

Message from the Executive Director



Clearing the Path for Saskatchewan's Future was SARM's theme for 2006. Over the past few years we have seen "Clearing the Path" grow from an idea to a nationally recognized example of the power of a grassroots movement. The Municipal Primary Corridor System and the Municipal Capacity Development Program were born out of CTP and will open many development opportunities for our province in the years to come.

This year, SARM unveiled a new website (www.sarm.ca). The website has a modern look and is very user friendly. SARM is looked at as the voice of rural Saskatchewan and our website enables us to keep our members and the general public informed of new developments and emerging rural issues on a daily basis.

On the financial side, SARM continues to show a strong financial position. Our self-insurance programs closed the year with a healthy growth in reserves. Our Trading Department continues to be the SARM service that receives the highest level of praise from our members. And, our Legal Services Department is also very popular with our members and has proved to be a valuable asset to our association. It is because of the tremendous support of our members that we can continue to offer these services at such great rates.

In the spring of 2006, there was a breakthrough on the education tax issue with the announcement of

the province of an injection of \$52.8 million to alleviate the pressure on the agriculture land property tax. The result was a 38 per cent reduction on education tax on agriculture land in place of the 8 per cent reduction of 2005. The Premier stated that this establishes that the province is now paying 60 per cent of the agriculture land tax and he made a commitment to ensure that the province continues to pay that share on agriculture land. SARM is continuing to work with the other members of the Education Tax Coalition to achieve that same percentage for other property classes.

We saw a number of changes on our Board of Directors in the past year with the election of a new President (David Marit), a new Vice-President (Jim Hallick) and two new Directors (Harvey Malanowich and Darryl Senecal). The Board is very committed to seeking out feedback and advice from our membership and is, therefore, renewing their efforts to visit with as many RM councils as possible each year.

A special thank you to all SARM staff for their continued hard work and

dedication. We hope you enjoy this annual report and we look forward to continuing to work on your behalf in the coming year.

Sincerely,

Ken Engel
Executive Director

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