

Partnerships get water flowing

by Sue Murray, Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Secretariat



the Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Program, for which **Stephen Owen**, Minister of Western Economic Diversification, and **Rosann Wowchuk**, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade for Manitoba, are responsible.

In rural and northern Manitoba, the emphasis has been on improving water quality and wastewater management – particularly for communities under boil water advisories. Early in the program, funding flowed for water supply and sewer projects in communities affected by boil water advisories: Balmoral, Haywood, Garson, Tyndall, Ile-des-Chênes and St. Adolphe.

While the majority of infrastructure projects are still underway, 37 of the 49 completed infrastructure projects are water-related and include 22 sewer and water projects, five upgrades to water treatment plants, five lagoon expansions and five water supply projects.

Manitobans across the province are now benefiting from the many completed projects. Among them are the new water treatment plant and water pipeline in Wawanesa; water treatment and storage in Massey; wastewater lagoon stabilization in Teulon; water and sewer line upgrades in Duck Bay; sewer and water mains in St. Claude; and the water treatment plant upgrade in Lac du Bonnet.

More in the works

While the Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Program has concluded project allocations under the \$180 million agreement signed in October 2000, the Governments of Canada and Manitoba announced the general principles for a framework for a new Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Program under the *Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund* in May 2004.

Once a final agreement is signed, information on the application process will be mailed to local governments and will also be posted on the Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Program web site at www.infrastructure.mb.ca. Information will also be available from the Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Secretariat at 204-945-1906 or toll-free at 1-800-268-4883. ♦

In the four years since the \$180 million Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Program (CMIP) was established, over 175 projects have received funding, including about 125 water-related infrastructure projects.

The high number of water-related projects clearly reflects the primary investment focus of the program. That focus is green municipal infrastructure that will protect or enhance the quality of our environment, such as water and wastewater systems, solid waste management and recycling, and capital expenditures to retrofit or improve the energy efficiency of buildings and facilities owned by local governments.

Local involvement in application review and recommendation has been vital to the competitive and merit-based process of project selection. The Rural/Northern Federal-Provincial-Local Consultative Committee on Infrastructure consists of three representatives of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (**Stuart Briese**, **Garry Wasylowski** and **Ron Bell**), two representatives of the Northern Association of Community Councils (**Ken Ellison** and **Reg Meade**), and an official from Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (**Jeff Gordon**).

When reviewing project applications, the priority for the local consultative committee was 'green' infrastructure. In fact, all rural and northern projects approved by the committee are either for water and sewer improvements or for solid waste management and recycling facilities.

Building stronger communities together

CMIP's approach to funding through matching federal, provincial, and local contributions has also proven to be a successful tool for leveraging funding through other sources, bringing infrastructure program contributions and levered investments in Manitoba to more than \$360 million.

April 2004 saw further investment in rural and northern Manitoban communities when 30 water-related projects received more than \$15 million in funding under

