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# News Release

## A little bit here, but not enough there

### *AMM COMMENTS ON 2008 PROVINCIAL BUDGET*

**April 10, 2008** – Ron Bell, the President of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM), describes yesterday’s provincial budget as “a little bit here, but not enough there.”

The AMM is pleased to see funding for libraries and more money for community recreation needs and wastewater infrastructure. It also welcomed new initiatives for doctor recruitment and specialized training for nurse practitioners. Overall, however, the AMM’s two big “asks” – infrastructure funding and water protection dollars – were lacking.

“Our biggest disappointment would have to be the water funding, or lack thereof,” explains Bell. “Over the past year the Department of Water Stewardship has announced numerous initiatives without any attached funding for implementation. We were hoping to see some of that funding in this budget. Instead we saw a three per cent increase overall, which is just a drop in the bucket.” Bell stresses this is a real concern for municipalities, adding “if the province isn’t paying, who is”?

Bell welcomed the increase of six per cent to the Building Manitoba Fund, but noted the massive infrastructure deficit in the province requires much more dedicated funding. As well, “doctor recruitment is a huge issue for smaller communities so anything towards that is money well spent. We were happy to see funding for new pilot programs, as new, creative thinking is required to solve the healthcare problem”.

Overall, Bell says this year’s budget offers funding in some areas, but misses the mark in others.

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