

Fiscal Relationship and Resource Equity

All of the MKO First Nations responding to the survey identified establishing a new fiscal relationship with the federal and provincial governments as a key priority. MKO First Nations view the water, energy, mineral and resources of the traditional territories of the MKO First Nation as foundational to the provincial economy. A cornerstone of the new fiscal relationship would include means to equitably share with First Nations the benefits and wealth of water, energy and resource development.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, how will your Government:

- 1) implement resource equity initiatives and a sharing of provincial resource revenues and taxes with First Nations?

This will be negotiated between MKO, the provincial and federal government through meetings. An equitable, respective arrangement must be the goal.

- 2) make direct investments in infrastructure in First Nations communities?

A portion, at the very least, of these profits from the resources must be put into well-formulated infrastructure projects. The percentage can vary with the urgency of the project.

- 3) make the sales tax exemption for Treaty First Nation citizens universally applicable at the point of sale, such as the practice in Ontario, instead of Manitoba’s approach to require a “point of delivery” on reserve?

This is a point to consider. Perhaps recapture on tax returns is another way to address tax exempt status as many businesses will experience hardship unless their terminals can exempt taxes easily.

Education

The MKO First Nations identified education as a key priority area for their First Nation.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, how will your Government work directly with First Nations and First Nation school boards to:

- 1) ensure that the space or size of schools are adequate to teach the provincial curricula?

Space and school size should be matched to and equal to those schools in Winnipeg and Brandon.

- 2) revise the provincial curricula to more accurately reflect the Treaty relationship and the history, culture and language of Indigenous Peoples in Manitoba?

All grades need a section of their annual curriculum to include the actual facts of the Treaty relationship, with teaching of the history, culture and languages of the Indigenous Peoples of Manitoba and a 3 credit course in University needs to be put into each program. This is to right the wrongs of ignoring this important chapter of our history so that all children going forward are integrated into both cultures as equally as possible. Opportunities for exchange students between the North and the South of the Province should be available from grades 9-12.

- 3) collaborate with First Nations, First Nation school boards and First Nation education organizations to develop curricula and programs which reflect culturally relevant Indigenous approaches to teaching.

Curricula must be essentially the same in all school divisions. Culturally relevant Indigenous teaching approaches should be adopted in courses that are suitable. Culturally relevant other cultures should also be adopted as we are increasingly a blended society.

Children and Families

The MKO First Nations identify the reform of the Child and Family Services system as a central priority and objective. In particular, it is the objective of the MKO First Nations to restore the authority of First Nations over all matters relating to First Nation children and families and to ensure that Customary practices for the care, well-being and protection of children and families are applied.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, how will your Government:

- 1) take steps to restore the authority of First Nations over all matters relating to First Nation children and families?

The goal MUST be keeping the children with their parents or grandparents or other approved relative but access to their parents is paramount as parents almost always are better at child rearing. Working with the parents to correct any parent skill deficiencies and other counter-productive habits need to be accessible and utilized to keep children in the home. If only one parent is disruptive or dangerous, it is better to remove the parent than the child from the home.

- 2) ensure that Customary practices for the well-being and protection of First Nation children and families will be applied?

Cultural norms need to be reintroduced to the family unit by strong community bonding and help to re-establish the tight community bonds that existed before the Indian Residential Schools.

- 3) immediately stop the “claw-back” by the province of the Children’s Special Allowance paid by Canada for children in care and permit Child and Family caring agencies to apply the CSA to the needs of children in care?

Child rearing has to be deemed essential. Northern costs are excessive. Monies need to stay in the community. If the monies are being abused, trusts should be established for the children once they are old enough to use the funds. Teaching on budgeting must be available within the committee.

Women and Gender Equality in the Workforce

The MKO First Nations identify support for Indigenous women and achieving gender equality in education, training and the workforce as a high priority.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, how will your Government, in partnership with MKO and the MKO First Nations:

- 1) ensure that no person fleeing domestic violence is without a place of safety by ensuring Manitoba has a network of shelters and transition houses?

Safe homes need to be identified and persons in the community should be able to easily find these homes. Finding homes as a source, then the community centre needs to be the safe location. Shower facilities and small rooms for sleeping might need to be established in the community centre.

- 2) support entities and facilities which will provide access to leadership mentoring, training, employment supports and advocacy programs for Indigenous women?

Leaders in the community should have free access to transport and training on how to lead a business or government organization. Women, being the centre of the Indigenous culture, must be so honored and this pride needs to be re-established from Kindergarten up, with courses in the curriculum established to emphasize this fact.

- 3) in partnership with the MKO First Nations, develop and deliver measures that are intended to enhance the inclusion of Indigenous women in the workforce as a priority, with the overall objective being gender equality for the employment of Indigenous peoples in the workforce?

Women, being the centre of the Indigenous culture, must be so honored and this pride needs to be re-established from Kindergarten up, with courses in the curriculum established to emphasize this fact. Access to grants and bursaries as well as jobs should be blinded to avoid men assuming the applicant is male.

Housing

Addressing the critical housing crisis represented by the shortfall in basic housing needs of several thousand units is a key priority area of the MKO First Nations.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, how will your Government:

- 1) facilitate access by First Nations to timber resources nearby First Nation communities in order to use "local lumber" supplies to construct new housing and address the critical housing shortage in First Nation communities?

Training, if needed, if elders are not present or available, in proper harvest of trees from the surrounding areas should be provided. Preparation of lumber for use in green housing is paramount. Replanting of the trees is also needed.

- 2) work with First Nation communities to enhance fire protection capabilities, including related to forest fires?

Fire training needs to be in all school curricula. Northern communities need to be trained to cut fire lines and all the basics of fire fighting should be known by all community members, even the disabled. A fire truck and several drivers should be

present in each community with a well or lake to fill the water truck. Generator maintenance should be mastered by both the girls and boys as well as the men and women. Everyone should know the basics of all the equipment. Pay scales must be instituted during fire season for early intervention.

Water and Waste Water Treatment, Infrastructure and Retrofits The MKO First Nations identified addressing inadequate water and wastewater infrastructure and the crisis of inadequate access to clean water is having a major impact on housing and the overall health and wellbeing in communities.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, how will your Government make direct investments in infrastructure in First Nations communities, such as:

- 1) retrofitting homes to access piped water and wastewater services?

This should be accomplished not later than 2018. All persons need access to water at the level of the small cities located in the southern part of the province. Even though it is more difficult, it must be done. Rain barrels should be used as well. Solar panels should be built and placed to supply the water. Solar must be the main source of power to run the water plant or wells. Solar panels can be built in the community for use in the community, as a paid position.

- 2) enhance the protection of source water quality?

Mandatory water quality testing annually with treatment should be instituted and enforced. This training should be provided and one or more of the community sent for the training to protect their community water supply. Again, this should be a paid position.

Health

The MKO First Nations identified health care as a key priority area. The MKO First Nations focused on the need better access to medical services that included the building of nursing stations and access to local doctors and nurses in the community, as well as the effective integration of health services.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, how will your Government:

- 1) construct additional health facilities in and nearby First Nation communities such as dialysis centres?

Due to the high needs in the rural communities, two or more persons must be trained on their use. The home type dialysis machines can be used by several people to avoid the large centers being built. Laboratory training on the automated machines should be given, with phlebotomy and processing of the specimens taught in the communities. These persons would be paid for this work. Fax or electronic transmission to the MD for interpretation can be done. Microscopy can be taught in the larger communities as paid positions. Help with these functions can be accomplished by a telehealth unit.

- 2) work with First Nation health authorities to ensure that provincial health services are effectively and seamlessly integrated with federal and First Nation health services?

This takes only thoughtful listening and thoughtful communication to determine how the budget is developed. The goal should be training of the community citizens to manage some of the functions themselves as paid positions. Living in the north of Manitoba should be at a minimal risk greater than living in Winnipeg. The MD on-call may have to be in Winnipeg and accessible by telehealth (or even by Skype).

- 3) apply Jordan's Principle in the delivery of health services to First Nation citizens and patients with critical needs?

Jordan's Principle, named in the memory of Jordan River Anderson of Norway House, states that services for a Status Indian child which are otherwise available to other Canadian children must be provided the services without delay or disruption. Under this principle, where a jurisdictional dispute arises between two government parties (provincial/territorial or federal) or between two departments or ministries of the same government, regarding payment for these services, the government or ministry/department of first contact must pay

Inherent Rights, Inter-governmental Relations, Governance

The MKO First Nations identified several inter-related issues and concerns related to the recognition and exercise of inherent rights, intergovernmental relations and governance.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, how will your Government:

- 1) fully honour, respect and protect the Treaties and the Treaty relationship?

Absolutely

- 2) honour and operationalize the Crown's Duty to Consult

Yes

- 3) fully implement all modern-day Treaties and Agreements which include the province of Manitoba or Manitoba Hydro, including the Northern Flood Agreement and the Manitoba Treaty Land Entitlement Framework Agreement?

Yes, although some negotiations will be required to affect the honouring of these Treaties and Agreements.

- 4) endorse and apply the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent?

Yes, as this is International Law, and the only respectable way to work together.

4) engage in a true Nation to Nation Relationship between Manitoba and First Nations?

Yes

Clean Energy and Protection of Water, Land, and Food Sovereignty

The MKO First Nations identified the key priority to protect water, lands and resources to support environmental and resources sustainability and to protect and ensure the exercise of inherent rights and Treaty rights to hunt and fish and to food sovereignty.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, how will your Government:

- 1) fully honour, respect and protect the exercise of the Inherent and Treaty rights of First Nations to food sovereignty, including the rights to access clean water, medicines, plants, fish, game, timber and lands?

Yes, and learn how FN care for the land so we can begin to apply it for the safety of the planet.

- 2)) fully honour, respect and protect the exercise of the Inherent and Treaty rights of First Nations to exercise stewardship for water, medicines, plants, fish, game, timber, lands and sacred sites?

Sacred sites are sacred, no matter which group of peoples these sites are sacred for and must be respected in the manner of the culture that observes these sacred sites.

- 3) enter into effective land use planning and co-management agreements?

Yes, and learn how FN care for the land so we can begin to apply it for the safety of the planet.

- 4) facilitate the establishment of First Nation community recycling and waste reduction programs?

Of course, as this is necessary for proper care of Mother Earth.

- 5) improve transportation systems to remote communities?

This has been required "forever" and must be one of the first infrastructure projects, particularly Freedom Road. Other community access is just as important.

- 6) create access to cleaner forms of energy supplies, for example, to end dependence on diesel fuel to generate electricity?

Teach solar panel construction so that these can be assembled and connected on site in the communities needing clean energy.

High Cost of Living

The MKO First Nations specifically indicated that the high cost of living needed to be immediately addressed, although high costs of transportation of goods and services were frequently identified throughout.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, how will your Government:

- 1) engage in the construction of all-weather roads to remote First Nations?

Of course, with this being shared provincially and federally.

- 2) implement measures to reduce the cost of milk and nutritious foods to account for elevated costs resulting from remoteness?

Road and frozen or desiccated products are needed to be sold at prices as in Winnipeg. Road construction will help in large message.

- 3) promote enhanced food-security measures through support of local gardening projects, greenhouses and community freezers?

Help with establishing community gardens unites the community, teaches the children responsibility and helps them feel they are accomplished in something. These will take down the cost of fresh food during the summer. Canning can be taught to supply the food stuffs during the winter. Community shared large freezers can be placed in the community centre with someone in charge of both maintenance and organization of the stored foods. Greenhouses could be built with the community members trained and paid to build them and then community members can be trained as the gardeners. These greenhouses provide restful areas to de-stress for the youth as well as a source of pride at being able to grow plants year round.

Power Smart, Manitoba Hydro Rates and Uniform Energy Cost

The MKO First Nations identified the need to significantly reduce energy costs through the universal availability and effective delivery of Demand-Side Management programs, rate mitigation and bill reduction measures as a key priority.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, what steps will your Government to:

- 1) ensure that Power Smart and energy conservation programs are universally available and effectively delivered to every residential and business customer of Manitoba Hydro in the MKO First Nations?

This should be true for the entire province. Steps to meet with MB Hydro as well as the federal government are needed to set the goals for this that are reasonable yet fast with definitive dates of completion.

- 2) evolve the concept of “uniform electricity rates” to “uniform electricity costs” by requiring Manitoba Hydro to create an “equivalent to natural gas rate” to be applied to the electric heating loads of northern residential electricity customers who cannot switch to natural gas?

Geothermal and solar should be harnessed in addition to Hydro, making the rates equivalent and stable to those in the south. MB Hydro will likely need to expand it's offering of types of power in addition to Hydro.

- 3) ensure that the costs of Manitoba Hydro's social and environmental mitigation programs are removed from the costs that are billed to First Nation electricity customers who are adversely affected by Manitoba Hydro projects?

MB Hydro needs to become green and this may mean avoiding costly, destructive programs on virgin lands by utilizing solar, wind, and geothermal in addition to reasonable Hydro projects that do not disturb the First Nations lands.

Employment and Economic Development

The MKO First Nations identified the need to improve access to local employment and the support of community owned and operated economic development ventures as a means to reduce dependency on social assistance and government sourced funds.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, how will your Government:

- 1) revise provincial employment and procurement policies to require that a preference be given to qualified Northern and Aboriginal job candidates and Aboriginal businesses in all provincial government and Manitoba Hydro projects tenders?

Local employment opportunities have been mentioned in the above questions. Local persons need to be trained and should be the primary persons who build, maintain, and monitors these various projects. All should be paid positions that augment their current income during the establishment of these projects for at least the next five years.

- 2) monitor and ensure that provincial commitments to train, employ and contract First Nation citizens and businesses, in particular through Aboriginal and Northern employment and contracting preference provisions, are fully delivered?

Indigenous persons should be the ones who monitor the delivery of the provincial services to their own communities as well as adjacent communities, to be certain promises are fully delivered. This will be a paid position.

- 3) ensure that the objective of all provincial Aboriginal and Northern employment and procurement and training policies includes gender equality?

As with any position, this must become the norm as this utilizes the approaches that females bring to the workplace. Women can be in roles of management, as has been proven. As northern communities are matriarchal originally, this is the correct evolution for self-management.

Policing

The MKO First Nations identified policing and public safety as key priority areas. The province of Manitoba is responsible for “the administration of justice”, including in First Nation communities, in accordance with Section 92(14) of the British North America Act, 1867.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, what steps will your Government take to:

- 1) take immediate steps to establish an RCMP detachment in each remote First Nation community to promote public safety and address long response times?

RCMP detachments will take time to establish and should be recruited from Indigenous persons. Two pairs of constables should be in place in all communities that are over

500 persons, with an additional two RCMP members for each additional 250 persons in a community or surrounding area.

- 2) immediately proclaim into law section 80 of the Police Services Act to provide a provincial power to appoint local Band Constables as Special Constables and peace officers?

This would need to be further researched further but as the view is to achieve self-governance, this should be put into place. However, I have not had time to research Section 80 of the Police Services Act.

- 3) construct modern and safe holding cells in remote First Nation communities to temporarily detain individuals when required, as recommended by provincial Inquests?

Again, local community residents should be used to build these. This teaches proper construction, reading blueprints and planning as well as teamwork. These would be paid positions.

- 4) immediately initiate work with MKO and the MKO First Nations to establish an MKO Regional Police Force similar to the Dakota-Ojibway Police Service and the Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service in northern Ontario?

As the Dakota-Ojibway Police Service is already established, it appears that this blueprint can be utilized with goals and deadlines for initiation and final steps of implementation to be sent up. Using the time required for the Dakota-Ojibway as a guide, these timelines can be established fairly.

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Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, how will your Government:

- 1) revise provincial employment and procurement policies to require that a preference be given to qualified Northern and Aboriginal job candidates and Aboriginal businesses in all provincial government and Manitoba Hydro projects tenders?

Local residents need to be given preference for jobs as this is their home and pride in one's community should enhance the work ethic and help infuse monies into the community. Others should be brought in only as trainers and for those jobs where certification is required and cannot be easily obtained. However, training programs can be established to transition these jobs that require certification to the local residents. Skilled labour needs to be in place as quickly as possible within the community.

- 2) monitor and ensure that provincial commitments to train, employ and contract First Nation citizens and businesses, in particular through Aboriginal and Northern employment and contracting preference provisions, are fully delivered?

This should be monitored by First Nations committees as paid positions.

- 3) ensure that the objective of all provincial Aboriginal and Northern employment and procurement and training policies includes gender equality?

This has to be the standard for all business and government positions.

Resources for Youth and Childcare

The MKO First Nations identified the importance of improving resources and opportunities for youth and increasing access to local childcare services as a key priority.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, what steps will your Government take to:

- 1) work with the MKO First Nations to establish an effective integrated suicide prevention and response program that reflects a youth-focused emphasis?

Training programs need to be urgently established. Persons who have experience with the issues are the best persons to be trained. The training programs should be paid positions and persons with experience should be taught the counselling techniques as well as the first aid resuscitation in case of a counselling that fails.

- 2) establish more resources for youth and day care facilities for First Nation citizens both on and off-reserve?

Gardening, greenhouses, solar panel construction, building construction will aid in diverting the youth from drugs and non-productive behaviour. Day care for mothers who are working or are in training programs must be provided and graduated to the mother and father's income and ability to pay. Everyone must have equal ability to compete for the jobs, irrespective of the children at home. This, too, provides paid childcare positions. The communities become interconnected and able to support each other.

- 3) honour the commitments set out in Agreements with First Nations affected by Manitoba Hydro projects to construct alternative recreational facilities?

As most people are now obese and diabetes is closely tied to obesity, a healthy diet and regular exercise is a must, now that hunting and berry management has become less of a potential for all members living in the north. Thus, good exercise facilities need to be built, using paid local labour. Modular units could be made to speed this up and these could be built in nearby communities or in the community. A basketball ball court and track may be the first steps as moving is the important exercise. Fancy equipment can be added over time.

Roads

The MKO First Nations identified the need to build roads including an all-weather road and reviewing the relationship with East Side Road Authority.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, what steps will your Government immediately take to:

- 1) ensure that the East Side Road Authority will work in an effective partnership with the East Side First Nations to ensure the maximum value of ESRA projects is retained locally, including as part of the tendering and management of contracts?

Local tenders should be first. If no one is trained, then the next step is to start training the local community residents to obtain the certification to be able to compete for these tenders. Training programs will need to be paid positions.

- 2) complete the upgrade and paving of Provincial Highway 391 from Thompson to Lynn Lake and complete the upgrade and paving of Provincial Highway 280 from Thompson to Gillam?

This should be shared between the provincial and federal governments. Timelines and local labour must be the primary goal.

- 3) construct an overland road connecting PR 280 to York Landing and War Lake?

This should be shared between the provincial and federal governments. Timelines must be established and local residents hired.

Airstrips

The MKO First Nations identified the need for either repairing or the building of an airstrip to reduce costs for the transportation of goods and services in addition to servicing the medical needs of community members.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, what steps will your Government take to extend airstrips and upgrade airports in remote First Nations to ensure that scheduled and charter flights and aircraft can safely land with a full load of passengers and cargo?

As many do not have accessible roads and roads are not readily feasible in many areas, good airstrips with good maintenance by paid federal employees should be established. Mechanics and heavy equipment operators need to be trained as well in paid positions.

Connectivity and Telecommunications

The MKO First Nations identified the need to improve communications and Internet connectivity as a key priority.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, what steps will your Government take to:

- 1) address inadequate wireless or cellular telephone services in many remote First Nation communities

This has to be dealt with in the first budget. Communication is so very key in today's world that this has to be accomplished as absolutely as soon as possible.

- 2) partner with First Nations to address significantly inadequate broadband Internet capacity?

This, like water and housing, is now an essential ingredient for middle class lifestyles which need to be just as numerous up north as down south.

- 3) immediately address the connectivity-related impacts on health-, emergency-, and child and family services-related communications.

Telehealth, Skype, and all means of connectivity will be established as soon as the connectivity and bandwidth is corrected for all communities in Manitoba.

Climate Change Adaptation

The MKO First Nations identified the need to address climate change and development and implementation of climate change adaptation strategies, particularly regarding changes in winter roads, ice conditions, the increasing frequency, variability and severity of weather, flooding and forest fires as a key priority.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba:

- 1) what actions will your Government take to address climate change?

Every single step must include greening of the environment from recycling within each and every home, education regarding the same, good conservation techniques, and forest management. Every single decision must include the constant reminder that it must not impact the environment (or at least the option with the least impact is chosen, even if it costs more).

- 2) how will your Government work in partnership with MKO and the MKO First Nations to develop and implement Climate Change Adaptation Strategies to address changes in winter roads and ice conditions and the increasing variability, frequency and severity of weather, flooding and forest fires?

MKO has an excellent leader with many excellent ideas. Her input must be included in the decision making. Flood planning and weather patterns must be carefully researched for proper planning. Anyone and everyone with training must be engaged in this battle to save our environment.

National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

The MKO First Nations have collectively and consistently called for and strongly support the immediate conduct of a National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls as an “overarching” priority.

Question: If your Party forms the next government of Manitoba, what steps will your Government take to fully support the conduct of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls?

It goes without saying that we will support the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (and boys and men).