Groundbreaking MHCA The Heavy News Weekly

WORKSAFELY MHCA December 6, 2013 WORKFORCE MHCA

# City budget exposes fiscal gap

*Previously published in the Winnipeg Free Press 11/30/2013*

The Manitoba government raised the PST one percentage point and earned nearly $300 million in new revenue. The city raised property taxes by 2.95 per cent for a grand total of $14.5 million in additional income.

And there's the rub.

The fiscal imbalance between Winnipeg -- the prime generator of economic activity in Manitoba -- and the Selinger government is so wide it seems almost pointless for the city to raise taxes for anything other than keeping up with inflation.

The city's proposed operating budget will dedicate two percentage points of the tax increase to road renewal, while 0.95 per cent will be used to manage the rising cost of government.

Most civic fees, fines and services are also increasing, along with frontage levies and the usual dividend from the water and sewage utility, worth about $20 million this year.

The latter transfer is inappropriate because water rates should not be used to support general revenue, but the city feels it has no choice but to raid the utility. If they didn't loot the water and waste department, the city would have had to raise taxes another four percentage points, or cut services.

Unlike the province, which is averse to cutting services or staff, the city is introducing mandatory unpaid leave of 3.5 days during the Christmas season for non-essential services for an annual saving of $1.5 million. The measure is subject to negotiations with the city's unions. It is also cutting other staff for savings of $2 million, and budgeting for $14.1 million in savings through vacancy management. cont'd on page 2

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**City budget exposes fiscal gap, continued.**

The city also rescinded the dramatic and unwarranted $40,000 increase in councillors' ward representation allowance, which brought them to $114,000 annually earlier this year. The budget proposes a decrease of $37,000, to $77,000.

This is the third tax increase in as many years. Mayor Sam Katz said rate hikes will be the new normal unless the province decides to hand over a single point of PST to the city or open up new revenue sources for the city.

If the mayor runs again next year, it will clearly not include a promise of a tax freeze. That era is over, he said.

About 12 per cent, or $113 million, of the city's $967-million operating budget is derived from provincial and federal coffers, so it's unfair to say senior levels of government have completely abandoned Winnipeg and other municipalities.

But it's not nearly enough and most of the provincial money is linked to its own agendas, such as policing.

Mr. Katz's complaints are not the isolated whining of a single mayor. They are a common refrain in municipalities across Canada, which are struggling under huge infrastructure deficits.

In fact, other cities have raised property taxes at a much faster pace. Between 1999 and 2013, Edmonton's taxes rose 67 per cent, Calgary's 63 per cent, Saskatoon's 54 per cent and Vancouver's 52 per cent.

In comparison, Winnipeg's taxes went up about seven per cent during that time. If attitudes don't change on Broadway, Winnipeg will be playing catchup for decades.

A 2007 Federation of Canadian Municipalities study said cities needed $123 billion just to save existing infrastructure.

The Conference Board of Canada has also said cities "are not receiving the investment they need to fulfill their role as drivers of national prosperity."

Winnipeg, meanwhile, is heading deeper into debt following a sustained period during which per capita debt declined. By 2018, according to estimates, the city's total per-capita debt, including utilities, will be close to $1,800, the highest it's been in decades.

In financial terms the city is sliding backwards, but there will be no reversal of fortune so long as the city is denied new sources of revenue.

**********

## The registration site for EXPO North is now up and live, ready for you to register!

**EXPO North will take place in Thompson, MB between February 25 – 27, 2014!**

**Click the link for course information, registration and pricing!**

# www.plannersplus.ca/mhcanorth

To book your hotel accommodation please contact one of the following hotels of your choice:
Lakeview Inns and Suites – 204-778-8879
Mystery Lake – 1-800-442-0429 / 204-778-8331
Burntwood Hotel – 1-800-442-0635 / 204-677-4551
Quality Inn – 1-888-247-0995
Best Western – 204-778-8887

# MHCA Awards Breakfast presented by The Hon. Steve Ashton, Minister Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation, and The 70th Annual General Meeting of the Manitoba Heavy Construction

Kevin Harbottle, Stantec, is presented with the Gold Seal, by current National Gold Seal Chair, Barry Brown (MHCA Chair 1991 - 1992)

James Caskiw (Inland Aggregates) and Peter Paulic (Smook Contractors Ltd.), MHCA Chair Henry Borger and MHCA President Chris Lorenc, after James and Peter sworn into MHCA Board.

## Highlights of the 2013 MHCA Awards Breakfast and 70th AGM

Minister Ashton shared the MIT Interim 2014 Fall Construction Season Schedule, and presented the 2013 MIT Award Winners:

- GRADING: **Tri-Wave Construction Ltd**. PTH 110: Assiniboine River to PTH 1
- MAJOR STRUCTURES: **PCL Constructors Canada Inc.** Bridge Replacement over Assiniboine River on PTHY 1 (WB) east of Portage la Prairie
- MINOR STRUCTURES: **MD Steele Construction Ltd.** Triple Cell R.B. Box Culvert: Codner Drain on PTH 2 near Starbuck
- PAVING: **Mulder Construction & Materials Ltd.** PTH 1 (WB): 1.0 KM West of PTH 16 to West JCT of PTH 1A
- SPECIAL PROJECTS: **Russell Redi-Mix.** Grade Restoration and Subsurface Drainage PTH 83: 1.1 KM North of PR 366
- URBAN WORKS: **Zenith Paving**. PR 610 (Richmond Ave. at 17th Street East)

Mayor Sam Katz shared greetings from the City of Winnipeg and announced that a deal is being worked out with the Municipality of Rosser, re: sewer arrangements for CentrePort Canada Inc.

A table full of MHCA Awards!

Former MHCA Board Member Mike Smith

Past MHCA Chairs receiving a celebratory 70th Manitoba Heavy Construction Association framed cover of the Q4 edition of the Groundbreaker.

# MHCA Gala of our STARS

## 2013 Annual Chairman's GALA EVENT FOR THE STARS OF MHCA 'OUR MEMBERS'

*Thank You for all that you do and for making this event a huge success!*

MHCA Gala of our STARS

HRMAM's prestigious Excellence in Leadership Awards are designed to showcase outstanding Human Resource achievements in Manitoba. The Awards program honours organizations and individuals who are leaders in the HR profession.

## Applications are now accepted in the following categories:

### Organizational Awards:

Overall Organizational HR Strategy Award

Organizational Engagement Award

Workforce Planning and Talent Management Award

Labour and Employee Relations Award

Total Rewards Award

Learning and Development Award

Health, Wellness and Safe Workplace Award

Human Resources Metrics, Reporting, and Financial Management Award

### Individual Awards:

HRMAM Scholarship Award

Rising Star Award

Human Resources Manager of the Year Award

Senior Human Resources Leader of the Year Award

CEO Human Resources Champion of the Year Award

For further award details and to access application forms: CLICK HERE

## Applications are due January 17, 2014 at 5:00PM CST.

Applications are accepted from the public and private sector HR departments or individual HR practitioners and can be self or third party nominations. Nominees must be members of good standing of HRMAM at the time of nomination.

Award applications will be reviewed and nominees for each category will be determined by a respected panel of Manitoba HR business and organizational leaders who have expertise in people practices and organizational initiatives. This panel will put forth the nominees for each category and will determine the finalist for each - which will not be public acknowledged until unveiled at the evening's Awards Gala.

# Training Schedule

**Winnipeg Schedule:**

*Construction Safety Excellence ™*

## Training Schedule:

| | |
|---|---|
| COR™ Leadership in Safety Excellence | Jan 13 - 14 |
| COR™ Principles of Health & Safety Management | Jan 15 |
| COR™ Auditor | Jan 16 - 17 |
| Owner Operator Certification | Jan 20 - 21 |
| Train the Trainer | Jan 27 - 28 |
| Flagperson (1/2 day AM) | Jan 29 |
| Committee/Representative Training (1/2 day PM) | Jan 29 |
| COR™ Auditor Refresher (1/2 day AM) | Jan 30 |

To Register:
Email: sarah@mhca.mb.ca OR Fax: 204-943-2279

**FOR THE FULL CALENDAR**
**www.mcha.mb.ca/worksafely**

# WINNIPEG, MB
# WINTER ROADS TRAINING

Winter Roads Training will be held in Winnipeg Manitoba at the
MHCA Office, 3-1680 Ellice Ave., December 9th – December 13th

| | |
|---|---|
| COR™ Leadership in Safety Excellence | December 9th |
| COR™ Principles of Health & Safety Management | December 10th |
| WHIMIS | December 10th (p.m) |
| COR™ Auditor | December 11th |
| Winter Roads Training | December 12th |
| Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG) | December 12th (p.m) |
| First Aid<br>(Please Note: First Aid is not a sponsored course.<br>Course cost is $75.00 per person) | December 13th |

***This training is open to anyone, Training for Aborginal Communities building winter roads will be sponsored by Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation**

For any other training requests and to register please contact:
Sarah Higgins at sarah@mhca.mb.ca or by phone at 204-594-9060

Manitoba

Please note that a minimum of 6 students is required to hold the training.
WORKSAFELY™ policy states cancellation must be made at
least twobusiness days in advance otherwise
full course fee charge will apply.

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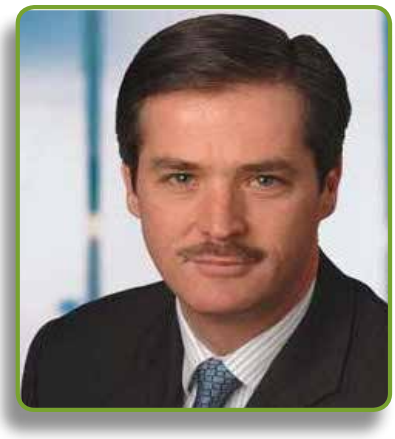
MHCA™ MANITOBA HEAVY CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION

## A Lesser-Known Leader

**Peter G. Hall, EDC Vice-President and Chief Economist, December 6**



*Peter G. Hall*

Leading indicators have gained more prominence in the post-crisis period, if only because the on-again, off-again economy has intensified scrutiny of shifts in momentum. However, the unusual circumstances that gave rise to delayed recovery and the extraordinary stimulative measures taken to rebuff weakness have distorted certain indicators, forcing analysts to pick and choose their favourites. Which ones can we rely on, and are they telling us anything helpful at this point in time?

Composite indicators – the ones that combine a group of time-tested leading signals – are still relied on as economic barometers. There's a lot of excitement about their recent direction. Take for example the OECD leading indicator – it has now risen for 12 consecutive quarters, a rare moment that we have not seen since the gush of stimulus that hit the economy in 2009-10. But has this venerated indicator been tainted by any recent distortions?

Unfortunately, yes. Composite indexes usually include a selected stock market index, a money supply measure and a yield curve calculation (long- versus short-term interest rates). Each of these has been influenced significantly by fiscal and monetary policy moves, not only in recent years, but in recent weeks. The mere mention of tapering last May had stock markets retreating and longer-term yields rising – not to mention altered expectations of growth in monetary aggregates.

If we are going to be months, or more realistically, years in unwinding extraordinary policy measures, which leading indicators can we rely on to point the way for the economy? The housing market is a favourite, and at least in the US, it is showing vibrant growth. Although strong pent-up demand is driving the market upward, this reliable indicator may see its own ups and downs, as current activity is occurring in a context of very easy access to financing, which is quickly coming to an end.

Average weekly hours will be an interesting one to watch. Uncertainty has made corporations unusually reticent to hire. When global growth begins to ramp up, we can expect average hours worked to ramp up sharply before companies get the signal that we are in a new hiring cycle. Many economies dealing with ageing populations may see a stronger spike than in past recovery periods. Sentiment is not normally a go-to harbinger of recovery, but for the moment, this one might be prescient. We have been so gloomy for so long, that it may take recovery in confidence to jolt the world into a sense that things are not so 'new-normal-drab' as we have been led to believe.

Business orders for goods and services of all descriptions remain one of the most reliable leading indicators. Thankfully, survey activity has been enhanced over the years to the point that even key emerging markets have solid data to work with. Recent readings also show that orders have been moving upward, convincingly – that is, the upward movement spans multiple regions of the world and a large variety of industries. Sustained growth going forward will tell the tale for global growth.

This brings me to a lesser-known index. If orders are a strong signal, then freight shipments shouldn't be far behind. After all, inputs have to be shipped before stuff can be made and delivered. Down at the bottom of a pile of other cyclical indicators is the US freight services index, and I'm happy to say that but for a one-off interruption last October, steady growth in this index has now taken it beyond its previous peak level in early 2005. If it's right, it is saying good things about the world's growth engine.

The bottom line? Unprecedented developments in the world economy have had many effects; one of them is a tainting of leading indicators. Thankfully, the untainted ones are projecting solid growth.

# QUEREL TRAILERS

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**Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation (as of December 6, 2013)**
**www.gov.mb.ca/tgs/contracts/tenders/index.html**

### TENDER NO. 6386 – STOCKPILING AGGREGATE

Location: Minnedosa-Brandon-Boissevain-Cartwright area

Tender Availability: Currently available

Tender Due: 12:00 Noon, December 12, 2013

Owner: Infrastructure and Transportation Phone: 204-945-3637

The work involves supplying,c rushing, loading, hauling and stockpiling aggregates for use on Provincial Roads in the Municipalities of Langford, North Cypress, Argyle, Saskatchewan, Cornwallis, South Cypress, Oakland, Whitewater, Strathcona, Morton, Turtle Mountain, Elton, Harrison, Minto and Glenwood. Major items of work include:

- 48 100 t of Stockpiling Traffic Gravel Class "C" (Modified)
- 15 600 t of Stockpile Granular Base Course Class "A" (Modified)
- 11 900 t of Stockpiling Seal Coat Cover Class "A"
- 4 500 to of Stockpile Aggregate for Bituminous Pavement Class "A"

### TENDER NO. 6387 - PIER MODIFICATIONS FOR A BRIDGE

Location: At Souris River on PTH 2 (Vicinity of Wawanesa)

Tender Availability: Currently available

Tender Due: 12:00 Noon, December 17, 2013

Owner: Infrastructure and Transportation Phone: 204-945-3637

The work involves pier modifications to the existing bridge over the Souris River on Provincial Trunk Highway 2, located in Section 21-7-17W in the vicinity of Wawanesa, in the Municipality of Oakland, Bridge Site No. 2980-00.

## City of Winnipeg (As of December 5, 2013) www.winnipeg.ca

### TENDER NO. 679-2013 - 2013 SEWER RENEWALS BY CIPP LINING - CONTRACT 11

Tender Availability: Currently available

Tender Due: 12:00 Noon, December 13, 2013

Owner: City of Winnipeg Phone: 204-986-2491

### TENDER 990-2013 - Ferry Road and Riverbend Combined Sewer Relief Contract No. 2

Tender Availability: Currently available

Tender Due: 12:00 Noon, December 18, 2013

Owner: City of Winnipeg Phone: 204-986-2491

# Tender Results

**Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation (as of December 6, 2013)**
www.gov.mb.ca/tgs/contracts/tenders/index.html

## TENDER NO. 6381 - BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION AT LITTLE SOURIS RIVER ON PR 348 (SOUTHWEST OF BRANDON)

Closing: November 28, 2013 Results:

| | |
|---|---|
| (M) MACAW MACDONALD COR TM | $689,000.00 |
| Surespan Construction Ltd. COR TM | $698,719.50 |
| PCL Constructors Canada Inc. | $730,070.10 |
| Armcon Ltd. COR TM | $849,800.92 |
| Minty's Moving Ltd. | $1,095,575.00 |
| (M) Tri-Core Projects Manitoba Ltd. COR TM | $1,568,232.50 |

## TENDER NO. 6382 - SPOT ROAD IMPROVEMENTS, PR 513, EAST OF PTH 6 TO DAUPHIN RIVER FIRST NATION

Closing: November 28, 2013 Results:

| | |
|---|---|
| (M) Glacier North Ltd. COR TM | $1,461,195.00 |
| (M) Hugh Munro Construction Ltd. COR TM | $1,688,739.50 |
| (M) Tri-Core Projects MB Ltd. COR TM | $2,418,625.00 |
| (M) Strilkiwski Contracting Ltd. COR TM | $2,643,575.00 |

**City of Winnipeg (as of December 5, 2013) www.winnipeg.ca**

**UNEVALUATED RESULTS**

## TENDER NO. 774-2013 – RECONSTRUCTION OF THE ST. JAMES STREET BRIDGE OVER OMAND'S CREEK

Closing: November 22,2013 Results:

| | |
|---|---|
| Gateway Construction & Engineering | $1,937,877.05 |
| (M) M.D. Steele Construction Ltd. | $2,095,245.00 |
| PCL Constructors Canada Inc. | $2,223,868.00 |
| Surespan Construction Ltd. | $2,714,411.00 |
| (M) MACAW MACDONALD LTD. COR TM | $2,937,615.01 |

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