

MEMBER BULLETIN

March 30, 2023

Highlights of the 2023 Federal Budget

The federal government has published its 2023 Budget. The Budget includes an increase in spending by \$43 billion over the next six years. The priorities of this Budget were focussed on healthcare (and dental), affordability, and clean energy. Nevertheless, there were a number of important announcements for our industry, highlighted below (courtesy of Sussex Strategy):

Investing in Canada Plan Update

- Budget 2022 signaled the government's intent to accelerate the deadline for provinces to commit their outstanding funds as part of the Investing in Canada to March 31, 2023. Any uncommitted funds after this date will be reallocated to other priorities.
- Budget 2023 also noted that the federal government is now reviewing future federal infrastructure programming and will provide an update on this work later in the year, including the next steps on permanent public transit funding.

Labour

- Budget 2023 proposes to table amendments to the Canada Labour Code, before the end of 2023, that would prohibit the use of replacement workers during a strike or lockout, and improve the process to review activities that must be maintained to ensure the health and safety of the public during a work stoppage.
- An additional \$625 million was also committed in the Labour Market Transfer Agreements with Provinces to cover continued skills training, on-site work experience, career counselling, and job search assistance.

Major Projects

- By the end of 2023, a plan will be outlined to improve the efficiency of the impact assessment and permitting processes for major projects, which will include clarifying and reducing timelines, mitigating inefficiencies, and improving engagement and partnerships.
- \$10 billion through the Canada Infrastructure Bank's (CIB) Clean Power Fund and at least \$10 billion through its Green Infrastructure priority areas, totaling \$20 billion of support for building major clean electricity and clean growth infrastructure projects. These investments will be sourced from existing CIB resources.
- Budget 2023 announces the government will undertake targeted engagement with provinces and territories, industry stakeholders, and workers and unions on concrete reciprocal procurement measures, so they can be implemented in the near term. The proposed measures will include placing conditions on foreign suppliers' participation in federally-



funded infrastructure projects, applying strict reciprocity to federal procurement, and creating a preference program for Canadian small businesses.

If you have any questions, please contact Patrick (905-629-7766 or patrick.mcmanus@oswca.org).