



Transitional Housing

Unfortunately, we have not received word from the Ministry of Northern Development & Mines (MNDM) regarding our proposal to use Area Service Board (ASB) funds for a Transitional Housing Study in the District of Rainy River. I have made inquiries through our local MNDM representative, Ms. Jane Gillon, whose last correspondence (dated 31 January, 2008) indicated that "MNDM is considering your proposal and will get back to you with a response when a decision has been made. I have advised senior management that you have inquired about the status of the project so they are aware that you are anxious for a response. Hopefully a response will be forthcoming soon." I have had inquiries from some of our partners, including Riverside Health Care, regarding the status of our proposal and have shared the above.

Sandra Weir, Non-Profit Housing Manager, did attend a Northern teleconference/seminar on *Aging at Home* with local representatives of the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) and Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) on 19 February, 2008 to gather and share information on "transitional" housing which we have defined as the transition between the family home and long term care. Sandra was very pleased with the contacts made and information she received, on our behalf. We are anxious to move forward.

Provincial Land Tax Reform

I have gathered information through the Ministry of Revenue regarding provincial land tax (PLT) reform. The Ontario government is "proceeding with the reform of the PLT system to bring the assessment of unincorporated territory properties in line with the rest of Ontario." The Province indicates that "this reform will provide increased fairness and consistency for taxpayers through the implementation of an updated property assessment system." The *PLT Act, 2006* will come into force on 01 January, 2009 and extend current value assessment (CVA) to PLT in the unincorporated territory.

It is reported that properties that reside outside of school board boundaries have not been reassessed since the 1940's. At the time of transfer of responsibility from the province to the RRDSAB, it was estimated that 5% of the unincorporated area in our district was outside of the school board boundaries - this has not been confirmed recently.

In 2008, the Ministry of Finance plans to hold a second round of public consultations, prior to implementing PLT reform scheduled for 2009. "No decisions will be made on any PLT tax rates and phase-ins or new services until these consultations are complete."

The unincorporated territory residents will receive their first *Property Assessment Notice* from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) in the fall of 2008, showing the CVA value of their property. Their first new tax bill, reflecting the use of CVA, will be sent in the spring of 2009 for the 2009 tax year.

The new PLT bill will contain education taxes, if applicable, as a line item of the tax bill. Levies and fees for local services boards (LSBs) and local roads board (LRBs), if applicable, may also appear.

Unincorporated residents will have the same right to appeal their property assessment as all other owners of property in Ontario.

The Ministry of Revenue reports that "any new revenues from PLT will be used to support services in the north."

I have consulted with Grant Erickson, Program Supervisor, Ministry of Community & Social Services, our lead Ministry, as to the status of PLT and the potential impact, if any, on the unincorporated share of DSSAB funding. He has forwarded a request to the MCSS Corporate Offices and I await their response.

Any questions can be directed to the Ministry of Revenue Information Centre toll-free at 1-800-263-7965.

Human Resources

Since the last board meeting, we have seen the following HR activity:

NAME	TITLE	STATUS	EFFECTIVE DATE
Rick Bliss	Painter/Maintenance Worker	One (1) year contract	19 February 2008

New Board Member

Welcome to Jim Belluz, our new representative from the Township of LaVallee. Jim has participated in a Board Orientation with the Managers, Board Chair and I, and will be a member of our Ontario Works Committee. We look forward to working with you, Jim!

Respectfully Submitted, /D. Dittaro