COMMUNICATIONS

From the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade,

Submitting communication dated May 6, 2005 to His Worship Mayor Katz advising that he recently received Council's request that the Province make significant changes to Manitoba's property assessment system specifically to implement a two-year assessment cycle, and to approve a single province-wide assessment authority beginning with establishment of a committee to prepare an implementation plan.

Advising that the Province of Manitoba is committed to changes to the property assessment and taxation system that provide direct benefit to property owners and result in greater equity, increased understanding and reduced taxes. They have reduced both residential and farmland education property taxes, and committed for 2006 to take steps to provide Winnipeg with comparable treatment to other municipalities respecting the cost of assessment services for education taxation.

Further advising that with respect to Council's requests, they too recognize the importance of shortening the assessment cycle in terms of improving the assessment system by providing more up-to-date and therefore relevant property assessments. However, a more shortened cycle is not without risk. Prior to establishment of the current four-year cycle, the Province changed the assessment legislation twice at the City's request to delay the three year assessment cycle because the City was unable to meet the timeline. More recently, he is advised that a significant number of assessment appeals to The Municipal Board by City of Winnipeg property owners have not yet been heard because the City had indicated that they do not have the resources at this time to defend the assessments.

Advising that the establishment of a province-wide single assessment authority represents a significant organizational change rather than assessment system change. It is not accurate to assume that significant cost savings would result. City assessment costs would be shifted out of the City's budget directly onto City taxpayers and onto municipalities outside Winnipeg.

In closing, he appreciated receiving Council's requests for changes to Manitoba's property assessment system and would support prioritizing action towards shortening the assessment cycle from the current legislated four-year cycle as a first initiative. To begin, he will be directing his officials to work with the City to develop an implementation plan to shorten the assessment cycle. File AA

From the Accountant and Secretary, Sinking Fund Trustees,

Submitting communication dated May 18, 2005, providing the annual report of the Sinking Fund Trustees of the City of Winnipeg for the year ended December 31, 2005. File F-1

Communications (continued)

From the City Auditor,

Submitting communication dated June 20, 2005 advising that in accordance with the Councillors' Representation Allowance Fund Policy requirements, she has conducted an audit of the Councillors' Representation Allowance expenditures incurred by each City Councillor during 2004. Due to a mid-term by-election, she has provided an opinion for seventeen past and present councillors.

Advising that the City Clerk's Department is responsible for reviewing and processing expenditures in accordance with this policy, while the Secretariat Committee oversees the policy including making policy interpretation decisions. Her audit is limited to determining whether the Councillors' Representation Allowance expenditures complied with the Councillor's Representation Allowance Fund Policy requirements in all significant respects.

Also advising that she conducted her audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that she plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance that the Councillors' Representation Allowance expenditures comply with the criteria established by the provisions of the policy referred to above. Such an audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts, purpose, approval, recording and reporting of expenditures for compliance with the Councillors' Representation Allowance Fund Policy requirements.

Further advising that expenditures for sixteen City Councillors were found to be in compliance with the Policy in all significant respects; therefore she was able to provide an unqualified audit opinion. In the case of the seventeenth City Councillor, she was unable to provide an unqualified audit opinion because of lack of supporting documentation for expenditures incurred. The individual audit opinions and accounts are submitted information. File GC-2

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,

Submitting as instructed by Council on October 27, 2004, draft by-law to close the Public Road east of Panet Road, south of Regent Avenue West, which by-law may receive all three readings. File DAC 15/2004 (By-law No. 110/2005)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,

Submitting as instructed by Council on November 24, 2004, draft by-law to approve a Plan of Subdivision and to amend Zoning By-law No. 6400/94 for the enactment of a zoning change on land located at 900 and 910 John Bruce Road East, in the Riel Community, which by-law may receive all three readings. File DASZ 25/2004 (By-law No. 111/2005)

Communications (continued)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,

Submitting as instructed by Council on May 18, 2005, draft by-law to approve a Plan of Subdivision and to amend Zoning By-law No. 6400/94 for the enactment of a zoning change on land located at 1205, 1215 and 1225 St. Anne's Road, in the Riel Community, which by-law may receive all three readings. File DASZ 13/2005 (By-law No. 114/2005)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,

Submitting as instructed by Council on May 18, 2005, draft by-law to approve a Plan of Subdivision and to amend Zoning By-law No. 6400/94 for the enactment of a zoning change on land located on the east side of Redonda Street between Pandora Avenue and Rothshire Drive, in the East Kildonan-Transcona Community, which by-law may receive all three readings. File DASZ 5/2005 (By-law No. 115/2005)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,

Submitting as instructed by Council on May 31, 1989, draft by-law to approve a Plan of Subdivision and to amend Zoning By-law No. 6400/94 for the enactment of a zoning change on land located on Chadwick Crescent, in the East Kildonan-Transcona Community, which by-law may receive all three readings.
File DASZ 42/87 - Phase 1H (By-law No. 116/2005)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,

Submitting as instructed by Council on May 31, 1989, draft by-law to approve a Plan of Subdivision and to amend Zoning By-law No. 6400/94 for the enactment of a zoning change on land located on the north and south sides of Edmund Gale Drive and George Reshaur Bay, in the East Kildonan-Transcona Community, which by-law may receive all three readings. File DASZ 42/87 – Phase 4 (By-law No. 117/2005)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,

Submitting draft by-law to repeal By-law No. 118/2004, which by-law may receive all three readings. File DAZ 225/2003 (By-law No. 118/2005)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,

Submitting draft by-law to repeal By-law No. 124/2004, which by-law may receive all three readings. File DAZ 205/2004 (By-law No. 119/2005)

Communications (continued)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,

Advising that Council on February 26, 2003, passed By-law No. 43/2003 authorizing the submission of by-laws to enact street name changes of a minor nature without the prior approval of any Standing Committees.

Submitting draft by-laws to change the names of certain highways in The City of Winnipeg, which by-laws may receive all three readings. File SC-3.14(34)
(By-law No. 120/2005 - changing to Riverside Drive)
(By-law No. 124/2005 – changing to Harrow Avenue East)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,

Submitting as instructed by Council on May 19, 2004, draft by-law to close the public lane east of Woodlands Crescent, south of Portage Avenue, which by-law may receive all three readings. File DAC 7/96 (By-law No. 122/2005)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,

Submitting as instructed by Council on March 23, 2005, draft by-law to amend Zoning By-law No. 6400/94 for the enactment of a zoning change on land located at 1589 St. Mary's Road in the Riel Community, which by-law may receive all three readings.
File DAZ 204/2005 (By-law No. 125/2005)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,

Submitting as instructed by Council on September 24, 1997, draft by-law to approve a Plan of Subdivision and to amend Zoning By-law No. 6400/94 for the enactment of a zoning change on land located on the south side of Grandmont Boulevard west of Pembina Highway in the Riel Community. File DASZ 11/97 (By-law No. 126/2005)