

# DAILY COMMERCIAL NEWS

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## AND CONSTRUCTION RECORD

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Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario

RCCAO hosts industry-government roundtable on economic stimulus measures

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Over 30 construction industry stakeholders will come together next week to hammer out a common message for governments to consider in their economic stimulus plans.

“We have a good cross-section of our industry coming together ready to sit down, talk and roll up their sleeves,” says Andy Manahan, executive director of the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO).

“On a high level, as it concerns expediting and addressing infrastructure, we can come to an agreement.”

RCCAO is hosting a construction industry roundtable on Friday, January 16, 2008 that will have representation from labour and management associations, not all RCCAO-affiliated.

The one-day event is not meant to take away from any association’s lobbying efforts.

“All governments recognize that infrastructure is an important tool to help the economy and we hope we can provide them with the best advice from our perspective,” explains Manahan.

The province will have representation at the roundtable and the federal government is interested in having someone there as well. With many groups calling for accelerated infrastructure investment, the benefit of hearing industry-generated solutions and recommendations will benefit any government’s plans.

“There likely will be suggestions on how to expedite projects and fast-track things in some areas on the regulatory side,” notes Manahan.

Suggestion on a more harmonized EA (environmental assessment) process between the

federal and provincial governments will likely be generated as well. From a labour side, suggestions could concern how to better retrain workers from residential work to civil construction.

The federal government last month released a consultation document that proposes an economic stimulus package that calls for expediting infrastructure projects, investing in housing, supporting workers and sectors affected by the economy and improving access to credit.

RCCAO notes that Doug Porter of BMO Nesbitt Burns speculates that a \$16 billion stimulus package is required, equivalent to one per cent of GDP.

A facilitator has been hired for the roundtable to help draw out ideas and practical solutions from the wide cross section represented. Among the groups attending will be the Ontario Road Builders' Association, Ontario General Contractors Association, Electrical Contractors of Ontario, Mechanical Contractors of Ontario, Consulting Engineers of Ontario and the Canadian Urban Institute.

The roundtable will be held at the Toscana Banquet and Conference Centre adjacent to the Hilton Garden Inn Toronto Vaughan on Friday, Jan. 16. Registration begins at 8 a.m. For more information, contact RCCAO at 905-760-7777.