

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PUBLIC LIAISON COMMITTEE**

By:

The Manitoba Floodway Authority

## **Introduction**

The Manitoba Floodway Authority is committed to ongoing public involvement as the Red River Floodway Expansion Project moves forward. A key component of this commitment is the establishment of a Public Liaison Committee as part of a 10 Point Plan on Ongoing Public Consultation.

## **Background**

On July 8, 2005, Manitoba Conservation issued an environmental license under the Manitoba *Environment Act* and the Government of Canada made a decision pursuant to the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* to permit the Red River Floodway Expansion Project to proceed. Both the provincial license and federal screening report included conditions related to ongoing environmental monitoring, reporting and public involvement. The Manitoba Floodway Authority (MFA) is committed to comply with all of the federal and provincial environmental conditions as it proceeds with construction on the project.

On August 9, 2005, the MFA outlined a “10 Point Plan for Ongoing Public Consultation”. This plan builds on the previous two years of public consultation including four rounds of public meetings and public hearings held by the Clean Environment Commission, as part of the environmental assessment process on the floodway project. The 10-point plan includes the establishment of a Public Liaison Committee, a Floodway Recreation Working Group, and an Environmental Steering Committee. In addition, the MFA has committed to further discussions with Aboriginal communities and on various project components including bridge construction, drainage, the West Dike, and the workplace. Furthermore, the MFA has committed to continued outreach activities including ongoing communications, a project newsletter, maintenance of the MFA website, and the establishment of public information booths as the project proceeds.

The Public Involvement Plan was submitted to the Federal Responsible Authorities on August 9, 2005. In addition to the establishment of the Public Liaison Committee, the MFA is also committed to ongoing discussions and meetings with rural municipalities in the vicinity of the floodway.

## **Purpose**

The main purpose of the Public Liaison Committee is to provide a forum for two-way communication between community and citizen representatives and the MFA to share information, opinions, and ideas regarding the project as it moves forward. In this context, the committee will provide participants an opportunity to learn about the status of the project, raise questions, and provide their input and suggestions to the MFA. The Committee will initially focus primarily on issues related to project construction (bridge construction, detours) and environmental protection (environmental protection plans, groundwater impacts etc.). The terms of reference for the committee will be reviewed and

proposed amendments submitted for approval in 2010 respecting the Operating Phase of the Project.

## **Objectives**

The Objectives for the Committee are:

- To provide an opportunity for community and citizen representatives to learn about the status of the Red River Floodway during the construction of the expanded floodway project and the on-going operation after the floodway expansion project is completed;
- To provide an open forum for discussion of issues related to project construction, post-construction operating and maintenance, environmental protection and other project-related matters directly relevant to residents in the floodway region;
- To provide an ongoing forum for input, feedback and sustained information exchange;
- To serve as a vehicle to provide accurate information to the public in order to foster a greater understanding of MFA and Manitoba Water Stewardship activities;
- To provide an opportunity to review plans in an informed manner to ensure compliance to Federal and Provincial environmental licensing conditions and promote continuous improvement during the construction and on-going operation of the Red River Floodway;
- To provide guidance on appropriate and effective ways of communicating with the community at large.

## **Committee Membership**

It is recommended that the Committee facilitate the participation of stakeholders who have demonstrated an interest in the Red River Floodway Expansion Project and are located in the geographical vicinity of the Floodway. At the same time, in order to ensure that the Committee is manageable, membership to the committee will be limited to 19 positions. The make up of the committee will be as follows:

- Public Citizens – 2 positions
- Public Citizens (Appointed by Government of Manitoba) – 2 positions
- Rural Municipalities – 9 positions
- City of Selkirk – 1 position
- City of Winnipeg – 1 position
- Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs – 1 position
- Manitoba Metis Federation – 1 position
- Manitoba Floodway Authority – 2 positions

The Committee will be responsible for filling the two public citizen positions on the Committee through a recruitment process that will include a public advertisement for interested citizens. It is anticipated that the Committee will form a selection committee to

review all applications and choose successful candidates. It will be the responsibility of the Committee to ensure that at least one of the positions will be filled by a bilingual member. The MFA will select two public representatives from the applications received in response to the public advertisement.

Representatives from each of the nine Rural Municipalities in the area will be selected by municipal council. The nine municipalities are:

- Macdonald
- Morris
- Ritchot
- Springfield
- St. Clements
- Tache
- East St. Paul
- West St. Paul
- St. Andrews

The remainder of the positions on the Committee will be selected by each of the specified organizations. The MFA, as the proponent for the floodway project, who will be expected to provide regular updates and information to the Committee, will be provided an opportunity to appoint two representatives to the committee.

This proposal ensures urban, rural, Aboriginal, and regional representatives, and at least one bilingual member on the Committee at all times. In addition, the MFA strongly encourages the participation of under-represented or equity group members including women, Aboriginal people, visible minorities, and persons with disabilities.

It is the expectation of the MFA that the Committee will meet at least once every six months. It will be the decision of the Committee if there is a need to meet more frequently during some periods. Quorum for the meetings will be seven members.

### **Establishment of Sub-Committee**

The Committee will have the ability to establish sub-committees, including the appointment of new representatives to the sub-committees, to review specific matters as required not being reviewed by other committees.

### **Co-Chairs of the Committee**

The Committee will be led by Co-Chairs, including one representative from the MFA and one chosen by a majority vote of the Committee.

The role and responsibility of the Co-Chairs will be to ensure that the meetings are conducted in an orderly, open, and respectful manner. As part of their role, the Co-Chairs will be responsible to organize meetings, develop and distribute agendas, and contact committee members prior to each committee meeting.

Support service to the Co-Chairs will be provided by the MFA.

## **Administrative Principles**

The Committee will function in a manner that is consistent with the following principles:

- The discussions during meetings will be open, honest, and respectful. All opinions are worth a full hearing.
- The Committee is not a decision making body respecting the components of the project. It is to provide input for MFA's consideration on improving how the project will proceed. If MFA does not accept the suggestions from the members of the committee, reasons will be reported back.
- Meetings are to discuss the implementation of the project not to consider alternatives to the project. (Input must relate to the implementation of the project).
- Agenda items must be submitted with sufficient time to be circulated and for participants to prepare for discussion.
- Cellular telephones and Blackberries are to be turned off during meetings.

## **Records of the Meetings**

The MFA will retain the services of a note taker who will be in attendance at all meetings. After the notes of each Committee meeting are prepared, they will be submitted to the committee members for their review and consideration. The final draft notes will be approved at the following meeting.

The final draft notes and approved notes will be provided to the MFA and the MFA will be responsible for posting the records on the MFA website in a timely manner.

## **Non-Committee Member Involvement**

It is anticipated that non-Committee members may be invited to participate and/or present to the Committee on an as required basis. For example, the Committee may request that information be provided by the federal and provincial regulators on the environmental licensing process or that the MFA provide detailed information on any specific environmental or engineering initiatives associated with the project.

## **Expert Support**

It is anticipated that the Committee will consist of individuals who represent their community and, therefore, do not necessarily have technical and engineering expertise. As a result, the Committee, through the Co-Chairs will have the ability to request from the MFA that technical support be provided to the Committee to clarify specific issues. The MFA will review the request and, if appropriate, provide individuals with the technical expertise to advise the Committee.

### **Location of Meetings**

The Committee will meet at different locations within the Floodway region, with the expectation that the Committee will try to meet in areas where floodway work is being undertaken.

### **Duration**

The committee will continue to exist during construction of the project (i.e. until 2010) or as deemed necessary by the Committee. The duration of the Committee during the post-construction operating phase will be considered and included in the amendments to the terms of reference for the committee to be undertaken during 2010.

### **Financing of the Committee**

Membership on the Committee will be an unpaid volunteer position.

Committee Members will be provided mileage and childcare reimbursement compatible with the standard Province of Manitoba reimbursement programs.

The Manitoba Floodway Authority will be responsible for renting a venue for meetings, the note-taker, audio visual requirements, refreshments, and any other services as required.

January 31, 2007