



RESIDENTIAL AND
CIVIL
CONSTRUCTION
ALLIANCE OF
ONTARIO
RCCAO Constructing Ontario's Future

2028.5.4

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**TORONTO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
CONSIDERATION OF REPORT ON FEASIBILITY OF HOSTING 2025 WORLD EXPO
January 20, 2014**

The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) comprises management and labour groups from the residential and civil sectors to advocate on behalf of the construction industry.* Our goal is to work in cooperation with governments and others to shape policy and to provide real solutions.

RCCAO supports Toronto's bid for the World's Fair to be held in 2025. Toronto's Port Lands is a fantastic area to host the Expo and aligns well with City objectives to redevelop these prime waterfront lands. This major international event will greatly assist in accelerating a range of key projects in a similar way that we are witnessing in the lead up to the 2015 PanAm Games. Without a doubt, Expo 2025 will be a catalyst for investment.

In fact, next month RCCAO will be hosting a Construction Industry Roundtable with the theme "Infrastructure Investments: A Catalyst for Economic Growth." This will be a fifth anniversary event and will provide input to Ontario's pre-Budget consultation process.

It is worth highlighting the top themes which emerged from the Roundtable held in January 2009 as these are instructive with respect to how the wider construction sector can positively impact economic growth and community building.

Construction investments – roads, water and sewer infrastructure, bridges, transit and housing, among others – have historically generated large multiplier effects beyond direct job creation. There are many reasons why investing in infrastructure projects is crucial for both short-term and long-term horizons, such as:

- Increasing employment opportunities
- Promoting local sourcing of materials relative to other investments
- Enhancing productivity growth and attracting foreign investment through the construction of core infrastructure
- Fostering green targets, including more energy efficient communities and buildings
- Creating opportunities for further innovation in technology, materials and systems

A report that RCCAO commissioned last year on "Investing in Ontario's Infrastructure for Economic Growth and Prosperity" (May 2013) used input-output modelling to demonstrate that, at the provincial level, a \$12 billion annual investment creates 203,000 jobs and generates \$668.7 million in corporate taxes.

The authors of this report also took the position of American economist Jeffrey Sachs who has argued against "... temporary tax cuts and temporary spending programs" but

for "... a consistent, planned, decade-long boost in public investments in people, technology, and infrastructure."

A bid for Expo 2025 would support these objectives by improving the productive capacity of labour and business. Strategic investments in transportation projects, for example, whether through a waterfront LRT project or a subway relief line would be spurred on and would send a signal about development opportunities in the Port Lands area. Our chances of getting investment dollars from the Queen's Park and Ottawa will be enhanced if we are able to proceed with this bid.

Toronto has great locational attributes in order to attract visitors from across North American and around the world. We are one of the most, if not the most culturally diverse city in the world. An exposition of this magnitude will increase our standing significantly in global rankings. Naturally, this will attract permanent residents and more investment.

There are of course a number of challenges that members of this committee are well aware of but we must pull together to make this bid happen.

In terms of next steps, there are a number of initiatives that could be taken including more outreach, more research and more drum beating. Creating a steering committee would be worthwhile to drive this agenda.

Thanks for the opportunity to make this presentation.

Andy Manahan
Executive Director, RCCAO

* RCCAO Member Associations:

- Greater Toronto Sewer and Watermain Contractors Association
- L.I.U.N.A. Local 183
- The Heavy Construction Association of Toronto
- Joint Residential Construction Council
- Toronto and Area Road Builders Association
- Carpenters' Union
- Residential Carpentry Contractors Association
- International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 793
- International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, District Council 46