



## MEMBER BULLETIN

September 29, 2016

# Updated Mandate Letters for Ontario Ministers – Priorities leading into 2018

On September 23, Premier Kathleen Wynne published the Ministerial mandate letters, which will be used to guide the government's priorities at all 34 Ministries over the next two years. The letters follow on the heels of the Speech from the Throne on September 12, and allocate responsibility for each of the government's priority initiatives to accomplish in advance of the next provincial election in 2018.

These letters provide insight into where the Liberal government's priorities lie in the leadup to the 2018 election and what they plan to accomplish. Some of the "big picture" initiatives that are outlined in these letters include: a focus on job creation by making university and college education more affordable; making the "largest infrastructure investment in Ontario's history;" building a low-carbon economy; and, creating greater retirement security for Ontario workers.

Below are key highlights noted in the mandate letters for the relevant ministries to the construction industry:

### **Ministry of Infrastructure (MOI)**

The MOI has two primary sets of goals focussed on 1) standardizing and regulating the municipal asset management planning process and 2) drafting the next Long-term Infrastructure Plan (LTIP), as well as a host of smaller more direct priorities over the next two years.

- Develop regulations to standardize the asset management planning and evaluation process for municipal infrastructure assets by January of 2017.
  - Direct infrastructure investment towards projects representing the greatest areas of need (rather than want) based on asset management plans.
  - Require municipalities to report on climate change criteria in their asset management plans.
- Draft a new LTIP and prepare it for publication by the end of 2017, with several specific goals, including: incorporating life-cycle assessment and life-cycle cost assessments into the capital planning process, and coordinating provincial



spending based on evidence-based criteria that considers both current and future needs.

- Incorporate climate change criteria into existing and future municipal funding programs.
- Refine the provincial Alternative Financing and Procurement (P3) model with considerations for best practices and other improvements.

### **Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC)**

The MOECC's big priorities will focus strategies to reduce greenhouse gases and improve provincial/municipal adaptation to climate change. Their priorities are closely linked, and will in many cases will intertwine, with the MOI's LTIP and asset management planning responsibilities.

- Create greater protections against contaminating the Great Lakes, including clean-up and ecological restoration efforts.
- Explore ways to encourage water conservation.
- Reform the regulatory process for permits to take water for water bottling purposes, including a reform on permit pricing options and improving access to refillable water stations in public spaces.
- Increase awareness of the rigorous standards municipal water systems must meet to provide the tap water.

### **Additional issues of interest:**

- **Ministry of Labour:** Introduce legislation to amend the *Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2009* based on the Tony Dean Review by the end of 2016.
- **Ministry of Labour:** Ensure the WSIB continues to move towards eliminating its unfunded liability by 2022, while also reducing overall premiums on average.
- **Attorney General:** Introduce legislation in Spring 2017 to modernize the *Construction Lien Act* based on recommendations made in the Reynolds Report.

If you have any questions about the mandate letters for any of Ontario's Ministers, please contact Patrick McManus ([patrick.mcmanus@oswca.org](mailto:patrick.mcmanus@oswca.org) or 905-629-7766 ext. 222).