

November 8, 2018

**PROVINCE ANNOUNCES SUPPORT
FOR BEAR CLAN PATROL**

The Manitoba government is investing nearly \$200,000 to provide support and assistance to the Bear Clan Patrol's community crime prevention and intervention efforts, Justice Minister Cliff Cullen and Municipal Relations Minister Jeff Wharton announced today.

"We understand how important the Bear Clan Patrol is to our community," said Cullen. "By promoting safety, offering support and providing assistance, the group helps reduce crime and keep our streets safe."

Over \$126,000 is being invested through Manitoba Justice from the Proceeds of Crime Fund toward infrastructure and safety improvements including a 15-passenger van, first aid kits, safety gear and bikes for patrol. The funding will enable the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) to work in partnership with the Bear Clan Patrol and through information sharing between the WPS and Bear Clan Patrol, the WPS will benefit from increased awareness of community situations.

"The Winnipeg Police Service strongly supports proactive intervention in the effort to reduce the level of violent crime occurring in Winnipeg," said Chief Danny Smyth, WPS. "The Bear Clan is credited with increasing the safety and well-being of people in the community through their visible presence, provision of basic food and shelter necessities, and positive contacts and referrals of individuals."

An additional \$70,000 from the Municipal Relations Neighbourhood Renewal Fund will support developing a system to collect and distribute food donations to vulnerable people and partner agencies. It will also help to establish a dedicated base for Bear Clan operations for patrol co-ordination, information sharing,

volunteer training and equipment storage. The space will serve as a focal point for Bear Clan Patrol activities.

“This much-needed funding will support the Bear Clan Patrol as they continue to gain momentum,” said Wharton. “Over the past four years, they have seen significant growth in the number of volunteers and necessary equipment required to operate safely, so a dedicated base will go a long way in supporting their work.”

Since briefly functioning during the 1990s, the Bear Clan restarted operations again in 2015, and has since become a model for community safety patrols by First Nations groups across Canada.

“Funding is essential at this stage in the game,” said James Favel, executive director of the Winnipeg Bear Clan Patrol. “We have 1,400 Winnipeg-based volunteers and this money from the Proceeds of Crime Fund will provide us with the much needed tools we need to do what we do.”

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For more information:

- Public information, contact Manitoba Government Inquiry: 1-866-626-4862 or 204-945-3744.
- Media requests for general information, contact Communications Services Manitoba: 204-945-3765.
- Media requests for ministerial comment, contact Communications and Stakeholder Relations: 204-945-4916.