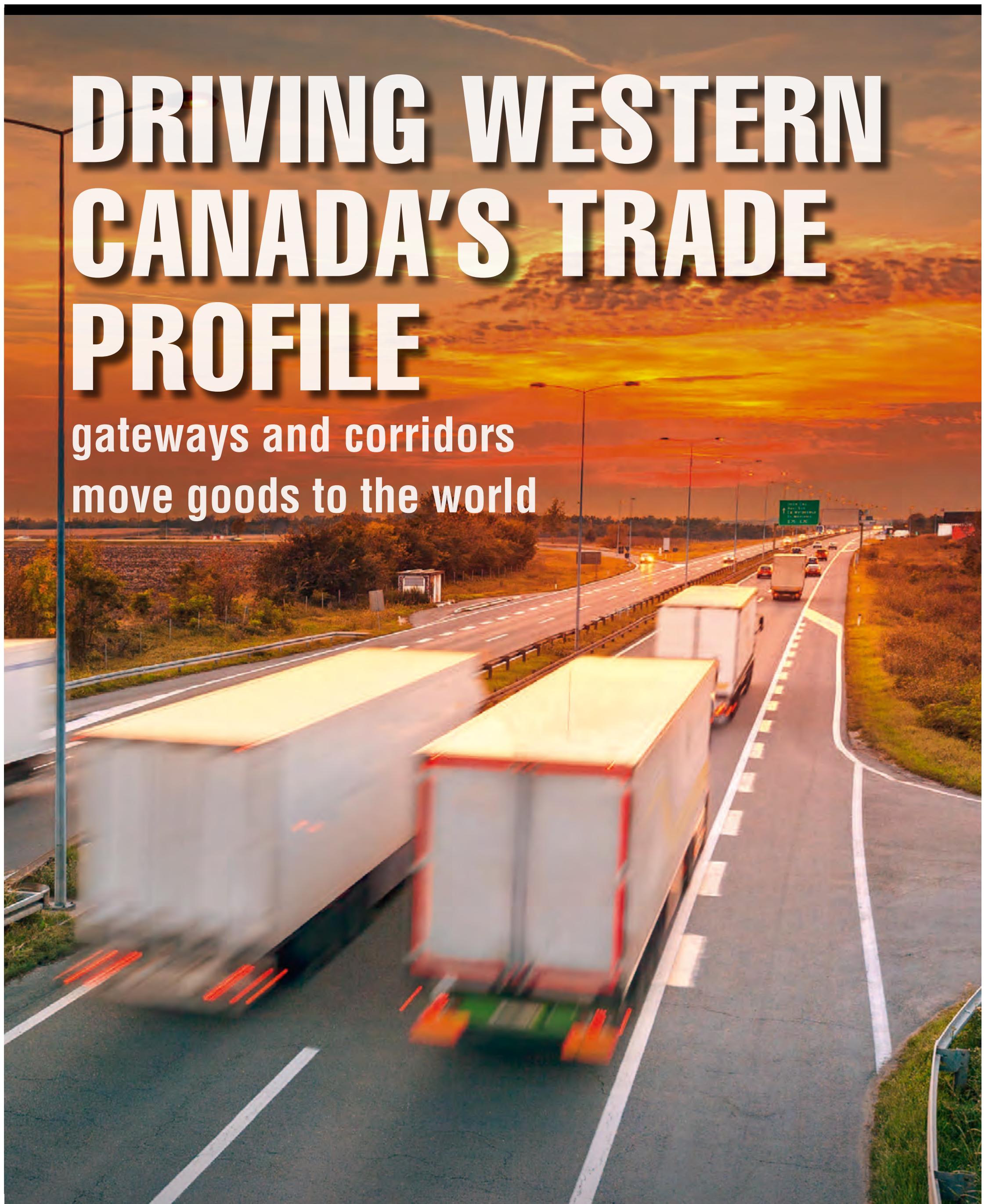


SUPPLEMENT TO THE WINNIPEG FREE PRESS - SATURDAY, APRIL 10, 2021



DRIVING WESTERN CANADA'S TRADE PROFILE

gateways and corridors
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Manitoba, the West's road to economic revival is built on trade

By Chris Lorenc

The provincial government has said it recognizes Manitoba's highways and roads need work, that cuts made in the past went deep and now we have to rebuild.

How we rebuild, however, is about more than increasing budgets, it is about positioning infrastructure investment as part of economic revitalization, in the wake of a pandemic-triggered recession.

Our economy, like Canada's, relies on trade. And that's why investing in our transportation system – the gateways and corridors that move trade along seamlessly, efficiently and for lowest cost – must be central to broad economic growth policy and planning.

Economic analyses verify investment in strategic infrastructure holds amongst the highest public 'return on investment' to GDP. Those returns range between \$1.30 to \$1.90 in the same year, for every \$1 invested. That being the case governments need to ask: Are our program dollars working as hard as they can to grow the economy?

Getting the most out of every dollar requires rethinking Manitoba's infrastructure investment strategy and priorities, and, because our goods move beyond provincial and national borders, working regionally with Western provinces to raise our trade profile and potential.

First, in Manitoba, we need a robust trade policy framework that organizes infrastructure investment around 'ROI to GDP' as



a core principle to attract investor interest. Lest you think that a pipe dream, CentrePort Canada has already attracted more than \$1 billion to its footprint - with more to come - because of its cheaper-faster connection to global markets proposition.

Manitoba Infrastructure's mandate should be re-imagined and re-purposed to identify and lead investments that capitalize on the potential in Manitoba's trade advantage as a geographic hub

connected to all four points of the globe by air, land and marine ports.

MI's new mandate should include identifying trade gateways and corridors as key assets for strengthening existing markets and developing new trade partners, while ensuring all highways and provincial roads are designed to carry heavy trucks and high traffic volumes to support Manitoba's producers and encourage value-added enterprise.

Second, and equally important, Manitoba should step up to pull Western provinces together, in a Western Canada Trade Gateways and Corridors Initiative.

The concept that would see the Western provinces working to coordinate and prioritize investment plans as a region, selecting through merit-based criteria projects that contribute to raising the West's global trade profile. In turn, this would elevate Canada's profile and allow the country to capitalize on newer trade agreements that expand or enter new jurisdictions to diversify our trade markets and partners.

The idea is not without precedent.

The federal Asia-Pacific Gateway and Corridor Initiative (2006) focused investment on strengthening Canada's routes to the growing Asian market. It released transportation and supply-chain pinch points and increased flow and volume in the trade network of road, rail and ports.

Federal seed money of \$1.4 billion leveraged \$3.5 billion in

total public funding and triggered private investments of \$14 billion. The legacy: a string of new roads, bridges and grade crossings, and increased capacity at terminals and ports. It increased the volume of cargo containers that western ports can handle by about 630% over 20 years.

Most of the investment focused on British Columbia, but the intent was to see similar investment rollout across the West.

Yet, there has been no successor program in its wake.

That's hurt Canada's international trade profile, because our trade partners and potential investors keep close watch on national trade policies and investment plans. In 2008-09, Canada was ranked 10th globally in the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index for transportation infrastructure reliability. As of 2019, Canada's rank dropped to 32nd.

The concept for a renewed federal capitalization of trade infrastructure is gaining support, along with the idea of a Western Canada Trade Gateways and Corridors Initiative. A sense of urgency is growing as economies across the globe are emerging from pandemic lockdown, hungry for the prospect of trade.

The West has shown it can raise its and Canada's trade game with coordinated effort and investment. As a keystone province, Manitoba is positioned to help push the West to expand and enter new trade markets, and secure Canada's future prosperity.



Chris Lorenc is President of the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association

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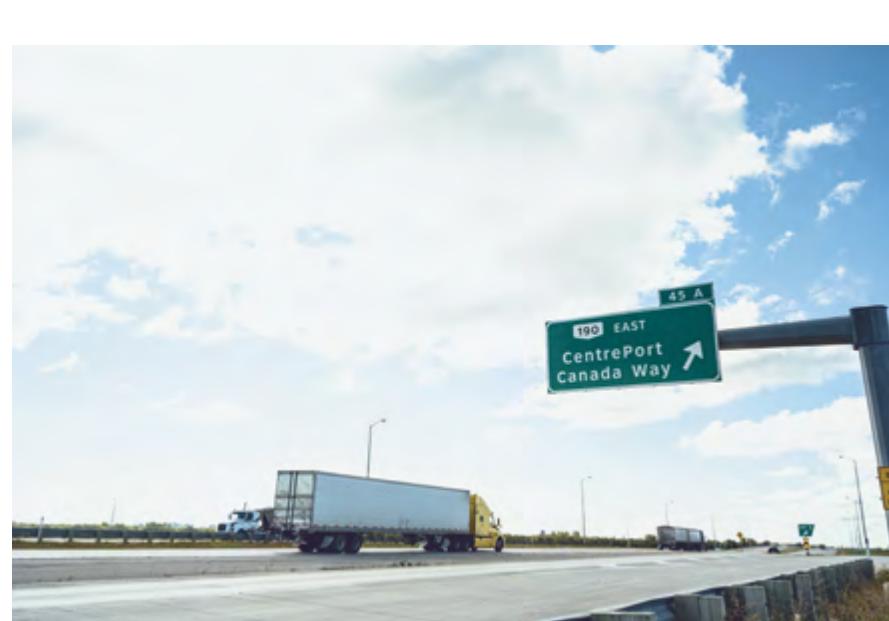


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Turn construction and demolition waste into resource

By MHCA

The government has asked Manitobans for their views on reducing the waste heading to landfills so Manitoba can become “the cleanest and greenest” province.

We say look no further than the sidewalk under your feet, or the roads you drive daily. And what about when the demo crews move in to tear down an old building or gut your neighbour's kitchen?

Construction, renovation and demolition (CR&D) sector is one of the largest resource consumers and waste producers in society, using up to 40% of the total raw materials extracted globally and generating about 35% of the world's waste.

While other jurisdictions have adopted policy and regulations for recycling CR&D waste, in Canada just about 16% of more than 4 million tonnes of CR&D material produced annually is diverted from the landfill. (And that doesn't include material generated by large civil engineering and infrastructure projects.)

That's a huge “waste” of opportunity, and a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions.

Meanwhile, there are successful models to learn from and replicate.

The recycling of construction and demolition waste materials is rapidly developing as an area of global public policy, as national and sub-national governments work to divert waste from landfills, preserve natural resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2008, the European Union set a target for an average 70% recycling rate by 2020; Belgium, Switzerland and Austria reached the 70% target in 2013. Japan passed a Construction Waste Act (2000), mandating recycling of concrete and wood and more than 93% of regulated construction waste is recycled there. In the U.S., almost 456 million tons, or 75%, of construction and demolition waste was recycled in 2018.

Closer to home, Edmonton has an aggressive policy for recycling, encouraging residents to bring their construction and renovation waste to civic recycling depots. In the past three years, the city has produced 642,753 tonnes of recycled aggregate, used mainly for all the road base construction on city projects.



Dr. Asia Shvarzman leads research and innovation at Antex Western/ACM Technologies

Every jurisdiction has its reasons for diverting materials – concrete, asphalt, untreated wood, glass, metals etc. – from the landfill. Frequently, it is driven by scarcity of resources or available landfill area. The best reason is to reduce the carbon footprint and preserve natural resources, some of which are finite and significant factors in the cost of construction.

Further, reclaiming CR&D waste would open new avenues for research and innovation in engineering and value-added material processing and production, says Dr. Asia Shvarzman, a University of Manitoba adjunct professor of civil engineering, and research and innovation lead at Antex Western/ACM Technologies.

Recycling of aggregates and asphalt are among the most common materials reused, and some countries have legislated the reclamation of cement from demolished concrete. Recycled glass is used in road building, as well, and recycled plastic as a road-building material is in development. Recycled carpet fibers could be used as soil reinforcement in road construction.

Shvarzman says the successful uptake of CR&D waste recycling requires a public policy framework that promotes sustainable

practices with mandated recycling thresholds, construction specifications and incentives – landfill tipping fees, tax credits etc. – in an approach toward a “circular economy.” She has devised a series of policy ideas for Manitoba (see sidebar).

But at present, recycling of construction materials in Manitoba for road-building or other purposes is largely the result of private-sector initiative.

For example, the use of recycled concrete aggregate (RCA) on public works projects – primarily within the City of Winnipeg – was introduced in the late 1990s by the heavy construction industry, which saw value in re-processing and repurposing the base and sub-base materials (aggregates) torn up in street rehab and reconstruction projects.

However, in 2020 the City of Winnipeg wrote new road-building specifications for road base and sub-base that have clipped the ability to use recycled aggregate materials. The city and the industry are working to see RCA use continue.

This work is being done in the wake of a 2020 resolution from the Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works Committee, directing the administration to present recommendations to increase the use of RCA in road-base design. The MHCA supported the resolution.

The direction is consistent with the City's own 2019 Climate Action Plan, which directs the public service to “reduce consumption and increase waste diversion from residential, commercial and industrial users; and advance Winnipeg's circular economy to support waste reduction.”

Hundreds of thousands of tonnes of RCA are pulled up each year from public and private-sector infrastructure works in Winnipeg and the immediate capital region.

Diverting this material to landfills grossly conflicts with sustainable finite resource management.

The provincial review of recycling policies and programs should look beyond assessing current practices, to a broader framework that moves us closer to the circular economy concept, where landfilling is a last resort.

Going green and clean demands that the enormous volumes of construction materials pulled up each year be turned into a valuable resource, not an environmental liability.

ENCOURAGE RECYCLING, NOT DUMPING

The MHCA, aided by Dr. Asia Shvarzman, has recommended that Conservation and Climate Minister Sarah Guillemard consider the following:

- Require recycling of construction and demolition waste materials in procurement by government, Crown corporation, public bodies and agencies
- Set rules for sorting, stockpiling and recycling of waste materials; include accountability measures for project owners, material producers, builders, agencies, departments and facilities
- Amend the Planning Act to promote the inclusion of construction and demolition waste recycling thresholds in municipal planning bylaws and development agreements, and within regional development plans
- Align financial incentives – user fees and charges to encourage waste reduction and diversion, such as tipping fees or virgin materials levies
- Adopt waste disposal bans or transportation restrictions to limit the disposal of materials
- Increase the resource efficiency of construction, renovation and demolition activities, such as through building certification and deconstruction standards.



MHCA Photo



Trade: the catalyst for economic growth in Western Canada

By John Law

For Canada, the economic imperative of trade corridor infrastructure has been established. Trade, and the transportation infrastructure that enables it, accounts for two-thirds of Canada's national income. It is the foundation of our economy.

Moreover, improving trade corridor infrastructure can be a catalyst, particularly in Western Canada, for the next generation of economic growth and can start in 2021 with the path back from the COVID-19 pandemic.

To capitalize on this opportunity and better understand emerging trade infrastructure needs, we can learn from three recent periods in which trade in Canada went through important changes.

Western Canada's decade of growth

In the decade before the COVID-19 pandemic, Western Canada's businesses embraced a globalization trend to expand their domestic and international customer bases. For 10 years, Canada enjoyed a 4.5% average annual growth in imports and exports. By adding new markets, Western Canadian companies of all sizes, including small and medium-sized enterprises, increased profits

and created jobs.

This growth increased pressure on our trade corridor network and heightened supply-chain vulnerability as businesses exports were exposed to more "points of contact" across their interconnected trade networks.

Growing uncertainty and accelerating competition

Over the last 3 to 4 years, Canada's privileged trade relationship with our US neighbours has been challenged by the Trump Administration's more openly protectionist trade policies, unexpected tariffs, and a forced renegotiation of NAFTA.

Similarly, China invoked arbitrary trade sanctions on Canadian food exports, and as one example of the growing competition to Canada's share of the international trade pie, displaced Canada for the first time as the largest trader with the US.

Domestically, Canada also had to deal with rail blockades and labour disruptions, hurting its reputation for trade reliability.

Continued on Page 5 »



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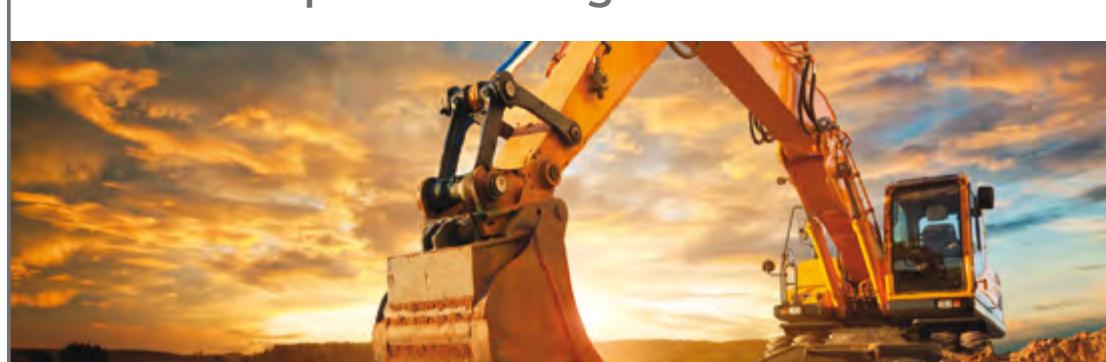


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John Law is the President of Lawmark International Consulting and a senior fellow with the Canada West Foundation. He is the former chair of the Canadian Council of Deputy Ministers responsible for Transportation and Infrastructure and served as president of the Transportation Association of Canada.

» Continued from Page 4

2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic

Multiple phases of the global spread of COVID-19 led to a pattern of “closing-shutdown-re-openings” that immediately induced a stop and go back-up of cargo traffic at ports around the world. This was accompanied by unprecedented drops in trade activity as well as major changes to consumer spending patterns which, in combination with logistics interruptions, produced freight rates that hit record levels amid a changing shipper and carrier relationship.

Key developments to watch for in 2021

Economic forecasters are projecting a return to trade growth for Canada of 5.8% in 2021 and 2022 respectively. However, robust growth will only be realized when the pandemic is brought under control, which is tied to the success and timing of the vaccine roll-out.

As Canada moves away from the pandemic crisis, economic recovery will be uneven both domestically, differing by industry, as well as internationally, depending on, amongst other factors, how foreign customers are able to distribute the vaccine.

Businesses in Western Canada should anticipate and plan for markets to recover at different times and at different speeds. This implies that different sectors will require very different strategies and that even for the same product different foreign markets will require different approaches.

Another key issue to watch in the coming year will be whether businesses and countries choose to mitigate recent supply-chain risks by diversifying their customer bases or alternatively by “reshoring” in favour of increasing self-sufficiency closer to home.

A key signal on this front affecting Canada’s most valuable trade relationship will be the emerging policy approach the new administration in the United States. Pay attention to the results of President Biden’s 100-day review of the US supply chain.

What's next

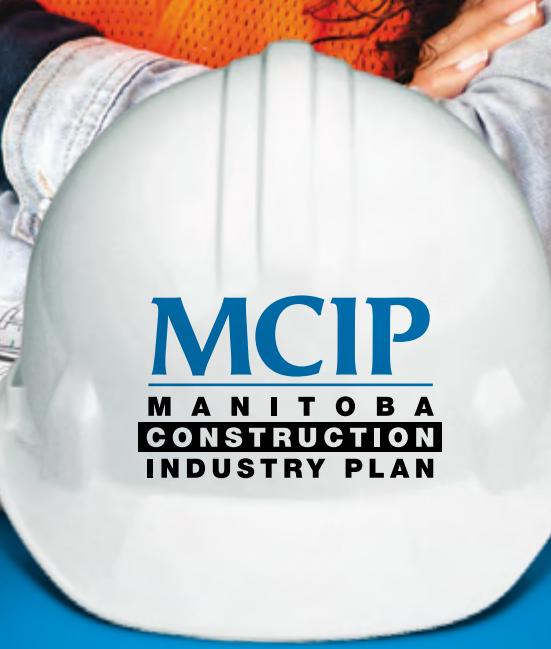
Beginning later in 2021 Western Canada can expect a return to trade growth in an environment of intensifying international competition and demands for more nimble supply-chain execution. It is hard to imagine an economy, as reliant on trade as that of Western Canada, where investments to improve domestic trade corridors can have a greater impact.

Recent years have taught us that, in this evolving world of international trade, there will be ongoing changes and many variables beyond our control.

However, we can and should improve the productivity of the corridor infrastructure that facilitates our trade-based economy. Doing so will send an important message to our international customers and set the stage for future economic growth.



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Manitoba Infrastructure can help drive provincial prosperity

Manitoba Infrastructure Photo

By Chris Lorenc

There's a palpable sense of hope spreading across Manitoba as the spread of COVID-19 abates, due to the hard work of citizens and the arrival of vaccines.

Repairing the damage done to many facets of our society, including small businesses, will require an economic revival.

However, sky-rocketing public-debt levels demand shaping a more resilient economy, one capable of producing the sustained growth in government revenues necessary to both pay down deficits and flow adequate funding to our world-class social programs.

In Manitoba, that revenue generation relies heavily on trade. Some 53% of Manitoba's GDP, or about \$37 billion worth of business, is generated from trade-related activities, sustaining roughly 240,000 direct and indirect jobs. Canada's economy is also dependent on international trade. Exports directly and indirectly accounted for some 3 million jobs, or 17% of all employment. Canada's trade-to-GDP ratio was just shy of 65% in 2019.

So, clearly, it is trade that holds the best hope for our provincial and



Chris Lorenc is the President of the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association

national economic revival.

That reality demands a whole-of-government approach. Let's start by asking not just where the public dollars for broad infrastructure investment are being used, but why.

There is an intrinsic connection between trade, infrastructure and prosperity. That is recognized by global 'confidence' indices that assess and rank countries' infrastructure investments, including transportation-asset condition, especially relating to

Trade matters to Manitoba

- Trade accounts for 53% of Manitoba's \$64-billion GDP, supporting some 240,000 jobs
- MB trade stats show our top 3 exports are: wheat - \$1b; pork - \$900m; canola - \$860m
- Our top 3 export markets are: USA - \$9b; China - \$1.4b; Japan - \$815m. Exports get on their way, and imports ultimately arrive, by truck
- Our transportation infrastructure is key to growing our trade profile. Manitoba's highways and bridges need \$9 billion in investment to bring them to good condition

"There is the infrastructure we want like parks and hockey rinks, the infrastructure we need like schools and hospitals and then there is the infrastructure that pays for these things and that is trade infrastructure."

— Perrin Beatty, President, Canadian Chamber of Commerce, *Infrastructure that Matters Most*, June 2016



interest. The policy must recognize the full potential of the Manitoba Infrastructure department.

Manitoba Infrastructure's value to the economy should be harnessed, and positioned to do much more than managing transportation assets and an annual capital program.

Its mandate should be re-imagined and re-purposed to identify and lead investments that help elevate our provincial global-trade profile. Recognizing the pent-up potential in Manitoba's trade advantage as a geographic hub connected to all four points of the globe by air, land and marine ports, MI's new mandate should task it to:

- identify trade gateways and corridors as key assets for strengthening existing markets and developing new trade partners
- prioritize the infrastructure projects with the greatest ROI to GDP
- ensure an efficient, province-wide system of highways designed to carry heavy trucks and high traffic volumes to support Manitoba's producers and encourage value-added enterprise
- promote a culture of regional

economic development with coordinated regional funding that incents infrastructure investment decisions among proximal municipalities.

Canada's other major cities have been attracting investor and site-locator interest for years; it's time our Capital Region, situated strategically to CentrePort got in the game

• ensure existing highways are well-maintained, for the efficient movement of people to jobs and goods to market.

Economies across the globe are on the cusp of reopening.

We can build a more resilient economy, by strengthening ties with existing trade partners and building new relationships in emerging global markets.

Adopting a robust provincial trade policy framework would send a clear signal to the world that Manitoba sees clearly its potential and is ready to invest in a strategy to become a regional trade superpower.

As a keystone province we are geographically positioned for success. Expanding our global trade profile ensures that our economy and social welfare programs don't just benefit, but thrive.

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Building a better Canada through greater investment in sustainable infrastructure



Hoop and Holler controlled cut 2011 - Manitoba Infrastructure Photo



Mary Van Buren is President of the Canadian Construction Association



Red River Floodway - Manitoba Infrastructure Photo

By Mary Van Buren

Canada's wide-ranging geography and climate has always presented challenges for infrastructure project planning, design and construction. The construction industry has a track record of successfully building infrastructure that stands up to the test of time.

We are presented now not just with what is arguably an existential challenge – preparing for climate change and the risks of more frequent extreme weather events – but opportunities to drive greater innovation and sustainability in construction.

Governments are prioritizing climate resilience in infrastructure investment programs and the Canadian construction sector is excited to play its part in “building back better” and leading in this area.

The Canadian Construction Association has developed a research paper, *Strength, resilience, sustainability: Canada's construction sector recommendations on adapting to climate change*, to increase awareness of the importance of sustainable and resilient infrastructure that can withstand the effects of climate change.

Warmer temperatures, increased precipitation and extreme weather events like flooding, ice storms, tornadoes and fires will need to become a normal consideration when planning public infrastructure projects.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also created an opportunity for jurisdictions to prioritize climate action as part of their economic recovery strategies.

Research indicates that the benefits of investing in community adaptation and resilience at the front-end outweigh the cost of such investments by a ratio of six to one.

The recent announcement of Canada's first-ever National Infrastructure Assessment is an important first step, but governments must also be prepared to lead the way through investment programs and by adapting procurement policies to defray resilience costs.

Projects that include innovative materials and concepts, despite costing more up front, should be given consideration. Programs are also needed to financially incentivize businesses of all sizes, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), to access and embrace emerging and sustainable technologies, materials, or processes.

The federal government has an opportunity to collaborate and partner with industry to ensure that large-scale infrastructure built today can better withstand the weather patterns and climate shocks of tomorrow.

Strength, resilience, sustainability outlines key opportunities for how industry and government can invest in green infrastructure, and how the higher upfront costs in sustainable construction can lead to significant environmental and financial savings over the long term.

Building Canada's clean economy requires that the federal government work in partnership with provinces, territories, and municipalities as well as industry stakeholders, to change the way public infrastructure projects are determined

and funded.

Buildings, roads, bridges, and highways will need to be more resilient and now is the time to act on this objective. With the 2019 edition of the *Canadian Infrastructure Report Card* (CIRC) showing that Canada's aging public infrastructure is in serious need of rehabilitation or replacement, there is an opportunity to re-shape our communities in a more sustainable manner.

CCA has been advocating for a 25-year blueprint for infrastructure investment in Canada. A forward-looking, long-term plan with prescribed annual commitments, including for training and innovation, could help pave the way towards a climate resilient infrastructure development program.

Without changes to existing practices that do not prioritize climate resiliency in infrastructure, climate change costs for Canada could escalate from roughly \$5 billion per year in 2020 to between \$21 and \$43 billion per year by the 2050s.

As governments prepare their COVID-19 recovery plans, they must integrate appropriate policies and investment programs that allow for the construction of resilient infrastructure.

Capacity building for climate change adaptation through investment and policy frameworks that support businesses is essential.

The principles of sustainable development are fundamental to how government, industry and society will successfully address critical societal needs, environmental pressures, and climate change impacts.

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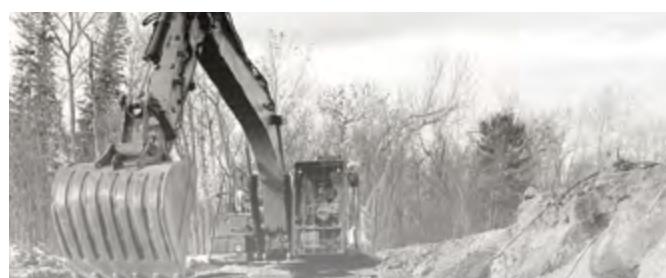
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Planning: our road to economic growth



Winnipeg Metropolitan Region Photo



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Colleen Sklar is the Executive Director of the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region

By Colleen Sklar

A simple fact: regions and communities need reliable, future-proof infrastructure to be strong and successful. People move their lives and plan their careers where they see the opportunity for a bright future for themselves and their children. They go where good jobs are — and employers go where they have the infrastructure and services they require. Reliable internet, clean and fresh water, safe roads and core municipal services are essential in attracting investment and growing our economy.

To build strong communities and spur the kind of growth we need to move Manitoba forward post-pandemic, we must connect the dots between regional planning, investments in infrastructure, service delivery, the creation of good jobs, housing options and our economic activity.

The good news: as Manitobans, our future can be as bright as the infrastructure we invest in.

The Winnipeg Metropolitan Region (WMR) is in the final stages of completing the first draft of Plan20-50, a 30-year regional land use and servicing plan that includes the City of Winnipeg and the 17

municipalities surrounding it. Plan20-50 is designed to facilitate smart, balanced and collaborative economic growth. It sets out regional-level policies to coordinate and align investments and servicing across municipal boundaries, beyond election cycles.

Successful regions across North America share two things in common: they have long-term vision and they plan for the future.

Manitoba has a legacy of big ideas and executing the seemingly impossible. Our region benefits today from the insightful leadership of those who dared to plan for a prosperous future at the turn of the 20th century. Consider the Red River Floodway, or drive down one of the 10 lanes at Portage and Main, and see how these major projects required long-term vision and a collaborative plan between governments, business and industry. This type of planning for the future takes leadership — because it's not easy.

Growing our economy, protecting our environment and building vibrant communities doesn't just happen; it requires a shared vision, some give and take, and good old-fashioned teamwork.

With a metro region expected to grow to 1.1 million by 2050, we once again need this type of bold leadership. Plan20-50 is a roadmap to harness the strengths of many to achieve the vision of a strong, sustainable and prosperous region. It calls us to plan and budget for investments in transportation, roadways, housing, emergency service provision, water and wastewater infrastructure, while protecting our water, agricultural land and natural resources for a future that

allows our children the opportunity to be successful here.

Elsewhere in Canada, regions have led bold initiatives for key infrastructure projects, such as regional public transit, to support the mobility of people, or broadband internet to enhance connectivity and bridge the urban and rural digital divide. Regions played a central role in coordinating these infrastructure investments and services, unlocking the key to creating complete communities that support good jobs, and attract the skills and investment needed to make a region globally competitive into the future.

Plan20-50 builds on this legacy and best practice to ensure the long-term supply of serviced residential, commercial and industrial land in order to:

- Plan, prioritize and facilitate investment in infrastructure;
- Provide confidence and predictability for investment;
- Ensure the protection of agricultural land, natural land and freshwater resources;
- Build resilience to flooding and drought and the effects of a changing climate; and
- Ensure service delivery to residents and businesses is effective and efficient into the future.

Getting to the first draft of the plan has not been an easy process, and no plan is ever perfect. The leaders of the WMR have taken a balanced approach to addressing the region's needs and meeting the key components necessary for a regional plan.

Learn more and have your say at 20to50.ca



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Industry training for all: your first step on the road to good jobs, good pay



By Nicole Chabot

There's never been a better time to start a career in heavy construction, whether you're young, new to Canada or not cut from the fabric of a traditional construction worker.

An aging workforce means there are thousands of jobs coming open in the coming years. Further, the industry is devising new recruitment and training programs to attract a diversity of potential workers and employees to all strands of the operations.

One such program was launched in January through River East Transcona School Division, called Introduction to Heavy Construction for Women. Another opportunity, offered by Seven Oaks School Division, will see a new 8-credit, co-operative vocational heavy construction program come into play.

"Young people are the lifeblood of the construction industry," said Carol Paul, Executive Director, Manitoba Construction Sector Council (MCSC). "As the existing generations retire and move on, companies need to attract and retain top talent to fill their spots."

Heavy construction has not been a part of the high school curriculum despite the skill shortages voiced by the industry, Paul noted.

Until now.

The River East Transcona School Division program, the first of its kind, started earlier this year as partnership that included the Manitoba Heavy Construction



Manitoba Construction Sector Council Photo

Association, MCSC and the Office to Advance Women Apprentices, with funding from the Manitoba Status of Women. This program was geared to deliver an introduction to heavy construction to young women.

"I had all the essential skills for a career in construction but never had the opportunity to get my foot in the door, until now," student Jami Genik said.

Student Chloe Phillips agreed.

"I already have the experience in heavy-duty trades in metal-fabrication," Phillips explained. "I enjoy what I'm learning and what I'm able to do as a woman. We don't get opportunity like this every day, especially females of my age."

A second program will be offered through the Seven Oaks School Division's Co-operative Vocational

Education (CVE) Program this fall. Seven Oak CVE's unique feature is the extended work placement portion of the program. Students have the opportunity to work in the field of their chosen trade for six to seven months, doing the job and making valuable contacts in the industry.

"The co-operative vocational program is more than just education, it's experiential, where students gain real-life industry experience," said Andreas Laubstedt, CVE Team Lead, Seven Oaks School Division. "It's where the community becomes the classroom. For many of our students, that translates into direct employment in industry."

Seven Oaks School Division is excited about its newest program, heavy construction. The heavy

construction program will allow students to explore several career paths like equipment operator, heavy duty mechanic or surveyor in the industry.

Both of these programs are the first of their kind in Manitoba and give young people the ability to explore the many diverse opportunities that exist within the heavy construction industry and allow the industry to highlight those who are succeeding in the field.

Such introductory and training courses are important because the adage – You can't be what you can't see! – is so true in a field that is traditionally staffed by men.

The industry offers good jobs, with career paths at good wages and benefits, including for those just entering the field.



Only 3.4 per cent of workers in heavy construction are women.

There is no better time to introduce young women to the heavy construction industry. Women are known to take excellent care of equipment, follow directions and pay close attention to details. The employers are excited about meeting the women and opening doors to their future.

– Colleen Munro, President, Munro Group; MCSC Board Chair and former MHCA Board Chair

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MHCA WORKSAFELEY™'s safety advisors can get you on the way to COR™ certification - MHCA Photo




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Don Hurst is the Director of MHCA WORKSAFELEY™ Education and Training



By Don Hurst

The MHCA's WORKSAFELEY™ program delivers the nationally recognized Certificate of Recognition (COR™) safety standard. This standard is an integral part of industry safety excellence. In fact, Manitoba's heavy construction industry has led the way for safety certification for over 20 years.

Ray Bissonnette, Safety, Health and Risk Manager for Nelson River Construction, sees COR™ in action constantly.

"COR™ Certification is constantly a part of our day-to-day business," says Bissonnette. "It sets a standard for us to achieve in safety, it's something we have to maintain every day to retain year over year."

In order for businesses to become COR™-certified, companies have to go through a thorough audit of their policies and procedures around safety and health. The audit process recognizes areas where companies are doing well, and areas that could be improved to meet COR™ criteria. In addition, certification provides the required education needed to achieve and maintain the certification.

"The certification not only gives us the tools for our own workplace safety program, it also shows our commitment to health and safety," says Bissonnette. "COR™ is a nationally recognized program that demonstrates the value our organization places on a quality safety management program."

MHCA's WORKSAFELEY™ team diligently works to help companies maintain their COR certification.

"We work with the company's internal audit team to ensure they are continually at, or exceeding, what is required," says Randy Olynick, Safety Advisor for WORKSAFELEY™. "It's something the WORKSAFELEY™ team takes seriously because of what it means to us as a certifying partner."

The COR™ certification goes beyond worker safety. While the health and safety of workers is most important, COR™ certification also contributes to company success.

"Having a safe workplace means less downtime and time loss to workers due to injury," says Bissonnette. "Every part of the company benefits when we're working safely."

"Our long-time partnerships with our industry are important," says Olynick. "We're proud of the national COR™ brand, our dedication to safety and our industry, and we hope it's visible to our companies and the industry each day."



COVID-19 safety protocol the new normal in heavy construction industry



By Jackie Jones

In the last year, the Covid-19 crisis has demanded important changes in safety procedures from Manitoba's heavy construction industry. A year later, many of them will remain in place.

The heavy construction industry was deemed an essential service right from the start of the pandemic, and the industry quickly adopted additional safety protocols, such as guidelines on social distancing and mask wearing.

As the industry navigates through the pandemic towards a new normal, we have recognized that some changes have become routine safety procedures.

"Last year brought new factors into play that you or I would never have thought about," said Mike Burtnick, Safety Manager of Maple Leaf Construction. "There has been a standard shift in many areas of construction that is leading contractors to do many things different than they have in the past."

COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of worker health and safety. In order to continue working on jobs, Manitoba's heavy construction companies quickly implemented new jobsite policies and procedures for preventing spread of the virus, and keeping the worksite and its workers healthy and safe, which include:

- Social distancing policies and procedures
- Mask requirements where social distancing is not possible.
- Controlled access to jobsites, and daily screening of all personnel and visitors for covid risks and so contractors can track who is on their jobsite
- Self-monitoring by employees for COVID-19 symptoms
- Stepped-up handwashing, sanitization



and disinfection policies for workers, tools, machinery and work areas

- Guidelines for COVID-19 outbreaks and response plans and sick leave policies

"WORKSAFELEY™ has been instrumental right from the beginning of the pandemic," said Burtnick. "The fact they kept on top of all the changes, and created and provided resources for our industry was very important."

Having the COR™ safety program in place provided the basis for heavy construction companies to continually work towards working safely, ensuring that safety protocols have been implemented and that there are effective channels of communication to keep projects moving in the right direction.

"As this industry navigates this pandemic towards a new normal, we have recognized that things have changed for the long term and have invested tools and procedures to come out a stronger, more successful industry," Burtnick stated.



Jackie Jones is MHCA WORKSAFELEY™'s Education and Training Advisor



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Prevent injuries, prepare your muscles, joints for yard work



By Jackie Jones

After a long winter, many of us look forward to spring and are starting to plan yard projects.

With outdoor projects, accidents and injuries often happen, even in your own yard. Slips or falls to strains and sprains – frequently these spring yard-work injuries are preventable.

Many people are prone to accidents when they hurry or underestimate the demands of their yard-work jobs, especially if the winter was more sedentary. The twisting, turning, bending and reaching involved in weeding, raking and other yard chores can cause injury if your body is not prepared.

"Before you reach for your shovel, you should consider the possible consequences, such as upper or lower back strain, neck

strain and pain in the shoulders," says Trevor Shwaluk, Safety Advisor for WORKSAFELEY™.

"For spring yard work, think of all jobs that may involve bending, or shifting body positions." Shwaluk advises. "This may include pulling weeds, raking debris or pushing heavy lawn mowers."

Long hours weeding and planting garden beds or pushing heavy mowers will take their toll on muscles and joints. The simplest solution is to stretch before heading out and right after you've finished your work.

Stretching will do wonders for the body, including preparing it for the movements done while working in the yard and cooling it down once finished.

"Opt for three rounds of 20-second stretches targeting one or two muscle groups at a time, such as hamstrings, shoulders, hips and the lower back. Increase circulation and loosen hands,

wrists and legs by shaking them out leisurely before and periodically during yard work," recommends Shwaluk.

You can further prevent yard-work injuries by following these safety tips and procedures:

- Stand as straight as possible, and keep your head up as you rake or mow
- Bend at the knees, not the waist, as you pick up tools or piles of leaves
- Be sure to switch the sides of your body, on which you operate the equipment, as often as you can
- Change your stance and motion frequently to balance the muscles being used
- When mowing, use your whole body weight to push the mower, rather than just your arms and back
- If your mower has a pull cord, bend at the knees and pull in one smooth motion;

do not twist at the waist or yank the cord

Additionally, make sure to slip on the following gear the next time you're outside:

- Closed-toe, slip-resistant footwear when doing activities like mowing the lawn or climbing ladders, as they're far less likely to slide and shift
- Long pants to protect you from cuts, scrapes and ricocheting debris
- Gloves during yard work, as a final protective layer

Most importantly, listen to your body. Fatigue and pains are not signs of weakness but messages from your body to lighten it up just a little.

There's no need to strain yourself working out in the yard. Doing so will not only cause injuries, but also result in mental strain and fatigue, as well.



Jackie Jones is MHCA
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Before you start landscaping or that reno – click before you dig!

By Jackie Jones

The warm weather we have been having is a sure sign of spring. This is the time that Manitoba residents are busy planning landscaping and renovation projects.

Spring also brings April's national Dig Safe month. It is important to remember that no matter the size of the project, if it involves digging, everyone must identify, locate and mark any underground cables and utility pipes before shovels hit the ground.

Homeowners who are excitedly waiting to start landscaping and outdoor renovation projects should visit 'Click Before You Dig Manitoba' as part of Dig Safe month.

By law, every Manitoba homeowner or contractor must have the utilities in the area located before they dig. Not only does this process protect your home, but also prevents damage to buried infrastructure and the loss of essential services.

"Whether you are hiring a contractor or doing the work yourself, if you dig, always contact Click Before You Dig Manitoba, no matter the size of the project," said Jack Winram, executive board member of the Manitoba Common Ground Alliance.

It is important for homeowners to be aware that even if they feel their site is familiar, it still may be unsafe to dig because of natural erosions, or construction alterations and additions. Never take for granted it is safe to dig – just below the surface of the ground there could be gas, electrical or water lines.

"Some people might think, 'I'm just planting a tree,' or, 'I'm just digging a fence post where there was a fence post before,'" Winram said. "But even excavations like that are deep enough where there could be buried lines or pipes."

"Often people are stunned when they learn



Jackie Jones is MHCA WORKSAFEY™'s Education and Training Advisor

their gas service might only be 18 inches below the ground," he added.

"One click gives you the assurance that you are protecting your family, home and community."

Contacting Click Before You Dig Manitoba is completely free, as well as the locate itself.

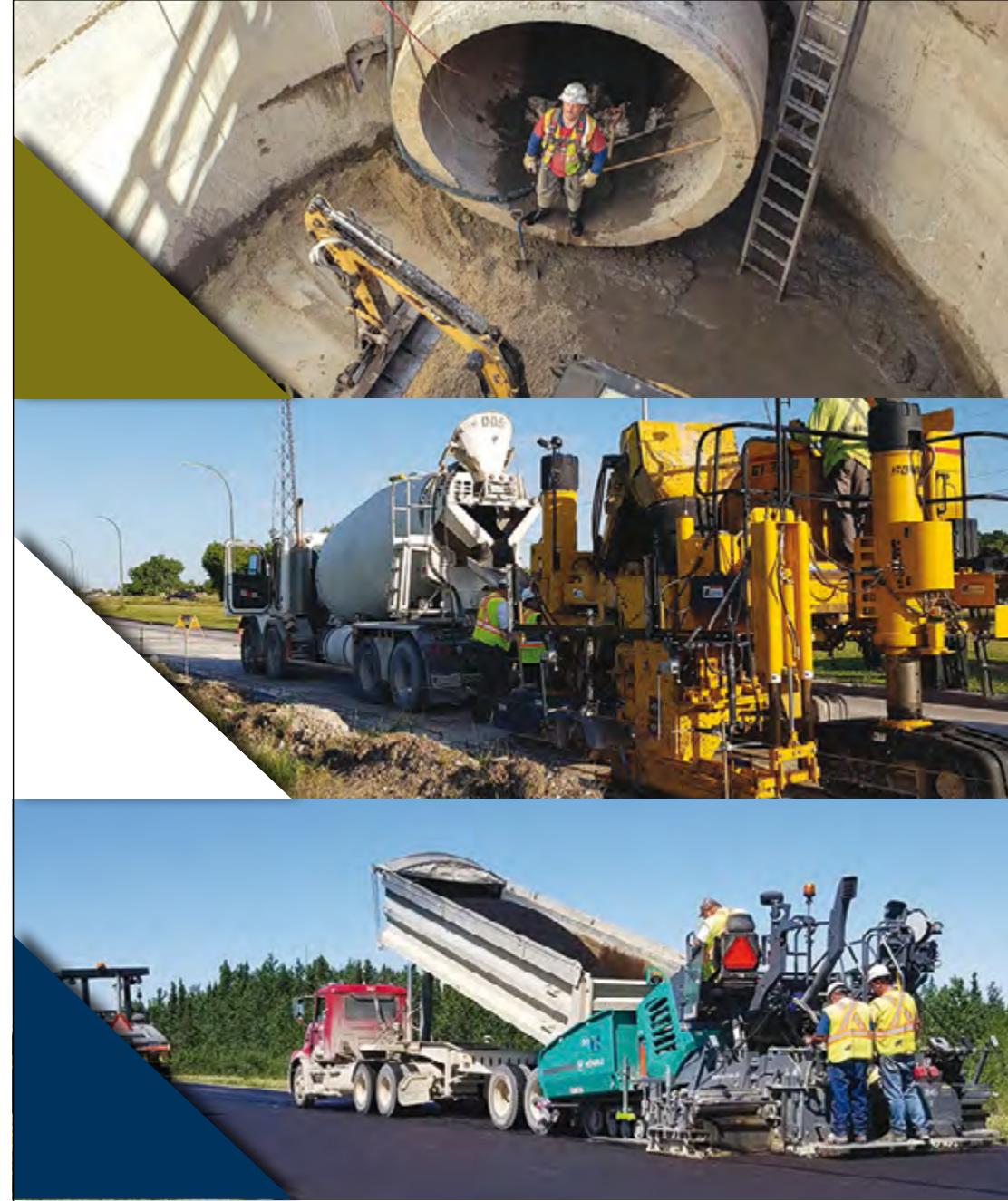
Once a request is made, utility owners will visit the site to mark (locate) underground cables or pipes in the area of the planned dig. They will mark the buried infrastructure and send you records which will help you understand what is buried in your property and make sure you are able to avoid that when you begin your renovation or landscaping project.

Manitobans are encouraged to learn more about Click Before You Dig Manitoba and how simple it is to request a locate.

To arrange a locate, visit Click Before You Dig Manitoba at clickbeforeyoudigmb.com.



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