

Manitoba PC Caucus Review

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PROVINCE MAKES MAJOR INVESTMENTS TO ENHANCE MANITOBA PARKS

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As part of Budget 2019, the province is investing nearly \$10 million for capital projects in the provincial park system, while supporting the nature pillar of the *Manitoba Climate and Green Plan*. Sustainable Development Minister Rochelle Squires announced in Grand Beach this week.

“Our government is committed to protecting and enhancing our beautiful parks, while encouraging a greater connection with the environment and increasing ecotourism,” Squires said. “Our provincial parks are popular travel destinations, and we want to ensure Manitoba families and visitors enjoy their experience for many generations to come.”

The Manitoba government is planning numerous investments for parks right across the province, including accessibility improvements, upgrades to park offices, shower facilities and other infrastructure and amenities.

One of the many significant projects underway this year is \$625,000 in upgrades to the washroom and shower areas in the campground at Grand Beach Provincial Park. Campers will also notice new campground offices in Asessippi and Spruce Woods provincial parks with plenty of room to line up while checking in without disrupting regular traffic into the campground.

Another key project will be the installation of new pedestrian scale lighting along the Winnipeg Beach Seawall Promenade, in the Winnipeg Beach Provincial Park. The seawall was heavily damaged in 2015 by flooding, and while significant upgrades have been undertaken, \$325,000 has been allocated for upgrades this summer.

“Our provincial parks have so much to offer,” Squires said. “As many Manitobans head out to explore our beautiful province this long weekend and throughout the summer months, I encourage everyone to play an active role in protecting our environment.”

GOVERNMENT APPROVES URGENT CARE CENTRE FOR CONCORDIA

The Manitoba government will implement recommendations made in a quality assurance assessment of planned changes within the Winnipeg health region, including the transition of emergency departments to urgent care centres at Concordia and Seven Oaks hospitals, Health, Seniors and Active Living Minister Cameron Friesen announced this week.

“There is broad agreement among clinical leaders throughout the health-care system that the plan to improve patient outcomes is working, but it has become increasingly clear the timeline is problematic,” said Friesen. “We will establish urgent care centres for Concordia and Seven Oaks while giving health-care leadership at least six months to build control measures that further strengthen patient safety and the stability of the overall system before proceeding with further planned changes.”

The minister said increased patient volume reflect the decision to establish an urgent care model at Concordia. In only two years, Winnipeg hospitals have seen a 12 per cent rise in ambulance arrivals and an 11 per cent increase in admissions. Similarly, the population of seniors 65 years of age and older in Concordia’s catchment area increased by 8.4 per cent between 2015 and 2018.

“The significant increase in the number of patients both presenting and requiring admission to hospitals throughout Winnipeg warrant a more robust model of care,” said Friesen. “We will establish an urgent care centre for Concordia within the next six weeks while the transition for Seven Oaks remains on track for September.”

PROVINCE PARTNERING WITH PEGUIS FIRST NATION TO CREATE NEW ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

The Manitoba government is working in partnership with Peguis First Nation on two initiatives to advance reconciliation and self-determination, and create new economic opportunities in the community, Premier Brian Pallister announced this week.

“Our government is committed to advancing reconciliation with First Nations communities and we fully support Peguis First Nation in its efforts to achieve economic independence,” Pallister said. “The leadership of Peguis have shown they are committed to the responsible development of new economic opportunities for their people, and we are proud to work in partnership with them.”

Manitoba is issuing a Crown Land Use Permit to provide Peguis with exclusive use for a quarry as part of its Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) selection. The provision of an exclusive use permit signifies the government’s commitment to have the Crown land advanced through the TLE land transfer process, toward the eventual establishment of the land as Peguis First Nation Reserve.

The premier also noted the province is working to help the First Nation assume certain management responsibilities within the Mantagao Lake Wildlife Management Area (WMA).

Mantagao Lake WMA is approximately 50,000 hectares in size located about 230 kilometres north of Winnipeg, just northeast of Ashern, and includes a campground that Peguis is interested in managing. With the establishment of a new WMA working group, the province will work with Peguis and other user groups to develop their plan for the campground and ensure it is compatible with the requirements of the WMA.

MANITOBA INVESTS IN MENTAL HEALTH AND CRIME PREVENTION INITIATIVES WITH RCMP

The Manitoba government is providing more than \$546,000 to support new resources for Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) detachments across the province including \$200,000 to expand the use of the HealthIM assessment tool and significant investments to make communities safer, Justice Minister Cliff Cullen announced this week.

“The HealthIM system can be used to help resolve situations safely, both for people in the midst of a mental health crisis and the police officers who respond,” said Cullen. “This is part of our government’s commitment to utilizing police resources more effectively to combat serious, violent crime.”

When police respond to a call and find a person in a mental health crisis, HealthIM helps determine the most appropriate response based on the officer’s observations and a risk assessment tool.

The Manitoba government is also making significant investments in the RCMP to support public safety and crime prevention, with a particular focus on initiatives that keep young people out of the criminal justice system. These include investments in programs through the RCMP detachments in Shamattawa, Snow Lake, Moose Lake, Norway House and Winnipeg.

These investments are being made through the province’s Criminal Property Forfeiture Program, which will distribute a total of more than \$1.6 million to law enforcement agencies across Manitoba this year. For more information about criminal property forfeiture, visit www.gov.mb.ca/justice/safe/cpf/index.html.

PROVINCE ANNOUNCES NEW FUNDING FOR SECTOR COUNCILS



The Manitoba government is investing \$24 million over four years to help sector councils provide workforce training and develop human resource services, Education and Training Minister Kelvin Goertzen announced this week.

“This investment will help workers learn the skills and knowledge they need to succeed and support Manitoba businesses compete on local, national and international levels,” said Goertzen. “Governments, employers and schools share the responsibility to create a workforce that can thrive in today’s economy.”

Provincially supported sector councils in Manitoba represent more than 280,000 workers and 9,000 employers, small-business owners, labour groups and others. The province created the Sector Council Program in 1991 to promote private investment in workforce training and development, and bring together representatives from stakeholder groups to address changing needs.

Goertzen also announced a new multi-year program model that will operate more efficiently and reduce red tape.