

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, I am pleased to present the 2010 Annual Report.

With 2010 being a municipal election year in Manitoba, many of you reading this report will be new to the AMM and perhaps unfamiliar with some of our issues. It is my pleasure to welcome you to the world of municipal government and to our association.

It is always gratifying to begin with successes, and this year was no different in that it held several. Undoubtedly our greatest achievement came in the form of our united lobbying efforts. This was highlighted

when we voiced our concern over the Province's proposed amendments to the Onsite Wastewater Management System Regulation – otherwise known as the “sewage ejector issue”. While this report includes a full recap of the situation and our efforts, suffice it to say it is a perfect example of what we can accomplish when we work together.

Our top issue for 2010 was actually a combination of several – the growing infrastructure deficit, increasing municipal responsibilities and the need for alternate revenues for municipalities. We packaged these issues together as the “Core Challenges for Municipalities” and conveyed these challenges to government at every opportunity this year.

The infrastructure issue has become so threatening that the AMM, in partnership with the City of Winnipeg, created the Infrastructure Funding Council on May 21st. The IFC's mandate is to develop a comprehensive infrastructure funding

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strategy, including recommendations, to begin the process of addressing the ballooning municipal infrastructure deficit. I look forward to the completion of this report in the near future.

The AMM pushed several key issues on the federal scene this year, including the need for an escalator clause in the federal Gas Tax Agreement and the need for a new round of

programs to fund municipal infrastructure. The Communities Component of the Building Canada Fund has been allocated in Manitoba, so it is essential for all parties to begin the discussion now about the next generation of municipal infrastructure funding programs. Also high on the agenda was the federal government's new wastewater requirements and the concern that there is no accompanying dollars to fund these requirements.

Provincially, we kicked off our lobbying year with our annual meeting with Premier Selinger and the Provincial Cabinet last November. This was our first meeting with the new Premier and we had the opportunity

to make him aware of a great many issues. Throughout the year we also raised dozens of other issues during our annual provincial Minister meetings which are detailed in the pages of this report.

I must thank my executive team for their work over the past year. Without the support of Vice-Presidents Shirley Kalyniuk and Roger Wilson and Executive Director Joe Masi, my work would have been much more difficult, and a lot less enjoyable. The entire Board of Directors deserves a warm thank you as well, for their dedication and efforts throughout the year.

Several AMM directors have decided to step down and follow other pursuits, and I bid farewell to Eastern directors Art Rempel and George Harbottle, Interlake Rural Director Alice Bourgouin and Northern Director Oswald Sawh. Their efforts over the past number of years are greatly appreciated and their wisdom and insight around our board table made us a stronger team. They will be missed.

My final thank-you is of course reserved for our members. Your support and encouragement throughout the past year meant a great deal to me and our entire board. Our success with the sewage ejector issue is a testament of how united we can move the agenda of government in our favour.

This may be our last annual report before a provincial election. As we enter the new year, it is crucial that we take every opportunity to place our issues front and centre with both the government and the opposition. You can be assured that the AMM will make it a priority to do just that.

Best wishes to you as you enter a new term in municipal government.

Doug Dobrowolski, President

