



New North

Saskatchewan Association
of Northern Communities

2018-19
Annual Report



From the Chair, Bruce Fidler

From the CEO, Matt Heley

A key objective of New North is to highlight success on a range of issues and initiatives. It's not enough to be doing something, you also have to show that you're doing something. Looking over this year, we can see where progress has been made, and some successes achieved, but we know that there is a lot to be done, and we know that sometimes you won't see the results of the work overnight. You can wait two or three years for an outcome to be achieved. That can be frustrating, but when the rewards come, they come.

I think we just need to look at where the northern communities are moving forward on a range of initiatives, like regional solid waste solutions. I don't think a lot of us thought we'd see major infrastructure dollars going into landfills, but here we are. That's progress.

For the last two years a major part of our strategic plan is to advocate for programs to help build administrative capacity. A part of this is helping Mayors and Councillors become more familiar with their roles. We went down this path because the growth and sustainability of our communities is dependent on having rock solid administration and governance in place. One success this year, in collaboration with our colleagues on the Northern Municipal Trust Account Management Board, was the launching of the Northern Administrators association this year. We have similar projects coming up this year as well.

I hope you will accept our 2018-19 Annual Report. It's been a busy year given everyone's fiscal restraints. We're moving forward, and hope to have you as company on the journey. ■

No one working in the north achieves anything on their own, and New North is no exception there. We are lucky to have so many willing partners to help us. The projects spoken about in these pages are really just testaments to great working relationships with our partners, among whom include the Northern Municipal Trust Account Management Board, the Ministries of Government Relations, Environment and Justice, and of course SUMA and SARM. We also work with the RCMP on a number of projects, and plenty of other organizations on a one-off basis from time to time. The successes we have belong as much to them as to us.

It's nice to spend a moment or two to reflect on the year we've had, but time is an endless stream, and it waits for no one. We are already working on a set of fresh initiatives to tackle a broad range of issues in 2019 and 2020—and of course, our partners will be along with us.

Because of the New North's Executive focus on building administrative capacity, we have put considerable time over the last year into developing a range of initiatives aimed at helping our municipal administrators reach their full potential.

Among these is what we are calling the Administrative Circuit Rider program, which is being developed with the NMTA Management Board. We also have plans for a regional administrative support pilot project, which will provide more hands-on and a broader range of services to administrators, including mentoring.

As well, we are planning to build a new set of educational and training initiatives called "From the Ground Up"—the key is in the title!—which will take a new approach to training administrative staff, with an initial focus on financial management, and also water operators, with an initial focus on helping them pass their certification exams!

With perseverance and lots of help from our friends, these will hopefully be just a couple of the deliverables in 2019-20 that you will be reading about next year! ■

About New North

NEW NORTH—SANC SERVICES INC is a non-profit organization, based in La Ronge, dedicated to serving the interests of the 35 municipalities of northern Saskatchewan. New North's governance is supplied by a Board of Directors (the "Executive"), which is elected from among the Mayors and Councillors of the 35 municipalities. New North has a small core staff of two, Chief Executive Officer, Matt Heley, and Executive Assistant, Shelley Isbister, who carry out of the strategic vision of the Executive by engaging in proposal development, project management and coordination, communications, the provision of direct support to municipalities, as well as administering the organization.

New North Executive



Chair, Bruce Fidler,
Mayor of Creighton

Vice Chair,
Robert St. Pierre,
Mayor of La Loche

Keith Laprise,
Councillor of Stony
Rapids

Mike Natomagan,
Mayor of Pinehouse

Gord Stomp,
Treasurer, Mayor of
Air Ronge

New North Staff

Matt Heley, Chief Executive Officer

Shelley Isbister, Executive Assistant

New North Communities

New North's communities are the 35 municipalities of northern Saskatchewan. They are: The Northern Villages of Green Lake, Beauval, Buffalo Narrows, Pinehouse, La Loche, Ile a la Crosse, Denare Beach, Cumberland House, Sandy Bay, Pelican Narrows and Air Ronge; the Northern Hamlets of Dore Lake, Cole Bay, St. George's Hill, Michel Village, Turnor Lake, Timber Bay, Black Point, Weyakwin, Jans Bay and Patuanak; the Northern Towns of Creighton and La Ronge; and the Northern Settlements of Sled Lake, Bear Creek, Brabant Lake, Camsell Portage, Garson Lake, Descharme Lake, Missinipe, South End, Stanley Mission, Uranium City and Wollaston Lake.

New North Mission Statement

New North – SANC Services Inc. (Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities) is organized to:

- Advocate the issues and concerns on behalf of the Northern Communities within the Northern Saskatchewan Administrative District (NSAD) of Saskatchewan;
- Organize and co-ordinate capacity building, training and development activities for the municipal governments and organizations; and
- Build and maintain strategic relationships.

Advocacy includes identifying the issues of importance to northerners and northern municipalities and communicating with other governments and organizations to inform them of the issues and ways to resolve them. It includes acting and speaking on behalf of northern municipalities in meetings and activities set up by governments to discuss issues that affect the northern people and municipalities.

Capacity Building is about improving the knowledge, skills and abilities of northerners and northern municipalities. It includes governance, management, and community economic development. There is a need to raise the capacity to some minimum level and to look at structural means of building capacity for the municipal governments of small communities.

Strategic Relationships are constructive relationships, partnerships and cooperative arrangements with other organizations and governments to promote the interests of northerners or to achieve mutual benefits.

New North Strategic Direction

The strategic direction for New North for the years 2018-2020 was set by the New North Executive at a strategic planning session in September, 2017. Building on the overall mandate and purpose of the association as set out in our mission statement, the Executive identified five main themes that were used to chart the strategic priorities of New North for next two to three years.

Advocacy	<p>The interests of northern communities are identified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advocacy represents the collective interests of northern communities• Advocacy is driven by credible and effective practices
Partnerships	<p>Increase impact through strong partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnerships are purposeful and provide strategic benefit• Partnerships are nurtured and effectively managed
Municipal Capacity	<p>Governance and administrative capacity growth in northern communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New North as facilitator, coordinator and program advocate• Primary focus of supporting success of administrators
Facilitation	<p>Increased collaboration amongst northern communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New North as catalyst with insight, process and information
Organizational Health	<p>A strong and stable organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policies and procedures advancing governance and management excellence

New North Vertical Slice, 2018-19

In pursuit of some of our key objectives this year, New North ...

- Ran two workshops focusing on building capacity in financial literacy for municipal administrators
- Put together a plan for the creation of a northern administrations association, which initiated in April 2019
- Surveyed communities and came up with a plan to help northern water operators achieve certification
- Advocated for the review, enhancement and immediate renewal of the Northern Capital Grants Program
- Advocated for the establishment of a green energy revolving fund
- Worked closely with our thought partners, Urban Systems, to submit funding proposals to Natural Resources Canada Green Energy Capacity Building Stream
- Certified 60 water operators from across the north at our annual New North waterworks
- Provided practical, hands-on support and advice to elected officials and administrators on a range of issues, including cannabis legalization
- Delivered more than \$40,000 in funding to support community justice and community safety initiatives in the north
- Provided forums for the northern elected to exchange ideas, interact with senior government, learn from each other, and advocate for their own interests
- Produced more than 100,000 words in written communication to New North members, government and stakeholders in 12 editions of the New North monthly newsletter, which had a year over year growth in subscribers of more than 400%
- Advocated for the retention, in its current form, of the provincial rental housing supplement
- Continued dialogue with U of S researchers to come up with sustainable, community-driven initiatives for dog control
- Continued to maintain strong, purposeful dialogue with our key strategic partners SUMA and SARM
- Advocated for the enhancement of northern revenue sharing to recognize the increasing challenges northern communities are facing, particularly with respect the crisis facing youth
- And much, much more ...



At New North we pride ourselves on capturing some pretty neat photos – staff are even trained in the art of photography. Here we see what we regard as the photo of the year, taken by New North Executive Assistant, Shelley Isbister, at the Embracing Life Through Cultural Healing Youth Conference in March 2019. The photo beautifully captures the energy, joy and spirit of the gathering co-organized by New North and a host of other organizations, which attracted more than 200 kids from across the north.



2018-19: ISSUES in FOCUS

New North lobbied on dozens of issues this year, as we do every year, across multiple ministries. Each issue requires research, consultation and lots and lots of meetings. Below are a few of the issues that kept our attention through the year.

Northern Revenue Sharing

Every five years the province is required to review their flagship program that provides financial support to municipalities. The Municipal Revenue Sharing program distributes about \$250 million a year, and about \$18 million to the north through a sub-set program called Northern Revenue Sharing, administered through the Northern Municipal Trust Account.

Through 2018 the province engaged stakeholders including New North in a full-some, top to bottom review of the program to establish whether it was meeting the needs of municipalities, and to see what else could be added to it to make it more effective, apart from more money, of course.

Included in the review was consideration as to whether the PST was the appropriate indexing mechanism, with another option being to link it to provincial GDP. Indexing is an important element of revenue sharing because the index chosen can radically influence both the growth (or decline) of the dollar value of the program, and just importantly, the year-to-year changes in the pool. The PST link has the potential value of producing quite large increases, but at the cost of volatility (ie, big movements from year to year), while the GDP link has the benefit of less volatility, but also potentially less growth in the pool.

Another consideration was whether stakeholders wanted to see a “carve off” from the main pool to advance sector interests, like greater support for governance and administration and initiatives related to encourage municipal co-operation.

Overall, the review didn’t change the program too much, which was largely a good thing, because people liked the way it ran. A carve-off of \$1.5 million is being put into a program called Targeted Sector Support, the roll out of which, led by the stakeholders including New North, will begin over 2019-2020.

Building Capacity with Northern Administrators

The launch of the Northern Administrators Association in collaboration with by the NMTA Management Board is the first of many initiatives we’ll be embarking on over the next few years to help northern administrators overcome their capacity gaps.

Wildfire Mitigation Funding

Northerners have demanded funding to secure their communities against a wildfire incursion for years, and finally, with a federal government announcement in April, that will happen. New North communities will have access to more than \$6 million in funding to undertake mitigation and other activities within their boundaries, with the provincial government undertaking similar work on adjacent Crown land. Communities will have full control over how, when and where the clearing will occur, with the goal that most of the work will be completed within the first two years. Communities get to decide what to do with the lumber and, of course, local labour will be utilized in the work. Training programs will be devised to ensure locals have the certification required to undertake the work.

Supporting Northern Governance and Leadership Development

This year was the first year of what will be a multi-year and ongoing focus of New North in providing enhanced training and learning opportunities for northern leaders in a whole range of subject areas, which will include education not just in the principles of governance, but economic and business development as well as social development. Over the last few years we’ve tried to ensure that leaders get value for their time and money by hosting MLDP modules alongside our Gatherings, and in April, we brought Laurent Mougeot onboard to facilitate the first of many high level governance training workshops.

Supporting Community Policing and Justice Initiatives and Suicide Prevention

This year featured two events to help communities share some of the great community-driven success stories related to community policing. The Northern Justice Symposium in May 2018 and the Empowering our Communities in March 2019 showcased and highlighted the great work of local community and volunteer groups aimed at building community resiliency, prevent crime and build better relationship with authorities. In March as well, we saw the first major youth conference initiative by the Embracing Life Committee. ■

Capacity Building Northern Administrators Conference

Spring 2018 AdminCon



The New North Northern Administrators Conference is one of the few opportunities administrators working in northern municipalities get to come together to network, share stories, pick up bits of useful information, and draw their chairs right up to the dessert table with absolutely no one judging.

The agenda was once again fairly packed, and following a brief overview of the activities of New North and Northern Municipal Services, our friends from MNP in Prince Albert came along to explain some of the logic behind the composition of financial statements, which was actually far more interesting than anticipated, and should, we hope, have the ancillary impact of encouraging communities that don't produce annual financial statements to go ahead and produce them, since no one understands them anyway.

MNP also touched on a topic that we would like municipalities take a great deal of interest in, and that is internal controls, which relate to anything to do with how you safe guard the integrity of your financial management systems, and can be as simple as having cash handling policies that ensure every transaction has at least two sets of eyes on it, to more complex and involved tasks like tracing back who left the yogurt out of the fridge. Internal controls, in other words, are important to establishing an "audit trail"—a paper trail—that shows the linkages in a

financial transaction and helps ensure transparency and accountability.

Just before lunch, Cynthia Mamer from Sask911 took administrators through the Civic Address Registry, an important tool in use by emergency responders, but pretty useless if municipalities aren't signed up to it. At least two northern municipalities are not on the system, the identities of whom which Cynthia, quite sensibly, didn't reveal, and which no doubt prompted every administrator to check their status when they got back home.

Following lunch, we met the new provincial landfills manager, Tara Pidborochynski, having only this year replaced Sarah Keith, who hath now dominion over Land and Air.

After that, Jordan Woodsworth stopped by via Skype to provide some insight into her research into dog control issues, and provided an opportunity for those present to share some of their own ongoing initiatives, including in the Beauval area where PLEDCO is looking into setting up a regional pound in partnership with surrounding communities.

Jordan also provided us with a copy of the new Dog Book, a tool that communities can use to try to develop their own dog control strategies. A link to the book is on the New North website.

Rounding out the day was Kerry Desjarlais from the Water Security Agency with her waterworks permittee responsibilities presentation. ■



Fall AdminCon Lays Foundation for Northern Administrators Association

The problem of getting fair and accurate property assessments done in the north was one of the topics of discussion at the Fall Northern Administrators Conference—AdminCon—at the Coronet on November 22nd.

The turnout was good—probably the best we’ve seen in 20 years of doing these—with a mix administrators, clerks and elected officials, along with everyone’s assistant administrators—showing up for a day of robust discussions, cheese cake, and robust discussions about cheese cake.

SAMA CEO Irwin Blank was first up, and gave an overview of what SAMA does. Normally you’d expect this to be a good time to flick through a Canadian Tire catalogue on your phone or test the resiliency of a melamine table with your forehead, but actually it was pretty riveting stuff. SAMA uses a market-based algorithm to get values of residential properties in most places, including the north, and this is obviously fairly problematic, due to the absence of actual housing markets in most northern communities. In these situations, they tend to try to pull in the value of sales in like communities until they come up with some kind of baseline valuation that they can then apply more or less indiscriminately. It’s not perfect—far from it—but it’s what we are stuck with.

SAMA doesn’t necessarily rely on the information they get from ISC or MLS to determine property values. They also talk to municipal administrators, because they know everything that’s going on. The administrators in the room seemed to think this was a pretty good practice.

When it comes to assessing industrial property, and especially something like a mine, things get even more complicated, because assessed value is related to what the thing actually does, like extract uranium or huge amounts of money or whatever. With Cameco shutting a couple of sites in the north, we are expecting to see their assessed values fall by \$100 million or more. Irwin Blank thought that Cameco may, as a result, be contributing around \$1 million to \$3 million less in property taxes from now on. Those property taxes go to the NMTA, which uses the money to provide programming to northern communities (such as the treasured Northern Capital Grants Program, the Northern Subdivision Program, the Northern Water and Sewer Program, and much more).

With issues in ethical conduct in municipal governance so firmly on the agenda at the moment, we thought it was a

good time to bring in a law-talking guy who could lead municipal administrators through one particular municipal governance minefield. That man was Steven Dribnenki, SUMA’s legal advisor. The minefield: conflict of interest law.

Sensing the sombre mood, Steve did his best work in rallying the troops to the topic at hand, which wasn’t that difficult in the end because firstly, this is Steve we are talking about, and secondly, conflict of interest law is really quite interesting in itself, and so much more interesting in the northern and smaller communities because of everyone’s relationships with each other.

The discussion that followed was where it was at. We learned that municipalities in the north are apparently finding unique ways of navigating conflict of interest rules.

For example, because of the difficulty of filling positions where every applicant is related to an elected official in some way or other, one community now uses an independent HR person to make a recommendation on an appointment, taking it out of the hands of council.

Heading to lunch, Allan Laird, from the Ministry of Government Relations, presented a “draft of the draft” of *The Northern Municipalities Act* amendments, which we think we’ll see proper open and public consultation on in the next few weeks.

Following lunch, Dee Johns from Northern Municipal Services provided a quick overview of an extremely useful resource that many of us may not know about: the planning for growth website.

The website has had extensive updates over the last little while, and is heading toward being a one-stop-shop for information about anything related to northern municipal governance, administration and planning. There, you will find links to just about every bit of legislation northern municipal officials need to know about, and maps and statistics related to every community. Check it out at www.planningforgrowthnorthsk.com.

The final session for the day was focused on discussion around the new proposed Northern Administrators Association, which we think will get going very shortly.

Lunch was roast beef. ■



New North Waterworks 2018 Baffles, Mystifies, Flocculates

The provincial, federal and municipal expenditures on water and sewer infrastructure in northern Saskatchewan over the last 15 years now exceeds well over \$200 million. For that, we get some of the best water in the world. The quality of the raw product itself helps, of course: the water in the northern lakes, where many community systems draw from, is pure rainwater. Water treatment mostly amounts to taking out the effects of the organics—the result of the fact that we share the water with birds, four-legged animals, fish and beer. Systems in the south that have to cope with the run-off from fertilizers and pesticides can produce harder water. “Softners” can do the trick, but they increase sodium levels, which will effect anyone who suffers from hypertension and general all-round saltiness.

None of this investment matters if you don't have the skilled operators to work the stuff, and this is where the ongoing training and certification of northern water operators is really paying off. Northern Saskatchewan has as few “upsets” as anywhere else; and northern operators are as skilled, knowledgeable and good looking as any in the south, a fact we are reminded of each and every year New North hosts the Annual Waterworks and Baseball Cap Jamboree.

This year the event kicked off as usual with the Water Security Agency providing an overview of the water and wastewater regulatory framework, which as we all know stems from the inquiry into the contamination

of the North Battleford water supply, leading to an outbreak of cryptosporidiosis.

Contributing factors there included the operation of the water plant, and some fault was attributed to the handling of the contamination by the operators. Poor record keeping was identified as a factor as well, which is why EPOs tend now to hammer operators about how well they're keeping their paperwork (it's also the reason why it never comes up as a topic at these conferences: operators already hear too much about it).

After lunch, A2Z Safety delivered WHMIS training, the obtaining of which is compulsory for anyone exposed to hazardous materials in the workplace. As of December 2018, all workplaces will have to comply with the new WHMIS provisions, so this training was timely.

On the second day, Bert Gaudet from ATAP took delegates through the basics of filter surveillance. Although filtering water would seem to be pretty straightforward exercise, removing particles from water is actually quite complex. This is where an understanding of basic chemistry comes in handy which, in our case, meant we didn't understand a word of it, although we did pick up the term “flocculation,” and are actively seeking opportunities to use it in conversation.

The New North Waterworks was attended by more than 80 operators, guests and presenters from across the north and south. The event's major sponsors included ATAP, Anderson Pumphouse, SRC, the OCB, HACH, Cleartech and Enviroway, in no particular order. ■

Capacity Building New North Scholarship

The New North Executive was once again pleased to award New North Public Administration and Leadership Scholarships this year.

Recipients included Donny Favel from Ile a la Crosse, who was completing his LGA, and Robyn Lafond, who we assisted in achieving her career goal of becoming a conservation officer.

The New North Public Administration and Leadership Scholarship has assisted more than a dozen northern students advance in their tertiary

studies by providing financial support to purchase books, pay for tuition, housing, and other costs related to their education.

Successful applicants are chosen based on their commitment to playing a leadership role in advancing the growth and development of northern Saskatchewan.

Recipients of the award have been undertaking studies across a diverse field, including administration, health, education, the law and now environmental studies. ■

Communities Empowered

Celebrating Local Champions at “Empowering Our Communities,” March, 25-27th, 2019

We all know that northerners are good at engaging in conversations on crime and policing issues that plague their communities. This month, they were asked “how do we get from engagement to empowerment?”

That came from facilitator Flo Frank at the Empowering Our Communities symposium on March 25-27. The point is: we hear many of the same problems over the years, and it’s time to get at solutions so that in 10 years we aren’t talking about the same problems. So Frank took on the daunting task of getting symposium attendees — who were a mix of police officers, First Nations leadership and CPB members, and some New North members — to come up with a single, concise answer to the complicated question of “what can we do, beyond enforcement and policing, to make our communities safer?”

All of the ideas were action-oriented, and they put a lot of onus on the communities themselves to take action (and for them to sustain it once they get started). Pinehouse suggested getting a Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) group in the community and Lac La Ronge suggested a youth program like Project Venture that has proven successful in the past.

By the end of day one, there was an impressive adherence to the “one idea per table” rule — and when it came policing they came up with ideas like creating an orientation packages on the history of a community to give to new RCMP officers and for officer training to have mandatory Indigenous studies courses.

A struggle became clear early on in the symposium during the first question and answer period. It revolves

around whether the north needs more police, or whether it needs more prevention activities.

The message from the provincial representative at the table was clear.

“Adding more police officers is really not the solution to everything,” said Cory Lerat. He’s the Executive Director Police Quality and Innovation, Ministry of Corrections and Policing, Ministry of Justice.

That’s easy to say, but preventing crime is a tough sell when there are acute fears for safety in a community. This message came from Edmund Clark from Lac La Ronge.

The case for Community Safety Officers

Lerat made it clear early on that he’s a huge advocate of community safety officers (CSOs). Quick primer: community safety officers are a uniformed presence that carries handcuffs and pepper spray (no gun) and attend “not in progress events” to assist police. After six weeks of training, they have the provincial blessing to issue tickets under a large number of acts, but they cannot attend events where weapons are involved or suspected to be in a home. Suspected domestic and sexual assaults require CSOs to contact police.

They are employed by a municipality, Rural Municipality or First Nation. This brings up the issue of funding. It is up to the community to fund their CSOs, and while Gavin Nash, the director of policing innovations in the Ministry of Corrections and Policing, said the ministry has been covering the \$6,220 cost of training, there is currently

zero help beyond that from the provincial or federal government. Wages are about \$65,000 per year, plus about \$120,000 for equipment, including a vehicle, that needs to be replaced every three years.

Nash touted the benefits of having CSOs from personal experience back when he worked in Nunavut. The CSOs there helped him as soon as he landed in the community as a fresh-faced officer from Vancouver, and over the years they were vital link for him as they invited him to do cultural activities with them.

“I wouldn’t have been successful in that community had they not been there,” Nash said.

Lerat said CSOs are a uniformed presence in a community who don’t rotate out in the way that RCMP members do. They’re a constant.

CSOs proved to be a passionate topic, where Clark suggested that members don’t sign new CTAs until there’s an agreement for them to get CSOs. He got a hearty applause from that idea.

Nash said people are working really hard behind the scenes with the province to get funding for CSOs, but he wasn’t able to give a timeline for when that might happen. Angie Merasty from Pelican Narrows’ CCG told the crowd the crime reduction is visible in the community. Specifically, she said, when peacekeepers were away for their CSO training, there was a mild crime spike that dipped back down when they returned.

In short, the will is strong but the sources to fund CSOs is unclear.

“The community style policing I think is what we need more of. Also, the alternative measures type of policing, that sort of alternative measures justice. We need more of that. The CTAs that we have right now don’t seem to be working. I think a lot of people in the north want change,” Merasty told New North.

Simple actions, big effect

One of the most impactful messages of the week, according to attendees, came from a Canoe Lake family that started a protest against a known bootlegger in its community. Protest signs, saying things like “Children’s \$ is for food not booze” sent a strong message at the time, and resonated with Chasity Wahobin, from Waterhen Lake First Nation.

“These women went out there and they gained that knowledge and they stood up to what is right and that is what we need. You see a lot of women paving the way in their communities and that is what I would like to do too,” Wahobin told New North.

Success in justice is a mix of community-based actions and leadership, but it’s also about the community’s relationship with the RCMP. On that front, Black /Stony Rapids Cst. Tayte Goddard spoke quite frankly about his experience as an small-town Alberta boy coming out of

RCMP depot as a “greenhorn.” His first posting was at Loon Lake/Makwa Sahgaiehcan, and he said, coming from a controlled training environment, he wasn’t prepared for the job he had to do on reserve.

Beyond the work, Goddard talked about how lonely it can be to come to a community as a young, single guy knowing nobody. To fight that when he was working on Makwa, he threw himself into visiting the school and attending powwows. In return, he found an adopted family there and even received an eagle feather from the community.

“They send a lot of young single guys but finding that there was a family around you, was excellent,” he said.

In Black Lake though, he said the isolation has strained relationships with the community and police, and because RCMP can’t make it to all the calls they receive, people get a negative perspective of police. Goddard said he’d like to find a way to help the community understand the resource strain the RCMP is under, but it’s a challenge.

His presentation was a nice turning point in a conference where the background chatter frequently included complaints about officers and their investigations on reserve. Goddard’s presentation was a humanizing element. One attendee said he took his hat off to Goddard for his efforts.

That kind of relationship-building is key, said RCMP Assistant Commissioner Mark Fisher.

“You’re, at the end of the day, going to have a police officer, I think, that is more invested in the community, whether that is in their professional role as a police officer, or as a community member,” Fisher said.

On the final day, New North CEO Matt Heley walked attendees through the timeline of the CPPB. One important point there, is that the most recent CPB agreement was signed in 2009 and has a 20-year life.

The symposium ended with a highly engaged session where groups got together and filled sheets with answers to questions around community safety. Through that, it was clear that crystal meth is a continued issue in northern communities. Some of the questions included “who do you talk to about community safety concerns?” and “what is your community doing to orientate and provide cultural training to local RCMP members?” It was a fitting end to an event that sparked conversations around how communities can work as a team with their RCMP to make people feel safe in their homes. The limitations are clear, and a banding together of people is necessary if the effort is to be successful. ■

“Empowering our Communities” was an event co-organized by New North, the Ministry of Justice and the RCMP, and funded by the provincial government.

New North Advocating for Northern Interests

A primary mandate of New North is to advocate for northern municipal, social and economic interests.

We regularly meet with cabinet ministers and senior government officials, as well as strategic partners, to put our point of view across assertively yet respectfully.

Effective lobbying requires strategy, research and tact, and embarrassing government is rarely going to achieve anything. Sometimes facts are not enough, but it is always a good idea to come prepared with a solution. Quite often, government knows less about issue than we do, so being prepared is the key to making any headway.

This year, as always, New North met a number of times with the ministers of Government Relations, Rural and Remote Health, Social Services and others.

On the health side, we continue to press for a fair distribution of mental health funding to the north. Additionally, with the move to a single health authority, we are concerned not just about how service levels will be maintained for northern residents, but how transparently the authority will be reporting to northern people on service levels and health expenditures. For this reason, we have been advocating for a northern health advisory council, among other things, to give northerners a way of “talking back” to government on health care.

On the social services and housing side, we continue to be alarmed by the

housing authority’s replacement of propane or oil furnaces with the far more costly-to-operate electric furnaces, which is propelling energy prices to skyhigh levels for many northern social housing tenants. As well, we continue to lobby for SaskHousing to consider a forgivable loan for tenants to put a deposit down on a mortgage so they can purchase their units.

We met a number of times with the Minister of Government Relations Warren Kaeding. At each, the message was the same: administrators need support; the Gas Tax Fund doesn’t work for the north; Northern Capital Grants program renewal, and northern revenue sharing needs to be enhanced to support the full range of activities northern municipal governments engage in.

These are just some of the issues we lobbied on this year. In the coming year, we will continue to focus our efforts and attention on social and economic issues with the aim of improving the lives and well being of northern residents. ■

New North Executive & Staff Committee Representation

- Police Advisory Committee
- Gas Tax Oversight Steering Committee
- Solid Waste Advisory Team
- Northern Justice Committee
- Gas Tax Communication Committee
- Northern Housing Advisory Committee
- Taskforce on Policing
- ... and many others

New North Northern Justice Symposium



By Chelsea Laskowski

There was a notable youth presence at the three-day New North Northern Justice Symposium, which featured a special workshop for a large group of young northerners and high school students from Prince Albert who were in attendance during the week.

Hannah Anderson-Ross from Green Lake was among them. As the winner of youth of the year at the Northern Excellence Awards, the 17-year-old Métis student is ambitious and plans to pursue a career in law. Her dad is a conservation officer so she was interested in the justice field from a young age.

“I took a law class last year, I was originally interested in business and then I changed my mind. And I just realized I was more interested in topics of law and the injustice for Aboriginals in the courtroom so that’s what makes me want to be a lawyer,” she said.

She and others made reference to the Gerald Stanley acquittal in the killing of Colten Boushie, saying it is a symptom of a troubled justice system. The statistics can be harsh for Indigenous people, and Canadian Senator Lillian Dyck said in her keynote address that Aboriginals are more likely to face racism, be murdered, face murder charges, or be imprisoned than non-Aboriginals in Canada. She presented on a bill she proposed that would impose harsher sentences on people who assault or kill Indigenous women, similar to

NORTHERN JUSTICE SYMPOSIUM

May 15-17, 2018

a law that does the same for taxi drivers. The bill is waiting for its first reading in Parliament.

“It’s definitely hard to think that we’re more prone to having someone be violent against us or having something happen to us more just because we are of a certain race, definitely hard to comprehend that and understand that that actually happens and that it’s a serious thing,”

Anderson-Ross said.

Throughout the symposium, presenters made note of how care and attention — or lack of care and attention — to young people translates into the justice system.

Gina Alexander with the Ministry of Justice’s Community Safety and Well-Being department imparted how crucial a Grade 3 reading level is. She said there is a correlation to HIV risk and high justice interaction later on in life, to the point that one state looks at its Grade 3 reading level in order to plan its justice and health budgets. She espoused the need to “wrap our head around prevention” and social development.

In a similar vein, the Northeast Youth Violence Risk Partnership (NYVRP) is aiming to change the tide for young people between 12 and 24 years old who are either already involved in or at risk of getting involved in the criminal justice system as offenders. The group

currently has capacity for eight young people each in Sandy Bay, Deschambault Lake, and Pelican Narrows; Sandy Bay has the youngest group of participants who are involved, Pelican Narrows has a mix, and Deschambault is mostly adult. There is a waitlist of 85 referrals, and the program has funding after successfully building an evidence-based proposal to the National Crime Prevention and Public Service Canada that has given them \$5.2 million for a five-year pilot program that ends in 2020. Angie Merasty and Shawna Bear's presentation on the program became emotional when they asked the audience to name the characteristics of their mentors and role models growing up: traits like caring, patience, and encouragement. All those characteristics, they said, are embodied by their staff.

Getting youth on board with three-times-a-week meetings (which can last a few hours or half a day depending on how vulnerable the youth is that day) does not just happen on its own, but there have been major breakthroughs. Out of 43 active participants, only one has reoffended in the past year, Bear said. Fourteen of them have received employment supports and two have gotten jobs out of that.

But beyond the stats are the daily changes in the young people and the relationships that have been built, Merasty and others say, because they are pulling their staff from locals who have the skills to break through the walls these young people have built up.

"These are the kids that don't have any stability in their life. They don't —they didn't — have any structure and you know, like, they're the ones that will show you in

the worst ways possible, what they need, what they're lacking," said Marina Dumas, health and wellness coordinator.

Staff are not there to judge the young people or to tell them what they did wrong — although if they're going through the courts or other disciplinary action staff will help the youths honour that — but there is an effort to find out their strengths and interests, and foster those by connecting them with other agencies that can set them up to pursue them, Merasty said.

"At the beginning when we first started with the youth we... were persistent with home visits. Now the youths actually come look for us because that's all they really need is someone to understand them and talk to them," said Olivia Custer, health and wellness worker.

NYVRP staff not only works with the youth but also works with the families whose struggles with the cycle of historical trauma is a hindrance to their kids' progress.

"It's hard work you know, because we teach them skills but they go back home and reality is still there," Dumas said.

One big goal for those who are under 18 is to get young people on the right track so that they do not have a criminal record that diminishes their opportunities later in life. By involving community supports early into a sentence, they can create those pro-social connections and eventually replace the imposed structure and supervision with natural relationships that provide structure for young people, Bear explained in their presentation. ■



The large youth contingent came from across the north, and across the province, to engage in activities with Elders, do team building exercises, and then fearlessly get up in front of 200 people to deliver their thoughts. Here we see two members of the youth panel, Hannah Anderson-Ross from Green Lake (left), and Jada Sylvestre from Birch Narrows.

Communications & Research

Upcoming

Saskatchewan Association of
Northern Communities

**NEW
NORTH**

Monthly Newsletter

The New North newsletter, published monthly, continues to be the main way we communicate to members and stakeholders. Although written mainly with the northern municipal official in mind, the newsletter is an attempt to engage a broad audience on issues that affect northerners generally, as well those working in northern local government.

The content of the newsletter is produced specifically for the newsletter. This year was the second where we saw immensely valuable contributions by seasoned journalist Chelsea Laskowski to the northern conversation. Chelsea's experience working on northern-related stories with MBC made her a perfect fit for us. Bringing a deep appreciation of northern issues combined with a colourful, engaging and expressive style, Chelsea has added a new dimension to the newsletter over the last 18 months. She has a keen and finely tuned sense of justice and focuses on the fundamental human impacts of government policies. Her "Around the Traps" articles are a great way for us to learn about what communities are up to. Taking the time to interview three or four northern elected each month, Chelsea, with her journalistic background and strong ear for a story, knows how to get the most interesting angles, producing work of extreme readability and of great public interest.

Research and Issues Backgrounding

As well as on-the-scene journalism, Chelsea has added considerably to our capacity to "background" issues with her tenacious ferreting and strong desire to get at the heart of any issue. Her briefing notes have formed the basis of some of our most critical advocacy efforts this year, including, and especially, related to housing.

Research in Municipal and Northern Issues

In a post-fact, post-truth world, it is more crucial than ever that we continue to focus on producing fact-based and evidence-based research. This is what we continued to strive to do throughout the year, producing in-house research on a number of northern issues, including, but not limited to:

- Northern municipal revenue sharing
- Northern housing needs
- The evolution and scope of the "municipal purposes" mandate for northern municipalities
- The relationship between census counts and health reporting counts
- The potential for northern solar energy production
- The extent of the scrap tire stockpile in the north, and the development of strategies for how to deal with it
- Supports for cognitive disabilities and mental health

Projects Going Forward

This year, our research focus will move to social issues, and in particular, disability supports. We are very concerned with how FASD is being ignored in northern Saskatchewan, with no specific program targeting supports for some of our most vulnerable individuals and families.

In support of stronger participation in northern municipal governance and generate public awareness of what northern municipalities do, we will be launching a research project to look into public attitudes toward municipal government in the north. As well, we want to explore the barriers that might be in the way of more women running for municipal office.

We will also be launching a northern economic development research project, and are actively seeking a way to bring northern Saskatchewan into the federal government's Arctic Strategy, which we think will be a way of unlocking more federal funding for the northern communities.

Expanding Our Social Media Presence

Social media is playing an increasingly important role in influencing how people think and respond to what is going on around them. As a truly open and public forum, social media, like Facebook and Twitter (just to name two popular platforms), is revolutionizing both how people get their information, but also what they do with it.

New North's public communications and advocacy work this year will be greatly enhanced by an energetic focus on social media as a platform for the exchange of information, generation of new ideas and strategies, and informing our members, stakeholders and the public at large of our initiatives and our role in the north.

The reach, and power, of social media was brought home to us at our first real attempt to use the platform for widespread engagement, with the broadcasting over Facebook of the Northern Justice Symposium. At its peak, the symposium was being

watched by more than 3500 people (in addition to the 300 in the room)—and that was without any prior advertising. The videos are still up on our Facebook page, and continue to garner hits.

With the expansion of WIFI, cell phone reach and broadband internet, northerners are far more connected to each other, and the rest of the online world, than ever before. It is a revolution in communication and networking that we are planning to plunge headlong into in the coming year.

New North Web Presence

There was a time when having a website was an extra appendage to other more important forms of communication and public engagement. That is no longer the case. As people increasingly spend their lives online, the web is now often the primary way the public and stakeholders interact with a company or entity.

New North's web presence has undergone evolutionary changes over the last few years. However, as the importance of web presence continues to grow, with higher expectations for greater functionality and professional-looking design, New North will this year undertake a major overhaul of our website. ■

Media and Public Relations

The media plays a critical role in shaping public opinion, and at New North, we regularly engage with media outlets in a variety of ways to get our messages across.

A primary role for New North is to position northern interests front and centre in the public mind, and media relations are a key component of that. Our media relations strategy involves:

- Issuing press releases to draw the media's, and the public's attention, to our issues and concerns
- Providing formal and informal "backgrounding" to the media so those covering northern interests have a better understanding of the complexities and nuances of the how issues are affecting us
- Monitor media reporting to ensure fair and accurate coverage of northern issues
- Drawing the media's attention to community events, activities and community success stories that may otherwise have gone uncovered

- Making ourselves available to the media to provide comments and a point of view on issues affecting northerners

As well interacting directly with the media, New North also helps northern communities with their own media and public relations engagement exercises, providing research, backgrounding and "talking points" to help our members communicate their message more effectively.

New North's role as a nexus point in many strategic partnerships enables us to bring people together, and to point people in the right direction when they want to know who to talk to get something done. New North this year worked with a number of outside entities, including educational institutions, businesses, and of course government, on a consultative basis, to help link strategic partners together, and some of these partnerships will soon be bearing fruit. We look forward to continuing our role in helping people connect with other people, and with our new focus on facilitation this year, playing a much more active role as a catalyst and an agent for key strategic alliances. ■

Around the Traps

There's nothing anyone likes more than throwing a couple of sleeping bags in the bed of a truck and setting out on a road trip through northern Saskatchewan to explore the immense beauty of one of Canada's best kept secrets.

Which is what we did. Often. Although the north doesn't have a lot of communities, you have to do a lot driving to get anywhere. The New North truck, acquired in May 2018, got plenty broken in on the patchy northern pavement and barely held itself together on the gravelled access roads—at times only barely drivable, as everyone knows. With a deft touch and just the right amount inertial force you could slide all the way from the 155 to your hamlet of choice like a log carried on a bed of ball-bearings. Not that we suggest anyone try that.

Ultimately we weren't travelling to check out the state of the roads so much as to catch our members unawares in their home environments, which we frequently did, and more than once came across a mayor who'd

evidently just learned of our arrival in the community, making a hasty exit through a back window as we came blundering into their office.

Just kidding! Our hosts were also graciousness and welcoming and even managed to hide their disappointment when they discovered we hadn't brought Timmies or donuts of any kind, but we have learned our lesson and promise to buy out the whole store next time! ■



New North CEO Matt Heley (left) is joined by Chair Bruce Fidler, Mayor of Sandy Bay Paul Morin and Acting Administrator Denise Natomagan, at Sandy Bay's council chambers in early 2019.

New North Hosts SUMA Visit to North



No, it's not the cover of the latest edition of GQ—although it could reasonably be. It's a photo taken during the visit of SUMA officials to La Ronge and Air Ronge in early May 2018, who met with the New North Board and members of the La Ronge town council. We have, from bearded to least bearded: Brad Henry, Hugh Watt, Mike Strachan, Bruce Fidler, Mike Natomagan, Gordon Barnhart, the other Gordon, Ron Woytowich, and Bobby Woods.

New North Gatherings

New North Mayor and Councillor Gathering, June 2018



The New North Annual General Meeting, held back in June, was the occasion to furnish members and stakeholders with an account of the activities of the association for the financial year 2017-18, as well as a full reckoning of how much it all cost and where the money came from.

All this is available on the New North website, www.newnorthsask.org.

The New North AGM was also, as it always is, an occasion for some lively and pointed discussion. Northern leaders once again raised concerns not only about the lack of addiction treatment centres available for northerners, who not only have to travel way down south for treatment, but are spending many months on waiting lists to even get seen.

Northern leaders also continue to express frustration that the benefits of resource extraction are not making it back to communities. Mayor of Green Lake Ric Richardson noted that as many as 400 logging trucks a day rumble through his community, but questioned how much of the economic value those trucks represent is seen by northern people. "Resource revenue sharing formula doesn't reflect that it's our resources being taken out," he said. He reiterated that we need to be "forceful in negotiations" to obtain an "honest and reflective" revenue sharing program for the north.

New North Mayor and Councillor Gathering, November 2018

There are a few things more certain to make a room go deathly quiet than someone telling a scary story. With only the hissing of the gas burners under the bain marie as an accompaniment (and the occasional gasp from the audience), Shawn Tallmadge from the Ministry of Labour Relations—who was a guest presenter at the Mayor and Councillor Gathering on November 16—laid down example after example from his experience as an investigator of workplace harassment that were as horrifying as they were commonplace—and horrifying precisely because they were commonplace.

Apparently, incidences of workplace harassment (including sexual harassment) and bullying is on the rise in the workplace. And municipal workplaces are no exception.

It's probably a surprise to many people that, until about 10 years ago, there were no legislated protections against

Mayor of Cumberland House Kelvin McKay called for the establishment of more northern economic development entities to ensure that the benefits of the money spent on contracts for gravel crushing and highways work stays in the north.

In other news from the day, northern leaders welcomed a delegation from Primco Dene, the development arm of Cold Lake First Nations in Alberta, who came to share their plan to launch a bus line serving the west side communities along highway 155, through to Prince Albert and Saskatoon.

The resolution put forward by the Northern Village of Beauval wanted to "seek clarity and a rationale about the provincial government fire protection policy within northern Saskatchewan municipal boundaries," and for the province to work with communities to come up with a "new progressive and inclusive policy which will be more reflective of northern capacity, capability, and fiscal reality relating to fire risk, planning, and protection."

This resolution was later submitted by New North to the Ministry of Environment. The subsequent announcement of the merging of EMFS and Wildfire Management has created an opportunity for northern leaders to continue pressing this issue forward with the aim of creating a more equitable and reasonable policy environment around wildfire suppression costs for northern communities. ■

harassment in the workplace. Saskatchewan was just the second province to address workplace violence and personal harassment, with amendments to *The Occupational Health and Safety Act* in 2007.

Just about everyone has experienced some form of bullying or harassment at work—perhaps without consciously realizing it. On the flip side, people can be bullies and engage in harassing behaviour also without realizing they are doing it. Bullying is not necessarily an overt or aggressive action; it can also be "passive aggressive" (like deliberately, without reason, withholding information that someone depends upon), or giving someone "the silent treatment."

There are two types of harassment covered under legislation: harassment based on prohibited grounds, and personal harassment.

New North Gatherings

Harassment based on prohibited grounds is any conduct, comment action or gesture that is made on the basis of race, religion, colour, sex, sexual orientation, and so on, that constitutes a threat to health or safety of a worker. It also extends to sexual harassment.

Personal harassment—sometimes called bullying—is any conduct that affects a worker’s psychological or physical well-being, and which the perpetrator knows, or should know, would cause them to feel intimidated or humiliated.

Typically, for something to be bullying or harassment, it has to be repeat behaviour—and to continue even after someone has said “stop.” But a single incident can also constitute personal harassment if it is serious enough, and has had long lasting harmful effect on a worker. However, feeling humiliated or personally affronted by someone at work doesn’t necessarily mean you were bullied. Shawn Tallmadge also went through some incidences that didn’t constitute bullying. For example, getting disciplined for performance issues is not bullying, no matter how bad you feel about it.

But this is where things get complicated. Being told to dress appropriately at work is not bullying, but it could be in certain circumstances (or if the policy mysteriously only seemed to apply to you). There are plenty of cases where people will couch bullying behaviour within what they consider reasonable requests related to work performance.

Conflict of Interest

Also on the agenda was James Turner, the Deputy Ombudsman. While changes to the conflict of interest provisions in the various municipalities Acts in late 2015 didn’t really alter in substance what constitutes a conflict of interest—or what to do in the event of one—they did make one very significant change: the amendments gave the Ombudsman’s office the power to investigate conflicts of interest in a municipal setting. This new power is changing the face of municipal governance in the province—and particularly in the north.

Perhaps the key issue for municipal elected officials is that, with this new level of oversight, they need to show much greater care to protect themselves when being part of discussions, and decisions, where they might have, or be perceived to have, a “private” stake in the outcome.

There are exceptions here, of course. *The Northern Municipalities Act*, for example, doesn’t think you are in a conflict of interest when setting mill rates because, despite it impacting every councillor personally and financially, it also impacts everyone else, too.

Sometimes, this new obsession with conflict of interest can take a turn toward the absurd. We have heard about cases where it is asserted that a councillor is in a conflict if they bring forward or vote on an issue that council thinks touches on “personal beliefs” (whether to hoist a rainbow flag, for example).

One of the key messages of the Deputy Ombudsman’s presentation was that there is nothing wrong with having a conflict of interest (it was later echoed by Minister Kaeding—which makes us think it could be a speaking point).

One very important tip is that you have to make sure that the meeting minutes reflect your disclosure. So, in the next meeting

before the minutes are approved, ensure that your disclosure was properly recorded. Remember as well that the minutes need to reflect the actual nature of the conflict that you’ve declared.

The Ombudsman’s website has all the investigations they’ve done into conflicts of interest that they feel need to be made public. The reports are not just interesting in their own right; they also provide some handy object lessons in how to avoid getting yourself into trouble.



The Ministers

Special guests included the Minister of Highways, Lori Carr, and Warren Kaeding, Minister of Government Relations.

While the Highways minister wasn’t able to stay very long, we did find out that the major repaving work that’s to be done on Highway 155 north of Green Lake will begin next year. It also seems likely that northern airfields will get some further upgrades, too.

The minister also declared their support for the Wollaston Road to get done, and said that the province is ready and willing to put up their share of the costs as soon as the federal government is. The intent is for the communities there to benefit from the maintenance and construction contracts that come out of the project.

Minister Kaeding was also joining New North delegates for the first time, at least at this venue. The minister spoke briefly about revenue sharing—giving the impression the new deal is still up in the air—and also indicated that the government is fully intending to continue with the Northern Capital Grants Program (see earlier).

The minister heard concerns about the closing of fisheries on the westside over the non-winter months—greatly limiting the capacity of locals to make a living out of fishing.

Delegates also expressed appreciation for the effort made by the minister to attend the meeting, and urged Minister Kaeding to take the message back to his cabinet colleagues that we’d very much like to see them coming north a little more often. Lunch was baked ham. ■

Issues Ongoing ... 2019-20

Working Toward a Northern Strategic Vision

- Create a new policy strategy for the northern communities to address the social, economic, cultural and political needs that encompasses the whole of the north
- Develop a cooperative framework for northern leaders to identify key priority areas
- Work with the provincial and federal government and other stakeholders to have northern Saskatchewan considered as part of other northern jurisdictional program initiatives (ie, the federal government's "Arctic Strategy")

Northern Housing

The federal government's new National Housing Strategy represents an opportunity to shape national housing policies and funding to improve northern housing availability and housing adequacy. We will:

- Undertake fact-based research to ascertain state and condition of northern housing stock
- Advocate for more funding for the repair and renewal of units and to improvements in the adequacy of northern housing
- Advocate for funding for improvements in the energy efficiency of northern housing

In addition, we will:

- Continue to lobby SaskHousing to create home-ownership options for social housing units
- Continue to monitor the consistency of housing authorities in their application of housing policies to residents across the north

Meaningful Improvements to Northern Highways

Infrastructure

- Work with the existing stakeholders to identify their role in pursuing northern highway improvements
- Lobby the provincial government to shift focus to highway upgrades and capital investment to support local economic development

Working toward a provincial budget submission for 2019-20

- Consult with communities and other stakeholders to assess gaps/needs and wants with respect to identified priority areas
- Locate the needs/gaps within the context of a broader northern economic and social development strategy
- Quantify, and present to the provincial government, how this might be reflected in budget priorities

Green Energy & Solar Initiatives and Climate Change

Mitigation

- Continue to lobby for a solar energy revolving fund to be set up within the NMTA
- Lobby the provincial and federal government to provide funding and other opportunities for northern communities to prepare and respond to climate change

Health Advocacy

- Establish representation of northern municipal leaders on Health authority consultative committee
- Continue to lobby for a northern-specific mental health strategy
- Re-focus attention on FSAD and initiatives to support affected individuals and families, including lobbying for supports for diagnoses

Small Community Recycling Initiatives

- Acquire funding to undertake a thorough investigation of potential avenues for small community recycling initiatives in the north

Administrative/Governance capacity building

Defining the parameters of administration and governance support program will be a priority of New North this year.

Initiatives will include:

- Support for building an administrative peer network
- Lobbying for an administrator intern program
- Orienting the New North scholarship to fields related directly to municipal administration
- Lobby funding partners to support the Administrative Circuit Rider initiative
- Make progress toward completing the Administrators Resource bank
- Support the uptake of MLDP enrolments by offering the courses as part of New North Gatherings
- Focus a portion of New North Gatherings on governance training
- Working with partners to prepare for new asset management requirements to ensure northern municipal compliance with the federal Gas Tax Fund and other federal and provincial funding programs

Build strategic relationships with stakeholders and increasing net value from strategic partnerships

New North has limited capacity, so continuing to work on and build new relationship is always a priority. This year we will focus on turning relationships into outcomes, by:

- Continuing to engage with our members to ensure that we are representing them appropriately, focus on getting our message out to them about what we are trying to do, and to reflect their interests in our newsletter and other communications
- Continuing to work with Northern Municipal Services to understand their capacity issues and priorities, as well as to establish shared interests and ways we can work together to achieve them
- Establishing key points in common with the NMTA Management Board to amplify our collective messaging
- Identify key issues, project, programs and priority areas where we can leverage our maturing relationship with SUMA and SARM.
- Create a set of shared interests and objectives with First Nation organizations and work strategically toward achieving them