

Meeting of the  
**Association of  
Manitoba  
Municipalities**



with

The Honourable Rosann Wowchuk

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Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural  
Initiatives

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April 10, 2007

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# Executive Summary

## Departmental Issues

### 1. Change to the Education Tax Rebate System

- Extensive changes have taken place in Manitoba since the provincial system of education funding was first established.
- The inequity of this system and its effect on all municipalities has led the AMM to identify education funding as a top priority for several consecutive years.
- The rebates on farmland education taxes have assisted agricultural producers in dealing with several years of poor environmental and economic conditions. Renewing this commitment for 2006 with the increased rebate of 60 per cent provides much-needed support for all producers.
- However this rebate would be more efficient if it was provided at the source, rather than through the current rebate system.
- The AMM's objective is to reduce the reliance on all classes of property, not to shift the taxation burden to any particular property class.

**The AMM urges the Provincial Government to improve the efficiency of the Education Tax Refund system by providing the refund through an adjustment in the municipal tax levy.**

### 2. Economic Development in Rural Manitoba

- All orders of government have taken on a role in supporting economic development in Manitoba and these roles must be strengthened.
- With the Municipal Officials Seminar session on economic development as a starting point, municipalities that are not already engaged should have the information required to begin exploring opportunities for their communities.
- The AMM consultation raised the need to develop an overall provincial strategy for economic development so that communities could locate their efforts in a larger context.
- As well, funding must be flexible enough to accommodate a range of local priorities and initiatives.

**Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to support the coordination of economic development service delivery and ensure funding mechanisms are responsive to community needs.**

### **3. Land and Water Planning and Management**

- The Manitoba legislature has recently passed two crucial pieces of legislation that will significantly affect municipalities: *The Planning Act* and *The Water Protection Act*. Now that both acts have come into force, it is vital that the appropriate processes be implemented to resolve outstanding concerns.
- At present, the public hearings for land use planning place municipalities in the position of defending Provincial policy since municipal councils are the only order of government in attendance. This situation must be rectified in order to ensure that the public has access to accurate information and Department of Conservation staff must attend public hearings to respond to environmental inquiries.
- Regarding *The Water Protection Act*, municipalities are concerned with the acute lack of detail, which raises concern for the additional responsibilities and financial contributions that municipalities will be expected to bear.
- The agricultural sector is subject to both land use and water planning strategies and must participate in the new structures defined by the legislation. It is essential for the departments of Water Stewardship and Intergovernmental Affairs to interact with MAFRI to balance the needs of all three departments.
- Improved clarity and the enhanced use of scientific principles will increase the effectiveness of the legislation, since such improvements will empower municipalities to strategically build industry.

**Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to ensure greater coordination among all associated departments regarding the implementation of new land and water planning legislation.**

## **General Issues**

### **1. Creating Fiscal Balance**

- Manitoba's municipal governments continue to take on increasingly greater responsibilities. As the importance of local community increases, it is necessary that the roles, responsibilities and resources of municipal government be examined.
- Unclear legislation, such as the Water Protection Act, concern municipal governments because the financial costs in implementing and enforcing this Act are great. Infrastructure needs in municipalities throughout the province are at the top of municipal agendas however the municipal budgets are stretched thin.
- Some options to support municipal governments to serve their communities effectively are removing education tax from property and exempting municipal governments from the Provincial Sales Tax.
- Provincial/territorial municipal associations are developing a cross Canada perspective of municipal responsibilities and finances to inform municipalities of the similarities and inequalities that are currently being experienced nation-wide.

**The AMM urges the Province to work collaboratively with municipalities to create a fiscal balance for all orders of government in Manitoba.**

## **Departmental Issues**

### **1. Change to the Education Tax Rebate System**

Extensive changes have taken place in Manitoba since the provincial system of education funding was first established. Taxing property was at one time seen as an equitable and efficient mechanism to fund education, as land ownership was evenly distributed among the population. However, it has been decades since this mechanism could be categorized as equitable, due to changing patterns of land ownership. The inequity of this system and its effect on all municipalities has led the AMM to identify education funding as a top priority for several consecutive years. Again at this year's Convention, education tax was a central concern with a resolution passed indicating that the Province should improve the efficiency of the Education Tax Refund system by providing the refund through an adjustment in the municipal tax levy.

The AMM recognizes that increasing the Provincial share of education funding is a complex process and municipal governments appreciate the valuable first steps that the Provincial Government has taken to address this issue by reducing education taxes on certain classes of property. The elimination of the residential Education Support Levy (ESL) has been an essential part of this initiative and the final reduction of \$34 million for 2006 will certainly be beneficial to residential landowners. Furthermore, the rebates on farmland education taxes have assisted agricultural producers in dealing with several years of poor environmental and economic conditions. Renewing this commitment for 2006 with the increased rebate of 60 per cent provides much-needed support for all producers, however this rebate would be more efficient if it was provided at the source, rather than through the current rebate system.

Over and over again municipalities have made it clear that education funding is a core Provincial responsibility and the current taxation system is unsustainable. There is little doubt that education tax effectively crowds out municipal tax space, which is detrimental to all other services provided by the municipality. Education tax places an unfair burden on property owners while municipalities are hindered in their ability to provide necessary services with limited revenue tools.

Municipalities want to work cooperatively with the Province to address this important matter.

Education taxation will remain a priority until municipalities are empowered to control the level of

local property taxation without having to use this mechanism for Provincial purposes such as education.

Reductions in education tax should be available to all property owners since it is incongruous for education funding to be associated with property. Furthermore, reductions in farmland education taxes should not result in shifting taxation across property classes. The AMM's objective is to reduce the reliance on all classes of property, not to shift the taxation burden to any particular property class. The Provincial Government has repeatedly committed to work on this issue and with the five-year ESL phase-out complete, it is time to identify other methods of reducing the reliance on property taxes to fund education.

Municipalities are committed to supporting high quality education and are not advocating an overall reduction in education spending. On the contrary, this important service must be funded equitably by all Manitobans based on a shift away from property taxation. Such a substantial change must be achieved by developing long-term solutions.

**The AMM urges the Provincial Government to improve the efficiency of the Education Tax Refund system by providing the refund through an adjustment in the municipal tax levy.**

## **2. Economic Development in Rural Manitoba**

Communities across Manitoba are continually searching for chances to create jobs and stimulate growth in the local economy. Identifying regional strengths and opportunities can inspire new initiatives and an entrepreneurial spirit. There are many ways economic development can be implemented and the AMM is encouraging municipalities to seek opportunities that fit with local objectives. Economic development is most successful when community members generate ideas, therefore initiatives must be community-driven. At the same time, all orders of government have taken on a role in supporting economic development in Manitoba and these roles must be strengthened.

The AMM has promoted the need for economic development by engaging community leaders in a discussion of ways to enhance the delivery of programs that are available in Manitoba. Currently the AMM is leading an Economic Development Committee with involvement from Manitoba

Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, Agriculture Canada - Rural Secretariat and Western Economic Diversification. This group is working to assess Economic Development in Manitoban municipalities. This work is based on the AMM's report *Creating a Vision: AMM's Report on Economic Development* completed in 2003. The report articulates 12 recommendations for improvement in the areas of organizational structure and planning, funding, and human resources. These recommendations were discussed further at a consultation session in April 2005 where they were prioritized and specific actions were suggested. The AMM is viewed to have a role in leadership, communication and training, therefore serious consideration has been given to how to enhance the AMM's achievement of these roles.

As a result, one of the plenary sessions at the 2006 Municipal Officials Seminar (MOS) focused on educating and involving municipal leaders in economic development. One of the common criticisms of municipal officials is that they are not aware of how economic development can enhance their communities or how to undertake economic development initiatives. This session provided a forum for stimulating discussion that included a definition of economic development, tips for municipalities, available programming and success stories from within Manitoba. With this session as a starting point, municipalities that were not already considering economic development were provided with the information required to explore opportunities for their communities.

The session provided an opportunity for the Provincial Government to discuss its contribution to economic development programming. A key part of economic development in Manitoba is the support that is available through the Provincial and Federal Governments. There are many ways that the Provincial Government can contribute to improving economic development service delivery in Manitoba. The development of an overall provincial strategy for economic development will assist communities in locating their efforts within the larger context. As well, there is an ongoing need for multi-year funding since economic development involves long-term projects. Funding must also be flexible enough to accommodate a range of local priorities and initiatives. The Provincial Government can also assist local efforts by providing incentives for regional partnerships and for those municipalities that engage in economic development. It is essential that the Province maintain existing support mechanisms, such as Regional Development Corporations, however further action should promote increased investment in economic development across Manitoba, particularly outside of agricultural initiatives.

All orders of government should contribute to economic development since each will benefit from successful projects. The AMM will continue to assist municipalities to identify and pursue ways of initiating economic development. A commitment is also needed by the Provincial Government to enhance province-wide efforts related to economic development, particularly outside of agricultural initiatives.

**Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to support the coordination of economic development service delivery and ensure funding mechanisms are responsive to community needs.**

### **3. Land and Water Planning and Management**

The Manitoba legislature passed two crucial pieces of legislation that significantly affect municipalities: *The Planning Act* and *The Water Protection Act*. Municipalities are involved in planning for both land use and water management purposes and this legislation has impacted these planning processes. The AMM is generally supportive of the underlying principles of each act as they are based on the promotion of long-term land use planning and water resource management. Implementing these principles is a complex process that requires a coordinated effort by the Provincial Government along with municipalities, since both orders of government have substantial responsibilities to fulfill. Now that both acts have come into force, it is vital that the appropriate processes be implemented to resolve outstanding concerns.

Currently the Clean Environment Commission (CEC) is in the process of reviewing the issue to ensure the sustainability of the hog industry in Manitoba. Municipalities understand that the impact that the hog industry has on the environment is critically important to future economic development within Manitoba, however the impact that this pause will have on land use planning will be significant.

The recent review and modification of *The Planning Act* has had a tremendous impact on municipalities province-wide. New regulations have required municipalities and/or planning districts to create development plans and zoning bylaws to encourage sustainable planning and development within the province. A Livestock Operation Policy must be included as part of the development plan

with section 42(2) in The Planning Act laying out the requirements. Municipalities are required to have this work completed by January 1, 2008 and while many have already been completed, there are still some forthcoming.

The work of the CEC will have an impact on municipal planning therefore the AMM has requested that the CEC complete the review promptly to ensure that municipalities are able to complete the planning process. The review of The Planning Act resulted in municipalities spending the last year adapting to a new planning system. The CEC's recommendations will have the potential to have major implications for The Planning Act, however these should ensure that the Act's general principles are not altered.

Municipalities and key stakeholders have previously participated in a protracted consultation process to renew this important legislation and it would be unfair for municipal councils to have to work with a constantly changing set of planning rules. The current Act, while not exactly what any single stakeholder advocated for, is the best available solution and as such, its general principles should remain unchanged.

One of the key attributes of the current process is that the Province is responsible for environmental issues while municipalities are accountable for land use. The Province of Manitoba needs to be accountable for environmental decisions and technical information should not be left to be defended by municipal councils during the public hearings as required by The Planning Act. This is why the AMM believes that the Technical Review Committee (TRC) should be required to attend all municipal public hearings for which they have provided information. Currently this is not required in The Planning Act.

It is important to the transparency of the planning process to verify all technical information received from the TRC and through the environmental assessment process. It is also imperative to allow a public inquiry of the science-based information in order to assist the public in accepting the information as being true and public involvement where individuals are interested. The AMM also believes that there should be public involvement on the TRC. This would allow local knowledge to be incorporated and cross checked with technical information. The TRC process needs to be examined to ensure that the information presented is precise. Municipalities will defend their own

political decisions, however should not be required to defend the technical decisions made by the Province. There is adequate opportunity for this public process to occur at municipal public hearings.

The environmental licencing and approval process also needs to be examined. Currently the process allows for public hearings to be held at the discretion of the Minister of Conservation. These public hearings should be mandatory, not simply based on how politically controversial an issue is. This would increase the transparency of the licencing and approval process while allowing for public acceptance and understanding of the technical and environmental information being reviewed. The AMM believes that increasing the opportunity for public involvement would increase support for the science-based research and evaluation completed by the Province.

The development of future regulations has the potential to increase the responsibility of municipalities in the planning process. Municipal budgets are already over-extended and municipal governments are not in the position to take on additional costs and responsibilities. Considerable capacity is required to make the current regulations a reality. The capacity of municipalities to increase their responsibilities to meet proposed recommendations should be kept in mind throughout the Hog Production Industry Review.

The CEC recommendations will not be available until late-2007. Following this, the Minister of Conservation will make a decision on the recommendations that could affect the planning process for municipalities. If this is the case, financial and technical support will be required to ensure that municipalities have the capacity to change their development plans to meet the new regulations.

There is a persisting municipal concern regarding the acute lack of detail in *The Water Protection Act*, which raises concern for the additional responsibilities that municipalities will be expected to bear. Municipalities, conservation districts and planning boards will certainly have a role to play in the implementation of the concepts under consideration, however the extent of this role remains unclear. The Province has been ambiguous regarding how the newly legislated ideas and requirements will be implemented. To date, the proposed regulations have provided some further indication, however the full extent to which municipalities will be impacted remains unclear. The Province must continue to work with key stakeholders to clarify the roles of all affected entities and

to ensure that consultation is meaningful. Local stakeholders must be involved in the process and their feedback must be an important consideration as the regulations are finalized.

This issue extends to the financial resources that will be required to implement *The Water Protection Act*. Without a significant financial investment from the Provincial Government, none of the Act's key attributes can be achieved. Another concern is that watershed planning authorities cannot create the required watershed management plans using existing tools, yet the little funding the Provincial Government will provide does not come close to the actual costs of developing these plans. It is essential that the Province establish and explain the financial underpinnings of this legislation in order to move forward with its implementation.

Although land use planning and water management are primarily the responsibility of other Provincial departments, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) is also a stakeholder in these processes. The agricultural sector is subject to both land use and water planning strategies and must participate in the new structures defined by the legislation. Therefore it is essential for the departments of Water Stewardship and Intergovernmental Affairs to interact with MAFRI to balance the needs of all three departments. Planning processes at the municipal level are significantly impacted by reviews given by all Provincial departments, and therefore it is vital that there is coordination between them. Inconsistencies in decision making is becoming a common problem for municipalities creating development plans. Municipalities are working to meet the requirements of each department and their associated legislation, however greater coordination among Provincial departments is necessary.

Improved clarity and the enhanced use of scientific principles will increase the effectiveness of the legislation, since such improvements will empower municipalities to strategically build industry. Strengthening the municipal economic base requires planning efforts that appropriately consider local land use and water management needs. The AMM is supportive of the Provincial Government's efforts to improve land use planning and water resource management in Manitoba, however there are gaps in the current and proposed planning tools. Building strong communities will require that the application of legislative requirements take municipal concerns into account.

**Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to ensure greater coordination among all associated departments regarding the implementation of new land and water planning legislation.**

# General Issues

## 1. Creating Fiscal Balance

Municipal government is playing a more important role in the every day lives of Canadians. No longer is the local council seen as merely the local tax collector and tertiary service provider. Today, municipal governments have greater responsibilities, often playing a leading role in key areas that are not traditionally municipal in nature, such as health care and environmental protection. As the importance of the local community grows, municipal government, as the order of government closest to the people, is becoming more important. Yet, municipal governments do not have the tools they need to meet these new expectations. Many communities are starting to see the decay of key infrastructure and the unfortunate reduction in program delivery as a result of limited resources and increasing responsibilities. Municipal councils are left with the impossible task of delivering all the services expected by both the citizens and other orders of government, while only having access to limited resource streams. This is not sustainable and consequently it is necessary to undertake a major review of municipal government in Manitoba to create a fiscal balance between all orders of government.

Nationally, through the work of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, municipal governments have been able to secure a full rebate of the GST as well as the New Deal for Communities or 'Gas Tax Rebate.' Community issues have become front and centre on the national stage, and the AMM is pleased with the recognition by the federal government of the importance of local government and the need to put resources in the hands of the order of government that delivers key services.

Provincially, municipal government in Manitoba has seen some advances as well. Most recently the Province announced the new Building Manitoba Fund that will link municipal grant money to provincial gas tax revenues. Manitoba is also unique in that the Provincial Government shares a percentage of income tax with municipalities through the previous Provincial Municipal Tax Sharing agreement.

While these initiatives are certainly positive, more is needed. Many of the resolutions currently being worked on by the AMM deal with issues of funding, or more specifically inadequate funding levels. A serious discussion of the resources available to municipalities needs to be undertaken. However

for this discussion to be fruitful, it must be raised within the greater context of what are and what should be the responsibilities of municipal government.

Municipal government in this province has embraced taking on additional responsibilities as these have been seen to be for the betterment of the local community. For instance, many municipalities have gone to great lengths to help provincial RHAs recruit physicians. As well, municipalities have undertaken projects to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve the environment. Yet there are limits to how much municipalities can do with their current revenue streams.

We have consistently heard from the Province that Manitoba municipalities fare better than almost every other province in terms of funding transfers from provincial governments. However, this discussion is meaningless without a discussion of the responsibilities of these municipal governments. If Manitoba's municipalities are continually expected to take on additional responsibilities it is imperative that new revenue sources are made available.

Provincial and territorial municipal associations are in the process of developing a cross Canada perspective of municipal responsibilities and finances. Manitoba municipalities have heard many times that they receive more resources from other orders of governments than any other province or territory. This report, which is due to be released in May 2007, will inform all municipalities on the similarities and inequalities that are currently being experienced nation-wide and will assist in understanding the issues that need to be addressed within Manitoba.

In Manitoba, a major municipal issue is the financial implications of the recently passed Water Protection Act. While the intent behind this legislation is laudable, the overwhelming lack of detail, especially in the area of responsibilities and finances, has many municipal governments concerned. Municipal governments cannot take on the financial costs associated with implementing and enforcing this Act. The Municipal budget is already stretched too thin.

The current municipal infrastructure deficit in Manitoba further compounds the need to re-examine the resources available to municipalities. Communities are facing crumbling roads, deteriorating community centres and inadequate water treatment facilities. It is estimated that Manitoba's infrastructure deficit is \$7.4 billion, which includes \$2 billion in rural municipal infrastructure and

\$1 billion within the City of Winnipeg. These are staggering numbers when compared to the revenue streams available to these municipalities. When only 7 to 8 cents of every tax dollar goes to municipalities, it is evident there is a lack of resources to deal with this deficit.

This is why the AMM has been advocating for a 5-year plan to significantly reduce the reliance on property tax to fund education. Currently the property tax base is the principal source of revenue for municipalities. However, this tax base is diminished when education tax takes up over 50 per cent. Equally concerning is the continuing increases year after year which force municipalities to seriously re-consider any municipal tax increases, as there are limits to what local residents are able to withstand. The AMM fully supports maintaining and improving the quality of education in Manitoba, however the current system of education taxation is not sustainable and in reality it is hurting local communities by limiting municipal resources.

In addition to the removal of education tax from property, there are other options to provide greater revenue to municipalities. For example, the Provincial Government can follow the lead of the Federal Government with the GST and exempt municipal governments from the Provincial Sales Tax. Not only would this leave more money in the hands of municipalities, but it would significantly reduce the costs of many major infrastructure projects, thereby freeing up valuable funding for other areas of need. This would represent a significant shift away from the current tax and return system toward a new system that allows municipalities to retain resources for community needs.

Strong communities are the foundation of a strong province and a strong Canada. As the Association that represents all incorporated municipalities in Manitoba, we understand this. The AMM has long been advocating for municipal governments to look at ways of improving how they do business to ensure strong, sustainable communities across Manitoba. We also hear firsthand the challenges communities are facing and we see the implications provincial actions are having on municipalities. It is for this reason that we believe it is time to take a closer look at the resources available to municipalities and take stock of the roles and responsibilities of municipal government in Manitoba. It is only through this type of examination that we can truly create fiscal balance in Manitoba.

**The AMM urges the Province to work collaboratively with municipalities to create a fiscal balance for all orders of government in Manitoba.**

## **Appendix A – Active Resolutions**

### **AMM Resolution 29 – 2006**

#### **Topic: Education Tax Refund**

Sponsor: RM of Brenda (Western District)

Department: Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs

WHEREAS the present method of remuneration of the 60% education tax refund for farmland is by means of a rebate cheque payable each year;

AND WHEREAS this method is unnecessarily cumbersome and time-consuming for ratepayers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to change this system so that in the future the refund shall be made by an adjustment in the municipal tax levy.

### **AMM Resolution 08 - 2004**

#### **Topic: Dead Stock Disposal**

Sponsor: City of Dauphin (Parklands District)

Department: Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs, Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba requested the assistance of Manitoba municipalities in the spring of 2004 relating to the disposition of dead livestock;

AND WHEREAS this assistance was requested as a result of the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) disease in cattle and the resultant reduction in the ability of dead livestock to be rendered;

AND WHEREAS the disposal of dead livestock in licensed municipal landfill sites utilizes valuable space and presents a number of health and safety-related concerns;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Provincial Government to develop a plan to dispose of dead livestock carcasses that does not involve the use of municipal landfill sites.

### **AMM Resolution 43 - 2002**

#### **Topic: Milk Price Controls in Rural and Northern Communities**

Sponsor: Town of Churchill (Northern District)

Department: Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs

WHEREAS the sale of liquor is regulated by The Liquor Control Act under section 51(1) which states: "The price of each particular variety of liquor shall be the same at all liquor stores and premises of liquor vendors appointed under section 17";

AND WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba controls the price of liquor sold in stores regardless of geographical location;

AND WHEREAS the Province controls the operation and production of milk which is regulated under The Dairy Act;

AND WHEREAS the Province does not regulate or control the price of milk as is the case with liquor;

AND WHEREAS the price of milk in rural and northern communities is more expensive than the southern region of the province and is, at times, more expensive than an equal quantity of liquor;

AND WHEREAS the availability of fresh milk is an essential component of healthy living, especially for children, and is one cornerstone of Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating, while liquor is not;

AND WHEREAS Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating suggests that children 4-9 years consume 2-3 servings per day, children 10-16 years consume 3-4 servings per day, adults consume 2-4 servings per day and breast-feeding women consume 3-4 servings per day. The same cannot be said for liquor;

AND WHEREAS alcohol and drug abuse is the largest socioeconomic crisis in rural and northern Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS the Province has placed more effort into supplying affordable liquor to rural and northern communities than any other consumable;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the AMM lobby the Province to regulate and control the price of milk in rural and northern communities in the same way as liquor is regulated and controlled by The Liquor Control Act.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the AMM lobby the Province to amend The Dairy Act to include similar pricing controls as are found in section 51(1) of The Liquor Control Act, to ensure that the price of milk in rural and northern communities is the same across the province regardless of geographical location.

### **AMM Resolution 26 – 2005**

#### **Topic: Farmland Education Rebate**

Sponsor: RM of Woodlands (Interlake District)

Departments: Manitoba Finance, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs

WHEREAS the Province has assisted farmers by providing tax relief through a 50% rebate on school taxes on farmland in 2005;

AND WHEREAS farmers must pay the taxes, then apply for the rebate;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to provide the rebate directly to municipalities

### **AMM Resolution 14 - 2003**

#### **Topic: Development Proposals in Rural Manitoba**

Sponsor: RM of East St. Paul (Eastern District)

Department: Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs

WHEREAS it is important that municipalities ensure that planning and development is carried out in an orderly and organized manner and within the parameters of the Provincial Land Use Policies;

AND WHEREAS in the past few years the Province of Manitoba has objected to numerous development proposals in rural Manitoba, including the Capital Region;

AND WHEREAS it appears that in some cases the provincial process to review development proposals is being carried out not with the purpose of ensuring that development meets municipal development plans and Provincial Land Use Policies, but rather to stifle development in some areas of the Province;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba has placed a great deal of emphasis on Manitoba being 'open for business', however its actions, including the Capital Region, are not consistent with the phrase;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Provincial Government to maintain a fair and equitable policy when reviewing development proposals, and also to explain its position in objecting to developments in rural Manitoba.