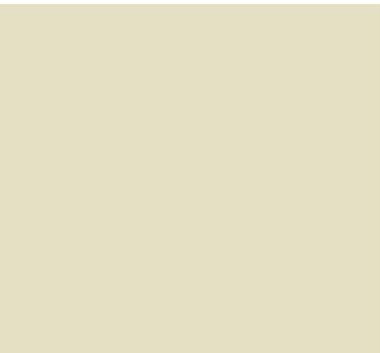
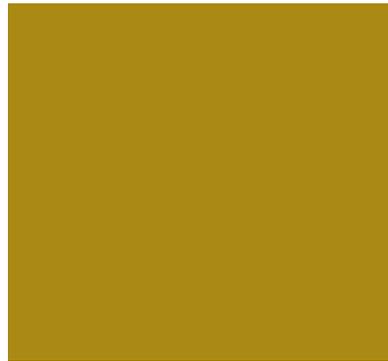
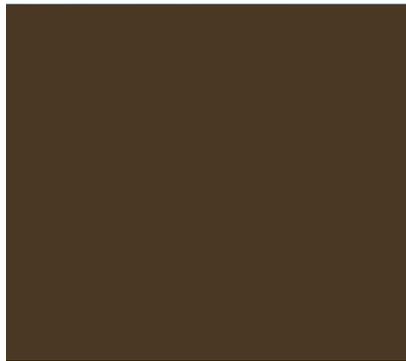




# What is the Legislative Assembly?



Explore the history,  
purpose, and functions  
of the Saskatchewan  
Legislature



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# What is the Legislative Assembly?

It is **Saskatchewan's provincial parliament**, and it plays a vital role in our lives.

Parliament influences the laws that govern us, the public services we use, and our relationship with the rest of Canada and the world. The decisions of the Assembly affect everyone in the province.

**But where did it come from? And how does it really work?**  
How are decisions made? And who makes them?

This booklet explores the structure and functions of our provincial Assembly. You will learn about the role of Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), how laws are made, how public money is approved for spending, and many other topics.

Immerse yourself in the life of the Assembly and find out what happens inside the Saskatchewan Legislative Building.

*The Western Red Lily is the official floral emblem of Saskatchewan.*



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# The Parliamentary System

Canada, and each of its provinces, is a **constitutional monarchy** and a **parliamentary democracy**.

## Parliamentary Democracy

A parliamentary democracy is a system in which government is responsible to the people. The principles of governance followed in Saskatchewan originate from the British parliamentary system.

**Representative Government** — A system where members are elected to represent the rest of the population. In Saskatchewan, the province is divided into 61 areas (constituencies) with roughly equal portions of the total population. Each constituency elects one representative to the Assembly. Elections are held at regular intervals to ensure the government remains accountable to the people.

## Responsible Government —

Government must answer for its actions to a Legislative Assembly of elected representatives. The governing party is required to maintain the support of the majority of the members of the Assembly to continue to hold office. Members of the opposition work to hold government publicly accountable for its decisions, challenge government policies, and provide alternatives.

**Confidence Vote** — A vote made by the elected members that determines whether the government holds the confidence of the Assembly to continue to govern. If the government loses the support of the majority of the Assembly, it is customary for the Premier to resign and call for an election.

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## Constitutional Monarchy

A constitutional monarchy is a system in which the Crown is the head of state, and its powers are defined by a constitution. *The Saskatchewan Act* is a part of Canada's Constitution, and grants the province the ability to govern itself through a provincial Legislative Assembly.

The monarch is represented by the **Lieutenant Governor** in Saskatchewan, and by the Governor General at the federal level. They take on the role and responsibilities of the monarch in a non-partisan and apolitical position.

The Lieutenant Governor's responsibilities include, among others: conducting swearing-in ceremonies; summoning, proroguing, and dissolving the Assembly; and providing royal assent to turn bills into laws.

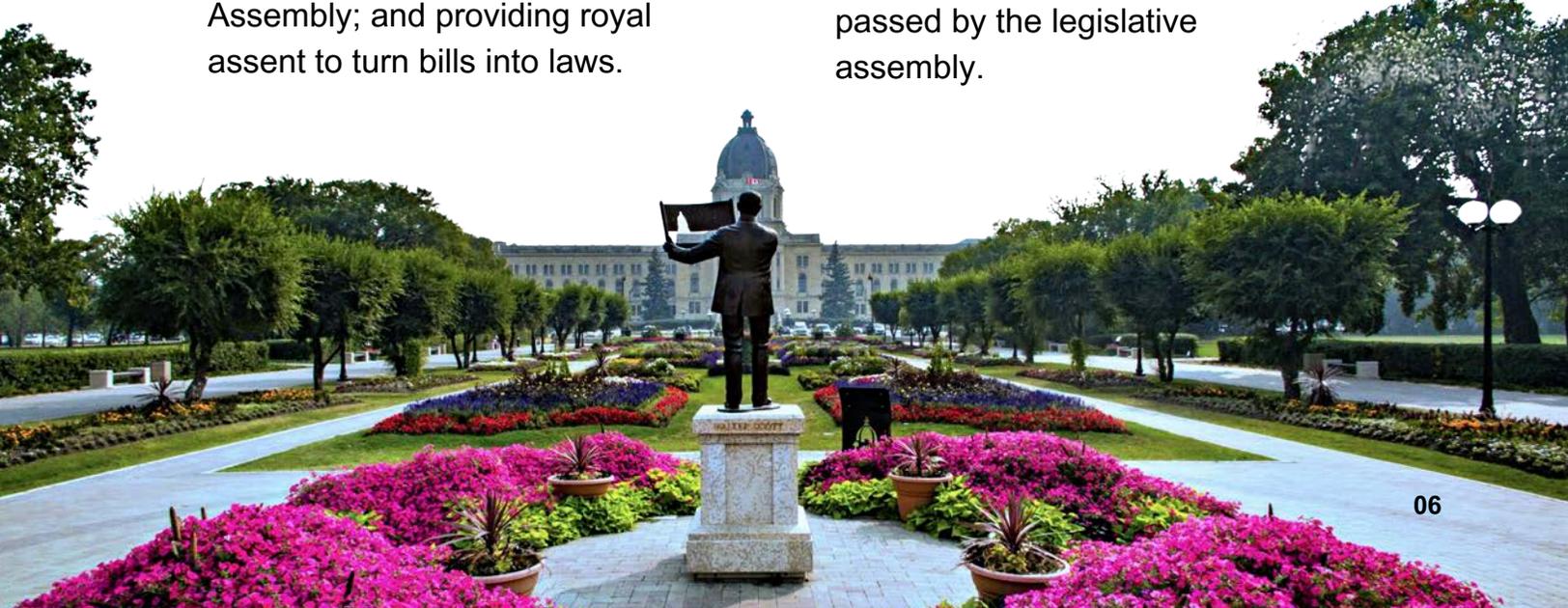
## The Three Branches

The **Westminster Parliamentary System** is the democratic system in Canada and its provinces. Within this system, there are three separate branches of government: executive, legislative, and judicial.

In Saskatchewan, the **executive branch** is made up of the Premier and their cabinet ministers. This branch is responsible for administering the government's programs and policies.

The **legislative branch** is made up of the Speaker of the Assembly and all the elected members. They are responsible for debating and authorizing laws and public spending. Provincial legislatures are unicameral, with only one body of elected members.

The **judicial branch** is the independent court system that interprets and applies the laws passed by the legislative assembly.



*Front elevation framework  
of reinforced concrete  
columns and floor slabs  
during building  
construction, ca. 1909-  
1910.*



*Source: The Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan*

# History of the Legislative Assembly

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## North-West Territories

Following its victorious campaign for dominion over the North American continent near the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the British Crown began to establish a constitutional framework for governing the settlements of modern-day Canada. In 1867, the British parliament passed the **British North America Act** and created the Dominion of Canada.

At the time of confederation, the land now known as Saskatchewan was controlled by the Hudson's Bay Company. It was surrendered back to the Crown in 1869 and became part of the North-West Territories, managed by an appointed Territorial Council.

In 1888, the federal parliament amended the **North-West Territories Act**, abolishing the Territorial Council and giving the territory encompassing Saskatchewan the right to create a Legislative Assembly. The new Assembly was composed of 22 elected and 3 appointed members. The Assembly was also empowered to choose one of its own members as the Speaker.

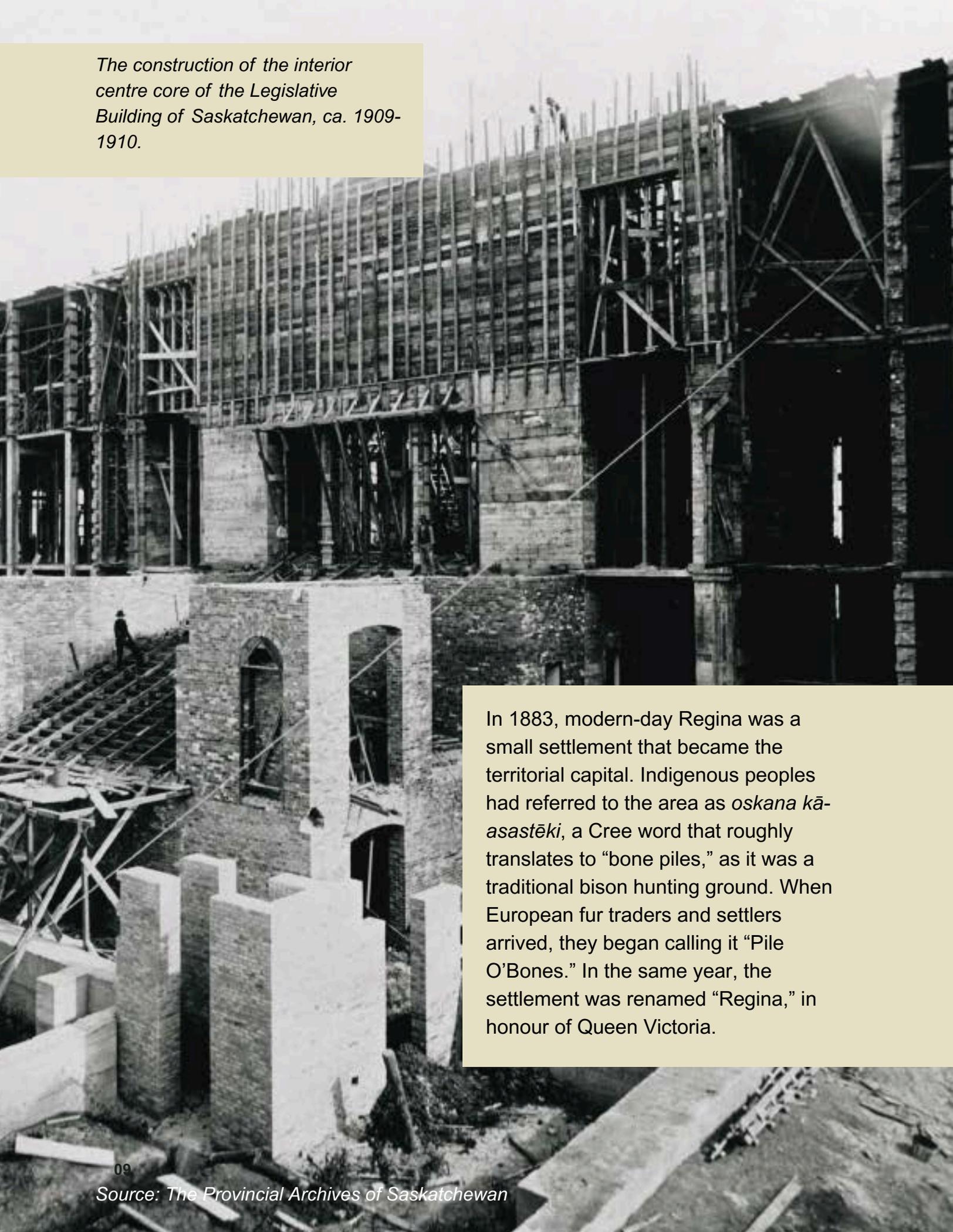
An Advisory Council of four members and the Lieutenant Governor formed the first Executive Committee, a precursor to modern-day cabinet. In 1897, the Executive Committee was made **responsible to the Legislative Assembly**, following the British parliamentary model where executive government is held accountable for its actions by an elected body of representatives.

*A Rumley Oil Pull tractor, 3 miles south of Regina, ca. 1913. The Legislative Building can be seen in the background.*



*Source: The Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan*

The construction of the interior  
centre core of the Legislative  
Building of Saskatchewan, ca. 1909-  
1910.



In 1883, modern-day Regina was a small settlement that became the territorial capital. Indigenous peoples had referred to the area as *oskana kā-asastēki*, a Cree word that roughly translates to “bone piles,” as it was a traditional bison hunting ground. When European fur traders and settlers arrived, they began calling it “Pile O’Bones.” In the same year, the settlement was renamed “Regina,” in honour of Queen Victoria.

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## The Province

On **September 1, 1905**, Saskatchewan formally became a province. However, it lacked the physical infrastructure required to support a rapidly growing population.

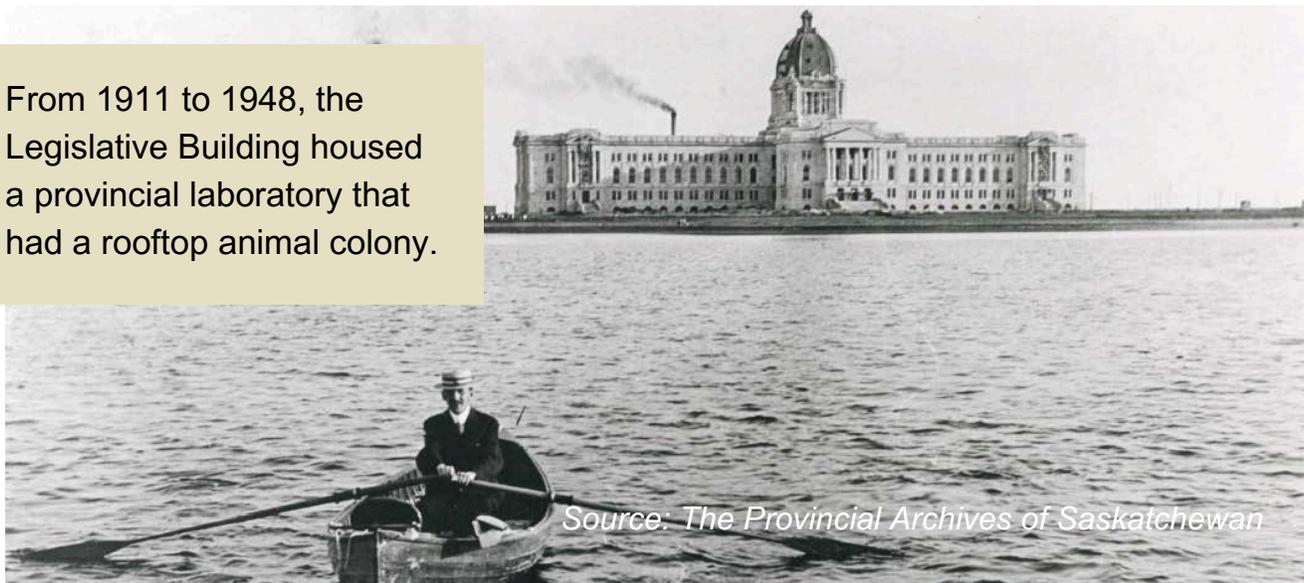
**Walter Scott**, Saskatchewan's first Premier, presided over an era of remarkable population growth and development, particularly in agriculture. To encourage people to immigrate and stay in the province, the government built roads, schools, court houses, and a university, and supported the expansion of a railway system. In an effort to address rural isolation, the Scott government also worked with farmers and rural communities to coordinate a province-wide telephone service.

## Building Construction

In 1905, the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly was outgrowing the old North-West Territorial buildings. The buildings were deteriorating and the number of constituents was swiftly increasing, requiring more elected members to represent them. Therefore, Walter Scott proposed the construction of a new building to house the Assembly. The site of the new building was chosen to **maximize public access**, centrally located to serve as the heart of the community and to allow the city to grow around it.

Construction began in 1908 and in January 1912, Saskatchewan's Legislative Assembly met for the first time in the newly constructed Chamber. The building features a large dome to serve as a landmark, two large wings that could be expanded, and a Chamber that can hold 125 seats.

From 1911 to 1948, the Legislative Building housed a provincial laboratory that had a rooftop animal colony.



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# The Legislative Assembly

The Legislative Assembly is the centre of power in Saskatchewan. It is where elected members introduce legislation, debate policies, and hold government accountable for its spending. Composed of 61 members — each representing one constituency — the Assembly consists of the Speaker, the Premier, cabinet ministers, and private members (i.e. members not in cabinet).

When following the regular **parliamentary calendar**, the Legislative Assembly meets for a total of 65 days, over two periods in the fall and spring. Every cycle is referred to as a **session**, and each legislative term is typically made up of four sessions. During session, bills are introduced, debated, and voted on by the Assembly. Members of the Legislative Assembly, except for the Speaker, can introduce legislation, debate policies, and vote.

The meetings of the Assembly during session are normally referred to as **sitting days**. Each sitting day generally follows a set schedule of business and ends when the Assembly rises or adjourns for the day. The Assembly typically meets Monday to Thursday, allowing members to return to their constituencies on Fridays.

**Privileges** are the rights and immunities granted to the Assembly and its members so that they may be able to perform parliamentary duties. They include the right of members to speak freely in the Assembly without obstruction or fear of legal consequences and the right of the House to regulate its own internal affairs.





At its core, the Assembly is a forum for members to **debate**. Each debate is put forward to the members as a motion. A motion is a proposal stating that the Assembly do some action, change something, or express an opinion on some matter of public concern. Generally, members may share their opinions either for or against the motion before the Speaker calls for a vote. If a vote is called and it's voted down, the motion doesn't go forward. If the majority of members vote in favour of the motion, that means the Assembly agrees with it and it is adopted.

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## Executive Government

The political party with the most seats in the Legislative Assembly forms government. The leader of the party, known as the **Premier**, becomes the head of the provincial government. The Premier appoints members to **cabinet** and they set government policy, determine the government's priorities, and decide how tax dollars are spent.

Each cabinet minister oversees a **ministry** or is responsible for a Crown corporation. They report their activities and spending and advocate for changes to public policies. Cabinet is responsible for introducing most bills in the Assembly.

Not all members of the governing party are part of Executive Government; it consists of only the **Premier and cabinet ministers**.

## Opposition

The opposition is made up of members of the parties who have not formed government as well as most independent members. The primary role of the opposition is to hold government accountable by reviewing government spending and legislation and presenting alternative points of view.

The party with the second-most seats in the Assembly forms the **Opposition**. The head of that party is known as the **Leader of the Opposition**, and they are the primary critic of government policies and business. They appoint members that critique the work of executive government.

## Private Members

Private members are elected officials from any party that are not part of Executive Government. They call attention to their constituents' achievements or concerns, participate in debates, serve on committees, and bring forward their own bills on topics of concern.



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## Parliamentary Publications (*Hansard*)

One of the ways the public has access to legislative proceedings and debates is through the ***Hansard*** — the official verbatim record of what is said in the Assembly and in committee meetings.

*Hansard* editors listen to audio recordings of proceedings and transcribe the members' spoken words into written text. Editors take great care to ensure that the meaning of the words is preserved in the written form, with very minimal changes to the language used. Audio switchers, located in the media gallery and committee room, will activate the microphones on the MLAs' desks. They identify who is speaking for the benefit of the editor transcribing that portion of the audio recording.

Saskatchewan was the first province to broadcast proceedings over radio. Today, proceedings are broadcast over television and live-streamed online.





# Members of the Legislative Assembly

## Role of a Member

As an elected representative, a Member of the Legislative Assembly has many different roles. Each MLA in Saskatchewan represents an average of **14,000 constituents**.

MLAs are responsible for voicing concerns, proposing motions, and presenting petitions on behalf of these constituents.

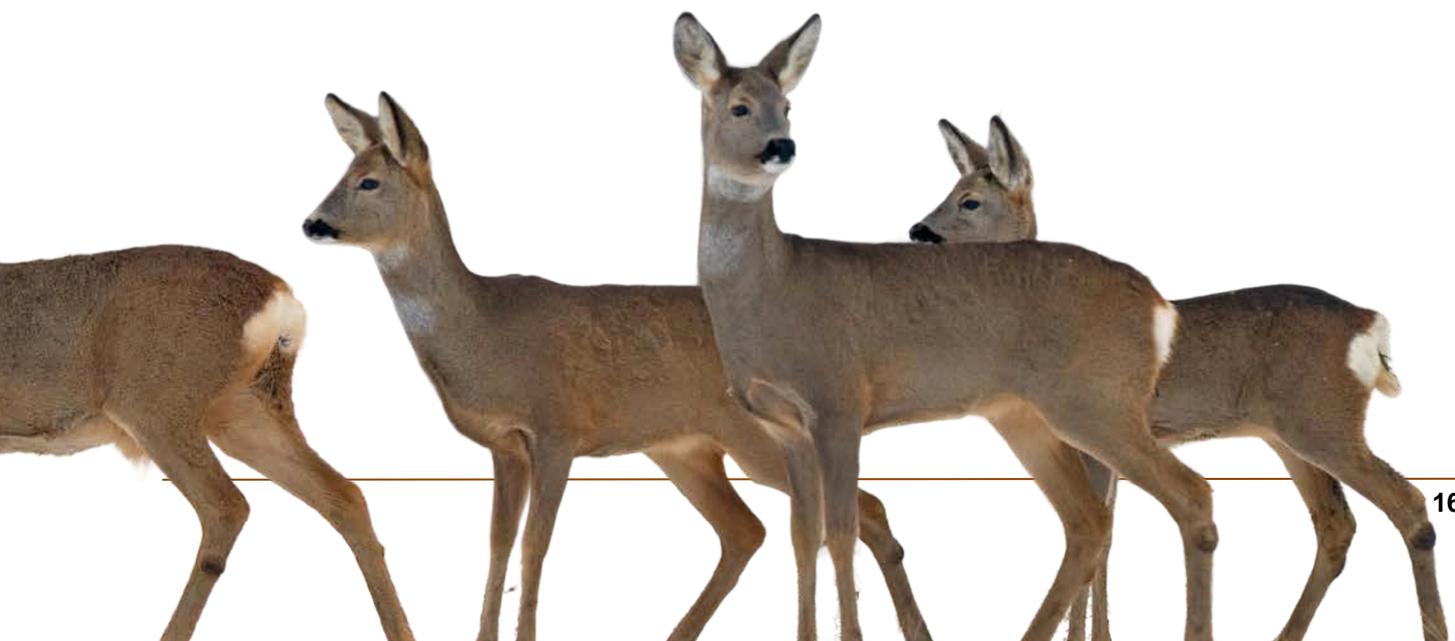
*The White-Tailed Deer  
is the official animal of  
Saskatchewan.*





As a member of the Assembly, MLAs are required to participate in debate and vote on a variety of subjects. Members may also participate in committees to review and scrutinize public policy, spending, and the actions of the government.

Regardless of their position in the Assembly, members maintain contact with their constituents and they sometimes solicit feedback about current issues. They may meet with individuals or groups to discuss problems and issues of importance, and they may be asked to help resolve issues involving government ministries or agencies.



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## Elections Process

*The Legislative Assembly Act, 2007* requires that a general election be held **every four years** on the last Monday of October. If the provincial election falls within a federal election cycle, the provincial election is delayed. The election campaign lasts a minimum of 27 days and is coordinated by Elections Saskatchewan's **Chief Electoral Officer**.

Elections Saskatchewan maintains a register of eligible voters, ensures the election process is **fair** and **transparent**, and counts the votes. Each eligible voter places one ballot into the ballot box in the presence of scrutineers representing each candidate.

After the votes have been counted, the Chief Electoral Officer officially announces the election of the candidate who received the most votes in each constituency. This announcement is informally known as "**the return of the writ.**"

Before elected candidates can take their seat in the Assembly, they must be sworn in and either take an oath of allegiance or make an affirmation of allegiance to the monarch. The oath is an affirmation of loyalty to the Crown and, through it, to constitutional and democratic principles that are the foundation of our system of government.





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## Party Candidates

Each **political party** determines its own philosophy, develops policies consistent with that philosophy, selects its own leader, and seeks support for its candidates. Any Canadian citizen 18 years or older, who is a resident of Saskatchewan and not disqualified (a judge, for example), is eligible to become a candidate.

Candidates must file nomination papers and may choose to run as a member of a political party whose platform on a wide range of issues aligns with their own views. During their nomination, party candidates may benefit from the support and resources offered by the party, as well as increased media coverage in some cases. Candidates may also run as an **independent** if they wish, meaning they are not a member of any party.

As an elected member of a political party, MLAs are also part of their **caucus**, which develops strategy and considers issues for debate. Caucus meetings give members the chance to discuss the views of their constituents and help develop party policies.

Ultimately, members will be held accountable by the public, and if their constituents do not feel they have done a good job representing them, they may be voted out in the next election.

*The white birch, the official tree of Saskatchewan.*

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# Role of the Media

**Journalists** play an important role in communicating the actions of the Assembly to the public. Often, members of the media are the first to report on the introduction of new legislation, debates, and committee proceedings.

The media gallery, located above and behind the Speaker, allows the accredited media to attend sittings and take notes. In many Commonwealth parliaments, the press have been traditionally seated where they cannot be seen by the Speaker in order to minimize distractions. Today, in addition to the option of attending in person, members of the media and the public can watch the live broadcast of proceedings from the comfort of their home or office.

**Media scrums** are informal press conferences that allow the media to question MLAs. They are regularly held outside the Chamber during sitting days.



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# Asking Questions of the Executive

In order to hold Executive Government accountable for its use of provincial resources, members have several avenues to pose questions:

**Question Period** — A 25-minute period each sitting day where members can ask questions of the Premier and cabinet ministers. Questions must relate to matters within the administrative competence of the government. Typically, questions and responses are 60 seconds each.

**Written Questions** — Members may ask for information on one subject per question, directed toward the government or a specific minister. Questions can cover multiple years and more than one ministry, agency, or Crown corporation. Five sitting days' notice is required.

**Committee Scrutiny** — This is an avenue for members to question ministers alongside government officials, examine legislation in detail, review budget estimates, and conduct inquiries. The committee's observations are reported back to the Assembly.

**Returns** — Members may request specific documents or a compilation of lengthy, detailed information from the government or a specific minister. Members submit notice to move a motion for return. Two sitting days later, the government has the option to provide a response or debate the request.

In response to written questions and motions for return, the government may either provide an answer within 180 days or debate the matter in the Assembly. For written questions, they also have the option of providing a written response when the question is called.



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# Levels of Government

The Prime Minister, the head of the federal government, is the leader of the party with the most seats in the House of Commons. Many of the parliamentary roles and responsibilities of the Premier and Prime Minister are similar, but federal and provincial responsibilities are separated and defined by the **Canadian Constitution**.

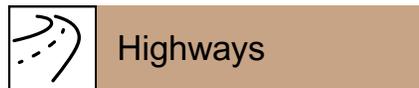
The federal parliament governs matters of **national interest**, which affect Canadians across the nation. Provincial legislatures govern **local interests** or concerns.

While municipal governments are not a constitutional government, they are established by the province and assigned specific **administrative duties**. Municipal governments, such as the City of Regina, establish bylaws and provide services for the residents of their community.

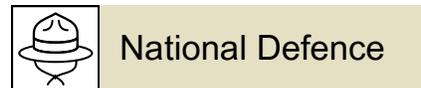
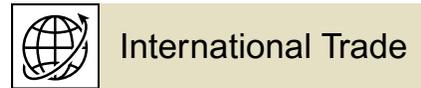


**Agriculture, immigration, and pensions** are shared responsibilities between the federal and provincial governments.

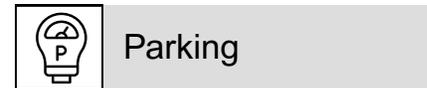
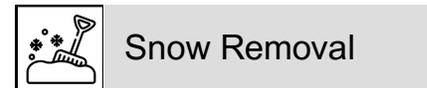
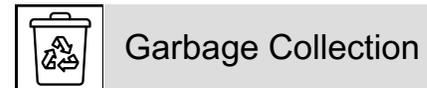
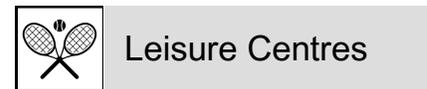
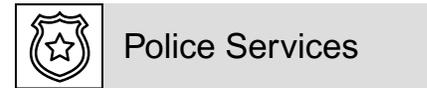
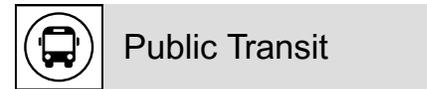
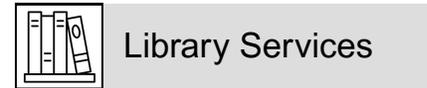
## Provincial



## Federal



## Municipal

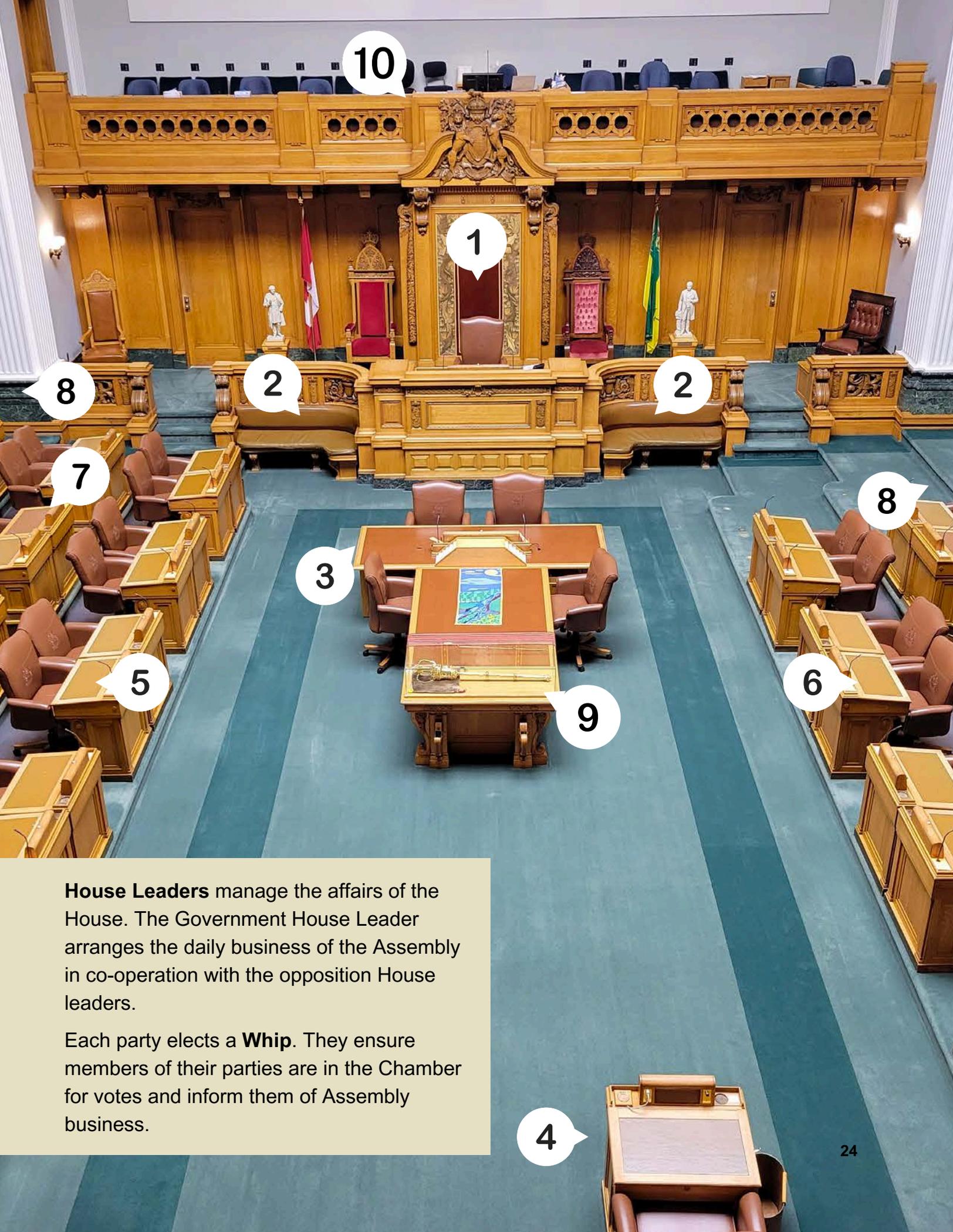


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# The Legislative Chamber

- ① **The Speaker** — The member with the highest authority in the House. The Speaker is the presiding officer, overseeing proceedings in the Chamber to ensure the rules and procedures are followed. They play an impartial role and are elected by fellow members in an anonymous vote following a provincial election or when there is a vacancy. A Deputy Speaker is also elected to preside over the Assembly in the Speaker's absence.
- ② **Legislative Pages** — Pages deliver messages and documents during legislative sittings.
- ③ **Clerks-at-the-Table** — Non-partisan employees of the Legislative Assembly Service (LAS). In the Chamber, they provide advice to members and the Speaker about parliamentary procedure and rules. They also provide executive oversight for the LAS.
- ④ **Sergeant-at-Arms** — Responsible for maintaining security on the Chamber floor.
- ⑤ **Premier** — Sits in the centre of the front row on the government side of the House.
- ⑥ **Leader of the Official Opposition** — Sits in the front row, opposite the Premier.
- ⑦ **Cabinet Ministers** — Can be found in the front rows, in the chairs closest to the Premier.
- ⑧ **Private Members** — Commonly called “backbenchers,” can be found seated in the back rows.
- ⑨ **The Mace** — A gold-plated staff symbolizing the power delegated to the Assembly by the Crown. It is carried by the Sergeant-at-Arms and remains on the Table during each sitting day.
- ⑩ **Media Gallery** — Where members of the press gallery may watch sittings.

The **East and West Galleries** are for the public. Members of the public can watch legislative proceedings from these seats. The Speaker's permission is required to sit in the **North Gallery**.



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**House Leaders** manage the affairs of the House. The Government House Leader arranges the daily business of the Assembly in co-operation with the opposition House leaders.

Each party elects a **Whip**. They ensure members of their parties are in the Chamber for votes and inform them of Assembly business.





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# Assembly Proceedings

## Routine Proceedings

Each sitting day begins with the **Speaker's parade**. The parade is led by the Sergeant-at-Arms, who carries the ceremonial mace, followed by the Speaker, Clerks-at-the-Table, and the Pages.

The Speaker begins the sitting day with a prayer and brings the Assembly to order. After the prayer, the daily routine proceedings are as follows:

**Introduction of Guests** — Members briefly introduce guests, such as constituents or school groups, seated in the public galleries.

**Presenting Petitions** — Members present petitions to the Assembly. Citizens wishing to have their petition presented must find an MLA willing to sponsor it. The majority of petitions are presented orally to the Assembly, in which the member will read the prayer and briefly indicate where the petitioners reside. Alternatively, members may choose to silently file the petition.

**Statements by Members** — A 10-minute period in which members speak about matters of importance to their constituents. Ministers are not permitted to remark on their area of ministerial responsibility.

**Question Period** — A 25-minute period in which the opposition questions the Premier or cabinet. The principal objective is to seek information and hold the government accountable.

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**Ministerial Statements** — Cabinet ministers make announcements about a new policy, program, or government direction. The opposition has the chance to respond.

**Introduction of Bills** — Sponsoring members rise and move that their bill be introduced and read for the first time.

**Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees** — Business that has passed through the committees is reported back to the Assembly, with any changes agreed upon during committees.

Upon entering and leaving the Chamber during proceedings, members bow to the Speaker as a sign of respect. If the Speaker has other business to attend to outside of the Chamber, the Speaker may leave the Chair and the Deputy Speaker may preside over the Assembly in their absence.



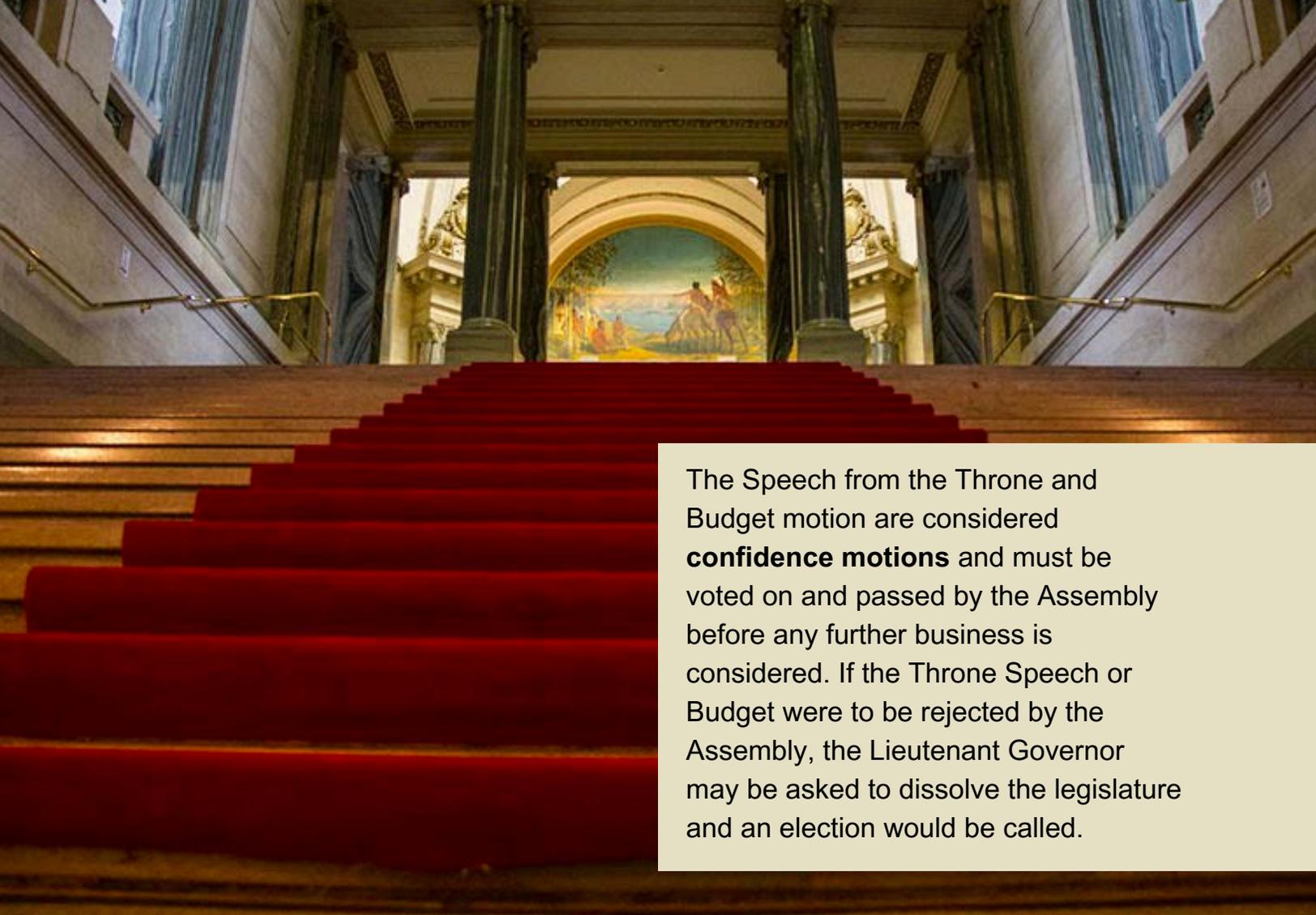
## Orders of the Day

After routine proceedings, the Assembly will move to other items from their daily list of business, including responses to written questions and special orders, such as the Throne Speech debate and Budget debate. These special orders take priority over all of the other business.

Orders of the day also include the following:

**Government Orders** — On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, the government decides the business considered and the order of consideration. This often includes second readings and adjourned debates, where bills are debated before they are committed to committee.

**Private Members' Business** — On Thursdays, private members' business, such as bills or motions, is prioritized after routine proceedings. Thursdays also include a 75-minute debate on a topic chosen each week by either the opposition or the government.



The Speech from the Throne and Budget motion are considered **confidence motions** and must be voted on and passed by the Assembly before any further business is considered. If the Throne Speech or Budget were to be rejected by the Assembly, the Lieutenant Governor may be asked to dissolve the legislature and an election would be called.

## Special Days in the Assembly

**Opening Day** — The opening of every session is marked by the Speech from the Throne, read by the Lieutenant Governor. This typically takes place in the fall or following a general election. The Throne Speech is where the government has an opportunity to outline their plans and goals for the upcoming session.

The Throne Speech is the only time when the Lieutenant Governor and all three branches of government come together at once.

**Budget Day** — Budget day typically takes place in the spring. The Minister of Finance outlines the spending plans for the entire government. The Budget speech includes any new financial initiatives, the allocation of funds to ministries and organizations in the province, and an update on the province's financial situation.

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# The Legislative Process

## How Laws Are Made

A bill is a proposed law or piece of legislation put before the Assembly for approval. Before becoming law, all bills must pass through the **legislative process**, including several readings, an in-depth review by a committee, and royal assent. These stages typically occur on different days to ensure all MLAs have the opportunity to examine the bill.

Almost all of the bills introduced in the Assembly are **public bills**, which affect the entire province. The majority of public bills are proposed by a cabinet minister. Sometimes, a bill is proposed by an MLA who is not a cabinet minister, and this is referred to as a private member's public bill.

Public bills that ask for the spending of public money must get approval from the Lieutenant Governor, known as a **royal recommendation**. Only cabinet ministers have the authority to introduce bills that spend money.





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## How Bills Become Laws

**Introduction and First Reading** — The MLA sponsoring the bill will first give the Assembly two days' notice and then put forward a motion to introduce it for the first time. Typically, members agree and the bill becomes publicly available. There is no debate yet at this stage — that will begin during second reading.

If the bill is defeated at any stage, it does not proceed to the next stage.

**Second Reading** — The member responsible for the bill highlights the bill's purpose and conditions and moves a motion for second reading. Members then have the opportunity to speak to the principles of the bill and put their opinions on record. If the bill is adopted by the Assembly, it is referred to a committee for further examination.

**Consideration in Committee** — Committees conduct a review of the bill in greater detail and call forward witnesses and experts to answer questions about the bill. Committee members may propose changes to clauses in the bill. Once the review is complete, the committee will vote on each clause and report back to the Assembly.

**Third Reading** — Gives the opportunity for members not part of the committee to ask questions and propose amendments. MLAs may debate the bill one final time. If the motion for third reading is adopted, the bill is ready to receive royal assent.

**Royal Assent** — The Lieutenant Governor formally approves the bill, making it an Act. The new law can come into force immediately or at a later date.

If a bill doesn't make it past the royal assent stage before the end of a session, it doesn't become law.

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# Legislative Committees

Comprised of small groups of MLAs, committees are responsible for reviewing legislation and government spending, policies, and programs. Committees allow private members to take on a more active role in the legislative process, propose amendments, and receive responses directly from cabinet ministers and government officials. They also provide an opportunity for public input.

**Standing committees** are permanently established by the Legislative Assembly. They each fall into one of three categories: scrutiny, House, and policy field committees. Occasionally, special committees are created to study a specific issue.

## Scrutiny Committees

Scrutiny committees are responsible for reviewing past government spending, assessing how effectively public dollars were spent, and making recommendations to the Assembly.

**The Standing Committee on Private Bills** considers and reports on petitions and bills related to specific organizations, and not the general public.

**The Standing Committee on Public Accounts** scrutinizes government expenditures through a detailed review of the Public Accounts and Provincial Auditor's reports.

The *māmawapiwin náyati* room in the Legislative Building was specifically designed for committee meetings. The Cree word *māmawapiwin* and the Dene word *náyati* both translate as meeting or gathering.

## House Committees

**The Standing Committee on House Services** has a general oversight role, and examines the rules, procedures, powers, and operation of the Assembly.

**The Standing Committee on Privileges** examines and reports on issues of privilege as referred to it by the Assembly.



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## Policy Field Committees

Each policy field committee oversees a portfolio of specific ministries and government agencies. This is accomplished through the examination of legislative proposals, regulations, bylaws, and budgetary estimates. Policy field committees have the power to independently conduct inquiries and consider annual reports of ministries, agencies, and Crown corporations.

The four policy field committees focus on the following matters:

**The Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies** — Crown Investments Corporation and its subsidiaries, central government agencies, liquor, gaming, and revenue-related entities.

**The Standing Committee on Human Services** — Health, social services, education, and labour.

**The Standing Committee on the Economy** — Economic development, agriculture, the environment, natural resources, transportation, and infrastructure.

**The Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice** — Justice; corrections and policing; municipal, intergovernmental, inter-provincial, First Nations, Métis, and northern affairs; tourism; parks; culture; and sport.

## Committees of the Whole Assembly

Committees of the Whole Assembly are composed of all the members of the Legislative Assembly and meet in the Chamber.

**The Committee of the Whole on Bills** conducts clause-by-clause consideration of proposed legislation either after second reading or following consideration in committees.

**The Committee of Finance** considers budgetary estimates for Executive Council and approves the resolutions for appropriation bills.



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# Parliamentary Financial Cycle

One of the Assembly's fundamental responsibilities is reviewing and approving the Government of Saskatchewan's financial plans.

The government cannot implement its budget, spend money, or raise revenues without the consent and approval of the Legislative Assembly. This principle is known as “**grievance before supply.**”

The fiscal year begins on April 1st and ends on March 31st of the following year. However, the financial cycle is a continuous process that takes place over multiple fiscal years.

## Estimates

Each year, the government proposes a **budget** made up of **estimates** on its expected spending for each ministry and agency. These estimates show the breakdown of spending in each area.

In order for the government to implement its financial plan, the Assembly must first approve it.

Typically, at the beginning of the spring sitting, the Minister of Finance tables the estimates for the next fiscal year, delivers the Budget speech, and moves a motion stating that the Assembly approves the budget in general.





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## Budget Motion

The Minister of Finance begins debate by delivering the **Budget speech**, outlining the government's fiscal policy for the next fiscal year.

This speech often also describes the government's economic and financial performance, announces new initiatives, and details changes in taxation. The Finance critic, a member of the opposition, can introduce an amendment to the motion, often stating that it has lost confidence in the government.

Each MLA has the opportunity to speak in favour of or against the motion. After about **five days**, the Assembly will vote on the Budget motion as well as the amendment that the opposition put forward. If the majority vote in favour of the Minister of Finance's Budget motion, that means the Assembly agrees with the budget in general.

If the Budget motion is defeated at any stage, this is an expression of **non-confidence** in the government and then a general election may be called.

Although the Assembly has agreed to the budget in general terms, it hasn't yet had a chance to critique the details of the government's plan. This will happen next in committees.



## Committee Review

After the Budget motion is passed, the estimates are automatically committed to **specific committees** where MLAs can examine them in more detail. Each minister and their officials will appear before the committee and answer questions about the amounts and their ministry's spending plans. Each committee will then vote on the amounts and report them back to the Assembly.

## Final Approval and Spending

All of the approved amounts are rolled into a bill called the **Appropriation Act**. This bill gives the government the authority to go forward with its financial plans and spend public money.

The money the government generates, for example by collecting taxes, is put toward things like funding education, building highways and hospitals, and managing provincial parks.

The Assembly's authority to review and approve government spending is supported by the ***Constitution Act, 1867*** and ***The Financial Administration Act, 1993***.

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## Financial Accountability

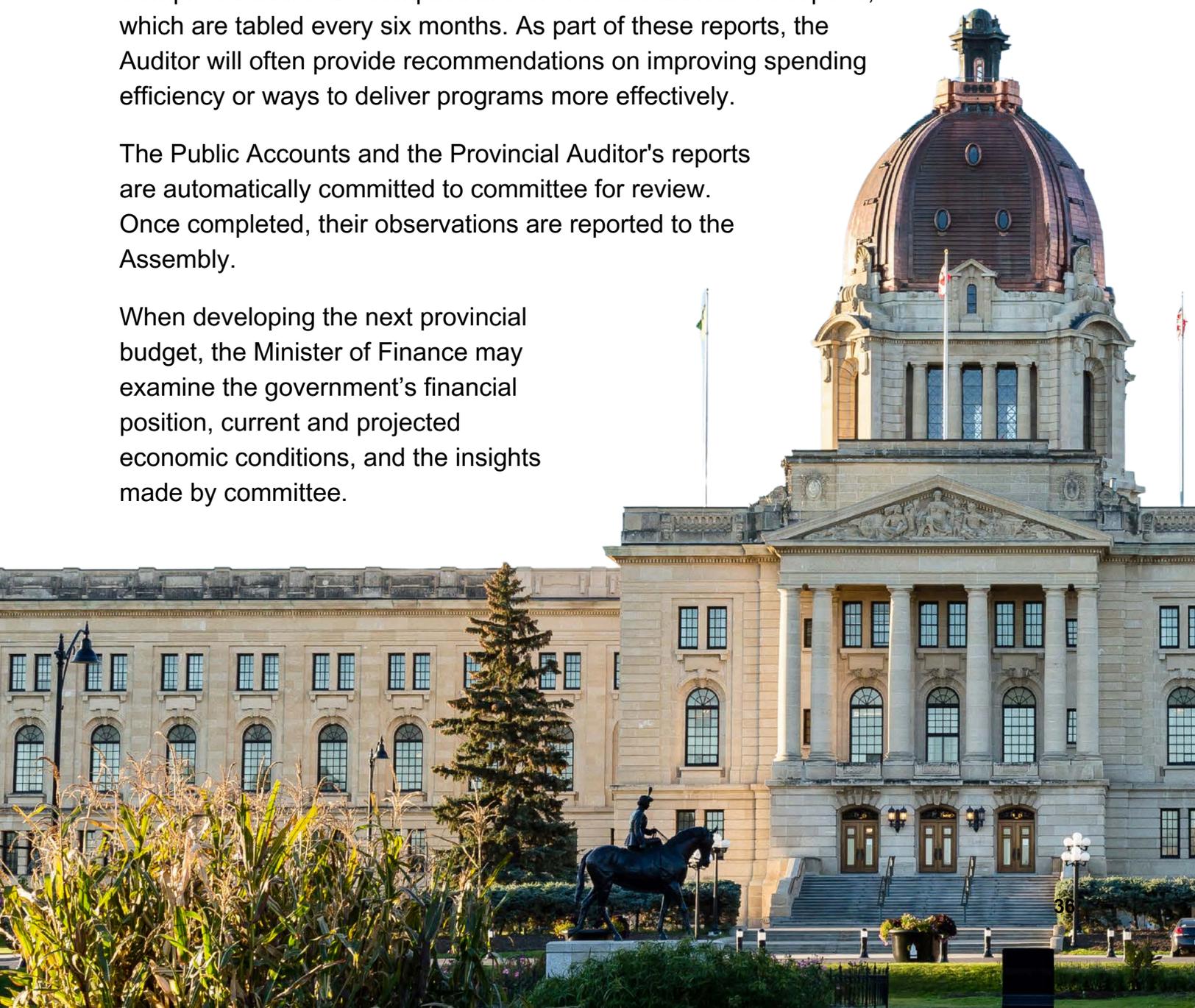
Government organizations submit revenue and expense reports to the Ministry of Finance. These reports are compiled into the **Public Accounts**, which serves as a summary of the government's financial operations.

Once the Finance Minister tables the Public Accounts, the **Provincial Auditor** conducts an independent audit on different areas of government. The audit includes an examination of the administration and efficiency of government services and whether government agencies have complied with the proper authorities.

Completed audits are compiled into the Provincial Auditor's reports, which are tabled every six months. As part of these reports, the Auditor will often provide recommendations on improving spending efficiency or ways to deliver programs more effectively.

The Public Accounts and the Provincial Auditor's reports are automatically committed to committee for review. Once completed, their observations are reported to the Assembly.

When developing the next provincial budget, the Minister of Finance may examine the government's financial position, current and projected economic conditions, and the insights made by committee.



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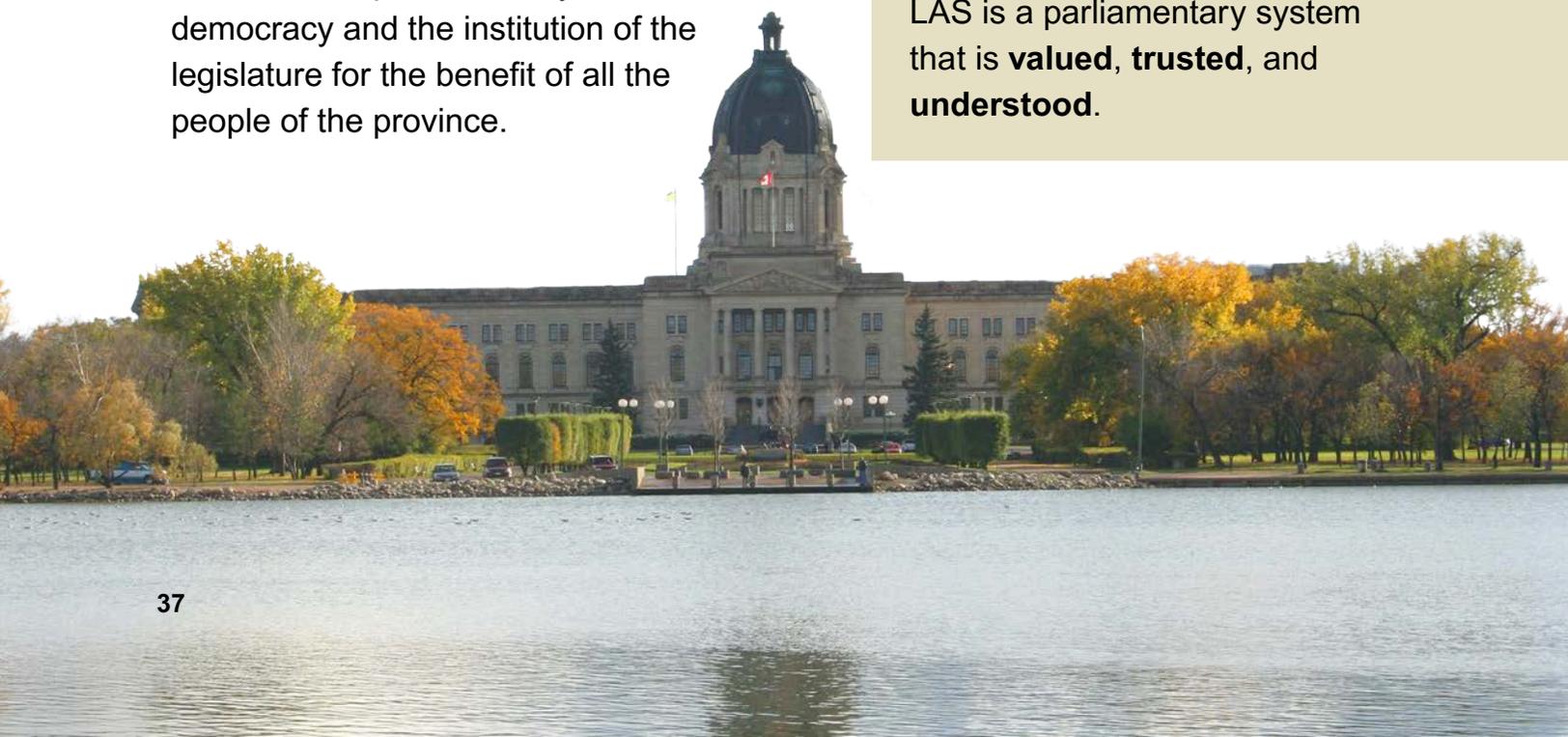
# Legislative Assembly Service

The Legislative Assembly Service (LAS) is a **non-partisan** organization, overseen by the Speaker, which provides administrative and support services to the Legislative Assembly. The LAS serves all members of the Assembly, regardless of their party, with integrity and impartiality and also provides organizational continuity from one legislature to the next.

The LAS team works with members of the Assembly to carry out their duties during session, in committees, and throughout the intersessional period. They also work together to preserve and enhance parliamentary democracy and the institution of the legislature for the benefit of all the people of the province.

The head of the LAS is the **Clerk of the Assembly**, who, similar to a deputy minister, provides administrative and organizational leadership to the different service areas. Each team provides a variety of services to MLAs, officers of the Assembly, and the citizens of Saskatchewan, including public education, procedural guidance and advice, record keeping and documentation, research support, financial and legal services, and more.

The organizational vision of the LAS is a parliamentary system that is **valued, trusted, and understood.**



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# Learn More

Find more information about the Assembly:

[www.legassembly.sk.ca/learn/](http://www.legassembly.sk.ca/learn/)

Visit the Legislative Building or attend a sitting:

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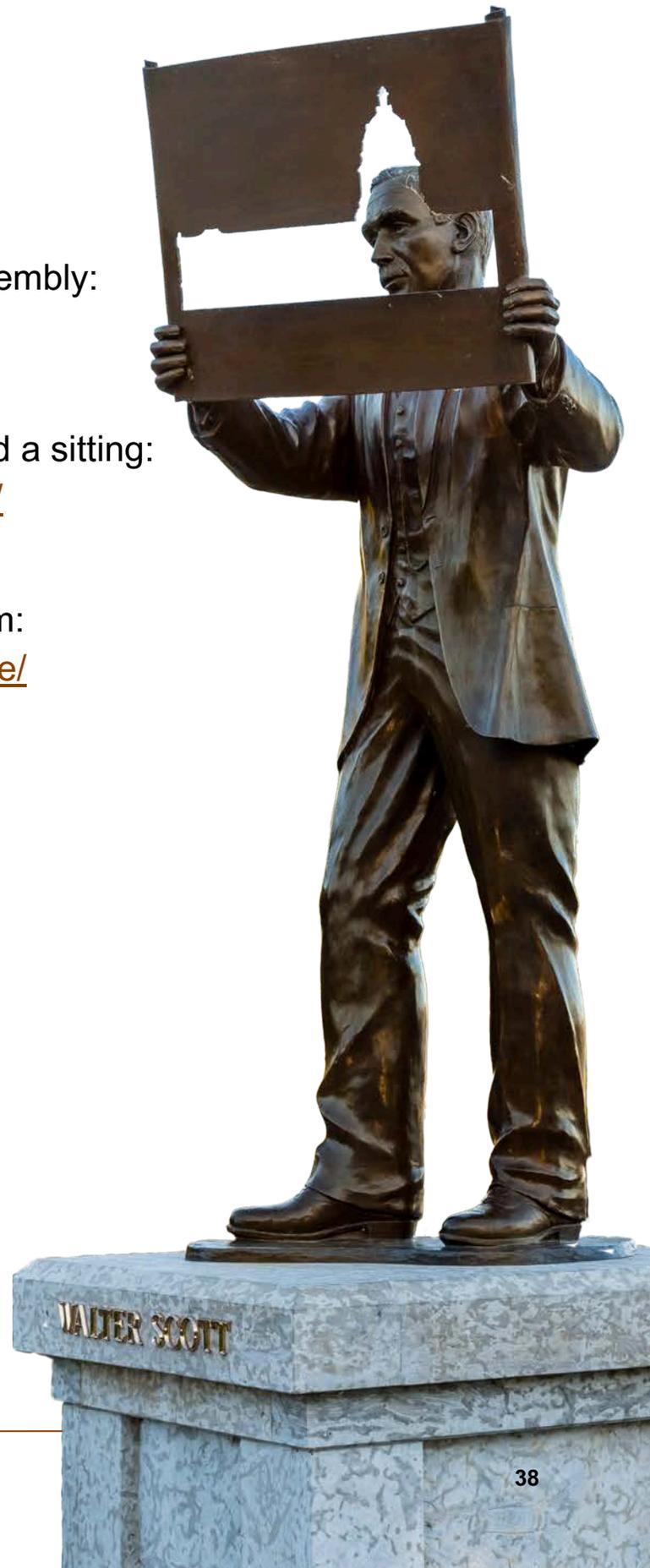
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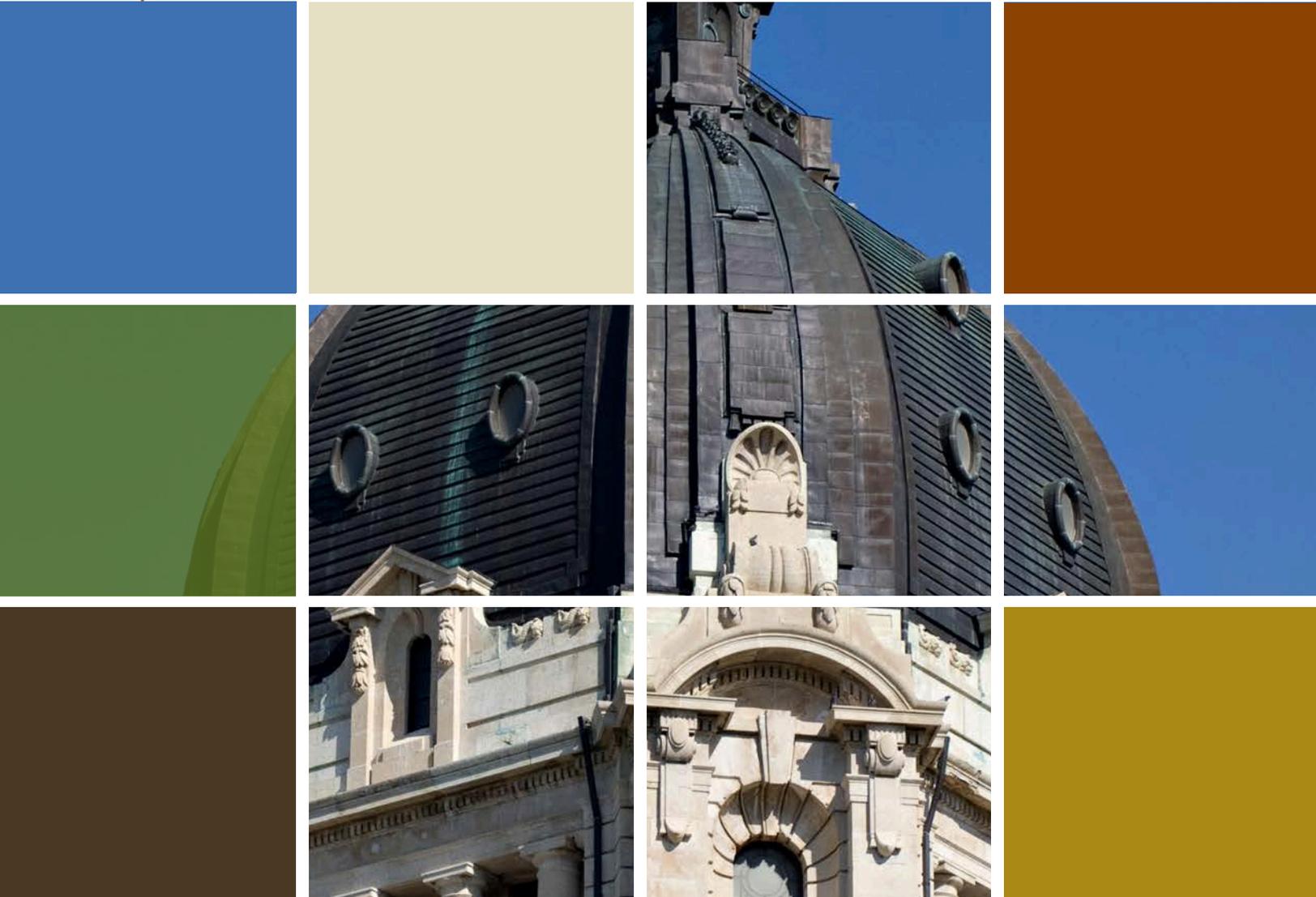
<https://legassembly.sk.simplybook.me/>

Contact the LAS's Parliamentary Education unit for more information about tours, offerings for schools, and educational resources:

[guides@legassembly.sk.ca](mailto:guides@legassembly.sk.ca)

306-787-5416





# Thank You

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