

# DAILY COMMERCIAL NEWS

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## AND CONSTRUCTION RECORD

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Major Capital Infrastructure Co-ordination Office

City of Toronto plans central office for infrastructure planning and building

VINCE VERSACE

staff writer

The City of Toronto plans to create a new office to co-ordinate infrastructure planning and building to help tackle growing capital spending.

“While capital budgets and delivery will remain the responsibility of operating divisions or ABCs (agencies, boards, commissions), the role of the new office will be to provide planning leadership and oversee the implementation of new protocols to provide high-level liaison on major inter-divisional capital projects,” Shirley Hoy, Toronto’s city manager, said in a news release.

The office of Major Capital Infrastructure Co-ordination will have a director who will report directly to Toronto’s deputy city manager. This director will be a liaison between various city divisions, agencies, boards, commissions and corporations (ABCCs) and utilities which deal with infrastructure.

A temporary unit will be established initially for a two- to three-year period followed by a review. The director is expected to be in place by this October, said Hoy.

“From a co-ordination aspect, whether it is Queen’s Park or a large municipal bureaucracy, there tends to be silos created,” said Andy Manahan, executive director Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario. “This is positive for construction — it indicates Toronto wants to get projects out the door quicker.”

Creating a senior-level infrastructure position was one of the recommendations made by the Mayor’s Fiscal Review Panel’s report called Blueprint for Fiscal Stability and Economic Prosperity: A Call to Action. Other real estate and infrastructure recommendations included creating a high-level real estate office and evaluating the best uses for Toronto’s holdings.

“The city must have a new structure and strategy for managing, co-ordinating, and maximizing the real estate holdings (conservatively valued at \$17.9 billion) and the infrastructure of the City and the ABCCs,” the panel recommended.

“We believe the City should conservatively target \$150 million annually from real estate development, sales, etc., and significant additional savings from better infrastructure supervision and monitoring.”

Hoy says the main objectives of the new office are to enhance service delivery for the city, its businesses and residents.

The office will expedite delivery of major capital projects, streamline procedures and approvals and co-ordinate schedules.

The infrastructure office is expected to develop consolidated five and 10-year infrastructure plans, ensure environmental standards compliance, and establish high-level performance measures for major capital project delivery.