

Manitoba PC Caucus Review

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PROVINCE UNVEILS FIRST PROJECTS UNDER CONSERVATION TRUST

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Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation has selected the first round of projects approved under the Manitoba government's \$102-million Conservation Trust, Premier Brian Pallister and Sustainable Development Minister Rochelle Squires announced recently.

"The Conservation Trust is an innovative, forward-thinking approach to invest in local projects that will conserve and enhance natural infrastructure and support the implementation of our best-in-Canada climate and green plan," Pallister said. "With this long-lasting partnership, we are building a legacy of work that will benefit all Manitobans. Today's announcement is the first instalment of many years of projects that will ensure Manitoba remains Canada's cleanest, greenest, most climate-resilient province."

The first round of initiatives includes 41 projects, with funding totaling over \$2.2 million across four distinct program areas: watersheds, habitat and wildlife, connecting people to nature, and innovation and conservation planning. Funding is based on a two-to-one matching formula, with the first group of projects receiving support ranging from \$4,000 to \$125,000.

The Conservation Trust was announced in Budget 2018 and is now permanently endowed so it can support and inspire important conservation projects for generations. The fund is expected to generate about \$5 million a year and will be managed by The Winnipeg Foundation, with projects administered, tracked and evaluated by the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation.

Among the projects selected in this round are the Kirkella Community Pasture Grassland Enhancement, the Wetlands and Waterfowl Conservation Project, and Brandon Riverbank Wetland Restoration and Access Improvement

To view the complete list of funded projects, please visit: <https://www.mhhc.mb.ca/projects-funded-ct/>

FIRST INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS TO CELEBRATE MB150 ANNOUNCED



The province will embark on a number of important infrastructure projects as part of Manitoba 150 celebrations, Premier Brian Pallister announced this week.

“2020 is a significant milestone for our province, one that deserves celebration and recognition,” said Pallister. “We have committed \$45 million to infrastructure projects across the province that will leave a lasting legacy and help provide a brighter future for Manitobans to look forward to.”

Budget 2019 included \$45 million for capital projects in recognition of Manitoba’s 150th anniversary including funding for additional highway infrastructure projects. Projects considered for this additional infrastructure funding are priority infrastructure projects that:

- support trade and commerce,
- increase and support Manitoba tourism,
- improve safety and level of service,
- improve drainage, and
- improved ride quality on roads.

To learn about the announced projects, visit

https://news.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/newslinks/2019/04/BG-MB150_Infrastructure-IN.pdf

PROVINCE BREAKS GROUND ON NEW SCHOOL IN THE CITY OF BRANDON

Construction has started on a new kindergarten to Grade 8 School in southeast Brandon, Premier Brian Pallister announced this week.

“We are delivering on our promise to build a new school in Brandon to accommodate the tremendous growth that has happened here over the past 20 years,” said Pallister during a groundbreaking ceremony at the school site. “Today, as we break ground for Maryland Park School, we are taking another important step to address that need.”

Total provincial funding for the new school is \$24.1 million. The 65,700-sq.-ft. facility at Maryland Avenue and Ninth Street has capacity for 450 students from kindergarten to Grade 8, and is designed to accommodate an additional 200 students if needed.

The school will also feature a child-care centre with 74 spaces. The centre will accommodate 54 preschool children and 20 infants and will provide flexible care to 40 nursery, preschool, and before-and after-school students.

The new school will feature a multi-purpose space, band room, library, gymnasium, classrooms, home economics and industrial arts labs, a grooming room and life-skills suite. It will also include resource teaching and support spaces and a science, technology, electronics and mathematics (STEM) lab.

Maryland Park School is scheduled to open in fall 2020 and is one of seven new schools the provincial government is currently building across Manitoba.

MANITOBA SHOWS POSITIVE ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

Manitoba is showing positive progress and growth in several key areas of the economy, Finance Minister Scott Fielding said this week.

Fielding noted Manitoba is first among the provinces in several key economic indicators including capital spending:

- private-sector capital spending increased by 10.1 per cent in 2018, the highest among provinces;
- since 2015, private-sector capital spending in manufacturing increased by 17.4 per cent annually, the highest among provinces;
- since 2015, capital spending on industrial properties increased by 32.4 per cent annually, the highest among provinces.

The minister noted Manitoba's improvements are evident in a number of economic areas, from the agricultural sector to auto sales:

- manufacturing employment has increased by 7.3 per cent so far in 2019, the highest among provinces;
- Manitoba's international exports to the U.S. increased by 21.5 per cent in 2018, best among the provinces;
- total farm cash receipts increased by 9.5 per cent in 2017, the highest in Canada, reaching a record \$6.5 billion in 2017;
- motor vehicle sales increased by 7.4 per cent in 2018, best in Canada and following a 10 per cent increase in 2017;
- full-time employment has increased by 2.4 per cent so far in 2019, the best growth rate since 2000; and
- private sector self-employment increased by five per cent in 2018, second highest among provinces.

More information on Manitoba's economic performance is available at:

www.gov.mb.ca/mbs/manitoba_quick_facts.html.

NEW INVESTMENT TO REDUCE WAIT TIMES FOR CT SCANS



Manitoba patients requiring less-urgent computed tomography (CT) scans now have improved access to this important service with the opening of the Diagnostic Imaging Outpatient Centre (DIOC) at Misericordia Health Centre, Health, Seniors and Active Living Minister Cameron Friesen announced this week.

"Our government is committed to improving access to health services and reducing wait times for Manitoba patients, including wait times related to diagnostic tests," said Friesen. "The ability to accommodate walk-in CT scans is a first in Manitoba and will be especially significant for patients from outside Winnipeg who would otherwise have to wait and potentially travel back to Winnipeg for the test on another day."

The Manitoba government is providing \$94,000 annually to support the operations of the program. The funding will enable an additional 4,766 CT scans to be performed at Misericordia Health Centre each year.

Eligible patients will be referred to the DIOC by a health-care provider and be able to either make an appointment or access services on a walk-in basis by presenting their requisition when the centre is open. The DIOC welcomes patients for appointments or walk-in services on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and on Saturdays 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

PROVINCE MARKS FIRST-EVER INVASIVE SPECIES AWARENESS WEEK



Thanks to a private members bill introduced by Selkirk MLA Alan Lagimodiere, Manitoba marked its first-ever Invasive Species Awareness Week this week.

“We all have a role to play in protecting this beautiful province and we have a responsibility to take action now to protect our waterways, forests and landscapes,” Sustainable Development Minister Rochelle Squires noted. “This week is a step toward making sure all Manitobans are aware of how invasive species affect our environment and what we can do to make sure our environment is healthy for generations to come.”

Manitoba has been working to raise public awareness of invasive species for decades and remind Manitobans of the constant threat they pose. Forest invasive species threaten trees while aquatic invasive species such as zebra mussels threaten aquatic ecosystems. The annual cost of controlling invasive species in Canada runs in the billions of dollars.

For more information on invasive species, visit www.gov.mb.ca/stopthespread.



GOVERNMENT TAKES ACTION TO REPLENISH MANITOBA'S RAINY DAY FUND AFTER YEARS OF NDP NEGLECT

The Manitoba government is taking action to replenish the province's fiscal stabilization account, also known as the rainy day fund, Finance Minister Scott Fielding announced this week.

“The rainy day fund was created in 1989 to serve as a fiscal shock absorber,” said Fielding. “Over the past decade, the previous government drained \$794 million from the account to pay for its reckless overspending. We are moving to restore those funds, rebuild Manitoba's savings and return the province to stronger financial footing.”

Following a transfer of \$50 million in 2018-19, the account has a balance of \$215 million as of March 31. It is projected to have a balance of \$265 million as of March 31, 2020, after the budgeted transfer of \$50 million this fiscal year.

Fielding noted the previous government drained the fund to \$115 million in 2015-16 from \$864 million in 2008-09. The transfer to the account of \$50 million in 2017-18 is the first time the province has contributed to the fund in 10 years, he said.

“We are taking responsible steps to protect Manitobans from unforeseen challenges ahead,” said Fielding. “Our government is replenishing the fund while continuing to reduce the deficit and making life more affordable for Manitobans. We will continue to fix the finances and move our province in the right direction.”

A backgrounder showing the NDP's depletion of Manitoba's fiscal stabilization account is available at https://news.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/newslinks/2019/04/BG-Rainy_Day_Fund-FI.pdf