



Association of Manitoba Municipalities

**TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE
+
CONSUMER
PROTECTION AND
GOVERNMENT SERVICES**

FEBRUARY 26

2024

SUMMARY OF MUNICIPAL PRIORITIES

The AMM appreciates the opportunity to meet with Minister Lisa Naylor and representatives of Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure and Consumer Protection and Government Services. 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 Minister Naylor's portfolio. The AMM looks forward to working with the Province to strengthen provincial-municipal growth and partnership opportunities.



Infrastructure Priorities and Partnerships

- **Discuss department priorities and new legislation in the MTI-AMM Service Delivery Review Working Group.**

Disaster Financial Assistance

- **Advocate for federal government action: Restore the previous DFAA cost-sharing formula and support municipalities by urging Canada to include interest charges in the modernized DFAA program.**

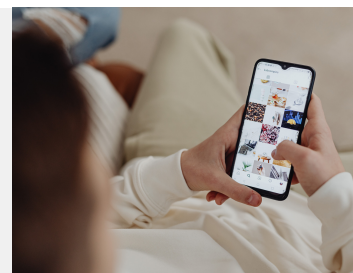


Next Generation Infrastructure Programming

- **Foster collaboration with the federal government to streamline processes and enhance flexibility for applicants and funding recipients.**

Connectivity

- **Utilize federal funding programs like the Universal Broadband Fund (UBF) to collaboratively expand both broadband and cellular initiatives across Manitoba, working closely with municipalities to develop effective solutions.**



Infrastructure Priorities and Partnerships

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ ***Ensure department priorities and new legislative initiatives are discussed through the MTI-AMM Service Delivery Review Working Group; and***
- ✓ ***Support municipalities by advocating for a dedicated water and wastewater infrastructure funding program at both the federal and provincial levels.***

Municipalities in Manitoba - and across Canada - are facing unprecedented inflation and supply chain challenges. Increased provincial support for local communities grappling with aging municipal infrastructure is urgently needed. Enhancing local roads, bridges, and water systems stands out as a crucial avenue to create jobs and stimulate economic growth.

Further, studies have shown that one-third of core municipal infrastructure is in fair or very poor condition, which is concerning given that municipalities manage **60%** of Manitoba's public infrastructure despite collecting less than **10 cents** of every tax dollar.

While the AMM acknowledges the Province of Manitoba's commendable investment of **\$100 million** in supporting essential municipal water and wastewater projects, concerns persist among municipalities regarding water-related infrastructure. Municipalities in Manitoba have identified a need for over **\$976 million** to upgrade or construct water and wastewater treatment facilities, as well as sewer infrastructure, encompassing **over 300 projects** - a cost **increase of over \$224 million** compared to 2022 projections.

Thus, the AMM continues to call on the Province to invest no less than **\$1 billion** annually in strategic infrastructure as it is imperative that infrastructure investments enable local growth while budgeted infrastructure dollars are fully maximized to benefit all municipalities.

Finally, it is vital that municipalities are properly consulted on infrastructure changes that directly impact their communities, including highway access points, highway road closures and provincial road upgrades. Furthermore, municipalities require adequate funding to mitigate financial and administrative pressures resulting from any regulatory changes introduced by the provincial government.

Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ ***Urge the federal government to restore the previous DFAA cost-sharing formula; and***
- ✓ ***Support municipalities by calling on the Government of Canada to include interest charges as part of the modernized DFAA program.***

If there is a major flood event in Manitoba, the current DFAA cost-sharing formula will have severe impacts on municipalities, particularly for smaller municipalities due to increased thresholds. This is problematic given that Manitoba is the second largest user of the DFAA program.

The AMM is aware that the existing DFAA is set to expire on **March 31, 2025**, and will be replaced by a modernized version scheduled to be implemented in **April 2025**. Concurrently, we acknowledge that the Province is actively reviewing its provincial DFA program with the aim of enhancing responsiveness, minimizing administrative burdens, and expediting the flow of funds to those impacted by disasters.

As the Province initiates changes to the DFA program, it's crucial to integrate local insights and feedback into the provincial program's modernization and consult municipalities as the federal DFAA modernization unfolds. Given the recurring nature of flooding and natural weather events in many municipalities, easy accessibility to the DFA/DFAA program is paramount. Currently, the DFAA program reimburses overtime wages for disaster-related work only for specific municipal staff. It is imperative that the modernized DFAA program allows for the claiming of regular wages for current municipal personnel, recognizing that these individuals typically work during normal hours. Replacing knowledgeable municipal personnel with temporary workers is not a viable strategy to enhance disaster response.

Moreover, concerns have been voiced by municipalities regarding the time delay between making payments for restoration and submitting expense claims to the Province under these programs. Local municipalities are then obligated to bear these costs, leading to incurred interest charges that adversely affect both the municipalities and their ratepayers. Thus, we urge the Province to support municipalities by calling on the Government of Canada to include interest charges as part of the modernized DFAA program. Additionally, advocating for reduced red tape and streamlined payment processes is essential to expedite financial support. Finally, as droughts intensify in Manitoba, it is crucial for Canada to recognize them as eligible expenses in disaster response efforts.

Next Generation Infrastructure Canada Programming

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ ***Collaborate with the federal government to streamline processes and increase flexibility for applicants and funding recipients with enhanced ability to move funds between streams to better address municipal priorities; and***
- ✓ ***Continue to involve AMM input for reviewing applications related to various funding streams for municipalities in next generation federal funding.***

As Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) funds have been fully allocated and many federal programs are approaching expiration, next generation infrastructure programming must be more inclusive and better address the diverse needs of all provinces. To date, there have been several challenges with federal infrastructure programming. For instance, Manitoba municipalities often find themselves overlooked within federal definitions of the term 'rural'. Application requirements are often unclear, further complicated by cumbersome lenses, and the reporting requirements are complex.

Thus, it is imperative that the Province of Manitoba support municipalities by ensuring future federal program administration focuses on ensuring the swift delivery of funds, so municipalities can seize economic growth opportunities and help fuel our collective recovery.

Further, AMM is very pleased to participate as a member of the Manitoba Local Consultative Committee to review applications and recommend local priorities for the various streams under ICIP. Therefore, the AMM strongly urges the Province of Manitoba to maintain this agreement to consider incorporating our organization in the development of next generation infrastructure programming funding streams. This collaboration is essential to guarantee that municipal infrastructure priorities are adequately represented and addressed.

Connectivity

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ *Utilize federal funding programs like the Universal Broadband Fund (UBF) to collaboratively expand both broadband and cellular initiatives across Manitoba, working closely with municipalities to develop effective solutions; and*
- ✓ *Expedite the rural broadband expansion project to ensure all residents have equal access to high-quality Internet.*

Insufficient cellular network and broadband coverage persists in numerous areas, presenting a substantial challenge to our competitiveness, economic growth, and public safety.

Recent findings from a 2023 poll conducted by Probe Research for our organization underscore this issue. The survey revealed that, outside of Winnipeg, a mere **one-third (34%)** of rural and Northern Manitobans perceive their cell service as completely reliable. In contrast, a significant majority, comprising **64%**, express dissatisfaction, deeming their service either unreliable or only somewhat reliable. It is imperative for the Province to actively collaborate with cellular carriers and other stakeholders.

Further, while we welcomed the provincial commitment to invest **up to \$20 million** to leverage Manitoba Hydro's dark fiber optic network, we remain concerned that **only 20 per cent** of the rural broadband expansion had been completed as of April 2023. Thus, the AMM would appreciate an update on the Manitoba government's plan for broadband deployment.

Further, in November 2022, the federal government announced a **\$475 million top-up** to the UBF that **now totals \$3.225 billion**. Despite this substantial increase, the selected UBF projects webpage indicates that **only \$9.6 million** has been allocated to Manitoba since the fund's inception. This disparity underscores a concerning trend where broadband connectivity in our province lags behind other regions in the country, which hinders our competitiveness and potential for growth.

Further, the AMM understands that UBF projects are being prioritized with MoU signatory provinces with targeted federal-provincial funds, yet Manitoba is one of two provinces that is not a signatory. It is crucial for all levels of government to collaborate, ensuring that available funds, including those from the Universal Broadband Fund (UBF), are fully utilized to support local community projects.

Active AMM 2023 MTI Resolutions

AMM Resolution #29-2023: DFAA Interest Charges

Sponsor(s)

Morris, RM (Central)	Dunnottar, Village (Interlake)
Morden, City (Central)	Woodlands, RM (Interlake)
Pembina, Municipality (Central)	Coldwell, RM (Interlake)
Rhineland, Municipality (Central)	Fisher, RM (Interlake)
Headingley, RM (Central)	Montcalm, RM (Eastern)
Altona, Town (Central)	Morris, Town (Eastern)
Cartier, RM (Central)	Ste. Anne, RM (Eastern)
North Cypress-Langford, Municipality (Western)	Stuartburn, RM (Eastern)
Mountain, RM (Parkland)	Emerson-Franklin, Municipality (Eastern)
Teulon, Town (Interlake)	St. Clements, RM (Eastern)
Winnipeg Beach, Town (Interlake)	Lac du Bonnet, RM (Eastern)
Grahamdale, RM (Interlake)	Brokenhead, RM (Eastern)
Gimli, RM (Interlake)	De Salaberry, RM (Eastern)
	Springfield, RM (Eastern)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to continue to lobby the Government of Canada to amend the Federal DFAA Program to include eligibility for 'Carrying Costs' (or Interest) as a part of the program; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM request the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to lobby the Government of Canada on behalf of all Canadian municipalities to have the Government of Canada amend the DFAA Program to include eligibility for 'Carrying Costs' (or Interest) as a part of the program; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to re-imburse municipalities for any carrying costs that they have incurred for disasters that have occurred over the past five years.

AMM Resolution #30-2023: Provincial Road Upgrades in Communities

Sponsor(s)

St. Clements, RM (Eastern)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to change the designation of these roads to ensure the required upgrades are completed.

Active AMM 2023 MTI Resolutions

AMM Resolution #31-2023: Provincial Roads through Towns and Villages

Sponsor(s)

Whitehead, RM (Western)
Oakland-Wawanesa, Municipality (Western)
Melita, Town (Western)
Killarney-Turtle Mountain, Municipality (Western)
Wallace-Woodworth, Municipality (Western)
Elton, RM (Western)
Sifton, RM (Western)
Boissevain-Morton, Municipality (Western)
Two-Borders, Municipality (Western)
Souris-Glenwood, Municipality (Western)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to properly maintain the PRs to provincial standards.

AMM Resolution #32-2023: Approaches off Provincial Trunk Highways

Sponsor(s)

Elton, RM (Western)
Riverdale, Municipality (Western)
Oakland-Wawanesa, Municipality (Western)
Whitehead, RM (Western)
North Cypress-Langford, Municipality (Western)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to ensure all entities, including the Province of Manitoba, follow the guidelines outlined in the Guide; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba and Government of Canada to jointly act to ensure that all existing temporary high traffic unsafe accesses that were approved through the development stage be removed immediately to ensure the safety of the travelling public and to jointly act to ensure that all new temporary accesses adjacent to provincial highways be limited to a six-month period to ensure the safety of the travelling public.

AMM Resolution #33-2023: Transportation Barriers

Sponsor(s)

Lac du Bonnet, RM (Eastern)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to take the following actions to promote rural transportation:

- Enable funding for rural transportation infrastructure and services to improve connectivity between rural communities and urban centers; and
- Develop and implement a comprehensive rural transportation strategy that incorporates the unique needs and challenges of rural communities, including the use of innovative solutions such as ride-sharing, volunteer driver programs, and public-private partnerships; and
- Provide financial support to local communities, non-profits, and other organizations to establish and operate transportation services that meet the needs of rural residents; and
- Collaborate with the federal government, municipalities, and other stakeholders to identify and implement long-term sustainable solutions for rural transportation.

Active AMM 2023 MTI Resolutions

AMM Resolution #20-2023: Funding for Municipally Owned Airports

Sponsor(s)

Virden, Town (Western)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to increase the annual operating grants to airport owners.

AMM Resolution #21-2023: Hire Local

Sponsor(s)

Stuartburn, RM (Eastern)

Brokenhead, RM (Eastern)

Ste. Anne, RM (Eastern)

Reynolds, RM (Eastern)

Beausejour, Town (Eastern)

Alexander, RM (Eastern)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to ensure when provincial work is being completed within a municipality, local businesses within that municipality be given first preference as the Contractor, pending they meet the requirements to complete the work; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM request the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to lobby the Government of Canada on behalf of all Canadian municipalities to ensure the federal government give the same consideration when federal work is done within Canadian municipalities.⁴

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