



July 3, 2019

The Honourable Laurie Scott
Minister of Infrastructure
777 Bay Street
College Park, 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Scott,

Congratulations on your recent appointment as Minister of Infrastructure.

I appreciated the opportunity to speak with you on the phone on June 25th, along with Richard Lyall, regarding your mandate for infrastructure delivery in the province of Ontario.

As you may know, the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) advocates on behalf of the tens of thousands of hard-working men and women who are employed in the construction industry, both as union members and as employers.

On behalf of our member organizations, RCCAO commissions independent research into the issues facing not only our industry, but also Ontario society. We have commissioned 50 reports to date, which seek solutions on topics ranging from better managing traffic congestion to responsibly managing excess construction soil. These reports have earned the respect of many, including Ontario government officials, for their objective, evidence-based findings and constructive recommendations.

A primary RCCAO focus since our inception has been the importance of investing in public infrastructure – from transit and waterworks to roads and bridges – and doing so smartly and efficiently for taxpayers and daily users of infrastructure. On topics such as modernizing the municipal environmental assessment process, we have identified ways to streamline processes and to remove unnecessary, costly and time-consuming barriers to speeding up delivery of vital local projects. We hope the good work that your government has been doing on this file continues.

There is widespread support for major infrastructure investment as a priority for all governments but more needs to be done to improve project evaluation methods. It is imperative to get the best value from our large capital expenditures on public infrastructure and to find innovative ways to finance them.

Many RCCAO research reports have argued for a more business-like approach to the selection and delivery of infrastructure projects. In [Unlocking Ontario's Advantages](#) (2014) a case was made for more effective leveraging of our existing public assets and exploring new sources of revenues. In 2016, we followed-up with [Megatrends](#), a report emphasizing the need to anticipate the infrastructure requirements of the future, in the face of trends changing Ontario's economy and society. This could include a lower demand for bricks-and-mortar facilities in health care and education. The report author, former deputy Minister Michael Fenn, said that good infrastructure decisions serve us well economically, socially and environmentally, but the wrong decisions can burden us for generations.



One of our recently commissioned reports by the Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis was an [infrastructure update](#) report focusing on the federal and provincial risks and rewards. Your predecessor, Minister McNaughton, was very appreciative of this analysis. An update [bulletin](#) released in May showed that the underinvestment trend has continued. For example, previous provincial Liberal budgets underspent on infrastructure by about \$2 billion per year based on budget announcements. More striking though is that there is a structural underinvestment by the federal government. This has been exacerbated by delays in releasing funds to Ontario and its municipalities.

We would be happy to meet with you and discuss in more detail the work that RCCAO has done on infrastructure-related issues and how industry and government can work collaboratively to ensure that infrastructure remains a priority for the Government of Ontario.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Manahan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andy Manahan
Executive Director

Copy to:

Walid Abou-Hamde, Manager of Stakeholder Relations
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
Ontario Formwork Association
International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 793