



ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA MUNICIPALITIES

MEETING WITH

Honourable Steve Ashton
Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation

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Executive Summary

Departmental Issues

1. Municipal Infrastructure Priorities

- Insufficient investment in Manitoba's deteriorating infrastructure has created a major burden for municipalities in the form of a severe municipal infrastructure deficit estimated in excess of \$11 billion for Manitoba.
- When Provincial highways are severely degraded or not available due to detours or road restrictions, municipal roads incur substantial damage by being subjected to increased use.
- Urban highways are also critical to the transportation network and maintaining these key thoroughfares must be given greater priority.
- An enhanced grant-in-aid program is one mechanism the Province should consider in order to increase investment in municipal roads across Manitoba.
- As well, the renewal of the Prairie Grain Roads Program would be greatly appreciated by Manitoba municipalities.
- Bridge infrastructure also requires targeted funding through a cost-shared program, such as a reinstated Municipal Bridge Co-operative Program.
- An increased Provincial commitment to the capital and operating expenses of small rural and northern airports would be a significant investment in the affected communities.
- Cultural and recreational facilities are also competing for limited municipal funds, and often face ongoing neglect in favour of other pressing infrastructure needs such as roads or water and wastewater systems. The limitation to fund a maximum of \$50,000 on a project means that the Community Places Program contributes a diminishing proportion of the total project costs and should be increased.
- Municipalities are required to adhere to new legislation governing water and wastewater facilities, and although they support the aim of protecting the environment, there is a significant cost associated with the additional requirements.
- The high fees charged by Manitoba Hydro should be reduced in recognition of the limited budgets of publicly-owned and -operated facilities, such as recreation centres.
- The Province should also assist in reducing operating costs for these facilities by allowing flexibility to pursue comparable, low-cost alternatives rather than adding onerous requirements such as LEED Silver certification.
- The Provincial Government is an important stakeholder in this process and must be prepared to adequately support municipalities as they take on the arduous task of upgrading and maintaining infrastructure assets.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to address Manitoba's infrastructure deficit by working with the Federal Government to provide long-term, sustainable, predictable funding for all categories of public infrastructure.

2. Rail Line Abandonment

- Railways are currently an integral part of Manitoba's transportation network and the advantages of maintaining this infrastructure outweigh the detrimental effects of abandonment.
- The Federal and Provincial Governments have expressed support for developing an inland port in Manitoba, and this is due to the availability of several modes of transportation including rail infrastructure.
- It is inefficient to abandon functioning infrastructure and thereby create demand for alternative transportation infrastructure that is already deteriorating due to lack of investment.
- The AMM supports the recommendation of the Manitoba Ombudsman which states that the review of *The Provincial Railways Act* should "contemplate whether the federally-regulated railway companies' obligations to pay compensation can be preserved upon the discontinuance of a grain-dependent branch line, even where the line is discontinued by a provincially-regulated successor company."
- Where rail line abandonment is already in process, the Provincial Government must be prepared to address environmental concerns such as contamination and drainage concerns arising from the removal of rail beds.
- In recognition of the importance of railways in Manitoba, the Provincial Government must ensure that the review of *The Provincial Railways Act* reflects the current realities facing rail transportation in this province and must begin this process immediately.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to recognize the valuable services provided by Manitoba's rail lines, address the economic and environmental impacts of rail line abandonment and ensure that these concerns are reflected in an immediate review of *The Provincial Railways Act*.

3. Funding for the Port of Churchill and Northern Rail Lines

- The Port of Churchill represents a clear competitive advantage for Manitoba as it is Canada's only Arctic seaport and is a cornerstone of CentrePort Canada, so it is critical that the Province provide adequate support to the Port of Churchill to develop this critical infrastructure.
- For many northern communities rail lines are their only link to the outside world, and the rail line not only moves people in and out of the community but is relied upon for the necessities of life.
- The AMM is increasingly hearing concerns about the quality of the rail system in Northern Manitoba.
- The AMM would like to see the Province make greater investments in this critical infrastructure to not only ensure the sustainability of those in the North but also to capitalize on the opportunities that exist in Northern Manitoba.

Therefore the AMM would like the Province to make a greater investment in Northern rail lines to maximize the potential of the Port of Churchill and provide northern Manitoba with the reliable infrastructure necessary to remain sustainable.

4. Greyhound Service

- For many Manitobans transportation by bus is their only means of connecting to larger centres, for everything from shopping to medical care.
- Bus service is also used to move goods across the province connecting smaller centres with the rest of the world.
- Municipalities across the province were alarmed with the unilateral decision of Greyhound to discontinue service in Manitoba as it has become a key cog in Manitoba's transportation network.
- The AMM appreciated the quick action by the Province to ensure service continued, however the long-term future of bus service in Manitoba remains unclear.

Therefore the AMM requests the Province to work cooperatively to ensure bus service remains in all areas of the province.

5. Drainage Issues

- The need for adequate drain construction and maintenance is a major concern for municipalities, however the Province has not committed sufficient resources to fulfill this need and establish coordinated drainage systems for Manitoba.
- For instance, there was no significant increase in drainage funding in the 2009 Budget, even though the Province had indicated that water protection and management are important provincial priorities.
- Municipalities share the Province's interest in a coordinated water management system, however water systems extend well beyond municipal boundaries and municipal drainage works must occur within a broader province-wide plan.
- Municipalities have also raised concerns regarding the drainage licensing process and the AMM appreciates the Province commitment to taking action on the Ombudsman's recommendations in order to improve the overall operation of drainage works in Manitoba.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to develop a province-wide drainage management plan and allocate sufficient resources to drainage construction and maintenance throughout Manitoba.

6. Water System Assessment Funding

- There is widespread support among municipalities for creating and maintaining systems that allow citizens to access the highest quality of drinking water.

- For instance, recognizing that water and wastewater are critical services, municipal governments have taken on the responsibility of employing certified operators as required by the Provincial Government.
- Similarly, in order to meet the requirements of *The Drinking Water Safety Act*, municipalities must now conduct engineering assessments on water system infrastructure and its water supply source.
- This creates yet another cost that municipalities are expected to incur, but it is unreasonable to expect municipalities with the limited resources available to continue absorbing such costs.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Province to fully fund the cost of engineering assessments on water systems.

7. The Cost of Traffic Control at Motor Vehicle Accident Scenes

- Municipalities fully understand their responsibility to provide fire prevention services to their communities. However at issue is the expectation that volunteer firefighters perform traffic control at accident scenes, something that is not a municipal responsibility.
- One of the major concerns is the safety of having untrained volunteers perform this duty at accident scenes. The AMM did receive a commitment from the RCMP to provide training to volunteer firefighters; however we firmly believe this responsibility should not be downloaded to municipalities.
- If the expectation is for municipal firefighters to take on this added responsibility full training and compensation must be provided.
- The AMM was pleased to hear the OFC is working on designating municipal firefighters as flagmen at accident scenes which will be helpful, but compensation for performing this responsibility is imperative.
- The AMM would also like to see greater effort made to raise public awareness of the importance of slowing down for emergency personnel at accident scenes.

Therefore the AMM requests the Province either discontinue the practice of having municipal firefighters perform traffic control at accident scenes or provide training and financial compensation for this service. The AMM further requests greater effort be made to raising public awareness of the need to slow down for emergency personnel at accident scenes.

General Issue

The Core Challenges for Municipalities

- Municipal government plays a greater role in the lives of Canadians than any other time in history and the new realities facing municipalities have serious repercussions as they diligently try to balance growing responsibilities with stagnant revenues.

- Municipal infrastructure is the very foundation of a community, yet its current state leaves communities with little hope for prosperity. Nationally the municipal infrastructure deficit is in excess of \$123 billion and provincially it is estimated at over \$11 billion, or a staggering \$10,000 per Manitoban.
- As well, municipal responsibilities continue to grow, either through the intentional or unintentional offloading of responsibilities or new unfunded mandates being forced on municipalities.
- Because of these challenges municipalities must have access to new sources of revenues. Options include the Province collecting a one cent municipal tax to be allocated to municipalities for infrastructure, a rebate of the Provincial Sales Tax paid by municipalities, or an increase to existing revenue sources such as VLTs.
- Manitoba municipalities are more reliant on provincial and federal grants than any other province in Canada and while in some cases these types of programs are necessary it leaves municipalities having to compete against each other for limited dollars and restricts a municipality's ability to properly plan for much needed investment.
- For municipal government to be sustainable into the future, and for Manitobans to have access to the quality of life they deserve, municipalities need to have access to sustainable growth revenues. This is the only way municipalities will be able to even begin to address the core challenges they face.

Therefore the AMM would like to see:

- 1. A greater investment in municipal infrastructure by all levels of government**
- 2. An end to the downloading of responsibilities to municipalities and a requirement that new mandates come with new funding**
- 3. A commitment to provide new alternate revenues to municipalities**

Departmental Issues

1. Municipal Infrastructure Priorities

Insufficient investment in Manitoba's deteriorating infrastructure has created a major burden for municipalities in the form of a severe infrastructure deficit. Municipalities are facing growing demands and expectations, while lacking the resources to meet these expectations. This trend is evident across all types of public infrastructure including: water and wastewater treatment and delivery, storm water systems, roads, bridges, public transportation, airports, railroads, and recreation and leisure facilities. The recent 2010 Federal Budget has left municipalities wondering where to turn for much needed infrastructure help. While municipalities greatly appreciated the stimulus spending of last year, we are disillusioned with the recent decision to scale back spending at a time when it is needed and makes sound fiscal sense. Reversing the

trend of infrastructure deterioration will require a collective effort from all orders of government to strategically invest in public infrastructure throughout Manitoba.

In 2007 the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) commissioned a report entitled *Danger Ahead: The Coming Collapse of Canada's Municipal Infrastructure*, which illustrates the need to dramatically increase infrastructure investment across all categories of municipal infrastructure. The research defines the value of Canada's national municipal infrastructure deficit as \$123 billion and demonstrates that this figure has more than doubled in the previous four years. Equally alarming, the \$123 billion is only for the upgrade and repair of current municipal infrastructure, with another \$115 billion required for new infrastructure.

The City of Winnipeg has since recently calculated its own infrastructure deficit to be in excess of \$3.8 billion for existing infrastructure and \$3.6 billion for new strategic infrastructure. Historically the municipal infrastructure deficit outside Winnipeg has been double that within Winnipeg, so it is fair to extrapolate that the deficit outside Winnipeg is in excess of \$7.5 billion, putting the total deficit in excess of \$11 billion.

Manitoba municipalities are not equipped to address these infrastructure demands alone since the magnitude of investment required is far beyond the scope of municipal budgets. The reality is that municipalities are stretching existing resources to meet competing priorities such as crumbling roads, recreation centres on the brink of closure, and water and wastewater treatment facilities deemed inappropriate by the Province. Throughout Manitoba major projects are required that demand far more resources than municipalities can provide alone.

The AMM appreciates the Province's recent commitments to enhance infrastructure funding in Manitoba, including the 2008 Throne Speech announcement of a four year \$4.7 billion infrastructure plan to fund capital projects including transportation, water and wastewater treatment. The provincial transportation network will receive much-needed investment through the Province's 2007 announcement of \$4 billion over 10 years along with the recent commitment for an additional \$45 million in capital funding for the 2009-10 construction season. We also greatly appreciate the

willingness of the Province to match the accelerated Federal spending over the last year.

The AMM is optimistic that provincial rehabilitation projects will improve many Provincial highways so they can again withstand the intended level of commercial traffic. As a result, traffic will return to an appropriate level on municipal roads used as alternatives to these deteriorating Provincial highways. When Provincial highways are severely degraded or not available due to detours or road restrictions, municipal roads incur substantial damage by being subjected to increased use. This has created a high demand for investment in these municipal roads. In the past, municipalities have allocated funding to Provincial roads where it was deemed to be a strategic approach to improving the overall transportation network. The Province should therefore be willing to invest in municipal roads out of a similar interest. Similarly, urban provincial highways are sometimes neglected and appear to be within the responsibility of local municipalities. Many communities are thus subjected to neglected urban highways, while having no decision making authority for the necessary repairs and upgrading. Urban highways are critical to the transportation network and maintaining these key thoroughfares must be given greater priority. The Province has established valuable programs such as grant-in-aid, however there is insufficient funding available to meet the current needs for municipal road investment. An enhanced grant-in-aid program is one mechanism the Province should consider in order to increase investment in municipal roads across Manitoba.

To promote further investment in Manitoba's highway infrastructure, the AMM continues to lobby the Federal Government to reinstate the Prairie Grain Roads Program (PGRP). Municipal and Provincial highways must now accommodate the increased traffic caused by the restructured grain transportation system and associated reductions in rail usage. Since the expiration of the PGRP many municipalities are facing additional difficulties in meeting transportation infrastructure demands and a continued investment should be pursued through the renewal of this program. The AMM appreciates the Provincial Government's support for reinstating the PGRP and its efforts to highlight Manitoba's infrastructure needs on the Federal stage. The PGRP was

an effective program and its renewal would be greatly appreciated by Manitoba municipalities.

Although Manitoba's *Highway Renewal Plan* includes funding for Provincial bridges, municipalities continue to have difficulties in funding critical repair and upgrading projects due to the elimination of the Municipal Bridge Co-operative Program. Bridge repairs and maintenance can be expensive due to higher engineering costs and municipalities find maintaining, repairing and constructing bridges very difficult. Deteriorating bridges often cause major traffic diversions that increase greenhouse gas emissions and place additional pressure on municipal roads that were not necessarily designed to accommodate the increased traffic. Therefore, this important infrastructure requires targeted funding through a cost-shared program, such as a reinstated Municipal Bridge Co-operative Program.

As well, the AMM membership recently passed a resolution seeking an increase in the operating grants available for small rural and northern airports. These Provincial grants have not increased for a number of years, and \$1,200-\$2,400 no longer covers an adequate portion of the operating costs of these airports. Furthermore, the elimination of the capital investment portion of the Manitoba Airports Capital Assistance Program (MACAP) created additional problems for communities that rely on local airport services. An inability to make capital investments will certainly result in a declining level of airport services in these communities. Therefore, an increased Provincial commitment to the capital and operating expenses of small rural and northern airports would be a significant investment in the affected communities.

Cultural and recreational facilities are also competing for limited municipal funds, and often face ongoing neglect in favour of other pressing infrastructure needs such as roads or water and wastewater systems. The AMM was pleased that the Federal Budget included \$500 million for recreation infrastructure over two years as Manitoba's share will be a beneficial complement to the Province's commitment to double funding for recreation centres to over \$60 million. In particular, providing additional funding through the Municipal Recreation Fund is an effective method of directing funding to municipal infrastructure projects. The Provincial Government clearly has an interest in the availability of recreational facilities and programming given the related

opportunities to decrease the long-term cost of health care services through preventive measures.

At the same time, there are opportunities for improvements to other recreation infrastructure programs such as the Community Places Program. Municipalities recognize and appreciate the substantial funding increase for this program in the 2008 Budget as it will certainly support several additional recreation projects. However, like all construction projects, recreation initiatives are confronting increasing costs. The limitation to fund a maximum of \$50,000 on a project means that the Community Places Program contributes a diminishing proportion of the total project costs. Since the purchasing power of \$50,000 declines over time, municipalities are required to fund a greater percentage of the total project costs. Increasing the maximum allowable amount would provide a greater opportunity for each municipality to invest in the types of recreation projects the community desperately needs.

A discussion of the demand for infrastructure investment must include the essential services of water and wastewater treatment and distribution systems. Municipalities are required to adhere to new legislation governing water and wastewater facilities, and although they support the aim of protecting the environment, there is a significant cost associated with the additional requirements. For municipalities acting alone, the high cost of water and wastewater infrastructure can deter the required investment, yet the health of the community and environment are at stake. Many communities throughout Manitoba are under long-standing boil water orders and the Province has a responsibility to rectify these situations. Specifically, municipalities are prepared to participate in a tripartite funding program to replace the expired National Water Supply Expansion Program. Many municipalities benefited from this program, yet there is further demand for safe and reliable water and wastewater facilities that must be addressed. The Federal Government is also a stakeholder in this process and the AMM encourages the Province to initiate a tripartite funding agreement to resolve outstanding water supply issues in Manitoba.

All categories of infrastructure are facing escalating costs for construction, repairs and maintenance. Municipalities would be better able to accommodate these costs with

assistance in controlling the operating costs of these community facilities. For instance, several municipalities have explored mechanisms for improving the efficiency of their operations through the Manitoba Municipal Efficiency Program. Yet there are some operating costs that municipalities cannot affect through internal processes, such as hydro rates. This is particularly difficult for not-for-profit organizations such as recreation associations that provide valuable services to local communities. The high fees charged by Manitoba Hydro should be reduced in recognition of the limited budgets of these publicly-owned and -operated facilities. Furthermore, municipalities are facing increased costs due to the Provincial commitment that requires government-funded buildings to meet or exceed the LEED silver certification. Municipalities support the concept of environmentally-friendly community facilities, however in some cases, the cost of LEED certification approaches the amount of the available Provincial grants, thereby reducing the possible scope of projects within a given funding allocation. The Province should assist in reducing operating costs for these facilities by allowing flexibility to pursue comparable, low-cost alternatives rather than adding onerous requirements. This would enable municipalities to provide quality infrastructure and related services to their communities at a reasonable cost.

Municipal infrastructure encompasses a diverse range of assets and services which compete for scarce municipal resources. There is an ongoing need to invest in municipal infrastructure, yet municipalities cannot unilaterally provide the funding required for all the necessary construction, repair and maintenance projects. Municipalities cannot provide the services required using only the property tax mechanism and other orders of government must contribute to the necessary funding. The Provincial Government is an important stakeholder in this process and must be prepared to adequately support municipalities as they take on the arduous task of upgrading and maintaining infrastructure assets.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to address Manitoba's infrastructure deficit by working with the Federal Government to provide long-term, sustainable, predictable funding for all categories of public infrastructure.

2. Rail Line Abandonment

Manitoba is well-positioned to move forward as a Canadian transportation hub and investing in railways as an efficient, low-cost shipping option is consistent with this goal. Railways are currently an integral part of Manitoba's transportation network and the advantages of maintaining this infrastructure outweigh the detrimental effects of abandonment. The decision to abandon a rail line cannot be reversed and it is highly unlikely that rail services will be re-established. Yet maintaining rail lines leads to substantial benefits in years to come, therefore the Province should consider these future impacts and develop disincentives to rail line abandonment in Manitoba.

The increasing trend towards abandoning rail lines is a major economic concern. The Federal and Provincial Governments have expressed support for developing an inland port in Manitoba, and this is due to the availability of several modes of transportation including rail infrastructure. For instance, the rail links to northern Manitoba and the Port of Churchill offer a key opportunity to further develop trade with overseas partners. In contrast, eliminating or neglecting rail lines deters business development in many areas due to the reduced number of connections between producers and markets. In communities where the railway is the only transportation link, abandoning rail lines effectively halts future economic development opportunities, isolates communities, and cuts off access to required goods and services.

At a time when innovative solutions are required to address the growing infrastructure deficit, allowing an effective, low-emission transportation option to disappear exacerbates municipal infrastructure problems. In particular, recent rail line abandonment related to agricultural shipping has increased pressure on Provincial and municipal highways, resulting in a need for additional investment in road maintenance and repair. The AMM raised these issues with the Federal Government through the Rail Service Review that is currently being conducted and will continue to raise this issue through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Municipalities aim to strategically plan infrastructure and make long-term investments accordingly, however the changes brought about by rail line abandonment interfere with these efforts. This is especially difficult in Northern Manitoba where railways are often the only transportation access available and there are limited opportunities to shift to a reliance on the road network. It is inefficient to abandon functioning infrastructure and thereby create demand for

alternative transportation infrastructure that is already deteriorating due to lack of investment.

Municipalities prefer that rail lines be preserved and maintained, however when companies choose to abandon rail lines, municipalities must be properly compensated. Under *The Canada Transport Act*, a federally-regulated railway company must pay compensation to affected municipalities when discontinuing the operation of a grain-dependent branch line. Since provincially-regulated companies are not subject to the same requirement, municipalities are left with substantial costs and no compensation. The AMM is aware that the Manitoba Ombudsman has made a recommendation on this matter, stating that the review of *The Provincial Railways Act* should “contemplate whether the federally-regulated railway companies’ obligations to pay compensation can be preserved upon the discontinuance of a grain-dependent branch line, even where the line is discontinued by a provincially-regulated successor company.” The AMM supports this recommendation since municipalities are facing growing difficulties in meeting local infrastructure demands. The discontinuance of rail lines creates additional costs for municipalities, and rail companies should remain accountable for these decisions as prescribed by the Federal legislation.

There are also significant environmental impacts associated with rail line abandonment. From an emissions standpoint, shipping by road generates far more greenhouse gas than shipping by rail. Since the Provincial Government aims to reduce emissions in other industries, transportation should be no exception. As well, many rail beds act as dykes to protect communities against high water levels. The elimination of this infrastructure therefore changes drainage structures and puts communities at an increased risk of flooding. Municipalities do not have the resources to replace this infrastructure and decommissioning plans should include greater consideration of such impacts on adjacent property. In addition, the abandoned rail beds pose an environmental threat when contamination issues are not resolved. The decommissioning process must also include sufficient efforts to remove any contamination that poses a threat to the local population and environment. If the railway companies are not held responsible for removing such contamination, municipalities will be forced to take on this considerable liability. Therefore, where rail

line abandonment is already in process, the Provincial Government must be prepared to address ongoing environmental concerns.

In recognition of the importance of railways in Manitoba, the Provincial Government must ensure that its legislation reflects the current realities facing rail transportation in this province. The commitment to review *The Provincial Railways Act* is appreciated however so far we are unaware of any movement forward. Action must be taken immediately on this review. The Province must also work with the Federal Government to preserve rail services in Manitoba. As the Federal Government moves forward with its rail service review, the Provincial Government must ensure that Manitoba's reliance on railways is taken into consideration. Federal policy changes that result in detrimental impacts for Manitoba communities must be avoided. The Provincial Government must assist communities that rely on rail transportation by reiterating municipal concerns throughout the federal rail service review.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to recognize the valuable services provided by Manitoba's rail lines, address the economic and environmental impacts of rail line abandonment and ensure that these concerns are reflected in an immediate review of *The Provincial Railways Act*.

3. Funding for the Port of Churchill and Northern Rail Lines

The Port of Churchill represents a clear competitive advantage for Manitoba as it is Canada's only Arctic seaport. The Port is also one of the cornerstones of CentrePort Canada, a key initiative of the Provincial Government. Because of the critical importance that the Port plays for Manitoba's economic development it is critical that the Province provides adequate support to the Port of Churchill to develop this critical infrastructure.

Closely related to the Port is the Northern rail system in Manitoba. For many communities it is their only link to the outside world, and the rail line not only moves people in and out of the community but is relied upon for the necessities of life. The AMM is increasingly hearing concerns about the quality of the rail system in Northern Manitoba. The recent consideration by VIA Rail to cut service in the North will also have

a negative impact on those communities that rely on rail service. The AMM would like to see the Province make greater investments in this critical infrastructure to not only ensure the sustainability of those in the North but also to capitalize on the opportunities that exist in Northern Manitoba.

Therefore the AMM would like the Province to make a greater investment in Northern rail lines to maximize the potential of the Port of Churchill and provide northern Manitoba with the reliable infrastructure necessary to remain sustainable.

4. Greyhound Service

For many Manitobans transportation by bus is their only means of connecting to larger centres. Bus service provides Manitobans with a link to larger commercial centres like Portage, Dauphin or Thompson, as well as centres like Brandon and Winnipeg for necessary medical appointments. Bus service is also used to move goods across the province connecting smaller centres with the rest of the world.

Municipalities across the province were alarmed with the unilateral decision of Greyhound to discontinue service in Manitoba. Greyhound has become a key cog in Manitoba's transportation network and the discontinuance of service would be a real problem for many more remote communities.

The AMM appreciated the quick action by the Province to ensure service continued, however the long-term future of bus service in Manitoba remains unclear. The AMM appreciates the recent one-year service maintenance announcement however it is critical that a workable solution be found that keeps service in all areas of Manitoba permanently.

Therefore the AMM requests the Province to work cooperatively to ensure bus service remains in all areas of the province.

5. Drainage Issues

Water management affects all municipalities, therefore the AMM appreciates the Province's past actions to improve drainage processes in Manitoba. This included

allocating over \$4 million for select drainage projects in 2006 as well as enhancing drainage licensing and enforcement by hiring additional staff. At the same time, ongoing drainage issues continue to rank among the top concerns of municipal governments. This is evident in the current volume of AMM resolutions related to drainage, which increased through the introduction of three new drainage resolutions at the 2008 AMM Convention and another one in 2009. The need for adequate drain construction and maintenance is a major concern for municipalities, however the Province has not committed sufficient resources to fulfill this need and establish coordinated drainage systems for Manitoba. For instance, there was no significant increase in drainage funding in the 2009 Budget, even though the Province had indicated that water protection and management are important provincial priorities. There are many initiatives that should be funded in order to achieve properly managed water systems in Manitoba, and drain construction and maintenance must be included among the top priorities. In pursuing its commitment to invest in infrastructure, the Province should ensure that additional funding is available for drainage works in the upcoming 2010 Budget.

Furthermore, in order to support the coordination of drainage operations, the Province must implement a plan to guide drainage works throughout Manitoba. Municipalities share the Province's interest in a coordinated water management system, however water systems extend well beyond municipal boundaries and municipal drainage works must occur within a broader plan. Such a plan will also be useful in guiding the strategic allocation of Provincial and municipal drainage funding. Both orders of government will be better able to identify and prioritize required construction and maintenance projects, leading to more effectively managed drainage infrastructure. In June 2008, Minister Lemieux indicated that the Province was moving towards a long-term capital plan for drainage, however municipalities have not learned of any progress in this regard.

Municipalities have also raised concerns regarding the drainage licensing process. Many of these concerns were highlighted in the 2008 Manitoba Ombudsman's report on improving the drainage licensing and enforcement system. The AMM appreciates that the Province is committed to taking action on these recommendations in order to

improve the overall operation of drainage works in Manitoba. What is required is greater attention to provincial drains as these are an integral part of the water management system in the province.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to develop a province-wide drainage management plan and allocate sufficient resources to drainage construction and maintenance throughout Manitoba.

6. Water System Assessment Funding

A safe and secure drinking water supply is one of the highest priorities for all municipalities and the AMM supports the Province's aim of ensuring that high quality drinking water is available to all Manitobans. Municipalities are working hard to satisfy the requirements of recent legislation such as *The Drinking Water Safety Act*, however the lack of resources is a significant issue for many. The Province should acknowledge the financial impact of these additional requirements and assist municipalities in their efforts to provide clean, healthy drinking water.

There is widespread support among municipalities for creating and maintaining systems that allow citizens to access the highest quality of drinking water. For instance, recognizing that water and wastewater are critical services, municipal governments have taken on the responsibility of employing certified operators as required by the Provincial Government. However, as a result municipalities now incur the costs of training courses and exam preparation for these operators then must compete with other municipalities to retain these skilled individuals. This demonstrates the expectation that new requirements for drinking water safety must be borne by municipalities, even when it is the Provincial Government initiating the new safety measures.

Similarly, in order to meet the requirements of *The Drinking Water Safety Act*, municipalities must now conduct engineering assessments on water system infrastructure and its water supply source. In many cases, municipal water treatment facilities are designed and constructed in conjunction with Provincial Government experts at the Manitoba Water Services Board. Yet an additional engineering assessment is now required to meet the conditions of this legislation. This creates yet

another cost that municipalities are expected to incur, but it is unreasonable to expect municipalities with the limited resources available to continue absorbing such costs. It is especially difficult to rationalize when municipalities already take steps to ensure they construct and maintain safe facilities.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Province to fully fund the cost of engineering assessments on water systems.

7. The Cost of Traffic Control at Motor Vehicle Accident Scenes

An issue that is of concern to our members is the cost of providing traffic control at motor vehicle accident scenes. Municipalities fully understand their responsibility to provide fire prevention services to their communities. However at issue is the expectation that volunteer firefighters perform traffic control at accident scenes, something that is not a municipal responsibility.

One of the major concerns is the safety of having untrained volunteers perform this duty at accident scenes. The AMM did receive a commitment from the RCMP to provide training to volunteer firefighters; however we firmly believe this responsibility should not be downloaded to municipalities. Municipalities are being asked to cover the cost of providing this service when it is not a municipal responsibility. If the expectation is for municipal firefighters to take on this added responsibility full training and compensation must be provided.

The AMM has looked at other provinces and has found that in many cases municipalities bill the province for the cost of providing this service. In Manitoba, Manitoba Public Insurance has made it clear that it will not cover this cost as part of an insurance claim, which leaves municipalities to pay firefighters to do traffic control.

The AMM also met recently with the Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) and was pleased to hear the OFC is working with Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation to see if this issue can be resolved in part by designated municipal firefighters as flagmen at accident scenes. While this designation would be helpful, most important is the compensation that would accompany this designation. Our association would be happy to work with your department to help find a suitable resolution to this issue.

The AMM would also like to see greater attention put toward reducing speeds when emergency personnel are at accident scenes. While section 109.1 of *The Highway Traffic Act* lays out the requirements for passing a stopped emergency vehicle it is clear this does not always happen at accident scenes. The AMM would like to see greater effort made to raise public awareness of the need to slow down at accident scenes.

Therefore the AMM requests the Province either discontinue the practice of having municipal firefighters perform traffic control at accident scenes or provide training and financial compensation for this service. The AMM further requests greater effort be made to raising public awareness of the need to slow down for emergency personnel at accident scenes.

General Issue

The Core Challenges for Municipalities

Today's municipal government plays a greater role in the lives of Canadians than any other time in history. Municipalities no longer simply plow the streets and pick up the garbage. Sure today's municipal corporation still cleans the streets and collects garbage (and recyclables), but it also is sustainably managing growth through everything from state of the art transit systems to environmentally conscious land use and water planning. The pioneers of municipal government would be astonished to see today's council agenda where elected officials are doing everything from recruiting doctors from around the world to providing funding for daycares.

These new realities are having serious repercussions for municipalities as they diligently try to balance growing responsibilities with stagnant revenues. Everyday municipalities are facing new demands from both citizens and other orders of government and must try to balance these with existing priorities and scarce revenues that remain overly reliant on the ebb and flow of grant programs. The current challenges facing municipalities are overwhelming and there must be a greater effort to address these if we want to see strong vibrant communities throughout our province.

While municipal concerns cut across every provincial department, there are two core issues that are most pressing for municipalities today - the ballooning municipal infrastructure deficit and the growing mandate of municipal government, either through intentional and unintentional offloading of responsibilities from other orders of government and unfunded mandates. These two challenges are crippling municipal government and keeping Manitoba communities behind.

Municipal Infrastructure Deficit

It is no secret that municipalities are facing nearly insurmountable infrastructure challenges. We only need to take a look around our communities to see the deteriorating state of our infrastructure. Roads that are nearly impassable due to potholes and heaving, drafty libraries with crippling heating bills, recreation complexes

with leaking roofs and water and sewer treatment plants that are running beyond capacity. These are the very foundation of a community, yet their current state leaves communities with little hope for prosperity. For Manitoba communities to thrive in the future these swelling infrastructure challenges must be addressed.

In Canada the municipal infrastructure deficit is in excess of \$123 billion for current needs. Most alarming is how quickly the deficit has been compounding, as it has doubled over the last 5 years. Equally alarming, the \$123 billion is only for the upgrade and repair of current municipal infrastructure, with another \$115 billion required for new infrastructure.¹

These national trends hold true for Manitoba as well. The City of Winnipeg has recently calculated its infrastructure deficit at \$3.8 billion for existing infrastructure and \$3.6 billion for new strategic infrastructure.² Historically the municipal infrastructure deficit outside of Winnipeg has been double that within Winnipeg so it is fair to extrapolate that the deficit outside Winnipeg is over \$7.5 billion, putting the total municipal infrastructure deficit in Manitoba in excess of \$11 billion, or a staggering \$10,000 per Manitoban. It is certainly an insurmountable amount for municipalities to tackle on their own since the total municipal taxes levied in 2007 were just over \$730,000,000.³

There is no doubt the current infrastructure deficit is crippling Manitoba's economy. Adequate infrastructure is an obvious prerequisite for economic development and unfortunately it is greatly lacking in many communities. FCM has investigated this principle in depth and found that an increase in municipal infrastructure spending of \$1 billion in 2008 (at nominal process and allocated to a representative mix of infrastructure) would increase the size of the real economy by roughly 0.13 percent or \$1.3 billion in nominal terms. While this would erode slightly over time with consistent investment, over a four year period it would still result in meaningful gains to the economy, dropping to a 0.6 percent increase in the final year. The resulting investment

¹ Saeed Mirza, "Danger Ahead: The Coming Collapse of Canada's Municipal Infrastructure", November 2007 (available at www.fcm.ca)

² City of Winnipeg Administrative Report, "Infrastructure and Possible Funding Options" Tabled at July 22nd, 2009 Council Meeting (available at www.winnipeg.ca)

³ Province of Manitoba, "Statistical Information 2007 – Municipalities of the Province of Manitoba", P.17

would be felt in the employment sector as well, since a great number of industries would benefit. A \$1 billion investment in 2008 would add 11,500 new jobs, which would be felt in industries from labour and material suppliers through to architects and engineers.⁴

Providing adequate infrastructure has both direct and indirect benefits for private-sector manufacturing. Infrastructure is an intermediate input into the production process, with businesses locating where there is access to water, hydro and transportation. New roads reduce fuel costs and haul times. Access to high quality (and adequate) water reduces input costs. There is also evidence that increased investments in public infrastructure allow private companies to use labour inputs more intensively, translating into more jobs.⁵

While the numbers are staggering, of far greater concern is the very real impact this infrastructure deficit is having on the people who live in Manitoba. Manitobans are experiencing longer commutes to work either because of impassable roads or slower speeds. We are also spending more time travelling to neighbouring communities to access recreation opportunities. Many have seen the outmigration of neighbours and friends who tire of dealing with these daily challenges.

Municipal councils want to create vibrant, welcoming communities, but this is nearly impossible with the state of infrastructure today. For example, there remain 137 boil water advisories in Manitoba, many in Manitoba municipalities.⁶ This means in 2010 thousands of Manitobans do not have access to safe drinking water when they turn on the tap. It is unreasonable to think these communities can realistically compete with the rest of Manitoba and Canada if they do not have this essential infrastructure.

Ever Increasing Responsibilities

⁴ Sonnen, Carl, "Municipal Infrastructure- Macroeconomic impacts of spending and level-of-government financing" May 31, 2008 (available at www.fcm.ca)

⁵ Brox, James A. "Infrastructure Investment: The Foundation of Canadian Competitiveness - IRPP Policy Matters 2008" August, 2008 (available at www.irpp.org)

⁶ Province of Manitoba "Provincial Boil Water Advisories" – January 11th, 2010

A second core challenge for municipalities is ever increasing responsibilities. Municipalities are continually being asked to do more and more, either through the intentional or unintentional offloading of responsibilities from other orders of government or through new unfunded mandates being forced on municipalities by the provincial and federal government. These new responsibilities do not come with new revenue sources and result in municipal budgets being stretched thinner and thinner. The sad reality is that as municipalities are being forced to take on more the core municipal responsibilities suffer.

Municipal officials believe in their community. This is where they live, most often where they work and sometimes where they were born. They care greatly about their community and when they see a need they will do everything they can to address it. Many times municipal officials are their own worst enemy, as they step in and act where other orders of government have abdicated their responsibilities. Municipalities step up and do repairs on provincial roads, they recruit physicians from all corners of the world, and they help fund community health facilities. In some cases municipalities are just filling gaps in service unintentionally left by other orders of government and other times municipalities are stepping in because the provincial and federal governments have made it clear their community will not get the service or investment unless they do.

Compounding this is the growing trend of unfunded mandates being heaped on municipalities by the provincial and federal governments. Too often new rules are implemented without adequate thought to how they can possibly be implemented. These unilateral decisions leave municipalities in the untenable position of either scarifying core programs and services or being in non-compliance of provincial rules. Unfortunately we are hearing more and more from municipalities that they are being forced to opt for the latter.

Municipalities cannot keep pace with the rapid increase in the offloading of responsibilities and unfunded mandates. These challenges are pushing municipalities further and further behind.

Alternate Revenues

Now more than ever municipalities need new tools to deal with new responsibilities and new expectations. Currently Manitoba municipalities are more reliant on provincial and federal grants than any other province in Canada⁷. While in some cases these types of programs are necessary (for example large-scale infrastructure projects), it leaves municipalities having to compete against each other for limited dollars and restricts a municipality's ability to properly plan for much needed investment. The amount allocated to grant programs like the recent Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund or community infrastructure funding under the Building Canada Fund is nowhere near the total demand, meaning there is no guarantee much-needed projects will ever receive funding.

Over-reliance on grants and transfers leaves municipalities without the tools required to meet demands. Many municipal issues, when stripped down to their core, are really issues of access to revenue. For example, the need to remove education tax from property is really a municipal revenue issue, as municipalities see education tax as eroding the property tax base, which is the single greatest source of municipal revenue. Over the last number of years we have seen more and more municipalities speaking out on the need for greater municipal revenue sources.

It is important that the federal and provincial government contributions to municipalities are not forgotten. Federally, municipalities have benefited from a GST rebate, the sharing of the federal gas tax and the Building Canada Fund as well as Stimulus Funding. Provincially, municipalities have benefited from the sharing of provincial income tax, the Building Manitoba Fund, and supports in several other areas. We also appreciate the Province stepping up with their one-third share of recent federal programs. The message the AMM is hoping to convey is not that either order of government has completely forgotten about municipalities, but rather that despite these efforts municipalities still face enormous challenges and more is needed.

⁷ Slack, Kitchen, McMillan, Vaillancourt, "Roles, Responsibilities, Resources and Relationships – Report to the Provincial and Territorial Municipal Associations" June 15th, 2007.

Municipalities must have access to new revenue sources. A greater reliance on property taxes and provincial and federal grants has created an ever-widening chasm between municipal revenues and needs, leaving future generations with what is quickly becoming an insurmountable infrastructure deficit. Municipalities are struggling to deliver core services as their budgets begin to crack under increased demands.

A new approach is needed, and for this reason we are asking the Province of Manitoba to collect a one cent municipal tax to be allocated to municipalities for infrastructure and split equally among municipalities on a per capita basis. This will provide municipalities with in excess of \$200 million a year. For a community of 1,000 people, this means roughly an investment of \$185,000 in their local infrastructure, or \$370,000 for a community of 2,000 people. A community such as Thompson could see close to \$2.5 million, while Winnipeg would expect to see over \$117 million. Although this funding alone will not erase the infrastructure deficit in Manitoba, it is a positive first step.

While the AMM is not necessarily asking for a new tax, there is support among Manitobans for a new tax dedicated to municipal infrastructure. Polling done by AMM in 2008 found that 94 percent of Manitobans see infrastructure as a high priority, including a 94 percent positive response rate in Winnipeg. The poll also found that 55 percent of Manitobans think that municipalities do not have the revenue sources needed to cover infrastructure costs alone, including 50 percent in Winnipeg. Most interestingly, the poll found that 54 percent of Manitobans, including 51 percent of Winnipeggers, support an additional one percent municipal tax dedicated to infrastructure renewal projects⁸. As the infrastructure deficit continues to grow, support for this will only increase.

The AMM is also asking for other revenues sources for municipalities, such as a rebate of the Provincial Sales Tax as well as increases to existing sources such as VLT revenues. We would also ask that any new mandates for municipalities be accompanied with corresponding financial support.

⁸ Probe Research "Public Attitudes on Infrastructure Renewal Funding in Manitoba" September, 2008.

The sad reality is that while the Province of Manitoba has been leaders in some municipal areas, it has not been enough. We have the opportunity to visit every municipality in Manitoba within the four year election cycle and it is clear our communities are struggling and we are falling behind.

We understand that providing additional revenues to municipalities may become more difficult as the economy continues to fluctuate. While economic projections can never be taken as absolute fact, they are often a prophetic divining rod on economic times. However what should not be lost is the positive impact infrastructure investment would have for the provincial and national economy. Furthermore, delaying investment in these critical infrastructure projects will have serious long-term consequences for Manitoba's economy.

Municipalities are not looking for new revenue sources to store money away for a rainy day. The storm has arrived. With a national municipal infrastructure deficit in excess of \$123 billion, and Manitoba's share in excess of \$11 billion, there is no shortage of work to be done. If municipalities are left to deal with this ballooning deficit alone armed only with property taxes and grants, it will continue to grow exponentially. Alternatively, providing municipalities with new revenue sources will not only begin to address this growing deficit, but will help build and strengthen our economy.

The time has come for a new approach to municipal funding. The expectations of today's municipalities are greater than any time in history. Regrettably so are the financial challenges facing municipalities. For municipal government to be sustainable into the future, and for Manitobans to have access to the quality of life they deserve, municipalities need to have access to sustainable growth revenues. This is the only way municipalities will be able to even begin to address the core challenges they face.

Therefore the AMM would like to see:

- 1. A greater investment in municipal infrastructure by all levels of government**
- 2. An end to the downloading of responsibilities to municipalities and a requirement that new mandates come with new funding**
- 3. A commitment to provide new alternate revenues to municipalities**

Appendix A – Active Resolutions

AMM Resolution Number 30 - 2009

Topic: Flood Protection Expenses

Sponsor: City of Portage la Prairie (Central District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS members of Parliament and members of the Manitoba Legislature have immunity from the process of liability as a result of any debate or discussion which occurs while they are in session;

AND WHEREAS municipally elected members do not have this same level of immunity and as such are on occasion subject to the legal process for resolution;

AND WHEREAS this process of litigious defense against trivial claims can be lengthy involving a great deal of time for staff and members of council, as well as extensive cost for municipalities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to amend The Municipal Act to grant the same immunity as currently accorded to members of Parliament and the Manitoba Legislature.

AMM Resolution Number 29 - 2009

Topic: Drainage Issues

Sponsor: RM of St. Laurent (Interlake District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS provincial highways and roads are often an impediment to municipal drainage;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to work with municipalities to resolve drainage issues related to provincial roads and highways;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Province of Manitoba provide sufficient funding to undertake this drainage work so it is at no cost to municipalities.

AMM Resolution Number 28 - 2009

Topic: Funding for Control of Noxious Weeds

Sponsor: RM of South Cypress (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba reimburses municipalities up to 60 per cent of the cost of insecticide and its application in the control of grasshoppers along public rights-of-way;

AND WHEREAS noxious weed growth along public rights-of-way has a similar negative impact on adjoining crops and hayland as grasshoppers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to establish a funding program for the control of noxious weeds on public rights-of-way.

AMM Resolution Number 27 - 2009

Topic: Weight Restrictions

Sponsor: RM of Thompson (Central District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS there is a marked increase in heavy truck traffic on municipal roads during the spring weight restriction period for provincial highways and roads;

AND WHEREAS this increase in truck traffic causes considerable damage to municipal roads, which are also at this time in a vulnerable condition, creating additional expenses for municipalities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to consider a weight restriction of 90% combined with a speed reduction to replace the 65% weight reduction restriction as a measure to encourage truck traffic to continue using provincial highways and roads during the spring weight restriction period, thereby reducing the negative impact and financial burden incurred by municipalities.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT empty truck traffic be exempt from restricted roads.

AMM Resolution Number 24 - 2009

Topic: Review Process for Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Programs

Sponsor: RM of Argyle (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS the Association of Manitoba Municipalities was previously involved in the application review process for Canada-Manitoba infrastructure programs;

AND WHEREAS all municipalities benefited from having municipal representation in the review process;

AND WHEREAS Manitoba's cooperative review process was a model for the rest of Canada;

AND WHEREAS the Provincial and Federal Governments have decided to exclude AMM from the selection process;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba and Government of Canada to return a municipal voice to the review process and have AMM participate in the application review process for all Canada-Manitoba municipal infrastructure programs.

AMM Resolution Number 23 - 2009

Topic: Infrastructure Funding Cost-Sharing

Sponsor: RM of Springfield (Eastern District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS the traditional method of funding federal/provincial/territorial infrastructure projects has been on a 1/3 cost-share arrangement for each order of government;

AND WHEREAS municipalities receive only 8 cents of revenue from every tax dollar collected in Canada, with the Federal Government receiving 50 cents and the Provincial/Territorial Governments receiving 42 cents;

AND WHEREAS smaller communities do not have the capacity to participate in major infrastructure works;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to change the current 1/3 infrastructure funding cost-sharing arrangement to replicate the tax revenue proportions with the Federal Government contributing 50 percent, the Provincial Government contributing 42 percent and the municipal governments contributing 8 percent.

AMM Resolution Number 42 - 2008

Topic: Drainage Adjacent To and On Highway Rights-of-Way

Sponsor: RM of Macdonald (Central District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation has indicated that the Provincial Government does not have the resources to conduct all necessary drainage works on highway rights-of-way;

AND WHEREAS some municipalities are willing to undertake these necessary drainage works;

AND WHEREAS Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation requires these municipalities to enter an agreement with onerous stipulations and a requirement to take over liability;

AMM Resolution Number 41 - 2008

Topic: Water System Assessment Funding

Sponsor: RM of Thompson (Central District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba has implemented required levels of training for water and wastewater facility operators and a continual increase in frequency and types of water sampling requirements;

AND WHEREAS the costs to provide training and additional time for personnel to satisfy the testing requirements have been borne by the local consumer;

AND WHEREAS under The Drinking Water Safety Act, the Province of Manitoba in addition to the above mentioned requirements is imposing an engineering assessment of local water system infrastructure that has for many communities been designed by and constructed under the supervision of the Manitoba Water Services Board;

AND WHEREAS there needs to be an end to the downloading of costs to the local consumer resulting from the implementation of Provincial Government regulations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to deem the engineering assessment of significant importance and fully fund the costs of performing the assessments as well as any improvements required following completion of the assessment process.

AMM Resolution Number 40 - 2008

Topic: Infrastructure Replacement Funding

Sponsor: RM of Thompson (Central District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS municipalities are experiencing rail line abandonment resulting in the removal of rail bed material;

AND WHEREAS in many areas, the rail beds have served as dikes during periods of high water levels since their construction;

AND WHEREAS the removal of existing rail bed material has left many miles of road, acres of farmland and farm buildings vulnerable to severe flooding;

AND WHEREAS rail line abandonment and the resulting salvage operations that have caused the removal of rail bed material have been sanctioned by the Province of Manitoba through their inaction and indifference to this issue;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to provide full funding to cover the cost of replacing the infrastructure necessary to protect property from the devastation of flooding.

AMM Resolution Number 39 - 2008

Topic: Weight Restriction Enforcement Services

Sponsor: RM of Tache (Eastern District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS spring weight restrictions placed on Provincial highways result in the diversion of commercial truck traffic onto municipal roads during the restriction period, therefore causing substantial damages;

AND WHEREAS individual municipalities do not have the resources to protect the municipal road network during this period when municipal roads are most susceptible to damage;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to enter into service provision agreements with interested municipalities to provide weight restriction enforcement services.

AMM Resolution Number 37 - 2008

Topic: Increase Operating Grants for Small Rural Airports

Sponsor: RM of Bifrost (Interlake District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba provides annual operating grants to small rural airports in the amount of \$1,200 for airports with unpaved runways and \$2,400 for airports with paved runways;

AND WHEREAS costs to operate these airports continue to rise;

AND WHEREAS the Provincial grants have not increased in many years;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to increase operating grants for small rural airports.

AMM Resolution Number 34 - 2008

Topic: One-Call System

Sponsor: RM of Elton (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to pass legislation to implement a one-call system for notification to all utility companies for buried cable locations, as has been implemented in other provinces.

AMM Resolution Number 33 - 2008

Topic: Major Approaches

Sponsor: RM of Woodworth (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation, Manitoba Justice

WHEREAS most of the highways and provincial roads were built 40 - 50 years ago;

AND WHEREAS trucks were not nearly as large then;

AND WHEREAS highways and provincial roads are under the jurisdiction of Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation;

AND WHEREAS the narrowness of many approaches are potentially a safety concern for semi-trailer traffic;

AMM Resolution Number 32 - 2008

Topic: Rail Lines

Sponsor: RM of Roblin (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation, Manitoba Justice

WHEREAS rail line abandonment impacts Manitoba's road network by moving traffic from rail lines to roads;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba and Government of Canada to become more actively involved in maintaining rail line transport of goods and services throughout Canada and Manitoba, in an attempt to reduce the impact of transfer traffic on Manitoba's road network.

AMM Resolution Number 25 - 2007

Topic: Road Restrictions

Sponsor: Town of Rivers, RM of Daly, RM of Blanshard (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba imposes annual spring road restrictions as required to protect our highway infrastructure;

AND WHEREAS the increased demand for movement of necessary supplies in and out of our rural communities has primarily been shouldered by large trucks;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to exempt empty truck traffic from Level 2 road restrictions on the steering axles, thus significantly reducing heavy truck traffic on municipal roads and also shortening many return trips;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that essential commodities be allowed simpler guidelines to be transported at Level 1 weights on Level 2 restrictions when servicing local customers

AMM Resolution Number 23 - 2007

Topic: Assistance for Damages Caused by Provincial Weight Restrictions

Sponsor: RM of Taché (Eastern District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS weight restrictions placed on Provincial roads redirect traffic onto municipal roads causing substantial damages;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba for assistance with rebuilding municipal roads damaged as a result of traffic diverted from provincial roads because of Provincial weight restrictions.

AMM Resolution Number 22 - 2007

Topic: Highway 6 Upgrades

Sponsor: City of Thompson (Northern District); RM of Brenda (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS Highway 6 is the major north/south land connector for northern Manitoba and of considerable economic value;

AND WHEREAS the increased volume of heavy traffic and changing types of equipment require increased safety measures, particularly for automobiles;

AND WHEREAS Highway 6 has proven to be a tragic one for many families who have experienced the loss of loved ones;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba for improved safety measures on Highway 6, such as frequent passing lanes throughout the highway, the provision for more rest areas, the provision of paved shoulders of sufficient width to enable safe parking, and prohibiting the practice of trucks traveling in convoys.

AMM Resolution Number 21 - 2007

Topic: Funding for Municipalities with Boil Water Advisories

Sponsor: RM of Whitemouth, Village of St. Pierre-Jolys (Eastern District)

Departments: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba and Government of Canada to provide targeted funding to municipalities that have boil water advisories to construct water treatment facilities.

AMM Resolution Number 23- 2006

Topic: Provincial Highway Conditions

Sponsor: RM of North Cypress, Town of Carberry (Western District)

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS the condition of all Provincial Highways in the province has been continually deteriorating and may soon reach a point where it is impossible to repair all of the damage;

AND WHEREAS the Provincial Government has only budgeted a small increase in the road maintenance budget for Provincial Highways;

AND WHEREAS the costs associated with repairing asphalt have increased dramatically due to rising input costs;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to increase funding for Secondary Highway asphalt repairs and resurfacing.

AMM Resolution Number 21- 2006

Topic: Upgrade of Provincial Roads and Trunk Highways

Sponsor: RM of Rosburn (Midwestern District)

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS a number of hard-surfaced Provincial Roads and Provincial Trunk Highways are restricted to 65% of normal axle weight during the time of spring load restrictions;

AND WHEREAS several years ago, many of these highways were restricted to 90% of normal axle weight, but have since deteriorated;

AND WHEREAS commercial and farm trucks, in order to avoid weight restricted provincial highways re-route their delivery of goods over municipal roads;

AND WHEREAS municipalities are forced to expend thousands of tax dollars to repair damaged roads;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to upgrade its hard surface roads to standards that would only require 90% axle weight restrictions.

AMM Resolution Number 20 - 2006

Topic: Rail Line Abandonment

Sponsor: RM of Thompson

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation, Transport Canada

WHEREAS Southern Manitoba Railway has given notice to discontinue railroad operations from Morris to Mariapolis, Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS excessive traffic has caused severe deterioration of municipal roads and provincial roads and highways;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Federal and Provincial Governments to establish a ten-year moratorium on rail line abandonment;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the AMM lobby the Provincial and Federal Governments to pressure the rail lines to adopt a policy allowing multiple rail company access to service shippers.

AMM Resolution Number 40- 2005

Topic: Increased Infrastructure Grants

Sponsor: Town of Erickson (Midwestern District)

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation, Manitoba Finance

WHEREAS the costs of municipal infrastructure such as storm sewers, water lines replacement, street maintenance etc., have increased in rapid proportion and have become a strain on municipal budgets;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to provide increased grants to municipalities to meet these increased costs, which in turn provide adequate services to their residents at a reasonable cost.

AMM Resolution Number 17 - 2005

Topic: Weed Control for Ditches

Sponsor: RM of Springfield, RM of Tache

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation, Manitoba Finance

WHEREAS weed growth along Provincial roads and highways has been proven to contribute to the widespread dispersal of noxious weeds, which leads to increased weed control costs for municipalities and farmers, and to reduced crop returns for the agricultural industry;

AND WHEREAS the Department of Transportation and Government Services has demonstrated in some areas in 2005 that weed growth can be properly controlled;

AND WHEREAS The Noxious Weeds Act of Manitoba requires the Provincial Government to control weeds on Provincial lands;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to recognize its responsibility to adequately control weed growth along Provincial highways and roads in order to minimize the spread of noxious weeds.

AMM Resolution Number 47- 2004

Topic: Bridge Co-Operative Program

Sponsor: RM of Glenwood (Western District)

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation, Manitoba Finance

WHEREAS the maintenance, rehabilitation and construction of municipal bridges is very costly for municipalities;

AND WHEREAS major municipal bridge projects have in the past been costs shared on a 50:50 basis by the Province through its Rural Municipal Bridge Co-Operative Program;

AND WHEREAS the Provincial Government has discontinued the Bridge Assistance Program thereby placing a huge increase on bridge costs for rural municipalities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to reinstate the Rural Municipal Bridge Co-Operative Program.

AMM Resolution Number 46- 2004

Topic: Priority for Drainage System Maintenance

Sponsor: RM of Woodlands (Interlake District)

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to have higher priority given to the annual mowing and clean out of ditches that are an integral part of the drainage system.

AMM Resolution Number 44- 2004

Topic: Secondary Emergency Access Roads

Sponsor: RM of Reynolds (Eastern District)

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation, Manitoba Science, Technology, Energy & Mines, Transport Canada, Emergency Preparedness Canada

WHEREAS in some municipalities there are communities that only have one access road;

AND WHEREAS some communities have a railway crossing (either CN, CP, or Greater Winnipeg Water District) running through this access road;

AND WHEREAS when a derailment, fire or other emergency occurs there is no other exit for emergency services and therefore evacuation is impossible by road;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial and Federal Governments, and railway companies to make funding available via cost sharing grants to municipalities that desire to construct secondary emergency accesses in these communities.

AMM Resolution Number 43- 2004

Topic: Access Roads

Sponsor: Town of Lynn Lake (Northern District)

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation, Manitoba Conservation, Manitoba Culture, Heritage, Tourism & Sport

WHEREAS tourism is a major component of the economic development for many communities;

AND WHEREAS more tourists are targeting the Province of Manitoba for tourism opportunities;

AND WHEREAS a great number of road accessible lakes located throughout the Province are without properly maintained road infrastructure;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to ensure access roads are maintained thereby promoting greater tourism development.

AMM Resolution Number 42- 2004

Topic: Reinstate the Manitoba Airport Capital Assistance Program

Sponsor: Town of Russell (Parkland District)

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation, Manitoba Finance

WHEREAS the Manitoba Government through its Manitoba Airports Capital Assistance Program provided contributions for rural airports to ensure the safety and efficiency of rural airports;

AND WHEREAS the Provincial Government has suspended the program effective 2004;

AND WHEREAS services such as Life Flight depends on accessing rural communities by means of local airports;

AND WHEREAS many rural airports struggle to raise sufficient funds for operating costs and have little or no capacity to raise monies for its capital improvements;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to reinstate the Manitoba Airport Capital Assistance Program immediately and ensure the continued viability for local airports.

AMM Resolution Number 41- 2004

Topic: Increased Funding for Grant-In-Aid

Sponsor: Town of Roblin (Parkland District)

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS urban municipalities rely upon grant-in-aid programs to upgrade streets and roads in urban centres;

AND WHEREAS the funding available to municipalities for the grant-in-aid program currently at \$1.3 million is grossly inadequate;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to increase the funding available for grant-in-aid programs to allow more municipalities greater access to these programs.

AMM Resolution Number 39- 2004

Topic: Sufficient Funding for Urban Highways

Sponsor: Town of Roblin (Parkland District)

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS Provincial highway systems pass through many urban centres in Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS the maintenance and upgrading of these highways is a provincial responsibility;

AND WHEREAS the tremendous increase of vehicle and truck traffic through urban centres in recent years has created deplorable road conditions as well as safety concerns for urban municipalities;

AND WHEREAS current available programs such as “grant in aid” or the Prairie Grain Road Program do not address the issue of reconstruction and the upgrading of these provincial highways passing through urban centres;

AND WHEREAS urban municipalities cannot address these road and traffic issues on their own since it is out of their jurisdiction;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to address urban Provincial highway issues by setting aside sufficient funds annually specifically geared for urban highway renewal, reconstruction and upgrading in the smaller urban centres of Manitoba.

AMM Resolution Number 40- 2003

Topic: Restricting Re-issuance of Licenses

Sponsor: City of Portage la Prairie (Central District)

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation, Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation

WHEREAS municipalities have enacted legislation to provide parking and municipal traffic control, including the right and responsibility to establish penalties for timed parking, location of available public parking, etc.;

AND WHEREAS some offenders do not adhere to their legal responsibility of paying penalties for infractions, which cumulatively may become a substantial sum of money to the municipality;

AND WHEREAS the methods of recovery available under current legislation are expensive and time consuming, particularly since each claim may be of a relatively small amount;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to enact legislation to restrict the re-issuance of personal or vehicle licenses until restitution for parking and traffic violations within the municipality has been made.

AMM Resolution Number 21- 2001

Topic: VIA Rail Service

Sponsor: Town of Churchill (Northern District)

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation, Transport Canada

WHEREAS rail access to and from the Town of Churchill is an essential mode of transportation;

AND WHEREAS rail transportation of freight, both perishable and non-perishable goods, is vital to the re-supply of the Town of Churchill;

AND WHEREAS rail transportation of tourists into the Town of Churchill is vital for the continued economic development of the town;

AND WHEREAS rail service is the economic lifeline for many communities, which include the transportation of passengers and goods to and from communities, and directly encourages the tourism sector in Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS the condition of VIA Rail train cars is below standard for many rural and northern Manitoba communities;

AND WHEREAS the customer service that is provided to rail passengers is not of an acceptable standard and there is sufficient documented proof that VIA Rail is unwilling to remedy the problems that plague this rail service;

AND WHEREAS the cost of rail travel has increased steadily over the past five years for most remote and northern Manitoba communities having a negative impact on their ability to conduct business;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM petition both VIA Rail Canada and the provincial and federal ministers of transportation to improve passenger service into northern and remote Manitoba communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Association of Manitoba Municipalities petition VIA Rail Canada and the provincial and federal ministers of transportation to improve the condition of the passenger cars, improve customer service, and reduce and stabilize the cost of transporting people and goods into northern and remote Canadian municipalities.

AMM Resolution Number 83- 2001

Topic: Maintenance of Provincial Gravel Roads

Sponsor: RM of Morris, RM of Macdonald (Central District)

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation

WHEREAS the Province is responsible for maintaining provincial roads;

AND WHEREAS Manitoba Highways has not provided adequate maintenance to provincial roads to the point where those roads have become impassable at various times;

AND WHEREAS the provincial gravel roads are often impassable at certain times of the year;

AND WHEREAS municipal roads take added traffic because provincial roads are in such poor condition;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province to maintain provincial gravel roads to a standard that would allow greater use on a year-round basis.

AMM Resolution Number 17- 2001

Topic: Winter Road to Nunavut

Sponsor: Town of Leaf Rapids (Northern District)

Department: Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation, Transport Canada

WHEREAS the road system plays a crucial role in the province of Manitoba's economic development including Northern Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS some northern communities and natural resources are not currently accessible by road;

AND WHEREAS the economic vitality of Northern Manitoba is dependent on forestry and mining industries;

AND WHEREAS a direct transportation link from Northern Manitoba to Nunavut would open up new trade opportunities due to shorter distances;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Minister of Transportation and Government Services and the federal government to provide a winter road system throughout Northern Manitoba to Nunavut.