



## New North Projector Brought Out of Retirement for One Last Event Declares It Getting Too Old for This

Full story inside.

### Upcoming

New North Administrators Conference

September 14, 2017

Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities

# NEW NORTH

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- “Whistleblower” Protections
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- Getting stains out of carpet with vinegar

## Monthly Newsletter July-August 2017

## Cabinet Shuffle as a Sask Quiet Achiever Steps Aside

The announcement of the retirement of Premier Brad Wall was accompanied by a whirlwind of cabinet ministers stepping aside from their posts to contest the leadership, resulting in a flurry of new appointments in late August.

Dustin Duncan comes full circle as Minister of Environment, being the third, fourth or fifth MLA, depending on how you count them, to step into that role since he was last there back in 2011. Scott Moe, who was that minister twice in that time, is a SaskParty leadership candidate.

Also getting a new minister is the Ministry of Government Relations, with Donna Harpauer moving to Finance. The new minister is Larry Doke, an MLA from over west.

Bronwyn Eyre moves from Advanced Education, to Education, and Kevin Doherty has taken her place there.

Gord Wyant has also stepped aside as Minister of Justice, with Don Morgan, previously of Education, dusting off his law degree to take the reigns while Wyant contests the leadership.

## New Minister of Govt. Relations has Plenty of Challenges Ahead

The Minister of Government Relations is also the Minister responsible for First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs, a title so ponderous it requires looking up from time to time to make sure we have it all in there. It is a ministry that enjoyed continuous occupation by Jim Reiter from 2012 until 2016, when Donna Harpauer took over. Reiter’s tenure was generally good times for the municipal sector (and the province in general), with the northern municipalities in particular seeing a jump in revenue sharing as well as some decent education property tax (EPT) relief. Under Harpauer things were different. Although revenue sharing stayed, tough budget decisions led to some municipalities in the south getting hit by the

cancelling of “grants in lieu,” and everyone was affected by an increase in EPT.

On the agenda for the new minister, Larry Doke, will be the review of revenue sharing. Slated to happen every five years–this year being the year–the ministry has yet to make it known if and when the review will take place. The broadening of the PST, upon which revenue sharing is based, also makes figuring what share the municipal sector will get a little more complicated. The minister will also have to do some lobbying at the cabinet table to ensure that the province sets aside their share of matching funds for the ever-flowing stream of federal dollars coming through the various infrastructure programs.

# NewNorth News & Updates

## **Administrators Conference September 14, Prince Albert**

After an absence of many months, New North is set to host another Administrators Conference at the Holiday Inn Express in Prince Albert, on September 14.

One highlight of the morning agenda will be a presentation by MNP focusing on audit readiness and other audity-related stuff.

The afternoon will set a new bench-mark for professional development for northern administrators, as the Ministry of Justice's Dispute Resolution Office will be coming in to take administrators through the basics of how to resolve conflicts. Effigies of your local trouble-makers are not required to be brought, as we don't have anywhere to burn them anyways. Full catharsis is not guaranteed, but we think in most cases there should be ample opportunities for self-justification, and later, perhaps on the drive home, total and utter self-vindication.

Conflict is a part of everyday life, and dealing with it effectively can often be the difference between having a great day at work, and endlessly unloading on your significant other while he tries to watch Netflix, so we hope to see everyone there.

Go to our website, [newnorthsask.org](http://newnorthsask.org), to see the full running order.

## **MLDP Module on Financial and Strategic Planning, November 23, Prince Albert**

New North is hosting the MLDP's Financial and Strategic Planning module in Prince Albert November 23, to coincide with the New North Mayor and Councillor Gathering on November 24.

The module is one of six offered through Municipal Leadership Development Program, which all municipal officials are encouraged to participate in over the course of their tenure.

Space will be limited for this particular module, so keep an eye out for the opening of registrations sometime in the near future. The cost is approximately \$150 per person.

## **September is National Suicide Prevention Month**

With communities across the north planning suicide awareness days this month it is fitting that September also just happens to be the National Suicide Prevention Month, with September 10 as the national day of recognition.

To stay up-to-date on events and other activities around suicide prevention, intervention and post-vention, take a look at the Embracing Life website, [www.embracinglifesk.com](http://www.embracinglifesk.com). The Embracing Life committee is made up of representatives from agencies and government, both provincial and federal, who work in support of activities related to suicide intervention, prevention and post-vention. If you or your community is planning anything related to suicide awareness or prevention, you can let the committee know through the website, and they can post it up there.

## **Sask Municipal Awards**

### **Don't Forget to Nominate Your Municipality!**

Is your municipality doing something new, innovative, ahead of the curve...maybe even award worthy? Are you working with neighbouring municipalities? Take the time to celebrate the successes, innovations, and excellence in your municipality through a nomination for the Saskatchewan Municipal Awards. Nominations for these awards are open until September 8, 2017. To learn more about the Sask Municipal Awards and to download the application form, go to: <http://municipalawards.ca>.

# Cannabis Legalization:

## What Will the Municipal Move Be?

*Where do you stand on the cannabis legalization issue? What will your community do when the legislation finally drops, and will it be the “right” thing?*

Although the Liberal Party campaigned on cannabis legalization (as did the NDP and Greens), it was probably still a surprise that, a mere 6 months after getting into office, the now-victorious Liberals decided to shove legal cannabis into everyone’s pipes, whether they wanted it or not (and let’s be honest, most people did), setting a pretty ambitious timeline of July 2018 as the date when you will be able to confidently walk into a cannabis retailer in Canada, slam down a twenty and say “a bushel of your finest dirtweed, good sir.”

But full legalization has always been less supported in the western provinces, if you take out B.C., and its road to acceptance in these parts as “just another drug” is likely to be pretty rough still.

Indeed, a motion to debate the legalization of cannabis was tabled at the recent northern elected Gathering in June, with the vibe in the room being that this is not an altogether welcome development, given the chronic addiction issues northern leaders are already dealing with.

### **The Legislation**

Following a discussion paper and some fairly desultory consultation with stakeholders, including the municipal sector, the federal government formally set upon the legislative process of legalizing cannabis with the introduction of Bill C-45 in April this year. Some of the highlights of the legislation include:

- Sales to be restricted to people age 18 and older, although provinces would have the jurisdiction to increase their own minimum age.
- Adults 18 and older would be allowed to publicly possess up to 30 grams of dried cannabis, or its equivalent in non-dried form.
- Sales by mail or courier through a federally licensed producer would be allowed in provinces that lack a regulated retail system.
- Adults aged 18 and older would be allowed to grow up to four cannabis plants for each residence, with plants not to exceed one metre in height.
- Adults aged 18 and older would also be allowed to produce legal cannabis products, such as food or drinks, for personal use at home.
- At first, sales will entail only fresh and dried cannabis, cannabis oils and seeds and plants for cultivation. Sales of edibles will come later, once regulations for production and sale can be developed.
- Possession, production and distribution outside the legal system would remain illegal, as would imports or exports without a federal permit. Such permits will cover only limited purposes, such as medical or scientific cannabis and industrial hemp.
- Travellers entering Canada would still be subject to inspections for prohibited goods, including cannabis.
- The existing program for access to medical marijuana would continue as it currently exists.

### **The Provincial/Municipal Response**

It is no secret that the rapid movement of the federal government has left a lot of key stakeholders scrambling to figure out where they fit in. In fact, the widely-circulated discussion paper on legalization pretty much stated that no one was really ready for this, and maybe government should slow down. The municipal sector especially felt like it could’ve done with a bit more time to sort through exactly how legalization would impact municipalities, given it is them that’ll be at the pointy end of regulating and enforcing the manufacture and retail of cannabis.

In late June, a gaggle of provincial and federal officials met to flesh out some of the municipal sector concerns. Helpfully, the Ministry of Government Relations has released to the associations the presentations from that

meeting, one of which we can present in summary below.

### **Municipal Authority to Regulate Cannabis**

University of Saskatchewan's Professor Felix Hoehn's presentation examined the regulatory authority given to municipalities in the existing municipal legislation (such as *The Northern Municipalities Act*). The Professor concluded that under the provisions related to land use, the power to protect the health, safety and welfare of people and property, and the ability to regulate public places, nuisances and businesses, municipalities have adequate authority to regulate cannabis. Professor Hoehn also considered the likelihood of success of "local bans on cannabis use." This is perhaps tricky ground, but the Professor thought that "local bans" (ie, those imposed by a municipal bylaw) would survive legal challenges if they served a municipal purpose, do not conflict or frustrate provincial or federal legislation, and do not violate the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

In a practical sense, what this means is that through the municipality's existing power to regulate businesses, public spaces and so forth, you will be able to prohibit or limit the use (e.g. by banning consumption in public spaces), retailing and manufacture of cannabis in your community, similar to how you can regulate the sale and use of alcohol right now.

Interestingly, Professor Hoehn suggests that "personal cultivation" could be regulated by zoning and land use, safety, health and welfare and nuisance heads of power in existing municipal legislation. But perhaps more startlingly, the Professor also suggests that cannabis bans imposed by the municipality could extend to private consumption. Professor Hoehn references northern or religious communities as places where "bans" (on retailing, consumption, etc) could be legally defensible if the bans are for a "moral purpose." Expanding on that, in arguing for local bans, northern leaders could cite the high likelihood of cannabis ending up in the hands of minors, the overwhelming addictions issues that legalizing cannabis would only add to, or a plebiscite conducted by the community showing support for such a ban (as happens with VLTs).

### **Should Communities Ban it, Though?**

Even if your municipality has the legal authority to ban cannabis, should you? Perhaps the key question here is the municipality's capacity, or willingness, to enforce bans, especially bans related

to private consumption and cultivation. There is little sense, as most municipalities have discovered, in having bylaws you cannot possibly enforce. And don't count on the RCMP to enforce personal use bylaws that try to go beyond the legislation. It is also worth keeping in mind that the explicit and stated purpose of legalizing cannabis is to cut down its illegal production and use—essentially to keep it out of the hands of criminals (and out of the criminal justice system). Wide-spread municipal bans would certainly "frustrate" the intent of the legislation from this point of view, meaning that at some stage such action, especially if it is widespread, is likely to come under the scrutiny of the Supreme Court. Perhaps ironically, at least to some, there is the health and safety of community members to think about. Keeping in mind that one of the goals of legalization is to regulate the strains of cannabis for recreational use to make a safer product, communities, even with the best intentions in mind, may inadvertently create environments for the continued use of illegal, less safe, more potent, strains of cannabis (which is sometimes laced with fentanyl).

### **What Could the Province Do to Make Legalization Better?**

The provincial government, at this point, has no specified plans to introduce legislation or make amendments to legislation beyond an "omnibus bill" that presumably would do nothing much more than create the legal doorways through which the federal legislation will, by July next year, come stumbling through. There is nothing being seriously discussed regarding what will happen to provincial revenues generated by cannabis sales (extremely unlikely to get shared with municipalities, but who knows?).

Interestingly, though, one presentation noted that in the United States, where states have gone down the road of legalizing cannabis (federally it is still illegal, of course; figure that one out), some have incorporated "opt-out" provisions, giving municipalities the authority to allow or prohibit the sale of recreational cannabis. (In Colorado, for example, virtually the only municipality that allows the sale of cannabis is Denver.)

Although municipalities might currently have the legal power to ban or regulate cannabis to their liking in Saskatchewan, perhaps what is needed is something inscribed in municipal legislation that makes the scope and reach of this authority a little more explicit. ■

# “They Don’t Shoot Whistleblowers, Do They?”

With the United States’ experiment of electing as President a man whose signature looks like a failed polygraph test not working out—or working out exactly as intended; it’s hard to say—thoughts inevitably turn to how best to protect public institutions from the fraudulent, corrupt and unethical practices of those elected and appointed to serve in them.

In the municipal sector in Saskatchewan, this conversation picked up steam following Ron Barclay’s inquiry into the RM of Sherwood back in 2014, with one outcome of Barclay’s report being the strengthening of the conflict of interest provisions in the various municipal legislations.

The Ombudsman now also has jurisdiction over municipal entities, which means that members of the public can raise a complaint with the Ombudsman if they think a local government is not treating them fairly, or if they have a complaint about a councillor’s failure to declare a conflict of interest. The most recent Ombudsman’s Annual Report shows that this is working, with at least one member of a municipal council—from the RM of Sherwood, as it happens—subject to the removal process under the legislation as a result of an Ombudsman’s investigation.

Roughly coinciding with Barclay’s report, the province also started to look at how to strengthen “whistleblower” protections for public officials. A “whistleblower” is someone who speaks out against perceived wrong-doing—the misuse of funds, fraud, or other unethical behaviour. Quite often—and some of you may have experienced this—there can be serious career repercussions for people who “blow the whistle” when they see something that’s not quite right.

At the provincial level, public servants have protection under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act* (PIDA), which basically prohibits the powers that be from taking action against someone complaining about wrong-doing.

There are no explicit legislative protections for officials working in municipal government. Or are there? With the “whistleblower” legislation seemingly off the table for now, the Ministry of Government Relations has detailed some of the existing protections for municipal employees in whistleblower situations. Courtesy of the ministry, below is a summary of what these are.

## **1. Existing protections under *The Saskatchewan Employment Act***

Section 2-42 of *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* (SEA) provides protection to employees who report

activity that is likely to result in an offence under any legislation. This includes municipal legislation. So, for example, because it is an offence under the municipal legislation for a councillor not to declare a conflict of interest, an employee would be protected from repercussions if they blew the whistle on them. This protection also extends to offences created under a bylaw.

According to the ministry, a municipal employee could technically report a councillor’s failure to disclose to the Ministry of Labour. Interesting.

The SEA prohibits an employer (ie, the municipality, acting through council) from taking discriminatory action against an employee. These actions would include termination, suspension, demotion, transfers, or changing anything about the terms of your employment. If an employer was convicted of taking such action, they could be fined as much as \$10,000.

## **2. Existing Protections: *The Ombudsman’s Act***

As mentioned, the amendments to legislation now brings the municipal sector within the purview of the Ombudsman’s unnerving gaze. The powers under the Act extends protections to municipal employees from prosecution for statements made or information provided to the OMB. Further to this, investigations by the Ombudsman are private and confidential, and information provided to that office is protected from disclosure.

## **3. Provisions under the *Canada Criminal Code***

Section 425.1 of the Criminal Code is similar to that in the SEA, but the protection under federal law only applies if an employee brings a criminal complaint to someone in law enforcement. So, for example, you would not be protected if you took a complaint to the media or blogger.

## **4. Locally established procedures and protections**

There’s no reason at all why a municipality couldn’t simply adopt, as part of its code of practice, some “whistleblower” protections for employees. This is exactly what the City of Regina has done by including whistleblower protections into their employee code of conduct. As municipalities are now required to have some kind of code of conduct for employees—and even if they weren’t, they should have—it’s actually a fairly natural place to put in whistleblower protections. Not only could an employee code of conduct be about the expectations of and responsibilities of employees, it could also explicitly spell out the protections that an employee could expect against reprisals for speaking out. ■

In our continuing series on the viability of alternative energy sources for northern communities, **Chelsea Laskowski** this month asks ...

# Is Biomass the Answer to Our Energy Needs?

**E**nergy and power alternatives are always on the minds of northerners. Nationally, the potential for self-sufficiency by using renewable resources in remote and northern communities is gaining more interest, and we also see that regionally with New North's recent interest in solar power.

With that in mind it should come as no surprise that over the years, a number of northern Saskatchewan communities have commissioned feasibility studies into a type of energy and power production that uses trees as fuel. Wood waste from trees is a form of biomass that can be collected and then burnt to a) be used as a heat source (energy), or b) to produce electricity (power). Wood is abundant in many of New North's regions, making this biomass technology thing sound like a slam dunk, right? Well, nothing in life is that simple. Let's take a look at the pros and cons of biomass.

## Pros

Darren Anweiler with the Sask. Research Council has worked on feasibility studies for northern communities. He says the studies are often prompted by rising propane costs or higher SaskPower bills, and also when a community notices it has a lot of what he calls "feedstock" (wood waste) that isn't being utilized; for example, wood waste from sawmills or wood cleared from road and construction. That feedstock, if used for biomass, would be carbon neutral and environmentally friendly.

Anweiler says he's rooting for communities to find a way to tap into wood-fueled power and energy: "With us, we wanted to see some out of this biomass because we've got so much of it" in the province.

**Pro 1:** there's lots of wood waste in many of New North's areas.

**Pro 2:** if people are getting their power and heat from biomass, they won't be at the mercy of outside forces like they are with SaskPower, SaskEnergy, propane, or diesel.

**Pro 3:** Biomass is environmentally friendly.

Anweiler and the SRC are not the only ones keen on biomass: in 2016 the Yukon government published a report that found biomass energy systems to be viable for the territories (it's worth noting this report is focused on energy, aka heating, not power). The report, titled "Yukon Biomass Energy Strategy," says that by increasing the use of advanced biomass energy systems "Yukoners could save money, support local economic opportunities for the forest and heating industries, reduce GHG emissions, and become more energy self-sufficient."

The report cites an example from the Government of the Northwest Territories, where the 2013 installation of 14 modern biomass heating systems in public buildings significantly reduced heating costs and drastically reduced emissions. The report concludes "The benefits of using biomass for heat contribute to a clear economic argument for switching from fossil fuels to wood for heat."

**Pro 4:** there are strong arguments that biomass saves money.

**Pro 5:** biomass can support local economic opportunities.

**Pro 6:** biomass can encourage a community to become more energy self-sufficient.

The First Nations Power Authority (FNPA) finds biomass power creation to cost 12 cents/kWh -- which is expensive compared to 4 cents/kWh for coal and 7-8 cents/kWh for wind, and the low end of 8-13 cents/kWh for retail power -- but when compared with hydro power, which costs a staggering 14-25 cents/kWh (once in place hydro is inexpensive to run, it's the startup costs that make it expensive), biomass is pretty reasonable. Additionally, biomass has a lower environmental impact compared to hydro. And yet, through SaskPower's goal to be running on 50 per cent renewables by 2030 it wants to increase its hydro power generating capacity by 16 per cent. Meanwhile, SaskPower expects only a five per cent increase for biomass, solar, and geothermal all combined.

**Pro 7:** biomass can help SaskPower meet its 2030 renewables target for less money than hydro.

The folks at SaskPower are no strangers to biomass: in 2003 the province announced that SaskPower, the SRC, and the Zelensky Brothers Sawmill in La Ronge would team up in a two-year project to demonstrate technology that uses wood residue to generate 600kW electricity, as well as heat, through what's called "cogeneration technology." Nearly a decade later, SRC's president Laurier Schramm told a legislative committee they are considering developing a larger 5 MW plant with the Zelensky brothers. The plant would "burn sawdust to create power which would help a northern community that's at some distance from the generating parts of the grid. So that has some benefits for the power utility as well as the local community, while using waste biomass that's already there and isn't doing anything constructive," Schramm told the 2012 committee. Further still, in a 2016 committee, Schramm said "it's our assessment that we could convert Saskatchewan's entire fossil fuel use to waste biomass energy production" with a mix of flax straw,

slough grasses, wood waste from forestry, and other items.

**Pro 8:** the province has invested in testing biomass technology, and it is proven to have potential benefits for SaskPower and SaskEnergy

In 2016, Schramm was saying that biomass technology is “well, well advanced.” This builds on the Yukon’s report, which says that modern biomass energy systems are advancing in Alaska, the Northwest Territories, and many northern European nations.

**Pro 9:** biomass technology is making major advancements worldwide

### **Biomass projects in Saskatchewan**

Before I get into the cons of biomass, it’s important to tell you that biomass energy and power projects in the province are either small in scale, experimental, or have never gotten off the ground. For example, that Zelensky brothers expansion that was discussed in 2012? Five years later, and there has not been a peep about that coming to fruition.

Another project that was oft-discussed and publicized earlier this decade -- yet never built -- is the Meadow Lake Bioenergy Centre. This behemoth project through the Meadow Lake Tribal Council (MLTC) would produce 35 MW of power, providing power for up to 36,000 homes for a full year, and already has a power purchase agreement with SaskPower that was signed in 2012. FNPA was involved in the project back then but currently considers it inactive, while those at MLTC say it is active but seeking funding. In December, the head of SaskPower Mike Marsh was saying “there’s every potential that something may develop there over the next two to three years.”

And while Anweiler’s work with SRC has produced up to 10 feasibility studies that explore biomass in Saskatchewan, he says that interest tends to fade away as resource prices (diesel, propane) drop. This isn’t to say there aren’t biomass projects in the province, just that there aren’t big ones that utilize the north’s abundant wood waste.

### **Cons**

Here comes the part where I explain why biomass power and energy’s potential is largely unlocked in Saskatchewan right now.

When we look at the Yukon and NWT, the government is spearheading funding for biomass projects and research. And while SaskPower and SaskEnergy are aware of biomass’ potential, they are certainly not chomping at the bit to start up new projects. SaskPower’s interest in biomass seems limited to the currently-tabled Meadow Lake Bioenergy facility. Meanwhile, in 2014, SaskEnergy’s then-president was saying that the utility has never considered going beyond the

business of natural gas service “because we’ve been focused on our core expertise.”

**Con 1:** the province of Saskatchewan is not interested in trailblazing with biomass (or funding its development) in the same way NWT and the Yukon have.

The saying “go big or go home” applies to biomass power production, Anweiler says, because the capital costs of building a facility (like the Meadow Lake one) is high regardless of how much power it will put out. To understand cost, here’s an example: the FNPA is currently working on a proposal that would see 400,000 railway ties burnt per year at the Global Transportation Hub to generate power that is fed back into the SaskPower grid. The estimated price of construction? In the ballpark of \$80 million. On a small scale, for example for residential projects, the capital costs are too high to make a biomass power project feasible. But in remote communities, there’s an additional cost of tying back into the grid.

### **Con 2: Capital costs are high**

Having a funding partner or investor makes those capital costs much less daunting. However, Jai Roberts with FNPA says it’s incredibly difficult to guarantee a long-term supply of pulp or wood waste, making it a hurdle to get SaskPower or other investors on board. He says SaskPower wants to see that you can guarantee your power source for at least 20 years which requires a long-term wood supply agreement. However, he says “the most optimistic contracts I’ve seen are the five to seven year range.”

### **Con 3: It’s hard to get funding.**

So is biomass a viable option for the north?

Absolutely. The obstacles are intimidating, but there are ways to decrease them. For example, with SaskPower’s 50 per cent renewable goal it is worth lobbying for more investment in biomass technology, particularly in New North’s regions that have a lot of wood waste. Likewise, SaskEnergy can be lobbied to invest in biomass.

SRC’s president says biomass technology is far enough along that it’s a viable option -- and says it will be up to entrepreneurs and companies to move the market forward. One thing that may help that is if a region can show that they have a cheap, reliable, large supply of wood waste and that the costs of hauling it from point a to point b are inexpensive.

Anweiler remains optimistic, saying “I’m pretty keen on any type of thing that can be economically viable and utilize biomass in the north.” Looking at how under-utilized biomass is right now in the province, it seems it needs a push to reach its full potential. ■

**FROM THE CEO**  
BY Matt Heley

Last year, in response to Loutcries across rural Saskatchewan at the growing incidence of crime, the provincial government went ahead and put together a Task Force on Crime. The task force toured the province back in November to gather the thoughts and perspectives of community members and stakeholders about what could be done.

The committee reported back in August. The recommendation that got most attention was the creation of a new entity variously called the Provincial Enforcement Team, or Protection and Response Team, depending on which briefing note you look at.

The PET or PRT is a kind of flying squad of 258 “armed enforcement officers,” most of whom are already in service, comprised of municipal cops, RCMP members, some guys from highway vehicle enforcement division who apparently have guns, and Ministry of Environment Officers (COs), who we know have guns. Their role will be to “enhance uniform visibility in rural areas,” improve response times to emergencies, and increase the enforcement of drug trafficking on highways.

The committee’s report highlighted some disturbing trends in rural crime, including a dramatically higher use of firearms. Property crime seems to be the category most people are worried about, identified as

being driven by illicit drugs, especially crystal meth (yes, the report uses the hip diminutive). (If this report was focused on the north it’d probably be interpersonal violent crime that would rate most highly).

Despite criticism that it doesn’t, the recommendations *do* touch upon the structural causes of crime, and made recommendations to increase resources for mental health and addictions. The province will also lobby the federal government to reinstate “gang exit strategy” funding. As well, the province would like federal funding to “pursue building a Western Canada Aboriginal Gang Strategy.” The committee also recommended lobbying the federal government to take a long, hard look at the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* in order to ensure that, as they put it, “the Act continues to meet the needs of youth and strikes a balance between accountability and rehabilitation.”

But the touch is very superficial overall. The report mostly confirms what everyone already knows about the structural or upstream contributors to high crime rates. Given the paltry amount of money government was willing to put behind the recommendations—and most of that coming from SGI of all places—this committee was clearly never primed to do much more than gesture somewhat uselessly in the direction everyone was already wildly gesturing. At least that’s something.

**About New North ...**

Since 1996 New North has been the voice of the municipalities of Northern Saskatchewan. Our goal, as defined by our mission statement, is to advocate, negotiate and initiate improvements in well-being of the residents of the Northern Saskatchewan Administrative District. Organized on the basis of strength through unity, New North partners with all northern stakeholders, from government and non-government agencies, associations and First Nations, to enhance the quality of life, create opportunities and build better futures, for the people of the north.

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