

November 28, 2022

Hon. Ernie Hardeman, Chair
c/o Michael Bushara
Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
99 Wellesley Street West, Room 1405
Whitney Block Toronto, ON M7A 1A2

Submitted electronically

RE: Bill 36, Progress on the Plan to Build Act (Budget Measures), 2022

The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) is pleased to provide comments to the Standing Committee regarding Bill 36, *Progress on the Plan to Build Act*.

RCCAO is an alliance of key labour and management stakeholders derived from the residential and civil construction sectors. RCCAO's goal is to work in cooperation with government and related stakeholders to offer realistic solutions to a variety of challenges facing the construction industry and which also have wider societal benefits.

Our membership includes the Greater Toronto Sewer and Watermain Contractors Association; Heavy Construction Association of Toronto; International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 793; Joint Residential Construction Association, LiUNA Local 183; Ontario Formwork Association; and Toronto and Area Road Builders Association.

RCCAO is encouraged by the Ontario government's progress on transit and transportation infrastructure contained within the 2022 Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review. These projects, made possible, with its historic investments in transportation infrastructure, demonstrate substantial progress on enabling infrastructure for the Bradford Bypass, design, environmental assessment, and field work on Highway 413, and tendering for the Ontario Line.

The Greater Toronto Area is among the fastest growing regions in North America. The area expects to welcome an additional 2.8 million people over the next 25 years, with 58% of that population growth destined for York, Halton, and Peel regions. The expected population growth will increase demand for critical infrastructure such as water, wastewater, housing, transit systems, highways and roads. This is why it is imperative that the construction of Highway 413 and the Bradford Bypass proceed and create transportation infrastructure for Ontario's future.

Both projects are of vital importance to the province in terms of reducing congestion, fostering economic recovery and long-term competitiveness, improving connectivity, supporting affordable housing initiatives, and facilitating job creation.

The geography of North America and more specifically, Ontario, necessitates cars and allowances must be made for the fact that personal vehicles will always be a reality and as such, infrastructure must be built and maintained for these purposes. As reflected in the Ministry

of Transportation's [Fall 2020 Discussion Paper survey](#), 75 percent of Ontarians noted that they use a car daily or one to two times a week prior to COVID-19.

Roads and highways are also essential infrastructure for the movement of goods across Ontario, which is the backbone for local and regional economies. Demand for goods has reached historic levels, especially during the pandemic, and that demand is only projected to increase as both as e-commerce takes firm hold and as the population of the region continues to grow. Building and maintaining road infrastructure increases business productivity and competitiveness by reducing the time and cost of transporting goods. It allows products to move efficiently through the supply chain and to end-use customers around the region and beyond.

Building necessary transportation infrastructure like the Bradford Bypass and Highway 413 will provide additional benefits for the region and the province, including supporting housing initiatives such as increasing land availability and future housing stock as well as building future communities and neighborhoods.

The construction of transportation infrastructure also brings significant economic opportunities. A recently commissioned [RCCAO jobs and economic impact report](#) found that building Highway 413 will create up to 8,000 jobs a year during construction, generate \$2.3 billion in earnings for Ontario workers, create up to 600 apprenticeship opportunities to train Ontario's next generation of builders and produce \$906 million in tax revenue.

RCCAO also welcomes the Ontario Government's continued focus on recruiting a new generation of builders and expanding training capacity across Ontario. Renewal of Ontario's skilled and construction trades workforce is necessary for long-term economic competitiveness.

While progress on provincially controlled infrastructure is welcomed, RCCAO implores the Governments of Ontario, in partnership with the Government of Canada, to provide funding support to municipalities to address budgetary shortfalls caused by the COVID pandemic. Without concerted support from the Federal and provincial governments, municipal capital and state-of-good repair projects are at risk of being delayed or cancelled.

Such ramifications would have negative consequences for workers and would add significant strains to critical infrastructure that already operates with a backlog in state-of-good-repair work. Assurances of funding support would allow tenders and projects to proceed, rather than risk losses during construction season.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments to the Standing Committee and look forward to continuing our engagement with the Government of Ontario as it works to address the infrastructure needs of the province.

Sincerely,



Nadia Todorova
Executive Director