

2024 Provincial Budget Submission

Introduction

The Manitoba Chambers of Commerce (MCC), established in 1931, is the umbrella organization for Manitoba’s chamber network. With a membership comprised of 65 local Chambers of Commerce, as well as hundreds of direct corporate members, MCC is the province’s largest and most diverse advocacy association for the business community, representing 10,000 organizations across all sectors.

Our vision is to “Make Manitoba the Best Place to Live and Work,” and our mission is to champion sustainable economic growth leading to greater prosperity for business and communities in Manitoba.

MCC has developed its MB Prosperity policy platform in collaboration with our extensive business network. This platform highlights areas that the provincial government is encouraged to focus on to drive economic growth in the province, with key recommendations for Budget 2024 stemming from this platform.

MCC is honoured to provide our recommendations to the provincial government as it develops Budget 2024 and is committed to working collaboratively to elevate Manitoba’s business community, help our communities prosper, and make Manitoba the best place to live and work.

Recommendations

The Manitoba Chambers of Commerce advocates for economic growth, quality of life, and prosperity for all Manitobans. Our membership is committed to working alongside the provincial government to champion opportunities and reduce barriers, contributing to making ***Manitoba the Best Place to Live and Work.***

Specifically for Budget 2024, on behalf of our network of 65 local Chambers of Commerce, MCC recommends that the provincial government takes the following actions:

Strengthen Economic Competitiveness and Business Confidence

- 1. Continue the momentum on making Manitoba's Personal and Payroll Taxes competitive on the national level.**
 - Adjustments to the personal tax brackets in 2024 puts Manitoba 6th in the country for tax collected at Manitoba's average salary of \$58,354. Progress is being made, but the equivalent salary provides a worker with more take-home pay in all other Western provinces. In BC, a worker brings home an additional \$2,229 in pay [1].
 - See Appendix: Income Tax Changes Making Small Steps Towards Competitiveness
 - See Appendix: Payroll Tax Reductions a Boost for Economic Development.
- 2. Publish economic metrics in Manitoba's annual report to track and demonstrate the efficacy of investments.**
 - Manitoba ranks 7th in the country for labour productivity and has fallen down the rankings compared to 2018 [2]. This key metric incorporates how efficient the labour force is at generating value per time working. If the provincial government correctly sets the conditions for businesses to thrive, this measure should increase compared to our neighboring provinces. Manitoba is in a tenuous fiscal position, and the government must optimize its investments to ensure that future generations have the capacity to support the services Manitobans want and need.
 - See Appendix: Labour Productivity Not Keeping Pace Nationally.
- 3. Ensure the Manitoba business community is consulted before introducing new legislation related to labour or with other business relevance.**
 - Predictability is fundamental to business confidence, economic recovery, and sustainability. Businesses need a stable policy environment with clear timelines, contracts, consultations, and strategies to help them plan and make long-term investments.

4. Make investments in sectors that provide the greatest opportunity for Manitoba's economic development:

- Green economy
 - The rationale for investing in the green economy is multi-faceted, with the potential for significant economic and environmental benefits. MCC is developing a roadmap for the green economy as part of its Manitoba's Green Advantage project which will help provide guidance on how to optimize investments in this sector.
 - See Appendix: Manitoba's Green Advantage.
- Tourism
 - Tourism spending in Manitoba is slated to grow by nearly \$1 billion by 2030 [3], with a significant influx of international spending expected as Winnipeg restores its airline connections with the United States post-pandemic. Additionally, Indigenous tourism has the potential for 300% growth as this burgeoning sector gains resources, capability, and connections [4].
 - Commit to sustaining the 95/5 funding model of support for Travel Manitoba.
- Critical Minerals
 - Manitoba should continue to support the Mining Association of Manitoba and initiatives such as the Manitoba Mineral Development Fund to drive the burgeoning critical mineral industry in the province. Manitoba can realize significant economic development opportunities while advancing Indigenous partnerships, supporting the transition to clean technologies, and reducing reliance on foreign countries for raw minerals. BloombergNEF recently ranked Canada as the top supply chain for batteries in the world, and Manitoba has the resources to be a significant contributor if the proper investments are made [5].
 - While the export of metal ores and minerals is still a small portion of Manitoba's exports, the growth in the value of exports jumped 64% in 2023 [6], demonstrating the potential for this industry to provide significant economic benefits to the province if the exploration activities underway convert to active mining operations.
- Manitoba's North
 - Manitoba's Indigenous population is underrepresented in the labour force, making up 18.1% of the population but only 13.5% of the labour force [7]. By increasing economic inclusion for this under-represented group, Manitoba will see an increase to its overall economic output. Investments needed to increase access include remote connectivity and improved infrastructure. Additionally, by improving trade-enabling infrastructure such as the Hudson's Bay Railway, Northern Manitoba can serve as the conduit to service Nunavut and remote communities further growing Manitoba's economy.

Attract and Retain Manitoba's Talent

5. Allocate funding to develop a strategy to eliminate interprovincial migration losses.

- Manitoba is rich in diversity in both its people and opportunities. We also have one of the youngest populations in Canada with a median age of 37.7 years [8]. Capitalizing on our youth talent will be one of our most significant opportunities in the years ahead. With such a diversified economy, there are tremendous opportunities in Manitoba for young people.
- Incorporate the recommendations of the upcoming release of the Manitoba Youth Talent Attraction and Retention Project Report facilitated by MCC.

6. Expedite foreign credential recognition.

- The Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program has positioned Manitoba as a leader in attracting talent to the province. However, there is a significant opportunity to maximize the retention rate, as over 25% of immigrants left the province within the year when arriving in 2020 [9]. By providing immigrants coming to Manitoba with a career that is commensurate with their training, Manitoba can increase its retention rate and provide needed skilled workers to its tight labour market.

Facilitate Global Trade and Reduce Barriers

7. Allocate funding to develop a Manitoba trade strategy and realize the province's robust export potential.

- In 2023, Manitoba exported over \$15.5 billion of its total \$21.5 billion in exports to the United States, with China being the only other country that imported over \$1 billion in goods from Manitoba [10]. This reliance on a single trade partner shows the potential for significant export growth that could be had with greater awareness of Manitoban products and companies. Manitoba needs an overarching strategy to increase exports by leveraging the 14 trade agreements with over 50 countries around the world, including Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) (North America), Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) (Europe), Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for TransPacific Partnership (CPTPP) (Trans-Pacific), among others [8].
- Incorporate successful elements from other provincial trade programs such as the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership (STEP).

8. Make strategic and sustained investments in trade enabling infrastructure.

- Strategic infrastructure investment provides some of the highest returns to our GDP in repeat economic analyses [8].
- Invest in core, community, and educational infrastructure to support vibrant, healthy communities connected within the province and to our trading partners with available fiscal capacity.

Build Strong, Resilient, and Healthy Communities

9. Provide predictable and reliable funding for municipalities and return the PST paid by Manitoba municipalities.

- The Manitoba government ended the seven year-freeze on municipal operating basket funding and provided additional funding for strategic infrastructure investments. However, for municipal planning purposes, it would be advantageous to establish a funding model that provides predictable funding with suitable annual escalation to match inflation.
- Manitoba municipalities pay provincial sales tax (PST) on the goods and services they purchase. While the federal government gives what municipalities spend in GST back in the form of a rebate, local governments pay more than \$25 million to the provincial government in PST each year and are not rebated for this expenditure. Municipalities receive less than 10 cents of every tax dollar and yet are responsible for 60% of public infrastructure [11].

10. Implement the recommendations from the joint Manitoba Chambers of Commerce and Doctors Manitoba report: Manitoba's Physician Shortage: Physician Recruitment and Retention Recommendations from the Rural & Northern Health Summit

- Manitoba has the lowest number of family physicians per capita in Canada at 108 per 100,000 residents and has the third lowest number of specialist physicians per capita. The physician shortage is even more acute in rural and Northern Manitoba, with a ratio as low as 92 physicians per 100,000 residents in the Interlake-Eastern region [8].
- Accessible healthcare is important to all Manitobans, including to the business community, and reliable, quality care is essential to rural and northern economies. Healthcare is an economic issue because without a strong healthcare system, we cannot support the attraction of new residents and businesses, we are unable to promote tourism with confidence, and we restrict Manitobans' ability to age in place.

Drive Awareness of the *Manitoba Advantage*

11. Allocate funding to develop a campaign to market the *Manitoba Advantage*.

- Lastly, MCC recommends investing in a broad outreach and awareness campaign to capitalize on the *Manitoba Advantage*. In collaboration with Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources, PrairiesCan, and Economic Development Winnipeg, MCC has completed initial work to understand the key advantages of investing and conducting business in Manitoba. The provincial government is highly encouraged to build on this by expanding awareness outside of the country and to attract workers to Manitoba.
- See Appendix: The Manitoba Advantage

Conclusion

Budget 2024 will send an important message from government to not only the Manitoba business community but all Manitobans that the government understands the challenges we are all facing. By focusing greater attention on key economic indicators and measuring our success, we can generate results including significant prosperity for all Manitobans. MCC believes that although we are experiencing strong inflationary pressures and an unprecedented labour shortage, it is imperative that we focus on growing our economy and leveraging our strengths through a strategic, focused and results-driven approach.

The reality is that all countries, provinces, and communities depend on a growing economy to meet the needs of citizens. The Province of Manitoba must focus on creating a competitive economic climate that provides business with the confidence and certainty needed to grow, invest, and create jobs and opportunities for Manitobans.

As always, the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce and the chamber network are excited to work with all levels of government to achieve this.

Appendix: Supporting Information

2023 Manitoba Business Outlook Survey Results

The Manitoba Chambers of Commerce retained Léger to conduct its annual Manitoba Business Outlook Survey that provides data from members and partners. The primary purpose of this research is to equip MCC with statistically reliable feedback from Manitoba businesses about their goals, performance, and challenges. Feedback and insights help shape our policy priorities and drive our advocacy work. It is critically important for MCC to hear directly from business as we focus on driving competitiveness and identifying obstacles to growth for Manitoba's business community. The survey was available online in late November and early December 2023. The published results are available here: <https://mbchamber.mb.ca/policy-and-advocacy/manitoba-business-outlook-survey/>

Key information related to Budget 2024 is highlighted below:

Cost Pressures Are Biggest Business Challenge for 2024

71% of businesses highlighted that increased costs or inflation is the biggest barrier to growth for their business, with inflation and cost pressures being the largest challenge ahead. In recent years, workforce attraction and retention was the biggest challenge so this shift demonstrates how much attention cost pressures are drawing from company management. Budget 2024 should prevent adding additional cost burdens to businesses.

Manitoba Businesses Don't Believe Manitoba is Competitive Nationally

Less than half of survey respondents saw the Manitoba business climate as competitive on the national stage. The payroll and personal tax rates here mean that businesses and their employees don't keep as much of their earnings compared to other provinces. However, reducing those taxes and providing training and workforce development incentives are the top options that the business community supports as ways to become more competitive.

Businesses Looking to Hire at a Record Rate

From all the data that MCC has collected, responses this year noted the greatest amount of hiring expected that has been recorded. 31% of firms were looking to grow their workforce, with only 9% expecting to see reductions in staffing. Given that Manitoba is at a record low rate of unemployment at 4.0% [12], businesses will have to rely on extraprovincial recruitment or will need to offer increased compensation to attract high-quality employees. This will serve as another barrier to growth for businesses already constrained by costs.

Businesses Utilizing Government Funding as a Key Source of Capital

20% of businesses accessed government funding in the last year, highlighting the important role that government plays in fueling business growth. Additionally, there was a strong sentiment that some funding should be allocated to businesses that are majority owned by women and/or underrepresented groups. Nearly half of all respondents thought that more than 20% of government funding should be reserved for these businesses. However, survey data showed that Manitoba Small Business Venture Capital Tax Credit was largely unknown in the business community, with almost half of respondents being unaware of the program. Given the potential for growing firms to benefit from local investment, there could be significant benefit from greater awareness of this program.

Businesses Have an Optimistic Outlook

Despite the cost pressures from inflation and labour market tightness, businesses are more likely to have an extremely positive outlook for the future than in prior years. Survey responses answering that they were “Very optimistic” about their business increased 35% over the past year. This indicates that businesses are willing to collaborate to achieve the great potential of our province.

Income Tax Changes Making Small Steps Towards Competitiveness

The changes to the income tax brackets in 2024 have made Manitoba more attractive when compared to other provinces in Canada. However, we still trail all the Western provinces in terms of income tax competitiveness. For a resident earning the average salary in Manitoba, \$58,354, they would grow their after-tax income by \$509 should they move to Saskatchewan and would have an extra \$2,229 if they moved to BC.

Comparison of Income Tax Burden for Residents by Province for a salary of \$58,354 [1]

Province	2023		2024		
	After Tax Income	Income Advantage over MB	After Tax Income	Income Advantage over MB	Relative Advantage over MB
MB	\$ 46,474		\$ 47,000		
BC	\$ 48,895	\$ 2,421	\$ 49,229	\$ 2,229	4.7%
ON	\$ 48,854	\$ 2,380	\$ 49,216	\$ 2,216	4.7%
AB	\$ 47,842	\$ 1,368	\$ 48,173	\$ 1,173	2.5%
SK	\$ 47,131	\$ 657	\$ 47,509	\$ 509	1.1%
NB	\$ 46,773	\$ 299	\$ 47,175	\$ 175	0.4%
QC	\$ 46,675	\$ 201	\$ 46,927	-\$ 73	-0.2%
NL	\$ 46,423	-\$ 51	\$ 46,806	-\$ 194	-0.4%
PEI	\$ 46,052	-\$ 422	\$ 46,469	-\$ 531	-1.1%
NS	\$ 45,421	-\$ 1,053	\$ 45,665	-\$ 1,335	-2.8%
MB Rank	7		6		

Payroll Tax Reductions a Boost for Economic Development

Manitobans’ average earnings are over 9% less than the Canadian average, and Manitoba ranks 8th out of all provinces for average earnings [13]. A barrier to Manitobans earning higher wages is the Health and Post-Secondary Education Tax Levy that is a disincentive for companies to hire more employees and to pay them a higher salary. Fortunately, in recent years this barrier has been reduced, allowing companies to offer their employees a larger salary more easily. Since 2020, the disparity between Manitoban and Canadian average earnings has fallen by 1.1%. Importantly, the disparity between Manitoba and Saskatchewan has fallen from 9.9% to only 5.9% as of 2023. Providing more competitive wages when compared to other provinces allows for Manitoba companies to better compete on the national stage and attract workers from other provinces. Over half of large businesses in Manitoba hired extra-provincially in the last two years and being able to offer competitive compensation is needed to recruit the high-quality talent needed to spur the growth of Manitoba’s largest firms.

Despite the reductions in the Health and Post-Secondary Education Tax Levy, the province still has been able to still grow its revenues per capita. In fiscal year 2023, the provincial government recorded revenues that were \$3,500 more per person than in 2018 [14] [15]. Even when factoring in inflation, the provincial government revenue per capita has climbed nearly 9% since 2018. Given this increase in relative financial capacity, there is evidence that the province has sufficient revenue from other sources to continue reducing the payroll tax consistent with prior posted plans.

Labour Productivity Not Keeping Pace Nationally

Manitoba is falling behind other Canadian provinces for how efficiently workers can generate value for the province. In 2018, Manitoba generated \$58,000 in activity per worker, which only rose to \$58,800 in 2022. Now Manitoba trails the Canadian average by nearly \$6,000 (10%) [2]. For Manitoba to increase its standard of living, worker productivity is critical and should be a key metric for tracking success of government investments in the province. Importantly, Canada trails the United States by a significant margin for this metric, and Manitoba even more so.

Comparison of Annual Labour Productivity (000's per worker) by Province, chained 2017 dollars [2]

	2018	Rank	2022	Rank	Annual Change
Manitoba	58.0	6	58.8	7	0.3%
Alberta	78.7	1	78.9	1	0.1%
Saskatchewan	75.1	3	75.2	2	0.0%
Newfoundland and Labrador	76.1	2	74.7	3	-0.5%
British Columbia	61.1	5	64.6	4	1.4%
Ontario	62.5	4	63.5	5	0.4%
Quebec	56.8	7	59.7	6	1.3%
New Brunswick	50.9	8	52.0	8	0.5%
Nova Scotia	49.9	9	51.7	9	0.9%
Prince Edward Island	46.5	10	49.2	10	1.4%
Canadian Average	63		64.7		0.7%
United States (non-farm business only) [16]					1.8%

Appendix: Manitoba Chambers of Commerce Initiatives

Manitoba's Green Advantage

Project Overview

This project aims to generate economic growth by capturing the opportunities ahead for Manitoba in the green economy. This project will have two distinct phases with the first being the creation of an economic roadmap identifying key areas for investment which would lead to a competitive advantage for the province. Second, this project will offer a grant program to help kickstart action at small businesses that are working in alignment with the green economy roadmap.

Economic Roadmap

This roadmap will be a comprehensive outline to guide investments that will fuel Manitoba's green economy and create a competitive advantage for the province. By examining the strengths of the provincial economy, existing and emerging technologies, and green finance, a comprehensive plan will be developed including tangible steps to seize this exciting opportunity.

Funding Program for Greening Small and Medium Enterprises

Once the green economy roadmap is completed, a granting program will be established that will facilitate increased adoption of sustainable practices at small businesses. This will build upon the work done through the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce Climate Action Toolkit for Small and Medium Enterprises previously funded by the Conservation and Climate Fund.

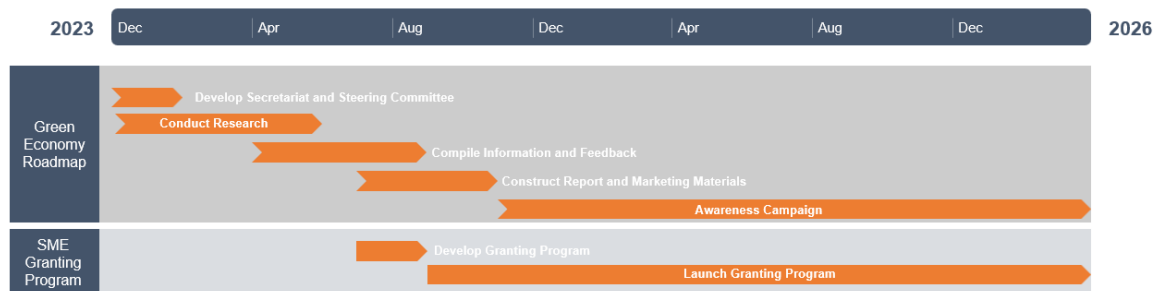
Project Budget

The project budget totals \$2.5 million, with funding allocated to project delivery, salaries and labour, and program development and delivery.

Project Oversight

The project will be executed by a project director and project manager with resources, support, and oversight from the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce. Additionally, a steering committee will be announced that will be composed of business community members and will provide strategic guidance, ensure alignment on project goals, and provide oversight to ensure project success.

Project Timeline



The Manitoba Advantage

Issue

Manitoba has an awareness problem that affects many distinct aspects of its business community and economy. Without a national presence, potential workers aren't aware of the opportunities and successes seen in the province, leading to a tighter labour market and to unfilled positions, which put a drag on business output and GDP. Additionally, federal investment into Manitoba businesses lags significantly, further hampering economic growth. Without a strong national and international presence, foreign companies aren't aware of the opportunities in Manitoba, and foreign investment passes over the province. Additionally, connections in foreign markets for Manitoban companies to leverage for exporting their existing products leads to lower outcomes for business. Lastly, even Manitobans aren't aware of the many advantages and successes of the business community here. By elevating the profile of business here in the province, we can boost domestic investment and our young workers can find meaningful careers right here at home.

Solution

It's time for Manitoba to show off its advantages and attract the workers, investment, and businesses that will drive Manitoba's economy forward. This project would create a campaign and strategy to forge key business connections to improve interest in Manitoba and create pathways to foreign success for existing Manitoban companies. It would also elevate the profile of the province to drive demand for migration to Manitoba on both the national and international level. Finally, the campaign would help shift the culture of Manitoba that frequently devalues the success of local businesses helping to foster greater domestic investment and reveal desirable career pathways for young workers and students.

In collaboration with Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources (EDITNR), PrairiesCan, and Economic Development Winnipeg (EDW) MCC has completed initial work to communicate the key advantages of investing and doing business in Manitoba. We would engage with a third-party marketing firm to build a campaign around this work and grow it to encompass the aspects of including worker attraction. This public marketing campaign to attract potential investors, companies, and employees to the province will be strategically launched in select markets and here in Manitoba.

Additionally, strategic travel to key events would allow Manitoba to raise its profile on the National and International stages and forge connections that can be leveraged for business success.

An advisory committee comprised of the Province's Economic partners, including Economic Development Winnipeg (EDW), Rural Manitoba Economic Development Corporation (RMED), Communities Economic Development Fund (CEDF), Business Council of Manitoba, Travel Manitoba, and World Trade Centre Winnipeg (WTC), in partnership with the Province of Manitoba, would oversee the initiative.

Final materials would be shared by all partners on social media channels.

Timeline

Date	Activity
April	Manitoba Advantage staff hiring
May	Convene meetings with critical partners
May	Sourcing of consulting and marketing partners (Manitoba companies only)
May	Develop strategy to elevate the Manitoba Advantage at key economic development events, tradeshow, and with federal departments
June	Begin hosting and attending events
July	Launch the Manitoba Advantage campaign
March 2025	Report on results and advise on next steps

Costs

Category	Cost (000's)
Salaries	\$225
Marketing and communications	\$500
Consultants and contractors	\$375
Travel and events	\$150
Total	\$1,250

Salaries include: two staff to coordinate contractors and marketing activities, conduct research, collaborate with local organizations, and travel for meetings, tradeshow, and other events.

Marketing and communications costs include: website development highlighting the Manitoba Advantage, tradeshow material development, material production, and other related costs.

Consultants and contractors costs include: market research, tradeshow representation, data collection, and other related costs.

Travel and events costs include: travel and accommodation, event hosting, logistics, and other related costs.

Results

A campaign of this nature is intended to create greater awareness of the opportunities that exist in Manitoba, provide focus on the Manitoba value proposition, encourage local businesses and economic development organizations to embrace a proactive approach and most importantly result in a reverse of the interprovincial migration loss of talent to other provinces. It's time to be bold and showcase Manitoba's strategic advantages. Let's make Manitoba the best place to work and live.

Evidence of Feasibility

While the [Alberta is Calling](#) campaign was purely focused on attracting residents, it shows the power of a well-communicated advantage targeted to the right audience. The result was that over [17,000](#) Canadians left their provinces to settle in Alberta. This strong pull led to BC having five quarters of net interprovincial outmigration for the first time in over a decade. While this same level of success should not be expected, an improvement on Manitoba's outmigration would be a massive boost for the long-term prospects of the economy. Alberta budgeted nearly [\\$5 million](#) on the campaign in the 22/23 fiscal year (a cost of less than \$300 per new immigrant). In Manitoba, the

average worker generated income tax of \$4,366 [14], meaning that if Manitoba could capture an equivalent number of new immigrants it would generate over \$74 million in personal income taxes. This demonstrates the strong economic benefits that might result from such the Manitoba Advantage campaign.

Key Outcomes from Driving Awareness of the Manitoba Advantage

1. Business Development Opportunities

- a. By having pathways and connections in foreign markets, Manitoban businesses can be assisted with growing their available market size and can leverage existing logistics channels for product/service export.

2. Foreign Direct Investment Growth

- a. Creating awareness of the success and opportunities in Manitoba will lead to greater interest from foreign investors and companies. Breaking the perception that Manitoba is just “cold and snowy,” will lead to consideration for national and international investments.

3. Workforce Development

- a. Manitoba has a tight labour market that is dependent on immigration to fill new jobs that are created. By raising the profile of Manitoba, greater interest from other locations will be had that can help fill labour market needs, especially for specialized or skilled talent.

4. Increased Local Success

- a. Manitoba businesses are less likely to receive investment due to the perceived lack of world leading status or potential. By elevating the success we already have, existing investors will be more willing to commit funding to local success stories, and the next generation of talent will be more excited by the local opportunities and may forego emigration to other provinces.

5. Capturing Manitoba’s Share of Federal Funding

- a. Manitoba’s businesses have received the lowest amount of Federal funding per capita over the last four years. The profile of the Manitoba business community must be elevated in Ottawa to ensure that Manitoba receives its fair share of funding so that our economic growth can be accelerated.

Why the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce?

There are few other organizations that have the capacity to execute a campaign like this and the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce is uniquely positioned because:

- MCC represents the Voice of Business, with broad representation across the province.
- MCC is sector agnostic and works well with non-business organizations like Doctors MB.
- MCC has proven success with past broad initiatives.
- MCC is developing the Youth Retention and Attraction Report which will help drive this initiative.
- MCC can leverage the Canadian Chamber network with connections across the country.
- MCC has broad name recognition with 93 years of history.

The Manitoba Advantage Overview

PRAIRIE PROSPERITY

MANITOBA'S **BRIGHT** ECONOMIC FUTURE



Located at the geographical centre of North America, Manitoba is home to a **population of 1.44M** including over one eighth of Canada's Indigenous population and is the National Homeland of the Red River Métis. With a real **GDP of \$64.6B** in 2022, Manitoba's strength lies in its stable economy and diversity - across sectors, in its natural resources, and its people.

GROWTH SECTORS



Critical Mineral Development – Home to 29 of the 31 minerals on Canada's 2021 Critical Minerals List, their significant economic value and strategic importance for Canada's transition to green energy places Manitoba in a pivotal role for the country.



Green Economy - Leveraging its inexpensive and renewable hydroelectric power, Manitoba has an opportunity to capitalize on green hydrogen production, biofuels, and CleanTech innovations.

ESTABLISHED SECTORS



Agriculture & Agri-Food

Manitoba's agricultural landscape spans a diverse spectrum with 19 grain companies and 9 national councils headquartered in Manitoba.

Roquette has established the largest pea protein facility in the world.

Maple Leaf Foods is a carbon neutral company that built the Bacon Centre of Excellence.



Life Sciences

Surging over the last five years: capital raised rose by 40%, R&D investments increased by 46%, and exports soared by 170%.

IVC Vita Health is Canada's largest private label manufacturer of OTC drug products.

Emergent Biosolutions produces products included in the U.S. Strategic National Stockpile.



Manufacturing

Manitoba's leading export sector, with 68k employees across 1,371 companies, saw a 2023 sales increase of 23.3%, surpassing Canada's average of 15.8%.

NFI Group Inc. has supplied over 3,000 zero-emission buses to over 150 cities for clean public transit.

MacDon has been world leader in the manufacturing of high-performance agricultural equipment for more than 75 years.

THE MANITOBA ADVANTAGE

AN ATTRACTIVE PLACE TO INVEST AND **GROW**



**BUSINESSES ARE
CHOOSING TO INVEST
IN MANITOBA.**



COST-EFFECTIVE BUSINESS

Manitoba offers **cost-effective advantages** with **low rent, land prices, and electricity rates**. 'Class A' commercial rental space in Winnipeg averages \$19.37/sq. ft compared to significantly higher rates in Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal.



TRANSPORTATION AND LOGISTICS

As the **geographical centre of North America**, Manitoba serves as a **vital hub for transportation and trade**. Manitoba is home to **CentrePort Canada**, North America's largest tri-modal inland port, which offers **Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) advantages** for businesses located there. Recent developments at CentrePort Canada and the Port of Churchill signify a transformative leap in the province's transportation capabilities.



WORKFORCE STRENGTH

Manitoba boasts a strong and diverse workforce. Our gold-standard **Provincial Nominee Program** offers three streams to **recruit new talent from around the world**.

MB Prosperity Policy Platform

MB Prosperity is the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce’s strategy to promote economic growth and resilience in the province of Manitoba. Its policy recommendations inform a forward-looking platform to promote long-term prosperity in our province.

At the MCC, we believe that for our province to achieve the level of prosperity needed to lift Manitoba’s economy to a level that is genuinely competitive with other Canadian jurisdictions, the provincial government must enhance its focus on economic growth and competitiveness. As we navigate both high inflation and unprecedented talent shortages, the economy must be the driving force behind government decision-making, and investments must demonstrate a strong return.

A strong economy is important for Manitoba because it means employment to fill in-demand jobs, it creates wealth, and it generates the tax revenue that gives the provincial government an ability to invest in programs and systems that are critically important for all Manitobans, including healthcare, education, housing, and social services. The business community will play a critical role in Manitoba’s economic development and future prosperity.

Looking ahead, policymakers will need to channel limited resources to where they will have the greatest impact. These investments should be accompanied by a strategy to support business and economic competitiveness. The MB prosperity platform recommendations are summarized below:

PILLARS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p data-bbox="363 1062 685 1176">Strengthen Economic Competitiveness and Business Confidence</p> 	<p data-bbox="743 940 1289 1037">Commit to eliminating the payroll tax and focus on personal tax competitiveness, including continued increases to the Basic Personal Amount and continued upward adjustments to personal income tax brackets.</p> <p data-bbox="743 1050 1305 1121">Invest in sectors and industries with the greatest strategic opportunity in Manitoba, including critical mineral development, the green economy, agri-food, transportation and bioscience.</p> <p data-bbox="743 1134 1305 1251">Ensure equitable access to capital by supporting businesses owned by women and underrepresented entrepreneurs with valuable venture and growth capital through the Manitoba First Fund, making sure that all Manitoba businesses can expand and thrive here at home.</p> <p data-bbox="743 1264 1305 1331">Consult with businesses and other stakeholders prior to introducing new legislation or regulations that significantly impact labour and/or the business community.</p>
<p data-bbox="386 1428 662 1499">Attract and Retain Manitoba’s Talent</p> 	<p data-bbox="743 1352 1289 1444">Foster stronger alignment between post-secondary education and employers and establish a new governance framework to address deficiencies in the quality and sharing of Labour Market Information.</p> <p data-bbox="743 1457 1289 1499">Develop a strategy to tackle net interprovincial migration losses within the first 12 months in office.</p> <p data-bbox="743 1512 1305 1604">Improve labour market outcomes for Manitoba’s Indigenous population by committing to the creation of an Indigenous-led strategy and ensure meaningful collaboration in the development of provincial economic growth and labour policies.</p> <p data-bbox="743 1617 1305 1709">Expedite and streamline foreign credential recognition and work with regulatory authorities. Improve Manitoba’s immigrant retention rate by extending regional immigration programs and wrap around settlement services for both primary immigrants and their families.</p>

PILLARS

RECOMMENDATIONS

<p>Facilitate Global Trade and Reduce Barriers</p> 	<p>Commit to developing a clear and robust trade strategy in Manitoba to build international trade opportunities for Manitoba businesses, and to take full advantage of our province's export potential.</p> <p>Work with the federal government on the mutual recognition of regulations, rules, and policies to allow for the free movement of labour, goods, and services in and out of Manitoba.</p> <p>Commit to a strategic, sustained, and disciplined approach to investment in Manitoba's core infrastructure.</p> <p>Develop a consistent, coordinated approach to Indigenous consultation and accommodation which clearly identifies Indigenous rights and responsibilities and the duties of the Crown and the role of industry as a stakeholder supporting the process.</p>
<p>Build Strong, Resilient and Healthy Communities</p> 	<p>Implement all five recommendations with supporting actions from the joint MCC and Doctors Manitoba report titled Manitoba's Physician Shortage: Physician Recruitment and Retention Recommendations from the Rural & Northern Health Summit.</p> <p>Ensure that Manitoba has the necessary supply of trained ECEs by expanding training options, improving access to ECE programs through added financial support, and valuing the work of ECEs by ensuring it is a well-compensated profession with benefits and improved working conditions.</p> <p>Ensure that Manitoba municipalities have the resources and predictable funding they need to create safe communities.</p> <p>Establish a simplified, fair, and predictable funding model for municipalities, and rebate the more than \$25 million in PST paid on an annual basis by Manitoba municipalities.</p>

At the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, we believe that for our province to achieve the level of prosperity needed to lift Manitoba's economy to a level that is genuinely attractive compared with other Canadian jurisdictions, the provincial government must consider these four pillars as it develops the new budget.

For almost a century, the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce has been the independent, non-partisan, indispensable partner of Manitoba business. We look forward to working alongside the provincial government as it implements Budget 2024 as we work towards a prosperous future for all Manitobans.

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