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BILL 28 PROVIDES CHOICE FOR MANITOBA TRADESPEOPLE

Floodway Expansion - Red River, MB - Dillon Consulting Limited



Yvette Milner and Chris Lorenc, Winnipeg Free Press, October 2

Bill 28 preserves choice and ensures that all employers and their employees have the opportunity to bid and work on public projects in Manitoba without having to join or pay dues to a building-trades union.

Most employees in Manitoba's construction industry do not belong to a building-trades union — by choice. These are skilled tradespeople working for employers who meet or exceed legislated safety standards, pay good wages and benefits, and strive for workplace and project excellence.

In Manitoba, the open-shop sector comprises small, medium and large businesses engaged in the heavy civil, industrial, commercial and residential projects. They and their workforce, who have chosen to work without union representation, build our bridges, fix our roads and develop residential and commercial

properties — effectively, all aspects of construction. Bill 28 ensures that these employers and, more importantly, their employees — your neighbours, friends and family — who make up the vast majority of the construction industry, can work on public projects without forced unionization and without being forced to pay union dues.

Bill 28 ensures that all employers and their employees have an opportunity to work on public projects without having a labour model imposed upon their workplaces by the ideology of government. Bill 28 is about enabling free choice. Despite what the Manitoba Building Trades union argues, this is a good thing.

It is obvious that when more industry is allowed to participate, competition goes up, costs go down and innovation and productivity increase.

Project-labour agreements set out terms and conditions for a project and can have their place, but they need to be done openly as a result of the exercise of free will, not imposition. Allow all qualified employers and their

Cont'd: Bill 28 provides choice for Manitoba

employees to work on the project regardless of union affiliation, if any, and regardless of the labour model they choose to employ.

Bill 28 does not eliminate project-labour agreements, but rather, allows the successful bidder to determine the labour/management model it will employ to do the job.

A few facts about "union-only procurement": a closed project-labour agreement system, as supported by Manitoba Building Trades, forces workers to join a designated trade union or pay union dues to work on major public infrastructure projects, even though the projects are being paid for by the workers' own tax dollars and even though those same workers have rejected joining a union. That's called forced unionization. It's like forcing a shopper to pay an entrance fee each time they enter a grocery store to purchase groceries.

Project-labour agreements on Manitoba projects such as the Red River Floodway, East Side Road and Keeyask dam had or currently have project-labour agreements forcing all workers to pay dues to a union for the privilege of working. While there is nothing wrong with identifying terms and conditions on a project — for example, Indigenous participation or use of local labour — forcing non-union workers to pay union dues as the price to work is just wrong.

According to a study by the Beacon Hill Institute, restricting tendering processes and forcing workers to belong to unions increases costs for projects by 12 to 18 per cent. Other studies from across Canada have suggested the cost increases could be even higher. The City of Montreal produced a study that suggests costs could be up to 30 per cent higher.

The City of Hamilton's study found costs could be as much as 40 per cent greater. Another report, prepared by Cardus, suggests that Ontarians are paying 20 to 30 per cent more for construction projects that are subject to closed tendering. Similarly, studies in other countries have shown similar cost increases due to closed tendering practices.

The Manitoba government is doing the right thing with Bill 28, and the majority of Manitobans agree.

A 2016 poll conducted by NRG research group suggested that the majority of Manitobans agree it's time for the Manitoba government to abandon the policy of forced unionization, forcing workers to pay union dues to be allowed to work, in favour of one that protects choice. Bill 28 does this and is a huge step in the right direction.

Yvette Milner is president of Merit Contractors Association; Chris Lorenc is president of the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association.

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Pallister government cancels its carbon tax

Tax at the pump was to start December 1st

The planned carbon tax on diesel and gasoline at the pump has been scrapped by the provincial government. Premier Brian Pallister announced Wednesday his government did not get the assurances it needs that Ottawa would not impose its own, escalating tax.

The remainder of the province's Climate and Green Plan will proceed, Pallister said.

"We had concerns about the imposition of a new fuel tax and the impact on our industry's business and competitiveness," MHCA President Chris Lorenc said. "This announcement seems to throw additional uncertainty at us, because we are unsure of how or when Ottawa will respond."

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Wednesday his government will impose on Manitoba, and all provinces bucking the federal edict for a price on carbon, the federal plan. The federal "backstop" plan would allow Ottawa to decide how to use the revenues from the new tax.

"We will bring in federal measures to collect the price on pollution and return that money to hardworking citizens, right across the country," Trudeau told the House of Commons.

Manitoba's plan would have imposed a flat carbon price of \$25 per tonne for the next five years. The Trudeau government expected provinces to begin with a carbon price at \$10 per tonne in 2018 and increase it by \$10 each year to hit \$50 a tonne in 2022.

The Manitoba government said its green plan would reduce greenhouse gas emissions further in a 5-year period than would Ottawa's proposal.

Pallister said he took the action because it's clear the federal government would not respect Manitoba's plan.

"Therefore, our course of action is clear. The federal government says Manitobans are not doing enough to protect the environment. We say no."

Pallister did not immediately say if there would be any other changes to his climate plan.

Lorenc said the MHCA will be seeking clarification from the provincial government on the way forward.

"There are significant cost implications to the companies within our industry, from contractors to suppliers and beyond. We need certainty in order to plan, to organize our businesses."

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Year-end accounts show province underspent on highways.

Infrastructure takes hit while other budget lines rise.

The numbers are in and the news is not good.

The provincial government underspent the Highways Capital budget for 2017/18 by about \$60 million, according to the public accounts released on September 28.

And the expenditure on water-related infrastructure, at \$30 million, was half the amount allotted in Budget 2017.

“Manitobans should be taking notice of the record of this government when it comes to investing in critical infrastructure,” MHCA President Chris Lorenc said.

“The government underspent what it said it would on highways last year — that means a bumpier ride for Manitobans — and underspent by half what it budgeted on flood protection works. How does that make sense as we are moving into a “climate change” era of infrastructure planning?”

The provincial government since 2016 has cut Manitoba Infrastructure’s highways capital budget from \$628 million (actual) to \$350 million (budgeted) in this year.

In 2017/18, the budget for highways was set at \$502 million, but the government expended just approximately \$442 million.

“The final public accounts really underscore the fact that, clearly, infrastructure is not this government’s priority,” Lorenc stressed. Strategic investment in core infrastructure returns to the economy anywhere between \$1.30 to \$1.60 for every \$1 invested, repeat analyses have shown.

He noted that eight other leading Manitoba business groups have joined the MHCA in pressing the province to make transportation infrastructure a priority — “because we all know that trade – the heart of our economy — moves on roads and highways.

“The government has given up real, defined economic growth potential in choosing to not adopt a strong, multi-year investment program for core infrastructure.”

Lorenc said he supported the fact the government cut the provincial deficit to \$695 million, bettering its estimate of \$840 million in Budget 2017 estimate.

But, instead of a balanced, measured approach to doing so, the government has chosen to favour budget increases in some departments on the back of its investment in core infrastructure.

In total, the combination of cuts to and under-spending of the highways capital budget, since 2016, amount to almost \$360 million — more than the current year’s highways allotment.

Meanwhile, the budget increases for health, families and education in 2017/18 totaled more than \$1 billion.

“This re-allocation of fiscal resources reflects political priorities, and investment in infrastructure is not amongst those priorities. Infrastructure is given lip service,” Lorenc said.

The Budget Numbers – taken from Public Accounts

Highways Capital investment - MB Finance, Provincial Budgets, 2016-2018

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
MI Highways Cap (Budget)	\$588.5m (NDP)	\$540m (PC)	\$502m (PC)	\$350m (PC)

Mb Infrastructure, Annual Reports, 2016-2017

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Highways Cap (Actual)	\$628.4m	\$520.1m	\$442m	



MANITOBA HEAVY CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION

AWARDS BREAKFAST & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday, November 16, 2018

Tickets \$49 + GST (per person)

RBC Convention Centre
York Ballroom 2

No. of tickets

8 AM - 11:30 AM

Keynote Speaker Mr. Don Leitch, Business Council of Manitoba



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To request a special meal, to accommodate any food allergies and/or dietary restrictions, please call or email Christine at 204-947-1379.

Five terrible reasons to run for municipal office

Danielle Klooster, Danikloo Consulting



Ever wonder what motivates a person to run for municipal council? It seems that, in many Alberta communities this year, there are a record number of candidates for Council, as well as many mayoral hopefuls. I've heard a lot of different reasons for why people choose to run,

many of them misguided and some even mendacious. Here are my top five bad reasons to run:

1) **"People are ready for change!"** Newsflash: everyone says that, every election. Sometimes it's true and sometimes it's just perception. Often times, when voters go behind that screen, they get a bit scared of change (which is natural) and they go for the known quantity.

That aside, it is my opinion that you just plain need a better reason to run. If the best you can do is "Hey, I'm new!" ... I mean, come on. You need to understand budgets, financial statements, water, sewer, garbage, road construction, residential/commercial/industrial development, the role of governance, Inter-municipal relations, by-laws, social and economic development and more.

Have you done your homework on this stuff? Do you have INFORMED positions? Do you have proven leadership experience? Have you ever even sat on a board? As a voter I need to know about what qualifies you for the job and what you stand for. Simply representing "change" is woefully inadequate.

Furthermore, as of the day you are sworn in, you officially cease being "change" and become part of the institution — it's what you're signing up for. And if you think that folks are magically going to like you better than the last group, think again. The moment you sit down to the council table, you officially become "them".

This I promise.

2) **"I'm going to clean house!"**

Uh, no you're not.

If you envision yourself walking into the municipal office and taking over operations, firing a bunch of people, and generally sticking your nose into administration's business, you're in for a rude awakening. If you want to manage your town or city, apply for the job.

The CAO's job is management; your role as a Councillor is governance. You don't get to direct the staff. You are not the bylaw officer, the public works foreman or the HR Director. In fact, you have only one employee – the CAO. And guess what? In many communities, the CAO has an employment contract. You can't just ditch this guy so you can take over running the place. And even if you get a new guy, you still don't have the right to manage the municipality. Besides, removal would take a majority vote of Council and would cost the rate payers a whole bunch of money.

You don't have to like the Town Manager or any of the staff but as a councillor you are legally bound to do things properly (spoiler alert: you're going to take an oath to that effect if you get elected).

3) **"I'm going to fix the [insert pet peeve such as snow removal/pot holes/bike lanes] situation!"** Another very misguided statement that reveals a fundamental lack of understanding of how councils function.

It's an interesting dichotomy, of course, since candidates run as individuals but then have to work as a team, once elected, in order to get anything accomplished.

The truth of the matter is that you have NO POWER outside of council chambers. Even around the council table, your power extends only to the amount of influence you can leverage during debate, and to your (ONE) vote. I would add that, while it's true that you have no power outside of chambers, you are ALWAYS a representative of the municipality.

You ought never overstep your bounds or ram through your personal agenda. You have a responsibility to consider all matters related to the strategic and fiscal direction of your municipality, and your job, as one member of a team, is to find ways to work together to make wise, informed, responsible decisions for the benefit of all. You are one of a group of decision-makers; no more, no less.

You won't have the ability to unilaterally wave a magic wand and fix all of the potholes (though people will think you can).

When you make promises you can't keep, you perpetuate the stereotype of politician. So stop it.

4) **"We have to get rid of the current corrupt/secretive/self-serving/incompetent bunch!"** Ah, the ever

popular “anti” campaign... this tactic, sadly, is often successful. It resonates with coffee klatches and angry people. The problem is that, while it may get you elected, it’s a poor foundation for being an effective mayor or member of council.

The day after you “get rid” of the last bunch, you have to actually do something. Any ideas on what that will be? No? Hmm, that’s really sad. It’s sad because you have a whole bunch of really important decisions in front of you; stuff that was already in motion, that the previous council (that you thought was so useless) was working hard to deliberate over and consider that perhaps you should have put some time into understanding. An individual with a personal grievance who runs for office is not just in danger of being an ineffective Councillor — these folks can be downright destructive.

I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again: anybody can tear down; tell me what you are going to build.

5) **“I’m going to make lowering taxes my number one priority!”** This may well be the most irresponsible thing I hear come from the mouths of candidates. If all you want to do is find ways to save people money, then let’s abolish property taxes right now and we can all go home. After all, what’s the point of even having taxes if the only thing we care about is not spending any money?

My point is this: yes, fiscal accountability and responsible spending are very, very important. And no one likes paying taxes, me included. But the number one responsibility of the councillor is NOT fiscal responsibility — it is rather to build community infrastructure for future generations.

Shame on you if in 5, 10 or 25 years there is no water or sewer capacity or the roads are falling to pieces or there are insufficient playgrounds and recreation opportunities because you were busy pinching pennies.

Ultimately, there are good councillors and bad councillors in every community. Some mayors and councillors who should never be in office do get elected, and sometimes people are justifiably upset by actions and decisions. I get that. But I have yet to see a municipal council — at least in this province — that is a wholly evil empire. But, to the voter: can we at least agree to make informed decisions at the polls, instead of vilifying the entire group without, in many cases, even a basic understanding of the role, the decisions, the full story? How about those critical thinking skills, gang?

Why should you actually run for Council? You should run because you wish to serve your community, to provide good leadership, to plan and build for the future. You should run because you have a contribution to make, ideas to be shared, passion that won’t abate and a commitment to do the right thing no matter what. You should run if you understand that you will have to sacrifice popularity and family time, and that you will have to sometimes make decisions that benefit the community as a whole but don’t benefit you personally. You should run if you want a better future for your grandchildren, and your grandchildren’s grandchildren.

If any of the five terrible reasons I mentioned frame up your election campaign, take heart; it’s not too late. You can withdraw from the race now and free up a seat for people with the right motivation. Or you can reflect on your intentions and set a new course with a commitment to serve your community for the all the right reasons.

Danielle Klooster is a former municipal councillor in Penhold, Alberta. She is the senior business development manager at Catapult Entrepreneurs and the principal consultant at Danikloo Consulting.



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Don Hurst
Director of WORKSAFELY™
Education and Training

Getting prepared for legalized marijuana

The upcoming legalization of marijuana on October 17th presents an opportunity for the companies in our industry to review their policies regarding drug and alcohol use and to review with supervisors and employees the consequences of impairment in the workplace.

From the outset of discussions about the legalization of marijuana, we have emphasized the use of existing policies to address safety challenges that may be anticipated as a result of legalization. The point to make is that legalization shouldn't change your existing approach to dealing with impairment in the workplace.

If you are interested in reviewing your drug and alcohol policies or need to create or improve your policy, please join us for a WORKSAFELY workshop on Managing Impairment in the Workplace, coming up on November 13th. Check out the training schedule to identify other training dates that may also meet your schedule.

In conjunction with these workshops we will be posting policies and tools on the resource section of the website to assist companies in addressing impairment in the workplace.

KNOW YOUR WORKSAFELY™ TEAM

Don Hurst, B.A., M.A. (Econ.)

Director, WORKSAFELY™ Education and Training
E: don@mhca.mb.ca T: 204-594-9051 C: 204-291-4740

Phil McDaniel, OH&S Cert., P. Gold Seal Cert, NCSO, CRM

COR™ Program Development & Quality Control Advisor
E: phil@mhca.mb.ca T: 204-594-9059 C: 204-997-5205

Ed Gregory, NCSO, OH&S Cert.

WORKSAFELY™ Safety Advisor, Southern Region
E: ed@mhca.mb.ca T: 204-594-9058 C: 204-227-6932

Randy Olynick, CRSP

WORKSAFELY™ Safety Advisor, Eastern Region
E: randy@mhca.mb.ca T: 204-594-9057 C: 204-295-3876

Trevor Shwaluk, NCSO

WORKSAFELY™ Safety Advisor, Central Region
E: trevor@mhca.mb.ca T: 204-594-9061 C: 204-871-0812

Dave McPherson, NCSO

WORKSAFELY™ Safety Advisor, Northern Region
E: dave@mhca.mb.ca C: 204-271-2088

Gerry McCombie, Gold Seal Cert, NCSO

WORKSAFELY™ Safety Advisor, Western Region
E: gerry@mhca.mb.ca C: 204-720-3362

Jackie Jones, CAE

WORKSAFELY™ COR™ Program, Education and Training Advisor
E: jackie@mhca.mb.ca T: 204-594-9054 C: 204-509-0384

Delaney Kunzelman-Gall, OH&S Cert.

WORKSAFELY™ Client Services Advisor
E: delaney@mhca.mb.ca T: 204-594-9060 C: 204-325-6170

Kristen Ranson

WORKSAFELY™ Administrative Assistant
E: kristen@mhca.mb.ca T: 204-594-9056 C: 204-330-3520



SAFETY TALK

Vibration hand-arm injuries

Continuous use of vibrating tools and equipment can cause a condition known as “hand-arm vibration syndrome.” Equipment and tool operators in the construction industry are at elevated risk, due to the prolonged exposure to vibration.

What’s the danger?

Symptoms include:

- Whitened fingertips, then whole fingers
- Numbness and tingling in the fingers
- Finger spasms
- Nerve damage and loss of feeling in fingertips
- Reduced grip strength

Often these symptoms will increase in frequency and pain over time. Risk can depend on:

- On/off versus continuous operation
- Duration the tool/equipment is used
- Temperature
- The magnitude of the vibration
- If the operator smokes

Protect yourself

- If possible, avoid using tools or equipment that vibrate
- Use tools/equipment with anti-vibration features built in
- Wear anti-vibration gloves (ISO standard 10819)
- Maintain equipment as poorly functioning tools can vibrate more
- Keep your body - particularly your hands - warm
- Take breaks while using vibrating tools
- Don’t smoke, as it reduces circulation of blood
- Exercise to maintain healthy blood circulation
- Don’t ignore symptoms; if they appear, see a doctor promptly

Print and review this talk with your staff, sign off and file for COR™ / SECOR audit purposes.

Date: _____

Performed by: _____

Concerns:

Employee Name:

Supervisor: _____

Location: _____

Corrective Actions:

Employee Signature:



Training Schedule

Construction Safety Excellence™

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BRANDON
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October 2018

- 10-11 Traffic Control Coordinator
- 15-16 COR™ Leadership in Safety Excellence**
- 17 COR™ Principles of Health & Safety Management**
- 18-19 COR™ Auditor**
- 23 Train the Trainer - Facilitation Skills
- 29 Excavating & Trenching 1/2 day AM
- 29 Transportation of Dangerous Goods 1/2 day PM

October 2018

- 29-30 COR™ Leadership in Safety Excellence**
- 31 COR™ Principles of Health & Safety Management**

November 2018

- 1-2 COR™ Auditor**

November 2018

- 1 COR™ Auditor Refresher 1/2 day AM**
- 5 Winter Roads 1/2 day AM
- 5 Emergency Response 1/2 day PM
- 13 Impairment in the Workplace 1/2 day AM
- 19-20 COR™ Leadership in Safety Excellence**
- 21 COR™ Principles of Health & Safety Management**
- 22-23 COR™ Auditor**

December 2018

- 4 Safety Committee/Representative 1/2 day AM
- 4 Flagperson 1/2 day PM
- 5 Train the Trainer-Facilitation Skills
- 6-7 Traffic Control Coordinator
- 10-11 COR™ Leadership in Safety Excellence**
- 12 COR™ Principles of Health & Safety Management**
- 13- COR™ Auditor**



A new deal for North Americans

By Peter G Hall, Vice President and Chief Economist

Monday was a very good day for Canada. Following months of tense negotiations, exporters woke up to the news that a new deal for North American trade was finally inked: the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). Suddenly, the number one concern for Canada's exporting community was taken off the table, adding badly-needed clarity to the economic future. So, what exactly does the new deal mean for Canada?

Here's one thing it doesn't mean: an immediate surge of exports. Despite tariffs - actual and threatened - and the general shroud of uncertainty, exports have been rolling along very nicely. They are currently up by 8 per cent this year, besting our bullish forecast. Amid the turmoil of the talks, global growth has churned away and exporters have continued to meet orders.

The stakes were high

That's admirable, because there was a lot at stake. At times it looked like the deal would be torn up. That wouldn't have single-handedly thrown us into recession, but it would have taken a huge bite out of the auto, electronics and food product industries, and caused a nasty spate of indirect impacts. Steel and aluminium tariffs raised input costs in the price-sensitive auto, aerospace and construction industries. Threats from the US Administration of a punishing tariff hike, far beyond the no-NAFTA MFN rates, transfixed the auto sector.

Investment: the bigger risk

If exports didn't blink, investment sure did. In conversations across the country I personally heard tales of investment hesitation. Some were sidelining their ventures, unsure of where to create new capacity, or whether to do that next refit of existing facilities. Others were under pressure from suppliers to relocate to a 'safer' place. Survey results said the same: 28 per cent said that NAFTA talks were having a negative impact on their business, while 6 per cent of respondents declared that they were uncertain enough to delay their investments. That wasn't an easy decision; new investments were badly needed, as many firms were running out of spare capacity, and there were also ample sources of funding.

With the greater certainty of a deal, this pent-up investment could soon begin to cascade into the economy. And with many plans already formulated, it could happen more quickly than usual. But will it happen in Canada, or has the fear-factor permanently impacted intentions? On that point, rising costs for labour, plant and equipment in both the US and Western Europe should work to Canada's advantage. Companies are expected to optimize much as they did prior to trade turmoil, so with negotiations now behind us, much unleashed investment is expected to find a home here.

Globalization ain't dead

Getting to this stage is a huge relief that extends far beyond the immediate situation. Until this point, the bluster has posed a credible threat to the process of globalization, feeding on the discontent of millions who believe that the concept itself is wrong-headed. Before this week, momentum seemed to be singularly in the protectionist camp. Instead, what is emerging is a

hard-edged approach to brokering better deals - upgrading and modernizing them to address today's business realities.

If true, then exporters' greatest uncertainty has been dealt with. But it also means that the process isn't over. It seems this is just the first of a number of deals that will follow the same playbook. Tariffs have been promised as a means of getting the attention of the 'other side', and, as in the case of steel and aluminium, will not necessarily be annulled on completion of a deal. Consequently, Canada's exporters can expect further bump and grind, and may even be able to capitalize on some of this. One consolation is that whether the effects are positive or negative, they will affect a much smaller share of overall trade.

The bottom line?

Uncertainty has been a huge hindrance to the global economy since the Great Recession. Doubts about trade in general, and the North American trade contract in particular, made things worse. With Sunday night's achievement, we are finally on the way to a more certain trade world - Canada has a green light to get on with growth.



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