

Meeting of the  
**Association of  
Manitoba  
Municipalities**



with

The Honourable Jim Rondeau

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Minister responsible for Healthy Living and  
Seniors

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February 18, 2004

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## A) Executive Summary

### 1. Overview of New Department

- In its speech to the throne on November 20, 2003, the Provincial Government announced the creation of a new Provincial Department of Healthy Living, which will work within the Department of Health on prevention and wellness initiatives.
- The AMM believes the new Department of Healthy Living is a good initiative and hopes that it will relieve some of the strain on an overburdened health system. However, the scope and mandate of this new Department remains unclear to the AMM and we would be interested to learn more about Healthy Living.
- As health is more and more important to municipalities, the AMM would appreciate an overview of the healthy living department and a description of the various health programs that fall under this new initiative so that the AMM may direct its members' questions and concerns about health issues to the appropriate Minister.

**The AMM would appreciate an overview of the new Healthy Living Department so that AMM members will be aware of the various programs being covered under this new initiative.**

### 2. Funding for Seniors Independent Living

- Many Manitoba communities, in an effort to assist seniors to remain living independently as long as possible, have established community resource councils. The councils act as a point of access for information and referral, as well as identify and develop new services needed for seniors at the local level. The provision of these services costs substantially less than if seniors were to reside in personal care homes.
- Despite the importance of community resource councils, the Province, through the Regional Health Authorities (RHAs), funds only the wages, training and travel costs of permanent resource council staff and must rely heavily on volunteers.
- Although many community resource councils would like to hire permanent staff to carry out many of the functions of these volunteers, the councils are unable to afford it. These councils provide exceptional services to local seniors and the AMM believes they need to be recognized for these efforts.
- An increased commitment by the Provincial Government to funding community resource councils and other programs for seniors independent living will demonstrate to seniors and their families that issues of aging are being addressed.

**Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to increase funding to Manitoba community resource councils and other seniors independent**

**living programs across the province to strengthen the support system available to seniors that choose to live independently.**

### 3. Life-lease Condominiums

- Many Manitoba municipalities have concerns with the number and type of rental properties that are exempt from paying education property taxes under the *Elderly and Infirm Persons Housing Act (EIPH Act)*.
- The AMM recognizes that seniors living in modest financial circumstances require some consideration with respect to taxation; however, a number of our member municipalities have expressed concern that this exemption has extended beyond modest living accommodations.
- This is despite the fact that the original intent of the *EIPH Act* is to provide tax relief to seniors living in modest circumstances, or in personal care homes. The AMM believes this practice to be unfair, considering there are elderly individuals living independently either in apartments, condominiums, or their own homes that do not receive the benefit of a tax exemption.
- As education is a public good, the AMM believes that— as long as property taxes fund education- all property owners in a municipality should pay their fair share of taxes, as school divisions must continue to provide exceptional educational services.

**Therefore, the AMM would urge the Province to proceed with the necessary legislative changes to the *Elderly and Infirm Persons Housing Act* to ensure the tax exemption is not extended beyond its original intent.**

### 4. Seniors Housing

- On April 12, 2003, the AMM co-sponsored a one-day conference with Manitoba Family Services and Housing and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation entitled *Housing Now! Meeting Manitoba's Needs*.
- Throughout the conference, AMM members raised several recurrent concerns in relation to seniors housing, including: the need for flexibility of design to accommodate changing abilities as seniors age; the difficulty with finding clear, complete information on available seniors housing programs; the need to make better provisions for health care; and the need to manage housing to suit local needs.
- However, the most frequently cited concern in relation to seniors housing was the difficulty of securing adequate funds to meet the costs of operating and maintaining housing for seniors.

**Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to increase funding for seniors housing programs across the province, and also to achieve a**

**greater degree of co-ordination between seniors housing and health care services needed to support these residents.**

## 5. West Nile Virus

- The focus of the new Department of Healthy Living will be on prevention and wellness initiatives, and as the West Nile virus (WNV) program focuses largely on preventative measures, the AMM believes this is a relevant issue to raise with the Minister of Healthy Living.
- WNV poses a real threat to Manitobans, and for this reason municipalities want to take measures to protect their citizens. This past summer, Manitoba had 141 confirmed human cases of WNV, and as the threat of WNV increases over time, it is likely that WNV will remain a primary concern of municipalities in the years to come.
- The primary concern of Manitoba municipalities in relation to WNV is the matter of financial compensation to municipalities to offset the costs associated with taking measures to deal with health-related emergencies.
- The AMM believes that the Province's WNV cost-sharing policy disadvantages municipalities that are voluntarily assisting Manitoba Health to address this important public health concern. AMM members believe that because the control of WNV is a Provincial public health issue, the associated costs should be borne by the Province.
- The AMM also believes that it is important to take into account municipal concerns with the 2003 WNV program, in order to improve the WNV strategy for 2004. The AMM would encourage the Province to consider the concerns solicited during WNV regional meetings and the 2003 evaluation session, as well as individual municipal concerns regarding the WNV program.

**The AMM urges the Province to absorb all health-related costs associated with the control and surveillance of West Nile virus, and also encourages the Province to take into account municipal suggestions in planning the 2004 West Nile virus program.**

## 6. Education Funding

- No issue is heard more often from our members than the concern of high property taxes as a result of the amount of property taxes dedicated to funding education.
- The AMM is pleased to be a part of the Minister's Working Group on Education Finance and would encourage the Province to move forward with the final report.
- As the recommendations of the report will not be released in time for the 2004 school budget process, the AMM would urge the Province to hold constant the current municipal and provincial contributions to education so that ratepayers are not further burdened with an increase in property taxes.

- The AMM believes that a new formula should be developed that would decrease property tax support for education while not diminishing education quality. The AMM firmly believes that the Province needs to adopt a stable and sustainable education funding ratio of 80 per cent from Provincial general revenues and twenty per cent from property tax revenue levied by local school boards. Furthermore, it is important that once an 80:20 ratio is achieved, it be maintained in future years.

**The AMM urges the Province to move forward with the final report of the Minister's Working Group on Education Finance, and looks forward to discussing the recommendations with the Province, once released. The AMM further urges the Province to adopt a stable and sustainable funding ratio of 80 per cent from Provincial general revenues and twenty per cent levied by local school boards.**

## 7. A New Deal for Municipalities

- All Manitoba municipalities have concerns about the ability of the current taxation system to meet municipal financial requirements. The root of the problem is the gap between the services that municipalities must provide and the resources at their disposal.
- In Manitoba, the infrastructure debt is approximately \$7.4 billion as municipal revenues have failed to keep pace with increasing demands for investment. Although Federal and Provincial revenues have grown significantly over the past four years, Municipal revenues have grown by only four per cent.
- Municipal governments in Canada currently earn 54% of their income from property taxation, a revenue stream that does not increase in times of economic growth. Without a change to this system, infrastructure upgrades will continue to be postponed and the infrastructure debt will only grow larger.
- The AMM hopes that the Province is willing to work with all Manitoba municipalities to access new sources of revenue- including growth revenues, and hopes the Province will respond to the needs of local governments.

**The AMM looks forward to working with the Province to make a new revenue deal for municipalities a reality for local governments across Manitoba.**

## B) Departmental Issues

### 1. Overview of New Department

In its speech to the throne on November 20, 2003, the Provincial Government committed to focusing more effectively on public priorities and modernizing government for the future. This included the creation of a new Provincial Department of Healthy Living, which will work within the Department of Health on prevention and wellness initiatives. The AMM believes the new Department of Healthy Living is a good initiative and hopes that it will relieve some of the strain on an overburdened health system. However, the scope and mandate of this new Department remains unclear to the AMM and we would be interested to learn more about Healthy Living. As health is more and more important to municipalities, the AMM would appreciate an overview of the Healthy Living Department and a description of the various health programs that fall under this new initiative so that the AMM may direct its members' questions and concerns about health issues to the appropriate Minister.

**The AMM would appreciate an overview of the new Healthy Living Department so that AMM members will be aware of the various programs being covered under this new initiative.**

## 2. Funding for Seniors Independent Living

For many aging Manitobans, the choice to live independently is an important one and local programs must be in place to assist seniors with this decision and to allow them to make the choice to live independently. Many Manitoba communities, in an effort to assist seniors to remain living independently as long as possible, have established community resource councils. The councils act as a point of access for information and referral, as well as identify and develop new services needed for seniors at the local level. These services include such things as congregate meals, friendly visitors, yard and home maintenance, escorted transportation, safety checks, emergency response information kits and advocacy. The community resource councils provide many valuable services to seniors living in the community and the provision of these services costs substantially less than if seniors were to reside in personal care homes.

Despite the importance of community resource councils, the Province, through the Regional Health Authorities (RHAs), funds only the wages, training and travel costs of permanent resource council staff. However, expenses related to office operating costs are not funded by the RHAs, and community resource councils must rely on community donations to recoup these expenses. Furthermore, community resource councils rely heavily on volunteers for many of the services provided by the councils, including transportation programs and congregate meal provision. Although many councils would like to hire permanent staff to carry out many of the functions of these volunteers, the councils are unable to afford it. These councils provide exceptional services to local seniors and the AMM believes they need to be recognized for these efforts.

The Provincial Government has displayed its commitment to addressing the needs of older Manitobans by implementing a new seniors strategy called *Advancing Age*. As the Seniors Directorate acts as a central point of contact for seniors, their family members and organizations within Manitoba, this directorate will lead the Provincial Government in creating an environment that promotes the health, independence, and well-being of all Manitoba seniors. In fact, one of the five key principles of *Advancing Age* is independence

and includes commitments to enhance the quality of life of seniors, to provide adequate and affordable housing, to offer affordable and accessible transportation, to encourage healthy lifestyles and to enhance community-based services and health programs. The AMM believes that increased funding to community resource councils will help to strengthen the principles of *Advancing Age* and will help the Province meet its commitment to promoting independence as seniors age. Because these councils act as points of information in the communities that they serve, they are well positioned to respond to the needs of local seniors and can help to promote a collaborative environment to address issues, explore options and stimulate initiatives within the seniors' community. An increased commitment by the Provincial Government to funding community resource councils and other programs for seniors independent living will demonstrate to seniors and their families that issues of aging are being addressed.

**Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to increase funding to Manitoba community resource councils and other seniors independent living programs across the province to strengthen the support system available to seniors that choose to live independently.**

#### AMM RESOLUTION NUMBER 38 -- 2003

**Topic:** Funding for Seniors Independent Living Program

**Sponsor(s):** Virden, Town (Western)

**Department(s):** Manitoba Health

WHEREAS there is insufficient funding provided to the Regional Health Authorities by the Provincial Government for Seniors Independent Living Programs;

AND WHEREAS this is a service provided to seniors to allow them to remain living in their own homes;

AND WHEREAS this service costs the Department of Health substantially less than seniors residing in personal care homes;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby

the Provincial Government for additional funding for the Seniors Independent Living Programs across the Province.

### 3. Life-lease Condominiums

Many Manitoba municipalities have concerns with the number and type of rental properties that are exempt from paying education property taxes under the *Elderly and Infirm Persons Housing Act (EIPH Act)*. The AMM recognizes that seniors living in modest financial circumstances require some consideration with respect to taxation; however, a number of our member municipalities have expressed concern that this exemption has extended beyond modest living accommodations. In fact, life-lease condominiums, although they do not provide for assisted living and are for-profit corporations, have been able to obtain a licence under the *EIPH Act* that allows seniors the benefit of a tax exemption. This is despite the fact that the original intent of the *EIPH Act* is to provide tax relief to seniors living in modest circumstances, or in personal care homes. The AMM believes this practice to be unfair, considering there are elderly individuals living independently either in apartments, condominiums, or their own homes that do not receive the benefit of a tax exemption. Municipalities rely primarily on property taxation to fund municipal services, yet the provision of these tax exemptions reduces the municipal tax base, forcing Municipal Governments to reduce spending and postpone infrastructure upgrades to recoup these losses. Furthermore, as education is a public good, the AMM believes that— as long as property taxes fund education- all property owners in a municipality should pay their fair share of taxes, as school divisions must continue to provide exceptional educational services.

The AMM is pleased that a review of the *EIPH Act* in 1997 restricted the licensing criteria under the *Act* to modest life-lease projects that did not exceed unit size criteria. However, if life-lease condominium projects obtained a licence before 1997, seniors living within these units continue to receive the tax exemption. The AMM is also concerned that the current legislation does not prevent a tax exemption for residents that have combined two apartment units into one unit, therefore exceeding the *EIPH* unit size criteria. Therefore additional amendments to the *EIPH Act* are required to remove the “grandparenting” clause which allows current residents to receive the tax exemption. The AMM believes this inequity in the provision of an exemption from the payment of education property taxes should be resolved in a fair and equitable manner.

**Therefore, the AMM would urge the Province to proceed with the necessary legislative changes to the *Elderly and Infirm Persons Housing Act* to ensure the tax exemption is not extended beyond its original intent.**

## AMM RESOLUTION 59 — 2001

**Sponsor:** City of Selkirk

**Topic:** Life Lease Condominium Tax Exemption

**Department:** Manitoba Family Services and Housing  
Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs

WHEREAS the Elderly and Infirm Persons' Housing Act [L.R.M. 1987, c. E20] Clause 27(1) requires every person, municipality, corporation or organization operating an elderly persons' housing unit, hostel, or personal care home to hold a valid and subsisting licence;

AND WHEREAS the Municipal Assessment Act [S.M. 1989-90, c. 24 – Cap. M226] Clause 23(1)(b) provides for the provision of a tax exemption for elderly persons housing units or hostels as defined in The Elderly and Infirm Persons' Housing Act;

AND WHEREAS Life Lease Condominium units, although they do not provide for assisted living, have been able to obtain a licence under the Elderly and Infirm Persons' Housing Act;

AND WHEREAS there are elderly individuals living independently either in apartments, condominiums or their own homes that do not receive the benefit of a tax exemption;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the AMM lobby the Province in order to ensure this inequity in the provision of an exemption from the payment of municipal property taxes is resolved in an equitable and fair manner.

## 4. Seniors Housing

As the Minister responsible for seniors, the AMM would like to take this opportunity to raise its members' concerns in the area of seniors housing. On April 12, 2003, the AMM co-sponsored a one-day conference with Manitoba Family Services and Housing and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation entitled *Housing Now! Meeting Manitoba's Needs*. The purpose of the conference was to provide an opportunity for AMM members to identify housing challenges, issues and/or needs that exist in their communities, and to suggest potential solutions involving the Federal, Provincial and Municipal Governments.

Throughout the conference, AMM members raised several recurrent concerns in relation to seniors housing, including: the need for flexibility of design to accommodate changing abilities as seniors age; the difficulty with finding adequate funding to cover maintenance and renovation costs; the difficulty with finding clear, complete information on available seniors housing programs; the need to make better provisions for health care; and the need to manage housing to suit local needs. Housing for seniors in particular requires unique attention to design in order to facilitate home renovation suited to the needs of seniors and also to accommodate changing abilities over time. Many participants observed the need for co-ordination between available housing for seniors and health care services needed to support these residents. However, the most frequently cited concern in relation to seniors housing was the difficulty of securing adequate funds to meet the costs of operating and maintaining housing for seniors.

The AMM believes that the Provincial Government has displayed a commitment to addressing the unique needs of seniors. In order to follow through with this commitment, the AMM believes that municipal concerns in the area of seniors housing need to be addressed and would encourage the Province to devote greater funds to seniors housing programs, as well as explore options for the co-ordination of seniors housing and health care services needed to support these residents.

**Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to increase funding for seniors housing programs across the province, and also to achieve a greater degree of co-ordination between seniors housing and health care services needed to support these residents.**

## 5. West Nile Virus

Another issue that the AMM would like to raise is West Nile virus (WNV). Although WNV may not appear an issue for Healthy Living at first glance, the AMM believes that WNV is relevant for two reasons: first, the overall goal of the WNV program is to assess risk and take appropriate measures to limit the adverse impact to human health of WNV in Manitoba. As Healthy Living will be focusing on prevention and wellness initiatives, preventing the spread of WNV appears very relevant for this new Department. Second, municipalities are encouraging healthier lifestyles within their communities by spending more municipal dollars on public greenspaces. As initiatives that encourage healthier lifestyles are important for Healthy Living, many AMM members are concerned that the threat of WNV may discourage residents from going outdoors, thereby discouraging healthier lifestyles. Therefore the AMM believes that WNV is a relevant issue for the Minister of Healthy Living, and would like to raise some concerns of its members in relation to WNV.

WNV poses a real threat to Manitobans, and for this reason municipalities want to take measures to protect their citizens. This past summer, Manitoba had 141 confirmed human cases of WNV, and as the threat of WNV increases over time, it is likely that WNV will remain a primary concern of municipalities in the years to come. Manitoba municipalities are in a good position to assist the Province with the WNV program, and, in fact, contributed many resources in 2003 to help control the spread of this serious virus. However, many municipalities have expressed concern with some aspects of the WNV program and the AMM would like to take this opportunity to raise some common municipal concerns so that Manitoba's WNV program may be strengthened in years to come.

The primary concern of Manitoba municipalities in relation to WNV is the matter of financial compensation to municipalities to offset the costs associated with taking measures to deal with health-related emergencies. For example, AMM resolution 46-2002 calls on the Province to ensure sufficient resources to accommodate province-wide mosquito population surveillance, as well as training, equipment, and expertise to municipalities to establish and maintain mosquito control programs throughout Manitoba. Although the control of WNV is

crucial to maintain public health, the Province requires municipalities to bear twenty-five per cent of the cost of insect control measures. The AMM believes that this policy disadvantages municipalities that are voluntarily assisting Manitoba Health to address this important public health concern. AMM members believe that because the control of WNV is a Provincial public health issue, the associated costs should be borne by the Province.

The AMM also believes that it is important to take into account municipal concerns with the 2003 WNV program, in order to improve the WNV strategy for 2004. Throughout November 2003, Manitoba Health invited municipalities to attend WNV information and feedback sessions in order to solicit feedback from municipalities on the 2003 WNV program. Key suggestions for planning for the 2004 season identified by participants focused on the following: enhanced communication with municipalities, including enhanced participation of municipalities in planning the program; enhanced sharing of data between the Province and municipalities, including, for example, sharing of cost information related to mosquito control in 2003 to prepare for 2004; increased training, resource capacity, funding and quality control support to build capacity for larva sampling and larviciding; better communication to the public about the various aspects of the WNV program, and the need for a more integrated regional response to WNV mosquito control. One of the specific concerns of the Town of Virden, for example, was the disappointment with the handling of the announcement that Virden and Deloraine had been issued public health orders to fog for mosquitoes capable of transmitting WNV. The concern was that the media had received the information regarding the order prior to the municipalities receiving the information. This resulted in several phone calls from concerned parties to Virden's administrative staff and Council that could not be properly addressed. Therefore, the AMM believes it is important for the Province to consider carefully the suggestions of Municipal Governments as they are key players in the Province's WNV strategy, and it will help to improve the 2004 WNV program.

**The AMM urges the Province to absorb all health-related costs associated with the control and surveillance of West Nile virus, and also encourages**

**the Province to take into account municipal suggestions in planning the 2004 West Nile virus program.**

**AMM RESOLUTION 46 — 2002**

**Topic:** West Nile Mosquito Surveillance

**Sponsor:** Town of Russell

**Department:** Manitoba Health

WHEREAS the Province has had confirmed positive tests of West Nile virus in both birds and horses;

AND WHEREAS spraying or larvaciding for the entire Province is cost prohibitive;

AND WHEREAS proper surveillance of mosquito populations must be completed throughout the Province in order to identify potential high-risk areas which would require control measures such as fogging or larvaciding;

AND WHEREAS municipalities can provide resources by means of personnel to help with the surveillance of mosquito populations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the AMM lobby the Province to:

1. Ensure sufficient resources are provided for 2003 to accommodate mosquito population surveillance;
2. Implement Province-wide surveillance at the beginning of the 2003 mosquito season; and
3. Provide training, equipment and expertise to municipalities to help establish surveillance programs throughout the Province.

## c) General Issues

### 6. Education Funding

An ongoing and important issue for Manitoba municipalities is education finance. The AMM is pleased to be included as a part of the Minister's Working Group on Education Finance and is pleased that the Province is including a municipal voice in its review. The final report of the working group was expected originally in October 2003 but has been delayed and the AMM would encourage the Province to move forward with this report. As the recommendations will not be available in time for the 2004 school budget process, the AMM would urge the Province to hold constant the current municipal and provincial contributions to education so that ratepayers are not further burdened by an increase in property taxes. After the final report is released, our association looks forward to reviewing the recommendations of the working group and to collaborating with the Province to develop a new and sustainable system of education finance in Manitoba.

It is crucial that the Province take action, as no issue is heard more often from our members than the concern of high property taxes, as a result of the amount of property taxes dedicated to funding education. The NDP election promise to phase out the Education Support Levy (ESL) over the next five years is welcomed, as this will partly assist in reducing the tax burden. The AMM acknowledges the efforts the Province has made so far, and we are pleased to see that a \$27 million reduction in the ESL has been achieved since 1999. However, the AMM believes that a new formula should be developed that would decrease property tax support for education while not diminishing the quality of education. Local schools are required to provide up-to-date learning tools, including current teaching materials and computer hardware and software, and the AMM does not believe that reducing property tax support for education should compromise the quality of education that Manitoba youth receive.

The AMM firmly believes that the Province needs to adopt a stable and sustainable education funding ratio of at least 80 per cent from Provincial general revenues and a maximum of 20 per cent from property tax revenue levied by local school boards, a formula recommended by

our own Task Force that examined this issue in great depth. In addition, it is important that once the 80:20 ratio is achieved, it be maintained in future years. It is clear that the current system is not sustainable, and the AMM urges that the reform of education funding be substantive and fair. The AMM again expresses its appreciation for being a part of the Minister's Working Group on Education Finance and looks forward to the release of the final report in the near future.

## 7. A New Deal for Municipalities

A relatively new and emerging issue for municipal governments in Manitoba concerns a new revenue deal for municipalities. Although the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has been calling for a new system of municipal finance for some time, the City of Winnipeg has initiated substantial discussion on this issue in Manitoba. The AMM believes this discussion has important ramifications for all municipal governments as all Manitoba communities have concerns about the ability of the current system of taxation to meet municipal financial obligations. Manitoba's prosperity and quality of life is determined largely by the health of its municipalities. Vibrant, sustainable communities are crucial to attracting the skilled, creative people who are key to this province's success. However many municipalities across Manitoba are struggling; their resources have not kept pace with their growing responsibilities for physical and social infrastructure.

The root of the problem is the gap between the services that municipalities must provide and the resources at their disposal. Municipal revenues have failed to keep up with the increasing demand for infrastructure investment. Across Canada as a whole, over the past four years, federal government revenues have increased sixteen per cent, provincial/territorial revenues increased twenty-one percent and municipal revenues only four per cent. Canada's core municipal infrastructure debt has been estimated at about \$57 billion and growing at a rate of \$2 billion annually. In Manitoba, the infrastructure investment debt hovers in the range of \$7.4 billion: \$3.4 billion for Manitoba's highway system; \$2 billion for rural municipal infrastructure; \$1 billion for rural land drainage; and \$1 billion for Winnipeg's infrastructure deficit.

Infrastructure debt passes on the costs of today's use and consumption of infrastructure to future generations, limiting their ability to meet impending infrastructure needs. Furthermore, failure to address the infrastructure debt breaches the principles of sustainable development. Infrastructure should be regarded as an investment and not solely as a payment or cost. However, it does require sustained investment, effort and organization to be maintained properly.

It is clear that the current situation is unsustainable and municipalities must gain access to new revenue sources. Municipal governments in Canada currently earn 54% of their revenue through property taxation, a revenue stream that does not increase in times of economic growth. In Manitoba, increasing school division levies have resulted in municipal governments maintaining current levels of property taxation to respond to ratepayer demands. This leaves municipalities with less revenue to maintain property services; without a change to this system of taxation, infrastructure upgrades will continue to be postponed and the infrastructure debt will only grow larger. Manitobans know that their municipal governments are accountable and responsive. They want the order of government closest to them to have access to new sources of revenue and they want the tax burden on municipalities lowered. Municipal governments are in an ideal position to deliver many services, however, increasing municipal responsibilities have resulted in more demand for services with less revenue to meet these demands.

This is an important debate for all municipal governments in Manitoba, and one that should involve the input of all stakeholders. In fact, partnership must be at the heart of a new revenue deal for municipalities and Manitoba municipalities believe that the three orders of government must work together to deliver municipal priorities. The Federal Government has committed to raising the municipal GST rebate to 100 per cent and has also committed greater funds to existing infrastructure programs, and the AMM is very pleased that the Federal Government responded quickly and in the spirit of partnership to address municipal concerns. Furthermore, there are suggestions that municipalities may receive a portion of the federal fuel excise tax, an exciting prospect for municipal governments in Canada and one supported by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. There is much that the Province of Manitoba can do as well, and the decision to pass all fuel tax collected from municipalities back to local governments is a good starting point. However, there is much more that needs to be done to address the growing revenue needs of municipal governments in Manitoba. The AMM hopes that the Province is willing to work with municipal governments to access new sources of revenue- including growth revenues, and hopes the Province will remain

responsive to the needs of local governments. The AMM looks forward to consulting with the Province to make this new deal a reality for all municipalities in Manitoba.