



Office of the Provincial President

August 17, 2021

Dear Minister Digness,

Maarsii. Thank you for agreeing to serve the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S) as Minister of Tourism.

This mandate letter describes the progress made to date in this portfolio and your responsibilities and priorities moving forward. It also outlines how I expect you to conduct yourself as a Minister and work with other Ministers, members of the Provincial Métis Council (PMC), and fellow citizens. As accountability and transparency are the cornerstones of good government, I am making these letters public, so all citizens are informed of how their government is working for them.

PROGRESS TO DATE

During the global pandemic, tourism activities ground to a halt around the world. Popular events such as Back to Batoche have dramatically downsized to virtual events while Métis business owners who rely on tourism have seen their business hampered.

Despite this, some progress has been made in areas with the potential to grow in the coming years. An important partnership was formed with Canadian Geographic, which has allowed the virtual Back to Batoche events to continue to draw wide audiences. This partnership has potential to become a major source of promotion of Métis culture in the Canadian tourism sector through their incomparable link to destination travellers who value cultural experience.

In another vein, work with Parks Canada to assume co-management of Batoche historical sites has continued through the pandemic and should have the potential to anchor significant attraction for tourists ranging from Métis citizens to international visitors.

In the period of post-recovery, supporting Métis businesses in the tourism sector to recover lost markets, grow new ones and build upon the certain resurgence of interest in travel will form a significant service to MN-S and its citizens.

MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

As Minister, you are responsible for the following areas:

- Tourism
- Métis and Indigenous Cultural & Heritage Tourism
- Relations with Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, Parks Canada, Government of Saskatchewan Ministry of Parks, Culture & Sport, Tourism Saskatchewan and other crown corporations/agencies involved in all levels of tourism.



PRIORITIES

I expect you to work constructively with your colleagues, members of the PMC, and citizens to deliver on the following priorities:

- Support the development of a robust distinctions-based Métis tourism sector and the development of a Métis business sector to take advantage of emerging market opportunities.
- Develop a distinctions-based Métis tourism strategy and incorporate Métis culture in a manner that is appropriate, respectful, and authentic.
- Create an inventory of Métis businesses involved in tourism in collaboration with Regional Directors and SMEDCO. Develop consultations and events to identify where MN-S support and partnerships could serve to expand in this sector, particularly in the Covid19 economic recovery.
- Support the development of a robust, distinctions-based Métis tourism promotion and education strategy in consultation with the Ministers of Language and Culture and Heritage. In particular, you will work on advancing the following projects:
 - The preliminary development and feasibility study to create a Métis Keeping House and Language Institute. This would serve as a repository for cultural and heritage knowledge, artefacts, artistry, and interactive education on Métis language and history. It would use technology as a major source of delivery to ensure influence beyond its geographic location.
 - Development of Regional Métis Heritage Tours in regions with rich Métis histories such as the Batoche-Duck Lake-St. Louis region, South Qu'Appelle and others. Sites of historical and cultural importance would be marked and self-guided tours would allow exploration, education and promotion of the importance of Métis in those areas.
- Explore the possibility of a Métis Interpretive Centre as part of reconciliation efforts, promoting and enhancing Métis cultural offerings to share with a broader public. Look to Alberta and British Columbia where Métis governing members have successfully expanded this sector of tourism.
- Work closely with the Minister of Culture and Heritage to explore and promote cultural and heritage tourism that will expand the recreational options for Métis citizens including the active promotion, preservation and protection of cultural knowledge and offerings. This will include preliminary planning and feasibility studies for a Métis Keeping House for the preservation and promotion of Métis culture, artifacts and language.
- As national and international travel opens up post-covid19, identify national and international industry partnerships which could promote Métis cultural tourism to Saskatchewan, increasing the employment and business opportunities for citizens and entrepreneurs.
- Support the Minister of Justice in the Constitutional Reform process to update and modernize our *Constitution of the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan* and related legislation to ensure they are grounded on our Métis laws and that we create legislative frameworks that



will continue to serve our citizens and Métis Nation as we move towards self-government.

- Support the Ministers of Women and Gender Equality and Justice in the development of a plan to address the situation of violence against Métis women, female Elders, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ persons in Saskatchewan.

EXPECTATIONS FOR MINISTERIAL CONDUCT

All Members of the Executive must act with honesty and uphold the highest ethical standards in their personal and professional lives. Métis citizens' confidence and trust in the integrity of government is essential. Our Executive Handbook was updated in November 2019 by the PMC. It affirms that all Ministers must adhere to strict standards of conduct guided by the principles of integrity, accountability, responsibility, leadership, respect and openness. I encourage you to routinely consult the Executive Handbook and use it as a guiding resource in your work.

In addition to the roles and responsibilities listed above, there is also an obligation to support and advance the overall priorities of this government. Confidentiality, solidarity and collective responsibility are critical to good governance and must be the foundation of how we work together. Our Executive Handbook outlines the meaning of solidarity. Ministers may disagree and state their personal opinions during private meetings. At the same time, to the public, they must present a unified front on all decisions and support all decisions made by their fellow Ministers. Collectively, Ministers are accountable for these decisions, even if they do not personally agree with them.

All Ministers must work collaboratively with each other and all members of the PMC to establish good communication. We will ensure policies and programs reflect the needs and aspirations of Métis citizens. The unique challenges that rural and urban citizens face are considerations in decision-making. Every attempt should be made to consult with and obtain the views of Members of the PMC, local Presidents, community members, Métis women, youth, 2SLGBTQQIA+ persons, Elders, and other experts.

As we strengthen our working partnerships with First Nations, the Government of Canada and the Government of Saskatchewan, you are expected to conduct yourself in a respectful and cooperative manner. Delivering success for our citizens requires good working partnerships with external partners and being solutions-oriented.

Our government has zero-tolerance for unethical behaviour. All Ministers are obligated to question any request or decision that they think may be unethical or unlawful. Rules and the proper protocol for addressing alleged breaches can be found in section 7.0 of the Executive Handbook.

As we rebuild our Nation, we know we have a lot of work to do. Part of this journey must include recognizing the devastating impact colonialism and land dispossession have had on our communities, kinship, and governance. Lateral violence is endemic across the Métis Nation. We need to understand how we are going to discard colonial attitudes and re-invigorate Métis laws and ways of living together. In particular, we need to critically examine how we will reinstate the vital role Métis women, girls and two-spirit persons traditionally played in our societies. This



work must include addressing and ending systemic violence against Métis women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ persons. We must also continue to ensure equal representation of women in all levels of our government, and that these perspectives and needs be reflected in decision-making.

Our people have fought for over a century for recognition, respect, and our rightful place as a self-determining people. Over the past three years, we have made substantial progress towards realizing the visions of Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont. From signing the Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement with Canada, investing in housing, education and economic development, making real progress on the negotiation of the North-West land claim, and strengthening our internal governance, we have made momentous strides in a relatively short time. This year, our communities have faced a significant challenge to our health and safety: COVID-19. We came together to support citizens, deliver PPE and provide critical support for housing, childcare, and Métis businesses. While we must remain vigilant to ensure everyone's safety, we should all be proud of how we have supported each other during such unprecedented times.

Thank you again for agreeing to serve the MN-S and its citizens. I am here to support you in your role as Minister. Together, we will continue to carry the torch of those great leaders who came before us. We can, and we will, succeed in fully realizing the vision of a strong, self-determining, accountable government for all of us as Métis people in this province.

Much respect,



Glen McCallum
President

