

Mayors and Reeves of the Capital Region forge new ground

The Mayors and Reeves of the Capital Region are creating conversations within the halls of many businesses and government agencies in the province. The activity of the group, as it moves ahead to forge an even stronger Capital Region, has caught the attention of many who feel it has been long overdue. Times are changing and the understanding of the importance of working together for the betterment of the region, its citizens and the environment is at the forefront of these conversations. The bottom line is that, as elected officials, the Mayors and Reeves have responsibilities to forge new ground for the success of the region – something that they are doing!

Led by a strong Executive Committee, the 15 municipal leaders have an ambitious agenda laid out for the coming months. “It is time that other Provinces are looking at us, instead of us looking at them!” is the measure of success laid out by Co-Chair, Mayor **Steve Strang**. “As municipal leaders, we work most closely with the public. We have a responsibility to lay out a vision



for the future citizens of this region that will position us for competitiveness and an enviable quality of life.” This means shaping the direction of the region in a number of areas such as transportation policy; environmental stewardship; economic growth; and guiding the region’s development in an environmentally sustainable manner.

To achieve this ambitious vision, the group has identified a number of areas to focus their attention. A full listing of projects

the group is undertaking can be found on the organizations’ website at www.wmcrp.com. One major project they are working on is an Inventory of Assets in the Capital Region. Once completed, it is envisioned that any prospective investor in the region could enter certain variables into an interactive database. The database would provide a number of different options throughout the region for locating their new commercial or residential development.

The group is also deeply concerned about the health of our rivers and lakes. To that end, they are working together with Manitoba Education and Training to see that students are educated about the pivotal role these natural resources play in the Capital Region economy.

As well, they will soon be issuing a statement regarding the importance of ensuring that public transit options are available in the region. Co-Chair, Mayor **Ross Thompson** says, “All the projections available tell us that the region is poised for growth. The availability of transportation options throughout the region



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will impact the sustainability of the entire region. It is a leadership issue, and we must be proactive in ensuring that it is addressed”.

Moving towards the development of a regional vision framework for the region will be a major focus for the organization over the next six months. “Manitoba’s Capital Region is in the enviable position of being able to plan for anticipated growth, rather than having to react to out-of-control growth,” asserts Mayor Strang. Capitalizing on an investment made over the past two years by the Mayors and Reeves of the Capital Region, Minister Steve Ashton, the Inter-governmental Affairs Department of the Province of Manitoba and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the group will use a software tool entitled *CapitalRegionQuest* to examine future scenarios for growth in the region. Through community consultations, a study of best practices in other jurisdictions, and a professional development workshop entitled *Learning to Think and Act like a Region*, the organization intends to produce a number of vision statements that will provide a picture and plan for the preferred future of Manitoba’s Capital Region. This Framework will present a common vision for the region that will align with and be supported by local planning.

The *Learning to Think and Act Like a Region* workshop is a pivotal step in provid-

ing the group with the tools to vision and work together across boundaries. Recognizing that many municipalities face these challenges, this professional development opportunity is being made available to all municipal organizations across Manitoba. The workshop will be held on **Thursday, April 10 – Friday, April 11** at the Fort Garry Hotel in Winnipeg. The workshop will be led by the Montana Public Policy Research Institute, specialists in working with North American municipalities on issues of regional collaboration. It will provide participants with the latest informa-

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tion on the practices of regional collaboration and strategies that will aid in moving regional initiatives from vision to action. Unique to this workshop will be an opportunity to work together on ‘real life’ issues faced by each of the groups participating in the workshop. For further information, or to register, visit www.wmcrp.com.

Collaboration is the new ‘buzz word’ in the Capital Region and that direction is attracting lots of attention to the group. “We have come to realize,” says Mayor Strang, “that we can no longer compete against each other if we want to keep up with the global marketplace. We must be able to cooperate and see that what may benefit one partner in the short term, will benefit the entire capital region in the long run.”

UPCOMING EVENTS

March, 2008

- 13 AMM Mayors, Reeves & CAOs Meeting - Interlake
- 14 AMM Mayors, Reeves & CAOs Meeting - Eastern
- 17 AMM Mayors, Reeves & CAOs Meeting - Parklands
- 18 AMM Mayors, Reeves & CAOs Meeting - Midwestern
- 19 AMM Mayors, Reeves & CAOs Meeting - Western
- 20 AMM Mayors, Reeves & CAOs Meeting - Central
- 26 AMM Mayors, Reeves & CAOs Meeting - Northern

April, 2008

- 16-17 Municipal Officials Seminar & Tradeshow - Brandon

June, 2008

- 9 AMM District Meeting - Interlake
- 10 AMM District Meeting - Central
- 11 AMM District Meeting - Western
- 12 AMM District Meeting - Midwestern
- 13 AMM District Meeting - Parklands
- 16 AMM District Meeting - Northern
- 17 AMM District Meeting - Eastern

November, 2008

- 24-27 AMM 10th Annual Convention - Winnipeg



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