

Sustainable Procurement Manitoba Working Group
Progress Report for 2016 and 2017



January 2018

Introduction

In 2015, the Sustainable Procurement in Manitoba Working Group (*SPMWG*) developed a five year Strategic Plan (2015-2020). The purpose of the plan was to enhance the adoption of sustainable procurement in Manitoba as intended by the Sustainable Development Act and to promote procurement practices that support other sustainability initiatives of Manitoba. To achieve this objective, *SPMWG* identified five goals within the Plan:

1. Increase public sector engagement,
2. Promote sustainable procurement to all Manitobans,
3. Create and maintain up-to-date information and resources for the SPM website,
4. Increase public sector knowledge of sustainable procurement practices and
5. Demonstrate benefits of the Sustainable Procurement in Manitoba (SPM) website and *SPMWG* to stakeholders.

This report provides a summary of 2016 - 2017 activities.

1. Increase public sector engagement:

To reinforce the mandate to public sector procurement professionals, *SPMWG* requested the website be acknowledged by then Minister of Sustainable Development, Cathy Cox, who noted the SPM website is “a great resource for public sector organizations interested in purchasing sustainable goods or services.”

Following on that, approximately eighty public procurement directors/managers received a letter informing them about the SPM website and encouraging its use as a tool and resource for sustainable purchasing. The directors/managers were asked to share the website link with their respective staff and forward suggestions to enhance the website.

Additionally, three newsletters and three original articles were distributed to the approximate eighty public procurement website members. The articles and newsletters for 2016 -2017 can be found on the [website](#).

Two surveys were distributed to members during this period:

- December 2016, a survey was sent to SPM members requesting feedback on website use, suggestions for improvement, and interest in future informational sessions. The survey garnered a forty percent response rate; The majority of the respondents found the SPM website useful and visited the site within the last twelve months. The survey also revealed that the majority of the users do not access the member portal and found both the Goods and Services and the Tools and Resources tabs most useful.
- October 2017, a survey was sent out to attendees of the SPM half-day session titled “Accessibility and the Role of Procurement”. Approximately 50% of attendees responded to the survey, providing *SPMWG* with information regarding, the effectiveness of the half-day session, their plans to use the website information and incorporate sustainable requirements into bid documents, and their interest in attending future workshops/sessions;. Most survey respondents found the session very informative and plan to use the SPM website to help incorporate sustainable and accessibility requirements into bid documents.

2. Promote sustainable procurement to all Manitobans:

To broaden exposure and access to the website, *SPMWG* is currently looking at how social media tools such as Twitter may advance sustainable procurement more effectively. An SPM Linked-In account has been established as a start. Discussions are underway with entities that also support environmental initiatives including Lake

Friendly, Assiniboine Park Conservancy, Fair Trade Winnipeg and Bee Better Manitoba to determine if opportunities exist to integrate sustainability messaging and increase SPM exposure through social media.

As part of efforts to engage Manitobans outside of the procurement community, *SPMWG* also extended invitations to Social Enterprise Manitoba and the Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNET) to explore how the social value of sustainable procurement may be advanced and worked with the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation and The Canadian Fair Trade Network to promote the 2016 National Fair Trade Conference.

3. Create and maintain up-to-date information and resources for the SPM website:

On a monthly basis, *SPMWG* reviews and updates website content and conducts research to ensure content is current with legislation, environmental and social standards. In 2017, the Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA) was reviewed for implications on sustainable procurement and website content. Given the clear interface between the AMA and public sector procurement, *SPMWG* incorporated accessibility requirements into the goods and services information on the website and updated the website itself to support greater accessibility.

SPMWG also developed three new specifications sheets for goods and services, updated six existing goods and services specification sheets ([click here to view](#)) and updated the Quick Guide for Sustainable Purchasing to address developments in provincial legislation and provide guidance for supporting social enterprises.

4. Increase public sector knowledge of sustainable procurement practices:

On September 26, 2017 *SPMWG* hosted a half-day session titled “The Accessibility for Manitobans Act: How are we responding?” Fifty four public sector employees from provincial departments, school divisions, municipalities, universities, colleges and crown corporations attended. The session featured guest speakers Judy Redmond (Universal Design Coordinator from the City of Winnipeg) and John Wyndels (Policy Analyst from the Disabilities Issues Office, Manitoba Government). Information regarding accessibility, the role of procurement to support the AMA and *SPMWG*’s efforts to update the SPM website to incorporate accessibility considerations and requirements was presented.

Other jurisdictions (Nova Scotia Department of Internal Services) have requested membership however, the website is intended only for Manitoba’s public sector. *SPMWG* provided digital files from the restricted member section of the website to serve this out-of-province request.

5. Demonstrate benefits of SPM website and *SPMWG* to stakeholders:

Indications that *SPMWG* activities and SPM website content provide benefits to stakeholders are reflected in the letter of endorsement from the Minister of Sustainable Development and member surveys. *SPMWG* recognizes however, that there is still room to develop.

Signed,



Corinne Evason,
Chair, Sustainable Procurement in Manitoba Working Group