



Contact:
Lynne Bereza, AMM Communications Coordinator
Telephone: (204) 856-2366
Cell: (204) 871-0517
Fax: (204) 856-2370
Email: bereza@amm.mb.ca
1910 Saskatchewan Avenue W.
Portage la Prairie, MB R1N 0P1

News Release

Budget wish: short-term pain for long-term gain

March 22, 2010 – The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) has some advice for the Province of Manitoba leading into tomorrow's budget – invest in low cost options that will have maximum impact. "We know it is likely to be a tough budget year," explains President Doug Dobrowolski, "but the fact is, sometimes a dollar spent today results in thousands saved tomorrow." For example:

- **Anti-drug programs in schools** - There is no doubt that preventing young adults from ever becoming addicted to drugs is far easier—and cheaper—that trying to deal with the damage drug addiction causes. The AMM would like to see the Province invest in any of the number of programs available to be delivered in the school system. The consequences of *not* acting are simply too great.
- **Promotion of business development** - With the faltering economy raising concerns for the future of many businesses, this year's budget should invest in business development and training programs throughout rural and northern Manitoba. Communities need a strong pool of skilled workers to keep businesses viable and help Manitoba avoid the severe economic downturn other parts of Canada are experiencing.
- **Museums and tourist attractions** - Local attractions pull people into a community, allowing it to showcase what it has to offer to the world, while museums build a sense of community and keep local history alive. Museum funding has stagnated in recent years, and greater investment in this area would go a long way to helping communities generate more tourism dollars.
- **Beaver control** – Beavers are the most destructive animals next to humans and pose a real threat to infrastructure. The Problem Beaver Management Program is already very successful and has saved municipalities a great deal by eliminating repairs due to beaver dams. In wet years it is critical that additional funds are available because they can literally save millions of dollars in infrastructure.

According to Dobrowolski, the core issues facing Manitoba communities - the ballooning municipal infrastructure deficit, the downloading of responsibilities to municipalities, and the need for alternate revenues – are still front and center on the AMM's radar. "We will continue to push for another revenue source to address our huge infrastructure needs," he says. "But what we really want – and expect – to see tomorrow is no further downloading and gains in areas where a small investment will result in a maximum return."

President Dobrowolski will be at the Manitoba Legislature for tomorrow's reading of the 2010 Provincial Budget.

-30-

The AMM's complete budget submission is available at <http://www.amm.mb.ca/documents/Fin-Wowchuk-Jan18-10.pdf>