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Construction Design Alliance of Ontario urges provincial government to protect infrastructure funding in budget

TORONTO

The Construction Design Alliance of Ontario (CDAO) is voicing concerns of cuts to infrastructure spending leading up to today's provincial budget.

When questioned about the upcoming budget, Minister of Finance Dwight Duncan told Queen's Park reporters that "there will be significant reductions in infrastructure spending in the coming years, which will save us hundreds of millions in interest costs over time."

The CDAO was pleased nine months ago when Bob Chiarelli, Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation, tabled the province's 10-year infrastructure plan where the government committed to invest \$35 billion in the first three years including \$12.8 billion in 2011-12 in an effort to reduce Ontario's infrastructure deficit.

The recently released report from the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services, chaired by former TD economist Don Drummond, called infrastructure a "double edge sword."

Drummond added that a balanced approach to infrastructure investment does produce economic growth and employment.

"We understand that the Ontario government has huge fiscal challenges, however it is important to ensure that the province's debt burden does not interfere with its ability to continue to deliver the services that Ontarians require — services that are supported by modern infrastructure," said Joe Accardi, CDAO chair and Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association (OSWCA) executive director, in a press release.

CDAO points out that modern and reliable infrastructure drives Ontario's economy. It contributes to Ontario's wealth and productivity, and it helps attract investment and create jobs.

Infrastructure also shapes communities, improves the standard of living, and allows the province to remain competitive. Ontario's economy and quality of life depend on good public infrastructure.

CDAO is urging the provincial government to maintain infrastructure investment levels as committed in the 10-year Building Together infrastructure plan.

"As a province we need to continue to invest in infrastructure to build a strong Ontario, create jobs and remain competitive now and into the future," CDAO stated in a release.

"It would be detrimental to all Ontarians and our economic future if the budget announces cuts to planned infrastructure spending."

Last December, the **Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO)**, a member of CDAO, released a RiskAnalytica report that states over the next 50 years, average real GDP growth in Ontario could rise by over one per cent per year if the increases outlined in Ontario's 10-year Building Together plan continue.

The CDAO is composed of the major construction and design organizations involved in delivering infrastructure across Ontario.

CDAO members include: Association of Registered Interior Designers of Ontario; Consulting Engineers of Ontario; Mechanical Contractors Association of Ontario; Ontario Association of Architects; Ontario Construction User Council; Ontario General Contractors Association; Ontario Home Builders Association; Ontario Road Builders Association; OSWCA; Ontario Society of Professional Engineers; **RCCAO** and Residential Construction Council of Ontario.