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News Release

Cities pledge support to North

September 23, 2016 - The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) Cities Caucus gathered in the City of Thompson yesterday, the first time its members have met in northern Manitoba. After meeting to discuss common issues and touring Thompson, the group agreed: the sustainability and viability of the north is essential for ALL cities throughout the province.

City of Brandon Mayor Rick Chrest, who chairs the Cities Caucus, noted recent industry closures in Churchill and The Pas affect not only northern cities, but the rest of the province. "It is one thing to hear about situations occurring in northern Manitoba, but seeing first-hand some of the highlights - and challenges - Thompson and others experience was eye-opening," he said.

AMM President Chris Goertzen agreed. "The AMM represents all Manitoba municipalities, and the members of the cities caucus share similar issues," he noted. "Collectively we can all benefit from face-to-face forums to share our specific concerns and today's meeting was a perfect example of that."

Topics up for discussion included Thompson's Community Safety Officer (CSO) Program, municipal policing contracts, and new regulations for water and wastewater plants.

But the overall goal of the day was to cultivate an appreciation for northern cities, and Thompson Mayor Dennis Fenske felt this was achieved. "I invited the Cities Caucus to meet in Thompson to share information and to expose others to some of the unique issues faced in Manitoba's North," he explained. "I truly feel the members now have a better understanding of how our issues are their issues, too."

Chrest agreed. "What we heard and saw in Thompson today was that we are not so different. What affects the north affects us all, and every Manitoba city - whether in the north, south, east or west - must stand together."

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Pictured at Thompson City Hall:

L to R:

Mayor Eric Irwin, City of Dauphin

CAO Garry Ceppetelli, City of Thompson

City Manager Barb Dyck, City of Winkler

Mayor Ken Wiebe, City of Morden

Councillor Kelly Cook, City of Selkirk

Mayor Larry Johannson, City of Selkirk

CAO Duane Nicol, City of Selkirk

Mayor Dennis Fenske, City of Thompson

CAO Brad Collett, City of Dauphin

President Chris Goertzen, AMM

Mayor Martin Harder, City of Winkler

Councillor Jac Siemens, City of Steinbach

Mayor Rick Chrest, City of Brandon (Chair)

Councillor Jeff Browaty, City of Winnipeg

Mayor Irvin Ferris, City of Portage la Prairie