

News Release

91 and counting

Manitoba municipalities call on parties to “Put Communities First”

August 10, 2011 – Lagoons. Sidewalks. Cellular and internet service. Wastewater treatment. Culverts. Drainage. Housing. Flood protection. These amenities are just a few of the priorities Manitoba communities are unable to repair, replace or even provide their citizens due to an almost insurmountable infrastructure deficit.

Two months ago, the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) launched a campaign designed to send a strong message to all parties in the days leading up to the October 4 provincial election. That message – it is time to *Put Communities First* – is being delivered loud and clear from communities across the province which are increasingly unable to provide the services their citizens demand.

So far, 91 Manitoba municipalities have passed resolutions calling on the parties to commit, if elected, a portion of the tax revenue the Manitoba government collects in communities to repairing and upgrading the infrastructure in those communities.

Streets and roads are priorities in 51 per cent of communities and 40 per cent have water and wastewater treatment projects they are unable to finance. A further 27 per cent cite recreation centres, community halls, and arenas as needing attention. AMM President Doug Dobrowolski is not surprised.

“Drive through any community in Manitoba and you see why streets and roads are number one,” explains Dobrowolski. “Heavy truck traffic, extreme weather conditions, and years of neglect due to lack of funding have taken their toll. Water and wastewater treatment costs are skyrocketing, and rec centres and halls – those things are what keep communities thriving. You lose those, you lose the community.”

Dobrowolski will tour a number of communities – including Dauphin, Brandon, Gimli, Portage la Prairie and Lorette – in the coming weeks to see examples of the infrastructure crisis first-hand.

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A list of resolutions submitted is available on the AMM’s campaign website at

<http://www.amm.mb.ca/campaigncentre/about.cfm>.