



THE MANITOBA BAR ASSOCIATION  
L'ASSOCIATION DU BARREAU DU MANITOBA  
A Branch of the Canadian Bar Association  
Une division de l'Association du Barreau canadien

# Town Hall Meetings on Access to Justice Report and Summary

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# MANITOBA BAR ASSOCIATION TOWN HALL MEETINGS ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE REPORT AND SUMMARY

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## BACKGROUND

The Manitoba Bar Association, a branch of the Canadian Bar Association, held a series of Town Hall meetings in Manitoba during 2010/2011. These Town Hall meetings were modeled after a similar consultation with stakeholders in the justice system, held in Ontario in 2007.

In-person meetings were held in Brandon, Steinbach, Thompson and Winnipeg between December 2010 and June 2011. Personal letters of invitation were sent to members of the justice system, including court workers, sheriff officers, correction personnel, victims groups, women shelters, non-profit justice related agencies, judges, lawyers and more. The events were advertised in newspapers and sent out public service announcements and press releases.

The purpose of these Town Hall meetings was to bring together members of the public and the legal community to identify challenges in the justice system and offer solutions on how best to resolve them. If members of the public, the legal community and justice system workers were not able to attend one of the scheduled meetings, they were invited to send in their feedback in writing (anonymous submissions were accepted).

The participants in the Town Hall meetings were invited to present their comments and concerns with respect to three specific questions:

1. What is needed to ensure fair and timely access to the justice/legal system for all Manitobans?
2. What improvements or changes should be made to our justice system, locally and province-wide?
3. Does our community have adequate resources to meet the needs of our citizens?

This report contains a summary of the themes and issues that were identified by those Manitobans who took the time to make in-person comments or written submissions through the Town Hall consultative process, and concludes with a number of recommendations for change, based on the submissions received and comments heard.

## SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK RECEIVED

Numerous individuals and community agencies made comments in response to the questions posed during the four Town Hall meetings held across the province and through their written submissions to the Manitoba Bar Association.

One of the participants aptly described access to justice as a continuum of needs with the relatively basic need for legal information at one end of the continuum and the need for highly specialized legal advice or representation at the opposite end of the continuum. The feedback received from participants in the Town Hall process encompasses the entire spectrum of legal needs.

In their answers to the questions posed, participants addressed a wide range of topics, issues and concerns with respect to access to justice in Manitoba. From these, a number of recurring themes were identified:

- Access to information
- Access to community based advocacy and legal support services
- Access to lawyers
- Access to Legal Aid
- Access to Courts
- Access to the criminal justice system
- Access to the family law system

### Access to information

Access to information about the law is at one end of the spectrum of legal needs. Having information about the law is vital to both understanding one's rights and to determining whether or not to pursue a potential legal claim.

Participants spoke of the need for legal information at the places where people are connecting with the legal system. In the case of those involved with the courts, information is needed at the court facilities, whether at the registry desk or in the courtroom. Victims of crime need information through police, or Victims Services or through advocacy groups.

Legal information should be available when individuals find they need it. Women experiencing domestic violence need information after hours and in the evenings, through women's advocates.

Others need information when they ask for it – whether by telephone, web access or by dropping in to an information centre.

Many participants identified the need for legal information in multiple languages. At minimum, information should be available in both official languages; however, the diversity of Manitoba’s population necessitates availability of information about the law in many other languages as well.

Information about the law needs to be provided in clear, plain language. Not only should it be available in the information seeker’s own language, but it must be provided without jargon or complicated terminology. One participant stated that he needs to know “Where do I go, what do I fill out, how do I get this resolved.”

For those who are representing themselves in court processes, it is essential that information about court processes, rules and any downloadable forms be accessible using commonly available software.

### **Access to community-based advocacy and legal support services**

Access to community advocates and other legal support services is next along the spectrum of legal service needs. As was pointed out by one participant group, not everyone needs representation by a lawyer, but an individual may nonetheless require assistance from a skilled advocate or support worker.

Town Hall participants’ comments on this topic clearly reflected a disparity in provision of such services across the province. Participants from rural areas, and northern Manitoba in particular, expressed their frustration with a lack of community-based advocacy and support services, including counselling and addictions supports. There were suggestions to enhance community programming available to youth as a means to prevent their entry into the criminal justice system, and to provide better and more varied treatment and other post-incarceration supports to those exiting the criminal justice system.

In Winnipeg, the primary service gaps noted were in the areas of poverty law advocacy, including assistance with bringing cases before administrative tribunals, and in accessing services in a range of languages.

Where services are widely available (primarily in Winnipeg), participants pointed to the need for service agencies to be strengthened through provision of stable, long term funding (as opposed to year to year or project-based funding). Some participants pointed out the benefits of relying upon paralegals to provide information about the law and noted that the issue of licensing paralegals is under consideration by the Law Society of Manitoba.

Another comment made by multiple participants is that resource and support service providers need better training, specifically in domestic violence issues and cultural awareness.

## Access to lawyers

At the end of the spectrum where legal advice and assistance is needed, there may be obstacles to accessing a lawyer. Participants identified a range of barriers to accessing the services of a lawyer, including:

- **Economic factors** – Legal services are not affordable to all, and many people are not eligible for Legal Aid or their legal problems are not covered by the Legal Aid plan. It was noted that affordability is less of a barrier in matters such as making a will or purchasing a house, and has the greatest impact in matters that go before the courts, whether in family law, criminal law or civil litigation. With respect to the area of family law, participants spoke favourably about the recent Law Society of Manitoba Family Law Access Centre pilot project, which provided a mechanism to obtain lower cost legal services to those ineligible for Legal Aid. While the cost of legal services can be a barrier, it was also noted that reduction of lawyer's fees or provision of free legal services does not solve the problems related to overburdening of the courts nor the underfunding of Legal Aid (see below).
- **Supply factors** – In rural areas in particular, it was noted that there are not enough lawyers to meet the need for legal services, particularly in the areas of family law, criminal defence and civil litigation. Many lawyers in rural communities are nearing retirement age and recruitment of younger lawyers to these centres remains a challenge. The impact of these shortages can be exacerbated by conflict of interest rules which may prevent rural lawyers from taking on some clients. The supply issue is further complicated where those seeking legal services do not speak English. It was noted that there are very few lawyers outside of Winnipeg able to provide services in languages other than English, and that, there are not enough interpreters or translators available to assist with lawyer-client communications.

## Access to Legal Aid

Many of the issues raised in respect of access to lawyers also apply to accessing Manitoba's Legal Aid program, though with a twist.

Participants noted the following economic barriers to accessing Legal Aid services in Manitoba:

- Income thresholds are too low, with the result that many of the working poor do not meet Legal Aid's financial eligibility requirements;
- Ownership of certain assets may result in a failure to meet the financial eligibility criteria, but those assets may be tied up in the very court proceedings for which legal assistance is sought (e.g. on a division of family assets post-separation);

- Many lawyers are unwilling to take on Legal Aid clients as the fees paid to lawyers don't make it economically viable to take on Legal Aid certificates.

Accessing Legal Aid also requires that there be a lawyer available to represent the client. Legal Aid Manitoba provides services both through its staff lawyers in larger centres and through issuing certificates to lawyers in firms throughout the Province. As noted above, many lawyers are unwilling to take Legal Aid certificates for economic reasons. Where lawyers are already in short supply, as in northern and rural Manitoba, there may be no local lawyers willing to take on a Legal Aid client.

The result is that clients may have to incur the expense of travel to a larger centre to obtain services through Legal Aid, and/or that Legal Aid may incur additional expenses for a lawyer to go to the community where the client lives or is attending court.

The lack of availability of interpretive and French language services for clients of Legal Aid Manitoba, at both the intake stage and in providing legal representation, was also noted as a barrier to accessing these services. Some also noted that the application process can be lengthy.

Finally, it was noted that the Legal Aid plan does not provide sufficiently wide coverage for the legal problems faced by those with low incomes. For example, only limited assistance is available for areas of poverty law, while there is no coverage for division of family assets on breakdown of a relationship or civil disputes of any kind. As well, the plan does not provide legal counsel to provide assistance to those who must face their abusers in defending protection orders.

## Access to Courts

Town Hall participants made a number of comments with respect to access to courts in general, focusing on administration and facilities, as well as process. Many participants focused their remarks on issues within the criminal justice or family law systems, specifically. While these touch on the issue of access to courts, they are specifically addressed below under the headings of Criminal Justice and Family Justice.

With respect to accessing court facilities, participants noted that court offices outside of Winnipeg require additional staff, and that permanent court offices are lacking in circuit locations. Poorly equipped facilities were also noted as a concern in circuit locations.

Participants noted the need for information services to be provided onsite at court facilities, including information about agency and community supports available. The need for additional translation services was also noted. In this regard, positive comments were made about the effectiveness of the Aboriginal Court Worker program in meeting this need, where available, and the suggestion made for expansion of that program.

In terms of process, it was noted that courts have been slow to adopt new technologies and continue to rely too heavily upon a paper based system. It was noted that Manitoba lags behind other jurisdictions in that electronic filing of documents is not permitted, and court documents cannot be accessed online. This is an issue of particular concern to rural lawyers in communities that are not Court centres.

## Access to the criminal justice system

A number of participants in the Town Hall meetings focused their comments entirely upon issues relating to access to the criminal justice system, from the point of charge through plea and sentencing.

The most frequently heard comment on access to the criminal justice system was that it takes too long to get from the point of charge to disposition of that charge, and that this was due in part to the multiplicity of remands of the proceedings. Participants suggested that this indicates inefficiency in the criminal justice system and brings justice into disrepute, as the unfruitful remand appearance is seen to be the norm, rather than the exception.

Comments were made that the criminal courts are overburdened and in the result, appear unable to effectively deal with accused, or victims, in an efficient and effective way.

Some suggested the need for an alternative court stream or process for dealing with minor nonviolent offences and accepting guilty pleas. It was proposed that this could free up courtroom time for dealing with more serious offences.

Comments were also received on the effectiveness of the criminal justice system. To counter a perceived “revolving door” effect in circuit locations, participants suggested posting dedicated criminal court judges to specific locations so there would be a familiarity with the accused.

Numerous participants spoke of or wrote in favour of restorative justice programs or community-based, alternative justice systems as a means to more effectively deal with offenders while reducing the burden on the courts.

Other suggestions to enhance the effectiveness of the criminal justice system were to strengthen ties to mental health services, and to work in closer partnership with community agencies, especially in respect of determining appropriate and effective sentencing.

Accessibility of the criminal justice system was a particular concern of those participants in the Town Hall meetings outside of Winnipeg. The concern was raised repeatedly that the effectiveness of the system is hampered when accused persons are removed from their communities for pre-disposition custody and are unable to access appropriate supports and services while in remand. Participants also noted the lack of appropriate victim services and offender support programs in Thompson, in particular.



Access to a fair legal system was addressed in the context of bail applications. A suggestion was made that undue emphasis is placed, in those applications, on home ownership, which unfairly impacts Aboriginal persons who reside in band-owned housing.

### **Access to the family law system**

Multiple participants noted that the family law system is in crisis, and pointed to recent comments from Ontario's Chief Justice Winkler in this regard. As noted above, this is an area of law in which there are not enough lawyers, particularly in rural Manitoba. Further, the court process does not adequately promote swift resolution of these matters nor effectively rely upon alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

A number of participants proposed that mediation in family law disputes should be mandated as a starting point unless circumstances do not support its use.

Participants noted that because judges and lawyers are not adequately trained in the dynamics of domestic violence, nor as to the services available to victims and perpetrators, they are ill-equipped to deal with cases where domestic violence or abuse is alleged in the context of a breakdown of a relationship. It was suggested that such matters be diverted to a special court with dedicated staff, appropriately trained, and that additional services be made available to children who disclose sexual abuse.

Self-representing litigants are having a significant impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of the family law system, reducing efficiency of court processes as judges are taking time to educate and as claims are made where legal advice would have suggested against it. Legal information needs are especially acute for the self-represented litigant. There is a need for in-person assistance, including help with completing and preparing forms and documents.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Access to information

- Provide legal information in plain and clear language at existing community service access points, including police offices, Victim Services offices and through community advocacy agencies
- Provide information about the law in both official languages and with access to translations for other languages
- Ensure that information about legal processes is available to those who choose to represent themselves in those processes
- Provide 24/7 access to information about law in a range of formats and languages, including web-based, telephone, drop-in information kiosks and print materials

### Access to community based advocacy and legal support services

- Recognize existing expertise within the community by providing stable funding for those agencies and organizations delivering a continuum of legal services, from information and public education through resources for self-representing litigants
- Enhance and provide funding support to community programs targeted to youth as a means to prevent their entry into the criminal justice system
- Enhance access to advocacy services before administrative tribunals and boards in areas of poverty law, including income assistance, residential tenancies and social/health benefits
- Support efforts to enhance cooperation among and coordination of community-based support services
- Provide training opportunities for community service providers to recognize and appropriately address issues relating to domestic violence and too enhance cultural awareness

### Access to lawyers

- Explore and pursue alternative means to provide lower cost legal services to low and middle income-earners ineligible for Legal Aid in litigation matters (family, criminal,

civil), including legal service brokerages and public legal insurance programs that includes litigation assistance

- Provide support to recruitment efforts that enhance access to lawyers outside Winnipeg, particularly for family and criminal defence matters, and to avoid reduction in current service levels by replacing retiring lawyers in these communities
- Ensure there are sufficient Crown Attorneys available to keep workloads at an appropriate level so as to be able to conduct their work efficiently and effectively, thereby reducing burdens on the criminal justice system

### Access to Legal Aid

- Increase funding to Legal Aid Manitoba to ensure current service levels are not reduced and to enhance service levels as outlined below
- Expand the eligibility criteria for Legal Aid to ensure increased accessibility for persons unable to afford legal representation, thereby ensuring equal access to the justice system
- Increase income thresholds for financial eligibility to ensure that those who cannot afford to pay for legal services are able to access Legal Aid
- Expand financial eligibility criteria to provide coverage in family law processes where the applicant has assets potentially available to liquidate but those assets are subject to division or equalization under family property legislation
- Expand Legal Aid plan coverage to provide assistance to victims of domestic violence in obtaining or defending contested protection orders
- Increase tariffs paid to private lawyers in order to create incentives to provide legal services through the program, particularly outside Winnipeg
- Increase professional and paralegal staffing levels, particularly outside Winnipeg to address shortages in availability of legal services in areas of family and criminal law and to enhance duty counsel services in those communities
- Ensure that client services at intake and through lawyers are available in French language and with translation services for other languages
- Increase efficiencies in the application process to expedite the Legal Aid application and approval process, whether through expansion of Application Centres or providing web-based applications processes

## Access to Courts

- Create a system to allow for electronic filing of and access to court documents, to enhance access to courts for those outside of Court Centres
- Enhance ease of use of online tools on Manitoba Courts website, including providing fillable forms and or downloadable forms in Word format
- Simplify Queen's Bench processes, Rules and Forms to create greater efficiencies in process and to support the right of litigants to represent themselves
- Consider amendment to Queen's Bench Rules to require early stage assessment as to whether civil disputes should be diverted to mediation
- Provide better equipped court facilities in circuit points
- Establish permanent, full-time court offices in rural centres
- Ensure appropriate staffing levels at all court offices
- Provide additional training to courts staff and judicial officers in addressing domestic violence issues, and in recognizing cultural and other barriers to individuals
- Provide additional language and interpretive services for Aboriginal persons and newcomers
- Expand availability of Aboriginal Court Worker program
- Provide legal information tools and supports at court offices, for victims as well as parties to court proceedings

## Access to the criminal justice system

- Appoint more criminal court judges to provide sufficient judicial resources to meet the needs of a growing population and to reduce remand times, move charges through the system more efficiently and to allow for setting of earlier trial dates
- Focus court resources and time to deal with most serious charges, and establish streamlined court processes so as to more efficiently deal with guilty pleas to minor non-violent offences
- Limit the number of unproductive court appearances, thereby reducing the length of court dockets and minimizing the perceived inefficiencies of the remand process

- Provide funding for and enhance the availability of mental health, addictions and other treatment programs and rehabilitative services available to those in pre-trial custody
- Strengthen ties to mental health services, and work in closer partnership with community agencies to ensure that sentences and conditions imposed upon offenders are effective and achievable
- Provide funding for and support restorative justice and alternative sentencing programs as a means to effectively address the impacts of crime on victims and our communities including:
  - Coordinating restorative justice services across the province
  - Providing training to community members
  - Educating Crown and defence lawyers as well as police in the principles of restorative justice
- Establish a remand centre in Thompson, with support for appropriate pre-trial custody programming including mental health and addictions treatment
- Support development of more counselling and victim/offender programs in rural communities
- Review the Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission Report of June 2001 and ensure that recommendations are implemented in order to reduce the number of Aboriginal people in the justice system who are already disproportionately represented.
- To the extent possible, eliminate perceived bias against those who don't own homes (including Aboriginal persons who reside in band-owned housing) in considering bail applications

### **Access to the family law system**

- Explore and consider imposing a requirement for separating couples to participate in a mediation process before commencing court proceedings, unless to do so would be clearly inappropriate (e.g. where there has been family violence or there are protection or prevention orders in place)
- Provide translation services to victims of domestic violence who are seeking protection orders or defending protection orders

- Establish a specialized court to hear family proceedings where there are allegations of family violence and domestic abuse, with additional training for judges and provision of appropriate supports for victims and children who are involved in these proceedings
- Provide an expedited and low cost process for equalization and return of family property below a certain threshold value
- Amend Queen's Bench forms and documents to enhance ease of use and provide appropriate completion instructions (whether in writing or through in-person assistance) to aid the increasing number of self-representing litigants appearing in family law court proceedings

## CONCLUSION

The Manitoba Bar Association's Town Hall meetings on Access to Justice were a great success. Through this consultative process, Manitobans from across the province and representing a wide range of individual and community interests were able to voice their concerns over access to justice issues.

They told of the struggles experienced by unrepresented accused and family law litigants who cannot afford legal representation. They clearly expressed their concerns that Legal Aid Manitoba must become sufficiently funded to meet the needs of all Manitobans. They wondered why a person's right to access justice is dependent on their net worth or proximity to a large urban centre, and how it is that the working poor continue to fall between the cracks.

The recommendations made in this report are based on the feedback received through the Access to Justice Town Hall project, and support the view of the Manitoba Bar Association that it is time to treat access to justice as a fundamental right of all Manitobans, and that providing access to justice for all citizens requires a multi-pronged and collaborative approach.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Town Hall Panel Members**

Jillian Brown

Inspector Shane Corley

Grant Driedger

Robert Harrison

Mayor Shari Decter Hirst

Mayor Tim Johnston

Chief Justice Glenn Joyal

Tony Kavanagh

Rich Lonstrup

Judge Tracy Lord

Rekha Malaviya

Ken Mandzuik

Justice John Menzies

Inspector Ken Poulsen

Judge Doreen Redhead

David Sanderson

Dave Thorne

Josh Weinstein

Constable Kevin Wynn

Councillor Michael Zwaagstra



## APPENDIX 2 Promotional Advertisements



THE MANITOBA BAR ASSOCIATION

L'ASSOCIATION DU BARREAU DU MANITOBA

A Branch of the Canadian Bar Association  
Une division de l'Association du Barreau canadien

The Manitoba Bar Association *presents,*

### **Town Hall Meeting on Access to Justice Issues**

Wednesday, December 15, 2010

7:00pm – 9:00pm

Rowe Theatre, Room 209  
Education Building  
Brandon University  
270 - 18th Street, Brandon, MB



*We want to hear your thoughts . . .*

- What is needed to ensure fair and timely access to the justice/legal system for all Manitobans?
- What improvements or changes should be made to our justice system, locally and province-wide?
- Does our community have adequate resources to meet the needs of our citizens?

Please RSVP to [admin@cba-mb.ca](mailto:admin@cba-mb.ca) or by phone, (204) 927-1210.

*If you are not able to attend please feel free to submit your comments to the above questions in writing.*



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The Manitoba Bar Association *presents,*

## **Town Hall Meeting on Access to Justice Issues**

Wednesday, March 23, 2011

7:00pm – 9:00pm

Steinbach Legion Community Hall  
294 Lumber Avenue, Steinbach, MB  
(corner of Elmdale Ave. & Lumber Ave.)



*We want to hear your thoughts . . .*

- What is needed to ensure fair and timely access to the justice/legal system for all Manitobans?
- What improvements or changes should be made to our justice system, locally and province-wide?
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Please RSVP to [admin@cba-mb.ca](mailto:admin@cba-mb.ca) or by phone, (204) 927-1210.  
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The Manitoba Bar Association *presents,*

## **Town Hall Meeting on Access to Justice Issues**

Thursday, May 12, 2011

7:00pm – 9:00pm

MKO Boardroom  
200 - 701 Thompson Drive  
Thompson, MB



*We want to hear your thoughts . . .*

- What is needed to ensure fair and timely access to the justice/legal system for all Manitobans?
- What improvements or changes should be made to our justice system, locally and province-wide?
- Does our community have adequate resources to meet the needs of our citizens?

Please RSVP to [admin@cba-mb.ca](mailto:admin@cba-mb.ca) or by phone, (204) 927-1210.

*If you are not able to attend please feel free to submit your comments to the above questions in writing.*



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The Manitoba Bar Association *presents,*

## **Town Hall Meeting on Access to Justice Issues**

Wednesday, June 22, 2011

7:00pm – 9:00pm

Winnipeg Convention Centre  
Pam Am Room  
2nd Floor - 375 York Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB



*We want to hear your thoughts . . .*

- What is needed to ensure fair and timely access to the justice/legal system for all Manitobans?
- What improvements or changes should be made to our justice system, locally and province-wide?
- Does our community have adequate resources to meet the needs of our citizens?

Please RSVP to [admin@cba-mb.ca](mailto:admin@cba-mb.ca) or by phone, (204) 927-1210.

*If you are not able to attend please feel free to submit your comments to the above questions in writing.*

## APPENDIX 3

### Letters of Invitation

November 22, 2010

«AddressBlock»

«GreetingLine»

As an important and valued member of the legal community, I would like to invite you to participate in a *Town Hall Meeting* on access to justice issues. The meeting will take place on Wednesday, December 15, 2010 from 7:00pm – 9:00pm in the Rowe Theatre, Room 209, Education Building at the Brandon University, 270-18<sup>th</sup> Street, Brandon, Manitoba.

The *Town Hall* will bring together members of the public and the legal community to identify challenges in the justice system and offer solutions on how best to resolve them. We hope that discussion will be balanced between province-wide issues and those that are more specific to the justice system in the Westman region.

. Participants in the town hall will be asked to consider the following questions:

- What is needed to ensure fair and timely access to the justice/legal system for all Manitobans?
- What improvements or changes should be made to our justice system, locally and province-wide?
- Does our community have adequate resources to meet the needs of our citizens?

To ensure that all the concerns and recommendations are heard we ask that, where possible, participants bring a written submission to accompany any comments they will be make at the *Town Hall Meeting*.

Your advice and perspective is important to us, we hope that you, along with anyone else you think might be interested, will be able to join us for this important meeting. Enclosed please find a promotional poster that we would appreciate you displaying at your business. Please RSVP to [admin@cba-mb.ca](mailto:admin@cba-mb.ca) or by phone, (204) 927-1210. We would greatly appreciate if you could indicate whether you would like to make a presentation during the meeting. If you are not able to attend, please feel free to submit your comments to the above questions in writing to the address below.

Yours truly,



Ken Mandzuik  
President  
Manitoba Bar Association

February 22, 2011

«AddressBlock»

«GreetingLine»

As an important and valued member of the legal community, I would like to invite you to participate in a *Town Hall Meeting* on access to justice issues. The meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 23, 2011 from 7:00pm – 9:00pm at the Steinbach Legion Community Hall, 294 Lumber Avenue (corner of Elmdale & Lumber) in Steinbach, Manitoba.

The *Town Hall* will bring together members of the public and the legal community to identify challenges in the justice system and offer solutions on how best to resolve them. We hope that discussion will be balanced between province-wide issues and those that are more specific to the justice system in the Eastman region.

. Participants in the town hall will be asked to consider the following questions:

- What is needed to ensure fair and timely access to the justice/legal system for all Manitobans?
- What improvements or changes should be made to our justice system, locally and province-wide?
- Does our community have adequate resources to meet the needs of our citizens?

To ensure that all the concerns and recommendations are heard we ask that, where possible, participants bring a written submission to accompany any comments they will be make at the *Town Hall Meeting*.

Your advice and perspective is important to us, we hope that you, along with anyone else you think might be interested, will be able to join us for this important meeting. Enclosed please find a promotional poster that we would appreciate you displaying at your business. Please RSVP to [admin@cba-mb.ca](mailto:admin@cba-mb.ca) or by phone, (204) 927-1210. We would greatly appreciate if you could indicate whether you would like to make a presentation during the meeting. If you are not able to attend, please feel free to submit your comments to the above questions in writing to the address below.

Yours truly,



Ken Mandzuik  
President  
Manitoba Bar Association

April 13, 2011

«AddressBlock»

«GreetingLine»

As an important and valued member of the legal community, I would like to invite you to participate in a *Town Hall Meeting* on access to justice issues. The meeting will take place on Thursday, May 12, 2011 from 7:00pm – 9:00pm at the MKO Boardroom, 200 – 701 Thompson Drive in Thompson, Manitoba.

The *Town Hall* will bring together members of the public and the legal community to identify challenges in the justice system and offer solutions on how best to resolve them. We hope that discussion will be balanced between province-wide issues and those that are more specific to the justice system in the Northern region.

. Participants in the town hall will be asked to consider the following questions:

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Yours truly,



Ken Mandzuik  
President  
Manitoba Bar Association

May 24, 2011

«AddressBlock»

«GreetingLine»

As an important and valued member of the legal community, I would like to invite you to participate in a *Town Hall Meeting* on access to justice issues. The meeting will take place on Wednesday, June 22, 2011, 2011 from 7:00pm – 9:00pm at the Winnipeg Convention Centre, Pan Am Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor – 375 York Avenue, Winnipeg, MB.

The *Town Hall* will bring together members of the public and the legal community to identify challenges in the justice system and offer solutions on how best to resolve them. We hope that discussion will be balanced between province-wide issues and those that are more specific to the justice system in the Winnipeg region.

Participants in the town hall will be asked to consider the following questions:

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- Does our community have adequate resources to meet the needs of our citizens?

To ensure that all the concerns and recommendations are heard we ask that, where possible, participants bring a written submission to accompany any comments they will be make at the *Town Hall Meeting*.

Your advice and perspective is important to us, we hope that you, along with anyone else you think might be interested, will be able to join us for this important meeting. Enclosed please find a promotional poster that we would appreciate you displaying at your business. Please RSVP to [admin@cba-mb.ca](mailto:admin@cba-mb.ca) or by phone, (204) 927-1210. We would greatly appreciate if you could indicate whether you would like to make a presentation during the meeting. If you are not able to attend, please feel free to submit your comments to the above questions in writing to the address below.

Yours truly,



Ken Mandzuik  
President  
Manitoba Bar Association