



Thank you for your questionnaire regarding the issues that matter most to the AMM and to Manitoba municipalities. If re-elected, the NDP is committed to continuing to work closely with AMM to the benefit of all Manitobans and their communities. Please see our responses to your questions below.

1. There is no debating Manitoba municipalities are facing a massive infrastructure deficit. What is your party's plan to help address this deficit?

Manitoba's vibrant and diverse communities are what make our province great. When we were elected in 1999 there was a serious infrastructure deficit. The message from Manitobans was clear –the neglect of the 1990s was not sustainable. The NDP has worked with communities to reverse this tide and make significant investments into our infrastructure and our municipalities. Manitoba's grants in support of municipalities are now among the most generous and broad in Canada - between 2005 and 2011, grants in support of municipal infrastructure and transit have increased by 53%. And we have launched the province's first-ever multi-year plan to revitalize Manitoba's highways by investing \$4 billion over 10 years in highway infrastructure. The NDP has invested more in Manitoba's roads and bridges in the first 4 years of our highway plan than the Conservatives did during their entire decade in office.

To ensure our investments in municipal infrastructure and transit continue to grow, we have changed the legislated annual revenue-sharing formula to the equivalent of one point of provincial sales tax. This will ensure more predictable funding and greater future revenue growth in grants for municipalities. At the same time, we will enhance accountability and transparency so Manitobans will know these revenues are being invested in infrastructure across the province

We have also enshrined in legislation our commitment to a 50/50 transit partnership agreement which was cut by the Tories in 1993. Since 1999, transit operating grants have increased by 71% and capital grants by 28%.

2. One of the biggest challenges for municipalities is the downloading of responsibilities and the cost of meeting increasing regulation. What will your party do about these escalating costs for municipalities?

Unlike other jurisdictions, we have not downloaded major services to municipalities. In fact, several services have been uploaded to the Province, including short-term income assistance, Ombudsman services and costs for the use of water bombers for fire suppression in

municipalities. In contrast, in the 1990s the Tories offloaded thousands of kilometers of provincial roads to municipalities.

Where municipalities have taken on new services, the Province has provided additional resources, for example, funding for training water / wastewater treatment plant operators. The Province has also recently taken steps to address beaver management, including a subsidy increase for removal of problem beavers. And in 2009 we addressed a major concern that municipalities and the AMM had raised with us by adjusting the Disaster Financial Assistance cost-sharing agreement with municipalities to ensure that after municipal spending has reached five dollars per capita, the province will assume 100 per cent of the costs.

3. Recently the AMM undertook a tour of the province to hear first-hand the issues facing our communities. Near the top of the list was the need for affordable entry-level housing in our communities. What will your party do to address the housing shortfall across Manitoba?

Building affordable housing is good for families, strengthens our economy and breathes new life into our communities. That's why we have launched Homeworks! – a long-term housing strategy. We are on track to meet our commitment of creating 1500 new social housing units over five years. Just two years into the plan we have added more than 700 affordable housing units, assisted over 600 households to access rent-g geared-to-income housing, and provided funding for over 800 homeowners, seniors, people living with disabilities and renters to renovate their homes. This spring we also launched a new tenant protection package including strong measures to better protect tenants from excessive rent increases. If re-elected we will work with the private sector to create thousands of affordable private sector rental housing units across the province including downtown Winnipeg.

4. Overall municipal government revenues have not kept pace with municipal responsibilities. We are expected to take on more and more with access to the same revenue sources. Municipalities need access to new revenue sources. Is your party willing to give municipalities access to new revenue sources?

We are aware of some calls to increase the PST in order to finance municipal infrastructure. Our view is that while there are many partners in funding municipal infrastructure, there is only one taxpayer. For that reason we have categorically ruled out raising taxes on Manitobans - new sales taxes would impact provincial competitiveness and are inconsistent with our commitment to reduce taxes for Manitobans while maintaining core services such as healthcare, education, and policing.

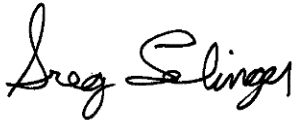
Municipalities have been asking for higher revenue growth and we're doing exactly that without raising taxes. This year our investments in municipal infrastructure and transit equaled one

point of the 7% PST – \$239 million. Our commitment to invest one point of the PST will ensure Manitobans benefit from one of the fastest growing revenues in our province -- and we're the only province in Canada to put it in legislation. Municipalities will receive more support with this new measure.

5. Connectivity is increasingly important to municipalities both in terms of having access to the global marketplace and in growing their communities, yet cellular service and high speed internet continue to be unavailable in many parts of the province. How would your party work to address this?

We agree that increased connectivity is an important part of building an innovative and strong economy. We have invested significant resources as well as working with providers to expand access throughout Manitoba. Since 2004, over 250 new communities have been connected. However, we know that addressing this issue would be far simpler had the Tories kept their word and not privatized Manitoba Telecom Services during the 1990s. As you may know, Hugh McFadyen was intimately involved in this poor decision as Gary Filmon's senior advisor.

Yours truly,



Greg Selinger