



Ken Cheveldayoff

From a Provincial Point of View

March 30th, 2012

Keeping the Saskatchewan Advantage

Keeping budgets balanced;

Keeping spending sustainable;

Keeping our economy growing; and

Keeping our election promises

SASKATCHEWAN GOVERNMENT PASSES FIRST BALANCED BUDGET IN CANADA THIS YEAR

The provincial legislature yesterday voted to pass the 2012-13 Saskatchewan Party government budget - the only balanced provincial budget in Canada so far this year. British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick have all tabled deficit budgets.

“The Saskatchewan Advantage is real,” Minister of Finance Ken Krawetz said. “While other provinces have massive deficits, we have balanced budgets. While other provinces have high unemployment and sluggish economies, we have the lowest unemployment in Canada and our economy is leading the nation.”

Krawetz said the 2012-13 budget is about keeping the Saskatchewan Advantage and keeping Saskatchewan moving forward.

“We’ve come so far, from a ‘have-not’ province to a ‘have’ province, from a declining population to a growing population,” Krawetz said

The 2012-13 “Keeping the Saskatchewan Advantage” budget limits overall government spending increases to less than five per cent and posts a surplus in the Summary Financial Statements, which take into account all government spending.

The budget keeps a number of Saskatchewan Party election promises, including \$60 million for the Saskatchewan Surgical Initiative to further reduce wait times, \$581 million for highway repair and

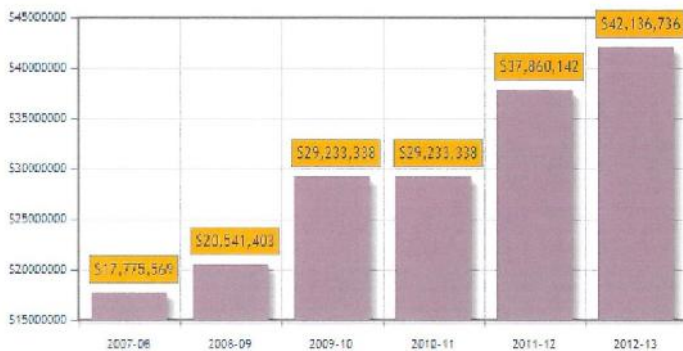
maintenance, a \$50 a month increase to the Seniors Income Plan for low income seniors, increased assistance for persons with disabilities and a new Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship that will provide all new high school graduates with \$2,000 over four years to reduce the cost of their post-secondary education.

“Saskatchewan is the best place in Canada to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life. That’s the Saskatchewan Advantage, and we plan to keep it.”

REVENUE SHARING IN SASKATOON INCREASES!

Saskatoon

Revenue sharing in Saskatoon has gone from \$17,775,569 in 2007/08 to \$42,136,736 in 2012/13.



Municipal Revenue Sharing for Saskatoon by fiscal year

DID YOU KNOW?

- That last week our government brought down the only balanced budget in Canada.
- The theme of this year’s budget is **Keeping the Saskatchewan Advantage**.
- One of the ways it does that is providing responsible fiscal management within a framework of sustainable spending on services and initiatives important to Saskatchewan people and keeping the promises we made in last fall’s election, an advantage created by the hard work of all of us.
- This is a budget with a vision to make Saskatchewan the best place in Canada to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life. This is a big vision but we are well on the way. Our government has identified four goals that will set the direction for the province, there are Sustainable growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people, improve our quality of life, making life more affordable, and delivering responsive government.
- This budget supports these goals by keeping our budget balanced, keeping our spending sustainable, keeping our economy strong and growing, and keeping the promises we made in the recent election campaign. The best indicator of future behavior is past behavior which is why, even before the budget was announced, we put in place the necessary changes to expand the Active Families Benefits and the PST exemption on children’s clothing. This was a promise we made in our election platform and we delivered on it.
- Our government knows to keep the Saskatchewan Advantage we must keep our economy strong. This means being fiscally responsible with a balanced budget and setting aside for a rainy day. This budget does just that. We have also limited overall government spending to less than five per cent while providing the services we all need. The Growth and Financial Security Fund will grow to \$978.9 million over the next four years to provide for those unexpected events we know all too well.
- The economic growth we seek is so families can enjoy a quality of life second to none, but this growth comes with some challenges. One of these challenges is the need for safe and dependable child

care spaces. This budget provides funding for 500 new child care spaces, this will go a long way to provide child care, but we know there is more to do.

- This budget also provides funding to deliver on the election promise to help students build their future right here in Saskatchewan, through the Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship. This scholarship will provide all new high school graduates with up to \$2,000 over four years to be applied to tuition fees at any Saskatchewan post-secondary institution or recognized training course. This is another way we are ensuring everyone benefits from Saskatchewan's growth.
- When our government came to office we learned that the Seniors Income Plan had not been increased in 16 years, this was not acceptable. We doubled this benefit for low-income seniors by the end of our first term, but there is still more to do. This is why we promised to increase this plan by \$50 a month this year, with a further increase of \$10 a month in each of the next three years. By the end of 2014, this will increase to \$270 per month; triple what the SIP benefit was when we formed government in 2007. Another promise made, and kept.

SASKATOON SILVER SPRING NEW SCHOOL ARTIST RENDERING!



As I indicated in last week's Provincial Point of View, Saskatoon Silver Springs received good news at the provincial budget when it was announced that the Willowgrove project in Saskatoon is one of six provincial school capital projects across the province that will move forward under the Government of Saskatchewan's new shared capital approach.

I was pleased to meet with Ray Morrison, Chair, Saskatoon Public Schools today to discuss the tendering process for the new school. It was very exciting to see the visual of what the new school will look like.

Through the new provincial shared ownership model, the Government of Saskatchewan is changing the funding formula for construction of various capital projects, such as new schools and long-term care facilities – by amortizing the costs over the expected life of the facility rather than expensing the entire capital cost in the first year.

With the population growth we are experiencing in this area of Saskatoon, we are pleased that this school project is moving forward. The school division is currently working with its architect on detailed design, which is expected to be completed by the end of March 2012. Once the design is tendered, construction will take approximately 16 to 20 months to complete. It is anticipated that construction will be complete and the school will be ready for occupancy by September 2013.

The Government of Saskatchewan has committed approximately \$500 million since November 2007 to move forward 38 major school capital projects and approximately 700 additional smaller school capital

projects across the province. This represents a record high investment in prekindergarten to Grade 12 capital infrastructure since 2007.

SASKATCHEWAN – Wait No Longer than Three Months by 2014

Saskatchewan surgical teams and those supporting them are working to provide sooner, safer, smarter surgical care through the [Saskatchewan Surgical Initiative](#).

Specialists and operating room teams, health regions, health provider organizations and administrators are collaborating to ensure that by April 2014, all Saskatchewan patients can receive surgery within three (3) months.

2011-12 TARGET: Patients can receive elective surgery within twelve (12) months **How are we doing?**

- 96% of all patients who received surgery between the dates August 1, 2011 to January 31, 2012 received it within 12 months of being booked for surgery.
- Currently there are 1,087 patients who have waited more than 12 months for surgery. This is a 73% decrease (or 2,910 patients) since the launch of the [Saskatchewan Surgical Initiative](#) in April 2010.

Performance by Region Saskatoon 95% - All Surgeries Performed with 12 Months

- Percentages based on surgeries performed using current data (August 1, 2011 to January 31, 2012)
About 21,560 patients were waiting for surgery as of January 31, 2012 (approximately 4,380 cases or 17% fewer than a year earlier). Surgical data shows that 87% of surgeries (including emergency cases) are done within six (6) months and 96% within a year. The longest waits for non-emergent surgery are in orthopedics, dental surgery, otolaryngology (ear, nose, and throat), ophthalmology and neurosurgery

I ENCOURAGE SASKATCHEWAN STUDENTS TO LEARN ABOUT THEIR LEGISLATIVE BUILDING AND GOVERNMENT

As Minister responsible for the Provincial Capital Commission Bill Hutchinson said, "Our Legislature and democratic government system belongs to all citizens of our province, especially our youth. We hope that by bringing students to the Legislative Building to learn about its history and about what the people who work there do, we will create a feeling of democratic responsibility and pride in our province that will inspire Saskatchewan's next great leaders."

It is a great year to take the opportunity to visit your legislative building during its 100th Anniversary to learn about its significance and the role of government.

There are several programs that will occur throughout 2012 including a final public event to be held on October 11, 2012 to commemorate the opening of the Legislative Building on October 12, 1912.

For more information on the Saskatchewan Legislative Building's 100th Anniversary please call 306-787-9261 or visit www.opcc.gov.sk.ca/leg100.

CABINET APPROVES LOWER COMMODITY RATE FOR NATURAL GAS CUSTOMERS

Today the Government of Saskatchewan gave the green light for SaskEnergy to lower its natural gas Commodity Rate by 16 per cent, starting April 1, 2012.

SaskEnergy applied to the Saskatchewan Rate Review Panel (panel) in mid-February to reduce its Commodity Rate from \$4.55/Gigajoule (GJ) to \$3.82/GJ, a decrease of \$6.35 per month for residential customers on equalized payments. On March 21, the panel recommended that a decrease to the commodity portion of the customers' bills proceed, based on market projections of lower gas costs over the next 12 months.

"SaskEnergy customers will soon benefit from the lowest natural gas commodity rate since 2000," Minister responsible for SaskEnergy Dustin Duncan said. "SaskEnergy has now decreased commodity rates for the fourth time in a row, while also providing stable, long-term rates and ensuring Saskatchewan consumers are protected against the volatile upward swings in the natural gas market."

JOINT TASK FORCE ON EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ANNOUNCED

The Government of Saskatchewan and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) today announced the panelists who will lead the Joint Task Force on Improving Education and Employment Outcomes for First Nations and Métis people in Saskatchewan.

The task force panelists include Gary Merasty, Vice President Corporate Social Responsibility of Cameco, Rita Bouvier, researcher/writer and community-learning facilitator and Don Hoium, Executive Director, League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents of Saskatchewan.

"Through this partnership with FSIN, the joint task force will consult with First Nations and Métis people and provide advice on practical solutions to eliminate education and employment gaps," Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration Minister Rob Norris said. "I want to thank the task force for agreeing to lead this process in support of First Nations and Métis people gaining the skills and knowledge needed to fully participate in Saskatchewan's economy"

For more information, please visit: [JOINT TASK FORCE ON EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ANNOUNCED](#)

SASKATCHEWAN VOLUNTEER MEDAL RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED

Lieutenant Governor Vaughn Solomon Schofield announced the names of nine recipients of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal. The medal recognizes outstanding volunteer service or exceptional community involvement.

"It will be a great privilege to present the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal to these nine outstanding individuals," Solomon Schofield said. "Each honouree is extraordinarily generous and capable, and has made enormous contributions to our province."

The 2011 recipients are:

- W. Allan Bailey, Yorkton
- Marcel de la Gorgendière, C.D., Q.C., Saskatoon
- Joseph L. Dubielewicz, Kerrobert
- Clarence Johnson, Parkside
- Dr. Anne Leis, Saskatoon
- Donald S. McDougall, Regina
- Marlene Nedelcov (posthumous), Weyburn
- Sandra R. Wankel, Regina
- Evelyn Wojchichowsky, Saskatoon

The recipients will receive their medals this spring, at Government House in Regina. Recipients are selected by the Saskatchewan Honours Advisory Council from nominations submitted by the public. Including the nine new recipients, the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal has been presented to 148 outstanding individuals since 1995. Saskatchewan has the highest rate of volunteerism in Canada

JUST THE LINKS

- March 26, 2012 – [GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL ADULT LEARNERS WEEK](#)
- March 27, 2012 - [HOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES RECEIVE FUNDING INCREASE](#)
- March 27, 2012 – [GOVERNMENT LISTENS TO FILM PRODUCERS, EXTENDS SFETC DEADLINE](#)
- March 27, 2012 – [SENIORS RIDE FOR JUST \\$10 IN MAY](#)
- March 28, 2012 – [INCREASED FUNDING FOR DAM SAFETY AND REHABILITATION OF WATER INFRASTRUCTURE](#)
- March 29, 2012 - [INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF PROPOSED VITERRA DEAL UNDERWAY](#)
- March 30, 2012 - [SASKATCHEWAN'S AVERAGE WAGES – HIGHEST ON RECORD](#)

SOME UPCOMING EVENTS IN SASKATOON

If you would like your event listed in Provincial Point of View, please contact ken.cheveldayoff.mla@sasktel.net

Please check my website at www.cheveldayoff.com for additional information.

Gardenscape

When: March 30, 2012 – April 1, 2012

Where: Prairieland Park

Time: March 30 – 11:00am-10:00pm; March 31 – 9:00am-8:00pm; April 1 – 11:00am-5:00pm

Details: Visit <http://www.saskatoonex.com>

Redwings Zone G Annual General Meeting

When: April 1st, 2012

Where: Father Robinson School

Time: 7:00 P.M

Living Well with Lupus Spring Symposium

When: April 21st, 2012

Where: Shoppers Drug Mart – Lakewood Common, Herold Court

Time: Registration 12:30; Presentation: 1:00-4:00

KEEP IN TOUCH

I appreciate the many opportunities to make a positive difference in my constituency. Your phone calls, letters and emails make a big difference in keeping me informed on the issues that matter to you. If you would like to recognize anyone or have your event mentioned in this newsletter, please don't hesitate to call me.



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“From a Provincial Point of View” is a weekly message from Ken Cheveldayoff, MLA Saskatoon Silver Springs. Your opinions are important and your letters, emails and phone calls on any issues relating to the provincial government are welcomed.

Ken Cheveldayoff, MLA Saskatoon Silver Springs
1106A Central Avenue Saskatoon, SK S7N 2H1

P 306.651.7100 | E ken.cheveldayoff.mla@sasktel.net

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