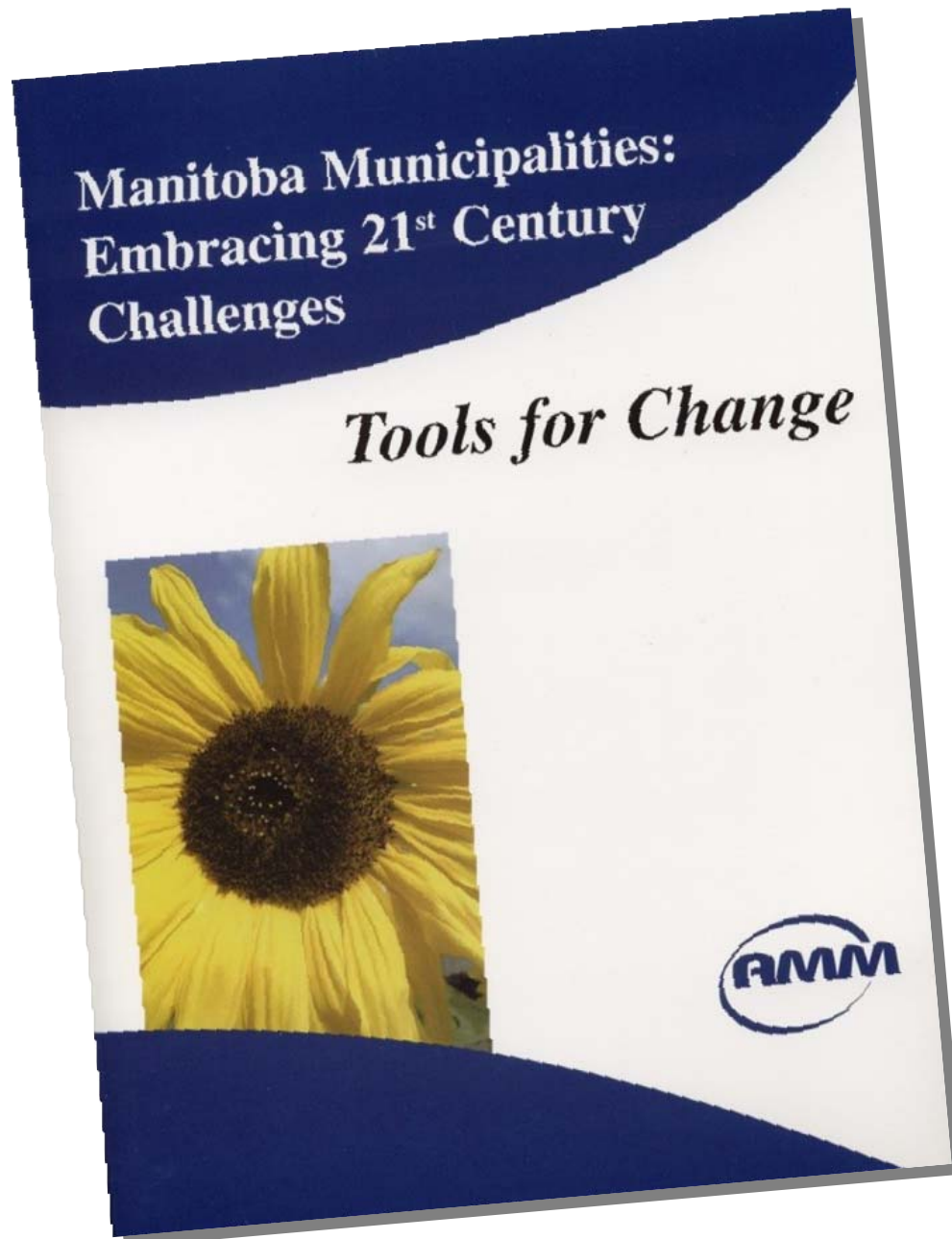


**1ST ANNUAL
MUNICIPAL INNOVATIONS AWARD**

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE IN MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE



**February 28th, 2005
Keystone Centre
Brandon, MB**

TOOLS FOR CHANGE APPLICANTS

BETTER MUNICIPAL BUSINESS PRACTICES

Rural Municipality of Macdonald: *Radio Frequency Remote Read Water Meters*

Since 1989, the RM of Macdonald has been extending water pipelines to villages and rural areas across the municipality, and now provides services to virtually the entire area including 1,718 customers in rural and urban locations. With such a widespread system, the inefficiency of accessing each location to read water meters and concern for the decreasing accuracy of the meter readings soon became apparent. For this reason, the RM chose to install the radio frequency remote read water meters to improve efficiencies in the system and effectively manage the resources of the municipality and water utility in a way that protects the interests of the utility and its consumers. The collection of accurate meter readings will facilitate water rate studies and possible water conservation initiatives.

Town of Rossburn: *Residential-Commercial Incentives*

To respond to several commercial closures over the previous 15 years, the Town of Rossburn and the Rossburn Chamber of Commerce developed a series of incentives for residential and commercial property, effective January 2003. New residents and business owners are eligible for incentives such as credits on water billing charges, property taxes, garbage collection fees and also receive passes to the curling club, golf club and family skating events. In each of the two years that the incentives have been in place, 10 new residents took advantage of the program and more children were enrolled in the local school. The Town of Rossburn successfully attracted individuals and families from across Manitoba and Canada, and ongoing interest in the program indicates potential for future achievements.

TAX SHARING AGREEMENTS

City and Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie: *Inter-municipal Tax Sharing*

On December 18, 2000, the City and RM of Portage la Prairie signed a tax sharing agreement to coordinate economic development initiatives across the region and jointly attract new industry to the area. Through this agreement, two municipalities share all increases in commercial and industrial property taxes on a 60:40 basis, with the host municipality receiving 60 per cent. This agreement contributed to Simplot's decision to locate a potato processing plant in the RM of Portage la Prairie, which created 230 jobs for the region. These two municipalities have the distinction of establishing the first agreement of this kind in Manitoba while enabling both municipalities to jointly market the benefits of the region and to focus on their mutual strengths.

TOOLS FOR CHANGE APPLICANTS

SERVICE SHARING AGREEMENTS

Town of Lynn Lake: *Demolition/Refurbishment/Renovation Project*

Mine closures have had a significant impact on the population decline in the Town of Lynn Lake, leaving widespread unemployment and a deteriorating housing stock. The Town of Lynn Lake undertook a training project in conjunction with the Marcel Colomb First Nation and the provincial departments of Employment & Income Assistance and Employment & Training to ensure that the project would attract workers from the First Nation and social assistance recipients. Since the First Nation was soon building a new reserve 20 kilometres from the Town, the project allows participants to learn skills that can be applied to housing construction and maintenance on the new reserve. As well, the training projects have resulted in the demolition of derelict housing and the renovation and provision of habitable low- to moderate-income housing for the community.

Rural Municipality of Armstrong: *Sewage Disposal Service Sharing*

As a solution to a sewage disposal problem that impacted the entire municipality, the RM of Armstrong approached several neighbouring municipalities to propose service sharing agreements. The RM of Armstrong had examined the feasibility of building a central sewage lagoon, but concluded that it was cost prohibitive and inefficient due to the significant distances that some individuals would have to travel to dispose of their sewage. An alternative solution was implemented in July 2002, when the RM of Armstrong finalized service sharing agreements with the RMs of Gimli and Coldwell and the Towns of Arborg and Teulon. These agreements have improved service to residents and businesses for sewage hauling and will result in long-term savings for all of Armstrong's ratepayers, while assisting to defray the costs of established sewage lagoons in other municipalities.

RESTRUCTURING

No submissions

Submissions were evaluated based on a number of criteria, including:

- complexity and creativity
- overall impact
- community support, and
- regional cooperation.

AND THE WINNER IS

ABOUT THE MUNICIPAL INNOVATION AWARD

All municipalities have experienced change since their incorporation. For some, this change has meant continued growth and prosperity. For others, change has meant new approaches are needed for long-term sustainability. For this reason, the AMM in consultation with the department of Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade developed the Tools For Change toolkit to help municipalities assess the health of their municipality and look at ways of improving how they do business.

The Municipal Innovations Award given out for the first time at this year's MOS is part of the Tools For Change initiative and is designed to recognize excellence in municipal practices that improve governance, administration, service delivery, or inter-municipal cooperation.

What is your municipality doing? Let us know. Submit your innovative municipal ideas to the AMM Office as part of the Tools for Change program. And watch for application forms to be sent out in January 2006 for next year's Municipal Innovations Award, which will be given out at MOS 2006 in Brandon next year.



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