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Doug Dobrowolski, President

The work has ALREADY BEGUN

I would be remiss if I didn't begin my first President's Message in the Leader by saying "Thank You" to each and every one of you who attended the AMM's 10th Annual Convention last November. It is a huge vote of confidence for me to be acclaimed to serve you in this position and I greatly appreciate it. I would also like to congratulate my executive team, Vice-Presidents **Roger Wilson** and **Shirley Kalyniuk**, for being elected and acclaimed, respectively, to their positions. Finally, welcome to our newest board member, Midwestern Rural Director **Randy Lints**. The changes that took place during Convention were exciting and I know I speak for all of us when I say we are looking forward to working hard on your behalf for the next year.

My goal is to be an open and accessible president, and I am anxious to meet with our members at our many events throughout the year.

And the work has already begun. January kicked off with the AMM Board of Directors' strategic planning session. Not surprisingly, the top priorities for the coming year continue to be the infrastructure deficit and the need for alternative revenue sources. We all heard the discussion that took place around Resolution #75 during Convention, and while many views were presented on the best way for municipalities to access additional revenue, there was a clear consensus that the time to act is now. This issue is so crucial for municipalities that we have made it the focus of our Special Report this issue. *Municipal Infrastructure: the need for alternate revenue* is explored in-depth on pages 29-40.

There were other priority issues identified during the strategic planning session. Recycling was one, along with all of the issues around water management. Concerns with downloading by other orders of government were also aired, bringing us back to the essence of our discussion – the need for more revenue. This need is felt across Canada and we will be watching closely to see how the Federal Government addresses it during its budget speech in late January 2009.

Another part of the strategic planning process was a review of the AMM member poll the board commissioned last spring. Overall, the findings of the survey were supportive and the AMM appreciates this vote of

confidence from our membership. However, we are always striving to improve what we do and there *were* areas identified where improvement can be made. This information will be incorporated into the strategic plan and will be a great help to us in planning our activities for the coming year.

In closing, I want to express how very much I am looking forward to the coming year. My goal is to be an open and accessible president, and I am anxious to meet with our members at our many events throughout the year. See you soon! 