



Good morning elected political leaders, esteemed colleagues, friends. I want to welcome you all to Niverville. Today is such an exciting day. How exciting? Let's just say some of us have been counting sleeps this past week. It is exciting because today we celebrate the announcement of a project that will impact our community for generations to come. Before I go into what this announcement means I do want to pass along some thank yous. An announcement and project such as this one does not happen if not for the hard work of many. This CRC project truly has occurred because of the joint initiative and collaborative process that enables all of us to be here today.

I would like to begin by thanking Minister Jim Carr and the Government of Canada. Minister Carr thank you for this generous grant. I assure you this investment will have an economic, social, and ecological impact, but most importantly ensure the sustainability of our community. What I am especially appreciative of is that you and your colleagues understand the importance that a community campus approach plays in the towns and municipalities across the country. Please pass along my thanks and the thanks of our residents to your colleagues.

Minister Carr when I attended an AMM function in Selkirk a couple of weeks ago for a budget information session I found out you were an accomplished musician. As my mother was a music teacher, I may have attempted to play two or three different instruments in my day. Thus, I understand to make music it takes multiple players to produce a symphony.

To produce the symphony that is the Niverville Community Resource Center many other players have been instrumental. Other players such as those in our provincial government including several who are here today.

I want to start by thanking Minister Kelvin Goertzen for your support. The leadership you have shown as Education Minister has been instrumental in assuring the CRC truly is a campus that addresses the needs of our residents. In Niverville 29% of our population are under the age of 14, that is 10% higher than the provincial average, and by ensuring the campus not only provides community space for families and seniors but also our youth was important for council. The ability to connect the CRC with the new Niverville High School truly creates an integrated campus approach that creates a meeting place for all generations. This CRC will now play a huge role in allowing all of our resident to have a more active, engaged, and healthier lifestyle.

Minister Jeff Wharton – a huge thank you for your role in this project. As the Minister of Municipal Relations thank you for helping to champion this project. I know that the to do list on your desk is long, thanks to all the requests that myself and my colleagues in municipal government inundate you with on a weekly basis. The tenacity which you and your staff have showed throughout this process has been inspiring.

Other Provincial leaders that are here include Minister Ron Schuler, MLA nominee for the newly formed Springfield/Ritchot riding. Minister Schuler, as infrastructure minister I know that this season is especially busy for you. Thank you for taking the time today to be here. Thank you also for the time you have given to myself and our community since your nomination. You have made yourself available to meet with us

and have shown that you are here to listen to the needs of Niverville and bring forth an action plan to assist us with meeting those needs. So, thank you for your hard work, and the role you have played in this CRC project.

Our current MLA Shannon Martin is here. Shannon, as you have invested yourself in our community these past years and attended many of our council meetings you have listened to our council speak to the hope of one day having a CRC. Thank you for carrying the torch for us back to your colleagues and being our advocate on this project. We owe a great deal to you for the hard work you have done to make this CRC project happen and I thank you for that.

When council began to consider the idea of a campus model, we knew we would need to have others on side for this ever to happen. A CRC campus model, a community resource center on the same campus as a high school does not happen if not for the willingness of the school board superintendent to accept it. Today the Hanover School Superintendent, our school division chair, Randy Dueck is here. I have said this to him before, but it bears repeating. This campus model, a model that is not the norm, is here today because our school superintendent was willing to sit down with council and listen. Then not only listen, but catch the vision, and share it with his board. Thank you for the part you have played in this project!

As government we have the role of making law, casting vision, and setting direction. But the plans of government do not become reality without the often overlooked administration teams that facilitate those plans. So, I want to acknowledge and thank all those that serve whether at the level of our Federal Government, our Provincial Government, and those here in our municipal office. You are the writers of the CRC symphony, the composers, and for this role I thank you!

Then to my fellow council team members. Thank you for your dedication of time and hard work. Thank you for your sacrifice in serving our great residents and for the wisdom, knowledge and dedication you bring to each issue and especially this CRC project.

There are many others who have played an instrumental role in this CRC announcement, and many more who will play a role going forward. And so I say to all of you, the volunteers, the willing land owner Mr. Church and the Church family who back in the 1960's were very generous and donated this land to the community for the purpose of recreation development, the construction teams, previous mayors and council members that laid a lot of the ground work, thank you all for the part you played in making today a special day.

The importance of a community resource center is that they are where relationships are formed, where new ones are made, and existing ones are strengthened.

This CRC will play a major role in relationship building. When our forefathers came up the Red River and settled in this area, it was our Indigenous neighbours that assisted them. This CRC project will have part of it set aside to honour our Indigenous friends and neighbours and to acknowledge the relationships both past and present that we have with them.

It will also be a place where we want to welcome new Canadians. This CRC has space where we can help to integrate new Canadians to our great country and to our community by teaching them our languages and assisting them with adjusting to life here. We want Niverville to be a place where new Canadians feel they can belong.

This CRC center will greatly facilitate times of community celebration. Currently when our community wishes to remember those that have served in our military and sacrificed for our country we are limited. The same holds true for high school graduations where not all family members are allowed to attend. We do not have a space in our community large enough to allow all who wish to attend these times of Remembrance and celebration. Thanks to today's announcement, now we will.

In government we spend time and money on items such as pavement and potholes, on bridges and boulevards, on sewers and sidewalks. While these are worthy and important, I believe the greatest goal of government is to create community. To put more emphasis on people and less on politics. In a world where we live in silos behind our screens, we need places and reasons to congregate and communicate. Places where it is about the chatter of children and families and friendships. To all those who have played a part in this CRC project, whether your role was large like playing first chair violin, or lesser such as playing the triangle, you all have been integral to the CRC project and to the building of community and relationships in Niverville and region and I thank you for that.

I want to say what a great pleasure it has been for me personally to have been part of the process and part of the CRC team. I realize that only the first movement has been completed and that there is still a lot of music left to be played. As council we look forward to the next steps and the continuation of the collaborative effort between all levels of government and all those I mentioned and thanked earlier.

The residents of Niverville have waited a long time for today's announcement. Some longer than others. Today standing with us is both a council member and a former mayor that fundraised for this building as school aged boys back in 1967. Also here today is my deputy mayor who has served on council for over 30 years. When he started back in the 80's he ran on the platform of bringing recreation to Niverville. Seeing the smiles on these faces today makes me so happy for them.

In conclusion music is about harmony. The Niverville Community Resource Center will allow us to strike a melodic chord that will include the sounds of teammates encouraging one another, residents and families interacting with one another, and the voices of children calling to one another as they play. To all involved again I say thank you and Bravo!