



ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA MUNICIPALITIES

MEETING WITH

Honourable Bill Blaikie
Minister of Conservation

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Executive Summary

Departmental Issues

1. Household Hazardous Waste and Electronic Waste Programs

- AMM has long been advocating for a permanent program to deal with these two waste streams as they pose serious environmental liabilities when dumped in municipal landfills.
- The AMM has appreciated the commitment in recent years to temporary drop off sites and one day round ups, as this has led to the proper disposal or reuse of some of these materials, and diverted them from landfills.
- Last year 750,000 kilograms of material was dropped off at 30 collection events and diverted from landfills showing the tremendous need for a permanent solution.
- AMM is pleased with recent progress however it is critically important that AMM is consulted prior to the completion and approval of any plan. This is particularly important for these plans as there will be multiple plans and multiple stewards, with some directly impacting municipalities and others working on the periphery.
- AMM can also play a valuable role in helping communicate the municipal impact of new plans to our membership which will be critically important as these streams are a departure from the norm for our members.

Therefore, the AMM looks forward to working with the province and the industry groups in the development of the plans to ensure they meet the needs of all stakeholders.

2. Waste Reduction and Recycling Support Levy

- An issue that remains an irritant for many of our members is the Waste Reduction and Recycling support levy.
- The AMM understands the desire to create incentives to promote recycling however it is critical that the system does not punish those municipalities that are behind the curve on recycling efforts, which is our concern with the structure of the levy.

- A preferred approach would be to target those municipalities that have below average programs and work with them to make improvements.
- AMM would also like to ensure it is consulted on how to allocate the current 20 percent that is being directed to Green Manitoba for household hazardous waste and electronic waste management once the new industry groups are all fully operational.

Therefore, the AMM would like to see the Waste Reduction and Recycling Support Levy enhanced to ensure all municipalities are supported in efforts to improve recycling systems.

3. Crown Lands and Municipal Development

- An issue that has been percolating for some time with municipalities and was raised most recently at our annual convention is the connection between crown lands and municipalities.
- Manitoba Crown Lands is a significant developer of crown land in Manitoba and in many cases this development is occurring within a municipality where councils have established development standards to ensure sustainable growth.
- Our concern is that there is no ability for municipalities to ensure Manitoba Crown Lands adhere to the same rules as other developers in a municipality, with the end result potentially being development that fails to conform to the standard set by the municipality.
- Municipalities are also concerned that Manitoba Crown Lands takes too long to approve the transfer of property, even when all sides are in agreement. Most often municipalities are seeking the transfer for a specific project and these projects are delayed until the transfer is complete.

Therefore, the AMM requests that Manitoba Crown Lands works more cooperatively with municipalities to ensure development on crown lands is done in accordance with municipal development standards and improves the timelines for transferring property to municipalities.

4. Contaminated Sites

- It is critical to ensure sufficient mechanisms are in place to eliminate the environmental and public health concerns associated with all contaminated and impacted mine and fuel storage sites in this province.
- The AMM was pleased that the Provincial Government set aside \$39 million for environmental stewardship as part of a larger \$165 million program to address government-owned sites and orphaned or abandoned sites.
- The AMM sees the completion of the contaminated site inventory available on the government website as an important first step in the cleanup effort; however the Province must now consider whether its current funding commitment is sufficient to have substantial immediate and long-term impacts on the remediation of contaminated sites.
- Where the responsible company can be identified, municipalities agree with legislated measures that hold these companies accountable for the required remediation. Furthermore, the addition of a set timeline for conducting this work would accelerate the required works.
- Allowing these sites to remain contaminated indefinitely deprives communities of the opportunity to pursue alternative uses for the location in question.
- Although the Province has made important strides in addressing contaminated sites in Manitoba, this effort would benefit from additional long-term funding and further criteria for remediation by private companies.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to ensure that sufficient funding is available for required contaminated site remediation and to legislate a timeline for private companies to complete necessary remediation work.

5. Beaver Management Program

- Beavers are incredibly destructive and in many areas of the province pose a real threat to municipal infrastructure and there is little doubt that it is far more cost effective to invest money into preventing damage than to try to rebuild roads and bridges that are damaged due to beavers.

- AMM appreciates the recent commitment from the Province to increase the tag amount available per beaver to \$20 as we see this as a further incentive to manage these problem animals. The reality remains however that without sustained increased funding the gains made this year will be lost in future years.
- Many municipalities, and certainly those in areas with the greatest beaver population, are offering additional financial incentives over and above the provincial rate in hopes of increasing trapping numbers.
- AMM certainly appreciates the difficulty your department has in trying to secure additional funding for the program and is happy to work with your department to strengthen the program in an effort to both secure additional funding and maximize the limited resources available.

Therefore, the AMM would like to see additional resources allocated to the beaver management program and would like to work with the department to strengthen the program to help maximize resources.

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.
- The core challenges facing municipalities have become overwhelming, and the lead up to this year's provincial election provides an opportunity for all political parties, candidates and citizens to engage in a thoughtful discussion about how these challenges should be addressed.
- 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.
- The AMM is therefore asking every political party to make municipal funding a top priority for this year's provincial election. Now is the time for each party to lay out its vision for the future of municipal government in Manitoba and how these core challenges can be addressed. The health of our communities is at stake.

Therefore, the AMM would like to see a commitment from each political party to:

- 1. Make a greater investment in municipal infrastructure**
- 2. End the downloading of responsibilities to municipalities and require that any new mandates come with new funding**
- 3. Provide new growth revenues to municipalities**

Departmental Issues

1. Household Hazardous Waste and Electronic Waste Programs

A long standing issue for municipalities is the proper disposal of household hazardous and electronic waste. AMM has long been advocating for a permanent program to deal with these two waste streams, as they pose serious environmental liabilities when dumped in municipal landfills.

The AMM has appreciated the commitment in recent years to temporary drop off sites and one day round ups, as this has led to the proper disposal or reuse of some of these materials, and diverted them from landfills. Last year 750,000 kilograms of material was dropped off at 30 collection events and diverted from landfills. The tremendous demand exhibited for these temporary programs only further highlights the need for a permanent solution.

The AMM was pleased to see progress since the commitment in last year's Throne Speech to move forward with the extended producer responsibility model in the coming year for these waste streams. The regulation has been published and work is well underway to have programs completed and ready to roll out.

It is critically important that AMM is consulted throughout the process and prior to the completion and approval of any plan. AMM was pleased with the process used in the development of the printed paper and packaging plan and would like to see this process duplicated for future waste streams. This is critically important for household hazardous waste and electronic waste plans as there will be multiple plans and multiple stewards, with some directly impacting municipalities and others working on the periphery. AMM can also play a valuable role in helping communicate the municipal impact of new plans to our membership. This will be critically important as these streams are a departure from the norm for our members.

Therefore, the AMM looks forward to working with the province and the industry groups in the development of the plans to ensure they meet the needs of all stakeholders.

2. Waste Reduction and Recycling Support Levy

An issue that remains an irritant for many of our members is the Waste Reduction and Recycling support levy. AMM certainly appreciates the efforts your department has made to provide information to municipalities on the details of the levy.

The AMM understands the desire to create incentives to promote recycling however it is critical that the system does not punish those municipalities that are behind the curve on recycling efforts. The reality is that the levy may in fact become a disincentive to improve recycling programs by siphoning needed dollars out of the community. A better approach would be to target those municipalities that have below average programs and work with them to make improvements.

AMM was concerned when the levy was introduced as there was no prior consultation and no discussion on its potential impact to our membership. It will be necessary to discuss what is done with the current 20 percent that is being directed to Green Manitoba for household hazardous waste and electronic waste management once the new industry groups are all fully operational.

Therefore, the AMM would like to see the Waste Reduction and Recycling Support Levy enhanced to ensure all municipalities are supported in efforts to improve recycling systems.

3. Crown Lands and Municipal Development

An issue that has been percolating for some time with municipalities and was raised most recently at our annual convention is the connection between crown lands and municipalities. In many ways Manitoba Crown Lands could be viewed as a municipal neighbour and as such it is important to ensure cooperation. Unfortunately municipalities are concerned when crown land development runs contrary to municipal development goals and also when land transfer agreements are tied up preventing possible development opportunities.

Manitoba Crown Lands is a significant developer of crown land in Manitoba and in many cases this development is occurring within a municipality. Municipalities have established municipal development standards to which all development is held within their municipality to ensure sustainable growth. Our concern is that there is no ability for municipalities to ensure Manitoba Crown Lands adhere to the same rules as other developers in a municipality. The end result is potentially development that fails to conform to the standard set by the municipality. A lot of effort has gone into ensuring municipal development planning is first rate and it is critical that this is not undermined by Manitoba Crown Lands working outside the system.

Municipalities are also concerned that Manitoba Crown Lands takes too long to approve the transfer of property, even when all sides are in agreement. We often hear from municipalities that have become frustrated with the transfer process. Most often municipalities are seeking the transfer for a specific project and these projects are delayed until the transfer is complete.

Therefore, the AMM requests that Manitoba Crown Lands works more cooperatively with municipalities to ensure development on crown lands is done in accordance with municipal development standards and improves the timelines for transferring property to municipalities.

4. Contaminated Sites

Across Manitoba, municipalities are facing environmental and health hazards as a result of contaminated sites in their communities. While the Province has committed funding to the remediation of selected sites which will result in considerable environmental benefits for the affected communities, the problem of the high cost of remediation remains. Although brownfields are often more efficient sites for development due to their proximity to existing infrastructure, the remediation costs often present an overwhelming obstacle to restoring these sites in a timely manner. Therefore, there is a critical need to ensure sufficient mechanisms are in place to eliminate the environmental and public health concerns associated with all contaminated and impacted mine and fuel storage sites in this province.

The AMM was pleased that the Provincial Government set aside \$39 million for environmental stewardship as part of a larger \$165 million program to address government-owned sites and orphaned or abandoned sites. Projects such as the brownfield redevelopment in Brandon offer a valuable asset to the community while improving population and environmental health. As well, municipalities are looking forward to the benefits that will accrue as a result of the recent commitment of \$19 million to rehabilitate selected orphaned and abandoned mines over a two year period.

The AMM is pleased the Province has now developed an inventory of sites which is published on the government website and is moving forward with remediation efforts. Now that the inventory is complete and the extent of contamination can be fully assessed, the Province must consider whether its current funding commitment is sufficient to have substantial immediate and long-term impacts on the remediation of contaminated sites.

Orphaned and abandoned sites are a major problem and although the Province is clearly engaged in moving its remediation efforts forward, municipalities have also identified other opportunities to assist in remediation. Where the responsible company can be identified, municipalities agree with legislated measures that hold these companies accountable for the required remediation. Furthermore, the addition of a set timeline for conducting this work would accelerate the required works. In some cases, companies only remove the superficial structures while leaving the soil contaminated, since there is a considerable cost associated with its removal. These companies are not concerned that the property cannot be sold and are willing to incur the long-term costs of holding the property rather than undertaking the necessary remediation and soil testing. Such brownfields are often located on prime real estate and once the soil is appropriately restored, they would be optimal locations for future development. Allowing these sites to remain contaminated indefinitely deprives communities of the opportunity to pursue alternative uses for the location in question. For this reason, the AMM membership passed a resolution at the 2008 Convention recommending a legislated timeline for remediation of three years after the closure or abandonment of the facility. This recommendation allows a reasonable timeframe for companies to plan for and implement the required works to restore the site to a usable condition.

Although the Province has made important strides in addressing contaminated sites in Manitoba, this effort would benefit from additional long-term funding and further criteria for remediation by private companies.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to ensure that sufficient funding is available for required contaminated site remediation and to legislate a timeline for private companies to complete necessary remediation work.

5. Beaver Management Program

Beavers have been on the municipal agenda for almost as long as there have been municipalities. Beavers are incredibly destructive and in many areas of the province pose a real threat to municipal infrastructure.

AMM appreciates the recent commitment from the Province to increase the tag amount available per beaver to \$20 as we see this as a further incentive to manage these problem animals. The reality remains however that without sustained increased funding the gains made this year will be lost in future years.

It is important to note municipalities are not simply asking the Province to fix this issue. Many municipalities, and certainly those with the greatest beaver populations, place an additional incentive for trappers over and above the Provincial amount. Municipalities understand the importance of this issue and are taking on a financial role to help remedy the situation.

AMM certainly appreciates the difficulty your department has in trying to secure additional funding for the program and is happy to work with your department to strengthen the program in an effort to both secure additional funding and maximize the limited resources available.

Therefore, the AMM would like to see additional resources allocated to the beaver management program and would like to work with the department to strengthen the program to help maximize resources.

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. Certainly 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. Every day 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.

The lead up to this year's provincial election provides an opportunity for all political parties, candidates and citizens to engage in a thoughtful discussion about how these core challenges should be addressed.

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 was estimated in 2007 to be in excess of \$123 billion for current needs. Most alarming is how quickly the deficit has been compounding, as it has doubled over the previous 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 for existing infrastructure is over \$7.5 billion, putting the total municipal deficit for existing infrastructure 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 2008 were just over \$760,000,000.³

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

¹ Mirza, Saeed, "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 2008 – Municipalities of the Province of Manitoba", P.17

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 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 traveling 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 167 boil water advisories in Manitoba, many in Manitoba municipalities.⁶ This means today, thousands of Manitobans do not have access to safe drinking water when they turn on

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" – October 19th, 2010

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

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, where they raise their families, where they work and for many 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 leave 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

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

government has completely forgotten about municipalities, but rather that despite these efforts municipalities still face enormous challenges and more is needed.

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.

The reality is the property taxation system cannot meet the new demands facing municipalities. Municipalities have been increasing taxes to try to meet these demands however they are falling further and further behind. Over the last 10 years municipalities outside the City of Winnipeg have increased their own taxes levied by over 4 percent a year on average. In 2009 only 13 municipalities outside Winnipeg decreased taxes, while 183 increased taxes, 22 municipalities by over 10 percent. Every year municipalities are going to citizens in their communities and asking them for more and more, yet the infrastructure deficit and budgetary demands continue to rise.

A new approach is needed, and for this reason we are advocating for 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 revenue 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 by corresponding financial support.

The sad reality is that while the Province of Manitoba has been a leader 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.

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

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.

The AMM is therefore asking every political party to make municipal funding a top priority for this year's provincial election. Now is the time for each party to lay out its vision for the future of municipal government in Manitoba and how these core challenges can be addressed. The health of our communities is at stake.

Therefore, the AMM would like to see a commitment from each political party to:

- 1. Make a greater investment in municipal infrastructure**
- 2. End the downloading of responsibilities to municipalities and require that any new mandates come with new funding**
- 3. Provide new growth revenues to municipalities**

Appendix A – Active Resolutions

AMM Resolution Number 13 - 2010

Topic: Electronic Waste Recycling

Sponsor: Town of Virden (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS an electronic waste recycling program would help divert used electronics from municipal landfills where they pose environmental concerns;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Province of Manitoba to bring in point of sale fees to cover the direct cost of recycling electronic waste.

AMM Resolution Number 12 - 2010

Topic: Amend the Waste Reduction and Recycling Support Levy

Sponsor: Town of The Pas (Northern District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS in July 2009, Manitoba introduced the Waste Reduction and Recycling Support (WRARS) Levy of \$10 per tonne on waste disposed at Manitoba landfills;

AND WHEREAS the levy was intended to help discourage waste generation and encourage increased recycling and waste diversion activities province-wide;

AND WHEREAS 80% of the revenue collected for the levy is to be rebated to municipalities to further promote recycling in Manitoba with the remainder of the funding to be used to support e-waste and household hazardous waste management programs;

AND WHEREAS Class 1 landfills are required to purchase a scale to measure waste by weight in order to calculate the WRARS levy;

AND WHEREAS the rebate under the WRARS program is based on the total eligible recycling tonnage reported by the municipality;

AND WHEREAS in some cases the rebate will not cover the costs for the implementation and operation requirements under the WRARS program;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Province of Manitoba to rework the rebate calculation to enable municipalities to recoup costs associated with the implementation of the program.

AMM Resolution Number 11 - 2010

Topic: Land Transfer Agreements

Sponsor: RM of Alexander (Eastern District); RM of Morton (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS Manitoba Crown Lands is a significant owner of property within the Province of Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS there are many development opportunities presented to municipalities on Crown land or involving the use of Crown-owned property;

AND WHEREAS concluding a land transfer agreement with Manitoba Crown Lands can take years, even when all parties have come to a full agreement;

AND WHEREAS such delays simply eliminate the desire of a developer to invest in the municipality;

AND WHEREAS in some cases, obtaining a response from Manitoba Crown Lands with respect to the rationale for a delay is not possible;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Province of Manitoba to have Manitoba Crown Lands respond to land transfer agreements within a 60 day period.

AMM Resolution Number 10 - 2010

Topic: Crown Land Subdivisions

Sponsor: RM of Alexander (Eastern District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS Manitoba Crown Lands is a significant developer of property within the Province of Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS municipalities have established municipal development standards which are intended to apply equally to all subdivision plans;

AND WHEREAS the AMM has created a generic development agreement which each municipality edits to meet their specific requirements;

AND WHEREAS each development agreement requires an assessment that includes plans prepared by a certified engineer and submitted to the municipality for approval, whether by its own personnel or contract personnel acting on behalf of the municipality;

AND WHEREAS each development agreement requires the developer to provide certain financial guarantees in order for the municipality to undertake remedial action to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the development agreement;

AND WHEREAS Manitoba Crown Lands has developed Crown property for the purposes of lease or sale while ignoring the requirements placed on the developer by the municipality in which these developments have taken place;

AND WHEREAS Manitoba Crown Lands has recently agreed to follow the existing provincial and municipal rules for the creation of subdivision plans;

AND WHEREAS Manitoba Crown Lands holds the position that they are not necessarily subject to the terms and conditions of the development agreement or the performance standards as required by the municipality;

AND WHEREAS developments not meeting the performance standards of the municipality eventually become the responsibility of the municipality to address;

AND WHEREAS ensuring the performance standards are met is often a significant cost to the property owner or the municipality;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Province of Manitoba to have Manitoba Crown Lands be held to the same standard of performance as other land developers, whether public or private, in Manitoba.

AMM Resolution Number 09 - 2010

Topic: Sewage Ejectors for New Construction

Sponsor: RM of Hamiota (No District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba has approved Regulation No. MR 60/2010 to amend the Onsite Wastewater Management Systems Regulation;

AND WHEREAS the amended regulation does not allow consideration for the installation of a sewage ejection system for new construction;

AND WHEREAS there are soil conditions throughout Manitoba that are better suited for sewage ejectors than septic fields;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Provincial Government to consider allowing the use of sewage ejector systems for new construction where appropriate soil conditions exist.

AMM Resolution Number 08- 2010

Topic: Sewage Ejector – Caveat to Acquire 10 Acre Minimum

Sponsor: RM of Morton (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba has amended some of the rules governing existing sewage ejectors and made them more flexible;

AND WHEREAS the regulation maintains the requirement that any transfer of ownership under 10 acres must eliminate the use of the ejector;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Province of Manitoba to allow the property owner to sign a caveat with adjacent landowners to acquire the 10 acre minimum requirement imposed by this legislation.

AMM Resolution Number 07 - 2010

Topic: Reinstating Use of Strychnine

Sponsor: RM of Morton (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS there is an abundance of gophers;

AND WHEREAS many of the methods of control have not been effective;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Saskatchewan was approved to use strychnine on an emergency basis;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Province of Manitoba to reinstate the restricted use of 2 percent strychnine as a rodent control.

AMM Resolution Number 06 - 2010

Topic: Conservation Agreements

Sponsor: RM of Hamiota (Midwestern District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS it is common practice in Manitoba for conservation organizations to work cooperatively with private landowners to protect and preserve wetlands;

AND WHEREAS these cooperative efforts to protect and preserve wetlands are registered by agreement against the title of property;

AND WHEREAS the municipality is notified upon completion of the agreement but at no time in advance is anyone who may be impacted, including neighbouring properties and other government agencies, notified that such an agreement is being negotiated;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Province of Manitoba to require conservation groups to circulate their intent to enter into agreements with private landowners to protect and preserve wetlands to neighbouring landowners, municipalities, utility companies and government agencies with an interest.

AMM Resolution Number 05 - 2010

Topic: Beaver Management

Sponsor: RM of Fisher (Interlake District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS beavers can cause serious damage to infrastructure;

AND WHEREAS Manitoba Conservation in part manages beaver populations by requiring trapping licences and permits;

AND WHEREAS ongoing costs associated with trapping beavers and removal of dams are beyond the financial resources of some municipalities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Province of Manitoba to cost share 50/50 the expenses for removal of beaver dams and cleanout of blocked culverts on municipal property;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Province of Manitoba assume all costs associated with the removal of problem beavers and dams on Crown Lands.

AMM Resolution Number 11 - 2009

Topic: Waste Reduction and Recycling Support Levy

Sponsor: RM of Morris (Central District); RM of Argyle (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS the Province has amended The Waste Reduction and Prevention Act to implement the Waste Reduction and Recycling Support Levy at all landfills;

AND WHEREAS the new levy is to encourage sustainable waste management practices and improve waste diversion activities such as recycling and composting;

AND WHEREAS the total tonnage of waste disposed at the nuisance grounds will greatly outweigh the tonnage of recycling;

AND WHEREAS this will result in substantial additional costs to Manitoba municipalities;

AND WHEREAS municipalities already contribute substantial amounts of money to run recycling programs and do not have surplus funds to subsidize the provincial household hazardous waste and electronic waste collection programs and other waste diversion initiatives;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to rescind the Waste Reduction and Recycling Support Levy.

AMM Resolution Number 66 - 2008

Topic: Used Shingles

Sponsor: RM of Ste. Anne (Eastern District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS many roofs in Manitoba are built with asphalt shingles, whose life expectancy is only a few decades;

AND WHEREAS when shingles are replaced the discarded ones end up in landfills;

AND WHEREAS used shingles may have value in being converted to road material;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to find a better alternative than landfills for used shingles.

AMM Resolution Number 21 - 2008

Topic: Hog Moratorium

Sponsor: RM of Rhineland (Central District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives

WHEREAS the Minister of Conservation recently legislated a moratorium regarding the expansion of the hog industry in a large area of eastern and central Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS the Province has singled out the hog industry;

AND WHEREAS the Clean Environment Commission (CEC) report on the issue did not recommend a continuation of the hog moratorium;

AND WHEREAS the livestock industry should be subjected to farming policies that are viable, environmentally sustainable and socially responsible; i.e. based on scientific principles and objective criteria;

AND WHEREAS the hog industry is making a significant contribution to the rural economy and the moratorium undermines this contribution and stifles community growth;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to rescind the hog moratorium legislation and enforce standards for the livestock industry that are based on sound agronomic and environmental policies and that are socially responsible.

AMM Resolution Number 20 - 2008

Topic: Timeline to Remediate Properties

Sponsor: Town of Altona (Central District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS there are abandoned gas stations and other brownfields located in numerous communities in Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS the companies that own the properties often clear the surface, however do not remediate the contaminated lands;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to pass legislation that would require the owners of such properties to conduct remediation within three years of closure or abandonment of the facility.

AMM Resolution Number 19 - 2008

Topic: Rate Increase for Problem Beaver Removal

Sponsor: RM of Whitemouth (Eastern District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to increase rates for problem beaver removal.

AMM Resolution Number 18 - 2008

Topic: Provincial Park Services

Sponsor: Town of Winnipeg Beach (Interlake District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS municipalities provide fire protection services, first responder services and garbage disposal services to Provincial parks;

AND WHEREAS municipalities receive no tax revenue for the provision of these services to Provincial parks;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to provide adequate compensation to municipalities that fairly reflects the costs incurred to provide services to Provincial parks.

AMM Resolution Number 17 - 2008

Topic: Increased Funding for Recycling

Sponsor: Town of The Pas (Northern District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS funding must be increased to sustain municipal recycling programs as municipalities do not have surplus funds to subsidize local recycling programs;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to increase the funding formula to provide operating revenue to sustain recycling programs, thereby relieving the financial burden on municipal ratepayers.

AMM Resolution Number 16 - 2008

Topic: Recycling Programs

Sponsor: Town of The Pas (Northern District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation, Environment Canada

WHEREAS municipalities have taken a lead role in supporting green communities and addressing waste reduction by actively promoting, participating in and subsidizing recycling programs;

AND WHEREAS the costs for shipping recycling materials have increased significantly over the past few years;

AND WHEREAS the Provincial Government is moving forward with new industry-led stewardship programs, however some programs are not yet in place;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to fast track the implementation of new industry-led programs.

AMM Resolution Number 15 - 2008

Topic: Education Program for Recycling

Sponsor: RM of Kelsey (Northern District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to restructure and improve an educational program informing the general public of the benefits of recycling.

AMM Resolution Number 14 - 2008

Topic: Biodegradable and Reusable Shopping Bags

Sponsor: RM of Kelsey (Northern District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS many businesses, especially retail stores, use plastic bags for customer purchases;

AND WHEREAS many of these plastic bags end up in local landfill sites because there is no system to recycle them;

AND WHEREAS they become a wind blown nuisance for municipalities to clean up;

AND WHEREAS plastic bags take many years to decompose;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to legislate that retailers use biodegradable or reusable carry out bags for consumers and eliminate the current use of plastic bags.

AMM Resolution Number 32 - 2007

Topic: Recycling for Air Hoses

Sponsor: Town of Winnipeg Beach (Interlake District); RM of Glenwood (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS air hoses for seeder and fertilizer applicators wear out and must be disposed of;

AND WHEREAS currently there is not an environmentally friendly disposal option;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to allow this type of air hose to be accepted at chemical container depots and be recycled accordingly.

AMM Resolution Number 38 - 2006

Topic: Review of Environmental Levy Rates

Sponsor: City of Dauphin (Parkland District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS the cost of recycling has increased significantly since the levies were first introduced;

AND WHEREAS currently there are no levies on glass, newspapers, magazines and commercial cardboard;

AND WHEREAS such levies are used in other Canadian provinces;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to review the Environmental Levies charged to corporations and consumers in order to make recycling viable.

AMM Resolution Number 10 - 2006

Topic: Beaver Control Management Program

Sponsor: RM of Rosburn (Midwestern District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS municipalities, particularly those on the peripheries of Federal and Provincial Parks, are constantly and continuously burdened by problem beavers, both in terms of finances and work time of their maintenance personnel;

AND WHEREAS the Department of Conservation does not have a beaver management program in effect within the provincially owned Crown lands;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial and Federal Governments to implement a long term and effective beaver control/management program within all Federal and Provincial Crown lands.

AMM Resolution Number 08 - 2006

Topic: Class 3 & 4 Water Plant Operators

Sponsor:

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS a number of small urban communities currently operate lime soda ash filtering water plants;

AND WHEREAS the complexity of the chemical process involved in the operation of lime soda ash plants has resulted in many of the facilities being designated as Class 3 or Class 4 water treatment facilities as per provincial legislation;

AND WHEREAS municipal employees have expertise and ability in operating lime soda ash plants sufficient to create consistent potable water for communities but may not have the educational and theoretical background to pass certification exams;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to ensure that training beyond courses designed to pass certification exams be offered so that Class 3 or Class 4 water plant operators can obtain sufficient background and knowledge to effectively and efficiently operate the facilities.

AMM Resolution Number 07 - 2006

Topic: Electronic Waste Disposal Program

Sponsor: City of Dauphin (Parkland District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS the AMM lobbied the Provincial Government in 2004 to initiate a program for the disposal of electronic waste;

AND WHEREAS the Minister of Conservation responded that the Province is aware of the issues associated with electronic waste; is examining options for management of these types of toxic waste; and will seek partners to support the collection of waste electronics in the future;

AND WHEREAS disposal of electronic waste is increasing at landfill sites;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government for an update on the collection of electronic waste;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the program for the disposal of electronic waste be expanded to include costs borne by municipalities to transport the collected electronic waste.

AMM Resolution Number 69 - 2005

Topic: Permanent Household Hazardous Waste Program

Sponsor: RM of Tache (Eastern District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to establish an effective program to recycle paint products, glycols as well as electronic waste material so as to remove these products from local landfill sites.

AMM Resolution Number 61 - 2005

Topic: Water on Crown Land

Sponsor: RM of Fisher

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS water flowing from crown land and wildlife management areas is causing flooding problems on adjacent land;

AND WHEREAS costs associated with control of large volumes of water from marginal crown land and wildlife management areas is causing a financial hardship for those municipalities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to assume responsibility for water flowing from crown land and wildlife management areas.

AMM Resolution Number 15 - 2005

Topic: Crown Land Subsidies

Sponsor: RM of Piney (Eastern District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS municipalities have a substantial amount of crown lands within their jurisdiction;

AND WHEREAS municipal roads are utilized to access these crown lands by timber operations, mining industries, hunters, fishers and tourists;

AND WHEREAS the increased use by these outside sources requires extensive maintenance of municipal roads thereby causing a financial burden to the municipalities' ratepayers;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba is collecting various fees from the timber operators, the mining industry, hunters and fishers;

AND WHEREAS the municipalities do not receive any financial benefits from these unleased crown lands;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to subsidize municipalities having crown lands within their jurisdiction with an annual Grant-in-Lieu of taxes in the amount of fifty cents per acre.

AMM Resolution Number 08 - 2005

Topic: Additional Inspectors

Sponsor: RM of Shoal Lake (Midwestern District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS under the new Planning Act, the Province will assume responsibility for all matters relating to pollution with livestock operations;

AND WHEREAS at present there is a lack of inspection and enforcement of regulations by Provincial inspectors due in large part to the shortage of inspectors;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to immediately hire additional inspectors to monitor and inspect all livestock operations in order to lessen infractions or alleged infractions of the provincial regulations.

AMM Resolution Number 12 - 2004

Topic: Clean Up of Contaminated Sites

Sponsor: Town of Lynn Lake (Northern District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS numerous mining communities within the Province of Manitoba are left with environmental hazards from mine tailings and abandoned mine sites when mines are closed;

AND WHEREAS the environmental concerns for these areas are a high priority for the health and well-being of the communities and the Province as a whole;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba has committed to cleaning up the environment;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Provincial Government to take a pro-active stance with the environmental remediation of these contaminated sites by provision of funding and the development of a strategy to deal with site remediation in a timely fashion.

AMM Resolution Number 44 - 2001

Topic: Contaminated Sites

Sponsor: RM of Woodworth (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Conservation

WHEREAS certain properties which were once operated as service stations or businesses which marketed petroleum products using underground tanks are now abandoned;

AND WHEREAS the properties are left without owners who can be held responsible for maintenance, cleanup and remediation costs;

AND WHEREAS these contaminated sites then fall into arrears of taxes, are subsequently offered for sale at a tax sale, are not purchased because of the perceived risk of contamination and the potential cost of initial site cleanup and testing, and thus remain on the tax rolls, revolving through the tax sale process indefinitely, accruing arrears of taxes and costs annually, all the while becoming more unsightly;

AND WHEREAS the Contaminated Sites Remediation Act does not address remediation of sites where the owners/contaminators are deceased;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Province of Manitoba to ensure that The Contaminated Sites Remediation Act be amended to define remediation to include all actions required to restore the site to its original state, which includes removal of all foreign materials and equipment and final site testing;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the responsibility for the amended remediation of such sites be the responsibility of Manitoba Conservation.