



**AMM Vice-President Ralph Groening
Speaking Notes – October 23, 2017**

Bill 24 - The Red Tape Reduction and Government Efficiency Act

On behalf of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM), I would like to thank you for the opportunity to present municipal concerns related to reducing red tape.

I will begin my presentation today by providing a brief overview of the AMM, our ongoing advocacy efforts to reduce red tape and regulatory burdens on our members, and our recommendations to help address this challenge.

The AMM was formed in 1999 as a result of a merger between the Union of Manitoba Municipalities (UMM) and the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities (MAUM).

Our organization is independent and non-partisan, and our mission is to identify and address the needs and concerns of our members in order to achieve strong and effective municipal government.

Our membership consists of all of Manitoba's 137 incorporated municipalities, including the City of Winnipeg.



In regards to Bill 24 specifically, the AMM welcomes the elimination of the need for municipalities to gain ministerial approval to charge more than a specified amount to property owners for controlling noxious weeds under *The Noxious Weeds Act*. This regulatory change further recognizes municipalities as an elected order of government accountable to their residents.

However, it is essential the Province of Manitoba ensures adequate training is provided to weed supervisors and inspectors. We also encourage Manitoba Agriculture to make available departmental staff to answer questions from weed supervisors and weeds inspectors, when required.

In relation to our advocacy efforts, the AMM made a comprehensive written submission on March 3, 2017 to the *Red Tape Reduction Task Force*, which included 20 targeted recommendations to address red tape and excess regulation which often hinders our members while delivering public services.

These recommendations were formulated based on our review of more than 75 written submissions from municipalities across Manitoba that identified inefficiencies in various provincial government processes. Moreover, the AMM Executive also made formal presentations to the Red Tape Reduction Task Force's transportation and land development sub-committees.



Overall, approximately 90 per cent of Manitoba municipalities have indicated to us that they encounter provincial red tape on a regular basis resulting in added financial or staff resources and delays when dealing with provincial Acts, regulations, license requirements, and permit applications. Therefore, we are committed to identifying red tape barriers and sharing practical ideas to streamline provincial government processes to benefit Manitoba municipalities.

Our members also often experience process delays when dealing with the Municipal, Public Utilities, and Highway Traffic Boards. Our recommendations to conduct a full review of the function and purposes of these bodies complement the provincial government's commitments made in its 2016 *Speech from The Throne*.

In addition, more than 80 per cent of municipalities experience red tape with regards to land development due to provincial requirements, causing process delays, additional paperwork, and labour costs. For instance, it is currently common practice for municipalities to experience multi-year delays in the acquisition process for Crown Lands. In some cases, it has taken more than a decade for applications to be processed, which not only hinders economic growth but also potentially discourages new investments in local communities.

When new regulations are being contemplated and implemented, it is essential that they are matched with provincial funding support. Unfortunately, over the years, municipalities have often had to deal with the downloading of provincial responsibilities and regulations with no provincial funding.



For example, since 2011 the AMM has repeatedly voiced concerns over the lack of provincial funding to municipalities to support the effective implementation of accessibility standards. Funding support must be provided to ensure the effective implementation of the standards as there will assuredly be financial costs associated not only with the customer service and employment standards but also with the three subsequent standards yet to be developed.

Many Manitoba communities are currently proactively implementing accessibility plans in order to comply with provincial regulations, yet they shouldn't have to shoulder these priorities alone. In short, the implementation of the mandated accessibility standards will be undermined so long as no provincial funding support is provided.

This is only one example of how excessive regulations are negatively affecting our members and causing unnecessary financial and administrative burdens for local communities.

In closing, the AMM welcomes the identification and elimination of red tape and excess regulation. Municipalities require clear, efficient, and effective processes in order to grow and sustain local communities.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to provide these comments.

If you have any questions for me, I would be happy to answer them.