

MEMBER BULLETIN

November 4th, 2021

Key Highlights of the Provincial Fall Economic Statement

On Thursday, November 4th, the Government of Ontario released its Fall Economic Statement (FES). The FES has become a common ‘milestone marker’ event in the Ontario calendar over the last decade, marking the opportunity for the government to provide an update about its finances and spending plans heading into the Spring Budget.

The 2021 FES is of particular interest because it includes a “Building Ontario” update, including significant new funding for infrastructure investments across the province. Below are some of the key highlights of announced:

Highway 413

- FES includes new money for land acquisition for the Highway 413 projects (this is new money dedicated solely for land acquisition along the corridor route).
- The province has submitted its Initial Project Description to the federal Impact Assessment Agency and are estimating the final submission to the federal government will occur in early-2022, meaning that any federal decision on an environmental assessment (EA) for this highway will occur after the June 2022 election.
- The province is also on track to complete its EA by the end of 2022, however if the federal government does choose to launch its own EA process, it could add up to 5-years to the development phase of this project.

Building Community Infrastructure (BCI) Fund

- The province is doubling the BCI Fund for each of the next five years, adding \$1 billion in extra funding for small, rural, and northern communities to build core infrastructure (i.e. sewer; watermain; stormwater; road; bridge).

Highways

- \$2.6 billion for highway construction and repair in 2021-2022.
- \$1 billion as a starting point for the design and construction of a road into the Ring of Fire mining site. The province has called on the federal government to match this investment.

Bridges

- \$455 million over the next five years for bridge rehab and reconstruction across the province.

Skilled Trades

- The Ontario Jobs Training Tax Credit has been extended for another year, until the end of 2022.
- \$90.3 million to enhance the provincial Skilled Trades strategy, including things like hosting a skilled trades career fair and increasing funding to the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program and Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program.

Other key items noted in the FES include: the move to \$15 per hour minimum wage beginning January 1, 2022; investing an additional \$5 million to expand the Second Career Program; and, establishing a Critical Minerals Strategy to help Ontario become the premier jurisdiction for responsibly sourced critical minerals and to secure investments.

For the provincial news release and supporting documentation please click [here](#).

If you have any questions about anything you have read in this bulletin, please contact Patrick McManus (patrick.mcmanus@oswca.org or 905-629-7766 ext. 229).