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The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce



WINNIPEG
CONSTRUCTION
ASSOCIATION

Together We Build Manitoba

May 7, 2020

Hon. Heather Stefanson
Deputy Premier

minfs@leg.gov.mb.ca

Hon. Scott Fielding
Minister of Finance

minfin@leg.gov.mb.ca

Hon. Ralph Eichler
Minister, EDT

minedt@leg.gov.mb.ca

Hon. Ron Schuler

Minister, Manitoba Infrastructure

minmi@leg.gov.mb.ca

Hon. Reg Helwer
Minister, Central Services
mincentral@leg.gov.mb.ca

Dear Ministers,

At your request made at an April 24 meeting, a letter signed by 20 Manitoba business organizations addressed to Minister McKenna was emailed on April 28 – *see attached* – requesting accelerated ICIP approvals, flexibility in funding eligibility and accommodating an expedited approval for the Lake Manitoba/Lake St. Martin Outlets project.

The letter was also copied to Minister Vandal with whom we noted we would seek a meeting. A conference call was held on May 4 with Minister Vandal and the below signatories on behalf of the full group.

In addition to the above, Minister Vandal was pressed to support significantly enhanced and accelerated infrastructure budgets with which to help stimulate the economy. We suggested a strategy that procures jobs and builds legacy assets in areas including trade gateways and corridors, water treatment and distribution, wastewater treatment, broadband and public service facilities. A key concern was the lack of consumer and investor confidence that compels a very public commitment to an economic recovery strategy.

In summary, the minister noted that investment in infrastructure will play a significant role in economic recovery and that government was developing a new infrastructure program with recovery in mind. He agreed to follow up on the flexibility and approval observations. With respect to Lake Manitoba/Lake St. Martin outlets he undertook to review further as he had heard that funding requirements were perhaps too prescriptive and inflexible, but also that consultation remained a concern.

During the call, it was noted that Manitoba has the weakest uptake of available federal program funding of any province. Other provinces have done better: Alberta 77%; BC 67%; Ontario 50%; Quebec just under 50%. By comparison Manitoba had accessed only 7%, will the full 100% for northern infrastructure unspoken for, leaving more than \$1 billion in federal funding still available. Manitoba was encouraged to access the funding programs.

We are concerned if the above comparison is correct and would like to assist in further discussions to accelerate approvals and agreement.

Minister Vandal undertook to take a further conference call with the group and May 25 has been set, at which updates might be available.

We would appreciate some discussion ahead of that meeting, to help with messaging in support of the common objectives.

Please respond directly to Chris Lorenc, President MHCA at clorenc@mhca.mb.ca to coordinate further communication.

We look forward to your reply.

Regards,



Brad Cook, P. Eng.
President, ACEC-MB



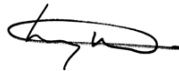
Bram Strain,
President & CEO, BCM



Chuck Davidson,
President & CEO, MCC



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



Lanny McInness
President & CEO MHBA/UDI



Terry Shaw
Executive Director, MTA



Yvette Milner
President Merit MB



Loren Remillard
President & CEO, WCC



Ron Hambley
President, WCA

cc Construction Association of Rural Manitoba (CARM), Carla Milne, CPA, CA, President
Canadian Institute of Plumbing & Heating (CPIH), Manitoba Region, Nolan Shortage, President
Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters (CME) Manitoba, Ron Koslowsky, Vice-President
Electrical Association of Manitoba (EAM), Mike van Dam
Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP), Patty Rosher, General Manager
Manitoba Association of Sheet Metal & Air Conditioning Contractors (MASMAHC), John Kork, President
Manitoba Masonry Contractors (MMC), Norman Blerot, President
Manitoba Real Estate Association (MREA), David Salvatore, CEO
Manitoba Wall & Ceiling Association (MWCA), K. Klippen, President
Mechanical Contractors Association of Manitoba (MCAM), Ramona Coey, Executive Director
Michael Kowalson, Director, Stakeholder Relations, Manitoba Premier's Office