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Saskatchewan 2024: Making Change Happen - New Democratic Party of Saskatchewan Election Review Panel Report

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Saskatchewan 2024: Making Change Happen



New Democrats

New Democratic Party of Saskatchewan
Election Review Panel Report
April 2021

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Saskatchewan 2024: Making Change Happen

Introduction and Executive Summary

This panel was constituted by the Provincial Council of the Saskatchewan NDP following the October 2020 provincial election. The panel's mandate and tasks were defined by the following resolution:

“That the Saskatchewan NDP will conduct an external, comprehensive review of the 2020 provincial election outcome with a dual focus on both the root causes of the result, and solution-based recommendations to prepare for the next election. The review will be inclusive of stakeholders and will review structure, processes and election preparation.

“The report will assess strengths and weaknesses and provide actionable recommendations for the coming four years of building toward the next campaign. The review will inform a strategic plan for the future and will be reviewed operationally on a regular basis by executive and council. The results of the review will be provided to the Provincial Council before the next Provincial Convention. The review panel will be led by Gerry Scott, with four additional members to be elected by Provincial Council.”

In addition to Gerry Scott (chair), four panel members were elected by the Council: Judy Bradley, Modeste McKenzie, Craig Scott and Brian Topp (brief biographical notes on the panelists are at the end of the report).

In laying out our work plan, we paid special heed to Provincial Council's focus on “root causes” and the need for “solution-based recommendations.” Accordingly, we took the perspective that, while assessing the 2020 campaign was important, equally important was the task of examining trends that arose in the years since we were last in

government. We also very explicitly sought advice from everyone we met with on the changes and improvements that they felt were needed to bring electoral success.

We began our work in December and in January and February we interviewed and met with people throughout the province, including MLAs, former MLAs and ministers, 2020 candidates, trade union representatives, constituency associations, representatives of the party wings and committees, campaign staff, and other activists from a variety of backgrounds.

We conducted 45 interviews with individuals, 16 regional constituency meetings with 61 constituencies represented, five meetings with trade unions and the SFL, and seven sessions with internal party bodies such as the wings. Through two mass emails we also sought input from all members, volunteers and donors that were in the party's central database. We received and reviewed 320 individual and constituency written submissions.

We thank all of the members and organizations who made submissions and particularly those who met with us. We also want to thank Samira Wagner who provided valuable staff support to the panel throughout this process.

We have heard a wide range of opinions about the past and the future, and we have attempted to assess all of the information in a balanced way to bring forward both the most common themes and the ideas for change that we feel have the most potential to support victory in 2024.

The panel heard from many about how much Saskatchewan has changed in the past couple of decades. Fewer and much larger farms; more urbanization; more polarization on social and political issues including Indigenous relations; Saskatchewan's increased economic reliance on oil and gas; the rise of right-wing populism; fundamental changes to the media; the evolution of a basic two-party system; and a precipitous drop in voter turnout.

It is important to note that, while most of our discussions focused on the challenges of recent years and the need for change going forward, we also heard a lot of praise. Many members felt they had seen a well-run, professional campaign; a strong Leader's debate performance; a strong Leader's tour; a truly diverse slate of candidates; increased supports for local campaigns; successful fundraising; and excitement and pride in a renewed caucus of thirteen energetic MLAs, including eight female MLAs, three Indigenous MLAs and a re-elected Leader (the first since 2007). Generally speaking, the campaign itself was not seen by most as the biggest challenge, although areas that need improvement were certainly identified.

But that does not mean these results were in any way acceptable to the members of the Saskatchewan NDP with whom we spoke.

We were solidly defeated for the fourth time in a row. Members feel strongly that a lot about our party must change.

But most participants felt that the most important challenges that the Saskatchewan NDP faces go far beyond what was done or not done in the most recent 28-day campaign period.

Many submissions highlighted the challenges we have specifically faced in recent elections in rural constituencies. Members feel that strong action is required to address those challenges – beginning with a strong response to the attacks on the records of the Romanow and Calvert governments.

Many also noted that there are too many working families either not voting or supporting the Saskatchewan Party (SP) conservatives because, in their view, we have not connected strongly enough on jobs, working people's experiences, their fears of income insecurity, and pocketbook issues generally.

Many stressed the declining voter turnout in recent elections and challenged us to address the need to reach non-voters, including the many Indigenous people who relate more strongly to federal politics.

Importantly, many activists also told us that internal reforms are needed to connect members and supporters more effectively with the central party and caucus, to ensure two-way communications are strengthened, and to engage our supporters in more active ways year-round and not just at election time.

Since the 2007 election when we lost power, the Saskatchewan NDP has suffered from internal turnover, disappointments of losses, decline of our rural base, leaders losing their own seats, and conflicts on issues such as climate and energy. Despite diminishing public enthusiasm for the SP conservatives, they have been left in office as a result of these factors and our failure to fully capitalize on their failings.

At the same time, the SP has abused their position in order to brand their party,

Saskatchewan's provincial government, and this province as essentially one and the same. They have also deployed vastly superior financial resources for year-round campaigning.

We want to again stress that our present situation did not arise just since the last election cycle of 2016-2020. Most of the factors that we describe in this report have been developing over the past 15 to 20 years.

We must grapple with major, longer-term issues. Getting them right is vital if the NDP is to rebuild and become truly competitive to win the 2024 election.

The NDP way is to get the job done. When in government, the NDP has, time and again, got down to work, whether it was erecting the stable foundations of Saskatchewan's social, economic and physical infrastructure from Tommy Douglas through Allan Blakeney or whether it was the Romanow and Calvert governments picking up after the rampant criminal corruption and economic incompetence of the Grant Devine Conservatives - the parents of today's SP conservatives.

It is again our challenge to persuade the people of Saskatchewan to give us the chance to prove our competence in leading transformation of the economy. The burden is indeed on us. It is for the NDP to set out the plans and inspire the trust of the people of Saskatchewan, to show them that not only did we get the job done successfully in the past, but we will get the job done again. We need to stimulate the drive and skills of Saskatchewan's people to tackle the challenges we face, not just as they appear at present but also as they will take shape in the future.

The Saskatchewan NDP is the party that built a fiscally sound, prosperous and environmentally responsible Saskatchewan - but we must also remind and persuade voters of that fact.

It is the party that has the vision and the competence in government to steer Saskatchewan toward where (to paraphrase a great Canadian) the puck is going to be, not where it is now.

Our major recommendations in brief:

First, we need to change the way we do our political work.

We must conduct four-year, 365-days-a-year campaigns, as elections are not usually won or lost in the official 28-day campaign period.

Our caucus and party must aggressively prosecute the record, competence, ethics and priorities of the current government. If we don't have a problem with the government, the public won't either.

The Saskatchewan NDP must aggressively challenge our opponent's lies and distortions about our record in office. In the eyes of too many former supporters, we are currently disqualified from office because we have unwisely chosen not to answer those attacks.

We need to speak directly to the principal concerns of working families in the province – their jobs, their economic security, and their future in a resource-driven economy that is facing changes driven by global forces.

And the Saskatchewan NDP needs to re-assume its role as this province's strongest and most effective national advocates, after a long period of the

province punching far below its weight in the federation under “Saskatchewan Party” premiers rightly viewed as lightweights by their peers on the national stage. When necessary, that includes fearlessly standing up to the federal NDP when it is wrong on Saskatchewan’s provincial issues.

Second, our party itself needs to change and improve, on a number of fronts.

Among them:

- **Active outreach to build relationships with Indigenous Peoples and diverse communities throughout the province.**
- **How the party and its campaigns are governed.**
- **The candidate nomination process.**
- **The platform and policy process.**
- **Our network of constituency associations, especially in rural communities.**
- **Fundraising and expansion of other party-building capacities**
- **Internal and external communications.**

Few political parties have a deeper talent pool than the Saskatchewan NDP – but much of it has been sitting on the bench. It is homecoming time for all members and supporters of the Saskatchewan NDP, from every generation.

Few parties have prouder records. It’s time to be proud, and to say so – while speaking to today’s issues with, and for, a new generation of people with new ideas.

And few parties in opposition face such an unsuccessful, fiscally irresponsible, corrupt, and poorly led opponent – an opponent with such a troubling past they changed their name to hide it. It’s time to hold them accountable, 365 days a year.

People all across Saskatchewan – urban and rural, young and old, Indigenous peoples and newer Canadians – know that the time is coming to end the drift, dithering and failures of this province’s current government.

It’s time for a change in Saskatchewan.

But before the people of Saskatchewan will trust us to change this province, they need to see us change. Change what we present to them; and change how we operate as a party.

That is what this report is about.

Part 1: Results

(1) Eligible voter turnout in Saskatchewan elections has declined.

Participation in Saskatchewan elections, traditionally high, dropped abruptly in 1995 and has remained low since. Conservatives generally do better in low turnout elections.

Election	Turnout
1982	79.8%
1986	76.8%
1991	77.4%
1995	57.4%
1999	55.9%
2003	58.3%
2007	60.8%
2011	51.1%
2016	53.5%
2020	52.8%

(2) The NDP is struggling to rebuild its caucus.

The NDP's rise and fall since 1982 involved sweeping city and suburban seats (1986) and then rural ones (1991) – and then surrendering these gains in reverse order. The NDP has a strong and resilient provincial core vote but has not been able to grow beyond it for four cycles.

Election	NDP vote	Caucus	Outcome
1982	37.6%	9	Opposition (Blakeney)
1986	44.6%	25	Opposition (Blakeney)
1991	51.0%	55	Majority (Romanow)
1995	47.2%	42	Majority (Romanow)
1999	38.7%	29	Minority (Romanow)
2003	44.6%	30	Majority (Calvert)
2007	37.2%	20	Opposition (Calvert)
2011	32.0%	9	Opposition (Lingenfelter)
2016	30.4%	10	Opposition (Brotten)
2020	31.6%	13	Opposition (Meili)

(3) A regional breakdown tells a more complex story.

The Party’s northern vote is quite resilient - but not to be taken for granted.

Our urban and suburban vote has been steadily recovering since 2011 and is in sight of the numbers earned during winning campaigns, although the suburban gap remains a challenge.

Our rural vote held respectably throughout our last term in government (2003-2007), but rural communities are now where conservatives are piling up their largest pluralities (the riding-by-riding details of this chart are set out in Appendix B).

	1978	1982	1986	1991	1995	1999	2003	2007	2011	2016	2020
North	58.7%	51.8%	58.0%	82.3%	57.3%	76.7%	69.8%	62.7%	63.5%	63.5%	61.7%
Four cities	53.7%	40.7%	55.7%	58.4%	56.1%	47.1%	52.5%	45.0%	39.4%	40.7%	44.6%
Urban.core	54.0%	41.5%	57.3%	61.0%	59.9%	50.4%	57.3%	50.1%	44.4%	46.3%	49.8%
Suburbs	50.3%	35.0%	43.4%	44.7%	39.6%	32.4%	34.7%	26.2%	21.2%	29.0%	33.7%
Northwest	43.6%	31.9%	37.6%	42.7%	40.6%	38.8%	37.8%	31.8%	26.5%	18.9%	16.6%
Northeast	52.1%	41.8%	44.0%	50.1%	42.7%	35.3%	38.9%	31.0%	25.1%	22.8%	21.1%
Southwest	35.7%	29.1%	30.9%	32.5%	27.9%	19.4%	23.3%	16.0%	12.2%	15.3%	15.4%
Southeast	40.8%	34.2%	36.2%	44.5%	38.8%	27.3%	35.9%	26.2%	21.8%	17.5%	17.4%

(4) Conservatives enjoy a massive fundraising advantage during and between elections, fueled by corporate donations.

The former Devine Conservatives retook power in 2007 powered by over \$3 million in corporate donations - over 60% of the funds they raised that year - and have been generously funded by corporate supporters in Calgary and in-province every year since.

The official financial numbers displayed in the chart below, published by Elections Saskatchewan, likely significantly understate the funds available for recent conservative campaigns, given the growing role of rightwing dark money and third-party entities.

The NDP has benefited from corporate and trade union donations, especially during election years, but is in no way financially competitive against its SP conservative opponent under current fundraising rules. Since 2007, the SP has raised over \$27 million more than the NDP.

	NDP	SP	SP Advantage
2006	1,715,234	1,406,475	-308,759
2007	2,289,818	4,794,646	2,504,828
2008	941,494	1,364,442	422,949
2009	1,171,000	1,697,903	526,803
2010	1,342,431	3,932,775	2,590,344
2011	2,096,988	6,113,499	4,016,511
2012	956,597	3,267,950	2,311,353
2013	1,177,515	2,680,215	1,502,700
2014	408,542	2,731,762	2,323,220
2015	1,326,180	4,264,353	2,938,172
2016	2,398,419	5,740,052	3,341,633
2017	1,321,915	2,937,599	1,615,684
2018	1,320,315	2,714,418	1,394,103
2019	1,354,521	3,405,067	2,050,546
Total	19,821,069	47,051,155	27,230,086

(It should also be noted that political fundraising reports in Saskatchewan hide as much as they reveal. For example, reports blend corporate donations with campaign loans. The vulnerability to out-of-province funders; the dominance of out-of-province corporate donations to the governing party; and poor reporting and accountability were corrected long ago in other provinces)

(5) Party membership has steadily declined since its peak in 1991.

The historical membership numbers below are not complete, but there is no question that numbers in recent years are far below the party's peak membership.

	Membership	Note
1991	45,000	Peak membership
2003	16,600	Provincial election year
2007	8,600	Provincial election year
2009	13,200	Leadership race
2010	10,200	
2011	9,000	Provincial election year
2012	8,200	
2013	11,000	Leadership race
2014	7,600	
2015	6,400	
2016	5,300	Provincial election year
2017	7,600	
2018	14,100	Leadership race
2019	8,000	Provincial election year

Part 2: Why These results?

(1) The so-called “Saskatchewan” Party proved to be a loyal pupil of the NDP.

The current government was launched as a tactical merger of the Progressive Conservative and a portion of the Liberal caucuses in the Legislature - creating a vehicle to pool Conservative and Liberal votes, the traditional means to unseat the NDP in Saskatchewan.

This new entity then set out to “out NDP the NDP”. They aimed to disqualify the NDP in the eyes of voters in the same manner the NDP had succeeded in disqualifying the Conservatives of Grant Devine – and deployed a massive fundraising advantage to do so.

This continuation of the Devine regime in another guise has been as successful as it is brazen.

It has appropriated the province’s name and provincial colours, in the same way that Quebec’s Parti Québécois and other ethnic nationalist and rightwing parties have done around the democratic world – an attempt to signal that true citizens of this province must support the conservative record and policy.

It created a false-front vehicle, the “Saskatchewan Party”, to allow senior figures from the Devine Conservative government to return to provincial politics without being held accountable for their conduct in office. That included Brad Wall (in his early public career a talented rightwing populist before his real face eventually emerged).

And it elected a government that learned a few things. Returned to office, the conservatives have been stealthier and more incremental. For example, they have been hollowing-out and contracting-out the province’s Crown Corporations, instead of trying to sell them. And they have regularly made symbolic gestures to hold the traditionally Liberal vote they acquired

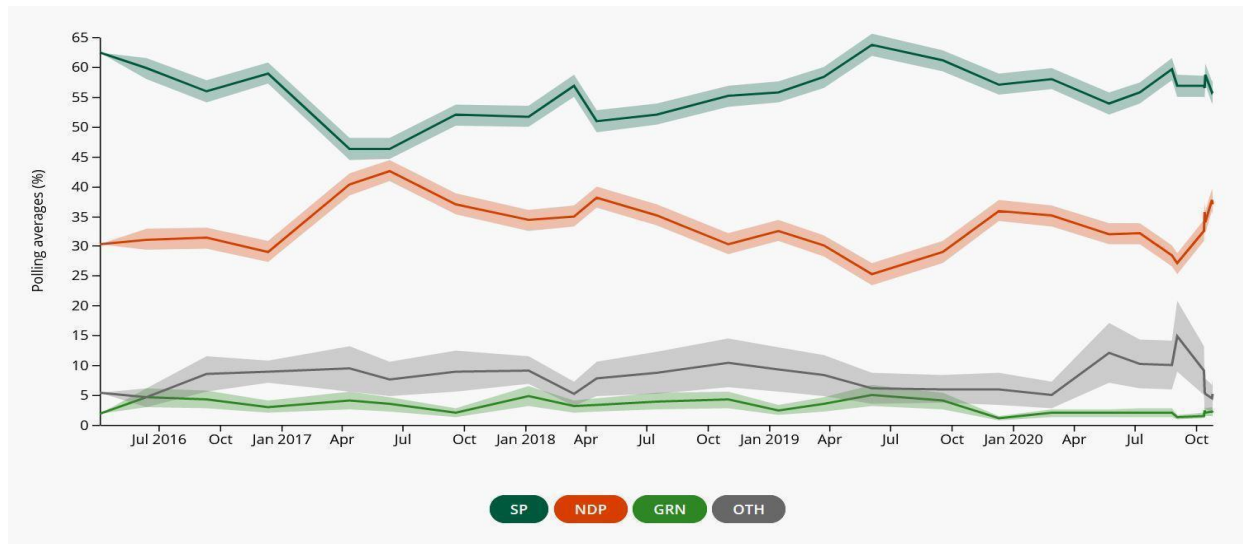
when they merged with a portion of the Liberal caucus. For example, the government recently implemented an insurance rebate suggested by the NDP caucus.

But, unfortunately, a \$2-billion-and-counting public tendering scandal and a public debt heading to \$30 billion demonstrate that the current government learned neither to keep their fingers out of the public cookie jar nor how to count.

The police investigations and prosecutions that flowed from the last conservative round in office ruined many lives and careers. Some figures committed serious crimes. Others were prosecuted for trivial violations (for example, one elderly Conservative MLA ended his career with a tearful apology to his grandchildren in the legislature, after being caught using his MLA allowances to buy a saddle for rodeo parades in his constituency).

The conservatives’ recovery from this utter discredit and ruin; their careful study of what made the Saskatchewan NDP successful; their ability to learn and adapt; and their determination to win - all this has generated a remarkable if improbable political chapter in Saskatchewan’s colourful history. The Devine Conservatives figured out how to return to office.

To turn the page on that chapter, the Saskatchewan NDP needs to find the same energy and determination within itself.



(2) Our approach to opposition has not disqualified this government.

The NDP, some argue, has been an overly “nice” opposition. In the view of many party activists who spoke to us, in recent election cycles the NDP has chosen a relatively polite and unduly ‘reasonable’ approach to both the conservative government’s glaring scandals and its policy failures. “The NDP is playing nice and gentlemanly and being kind,” a former candidate told us. “The rules of politics are otherwise.”

If we do not have a problem with the government, why should the public?

It bears saying that this may be too simple.

The NDP under Dwain Lingenfelter mounted a ferociously negative campaign aimed at profiling Brad Wall’s troubling history as a senior official in the Devine government. Mr. Lingenfelter was himself then politically disqualified for being “too negative”.

Cam Broten energetically profiled the SP’s corruption in office, including the Wall government’s still-to-be-investigated multi-

billion scandals and gross fiscal mismanagement during a commodities boom. Mr. Broten too was disqualified for being “too negative”, notably during the 2016 leader’s debate.

As we can see from the CBC Saskatchewan poll tracker set out above, the Saskatchewan NDP caucus mounted a relatively effective opposition between 2016 and 2018, exploiting serious mistakes by the conservatives.

The caucus avoided tangling with the still-popular Premier Wall and instead focused on vulnerable ministers, whose many weaknesses, suitably profiled, were beginning to persuade the public to reconsider the wisdom of rehiring them to run the province – and were also beginning to persuade voters to question the premier’s judgement.

The caucus emphasized the need for a better and more effective focus on jobs and the economy. They profiled the government’s record of “mismanagement, scandal and waste” – repeating that line until the public was beginning to hear it. And they responded effectively to a grossly unpopular budget.

Caucus members told us they could see they were connecting with the public during this period. Their arguments started to be repeated back to them by citizens at increasingly well-attended urban and rural public meetings. Mr.

Wall's "reveal your real face" final budget confirmed much of what the Saskatchewan NDP was saying.

And then the "Saskatchewan Party" switched to a new leader, softened some of its unpopular budget provisions and - as if coated in Teflon - successfully turned the page. The NDP gains were reversed.

Therefore, a glaringly weak, tired and incompetent Saskatchewan Party ministerial team; the need for a forward plan for jobs and the economy instead of running up the province's credit card during a commodities boom; conservative mismanagement, scandal and waste; and Scott Moe's troubling issues of character and competence were not top of mind

for voters by 2020. They needed to be, for the NDP to have a shot at winning the election. That is still true today.

The departures from cabinet of Bill Boyd and Joe Hargrave, driven out by public anger over their lapses, are proof that determined NDP opposition tactics can pierce the SP armour. Governments can be, and are, defeated by their mistakes, their misguided priorities, their neglect of people's needs - if the opposition skillfully and relentlessly attacks and exposes those misdeeds in ways that connect with the public. Simultaneously, we must draw a sharp contrast by effectively communicating our offer to Saskatchewan voters. Those are the key tasks ahead.



(3) The NDP decided not to respond to the conservative framing of its record.

In April 2021, NDP MLA Aleana Young engaged in a memorable exchange with Jeremy Harrison, who is (as she likes to say) the worst economic development minister in Canada -- a typical minister of the current SP government. Young pointed out that the SP government's obsessive attacks on health policy implemented thirty years ago is an attempt to deflect from their own record -- and is aimed at an NDP team who were schoolchildren at the time.

Some of our caucus then posted photos of themselves so that voters in Saskatchewan could see who the government was attacking. Here

they are above. Points for correctly identifying everyone.

A couple of observations on this:

First, the NDP caucus is the future. They are a team of bright, energetic, and highly capable MLAs. They are broad cross section of people with new ideas. Which is what Saskatchewan will need after four terms under a tired, expended, incompetent, corrupt and innumerate government led by ministers like Mr. Harrison.

Second, as we will discuss below, this exchange is what this team of Saskatchewan New Democrat MLAs are capable of -- and owe voters: a determined, on-point, memorable and witty opposition that connects with voters.

Conservatives have weaponized a caricature of health policy implemented thirty years ago to deflect debate and to avoid accountability for their own record over the past fourteen years.

Millions of dollars' worth of unanswered conservative attack ads has been deployed over four election cycles around a populist rightwing "big lie" about health policy in Saskatchewan.

What is the substance of this?

The former NDP government's 1992 and 1993 budgets were designed by the late Ed Tchorzewski – Finance Minister at the time, a principled New Democrat and career schoolteacher, clear in his mind that he was proposing temporary economies to save public services from bankruptcy after the last period of conservative mismanagement, corruption, and waste.

Many measures were hotly debated, but this approach overall enjoyed wide public support and led to the government's re-election with a majority in 1995. The NDP then remained in office for twelve more years.

- On health care, almost all facilities at issue remained open, arguably in more effective roles. The "Saskatchewan Party" certainly thinks so, since not one has been restored as a "hospital" during the current 14 years of SP rule.
- By saving the province from the near bankruptcy brought on by conservatives when they were last in office, the Saskatchewan NDP *saved* our hospitals and health facilities throughout the province.

The current government sometimes rolls school closures implemented in the 1990s into their messaging.

- Thirty years ago, school closures were decided by division boards based on enrollment and viability, not by the provincial government.

- But things are different now: school closures are now effectively decided by Mr. Moe's conservatives, since the SP during their current stint in office stripped school boards of a great deal of their autonomy by removing local division taxing authority.

These unanswered attacks by our opponents have damaged a key part of our party's brand – our role as founders and sustainers of medicare.

As we have seen, many of our current MLAs and candidates were in grade school thirty years ago. And many of them told us they were intensely frustrated to be held accountable by our political opponents for a cartoon of policies implemented when they were children and teenagers. But many candidates, especially in rural ridings, nonetheless told us that these themes were successfully weaponized by the SP and dominated their exchanges with too many voters.

Why weren't these attacks rebutted effectively? In the view of many party activists we spoke to, in recent election cycles the NDP consciously chose not to respond to this multi-million dollar, determined and long-term effort by its political opponents to deflect attention from their own record. The NDP did this on the theory that it should not do battle on the issues chosen by its opponent, that "when you're explaining you're losing", and that these issues are "ancient history no longer relevant with the passage of time".

Our election results over the past three cycles suggest this was unwise – and that an effective response like the one mounted by our caucus a few weeks ago would have served us better during recent election campaigns.

(4) The NDP has too often missed voters' deep concern about jobs.

The party has been too light on jobs and people's concerns about their economic security, the principal concern of many voters. The Saskatchewan economy has been built on resource development and on agriculture. In recent election campaigns the NDP has accepted the erroneous perception that conservatives are more credible on economic issues, and that the party should focus on health and public services in its campaigning because of our relative strength in those areas compared to the SP. This has left the Saskatchewan NDP (which, unlike most other NDP provincial sections, oversaw the construction of the provincial economy for most of its postwar history) not persuasively addressing the principal concern of most voters – their jobs and their economic future.

The NDP caught it in both ears on what it did campaign on. The NDP set out in recent election cycles to contrast itself with the government by “putting people first” – proposing to invest in public services, while conservatives cut services. The SP conservatives counterattacked the investment proposals by asking “how will this all be paid for?” In the view of several activists speaking to us, this was the only line in the 2020 leader's debate that stuck with voters, despite what almost all who spoke to us felt was a strong performance by Ryan Meili.

The conservatives also countered our attacks on their past and future cuts successfully, by re-litigating the NDP's 1990s health reform, without effective rebuttal. In this way, the government politically had its cake and ate it too, simultaneously attacking the NDP for claimed reckless spending to come and for past cutting of spending. Both sides of this attack were repeatedly and simultaneously put to our canvassers by voters at the door in 2020 (“How will you pay for all this?” alongside “The NDP can't be trusted because you cut spending”).

(5) Too many working people no longer see the NDP as their party.

Since 2007 there has been a growing disconnect between working people and our party. This is a trend impacting social democratic parties throughout the industrialized democracies from Australia to Europe to North America. In our meetings many views were offered on this concern: perceptions that we no longer support

resource industries, economic development, and new jobs; the perceived federal NDP role in the Liberals' minority Parliament; too much focus on marginalized communities; fears of "expensive" policy proposals with tax increases; and the factors noted in points 1-4 above.

Of note was the most common message given to us by trade union leaders, candidates and others: that we are perceived by too many potential supporters as detached from their economic concerns, Saskatchewan's development and the need for more good jobs.

(6) The NDP has been marginalized and vilified in rural Saskatchewan.

Many of our party's campaigners in rural ridings told us they faced a hostile atmosphere in rural Saskatchewan, created by over a decade of unanswered negative campaigning from the SP conservatives.

Some candidates reported being aggressively vilified and harassed at the doorstep and on the street. Supporters in some communities were reluctant to take signs out of concern they and their families would be retaliated against by neighbours. Voters repeated lines verbatim from unanswered conservative attack ads at the door. In some areas, candidates were reluctant to stand until just before the campaign period, to minimize their exposure.

For too long, we have allowed this decline of our rural base - a base we have built our party on since the 1920s. We have seen a drop in membership, less active communications and engagement with supporters, and a growing disconnect with economic and social changes. **The party has failed to fully deal with the changes in agriculture, the growing proportion of workers in many smaller cities and rural communities, and the changing needs of those communities.**

In consequence, an important and growing portion of rural working-class voters are aligning with conservatives.

With the concentration of agriculture into the hands of a relative handful of landowners, most

people in rural Saskatchewan have become resource workers, waged agricultural workers, service sector employees, or public sector employees – as a former leader told us these are “all natural NDP constituencies”. Yet, many rural working-class families believe the SP over the NDP.

Why?

A strong majority of people in rural communities have been persuaded to fear a return to NDP government, on the SP claims that the party seeks a quick end to the oil and gas industry, and places environmental goals ahead of mining, forestry, and other resource development. This is a too-common perception – that we are threatening the industries that have provided rural Saskatchewan with hope, with capital, with new jobs, and with an economic future after farming transitioned to its current form.

In a number of rural ridings, the newly formed separatist “Buffalo Party” competed for votes. Although this new party is probably of greater concern in the long term to the conservative government than to us, its ability to appeal to working class voters underlines the price the NDP is paying for failing to sufficiently address the core concern of these voters – their jobs and economic future.

The work of the Agriculture and Rural Life Committee (ARC) is a welcome change in the right direction for our party and is providing hope that more engagement and better organization can change our fortunes in rural Saskatchewan.

(7) The COVID Pandemic helped the government.

As the pandemic progressed throughout last October, there were opportunities for us to effectively expose the government's response shortcomings and that was done. But with case counts low until almost E-Day, those challenges were not that salient for most voters (in line with other provincial campaigns in British Columbia and New Brunswick, where incumbent governments also had the advantage). As we have all seen the situation has changed dramatically after E-Day.

But with the COVID restrictions in place, there were many downsides for us in terms of mobilization and organization, particularly with volunteer and staff recruitment and with voter

turnout. Many First Nations were in complete lockdown at various critical periods. The curtailment of door-to-door canvassing for several months is another key example, but just one of many important impediments to our ability to actively campaign and mobilize constituency teams.

Too many voters in our universe of potential supporters were either relatively satisfied with the situation due to the low number of COVID cases before the second wave hit, or they stayed home and did not vote because they feared contact with other people.

The various limitations on door knocking, phone banking, Leader's tour events, constituency meetings and other group activities all had the same impact of limiting our profile, our contact with voters, and our momentum. These factors all helped a stable, incumbent government.

(8) Too many people saw us addressing too many issues.

Our interviews often brought out strong opinions that the full written platform and the campaign messaging were trying to deal with too many issues, for too many different audiences.

Frequently, the same folks who said this to us often added that the platform should have also included one more key item!

That tendency is a trait that we are all guilty of. But often it does not lead to effective connections with people who are looking at us to deal with core issues such as jobs, their family's economic security, health care and education. Most voters are usually not interested in a long list.

Often, a long list triggers concerns regarding possible tax hikes. Those are concerns that we must fully anticipate and address with solid

information about who is really carrying the tax load under Scott Moe's SP regime.

Our core campaign messages must speak to voters' top priorities, based on our values and theirs. The campaign's communications emphasis simply cannot include everything that is in the platform itself.

At the same time, we almost always need a platform to outline, in somewhat greater detail, our goals for changes in the event that we are chosen to form a government.

Therefore, the panel sees the challenge as balancing the campaign's day to day communication focus on core issues with the development of a platform that speaks to voters more broadly on a wider range of issues and concerns that may be more specific and perhaps more localized. While that balance in 2020 was not always achieved in the eyes of many we met with, the panel also recognizes that the platform was also addressing the important strategic goal of showing the contrast between our commitments and the record and priorities of our conservative opponents.

(9) Voters want us to stand up for them, regardless of federal party politics.

Many Saskatchewan New Democrats told us that the federal NDP has reinforced the provincial party's problems on economic issues and made it more difficult to connect with working class voters in both urban and rural seats. In their view, the federal party has not been effective at defending itself or counter-attacking its conservative opponents in this province.

In the result, the federal NDP's positions on resource development and energy infrastructure (including proposed pipelines in prairie provinces) have damaged the provincial party's brand and political prospects in Saskatchewan.

In the last election cycle, the federal party's support for the federal government's carbon tax was also profiled by our conservative opponents, as were the federal party's confidence votes in Parliament.

The federal party's handling of Erin Weir, a federal Saskatchewan MP, also concerned some of the members who spoke to us.

(10) Conservatives have successfully targeted all of the NDP's post-government leaders.

The SP conservatives have used their fundraising advantage to personally discredit three successive NDP opposition leaders. Elections in good part are referendums on leaders. Conservatives in Saskatchewan understand this well and have focused much of their fundraising advantage on discrediting a succession of NDP leaders since the party went into opposition in 2007. Here again conservatives are repaying the NDP in its own coin – the NDP won in 1991 by comprehensively discrediting the Devine regime; the NDP won the 2003 election in good part by seizing on a gaffe made by SP leader Elwin Hermanson and discrediting him. Favours

that have been returned with interest over the past four election cycles.

NDP campaigns have neither successfully defended their leaders, nor responded effectively to the cards that were thus dealt. A number of activists speaking to us noted that the conservative playbook of personally targeting whoever leads the NDP is now entirely predictable and needed a much more effective response.

High turnover in the leadership meant less effectiveness for the party. Since 2007 the NDP has had six permanent and interim opposition leaders and leader's staff teams. Dwain Lingenfelter served until 2011, John Nilson until 2013, Cam Broten until 2016, Trent Wotherspoon until 2017, Nicole Sarauer until 2018, and now Ryan Meili – on average, a new acting or permanent leader every 26 months. This has, in many ways, served the conservative government very well indeed.

(11) The collapse of Saskatchewan's media strongly benefits the government.

Rowing against hostile media is nothing new for the Saskatchewan NDP – but the state of the media in the province has become a matter of urgent public interest.

The province's former newspapers (the "Sifton press") were once among the party's most formidable and obsessed adversaries. Tommy Douglas countered them by speaking to voters directly on radio.

Those newspapers are now shadows of their former selves. Saskatchewan's daily newspapers were strip-mined by American vulture fund investors. Their community advertising, newsrooms and readership then collapsed. Their role as the voices of communities here in Saskatchewan was discredited by front-page partisan political editorials written for them in Toronto.

Commercial radio and TV newsrooms are a thing of the past – radio's contribution to provincial politics is now the partisan views of an American-style right-wing talk radio host who is an unembarrassed former Conservative MP and a political intimate of the current government. *Press Progress* recently reported that the dominant corporate owner of Saskatchewan's radio stations (Rawlco/Rawlinson) donated over \$300,000 to the SP conservatives between 2006 and 2018.

The CBC could compensate. But conservatives understand this, and obsessively attack the public broadcaster in the same manner Donald Trump railed against independent accountability. The current national conservative leader proposes to close the CBC television network if elected. The present Liberal government in Ottawa for reasons of its own has not corrected a long period of defunding, and in consequence

the CBC's local news efforts and audiences have eroded.

Only community weekly newspapers retain a healthy relationship with their audiences.

None of this is a positive development. It has almost emptied the press gallery in the provincial legislature. This has resulted in the shrinking of detailed coverage, investigative enquiry and serious commentary on provincial politics and public issues, notwithstanding the efforts of a handful of hardworking survivors. That is entirely to the benefit of the incumbent conservative government, which now governs with little independent public accountability.

Getting to this point is why today's conservatives throughout the western world obsessively attack the "fake news" media even when, in their editorial sections, the same outlets are often servile enablers of conservative rule. Populist, Americanized modern conservatives like the ones operating on the Canadian prairies do not want objective professional journalists or nonpartisan commentators enquiring into their doings on any terms.

We note a pattern of message alignment:

At election time in recent cycles, there is a notable alignment between some of the content circulated by the SP war room, dark money third-party conservative groups, at least one Conservative MP using House of Commons mailing privileges, and the province's media. In the 2020 election, for example, the aligned message was that the election would be about holding the NDP accountable for its 1990s record in office, at a time when many of the NDP's candidates were schoolchildren – a theme concurrently reinforced in the SP's "big lie" attack ads.

Leaders' debates are sometimes an opportunity for a challenger to equalize a money advantage by their opponent. Jack Layton, for example, vaulted into official opposition in 2011 with the help of a well-framed debate performance. Rachel Notley solidified her victory in 2015 in

Alberta with a sparkling debate performance. To suppress this risk, on the day after the 2020 Saskatchewan leader's debate, in which Ryan Meilli performed well, the province's major newspapers focused on a political poll they had

fielded before people had heard the debate – largely ignoring the public interest in the issues debated, and helping the conservatives suppress any effect the debate might have had on public opinion.

(12) The party withered in power and further withered in opposition.

The NDP failed to tend to its grassroots, and so they too have withered. Periods in power can be opportunities for a political party to build out and to stock up for an inevitable future period in opposition, as the party did in Alberta under Rachel Notley. That did not happen here. Instead, the party withered in office. Many constituency associations lost their ability to function without an MLA, and as the caucus shrunk, so did the party at the local level. The withering of the party can be seen in many ways – notably in its political, membership and financial results, outlined in the tables above.

A few other elements worth highlighting:

- **Our repeated, lengthy leadership races sapped the party of its focus and resources.**

Party executives and organizers across Canada have bought into the myth that long leadership races provide political parties with an opportunity to grow their membership and fundraising base. The Saskatchewan NDP is an excellent demonstration of the folly of this.

Lengthy internal warfare over leadership exhausts political leaders and activists; builds internal tensions and division; wastes fundraising resources on internal campaigning and debate; and produces too many one-time members and one-time donors who do not renew after the leadership convention is over. Long, paralyzing internal leadership debates are exactly what our conservative opponents wanted, and we obliged.

- **The party unwisely failed to reform political fundraising rules while in office, perhaps because the corporate sector provided the party itself with relatively generous contributions.**

But as the overall fundraising numbers show, corporate donors in and out of province are prepared to fund conservative governments much more generously, particularly between elections.

As a result, while the NDP has managed to put together somewhat reasonable budgets during election years, it sometimes collapsed into relative inactivity between elections. The conservatives have been generously funded every year and have massively outraised the NDP, every year.

- **To survive as a legislative party, the NDP focused its relatively meager financial resources on winnable ridings in cities.**

This meant, in essence, ceding a majority of the province to the conservatives for over a decade with the results we see.

- **Internal party meetings frustrated and demobilized members and deterred new recruits.**

Very few of the activists we spoke to believe that the party's meetings and governance inspire new members, build political momentum, or play any meaningful role in its key decisions.

As is the case in many sections, our conventions are now paralyzed by procedural disputes and agenda debates – which are often the visible sign of efforts by the party to sideline unwisely-drafted policy motions that would feed the narratives of our political opponents.

Thus, like leadership races, conventions in their current form have become an expensive instrument to further erode the party rather than to build it.

- **Many members feel that party membership has been reduced to receiving fundraising emails.**

Without accessible, regular, and meaningful ways to participate in political activities between elections, party membership in the Saskatchewan NDP has, in the perceptions of

many, largely become an opportunity to receive a torrent of daily provincial and federal fundraising emails – and an invitation to help with canvassing, once every four years. It is a remarkable tribute to the determination of the Saskatchewan NDP’s membership that almost 10,000 of them endure this and retain their cards, hoping for better days.

But while waiting for those better days, the real work of organizing, candidate recruitment,

fundraising, local campaign planning, community outreach and recruitment, and community policy development has increasingly fallen to a corporal’s guard of constantly changed central staff, small local volunteer teams, and then to a relative handful of out-of-province campaign workers working in ridings for a few weeks at election time.

Our results underline that this must change.

(13) Blending the work of the Agricultural and Rural Life Committee (ARC) with the central campaign and the platform was only partly successful.

As noted in many of our meetings, ARC represents a vibrant example of grassroots member initiative and hard work - one to draw strength from going forward. Considering cross-over memberships on Provincial Council, ARC has a significant voice in the current governance of the party. In the rural context, the 2020 election cycle was distinguished by the proactive efforts of ARC to prod party thinking about policy that would speak, from the perspective of ARC's dozens of members, to the needs and future of rural Saskatchewan. There were also ARC communications initiatives (such as op eds in local papers).

ARC also made good use of technology to bring together people spread around the province to arrive at collaborative agreement around policy recommendations, to connect on matters of common interest, and to offer mutual support - even before Zoom became a household word after COVID-19 broke out. On the latter (mutual support) front, the Panel heard from a good number of rural candidates who were grateful to ARC and specific ARC leaders for support online as they struggled with both campaign logistics and the challenges of facing considerable hostility in some rural areas. These efforts paralleled considerable support provided to candidates by the Saskatchewan New Democrat Women wing as well as the guidance and support for rural candidates that the central campaign team was able to provide.

In 2019 and 2020, ARC representatives worked through various party processes to influence decisions on policy and platform and developed significant written submissions such as a

document entitled *Healthy Communities*. While it is not possible to document the extensive back and forth exchanges, it is important to note that there was frustration and concern that the perspectives offered by ARC were not fully embraced in the central decision processes.

In the context of a tradition of grassroots activism in the Saskatchewan CCF and NDP and of a desire to help the party reconnect with rural Saskatchewan, ARC and Provincial Council members were working from the perspective of democratic engagement in policy development. The central party and campaign team needed to integrate this with the purposes and realities of election platform formulation. A platform is the entry-point for an election communications strategy that increases the chance of striking a chord with voters in a way that produces winning campaigns. Platforms also provide a framework for the civil service to develop ministry by ministry plans for an incoming government, especially when an opposition party replaces the incumbent. A lot of research, consultation, expert policy judgment and strategic political judgment must come together in the decisions made around the content, presentation and roll-out of a platform that contains good policy based on accurate data, is fiscally sound, and is likely to produce the outcomes desired.

The Panel often heard from those who were not ARC members just how much ARC's work and grassroots spirit was deeply appreciated, even as it was felt by some that ARC had some unrealistic expectations of how detailed a platform should be on specific issues, including energy and climate protection. We also heard from some that they felt the ARC proposals reflected "more NDP gospel than rural realities". The ARC efforts to influence policy and the response of the central team should not be viewed in isolation. These were not the only policy consultations in which the central team was involved and the general challenges of developing an effective platform affected the central campaign's relations with ARC.

Alongside ARC's participation, it is important to note that, this time around, there was

considerable engagement (perhaps notably the Battlefords conference in 2019). As well, the platform team also made diligent efforts to meet with all sitting MLAs.

In that regard, it is important to know that ARC efforts were listened to. In terms of ARC's initiatives in writing and placing op eds articles and leaflets, the campaign welcomed these in general terms. As for platform impact, it seems likely to the Panel, for example, that ARC's advocacy around rural telecommunications connectivity was a factor in its inclusion in the platform, even if it did not receive as much emphasis in the campaign as hoped for. That

said, many – including from urban ridings – expressed concerns to us that there was simply not enough rural content and strategy in the platform and campaign.

ARC's efforts tell a story of democratic energy. Even as many rural riding associations were struggling to meet campaign demands, the province-wide ARC was there - and will continue to be there - to put rural Saskatchewan more firmly on the party's political map. Their outreach methods and their person-power are a solid foundation on which to build, as new and much-needed rural strategies and actions are developed.

(14) Our voter universe has shrunk and so has turnout: both help the conservatives.

As shown by the figures in section 1 of Part 1, the percentage of eligible voters who come out to vote fell off a cliff in 1995, dropping to 57% from the 77% turnout in 1991. It has since then only crept above 60% once, and that was 60.8% in the change election of 2007 when the Saskatchewan Party conservatives first came to power. Since 2007, the vote has hovered close to 50%: 51.1% (2011); 53.5% (2016); and 52.8% (2020).

It is worth noting that conservatives do better when voter turnout is lower. Before the 2020 election, publicly available polling did indeed reveal that a significant percentage of Saskatchewan voters, well beyond 50%, had tired of the SP and had no particularly strong loyalty to, let alone affection for, the party.

It seems likely that a slice of those voters was presumptively still going to vote SP in 2020, but did want the SP to be counterbalanced by a more numerous Opposition because a range of concerns had developed in their minds. Internal polling data suggests a considerable number of others were potential switch voters to the NDP at the start of the election.

Even though overall voter turnout was down by only 0.7% in 2020 as compared to 2016 (and indeed up by 1.7% from 2011), that number could well represent the difference between the Saskatchewan NDP having won the 13 seats it did and taking an additional three to eight if we had been more successful in getting out the vote in those ridings lost by a small number of votes.

One can always muse about this after an election, and sometimes it is clear that efforts left nothing on the table and there were simply no more votes to be found. However, the Panel believes that COVID hesitancy and a general

lack of motivation from some clearly identified supporters to vote on election day (perhaps caused in part by polls that may have made voting feel beside the point) were salient factors in those close ridings.

Beyond the handful of close ridings, however, it would be a stretch to say that election turnout was a particular factor for this election any more than for all the elections with reduced turnout in recent years. In general, failure of most potential switch voters to stay in the Saskatchewan NDP voter universe by the end of the election reflects the general factors, discussed throughout our findings, that have caused the NDP to lose voter share at the same time as low turnouts have become the norm.

Of great significance to Saskatchewan's future is the relatively low turnout in many Indigenous communities (impacted significantly by COVID lockdowns in this election). While we must never take for granted that Indigenous voters have a strong preference for the NDP, our positions on a range of issues do justify saying there is far more affinity between the NDP and Indigenous voters' values and interests than the Saskatchewan Party. With three very capable Indigenous leaders as MLAs in the new caucus, alongside many energetic Indigenous activists and the 2020 election's Indigenous candidates, a strong foundation for strengthened engagement is in place.

We also know that Saskatchewan is changing. More newcomers are coming in. The province is getting younger. Inequality is growing and has been deepened by COVID impacts. Suburban women can be expected to show increasingly limited patience with the reactionary conservatism, machismo, and poor role models that plague the SP conservatives. Indigenous people are becoming a larger and larger share of the overall population. Too many workers have drifted away from us, but there is much room for the NDP - the party of working people - to do the hard work of winning back a big chunk of that vote, in partnership with trade unions and other allies. All these changes open possibilities for higher voter engagement and turnout, but only with strong actions from the NDP.

(15) Party resources and capacities are inadequate to bring victory.

There has been an absence of internal party renewal and re-organization since the 2007 defeat, even as there has been a lot of change in Leaders, senior staff, and MLAs. We see evidence of a ‘missing generation’ of activists, constituency leaders, and election staff as the recruitment, mobilization, training, and mentoring required for renewal in various capacities just did not occur at sufficient levels between 2007 and 2020.

Pre-election preparations in 2020 did not overcome the challenges of the point above as there is a significant gap between the needs and the capacities. That is, the party is not meeting the needs for more constituency organizing and communications support, for Indigenous organizing, for outreach to communities and social sectors, for rural organizing, and for advertising between elections, to name just

some. We need more resources, more trained and experienced staff and volunteers, more strategic planning, and more funding. These gaps further illustrate the need for increased activity at all levels in the years between elections, including expanded fundraising and membership. The 2020 campaign also demonstrated that there is a need for tighter communications between the central and the constituency campaigns about responsibilities and roles of each level in terms of specific campaign components.

Of particular importance is the party’s capacities in the world of online campaigning. In principle, digital campaigning could be an equalizer, balancing the conservatives’ out-of-province and corporate fundraising advantages. While 2020 saw a much improved and expanded digital campaign overall, more can and must be done going forward. As well, there must be very close alignment between the central online activities and those at the constituency level, with early and shared planning, significant training, clear reporting, and larger budgets at both levels before and during the election campaign.

(16) Youth involvement in the party has declined.

Throughout the history of the NDP, across provincial sections and federally, youth members have been crucial to the party's energy and generational rejuvenation. A significant number of active constituency leaders, party staff, and MLAs have, over the years, entered the Saskatchewan NDP through Youth Wing membership and activities.

The Panel spoke to a number of NDP members in their late teenage years and in their twenties. Apart from the SYND representatives, young people were part of many of the Panel's group sessions and spoke often and with keen observations.

There was much evidence of young people playing essential roles as campaign volunteers, as campaign staff, and indeed as candidates. This was more obviously the case in urban ridings as the volunteer core of most rural ridings are in their 60s and onward. This does not mean youth were absent in rural campaigns — indeed, a good number of impressive rural candidates were younger.

At the same time as many youths are active in the party, there is a consensus that youth involvement is considerably less than historically the case. Campus clubs have gone defunct, with new efforts to revive them now underway. The Youth Wing reports that it is treading water, with limited integration into the overall affairs of the party and with limited success in attracting new members. It is worth noting that the Youth Wing has a special replenishment challenge as compared to other wings - youth do not stay that way and age out, and many younger adults tend not to identify as "youth."

Of serious operational concern is the gradual diminishment of staff opportunities for youth, which is a key source of experience and inspiration for short- and long- term involvement (a smaller caucus and smaller party means fewer opportunities). There does not appear to be a concerted, province-wide effort to recruit younger activists for organizational roles and to develop mentorships for key positions such as campaign managers.

In comparison to other periods, there also has been a limited number of Saskatchewan youth gaining campaign experience in other provinces. The number of ridings in Saskatchewan compared to population makes it difficult to always have youth in key roles in every constituency. But it appears that this challenge has been worsened by a missing generation or two of organizers due to fewer young New Democrats becoming activists in recent years.

We were told several times by younger New Democrats that their generations are increasingly best understood as doers not joiners. They will join a protest or solidarity event, or organize an event, as an active commitment to values or a cause — such as climate change, standing up for the struggles signified by #BlackLivesMatter, or bringing attention to Indigenous suicides.

Less and less do they find satisfaction in simply joining a party, especially if, as more than one youth noted, they think that party membership equals "meetings" versus "action". NDP youth are encountering this recruitment challenge and the central party has not acted to systematically counteract this decline, although the summer intern program has been a critical and successful step in that direction. The gaps in youth recruitment, involvement, training and mentorship are significant and must be more fully addressed.

(17) The process of vetting and nominating candidates needs strengthening and improvement.

Various aspects of the overall process of nominating and vetting candidates and of approving nomination meetings were criticized by many of the members that we interviewed. Much of the criticism arises from conflicting understandings about what the centre should be managing and what are the responsibilities of constituencies in terms of candidate nominations. Some of this divergence arises from the grassroots traditions of the CCF and NDP colliding with newer dynamics that have arisen with more polarizing campaigns, social media, and greater influence of ‘big media’ compared to local constituency media outlets.

The criticisms the panel heard are addressed in the recommendations we make, and those are guided by the overriding need for close alignment between the centre and the constituencies with respect to the nomination process. They cannot be in conflict and must be addressed early to avoid that.

The main concerns raised were:

- too many candidates were nominated too late;
- the vetting process and criteria were not clear enough and there was no appeal process;
- the considerations behind the scheduling of nomination meetings by the EPC and the Provincial Executive was not always fully communicated and/or understood by constituency executives and candidates for nomination, and those considerations were often seen by local activists as more properly to be a constituency decision;
- the provincial party’s policies and strategies to seek diversity within our candidate slate were not always fully communicated and/or understood by constituency executives and candidates for nomination and were often seen as more “central interference”, rather than as an ongoing provincial policy that had been widely discussed and accepted over the years at conventions.

There are some important strategic issues that justify what the party was trying to do in terms of nominations:

- The party was seeking to present a slate of candidates that was gender-balanced and diverse - and succeeded;
- People who are interested in standing for public office are typically talkative on social media, and political war rooms feast on unwise posts to undermine opposing campaigns. Candidates’ backgrounds are part of the party’s credibility. Through the vetting process the party needed to understand its risks when determining whether to allow a candidate to represent it. We just need to recall the NDP’s 2016 campaign challenges, the media coverage and the SP’s successes in that regard to appreciate the need for thorough vetting and serious consideration of candidate approvals;
- Timing of nomination meetings is part of a provincial strategy, not just a local constituency decision. Other criteria such as local candidate search, membership levels, voter contact activities and fundraising targets are linked with timing as part of the provincial strategy;
- In principle, filling a slate with enthusiastic but often low-profile local activists prevents the party from finding nominations for higher-profile candidates who would not be able to campaign as NDP candidates until closer to the writ – local mayors and councilors, for example.

Although we believe the party was acting for valid reasons, we must report that many activists believed that the late nominations in particular left them dead on arrival during the campaign, in many rural areas. Certainly, the opportunity cost was very great. Too many of our constituency associations folded over the past 20 years as they lost their MLAs and after the SP took power. Dropping candidates into local

campaigns a week or two before the writ was the cherry on the cake with respect to the issues discussed above – increasing the chance of failure and defeat.

A final critical point: in recent cycles, few candidates who lived this experience remained engaged after the election to build their constituency associations.

(18) The bottom line: We did not materially improve on our 2016 vote.

This was so even though the 2020 NDP campaign was well-managed by its central campaign staff, we seemed to be generating positive momentum in public domain polls and we had many strong local campaigns.

In many ways, 2020 was a good campaign for the Saskatchewan NDP: many members volunteered that the most recent campaign was the best-managed, smoothest run and most supportive campaign they had seen in recent memory. Others disagreed.

Senior staff reported that they worked well together as a team, got along, executed the tasks they were assigned effectively, and were proud of their work. Many ridings observed they were much better supported than in recent campaigns. Many constituency campaigns had stronger efforts than in other elections and we gained vote share in many of those. However, that was not a fully consistent trend despite great efforts by candidates, trade union allies, staff and volunteers.

Losing two to one hurts. But these results are not rooted in the effort or the hours put in by campaign staff, most of whom were given only months or weeks to contribute to the effort. Many staff members reminded us that public domain polls and a good deal of media commentary suggested that the Saskatchewan NDP was going to be erased from the Legislature or reduced to a rump in this election, during a COVID epidemic that strongly favoured incumbent governments of all stripes.

Instead, the party held its ground, its caucus, and its vote, and re-elected its leader for the first time since 2007. We have several new MLAs and a caucus that has eight women and three Indigenous MLAs.

Members of this panel have seen far worse results. For example, a BC election that reduced the NDP (currently back in government) to two seats. Our Quebec campaigns in the not too-distant past celebrated increases in votes from 1% to 2%.

Now is a time for all friends of the Saskatchewan NDP to return to our work. And for hard work to be thanked – like the work of our 2020 campaign team led by director Trevor McKenzie-Smith, caucus chief of staff Adrienne King, and provincial secretary John Tzupa; the efforts of all our candidates; support from the trade union movement; the sacrifices of our legions of constituency organizers and volunteers; and of course, the generous support of our donors. Some campaign managers and senior campaign staff even joined this work from out-of-province – these party colleagues spent many long nights far from home to help the party in Saskatchewan. They, and all our team, deserve our thanks for the effort they put into this campaign.

It is also true that measured by the final vote itself and burdened as it was by the deep and long-term issues outlined above, the party did not materially improve on its 2016 result.

- The SP conservatives received 61.12% of the vote, a 1.41% decrease from 2016.
- The NDP received 31.82% of the vote, a 1.52% increase from 2016.
- We lost good incumbent MLAs and other constituencies that we have frequently held in the past.

Public domain polls over the course of the campaign reported a small bump in voting intentions as voters assessed the respective leaders' tours, debate performances, paid advertisements, digital messages, and local campaigns. But that did not translate at the ballot box overall – remembering that, as we showed above, the party is recovering its vote in urban and suburban constituencies and holding our strong leads in the far North.

It can be credibly argued that this campaign did achieve an important strategic goal – the Saskatchewan NDP avoided being wiped off the map, in an election in which its opponent got 61% of the vote. We have a more well-known Leader, a very credible new caucus and a solid base vote.

But what political parties in official opposition owe voters is a compelling prosecution of the incumbent government and a presentation of a credible alternative government. Political parties should not be playing for bronze, they should play to win.

That is particularly true here. **The Saskatchewan NDP is the cathedral of social democracy in North America – the seedbed of**

much of what Canadians think of as the heart of their citizenship.

It is time to wipe the mud off our record, flung at it by a tired, incompetent, corrupt and increasingly bankrupt conservative government.

It is time to speak clearly and directly to the core issues that working families care most about, whether in urban, suburban, Indigenous or rural communities.

And it is time to correct internal mistakes that distract us from this work. The party has a deep well of talent and support in the province, much of which has been sitting out recent cycles. It is time for homecoming – of all of the friends of the Saskatchewan NDP.

Part 3: Recommendations for Change

(1) We need to match the SP's permanent campaign with our own.

We Recommend:

(1.1) A campaign for four years to match the SP's permanent campaigning: we must recognize that we cannot win in just 28 days or even 28 weeks. This approach requires more resources, planning, work, and imagination to make our actions and our smaller budgets more effective. Happily, our activists want to be more active in political action - and not just for 28 days but more regularly. So let's harness that energy where it is most needed: taking our issues to the people as often and as effectively as possible.

(1.2) Critiques of government corruption and failures by the Leader and MLAs must be strongly reinforced and supported by party activities and resources to take those messages directly to people. At all levels of the party we must ramp up grassroots communications, voter contact, and community engagement to make our criticisms stick and disqualify the SP, just as the NDP did when Grant Devine was the premier. This would include social media work, Coffee Row communications, leaflet distribution, canvassing, letters to editors, call-in shows, etc.

(1.3) A digital strategy that is state-of-the-art, effectively implemented, and nimbly adjusted as lessons are learned. This is especially crucial as a strategy for connecting with, and across, the geographically spread-out ridings of rural Saskatchewan and the increasingly diverse communities in urban and suburban constituencies. Importantly, such digital campaigning must go beyond one-way flows of information and include genuine interactive engagement with our members, with those most clearly in our voter universe, and with the people of Saskatchewan as a whole.

(1.4) We suggest the party relaunch *The Commonwealth* as a regular e-magazine. We suggest "Coffee Row" be relaunched as a regular source of information and political talking points. We suggest a weekly email with party news, without a word of fundraising content. Our goal is to develop party membership that is more than fundraising emails, with more political information flow, more opportunities for feedback, opportunities to campaign between elections, and social events that are not for fundraising such as coffee parties, MLAs' reporting sessions and pub nights.

(1.5) Rebuild around strong constituency associations, strong campus clubs and strong wings, including a plan for strong central organization and outreach activities that utilize the 2021 summer interns, the 2020 local organizers, volunteers, MLAs and the 2020 candidates to establish the NDP profile and organizational foundations in the maximum number of constituencies in all regions.

(1.6) A strategic plan for nominations that takes into account local and provincial candidate search, earlier nominations, diversity of candidates, timely vetting, and candidate support and training. Use the nomination process as a key tool to strengthen constituency building and growth. (see also Recommendation 11)

(1.7) Expanded and systematic community outreach by the Leader and MLAs to strengthen connections and relationships with businesses, Indigenous communities, agricultural producers, multicultural communities, trade unions, women's organizations, students, LBGTQ and Two-Spirited groups, seniors, disabled organizations, and others.

(1.8) The priorities of the provincial office should also reflect the 'permanent campaign' model, with ongoing efforts to streamline administration and to maximize the focus of staff time and resources on front line campaigning.

(1.9) **A major focus on identifying a new generation of organizers** for intensive training and on-the-ground experiences, as soon as possible.

This can include the successful summer intern program, elections in other provinces, constituency-level voter contact activities, and specialized skill-building workshops (including at the October convention and at Council meetings). This investment now is needed to increase between-election political action and to provide learning experiences in the years ahead of the 2024 election.

(1.10) **Systematic skills development and capacities expansion** with increased mentoring, training, campaign experience, and ongoing voter contact activities between elections, including more support for our volunteers such as training in delivering our messages, safety measures (particularly for women, Indigenous people and minorities), recognition for their

efforts, and sharing of strategies in inclusive ways.

Finally, we need to respond to the collapse of Saskatchewan's media.

We recommend:

(1.11) That in all communications **we do all that is possible with what is left of the mass media.** Treat serious reporters with the respect they deserve. Expand the Leader's and MLAs' engagement with weekly newspapers and other community media outlets.

(1.12) **That we invest more resources, time and energy in talking directly to voters:** go into broadcasting with lots of podcasts, videos and creative (and strategic) social media, involving innovative young activists in many languages and many communities. Fresh minds and a new approach to message modes and methods are required

(2) The current government needs to be held accountable.

Our caucus and party should aggressively prosecute the record, competence, ethics, and priorities of the current government.

New Democrats do not always take naturally to opposition politics. People typically get involved in the Saskatchewan NDP to advocate for a better deal for ordinary people and to improve public services like health and education. But politics is necessarily adversarial. Opposition parties play a critical accountability role in legislatures. And successfully prosecuting an incumbent government is a necessary preliminary to defeating it.

If we do not have a serious problem with the “Saskatchewan Party” government, why should the public?

Disqualifying the current government must therefore be a principal focus of our caucus and our party.

A public party report is not the place to blueprint detailed legislative strategies but it is appropriate for us to report the unanimous view of every party member who addressed this matter during our discussions: our party needs to take the fight to the SP government and show that we intend to replace them by doing our job as the official opposition with clarity, focus and determination. It is unusual to defeat a government in a 28-day

campaign. Governments in Saskatchewan are typically defeated in detail over the full course of their final term, and that is what needs to happen to the current government during the current term.

To illustrate, look at how our current team aggressively took on the 2021 government budget, and the government’s dismal record managing COVID.

We recommend:

(2.1) **We urge clarity, focus and fierce determination** in revealing and profiling the current government’s corruption, fiscal mismanagement, dithering, failures on the national stage, and weak Premier and cabinet team.

(2.2) **The Leader’s and MLAs’ core messages should be circulated broadly and rapidly within the party** following provincial budgets, significant legislation and other key decisions in a few easy-to-share communications products (leaflets, social media, op-ed articles, etc.). The Provincial Executive and senior staff should develop a work plan for ongoing outreach and communications that involve all levels of the party in grassroots communications and voter contact with these core messages.

(2.3) **We also recommend the caucus and party keep fighting to end the rule of “big money” in Saskatchewan.** Political donations should be limited to individual voters who live in Saskatchewan, like almost every other province in Canada.

(3) We must confront the Saskatchewan Party's "Big Lie" about our record.

The Saskatchewan NDP must challenge our opponent's lies and distortions about our record in office.

There is room for debate about the fiscal, economic, and social records of the Douglas, Lloyd, Blakeney, Romanow and Calvert governments. But there is no room for debate about the CCF-NDP's history on health care. Our party founded medicare; built it; successfully maneuvered in the national Parliament to make it a national right of citizenship; and then saved it in Saskatchewan from the reckless fiscal irresponsibility of Devine's Conservative government - now back in office, their hands once more in the public cookie jar, and the provincial debt once again out of control.

- Hospitals and health centres in Saskatchewan were *saved* from the consequences of the province being brought to the brink of bankruptcy by the Devine Conservatives - the parents of today's SP.
- In the fourteen years it has been back in power, the "Saskatchewan Party" has not converted a single rural health centre into a "hospital". By their deeds they support these centres in their current roles.

That our record on these issues has been successfully muddied by the same people who fought public medicare tooth and nail; then bankrupted it; and now angle for its privatization is a testament to the power of the "big lie" in politics. And it is a testament to what happens when you choose not to answer claims by your political opponents. As recent events in the

United States demonstrate, populist rightwing parties no longer fear trafficking in falsehood, and what they say is widely believed – if what they say is not challenged.

We recommend:

(3.1) The Saskatchewan NDP needs to tackle the "Saskatchewan Party" on these issues.

Our caucus is off to a good start doing so, as we discussed above. Calling out the SP government's big lie on medicare needs to become an issue of their character, and their own conduct in office. What else are they lying about? What is it about their own term they do not want exposed or debated?

(3.2) In support of this work, this might be a good moment for our party to take stock of its own history and real record. **We recommend staging an important segment of the coming NDP convention** to review and celebrate over 75 years of achievement under the Douglas, Lloyd, Blakeney, Romanow and Calvert CCF/NDP governments. As well, a carefully considered information package should be provided to new and existing members of the party, to help them confidently rebut our political opponents' distortions and to take the fight to them.

(3.3) More generally, we recommend finding ways to restore pride and rejuvenate the 'happy warrior' side of the NDP – a tone we welcome in our new caucus. For example, the party should provide a welcome kit for new members that highlights the NDP's history, record, values, and readiness to lead Saskatchewan into the future. Just as the convention will do, welcome packages will facilitate team building, linking our past achievements to present and future actions. In our proposals on party communications set out below, we urge other ways to provide every NDP supporter with the real facts and the confidence to use them from coffee row to the lunchroom to Facebook.

(4) We need to reconnect with working class voters.

Based on our meetings with trade union representatives and many activists and candidates in constituencies, it is clear that we need to strengthen our connections to working people and to Saskatchewan's trade unions as frontline representatives of working people.

We recommend:

(4.1) Speak directly to working class voters, more often and about more of their priorities.

While this seems very obvious, we believe it is worth stating explicitly because too often, we were told in many of our meetings, including those with trade union representatives, that the NDP is perceived to be talking to 'somebody else' and not enough to working class and middle-class families.

(4.2) Connect with people through their workplaces, unions, industries, and work-related activities. In other recommendations we reference the many ways of reaching out to more people through organization and communications. These steps and others referenced in this report can bring us closer to the everyday working families, with a great diversity of backgrounds, that are the majority of Saskatchewan residents.

(4.3) Increase communications and collaboration with trade union allies, build stronger relations and greater cooperation in areas of shared interest, and work with them as active participants in our goal of 'the permanent campaign'. This would include party representatives learning more about their industries, their workplaces, their concerns, and their ideas for developing more political involvement of their members. This would include caucus outreach to develop priority issues and to reach more working families where they are at, in cooperation with their unions.

(5) We need to squarely address the future of resource industries.

We observe that fossil fuel will remain a significant energy source for many years, but its growth rate is declining throughout the industrial world. In that light, Saskatchewan must lead in greater diversification, energy innovation, energy efficiency and in provincial policies for climate protection. The ground is shifting in the Saskatchewan business community, as demonstrated by the March 17, 2021, milestone report by the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, *Building the Low-carbon Economy: Exploring Opportunities and Challenges for Saskatchewan*.

We believe that the Saskatchewan NDP must present itself as the party that forward-thinking business leaders will want to engage, in preference to the SP conservatives, who are joined at the hip with the federal Conservative Party. The Conservatives just showed at their national convention that its all-controlling base - alongside many of its MPs and party officials - has no interest in seriously addressing climate change and pursuing the kinds of smart energy policy that Saskatchewan needs to be at the forefront of.

Ultimately though, the burden is on Saskatchewan's NDP to make the case for why we (and social democratic economic principles) are much better at meeting the economic needs of people and communities than the Devine-Wall-Moe conservatives. We must walk the talk as we make our case, showing by plans and actions how we in government will both preserve and create good-paying jobs as we move, over the next decades, to foster new energy sources and technology in ways that reduce our heavy economic reliance

on oil and gas, while fighting for this industry's and its workers' rightful places in our national economy.

We Recommend:

(5.1) That we make it clear that we understand the importance of our resource industries for jobs, revenues and economic stability. Make it clear that it was the Saskatchewan NDP governments that laid the foundations of many of those jobs and we now want to see more value-added, more diversification, more innovation so that Saskatchewan stays ahead. Make it clear that we are committed to strong, made-in-Saskatchewan actions to both create new jobs and industries and to protect the climate, so that Canada meets the Paris emission reduction goals committed to by both of the last two Prime Ministers, Stephen Harper and Justin Trudeau.

(5.2) That our Leader and our MLAs connect with those involved in the resource industries and build relationships and trust. First and foremost, this means connecting with those working in those industries. That includes the businesspeople grappling with the challenges of competition in the global economy and the nearby communities most involved in the environmentally - sustainable extraction, transportation and refining of Saskatchewan's natural resources.

(5.3) That we continue to reach out to those in the business community who are not locked into the cycle of inaction and short-term thinking that has led the SP to leave Saskatchewan well behind the curve. We must continue to connect with workers in the energy and resource industries and their unions to strengthen communications and collaboration in pursuit of job creation as innovations, energy demands and product demand change, such as the ongoing shift from petroleum to more electricity.

(6) Our party needs to be rebuilt in rural Saskatchewan.

We Recommend:

(6.1) A renewed commitment to reconnecting with rural residents and communities based on active outreach, rebuilding constituency associations and renewed two-way communications to ensure rural Saskatchewan is a bigger part of all NDP strategies and actions.

We believe the Agriculture and Rural Life Committee (ARC) has taken many strong actions to rebuild support and profile in rural constituencies. These actions can be a key part of ongoing renewal and rebuilding with ARC, central bodies, our Leader and our MLAs working together on shared, coordinated rural initiatives.

(6.2) Creation of a workable number of rural zones that group four to six constituencies together for mutual support, sharing of information and experiences, and collaboration on activities. We suggest examining how each zone can be connected with an MLA and/or former MLA, who can work with them on an ongoing basis.

(6.3) Regular zoom calls with rural constituency leaders and activists in each zone from central offices to strengthen two-way communications and information sharing.

(6.4) Specific training and support for rural, grassroots communications so that the work of the Leader, the MLAs and the party can be more broadly and effectively promoted within rural communities.

(6.5) Specific efforts to work with the variety of rural situations in applying recommendations made in this report: one size does not fit all constituencies.

(7) Voters want us to stand up for them, regardless of federal party politics.

Under the leadership of Tommy Douglas, Woodrow Lloyd, Allan Blakeney, Roy Romanow and Lorne Calvert, Saskatchewan played an important leadership role in Canada -- and fought hard and effectively for Saskatchewan's interests.

That is not what Saskatchewan has been getting under the current government. Brad Wall and Scott Moe were and remain featherweights on the national scene, and Saskatchewan has been punching far below its weight under the current government. For fourteen years, Mr. Wall and Mr. Moe focused on media stunts during federal-provincial meetings and achieved nothing of note on any national file – until March 25, 2021.

On that date, in response in part to a foolish, poorly argued reference case pursued by the “Saskatchewan Party” government, the Supreme Court upheld the federal government’s climate pricing system. The decision of the SP government not to present a viable made-in-Saskatchewan emissions reduction regime led to the most significant loss of provincial control over natural resources since 1982, when Premier Blakeney and then-Deputy Premier Romanow obtained full provincial control of resources during negotiations over the Constitution and the Charter of Rights.

That is a lot of damage to undo.

We recommend:

(7.1) **These issues should be highlighted** as part of our work holding the current government accountable for its weakness, corruption, and poor judgment.

(7.2) **The party should consider what a better-led Saskatchewan government should be working for on the national stage and ask for a mandate for that agenda in the next election.**

(7.3) The “Saskatchewan Party” has tried to deflect attention from its record of failure on the national scene by attacking the federal NDP and suggesting that Saskatchewan New Democrats are somehow responsible for what the federal NDP does in the federal Parliament. This is an old game. The answer is to **be frank in strong disagreement with the federal NDP when it is wrong on provincial issues** – as, for example, Alberta NDP leader Rachel Notley does - and to not permit the current government to hide from its own record by criticizing opposition parties in Ottawa.

(7.4) **Our party’s federal affiliation was on the minds of, and of concern to, a number of the members who spoke to us.** The federal party’s failure to argue its corner in Saskatchewan - similar in some ways to our own - is an important issue for Saskatchewan members to raise at federal meetings. How close an affiliation the Saskatchewan NDP wants with the federal party is an appropriate issue for members to debate at Provincial Council and Convention.

(8) We need to connect more with Indigenous Peoples and communities.

To meet this challenge, we must develop deeper and long-term relationships with more Indigenous leaders, elders and communities to emphasize the relevance of provincial politics and to ask them to consider the NDP as a partner in getting their priorities addressed by the province as appropriate. We must focus on what is important to many Indigenous voters: a sincere relationship developed over time, and one that does not have us showing up only near elections.

Any support from Indigenous voters needs to be earned support that convinces people that voting for the Saskatchewan NDP is meaningful and a legitimate strategic choice even for those Indigenous voters who believe, with good reason, that their primary nation-to-nation legal relationship is with the federal government. Overarching all of this, the NDP must listen to and learn from those willing to take the plunge to try to build trust — and develop serious, tangible plans for a fair partnership for when the NDP returns to government.

We Recommend:

(8.1) An immediate priority must be the hiring of **an Indigenous organizer** to ensure ongoing outreach and organization efforts in conjunction with the work of the Leader, MLAs, the Indigenous wing and local constituency associations.

(8.2) There should be an effort **to address those provincial services** that would facilitate work with Indigenous communities on and off reserve including economic development, health care, infrastructure links, social services, and education and skills training. Given the many ways in which provincial governments have impacts on Indigenous communities, it is also important to show where the federal government has abandoned many of its responsibilities to provinces.

(8.3) The panel further suggests that the Saskatchewan NDP must not only walk the talk of partnership with Indigenous Peoples, communities, and leaders with respect to provincial services and laws but should give considerable thought to how the NDP — and an NDP government — can be **Indigenous Peoples' ally** in fighting Ottawa for its continuing failures and for its buck-passing to the provincial governments.

(8.4) Deeper and more meaningful relationship building between the Saskatchewan NDP and Indigenous communities and individuals must take very seriously **the role of elders and knowledge-keepers**. Leader to leader trust-building between the NDP leader and community leaders is crucial and must be emphasized in the Leader's ongoing priorities.

(8.5) Ongoing and strengthened efforts to ensure **our members and activists are properly prepared** to support Indigenous people, including candidates for public offices, within the party and in our communities in the face of racism, bias, and other injustices.

(8.6) As the Saskatchewan NDP addresses its relationships with Indigenous communities and as it makes itself more attractive to youth, **special consideration should be given to facilitating and welcoming Indigenous youth** to be core to the NDP as it evolves. The Panel was highly impressed by the thoughtfulness and leadership qualities of Indigenous youth, both First Nation and Metis, and from whom we heard a good number of insights. Indigenous youth are at the very heart of Saskatchewan's future -- as bridge-builders, translators, advocates and activists and as people 'simply' making their way in life in ways that help us learn little by little how to embrace difference and common humanity in the same breath. In this respect, the action taken by Tristen Durocher on the lawn of the Saskatchewan legislature and beyond is an uncommonly inspiring example of the power of Indigenous youth to help lead Saskatchewan forward in the decades to come.

(9) We need to strengthen relationships with culturally diverse communities.

We Recommend:

(9.1) A **significant commitment to ongoing outreach activities** by the Leader, MLAs and appropriate party bodies to build up relationships, gain greater knowledge of the specific experiences and concerns of newer citizens and Saskatchewan's culturally diverse communities, increase our profile and organize targeted constituency campaigns that will help elect candidates, including from those communities. We had a significant number of candidates in the 2020 team who were from culturally diverse communities and while none were elected, some came very close, and that growth and participation is a foundation for more progress.

(9.2) More **communications and organizing** actions that are geared to students and youth within those communities in order to ensure participation in the broadest possible ways.

(9.3) Clear recognition that, alongside immigration and a growing presence of cultural communities in Saskatchewan's social fabric, several developments – including growing urbanization of Indigenous people and more political activism from Indigenous communities, amongst youth, and within many marginalized communities -- are **changing Saskatchewan politics**, and for the better, and that those changes sometimes spark some resistance and reactions.

(9.4) As a party we have done many good things in this changing context. Now we need to do more to **remove remaining attitudinal barriers, resistance to more inclusion, and even examples of racism** from within our audiences of potential NDP voters (these were brought up in meetings and included incidents during election canvassing.)

(9.5) Ensure that all our members and activists are **properly recognizing, respecting, and welcoming new people** of all backgrounds at all levels of the party. Local constituency leaders and provincial bodies' leadership teams need to ensure genuine inclusion and involvement in all aspects of the work of the party, from the work of putting up campaign signs to nomination as candidates to constituencies' leadership.

(10) We need to improve how we debate and generate policy and platforms.

As we commented above, the party's current policy-making process tends to discourage members and new recruits. The process that produces policy resolutions at convention is an awkward way to research, carefully consider, balance and frame policy proposals that will attract wide support in an election. Our policy resolution process is hard to participate in, often hard to listen to, and the results are not always helpful. In our findings, we also particularly noted members' efforts to contribute to the election platform directly, which produced considerable frustration all around. Drawing on this experience, it is crucial that the governance bodies of the party and the membership develop a productive understanding going forward.

The challenge in connecting participatory internal democracy to general policy formation and more specific platform development must be squarely faced. That challenge is to harness such participation in such a way that not only good policy emerges in advance of platform development, but also that, at election time, campaign communications connected to policy and platform are clear, focused, and take root with those open to voting NDP. Ultimately, we must bear in mind that, if our communications with the broad public contain too many messages, none of them will get through – a problem that appears to have affected the 2020 campaign.

We recommend:

(10.1) That the leader appoint four policy task forces, each co-chaired by a caucus

member and a party activist. We suggest a task force on (a) jobs; (b) public services; (c) rural and northern development; and (d) the real record of the current government.

(10.2) These task forces will consult widely, including with the party's executive, wings and working committees; MLAs, former MLAs, and former candidates; riding association executives and members; our labour partners; business people; Indigenous communities and leaders; civil society; academics and issue experts; and municipal leaders and citizens. Our goal is to engage friends and supporters in open, collaborative, friendly, fact-based and results-oriented discussions about these issues – a process that will inspire and engage people.

(10.3) Consider building into the work of the task forces one or more collaborative-decision and digital-democracy tools in order to benefit from the collective insight of members, experts and stakeholders.

(10.4) That task force reports be considered by the Executive, Council and Convention as priority policy discussions – and be reported out in final form as building blocks to our next election platform, and guides to our work in the Legislature and in outreach to communities.

(10.5) Policy generated by task force processes and platform elements should be embedded in a communications strategy organized around clear core messages for wide audiences. However comprehensive the policy documents end up being, very deliberate choices must be made on what to emphasize in messaging.

(10.6) After going through this exercise, the Executive and Council should consider whether it might provide a model for a fundamental reform of the convention policy resolution process.

(11) The candidate nomination process must be improved.

We Recommend:

(11.1) That the Election Planning Committee in early 2022 develop a **strategy for nominations** to consider timing with the goal that candidate nominations start 24 -18 months prior to the scheduled date of the 2024 election, with appropriate preparations and criteria in place prior to any nominations.

(11.2) That **criteria for nomination meeting approvals be adopted** and include membership, fundraising and voter contact goals, and candidate search efforts (including diversity and equity goals), with those criteria taking account of the various categories of constituencies such as incumbent, '2020 near win', rural, etc.

(11.3) That **sufficient resources be allocated for thorough vetting** of prospective candidates for nominations and be sufficient to meet a robust turnaround time.

(11.4) That the steering committee of the Election Planning Committee be responsible for the appointment of **the candidate vetting staff** and make known to all bodies within the party the Terms of Reference for the vetting process, as developed and approved by the Provincial Executive.

(11.5) That a decision of the candidate vetting process may be **appealed to the Officers of the party** who shall make the final decision of approval/non-approval.

(11.6) That a **candidate search task force** be appointed by the Election Planning Committee by January 2022 and work with the caucus, the wings of the party, affiliated trade unions, constituency associations and others who can actively support effective candidate search.

(11.7) **That Terms of Reference** for the candidate search task force be made known to all bodies within the party when it is appointed.

(11.8) That the Provincial Executive and/or the Election Planning Committee undertake **significant internal communications** directed to constituencies and their activists to ensure that they are aware of all aspects of the candidate nomination process.

(11.9) **That by July 2022 the Provincial Executive have in place appropriate rules and regulations to govern the conduct of nomination meetings**, including but not limited to such questions as voter eligibility, mail-in ballots, multi-day voting, nomination campaign spending limits, nomination meeting management plans, identification requirements, notice periods, etc. As well, these regulations should cover by-elections, snap elections and other situations that may require the waiving or alteration of standard nomination procedures. The Executive is to appoint a task force to develop this package of nomination meeting regulations.

(11.10) That very serious consideration be given to a constitutional amendment or regulation to specify that **members must be in good standing 60 or 45 days** prior to the nominating meeting to be eligible to vote. That period would allow time for verification of the membership voter lists, for candidates to meet the members, and for preparation of a well-organized nomination meeting.

(11.11) That **preparations be made soon for the coming redistribution of constituencies**, which will require collaboration between the provincial office and the constituency associations.

(11.12) That provision be made for **adequate resources, primarily staff and volunteer time**, early in the coming cycle in order to execute a successful nomination strategy in all 61 constituency associations.

(12) We must address the decline in turnout, particularly from within our voter base.

In each of the last three elections, voter turnout has been very low in Saskatchewan: 51.1% (2011), 53.5% (2016), and 52.8% (2020). This is a consistent and marked drop since the 60.8% turnout in 2007 when the NDP lost government. Given the extent of the voter discontent demonstrated in polls published at the time of the 2017 SP budget and associated cutbacks in services, we believe that greater citizen participation and mobilization is possible than the 2020 voter turnout. (We also have to assume that COVID will not again be a factor keeping some of our supporters home in 2024.)

The recent victories in Georgia and other US states like Arizona have vividly demonstrated the possibilities of expanded mobilization. Georgia leader Stacey Abrams would be the first to say that it ultimately took a cast of thousands, on doorsteps, on street corners, and online. Not just to reach out and advance-register Georgia non-voters and new voters, but also to win the turn-out war contest on election day, both in the presidential election and in the double Senatorial race two months later. That mobilization of thousands of volunteers is our challenge here as well.

The successes in Georgia made it very clear that success in raising voter turnout is not possible with just 28-day efforts or with just a stellar GOTV effort alone – we need this approach for the next three and a half years and beyond. All of the turnout issues connect back to ‘the permanent campaign’ model.

We recommend:

(12.1) Meaningful resources and energy must be devoted to analysis of low voter turnout, to development of ongoing long-term strategies to increase overall voter turnout and to the significant strengthening of our approach to Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV) operations during the 2024 election.

(12.2) We urge strong outreach, communications, voter contact and advocacy actions to connect more people in more of their communities to our positions, values and activities. These initiatives - directed towards youth, Two-Spirited and LBGQT communities, new Canadians, farmers, workers and small businesses in various sectors, Indigenous communities and persons, suburban neighbourhoods, and others - should all approach voter turnout as not just one outcome of more political engagement, but a critical one.

(12.3) We urge an action-centred, relationship-building approach across all outreach plans and activities. (See a number of recommendations that spell this general principle out in more concrete terms in different contexts).

(13) We must engage more youth in our party.

We must make membership as meaningful as possible for all members, and some youth will join for that reason. But, more generally, it may not be productive to stick just to a membership model of engagement that is producing limited gains.

Instead, develop a ‘no strings attached’ approach that will open doors to participation opportunities that can expand over time.

Walk the talk on the issues that we know many youth open to the NDP are concerned about — including climate change, decent jobs, a fair future for them in a world of deepening economic inequality, decolonization and combating resurgent racism.

We recommend:

(13.1) We recommend above that *The Commonwealth*, “Coffee Row”, and a weekly party bulletin be relaunched using email, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, and other appropriate online platforms. **We suggest youth members -- in particular, members of the Youth Wing executive and team -- be invited to participate as core members of the team to help make this happen.**

(13.2) **Develop more -- and more creative -- ways to draw young people to the party and our activities**, including but not limited to membership. Invite folks to meaningful days of action and events that can attract newcomers for the substance of what is being done and that do not feel like a sales pitch for joining the NDP.

(13.3) At the same time, the party must increase traditional methods of expanding youth involvement: **building up campus clubs**, recruiting a critical mass of youth members in all communities and demographic sectors, training in organizational and communications roles, expanding the summer intern program, and standing up on the issues that most interest younger people.

(13.4) **Switch it up, too, as there is nothing wrong with making democracy a bit more fun**, whether a Trivia night at a pub or a music night or a video-games tournament. As well, leader and MLA events can allow youth to engage in casual meet and greets and talk with the party’s elected representatives about their work, politics and issues of the day: conversations not just ‘meetings’.

(13.5) Perhaps most crucially, if the party takes up our suggestion to **consider digital democracy** tools and platforms for collaborative engagement as part of the task-force policy process, put youth — they do not have to be members, that is part of our point — at the forefront of scouting, selecting, testing and, as possible, trialing good prospects with members. Here, it is worth noting that some of the best digital democracy platforms pay considerable attention, at the design level, to the element of enjoyable engagement when making choices and giving one’s input.

(13.6) Go further. **Enlist the ideas, tech savvy and energy of youth to drive the party into creative space.** For example, consider challenging NDP youth to use their know-how to suggest ways in which the Saskatchewan NDP should think about becoming its own online broadcaster, generating serious content in a non-boring way.

(14) Our governance and campaign planning need reform.

Our party's core decision-making bodies need reform.

We recommend:

Overall governance improvement:

(14.1) That the President work with members of the Provincial Executive, the members of the Provincial Council and senior staff to **review and clarify 'who does what'** in order to maximize efficient operations and clear decision-making responsibilities. Particular attention should be given to the best use of Council meetings to maximize focus on political content and constituency development, rather than the operational and administrative issues being addressed by Officers and Executive.

(14.2) That the President undertake new actions to **strengthen the flow of information** from Executive and Council meetings going to constituencies, affiliates and wings, including reports, motions, and decisions as appropriate.

(14.3) Given that each constituency has two Council representatives, we recommend that the constitution be amended so that **one of them is the constituency president**. That way, the constituency 'leader' will be directly involved in the deliberations of the Council and be able to speak for her/his constituency positions. This would make the Council a more efficient vehicle to provide constituencies with the information coming to the Council and decisions made by the Council. We learned in our meetings that currently too much Council information is not reaching constituency executives and activists.

Election planning improvement:

Our party needs to become capable of conducting four-year, 365-days-a-year campaigns, which means the way we plan and organize for elections needs to change.

Traditionally in the Saskatchewan NDP, elections are organized and overseen by a "political committee" of cabinet ministers working closely with the Provincial Executive. This often worked well (the party won twelve elections between 1944 and 2003), ensuring that our leader and caucus kept the election cycle in mind while doing their work in the Legislature and working in close partnership with the party.

More recently we have imported an "election planning committee" model from other NDP sections. We have not won any elections under this model.

We think we should go back to what has worked here, suitably updated to fit current political circumstances.

We recommend:

(14.4) That the (elected, widely representative and accountable) Provincial Executive, plus the steering committee outlined below **be the Election Planning Committee (EPC)**.

(14.5) **That the leader appoint a steering committee and name a chair.** We suggest the steering committee be composed of three MLAs, two other seasoned party activists (non-staff) appointed on the basis of their campaign skills and experience, the party president, and the Leader as an ex-officio member.

(14.6) **That the Provincial Executive, acting in its EPC role, consider and approve the campaign budget and the election platform proposed by the steering committee.** The Executive's key role should be to ensure that all bodies represented on and by the Executive are engaged in, and have their views carefully considered, in the work of election planning and preparations. The chair of the steering committee should report on progress to the Executive at least monthly.

(14.7) That the chair of the steering committee **meet at least weekly with the Leader**, and be charged to ensure perfect alignment on all matters between its work and the party leader.

The chair of the committee should **also report at least monthly to caucus**, to consult on strategic questions, and to ensure alignment between the caucus' work and campaign plans.

(14.8) That the Leader and President **report to the Provincial Council and Convention** on election plans.

(14.9) That the steering committee **should meet daily** in the immediate run-up to a campaign and during a campaign.

(14.10) **The steering committee, subject to the approval and oversight of the executive should:**

- a. commission and consider all polling and research;
- b. direct the drafting of the platform, ensuring the reports of policy task forces (see Recommendation 5) are considered in the drafting process and ensuring appropriate internal and external consultations during the process
- c. design, propose, and oversee the campaign budget;
- d. hire and direct the work of a full-time paid campaign director;

- e. consider regularly updated proposals and plans from the campaign director (and the party CEO as appropriate) on a campaign organization chart and budget; pre-campaign and campaign leader's tour; a candidate recruitment, vetting and nomination plan; local organizing and campaign plans; a debate strategy; a close-of-the-campaign strategy; a paid and earned communications plan; and other appropriate work – and then hold the campaign director accountable for progress and results; and
- f. define the terms and conduct of an appropriate competitive process to retain campaign contractors; select a digital/paid media advertising provider and a polling firm for a fixed term not to exceed an election cycle; and consider renewals or change based on election results and outcomes.

(14.11) We recommend everyone involved in this work take the following to heart: it is the duty of senior campaign and political staff to “speak truth to power” by fearlessly and candidly providing the steering committee and the full EPC with their best advice. Then it is their duty to diligently carry out and fully report progress on direction given by the committee. Non-elected staff are in advisory and staff roles. **The steering committee must not delegate or abdicate its own role and responsibilities, which are essential to success.**

(15) We need to expand and improve our fundraising.

We Recommend:

(15.1) **A simpler revenue-sharing formula is needed**, one that has incentives to reward individual constituencies' efforts with fewer of the complexities that bring frustration and likely reduce revenues for all levels. We suggest rapid assessment of the options by a special task force of experienced staff and activists, including a review of the formulae and recent experiences in other major sections of the party, and recommendations for changes.

(15.2) **Digital fundraising** potential must be further assessed for increased growth beyond our existing members and donors, including examining all the methods and techniques used

in other sections and by civic organizations that have successfully expanded this revenue stream, to ensure ongoing success with best practices and systems.

(15.3) **More support for, and coordination with, constituency fundraising** is needed, including direct mail, events, and 'direct ask' activities. The panel believes that investments in central support for better and more regular local constituency efforts will be rewarded in both increased revenue and good will.

(15.4) In planning and executing enhanced fundraising approaches, great care must be taken not to deepen the feelings of members that they receive too many requests to donate in comparison to other forms of communications. In that respect, **enhanced fundraising must be pursued in parallel with improved and expanded political engagement with members.**

(16) Should we change our brand?

The panel frequently heard the suggestion that a name change could give the party a new start and new appeal. The parallel was made with the changes undertaken after the debacle of the Devine period.

While we recognize that the SP was successful with a new name and brand, we must remember that those changes were necessitated by the Grant Devine Conservative government's string of criminal convictions, widespread corruption and total failure in its performance - they had no alternative but to change their name. We are not in that situation so the parallel does not apply at all.

We Recommend:

(16.1) That we strengthen our brand by “doing”, not saying. Explain our successful record of governing Saskatchewan. Reconnect with communities and citizens through strong Opposition performance and active political work year-round. Talk to more people more often about their priorities (not just ours). Show confidence and pride in what we have accomplished and what we will accomplish - that is the most powerful way to strengthen our brand.

(16.2) That we remind people that we are the Saskatchewan NDP, with deeper roots in this province than the SP conservatives.

(17) Party wings and committees need support, clear mandates, and more involvement.

The party has a number of constitutionally recognized entities that are often collectively called “wings”. [this sentence to be deleted] In our meetings it was clear that there is a wide range of perceptions, levels of activity and some confusion within the wings and committees. Clarity is required.

We Recommend:

(17.1) **That the CEO and the President conduct a review of each wing** and committee in conjunction with the leaders and other activists as appropriate to assess the situation of each. This review should provide recommendations to the Executive to guide revision of wing and committee mandates if necessary, review appropriate support and resources, and assess their roles in the party’s overall political strategies.

(17.2) The review should also examine the **relationships between the wings and committees and the Executive, Council, and caucus** to determine if there are greater opportunities for the wings and committees to support the work of the party overall through those bodies. Determine if they feel they are being heard, if they know what the opportunities are for them, if they have ideas to support broad party and caucus strategies, and how they understand where they fit, or could fit, in the party processes.

(17.3) In this review and subsequent actions concerning the wings and committees, the panel urges **recognition of the important role played by some of the wings and committees in bringing new people into active party involvement**, in recruiting and supporting candidates for public office, and in providing concrete support to their members and their sectors of the Saskatchewan population. While this has historically been the case for the SNDW and the Young New Democrats, we feel there is the potential for more growth in these directions with the Agriculture and Rural Life, Rainbow Pride, Indigenous and Diversity bodies, given proper planning and support.

Part 4: Next Steps

Implementation:

To generate some early momentum, we suggest the following be undertaken within 90 days. That is not to say that these are the top priorities, rather we see these as some that can be started up quickly even as the Leader, the CEO, the President and the appropriate party bodies work on the report as a whole. Many of our recommendations are much broader strategic steps and will be ongoing for years.

We recommend:

- (1) We recommend the **policy task forces** proposed in recommendation 10.1 be appointed within 90 days, to get to work on policy renewal.
- (2) We recommend the **EPC steering committee** proposed in recommendation 14.5 be appointed within 90 days to get to work on planning the next election.
- (3) We recommend that the **nominations rules task force** proposed in recommendation 11.9 be

appointed within 90 days to get to work on modernizing nomination rules and procedures.

(4) We recommend **rural zones** be created within 90 days as proposed in recommendation 6.2, as a first step to getting to work renewing and rebuilding our party in rural Saskatchewan.

(5) We recommend the **Indigenous Organizer** proposed in recommendation 8.1 be appointed immediately.

(6) We recommend the Leader, the CEO and the President collaborate to provide a **written report tracking progress** on the implementation of the approved recommendations at each meeting of the Provincial Executive and the Provincial Council until the next election.

Like those who met with us, we are eager to see the changes and forward progress that will lead to victory in 2024 and beyond. We will be available to discuss the report, our rationale for the contents and any background information.

Appendix A: **Our panel**

Judy Bradley grew up on a family farm south of Regina, raised her family at Milestone and now resides at Echo Lake. She is a retired educator. Judy was elected as a Member of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan under Premier Romanow, representing Bengough - Milestone from 1991 to 1995, and reelected for 1995-1999 in the redistributed constituency of Weyburn-Big Muddy. During this time, she was Caucus Vice-Chairperson and served in cabinet, as Minister of Highways and Transportation and Minister Responsible for the Status of Women. Presently Judy is elected to the Prairie Valley School Board and serves as a Vice Chair. Judy is a dedicated lifetime member of the NDP.

Modeste McKenzie is a 26-year-old Dene-Metis man who was raised in northern Saskatchewan and currently resides in Prince Albert. He has served the Saskatchewan NDP in many different capacities but most recently as the Vice-President of the party. Currently, he attends the University of Regina and is a community activist that is passionate about Indigenous youth suicide prevention.

Craig Scott, originally from small-town (Windsor) Nova Scotia, is Professor of Law at Osgoode Hall Law School of York University. He served as Member of Parliament for Toronto-Danforth from 2012 to 2015 during which time he was Official Opposition Critic for Democratic and Parliamentary Reform and a proud member of the NDP's (then-named) LGBTQ MP Caucus. Currently, Craig serves on

the Panel of Senior Advisors to the Auditor General of Canada. He is also on the board of Ethelo Decisions, a British Columbia "B Corp" – at the same time as supporting digital-democracy initiatives through the non-profit eDemocracy Network.

Gerry Scott lives in Vancouver and has been active in the NDP since 1972. He served twice as Provincial Secretary of the BC NDP, once in the mid-1980s and again from 2003 to 2006. He has worked in the House of Commons, the BC Legislature and the Government of BC in a number of research, communications and strategic planning roles. Gerry was the Climate Change Program Director at the David Suzuki Foundation from 1998 to 2003. He has organized and managed many campaigns in several provinces (but regrettably not in Saskatchewan) and several of BC's federal campaigns. In recent years Gerry managed the 2015 and 2019 Alberta campaigns, and was the director of multicultural communications and outreach in the 2017 and 2020 BC campaigns.

Brian Topp served as chief of staff to Alberta premier Rachel Notley, deputy chief of staff and director of research to Saskatchewan Premier Roy Romanow, and as national campaign director to federal NDP leader Jack Layton. He is a member of the board of the Broadbent Institute, a fellow at the Public Policy Forum, and teaches a unit at McGill University's Max Bell School of Public Policy. He is a partner at a public affairs consultancy in Toronto.

Appendix B: NDP vote by constituency 1978-2020

		2020	2016	2011	2007	2003	1999	1995	1991	1986	1982	1978
N	Athabasca	56.8%	64.7%	63.8%	59.4%	70.7%	84.4%	40.2%	83.8%	55.2%	39.2%	58.2%
N	Cumberland	66.5%	62.3%	63.2%	66.0%	69.0%	69.0%	74.4%	80.7%	60.7%	64.4%	59.2%
Urb	Moose Jaw North	34.1%	34.6%	35.9%	45.5%	57.9%	50.7%	67.0%		50.4%	37.6%	49.5%
Urb	Moose Jaw Palliser								58.4%			
Urb	Moose Jaw South									58.5%	45.3%	59.1%
Urb	Moose Jaw Wakamow	41.1%	42.6%	45.9%	52.3%	62.6%	53.9%	63.0%	67.2%			
Urb	Prince Albert									55.8%	44.0%	54.1%
Urb	Prince Albert Carlton	38.2%	41.2%	37.6%	48.6%	58.6%	54.0%	54.1%	59.7%			
Urb	Prince Albert-Duck Lake									49.5%	41.9%	46.3%
Urb	Prince Albert Northcote	45.3%	49.1%	46.8%	53.3%	58.9%	48.6%	58.8%	68.0%			
Urb	Regina Albert North								61.0%			
Urb	Regina Churchill Downs								69.9%			
Urb	Regina Centre						52.1%	63.2%		60.3%	52.3%	60.8%
Urb	Regina Coronation Park	44.1%	45.5%	44.0%	56.9%	62.9%	52.2%	63.5%				
Urb	Regina Dewdney			35.0%	45.5%	55.1%	47.1%	69.3%	69.4%			
Urb	Regina Douglas Park	60.1%	49.8%	41.3%	51.9%	57.0%						
Urb	Regina Elphinstone-Ctr	59.9%	59.2%	57.1%	62.5%	66.4%						
Urb	Regina Elphinstone						51.1%	67.1%	72.0%	70.9%	55.5%	70.4%
Urb	Regina Hillsdale								51.3%			
Urb	Regina Lake Centre								62.8%			
Urb	Regina Lakeview	65.5%	56.5%	48.4%	47.7%	56.9%	49.3%	54.9%		47.6%	42.2%	45.3%
Urb	Regina North									58.7%	37.9%	37.9%
Urb	Regina Northeast	44.2%	40.6%	38.7%	48.8%	61.3%	52.5%	64.2%		64.0%	38.5%	61.0%
Urb	Regina Northwest									58.7%	38.4%	54.9%
Urb	Regina Rosemont	57.9%	54.0%	54.9%	53.4%	62.1%			65.2%	55.8%	39.2%	60.8%
Urb	Regina Sherwood						50.6%	63.3%				
Urb	Regina South			42.6%	41.2%	48.5%	39.0%	48.1%		37.8%	31.0%	38.3%
Urb	Regina University	50.0%	43.0%									
Urb	Regina Victoria						47.6%	58.5%	65.3%	50.2%	42.6%	60.7%
Urb	Regina Walsh Acres	37.7%	42.7%	39.3%	62.0%	62.9%						
Urb	Saskatoon Broadway								53.1%			
Urb	Saskatoon Buena Vista											51.2%
Urb	Saskatoon Centre	58.5%	57.1%	54.0%	57.4%	61.9%				49.7%	42.9%	55.6%
Urb	Saskatoon Churchill-Wldd	46.2%	40.2%									
Urb	Saskatoon Eastview	50.8%	41.0%	39.6%	45.4%	44.6%	43.5%	55.7%		38.9%	32.8%	46.7%
Urb	Saskatoon Eastview-Hltn								52.5%			
Urb	Saskatoon Fairview	53.9%	39.7%	46.2%	51.3%	55.3%	56.7%	64.8%	66.6%	60.5%	34.2%	
Urb	Saskatoon Greystone			37.9%	38.8%	49.2%	47.9%	43.1%	37.9%			
Urb	Saskatoon Idylwyld						53.9%	62.8%	60.8%			
Urb	Saskatoon Massey Place			53.9%	55.7%	61.4%						
Urb	Saskatoon Meewasin	51.2%	43.0%	41.7%	35.3%	40.9%	44.2%	51.3%				
Urb	Saskatoon Mount Royal						58.0%	63.2%				
Urb	Saskatoon Nutana	65.1%	56.5%	49.6%	51.7%	55.5%	53.9%	64.8%	55.8%	59.5%	45.8%	57.2%
Urb	Saskatoon Riversdale	47.9%	48.2%	51.5%	56.1%	62.7%	57.9%	68.2%	70.9%	68.5%	47.0%	64.7%
Urb	Saskatoon Sutherland			34.6%	40.6%	58.9%	44.4%	49.1%		47.2%	34.1%	43.3%
Urb	Saskatoon Sutherland-Uni.								47.0%			

Urb	Saskatoon University	53.0%	42.6%						44.4%	41.2%		
Urb	Saskatoon Westmount							65.3%	64.9%	46.4%	62.9%	
Urb	Saskatoon Westview	41.0%	46.3%									
Sub	Martensville-Warman	18.5%	17.1%									
Sub	Regina Albert South								46.4%			
Sub	Regina Gardiner Park	35.6%	34.4%									
Sub	Regina Pasqua	44.7%	40.9%									
Sub	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley			34.1%	40.6%	58.9%	49.2%	55.2%				
Sub	Regina Rochdale	38.9%	36.4%									
Sub	Regina Wascana									41.3%	34.8%	45.4%
Sub	Regina Wascana Plains	32.0%	27.1%	26.9%	31.3%	43.4%	40.2%	47.8%	46.4%			
Sub	Saskatoon Mayfair									43.8%	32.0%	55.3%
Sub	Saskatoon Northwest	35.5%	29.1%	25.4%	29.7%	37.4%	34.3%	45.8%				
Sub	Saskatoon River Heights									42.9%		
Sub	Saskatoon Silverspring-Suth.	37.9%	28.5%									
Sub	Saskatoon Siver Springs			21.6%	27.5%	39.0%						
Sub	Saskatoon South									45.2%	38.1%	
Sub	Saskatoon Southeast	34.5%	28.0%	19.3%	28.4%	29.6%	38.3%	49.0%				
Sub	Saskatoon Stnbrdg-Dakota	28.1%	24.4%									
Sub	Saskatoon Wildwood									43.2%		
Sub	Saskatoon Willogrove	31.8%	24.0%									
N												
W	Battleford-Cut Knife						35.9%	40.9%				
N												
W	Biggar-Sask. Valley	15.2%	18.7%									
N												
W	Biggar			25.7%	30.8%	36.1%			47.6%	44.7%	38.5%	55.8%
N												
W	Cut Knife-Lloydminster								47.6%	42.5%	43.8%	52.4%
N												
W	Cut Knife-Turtleford	13.2%	13.3%	33.3%	31.5%	39.0%						
N												
W	Kindersley	7.2%	18.1%	16.1%	20.4%	22.1%	20.4%	24.5%	28.7%	28.8%	23.9%	34.3%
N												
W	Lloydminster	11.4%	8.6%	29.1%	36.8%	48.0%	38.7%	43.7%				
N												
W	Martensville			13.5%	18.7%	28.9%						
N												
W	Meadow Lake	25.7%	22.9%	36.7%	48.4%	60.3%	46.7%	48.2%	51.3%	35.0%	31.5%	44.0%
N												
W	North Battleford						37.2%	53.9%				
N												
W	Redberry								44.3%	41.9%	36.3%	49.4%
N												
W	Redberry Lake						32.4%	43.0%				
N												
W	Rosetown-Elrose	15.9%	18.1%	16.0%	20.0%	27.1%			39.0%	34.6%	29.4%	29.4%
N												
W	Rosetown-Biggar						33.6%	42.2%				
N												
W	Rosthern-Shellbrook	16.1%	19.5%	31.8%	35.5%	36.5%						
N												
W	Rosthern						26.7%	28.5%	32.5%	33.5%	20.3%	35.8%
N												
W	The Battlefords	28.6%	31.9%	35.8%	43.8%	42.5%			58.8%	47.7%	36.4%	58.0%
N												
W	Wilkie								34.0%	30.1%	26.8%	32.9%
NE	Arm River-Watrous			23.9%	28.7%	38.2%						
NE	Batoche	27.8%	30.6%	30.3%	34.1%	36.3%						
NE	Canora								49.9%	41.8%	42.8%	55.8%
NE	Canora-Pelly	24.0%	20.7%	27.0%	29.9%	37.8%	28.2%	39.8%				
NE	Carrot River Valley	19.8%	20.4%	22.2%	33.2%	42.0%	39.8%	43.2%				

NE	Humboldt-Watrous	15.0%	20.4%				35.0%	41.4%				
NE	Humboldt			23.2%	28.0%	39.9%			45.6%	44.8%	44.1%	54.9%
NE	Kelsey-Tisdale								51.6%	42.1%	33.6%	50.3%
NE	Kelvington-Wadena	17.8%	18.5%	18.4%	23.1%	31.4%	28.0%	41.7%	54.3%	44.0%	45.2%	51.7%
NE	Kinistino								50.3%	47.2%	45.4%	54.6%
NE	Melfort	15.8%	19.4%	24.7%	30.1%	38.3%			41.1%	37.6%	37.1%	49.0%
NE	Melfort-Tisdale						31.5%	38.2%				
NE	Nipawin								45.3%	38.6%	35.7%	43.1%
NE	Pelly								59.6%	47.0%	48.1%	56.4%
NE	Quill Lakes								49.8%	50.8%	47.6%	53.6%
NE	Saskatchewan Rivers	27.7%	29.4%	31.2%	41.2%	47.7%	42.6%	47.4%				
NE	Shellbrook											52.0%
NE	Shellbrook-Spiritwood						38.7%	42.9%				
NE	Shellbrook-Torch River								53.7%	46.6%	38.9%	
NE	Turtleford								50.0%	43.7%	41.3%	51.5%
NE	Watrous						38.9%	47.3%				
SW	Arm River	15.7%	17.3%				25.0%	38.1%	32.1%	35.2%	30.7%	41.8%
SW	Assiniboia-Gravelbourg								35.9%	30.3%	33.7%	38.5%
SW	Bengough-Milestone								37.9%	35.1%	34.8%	42.6%
SW	Cypress Hills	9.5%	12.1%	12.4%	16.0%	20.8%	20.7%	25.3%				
SW	Lumsden-Morse	18.0%	19.9%									
SW	Maple Creek								30.9%	31.7%	28.8%	32.5%
SW	Morse								34.8%	33.6%	33.8%	38.0%
SW	Shaunavon								37.3%	42.7%	38.6%	38.0%
SW	Swift Current	19.8%	15.1%	16.5%	23.4%	38.6%	30.2%	42.7%	51.0%	43.2%	33.4%	41.9%
SW	Thunder Creek			17.5%	23.2%	30.9%	20.0%	30.9%	32.6%	26.4%	28.5%	47.6%
SW	Wood River	14.0%	12.3%	14.7%	17.3%	26.0%	20.5%	30.4%				
SE	Cannington	8.7%	8.8%	14.8%	16.6%	21.7%	14.6%	24.0%				
SE	Estevan	7.0%	9.1%	17.3%	18.8%	31.4%	19.5%	35.6%	36.3%	29.1%	31.8%	33.7%
SE	Indian Head Milestone	28.2%	24.3%	20.0%	27.5%	39.4%	28.6%	43.5%				
SE	Indian Head-Wolseley								39.7%	26.1%	27.8%	33.2%
SE	Last Mountain-Touchwood	25.2%	22.9%	28.9%	30.9%	39.8%	36.0%	46.2%	48.6%	46.6%	45.0%	49.8%
SE	Melville-Saltcoats	17.6%	21.9%	24.5%	31.8%	32.2%						
SE	Melville						25.1%	38.1%	45.9%	38.5%	39.1%	48.3%
SE	Moosomin	16.3%	14.5%	19.0%	21.4%	30.9%	20.5%	32.1%	39.7%	31.7%	30.2%	33.0%
SE	Qu'Appelle											43.8%
SE	Qu'Appelle-Lumsden								48.3%	39.9%	27.7%	
SE	Saltcoats						25.1%	38.2%	52.5%	46.6%	44.9%	46.0%
SE	Souris-Cannington								28.5%	22.3%	22.6%	29.1%
SE	Weyburn								45.3%	36.9%	34.4%	44.3%
SE	Weyburn-Big Muddy	13.2%	16.1%	22.1%	25.2%	40.6%	35.0%	41.6%				
SE	Yorkton	23.3%	22.7%	27.7%	37.5%	51.5%	41.0%	49.6%	60.0%	44.7%	38.6%	46.9%