



Meeting with Honourable Stan Struthers
Minister of Finance
AMM Pre-Budget Submission

December 7, 2012

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CRITICAL ISSUES – REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ACTION

- **Alternate Revenue Sources**

- *Manitoba Finance*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Identify new sources of revenue for municipalities to address the infrastructure deficit and their increasing responsibilities.

- **Cell Service and High Speed Internet**

- *Manitoba Innovation, Energy and Mines*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Assist municipalities in the development of solutions to expand reliable emergency communications, cell service and high speed internet access to all Manitoban communities.

- **Economic Development Support**

- *Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Provide a replacement program for Regional Development Corporations, whose operating grants were discontinued in 2012;
 - ❖ Provide sufficient notice to Regional/Community Development Corporations of any changes in their funding or loan repayments to allow them time to budget accordingly.

- **Housing Shortage**

- *Manitoba Housing and Community Development*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Provide funding to support the recommendations of the Rental Housing Supply Roundtable to increase the supply of affordable housing, including rental housing, throughout Manitoba;
- ❖ Provide funding to support various forms of seniors' housing across the province.

- **Infrastructure Funding – New National Program**

- *Manitoba Finance, Manitoba Local Government*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Keep its commitment to provide a share of funding for the federal government's national, long-term infrastructure plan to be introduced in the 2013 Budget.

- **Mandatory Police Boards**

- *Manitoba Justice*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Provide funding to cover all operating costs for municipal police boards required under *The Police Services Act*.

- **Removal of Community Capital Contributions for Health Facilities**

- *Manitoba Health*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Fund all health facilities provincially without the current requirement for a local contribution covering 10 per cent of the project costs.

- **Recreation Centre Operating Costs**

- *Manitoba Healthy Living, Seniors and Consumer Affairs*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Support energy efficiency improvement programs and work with Manitoba Hydro to develop a rate structure to assist recreation centres with increasing energy costs.

- **Rural Airports**

- *Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Reinststate a capital assistance program for airports on a 50-50 basis with municipalities;
- ❖ Increase the amount of operating grants for rural paved and unpaved airports, which have remained at \$2,400 and \$1,200 respectively, for at least ten years.

- **Rural Water Pipeline Funding**

- *Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Establish a commitment of \$10 million annually towards rural water pipeline expansion, as the provincial share of a \$30 million tri-level funding initiative;
- ❖ Identify rural water pipeline funding as a provincial priority under the Growing Forward 2 Agreement with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

- **Veterinary Board Funding**

- *Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Reinststate the Technical Enhancement Grant to provide assistance with equipment costs;
- ❖ Increase funding for operating costs to keep rural veterinarian salaries competitive and to enable rural clinics to continue providing veterinary services to their communities.

NEW ISSUES

- **Coal Use in Manitoba**

- *Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Extend the date for banning coal use past January 1, 2014;
- ❖ Provide additional incentives to Manitobans to assist with the conversion of coal-reliant systems to alternate energy sources.

- **Support for LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) Data Collection**

- *Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Provide funding to support the acquisition of LiDAR coverage in partnership with local governments.

- **Tax Exemption for Municipalities**

- *Manitoba Finance*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Include municipalities as exempt entities under Section 113(2) of *The Tax Administration and Miscellaneous Taxes Act* to exempt them from paying land transfer tax.

ONGOING ISSUES – SOME PROGRESS, MORE ACTION NEEDED

- **Surface Water Management Strategy**

- *Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Provide sufficient funding to develop and implement this strategy, and to support new or expanded programs to fulfill the surface water management strategy objectives.

- **Noxious Weed Control**

- *Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Allocate additional resources to provincial weed control, and support Weed Districts in their weed control efforts.

- **Ecological Goods and Services Policy for Manitoba**

- *Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Implement a province-wide Ecological Goods and Services (EG&S) Policy with corresponding funding as soon as possible.

- **Libraries**

- *Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Establish funding for a universal, province-wide library card system;
- ❖ Increase overall funding for libraries from \$8.50 to at least \$10.00 per capita.

- **Tourism Funding**

- *Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Maintain support for vibrant communities by continuing to provide funding to promote tourism in Manitoba.

- **Reduction of Education Tax on Property**

- *Manitoba Education*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Identify sustainable new mechanisms that allow all school divisions to reduce their reliance on property taxes to fund education.
 - ❖ Fulfill election promises to eliminate education taxes on farmland and for seniors;
 - ❖ Exempt public library properties from education taxes.

- **Flood Compensation and Mitigation**

- *Manitoba Emergency Measures*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Provide compensation to municipalities and individuals in a timely manner for assessment and income losses to due to flooding;
 - ❖ Take responsibility for emergency volunteer workers compensation claims to avoid an artificial increase in the Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba levy for certain municipalities;
 - ❖ Provide funding for the improvement of flood prevention infrastructure;
 - ❖ Make improvements to flood response and mitigation capabilities based on the reviews of 2011 flooding.

- **Business Development and Retention**

- *Manitoba Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Work with communities in all areas of Manitoba to promote and retain local businesses through training and development initiatives.

- **Increase Shelter Allowance Rate (RentAid)**

- *Manitoba Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Increase funding available under RentAid to ensure those in need are able to secure adequate and affordable accommodation.

- **Accessibility Legislation**

- *Manitoba Family Services and Labour*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Determine costs and provide funding for all feasible upgrades to infrastructure to meet any proposed accessibility standards.

- **Funding for Child Care**

- *Manitoba Family Services and Labour*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Invest in initiatives to address ongoing staff shortages of child care workers;
- ❖ Continue the implementation of the Family Choices agenda for early learning and child care to increase the number of available child care spaces across Manitoba.

- **Health Practitioner Recruitment, Training and Retention**

- *Manitoba Health*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Continue to fund existing initiatives to help attract and retain health professionals in rural and northern Manitoba and ensure every Manitoban has a family doctor by 2015;
 - ❖ Commit the resources necessary to implement the recommendations of the Brandon Medical Education Study within a reasonable timeframe to address the severe shortage of doctors in rural and northern Manitoba.

- **Centralization of Rural Ambulance Services**

- *Manitoba Health*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Provide funding to ensure emergency response services are located a reasonable distance from every community to ensure the safety of all Manitobans.

- **Funding for Palliative Care Services**

- *Manitoba Health*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Provide full funding for local palliative care services.

- **Health Ombudsman Position**

- *Manitoba Health*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Establish a dedicated Health Ombudsman office, with appropriate funding, for the resolution of health complaints and systemic reviews of Manitoba's Regional Health Authorities.

- **Costs of Survey Monument Restoration**

- *Manitoba Healthy Living, Seniors and Consumer Affairs*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Allocate adequate funding to cover survey monument restoration program costs.

- **Intercity Bus Service**

- *Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Provide funding to support community-sponsored options for intercity bus service in rural and northern Manitoba.

- **Transportation Infrastructure**

- *Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Provide sufficient funding to maintain and renew provincial roads and urban highways, including:
 - Highways with safety issues (Highway #6);
 - Highways important for trade and travel (Highway #75);
 - Merging lanes on provincial roads.

- **Oil Production Issues**

- *Manitoba Innovation, Energy and Mines*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Support municipalities affected by oil production through a regional economic development plan to address municipal challenges such as local infrastructure deterioration and high survey monument restoration costs.

- **Mining Issues in Northern Manitoba**

- *Manitoba Innovation, Energy and Mines*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Support resource-based communities and municipalities in their development of long-term sustainability plans.

- **By-law Enforcement**

- *Manitoba Justice*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Provide additional funding to support improved training of municipal by-law enforcement officers;
- ❖ Allocate resources to implement the recommendations of the By-law Enforcement Working Group once they are finalized to reduce municipal enforcement costs and ensure municipalities can achieve compliance with their by-laws.

SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS – MORE FUNDING NEEDED

- **Community Museums**

- *Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Increase funding to the Community Museum Grants Program and reevaluate funding for the Signature Museum Program to ensure museums remain sustainable.

- **Community Places Program**

- *Manitoba Housing and Community Development*

- ❖ The AMM appreciates the increase to the maximum grant amount of up to \$75,000 for the Community Places Program North; however this excludes The Pas, Thompson and Flin Flon.
 - ❖ Funding for the Community Places Program was reduced from \$4.5 million to \$3.9 million in Budget 2011-2012, where it remained for Budget 2012-13.

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Provide additional funding for the highly successful Community Places Program to allow an increase in the maximum funding available and an increased number of recipients.

- **Dutch Elm Disease Management Program**

- *Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Reinstate permanent funding for Dutch Elm Disease management services for municipalities who request them.

- **Hometown Green Team Program**

- *Manitoba Children, Youth and Opportunities*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Increase funding for this program to allow the approval of more applications.

- **Funding for Conservation Districts**

- *Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Increase funding to CDs and consider reevaluating the funding formula.

- **Mobility Disadvantaged Transportation Program**

- *Manitoba Local Government*

- ❖ The AMM appreciates the \$1 million in operating and capital funding provided by the Province to 69 communities; however the costs to deliver handi-transit services continue to increase.

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Increase the maximum grant amount available and total funding for the program.

- **Municipal Bridge Renewal Program**

- *Manitoba Local Government*

- ❖ The AMM appreciates the \$75,000 from this program recently allocated to engineering assessments for municipal bridges to prepare them for future infrastructure funding.

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Continue to support bridge repair and replacement.

- **Problem Beaver Management Program**

- *Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship*

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ Continue to provide funding for targeted beaver management and higher beaver tag rates;
- ❖ Review options for maximizing the available resources in the program;
- ❖ Continue to administer the program provincially.