

## A QUESTION OF VISION AND LEADERSHIP

In our busy world where branches of government have limited human and fiscal resources, it is normal for municipal, health and education organizations to focus almost exclusively on their respective traditional mandates. Leaders in such circumstances argue that such a focus is essential in order to provide services in a cost effective and efficient manner. This perspective, however, focuses too tightly on traditional services and tends to miss the emerging needs of the population.

Modern municipalities do more than provide roads, sewers and parks. Modern health regions do more than ensure the availability of hospital services. Modern school systems do more than teach the “3 R’s”. It is in delivering the “additional” services that the mandates of the traditional organizations may overlap. For example, as a health region promotes physical activity as a means to support the wellness of the population, the question arises about encouraging people to walk and cycle instead of driving their vehicles. These activities depend on there being safe and pleasant sidewalks, parks, bike paths or bike lanes in the community. Similarly, if students are to walk to school, the schools have to be situated in proximity to the residences and safe, clear (i.e. no snow) routes need to be available. As well, convenient, low-cost access to gymnasiums in the schools should be readily available to the community. This is just one example in which municipal, health and education organizations might collaborate to improve the population’s quality of life.

Organizations have inertia. They do not change their behaviour spontaneously. Collaboration among municipalities, health, education and other organizations will occur only with deliberate leadership. In Lloydminster, what processes are in place to support effective consultation, joint planning and collaboration among our local governing bodies? Are the existing processes sufficient? How might they be improved? Who should initiate the improvement process? What are the roles for the leaders and CEO of each organization?

These questions will be referred to the Mayor and Council, the Chairmen and Directors of the School Divisions and to the Chairman and CEO of the Health Region.