



# EAST SIDE ROAD PROJECT TO GENERATE LONG-LASTING BENEFITS

## \$315 Million To Be Invested In Economic Spin-offs For East Side Communities

As planning and preparations for the construction of an all-season road on the east side of Lake Winnipeg continue, the East Side Road Authority (ESRA) recently committed to invest approximately 35 per cent, or \$315 million, of the overall road construction budget in jobs, training and economic development opportunities for local residents over the next fifteen years.

“The construction of an all-season road is a great opportunity to improve life in the region,” said Eric Robinson, Minister responsible for the East Side Road Authority. “As one of the largest infrastructure projects in Manitoba’s history, the project will improve transportation while providing a much needed economic boost to the region.”

“The East Side Road Project is more than just a construction project,” Robinson noted. “We view it as a way to engage the communities so that local residents participate in, and benefit from, the construction of the road.”

ESRA’s business plan calls for an investment of \$1.125 billion over the next fifteen years to build the all-season road. From this amount, ESRA plans on investing \$315 million in

local communities through Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) and local hiring and procurement requirements in construction tenders.

CBAs are three-year agreements designed to generate jobs, training and economic opportunities for local communities for pre-construction activities such as gravel crushing, right-of-way clearing, access road exploratory clearing and road upgrading. To date, ESRA has entered into CBAs with ten of the 13 east side First Nation communities. Discussions are ongoing with the remainder of the east side communities for future CBAs.

ESRA is also developing an Aboriginal Benefits and Tendering Strategy that will identify local procurement requirements for contractors bidding on construction tenders. This will mean that contractors will be required to:

- hire a percentage of their workers from the east side region
- provide positions for newly trained workers
- purchase goods and services from local service providers

“Local communities have an enormous economic development opportunity related to the all-season road project,” said Ernie Gilroy, CEO of ESRA. “We look forward to working with all of the communities to achieve a long-lasting legacy for the region.”

Over the next few months, while finalizing the Aboriginal Benefits and Tendering Strategy, ESRA is seeking environmental approval on the all-season road from PR 304 to Berens River First Nation. ESRA is also completing the East Side Large Area Transportation Network Study which is examining all-season road route options for the remainder of the region.

The provincial government has committed \$93 million to the all-season road project. Although the federal government has not yet committed to the project, discussions are underway about the prospect of federal funding.

**For more information on the East Side Transportation Initiative, please contact:**  
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