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# News Release

## **Budget must address escalating infrastructure deficit: AMM President**

**March 23, 2009** - The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) wants the Province to take action in Wednesday's budget to deal with some of the most pressing needs in Manitoba municipalities. Topping the list is the need for a sustainable source of funding to address Manitoba's rising infrastructure deficit.

AMM President Doug Dobrowolski says although a new funding source is not the only financial need on the AMM's wish list this year it is by far the most critical. "We have two dozen priority issues that Minister Selinger is aware of," Dobrowolski notes "but the need for alternate revenue is the big one for us."

During the AMM's annual convention back in November 2008 delegates carried a resolution asking for the Province of Manitoba to allocate the equivalent of a one per cent provincial sales tax to municipalities for municipal infrastructure. According to Dobrowolski, a long-term, sustainable, dedicated funding source such as this is long overdue. "Municipalities are being forced to do more with less every day, and having to rely on property taxes and provincial grants is just not working anymore," he explains.

Pointing to recent funding programs announced in Saskatchewan that are making major investments in municipal infrastructure programs (including the recent budget commitment to give Saskatchewan municipalities one per cent of the sales tax), Dobrowolski says Manitoba is in serious danger of falling too far behind to catch up. "The time is now for the Province to make a serious investment in municipalities so that we can provide the municipal infrastructure our citizens need and deserve," stresses Dobrowolski. "This budget simply must address this issue – or we will soon find that this deficit is insurmountable."

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The AMM's complete budget submission is available at:

<http://www.amm.mb.ca/PDF/MinisterMeetings/2008/Fin-Selinger-Oct%202008.pdf>