

ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA MUNICIPALITIES POSITION PAPER

MINISTER OF SPORT, CULTURE & HERITAGE | CATHY COX | FEBRUARY 10, 2021



ASSOCIATION OF
MANITOBA
MUNICIPALITIES

The AMM appreciates the opportunity to meet with Minister Cathy Cox and representatives of Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage.

The AMM encourages the Province to consider municipal concerns as well as the effects of funding decisions on local communities throughout the budget process.

This document outlines the AMM's position and recommendations on a number of important municipal issues relevant to the Sport, Culture and Heritage portfolio.

PRIORITY ITEMS:

LIBRARY FUNDING
AND UNIVERSAL
ACCESS

FUNDING FOR
COMMUNITY
MUSEUMS

PARTNERS IN GROWTH

The AMM looks forward to working with the Province of Manitoba to strengthen provincial-municipal growth and partnership opportunities.

Priority Item #1

Library Funding and Universal Access

The AMM recommends the government:

- ✓ **Increase provincial funding to the Rural Library Operating Grant Program; and**
- ✓ **Allow all library cards issues in Manitoba to be valid at any library that receives provincial funding.**

- According to a study conducted by the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries, every dollar invested in public library service brings over \$6.00 to the local economy.
- In fact, the Ontario government is investing more than \$4.8 million to upgrade broadband at public libraries in unserved and underserved communities. As the push for e-services has increased due to the pandemic, it is vital to invest in improved broadband at public libraries to provide greater community access to vital services.
- Given the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become clear that local libraries are critical for fostering community relations and partnerships throughout our local communities.
- However, since 2004, the provincial contribution to the *Rural Library Operating Program* has remained flat at a maximum of \$8.50 per capita.
- The 17-year stagnation in funding causes local libraries to address financial shortfalls through increased municipal contributions to avoid further cuts to critical library programming.
- Between provincially mandated accessibility standards, the rising cost of technological advancements and frozen provincial funding further contributes to the challenges local community libraries endure.
- Coupled with COVID-19 and impacts of Code Red restrictions, municipalities are facing increased fiscal pressures. Therefore, we strongly encourage the Province to immediately increase the maximum provincial grant amount to ensure libraries can keep their doors open as municipalities look to recover from the pandemic.
- Moreover, as per the 2020 Ministerial mandate letter, the Province has rightly recognized that local libraries are the centre of learning and act as community hubs. Therefore, the AMM would appreciate an update on the provincial commitment to sustain local libraries as these centres and hubs.
- Lastly, the AMM continues to support the implementation of a universal, province wide library card system to increase efficiencies and facilitate library use.

Priority Item #2:

Funding for Community Museums

The AMM recommends the government:

- ✓ ***Continue to work with community museums and local heritage foundations to ensure the Heritage Trust Program benefits local communities; and***
- ✓ ***Outline all available departmental funding programs for municipalities.***

- As provincial tourism reports consistently convey, visits to both museums and historic sites are frequent activities that visitors choose when planning their trip to Manitoba.
- However, over the last year, Manitobans have been encouraged to stay within the province to explore museum and heritage sites within their own backyard. This provincial recommendation has caused many municipalities to quickly adapt to increased demand for these facilities.
- The AMM welcomes ongoing investments under the Heritage Trust Program in support of small and medium-sized museums as well as the provincial decision to extend the program beyond the original March 31, 2021 deadline to give heritage organizations more time to take advantage of this vital program.
- In addition, the AMM welcomes the Province's recent \$750,000 investment under the Heritage Resource Conservation grant to more than 80 projects across Manitoba. As local communities look to recover from the pandemic, it is vital that municipalities receive financial support for facilities that serve to protect and interpret Manitoba's historical and heritage resources.
- Moreover, the *Community Museum Grants Program (CMGP)* supports over 100 community museums while awarding maximum grant amounts of only \$1,350 and \$3,150, depending on the type of museum.
- These amounts have remained stagnant for 30 years, and thus many local community museums have increasingly become reliant on local fundraising and donations as their operating costs continue to increase.
- As municipalities look to recover, we urge the Province to work with community museums to ensure all areas of the province are made aware of all available funding programs and eligibility requirements.

Appendix – AMM Active Resolutions

AMM Resolution #24-2020

Topic: Heritage Resource Act

Sponsor(s): RM of Ste. Anne (Eastern District)

Department(s): Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage

WHEREAS The Heritage Resources Act provides for the designation of municipal heritage sites by by-law;
and

WHEREAS The Heritage Resources Act was proclaimed in 1986 with the last revisions taking effect in 2003 and the procedures and requirements of a municipality to designate a Heritage Site within their boundaries are arduous and excessive in relation to other requirement under similar Acts such as The Planning Act, these requirements which cost municipalities unreasonable time and funds in order to meet the same; and

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba has made efforts over the past number of years to reduce red tape and make applications processes more streamlined for both municipalities and applicants alike;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to review and update *The Heritage Resources Act* in order to increase consistency with the requirements of other acts and simplify the processes required under this Act.

AMM Resolution #41-2018 *Standing Policy

Topic: Funding for Community Museums

Sponsor(s): RM of Alexander (Eastern District)

Department(s): Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage

WHEREAS at present, 110 museums receive funding from the Community Museum Grants Program (CMGP); and

WHEREAS 160 museums fit the CMGP institutional criteria and merit consideration of eligibility, but are currently excluded due to the limitation of the availability of funds to this program;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to reinvest in the Community Museum Grants Program (CMGP) by setting forth an inclusive, rather than exclusive, mandate for this program, thus opening it up to all eligible museums who meet the required operating and governance criteria; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the provincial government increase funding for community museums to reflect their importance to local communities.

AMM Resolution #47-2016 *Standing Policy

Topic: Library Funding

Sponsor(s): Municipality of Grandview (Parkland District)

Department(s): Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage

WHEREAS libraries provide valuable services to all Manitobans; and

WHEREAS libraries are faced with ever increasing costs to provide these services; and

WHEREAS the Rural Library Operating Grant matches municipal funding up to a maximum amount that hasn't been increased since 2004;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to increase the maximum funds available to libraries to reflect the increasing costs libraries have seen in the last 12 years and in the years ahead.

AMM Resolution #42-2012

Topic: Exempt Public Libraries from Education Levies and Taxes

Sponsor(s): Town of Stonewall (Interlake District), RM of Rockwood (Interlake District)

Department(s): Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage; Manitoba Municipal Relations

WHEREAS there are ninety-two public libraries in the Province of Manitoba formed under The Public Libraries Act and funded by the Province and member municipalities;

AND WHEREAS public library properties are subject to the other property provincial education support levy and the local school division education levy;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to amend The Municipal Assessment Act to exempt public library properties from provincial and local school division education levies and taxes.

AMM Resolution #15-2011

Topic: Increase per Capita Base Rate for Library Funding

Sponsor(s): RM of North Cypress (Western District), Town of Carberry (Western District)

Department(s): Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage

WHEREAS the current provincial maximum per capita levy amount for library funding is \$8.50 and was last raised in 2003;

AND WHEREAS funding for many libraries has been at this maximum rate for years;

AND WHEREAS the provincial funding falls short of the current financial requirements to operate libraries and increases to municipal levies are required annually just to sustain existing services;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to increase the per capita base rate funding for library boards to \$10.00.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to re-evaluate the funding formula for library boards annually or bi-annually to better reflect the actual cost of delivering the services.

AMM Resolution #22-2008

Topic: Library Cards

Sponsor(s): RM of Morris (Central District)

Department(s): Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage

WHEREAS each library system in Manitoba has its own identification cards for members;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba provides major funding to all libraries;

AND WHEREAS some residents may live closer to a library in a neighbouring district;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to mandate that all library cards issued in Manitoba be valid at any library



ASSOCIATION OF
MANITOBA
MUNICIPALITIES

