
Agriculture

Meeting with Minister Ron Kostyshyn

May 4, 2026



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

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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 and additional 2026 funding for recruitment, mentorship, and tuition rebates – 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 municipal representation, as well as the recent announcement of the Veterinary Services District (VSD) Working Group. We encourage the Province to use these forums as central platforms 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 modernized 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. While recent investments in recruitment, training, and retention are positive steps, a comprehensive and adequately resourced approach is still needed, including increased training capacity and return-to-service incentives to ensure veterinarians are practicing where they are most needed.

Active AMM 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.

AMM Resolution #45-2023: Vet Shortages

Sponsor(s)

Armstrong, RM (Interlake)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to relax the immigration requirements enabling veterinarians to practice in Manitoba; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to implement a strategy to ensure veterinarians be required to return to provide services in Manitoba for a three-year period including large animal practices, thus providing a rotating stream of veterinarians in rural Manitoba.

AMM Resolution #44-2023: Vet Education

Sponsor(s)

Coldwell, RM (Interlake)
Harrison Park, Municipality (Midwestern)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to commit to long-term recruitment and retention of veterinarians by creating a veterinarian college within one of Manitoba existing post-secondary education institutions; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to consider allowing a certain number of annual seat allotments to be specific to those wanting to pursue Large Animal Veterinary.

AMM Resolution #43-2023: Vet Funding

Sponsor(s)

Harrison Park, Municipality (Midwestern)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to review and increase the current funding to local Veterinarian Service Districts.
