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Message from Minister Harry Van Mulligen

Congratulations to all of the new and returning mayors, reeves and councillors who were successful in this year's municipal elections. Your willingness to serve your municipality plays a key part in the strength of our Saskatchewan communities. It is the leadership of elected officials like you that will move Saskatchewan forward as a strong place for families and young people to build their futures.

I have had the privilege to serve as the Minister responsible for Government Relations for 10 months now. This summer, it was my pleasure to travel across this great province meeting with mayors, reeves and councillors about municipal issues important to you.

The variety of the issues discussed demonstrated both the diversity of our province and the complexity of operating a municipality. The knowledge that elected officials have brought to our discussions, whether it be on heavy haul roads, revenue sharing, economic development, an urban agenda or infrastructure programs, has been impressive.

These discussions will be invaluable to me as we move ahead on many issues in the upcoming year. The government is committed to continuing to work with the municipal sector regarding

municipal financing, including the revenue sharing program and funding for infrastructure.

Work will continue on the urban agenda in recognition that cities are significant drivers of the provincial economy both within their borders and in the surrounding rural areas. In a province of our size, cities and rural communities are intertwined, and sustain and support each other.

We will continue to work with SARM and SUMA to support Clearing the Path and with the Action Committee on the Rural Economy to stimulate economic development in Rural Saskatchewan.

In the next year, the new Planning and Development Act will replace the current legislation and provide the tools needed to advance Saskatchewan as a leader in environmental protection and the green economy and ensure that today's Saskatchewan families benefit from our strong economy.

When people work together, positive things happen. Excellence in Saskatchewan's municipalities is something that should be recognized and celebrated.

Next year will see the first-ever Saskatchewan Municipal Awards, a partnership between SARM, SUMA, New North, UMAAS, and RMAA and Government Relations.

The theme for this year's awards is "Celebrating Excellence," and based on what I have seen as I have travelled this province, I'm confident there is a great deal of excellence and leadership in the municipal sector.

I look forward to opportunities to meet and speak with many of you in 2007.

Best wishes for a happy holiday season!

New North CEO

On November 13, 2006, Boyd Clark officially took over as the Chief Executive Officer for the Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities Services Inc. Boyd replaced Al Loke, who was the CEO for New North for the past six years.

Boyd arrived in La Ronge from Camrose, Alberta on November 9. Boyd received his undergraduate degree from the University of Regina and his Masters of Science in Community Administration from the North Dakota State University, Fargo, North Dakota.

Boyd has had a number of years experience in local municipal governance as Chief Administrative Officer for one year and five years working in Northern Alberta for the Town of High Prairie / Municipal District of Big Lakes as the Manager of Community Services (the senior portfolio included Community Services, Parks and Recreation, Tourism and Economic

Development). This regional municipal commission included overseeing the portfolio of Community Services for the town, the municipal district, 4 hamlets, 3 First Nations and 3 Métis settlements in the second largest northern municipality of Alberta.

Boyd originally is from Saskatoon and has family in Northern Manitoba and looks forward to the opportunities that Northern Saskatchewan has to offer.

S.A.N.C. (New North)

The Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities Services Inc. (New North) held their annual general meeting in Prince Albert on November 16 and 17, 2006 where a new executive was elected from the members of the Northern communities.

The newly elected S.A.N.C. Executive consists of:
Chairperson - Ida Fietz-Ray (newly elected Mayor of Sandy Bay)
Vice Chairperson - Georgina Jolibois (incumbent Mayor of La Loche)
Treasurer/Secretary – Gordon Stomp (incumbent Mayor of Air Ronge)
Councillor - Doris MacDonald (newly elected Sandy Bay)
Councillor - Bruce Fidler (incumbent Mayor of Creighton)

Municipal planning: Government Relations introduces new legislation

For over a hundred years, municipalities full of hardworking prairie people have worked to ensure that municipal development results in viable and healthy communities. The province is supporting these efforts.

In November, new legislation intended to foster sustainable communities was given second reading in the provincial legislature.

The Planning and Development Act 2006 will enable municipalities to plan for and encourage development in Saskatchewan. It is the result of a process in which people from across the province came together to determine the future of municipal planning.

Starting in September 2005, Saskatchewan Government Relations began gauging public opinion and requesting input from stakeholders.

A series of open houses were held and residents were invited to participate in a provincial survey.

"I am very pleased by the amount of interest Saskatchewan people have shown regarding this issue," Government Relations Minister Harry Van Mulligen said. "People are ready and willing to lead the way to make Saskatchewan an even better place to live."

Discussions focused on five themes: Municipal Authority, Public Participation and Accountability, Inter-jurisdictional Planning, Provincial Interests, and Subdivision. Input on each of the five themes was considered and new provisions to the Act were drafted to address issues raised by communities and stakeholders.

Once passed, the Act is intended to promote economic growth, environmental sustainability, social and cultural development and sustainable communities, through the provision of clear, consistent, and effective tools for community planning.

It is also meant to foster co-operation and partnerships among municipalities, governments, First Nations, entrepreneurs and all citizens so that they can build and invest in communities.

“These new provisions respond to the requests from municipalities looking for more local autonomy and authority,” Van Mulligen said. “We’ve stream-lined the planning processes and provided clearer and more flexible ways to administer planning bylaws.”

With the new provisions, municipalities will be able to engage citizens in planning decisions, while making certain that decision-makers are held accountable at the same time.

“We are looking to give residents of the province what they really need in order to improve municipal planning,” Van Mulligen said. “I

am confident that the new planning provisions will do that.”

Changes to the Act will help all municipalities to improve the province that already is the best place in Canada to live, work and raise a family. If your municipality has comments, they can be directed to the Department of Government Relations.

For a copy of the Bill or for more information on The Planning and Development Act Review, visit www.municipal.gov.sk.ca/div/cpb/ongoingpandactreview.html.

Now that you’re elected – what next?

Your fellow citizens may have asked you to run, or you might have decided on your own to seek municipal office. Now that you are on council either as a mayor, reeve, or councillor, what’s in store for the next two or three years, depending upon which type of municipality you serve?

Undoubtedly there may be some challenges – there will be many decisions to make on where to spend the money available to the municipality - much the same as running a business or a household. On the other hand, there may be opportunities to be the architect or the facilitator of progress in your community, whether it’s a new road, enhancing recreational programming, or attracting a new business to the community. So how do we do this?

Municipal government is often viewed simply as a body to provide a certain level of municipal services to citizens and ratepayers. The municipality is responsible for road maintenance, waste collection and water treatment, fire protection and so on. Council not only establishes the level of these services, but will also determine how those services are provided, whether it’s by the municipality itself or by contract or in partnership with other municipalities. More important than being a service provider or facilitator, municipal government is a forum for public debate to determine a course of action or policy that best suits the public purpose.

Saskatchewan Government Relations has prepared a variety of publications and manuals to assist you to carry out your duties.

- *The Municipal Council Member’s Handbook* discusses the powers and duties of council, the enactment of bylaws, legislative responsibilities when members have a conflict of interest with a municipal matter, and other topics.
- Council’s power is collective; that is, decisions are made by members of council in meetings, not individually. *The Municipal Council Meeting Guide* outlines the basic elements of meetings as members debate issues of interest to the municipality. This publication identifies other resources which members may wish to access.

- There are a variety of publications which are topic specific, such as tax enforcement, assessment appeals, and local improvements and so on. While these may be of particular interest to the municipal administrator, reviewing these publications provides members of council with a better understanding of the processes to undertake these activities.
- There are several reports, articles and studies discussing items of interest to municipalities, such as property revaluation, municipal organization, and liability. These documents provide members of council with valuable insight into issues facing local government today.

It is up to you to determine how you carry out your duties as an elected member of council.

Through our [website](#) and other resources, Saskatchewan Government Relations provides you with information to help you make a decision. The publications mentioned can be found on the Department's website.

Municipal Leadership Development Program

Saskatchewan Government Relations is a partner with SUMA, SARM, RMAA, UMAAS and the New North in the Municipal Leadership Development Program.

The Program provides a series of workshops developed exclusively for elected and appointed municipal leaders in Saskatchewan. These workshops cover topics such as roles and responsibilities, planning, economic development, labour relations, and communication. Check out the program website at www.mldp.ca.

Workshop Dates:

- December 5, 2006 – Warman
 - Module 4 – Human Resources in the Municipal Workplace
- December 6, 2006 – Weyburn
 - Module 2 – Planning for Success
- December 6, 2006 – Hudson Bay
 - Module 3 – Municipal Economic Development Fundamentals
- December 12, 2006 – Kipling
 - Module 5 – Public Relations and Communications for Municipalities
- December 13, 2006 – Holdfast
 - Module 4 – Human Resources in the Municipal Workplace

Department staffing

Government Relations is currently seeking to fill two existing position vacancies: one Municipal Administration Advisor; and, one Provincial-Municipal Relations Consultant. Further details can be found at the Saskatchewan Public Service Commission Career Centre at www.careers.gov.sk.ca/.



Celebrating Excellence

Showcase your community with a Municipal Award.

Award Categories:

- **Municipal Service Excellence**
- **Economic Development Leadership**
- **Regional Leadership and Partnerships**
- **Community Leadership**

Nomination packages have been sent to all Saskatchewan municipalities by the end of November 2006. **Nominations must be received by 4:00 p.m., Friday, January 19, 2007**, to be considered.