



URGING
SASKATCHEWAN TO

MARCH FORTH

A Compendium of Ideas for
stronger business and
government leadership during
critical times in our economic
history.

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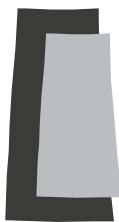


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THE MARCH FORTH INITIATIVE

AN INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE TO SASKATCHEWAN'S BUSINESS LEADERS AND ADVISORY GROUPS

Hello to a select list of old friends and key contacts. The three of us are some older guys who have either once been in your exact shoes, and/or who have known you or your organizations as your long-term "colleagues in capitalism." At the risk of coming across as too brash, and with absolutely no intent to seem pretentious, we would like to pass on some measured advice based on our cumulative 120 years of experience on the front lines of economic development in Saskatchewan and Canada. We have no self-serving desires or expectations other than just to reach out – because we care about our local business community. We view this as purely a volunteer and pro bono exercise.

As "elder statesmen," we are reaching out to lobby the business lobbyists. We are focusing on YOU as the current generation of advocates for business, because we all know that governments generally follow the grassroots input of groups like yours, rather than innovate and lead by themselves. We also know that you are inundated with multiple sources of information and other opinions. But as stated from the onset - we have been around awhile, and we have seen a lot - through many business cycles. We offer our advice to you in the spirit of inter-generational mentorship. This introduction has been sent to a total list of EDs/CEOs from thirty-two (32) different business groups and economic advocacy groups from across Saskatchewan.

Within these pages, we would like to begin offering our advice by way of a series of "Installments." You will be scanning through a successive number of short briefs, in the form of "Ideas Sets" that we have put together. While a full-fledged Trade War has, so far, been held back during a current, uncertain and short "moratorium period", the Trump administration has already begun to inflict considerable damage in the steel, aluminum, and auto sectors, and in all the related supply chains connected with this trade. Our future relationship and status in all the other sectors, and with our biggest and most important market in the USA, is extremely unstable and unreliable, to say the least. Yet frankly, we continue to be alarmed by the relative degree of inertia - or inability to even see - the more strategic "chess moves" that will be fundamentally required for months (if not years) as a fundamental change in the way we all must do business. The tactical response by our government to respond with counter tariffs is a necessary beginning. But that is only tantamount to "playing checkers." You are part of the next generation of business leaders, and our intent is to encourage you to "play chess," instead.

The second impetus in preparing this series of Idea Sets is because Donald J. Trump has given Canada and Saskatchewan a valuable "Wake Up Call". Our Canadian economy was seriously languishing well before the recent U.S. election. In fact, our new Prime Minister Carney has now inherited a relatively dismal and dysfunctional Canadian economy that has not been well prepared to compete in comparison with so many other dynamic and aggressive international players, and in light of so many other pre-existing social, economic, and environmental pressures that have also been rapidly converging upon us. So, thanks to being first awoken by the Trump Tariff Threat, we find ourselves at an historic crossroads. And as the old saying goes, "*we should never let a good crisis go to waste.*"

You are about to review a series of our short (3-5 pp) Policy Briefs with respect to the following:

- Inter-Provincial Trade Strategies and detailed Tactics,
- A Strategic Game Plan for accelerated Export Diversification,
- The mobilization of a Private Sector Ambassador Network(s),
- Strategies for Alternative Global Sourcing and Import Replacement,
- Accelerated Supplier Development and Locally Made Product/Service Substitutions,
- Streamlined Permitting and Regulatory Reform,
- Productivity, Productivity, Productivity – with numerous Strategies/Programs to enhance it, and
- Added Strategies to Become More Business Friendly and Investor Attractive

Beyond potential rounds of tariffs, counter tariffs - we also have a few other ideas. To help fight this Trade War, we can also exercise our own fiscal sovereignty in strategic ways that *modify tax policy* to either get the attention of other global investors, and/or to overcome the looming prospect for business disinvestment to the American side of those new tariff walls. We have also ideas for some *strategic expenditures* by government to buttress our Canadian and Saskatchewan economy and make the West more competitive.

Finally, and with the greatest respect to your own organization's Member Services and Programs, you will also see our added suggestions *for more of a D.I.Y. (Do-It-Yourself) approach* to also get our regions more *strategically* positioned and competitive, beyond just lobbying and waiting for politicians and their bureaucracies to act. In the following series of Idea Sets, we will also be encouraging your group to consider new and different forms of enhanced member networking and programming – *at a grassroots level* – to get everyone else also more strategically engaged and working together.

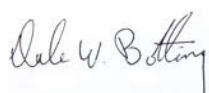
With complete transparency - and for your added background information - we have attached a full list of every business group that we would like to advise and mentor. (See Appendix A of this Compendium).

Quite apart from engaging with you as the Association Executive Officer, we would also relish any opportunity to directly meet with your Board or Board Chair or even serve as a provocateur or thought leader before your wider Membership.

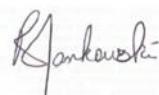
We hope you will be receptive to hearing our added thoughts and advice.

Better yet, we hope to stimulate a new era of historic actions – by both government and business leaders alike - to meet this very critical and historic moment.

Yours most respectfully.



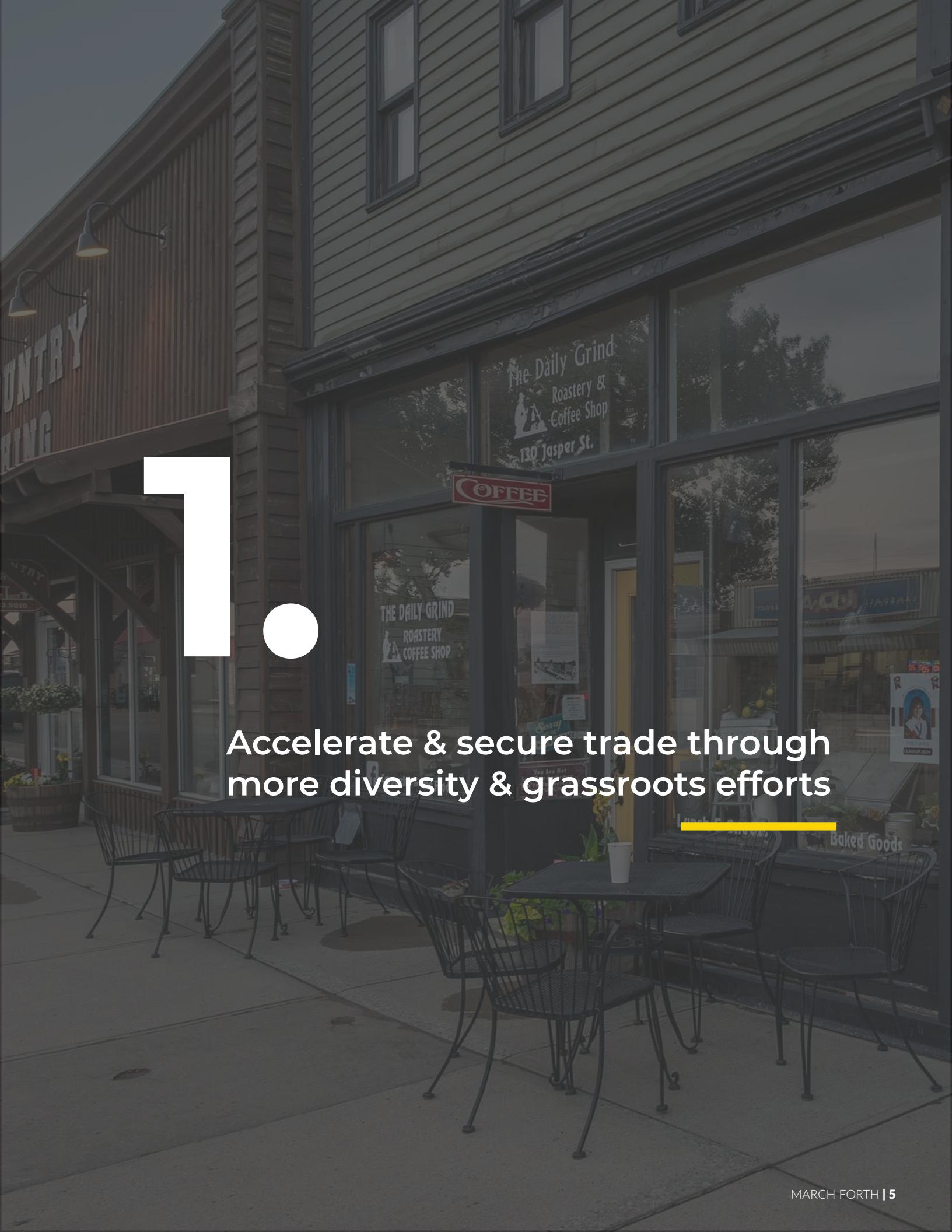
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Accelerate & secure trade through
more diversity & grassroots efforts

ACCELERATE & SECURE TRADE THROUGH MORE DIVERSITY & GRASSROOTS EFFORTS

1. INTRODUCTORY PREMISE:

- While Saskatchewan is more trade diverse than most other provinces, we still have more work to do - given the predatory, unpredictable, and chaotic attitudes in the current US administration.
- While government agencies like Global Affairs Canada and the Sask. Ministry of Trade and Export Development do good work, along with established public-private partnerships like STEP, it is time for our grassroots business community and leaders to also “step up” and activate its own linkages and connections.
- Canadian businesses have more room to prosper by doubling down on increased trade within our own borders. Almost \$600 billion worth of goods and services move across provincial and territorial borders, while annual two-way trade with the USA is more than \$1 trillion.
- There is even room for more trade and commerce inside Saskatchewan – between cities, between on-reserve and off-reserve communities, between the south and the north, and even across BIDS and neighbourhoods to become fully integrated cities.

2. OPTIMIZING BUSINESS INSIDE ALL OUR MANY OTHER EXISTING TRADE AGREEMENTS

- Canada has many Free Trade Agreements – i.e., a total of 15 Agreements that encompass 51 countries *other than just with the USA*. Optimize and accelerate our work within them – e.g., with Mexico, Chile, Korea, the UK, Peru, Columbia, Panama, Europe EU, etc.
- Canada also has an opportunity to offer itself as a more stable and viable alternative to the added Free Trade Agreements formerly established by other countries with the USA. We can try to enter and replace American trade under their agreements and promote our more stable and reliable trade opportunities instead.
- Saskatchewan has many other sister cities and twinning agreements around the world between our cities, U's other institutional partners. Have we fully optimized them?

3. DOUBLING DOWN ON CREATION OF A BUSINESS TRADING CULTURE

- We need to elevate our global trading “literacy” among our business community, and within the next generation of business students – i.e., heighten awareness of the Forum for International Trade Training (F.I.T.T.) and the added benefits of attaining a Certified International Trade Professional (C.I.T.P.) status.
- We need to elevate our overall awareness, recognition, and enhanced partnerships with customs brokerages and other import/export business infrastructure and systems.

4. ADDING “STEROIDS” TO OUR EXPORT FINANCING ECOSYSTEM

- We encourage more business groups to herald and take the A/R financing and trade support programs offered by Export Development Canada (EDC) to “the Front of the Class.” It is also time to explore added Sask-based partnerships with EDC (and FCC) to create more innovative financing – i.e., much like STEP did 20 years ago.
- Accelerate A/R factoring as an enhanced financing tool to support more inter-provincial and in-market trade. Push the banks and other financial institutions to enhance this tool to also complement the growth of more inter-provincial trade.

5. WORKING OUR BUSINESS DIASPORAS AND TAKING EXPORT PROMOTION TO THE GRASSROOTS

- Establish more business ambassador networks among those that are already integrated in-market and are “Daily Doing It.” Cultivate more on-the-ground intel and trade lead intel with our Sask. business “expats” around the world, who are more connected than anyone else.
- Give our Saskatchewan business alumni and ambassador networks the tools and the intelligence sharing mechanisms to ferret new trade leads and help us out.
- Tap our business diasporas everywhere – including in other provinces, or even in other cities or neighbourhoods right in our own backyards.

6. EXPANDING BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS PROMOTIONS THROUGH EXPANDED TRADE WITHIN CANADA

- More organized cross-provincial trade missions and promotional/fact-finding tours.
- Optimize our existing B-to-B networks – e.g., working among our cross-Canada chambers or boards of trade and the many world trade offices in all Canadian cities.
- Expanding the programs and services of industry associations to enhance inter-provincial trade and supply chain promotions.
- Time for businesses (themselves) to look in the mirror – by attacking all the many barriers imposed by business self-regulations and the professional licensing “cartels.”
- Ending the last vestiges of supply side marketing controls and restrictions inside Canada.

7. GROWING OUR INTRA-PROVINCIAL TRADE – EVEN JUST DOWN THE ROAD

- More inter-city or inter-regional trade missions and trade promotions inside the province, again being *business* hosted, and *business* led.
- Enhancing southern Saskatchewan as a better and more Informed partner and gateway to the north – including with the Port of Churchill, Nunavut, and the NWT.
- Do we even cross-promote from one urban neighborhood to the next?
- We are more connected to the west side and Alberta – but - how about a new vision of “Saska-toba” or “Mani-Saskatchewan”?

8. TIME TO FINALLY BRIDGE OUR TWO SOLITUDES

- Not just having our FNs or Metis Locals migrate to urban reserves and commerce in our many Cities and Towns – but - taking our cities and towns to the reserves as potential “Enterprise Zones” and large sources of our future workforce.
- We are long overdue to see more “trade and labour recruitment missions” to our own First Nation communities.
- Forging a new generation of smart partnerships – beyond public-private to new models of institutional-indigenous and shared infrastructure capital and operational efficiencies.
- Struggling rural towns, school boards, city recreational facilities, RM services and others could all pool their capital and operating budgets with neighbouring First Nation governments to create some win-win partnerships with the fastest growing demographics in the province (e.g. like the Dakota Whitecap FN partnership model with Saskatoon Public Schools).
- Indigenous – Settler institutional partnerships also can enhance the quality of services for indigenous people, by optimizing economy of scale and expertise rather than going-it-alone on reserve.

SUMMARY

- It is time for the grassroots to take over and be more business-led and business-driven.
- We advocate a DIY model of economic development at the grass roots level among all business groups, not just waiting for government to do it all for us. It works in process-led and technology-led situations and industries – let's do it here!



Source: Campus for Communities of the Future

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Strategies for import replacement,
alternative sourcing, and enhanced
supplier development

STRATEGIES FOR IMPORT REPLACEMENT, ALTERNATIVE SOURCING, AND ENHANCED SUPPLIER DEVELOPMENT

1. INTRODUCTORY PREMISE:

- Saskatchewan businesses currently import about \$12.7 billion of goods and services from the United States every year. As tariffs and counter-tariffs start to pile on as part of an escalating trade dispute, our provincial businesses will be squeezed by these significantly higher import costs. (and if we end up with expanded tariffs and counter-tariffs with China, as part of the current "Canola and Pork Wars," other importing costs will get ugly).
- On an urgent and critical basis, the Sask. business community needs to scramble together to pursue some alternative import sourcing.
- In addition, the best alternative sources of supply can be right here, under the very noses of our major government, institutional, corporate, and big resource industry buyers.
- This Mini Brief advocates a much greater and transparent effort toward accelerated Saskatchewan supplier development. We need to go "From Good to Great" – in a hurry!

2. BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS LEADERSHIP WITH ALTERNATIVE GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS AND SOURCING

- In addition to individual firms scrambling for alternative sources of supply, we advocate the business community undertake more business education and collective action.
- Some examples, on a smaller business group-by-group meeting basis, or through a larger conference, may encompass the following:
 - More profiling and organized networks for business to be fully aware of, and up to date with, the knowledge and services of our private sector custom brokers, freight forwarders, and supply chain sourcing specialists.
 - Promote an added function withing STEP, to now also include "STIP," or making added connections and linkages to alternative suppliers in our foreign markets.
 - Accelerated mailouts and digital information sharing of "How To's" on alternative sourcing, revised supply chain development, etc.
 - The good people in the Supply Chain Canada Association should be on "the speed dial," and viewed as a closer partner with, every business organization.

3. REVITALIZATION OF NEW PROGRAMS TO SHOWCASE WHAT KEY LOCAL BUYERS ARE CURRENTLY SOURCING IN THE USA OR OFF-SHORE, AND HOW THERE COULD BE SUBSTITUTE PRODUCTION AND SOURCING AMONG OUR EXISTING CORE CAPACITIES

- We need more Reverse Trade Shows!
- SIMSA has most recently taken the lead on some of these, but the concept goes back to 25 years ago at SREDA Inc. where we highlighted what other synchrotrons were buying offshore, and how this could alternatively be built and sourced by more local Saskatoon instrumentation and metal machining firms.
- Here again, some industry or business-led educational seminars are required to discuss how every firm has the potential to shift its core technical capacities to more locally generate the needed product substitutions that could be a viable and local option to replace former US/Chinese suppliers.
- For all consumer-facing businesses and their organizations, we need widespread promotions, and more accurate and consistent consumer labeling and signage to aid the consumer in his/her "Buy Local" or "Buy Canada" decision-making.
- Business organizations are also encouraged to provide more member education or informational workshops on existing buyer groups in various economic sectors, or how to form and manage new buying groups or purchasing cooperatives to enhance market clout and reduced input costs.
- Core capacity analysis and product/service market substitutions should be an ongoing, essential component of local economic development programming. All our major purchasers – public, private, and institutional – could be far more proactive at doing this.

4. STRONGER ADVOCACY TO HOLD THE "FEET TO THE FIRE" OF MAJOR PURCHASERS, WITH BETTER METRICS, TRANSPARENCY, AND PROACTIVITY TO STIMULATE LOCAL AND LOCAL SUPPLIER DEVELOPMENT

- SaskBuilds and other buy-Saskatchewan programs have been around for a long time. To date, primary effort has been around group bulletin/tendering boards, some common pre-tender and pre-qualification processes, two-envelope and other expedited purchasing decisions, and better practices in post-tendering access by and consultation with losing bidders to glean lessons learned.
- But we strongly encourage all our major purchasers commit to regularly be posting the KPI's and other real outcome metrics on the "Buy Saskatchewan" or "Buy My Community" or the "Buy Inside My BID/neighbourhood" - to better demonstrate their actual commitment and progress they are making. We need more open and transparent measurement of the actual "walk" and not just a lot of nice, general, but veiled "talk." We need to better track and monitor "the brutal truth".
- As recommended in (3) above, we urge our business leaders to advocate for far more proactivity and not just allow our major purchasers to only relegate to passive information sharing or website posting.

- True commitments to “Made-and-Purchased-in-Saskatchewan” should include more detailed educational workshops, reverse trade shows, first buyer/take-a-first chance or first user programs – all as part of a genuine and *complete* community development process.
- We should also see more commitment and openness to unsolicited project proposals, and more innovation-based purchasing and “test purchasing” or “test/pilot projects.”

5. STRONGER ADVOCACY PLACED UPON OUR LARGER INSTITUTIONAL BUYERS AND RESOURCE CORPORATIONS TO MONITOR THEIR REAL COMMITMENT TO INDIGENOUS/SOCIAL PROCUREMENT

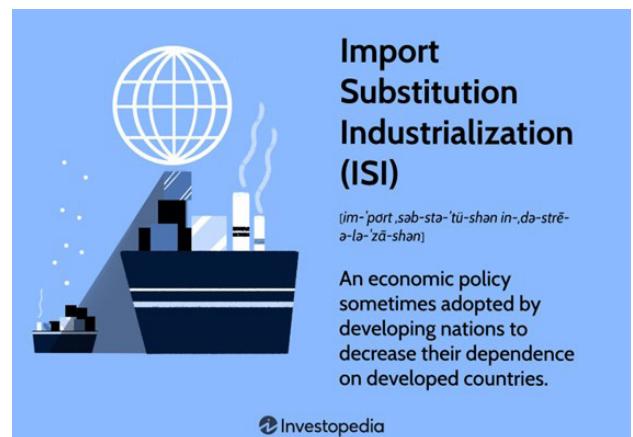
- Really “walking the talk” is especially necessary in an honest and full accounting of all the branding and promotional hype whenever our resource companies, governments, and institutions say they are committed to more Indigenous suppliers.
- Beyond promos and speeches, we need to see regular auditing and clear and open metrics.

6. OTHER CRISIS ADJUSTMENTS TO EXPEDITE PROMPT PAYMENT AND CASH FLOW TO THE SASKATCHEWAN SUPPLIER COMMUNITY

- Supplier credit and prompt payment will be other critical weapons to aid during these looming times of stress in our Saskatchewan business community because of this economic squeeze.
- We need to strongly advocate for certain major purchasers to change their A/R and A/P cycles to be far more business friendly, especially for SME suppliers.
- This should also include a systematic review of various holdback policies and other cash flow impediments to the supplier community.

SUMMARY

- Smart, progressive, and proactive supply chain development is a critical component in the overall economic equation. Business groups that do not carve out added programs, education, or advocacy to reinforce this are not providing a full service to their members.
- Significant increases in import replacement can also be a major strategic response to the US-Canada and the Canada-China trade disputes. As reciprocal tariffs continue to rebound and escalate dramatically, attention to alternative sourcing and supply chain management becomes imperative.



Source: Investopedia

3.

**Strategies & tactics for expedited
permitting and “21st Century”
efforts at Regulatory Reform**

STRATEGIES & TACTICS FOR EXPEDITED PERMITTING AND “21ST CENTURY” EFFORTS AT REGULATORY REFORM

1. INTRODUCTORY PREMISE:

- In Saskatoon, it now takes up to one year for a simple rezoning of land. This is addition to the fact that the fee for rezoning land has risen dramatically, to over \$10,000.
- It also takes several weeks to get a building permit for standard housing plans which have been reviewed and permitted repeatedly (i.e. undergo the same review even though nothing has changed).
- Minor discrepancies to development standards typically set projects back by weeks, and sometimes longer. This puts projects (and investment) at risk.
- All municipalities in Saskatchewan are under a single Planning and Development Act, meaning the smallest municipality shares the same requirements for approving development as the largest city. This is no longer necessary or desirable.
- Basic Planning Statements have been replaced by comprehensive Official Community Plans for all municipalities in Saskatchewan, leading to ‘top-heavy’ policy documents which are unnecessary and inappropriate for many small Saskatchewan communities.
- Cumulative effects of regulations create slower permitting times which are an unintended consequence when adding new regulations. There is a critical need to review how the layers of regulations relate to one another, including the net effective benefit of duplicated design and regulatory reviews by private sector professionals and municipal staff.
- The desire for regulatory ‘flexibility’ often comes at the expense of simplicity and ‘certainty’. Flexibility may not be necessary if regulations and processes to amend them are simplified.
- AI has enormous potential to streamline and simplify development approval processes. There does not appear to be a provincial AI strategy which has enormous potential to reduce time/cost when administering regulations (processing applications).
- Good ideas should not go to City Hall to die. Changing existing regulations takes far too long, so as a result, good ideas are ‘reduced’ or ‘altered’ to fit within existing regulations.
- A simplified regulatory environment and ‘light touch’ approach to regulation is required and desired.

2. WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO SOLVE?

- Business needs more certainty, specifically as it relates to time, cost and regulatory oversight. In addition, there should be a real and perceived “value-add” and value proposition from municipal governance.
- Business needs regulations to have a light touch, meaning not trying to solve all problems or prevent all possible negative outcomes through regulation.

- Existing processes to amend and change regulations are extremely onerous and a major deterrent to development.
- Show leadership within Canada. Solve these issues in Saskatchewan and it can become a best practice elsewhere in Canada.
- Planning is supposed to be visionary and strategic. It should not be an onerous or burdensome process. For small communities (under 10,000 people) Basic Planning Statements can reduce time, cost, complexity and burden to small communities who want to grow sustainably.
- Build capacity. Administrative capacity automatically increases when regulation is simplified and reduced.
- Help councils understand how regulations affect capacity to accommodate change.
- Understand cost-benefit and cost-versus-investment modeling. The notion that 'change takes time and money' isn't necessarily true; and good projects should not be subject to flippant delays.

3. WHERE CAN WE START?

- A good place to start is provincial legislation and a realistic look at the requirements in several pieces of legislation starting with the Planning and Development Act.
- Municipalities are governed by two Acts – The Cities Act for communities over 5,000 people, and The Municipalities Act for all other incorporated municipalities (generally, resort villages, towns, Rural Municipalities). It is time for a two-tier Planning and Development Act to recognize the two levels of municipalities.
- We need to find champions who have gone through the trenches and have experienced issues which point to systemic problems. This is not a lobbying effort for self-centred reasons. We want business and enterprise to feel welcome in a regulatory environment which says, 'Why Not?', instead of 'Why?'.
- Solutions need to be partnered with every problem. We need concrete recent examples of what needs fixing and to show how the problems can be fixed.
- Public engagement is important, but it is being wielded like a weapon. Good projects are subject to the whims of people who don't want anything to change.
- Build incentives that support *results over activity*. Being busy doesn't always translate into being effective.

4. OUR BIGGEST CHALLENGES

- Too many municipalities (see Idea Set 7) – creating capacity and infrastructure challenges which may affect willingness or capacity for change.

- An Urban/Rural divide (very different attitudes).
- SAMA regulations which entrench an outdated, uncompetitive system.
- Petty competition between communities. This leads to a 'we/they' mentality at the local level; this initiative should benefit all communities and create winners, not losers.
- Too many places to start, so we need to focus on a priority list of targeted reforms which is strategic and creates a cascade or 'domino effect' which leads to a series of meaningful changes to other related provincial policies and regulations.
- Ingrained culture that rewards iterative or micro change over aggressive business process re-engineering.

SUMMARY

- The regulatory environment affecting planning and development is ripe for review. Starting with the P&D Act, it is worth putting forward a few ideas on how a review can be conducted. The overall purpose needs to be understood – to provide a regulatory environment which is a 'better fit' in a province which has changed and will continue to change into the 21st century.



Source: ICBA (Independent Contractors and Businesses Association) 2020. Canada's position since 2020 is unchanged.

4.

Strategic investing for economic abundance and the need to wake up & build the opportunities

STRATEGIC INVESTING FOR ECONOMIC ABUNDANCE AND THE NEED TO WAKE UP & BUILD THE OPPORTUNITIES

1. INTRODUCTORY PREMISE:

- There has never been a better time to accelerate critical investments into the Saskatchewan economic landscape – both to maintain our security and to enhance our future prosperity.
- There are some emerging investment opportunities that are becoming increasingly obvious, and Saskatchewan business leaders and their governments would be remiss to stand idly by while other parts of the country are gearing up to meet the new challenges.
- The ways in which we can expedite and mobilize these urgently needed investments are just as important, or more critical, than the capital commitment themselves. *It is time to “stop walking through the mud” of regulatory delays, NIMBYism, and perpetual gridlock.*
- Last, the perfect storm of not knowing exactly who is in charge, or agreeing on what our long-term priorities are, or leading multi-layered opportunities, appears to be upon us. Leadership and collaborative-solutions-based execution have never been needed more than now.

2. INVEST NOW AND URGENTLY IN STRATEGIC TRADE AND TRANSPORTATION-RELATED TRADE INFRASTRUCTURE

- Inland container ports - and their concentrated industrial parks adjacent to such relocated transportation clusters (especially rail) - are tremendous economic opportunities in waiting, as Saskatchewan is one of the leading global exporters in Canada. We are “poised for export greatness” and even more diversified global market expansions.
- The Saskatoon CP yards, the CN rail links, and the Saskatoon-based trucking industry could bring even greater competitive advantages and economic growth to the Saskatoon Region.
- Based on some visionary land assembly and planning - and connected to an accelerated build of the planned Saskatoon Freeway Project - a northern transportation hub would be a valuable complement to Regina’s Global Transportation Hub (GTH).
- Putting the right things on rail (not oil), and the right things in an accelerated build out of oil and gas pipelines should be critical priorities. Shipping oil by rail creates a huge opportunity cost. It acts as a constipating impediment to our greater global competitiveness.
- The level of industrial park development at our current Airport Authorities also brings some untapped potential. The industrial land development role of our Airport Authorities should be strengthened and boosted, also with an expedited Enterprise Zone approach. Intermodal air freight connections can also be further developed.

3. ESTABLISH A NEW "SASKA-TOBA COALITION" TO MORE AGGRESSIVELY ADVOCATE FOR BOTH PROVINCES TO GAIN CLOSER ACCESS TO TIDEWATER AT THE PORT OF CHURCHILL

- Trade routes that eschew the United States have become a focus as U.S. President Donald Trump continues to threaten Canadian sovereignty and subject businesses to tariff whiplash. One option is the rail-accessible deepwater port in Churchill, Manitoba. Investing in the port is one way to "Trump proof" the economy, enabling trade connections with Europe and beyond.
- Arctic Gateway Group, a partnership of 41 First Nations and other local communities, owns and operates the port, a marine tank farm, and the Hudson Bay Railway running from Churchill to Canadian National's network in The Pas. Churchill has the potential to be a major export point for critical minerals in high demand globally, exports of Manitoba-mined zinc concentrate, products from a new fertilizer plant proposed in Saskatchewan, more alternatives to shipment of potash, and the potential for alternative shipment of gas and oil and a future LNG terminal.
- The current geopolitical situation should prompt the entire Prairie business community to accelerate some of these discussions.
- We also agree with Professor Barry Prentice, who directs the University of Manitoba's Transport Institute. He recently said that a container facility would make a lot of sense at Churchill. Western-bound containers from Europe arrive in Montreal and then have a very long rail ride out to the Prairies, which is very expensive. Churchill is a much shorter route that could lead to great savings. Having alternate trade routes will be key to resilient supply chains.
- Alternative options like the Port of Churchill would be more than just establishing some added systems redundancy or a backup. Its growth would create new channels rather than replacing the existing ones. Churchill can also be helpful in bolstering domestic supply chains, as well as enabling connections to northern territories that struggle with a high cost of living and rely heavily on pricey air travel.
- Through a renewed hub at the Port of Churchill, both Manitoba and Saskatchewan can also capitalize on a gateway to more defense investments in the arctic.
- Furthermore, a warming Arctic means longer periods with ice-free waters. Shipping lanes are currently open four months of the year. But the renewed ownership group at the Port is working with researchers at a nearby marine observatory to see if that can be extended to five or six months, without the need for icebreakers.
- Rising temperatures also mean thawing permafrost, making the ground beneath the track less stable and damage more likely. Newer and emerging technology is helping keep the Arctic Gateway Group ahead of those issues. Ground-penetrating radar on locomotives, combined with GPS to help detect potential trouble spots, will ensure future track stability. New drone monitoring can also now keep track of the levelness of the line.
- Now is also the time for bigger and bolder investments in shoring up the CN railway's northernmost segment.



4. URGENTLY INVEST IN STRATEGIC ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

- Beyond urgent and accelerated rail access to tide water, and a renewed focus on national pipeline projects (east-west, north-south, and north to the Arctic Ocean), Canada needs to finally emerge with its own National Electrical Energy Transportation Grid.
- Currently there are more electrical grid connections to the United States than there are between Canadian provinces.
- Accelerated inter-provincial trade in electrical energy will help forestall and/or help mitigate the spiraling costs that would be required for bigger, in-province generation projects.
- A bold, new national electrical energy grid will enhance Saskatchewan's emerging leadership as a future source of clean, nuclear power and the value-added growth of our uranium industry.
- Saskatchewan also needs to stimulate renewed interest and investment incentives through expansion of community-based micro grids, and other public-private energy partnerships such as more industrial co-generation.
- The emerging AI-based economy will generate huge, new levels of electrical demand – with a commensurate and urgent need for more electric systems infrastructure.

5. INVESTMENT NEEDS TO BE EXPEDITED THROUGH PRE-APPROVED AND PRE-DETERMINED ECONOMIC TRADE CORRIDORS - PLUS - ADDED ENTERPRISE ZONES

- Premier Moe has already said that he is prepared to site, design, and pre-approve a series of critical transportation/energy corridors to meet the current moment of grave economic stress and threats to our sovereignty as a nation. We need to see immediate action on this in months, not years, and not just talk or posting thoughts on social media. And we need to see more demonstrable planning efforts.
- Beyond critical new energy and transportation corridors, another form of expedited investment is to establish a system of Free Enterprise Zones in selected and concentrated areas to capitalize upon some of the emerging opportunities. The pre-approved and codified "Enterprise Zone Model" for economic development has been key to success in many of our competing US States and widely used across China and other Asian economies.
- Enterprise Zone development need not be confined to provincially owned, assembled, or regulated lands. First Nation governments could also develop an "Enterprise Zone" mentality. We encourage more FNs to seize opportunities for industrial parks, and expand their model of investment to go well beyond urban reserves and commercial, retail and institutional structures.
- Indigenous tourism features and corridors have also been discussed for several years. But the Indigenous tourism industry in Saskatchewan is still nascent, other than with casinos, golf courses, and soon, a new spa. In this current "Travel-Only-in-Canada" climate, now is an opportune time to work with all levels of government to accelerate the further investment in FN-based cultural, eco-tourism, and other recreational lands projects.

6. JOB CREATING OFFSETS TO RESTORE RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

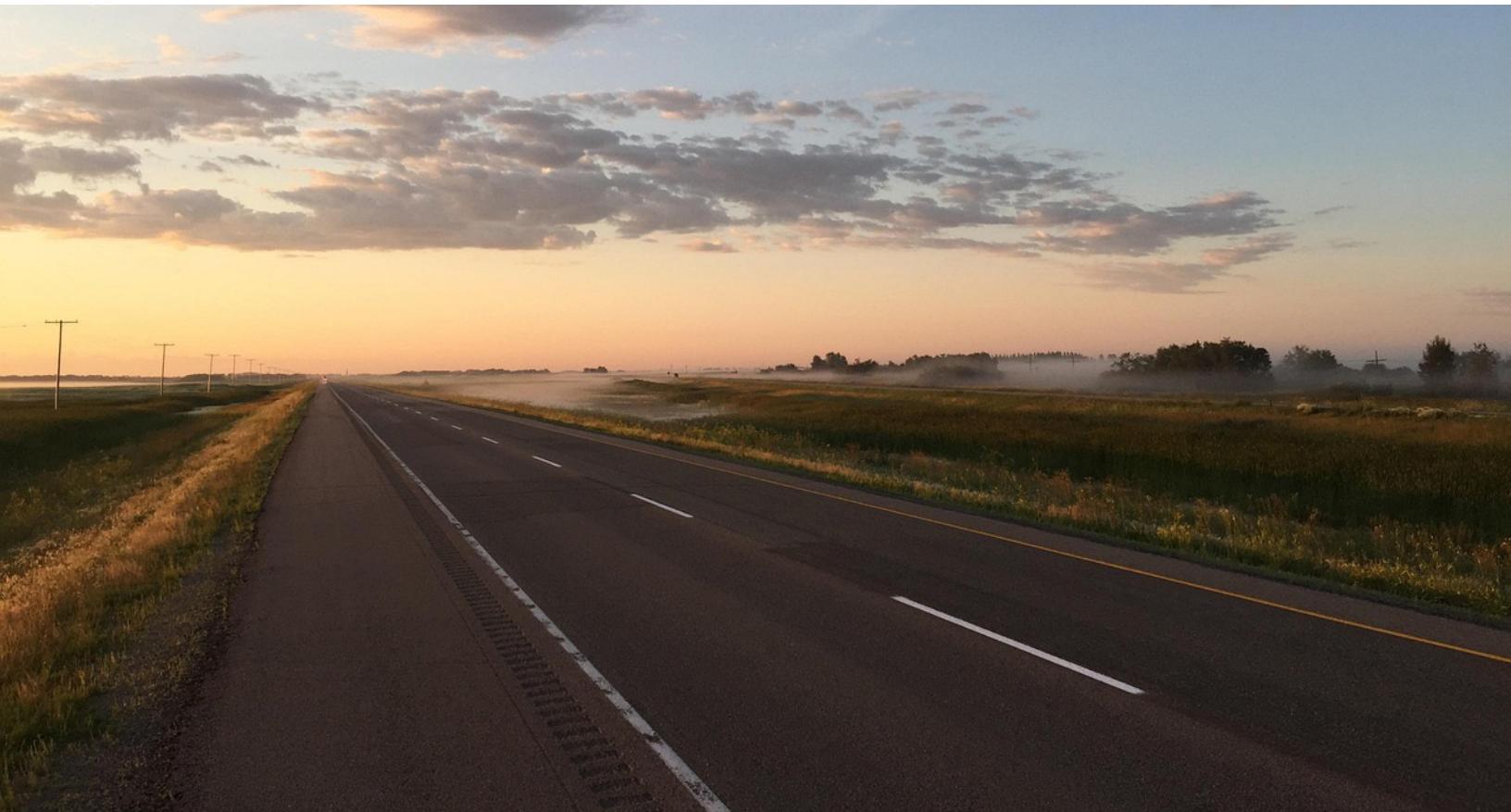
- RMs need more infrastructure investment to get agricultural and resource products to market. Saskatchewan's expansive array of rural roads, culverts, and bridges are slowly being degraded. An urgent Strategic Investing Program during this trade war may help to offset some of the jobs lost in other exporting sectors and supply chains, during this fragile economic period. It would also bring an added economic boost to some of our declining rural areas.
- About 34 percent of RM bridges are 60 years old and older and beyond their service lives; 29 percent of all RM bridges are 50 to 59 years old and approximately 18 percent are 40 to 49 years old. All told, 81 percent of our rural bridge inventory requires replacement in the next 10 years.
- To put that into perspective, consider that the cost of replacing any bridge that meets funding criteria through current programs will likely be over \$1 million. Because funding is based on per capita models, smaller communities have no chance of getting any of the money. This model is prone to failure of a larger over-arching goal if the smaller community is in a remote or 'solution-essential' area. (e.g. near Bethune and Jansen).
- The Saskatchewan business community should rally alongside and co-advocate with SARM to see that Rural Infrastructure Programs are changed to be more co-operative and to provide for more stable, long-term infrastructure funding.

7. SASKATCHEWAN ENTERPRISES, INSTITUTIONS, AND FN ECONOMIES HAVE MAJOR OPPORTUNITIES TO BE STRONGER PARTNERS IN THE BUILD UP OF OUR NATIONAL DEFENSES

- The United States and all our other NATO partners are insistent (and impatient) to see Canada enhance and defend its own sovereignty through more military/defense spending (i.e., to climb to at least 2-3 % of overall GDP in the next decade or less).
- Saskatchewan should urgently start preparing to be a major player in this explosive build out of the Canadian Defense Industry. We have some core capacities in defense vehicle manufacturing, instrumentation, metal fabricating, geomatics, IT software and services, telecom and satellite technology, etc.
- But we need more business-to-business, government, and post-secondary education and R & D leadership to start mobilizing ASAP. We also need to step up and insist on being part of the solution by bringing shovel-ready sites and mandates to the table. Watching investment go to Quebec, or Ontario, or Atlantic Canada, and then complaining about it, does not serve our cause or our future prosperity.
- With our strong array of Indigenous-owned development corporations - and Indigenous training and research institutions like SIIT, FNUC, Gabriel Dumont, etc. - Saskatchewan has particularly advantages in capitalizing on the added Industrial/Regional Development Program (IRDP) offset credits and incentives through promotion of Indigenous Partnerships.

SUMMARY

- Now is NOT the time to sit back and let other provinces or countries seize the same opportunities that are being presented to Saskatchewan. But now is the time to stop “walking through the regulatory mud and morass” of years of delayed site approvals, snail-paced permitting, and never-ending nimbyism.
- We need to seize these historic moments and opportunities for Nation Building. This includes, among many things, the long overdue time to work together and not pick winners and losers based on city-to-city and urban-rural competition - or through gamesmanship and “politicking”. While we quibble and squabble, the icebergs of opportunities float by us.



***This is not the moment to stand still
while others move forward.***



5.

**Urgent tax reform for
competitiveness & fiscal stability**

URGENT TAX REFORM FOR COMPETITIVENESS & FISCAL STABILITY

1. INTRODUCTORY PREMISE:

- As the global trading system reverts to a more protectionist and win-lose economy, Saskatchewan and Canada must rapidly adjust to offset our increasing disconnection with that large U.S. market, and to better compete despite the rising business costs behind “our side” of all these escalating tariff walls. In essence, the US government continues to hand us a gift that results in acknowledgement of our need to change – soon!
- Saskatchewan and Canada can help businesses with these urgently needed “offsets” by finally undertaking some long-awaited tax reforms to restore our global competitiveness.
- Saskatchewan business leaders are urged to echo this core message, and specifically, to champion an added review of corporate income tax, capital gains taxes, and the elimination of windfall resource revenues, which are often squandered by offshore (and not local) investors.
- We also encourage our fellow business groups and leaders to advocate a fundamental shift toward a lowered, simplified, and broadened tax base that is liberated from so much political manipulation, gimmicks, and loophole tax expenditures.
- We also continue to advocate that a more competitive, stable, and predictable economy will prosper by allowing and incentivizing businesses to reinvest their retained earnings, with a fundamental shift away from *heavy reliance of taxes on business wealth creation, and more toward broader-based taxes on overall consumption*.

2. ADOPTING THE ESTONIAN/MINTZ MODEL FOR COMPETITIVE CORPORATE INCOME TAX AND A “BIG BANG APPROACH”

- We agree with Canadian and global tax policy experts like Jack Mintz (from the University of Calgary), that a competitive economy requires some “Big Bang” Corporate Tax Reforms.
- When the economic sustainability of a region or a country has its back to the wall – such as during the current Trump-induced economic shocks – it must be underlined that *corporations create wealth - and not individuals*. Corporations then distribute that wealth to people. Ultimately, it is not a business that pays taxes, but all the people who benefit from that corporate wealth generation.
- This can only happen when enterprise is allowed to retain what they earn and are encouraged to then re-invest back into a virtual cycle of continual community investment.

- The “Big Bang philosophy” of Corporate Income Tax Reform urges a significant lowering of C.I.T. to zero. Corporate taxation would ONLY then be triggered when profits are distributed to its shareholders, but NOT when business reinvests back into an economy. This is exactly the approach modeled by the reform government of Estonia, since its emergence from a Soviet system in the 1990’s. Today, Estonia starts 45 X more IT and new Tech businesses than Canada on a per capital basis. Overall, it experiences 17.8 business start-ups for every 1,000 people in an entrepreneurial society, compared to only 4.9 start-ups in Canada for the same number of 1,000 citizens. Estonia is widely seen as having THE most competitive system of corporate tax in the entire world.
- In addition, small businesses with few profits are struggling in Saskatchewan because of so many other higher costs, including rising levels of municipal taxation. They would also prosper if these other tax layers were allowed to be *refundable* from overall CIT, and not just deductible. Deductibility during these trying times does nothing to help SMEs who have no profits from which to deduct these added, punishing costs.

3. BROADEN AND LOWER THE TAX BASES – LESS GIMMICKS, MORE SIMPLIFICATION

- For the sake of our overall economic prosperity and urgent competitiveness, it is time to take a hard look at the plethora of other targeted tax expenditures or tax loopholes that prevent the simplification and base broadening of our overall corporate and personal income tax systems
- Every targeted tax deduction for one politically favored group represents an opportunity cost - or de facto tax burden - that is shifted on to those who are not benefiting from the tax loophole or special deduction.
- Small businesses working in non-farming or non-oil and gas sectors, or most average taxpayers, or seniors on fixed incomes, are *all least likely to benefit from all these political gimmicks and giveaways*. The resultant impact is higher overall tax rates and increasingly complex tax codes that make it near impossible to conduct simple annual tax preparations.
- Accelerated tax deductions for any capital investment to support overall economic wealth creation should be recognized as a good thing and should not be considered as a tax “loophole”. However, under the looming economic crisis, it is time to take a hard look at what tax expenditures are really nothing more than supportive of “vote creation”, or of too narrow or limited benefits, rather than the more substantive drivers for true wealth creation.

4. SHIFTING OF TAXATION FROM INCOME TO CONSUMPTION – IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO RECONSIDER GST/PST HARMONIZATION

- Saskatchewan is one of the last provinces with a provincial sales tax that continues to inflict small business owners with two entirely different systems of tax collection, and with no ability for competitive enterprises to remove this added layer of taxation from the operating cost of business before passing it on to consumers, or through exporting.
- A more competitive shift toward consumption tax has been reviewed in the past in Saskatchewan. But it has always been politically rejected because it results in a higher combined PST/GST number – called the HST in other provinces like those in Eastern Canada – that is consumer-facing. This added consumer shock, however, can and is mitigated around the world among those economies who have shifted to more predictable and competitive taxes on consumption (and not income) using enriched and off-setting refundable HST or VAT credits to offset the impact on lower income consumers. Saskatchewan should do the same.
- Over the last decade, the base of goods and services attracting the Saskatchewan PST has been gradually widening. As the base of the PST gets closer to the broader federal GST base, the opportunities for finally and optimally finishing the job on *competitive* sales tax reform have never been more urgent – and necessary.

5. REWARD THE LEGITIMATE AND HARD-EARNED EFFORTS OF ENTREPRENEURS THROUGH LOWER CAPITAL GAINS TAXES

- Capital gains represent a return on risk, after a lifetime of hard work and effort in either the accumulation of retained earnings or through the growth of invested assets that have continued to benefit the overall communities in which entrepreneurs live.
- Lowering of capital gains tax rates, or increased exemptions before attraction of added capital gains taxes, should be strongly encouraged to enhance the risk to reward ratio, and to encourage added local investment.
- However, to ensure that these are legitimate tools to stimulate our economic competitiveness, we also need to be smart and not simply reward wealth that is hidden or hoarded in non-producing offshore accounts. We also need a healthy public policy debate about “unearned wealth” that has been accumulated in estate values among family trusts and ‘silver spoon’ families, without any prospect of returning that wealth back to economic growth in society. Tax reform needs to encourage entrepreneurship and not just more intergenerational class structures, or intergenerational inequities. We should not want to return to a new “gilded age” of outrageous wealth accumulation that does not contribute to an overall competitive, fair, and fiscally sustainable economy.

6. STABILIZE SASK. BUDGET MANAGEMENT THROUGH ELIMINATION OF WINDFALL AND RESOURCE “GIVE-AWAYS” – STOP SQUANDERING!

- We strongly encourage all economic leaders in Saskatchewan to read the recent book, *“Squandered”*, by former Finance Minister Eric Cline. This is an excellent critique of the massive resource wealth that Saskatchewan has historically squandered in the last decade, by allowing foreign interests and investors to walk away with exorbitant windfall revenues from the global potash market.
- The precept of this analysis is neither partisan nor part of a socialist economic philosophy. It is just based on capturing revenues from *windfall* profits, based on big and surging oscillations in resource prices and not due to superior management or any hard-earned ROI on investments. A major overhaul of Saskatchewan’s exceedingly complex and antiquated potash royalty regime has similarly been advocated by other pro-business tax economists, such as Jack Mintz and the Economics Faculty at the University of Calgary.
- Analysts like Cline and Mintz have estimated up to \$9 Billion in foregone revenues over the past decade due to failure to capture a fair economic rent from this highly unique and non-renewal resource, where this province has a clear competitive advantage. Saskatchewan could have used \$9 Billion more in revenue over the last decade to prevent us from having some of the highest rates of child poverty in Canada, a spiraling homelessness and addiction problem, hallway medicine or closed EMRs in rural Saskatchewan, and among the highest rates of family violence (also) in Canada.
- With billions more in a smarter form of potash taxation, we may have also been able to forestall an alarming increase in annual debt servicing cost, which is now up to almost \$1 billion per year. Ever-increased debt financing is a terrible opportunity cost to alternative spending in a competitive economy, and for a healthier society.

SUMMARY

- Good politics can often lead to very harmful economics. For decades the 20th Century model of corporate taxation – in all its manifestations – has held Saskatchewan and Canada back from becoming a more attractive source of business investment. It has also held us back from becoming a more entrepreneurial culture.
- There is a long list of taxation best practices to choose from and that we can adopt in our province. One has to ask, *“Why are non-resource-rich countries doing so much more, or so much better, than us??”*
- Layers of complexity, loopholes, gimmicks, and special carve outs have been a longstanding *“Tragedy of the Commons”*.
- It is time to stop, simplify, broaden, significantly lower - and then prosper!
- The next generation of business leaders need to explain these opportunities for 21st Century Tax Reform in a way that does not pit consumers against business, or salaried workers against entrepreneurs. A rising tide will raise all boats.
- We need to be up to the challenge for some fundamental restructuring and bigger bangs in how we tax people and finance our governments.

It's time to leave behind the outdated tax systems that stifle growth and embrace bold, simplified reforms that unlock entrepreneurship and prosperity...

Business tax reform can encourage investment, and in doing so, raise productivity and living standards



NOT TAXED

- Equipment
- Buildings
- R&D

TAXED

- Dividend payments
- Share buybacks
- Bonuses



Source: Fraser Institute

When we stop dividing consumers from business and workers from entrepreneurs, we can create a rising tide that lifts all of Saskatchewan.

6.

Paying attention to the “3 P’S”:
Productivity, Productivity, Productivity

----- URGENT PAYING ATTENTION TO THE “3 P’S”: PRODUCTIVITY, PRODUCTIVITY, PRODUCTIVITY

1. INTRODUCTORY PREMISE:

- One of the most alarming issues facing the Canadian and Saskatchewan economies today is the appallingly low growth in real GDP per capita – otherwise known as productivity – over the last decade.
- See the Appendix attached, which shows that **Canada has the most dismal record in productivity improvement among all global economies.**
- The stagnation of our local, provincial, and national productivity is seldom noticed or discussed, and seems to be overshadowed by other indicators like total GDP or employment. But without real growth in productivity, we risk becoming anathema for more foreign investment.
- All the other superficial indices look good because we take pride in becoming a productivity backwater. We take pride in our weak currency, and we look good because everything is cheaper when you wallow in mediocrity.
- We have also been fooling ourselves into a false economic confidence by artificially inflating and confusing real growth with an enormous, decade-long surge in immigration into our country and our region, without a commensurate increase in the longer-term productivity to sustain and support these growing populations.
- That inordinate surge in immigration, *without productivity and infrastructure increases*, has masked one of the most serious economic issues in our lifetimes. The huge and anomalous denominator of surging per capita in Saskatchewan and Canada has pulled down the entire equation that measures the true, complete, and lasting prosperity of an economy!

2. GET READY FOR THE A.I. REVOLUTION

- One of the most effective ways for Saskatchewan (and Canada) to leapfrog forward into a more competitive state of relative productivity, is to seize the opportunities of the very imminent “AI Revolution.” We have everything that a massive demand for new AI data centers will want – abundant land, energy to sustain their massive electrical demands, water for cooling them, and the need for distributed latency. We need to promote this!
- Just as importantly, all business groups and sectors need to get out front in educating their members about the imperative of rapidly adopting AI and applying these new tools. Otherwise, their individual business members will seriously be at risk of being left behind - and soon. This is the biggest and fastest technological revolution in our lifetimes. It will make the advent of the microchip seem like a quaint little bump in economic history.

- Presentations and joint workshops with AiSK (AI Saskatchewan), for example, should become an urgent collaboration that is high on the priority list for every business association or economic development agency in the province. We need to promote and accelerate more learning about AI - and to promote its new applications and training networks.
- It almost becomes a race against the clock, in a radically changing global economy.

3. EMBRACE NEW TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND ACCELERATE TECH DIFFUSION

- In addition to AI and the good work of AiSK, there are numerous other networks that are actively promoting the transfer, adoption, and diffusions of so many other forms of new technology to accelerate business productivity.
- For example, all sectors and business networks need to learn more about Next Generation Manufacturing Canada or NGen, and its promotional work to advance the adoption of advanced manufacturing (3D printing) and the growing fusion of digital technologies to every facet of business productivity across the supply chains and operations of business sectors.
- The fusion of rapidly emerging deep learning and other AI models will also complement major improvements in 3D printing, CAD/CAM, and other “2000’s technologies”, by accelerating coding and other related analytics.
- “Adopt or die” needs to become the alarm cry everywhere across the Saskatchewan business community – with awareness followed by accelerated transfer and diffusion of other technological revolutions - in robotics, IoT (the Internet of Things), and even quantum computing within the next decade. All of this is coming at the global economy in breakneck speed. Business and economic leaders in Saskatchewan have a serious responsibility to be at the forefront of these revolutions.

4. REGENERATE WITH A NEW GENERATION OF SIX SIGMA LEAN THINKING IN BUSINESS

- The work of Edward Deming is just as relevant to the economy of 2025 and beyond, as it was many decades earlier. The same can be said about “Six Sigma LEAN Thinking,” if this added business training addresses the fundamental elements of an overall business management system and not a few superficial aspects taken out of a more holistic context.
- Innovation always includes business *Process Reforms*, and not just new product development. Here again, we encourage the next generation of business managers to expand their members’ awareness and education about these time-honored and invaluable business tools.
- The advent of AI applications will only enhance Six sigma analysis and business process improvement, and it will never completely replace the “Define-Measure-Analyze-Improve-Check” routine often used in Lean Six Sigma Analysis for increased business productivity. AI use in the LEAN/Business Process Reviews will complement the human integration and staff “buy-in” with respect to this overall management philosophy.
- AI will allow for more customized LEAN applications and development of unique systems and standards on a firm-by-firm basis. The evolution of Six Sigma with AI will make systems and process improvements even easier by having AI do the heavy, tedious work involved in data heuristics.

5. LETS ALL GET BETTER WITH MORE BENCHMARKING OF EXCELLENCE

- Business organizations that want to show leadership in response to the productivity challenge should be organizing group technical tours for their members to visit and learn from best practices in other jurisdictions, and especially, from out trading competitors.
- Similarly, we encourage business organizations and Economic Development Agencies in all sectors and regions to undertake benchmarking studies, or to provide support programs to individual business members to undertake benchmarking and comparative assessments to help them better understand “the brutal facts of their current realities.”
- The science and the art of C.I. analysis, or Competitive Intelligence, also seems to be declining as an essential component of good business practice. Here again, we encourage our agencies and associations to revive some greater awareness and member education to enhance C.I. as an added skillset for their business members.

6. LET'S GET BETTER AT MORE COLLABORATIVE AND COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS TO ACCELERATE BUSINESS PRODUCTIVITY

- With respect to emerging technologies that involve considerable barriers and entry costs for acquisition, another role for economic development is to promote shared “Technology or Joint Equipment Co-ops” as added economic infrastructure.
- Incentives and networks to promote joint research - followed by open-source IP and tech transfer - should also be promoted as part of playing “economic chess.” In this regard, the leadership role of our Universities and Polytech in promoting technological innovation and IP transfer needs to seriously be examined, and if necessary, challenged much harder.
- New business ecosystems of joint technology use or process sharing should be encouraged to help those individual (and early) adopters attain full optimization of their specialized services. This could include the leadership of industry associations or business networks to promote added rentals of technology and equipment leases among each other, and with more cross-business access in optimizing supply chains within a larger community or ecosystems cluster.

SUMMARY

- The massive wave of immigration into Saskatchewan and Canada, and many of our cities, has brought fresh talent and an entrepreneurial vigour to many of our economic sectors and workforces. However, we have not served this population growth very well by investing in a commensurate array of support services and infrastructure to help our newcomers, or the rest of us, cope with this surge.
- The biggest cost of this influx has been our ability to not see beyond population growth, to monitor and oversee the more fundamental requirement for labour market productivity.
- In the long run, without stepping out of our productivity malaise - and without ending our neglect of this core issue - our current array of economic metrics can be almost "delusional".
- As business advocates, and as association leaders and professionals in economic development, we strongly encourage a greater emphasis on productivity.
- With an aging population and with the likely trend of less immigration in the near future, we need to get back on the Productivity Agenda and not be fooled by other false metrics.
- And with lower productivity and continual declines in our relative standards of living, in the future there will be fewer people, and even less capital, that will even want to come here. Governments and economic policy makers across Canada have been asleep on this issue.
- It is interesting to note that even the State of Mississippi now has a higher GDP per capita than Saskatchewan!

This table demonstrates where we stand in the world, and points to where we can go – or should be trying to go – in the generations ahead.



Source: *OECD and Visual Capitalist*



7

Modernizing municipal assessment & finance

MODERNIZING MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT & FINANCE

1. INTRODUCTORY PREMISE:

- Saskatchewan's municipal assessment and finance systems are foundational to local government service delivery, but they are increasingly misaligned with the needs of today's business environment.
- SAMA governs a \$271 billion property assessment base and \$2.33 billion property tax base, providing services to **762 municipalities** and valuing 876,000 properties.
- The system emphasizes uniformity and procedural compliance over responsiveness, transparency, and economic development.
- Commercial properties are assessed using methodologies that may not accurately reflect current market dynamics or encourage business investment, especially in regions with volatile or weak rental markets.
- Property taxes are the largest own-source revenue for municipalities, yet the link between assessment, tax burden, and investment attraction is poorly understood and often affects business and commercial property owners with unpleasant surprises.
- Saskatchewan has made no recent systemic reforms to its assessment or finance system, despite increasing pressures from rising costs, demographic shifts, and calls for smarter, streamlined regulation. The 2018 addition of another method for assessment calculation is not a systemic reform.

2. WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO SOLVE?

- A system where high property taxes and opaque assessments discourage business growth and distort economic signals.
- SAMA's four-year revaluation process and reliance on outdated base dates can be out of step with real-time business realities.
- The limited flexibility and high compliance burden make innovation in commercial property use difficult.
- Unpredictability in appeals, tax tools, and assessment increases creates investment certainty.
- Saskatchewan's assessment framework is too rigid to accommodate special-purpose industrial or transitional properties (e.g., innovation hubs, brownfield redevelopment).

3. WHERE CAN WE START?

- **Pilot Innovation Zones:** Enable municipalities to opt into an “Assessment Innovation Zone” where alternative methods (e.g., current market value or simplified cost-based models) can be trialed to support economic development. For example, identifying an area where significant revitalization is expected or desired to occur but fear of increased property taxes resulting from new development dampens developer attraction.
- **Tax Base Diversification Tool:** Create a new municipal financing option that shifts a portion of tax from property-based sources to activity-based sources (e.g., business license surcharges or service fees). Often, the fees associated with an ‘activity-based’ venture only cover the costs of licensing (i.e. no general revenue from activity to help pay for services).
- **Tiered Assessment Standards:** Develop simplified assessment guidelines for small towns and rural municipalities, where the full machinery of revaluation and appeal may not be warranted.
- **SAMA Mandate Review:** Undertake an independent review of SAMA’s governance and mandate to explore whether a more responsive agency structure is possible. This would mean reducing the number of municipalities and grouping them into similar assessment zones.
- **Modernization of Tax Tools:** Revisit the use of mill rate factors, phase-ins, and minimum/base taxes to better align with economic development goals. Conduct re-assessments more frequently than once every four years.
- **Fully Utilize AI Tools to Reform (modernize) Assessment Process:** New AI tools have emerged which can greatly assist with reforming the property tax system more quickly and efficiently. At a minimum, exploit technology to engage stakeholders and improve relations.
- **Appeal Reform:** Streamline the appeal process to make it more transparent and timelier, especially for small business owners and entrepreneurs unfamiliar with technical valuation language.
- **Identify and Adopt Best Practices:** Our province is not an island; all provincial (and most likely state) jurisdictions have similar challenges; therefore, solutions must exist elsewhere that could be customized and adopted here.

4. OUR BIGGEST CHALLENGES

- Deep institutional resistance (i.e. ingrained culture) to change within the SAMA framework and regulatory environment.
- Deep resistance to reducing the number of local governments in Saskatchewan. This reduces the ability to be nimble and apply new ways of doing things across the province.

The table below compares the number of municipalities in Saskatchewan to other western Canadian provinces.

Province	Estimated Population	Number of Municipalities	Municipalities per 100,000 people
Saskatchewan	1.2 million	772	64.3
Manitoba	1.4 million	137	9.8
Alberta	4.8 million	343	7.1
British Columbia	5.7 million	188	3.3

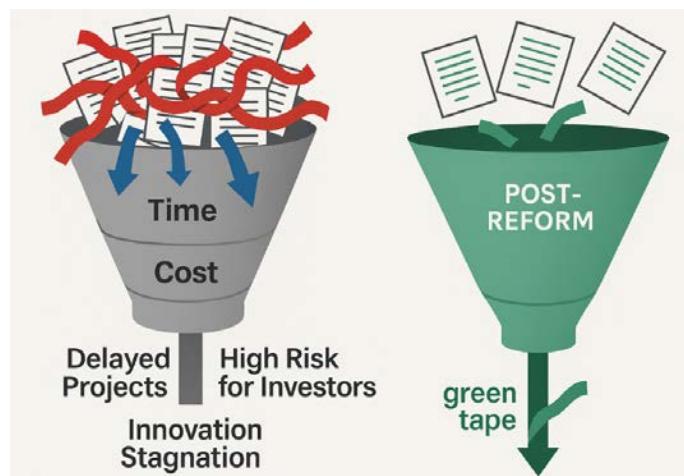
Source: Provincial Government Websites

THE KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THIS TABLE:

1. Saskatchewan has **more than double** the number of municipalities per capita than any other Western Canadian province.
2. British Columbia, with nearly **5x the population** of Saskatchewan, has only **one-quarter** as many municipalities.
3. Manitoba's amalgamation efforts over the past decade significantly reduced its total, while Saskatchewan has made **minimal structural changes**.
4. Making structural changes to the system of government to increase efficiency and service levels is much more difficult in Saskatchewan due to the sheer number of municipalities which must be consulted.
5. Capacity to effectively administer plans, strategies, policies and regulations is an issue within Saskatchewan.
 - Complexity of overlapping legislation (e.g., The Cities Act, The Municipalities Act, The Assessment Management Agency Act).
 - A perception that reform will create winners and losers, especially across sectors (residential vs. commercial vs. agriculture and between municipalities).
 - Lack of standardized performance data linking assessment fairness to economic growth outcomes.
 - Over-dependence on property tax revenues in the absence of alternative municipal revenue tools.

SUMMARY

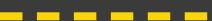
- The municipal assessment and finance system in Saskatchewan is in need of modernization. This Idea Set encourages Saskatchewan to lead the country by rethinking how assessments and municipal revenues are structured. We seek to build a smarter, more responsive, and business-aligned system that enhances local autonomy, simplifies compliance, and drives investment. The system must shift from being a rigid bureaucratic exercise to a strategic economic development tool which can help to achieve local public policy objectives.



Source: Generated by March Forth team

8.

Strategic investing in human services and talent attraction



STRATEGIC INVESTING IN HUMAN SERVICES AND TALENT ATTRACTION

1. INTRODUCTORY PREMISE:

- We strongly encourage all business groups to recognize that the “business of business” must encompass a healthy society, in addition to economic competitiveness.
- Our province, our cities, and each region functions as a human ecosystem – to prevent the increased marginalization of people and to build a compassionate society for all.
- The full meaning and purpose of “development” means a prosperous economy with no people left behind. Economic growth is not for the sake of just a wealthy few, or to generate profits and dividends only for the benefit of foreign investors.
- As fellow entrepreneurs ourselves, we also believe that most business owners see themselves as responsible community stewards. The good people on your Board and among your business membership are generally not content, after a lifetime of hard work and risk, to narrowly measure success as only an opportunity to achieve a prosperous exit, followed by only the transfer of their wealth into out-of-province retirement communities far removed from the society that helped make them successful.
- Strategic investing in critical human resources is also an issue of intergenerational equity for successive generations.

2. URGENT INVESTING IN CRITICAL SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE TO RESTORE THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF OUR DOWNTOWNS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

- It is not hyperbole to assert that our urban downtown and other neighbourhoods/BIDs are currently in a state of crisis - due to alarming increases in homelessness, safety issues, and the growing scourge of addictions.
- So many retail merchants and business offices now operate with locked doors, barred windows, and security doorbell-access-only these days. Even our community libraries were recently closed because of the growing danger to their employees and users. Bus transport is increasingly viewed as a high user risk, with the growing reluctance of citizens to embrace this form of energy-saving and efficient transport. This is happening at the very time when major cities like Saskatoon are expanding their investment into this increasingly scary form of public transportation.
- The provincial government is almost 18 months behind in its original announcement to establish major drug treatment centres (e.g. at the Lumsden retreat).

- The Province is also reluctant to fund Harm Reduction and other forms of entry-level shelters and rehab programs to save more lives of drug users, and to redirect them away from other business districts. They seem to simplistically prefer an approach toward increased arrests and criminalization, rather than adopting a stronger socio-medical model.
- Unlike other global models around the world (e.g., Portugal) we seem to be allowing the problem to get so large that it now overwhelms local municipalities and all the front-line community support workers.
- Critical and high priority investment in more social housing, and exponentially increased investment in drug treatment and rehabilitation, *is just as important or even more important than any other form of infrastructure spending.*
- We strongly encourage all business leaders and their organizations to be as vocal and adamant in their advocacy to have the government address this issue, as they are about taxes, regulations, and other investments in physical infrastructure.
- We encourage business groups to also generate and lobby for an agenda of critical social infrastructure spending.

3. TURNING AMERICA'S GROWING BRAIN DRAIN INTO A SASKATCHEWAN BRAIN GAIN

- The current anti-science agenda and drastic reduction in spending across many research agencies in the USA is creating an American scientific exodus and brain drain of historic proportions.
- Canada and Saskatchewan have a strategic opportunity to benefit from this growing USA brain drain, by opportunistically establishing new R&D attraction programs for highly qualified, global talent to provide a significant and lasting impact to our future economic growth.
- Expedited scientific researcher and engineer/technologist attraction needs to come at the very time, unfortunately, where the provincial government has recently tightened its programs to promote and expedite more immigrant entry. In the current provincial budget landscape, there has also now been a significant reduction in programs to enhance immigrant settlement.
- Global attraction (and especially from the USA) of highly qualified personnel (HQP) should be another high priority in the advocacy programs of all business organizations. HQP strategic attraction and settlement will benefit our world-class research centres like the PTRC, VIDO, the CLS, and across our entire post-secondary sector institutions.
- A business push for the timely attraction and settlement of HQP will also provide an historic boost to the competitiveness of our emerging technology-based enterprises – across all economic sectors.

4. TIME FOR BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS (CBOs) TO WORK CLOSELY TOGETHER

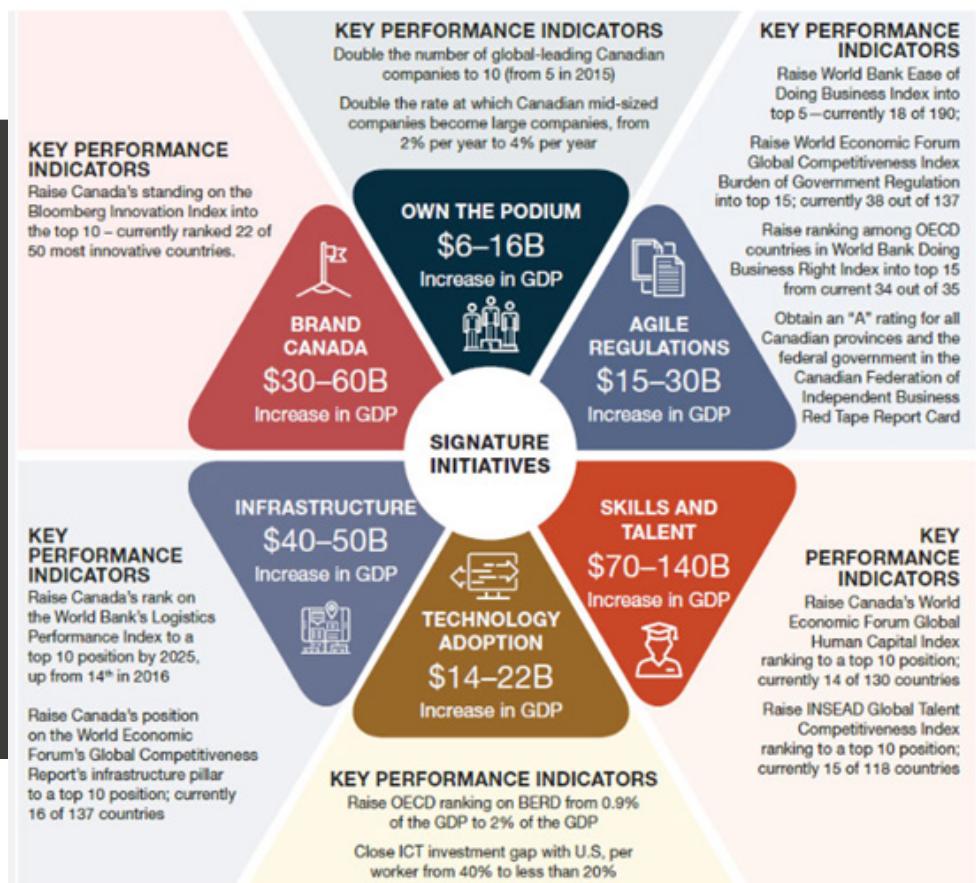
- Our communities all have some excellent Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) doing important work across Saskatchewan by providing essential human and cultural services.

- In many cases, the former budgets and programs that once were part of senior government level spending are now becoming increasingly downloaded and/or devolved to these CBOs. Our community agencies can deliver comparable (or better) public services through a lower-cost wage structure and leaner, more flexible and innovative organizational systems.
- As this devolution continues, our CBOs need the recognition and support of the Saskatchewan business community. They should be welcomed to meet business members, and to also share/ promote their good work to inspire others and solicit greater levels of corporate philanthropy.
- In addition to weakened funding through less government grants, and beyond philanthropy, a “third way” for these CBOs to stay solvent and thrive is by having them add other forms of Social Enterprise for their own-source revenues.
- When CBO-owned small businesses engage with and enhance their own client services as part of these Social Enterprise Models, this becomes “conscious capitalism” at its finest. It is a win-win solution for everyone involved.
- We encourage all local chambers, sector and SME associations, BIDs, and regional economic development agencies to consider ways to better profile and support these fledgling social enterprise models, and to promote and include them as added members within all respective business networks.

SUMMARY

- We urge all business and economic development leaders to not ignore the essential need for a critical balance of effective wealth creation alongside a fair, efficient, and more equitable system of wealth distribution and a compassionate society.
- Critical social infrastructure is directly related to overall economic development and communities where people will want to visit, come, stay, and enjoy a safe, superior quality of life - and not just make money to later take out of the province.
- We urge all our business groups to ask themselves the added questions, *“Economic Development for WHAT? Growth for WHAT?” Do we have a clear understanding of what Saskatchewan can become in the next 10 years?*
- Economic development agencies and local BIDs, in particular, are strongly encouraged to adopt and track a wider range of metrics to measure the overall health of a region, a neighbourhood, or a city. We urge them to use both short-term and localized data, as well as longer-term data sets to conduct higher-level trend analysis (i.e., track the big picture).
- While Saskatchewan’s GDP growth and lower rates of unemployment are impressive compared to many other parts of Canada, business leaders should also be concerned with other social inequities and community dysfunctions such as:
 - One of the highest child poverty rates in Canada.
 - The highest rates of domestic violence in Canada (mostly against women).
 - The equivalent of an entire new town in Saskatchewan composed entirely of the homeless populations in Saskatoon and Regina.

- o An epidemic of emergency drug overdoses - and alarming increase in addictions and poor mental health - that drive so many other social problems.
- o Our dismal distinction as Canada's leader in STD's, death rates from AIDS, violent crime rates, property crime ... and on and on and on.
- Business has an added leadership role to play in addressing these growing challenges or - at the very least – not being oblivious to all these concurrent elements of a less developed and less healthy society, regardless of all the other economic indicators.
- We are all in this together!
- On the other end of the spectrum, Saskatchewan has an opportunity to “seize the moment,” and to capture the best and the brightest in the world who are currently leaving the US research and technical communities in droves. The pro-active and incentivized attraction of Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP) and other top-notch scientists and engineers comes at the most opportunistic time in our history.
- Now is also the time to make some pro-active program adjustments to accelerate the immigration of future citizens that will make an historic infusion of innovative energy and expertise to the Saskatchewan economy.
- Saskatchewan could elevate its place on the global map by being among the first in Canada to aggressively go after the talent that is now part of the American Brain Drain.



This table provides a snapshot of Canada's intentions, but not its results. The current geopolitical framework is ripe with opportunity for Saskatchewan to learn from past federal and other provincial goals, but seize on the best objectives that deliver results for the people it's elected to serve.

Source: Government of Canada (Report from Canada's Economic Strategy Tables: Seizing Opportunities for Growth; September 25, 2018)

9.

**Strategic investing in a world
with rapid climate change**

STRATEGIC INVESTING IN A WORLD WITH RAPID CLIMATE CHANGE

1. INTRODUCTORY PREMISE:

- We encourage business groups to recognize that the “business of business” must encompass a sustainable environment, in addition to economic competitiveness over the shorter term.
- Our province, our cities, and each region function within ecosystems that sustain longer-term economic prosperity.
- Strategic investing in environmental stewardship is both an issue of intergenerational equity for successive generations and increased international competitiveness where most of the world (other than the Trump USA) continues to strive toward a Net Zero Economy.

2. INVESTMENT IN PROPER PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF WATERSHEDS

- With over 40 per cent of Canada’s arable land, Saskatchewan has a critical dependence on water resources. Our two largest river basins of the North and South Saskatchewan Rivers are also critically exposed to declining glacier meltwater in a time of rapidly emerging climate change.
- Sophisticated climate change modeling by meteorology experts – and not rural politicians or people with absolutely no trained expertise in this area – are in almost 100 percent agreement that the forecast across Saskatchewan over the next several decades (and within the lifetime of our grandchildren) will be radically different. There will be combinations of significantly longer and more severe droughts; and/or more extreme rain and storm events that will come significantly more frequently than other patterns from recorded history or expected norms.
- Already in the past decade, Saskatchewan has experienced a prolonged drought cycle, several years of summer crop damage from heat, and the lowest cattle herd (partly due to stressed rangeland) since the 1970’s. The Canada-Saskatchewan Agri-Stability Fund has repeatedly required annual fiscal bail outs to ensure greater income stability for farmers and ranchers to sustain major increases in crop insurance payouts. But this has also contributed heavily toward extensive and continual increases in our annual Saskatchewan budget deficits.
- Drought proofing and watershed management programs require added priority and attention, considering this coming climate change.
- In particular, the need for more regional water conservation, flood damage reduction, aquifer recharge, renewed recreational lake planning, and other water management Regional Plans will be of critical importance.
- The need for more comprehensive and widespread Saskatchewan Watershed Management Planning should be viewed by all Saskatchewan business groups – both urban and rural – as essential to the sustained prosperity of this province. It will and should become *even more critical than other forms of municipal and land use planning*.

- We also urge business organizations, across all sectors, to advocate for a strategic review of Saskatchewan's sustainable water resource management. This should result in a critical Water Technology and Development Fund – not just for a few dozen farmers who will benefit from over a \$1 Billion expansion of government funded irrigation from Lake Diefenbaker - but to all farmers and ranchers, energy producers, tourist operators, and other industrial users of water.

3. REMAINING COMPETITIVE THROUGH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & DEMONSTRABLE GHG MITIGATION MEASURES

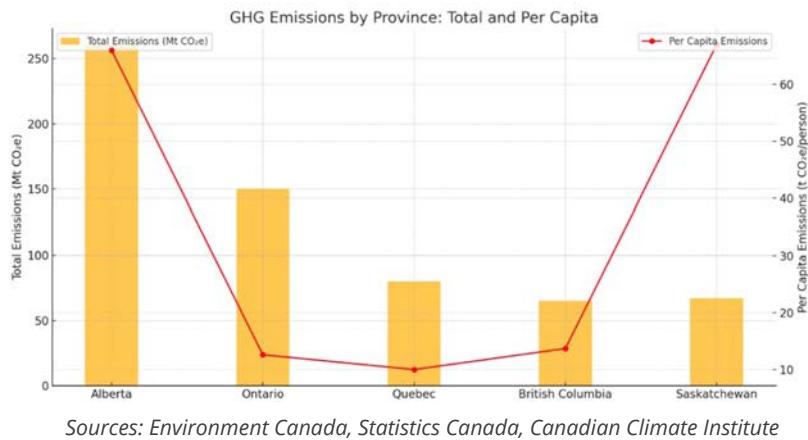
- Saskatchewan and Canada are signatories to global agreements to help mitigate GHG emissions. Smart and evidence-based economies and their leaders must continue best efforts to avoid catastrophic increases in average global temperatures far above the 1.5 degree C goal set as the Paris Agreement Target (and which has already been surpassed).
- Scenarios of a world with average global temperatures rising to 3, 4, or 5 degrees higher – before the end of this Century - predict alarming changes due to an impending series of sudden and dramatic global tipping points.
- Saskatchewan and Canada need to demonstrate their best efforts - not just as a moral obligation to our ancestors – but to be seen as part of a more global trend toward a progressive, regenerative, and “smart economy.”
- With increasing volatility and decreased security of access to the Trump-based economy of the United States, Saskatchewan will need to earn the added respect of the EU, the ASEAN, Japan, and other progressive societies to demonstrate its commitment and competitiveness as part of a world movement toward sustainable development.
- Despite the withdrawal of America from the Paris Agreement, we still need to look more outward and not be captured by all the MAGA rhetoric or the few, but vocal science deniers.
- As the uranium capital of the world, and with vast landscapes for added carbon sequestration, we have so much to gain by a world-wide push toward a Net Zero Economy.
- Saskatchewan also has among the best supply of renewable energy resources in Canada, with among the most solar and wind energy, and abundant geothermal heat stores below us. Thanks to rapidly advancing engineering in improved and large-scale battery storage, the ability to integrate and convert renewable energy alongside our base power supplies of natural gas and industrial co-generation could make Saskatchewan a world leader if it wanted to make this a political priority. Our university research in micro-grid design and operations is also world class.
- With its vast tracts of farmland and boreal forests, Saskatchewan's role in global carbon sequestration is also under- appreciated and under promoted. There are huge opportunities for global investors to take a closer look at Saskatchewan, with various new financing systems and markets that encourage greater carbon sequestration and biodiversity.

4. ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION FUND

- The unfortunate reality is that global efforts at climate change mitigation are not moving fast enough. The greater likelihood – *and economic necessity* - in our lifetime and in the decades ahead will be for building in an ongoing new financial system and programs of climate change adaption.
- Progressive and thoughtful business leaders and organizations are strongly encouraged to advocate for new, dedicated streams of revenue to be *allocated to help our economy adjust to adaptation to these coming, severe challenges*.
- For example, the current Agri-Stability Fund and its incessant top ups for increasing crop insurance payouts, year after year, is a form of climate change adaptation spending. So are our annual budgets to fight northern forest fires.
- But the annual pattern of deficit spending and borrowing from the future, to keep responding to these never-ending climate emergencies, is not good fiscal management.
- Saskatchewan needs to finally construct its own dedicated Climate Change Adaptation Fund as part of its systemic preparation for the future.
- The definition of insanity is to “*keep doing (and deficit spending) the same things over and over again, and then magically hoping for a different (fiscal) result.*” We strongly urge all business and economic leaders to end their general silence on this critical issue.

SUMMARY

- We urge all business and economic development leaders to not ignore the linkages between the “hard” and “soft” side of a prosperous and sustainable future for Saskatchewan people.
- Environmental stewardship directly relates to overall community development and a society where people will want to come, live, visit, stay, and invest.
- We also urge all business groups and political leaders to take the longer-term view.
- Saskatchewan should not succumb to short term prosperity at the expense of a future with prolonged and even more severe droughts, stranded farmland assets, and more frequent and costly natural disasters.
- Our economy also needs to stay competitive for global investor commitment where the rest of the entire world is concerned about a looming climate crisis, despite the current science denial, myopia, and simplistic rhetoric coming from the new US administration.



Marching Forth From Here

Summary
and next steps

----- **SUMMARY, NEXT STEPS, AND MARCHING FORTH FROM HERE**

1. REMINDERS ON THE PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THIS EXERCISE

- Several weeks ago, we began these series of weekly mail outs as strictly a volunteer effort to reach out to the next generation of business leaders and their organizations – simply because we care about the future of our communities and our grandchildren.
- We have attempted to reach out in the spirit of inter-generational mentorship, as a pro bono contribution from three seasoned individuals with a combined total of about 120 years in service to the past economic development of our province.
- We are NOT interested in using this as a pretense for any future consulting work. We wanted to raise awareness and signal our growing alarm with respect to the current economic challenges facing both Saskatchewan and Canada.
- As “elder statesmen” who have seen a lot and who have done a lot - we have been through a lot of difficult business cycles - including other times almost as critical as these. But now we are alarmed by the current crossroads where we now stand as a country, as a province, and in our regions and cities.
- We are not trying “to preach” or “to beseech”. We simply wish to offer some advice, based on some thought leadership derived from all our accumulated corporate memories, and through provision of additional documentation, added research, and our collective ideation
- The purpose of our “*March Forth Initiative*” has been to:
 - provide you and your business group with some insights and added suggestions for an urgent Advocacy Agenda for the Saskatchewan business community to elevate and echo across all levels of government; and
 - with great respect, to provide some added suggestions for a D.I.Y. Agenda (Do-It-Yourself) for the added and direct engagement of business groups, themselves, to take charge of the future of their own grassroots members.

2. THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

- A series of nine previous “Idea Sets” have been sent to over 32 different business groups across all economic sectors, major cities, major policy and business lobbying groups, and to various business neighbourhoods in Saskatchewan. (See Appendix A as a reminder).
- These weekly mail outs began in early March 2025.
- The title of our initiative as *March Forth* was a play on words linked to the initial date of March 4, 2025, when U.S. President Donald Trump was initially going to hit Canada with some sweeping tariffs across all goods, in revocation of the existing CUSMA Agreement and by potentially ending our critical and longstanding trading relationships.

- Using Donald Trump's exact words, these tariffs imposed upon Canada "*could be a way to make our country America's 51st state through economic force*", and "*America no longer needs anything from Canada*".
- In the last few months some of these threats have been suspended, and with some continued relief for goods and services still grandfathered (at least for now) under the former Canada-USA-Mexico Agreement negotiated in Trump's first term.
- In other sectors - notably in the auto, steel, and aluminum industries - the threat of 25 percent tariff shocks has been carried out, along with corresponding counter tariffs imposed by Canada on similar US imports.
- Canada, Mexico, and much of the world are still dealing with considerable economic uncertainties, pending any future re-negotiation or definitive conclusion to this new era of American protectionism. We may be forced to compete in this chaotic and unpredictable trading relationship throughout all the next four years, and perhaps longer.
- To add insult to this American injury, Saskatchewan has been impacted by a double whammy of added 100 percent tariffs on our canola oil exports going to China, as well as added Chinese tariffs on our pork products.
- Alarm bells have been ringing as Saskatchewan has been caught in a vice grip between the two largest markets on the planet

3. THE BIGGER AND LONG-FESTERING CHALLENGES

- Even before the erection of new walls of American and Chinese tariffs, Canada and to a somewhat lesser extent, Saskatchewan, were already ill-prepared to deal with an uncertain and disruptive global economy.
- Over more than a decade, we have seen our overall economic productivity decline - with Canada now having the dubious distinction as the nation with the lowest growth rate in GDP per capita *in the entire industrialized world*.
- We have masked this decline in real productivity with a massive surge in population and immigration, without any commensurate adjustments to housing supply or all the other essential settlement services and programs. (i.e., We have been fooling ourselves through a series of incomplete or deceptive economic metrics).
- At the same time, the growth of hiring in the public service in Ottawa has increased by 43 percent in the last ten years.
- In *both* Saskatchewan and Canada, our annual deficits have skyrocketed with no prospect of balanced budgets in the foreseeable future. We have decided to burden our children and grandchildren by just passing on the continuing fiscal shortfalls, along with their future burdens of having to pay for a costly, aging population.

- There have been many other long-fester challenges and signs of abysmal decline in the Canadian economy:
 - Still there is no access to tidewater for natural gas exports, and there have been no new pipelines and or limited exports of our other abundant energy resources to markets other than the USA, for the last many years.
 - The continuation of ridiculous barriers to internal trade, commerce, and labour market mobility inside a common Canadian market.
 - Slow progress in alternative trade diversification or optimizing all our many other formalized trading agreements with other nations beyond the USA.
 - Canada as having one of the least competitive tax climates for corporate investment in the world, along with comparatively low rates of entrepreneurial start-ups, scale ups, competitive benchmarking, technology transfer, and other measures of innovation.
- Closer to home, in our Saskatchewan communities, we have seen similar, disturbing trends:
 - Tepid progress in import replacement and enhanced, local supply chain development.
 - Some of the slowest, most expensive, and/or most opaque processes for business permitting and commercial land development in all of Canada.
 - The greatest number of local governments – on a per capita basis – in all of Canada, along with one of the most antiquated and inflexible systems of land use planning, municipal assessment, and alternative instruments for municipal financing in the entire country.
 - Dystopian downtowns and neighbourhoods due to the incredible rise in homelessness, addictions, and drug-related crimes, deaths, child poverty, and family violence. We have a long and sad list of some of the worst indicators of community and mental health in all of Canada.
 - Despite the incessant and obvious signs of global climate change, we see weak preparation for necessary adaptation to our water management, Agri-stability, infrastructure, and other structural adjustments beyond annual crisis management.

4. WE NEED A WAKE UP CALL

- To repeat, the current Trump-induced crisis is only the latest shock in a long series of slow atrophy and socio-economic decline.
- As three seasoned veterans who have dedicated a combined total of over 120 years to the economic development of this province, we felt compelled to speak out.
- The current Trump-induced crisis is only the latest shock in a long series of slow atrophy and socio-economic decline.
- In many ways, the Trump protectionism gave Canada and Saskatchewan a necessary jolt and an essential “wake up call” to also respond to all these other issues and challenges.
- *Our thesis is that we now have an added crisis that is “too good to waste”. The era of economic languishing and over-reliance on the U.S. economy has got to stop.*
- Coupled with a massive restructuring and essential adjustment to a more protectionist global economy, we also have an opportunity to “press the reset button” with a new government in Ottawa and a renewed hope to, as Prime Minister Carney said on his election night, “*build, baby, build.*”

- Coupled with a massive restructuring and essential adjustment to a more protectionist global economy, we also have an opportunity to “press the reset button” with a new government in Ottawa and a renewed hope to, as Prime Minister Carney said on his election night, *“build, baby, build.”*
- This spirit of urgent renewal must not be confined to new governments, or new forms of intergovernmental cooperation. It is also time to have all business groups and associations demonstrate more leadership and agency - *at the grassroots level* - and not just leave it all to politics.
- While everyone is always “busy” and conducts lots of “good activities”, this is also a time for all hands on deck to focus on the most important and critical – and to work smarter and not just harder on the same old ways and means of running a business organization.
- *Therefore, in summary, our second thesis is that it is time for added agency in also making strategic things happen at the grassroots, level as well.*

5. FROM POLICY PAPERS TO A NEW MANUAL AND A CONSOLIDATED “GRANDFATHER’S MANIFESTO” FOR ECONOMIC RENEWAL

- Following upon our last nine Idea Sets, we would like to spark and catalyze a new generation of leadership within the business community, itself.
- Our next step will be to consolidate all that we have put together into a Manual for future consideration in accelerating economic development and the socio-economic renewal of Canada, Saskatchewan, our cities, our regions, and every local business community.
- We intend to expand our “thought leadership” to the political and public (media) arenas.
- We also believe that we have now produced a “Grandfather’s Manifesto” to wake up Canada and to take our business and political leadership in Saskatchewan to the next level.
- Finally, we also believe that our older generation and the future of our entire country are both “running out of time”. We need a greater sense of urgency – not out of desperation or despair – but out of greater resolve and renewed determination.
- We also need not be so parochial or myopic – the world is changing fast – and all around us.
- We owe this to our ancestors.

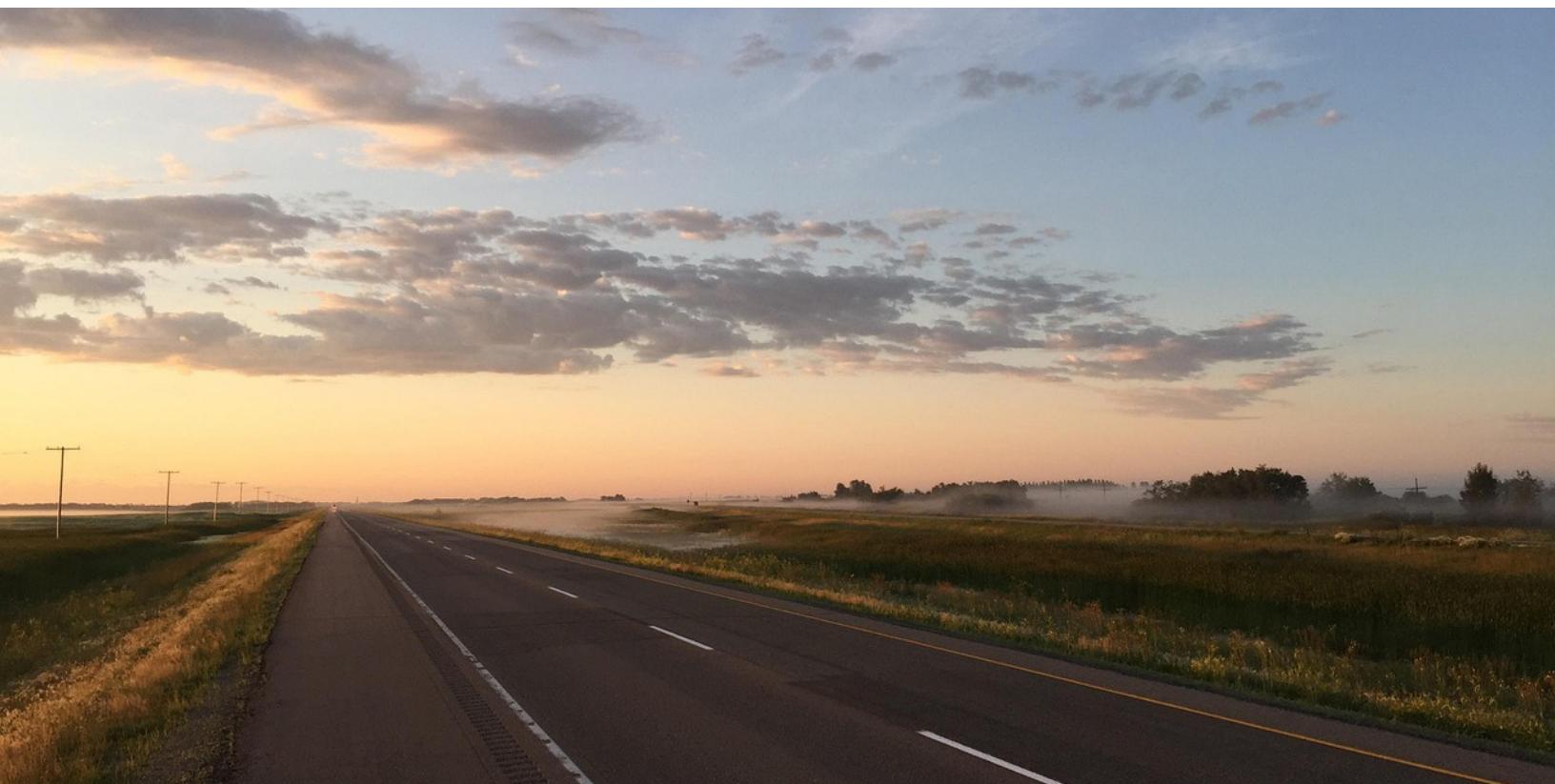
6. OUR PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

- If you share in this sense of urgency and intergenerational equity, we need to keep on talking together – even if it’s only for a few minutes over coffee or in just a half-hour conversation.
- We would like to continue our dialogue with you in the following ways - and all on an entirely pro bono basis, of course:
 - We offer ourselves and our ideas as provocateurs and guest speakers to your management team, to your board chair, and at your full board meetings.
 - We offer ourselves and our ideas as added speakers to your future gatherings or conferences across your full grassroots memberships.

- o We invite you to stay tuned for receipt of a subsequent published booklet on this future Manual for Economic Development, as our gift to the next generation of EDO's, Chamber CEO's, business and tax policy lobbyists, and other association executives.
- o Most of all, we invite you to share our passion for a better future for Saskatchewan and Canada – with the same sense of urgency as we have.

7. WE INVITE YOU MARCH FORTH ON THE FOLLOWING ISSUES:

1. Accelerate & Secure Trade Through More Diversity & Grassroots Effort
2. Strategies for Import Replacement, Alternative Sourcing, & Rapidly Enhanced Supplier Development
3. Strategies and Tactics for Expedited Permitting & 21st Century Regulatory Reform
4. Strategic Investing for Economic Abundance: Wake Up & Build the Opportunities
5. Urgent Tax Reform for Enhanced Global Competitiveness & Fiscal Stability
6. The Need to Pay More Attention to the "3 P's": Productivity, Productivity, Productivity
7. Modernizing Municipal Assessment & Finance
8. Strategic Investing in Human Services & Talent Attraction
9. Strategic Investing in a World of Rapid Climate Change



Appendix

March Forth
supporting
documentation

APPENDIX A: MARCH FORTH TEAM BIOGRAPHIES



DALE BOTTING

In a C-Suite career spanning over 40 years, Dale has been a leader of over seven different organizations, varying widely from business advocacy to science-based enterprises, to international trade, to non-profit human services, to deputy minister in Government. He was known as “the turn around guy” and was frequently cited as one of the most influential leaders in his region in Canada.

In 2010 Dale established his own business in a coaching and leadership development firm, Botting Leadership Inc. Dale’s company has served literally hundreds of organizations and executives across North America in small business, industry, indigenous, non-profit, and university communities. Along the way Dale was recognized by his peers as the Business Coach of the Year for all of Western North America in 2016 and was the first inductee into the Canadian Business Coaches Hall of Fame in 2022. His early career was launched through foundational degrees and numerous academic awards in Biology, Ecology, Environmental Geography, and Education. So, in addition to a passion for organizational leadership, Dale has held a lifelong passion for science and as a naturalist and teacher.



RICHARD JANKOWSKI

Richard has 35 years of private sector experience acquired from four industries (commercial real estate; construction and development; food manufacturing; agri-value). He spent the past 18 years as the provincial Managing Director for Canada’s two, and only, full-service commercial real estate firms, Colliers and Avison Young. Prior to real estate, he led the design and start-up of the first-ever gluten-free oat milling facility as the Chief Operating Officer of FarmPure Foods and as the head of the Asset Management team at Saskatchewan Wheat Pool (Viterra), he led a team of 250 staff in the prairie region, chairing the site selection and design teams for its inland terminal expansion program. He owns and manages a commercial real portfolio in Saskatchewan that he’s acquired through private equity syndication.

Richard’s educational background includes a master’s in project management from the U of S (Edwards School of Business in collaboration with York & Schulich) and programs from UBC, U of C and Ivey School of Business. His main philanthropy initiatives include serving as Board Chair of CNIB, and board member and gala chair of Alzheimer’s Society of Saskatchewan.

APPENDIX A (CONTINUED)



ALAN WALLACE, RPP MCIP

Alan is currently the Planning Director with Wallace Insights in Saskatoon. In this role, he is responsible for leading the planning and development activities for a large list of clients in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Prior to this role, Alan was the Director of the Planning and Development at the City of Saskatoon. He left the City in 2016 to join the private sector after 32 years of service. Alan was the Planning Lead for Saskatchewan with V3 Companies of Canada Ltd. until 2020. Alan's passion for community planning, regulatory compliance and long-term vision has been a mainstay of his professional career.

Alan is a U of S lecturer, the Past-President of the Saskatchewan Professional Planners Institute, Board Member Emeritus with Jubilee Residences, Foundation Board Member with Jubilee Residences, and Volunteer Co-ordinator with Janes Walk Saskatoon. Alan volunteers as a mentor to young planners in both Alberta and Saskatchewan. Alan is also a volunteer assessor for the Professional Standards Board of the Canadian Institute of Planners.

Alan is a contributor of opinion articles to the Star-Phoenix and is frequently a guest on CBC morning radio and other media outlets.

APPENDIX B: LIST OF BUSINESS AND ADVOCACY GROUPS THAT WE ASKED TO MARCH FORTH

1. Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership (STEP)
2. Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority (SREDA Inc.)
3. Saskatchewan Economic Development Alliance (SEDA)
4. Saskatchewan Industry and Mining Suppliers Association (SIMSA)
5. Saskatchewan Mining Association (SMA)
6. Tourism Saskatchewan
7. Saskatchewan Construction Association (SCA)
8. Association of Consulting Engineers of Canada – ACEC Saskatchewan
9. Saskatchewan Realtors Association (SRA)
10. Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA)
11. Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce
12. Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce
13. North Saskatoon Business Association (NSBA)
14. Regina Chamber of Commerce
15. Economic Development Regina
16. Saskatoon Downtown YXE
17. Riversdale B.I.D.
18. Broadway B.I.D.
19. Sutherland B.I.D.
20. 33rd St. B.I.D.
21. Regina Downtown B.I.D.
22. Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters – CME Saskatchewan Chapter
23. Saskatchewan Food Processors Association (SFPA)
24. Agricultural Manufacturers
25. Canadian Federation of Independent Business – Saskatchewan Office
26. Frontier Centre for Public Policy
27. Canadian Taxpayers Association – Saskatchewan Office
28. Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS)
29. A.I. Saskatchewan (ASK)
30. Saskatchewan Indigenous Economic Development Network (SIEDN)
31. Saskatchewan's Indigenous Chamber of Commerce
32. Saskatchewan Professional Planners Institute (SPPI)

APPENDIX C: SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC GRASSROOTS PROGRAMMING IDEAS FOR EDO'S AND BUSINESS ASSOCIATION CEO'S

1. **Enhance Economic Trade Literacy for Your Members** – invite guest presentations from Custom Houses/Brokers and F.I.T.T. (Forum for International Trades Training).
2. **“Work” your “Sister City” or “Sister Province” MOU’s** – to help diversify and penetrate other foreign markets. Encourage more goodwill twinning agreements.
3. **“Work” Your Business Diasporas Now Operating “In-Market” Around the World** – Create, coordinate, and cultivate your business alumni networks – they can be great sources of trade lead generation, investment attraction, and alternative supply chain linkages. Create sector and/or regional ambassador clubs.
4. **“Work” your local ethnic and immigrant communities** - to identify and cultivate the international trade and investment linkages that may be waiting to stimulate the local neighbourhood or region.
5. **“Work” Your Alumni/Business Diasporas as Boosters for Your City to Other Cities in Canada and Saskatchewan, or Even Across City Neighbourhoods** – goodwill tours, promo events, etc. Create sector and/or regional ambassador clubs.
6. **Lead Your Own Inter-Provincial Trade Missions** – organize your business association or regional network to go on interprovincial trade missions inside Canada.
7. **Create Your Own Association “Economic Renewal and Familiarization Tours”** – take Sask. businesses to see the Port of Churchill opportunities, Nunavut or NWT promo tours for Saskatoon as an alternative Gateway to the North, etc. – or – just take your Members to showcase nearby First Nation amenities and advantages (e.g. Whitecap Dakota Industrial Park, Muskeg Lake recreation areas, etc.).
8. **Assist Your Grassroots Members with Alternative Import Sourcing** – beyond the USA. Invite supply chain guest speakers to your member meetings and/or other import sourcing experts aware of alternative market linkages.
9. **Organize/Host/Promote Reverse Trade Shows** – get current purchasers to display what they are currently purchasing from the USA or offshore, and then promote alternative product design, production, and sales from within the core capacities of local businesses.

APPENDIX C (CONTINUED)

10. **Create Quality/Accurate “Buy Local” Guides** – Buy Local and Buy Canadian is not obvious, or even accurate, if it involves various Rules of Origin and multiple and confusing steps in the overall production process.
11. **Train or Promote Business Competitiveness through Fostering or Connecting to Various Grassroots Buying Groups or Joint Marketing Consortia.**
12. **Insist that Larger Resource Companies, Crowns, and Governments and Institutions (at all levels) Be More Transparent and Accurate on Real Supplier Development and Social/Local Procurement Metrics** – show us the beef and the *real* KPI's, beyond the general PR messaging! This includes more transparency and accountability from University, SHA, City Hall, etc.
13. **Promote and Encourage More City, Town and RM Partnerships for Co-Management and Co-Investment with Regional First Nations** – in education, municipal infrastructure and shared maintenance, recreation facilities, etc.
14. **Build Entire Member Education Programs/Training on an Urgent Need to Enhance Business Productivity** – in AI Applications, Six Sigma/LEAN, 3D printing and iOT revolutions, comparative sector/inter-regional benchmarking of productivity best practices, better competitive intelligence (C.I.) methodologies, tech transfer/tech diffusion, and IP access from nearby research institutes, universities and other post-secondary institutes/colleges, etc.
15. **Partner with Local CBO's On Attacking Homelessness and Addictions Issue** – it is becoming a dystopia!
16. **Profile/Promote Your Community Charitable Non-Profit Community, and Welcome More Social Enterprises into Your Business Community.**
17. **Create Community/Business “Welcome Wagons” to Help Settle Families of International HQP** – i.e., foster and work with universities and research centres to foster the best talent attraction in the world of scientists and engineers to help build our international profile and brand.
18. **Provide More Business-to-Business Member Education on Economic Tools, Technology, and Value Proposition to Enter the Net Zero Economy, and to Prepare AND to Respond to Increasing Climate Change Crises and Emergency Responses** – e.g., see SEDA Guidelines and Toolkits.

APPENDIX D: SUMMARY OF POLICY IDEAS FOR ECONOMIC RENEWAL THROUGH LEADERSHIP BY THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

1. **Diversify Trade** – with more promotions and activities under the existing 15 free trade agreements that Canada also has with 51 other countries, and which would optimize all our other trading relationships beyond the CUSMA that is currently under attack.
2. **Strategically work to offer alternative international Trade Agreements and formalized global trading partners with those currently trading with the USA.** Canada can better target and offer ourselves as “the” preferred North American alternative to exports from the USA, and Canada needs to be promoted as a more stable trading partner to redirect global trading patterns and linkages.
3. **Enhance the competitiveness of Canada as an “entrepreneurial trading culture”** – by providing greater support and awareness of the Forum for International Trades Training (F.I.T.T.) and by encouraging more CITP status among civil servants and business organizations.
4. **Expand Export Development Canada services and partnerships** – across all provinces, regions, and grassroots business organizations. They are an under-appreciated and key agency at this critical time.
5. **Fast track a landmark, new, comprehensive Internal Trade Agreement across Canada** – to create one common market and not 13 balkanized and non-harmonized trading and labour market environments.
6. **Enhance federal programs and support services to urgently help business find alternative global sourcing and import replacement** - away from over reliance on the increasingly erratic and unreliable US supply chains.
7. **Promote and enhance partnerships across Canada with the Supply Chain Canada Association.**
8. **Encourage Industry Development Canada to expand programs to assist Canadian businesses to shift core capacity to Made-in-Canada product design** and substitution to displace over-reliance on the unstable American market.
9. **More rigorously establish and track Canadian government and Crown Corporation metrics to demonstrate “Buy Canada” outcomes, more Social/Local Procurement, and increased Supplier Development Programs** for Canadian SMEs across all agencies and crowns.

APPENDIX D (CONTINUED)

10. **Review Prompt Pay Policies and expedited cash flows to all suppliers of government agencies and Crowns, and all regulated federal industries.**
11. **Fast track, coordinate, and consolidate major project permitting and strategic corridor development** - with expedited approvals to be coordinated across all levels of government (including FN cooperation). It is time to stop wading through all the layers of regulatory mud.
12. **Enhance and rapidly expedite tidewater access for all critical mineral and energy exports across Canada.**
13. **Recognize and establish the Port of Churchill as the next, most strategic port development in the modern history of Canada.**
14. **Expand oil pipeline capacities to reallocate transport away from oil pipelines** - and to optimize rail movement for the enhanced export of food, fertilizer, and other export goods.
15. **Establish a new, clean energy National Electrical Grid as another Nation-Building Project in the modern economic history of Canada** – we should at least have more interprovincial tie lines and electrical energy sales than we currently have, instead, with the northern US states.
16. **Establish a DARPA-like Canadian agency (like the American Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency)** - to accelerate the development and technology transfer of emerging defense technologies, and procurement spending, across all regions of Canada.
17. **Adopt the Estonian/ “Big Bang” approach to Corporate Income Tax reform** - to facilitate a radical boost to Canadian investment attraction and the reinvestment of retained earnings by all enterprises in Canada.
18. **Work with and incentivize all the remaining Provinces to establish a Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) or national VAT** – to reduce the business cost of exports, reduce SME red tape and overlapping compliance costs, and rebalance the overall revenue strategies of governments.
19. **Broaden and lower overall tax bases** – through an aggressive review of current loopholes and outdated tax expenditures. Less gimmicks and more tax simplification to capture greater tax compliance and reduce inequitable levels of corporate welfare and “politicized” carve outs.

APPENDIX D (CONTINUED)

20. **Optimize capital gains taxation to reward entrepreneurs, especially SMEs**, after a lifetime of risk and the need to reward their growth of active business capital.
21. **Create a major new Agency and series of educational programs and incentives, which could be called “Productivity Canada.”** We need accelerated focus on LEAN/Six Sigma applications across all sectors, more comparative benchmarking (at a global level) across all sectors, greater skills in competitive intelligence by SMEs, and rapidly enhanced business process reforms.
22. **Working with the new Minister of AI and the Digital Economy, we must rapidly “get out-front” of the AI Revolution.** We must promote far greater awareness of the greater productivity – and the potential threats - of an unregulated and/or lagging AI-based economy.
23. **We also need to fast track the competitive adaptation of Advanced Manufacturing/3D Printing, the iOT (Internet of Things), and far greater effectiveness of IP generation and technology transfer from all Canadian Post-Secondary and Government Research Institutions.**
24. **We urgently need to create “emergency” Business/Canda Government Partnerships in addressing the growing dystopia of homelessness and addictions** – there is a much stronger role for the Government of Canada to accelerate the availability of housing as a basic human right, and to promote “scattered housing models” of sheltering the homelessness in partnership with business landlords, CBOs, and with employers to promote rehiring and re-employment of rehabilitated and homeless persons.
25. **This is an opportune time for Canada to fast track the selective entry and immigration of Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP)** from the leading-edge scientific and engineering global workforce, and especially, to capture the biggest brain drain from the USA in modern history, as coming out of the anti-science Trump administration.
26. **A smart, progressive Government of Canada should also accelerate Social Finance and Social Enterprise programs and promotions across all Community Based Organizations in Canada**, and to promote stronger partnerships between business and non-profits providing essential human, cultural, and environmental services. (E.g. – social impact bond financing/SIBs, increased tax incentives for family office investing, added tax incentives for B Corps, etc.). We need to create an enlightened “Age of Conscious Capitalism.”

APPENDIX D (CONTINUED)

27. **Canada MUST accelerate its efforts at Climate Change Adaptation, including the development of a new, sustained “Climate Change Adaptation Fund”** – that could be dedicated to such needed areas as improved watershed management, coastal erosion management, preventative fire protection programs, etc. This new climate change adaptation fund should also enhance emergency management services and equipment, in partnership with the provinces, to address the logarithmic explosion of all the many anticipated and climate-caused emergencies. A new Canada Climate Change Adaptation Fund could also finance a new **“Youth Climate Adaptation Corp”** of youth and other volunteered services to commit to 1-2 years of dedicated service on various climate change mitigation, emergency, or adaptation project development across every region of Canada.
28. **Canada must demonstrate continued efforts toward a sustainable, net-zero economy - and adhere to global standards and expectations of enhanced biodiversity or ecological remediation.** Our competitiveness with progressive export markets like the E.U., Japan, and even China other Asian partners will all demand that we consider these energy and biodiversity transitions as essential to our economic competitiveness, despite the current disinterest in the current US administration. **We can NOT let up – and we must demonstrate more genuine progress.**
29. **Have the Government of Canada expand its role in Indigenous Economic and Community Development – through leadership of Indigenous Services Canada, the Department of Defense, Prairies Canada, and other federal agencies.** Strategic projects could include the following:
 - (a) **New partnership incentives for First Nation communities and nearby Non-Indigenous/Settler Municipalities to jointly plan, deliver and invest in shared use facilities** - for community recreation, municipal services, and other joint use development. This could generate fiscally efficient and win/win solutions to better unify and enhance regional inclusion and creative new partnerships across Canada.

APPENDIX D (CONTINUED)

- (b) **Provide an added focus on defense spending to expand the Industrial Regional Benefits Program (IDRP) through enriched offsets and procurement incentives that encourage participation of qualified Indigenous Defense Contractors.** In recent years there has been an explosion of Indigenous Economic Development Corporations with assets and businesses that could be retooled and redirected to also help meet the demands of the announced growth of Canada's Defense budgets. In Saskatchewan alone, we now have numerous Indigenous-owned enterprises in metal machining, metal fabricating, IT, advanced instrumentation, and other manufacturing and services to help meet the current goal as set out by our new Prime Minister.
- (c) **Also, in relation to National Defense, and through other interests, provide added procurement incentives for Defense Contractors and other industries to partner with our Indigenous Post-Secondary Training and Research Institutions** (e.g. First Nations University of Canada - FNUC, the Saskatchewan Indigenous Institute of Technology - SIIT, etc.).
- (d) **As a special carve out or sub-envelope of a new Canada Climate Change Adaptation Fund, also expand local First Nation preparedness and response to growing climate emergencies and preventative investments** in more community firebreaks, forest fuel removal, flood control, cooling stations, rezoning, or other strategic investments.

APPENDIX E: SUMMARY OF POLICY IDEAS FOR ECONOMIC RENEWAL THROUGH THE LEADERSHIP OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

1. **Optimize and Diversify Trade** – work through STEP to ensure more promotions and activities under the *existing* 15 Canada Trade Agreements, with 51 other countries, beyond the CUSMA that is currently under attack.
2. **Aside from global trade missions and reaching out, Saskatchewan could do a much better job of “working its own local immigrant diasporas.”** There may be some amazing contacts and global trade leads in there, just waiting to be tapped. We need more concerted and systematic programs to cultivate these relationships that may be right under our noses.
3. **Enhance the competitiveness of Saskatchewan as an “entrepreneurial trading culture”** – by providing greater support and awareness of the Forum for International Trades Training (F.I.T.T.) and by encouraging more Certified International Trade Professional status (C.I.T.P. designation) among civil servants and Saskatchewan business organizations.
4. **Expand Export Development Canada services and partnerships** – with creative new financial partnerships in Saskatchewan, and with stronger co-promotion across all grassroots Saskatchewan business organizations. EDC is an under-appreciated and key agency at this critical time.
5. **Fast track a landmark, new, comprehensive Internal Trade Agreement across Canada** – to create one common market and not 13 balkanized and non-harmonized trading and labour market environments. Saskatchewan lags far behind other provinces like Quebec, Ontario, and New Brunswick in introducing formal legislation and more rapidly dismantling its own barriers. We need more than MOUs.
6. **Enhance Saskatchewan government and STEP programs and resources to accelerate alternative global sourcing and import replacement** - away from over reliance on unreliable US supply chains.
7. **Promote and enhance partnerships in Saskatchewan with SIMSA and the Supply Chain Canada Association.** We need a lot more transparent, genuine, and *effective* Supplier Development.

APPENDIX E (CONTINUED)

8. **Encourage Saskatchewan Trade and Investment to expand programs that can assist our local businesses to shift core capacity to Made-in-Canada product design and product substitutions** to displace over-reliance on the unstable American market. We need to double down our collective efforts to transform the core capacities of local manufacturers to replace this over reliance.
9. **More rigorously establish and track clear and transparent metrics to demonstrate “Buy Saskatchewan” outcomes, more Social/Local Procurement, and increased Supplier Development Programs** for SMEs selling to all government agencies and Saskatchewan crowns. The Saskatchewan Government could also increase pressure for accelerated supplier development among all other major private corporations, universities, colleges and Sask Polytech, the health sector, and the industrial resource sectors.
10. **Review Prompt Pay Policies and expedited cash flows to all suppliers of government agencies and Crowns.** This should also include added pressure by the Sask. government in this regard, to be put on all the industrial resource sectors, local governments, and the MUSH (municipal, university, schools, and health) sectors.
11. **Fast track, coordinate, and consolidate major project permitting and strategic corridor development** - with expedited approvals to be combined across all levels of government (including FN cooperation). It is time to stop wading through all the layers of “regulatory mud.” Saskatchewan should also work with the municipal governments and First Nations to assist with the design and encouragement of “Free Enterprise Zones” for more fast-tracked investment attraction.
12. **Saskatoon has immense opportunities to capitalize around the planned Saskatoon Bypass, and partner with the CN railyards to build a parallel inland container and exporting port, similar to Regina’s Global Transportation Hub** (but assembled in a far different manner, and with much stronger business-government partnerships). If Canada seizes the greater opportunities at the Port of Churchill, a Saskatoon Inland Terminal could be an excellent adjunct to this nation-building project.
13. **The airports at Saskatoon and Regina have much greater opportunities for expanded industrial and commercial park development, and to create stronger linkages between air freight and road and rail transportation.**

APPENDIX E (CONTINUED)

14. **Beyond being so heavily linked to Alberta, there are opportunities to generate an alternative economic region and partnerships to form greater trade, investment, and innovation linkages under the brand of "Sask-a- atoba."** Linkages to a renewed Port of Churchill would give Saskatchewan the closest thing to its own tidewater. Other linkages and "Sask-a-toba Partnerships" need to be optimized with respect to world class health research, farm equipment manufacturing, transportation, renewable energy partnerships, co-promotion of prairie tourism, and other sectors.
15. **To further stimulate a future economy that may be stressed with heavy tariffs and counter tariffs, now may be an opportune time to also invest in upgrading other rural infrastructure, which is also badly in need of modernization** – in rural roads, bridges, culverts, and drainage systems, etc. It would also be a strategic spending stimulus for more distributed rural development.
16. **Saskatchewan needs to prioritize the defense, advanced electronics, and the aerospace industry to get more than its fair share of the expected growth of Canadian military spending** to reach the new 2% GDP target. Through increased Indigenous partnerships, like with SIIT and other Indigenous Economic Development Corps, we can build on our unique regional advantages under the IRDP Off-Set Programs.
17. **Since our Provincial Sales Tax base has been broadened, now is the opportune time to finally complete the process of Sales Tax Harmonization** - as attained in most other Canadian provinces that still use the sales tax.
18. **Broaden and lower overall tax bases** – through an aggressive review of current loopholes and outdated tax expenditures. Less gimmicks and more tax simplification to capture greater tax compliance and reduce inequitable levels of corporate welfare and political carve outs.
19. **Stabilize the management of Saskatchewan budgets through elimination of windfall resource wealth without commensurate and fair taxation to ensure a fair return of our potash resource development** – i.e., we need to stop the \$billion giveaways and stop the squandering of our non-renewal wealth potential.
20. **Amend the Saskatchewan Planning and Development Act** – to be less of a blunt, one-municipality-fits-all type of instrument and allow more flexibility for alternative models of local and regional land use planning.

APPENDIX E (CONTINUED)

21. **Encourage more Saskatchewan regulatory agencies to replace the old style Command and Control Approach** – i.e., we need to stop and replace lengthy permitting cycles with more modern approaches to pre-approved Codes of Practice; and to replace slow permitting with post-approval monitoring and appropriate penalties for later non-compliance.
22. **Encourage Innovation Saskatchewan to also develop programs and business education to greatly enhance our corporate productivity gap** – through accelerated focus on LEAN/Six Sigma applications across all sectors, more comparative benchmarking (at a global level) across all sectors, tools and techniques for Competitive Intelligence to support our corporate sectors, and rapidly enhanced business process reforms. We must promote far greater awareness of the greater productivity of a rapidly emerging AI-based economy, advanced manufacturing/3D Printing, the IoT (Internet of Things), and far greater effectiveness of IP generation and technology transfer from all Saskatchewan Post-Secondary and Research Institutions.
23. **Review the tremendous and antiquated burden of over 700 distinct types and forms of local government across rural Saskatchewan** - and instill and incentivize innovative approaches toward more inter-municipal coordination and regional cooperation in more strategic planning and more cost-effective/shared delivery of services.
24. **Modernize and reduce the unresponsive and unrepresentative, four-year revaluation processes still used by SAMA (the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency)** – including the modernization of its outdated data bases and antiquated systems. This must include great accommodation for special-purpose industrial and transitional properties like innovation hubs, enterprise zones, brownfield redevelopments, etc.
25. **Urgently review and modernize the Saskatchewan Cities and Municipalities Acts to explore alternative approaches and relieve the restrictive pressures on municipal fiscal management** - and to take the burden off a regressive property-base tax and alleviate the system of major upfront/development fees that combine to create increasing pressures on SMEs and stymies future land use development.
26. **Intensify efforts and creativity to address the growing urban dystopias of homelessness and addictions** – including more direct payments to landlords rather than the addicted persons, more and diversified addiction rehabilitation and recovery sites and services, distributed forms of shelter beyond concentrated and large-scale clusters, and incentives for businesses to work with treatment programs and CBOs to encourage rehiring of the homeless and the addicted.

APPENDIX E (CONTINUED)

27. **This is an opportune time for Saskatchewan to reopen and fast track the selective entry and immigration of Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP)** from the leading-edge scientific and engineering global workforce, and especially, to capture the biggest “brain drain” from the USA in modern history, as coming out of the anti-science Trump administration.
28. **A smart, progressive Government of Saskatchewan should also accelerate Social Finance and Social Enterprise programs and promotions across all Community Based Organizations in the Province** - and promote stronger partnerships between business and non-profits providing essential human, cultural, and environmental services. (E.g. – Social Impact Bond financing/SIBs, increased tax incentives for family office investing, added tax incentives for B Corps, etc.). We need to create an enlightened Age of Conscious Capitalism.
29. **Saskatchewan MUST accelerate its efforts at Climate Change Adaptation, including the development of a new, sustained “Climate Change Adaptation Fund”** – that could be dedicated to such needed areas as improved watershed management, predictable and enhanced forms of crop insurance for reliable budgeting of agri-stability through permanent droughts, more preventative Fire Protection Programs, etc. This new Climate Change Adaptation Fund should also enhance Emergency Management Services and Equipment to address the logarithmic explosion of all the many anticipated and climate-caused emergencies.
30. **Saskatchewan must demonstrate continued efforts toward a sustainable, Net-Zero Economy - and adhere to global standards and expectations of enhanced biodiversity or ecological remediation.** Our competitiveness with progressive export markets like the E.U., Japan, and even China other Asian partners will all demand that we consider these energy and biodiversity transitions as essential to our economic competitiveness, despite the current disinterest in the current US administration. **We can NOT let up – and we must demonstrate more genuine progress to stop being among the highest per capita emitters of Green House Gases (GHGs) in the entire planet.** (Largely because we continue to extend the burning of low BTU Lignite coal, unlike other competitive jurisdictions).

APPENDIX F: SUMMARY OF POLICY IDEAS FOR ECONOMIC RENEWAL THROUGH THE LEADERSHIP OF ALL MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS IN SASKATCHEWAN

1. **“Work” your “Sister City” MOU’s** – to help diversify and penetrate other foreign markets. Encourage more goodwill twinning agreements.
2. **“Work” Your Alumni/Business Diasporas as Boosters for Your City to Other Cities in Canada and Saskatchewan, or Even Across City Neighbourhoods** – goodwill tours, promo events, etc. Create sector and/or regional Ambassador Clubs.
3. **Lead Your Own Inter-Provincial and Intra-Provincial Trade Missions** – participate with your business association or regional network to go on interprovincial trade missions inside Canada, or even to enhance commercial linkages across Saskatchewan with other cities and other First Nation communities.
4. **Promote and Encourage More City, Town, and RM Partnerships for Co-Management and Co-Investment with Regional First Nations** – in education, municipal Infrastructure and shared maintenance, recreation facilities, etc. Do not let our historic “settler” towns and cities become separate solitudes from the rapidly growing populations and increasingly more sophisticated governance of their nearby First Nations.
5. **Partner with Local CBO’s, the business community, and the Saskatchewan Government to Better Resolve the growing Homelessness and Addictions Issue – it is becoming a dystopia!**
6. **Demonstrate greater transparency and attention to local and Real Supplier Development and Social/Local Procurement Metrics** – show us the beef (and the real KPI’s, beyond the general PR messaging)! This includes more transparency and accountability for the use of their local purchasing power not just from City Hall and all its departments, but with shared pressure from the University, SHA, City Hall, Sask Polytechnic, and all the other local Colleges.
7. **Consider the design and encouragement of local “Free Enterprise Zones” for more fast-tracked investment attraction.**
8. **The airports at Saskatoon and Regina have much greater opportunities for expanded industrial and commercial park development, and to create stronger linkages between air freight and road and rail transportation.**

APPENDIX F (CONTINUED)

9. **Saskatoon has immense opportunities to capitalize around the planned Saskatoon Bypass, and partner with the CN railyards to build a parallel inland container and exporting port, similar to Regina's Global Transportation Hub** (but assembled in a far different manner, and with much stronger business-government partnerships). If Canada seizes the greater opportunities at the Port of Churchill, a Saskatoon Inland Terminal could be an excellent adjunct to this nation-building project.
10. **Implement new forms of municipal regulation that replace the old style "Command and Control Approach"** – i.e., stop and replace lengthy permitting cycles with more modern approaches to pre-approved Codes of Practice; and to have the slow permitting process become expeditiously replaced with post-approval monitoring and appropriate penalties for later non-compliance.
11. **Work with the Saskatchewan Government to review the tremendous and antiquated burden of over 700 diverse types and forms of local government across rural Saskatchewan** - and explore innovative approaches toward more inter-municipal coordination and regional cooperation in more strategic and efficient delivery of regional services.
12. **Work with the Saskatchewan Government and business to modernize and reduce the unresponsive and unrepresentative, four-year revaluation processes still used by SAMA (the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency)** – including the modernization of its outdated data bases and antiquated systems. This must include great accommodation for special-purpose industrial and transitional properties, like innovation hubs, enterprise zones, brownfield redevelopments, etc.
13. **Work with the Saskatchewan Government to urgently review and modernize the Saskatchewan Cities Act and the Municipalities Act to allow for new approaches for local fiscal management** - and to take the burden off a regressive property-base tax and alleviate the system of major upfront user/development fees that creates increasing pressures on SMEs and stymies future land use development.
14. **Work with the Saskatchewan Government to amend the Saskatchewan Planning and Development Act** – to be less of a blunt, "one- municipality-fits-all" type of instrument and allow more flexibility for alternative models of local and regional land use planning.

APPENDIX F (CONTINUED)

15. **Redouble efforts to plan for Climate Change Adaptation** - and to address the logarithmic explosion of all the many anticipated and climate-caused emergencies. This also includes accelerated planning and enhanced preparation for a future of increasingly more frequent severe weather, extreme fires, and other Climate-driven Emergencies, and the subsequent evacuation and settlement plans and other necessary adjustments.
16. **Each municipal government must demonstrate continued efforts toward a sustainable, Net-Zero Economy - and to adherence to global standards and expectations of enhanced biodiversity or ecological remediation.** Our competitiveness with progressive export markets like the E.U., Japan, and even China other Asian partners will all demand that we consider these energy and biodiversity transitions as essential to our economic competitiveness, despite the current disinterest in other administrations. Net Zero Economies can also bring increased efficiencies and lower costs to local taxpayers.



Appendix G: How do you 'eat' an elephant-sized agenda for economic renewal?

One bite at a time.



(a) By the Government of Canada

- Move forward on Bill C-5 – Fast Tracking National Projects.
- Complete all Inter-provincial Trade Deals and Harmonizations.
- Rework/mitigate the Tariff Deals with Trump.
- Kick Start the Canadian Defense Industry and all its related infrastructure growth.

(b) By the Government of Saskatchewan

- Complete all province-to-province details and agreements for enhanced trade access.
- Review all existing Global Twinning MOUs with foreign partners/regions – and develop strategies to rejuvenate and “work them” harder.
- Inventory and cultivate all internal ethnic community diasporas for accelerated trade and foreign investment lead generation/promotion.
- Start planning some formalized, high-profile inter-provincial trade missions.
- Develop new immigration and scientific funding programs to capture the current, once-in-a-lifetime USA brain drain.

(c) By Municipal Levels of Government

- Review all existing Twin Cities and Sister Partnerships among other local institutions (e.g. Universities) with other global regions – and then develop strategies to rejuvenate and more seriously “work them” harder.
- Establish a Concierge model for more expedited local permitting.

(d) By Business & Economic Development Groups, plus Grassroots Associations

- Gear up member education programs around professionalized F.I.T.T. certification.
- Accelerated profiles/awareness of local customs brokers, critical freight forwarders, and alternative networks to find replacement sourcing away from USA dependence
- Gear up consumer and B-to-B awareness and proper education of what it really means to “Buy Canada” and to “Buy Local” - to support less USA dependence
- Along with Governments, get to really know your business and entrepreneurial colleagues in local ethnic communities. Celebrate their added, informal capacities to enhance global trade promotion and foreign investment attraction.
- Start launching at least one or two inter-provincial networking sessions and fact-finding missions to complement the overall strategy to enhance inter-provincial trade.



(a) By the Government of Canada

- Kick Start a greater “Team Canada” effort to optimize trade missions in all the other 15 foreign markets where we have Free Trade Agreements beyond just the USA.
- Concurrently launch a stronger Canadian “Soft Power Campaign” to promote Canada as a preferred, more stable, and more reliable exporting partner to replace US exporters in those markets formerly so reliant on buying American.
- Develop a Canadian Industrial Policy and Strategy for increased economic spinoffs from defense spending – both regionally and among First Nation enterprises and institutions.
- Enhance creative P3 financing opportunities for increased Indigenous participation in major and fast-tracked National Projects.
- Launch Productivity Canada as a new focal point and agency to help Canada recover from its abysmal loss of industrial productivity compared to all other OECD countries.

(b) By the Government of Saskatchewan

- Launch a Tax and Royalty Review of Saskatchewan Potash Industry to stop squandering windfall-levels of profits being uncompetitively and wastefully taken out of the Province, while still promoting incentives for new capital investment by resource industries.
- Forge added partnerships with EDC, BDC, and FCC to enhance innovative export financing for SMEs into foreign markets, including new financial services for factoring and A/R financing.
- Add a “STIP” feature and series of programs to STEP - namely, to create a new or sub-agency for alternative Saskatchewan Trade Import Placement and Alternative Sourcing to lower costs, risk and volatility of business supply chains.
- Create stronger provincial import replacement, buy-local and supplier development education Programs – with more teeth/accountability, transparency, and clearer benchmarks and metrics.
- Expand innovation-based sourcing and buy local as first government/crown users of new technology products or innovative services and/or establish higher thresholds of sole sourcing and pilot purchasing to stimulate crucial first sales to grow Made-in-Saskatchewan enterprises.
- Launch a re-invigorated and “21st Century” Saskatchewan Regulatory Reform initiative that reduces the antiquated, slow, and ineffective 20th Century models of regulatory “Command and Control”. This includes the introduction of more pre-approved Codes of Practice, followed by post-investment monitoring for compliance by HQP experts, like some of the former environmental reforms in the Brad Wall era. Also, review regulatory models across all provincial agencies to emulate the “Automatic Yes” toolkit that is now being introduced in Alberta.
- Introduce a new two-tiered Saskatchewan Planning and Development Act, with greater flexibility and fast-tracked expansion that stimulates rural development, along with more responsive planning mechanisms to accelerate urban development.
- Launch a comprehensive review of the Saskatchewan Municipal Assessment Act – to modernize, promote greater use of AI tech for faster assessment cycles, etc.

- Create a better Homelessness and Addictions Policy, in partnership with commercial landlords and employers, and with greatly intensified investment in harm reduction, rehabilitation and treatment, and social enterprise-related employment of struggling populations. It is also time to urgently reconsider and revamp the SIS Program of direct welfare payments to addicts. This will also require greater political will and energies to enhance partnerships with federal and municipal levels of government to more seriously address this critical issue.

(c) By Municipal Levels of Government

- Complete a review of all local development levies, investor charges, communication mechanisms and greater transparency to restore competitiveness to land development.
- Develop new initiatives to reduce the “Command and Control” permitting processes at city halls across Saskatchewan. Establish alternative use of codes, then follow up rule monitoring, or an “Automatic Yes” toolkit, similar to what is being introduced in Alberta.
- Concurrently expand opportunities and programming for local development stimulus through widespread use of TIFs (Tax Increment Financing), brownfield re-development incentives, etc.
- Benchmark and publicly make accountable the relative cost and time delays of all categories of project development in major cities relative to other competitive markets.
- Work in accelerated partnerships with local investors, nearby First Nations, and local commercial realty and developer communities to greatly expand the availability of local industrial land (especially in the City of Saskatoon, as distorted and pro-rationed by the Saskatoon Land Bank).

(d) By Business & Economic Development Groups, plus Grassroots Associations

- Every local Economic Development Authority, Chamber, BID, and Sectoral/Industry Association should identify more grassroots “Business Ambassadors” – either both in foreign markets and internally – to assist STEP and other government departments to promote and generate more leads for trade and direct foreign investment. These grassroots, Business-to-Business Ambassador Programs should be structured, planned, and implemented with rigour.
- Every grassroots business group should consider more inter-provincial and intra-provincial or subregional fact-finding missions, joint promotions and B-to-B networking events to maximize domestic foreign investment and internal trade opportunities.
- This should include more non-Indigenous business groups getting to better know local FN lands, demographics, and Indigenous economic opportunities – including a series of sponsored tours to meet local Band Offices, Metis Councils, and communities.
- Major Saskatchewan business groups and EDOs need to make a priority to look northward – to foster greater awareness and linkages with Nunavut, the NWT, and especially the opportunities to work with developers at the Port of Churchill.
- More grassroots business groups need to enhance member awareness of how to join or form buying groups leverage and save supply chain costs or form joint marketing consortia.
- There should be at least two of three reverse trade shows sponsored and launched by more grassroots businesses groups every year.



(a) By the Government of Canada

- Launch a new Canada National Energy Grid Strategy, including an enhanced program to build and incentive more interprovincial electrical grid sales and connections.
- Plan a renewed Port of Churchill expansion, including rail and pipeline connections to enhance overall port-to-port connectivity and prairie access to tidewater.
- Establish a new national incentive program to encourage more shared planning, programming and cost-shared financing of public infrastructure and municipal services between First Nations and nearby towns and rural municipalities.
- Launch and enrich funding for an accelerated First Nation tourism strategy.
- Undertake sweeping reforms of the Canadian systems for taxation of corporations, with a competitive review of alternative “Big Bang” approaches to enhance retained earnings for added investment, and the Estonian Model of CIT elimination other than at key points of investor buy backs or when it flows to personal incomes.
- Launch new reforms to stimulate creative forms of social finance in Canada, including the encouragement of social enterprise to help CBOs find more own-source revenues beyond old models of direct government grants and highly competitive local philanthropy.

(b) By the Government of Saskatchewan

- Complete the long-awaited harmonization of all sales taxes, to implement a Saskatchewan HST - like numerous other jurisdictions that have removed all provincial sales taxes off the embedded cost of provincial exports and the ultimate cost of doing business.
- Develop a new provincial program to encourage local governments to establish Enterprise Zones for fast-tracked approvals and global investment attraction. This could start with accelerated industrial development around all major Saskatchewan airport lands.
- Launch plans to build a second global transportation hub, or inland terminal, off the planned Saskatoon Freeway Project and incorporating extensive rail relocation, to better connect Saskatoon to future tidewater markets like a renewed Port of Churchill Strategy.
- Establish a new Saskatchewan Micro-grid Strategy, co-generation, and economic development program to encourage an AI-driven demand for extensive, new investment in local data centres, and to more sustainably meet other local energy demands.
- Develop a new Sask-a-Toba economic development corridor and infrastructure partnership to increase our access to tidewater and shared electrical energy, research, and other innovations.
- Simplify the overall Saskatchewan business tax system to broaden and lower overall rates, eliminate outdated and/or ineffective tax expenditures (i.e. one-off loopholes and credits) and that will both simplify and make Saskatchewan a more business-friendly jurisdiction.
- Launch a major new refurbishment program to assist RMs and rural developers with enhanced bridge, culvert, and road replacement, especially in critical transportation corridors going through regions of smaller per capita tax bases and limited mill rate financing capacities.

(c) By Municipal Levels of Government

- Establish new systems of Quality-of-Life Metrics and updated measurements of all key Social Determinants of Health, as added tools to promote each of our major communities.
- Establish greater joint use facilities, infrastructure, and services among Indigenous and Municipal users. Avoid spending overlaps and enhance overall operating efficiencies, cost reductions and quality of services through more shared-use agreements.
- Adjust Official Plans and Municipal permitting systems to support new Inland Hubs, Enterprise Zones, and other major provincial initiatives as noted above.

(d) By Business & Economic Development Groups, plus Grassroots Associations

- Accelerate grassroots business group efforts to talk more about our failing productivity compared to almost all other industrial and commercial economies in the world. We need grassroots, Business-to-Business education campaigns and increasing networking sessions to stimulate greater awareness of:
 - The AI productivity opportunities.
 - The rapidly unfolding future of robotics, Additive Manufacturing, the Internet of Things (IoT), and other emerging and essential technology transfers and diffusions.
 - Increased local business acumen with respect to how to conduct Competitive Intelligence.
 - New sector-wide and sector-led programs to enhance comparative benchmarking compared to other jurisdictions.
 - Renewed resolve to incorporate emerging AI application with Six Sigma/LEAN and other enhanced processes of vertical integration, process mapping, and streamlined and more responsive customer service.
- Launch added business networks and more inclusive programs to promote more widespread community support for local CBOs providing essential human services to enrich quality of life for all employees, their customers and all future investors.



(a) By the Government of Canada

- Have in place an added National Climate Change Adaptation and Emergency Fund – we are going to need it to help adjust to a chaotic climate decade.
- Also establish a Canadian Climate Change Adaptation Corps of youth and other term experiences as an added Reserve Force to help Canadian communities respond to both accelerating climate emergencies (e.g. fire, floods, droughts) as well to help rebuild adaptive infrastructure or rewilding/reclamation/GHG sequestration efforts.
- Finally, establish a National Debt Reduction Plan to ensure intergenerational equity and clear targets for halting the growth of increasing budget costs of servicing the federal debt.
- More tidewater access, more port-to-port pipeline access, and a substantial role by Canadian natural gas and LNG exports to displace coal burning and other high emitting GHG across global markets, as a strategic transition until ultimately reaching a Net Zero future.

(b) By the Government of Saskatchewan

- Correspondingly, have in place a Saskatchewan Climate Change Adaptation and Emergency Fund – we are going to need it to help adjust to a chaotic climate decade. Saskatchewan is structurally ill-prepared for this scientific reality, as witnessed by incessant short falls in crop insurance coverage and disruptive, unanticipated annual costs of fire fighting or other emergency budgets.
- Similarly, establish a clear and credible Saskatchewan Debt Reduction Plan to ensure intergenerational equity and clear targets for halting the growth of increasing budget costs of servicing the federal debt. Here again, our current provincial financing system is unsustainable and is structurally broken.
- Significantly reduce the overall amount of “per capita” local government in Saskatchewan, to levels comparable with every other province. Saskatchewan also needs far higher levels of regional government coordination and rural economic development planning – NOT more inter-municipal competition.
- Initiate, by the early 2030’s, an array of alternative/expanded tax tools and own source revenue gathering tools for municipal government. The ability for mill rates to be the primary instruments to sustain these growing urbanization cost pressures is rapidly becoming unsustainable.
- Initiate an entirely new model of comprehensive Watershed Management and Watershed Planning. Water will become THE most valuable resource to properly manage in the rapidly accelerating climate crisis. (And this also means a serious effort to introduce added water conservation technologies across all economic sectors).
- Create a significant public policy “Mindshift” away from the curative/emergency and extremely costly models of physical, mental and aging health care, and toward more preventative, distributive and community-based models as an essential imperative.

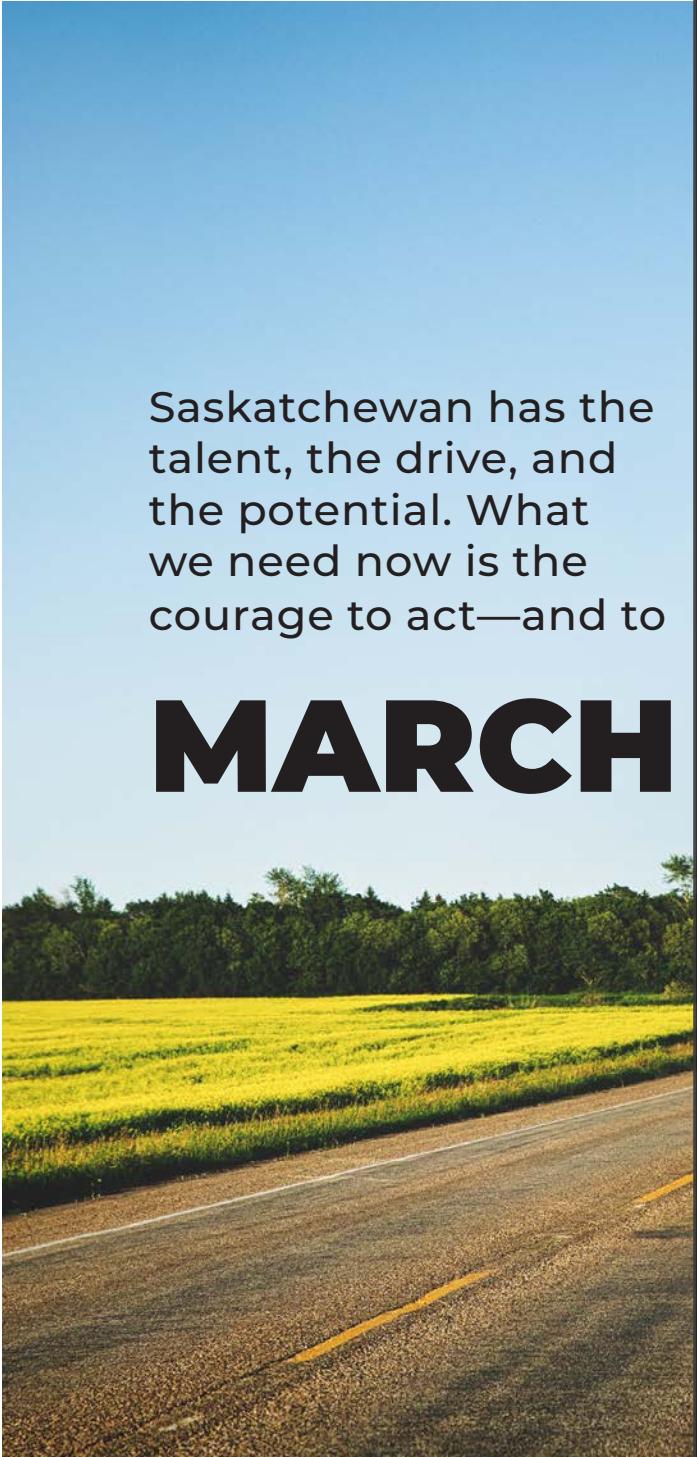
- Restore and prioritize efforts to mitigate GHG emissions as a responsible economic citizen of this planet, including through the intensified acceleration of SMRs, new battery storage technologies, and in conjunction with far-lower-cost renewable energies – all as a means to eliminate coal generation by well before 2050.

(c) By Municipal Levels of Government

- Take Saskatoon and Regina from among “the slowest” and “the costliest” and “the least available” – to among “the most business friendly” in Western North America.
- Halt the growing social dystopia of increasing drug overdoses, widespread homelessness and aimlessness, and among the worst of crime, public health and youth poverty metrics in Canada.

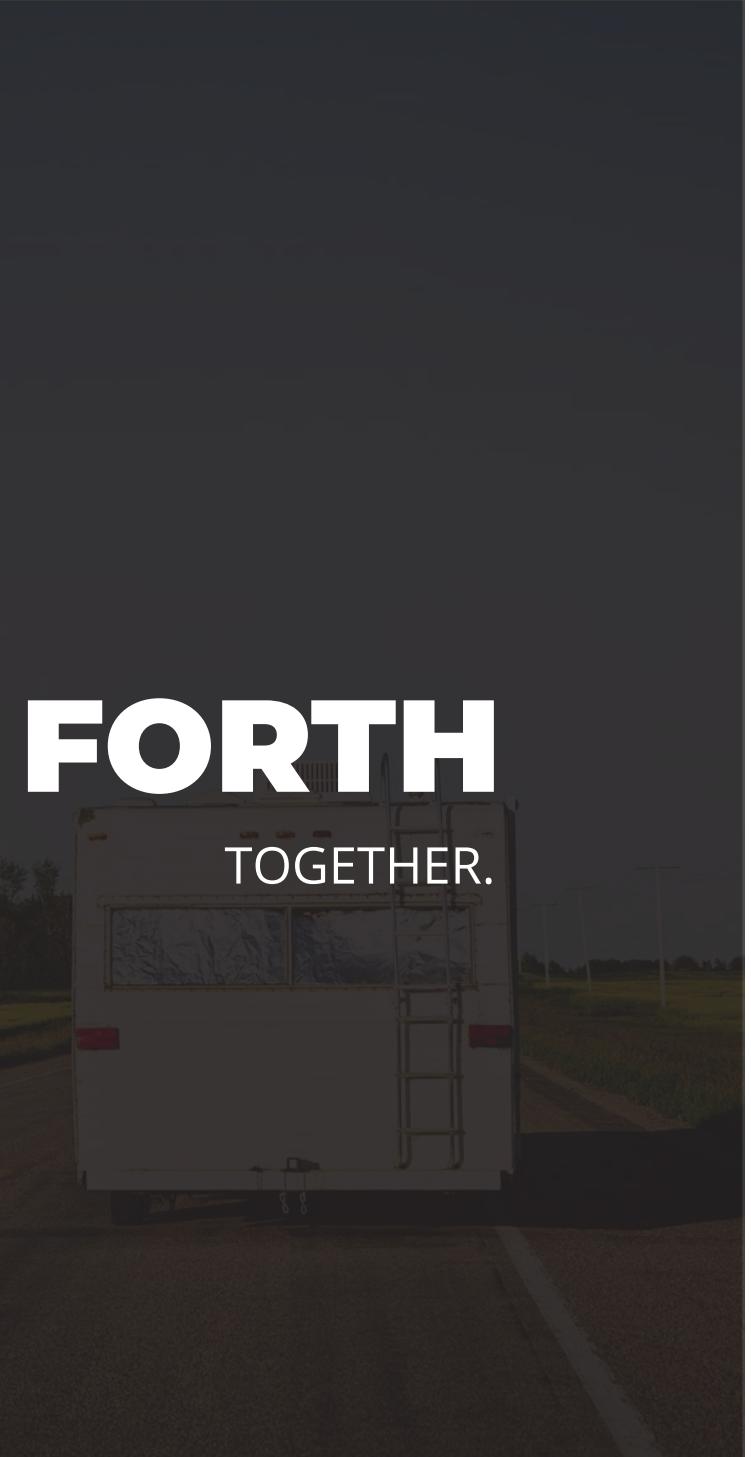
(d) By Business & Economic Development Groups, plus Grassroots Associations

- Do a far better job of mobilizing grassroots ambassadorships, outreach and external promotions, and business-to-business networking and education to restore our overall productivity and global connections. “Take back” some leadership away from the more politicized control and dominant mobilization of just the public sector.
- Enhance overall inclusivity with Business, CBOs, Indigenous, Settlement Organizations, and other communities all working together - through more tolerance, diversity, shared awareness and respect, and creative partnerships to generate stronger SOCIAL infrastructure - and less polarization and a declining quality of civic life.



Saskatchewan has the talent, the drive, and the potential. What we need now is the courage to act—and to

MARCH FORTH



TOGETHER.

Dale Botting
Richard Jankowski
Allan Wallace