experiencing continued growth. Local economies are changing. The rural economy, often relying on small rural business, is declining, while larger, corporate business is expanding. Meanwhile, regional/urban centres are experiencing growth, capitalizing on new economic opportunities that attract young people and families. The expectations of citizens are also changing. Residents are becoming more sensitive to the costs of local government, such as increases in property and education taxes, and are placing more demands on municipalities to deliver a broad range of quality services.

To manage change effectively, municipalities are exploring various approaches such as service sharing, tax sharing, and under certain circumstances, restructuring. The *Tools for Change Program* is a tool for municipalities to help determine the state of their communities. This important instrument was developed by the AMM, in partnership with the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade. Although the *Tools for Change Program* was introduced originally at the AMM's Municipal Officials Seminar in 2003, it continues to be an invaluable tool for municipal governments in Manitoba. It consists of three important steps: *The Municipal Health Checklist*, *An Approach to Managing Change*, and the final step – *Successful Municipal Practices*.

*The Municipal Health Checklist* is a self-analysis tool that enables AMM members to gauge their strengths and understand their challenges. Indicators used to determine the health of a municipality include population changes, assessment and taxation,

fiscal strength, intermunicipal or regional strength and governance. The next section, *An Approach to Managing Change*, is a tool that combines the *Health Checklist* results with the situation in a municipality to assist in selecting the best approach to managing change and meeting challenges. This reference series provides information on four major approaches to managing change, including better municipal business practices; service sharing; revenue (tax) sharing and municipal restructuring. The final section is called *Successful Municipal Practices* and consists of a series of fact sheets highlighting exciting Manitoba municipal innovations.

The AMM and the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade would like to underscore the importance of this tool for municipalities in Manitoba. By understanding what is taking place within a municipality,

governments will achieve a better sense of the challenges it faces, along with deciding which direction to choose for the future. Many Manitoba municipalities are struggling and cannot continue to function effectively without undertaking some form of change within the community. However, it is equally important that each municipality take control over its own situation and that change not be imposed by other levels of government. This is why the *Tools for Change*



AMM President Stu Briese thumbs through a copy of *Tools for Change*.

“ The *Tools for Change Program* is a tool for municipalities to help determine the state of their communities. ”



Please visit the AMM website at [www.amm.mb.ca/resources.htm](http://www.amm.mb.ca/resources.htm) to access an online copy of *Tools for Change*.

“ The *Tools for Change* Program allows a municipality to take stock of its own situation and decide its strategic direction for the future. ”

*Program* is such an important instrument; it allows a municipality to take stock of its own situation and decide its strategic direction for the future.

If you have not done so already, the AMM strongly encourages each of its members to explore the *Tools for Change* Program and undertake each of the important steps. In addition, the AMM encourages its members to submit success stories so that all Manitoba municipalities can benefit from the best practices and shared knowledge that are achieved through *Tools for Change*. In addition, the AMM will be giving out an award to honour innovative AMM members that have submitted success stories outlining groundbreaking municipal approaches to managing change. Please visit the AMM website at [www.amm.mb.ca/resources.htm](http://www.amm.mb.ca/resources.htm) to access an online copy of *Tools for Change*, as well as view some innovative and exciting success stories. We are continually updating this site with recent examples from Manitoba communities, so check back often. In addition, you may contact the department of Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade at 204-945-2572 to obtain information and technical support to assist you. ●

*Erin Boutang is now with Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade (IAT).*



## Your Petroleum Products Buying Group

The MTCML manager of your Petroleum Products Buying Group is:  
Prairie Fuel Advisors Inc. - Call Peter at 780-420-9801

### Is the High Cost of Fuel Getting you Down?



### The AMM Petroleum Products Buying Group Will Help!

We Provide Advance Notice of The Monthly Fuel Price Changes. This Information Helps Members Manage Fuel Inventories and Lower Costs. *All price changes tied strictly to changes in wholesale fuel prices.*

(Cartoon Reproduced with the Kind Permission of the Cartoonist, Steve Breen)

**All fuel and lubricants are obtained from your local dealers. PPBG supports local businesses.**

The AMM office would be pleased to provide you with information on how to join the PPBG. Call Linda Hargest at (204) 857-8666.

**“Remember, the greater the volumes, the greater the savings.”**