

## Backgrounder

### Rebuilding Saskatchewan's Roads and Highways and Investing in Transportation Innovation

#### The Saskatchewan Party's New Ideas to Secure the Future

Over the next four years, a Saskatchewan Party government will repair and rebuild the province's crumbling highways, by investing over \$1.8-billion in highways, municipal roads and transportation infrastructure, while working with our province's post-secondary institutions to develop innovative new road and highway construction techniques and technologies.

#### The Saskatchewan Party Plan

- Dedicating all of the gas tax to highways and infrastructure, as part of an overall four-year \$1.8-billion commitment to transportation infrastructure and improving Saskatchewan's highways, including \$140-million from the provincial government's sale of shares in the New Grade upgrader to highways and municipal road construction.
- Creating a Transportation Centre of Excellence, in partnership with the province's post-secondary institutions, to make Saskatchewan an innovation leader in highway construction and repair.

#### Cost:

- \$140-million over four years in addition to \$1.7-billion in funding through projected government operating expenditures for highways and transportation infrastructure.

#### The Tired, Old NDP:

- Over the last decade, the NDP took in almost a billion more dollars in fuel taxes than it spent on highways and transportation.
- In 2003, the provincial government estimated that nearly 11,000 km or 41% of the provincial highways network was not in good repair.
- Lorne Calvert acknowledged in March 2007 that the NDP has had no plan for highways and that previous highways spending had been done on an ad hoc basis – CBC
- *"The bottom line here is that our road network is deteriorating at a rate faster than we are repairing it. At the same time the provincial and federal governments are taking millions more in gas tax revenue out of your pocket than they are putting back into your roads."* - **Road Builders and Heavy Construction Association of Saskatchewan**

## The Saskatchewan Party Plan

### **Dedicating all of the Gas Tax to a Four-Year \$1.8-billion Investment in Highways, Transportation Infrastructure and Innovative Road Construction.**

- A Saskatchewan Party government will dedicate all of the fuel tax collected in the province to highways and transportation infrastructure, as part of a minimum four year \$1.8-billion commitment to rebuilding Saskatchewan's highway and transportation infrastructure.
  - In 2007-08, the Saskatchewan government collected \$380.3-million in fuel taxes.
  - Over four years, a Saskatchewan Party government will invest approximately \$1.5 - billion in fuel taxes into highways and transportation infrastructure excellence, supported through an estimated additional \$200-million from the general revenue fund.
  - A Saskatchewan Party government will dedicate an additional \$140-million over four years to municipal road and highway infrastructure from the proceeds of the provincial government's sale of its share in the New Grade upgrader.
- A Saskatchewan Party government will also negotiate with the federal government to increase federal funding for road, highway and infrastructure investment, to push funding beyond the minimum \$1.8-billion Saskatchewan Party commitment.

### **Making our Highways Safer and Supporting Economic Growth**

- A Saskatchewan Party government will establish a rolling five-year plan for the province's road construction and maintenance program, that will focus on improving the safety of the province's highways and investing in infrastructure that supports economic growth.
- A Saskatchewan Party government will place an emphasis on quality construction and focus on the implementation of new highway construction technology designed to meet the demands of Saskatchewan's climate and large scale truck traffic.

### **Investing in Transportation Innovation**

- A Saskatchewan Party's four-year \$1.8-billion commitment to improve Saskatchewan's highway and transportation network will include the creation of a partnership between the Department of Highways and Transportation and the province's post-secondary institutions to develop a Transportation Centre of Excellence:
  - The Transportation Centre of Excellence partnership will focus on developing new highways and road construction technologies and techniques to make Saskatchewan a world leader in road construction.

- The partnership will include support for innovative urban road construction initiatives at the Communities of Tomorrow research centre at the University of Regina.
- Funding for the Transportation Centre of Excellence will come through the Department of Highways, with the annual funding commitment to be determined following consultation with the province's post-secondary institutions.