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News Release

Infrastructure Top Issue in Election 2016: Probe Poll

Fair Share-Fair Say Campaign Results in Commitments

From all Parties on Municipal Infrastructure Priorities

Brandon, MB - April 14, 2015 - Before a province-wide audience of over 500 municipal officials, Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) President, Chris Goertzen today pointed to a new poll released Tuesday by Probe Research indicating infrastructure as the most important issue on the minds of voters as they head to the polls on April 19th. He also offered a wrap up of commitments on infrastructure resulting from the Association's six-week Fair Share-Fair Say campaign.

"Our goal was to engage Manitobans and our provincial parties in a conversation about the need for municipalities to receive a fair share of infrastructure dollars and a fair say in how they're spent," said Goertzen. "Clearly, the message resonated with both Manitobans and with our Party Leaders."

He added that the Fair Share-Fair Say campaign was based on the fact that municipalities are responsible for 60% of the infrastructure work across the province but receive just 8 cents of every tax dollar to get the job done. Plus, municipalities have little to no say in how the rest gets spent.

"Though we still have work to do on a few fronts, we are pleased that commitments to infrastructure have been made by Manitoba's main political parties, based on suggestions put forward by the AMM," Goertzen said.

These include:

- A commitment from the Liberal and PC Parties to give the AMM a Fair Say at the table when it comes to setting priorities for major capital infrastructure projects;
- In response to the AMM's request to create a simpler process for application based funding and transfers, the PC Party committed to a new basket funding model, single window access to programs and greater autonomy in setting and addressing local infrastructure priorities;
- In response to an AMM request for the full expenditure of annual infrastructure budgets, both the Liberal and PC Parties committed to this recommendation;

- A commitment from the PC Party for an improved doctor recruitment and retention program to help relieve municipalities from the weight of having to recruit and provide incentives to doctors; a commitment by the Liberal Party to make a greater effort to encourage physicians to practice in under-serviced rural areas; and a promise from the NDP to recruit more doctors and nurses and hire at least 50 more nurse practitioners, 50 new physician assistants and 25 new midwives;
- A commitment from the Liberal Party to rebate the PST municipalities pay the Province;
- In response to an AMM suggestion that municipalities receive a Fair Share of infrastructure dollars, the Liberal Party committed to dedicating 1% of the PST to a Municipal Infrastructure Fund; the PC Party committed to fully spend no less than \$1B on infrastructure; and the NDP committed to funding Brandon road projects 50/50 and increase its 5-year local road commitment to Winnipeg.

"From the AMM perspective, we will, as we have always done throughout our history, work with whichever government Manitobans elect on April 19," said Goertzen. "In the meantime, we thank Manitobans for their high level of engagement during the election campaign and ask voters to keep infrastructure top of mind when casting their ballots."