



Ontario's New Infrastructure Strategy

One of Brian's favourite words is "strategy".

Ontario's Minister of Infrastructure, Bob Chiarelli, recently announced "Building Together", a 10-year strategy for infrastructure investment in that province.

The strategy includes a projected \$35B investment over the next three years to continue to address the so-called "infrastructure deficit" here in Ontario.

That's especially noteworthy given the provincial deficit, which could otherwise result in major cuts to infrastructure investment! It's certainly had that impact in the past!

The announcement notes a general trend to longer-term planning and announces that the government is adopting a 10-year planning framework going forward.

Now that's strategic!

Under this plan, "infrastructure" includes transit, drinking water and wastewater treatment facilities, hospitals, universities, schools, parks, bridges, highways, government buildings ... and more.

The Introduction outlines some of the direct and indirect economic returns resulting from effective and consistent investment in infrastructure, including preserving and creating a projected 300,000 jobs over the next three years.

A study by Pricewaterhousecoopers is cited as suggesting that Canada will be the fifth largest construction market in the world by 2020.

Interestingly, the announcement specifically notes that the design and construction sector is lagging in productivity and needs to find ways to operate much more efficiently - a point Brian has stressed to clients of Strategies 4 Impact! when facilitating their strategic and business planning. And he usually mentions it during speaking engagements, referencing numerous studies that have compared this sector unfavourably with productivity improvements in the rest of the economy.

Ontario's infrastructure strategy outlines an expanded role for Infrastructure Ontario - including increased use of Alternative Financing and Procurement delivery (AFP) - as well as more traditional models. (This aligns with forecasts in last year's ACEC report "Understanding Public Private Partnerships in Canada" - Brian was principal researcher and author of that report, working with an ACEC Task Force.)

"Building Together" looks like some positive news for the design and construction sector, Ontario's economy in both the short and long term, AND the quality of public infrastructure in Ontario.

And because of its broad reach, "Building Together" qualifies as required reading for every business owner in Ontario ... especially those in the design and construction sector who will build it into their strategic planning!

Read "*Building Together*" in full

http://www.moi.gov.on.ca/en/infrastructure/building_together/index.asp

You might also find this report informative. It was prepared in 2010 for the *Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario* and advocates a long-term strategy for infrastructure. The report discusses the relationship between infrastructure investment and economic growth - and the negative impact on economic growth of under-investment in public infrastructure.

http://www.rccao.com/news/files/RCCAO_Report_JULY2010_LOWRES.pdf