



**Canadian
CED Network**
Manitoba

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April 21, 2020

Premier Brian Pallister
204 Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

cc:

Hon. Scott Fielding - Minister of Finance
Hon. Rochelle Squires - Minister of Municipal Relations
Hon. Heather Stefanson - Minister of Families
Hon. Cameron Friesen - Minister of Health, Seniors, and Active Living
Hon. Ralph Eichler - Minister of Economic Development & Training
Hon. Eileen Clarke - Minister of Indigenous and Northern Relations
Hon. Sarah Guillemard - Minister of Conservation and Climate
Hon. Cathy Cox - Minister of Sport, Culture, and Heritage

Dear Premier Pallister,

Thank you for your ongoing leadership and work to respond to the COVID-19 public health crisis and its social, economic, and cultural impact in our province.

I am writing to you on behalf of the Manitoba members of the Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet). Earlier this month we joined 6 other member-networks and associations in [providing recommendations](#) for ensuring these important non-profit and community-based organizations are able to serve Manitoba communities in need throughout the COVID-19 crisis.

Today I want to draw your attention to the ways our members are providing essential services to our communities while shifting programs to deal with COVID-19, and advocate on their behalf for continued investment in their important work.

Our membership is made up of non-profit, community-based organizations, social enterprises, cooperatives, women's centres, supporters, funders, and more from across Manitoba committed to community economic development. They are providing essential services to help communities address the impacts of COVID-19, while continuing to play a crucial role in supporting communities and individuals through already existing socio-economic needs.



Here are some remarkable examples of the work happening on the ground:

- **Neighbourhood Renewal Corporations, Women's Centres, and other community-based organizations** are addressing new and persisting community needs across the province - moving 24 hour safe spaces to hotels, providing meals to the food insecure, and assisting community members to navigate systems. In Winnipeg's West End community, DMSMCA has adopted a walk-up window model to provide community members with hygiene, harm reduction supplies, and even assistance with their taxes!
- **Social enterprises, cooperatives, and local economic development groups** continue to provide employment and training opportunities in creative ways. Some have shifted their activities to help with efforts to address COVID-19 and its impact in our community.
 - Purpose Construction partnered with Main Street Project to quickly convert an unused apartment building into emergency housing for people experiencing homelessness with COVID-19.
 - LITE has partnered with Canadian Muslim Women's Institute and Pollock's Hardware, selling non-medical grade masks sewn by Cutting Edge employees to community members.
- **Indigenous organizations, newcomer-serving groups, and disability-serving agencies** continue to provide essential services, advocate for their communities, and lead community development work. IRCOM continues working to see that community members are housed, and have access to healthcare and family supports. SSCOPE has [overhauled their entire space](#) to address needs of the community in response to COVID-19.

It would be unnecessarily damaging to the health of Manitoba communities and economies if these organizations are unable to continue their work providing essential services to communities in need. Furthermore, interruptions in funding could result in the loss of staff with institutional knowledge, thereby slowing Manitoba's economic recovery.

Below I have copied the recommendations from the letter sent April 6, 2020. These recommendations will help ensure Manitoban communities get through the COVID-19 crisis without more pain than is necessary.

We would be pleased to continue conversations with you about these recommendations at any point.

Respectfully,
Darcy Penner
Manitoba Network Manager



Recommendations:

1. Speak to the needs and responses of all three sectors: business, government and the non-profit, charitable and voluntary sector so that we know your commitment to our sector in all communications and planning.
2. Create a stabilization fund to provide financial supports for the non-profits that are on the frontlines, especially those organizations that cannot enforce social distancing or work-from-home for service or organizational reasons.
3. Create emergency funding provisions (one-time funding or zero/low interest loans for non-profits, charitable and voluntary organizations which may be facing a funding crisis or drawing on their reserves).
4. Provide and clearly communicate flexibility measures to assist nonprofits that receive funding directly from the Government as they manage their agreements with the Province. This could potentially include allowing funds to be moved between budget categories, extending funding agreements concluding in 2019/20 through the 2020/21 fiscal year, postponement of implementation of administrative guidelines, and recognition that program outcomes may shift.
5. Include the non-profit, charitable and voluntary sector at leadership tables to ensure that their needs are explicitly addressed in planning and fund allocation.
6. Articulate a clear strategy to ensure that the non-profit, charitable, and voluntary sector and their organizations remain viable and able to deliver critical services during the COVID-19 situation.