



ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA MUNICIPALITIES POLICY BRIEF – June 13, 2022

| Minister of Environment, Climate and Parks | Jeff Wharton |

The AMM appreciates the opportunity to meet with Minister Jeff Wharton and representatives of Manitoba Environment, Climate, and Parks. 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 Environment, Climate and Parks portfolio. The AMM looks forward to working with the Province to strengthen provincial-municipal growth and partnership opportunities.

TOP POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- The AMM welcomes the Manitoba government investing up to \$1 million to support the development and implementation of Manitoba's new provincial Water Management Strategy.
- The AMM has long called for a comprehensive Water Management Strategy as well as increased core operating funding to Watershed Districts (WDs).
- It is critical that every attempt is made to maximize resources as there is significant financial and environmental value in all the work completed by WDs, yet many WDs struggle to fulfill their current mandates and deliver programs with current funding.
- As municipalities look for solutions to mitigate future flooding and increase drought resilience, investments in water storage structures and irrigation will be critical to manage water sustainability.



MUNICIPAL PRIORITY

1. WATER MANAGEMENT

Municipalities are front line stewards of the environment that have invested considerably in flood mitigation infrastructure and share the vision of investing in safety and climate resiliency projects to not only save money in avoided flood damages but building resiliency for future floods.

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Continue to consult with the AMM on the Water Management Strategy; and*
- ❖ *Increase core operating funding to Watershed Districts.*

TOP POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- As municipal frustrations with the provincial drainage licensing process are well-documented, reducing red tape for low-risk, low impact drainage projects is long overdue.
- Thus, the AMM appreciates developing a new Working Group with the department to help address long-standing municipal concerns.
- While we commend the Province for launching the Water Licensing Portal to help expedite routine projects and reduce the significant backlog of drainage applications, the portal continues to increase costs, administrative time and red tape for municipalities.
- Moving forward, we encourage the department to continue consulting with the AMM to streamline processes by lowering application fees for all licensable projects, fees for routine clean outs and expedite drainage approvals overall.
- Moreover, several municipalities throughout Manitoba are working together to meet the challenges of climate change and ensure local communities are safe and sustainable.
- Thus, the AMM appreciates the Province's willingness to work in partnership with municipalities to ensure a sustained new funding stream for identified infrastructure projects.
- Leveraging federal funding to support climate adaptation projects in municipalities would help transition Manitoba to a lower carbon economy.
- Therefore, given the federal government's legal obligations to return carbon pricing revenues to their province of origin, we request the Province of Manitoba to support our call on the Government of Canada to distribute funds under the Climate Action Incentive Fund (CAIF).
- Since municipalities are committed to advancing climate-resilient initiatives at the local level, these promised funds will hasten a quicker COVID-19 recovery.

MUNICIPAL PRIORITIES

2. DRAINAGE LICENSING AND APPROVALS

3. MADE-IN-MANITOBA CLIMATE AND GREEN PLAN

The AMM appreciated the opportunity to participate on the Drainage Regulation Steering Committee to provide input on establishing an efficient drainage registration and licensing process with minimal red tape.

AMM strongly believes that one order of government should not tax another. Thus, we continue to call on the Province of Manitoba to support our call on the federal government to provide exemptions from the federal Carbon Tax.



The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Continue to streamline processes and reduce provincial red tape to expedite drainage licensing approvals;*
- ❖ *Consult with the AMM during the implementation of the Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan; and*
- ❖ *Support the AMM's call to exempt municipalities from the federal Carbon Tax and distribute promised CAIF rebates directly to municipalities.*

TOP POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- As the AMM is committed to advancing practical solutions to address challenges in waste diversion and recycling, we welcome the provincial commitment to comprehensively review recycling and waste management in Manitoba.
- Since municipalities have their boots on the ground, municipal-provincial partnerships are critical to explore opportunities for strengthening waste management systems.
- Thus, we were concerned to see the final report for the Manitoba Waste Diversion and Recycling Framework recommendations support more restrictions for the allocation of landfill levy revenue for municipalities as well as landfill bans.
- It is imperative that the recycling system is reflective of municipal needs and does not download costs onto municipalities.
- Moreover, the Province committed to transition to full Extended Producer Responsibility in the coming years. However, it remains unclear how this plan impacts the ongoing Recycling Review.
- Additionally, after four years of discussions, the AMM is pleased to see an in-kind advertising program where newspapers will provide communities with advertising in lieu of cash funding.
- However, more clarity and enhanced communication is required as municipalities look to modernize their recycling collection processes. The AMM strongly encourages the Province to strategically pause the Manitoba Waste Diversion and Recycling Framework Review until details regarding the EPR Transition Plan Framework are released.
- Moreover, maintaining recreational facilities is financially unsustainable due to ever-increasing operating costs, which include hydro and gas costs and increased insurance premiums. The increases in Manitoba Hydro rates will continue to negatively impact municipalities, particularly in the operation of recreation infrastructure.
- We urge the Province to further enhance and develop new energy-saving programs that decrease operating costs for community-owned public recreation facilities.

MUNICIPAL PRIORITIES

4. WASTE DIVERSION AND RECYCLING INITIATIVES

5. EFFICIENCY MANITOBA AND SUPPORT FOR RECREATION FACILITIES

Since 2017, more than \$2.5 million was withheld from Manitoba municipalities due to newspaper publishers no longer making payments to Multi-Material Stewardship Manitoba (MMSM) despite their regulatory obligations. However, as of November 2021 an agreement was reached between MMSM, News Media Canada (NMC), City of Winnipeg and AMM.

Public recreation facilities are important assets that not only contribute to quality of life and well-being but also play a vital role in attracting newcomers and retaining families in local communities. However, municipalities are trying to keep these buildings afloat all while collecting next to no user fees due to the ongoing pandemic.

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Continue to directly consult with the AMM and municipalities on the provincial review of recycling and waste management as well as the transition to full Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR); and*
- ❖ *Ensure Efficiency Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro enhance and develop new energy saving programs that decrease operating costs for recreation facilities.*

TOP POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- Due to significant cost implications and effectiveness concerns, the AMM has long advocated for the Province of Manitoba to reverse the ban on federally-approved weed control pesticides.
- In order to achieve comparable weed control outcomes, multiple applications of products and additional municipal staff time are required to comply with these regulations.
- Thus, we welcome the amendments to align Manitoba's cosmetic pesticide legislation with federal regulations and rigorous Health Canada review processes.
- Aligning with federal regulations will allow municipalities to effectively manage weed control programs while mitigating financial pressures on municipal budgets.
- While these are positive amendments, it is essential that the department develop informational materials that clearly outline where and how federally-approved products can be used.

MUNICIPAL PRIORITIES

6. COSMETIC PESTICIDE BAN

Restricting cosmetic pesticides approved by federal government agencies not only reduces the ability of municipalities to effectively manage weed control programs, but also results in unnecessary financial constraints on municipal budgets and red tape.

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Ensure municipalities receive necessary informational materials that clearly outline how federally-approved products can be used.*

ACTIVE AMM ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND PARKS RESOLUTIONS

AMM Resolution #08-2021: Provincial Water Strategy

WHEREAS considerable agricultural and industrial growth is now being limited in some areas of Manitoba by an inadequate supply of water and will be limited in more areas in the future; and

WHEREAS climate change projections identify the need to plan for an adequate water supply for future agricultural and industrial growth; and

WHEREAS a regional water planning approach will support continued economic development in Manitoba; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Water Strategy and the potential establishment of a new Canadian Water Agency promise to provide much needed scientific and funding support for water projects; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Government leadership is required to coordinate and support regional water planning, because the need extends beyond individual municipalities and between numerous regions of the province;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to develop a program for planning, identifying and prioritizing regional water projects as part of its Manitoba Water Strategy.

AMM Resolution #18-2021: Public Registry Advertising

WHEREAS the public registry made under the *Manitoba Environment Act* asks for comments from the general public on proposals of community developments for construction, industrial facilities and mining developments, agricultural manufacturing and process, etc.; and

WHEREAS these developments may overlap and/or affect the environment and the overall well-being and health of residents of more than the originating municipality;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba for the good of all, the environment and the well-being and health of residents that prior to the public registry advertising the proposal and giving approval to the development that all municipalities be circulated for their input, comments and concerns prior to listing the application on the public registry; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to change the process to include all municipalities.

AMM Resolution #19-2021: Waste Disposal Grounds

AMM Resolution #12-2020: Municipal Cottaging Initiative

AMM Resolution #13-2020: Mattress Disposal

AMM Resolution #16-2020: Subsidize Waste Management Facilities

AMM Resolution #22-2020: Solar Incentive Program

AMM Resolution #23-2020: Level 3 Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

AMM Resolution #29-2019: Composting

AMM Resolution #26-2019: Lake Winnipeg Water Quality

AMM Resolution #27-2019: Drainage Licensing

AMM Resolution #21-2018: Commercial Recycling

AMM Resolution #46-2017: Water Rights Act Compliance - SP

AMM Resolution #48-2017: Municipal Drainage - SP

AMM Resolution #24-2017: Certification of Water Treatment Plant Operators

AMM Resolution #46-2016: Noxious Weeds - SP

AMM Resolution #11-2015: Water Control Work Permits

AMM Resolution #18-2014: Drainage Upgrade and Solutions

AMM Resolution #17-2014: Tile Drainage Policy

AMM Resolution #41-2013: Increase Funding to Conservation Districts

AMM Resolution #13-2014: Weed Control Districts – Chemical Exemption

AMM Resolution #17-2012: Drainage on Crown Lands

AMM Resolution #13-2011: Cosmetic Pesticide Use Ban