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SASKATCHEWAN'S CONSTRUCTION MAGAZINE

HOPE

THINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN 2021

**2021 ECONOMIC RECOVERY
OPPORTUNITIES**

**CHANGE RESILIENT
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Mark Cooper, President & CEO,
Saskatchewan Construction Association*



Hope.

Hope is light, and light resists the darkness.

As 2020, a year that can safely be described as a waking nightmare, draws to a close, we must stoke the fire of hope within our hearts. In this issue of *We Build*, I have asked our contributors to share with you, our loyal readers, their view of the many things we can hope for and look forward to in 2021.

Read the pages of this issue and know that there is every reason to

believe 2021 will be a better year for us in Saskatchewan, in Canada, and across the world. We have every reason to believe that by the end of 2021 we will all have access to an effective COVID-19 vaccine and will be beginning to move into a post COVID world. I hesitate to say, "returning to normal", because I believe that the virus has inalterably shifted our future. It will be up to us - in our attitudes and decisions - to determine whether this shift moves us into a brighter or dimmer future.

The holidays are generally a time of

joy and hope for many. It can also be a challenging time for others. As we remain in the throes of the virus, most of us will be forced to alter our traditional holiday plans. We may have to spend this time apart from our family and friends. While we might be by ourselves, we are not alone. Across the world our fellow humans are all sharing in this same global experience. This shared experience is something that binds us together, and, if we open ourselves to it, also strengthens us.

On Monday, December 21st, we will reach a key point - the Winter solstice.



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On that day, just four days before Christmas, we will experience the longest night of the year. Every day thereafter, the days get longer. As I was prepping for this issue of *We Build*, and thinking about the solstice, I was reminded of the quote from philosopher Bernard Williams who wrote that, "There was never a night or a problem that could defeat sunrise or hope."

On December 22nd, we will begin to leave 2020 behind us. The days will get longer and brighter. The nights shorter. As Charles Lindbergh once said, "Time is no longer endless or the horizon destitute of hope." I know I'm not alone in my belief that 2021 will be filled with reasons for hope, optimism, and joy.

For now, as 2020 draws to a close, I leave you with this simple prayer: may your hearts and lives be filled with joy, peace, and hope.

See you in 2021! 🏠

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MEMBER SERVICES UPDATE



Work completed for YOU this quarter, and what's around the corner

Merry Christmas, members! This year I'd like to give you the gift of member value.

In all our calls with you over the spring and summer to check in, learn about your challenges and opportunities in this pandemic, one thing was abundantly clear; we need to get better at telling our story. That's why this issue is themed "Hope", highlighting all the things that we have to look forward to in the coming year, including member successes and opportunities, and reminding you of what our advocacy efforts do to enhance your success.

I'd like to take a moment to show you what value we brought to you since our last issue, and what you can expect next.

2020 Election Campaign: SKCA brought your messages front and centre

SKCA made a lot of noise in this provincial election campaign, getting in front of members, political figures, and the public. The messages we pushed were based on member priorities: no exemptions for prompt payment, supporting local, growing the economy, and improving public procurement practices. More details on each can be

found here: <https://www.scaonline.ca/news.html?id=472>.

Our messages were broadcast loud and clear across television, online news editorials, *We Build* magazine, industry newsletters, social platforms, personal emails, and more. We experienced some great successes:

- SKCA held a virtual press conference highlighting our industry issues, cementing our position early in the campaign;
- SKCA obtained and published party responses to our questions on policy issues pertinent to members;

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- SKCA sent members weekly elections updates and explainer vlogs on our policy messages and how they could be involved;
- SKCA provided members with door-knock flyers and sharable statistics for use when interacting with candidates;
- Members sent letters to their local candidates using our automated letter-writing tool; and
- Our social media campaign reached over 320,000 Saskatchewan residents, gaining over 470,000 impressions, and 500 clicks.

Now that the campaign is over, what's next?

We've sent the congratulatory letters and requests for meetings with each of the MLAs. We'll be watching out for this new government's priorities and what the cabinet shuffle will mean for members. Our priority focus will be on the latest creation of a new ministry, a combination of SaskBuilds, Priority Saskatchewan, and Central Services. This is a huge step toward efficiently coordinating procurement policies across government.

Prompt Payment: SKCA has begun setting up the adjudication authority


As part of our election campaign, we pressured the government to commit to an enforcement date of no later than April 1, 2021, and to remove any exemptions to the new law. Over the course of the fall, we've been building up our list of industry-experienced experts to serve as adjudicators in the "Authority", which is the process that will determine the outcome of any prompt payment disputes. The response has been excellent so far.

What's are the next steps for Prompt Payment to come into force?

We'll be developing a dedicated online portal where people can go and find out what their rights are and what steps they need to take to launch an adjudication. This will include educational videos, fee structure, and a contract position to manage the administration of the Authority.


SKCA has been encouraging Saskatchewan to stay open for business



SKCA is part the Saskatchewan Business Council (SBC), a strong voice of over 30 business groups and chambers across the province. The group has publicly announced its support for the Government of Saskatchewan's COVID-19 restrictions



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In all our calls with you over the spring and summer to check in, learn about your challenges and opportunities in this pandemic, one thing was abundantly clear; we need to get better at telling our story.

and urged the public to consider the irrevocable consequences of what a total lockdown would mean for our economy, in a time where such extreme measures are not necessary.

What's next for Saskatchewan businesses during the pandemic?

If the government and our medical professionals determine a lockdown is necessary, we will oblige. Until such time, we will lobby for businesses and construction sites to stay open for as long as they can accommodate the restrictions in place: mask up, follow hygiene protocols, socially distance, and stay home if you're sick.

In 2021, SKCA will be working to ensure you have more opportunities to build relationships and find the work you need to be successful.

As well as the items above, we're

continuously striving to better engage with architects and engineers to bridge the gap between designers and builders and offer avenues for two-way communication and genuine collaboration. Similarly, it is our purpose to lead industry engagement with public and private sector owners on the procurement file, ensuring member companies have the best possible advantage when it comes to finding and winning local work.

Finally, expect to see a lot more from SKCA in terms of sharing industry statistics, developing an economic dashboard, reports on the conditions necessary to improve private-sector investment in Saskatchewan, and opportunities and challenges faced by Saskatchewan's key industries and the role that construction can play in supporting their growth.

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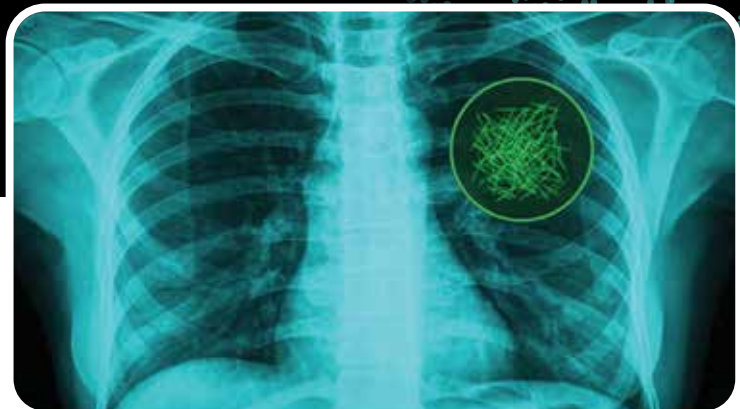


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2021 ECONOMIC RECOVERY OPPORTUNITIES AND OBSTACLES



By Darla Lindbjerg, MBA, CCE, C.Dir | Senior Strategy Advisor, Prairie Sky Strategy

Many people in Saskatchewan have experienced one of two extremes in 2020. On one side, there is a large swath of our population that have lost their jobs, closed their business doors, and are struggling day-to-day. On the extreme other side, a narrower swath of individuals and businesses have seen the best year they've ever had. The challenge is that not many fall in the middle.

A shocking reality is hitting many as our economy has been shut down for a second time, mortgage forbearance has come to an end, and mass currency creation is taking place, which is affecting our purchasing power. What you don't hear much about is the possibilities for our economy.

We are a resource-based economy and, therefore, we have many things going for us, including a new wave of investment that will begin flowing into the resource sector, low fuel costs, and investment of public dollars into infrastructure spending. I would argue that Saskatchewan people are some of the strongest, most resilient, and hardest working in the world. This is not the first or the last economic crisis that our economy will face. Often, we can't control what comes at us, but we can control how we respond to it.

In every situation, there's an opportunity. Many of the opportunities coming out of 2020 depend on decisions made by our elected officials. First, we know that the Bank of Canada, like all central banks around the world, is currently printing money to infinity and beyond. Our federal government has allowed this to happen through fiscal policy. The Bank of Canada has used monetary policy to lower interest rates to historic levels and are on the verge of taking these rates negative, following others like Japan, Spain, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden. There is a positive and a negative side to this unlimited money printing and the current stagflation we are experiencing: a combination of stagnant economic growth, high unemployment, and increasing inflation.

On the positive side, it means that you'll see significant dollars being moved into infrastructure spending by governments and debt creation in the form of loans to consumers. Why would loans be positive? Because we operate in a Keynesian economy – debt is what drives our economic growth, and currency creation drives inflation. The combination of low interest rates with the value of our debt being reduced through currency devaluation

results in the cost of borrowing being cheap in the near future.

On the negative side, the more dollars that are created, the more our currency is devalued, and therefore, the daily goods and services we rely on will increase in price. Negative interest rates may sound appealing, and if you are living on debt, they are. However negative rates haven't been successful in stimulating economic activity in Japan and Europe. Denmark and Sweden have now begun pulling this monetary policy back. If central banks continue moving toward the creation of digital currencies and negative interest rates are in place, it will create a challenging environment for savers, as negative interest rates will effectively siphon money out of consumer savings accounts and act as an additional tax on the general public.

Additional opportunities in 2021 to watch for

1. Liquidation of assets into the market will create a buying opportunity for those who have cash set aside or by using cheap debt to purchase them.
2. If things get worse before things get better in 2021, food will become a key challenge. As an agricultural centre, Saskatchewan stands poised and ready to respond to this challenge.

The people of Saskatchewan must move forward, together. It is important that we do not do this rashly, but with accurate information/data, prudence, and wisdom.

3. The precious metals sector is moving in an upward trajectory due to lower input costs and high demand as industrial metals, a form of money and an increasing popular store of value. Saskatchewan has opportunities to leverage our mining sector and build prosperity for our province.

Important considerations for yours and your children's future

1. Elect the right people into office at all levels of government – individuals who understand how the global market works and how we as communities, provinces, and a country can leverage it, not be leveraged by it.
2. Ensure we have the right policies in place to attract investment into our province and make Saskatchewan the best place to build and expand a business.
3. Get educated, be aware, and hold your policy makers to account. With all the money printing and stimulus packages being created around the world, someone must pay for it. There are two ways to pay for this debt: direct taxation by governments or indirect taxation through significant inflation on the products and services we purchase. To date, governments have chosen inflation through money printing, which makes their debt cheaper. Both methods will be painful – combining these methods and employing both at the same time would be catastrophic.

The people of Saskatchewan must move forward, together. It is important that we do not do this rashly, but with accurate information/data, prudence, and wisdom. If we do this right, we

will emerge from this period in history with an enhanced degree of patience, a depth of valuable experiences, and renewed sense of strength. 🏠

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2021: CHANGE-RESILIENT ORGANIZATIONS AND WORKFORCES

By Collin Pullar, President,
Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association



As 2020 draws to a close and we begin to turn the calendar to 2021, I believe there are several things to look forward to.

Naturally, like most people, I am hoping for an effective therapy, and ultimately a vaccine, to the coronavirus, and I am encouraged by recent positive news in that area. I'm looking forward to an eventual safe return to live gatherings such as sporting events, conferences, and meetings.

While we've certainly learned that we can get many things done through collaboration tools like Zoom, there is always a higher level of connection when we have a chance to meet in person. While online meetings are likely to be a part of business for years to come, it will be nice when we can collaborate with the benefit of seeing facial expressions more clearly, sharing meals, and having side conversations. Work can be a serious place, and I'm looking forward to a few moments of play in those relationships. It will be great to do business like that again, and I think that

will help inspire business and consumer confidence while encouraging investment in capital projects and new homes. Our construction businesses rely heavily on the ability to physically work together. We've been fortunate to be able to continue this work, and I'm optimistic that our industry will be the major catalyst to pull our economy forward after the pandemic eases.

I also hope we continue to see more women gaining strength on our worksites and in our boardrooms, and that some of the issues that have been exposed around systemic racism during the pandemic are translated into long-term and positive change. I hope more and more leaders recognize that being different and unique can drive change and the innovation that our builders have been known for. A thoughtful and practical cultural shift toward diversity and inclusion can drive bottom-line profit by sparking innovation, increasing productivity, reducing turnover, improving safety, increasing market share and customer base, and



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enhancing reputation. Anyone involved in Canada's construction industry – from the jobsite to the boardroom and everywhere in between – can benefit from a broader understanding of the impact diversity and inclusion has on the industry, and the important role they play.

Further, I look at the way we've been interacting with computers over the last several years, and I believe that these information sets are making us better and smarter. One can look at a normal business tool like a chart or electronic dashboard and retrieve amazing insights that weren't always readily accessible.

Today more people know how to access valuable training opportunities from an internet-connected device without having to leave their homes or offices. From that perspective, it has never been easier for leaders to construct a safe, high-quality work environment. I believe that making targeted improvements to a business and working with a better trained workforce can make every business safer and more profitable.

Business leaders often talk about the need to build "change-resilient" organizations and workforces. Has any living person experienced a time of worldwide change and transformation

like today? Many of us have exhibited grit, mental toughness, and flexibility over the last few months, developing personal and professional resilience, which will help us to "bounce back" more easily.

Change and setbacks had become a way of life in 2020. While I hate to state that hard times make for better people, future employees and employers will deal with stress with a different set of strategies and skills to approach change in the future.

In some ways, 2020 was an awesome opportunity. I know many of our members used changes to their workforce mix as an opportunity to be more hands-on in some areas of their operations, finding efficiencies and cost savings along the way.

When it comes to thinking about 2021 and looking to the future, I will quote Winston Churchill: "I am an optimist. It does not seem too much use being anything else."

While acknowledging several organizations experienced a huge shock in 2020, I believe several trends and events set in motion in 2020 will make businesses better and stronger. Grow strong and keep safe. 🏠



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ADAPTATION AND INNOVATION: LOOKING FORWARD TO 2021



*Dr. Larry Rosia, President and CEO,
Saskatchewan Polytechnic*



It is likely that the COVID-19 pandemic will go down as one of the most disruptive events in human history. No one wants a repeat of 2020. Yet, it was a year where we saw the amazing adaptability and innovation of people and organizations. This was certainly the case at Saskatchewan Polytechnic, which transitioned to a remote learning and work environment within a matter of days when the lockdown took effect in late March.

Given recent developments on the vaccine front, there is reason to believe that the year 2021 is one that Saskatchewan can look forward to with anticipation. Already, the signs

point to a number of positives, which are based on the lessons learned during the pandemic. They include:

Improved organizational readiness and agility

Despite the negatives of the pandemic, we saw that people and organizations, particularly businesses, can demonstrate agility and resiliency to meet challenges – and do so quickly. The result is that organizations are in a much better position to face future disruptions (including pandemics). This will serve us well in 2021 and beyond.

Think about how your own organization pivoted to meet

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I believe we can all agree that things will be forever different once the pandemic is over. This means that while there's no going back to things the way there were, the prospect of charting a new course brings hope for a ramp-up in economic activity.

the needs of clients and stakeholders. I suspect there was increased collaboration among your teams to find innovative solutions to challenges. Even though we couldn't be together, we realized that we truly are all in this together.

Increased tech literacy and awareness

Because many organizations were forced to work from home, technology took on even greater importance. Video technology is a prime example, with an explosion in the use of services like Zoom, Skype, and Microsoft Teams.

The pandemic has shown how critical digital technology and digital skills have become to our operations. As individuals and employers think about reskilling and upskilling, tech literacy and awareness will continue to be priority areas in 2021.

At the same time, the pandemic also probably exposed where tech weaknesses exist within organizations and where future technology investments must be made. If you have not already made these investments, what better time than 2021?

Heightened awareness of the importance of good mental health

Let's face it: 2020 was a stressful year. Not only did we experience fear and anxiety about the new coronavirus itself, the lack of answers to questions and the uncertainty surrounding the pandemic was stressful as well. In short, the pandemic served to remind everyone of the important link between one's mental health and one's overall health.

Even before COVID-19 surfaced, the World Health Organization reported that more than 300 million people

around the world suffer from depression. Additionally, more than 260 million are living with anxiety disorders. Many people live with both. The pandemic only exacerbated these for many. However – and this is the positive we can take into the new year – the pandemic reminds us how important nutrition, exercise and sleep are to both mental and physical health. While each of us handles stress differently, even simple things such as taking a quick walk between Zoom meetings can have a positive impact on one's day – and therefore health.

Economic recovery

I believe we can all agree that things will be forever different once the pandemic is over. This means that while there's no going back to things the way there were, the prospect of charting a new course brings hope for a ramp-up in economic activity.

While many economists predict it will be late 2021 before we see it in full, economic activity is likely to increase throughout the year. Travel and leisure activities will pick up and so will spending as pent-up demand to visit our favourite stores, restaurants and entertainment venues is released. As a result, we'll see more people working and a lower unemployment rate. These are all positives for our province, particularly for the construction sector.

Throughout human history, we have seen great periods of advancement following huge disruptive events. It's my hope that we are on the cusp of another period of advancement that begins in 2021 and that everyone reading this is ready to seize the exciting opportunities that await. 🏗️



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BUILDING A STRONG SASKATCHEWAN: OUR RECORD-BREAKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

By Michael Harrison, Special Advisor Communications,
Ministry of SaskBuilds and Procurement



The Government of Saskatchewan has launched one of the most ambitious infrastructure investment programs in Saskatchewan's history: a two-year, \$7.5 billion capital plan to build a strong Saskatchewan and stimulate the province's economy. This investment includes a \$2 billion "booster shot" in economic stimulus funding designed to get Saskatchewan workers and companies back to work as quickly as possible.

The infrastructure program includes several major projects such as the Lake Diefenbaker Irrigation Expansion, the Prince Albert Victoria Hospital, the Weyburn Hospital, the Ministry of Corrections and Policing Remand Centre in Saskatoon, as well as dozens of smaller maintenance and renewal projects in communities around the province.

Record setting investment drives economic growth in Saskatchewan

Infrastructure investment of this magnitude will not only ensure vital projects are being funded across Saskatchewan, but it will also help boost and sustain economic recovery over many years and benefit multiple sectors. A 2019 PricewaterhouseCoopers study noted that \$1 spent locally generates \$1.51 in total economic output for the province compared to \$0.39 generated by out-of-province suppliers.

To further bolster the economic benefits of this significant program for Saskatchewan people, earlier this year the Government of Saskatchewan committed to ensuring that public sector procurement benefits Saskatchewan's local economy to the greatest extent possible.

To achieve this, the Ministry of SaskBuilds and Procurement's infrastructure procurement program now features community benefits as an important scored element in the procurement process. With community benefits, points are awarded to vendors who commit to hiring local labour and suppliers.

Fast-tracking the benefits

As part of the stimulus package, a \$2 billion booster shot is being fast-tracked for quick investment to drive economic recovery. To date, \$1.34 billion has been ear-marked for large infrastructure projects, and another \$395 million will be allocated in the near future.

Investing in communities and leveraging investment

Other infrastructure stimulus funding dollars are also being rapidly injected into local economies. The \$150 million Municipal Economic Enhancement Program is supporting an impressive 1,361 projects in 736 Saskatchewan municipalities, coordinated by the Ministry of Government Relations. The Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure has dedicated \$300.5 million in infrastructure stimulus funding to projects that include:

- Upgrades to 325 kilometres of thin-membrane surface highways;
- 24 to 26 new sets of highway passing lanes;



- Rehabilitation of at least 100 RM roads when combined with our existing municipal roads program; and
- Improvements to community airports.

Saskatchewan has also asked for additional support under other federal infrastructure programs, including the Canada Infrastructure Bank and the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund.

Making history through expanded irrigation

One of the most exciting projects is the Lake Diefenbaker Irrigation Expansion announced by the premier in July of 2020. This is the single largest infrastructure project in Saskatchewan's history worth an estimated \$4 billion over 10 years. Once complete, the expansion will irrigate up to 500,000 acres of land – more than doubling the current irrigable land in Saskatchewan, supporting crop diversity and food security while building a more climate-resilient economy for future generations.

Construction is expected to take place over the next decade in three main phases. An immediate \$22.5 million will be invested in preliminary engineering and construction. A Prime Consultant

will be announced to oversee this work.

Phase One of the project is estimated to cost \$500 million, including the rehabilitation and expansion of the existing Westside canal system. Phase Two will add 260,00 acres of irrigation near Macrorie, Milden, Zealandia, and farther north to Delisle and Asquith.

Phase Three will see the buildout of the Qu'Appelle South Water Conveyance Project, adding another 120,00 acres close to the communities of Tugaske, Eyebrow, Marquis, and into Buffalo Pound Lake. The Moose Jaw-Regina corridor and southern Saskatchewan will have a secure source of water for the next century and act as a catalyst for industrial expansion.

The economic benefits of the expansion project are impressive. According to a report by Western Economic Diversification Canada, it's estimated that this one project alone will:

- Increase Saskatchewan's GDP up to \$83 billion over the next 50 years;
- Increase tax revenues up to \$20 billion to support public services;
- Create 22,700 years of employment per year over 10 years;
- Create 27,800 person years of employment; and


- Boost personal incomes by \$23.5 billion by 2040.

The Government of Saskatchewan will work with the Prime Consultant to ensure due diligence on the environmental impact and pursue comprehensive consultations with First Nations, and other affected communities.

Investing today in Saskatchewan's future

Overall, the Government of Saskatchewan's \$7.5 billion stimulus program provides a historic chance for the province's construction companies to participate in an unprecedented level of capital spending and investment. It represents an opportunity for a made-in-Saskatchewan plan overseen by the expertise of Saskatchewan people for the benefit of Saskatchewan people.

We look forward to working with our construction industry partners over the next decade as we build a stronger Saskatchewan together.

For more information on these infrastructure projects contact Sheldon Brandt, Director, Integrated Capital Planning, at sheldon.brandt@gov.sk.ca. 

PIVOTING BUSINESS OPERATIONS TO COME OUT ON TOP IN 2021: A MEMBER SUCCESS STORY



By David Robinson, Director,
Acara Glass & Aluminum Ltd.



To say 2020 has been a rollercoaster would be an understatement, and we're not at the end yet. But there have been a few silver linings despite everything going on. For starters, while we feel for those who have been mandated to close, we here at Acara Glass & Aluminum have been fortunate to be allowed to stay open for business, and we've taken every opportunity we can to stay that way.

When COVID-19 first struck, as a full-service glass and aluminum company, we quickly realized partitions to separate people in businesses would be in high demand. We rapidly started coming up with different solutions, such as rolling partitions to put in-between tables at restaurants, pre-assembled desk partitions, and permanent applications where we use hardware to fasten them onto the counter. Every situation was unique, and we had to be flexible enough to accommodate the need, and nimble enough to get the job done quickly. The customer responses to these designs have been positive, but the innovation doesn't stop there; we continue to build on the design, find ways of making them sturdier and more aesthetically pleasing. We have the right team in place, as well as a balance of creative geniuses and organizers who keep us in line and on track.

Generally speaking, the amount of construction work has slowed down. If you look at building permits year-over-year, commercial permits have dropped significantly – almost half – while residential permits have been steady. The reason? Over the summer, everyone went crazy with backyard renovations and landscaping. Stores were sold out of many items such as outdoor fireplaces, and patio furniture was selling like hot cakes.

As winter sets in, I predict that people will be spending more time indoors and not going on vacations. I believe we will see a transfer of spending move from the backyard to the inside of their homes – not just renovations for the sake of updating space, but also to create a second workspace, a home gym, a daycare, and so on. With the number of offices switching to virtual, this posed a golden opportunity for Acara, and we've decided to launch a separate company to focus on residential work.

Sometimes in business, it pays off to take a risk and strike while the iron is hot; 2021 will be a year of change, after all.

Our new company, Moda Glass Works, will be focused on custom glass shower and tub enclosures, glass railings,



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When COVID-19 first struck, as a full-service glass and aluminum company, we quickly realized partitions to separate people in businesses would be in high demand.

custom mirrors, and glass wall partitions for home gyms or offices. The operations, communication, and expectations are different than commercial customers, so we're putting a lot of time and effort in developing the strategy into how to best serve this market.

"Moda" means trendy, style, and vogue, and it should be launching in December 2020. Acara has been in business for 32 years and is known as a commercial glazier, so this is a big change for us. But we're ready for the challenge: our team has the skill set to do residential work, and we have done it for customers if they've requested it. Now we're ready to take it to the next level. Having this new company will cause less confusion for customers and give us more reason to focus on this operation.

Lastly, in conjunction with the slowdown in work, we've

had to take a step back and really look at Acara's company structure to move it forward in the next three to six months. Acara follows a business management system called the Entrepreneurial Operating System® (EOS), which teaches a tool called the Accountability Chart. The Accountability Chart ensures that you have the right people in the right seats, meaning they share your core values and have the skill, talent, and knowledge to do their jobs well. With the changes to our business, we need to ensure everyone fits the new criteria. Aside from the structure, we're also looking at a few other areas EOS focuses on, such as processes and our financial numbers, to make sure we're still standing once this chaos is over!

Have the right team in place, look for the opportunities, and – most importantly – don't be afraid to take them. 🏢



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TAX STRATEGIES CRITICAL TO RETURNS IN REAL ESTATE AND CONSTRUCTION

Provided by MNP



Today's challenging market conditions have had a direct impact on the real estate and construction industry. Market trends are changing as baby boomers retire and millennials continue to rent for longer than previous generations. The cost of land has skyrocketed, and the economic growth outlook has become uncertain.

Greater tax complexity has also become the new normal, shifting how we view investments in real estate and construction. Companies operating in this industry are faced with the challenge of having to adopt new approaches to generate the desired rate of return.

Making the most of your investment includes planning for tax at every stage. Tax has become a significant

strategic component that can influence how you evaluate an opportunity and how you structure your evolving investment.

The Tax Maze

Whether you build, own, or operate real estate, various taxes come into play and have an impact on each project. Although tax should not drive business decisions, its function has a significant role in determining your return on investment (ROI). These taxes include:

- New capital gains taxes
- Taxes on profits from sale of constructed properties
- Goods and Services Tax (GST)/ Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) and property taxes

- Additional taxes on foreign investments and vacant residential units

Specialized tax knowledge and experience can help you navigate the tax maze and improve your real estate and construction ROI.

Top Three Tax Practices

To ensure your results are optimized, consider these three key steps to managing taxes:

Make Tax a Priority from the Start

– Whether you have an in-house tax department, rely on external tax advisors, or employ a mix of both, include your tax advisors early on in your process. They understand your goals and can provide guidance in structuring your investments to mitigate risks and minimize taxes. It is always more efficient to consider tax as part of the overall plan, rather than at the final stages.

Employ the Right Set of Skills – Tax complexity has been a growing trend in Canada, along with rising tax burdens. Consider your needs from every angle – planning, structuring, obtaining financing, paying your taxes, and reporting. Ensure the professionals you hire have the capability to work collaboratively as a team to achieve your goals.

Think of it in the same way you think of a construction project: various experts, such as engineers, architects,

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Whether you build, own, or operate real estate, various taxes come into play and have an impact on each project. Although tax should not drive business decisions, its function has a significant role in determining your return on investment (ROI).

environmental experts, and others, working together to build a final product. The right set of advisors take a holistic approach and customize your solution to add value to your bottom line.

Embed Tax into Your Strategic Plan

– Whether you are planning the long-term growth of your business, your retirement, or an intergenerational transfer of your business or estate, tax is a critical component. The long-term value of your business or wealth can be significantly impacted by the tax planning you include in your overall strategic plan.

Transition Planning


Another issue private company or family business owners should consider is estate planning. You may assume the next generation will succeed you in operations; however, this may not be part of their long-term plans. If multiple children are involved, how they work together can be addressed in advance and any potential conflicts can be avoided. Strategic planning in this area is critical and should be done well in advance from both a family harmony and tax perspective. Waiting until retirement or a potential sale is too late.

Transition of a business can also bring further tax complications that may significantly reduce the value of your business assets. A solid tax strategy can structure your organization and investments in a manner that will more efficiently achieve your succession goals. If, alternatively, you want to sell your business in the future or ensure it can give you an adequate

payout, the right tax strategy can help you create a structure for your business and for specific investments that will work for you in the long term.

Conclusion

Tax planning can be a critical

component in getting the returns for your business and achieving the goals you want. There is no one-size-fits-all tax solution, and having the right set of advisors who help you plan from the start will help you optimize your opportunities. 

For more information please contact



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IS 2021 THE YEAR WE STICK IT TO COVID-19? COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATES ARE LOOKING POSITIVE.

By Samantha Sommerfield

It has been 10 months since COVID-19 has introduced itself into our lives.

Saskatchewan now sees itself in the last months of 2020, and in a second wave, but as Dr. Cory (Cordell) Neudorf, professor of community health and epidemiology at the University of Saskatchewan, notes, this is not unique to the province.

“Most predicted the second wave would hit in the late fall and winter, which means we had to respond differently with different restrictions like we did in the spring,” says Neudorf.

Since the spring, the days have been filled with an ebb and flow of

restrictions, which was to be expected, as we learned how the virus spreads and how to adapt to those findings.

All these restrictions have been, and continue to be, needed while we wait for a vaccine to be developed.

And now our patience is paying off, as front runners have started to appear in the vaccine race, which may potentially make 2021 the year we stick it to COVID-19.

Dr. Joseph Blondeau, clinical microbiologist and head for clinical microbiology at the Royal University Hospital and the University of Saskatchewan, as well as provincial lead for clinical microbiology with the

Saskatchewan Health Authority, is encouraged by the preliminary results released by some of the initial vaccine companies.

“Up until recently, I would have said realistically the timeline to get a vaccine administered to individuals would have probably been in the second quarter of 2021, but the announcement by Moderna and Pfizer with their vaccine efficacy (around 95 per cent) means it could be available to administer by the end of December 2020,” says Blondeau. “But there are a number of hurdles that companies need to jump through to make that a reality.”

The development of a vaccine is typically a long process that usually takes five to seven years. The phases that occur include testing, data collection, more testing, trials, then more data collection, and ultimately an independent approval stage and a regulatory approval process.

However, with the high demand and world-wide pressure of finding a vaccine for COVID-19, a collaborative approach was necessary. Because of this, developers kept intact the scientific phases that are needed, but they looked to make the information sharing process quicker. It's this collaborative approach, along with a new technology, that played a role in allowing Moderna and Pfizer to have a potential December 2020 or early 2021 vaccine roll out.

“[Moderna and Pfizer's product]



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Dr. Cory (Cordell) Neudorf



Dr. Joseph Blondeau

are being produced with a new technology that allows them to be produced more quickly. Others are being developed with a different technology, but these take a bit more time," says Neudorf. "Each practice can take different lengths of time to develop with their own pros and cons."

Ultimately, once the vaccines are available, distribution considerations will have to be looked at closely.

"In Canada, if you have a contract with a certain company, they try to divide up the doses to get an equitable spread. Then within the country you look at the population spread, so Saskatchewan can expect to get three per cent or so of the vaccine, as that is our make-up of the population," says Neudorf.

"However, we do not know who would be the first to receive it – front line workers, health care workers, vulnerable populations [age or health]," Blondeau adds. "It would be my suspicion that the Canadian government would have a task force investigating how this allocation should go."

Neudorf suspects that each provincial government will look at and assess how COVID is spreading in their communities and customize their own distribution to make the biggest impact, similar to the targeted and strategic approach used with H1N1.

"There is a tentative plan in place in Canada, but it hasn't been prioritized yet. They are waiting until they get the vaccine to then reassess what the outbreaks look like and prioritize from there," says Neudorf.

However, both Blondeau and Neudorf agree that in order to be effective and reach herd immunity, at least 80 per cent of people must receive

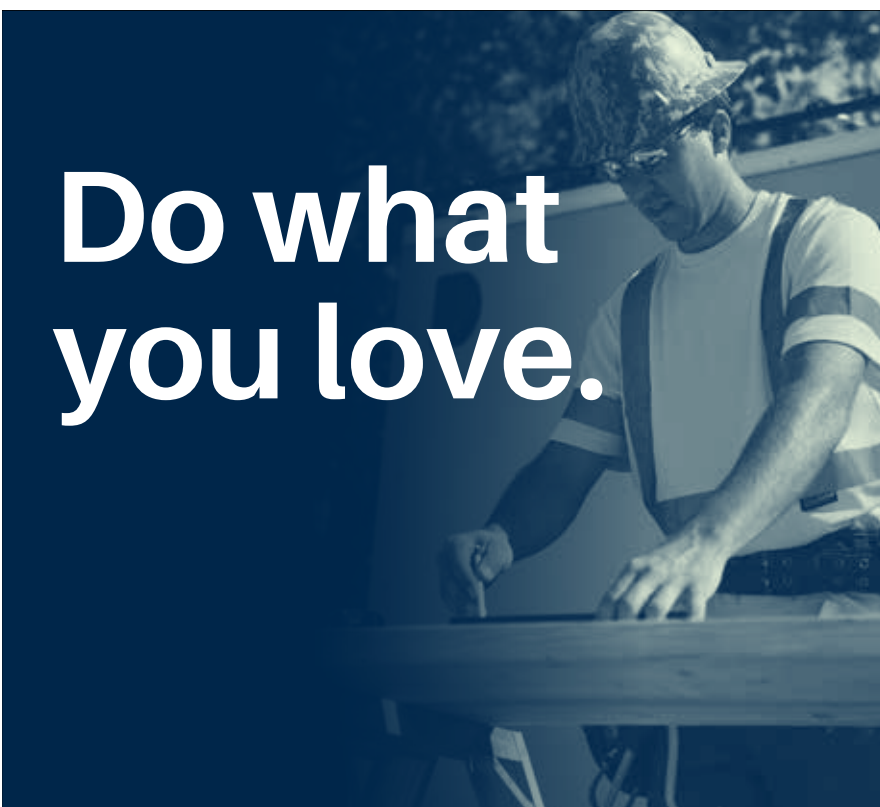
the vaccination. But an Angus Reid Institute study in October 2020 showed only 39 per cent of Canadians said they would get a vaccine as soon as one was widely available.

To that point, both Blondeau and Neudorf advise people to trust the science.

"We have to trust the process – and all the regulatory programs in place – that all the steps have been met and it

is safe. And if all those hurdles have been crossed, then we trust that it's a safe product to be used," Blondeau says.

Neudorf adds, "I think you have to trust the process but also understand there will be a lot of credible information. It won't be a 'blind trust us and take it' – you'll have the information available to make that decision." 🏠




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The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has prompted many Canadians to shop locally; interest in supporting local businesses has surged in recent months. Whether it's the Province of Quebec's Le Panier Bleu initiative or small businesses in Saskatoon holding gift card giveaways for their favourite neighbourhood stores, there are countless approaches to promoting local options. But why does shopping locally matter in the first place?

Follow the dollars: A tale of two apples

When people shop, money spent on locally supplied purchases creates more local economic activity than if those people bought goods from non-local sources. Consider two apples: one grown in Saskatchewan and one grown in California, with both apples delivered to a Saskatchewan grocer and purchased by consumers. The money from the Saskatchewan apple would be used by the grocer to pay the distributor,

who would pay the Saskatchewan farmer, who would pay local farm staff, who would spend their earnings at local businesses such as restaurants. A restaurant would then pay contractors for building renovations and so on. The money used to buy the Californian apple would leave Saskatchewan once the distributor was paid. When that money exits the local economy, Saskatchewan loses out on all the ways that the money could have generated growth in the province.

Shop here, work here

A major benefit to keeping money circulating in the local economy is the creation of local jobs. A Civic Economics study on the impact of local businesses in B.C. found that for a 10 per cent increase in local purchasing, approximately 31,000 jobs would be created for B.C. workers, leading to \$940 million in wages. Local businesses are also more likely to use local contractors such as accountants, information technology

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A Civic Economics study on the impact of local businesses in B.C. found that for a 10 per cent increase in local purchasing, approximately 31,000 jobs would be created for B.C. workers, leading to \$940 million in wages.

companies, and banks in their operations, further bolstering local employment.

Local suppliers mean local output

The multiplier effect of local shopping is not limited to small-scale purchases like apples. A study by PwC found that in-province procurement by Saskatchewan resource companies delivered nearly four times more economic benefit to the province than procurement from non-local suppliers. For every \$1 spent by a resource company on local suppliers, \$1.51 in total economic output would be generated. That same \$1 spent on out of province suppliers would generate \$0.39 of output. Ultimately, local purchasing at any level helps support Saskatchewan.

Building vibrant communities

Buying local also strengthens the community. According to a 2013 Consumer Trends report by BDC, many Canadians

want to know that companies are adopting high ethical and environmental standards through their value chain. Shopping locally helps build connections between consumers and suppliers, increasing transparency about how and where products are created. Not only does money then continue to circulate in the community to increase employment and economic growth, but improved knowledge and awareness about local businesses helps to build vibrant, engaged communities.

SREDA's local link

SREDA is working with interested Saskatoon Region businesses to measure how locally they operate, from ownership to procurement. We're also using the process to find ways of increasing local engagement in the Saskatoon Region economy for these businesses.

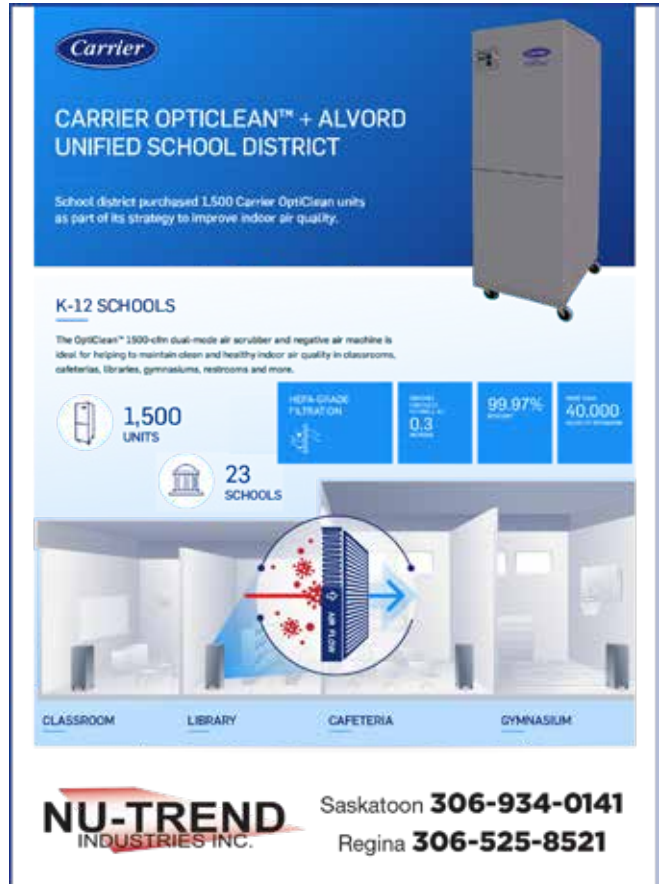
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HOPE FOR CONSTRUCTION AFTER 2020 ELECTION

By Joel Peterson, Vice President, Hill+Knowlton Strategies



To say that 2020 has been quite a year would most likely qualify as one of the greatest understatements of the century so far. People throughout the world have struggled with the COVID-19 pandemic, hoping that the worst will be over soon and they can return to a more normal time – a time when things were more predictable and when you weren’t waiting for the other shoe to drop. We continue to be amid some very uncertain times.

Yet, there is hope on the horizon. From a political point of view, we have just gone through a provincial election wherein COVID-19 and its impacts played a significant role in shaping the policies and programs that will be rolled out of the next number of years. The pandemic has forced governments to re-think how they did business before, respond to issues differently, and develop new and better ways of fulfilling their roles and their obligations to their voters.

We can already see this new way of doing business in several ways.

Recognizing that the construction sector is vital to the economy of Saskatchewan and that COVID-19 was having a substantial impact on the industry, we saw the Saskatchewan government respond over the summer by announcing additional investments in infrastructure to the tune of \$7.5 billion over the next number of years. This strategic investment will go a long way in building and re-building communities for a bigger and brighter future. It will ensure that we will have the roads, schools, hospitals, highways, housing, and other public buildings in place and ready as we recover.

We saw the Saskatchewan Party promise a Saskatchewan Home Renovation Tax Credit during the election. Properly implemented, this program will see many local

construction firms benefit from the work and keep their companies going and their workers employed.

We also see the government reaching out more than they have ever before and engaging with industry in discussions about how to best to develop policies and programs that make sure Saskatchewan companies, and their employees, are working. The recent industry consultations by SaskBuilds on the Capital Procurement Schedule and the Major Capital Projects List are evidence of this. Talking with the various industry groups across the province will allow these associations, and the companies they represent, to be better informed and able to plan their operations and workflows in a way they have never been able to do before.

With Premier Moe’s recent Cabinet appointments, we saw SaskBuilds and Priority Saskatchewan become a full ministry, signalling that this government is taking how things are built and procured more seriously than they ever have before. This should result in a coordinated approach across government and see that infrastructure and procurement policies and programs will be delivered in a more efficient and streamlined way.

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One of the positive outcomes of the COVID-19 pandemic is that it might force governments of all sizes and shapes to take some time to reflect, giving them an opportunity to reset, renew, and refresh their approaches. Hopefully, this time of crisis can have the effect of causing some of the more political partisan ways of doing things to be set aside – the Twitter wars, the gotcha moments, and the name-calling – and cause there to be an increased focus on less combative and more cooperative approaches to dealing with issues. This approach will allow the focus to be on developing good, “win-win” solutions to our problems and allows the best in public policy to come to the forefront. It’s not about who is right on either side of the political spectrum, but what is best for the province and its residents.

This is not to say that we are out of the woods yet. The challenge is still formidable, but it’s one that we can overcome by working together. Saskatchewanians are a

resilient people, and we will not let COVID-19 dampen our spirit or dim our anticipation of the future. As Red Green often said, “We’re all in this together.” 🏠



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THE COVID ONION



By Steve McLellan, CEO,
Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce



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I am writing this article weeks before you are reading it, so a vaccine may have been delivered...by Amazon, perhaps...and all is good. Or we could all be in an even tougher situation where more cases are causing governments to add more restrictions onto your business and even more significantly impacting our lives. Either way, this story ends the same - we will get through it. We will have casualties in business and in life and yet as always, we will show our ability to persevere and get through.

What is a COVID onion?

An onion has layers, and as you get past one layer, there is another, and another. That is the same with COVID-19. Just when we think we have seen it all - BAM! - another layer and another surprise. And to be fair, not all layers are bad. In the early days in mid-March when people had to move to work from home, we found that, for the most part, we could. For workers who stayed at work, new protocols were developed, and implementation went very well.

When we need to act fast, we can. Even governments acted fast, which is surprising, and we all hope that will be a lasting change.

We have seen the initial global shock and awe change to a determined effort to now a bit of both. For some it has been tough; businesses are now facing a second or third wave of outbreaks, and we need to pivot to survive, but the good news is - most are. Most have found new processes that can be used to reduce staffing costs, most have a new level of remote



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work capacity and some have also implemented long awaited technology improvements that, until now, were only on the wish list.

The challenges we face are both business-related and personal. Many of you have not seen loved ones for months. Many of you will not see your favourite bartender in Cancun this winter. There are even more significant changes coming. Supply chains have changed, and international routes may no longer be available to you, so we all need to look local. Insurance has historically been a sleeper, but now in most provinces the best advice is if you get a renewal option – take it! Because even if you pay more, at least you have insurance. Some long-term, low-risk companies can't even get a policy offer at any

rate. That is a huge onion layer that surprised many.

Perhaps the most significant change is how quickly businesses will need to go digital. This means developing capacity for remote work, giving your potential customers the ability to shop for your products and services online. Do you respond to online inquires as fast as the customer wants? People have learned to shop online because they were told not to go out. Those suited for this digital transformation like Amazon and every other online platform prospered. Even though you may not sell shirts or groceries, your customers have learned to shop online and will want to buy from you online too. Can you book a skid steer online? Can you schedule an appointment with the crew online

or do you have to wait for a darn reply email? Can you send a quote as fast as your customers want it? These are all challenging questions, but as RBC's Small Business, Big Pivot report outlined, there could be more businesses that die because they weren't prepared for the new economy after COVID than those that died because of an economic shutdown.

So get ready, get help, and stay ready because while we don't know what the other side will look like, I know it will be digital and in many other ways be different. You can let the onion tear you up or you can pivot, put on a pair of goggles, and dive in. We will survive and you can prosper, but always be ready for the next layer. 🏠



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STRENGTH IN UNITY AND COLLABORATION: 2020's SILVER LINING



By Mary Van Buren, President,
Canadian Construction Association



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As I write this article, we are currently in wave 2 of the COVID-19 pandemic, and Canadians are working together to bend the curve, to save lives and livelihoods.

Despite the pandemic, as an industry, we can enter this next phase, and future situations, with some optimism. Not only have we demonstrated a strong track record of safety in the first wave, but a vaccine also appears to be around the corner.

While some sectors had to shut down or alter their services early on, the construction industry has largely continued to operate during the COVID-19 crisis. Together, we created national health standards, shared best practices, and put on hundreds of training events and webinars. We are proud of this, as it demonstrates our deep-rooted commitment and culture of health, safety, and shared industry success.

At the same time, our local companies and associations generously supported their communities and healthcare workers with donations of PPE, free hot lunches, funding special programs, and food bank drives. There has always been a strong culture of caring for our communities, but this has been particularly pronounced during the pandemic.

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THE EXPERTS

We are very proud of the work our partner association colleagues and members continue to do for their communities. This was on full display on social media as part of our National Construction Day celebrations on November 3. Many of our members highlighted the invaluable contributions made to local communities – including Saskatchewan construction companies that donated over \$325,000 to local food banks at the height of the COVID-19 crisis.

We didn't and don't take this responsibility lightly. The health, safety, and well-being of our workers, their families and friends, and the communities we operate in has always been the top priority of the Canadian Construction Association (CCA), partner associations and more than 20,000 member firms.

While we will not become complacent in our COVID-19 standards, we can also contribute to economic recovery. CCA's voice is joined by our network of 63 partner associations from across Canada, and with important industry stakeholders like ACEC, P3, CBTU, Canadian Chamber of Commerce,

FCM, and many others. Together we are stronger.

Our united voice was heard by government as we advocated for the 75 per cent wage subsidy program and extended financing available to firms from the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) and Export Development Canada (EDC).

Over the years, our associations and members have consistently advocated for infrastructure. And this certainly paid off during the pandemic for all Canadians. Our food and health supplies were delivered on our roads and through our ports; we enjoyed parks to exercise in, clean water to drink and for handwashing; and we received excellent care in hospitals – infrastructure that was built by the industry, for all Canadians. We are essential service providers!

As the federal government embarks on a strategy to accelerate economic recovery across Canada, we expect that infrastructure investment will be part of the solution. There are billions of dollars already earmarked for projects and training across the country. Many firms also advanced

their digital readiness – nothing like having all your office staff working from home, or physical distancing limits to encourage the use of new technology. From increased use of back office automation to sensors and QR codes, we have shown how we can adapt quickly – and safely.

And together, we will continue to push the federal government for infrastructure investment that is balanced, coordinated, and flexible. Mass transit may work for urban centres, but not for many communities in Canada. We have to work together to apply some common sense to federal priorities. And with your letters, we continue to push for reimbursement for extraordinary costs from COVID-19 on federal projects. Construction firms have long shouldered the majority of project risk. Cost relief will alleviate some of the financial pressure on small and medium-sized companies that carry much of the upfront costs of projects.

The 2021 construction season will be off to a solid start as promised investments into public transit, energy efficient retrofits, clean energy, rural broadband, and water/irrigation

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infrastructure flow. This means that infrastructure investment must be targeted to the real and immediate needs of provinces and municipalities, not complicated by other federal policy goals. We must continue to work together to ensure these funds flow, and quickly.

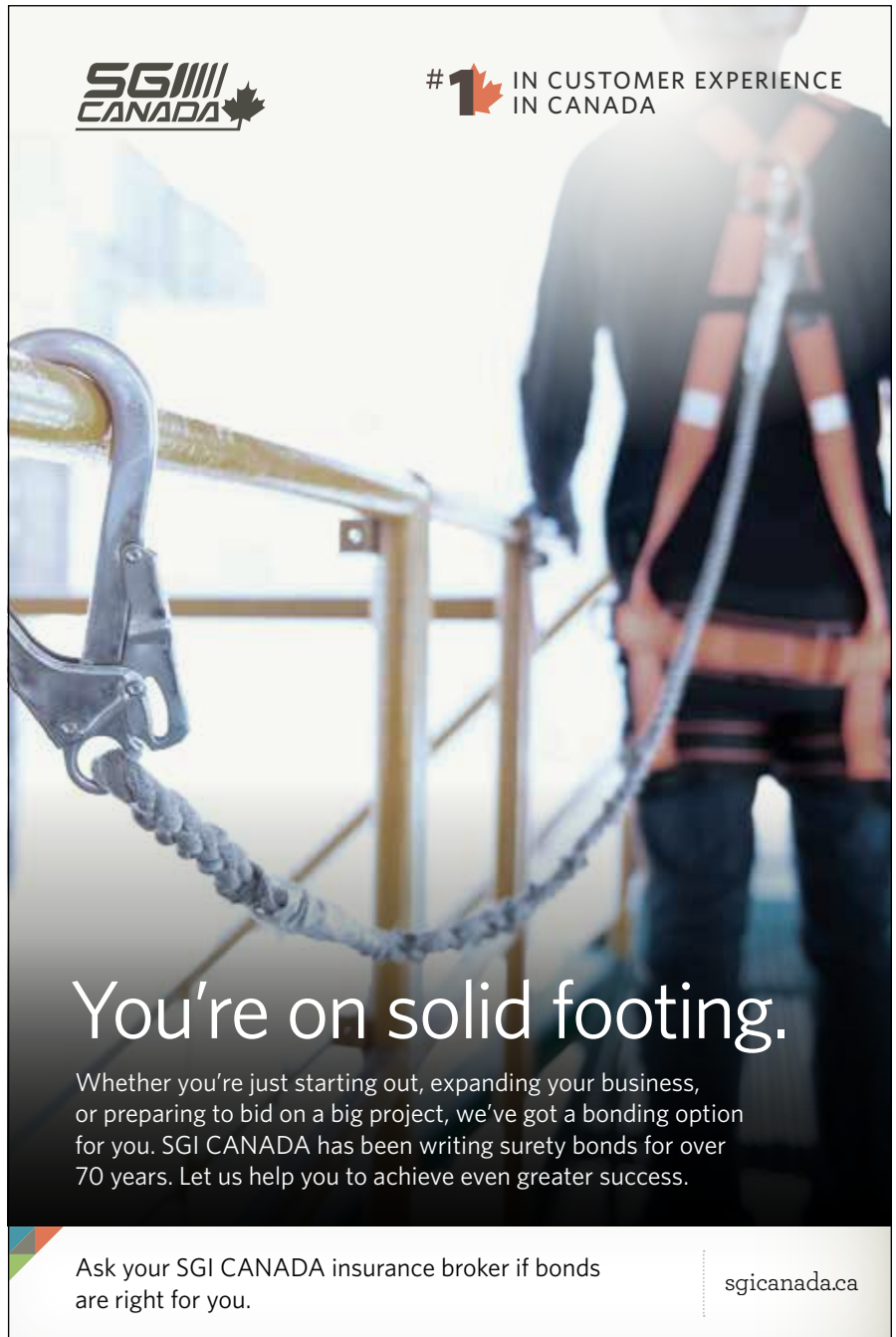
We have already demonstrated what we can accomplish by working together. All levels of government need to support and enhance Canada's economic recovery by maintaining a free-flowing system of trade and labour mobility between provinces. It is essential that we stand united and work together to benefit all Canadians during recovery.


Saskatchewan's participation in our Hill Day initiative was invaluable this year, and we thank Mark Cooper, president of the Saskatchewan Construction Association, past-chair Cory Richter, as well as Shannon Friesen, Executive Director of the Saskatoon Construction Association, for their participation. The regional perspective on issues like infrastructure stimulus and workforce recruitment help inform our national advocacy efforts.

Canada will be counting on the construction industry to lead us toward economic recovery. You can count on CCA to be your voice with the federal government, to collaborate with our provincial partner associations and municipal associations to provide helpful tools and share best practices across the country. Collectively, we are working passionately on your behalf and will continue to put Canada's heavy civil, institutional, commercial, and industrial (ICI) construction industry first. 🏠

Let's stay in contact

Please email me at mvanburen@cca-acc.com if you have any feedback or comments on how the CCA can serve you better during this crisis. Stay in the loop by subscribing to CCA's newsletter at bit.ly/ccasubscribe, by following @ConstructionCAN on Twitter, or by looking up Canadian Construction Association on LinkedIn.



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NOT EVERYTHING IS CANCELLED MAINTAINING MENTAL HEALTH DURING THE HOLIDAYS



By Kyle Anderson, M.A., Business Development Consultant, Bridges Health

The 2020 holiday season will look much different this year. Travel plans may have been cancelled, and traditional holiday celebrations and large gatherings with loved ones will not be possible due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, rates of mental health concerns and substance use are on the rise. The holiday season is already a stressful time for many, and social isolation can exacerbate existing mental health problems. Finally, the “winter blues” may leave people feeling a bit more lethargic.

The combination of all these factors means it is imperative to

prioritize one’s mental health. The following strategies can be used to reduce stress and improve mental health during this year’s holiday season:

1. **Acknowledge Your Feelings** – Most of us will be feeling a bit “off” in different ways. It’s okay to feel anxious, frustrated, grief, or any other type of distress you are experiencing. You can’t force yourself to be happy just because it’s the holiday season. Once you identify and acknowledge what you are feeling, you can begin taking steps to cope in a healthy way.

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Tip: Throughout the day, take 30 seconds to practice identifying what you are feeling in that present moment. Recognize any physical sensations you are experiencing, any thoughts you are having, and then identify the emotion/ feeling.

2. **Maintain Connection** – Isolation and loneliness carry huge mental health risks, so it's vital to maintain connection with loved ones in any way you can. Abide by physical distancing requirements but be sure to stay emotionally connected with friends and family through different means of communication.

How to do it: Connect with friends and family via video chat, make a few phone calls, download a multi-player activity app to try with friends, write letters or send a small gift in the mail. The possibilities to make human connections are endless!

3. **Make the Most of It** – There's no denying that things will be different this year, so try not to hold on to what the holidays typically look like. Change can be difficult, but it doesn't have to be a bad thing. Instead, focus on activities that can still be done, find creative ways to adapt, and maybe even start some new holiday traditions!

Inspiration: The internet can provide a plethora of unique and unconventional ways to do anything. Teambuilding.com has tonnes of ideas for virtual holiday fun with friends, family, or colleagues: <http://teambuilding.com/blog/virtual-holiday-party>

4. **Take Time for Yourself** – Holidays can be overwhelming for many people, so ensure you are maintaining healthy personal boundaries. It can be helpful to take smaller breaks throughout the day to be alone and look after yourself. Don't be afraid to say "no," – after all, you can't pour from an empty cup!

Resource: Try some of the mental wellness apps geared toward relaxation or meditation, such as Calm, Headspace, or Avail.

5. **Keep Up Healthy Habits** – During the holiday season, it's very easy to overindulge, so do your best to maintain healthy habits. This is a time of year when you want your immune system to be as strong as possible. Your physical wellbeing is closely linked to your mental health, so make sure you're getting enough sleep, exercising, getting fresh air, and eating healthy.

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Guidelines: While everybody is a bit different, a general guideline for exercise is to get at least 150 minutes of physical activity each week. Adults should aim for seven to nine hours of sleep each night, so avoid bright screens an hour before bed to ensure you can fall asleep. Regarding nutrition, it's recommended to follow the Canada Food Guide and eat a variety of healthy foods each day.

Maintaining perspective is also a healthy coping skill that should be utilized during this time. It is important to recognize that not everything is cancelled. Relationships are not cancelled. Family and friends are not cancelled. Kindness, laughter, love, and hope are not cancelled. It's important to embrace all of the good things that we still have and allow the most important things to define our holiday season.

Practicing gratitude on a regular basis has a tremendous impact on one's mental health. At first glance, it may seem difficult to find things to appreciate this year, but there is still plenty to be thankful for. Try making a conscious effort each day to identify things that you are grateful for. This can be as broad as giving thanks for health and family, or as specific

as having your favorite song play on the radio. Choosing to draw attention to the positive things in your life assists in maintaining a sense of hope and developing resilience.

As we begin to close the book on 2020 and look toward 2021, it's important to recognize new and exciting opportunities that have been brought about by the pandemic landscape. At Bridges Health, like many other organizations, we quickly had to pivot in the way we conduct business. We recently had the privilege of facilitating the very first Virtual Mental Health First Aid training in Canada and look forward to completing more trainings across the country in the coming months. Additionally, we have facilitated webinars not just throughout North America, but in Singapore, Shanghai, and Brazil. The virtual world is more interlinked than ever before, driving connection across the planet.

In closing, on behalf of the entire Bridges Health team, we wish you a safe and healthy holiday season, and a Happy New Year!

For more information on improving mental health and wellbeing with yourself, organization, or community, please contact Bridges Health at info@bridgeshealth.com. 🏠





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AWARD-WINNING ARCHITECT HENEY KLYPAK DESIGNS BUILDINGS THAT RESONATE WITH THEIR COMMUNITIES

By Martin Charlton Communications



Canora Credit Union interior.

Heney Klypak’s hands were meant to create treasured works of art. He just wasn’t sure how he wanted to use them.

A gifted musician, especially with a guitar, a young Klypak wrestled with which career path to take – architecture or music. He won awards with his exceptional guitar playing. In the 1970s, he strummed a six-string in a dance band that routinely played at wedding receptions across the province. He played bass guitar




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in a high school jazz band, recorded an album, and toured Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Klypak was so immersed in the music scene that he strongly considered attending the Toronto Conservatory of Music to learn classical and Latin-style guitar.

However, the architecture community can be thankful he chose to dedicate his vast creative skills to that profession. And with more than 30 years practising with his own architecture firm and accepting numerous awards, evidence suggests Klypak made the right choice.

An induction into the College of Fellows of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada in 2017 confirms that notion. Nominated by his peers, Klypak was Saskatchewan's lone inductee that year.

Canora Credit Union.



"That was a real honour," he said. "When I looked through the audience, I'm seeing these architects who are world renowned. I thought to myself, there is no way I am at their level. But whoever nominated me felt that I am."

And to think he was almost a coin flip away from choosing a different carer path.

"I almost quit my studies at the

University of Manitoba to pursue that dream. I was really close to doing that. But I chose to stick with [architecture]."

In 1982, Klypak received his master's degree in architecture from the University of Manitoba. Seven years later, Heney Klypak Architect Ltd., was established.

He completed his first project in 1990: an 18-bed healthcare facility in

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Imperial, Saskatchewan, not far from his family farm outside Simpson, where he grew up. This particular structure, along with the majority of other projects Klypak has designed and worked on, heavily incorporated masonry materials.

“When you’re designing, it’s about using the right materials for the application. You have to know which is best. I find masonry to be the best,” he said.

Klypak has been involved in a variety of projects and has received more than 10 design awards. He’s responsible for offices for private and public client groups, various heritage commissions, First Nation health centres and schools,

and several Credit Union buildings in rural Saskatchewan.

While Klypak’s first project was memorable, it is not his favourite. That designation goes to the Canora Credit Union, which netted Heney Klypak Architect Ltd. a 2004 Masonry Design Award of Excellence. He recalls Credit Union board members wanting a structure that is durable and looks just as good 15 years later as it does when it first opens.

“They wanted to send a message to their membership that they are here for a long time and are investing in their location,” Klypak said. “They didn’t want something mediocre. They wanted to make a statement.”

Klypak figured in order to meet those requests, masonry materials were the primary solution. The structure features curved exterior walls made of Tyndall stone.

“And to really add another dimension of complexity, the parapet also went up and down,” Klypak explained. “They were curved in two directions. When you looked at the wall vertically, it’s going up and down. But looking at the wall in plan view, the wall is curved. You needed someone who really understood how to work with stone because you needed to make the bend in two directions.”





“We have some great masons in Saskatchewan. It makes it easy to use this material if you have the people who know how to work with it. I just wish some of these older guys would stick around a little longer because some of the younger guys need to work side by side with the master masons to learn more about the tricks they do.”

Klypak beams when talking about the education facilities he has worked on for numerous First Nations in Saskatchewan. He’s currently designing a new K-12 school on the Sweetgrass First Nation. He notes that there’s a strict mandate on First Nations school projects in that they want their schools to be around for 50 to 70 years.


“The ones that have not used masonry,

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after 10 years these places look like they're 50 years old and worn out," Klypak said. "Whereas, the schools that were built with masonry materials, they look as fresh and as solid as the day they were built."

"If you want long-term performance, especially in a school, masonry is the right way to go. It's the most durable."

Klypak is a staunch community advocate. In 2005, he served as president of the Saskatchewan Association of Architects. He was a board member with Cosmopolitan Industries for 20 years and was elected president from 2012 to 2014. He has also instructed numerous classes to the construction industry in blueprint reading.

In 2017, he was a guest speaker at the Association for Learning Environments Conference. His topic was "Designing and Building Culturally Responsive Environments for Indigenous People."

Klypak said he's slowly starting to transition away from the profession.

He has hinted at retirement and travelling the world with his wife, Gwen, and that he can look back on a career he is proud of.

As for his guitar playing ...

"Never say never," Klypak said. "It's something I promised myself I would do when I had more time and more energy. I think I'll have more of both if I wasn't spending so much time at the office." 🏢



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SASKATCHEWAN'S CONSTRUCTION MAGAZINE

Produced and published for the SKCA by:

DEL Communications Inc.

Suite 300, 6 Roslyn Road, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3L 0G5

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www.sgbennett.com

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Publications mail agreement #40934510

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

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