

INSIDE:

2

FAIR
COMPETITION
FOR PUBLIC
CONTRACTS

3

MHCA WELCOMES
NEW MEMBER

9

WORKSAFELYTM,
CORTM AND SAFE
WORK CERTIFIED
ALIGNED:
BACK TO YOU

Federal Liberals rethinking tax changes to small businesses

Ottawa must pull full package of reforms off table, MHCA says



Source: pexels.com

The Trudeau government has asked Finance officials to find a way to protect the intergenerational transfer of family enterprises from the impact – rising tax bills – of the tax reforms for privately incorporated Canadian businesses.

After weeks of harsh criticism on the proposed reforms, the Liberal government is dialing back a proposal that would make it more expensive to transfer a business to a family member, than to an unrelated party.

“That’s progress, but really what it indicates is that the federal government has moved precipitously and should take the whole package of tax changes off the table,” MHCA President Chris Lorenc said Thursday. “They need to be studied by independent tax experts and subjected to real and meaningful cross-country consultation before anything is reintroduced.

“Small business owners, men and women, coast to coast were legitimately angered by this assault upon their ability to sustain their businesses, create wealth and jobs in this country, participate in legitimate long-term tax planning and family succession planning,” Lorenc added.

“The wrath of small-business owners will be felt by the federal Liberals at the polls, absent a genuine step back from the precipice of flawed taxation policy.”

The reforms seek to alter the way taxes are applied to the use of dividends – their disbursement to family members, and the conversion of dividends to capital gains, which are taxed at a lesser rate. Further, Ottawa plans to restrict the use of an incorporated small business as a vehicle to make passive investments.

The MHCA has been part of a business coalition in Manitoba opposed to the tax changes. The coalition has spoken out publicly, met with regional minister Jim Carr and written letters asking that Finance Minister Bill Morneau step back from planned reforms. A recent opinion poll found the Trudeau government’s popularity has fallen markedly with Canadians.

To protest the planned tax changes, you can “Write Your MP!” at www.protectgrowth.ca, an online campaign launched by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. The password is Chamber2017

Don't mess with open, fair competition for public contracts: MHCA

Winnipeg councilors cautioned not to give preference to local companies

A call this week at a city council committee for Winnipeg to give preference to local bidders in its tenders elicited a rapid response from the MHCA.

"We (MHCA) unequivocally support and endorse the committee's decision, which we understand is to award the contract to the lowest qualifying bidder, as the correct decision supporting the public, industry and its workers best interests," association President Chris Lorenc said Tuesday.

Lorenc was reacting to news this week that two associations -- Construction Labour Relations Association and the Manitoba Building Trades Council -- told councilors on the environment committee on Monday that the city should not have awarded a contract to upgrade the South End Sewage Treatment Plant to NAC Constructors Ltd., from Ontario. The associations said there should be local preference clauses that would allow awarding a project to a Manitoba company if its bid were less than 5% higher than the lowest-price bid submitted by an out-of-province company.

That's not the way free trade works, stressed Lorenc, and Manitoba governments cannot give preference to local companies for public contracts while, at the same time, working to tear down provincial barriers to trade nationally. Canada and the provinces have signed internal and international free trade agreements that would be violated were local preference attached to procurement policy or practice.

Free trade across provincial boundaries supports the principle that, on a level playing field, the most competitive bid should get the work because it delivers best value to the taxpayer, through the public budgets that finance the work.

The MHCA vigorously pursues the elimination of local-preference clauses in public procurement and contract language. Recently, the association's protest, through Manitoba government offices, resulted in SaskPower opening its tenders to contractors in this province.

"The well-established practices and benefits of open, unfettered awards to the lowest qualifying bidder regardless of the bidder's 'home jurisdiction' are supported by Canada's internal trade agreements and return the best value to all parties concerned," Lorenc wrote in an email to city councilors.

"The construction industry's ability to compete fairly cannot become restricted because of local preference practices. The public, and public purse, should not have to bear a premium price to satisfy positions which are not in their short-, medium- nor long-term interests."

Upcoming MHCA Meetings

MHCA Executive Committee
MHCA Office
October 25 - 12:00-4:00 PM

SAFE Roads
MHCA Office
October 27 - 12:00-1:30 PM

Rental Rates Committee
MHCA Office
November 3 - 12:00-2:30 PM

MHCA Board of Directors
RBC Convention Centre
November 17 - 10:00-12:00 Noon

MHCA Executive Committee
MHCA Office
November 21 - 12:00-4:00 PM

Rental Rates Committee
MHCA Office
December 1 - 12:00-2:30 PM

MHCA Executive Committee
MHCA Office
January 17, 2018 - 12:00-4:00 PM

MHCA Board of Directors
Location TBD
January 24, 2017 - 12:00-4:00 PM

MHCA welcomes new member

The MHCA is pleased to welcome its newest member **Travelers Financial**

Travelers Financial is the commercial financing and leasing division of Coast Capital Savings, the largest member-based credit union in Canada with total assets under administration of over \$19 billion. For the past 30 years, Travelers Financial has specialized in bridging the gap between sellers and buyers in the transportation and construction sectors.

Travelers Financial can be contacted at:

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LEGALIZED MARIJUANA ARE YOU READY?

WORKSAFELY™ will be hosting two seminars on substance abuse in the workplace.

Recreational marijuana will be legal next year across Canada. This heightens the need for strong workplace policies on impairment on the job.

Led by experts in the fields of labour law and substance abuse, these seminars will answer your questions.

Legalized Marijuana Workshops

FOR COMPANY OWNERS AND SENIOR MANAGERS

Nov. 1 – MHCA Office
12:00 - 2:30 PM

**FOR HR/SAFETY PROFESSIONALS/
MANAGEMENT**

Nov. 6 – Holiday Inn Airport-Polo
Park
8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

To register contact Kristen Ranson at
204-947-1379.

WORKSAFELY™ **MHCA**



**Canadian
Construction
Association**

Manitoba steel award flies over to hybrid Winnipeg bridge

Peter Caulfield, September 27

The innovative Kenaston Flyover Bridge in suburban Winnipeg has won the 2017 Canadian Institute of Steel Construction (CISC) Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Steel Design Award in the bridge category.

Joint winners of the award are the City of Winnipeg (owner); Capitol Steel Corporation (fabricator/detailer/erector/member); Dillon Consulting Limited (structural engineer); M.D. Steele Construction Ltd. (general contractor); and Dowco Consultants Ltd. (steel detailer).

"A flyover is a hybrid overpass with a curve in the middle," said Kris Overwater, chief operating officer of Capitol Steel in Winnipeg.

Capitol Steel supplied, delivered and erected the steel superstructure of the flyover. Containing 400 tonnes of steel, the six trapezoidal box girders were arranged in two lines of three and measure 115 feet long by seven feet deep and 11 feet wide.

Fabrication of the girders took four months in Capitol's 160,000-square-foot plant in Winnipeg.

"The main challenge we faced was dealing with the geometry of the girders and keeping within a tolerance of one millimetre," said Overwater.

The grade-separated Kenaston Flyover is part of the Waverley West Arterial Roads Project.

The overpass spans north-south on Kenaston Boulevard and extends it to the Perimeter Highway that encircles Winnipeg.

"Kenaston was designated a primary economic route...due to the linkage it provides between major industrial and commercial sites and national and international trade routes," said Robert Taylor, a structural engineer with Dillon Consulting, which acted as prime consultant on the project, responsible for design and contract administration.

Taylor said the extension has saved money for the many truckers who use Kenaston and has relieved congestion on adjacent roads in new residential neighbourhoods that are spreading into southwest Winnipeg.

The project had to deal with some unique design and construction challenges.

"One of the fundamental challenges was accommodating the future expected extension of Bishop Grandin, in addition to satisfying the roadway alignment of the realigned Bishop Grandin and extended Kenaston," said Taylor. "This greatly restricted a number of the structural configurations that could have been used to simplify the design."

To keep the approach embankments within the property that was available to the project, and to maintain the stability of the surrounding soil, Dillon installed mechanically stabilized earth wall embankments with light-weight concrete backfill.

The Kenaston project team received its award in a spring 2017 gala ceremony in the York Ballroom of the RBC Convention Centre in downtown Winnipeg.

Gordie Tumilson, CISC regional representative for Manitoba and northwestern Ontario, said there were award submissions in 11 categories, with 54 winning companies.



Agriculture rocks!

Peter G. Hall, Manager, Economic & Political Intel Centre

Next to water, food is the greatest human need. Funny that in general, we pay so little for it. Ah, but make it scarce, and next to water, there's nothing we would pay more for. It's the abundance of readily available food that makes it as affordable as it is. Not every country can make this claim, but in the availability of food, Canada is particularly blessed. For most of our modern history, we have been a 'bread basket' nation to the world. It's that very abundance that has made this very necessary sector almost a non-issue in economic banter. Until recently, that is. The vast populations of the emerging world are getting richer, and demanding ever-more first-world food. Is Canada in the game?

The key markets for our food – whether raw or processed – are still developed economies. The US dominated demand, gobbling up 53 per cent of what we export to the world. Japan accounts for another 7 per cent, and the top eight markets in the EU, just over 5 per cent. But as a share of total exports of agriculture products, the developed world is either static or declining. The US, for example, accounted for close to 60 per cent of total agricultural exports back in 2000, and Japan, 10 per cent. Are we somehow losing our grip in these markets? Hardly; annual growth to developed markets in the past 15 years has averaged 5.1 per cent. Net out inflation, and that's ahead of population growth – a sign of rising penetration.

Why the declining share? The simple answer: hungrier emerging markets. Growth there has averaged 8.4 per cent annually, taking the share of emerging market agricultural exports from 22 per cent of total in 2000 to 31 per cent in 2016. Population growth is not the only principal driver, as large parts of the emerging world are themselves dealing with sluggish population growth. Doubtless, dramatic growth is due in part to improved transportation and cold storage technologies, the impact of globalization on food taste preferences, and lower barriers to trade in foodstuffs. But the predominant driver is likely rising wealth. The pace of graduation into the middle class in emerging economies is nothing if not staggering. Brazil is purported to add 5 million annually to its middle class. In Indonesia, it is estimated to be 7 million annually. India boasts 20 million graduates annually, with an aim of soon reaching an eye-popping 30 million per annum – a pace that could technically be sustained for well over a decade. However, atop them all is China. Despite being saddled with population decline, the middle class is calculated to be increasing by the size of the Canadian population every year.

These facts translate directly into Canada's food export story. Of our top 20 markets for food exports, eleven are emerging markets, and this select group is growing collectively by almost 12 per cent annually. The fastest-growing markets are generally notching up impressive gains in market share, and have vaulted up the rankings in the past 16 years. Even so, for most, overall shares are still around 2 per cent or lower. Mexico is an anomaly, at 2.9 per cent of Canadian agri-food exports, but unlike the rest, its share hasn't budged since 2000.

Among emerging customers, China is a standout. With annualized growth of 15.5 per cent, China is Canada's second-largest export market, now well ahead of third-placed Japan. Its share of total Canadian agri-food exports is no less dramatic, rising from just 3 per cent in 2000 to 11 per cent today. While other markets hold the promise of future growth that's as dramatic, China is today's market, and growth there will be the biggest agri-food story on the planet for years to come. Higher meat consumption is the main driver of this demand. Beyond the sheer availability of food, Canada's key advantage in China's marketplace is food quality. The governance of our food system is a plus in a market where trust in the domestic industry has been undermined by tainted production processes and suspicion of the soundness of key elements of the in-country supply chain. Wealthier consumers are proving a new willingness to pay for guaranteed quality, and a growing number of Canadian producers are discovering – and leveraging – this new appetite.

The bottom line? Food is again turning into a high-growth business. While traditional customers are our mainstay, and the CETA deal opens up new European opportunities, emerging markets are and will be the powerhouses of growth in all facets of Canada's agri-food continuum for decades to come.



WORKSAFELY™ COR™ and SAFE Work Certified aligned

WORKSAFELY™ Back to You with Don Hurst

Over the past year WORKSAFELY™ has been working with SAFE Work Manitoba to align our COR™ program with the new SAFE Work Certified Program. This means that our COR™ companies will continue to benefit from the national COR™ program and be eligible for the new 15% WCB prevention rebate coming into effect in 2018.

This process has brought about some changes to WORKSAFELY™'s COR™ audit document and guidelines. These changes are reflected in the 2-day COR™ auditor training course and the half-day refresher course.

WORKSAFELY™ is offering a COR™ audit refresher course for our COR™ members who have a valid internal auditor number to communicate these additional changes. For companies new to COR™, our 2-day COR™ auditor training also includes these updates.

For questions related to these updates, please contact Phil at 204-947-1379.

To register for the COR™ auditor refresher or the 2-day COR™ auditor training please contact Kristen at 204-947-1379.

KNOW YOUR WORKSAFELY™ TEAM

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To contact your WORKSAFELY™ advisor assigned to your area, please see mhca.mb.ca/worksafely/know-your-advisor



**TO REGISTER,
PLEASE CONTACT:
Kristen Ranson
kristen@mhca.mb.ca**

Training Schedule

**WINNIPEG - MHCA Office
3-1680 Ellice Ave.**

October 2017

- 12 Flagperson 1/2 day AM
- 12 Committee/Representative training 1/2 day PM
- 13 Transportation of Dangerous Goods 1/2 day PM
- 16-17 COR™ Leadership in Safety Excellence**
- 18 COR™ Principles of Health & Safety Management**
- 19-20 COR™ Auditor**
- 23 Excavation and Trenching 1/2 day AM
- 24-25 Traffic Control Coordinator

November 2017

- 2 Winter Roads Safety 1/2 day AM
- 2 Environmental Awareness 1/2 day PM
- 7 Flagperson 1/2 day AM
- 7 Safety Committee/Representative 1/2 day PM
- 8 Excavating and Trenching 1/2 day AM
- 8 Auditor Refresher (no charge) 1/2 day PM
- 9 Train the Trainer
- 13-14 Traffic Control Coordinator
- 20-21 COR™ Leadership in Safety Excellence**
- 22 COR™ Principles of Health & Safety Management**
- 23-24 COR™ Auditor**

December 2017

- 4 Flagperson 1/2 day AM
- 4 Safety Committee/Representative 1/2 day PM
- 7-8 Traffic Control Coordinator
- 11-12 COR™ Leadership in Safety Excellence**
- 13 COR™ Principles of Health & Safety Management**
- 14-15 COR™ Auditor**

Construction Safety Excellence™



Awards Breakfast & Annual General Meeting

Friday, November 17, 2017 8 am - 11:30 pm
RBC Convention Centre, York Ballroom 2

Greetings from: Honourable Ron Schuler,
Minister, Manitoba Infrastructure

Awards, Year in Review, Membership and Future Priorities presentations

Tickets: \$49 +GST (per person)

No. of tickets: _____

Annual Chairman's Gala

Friday, November 17, 2017

An Enchanted Forest

RBC Convention Centre – York Ballroom

Cocktails 6:30 pm

Dinner 7:30 pm

All Inclusive Tickets \$210 ^{+GST} per person

Winnipeg

Tickets available as individual or tables of 10

No. of tickets: _____

Company: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____

Please Invoice: _____

Credit Card #: _____

Exp. Date: _____ **3-Digit Security Code:** _____

Card Holder Name: _____

Signature: _____

Delta Winnipeg, reservations: 1-844-294-7309 - room rates starting at \$135

Quote: Manitoba Heavy Construction Association

Fill out this form in full and fax to Christine Miller at the MHCA office at 204-943-2279 or email christine@mhca.mb.ca. To request a special meal, to accommodate any food allergies and/or dietary restrictions, please call or email Christine at 204-947-1379.