

## **Bill 33 - Amendments to The Municipal Assessment Act**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Overview of Legislation**

##### **What did Bill 33 do for The Municipal Assessment Act?**

- This bill amended The Municipal Assessment Act to enable property owners outside Winnipeg to access and receive their assessment notices electronically.
- The bill also enables municipalities to make a portion of their assessment rolls available to the public in electronic format.
- Amendments enable the City of Winnipeg to implement similar initiatives.

#### **The Municipal Assessment Act**

##### **Why are we making changes to The Municipal Assessment Act?**

- Currently, all property owners receive their notice of assessment via mail, with no option to receive it electronically. The electronic assessment notice will replace paper notices if Manitobans opt in to receive an electronic notice. Property owners outside Winnipeg will now be able to access and save an electronic version of their notice in a place convenient for them.
- Additionally, legislation previously required the assessment roll be available in municipal offices during business hours, implying that citizens are required to visit municipal offices to view assessment rolls. Online access to assessment rolls will enable citizens to view assessment rolls (with certain identifying information removed) at a time and place convenient for them.
- In addition to providing more convenience to property owners, the approach will save printing costs and reduce environmental impacts.
- Enabling property owners to access their assessment notices and assessment rolls electronically will bring Manitoba in line with current customer service standards already adopted by other jurisdictions and private companies.

##### **When will these amendments come into force?**

- The amendments to The Municipal Assessment Act came into force at Royal Assent on June 1, 2022.

## **Electronic Assessment Notice Delivery**

### **How will the electronic assessment notice be delivered?**

- For properties outside the City of Winnipeg, mailed assessment notices will contain a property owner's unique client number allowing them to sign up voluntarily on the [MyPropertyMB](#) web portal by creating a free account to view, download or save an electronic version of their assessment notice.
- Property owners opting in for accessing electronic assessment notices will no longer receive paper notices in future years. When their assessment/reassessment is ready to view, property owners would be notified via a system-generated email sent to the email they created to open up the online account.

### **How can a new property owner find assessment information about their property and sign-up on MyPropertyMB?**

- New property owners can find assessment information on the Municipal Relation's website, [https://www.gov.mb.ca/mao/public/search\\_select.aspx](https://www.gov.mb.ca/mao/public/search_select.aspx) , on their property tax bill, or by contacting their local Assessment office by phone or [assessment@gov.mb.ca](mailto:assessment@gov.mb.ca).
- As property owners require their Client ID to sign up on MyPropertyMB, they should contact their local Assessment office if they do not have a Client ID number or if the property does not show up on their MyPropertyMB account. There may be delays between possession dates and when the Assessor is notified of an ownership change.

### **Will an electronic assessment notice be the same as a paper assessment notice?**

- Yes, an electronic assessment notice will be an electronic copy of the same paper-based assessment notice containing the same information.

### **Will costs change for property owners?**

- There will be no additional cost to property owners for signing up to receive electronic assessment notices.

### **Will I have to register an account if I own multiple properties?**

- All properties associated with the unique Client ID will be displayed on MyPropertyMB once an account has been created.

### **How will Manitobans find out about the electronic assessment notice web portal?**

- The mail-out of printed assessment notices to all property owners outside the City of Winnipeg in spring 2022 highlighted MyPropertyMB on the assessment notice, and the reassessment information brochure communicated the availability of the electronic assessment notice web portal to Manitobans.

### **Will all past assessment notices be available on MyPropertyMB?**

- No, only the 2023 Reassessment Notice and notices going forward will be available.

### **What happens if a property owner does not receive an electronic assessment notice after signing up for electronic notices?**

- The assessment notice would still be posted on the property owner's account and available at any time after the system-generated email is sent to the property owner's email registered with the account. System-generated emails that go to out of date email addresses or are caught as spam are considered similar to lost or undeliverable physical mail. Citizens are expected to keep their account information up-to-date to ensure they receive their notices.
- When property owners do not receive email reminders to view the assessment notices online, they can contact their local assessment office to update their account information with a new email address or to receive a copy of their assessment notice.
- Municipalities are not responsible to ensure property owners receive their assessment notices. If citizens contact their municipality about not receiving an assessment notice, they should be directed to contact their local assessment office.
- In reassessment years such as in 2023, property owners will also be made aware that assessment notices have been mailed out or are available through regular communication from their municipality, including public notice of the Boards of Revisions.
- Assessment information is also included in annual tax statements which are provided to property owners by the municipality.

### **Will these changes apply to the City of Winnipeg?**

- The City of Winnipeg prints and mails out assessment notices to all property owners within city limits. This proposed legislation will also enable the City of Winnipeg to send assessment notices electronically, if they choose to do so.

## **Electronic Assessment Rolls**

### **Why is Manitoba enabling municipalities to post assessment rolls online?**

- Enabling municipalities to provide access to assessment rolls online will eliminate the requirement of residents to visit municipal offices to view assessment rolls. With the availability of assessment rolls online, property owners can access the information at a time and place convenient for them.

### **Will the municipalities have to pass a by-law for posting assessment rolls online?**

- Yes, passing a by-law ensures transparency and public awareness that municipalities are posting this information online.

**Will electronic assessment rolls include the same information as it appears on assessment rolls available for inspection by the public at municipal offices?**

- No. Only a portion of the municipality's assessment rolls will be made available to the public in electronic form. Identifying information of property owners such as the owner name and mailing address will be protected to mitigate any privacy risks associated with posting bulk data online.

**The bill states that the assessor will provide an assessment roll without personal identifiers for making available electronically. How will municipalities receive that version of the assessment roll?**

- Assessment Services Branch provides two PDF versions of the assessment roll when sharing with municipalities; one with and one without personal identifiers. Both versions will be made available through Manitoba Municipalities Online. Please contact [assessment@gov.mb.ca](mailto:assessment@gov.mb.ca) with further questions.

**How will municipalities be able to make electronic assessment roll information available to the public?**

- It is recommended municipalities, once their by-law has passed, make the PDF version of the assessment roll without personal identifiers (received from the Assessment Services Branch) available on their municipalities' website.

**Can municipalities make the paper copy of the assessment roll with personal information available to the public for viewing in the office?**

- Yes, at the municipal office. Regardless of whether the municipality posts their assessment roll online, the roll should be available for review in the municipal office.
- This is aligned with section 9(5)(b) of the Municipal Assessment Act, section 263(1)(a) of The Municipal Act, and section 44(1)(e) of The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

**If a citizen requests property owner names or mailing addresses over the phone or via email, should it be provided?**

- No. A citizen should be advised that as per the Municipal Assessment Act, the assessment roll is available at the municipal office for review. Personal information from the assessment roll should not be provided over the phone or via email.

**Should other non-personal information from the assessment roll be provided over the phone or email?**

- There are no FIPPA considerations regarding non-personal property assessment information, and if the municipality wants to provide that information as a matter of customer service, they can. Citizens can also access property assessment information at [https://www.gov.mb.ca/mao/public/search\\_select.aspx](https://www.gov.mb.ca/mao/public/search_select.aspx).

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