

# MEMBER ADVISORY



## AMM MEETS WITH PROVINCIAL-TERRITORIAL MINISTERS

*Uses unprecedented opportunity to focus on infrastructure, municipal 3R's*

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**July 13, 2007** – On Monday, July 9, 2007, the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) had the unprecedented opportunity to make a presentation to the annual meeting of Provincial-Territorial Ministers Responsible for Local Government. The invitation marked the first time in recent history that a municipal association has met with the Ministers. As this is a very significant event for the AMM, President Bell used the opportunity to focus on two of the most significant challenges facing municipalities across Canada – infrastructure, and the roles, responsibilities and resources of municipal governments.

**Infrastructure** – President Bell stressed that this issue is perhaps the biggest that municipalities face. There is not enough funding to meet the challenges that exist, particularly when important projects like water treatment plants are measured against community centres and recreation complexes.

President Bell also addressed the challenge of addressing the infrastructure deficit in municipalities that are large in area but small in population. These municipalities have a small tax base, making it difficult for them to contribute their 1/3 portion of funding for projects.

Overall, President Bell made the point that one-size does not fit all with regard to infrastructure programs. A suite of programs is needed, to allow flexibility and to ensure both large and small communities have programs available to meet their needs.

**Municipal 3R's** – The AMM also took the opportunity to highlight the issue of municipalities not having the resources needed to meet the responsibilities placed upon them. We call this the municipal 3R's – Roles, Responsibilities and Resources of Municipal Governments. As President Bell stated in his presentation, “the harsh reality is that municipalities, for a number of varying reasons, have taken on more and more responsibility over the years but haven't seen the accompanying resources. This isn't a sustainable practice and the time has come to review the situation and see if there is a better way to deliver the key services people across Canada expect from governments.”

**A good first step** – President Bell noted that this opportunity was a good first step towards working with provincial local government Ministers, on an ongoing basis, for the future health and prosperity of municipalities across Canada. To that end, the AMM's presentation concluded with an open-ended question for the Ministers to ponder – what can we do together? “Municipalities across Canada are more than willing to work with the provinces to find solutions to these challenges. No single order of government can do this alone.”

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**THE PRESENTATION IS AVAILABLE ON THE AMM WEBSITE AT [WWW.AMM.MB.CA](http://WWW.AMM.MB.CA).**