

2021-1 Road to Recovery & Investing in Communities, Employment, and Environment

Mover: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives - Manitoba

Whereas: COVID-19 will bring the global economy into recession, and Manitoba will be deeply impacted, including through pressure on the province's finances. A government austerity agenda at this time will continue to stagnate economic recovery across Manitoba communities and continue to make many Manitobans more vulnerable at this time.

Whereas: Economic analysis by Lynne Fernandez found that provincial spending cuts result in less stimulus in the local economy, resulting in a total loss of labour income to Manitobans of between \$981 million to \$1.179 billion, tax revenue losses to Manitoba from \$157 to \$189 million and a total drop of provincial GDP of between \$1.289 and \$1.525 billion.¹ While Manitoba's unemployment rate has recovered better from COVID-19 compared to other provinces, it is still at 7.0% in September 2020. However, many more are not counted in the unemployment numbers.

Whereas: The COVID-19 crisis has revealed stark inequities in our communities. For many it is a wake-up call that should be harnessed to protect vulnerable people, workers, and the planet. We need government to lead a road to recovery that prioritizes investments in a just, equitable, and sustainable recovery for all.

Whereas: Governments around the world will likely introduce stimulus packages in response to COVID-19 and go into debt so they can invest in such a way to stimulate the economy and keep people employed.

Whereas: The 2020 Alternative Provincial Budget, *Change Starts Here*, is a blueprint for Manitoba's budget that could be used to guide a road to COVID-19 recovery, while simultaneously investing in solutions to major economic, social, and environmental issues facing our province.

Whereas: We need to integrate priorities that maintain a habitable planet, support reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, while providing stable, decent livings for working people, particularly as part of COVID-19 recovery. This systemic approach has been captured recently by policy proposals and plans for systemic change through a Green New Deal, Just Transition, and Just Recovery. Manitoba could implement a package of changes that emulates the call of these movements.

Whereas: Manitoba's road to recovery must prioritize employment for those economically impacted by COVID-19, those who were already vulnerable and excluded from the labour market prior to COVID-19, as well as supporting transitioning off fossil fuels. Of particular importance is supporting Indigenous-led green jobs.

Whereas: Retrofit projects are significant job creators and result in monetary savings from reduced fuel usage as well as environmental benefits. The government can play an important role in stimulating large scale projects to create economies of scale. Savings can be rolled into paying for more projects. Done right, retrofits can extend the life of a building.

¹ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/manitoba-government-economy-covid-19-1.5539666>

Whereas: Manitoba has the oldest housing stock in the country which provides a massive opportunity for retrofit projects.

Whereas: Governments have a role to play to stimulate the local economy and help those in need. During an economic crisis such as COVID-19, borrowing money today will stimulate the economy, support employment, increase tax revenue, and save lives by providing life-sustaining services

Whereas: Manitoba's road to recovery should use a community economic development approach, which allows community members to democratically control development. Indigenous peoples, including many First Nations, are leading CED strategies through the social economy that demonstrates how a Green New Deal could roll out in Manitoba. Much of the Alternative Provincial Budget is rooted in CED principles and strategies. Training and investment is rooted in community economic development and environmental principles that support the Green New Deal strategy. This approach could see an increase in social economy enterprises and community-based organizations working towards a more inclusive economy, while supporting meaningful employment.

Whereas: This recommendation fits within the Local & Fair Economies and Tackling Climate Change theme areas of the Public Policy Road Map, supporting COVID-19 economic recovery through systemic approaches based in CED such as a Green New Deal, a just transition or just recovery.

Be it Resolved That: The Province of Manitoba reverse its austerity agenda and focus on leading a road to recovery from COVID-19 that prioritizes investments in a just, equitable, and sustainable recovery for people and planet. This approach should seek to achieve multiple social, economic, and environmental public policy goals through its investments and spending during the road to recovery.

Be it Further Resolved That: The Province of Manitoba focus on equitable employment for all as a key piece of the road to recovery. This can be achieved through policies such as:

- A. Ensuring stimulus and procurement policies and practices support climate resilience, strengthen local economies and reduce poverty, including the use of social procurement and community benefits agreements/clauses.
- B. Supporting the Truth & Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #92 supporting equitable access to jobs, training, and educational opportunities for Indigenous peoples through devoting resources and policy supports to organizations providing long-term supports to Indigenous job seekers facing multiple barriers to employment and employers committed to inclusive hiring.
- C. Prioritize green infrastructure and retrofits and basic needs of Manitobans while creating and supporting decent jobs, including in Indigenous communities

How the Resolution will be Advanced: This resolution is advanced through a number of approaches, coalitions, and campaigns. CCEDNet has signed on to the national call for a Just Recovery, as well as many members. Two webinars focused on the contents of this resolutions have been hosted by CCPA-Manitoba and CCEDNet Manitoba. Coalitions advocating for a Green New Deal, Just Recovery, and Just Transition can and are focusing on these elements as important recommendations to the Province, including the Manitoba Energy Justice Coalition and the Climate Action Team. Many coalitions are focused on equitable recovery policy goals, including Make Poverty History Manitoba, the We Want to Work coalition on social procurement, and others. The APB continues to be an important resource as a blueprint for change to coalesce around.