

News Release

AMM Awards City, RM of Portage la Prairie for Innovation

Historic tax-sharing agreement results in mutual respect, financial advantages

March 1, 2005 - The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) presented its first annual Municipal Innovation Award at the Municipal Officials Seminar today at Brandon's Keystone Centre. The City and RM of Portage la Prairie were the co-recipients of the inaugural award.

The submissions were judged by a panel against established criteria, including the innovation's complexity and creativity, overall impact, level of community support and use of regional cooperation.

"The panel had a difficult task, with a number of excellent entries that all deserve commendation," said Ron Bell, President of the AMM. "What ultimately worked in the City and RM of Portage's favour was the larger, lasting impact this type of innovation will have on Manitoba communities, not just now but well into the future."

The project involved a tax sharing agreement between the City and the RM which essentially made the boundary between the two disappear in relation to economic development. Together, the two municipalities were able to join forces in attracting new industry to the area. The impacts of this innovation to the economic development of the area were seen when the partners announced the establishment the 120 million dollar JR Simplot potato processing plant, creating over 230 jobs.

City of Portage la Prairie Mayor Ian Mackenzie and RM of Portage la Prairie Reeve Jim Knight were on hand to accept the award.

Bell added, "this agreement changed the way these two municipalities do business, and now stands as a model for others to follow. By joining forces, they strengthened the foundation for economic expansion in the area, resulting in a strong and vibrant economy for those in the Portage la Prairie region."

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