



2007-2010

STRATEGIC PLAN DECEMBER 2006



Going Places.

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Board of Governors

The Red River College Board of Governors sets the strategic directions for the College through the Strategic Plan.

As part of their governance, the Board has confirmed a set of guiding principles for the College as it advances its vision and mission into the future:

Guiding Principles

- Achieve Financial Stability.
- Be a Centre of Excellence.
- Have linkages with high schools and universities.
- Have community learning centres.
- Offer advanced credentials.
- Be well-known and recognized.
- Be a post-secondary educational institution of choice.
- Be accessible to all.
- Be flexible in responding to changing needs.
- Be an employer of choice.
- Deliver comprehensive programming.

- Be a key partner in economic development.
- Offer multi-modal education.
- Be a leader in Aboriginal education.
- Be a leader in life-long learning.
- Be a leader in international education.

Red River College Board of Governors

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Going Places.

President's Message

2007 marks an important milestone in the history of Red River College as we begin the implementation of our new Academic Plan to 2020. Through a consultative process with our staff and our external stakeholders, the College has created a new academic vision that will allow us to pursue our mandate and fully meet the needs of today's and tomorrow's Manitobans.

This strategic plan has been revised to reflect the prominent new goals of the College's Academic Plan. These fundamental goals are:

Responsible Growth

Red River College operates near capacity with waiting lists in many programs. Our Academic Plan 2020 will allow for the gradual growth from 8,000 full-time certificate, diploma, and applied degree students to 12,000 students by the year 2020. This growth will also include the addition of new programs to help meet the skills requirements of Manitoba's increasingly diversified economy.

Aboriginal Outreach

Manitoba's Aboriginal communities are expected to grow at the rate of more than 30 percent over the next decade, and Aboriginal youth will contribute greatly to our evolving workforce. With most new jobs requiring post-secondary education, we will ensure our programs and services are designed to attract Aboriginal learners and help them be successful.

Diversity and Inclusiveness

RRC supports the provincial government's commitment to broadening our cultural diversity and the provincial target of welcoming 10,000 immigrants each year. We will serve as a catalyst for innovation in business and social systems by increasing diversity in both our student and employee populations and we will set ambitious targets for broadening the socio-demographic profile of our student population and further diversifying our employee base.

Accessibility

RRC plays a critical role in Manitoba as a key provider of post-secondary learning opportunities. To that end, we must ensure that we undertake all means possible to enhance and improve access to our programs. "Access" includes physical and temporal accessibility, as well as ensuring learners possess the skills and capabilities to experience success in our programs. We will ensure our delivery methods respond to the time, place and pace needs of life-long learners.

Quality and Innovation

To achieve our vision of being recognized as a North American leader in applied learning and research, we must maintain a rigorous approach to quality assurance in our programming and services. Combining quality assurance with RRC's climate of innovation enhances our ability to serve our students and become a catalyst of success in the broader community.

A Polytechnic Model of Education

There is a growing global awareness of the importance of applied learning. It is recognized not only in the business and industrial communities, but in society as a whole. In responding to the needs of our communities, we will offer the full range of applied credentials from apprenticeship to applied degrees. Coupled with this enhanced applied education, RRC will undertake applied research, which is firmly focused on the ultimate practical benefit for the students, their employers and the economy.

The above principles and our exciting new academic vision will ensure that Red River College leads the way in transforming 21st Century college education and innovation for the benefit of Manitoba and its citizens.



Jeff Zabudsky
President

Context

Red River College has a rolling three year Strategic Plan.

The Plan is reviewed and renewed annually to ensure continuing relevancy. It is the fundamental basis for decision-making and sets the framework for all efforts at all levels of the institution.

The College recognizes the accelerating nature of change and the need to adapt and respond quickly. The College has adopted a consultative and data based strategic planning process to guide it into the future. Our process strives to be inclusive, flexible and adaptive.

Each year we:

- Identify and respond to the key trends that will have the greatest impact on us over the next three years;
- Revisit the vision, mission, goals and objectives;
- Articulate College-wide strategies and actions to achieve the vision, mission, and commitment (in the College's Operational Plan); and
- Facilitate divisional and departmental operational plans, actions, evaluation and accountability, consistent with this plan.

Through this process we strive to encourage strategic thinking at all levels in the College and link the plan to the real world. While the document is a valuable tool for all of us, the planning process is even more valuable.

2006 Process

In 2005 - 2006 Red River College undertook the challenge of imaging its future. Inspired by the goal of being a top tier college of advanced applied education and research, the college undertook a series of consultations and research initiatives aimed at positioning the college within a broader global community context. To date, these efforts have produced a comprehensive Academic Plan 2006 – 2020 and an Information Technology (IT) Strategic Plan. The process will continue into 2007 and beyond. Work has begun on a Campuses Master Plan and a People Plan. All planning efforts are aimed at advancing and supporting the college's core business: teaching and learning, and community service.

Understanding that the foundation of innovation is knowledge, RRC undertook a series of internal consultations supported by a comprehensive environmental scan, statistical analysis, and comparative benchmarking. These were followed by consultation with external stakeholders and the hiring of external consultants to provide an objective, independent perspective based on industry best practices and experience. Critical features of the process included the creation of an enrolment simulation model using 13 years of data and comparative analysis to project college enrolments into 2020 and the use of a continuous improvement planning model.

To fulfill its mandate and its potential, RRC acts as a catalyst for innovative achievement in the business and social systems of Manitoba and beyond, improving the economy and, ultimately, the society as a whole. The 2007-2010 Strategic Plan is based and builds on the previous plans of the College. It is a transitional process that the college is embracing as it seeks to define its future.

Vision

Red River College is the leader in applied learning and innovation.

Mission

To enable students to build a career, enhance quality of life, and contribute to Manitoba's economic and social prosperity through exceptional applied education and research.

Goals

Learning Quality:

The College is committed to providing a high quality learning experience to facilitate student success.

Growth:

Red River College will increase enrolments and participation rates in the college system by creating new, responsive programs, improving current programs and introducing innovative delivery methods to reduce barriers and facilitate access to education and training for Manitobans and meet the challenges of a changing economy.

Dynamic and Respectful Learning Environment:

The College will provide a safe, healthy workplace and a learning-centred environment that promotes peak performance and allows employees and students to participate and grow, respectful of each other and the diversity of the community and society.

Infrastructure Enhancement:

The College will provide a vibrant learning environment through the development and enhancement of its infrastructure including the facilities, equipment, systems and technology supporting the teaching and learning process.

Financial Strength:

The College will ensure the financial strength of the organization through government funding, fundraising and the development of business opportunities that advance the vision of the College.

Community:

The College will support and enhance the progress of Manitoba and its diverse, multi-cultural and Aboriginal heritage through public and community service arising from its learning focus and broad array of applied arts, science and technology programs.

Objectives

1. Deliver high quality programs and services that focus on the learner.
2. Increase student success.
3. Increase program offerings and ensure that programs and the mix of programming responds to the diverse and changing needs of Manitobans and the workplace.
4. Provide optimal accessibility to programs and services.
5. Recognize, strengthen and reward the capabilities and contributions of employees and support a respectful workplace.
6. Integrate information technology in the delivery, operation and management of all College programs and services.
7. Provide a safe and well-maintained environment for working and learning.
8. Continue the College's participation in global education.
9. Strengthen collaboration and partnerships.
10. Achieve financial strength and stability by employing college resources strategically and developing diversified revenue sources.
11. Enhance the image and commitment of the College among staff, students, alumni and the external community.
12. Enhance the learning-centred focus, innovative and technologically advancing aspects of the College.

A Statement of Values

Advancing our vision and mission can only be fully accomplished through a clear statement of values.

Learning.

We cherish learning and have clear and high standards for learning for all members of the college community.

Respect.

We believe in honouring the worth of others by demonstrating fairness, courtesy and compassion.

Inclusiveness.

We believe in fostering a diverse community and striving for greater inclusiveness.

Integrity.

We maintain at all times the highest level of honesty, communication, cooperation and credibility in relationships and fulfilling our commitments, including managing the resources entrusted to us.

Healthy environment.

We believe in promoting creativity, wellness and flexibility through a safe and sustainable learning environment.

Contribution to Community.

We serve the broader needs of the people of our community and strive to involve the community and contribute to the enhancement of the overall quality of life.

Areas of Strategic Focus

This Strategic Plan addresses the wide range of programs and services in the College's portfolio.

Within that range, **the College will focus on:**

Defining our Future.

Manitoba is on the move. Recent population and economic growth promise a bright future for the province. In partnership with the provincial government, Red River College has accomplished much over the past five years to build this promise. The natural next step in the growth of RRC is its development into a college of advanced applied learning. This means positioning the college to grow to more than 12,000 full-time regular students to meet the need for an educated and skilled workforce to advance Manitoba. A key direction for the College is to engage the community, alumni, government, and business and industry in realizing a new vision to 2010 and beyond to ensure a vibrant and expanding RRC - as the leader in applied learning and innovation.

Expanding capacity.

In September 2006 RRC's enrolments increased by 2.3% over the previous year. In regular programs 94% of spaces were filled. Even with significant growth over the last six years, the College is virtually at capacity. Overall, employers are satisfied with the quality of RRC graduates, with 98% of those surveyed in 2006 indicating they would hire a RRC graduate. However, 45% of employers felt that the college produced too few graduates to meet their employment needs. This figure increased to 75% in more technical areas, such as industrial technologies. This places the College in the position of having to meet industry's needs in an environment where many RRC programs have strong wait lists and physical infrastructure and resources

are at near maximum utilization. It is imperative that there are enough college spaces for all students who want an advanced applied education, if the human capital needs of the province are to be met. Accomplishing this will require significant and ongoing investments in new programming; educational technology; new classroom, laboratory and specialized spaces; in applied research; and in renewing and expanding infrastructure.

Student and graduate success.

Helping students achieve their educational goals is at the core of Red River College's mandate. The College will emphasize exceptional and relevant academic programming along with a comprehensive student support and services strategy. High retention and graduation rates along with high rates of employment, alumni engagement and continued education after graduating will reflect the college's commitment to its community.

Excellence in teaching and learning.

The College is in the knowledge business and delivers comprehensive applied learning. In promoting excellence in teaching and learning, it is essential that instructors stay current with new knowledge, instructional methods, and technologies that affect the andragogical process. Effective teaching likewise requires faculty to know about students and the diverse cultures from which they originated and in which they live. The College has developed a new Academic Plan 2006-2020 with a strong teaching and learning strategy based on sound educational principles. Mechanisms to improve access to regular programs, including reviewing registration processes, working towards more on-line courses, having multiple modes of delivery, more flexible scheduling, and more community based and workplace programming are being implemented. Quality assurance and establishing centers of program excellence figure prominently in the College's academic development process.

Accessibility to college education.

RRC acts as a gateway for many people into post-secondary education. In a recent survey, neither parent of nearly 40% of full-time students had education beyond high school. RRC provides opportunities for many students to advance their potential to participate more fully in the economic and social progress of the province. The College will continue to be an open access college and will focus on providing multiple modes of opportunities for learners to access applied learning. RRC will work to remove financial, geographic, academic, informational and historical (language, ability and cultural) barriers to entrance.

Increasing participation in college education.

The College has a strong record of enrolment growth over the last several years. In 1998-99 enrolments in regular full-time programs were 5,245 compared with 7,935 in 2005-06, an increase of 51%. In 1998-99 enrolments in apprenticeships were 1,350 compared with 1,985 in 2005-06, an increase of 47%. During the same time period, registrations in distance education increased by approximately 213%. Yet provincially college participation rates are very low (second lowest in Canada) in Manitoba. RRC has lower enrolment rates from sequential students (from high school) than in other provinces. The College will develop strategies to increase participation from all potential students.

Advancing the need for more investments in college education in Manitoba.

The Province of Manitoba has made significant investments in college education and now there are more programs, facilities and enrolments. However, there is still the need for more capacity. There are high aspirations for achieving post-secondary education in all segments of the population in Manitoba. Life-long learning is a requirement for continued participation in the workforce. The number of learners is growing and the diversity of learners is increasing. To work towards a 21st Century workforce where 70% of jobs will require post-secondary education, more college spaces for learners will be needed. Future college learning will require strategic investments in the areas of staffing, operations,

physical plant, capital, quality programming and applied research. RRC will advance the requirement for a more fully comprehensive college to continue the growth of college education to increase participation rates and advance economic growth in the province.

Valuing and supporting faculty and staff.

The faculty and staff at RRC are the keys to its success. The College will develop a People Plan to ensure that RRC remains an employer of choice. Faculty recruitment, retention, and development will be key elements of the People Plan. Maintaining an organizational environment conducive to the health and well-being of all members of the college community continues to be a high priority.

Achieving financial sustainability.

RRC continues to face considerable cost pressures. Over the last several years the College adopted a number of one-time methods to avoid major changes to programs and services. The shortfall between revenue and expenses continued and grew through the years. Now the College has reached a point with one-time solutions that will no longer work. RRC will work towards a long-term strategy for managing the financial future. This includes advocating the needs of the College to government, partnership development and a progressive tuition policy, which allows for a predictable and sustainable flow of revenue. Currently, Manitoba colleges have the lowest tuition in Canada. Manitoba college graduates have the lowest incidence of education debt and the lowest level of debt.

Advocating an evolving tuition strategy to COPSE and the Province of Manitoba.

Predictable revenues from tuition fees need to play an important part of RRC's financial stability to maintain quality. For a sustainable and stable financial future, Red River College needs to have a diversified and well-balanced set of revenue sources. Our direct work with clients in customized training and partnerships will help, but an essential element is a progressive and predictable tuition policy. RRC will advance the critical financial situation of the College and the value of the College to government decision makers to secure support

for a long-term tuition strategy that will enhance financial sustainability. Currently, RRC is defining its future to meet the changing needs of students, the economy and Manitoba. A key aspect of this is a discussion on an evolving tuition policy. There are several prospects for the future. One is to initiate discussions with the provincial government regarding the removal of the 10% rebate to students and directing the funds to colleges and universities. A second prospect is to investigate new modes of student payment for education debts, such as scaled payments to earnings. Another prospect introduces debt remission for work in particular fields or with non-profit agencies, or for graduates who stay and work in the province. Finally, study could be given to directing a portion of increased tuition revenue to entry scholarships and grants to students in need.

Advancing Aboriginal education.

Currently, 13.8% of Manitoba's population is Aboriginal. This is projected to increase to 18.4% by 2017. The Aboriginal population has a median age 16 years younger than the non-Aboriginal population. Educational attainment is less than the non-Aboriginal population at this time, but First Nations high school students have high aspirations for achieving post-secondary education. The proportion of children (0-14), who are Aboriginal, will be 31% in 2017 and the proportion of young Adults (20-29) 23.5%. Soon Aboriginal people will compose 25% of the workforce of Manitoba. The future prosperity of Manitoba will rely on a highly educated and skilled Aboriginal population. RRC has a long history in working with the Aboriginal community and in providing academic programs and culturally appropriate supports. Aboriginal students comprise 17% of the college's regular programs - a number that exceeds the Aboriginal population of Winnipeg (8%) and Manitoba (14%). Indeed, Statistics Canada's 2002 National Survey of 2000 graduates for Manitoba found that 16% were of Aboriginal descent. The College will continue a focus on excellence in Aboriginal Education linked to the aspirations and leadership of the Aboriginal community and the needs of the labour market.

Building applied research and commercialization.

RRC will contribute to the innovation and commercialization of research agendas of both the Provincial and Federal governments. In 2005/06, the College achieved Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) eligibility. RRC was awarded one of only six projects across Canada through NSERC's College and Community Innovation Pilot Program. RRC will leverage these recent successes, along with the Centre for Applied Research in Sustainable Infrastructure (CARSI) project and the newly established Applied Research and Commercialization office to increase innovation funding through such sources as the Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI), NSERC, SSHRC, the Canadian Institute for Health Research (CIHR) and others. RRC will pursue applied research in niche areas, including sustainable infrastructure, advanced manufacturing, biotechnology and life sciences, renewable energy and information and communication technology. Initiatives will include professional development strategies to increase applied research capacity and embedding of applied research in educational programming.

Granting applied degrees.

Students and employers have advocated for applied degrees to reflect changes in technology and Manitoba's need for a more highly skilled and innovative workforce. RRC will respond to this need by developing a Polytechnic Model of education and a strategy for granting applied degrees. Applied degrees are granted by colleges and technical institutes. They focus on advanced study and career preparation in areas where there is demonstrated market demand for applied learning which is qualitatively different from the types and objectives of university programming. This step will provide a full range of applied credentials for Manitobans, from apprenticeships to certificates, to diplomas, advanced diplomas, joint degrees and applied degrees. The College will begin to market itself as an institute of advanced applied learning, intent on building Manitoba's capacity to meet the challenges of a 21st Century knowledge economy.

Solidifying Partnerships and Development.

Strategic partnerships are critical for the successful delivery of quality programming in quality facilities with quality equipment linked to community needs and learner outcomes. The College will emphasize fostering a wide diversity of strategic partnerships and links with all sectors including industry, community, alumni, all levels of government and labour to advance the goals of the College. This will also support and sustain fundraising capability.

Supporting the educational needs of immigrants.

Population growth in Manitoba is being driven in large part through immigration, which means that economic growth is also being driven by immigration. In 2005, nearly 8,100 immigrants came to Manitoba. The provincial government's goal is to have 10,000 immigrants arrive in Manitoba annually. There are several ways the college will support this including working with the Province to design and deliver programs that will allow immigrants to use the skills they bring to Manitoba in employment. RRC will also ensure there is an environment at the college conducive to immigrant educational success.

Attracting International students.

The College will develop and implement more aggressive International student recruitment activities. As the economy and education continues to globalize, International Education will play a key role in promoting the worldwide image of the College and in opening new markets for programming. By attracting more International Students the College will also achieve a more diversified community of students to improve learning for all students.

Maintaining strong relations with the Province of Manitoba.

The College's key goals are congruent with and supportive of the Government of Manitoba's directions in developing an educated and skilled workforce and initiating an innovation strategy. RRC will work to maintain a strong relationship with COPSE and the Province.

Building partnerships with the Federal Government.

The College will work cooperatively with the Federal Government to develop ways and means to support the applied learning and research activities of the College. RRC's major activities fit with the goals of the Federal Government to increase post-secondary achievement rates and overcome the skills deficit, to advance innovation, to increase Aboriginal education, and to support immigrant resettlement. The College will advocate for support for its initiatives in these key areas.

Enhancing the image and recognition of the College.

RRC is recognized and valued by Manitobans as evidenced by recent surveys. The College will build on this solid foundation an integrated marketing and recruitment strategy to increase awareness of the value of applied learning among parents, teachers, counsellors, decision makers and youth. The goal is to increase participation of sequential students (so in the future RRC will be a post-secondary education destination-of-choice for high school students), Aboriginal students and other underrepresented groups, as well as to advance the overall image of the College.

Investing strategically in technology and systems.

The College has prepared a comprehensive Information Technology Strategic Plan to guide future development and investment. As an applied learning institution, RRC is reliant on technology to support its mission of education and to support corporate systems and maintain communications. Investments for information and communication technologies are critical for RRC success. This involves systems renewal and a strategy for e-learning, e-commerce and e-business initiatives. An overall strategy includes infrastructure, technical support, curriculum and faculty support, ever-greening strategies and cross campuses connections. RRC also continues to implement a comprehensive integrated corporate information system.

Strengthening links with high schools and universities.

RRC has a long history of articulations and joint programs with Manitoba high schools and post-secondary educational institutions. The College will focus on enhancing these links to support the laddering of educational opportunities for students.

Developing a Campuses Master Plan.

The College is developing a long-term multi-campus master plan to support the fundamental goals of accessibility, diversity and inclusiveness, Aboriginal outreach, and quality and innovation outlined in the new Academic Plan 2006 – 2020. The last five years has seen the square footage of the College increase by 32%. However, enrolments increased at about the same pace. New infrastructure is needed to support RRC's position as an institute of advanced applied learning. Existing aging facilities will be renewed to better reflect current and future student and labour market needs. The recently opened Centre for Applied Research in Sustainable Infrastructure will contribute to learning innovation through applied research. Plans for the construction of a Heavy Equipment Training Centre supports increased program demand as does the proposed new Culinary Institute. Accessibility is being addressed through the opening of a new regional campus in Steinbach and will be further addressed in planning for a new student residence.

Assuring quality and accountability.

RRC has grown but has also maintained a peerless standard of quality within the college sector in Canada. RRC's key performance indicator standards of student and graduate satisfaction and graduate employment are consistently at the top in Canada. Our apprentices lead the country in pass rates. Students expect and deserve value and RRC delivers this value through quality academic programs, quality student services and quality amenities. Indeed, a recent entering student survey indicated that students are keenly aware of the College's key performance indicators and use them in their post-secondary institution choice process. The College is committed to improving our quality by measuring our efforts and outcomes, as well as to publishing the findings. As part of our commitment to quality, we will undertake a self-

assessment as part of our involvement with the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business' Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program. We will also continue to measure the success of our students and graduates, and measure employers' attitudes toward our graduates. RRC also anticipates increased accountability requirements from COPSE, in addition to the Five Year Review.

Reinforcing skilled trades training.

There is a current critical shortage in the skilled trades and it is anticipated that this will worsen in the future. RRC has core strength in apprentice trades. The College will continue its commitment to provide skills training and plan for and advocate for additional facilities and equipment. Attracting women and Aboriginal people into the trades will be an aspect of this. RRC will reinforce its links with industry and high schools to support this focus.

Strengthening the College's role in life-long learning.

The knowledge economy of the 21st Century will require continuous educational upgrading as technology and business processes advance. The formation of the new School of Continuing and Distance Education will ensure that RRC maintains a strong focus on meeting the needs of adult learners. The College will focus on strategies to reinforce its educational programming to meet the life-long learning needs of the future. The new Student Success Strategy will emphasize life-long learning, recognizing as it does that Manitobans are increasingly global citizens with business interests and opportunities extending far beyond its borders.

Supporting economic and social development.

Colleges are partners in federal, provincial and city economic development initiatives. RRC's key strategic program sectors are aligned with those of the provincial government for economic development. RRC will continue to be responsive to the labour market needs of Manitoba and work with all levels of government, industry, business, labour and the community to foster an environment conducive to economic growth and prosperity.

Evaluation and Measurement

The **Operational Plan 2007-2010** provides explicit strategies and actions for each of the Strategic Plan's Objectives. The Operational Plan is the detailed document that describes how to achieve the Strategic Plan.

Every year progress on the strategies and action statements in the Operational Plan is reviewed and documented.

This allows the College to measure success and alter planned actions where external or internal events dictate.

A companion document, **Progress in Achieving the Vision 2006**, provides an overview of achievements in 2006. The report provides a qualitative and quantitative overview of the activities across the College in all departments to advance the vision and mission. It is one of several documents that help measure the performance of Red River College.

Major Trends

Some of the major forces that are and will continue to affect the College are:

- Increasing need for capacity growth in college post-secondary education in Manitoba to accommodate accelerating demand.
- Need to provide opportunities for a growing, young Aboriginal population with high aspirations for post-secondary education in the province.
- Anticipated need to attract and retain immigrants to the Province of Manitoba.
- Existing and growing shortages in the skilled work force.
- Increasing need for post-secondary education and training for the knowledge economy.
- Growing aspirations for post-secondary education in all segments of the Canadian and Manitoba population.
- Need to increase the participation rates of young Manitobans (those from high schools) in College education to help develop a skilled workforce.
- Increasing need for life-long learning opportunities.
- Need to keep skilled and knowledgeable young people in Manitoba.
- Increasing role for colleges in applied research, innovation and commercialization.
- Increasing demand for more advanced technical learning credentials such as applied degrees.
- Need to plan for faculty and staff renewal in view of demographic changes.
- Increasing emphasis on accessible education.
- Increasing International presence of RRC and increasing international students at RRC.
- Expectations for 24/7 access, diversity in program and course delivery modes, ease of credit transfer and mobility, and service quality; all supported by a robust technological infrastructure.
- Increasing requirements for professional growth opportunities for faculty and staff.
- More accountability requirements from post-secondary education institutions for all constituencies.
- Increasing recognition of the value of partnerships among post-secondary education institutions and business, government, community agencies and labour.
- Increasing emphasis on seamless education through articulations across the education continuum to enhance the opportunities for learners.
- Greater student and staff mobility.
- Continuing cost pressures and revenue and funding challenges.
- Need to evolve tuition policy.
- Increasing competition from a broad range of education providers.
- Strength in Manitoba's growing and diversified economy.



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