

A large, light gray map of the province of Manitoba is positioned in the upper right quadrant of the page. The map is outlined with a white border and is divided into several irregular, polygonal regions, likely representing different administrative or geographical areas. The map is oriented with its top edge towards the upper right corner of the page.

MHCA Priorities 2013

Groundbreaking

MHCA Priorities 2013

In 2012 the MHCA continued and built upon its established reputation of presence, profile and impact over the past year.

The achievements have been referenced in summary fashion by Bob Reidy our Chair, Glen Black, Director of our WORKSAFELY™ program and our Manager of Marketing & Communications.

Further information is also available for your review in the inaugural November 2012 edition of the MHCA quarterly, the 'Groundbreaker.'

Consistent as well with our approach, the past sets the stage for the future and our groundbreaking approach to help shape it. Accordingly, proposed for 2013 MHCA Priorities are the following highlighted areas of focus:

Long Term Infrastructure Program (LTIP)

Promote a federal Long Term Infrastructure Program (LTIP) which focuses on infrastructure investment supporting economic growth, rehabilitation and maintenance; engaging and expanding private sector participation; and leveraging sustained municipal and provincial funding participation

To this end, we have made submissions to and will continue to press the federal government in a collaborative manner to focus on sustained, smart, investments in Canada's infrastructure.

The LTIP is anticipated to be announced in the federal March 2013 budget. We expect it will be long term - at least ten years - and no less than the Bridling Canada Fund it is expected to succeed.

Infrastructure and the Economy

Roll out in January 2013, a report which asserts that sustained, strategic private and public sector investment fuels economic growth and funds our quality of life, as the basis for sustained attention to infrastructure investment

The MHCA has for the past three years championed re-messaging at the national level to ensure association of sustained investment in infrastructure with fueling economic growth. That approach we took to the Western Canada Roadbuilder & Heavy Construction Association (WCR&HCA) and then to the Canadian Construction Association (CCA) where it was adopted by the CCA Board of Directors.

In support of that approach we were asked to oversee the development of a report under contract with the Canada West Foundation, the highlights of which were presented earlier by Casey Vander Ploeg, Senior researcher with the Canada West Foundation.

The report, its findings and messages will be released likely mid January 2013 and will form the basis around which we link economic growth to strategies underpinning the LTIP

The CCA also accepted another strategy suggestion from the MHCA, namely that the CCA Chair meet with every Premier accompanied by LCA representatives in support of both the economic impact message and the imperatives of provincial participation in Canada's LTIP.

Balanced approach to funding infrastructure

From a Manitoba municipal perspective, a provincial consensus strategy should be developed around the following principles:

1. We acknowledge there is a real municipal infrastructure deficit and agree that current revenue sources available to municipal governments are insufficient to tackle the deficit.
2. The shortfall must be reduced in part by new revenue streams dedicated by legislation to transparently address the municipal infrastructure deficit.
3. There is a balanced and shared role for all three levels of government which should be appropriate to their respective capacities and responsibilities.
4. The following provincial/municipal practice and revenue options are proposed:
 - a. Municipal governments must:
 - shift the emphasis from generating revenues to generating economic growth partnering with the province as a matter of policy priority in their decision making process
 - make internal adjustments ranging from maximizing own source revenues and borrowing authorities (incremental to existing infrastructure funding)
 - introduce organizational efficiency changes, regional infrastructure service delivery and implement related best practices. (See the Infrastructure Funding Council (IFC) Report, 'A New Relationship: A New Order,')
 - b. Manitoba should in response to evidenced municipal government commitment to re-orientation, should:
 - visibly engage municipalities as economic growth partners
 - provide access to new revenue streams or access to new tax room, each dedicated by legislation to Infrastructure, with a priority focus on investments which grow the economy while supporting rehabilitation and maintenance of existing infrastructure.

The legislation would establish criteria to access the new revenue streams, protocols that ensure public transparency, accountability, and require five-year public reviews of progress against a long-term plan.

5. The federal government must accept its shared responsibility. Its tax revenues benefit most by a growing economy. It should be petitioned to announce a Long Term Infrastructure Program (LTIP) in its 2013 budget which flows funding in amounts less than its predecessor Building Canada Fund (\$33 billion over 7 years). Canada's LTIP focus should be on investments in infrastructure which support long-term economic growth, prosperity, rehabilitation in existing infrastructure and leveraging in the process both private sector partnership opportunities and funding from all levels of government to ensure national affordability and sustainability over the long term.

Annual, Five-Year, Rolling Budgets

Press municipalities and the Province to adopt early tender program release and tender ads, followed by timely construction contract awards

WORKSAFELY™

Promote the WORKSAFELY™ Program and its COR™ Certification as the standard for workplace safety practices

Heavy Construction EXPO

Continue to offer the Heavy Construction EXPO as the annual venue for certified education and training with which to attract, train and retain workers for the heavy construction industry

Networking with Stakeholders

The list of stakeholders with whom the MHCA networks is extensive and impressive and those efforts must continue.

In particular the MHCA must continue visible, proactive and engaged participation with the WCR&HCA and CCA to ensure the provincial and regional concerns are taken to the CCA which acts as the national voice of the construction industry in Canada.

Marketing & Communications

The MHCA will develop and implement a sustained, visible and present strategy of proactive and reactive messaging to including full use of the social media, to ensure ongoing and enhanced MHCA presence, profile and impact upon public policy development.

The messaging will be targeted to reach key voting constituencies leading into the next municipal, provincial and federal elections to assist public understanding of and support for sustained strategic infrastructure investment and its impact upon economic growth, career opportunities and our quality of life.

Growing our businesses; Networking

A growing economy expands economic opportunities not only for the broad Canadian, Manitoba and local economies, but as well for our industry and the companies in it regardless of geographic location, size or area of activity.

Supporting economic growth is in the best interests of the general public and by extension to all industries, including the heavy construction industry in Manitoba and this objective will remain front and center for the MHCA.

The MHCA will also continue opportunities to grow member businesses through our mix 'n mingle events, networking opportunities and our publication medias including the Annual Directory, Quarterly Magazines, the Weekly and our website

400 Members in 2013

The MHCA will be 70 years old in 2013 and we have identified reaching and surpassing the 400 membership mark in 2013.

We attracted 52 new members in 2012 and are at present 362 members strong and growing. A clear strategy will be developed to in a sustained manner be able to attract, engage and retain members in our association.

MHCA Member Priorities - Our Focus

As always, the MHCA will focus on and respond to member priorities however large or small the concern might be and regardless of geographic origin.

Whether it is reviewing the Quarry Rehab Program, licenses levies and related charges imposed by municipalities, taxation policies of the provincial government, reviewing the effectiveness of the Construction Management Degree Program, addressing timely utility locates, monitoring the Construction Industry Wages Act, addressing regulatory efficiencies, public service delivery of private sector areas of business, the MHCA will continue to be the voice of the heavy construction industry.

Conclusion

The MHCA has an earned reputation of being a collaborative voice of reason within our province and country. We have an earned trust with the public, media and government.

With your continued support, the MHCA will continue to influence public policy consistent with the public's best interests, with presence, profile and impact, and as always groundbreaking.



Chris Lorenc, B.A., LL.B.,
President MHCA

