



August 30, 2023

Chris Lorenc, President & CEO
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Re: Manitoba Heavy Construction Association Election 2023 Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to engage in this critical election. Growing the economy to attract new businesses and create good jobs is one of the most important goals of any government. A Manitoba NDP government will work with all sectors to ensure Manitoba is a competitive place for businesses to grow and thrive, supporting an excellent quality of life for families across the province.

Below you'll find responses to your questionnaire – we appreciate the opportunity to share our vision for a stronger economy in Manitoba.

- 1. Should you be Premier after October 3, will you embrace as general guidelines the Seven Pillars set out by the six leading business organizations to support economic growth: Fiscal Competitiveness, Venture Capital, Global Trade, Infrastructure Investment, Indigenous Engagement, Skilled Workforce, New Fiscal Deal for Municipalities**

We agree these are key elements to achieving economic growth and prosperity for all Manitobans, from improving access to skills training to maintaining a balanced and responsible fiscal framework. We have committed to affordability measures that will make a real difference for Manitoba businesses, including cutting the provincial gas tax and freezing hydro rates. We are committed to restoring Manitoba as a strong trading province including prioritizing inter-provincial trade and trade with the United States. We are also committed to providing municipalities with clear and predictable funding increases after years of freezes.

- 2. Do you commit to building upon the current level of forecasted investment in the highways (five year investment plan of a minimum of \$500 million annually) based upon a public assessment of the system's current condition and projected future needs?**

Yes, we know how important it is to invest in our transportation system. Heather Stefanson and the PCs cut the infrastructure budget by hundreds of millions of dollars, and we know it will take a significant effort to help repair the damage. The Manitoba NDP will work together with industry partners to plan for the short, medium, and long-term, building on existing \$500 million annual commitments. We will provide timely information on upcoming projects and invest every year to build the roads, highways and buildings of the future. We will organize a blue-ribbon panel to identify important infrastructure needs where local voices are heard, industry input is incorporated and economic goals are prioritized.

- 3. Do you agree strategic transportation infrastructure investment is central to economic growth, as it intrinsically links to trade?**

Absolutely: trade is one of the foundations of Manitoba's economy. And trade can only take place when we have a reliable transportation system that allows companies and producers to access markets in Canada, in the United States and around the world. To expand and maintain our transportation system, the Manitoba NDP will provide consistent, reliable investment in highways, roads and bridges to restore, maintain and grow the province's transportation infrastructure. After years of cuts, we need a strategic focus to restore Manitoba's ability to achieve strong economic growth.

- 4. Do you commit to continue Manitoba's support for Canada Trade Infrastructure Plan (CTIP)?**

A Manitoba NDP government is committed to working with the Federal Government, all provinces and industry on strengthening our nation's infrastructure and ensuring there is strong collaboration so we can develop a long-term funding plan that prioritizes and coordinates investments in trade infrastructure, contributing to the nation's development.

- 5. Given CentrePort Canada's demonstrated importance to Manitoba's domestic and global trade profile, do you commit to continuing to support the full buildout of CentrePort Canada?**

CentrePort has had the NDP's support ever since it was created under Premier Gary Doer. We will continue to support the buildout of CentrePort as a key hub for transportation and trade.

6. Do you commit to upgrading Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure's mandate to be central to the province's economic growth strategy, aligning investment plans to trade corridors and gateways?

We agree it is essential to align planning for transportation and infrastructure, not only with the movement of people and goods across the province but also with the goal of supporting and spurring economic growth. We will support infrastructure funding for trade corridors and gateways across the province.

7. Do you commit to moving MTI's highways capital budget to a planned annual and five-year program?

To achieve our shared goals, the construction industry needs predictability and proper funding from government, especially after years of cuts and uncertainty under Brian Pallister and Heather Stefanson. The Manitoba NDP will work with the heavy construction industry to provide timely information on upcoming projects to permit more efficient multi-year planning.

8. Would your government commit to negotiate a 'new funding deal' that a. contemplates greater sharing of growth taxes b. contemplates new sources of revenue raising for municipalities c. most importantly, undertakes to reposition municipalities with fiscal power and flexibility to deliver quality services?

Municipalities are under increasing pressure for services, and many communities are growing across the province. The Manitoba NDP committed to ending the Stefanson PC's funding freeze to municipalities, and reverse the millions in cuts to roads and bridges funding. We will introduce a predictable multi-year funding model and work to ensure local governments have the resources they need to serve Manitobans.

Thanks again for giving us the opportunity to respond. The Manitoba NDP look forward to working with the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association and other industry partners to move towards a shared vision for a thriving and sustainable economy where families can raise their children and enjoy a bright future.

Yours Truly,
NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF MANITOBA