



Member Release

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Parties Address Chamber's Growth Strategy

The three major provincial political parties are in agreement; Saskatchewan needs to grow in a strategic and sustainable manner.

"The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce has been diligently working through this election campaign to get our politicians to recognize that the current demographics of our province meaning that we need to engage in a long-term strategy to ensure we have a future tax base that can sustain our social and economic infrastructure," stated Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce CEO Steve McLellan.

"Today, we are claiming a measure of success as all three provincial political parties have agreed that Saskatchewan needs to embrace and encourage growth in our economy and population. Although, there were some concerns raised regarding how this should happen, the Chamber will continue to work with the parties to agree upon future strategies," continued McLellan.

Prior to the election, the Provincial Chamber introduced its Growth Strategy. Through this Strategy the people, businesses and governments of Saskatchewan would grow our economy, our population, and our infrastructure. By 2030, the Chamber believes our province needs to have a population of 1.5 million. However, the Strategy also sets out targets for labour force engagement, GDP growth, new housing starts, education, communities and more.

- Saskatchewan Party Leader Brad Wall was the first to express his support of the Chamber's Strategy noting that he was grateful that someone in Saskatchewan was talking about long-term growth and has laid out a plan.
- NDP Party Leader Lorne Calvert noted that sustained economic and social growth in Saskatchewan must be a collaborative effort; however he believes it should be facilitated by government not business.
- Liberal Leader David Karwacki was very receptive to this idea, stressing to the Chamber that he fully supports using strategic investments to support growing our province.

"Nobody planned for the surge in the economy and population Saskatchewan has experienced over the past year and this led to some growing pains. Saskatchewan, right now, has the opportunity to learn from the experiences of Alberta and other jurisdictions. By saying now that our province is going to experience a continual influx of people and economic activity we can put in place the houses, training, jobs and infrastructure needed to support them," continued McLellan.

The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce believes that for too long the people and businesses of this province have looked to government to lead them into the future. Under the Chamber's *Action Saskatchewan*

initiative a grassroots movement was started in 1999 to “Up the Attitude” of the residents in the province, and it did. Now, in an era of optimism and support, we are urging the residents of Saskatchewan to once again get engaged in shaping the future by starting to plan what they, personally, are going to do to grow this province in a sustainable manner.

“We are exceptionally pleased that all the party leader have decided to join the Chamber in a discussion about a big picture vision for the province and we want all residents to join us as well. We hope this will be the beginning of broader discussions in Saskatchewan,” elaborated McLellan. “Discussions during which we hope to get away from typical partisan politics and the old dynamics between stakeholders and start looking at new ways to grow our economic pie rather than divide it differently.”

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Contact:
Steve McLellan, CEO
Regina
Phone: 306-352-2671
Cell: 306-533-7686

Alternate Contact:
Mr. Dave Dutchak, President
Saskatoon
Office: 306-975-8811