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Association of
Manitoba
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News Release

A promising session for municipalities

November 16, 2006 – The Manitoba Government announced “the largest investment in infrastructure ever made in Manitoba” during yesterday’s Throne Speech, and it is an investment welcomed by the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM). AMM President Ron Bell was pleased to see infrastructure factor so prominently in the speech. “Infrastructure is a top issue for municipalities, and every time the Province increases their investment it’s certainly a good step,” he said. Bell reminded that “even though roads are a priority, there are lots of infrastructure categories in need of assistance and hopefully this investment will help them all.”

The AMM was also pleased to see several key programs receive attention. These include the expansion of the *Neighbourhoods Alive!* Program, added funding for municipal libraries, support for handi-transit, and a continued investment in new recreation options. “These are the types of programs that build our communities,” said Bell.

One disappointment for the AMM was the lack of details around the Water Protection Act, particularly in terms of who pays for any new requirements. “Municipalities are excellent environmental stewards, and we want to protect our communities,” explained Bell, “but at what cost? Municipal budgets are stretched too thin already. In the same way we’re seeking a long-term investment in infrastructure, we’d like to see a long-term plan for water protection – one that includes how it will be funded.”

Other positives in the speech included greater police presence in Manitoba communities, more wind power initiatives, and a commitment to review the RHA system. “Overall, we were quite pleased with the Speech from the Throne,” said Bell. “This looks like a promising session for municipalities.”