
Environment and Climate Change

Change

Meeting with Minister Mike Moyes

March 19, 2026



Association of
Manitoba Municipalities

Summary of Municipal Priorities

The AMM appreciates the opportunity to meet with Minister Mike Moyes and representatives of Manitoba Environment and Climate Change. 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 recommendations on a number of important municipal issues relevant to Minister Moyes' portfolio. The AMM looks forward to working with the Province to strengthen provincial-municipal growth and partnership opportunities.

1. Water and Wastewater Operator Certification

Recommendation:

- ✓ *Expedite the implementation of the Water and Wastewater Operator Certification Advisory Committee's recommendations to ensure the continued operation of essential water and wastewater infrastructure.*

2. Transition Plan to Full Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

Recommendation:

- ✓ *Continue to directly consult with the AMM and municipalities on the transition to full Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).*

3. Drainage Licensing & Approvals

Recommendation:

- ✓ *Continue to streamline and reduce provincial red tape to expedite drainage licensing approvals.*

4. Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention and Management

Recommendations:

- ✓ *Increase financial resources and enhance public awareness to effectively prevent the spread of AIS, including Zebra Mussels.*
- ✓ *Expand decontamination and inspection sites across Manitoba to cover all regions effectively and protect local water bodies.*

Water and Wastewater Operator Certification

Recommendation:

- ✓ ***Expedite the implementation of the Water and Wastewater Operator Certification Advisory Committee's recommendations to ensure the continued operation of essential water and wastewater infrastructure.***

For more than 20 years, municipalities have repeatedly raised concerns about Water and Wastewater Operator Certification, yet these challenges remain unresolved. While the AMM appreciates the work of the Certification Advisory Committee and the Department's review of its recommendations, particularly those related to certification barriers, training requirements, and administrative processes, we remain concerned that more than two years after the completion of the Committee's work, these recommendations have still not been implemented.

The CAC report provides practical recommendations that align with longstanding municipal priorities. The AMM welcomes the Province's commitment to initially develop a toolkit to address key recommendations and improve access to information. Municipalities also continue to emphasize the need to review the current exam curriculum to ensure training content is practical, regionally relevant, and reflective of real-world municipal operations. Aligning certification requirements with on-the-ground responsibilities is essential to addressing workforce shortages and ensuring operators are prepared for operational realities.

With growing demand and a staggering **\$1.35+ billion** deficit in water and wastewater infrastructure, the need to recruit and retain certified treatment operators has never been more urgent. Without timely action, municipalities will face greater challenges delivering essential services, with implications for public health, economic development, and community sustainability.

Municipalities are calling for the swift implementation of CAC recommendations, including expanded local and alternative training opportunities to ensure all communities can access certified operators. A practical model already exists in Manitoba as evidenced by the provincial government's investment in a mobile fire rescue training trailer that aims to deliver year-round training for municipal fire services. A similar mobile training approach for water and wastewater operators could potentially help expand access to certification, strengthen workforce capacity, and reduce the financial and logistical burden on municipalities required to send staff away for training.

Transition Plan to Full Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

Recommendation:

- ✓ ***Continue to directly consult with the AMM and municipalities on the transition to full Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).***

The AMM supports the transition to full Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and recognizes its potential to reduce the financial and administrative burden currently borne by municipalities. However, as municipalities remain on the front lines of waste management, successful implementation will depend on strong provincial partnership, clear direction, and operational certainty.

Through our municipal visits, councils continue to ask for clarity on the status and rollout of the transition plan. While we appreciate the establishment of the MMSM Transition Plan Advisory Committee, key concerns remain. In particular, opt-in and opt-out scenarios lack clear direction on the ownership and transfer of municipal assets – including carts, bins, and related infrastructure. Municipalities require transparent, equitable asset transfer provisions to avoid financial risk.

Given the phased approach, municipalities also need timely and accessible information to support budgeting, contracts, staffing, and service planning. Regardless of participation status, residents will continue to look to local governments when issues arise – making coordinated promotion and public education essential.

Uncertainty also remains regarding newspaper recycling and NMC member participation. With the in-kind advertising framework having expired in December 2025, elements of the proposed plan are now outdated. Significant in-kind advertising credits remain outstanding to municipalities, with no clear path forward on how earned credits will be honoured or how future compensation will be structured. The AMM is calling for active provincial leadership to bring stakeholders together, resolve outstanding obligations, and establish a sustainable and fair framework moving forward.

Resolving these issues will require active provincial involvement. Successful implementation throughout the transition period will depend on sustained collaboration, transparent communication, adequate resourcing, and robust education for local communities and their residents that can lead to a prosperous and sustainable long-term future for recycling in Manitoba.

Drainage Licensing & Approvals

Recommendation:

- ✓ ***Continue to streamline and reduce provincial red tape to expedite drainage licensing approvals.***

As part of our municipal tours across Manitoba, the AMM met one-on-one with more than 30 municipalities to discuss local priorities and challenges, with the provincial drainage licensing process identified as a key concern. While we appreciate the department's collaboration on the Legacy Drainage License Project, which allows municipalities to streamline approvals by bundling licensable drainage projects under a single \$500 application fee, municipalities continue to stress that additional action is needed to address cost pressures and delays.

Drainage infrastructure is critical to flood mitigation and community resilience. Municipal ditches require routine cleaning to remove silt and debris and restore proper flow. However, the current requirement to conduct surveys before restoring ditches to their original depth is creating significant delays and financial burdens. Some municipalities have reported costs of up to **\$17,000** for a single culvert study. These added expenses and timelines are hindering timely maintenance. We are urging the Province to exempt municipalities from survey requirements when clearing and restoring ditches to their original state and depth.

Beyond licensing and survey requirements, municipalities have also raised a broader regulatory issue. AMM members passed a resolution regarding registration certificates issued under *The Water Rights Act*. Although detailed plans must be submitted as part of the application process, the registration certificate itself does not describe the approved works. Given that these certificates are issued in perpetuity and are relied upon when engaging contractors, the lack of clarity creates unnecessary uncertainty and risk. Therefore, we urge the Province to amend the registration certificate template to include a clear description of the approved works – a practical administrative change that would improve transparency and provide greater certainty for municipalities.

Finally, we recognize the important role Manitoba Water Resource Officers play in issuing licences and ensuring compliance with surface water control works. Timely and consistent inspections and enforcement are essential to addressing illegal drainage and maintaining a fair regulatory system for municipalities. Given the vastness of the province, the formal complaint process can also serve as an important avenue for raising drainage concerns, and we encourage the Province to work with municipalities to increase awareness of this option and ensure concerns can be addressed effectively.

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention and Management

Recommendations:

- ✓ *Increase financial resources and enhance public awareness to effectively prevent the spread of AIS, including Zebra Mussels; and*
- ✓ *Expand decontamination and inspection sites across Manitoba to cover all regions effectively and protect local water bodies.*

The AMM welcomed the provincial government's **\$540,000** investment in Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) prevention in Budget 2025, building on the **\$500,000** commitment in Budget 2024. This funding includes the creation of a dedicated AIS Prevention Fund to support municipalities and partners in advancing local prevention initiatives.

Continued investment in AIS prevention is critical to limiting the spread of invasive species such as zebra mussels, which pose significant environmental and economic risks. We were pleased to see nearly **\$400,000** allocated to rural Manitoba as the first recipients under the new Fund. In total, we understand that more than **\$2.2 million** has been committed in recent cumulative budgets to protect Manitoba's waterbodies from AIS.

We thank the Province for responding to municipal concerns and working collaboratively with the AMM to strengthen prevention efforts. We also welcome the release of new tools under the AIS Partnership Program, including the AIS Prevention FAQ and by-law template, which provide practical support to municipalities. Moving forward, long-term, stable funding through the AIS Prevention Fund and stronger interdepartmental coordination will be essential. Expanding decontamination and inspection sites across all regions of Manitoba remains a key priority to ensure consistent coverage and adequate protection for local water bodies.

Finally, as visitor traffic increases during the summer months, public awareness and education are critical to preventing the spread of AIS. The AMM encourages the Province to expand public awareness campaigns and ensure municipalities have access to signage, brochures, and other educational materials for distribution at boat launches, campgrounds, and high-traffic areas.

Active AMM 2025 Resolutions

AMM Resolution #19-2025: Class 6 and 7 Soils

Sponsor(s)

Lac du Bonnet, RM (Eastern)
Stuartburn, RM (Eastern)
Reynolds, RM (Eastern)
Whitemouth, RM (Eastern)
Springfield, RM (Eastern)
Piney, RM (Eastern)
Alexander, RM (Eastern)
North Norfolk, Municipality (Central)
St. Laurent, RM (Interlake)
Rockwood, RM (Interlake)
Armstrong, RM (Interlake)
Bifrost-Riverton, Municipality (Interlake)
Ellice Archie, RM (Midwestern)
Prairie View, Municipality (Midwestern)
Yellowhead, Municipality (Midwestern)
Dauphin, RM (Parkland)
Mossey River, Municipality (Parkland)
Swan Valley West, Municipality (Parkland)
North Cypress-Langford, Municipality (Western)
Glenboro-South Cypress, Municipality (Western)
Whitehead, RM (Western)
Oakland-Wawanesa, Municipality (Western)
Souris-Glenwood, Municipality (Western)
Sifton, RM (Western)
Kelsey, RM (Northern)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to only enforce current limitations published in the Acts and Regulations, and remove the internal policy denying Water Control Works Licenses on Class 6 and 7 soils; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Province of Manitoba engage AMM to participate as stakeholders in the preparations of future internal policies within the Drainage and Water Rights Licensing Branch to adequately evaluate the impact of these internal policies on growth and future development.

AMM Resolution #20-2025: 30 X 30 Initiative

Sponsor(s)

Springfield, RM (Eastern)
Rockwood, RM (Interlake)
Harrison Park, Municipality (Midwestern)
Grandview, Municipality (Parkland)
Lac du Bonnet, RM (Eastern)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to consult with local governments, property owners and impacted stakeholders prior to moving forward with the 30 x 30 Initiative, to allow for better understanding of its policies and the platform to address concerns.

AMM Resolution #21-2025: Exemption to Conduct Surveys on Ditches

Sponsor(s)

Riding Mountain West, RM (Midwestern)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to exempt municipalities from the requirement to conduct surveys when clearing and restoring ditches to their original state and depth, thereby streamlining the maintenance process and reducing financial strain.

AMM Resolution #22-2025: Drainage Permit Amendments

Sponsor(s)

Elton, RM (Western)
Wallace-Woodworth, RM (Western)
McCreary, Municipality (Parkland)
Riverdale, Municipality (Western)
North Cypress-Langford, Municipality (Western)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to amend their permit for a registration certificate to include a description of the approved works requested on the application.