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# Agriculture

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Meeting with Minister Ron Kostyshyn

September 2, 2025



Association of  
Manitoba Municipalities

## Summary of Municipal Priorities

The AMM appreciates the opportunity to meet with Minister Ron Kostyshyn and representatives of Manitoba Agriculture. The AMM encourages the provincial government 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 recommendation on an important municipal issue relevant to Minister Kostyshyn's portfolio. The AMM looks forward to working with the Province to strengthen provincial-municipal growth and partnership opportunities.

## 1. Veterinarian Funding and Shortages

### Recommendation:

- ✓ ***Work with the AMM and municipalities to establish a funding model that considers availability and funding costs of veterinarian services across different parts of Manitoba.***

## Veterinarian Funding and Shortages

### **Recommendation:**

- ✓ ***Work with the AMM and municipalities to establish a funding model that considers availability and funding costs of veterinarian services across different parts of Manitoba.***

AMM members continue to raise concerns about veterinary funding, staffing shortages, and education barriers. While we welcome recent investments, such as \$8.3 million for veterinary training programs in 2025–26, a \$75,000 increase to veterinary district grants, and \$135,000 to implement a new provincial veterinary strategy, overall funding has not kept pace with rising costs. Provincial funding levels have remained mostly unchanged since the 1970s, even as expenses continue to climb, putting increasing pressure on communities that depend on these essential services.

The AMM also thanks the Department for establishing a new veterinary working group and including us as a member. We encourage the Province to use this forum as a central platform for developing and implementing solutions under the new veterinary strategy, ensuring municipal perspectives directly inform decision-making.

While some municipalities have implemented innovative clinic models, the diversity in resources, fiscal capacity, and geography across the province makes these approaches difficult to replicate universally. Veterinary Service Districts depend on provincial funding for upgrades to buildings and diagnostic equipment, yet escalating costs remain unaddressed by the current funding model. A new funding structure is essential to sustain these facilities, particularly in rural areas.

An improved model could help ensure the sustainability of these services in communities where they are needed most, while also supporting the attraction and retention of veterinarians in local regions. Additionally, there is a lack of clarity on the distribution of municipal versus private veterinary clinics. Publishing maps that clearly identify the location of municipal and private veterinary clinics across Manitoba would help municipalities assess service gaps and explore innovative solutions tailored to their local needs.

Finally, the shortage of veterinarians, especially in large animal care, remains a province-wide challenge. Rural clinics are closing due to recruitment difficulties and retirements, and in places like the City of Thompson, access issues also affect companion and small animal care. Any future veterinary strategy must be guided by local feedback and include measures such as increasing provincially funded veterinary student seats and exploring return-to-service agreements to encourage graduates to stay in rural Manitoba.

## Active AMM 2024 Resolutions

### **AMM Resolution #08-2024: Vet District Tax Exemption**

#### **Sponsor(s)**

Harrison Park, Municipality (Midwestern)

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to make an amendment to 23(1) of *The Municipal Assessment Act* to include animal hospitals owned by a veterinary services board under 6(2) of *The Veterinary Services Act*, as exempt from school taxes.

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