

June 2, 2010

## Town of Dalhousie Wins National Municipal Award for Innovation

*Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators Recognizes Town's Open Governance Efforts*

**Toronto, ON** – Open governance efforts intended to transform a former industrial town into a vibrant coastal community have earned Dalhousie national recognition. The Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) has presented the Town of Dalhousie, NB with its 2010 Willis Award for Innovation for its efforts to aid community transition. The award was presented on June 2 at CAMA's national conference held in Toronto, ON.

The Town of Dalhousie has experienced monumental changes in recent years, both in its economic base and mode of governance. The permanent closure to its paper mill and chemical plant necessitated significant changes to municipal operations. As a result, Dalhousie's Town Council and senior staff recognized the need for greater public involvement in municipal affairs, as fundamental changes were required to deal with the economic transformation of the community.

"CAMA is pleased to recognize the administrative excellence demonstrated by Dalhousie as they embarked upon an effort to overcome economic adversity and transform their community," said Chris MacPherson, president of the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators, CAMA board member for New Brunswick, and Assistant City Administrator for the City of Fredericton, NB. "Congratulations as well to residents for becoming more involved in the municipal process."

Dalhousie's open governance process began with the creation of a committee to examine options to diversify the economy. This resulted in a Community Action Plan for the region. The municipality also redesigned its municipal website to be used as an information dissemination tool that included Town bylaws and Council minutes.

These changes were complemented by procedural changes to ensure that council and committee meetings were more open to the public and that there was more opportunity for people to give their input prior to decisions being made. Dalhousie then embarked on a very public process to plan and adopt its 2010 budget, which resulted in a transitional budget that was unanimously passed by Council.

"A total of 29 award submissions were received from across Canada," said Ron Shaw, Chair of CAMA's Awards Committee, CAMA Director-at-Large and Chief Administrative Officer for Stratford, ON. "Year after year these awards attract an amazing calibre of entries."

The Willis Award for Innovation, awarded in recognition of Jack Willis for his contribution to the CAMA, is presented for programs, projects or services that demonstrate exceptional innovation or meritorious initiative. Because Canada has a unique mixture of small and large communities, awards are granted according to population – for municipalities under 20,000 and those over 20,000.



From left to right are as follows:

- Mr. Chris MacPherson, CAMA President and Assistant City Administrator, City of Fredericton,
- Ms. Christy Arseneau, Administrator, Town of Dalhousie
- Mr. Ron Shaw, CAMA Awards Chair/Director-At-Large for the CAMA Board of Directors and Chief Administrative Officer for the City of Stratford, ON

**About CAMA:**

A Canada-wide network and the national voice of senior municipal administrators, the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) strives to nurture and build municipal administrative excellence by providing its more than 400 members with knowledge sharing and learning opportunities, access to best practices, and valued input into policies and programs aimed at ensuring healthy and thriving communities across Canada.

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