



# Association of Manitoba Municipalities

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**JUSTICE**

**FEBRUARY 26**

**2024**

# SUMMARY OF MUNICIPAL PRIORITIES

The AMM appreciates the opportunity to meet with Minister Matt Wiebe and representatives of Manitoba Justice. 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 Justice portfolio. The AMM looks forward to working with the Province to strengthen provincial-municipal growth and partnership opportunities.



## Police Services Act Review and Funding Review

- **Expedite the provincial police funding review and preserve municipal representation on police boards.**

## Public Safety and Local Crime

- **Continue to collaborate with AMM and municipalities to address rising crime rates and growing demands on law enforcement, particularly in areas of rural crime and community safety concerns.**



## Community Safety Officer Program

- **Enhance public safety by ensuring municipalities receive sufficient resources and financial support for the recruitment and employment of Community Safety Officers (CSOs).**

## RCMP Cost Containment, Body Worn Cameras and Repeat Offenders

- **Advocate for meaningful consultation and cost containment to support contract partners, and implement bail reform measures within provincial jurisdiction to enhance community safety.**



## Police Services Act Review and Funding Review

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ ***Consult with the AMM and municipalities on the distribution of policing costs and grant funding to promote a more transparent, fair, and sustainable policing model; and***
- ✓ ***Maintain municipal representation on police boards and allow police boards to be established on a voluntary basis.***

As municipalities with their own police forces consistently raise concerns regarding the mandatory police board requirement in *The Police Services Act*, it is imperative to review this requirement within the framework of the comprehensive review of the Act. According to a 2023 survey conducted by Probe Research on behalf of the AMM, a staggering **90% of respondents** believe the Province should not have the authority to replace municipal representatives on police boards. We firmly believe that municipal representation on police boards is essential.

Additionally, the AMM has long called on the Province to review the distribution of policing costs and grant funding in Manitoba as the current model is antiquated and unsustainable. With the amalgamation of some "urban" and "rural" municipalities, significant financial and administrative strains have emerged concerning police services.

Disparities exist across Manitoba, where some "rural" communities, despite having larger populations than "urban" ones, do not contribute equitably to police service expenses. It is imperative to review funding arrangements among many amalgamated communities to address and resolve outstanding inequities. These disparities pose a particular challenge as inflation continues to drive up policing-related expenses. For example, municipal officials have noted a significant increase in the cost of public police services from one year to the next, with **expenses tripling** between 2022 and 2023 for identical services.

Thus, the AMM urges the Province to expedite the provincial policing review to provide predictability on local police resourcing. It is imperative that the funding model for policing is fair, transparent, and accurately reflects both the community's financial capacity to pay and the jurisdictional responsibility in addressing the root causes of crime.

## Public Safety and Local Crime

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ ***Continue to collaborate with AMM and municipalities to address rising crime rates and provide funding to local law enforcement.***

Municipalities have been ringing the alarm on increasing crime rates in their communities since the Prairie Provinces experience higher rates of rural crime compared to other areas of the country. Further, in 2023, the AMM commissioned a poll by Probe Research which revealed that only **5%** of Manitobans feel safer in their community than they did three years ago while **56%** of Manitobans feel decidedly “**less safe**” in their community.

It is evident that municipalities are concerned about the lack of police presence in their communities. This concern is partly attributed to frontline police officers being occupied with administrative tasks or attending court hearings related to repeat offenders. Furthermore, the increasing prevalence of homelessness, addictions, and mental health concerns in communities is placing additional demands on local police, who are increasingly tasked with responsibilities beyond law enforcement, such as addressing mental health crises. However, it is not optimal for municipal police forces to undertake this role. Therefore, it is imperative that the Province enhance social services and support systems to alleviate the burden on local law enforcement.

As the AMM has long called on the government to increase support to local community police forces to address increasing rates of crime and illicit drug use, our organization commended the Province for significantly increasing public safety basket funding by **\$13.7 million** in unconditional funding. We thank the Province for listening and acting on the concerns raised by our organization and members about the importance of investing in public safety initiatives to help protect our communities and build a stronger and safer Manitoba.

Finally, the AMM welcomed the provincial announcement of **\$1.3 Million** to support the development of Community Safety and Well-Being plans in six Manitoba communities. As part of our *Let's Grow Manitoba Together* provincial election campaign, the AMM called for the expansion of these plans across **all** municipalities. It is vital that all Manitoba municipalities benefit from this announcement to help improve community safety across our province.

## Community Safety Officer Program (CSO)

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### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ ***Enhance public safety by ensuring municipalities receive sufficient resources and financial support for the recruitment and employment of Community Safety Officers.***

The AMM commended the Province for introducing amendments to *Bill 34: The Police Services Act* that expanded authority of Community Safety Officers (CSOs) to better support municipalities.

The amendments offer municipalities an additional avenue to boost safety measures in their communities. While we recognize that not all municipalities have a CSO or can afford a CSO, having additional tools in the enforcement toolbox is valuable in addressing public safety challenges. Expanding enforcement options and offering new voluntary programs will enable municipalities to determine whether such initiatives can effectively address the unique needs of their communities.

However, the cost of implementing a CSO program is cost prohibitive for many of our members, particularly smaller municipalities. Therefore, it is vital that the Province expand CSO training opportunities and provide financial assistance to help offset costs should a municipality choose to participate in this program. For municipalities that have already joined the CSO program, it is crucial that the Province invest in regional training opportunities. By offering training closer to local communities, more municipalities will have the chance to participate and send their staff for CSO training. This approach will also help reduce expenses associated with staff travel, lodging and training costs overall. Finally, the AMM urges the Province to review the training program and ensure that program content aligns with the requirements of municipalities.

Lastly, the AMM wishes to reiterate its thanks to the Department for its valuable contribution during a panel discussion held during our Fall Convention aimed at fostering awareness about the CSO Program.

## RCMP Cost Containment, Body Worn Cameras and Repeat Offenders

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ ***Continue to support municipalities by calling on the federal government to commit to meaningful consultation and cost containment principles for contract partners with RCMP services; and***
- ✓ ***Implement bail reform measures within provincial jurisdiction to enhance community safety.***

In Manitoba, there are **21 municipalities** across the province with direct federal RCMP contracts. Despite being direct contract partners with Public Safety Canada for the delivery of RCMP services, new agreements, such as collective bargaining, and the procurement of equipment like body-worn cameras (BWC), are often negotiated by the federal government with municipal wallets and without meaningful consultation.

For instance, the anticipated annual cost per unit for body-worn cameras (BWC) is approximately **\$3000 per year**. The federal government intends to transfer responsibility for BWC to provincial governments and contract municipalities in 2024/2025 in which they will be forced to assume all financial responsibility. However, municipalities face significant financial strains, making it next to impossible for them to cover these expenses.

For instance, in Winnipeg alone, outfitting over 1300 officers with cameras was estimated at **\$7 Million**, with an additional **\$4 Million** allocated annually for operational costs. The AMM understands that the Province has acknowledged recent media reports underscoring public concerns regarding police transparency **and stands ready to help ensure costs and processes associated with BWC implementation are supported**. The AMM would certainly be interested in receiving an update on this announcement.

Finally, the AMM welcomed the successful passage of Bill C-48, which serves to hold violent repeat offenders accountable. Moreover, we urge the Province to also pursue stringent bail reform measures within its jurisdiction to enhance community safety. Additionally, inadequate coverage of cellular networks and broadband poses a significant obstacle to public safety. Therefore, prioritizing investments to enhance broadband connectivity is essential to assist bail monitoring efforts throughout Manitoba.

# Active AMM 2023 Justice Resolutions

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## AMM Resolution #22-2023: Fair Allocation of the Cost of Policing

### Sponsor(s)

Winkler, City (Central)	Dauphin, City (Parkland)
Morden, City (Central)	Swan River, Town (Parkland)
Selkirk, City (Interlake)	Beausejour, Town (Eastern)
Thompson, City (Northern)	Lac du Bonnet, RM (Eastern)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to amend The Police Services Act to ensure that the model for funding policing in Manitoba is equitable, transparent, and aligns the allocation of costs with the capacity to pay and the jurisdictional responsibility over the root causes of crime.

## AMM Resolution #23-2023: Full Staffing for RCMP Detachments

### Sponsor(s)

Dauphin, City (Parkland)	Gilbert Plains, Municipality (Parkland)
Dauphin, RM (Parkland)	McCreary, Municipality (Parkland)
Ste. Rose, Municipality (Parkland)	

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM work with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to lobby the federal and provincial governments to increase the number of RCMP members in the force to fully staff each department, through various ways like increasing capacity at the RCMP Depot in Regina to train more new members.

## AMM Resolution #24-2023: By-Law Enforcement

### Sponsor(s):

Lac du Bonnet, RM (Eastern)	Springfield, RM (Eastern)
Beausejour, Town (Eastern)	Pinawa, LGD (Eastern)
Brokenhead, RM (Eastern)	Alexander, RM (Eastern)
Reynolds, RM (Eastern)	

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM continue to lobby the Province of Manitoba to include By-law Enforcement Officers within the ongoing review of The Police Services Act and designate them as Peace Officers, within the regulations with the development of training standards; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM continue to lobby the Province of Manitoba to remove the requirement from The Police Services Act, that the CSO/FNSO be a direct employee of the city, municipality or community and provide the option of contracting out, as this would greatly assist smaller municipalities and communities with another option to address by-law enforcement and enhance public safety.

# Active AMM 2023 Justice Resolutions

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## AMM Resolution #25-2023: By-Law Standardization

### Sponsor(s)

Lac du Bonnet, RM (Eastern)

Beausejour, Town (Eastern)

Brokenhead, RM (Eastern)

Reynolds, RM (Eastern)

Whitemouth, RM (Eastern)

Springfield, RM (Eastern)

Pinawa, LGD (Eastern)

Alexander, RM (Eastern)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM and MMA work together to develop a By-Law Standardization website or electronic portal, which could be accessed by all municipalities and communities and thereby assist them in developing and sharing streamlined enforceable standardized municipal by-laws, reducing duplication and legal costs; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to develop a regional By-law court process which would be specific to by-law enforcement offences, and this would greatly reduce legal costs for all cities, municipalities, and communities, while enhancing by-law enforcement and overall public safety.

## AMM Resolution #26-2023: Trespassing

### Sponsor(s)

Ste. Rose, Municipality (Parkland)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to impose and enforce more stringent regulations pertaining to trespassing.

***\*\* For further information on any resolution, please contact the AMM office.***