



October 18, 2014 13:07 ET

## **Advisory Council on Government Assets: Construction Alliance Supports Dedicated Funding for Infrastructure Projects but Suggests Another Approach**

TORONTO, ON--(Marketwired - October 18, 2014) - The Chair of the Advisory Council on Government Assets, Ed Clark, spoke yesterday on improved management of provincial assets -- primarily Hydro One, Ontario Power Generation and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario.

In response, Executive Director of the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario, Andy Manahan said, "We agree with the Clark Panel that investments in transportation infrastructure will achieve high returns and that there will be immediate job impacts from new construction work."

"Better infrastructure will improve the quality of life for everyone in Ontario," said Manahan.

"The RCCAO takes a keen interest in infrastructure investment matters within the province. Our members represent both management and labour and are involved in the building of many transit and transportation projects," said Manahan.

According to Clark, \$2-\$3 billion can be invested in transit and transportation infrastructure without increasing the overall debt or deficit -- a fiscally prudent step to solving our infrastructure issues.

"These investments would create jobs directly and indirectly through removing impediments to economic growth," said Clark.

According to Manahan, expanding public transit and transportation infrastructure is part of the solution to address congestion, but many experts have pointed out -- to truly manage congestion, road and parking pricing solutions are essential.

In a June 2014 report commissioned by the RCCAO, Prof. Harry Kitchen wrote that road pricing, on a regional scale, such as the Greater Toronto, Hamilton area, is an effective travel demand management tool which can influence trip frequency, travel mode and time of travel. Pricing strategies will improve mobility for commuters, ensure goods get to market faster and help raise the \$2 billion annually that is required to meet future investment requirements.

In the spirit of the incremental approach which Clark is proposing, RCCAO is encouraging the Province to test the High Occupancy Toll lanes concept in the wake of the 2015 PanAm Games.

Using the expanded High Occupancy Vehicle lane network will move athletes and spectators around the GTHA faster during the events. These lanes could be kept in place and used by single occupant drivers who are willing to pay a per-kilometre trip charge.

High Occupancy Toll lanes have also been used successfully in many jurisdictions in the United States, with more HOT-HOV projects being rolled out.

"While the revenue potential of HOT lanes will be limited in a pilot test, these lanes offer drivers a choice and open up the capacity of the road network," said Manahan.

Queen's Park has proposed to take savings from the Crown corporations, as well as other sources, and place the funds in dedicated accounts, allocating \$29 billion over the course of 10 years to earmark for transportation across Ontario.

RCCAO will be submitting recommendations to the Clark Panel later this fall.