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NEWS RELEASE

BILL 37 CLEARS STANDING COMMITTEE WITH AMENDMENTS, MUNICIPAL CONCERNS REMAIN

April 22, 2021 – Earlier this week [Bill 37](#): *The Planning Amendment and City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act* cleared the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development with [amendments](#) following presentations from the AMM, municipalities, and industry stakeholders. However, the vast majority of registered presenters identified gaps or shortcomings with this proposed legislation which is cause for concern.

The AMM wishes to thank the Hon. Derek Johnson, Minister of Municipal Relations, for supporting amendments that include decreasing the time for an applicant to potentially file an appeal on municipal land-use decisions from 30 to 14 days as well as removing sections related to conditional use appeals. Previous changes to the Bill that now require a mandatory three-year review of the legislation as well as granting municipalities the right to be consulted by the Minister before the creation of any additional regional planning regions are also appreciated.

“While these amendments are positive, municipal concerns remain regarding the far-reaching scope of appeals since there are no safeguards built into the legislation preventing frivolous or vexatious appeals,” stated AMM President Kam Blight. “To prevent the creation of a significant appeals backlog, the AMM continues to believe that clear parameters related to the appeals process should be statutory as they are elsewhere in Canada.”

“Additionally, giving the Municipal Board the power to override local decisions undermines the authority and autonomy of municipal officials. As municipalities fuel Manitoba’s economy and local Councils know their communities best, democratically-elected local officials should decide how development happens – not provincially-appointed, unaccountable individuals,” added President Blight.

To address these concerns, the AMM proposed six key amendments which are outlined in President Blight’s [full remarks](#) to the Standing Committee. These amendments highlight the need for more clarity and consultation with municipalities and stakeholders before proclaiming this legislation since this Bill will fundamentally re-shape land-use planning in Manitoba.

The AMM wishes to thank the City of Winnipeg, City of Selkirk, RM of West St. Paul, RM of Headingley, RM of Macdonald, RM of East St. Paul, RM of Cartier and Association of Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities (AMBM) for also delivering oral presentations to the Standing Committee on Bill 37.

The AMM represents all 137 municipalities in Manitoba.