



# MEMBER ADVISORY

## PROVINCIAL BUDGET 2008 – MUNICIPAL HIGHLIGHTS

---

**April 11, 2008** – President Ron Bell attended the reading of Budget 2008 yesterday at the Manitoba Legislature. Following are the municipal highlights from this year's budget:

### BUDGET 2008 HIGHLIGHTS

**Recreation** – the budget introduced new initiatives for community centres and sports groups to purchase equipment and supplies. It also added almost \$1 million to the Community Places Program, along with additional funds for the Neighbourhoods Alive! Program.

**Building Manitoba** – this fund provides a share of provincial income and fuel taxes for municipalities and will see a 7 per cent average increase.

**Rural childcare** – the budget invests an additional \$5 million in child care to provide more spaces, a new training and recruitment fund and higher wages.

**Healthcare** – Budget 2008 provides an additional \$3 million to increase the number of nurses, health-care aides and allied health-care workers for personal-care homes in Manitoba. It also invests in a \$4 million nurse practitioner and doctor recruitment and retention pilot program, and invests another \$7.2 million to educate and hire more doctors.

**Safe communities** – the budget provides funding for 20 more police officers and 2 more Crown prosecutors. There is also \$1 million in additional funding for youth corrections.

### OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

- More funding for libraries
- \$4.5 million more for housing
- Continued 50 per cent funding for transit systems in Winnipeg, Brandon, Flin Flon and Thompson
- Resources to speed up treaty land entitlement agreements
- More dollars for seniors and healthy aging programs
- New apprenticeship spaces

### WHAT WASN'T IN THE BUDGET

**Water** – an overall increase of 3 per cent for water stewardship initiatives raises the question of whether this is really a priority. Water use licensing received minimal increases and the increase to \$5.3 million for conservation districts is nowhere near enough.

**Education tax** – an increase in the education property tax credit to \$600 is good but doesn't solve the larger problem of the erosion of the municipal tax base.

*It is important to note that these are early observations from this year's budget, and more information will be released in the coming days and weeks. The AMM will continue to track this year's budget and will update our members as new information is discovered.*