

# Ontario budget must focus on infrastructure and immigration: RCCAO

By Robin MacLennan, Editor, Ontario Construction News February 27, 2023

[The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario \(RCCAO\)](#) is urging immigration reform and stable funding for infrastructure in the provincial government's Mar. 23 budget.

Nadia Todorova, executive director of RCCAO took part in the regional pre-budget consultations in Toronto, as a part of the Ministry of Finance's consultations touring the province. Nadia's remarks expanded on three priorities:

1. Fulfill investments for Ontario's new critical transportation projects, such as the Bradford Bypass, Highway 413, and Ontario Line.
2. Fund state-of-good-repair work to maintain infrastructure and maximize its lifespan, including roads, water, and transit across Ontario.
3. Enact immigration reform to welcome more skilled trades workers to Ontario.

"Ontario needs more skilled trades and construction workers," said Todorova. "Enacting immigration reforms to at least double the allocations for the NOC-C Pilot will have an immediate impact to expand industry's capacity to meet the needs of the province and get more people working to help build Ontario."

The GTA is among the fastest growing regions in North America and expects to welcome an additional 2.8 million people over the next 25 years, with 58% of that growth destined for York, Halton, and Peel regions. This growth will increase demand for critical infrastructure on everything from water, housing, transit systems, highways and roads.

The submission also calls for financial assistance for the maintenance of infrastructure assets. Investing in state-of-good-repair work is a foundational element to keeping regional economies strong and ensuring Ontario's economic growth and competitiveness.

With the anticipated retirement of more than 86,000 construction workers in Ontario over the next 10 years and considering the projected volume of work, the RCCAO says the industry will need to hire, train and retain about 100,000 additional workers by the end of the decade.

"The government's focus on the skilled trades by improving the provincial apprenticeship system is commendable and will have positive impacts on getting people into the trades.

However, the scale of the issue requires that we look beyond domestic policies and toward reforming the immigration system to help address Ontario's critical labour shortage."

RCCAO's full submission can be viewed [here](#).