

Feature Report: Infrastructure Programs

Municipalities in Canada collectively spend approximately \$12-15 billion annually on the construction and maintenance of infrastructure to deliver safe drinking water, maintain roads, deal with storm and wastewater and provide recreational opportunities as well as other services to ratepayers within the community. However, municipalities find it difficult to fund infrastructure construction and upgrades, and many have inquired as to whether there is financial assistance available to help share the costs of these projects. In response, the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) has compiled this featured report.

This report will outline general provincial and federal infrastructure programs that are relevant for Manitoba municipalities. The majority of this report will then focus on four main categories of infrastructure: environment, technology and energy infrastructure; cultural and recreational infrastructure; transportation infrastructure; and water infrastructure. In addition, the AMM has provided a supplemental directory that highlights many additional programs that will be of interest to municipal governments in Manitoba. Although the AMM has made a concerted effort to include all infrastructure programs in this featured report, the list is not exhaustive. The AMM encourages its members to explore all of the infrastructure programs listed in this guide as many can benefit from the various federal and provincial infrastructure programs that are available to municipal governments.

The AMM is committed to serving the needs of its members and is certain that AMM members will find this guide a valuable tool both now and in years to come. Should you have additional questions about the programs listed in this guide, please do not hesitate to contact the AMM.

A. General Infrastructure Programs

1. The Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Program

The Government of Canada launched a six-year program in 2000 to renew and enhance Canada's physical infrastructure. In partnership with provincial, territorial and municipal governments, First Nations and the private sector, the program is helping to upgrade infrastructure in rural and urban municipalities across Canada. The program is cost-shared, with the Government of Canada contributing one-third of the cost of infrastructure projects.

There are two components to this program: municipal infrastructure and the strategic highway infrastructure program. The 2000 Federal budget provided \$2.65 billion for these two components, with \$2.05 billion being allocated to municipal infrastructure. Based on a per capita formula, the Province of Manitoba receives \$60.92 million under this program.

The Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Program's first priority is green municipal infrastructure and the program specifies that, in Manitoba, 20% of the total project value must be invested in green infrastructure. Secondary priorities include local transportation, cultural and recreational facilities, infrastructure supporting tourism, rural and remote telecommunications, high-speed Internet access for local public institutions and affordable housing. In Manitoba, there is an additional requirement that a minimum of one-third of total approved costs for all projects must be invested in projects proposed by rural municipalities.

Manitoba success stories

• **Gimli Sewage Treatment Plant:** A redevelopment of the Gimli sewage treatment plant was submitted and approved as a joint application between the former Town of Gimli and the RM of Gimli. The \$1.3 million upgrade and expansion will serve a densely populated townsite, a low-density agriculturally based rural area, and has the potential to be expanded to treat

sewage from neighbouring beach communities. Work on the plant expansion is expected to begin in Fall 2004. In addition, long-term plans call for decommissioning the existing lagoon in the town of Gimli and turning it into a wetland area.

• **Westman Recycling Centre:** Recycling in Manitoba's second largest city is way up, now that a new recycling facility is open. An initiative of the City of Brandon, the \$4 million, 35,000 sq. ft. Westman Recycling Centre opened in April 2003 and replaced a dilapidated facility operating out of a century-old building. The Westman Recycling Centre was facilitated with \$1.9 million in infrastructure funding and fits well with the program's preference for projects that enhance or protect the environment. When reviewing project applications in 2001 and 2002, the priority for the local consultative committee was 'green' infrastructure. In fact, all rural and northern projects approved by the committee are for water and sewer improvements, or for solid waste management and recycling facilities.



One-year-old, \$4 million Westman Recycling Centre.



northern communities, organizations, co-operatives and businesses that enhance 'main street' public places and building exteriors. The program also aims to promote unique identities and themes that define a community.

The program contains two components: 1) Hometown Meeting Places and 2) Hometown Main Streets Enhancements. Under Hometown Meeting Places, eligible applicants include non-profit community organizations, municipalities, northern community councils and co-operatives. Eligible projects will consist of community initiatives that enhance "main street" areas and public places under the Hometown Manitoba Program. Eligible project costs include incremental enhancements of public facilities and areas accessible by all members of the community within the 'main street' areas. This would include costs such as enhancements to a tourism site, community hall or the development of a park. Ineligible costs include repair or refurbishment costs that are part of ongoing maintenance expenditures.

The Hometown Main Streets Enhancements support projects from non-profit organizations, small businesses and co-operatives. Hometown Main Streets Enhancements will support projects that focus on upgrading the appearance of building exteriors, structures and exterior spaces in 'main street' areas. Eligible costs include incremental enhancements to building exteriors and areas accessible by the public and would include painting, installation of siding to replace a wood surface, and signage. Ineligible costs in this category would be costs such as roofing, and window and door renovation.



Application Procedure

Hometown Meeting Places will contribute up to one-third of the total eligible project costs to a maximum amount of \$5,000. The local/municipal government must contribute a minimum of one-third of eligible project costs.

Hometown Main Streets Enhancements will contribute up to 50% of total eligible project costs to a maximum of \$1,000.

In addition, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives may approve all, or a portion of the project(s) included in a community's application or a lesser amount per project. Consideration will be given to the availability of financial support being provided or considered from other public sector departments, agencies and crown corporations in the determination of support from the Hometown Manitoba Program.

For more information on the Hometown Manitoba Program, contact: Toll Free 1-800-567-7334

D. Transportation Infrastructure

1. Prairie Grain Roads Program

Rail line abandonment and grain elevator closures have shifted the transportation of agricultural products to municipal and provincial roads. However, many of these roads were not constructed to handle this type of traffic and are subsequently

Tips for developing a Funding Proposal (The following was taken from the Province of Manitoba's website)

Many provincial and federal programs require a funding proposal or application in order to be considered. While there are many factors to keep in mind when developing a proposal, municipal governments should keep the following points in mind:

1. Before applying for funding, be clear about the purpose of your organization and the objectives of the project or projects for which funding is required. Be sure to set priorities within your organization and know what projects are needed. It is important also to gain community support from key individuals, groups and institutions.

2. Funding organizations usually have funding policies, deadlines and specific forms to complete. Proposals may be rejected simply because they are late, not on the appropriate forms and do not comply with the stated guidelines. To ensure your proposal gets full consideration: make sure the projects fit the guidelines and intent of the program; specify categories of costs to reflect the areas that funding can cover- in some cases, only actual costs are allowed so be sure to keep accurate records of expenditures and receipts; submit the required number of application copies; submit the application on

time; consider payment procedures, schedules and partial payment schedules; and note the decision date so you can follow up, if necessary.

3. Funders make their decisions based on a variety of criteria. The public sector will generally support projects that are worthwhile; projects that fall within the policy laid out by the department; projects that are local, provincial, national or international, and not only for that group; the proposal contains a detailed application and budget; previous events were successful; and the group and its activities are open to the public. Generally, the public sector will not support groups or projects that do not fit its organization's policies; the group is not stable or is poorly managed; the group is not incorporated; the application is late or incomplete; or the funding organization may be out of funds.

The Province of Manitoba has a good deal of information related to developing a funding proposal, including tips on developing a written proposal. Please visit the Government of Manitoba website at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/grants/> (click on "Grants and Resources Directory," then "Resources," then "Funding Tips.")



the work to be carried out, and a detailed estimate of the cost of the work

Prioritizing and assessing a crossing for funding takes into account such factors as high exposure, high train or road traffic speeds, multiple track crossings, severely restricted sightlines, nearby intersections that distract the motorist or impede the view of approaching trains, and a history of accidents.

Manitoba success stories

• In June 2003, the Honourable Dr. Rey Pagtakhan, regional Minister for Manitoba (on behalf of Transport Minister David Collenette), announced that the Government of Canada would provide \$915,520 to improve safety at seven railway crossings in Manitoba. Three of these projects were in Alexander, two in Winnipeg, one in Bloom Siding, and one in St. Lazare. Since 1994, Transport Canada has contributed more than \$8.1 million to crossing improvement projects in Manitoba.



Application Procedure

For further information or to submit an application, please contact Transport Canada at: Phone: (204) 983-4214, or visit www.tc.gc.ca.

E. Water Infrastructure

1. National Water Supply Expansion Program

The National Water Supply Expansion Program (NWSEP) is a four-year, \$60 million federal initiative to help improve the agricultural community's capacity to address water supply concerns. Introduced in 2002, the program's first year of operation provided \$10 million to develop high-priority water supply projects in drought-affected areas.

On February 25, 2004, the Governments of Canada and Manitoba announced \$18.9 million in funding for the Canada-Manitoba Water Supply Expansion Program (CMWSEP), \$10.3 from the Federal Government and \$8.6 from the Province. As part of the national program, the CMWSEP creates access

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