



Meeting with
Honourable Christine Melnick
Minister of Water Stewardship

February 26, 2009

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Executive Summary

Departmental Issues

1. Water and Land Use Planning

- The implementation of *The Water Protection Act* and the recent review of *The Planning Act* both have major consequences for municipal planning processes.
- The primary municipal concern with *The Water Protection Act* is that it provides little detail regarding any additional financial or other responsibilities municipalities will be expected to bear.
- The need to preserve local authority was a key factor for the AMM during the review of *The Planning Act* and the new water management framework must respect these established processes.
- The need for coordination of Provincial policy and legislation is also apparent as the Province moves forward with the review of the Provincial Land Use Policies (PLUP).
- Amending and updating this regulation offers an opportunity to articulate that land use and water resource planning are complementary processes.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to promote greater coordination as new land and water planning legislation and policies are implemented.

2. CD Framework Document and Funding

- Since the discussion document *Framework for the Future* was announced, there has been significant progress toward crafting a new vision document that makes sense for municipalities, conservation districts and the Province.
- The consultation involving the AMM, the Manitoba Conservation Districts Association and Water Stewardship has been an extremely beneficial process and sets a valuable precedent for future collaborations between our organizations.
- Municipalities appreciate the Province's further commitment to develop a new funding allocation formula, since the proposal in *Framework for the Future* raised numerous concerns.
- Although the overall budget for the conservation district program has increased in recent years, this funding has largely been aimed at accommodating the newly established and expanded conservation districts.
- It does not consider the growing responsibilities conservation districts are expected to fulfill, including the requirement to develop and implement integrated watershed management plans.
- The Province has expressed support for the successful conservation district model on numerous occasions and it is time to substantiate this by allocating sufficient funding.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to increase overall funding for the conservation districts program and to develop a funding formula that equitably distributes funding to each conservation district.

3. Funding for Water Initiatives

- Each legislated demand for additional licensing or certification requires a costly and time consuming commitment from municipalities.
- For instance, the need for engineering assessments on water treatment facilities consumes a significant proportion of a utility's budget when municipalities already struggle to raise the funds required for these infrastructure investments.
- The need for additional funding is particularly acute in municipalities under long-standing boil water orders and the Province has a responsibility to address the needs of these municipalities.
- The AMM is also seeking the establishment of a tripartite funding program to replace the expired National Water Supply Expansion Program.
- As well, the certification of water and wastewater operators is a prime example of existing constraints beyond the financial, as there are insufficient training opportunities available in Manitoba.
- The Province must consider the financial feasibility of the new legislation and be prepared to work with municipalities to fulfill these requirements.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to provide sufficient funding for necessary water and wastewater treatment initiatives.

4. Provincial Flood Proofing Program

- Some areas experience the same flooding on a regular basis, yet municipalities lack the resources to construct sufficient dykes and other measures to avoid these repeated events.
- The AMM appreciates that DFA was designed to assist in particular circumstances, yet it demonstrates that the available programming is not sufficiently responsive to flooding problems in Manitoba.
- The need for additional flood protection is exacerbated by rail line abandonment, since many rail beds act as dykes that protect communities against high water levels.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to invest in a flood control and protection program that would be applicable throughout Manitoba.

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 increase in drainage funding in the 2008 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 Provincial 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 water management plan and allocate sufficient resources to drainage construction and maintenance throughout Manitoba.

General Issues

1. Alternate Revenues for Municipalities and Infrastructure Investment

- Today's municipal council must balance community economic development, land use planning and infrastructure renewal and development with an eroding tax base and an increased reliance on application-based grants.
- The message the AMM is hoping to convey is not that the provincial or federal government has completely forgotten about municipalities, but rather that despite their efforts municipalities still face enormous challenges and more is needed.
- A new approach is needed, and for this reason we are asking the Province of Manitoba to share one percent of the Provincial Sales Tax with municipalities for infrastructure. This will provide municipalities with in excess of \$200 million a year.
- What should not be lost is the positive impact infrastructure investment would have for the provincial and national economy.
- A study by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities 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.
- Municipalities are not looking for new revenue sources to store money away for a rainy day. The storm has arrived.

- Providing municipalities with new revenue sources will not only begin to address the growing infrastructure deficit, but will help build and strengthen our economy.
- 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.

Therefore the AMM is asking the Province to undertake a serious review of the roles, responsibilities and resources of municipal government in Manitoba and in the short term provide municipalities with one percent of the current PST to help address the growing municipal infrastructure deficit.

Departmental Issues

1. Water and Land Use Planning

The implementation of *The Water Protection Act* and the recent review of *The Planning Act* both have major consequences for municipal planning processes. Although the AMM supports the basic principles of each act due to the benefits of implementing strategic long-term land use planning and water resource management, concerns remain in terms of the interaction between the two acts and the extent municipalities are affected. Municipalities are still working to adjust their planning efforts to comply with the legislation, yet they continue to lack the information required to complete these processes. The Province must work with municipalities to ensure that water and land use planning move forward in a coordinated manner in order for either process to function effectively.

The primary municipal concern with *The Water Protection Act* is that it provides little detail regarding any additional financial or other responsibilities municipalities will be expected to bear. The AMM agrees that a broad framework is a necessary tool in moving forward with water management objectives, however this legislation has been in place for several years without offering municipalities a clear indication of its full impact. It is evident that this legislation will change municipal planning processes but municipalities cannot move forward until this matter is resolved.

In particular, municipalities engage in land use planning at the local level and the Province's emphasis on water resources will certainly impact these processes. Municipalities can strive to coordinate land use planning with water management objectives, but this must not jeopardize local authority in land use planning decisions. The need to preserve local authority was a key factor for the AMM during the review of *The Planning Act* and the new water management framework must respect these established processes.

The need for coordination of Provincial policy and legislation is also apparent as the Province moves forward with the review of the Provincial Land Use Policies (PLUP). Amending and updating this regulation offers an opportunity to articulate that land use and water resource

planning are complementary processes. The AMM has raised this in its discussions with Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs regarding the PLUP since municipalities are prepared to work with water management agencies to accomplish shared goals. Policies developed by Water Stewardship must also reflect this important principle to further promote coordination between the two processes.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to promote greater coordination as new land and water planning legislation and policies are implemented.

2. CD Framework Document and Funding

When the Province announced its vision for the future of conservation districts in the discussion document *Framework for the Future*, municipalities were very alarmed by the proposed direction. Since that time, there has been significant progress toward crafting a vision document that makes sense for municipalities, conservation districts and the Province. The AMM appreciates the opportunity to engage in consultations with Water Stewardship to ensure that municipal interests are represented throughout the plan. This has been an extremely beneficial process and sets a valuable precedent for future collaborations between our organizations.

With the initial work on the consensus document nearing completion, it is now critical to resolve some of the outstanding issues deemed to be beyond the scope of this document. Primarily, the AMM has major concerns regarding the long-term funding structure for conservation districts. Municipalities appreciate the Province's commitment to develop a new funding formula, since the proposal in *Framework for the Future* raised numerous concerns. The AMM looks forward to participating in the development of this new funding formula since it must work for all Manitoba's conservation districts.

At the same time, for any new formula to function effectively there must be sufficient overall program funding to allow conservation districts to fulfill their new mandate. Although the overall budget for the conservation district program has increased in recent years, this funding has largely been aimed at accommodating the newly established and expanded conservation districts. It does not consider the growing responsibilities conservation districts are expected to fulfill, including the requirement to develop and implement integrated watershed management plans. The Province has repeatedly stated that water resource management is a top priority and the conservation district program budget should reflect this status. In contrast, the 2008 Budget only provided an additional \$500,000 that was allocated to either new conservation districts or to those managing provincial drainage infrastructure. Without additional resources, funding will continue to be stretched among increasing numbers of conservation districts while expectations for service delivery continue to increase.

Without sufficient funding from the Provincial Government, municipalities must absorb any cost shortages. This inappropriately places municipalities in the position of raising local taxes to fulfill provincial priorities and responsibilities. Since there has been inadequate inclusion of urban municipalities in the conservation district program, this means rural residents currently make a disproportionately large contribution to initiatives that clearly benefit all Manitobans. Although municipalities value the work of conservation districts and are committed to making a contribution, the Province must take on a greater role in funding these important projects. Allocating funds toward effectively managed watershed-based programming is more cost-effective than reactively addressing the symptoms of water related problems, therefore funding for conservation districts proves to be a worthwhile investment. The Province has expressed support for the successful conservation district model on numerous occasions and it is time to substantiate this by allocating sufficient funding.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to increase overall funding for the conservation districts program and to develop a funding formula that equitably distributes funding to each conservation district.

3. Funding for Water Initiatives

Due to growing environmental concerns, the Province has enacted various requirements to protect and enhance Manitoba's water resources. *The Drinking Water Safety Act*, *The Water Protection Act*, and the *Water and Wastewater Facility Operators Regulation* are key examples of new water management legislation that redefine the management of municipal facilities. Each legislated demand for additional licensing or certification requires a costly and time consuming commitment from municipalities. Therefore, the Province must be prepared to commit additional funding to these critical projects.

For instance, 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. The need for engineering assessments on water treatment facilities consumes a significant proportion of a utility's budget when municipalities already struggle to raise the funds required for these key infrastructure investments. 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 to continue absorbing such costs with the limited resources available. This additional step is especially difficult to rationalize when municipalities are already working to ensure safe facilities are constructed and maintained.

Such additional financial burdens can deter much-needed investment, however the health of the community and the environment must not be compromised. These interests are shared by the Province, therefore it is appropriate for provincial funding to accompany newly legislated requirements for water and wastewater facilities. The need for additional funding is particularly acute in municipalities under long-standing boil water orders and the Province has a responsibility to address the needs of these municipalities. For this reason, the AMM is also seeking the establishment of a tripartite funding program to replace the expired National Water Supply Expansion Program. Many municipalities benefited from this program, yet there are still substantial demands for safe and reliable water and wastewater facilities. The AMM appreciates the Province's commitment to fund one-third of the full capital cost of sewer and wastewater

projects across Manitoba. Since the Federal Government is also a stakeholder in these initiatives, municipalities appreciate the Province's efforts toward securing a tripartite funding agreement that would resolve ongoing water resource issues in Manitoba.

There are also constraints beyond the financial that hinder municipalities from meeting the requirements laid out in Provincial legislation. The certification of water and wastewater operators is a prime example as there are insufficient training opportunities available in Manitoba. This is a pressing problem since the first round of conditional licenses is set to expire in June 2009 and the Province has still not established the necessary systems to ensure that municipalities can hire certified operators. The AMM has raised these concerns from the time the Province initiated the certification process and it has now reached a critical point where action must be taken to ensure Manitoba's water and wastewater treatment is properly managed.

Municipalities place a high priority on providing clean water and environmentally sustainable wastewater treatment. The new legislation governing water and wastewater facilities imposes additional requirements for municipalities at a significant financial cost and assistance is required in meeting these new demands. The Province must consider the financial feasibility of the new legislation and be prepared to work with municipalities to fulfill these requirements.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to provide sufficient funding for necessary water and wastewater treatment initiatives.

4. Provincial Flood Proofing Program

The Red River Floodway is a prime example of the need to invest in flood protection and control measures in Manitoba. Although a project of this magnitude is clearly designed to respond to a unique need, it is indicative of both a widespread problem and the value of developing appropriate solutions.

Manitoba's geography is such that there are many flood prone areas that would benefit from greater flood protection. Some areas experience the same flooding on a regular basis, yet municipalities lack the resources to construct sufficient dykes and other measures to avoid these repeated events. To date, the Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) program focuses exclusively on temporary, ad hoc initiatives that do nothing to prevent a similar event in the future. The program dictates that any flood protection must be removed once the threat of flooding subsides, thereby leaving communities vulnerable to repeated flooding and increasing the long-term costs of DFA. The AMM appreciates that DFA was designed to assist in particular circumstances, yet it demonstrates that the available programming is not sufficiently responsive to flooding problems in Manitoba. Therefore, municipalities are seeking a program dedicated to ensuring that permanent flood protection is available for all communities.

The need for additional flood protection is exacerbated by rail line abandonment, since many rail beds act as dykes that protect communities against high water levels. The elimination of this infrastructure changes drainage structures and puts communities at an increased risk of flooding. Municipalities do not have the resources to replace this critical flood protection infrastructure and decommissioning plans must give greater consideration to the impacts on adjacent property. Where rail line abandonment is already in progress, the Province should be prepared to work with rail companies and local communities to identify and resolve the negative consequences of removing this infrastructure.

The AMM raised these issues through the 2008 Budget consultations and at the 2007 AMM meeting with Cabinet and received positive response from the premier and other ministers. However, no action has been taken to establish an effective mechanism to prevent destructive flooding activity throughout Manitoba.

Therefore, the AMM urges the Provincial Government to invest in a flood control and protection program that would be applicable throughout Manitoba.

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. 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 increase in drainage funding in the 2008 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 2009 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 toward a long-term capital plan for drainage, however municipalities have not learned of any progress in this regard. This will require Manitoba Water Stewardship to work with Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation to coordinate the Province's drainage efforts. At present there is some confusion regarding the interaction between these departments where drainage is concerned, and articulating an overall plan would greatly assist in clarifying the Province's approach to drainage.

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. For instance, many municipalities were concerned with the decision to require licenses for all drainage works, including replacing culverts of the same size. The opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback on the new policy for licensing minor works will be beneficial in establishing an effective licensing process. Requiring licenses for minor works will now increase the number of applications received, therefore executing an expedited process will be critical in ensuring the licensing process does not delay these important works. At the same time, there are further improvements to be implemented based on the Ombudsman's report and municipalities will be assessing the effectiveness of these measures over time.

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

General Issues

1. Alternate Revenue for Municipalities and Infrastructure

Investment

The lack of revenue is not a new problem for municipalities. In fact a strong argument can be made that from its inception municipal government has not had the resources required. You need only look back to the resolutions from the founding meeting of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities in 1905 to see municipal revenues were front and centre.

But now more than ever municipalities need new tools to deal with new responsibilities and new expectations. Municipalities are playing an ever greater role in the lives of Manitobans, as the days of simply collecting garbage and plowing roads are long gone. Today's municipal council must balance community economic development, land use planning and infrastructure renewal and development with an eroding tax base and an increased reliance on application-based grants. This has left many municipalities to question whether the current system is tenable any longer.

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

Overreliance on grants and transfers leaves municipalities without the tools required to meet demands. Many issues raised by municipalities are really issues of access to revenue when stripped down to their core. 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, 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 governments' contribution to municipalities are not forgotten. Federally, municipalities have benefited from a GST rebate, the sharing of the federal gas tax and the new Building Canada Fund. The recent Federal Budget has made an unprecedented investment in infrastructure, which will benefit municipalities. Provincially, municipalities have benefited from the sharing of provincial income tax, the Building Manitoba Fund, and supports in several other areas. 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.

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.

A new approach is needed, and for this reason we are asking the Province of Manitoba to share one percent of the Provincial Sales Tax with municipalities for infrastructure. This will provide municipalities with in excess of \$200 million a year. For a community of 1,000 people, this means an investment of roughly \$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 these amounts alone will not erase the infrastructure deficit in Manitoba, it would be a positive first step.

The AMM understands 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.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has investigated this principle in depth and has found in their 2008 study "Municipal Infrastructure- Macroeconomic impacts of spending and level-of

government financing” 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, in industries from labour and material suppliers through to architects and engineers.

Giving municipalities access to additional revenues, will translate to stronger investment in our communities. The Institute for Research on Public Policy has shown that 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 they have 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.

Municipalities are not looking for new revenue sources to store money away for a rainy day. The storm has arrived. The national municipal infrastructure deficit is in excess of \$123 billion for current infrastructure with another \$115 billion needed for new infrastructure to keep pace with other developed nations. 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.

Therefore the AMM is asking the Province to undertake a serious review of the roles, responsibilities and resources of municipal government in Manitoba and in the short term provide municipalities with one percent of the current PST to help address the growing municipal infrastructure deficit.

Appendix A – Active Resolutions

AMM Resolution Number 68 - 2008

Topic: Drainage Approvals for All Works

Sponsor: RM of Elton (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Water Stewardship

WHEREAS Manitoba Water Stewardship has advised that all municipalities will now be required to submit an application for drainage approval for all culvert replacements, including those where the replacement is for the same size of culvert;

AND WHEREAS this will impose a tremendous amount of work and cost upon all municipalities where there is no change in the culvert size or flow patterns;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to remove the requirement for a drainage permit application where the culvert is being replaced by a new culvert of the same size.

AMM Resolution Number 69 - 2008

Topic: Manitoba Water Services Board

Sponsor: RM of Elton (Western District)

Departments: Manitoba Water Stewardship; Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation

WHEREAS the Manitoba Water Services Board provides funding and expertise to Manitoba municipalities relating to water and sewer infrastructure, including rural water lines;

AND WHEREAS construction costs for water and sewer related infrastructure for Manitoba municipalities have increased an average of 10% every year;

AND WHEREAS the Provincial allocation for the Manitoba Water Services Board from the Province of Manitoba has not increased for the last ten years, resulting in fewer infrastructure projects being initiated for Manitoba;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to increase the annual budget to the Manitoba Water Services Board to fund infrastructure projects and provide expertise for water and sewer infrastructure.

AMM Resolution Number 70 - 2008

Topic: Water Rights License Applications

Sponsor: RM of Taché (Eastern District)

Departments: Manitoba Water Stewardship

WHEREAS municipalities are required to apply and obtain water rights licenses for drainage works;

AND WHEREAS an efficient annual municipal drainage program requires timely issuance of licenses;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to review the staffing complement of drainage officers to determine its sufficiency and establish standards for responding to water rights license applications.

AMM Resolution Number 71 - 2008

Topic: Increase Conservation District Funding

Sponsor: RM of Louise (Central District)

Departments: Manitoba Water Stewardship

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba proposed an inequitable new funding formula for the allocation of funding to conservation districts;

AND WHEREAS the proposed funding formula will decrease funding for some conservation districts;

AND WHEREAS the overall funding provided by the Province and the proposed new funding formula is inadequate to address the addition of conservation districts into the program and to accomplish conservation objectives as directed by the Province;

AND WHEREAS under the current funding structure, Provincial expectations of the conservation districts to assume greater responsibilities, yet to continue to be effective and efficient in the administration of provincial priorities, is unreasonable, unfair and places a financial burden on municipal ratepayers to absorb cost shortages;

AND WHEREAS municipalities should not be expected to increase conservation levies to further fund the management of priorities for which the Province is ultimately responsible;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to increase the overall funding to the Conservation Districts Program to address future growth and to provide adequate funding to existing conservation districts to ensure the continued effective and efficient management of Provincial priorities;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Province of Manitoba replace the proposed new funding formula with one that will ensure that conservation districts have the resources available to fulfill Provincial directives without placing the financial onus on municipalities.

AMM Resolution Number 34 - 2006

Topic: Provincial Flood Proofing Program

Sponsor: RM of Westbourne (Midwestern District); RM of Taché (Eastern District)

Departments: Manitoba Water Stewardship; Emergency Preparedness Canada

WHEREAS flooding is prevalent in all areas of Manitoba, often during the summer months;

AND WHEREAS the damages being caused by flooding is expensive to repair;

AND WHEREAS a large portion of the public works budget has been redirected to assist against property losses due to flooding events;

AND WHEREAS compensation programs are often not adequate to cover costs of repairs and losses to landowners;

AND WHEREAS municipalities have been approached for assistance in constructing dykes for flood proofing purposes;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial and Federal Governments to invest in a flood control and protection program that will be applicable to the entire Province of Manitoba.

AMM Resolution Number 63 - 2005

Topic: Provincial Drain Management

Sponsor: RM of St. Andrews

Departments: Manitoba Water Stewardship

WHEREAS drainage is a large concern for many municipalities in the Province of Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba has, in the past, provided and maintained both Provincial drains and highway drains;

AND WHEREAS the provision of and maintenance of Provincial drainage and highway drainage is not occurring at this time;

AND WHEREAS the major stumbling block to the applicable departments looking after the above responsibilities is a lack of funding;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to provide adequate funding to the applicable departments to ensure that drainage systems that are the responsibility of the Province of Manitoba are both constructed and maintained.

AMM Resolution Number 59 - 2005

Topic: Conservation District Funding

Sponsor: RM of Springfield (Eastern District)

Departments: Manitoba Water Stewardship

WHEREAS Conservation Districts deliver sustainable conservation programming on the landscape that benefits local residents in addition to all Manitobans;

AND WHEREAS the Province has consistently not met the 75% funding target for Conservation Districts, (e.g. provincial funding to the Cooks Creek Conservation District is approximately 67%);

AND WHEREAS allocation of funds toward watershed-based programming is a more cost effective solution to addressing soil and water related problems than treating the symptoms of the problem;

AND WHEREAS watershed-based programs can result in significant cost savings related to infrastructure, wildlife habitat, water quality, flooding and other issues;

AND WHEREAS Conservation Districts have been referenced in the proposed Water Protection Act;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to maintain funding at a 3:1 ratio to established Conservation Districts;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the AMM lobby the Provincial Government to match new Conservation Districts at the same 3:1 ratio, with matching funds made available to Conservation Districts that desire to raise their local levies in order to address issues identified in an approved watershed management plan developed by the watershed stakeholders.

AMM Resolution Number 23 - 2003

Topic: Provincial Water Retention Policy

Sponsor: RM of Westbourne (Midwestern)

Departments: Manitoba Water Stewardship; Manitoba Finance

WHEREAS water is one of the most important natural resources in Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS water is a necessity for sustaining life and industry throughout Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS increased drainage and land clearing has reduced the ability of aquifers to adequately recharge in the spring and throughout the year;

AND WHEREAS it should be the responsibility of all residents of Manitoba to conserve and protect our water supply;

AND WHEREAS areas of the Province are experiencing an increasing demand for water to sustain and improve agricultural industries;

AND WHEREAS there are no incentives for landowners to conserve moisture and preserve areas well-suited to water retention projects;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Provincial Government to develop a Water Retention Policy to ensure aquifers are adequately recharged in periods of spring runoff and heavy moisture conditions;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this policy include Environmental Tax Credits for those property owners who are willing to preserve wooded areas and maintain water storage projects on their property.

AMM Resolution Number 32 - 2002

Topic: Commission to Identify Water Recharge Areas

Sponsor: RM of Piney (Eastern District)

Departments: Manitoba Water Stewardship

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province to appoint a commission to identify water recharge areas throughout the southern part of the province, and to provide recommendations to rural municipalities to protect these areas.

AMM Resolution Number 30 - 2001

Topic: Provincial Maintenance of Drains

Sponsor: RM of Morris (Eastern District); RM of Rosser (Interlake District); RM of MacDonald (Central District)

Departments: Manitoba Water Stewardship

WHEREAS inadequate drainage of agricultural land is a major concern to both the farming community and to municipalities;

AND WHEREAS municipalities continue to improve drainage to keep pace with the expectations of the farming community;

AND WHEREAS the Department of Conservation has made little attempt to maintain drainage systems for which they are responsible;

AND WHEREAS the financial loss due to improper drainage not only affects the farming community, but reduces the revenues that would be generated to the federal and provincial governments;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Province to undertake work on their drains to provide proper and adequate drainage;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Province to improve and upgrade drains that are the jurisdiction and responsibility of the Department of Conservation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Province to provide additional funding that would allow for the maintenance of provincial drains to provide efficient drainage of land in the agricultural areas of the Province.

AMM Resolution Number 32 - 2001

Topic: Maintenance of Natural Waterways

Sponsor: RM of Morris (Eastern District)

Departments: Manitoba Water Stewardship

WHEREAS the natural waterways in the Province are designated under the responsibility of the local municipality;

AND WHEREAS these natural waterways are a cost factor beyond most municipalities' capabilities for crossings, etc.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities request that the Province accept responsibility for all natural waterways and their required crossings.

AMM Resolution Number 39 - 2001

Topic: Protection for Groundwater Services

Sponsor: Town of Stonewall; RM of Woodworth

Departments: Manitoba Water Stewardship; Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs

WHEREAS the quality of potable groundwater has always been of great importance to the quality of life and health of the citizens of the province;

AND WHEREAS a potable water source is essential for rural residential land uses;

AND WHEREAS septic fields and injection systems in rural residential developments are resulting in a negative impact on potable groundwater sources;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the Province to strengthen the provincial land use policies to require greater protection for potable groundwater sources.

AMM Resolution Number 27 - 2000

Topic: Third Order Drains

Sponsor: RM of La Broquerie (Eastern District)

Departments: Manitoba Water Stewardship

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Manitoba Municipalities lobby the provincial government to acquire the right-of-way of those portions of all third order drains that they do not already own.

AMM Resolution Number 59 - 1999

Topic: Drainage Licenses

Sponsor: RM of Dufferin (Central District)

Departments: Manitoba Water Stewardship

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba has the authority to issue licences to individuals and corporations for drainage projects;

AND WHEREAS municipal corporations are aware of the impact which proposed drainage projects will have on properties downstream;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM request the Province of Manitoba consult with the local municipal corporation before issuing a drainage licence.