

Approval process reforms needed: CDAO chair

Angela Gismondi January 5, 2018

As the new chair of the Construction and Design Alliance of Ontario (CDAO), Richard Lyall is looking to drive reforms and improvements to the development approvals process in Ontario.

“We are ranked 54th in the world by the World Bank on dealing with construction permitting and that is simply a pathetic metric that should be ringing alarm bells,” said Lyall, adding Ontario is one of the most regulated jurisdictions when it comes to construction. “There is some action on this front but we need more and we need it yesterday.”

According to its mandate, the alliance provides a forum for discussion, development and advocacy of the broader construction industry’s issues related to provincial government policy, legislation and regulation.



Richard Lyall

“The alliance gives us an opportunity to share information and ideas and look at some of these issues from the 30,000 foot level and be able to take joint positions on select items where we can all agree and bring that influence to bear in government,” Lyall noted.

“Where we have our own individual connections with governments, we can share those concerns, we can bring the same message and some consistency to that because ultimately we’re all in the same boat together.”

Lyall was appointed chair of the alliance at a recent annual general meeting. He was previously the vice-chair of the CDAO and is currently president of the Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON).

The CDAO is made up of a variety of associations including **RESCON**, the Ontario General Contractors Association (OGCA), the Ontario Road Builders’ Association, the Mechanical

Contractors Association of Ontario, the Ontario Association of Architects, Ontario Society of Professional Engineers, Consulting Engineers of Ontario and the **Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario**, among others.

Lyall stated the value of the CDAO is that, “on certain issues, where we all see things the same way, we needed to have a common voice and a common forum to understand the challenges that each of us are facing in our day to day operations.”

“For example, if architects and engineers are running into problems and can’t get their work done as efficiently as they might like, then that affects builders and so on,” Lyall explained.

“It’s been a really good alliance. It’s a terrific forum to exchange ideas and to talk about and take action on issues of common interest and voice our concerns.”

While construction is a key driver of the economy in Ontario it is also undergoing the greatest amount of scrutiny, changes and challenges, he said.

“There is no area of our industry that isn’t under some kind of review right now whether its building codes, planning, growth plans, warranty programs, the Employment Standards Act, Ontario Labour Relations Act. Health and safety is perpetually evolving, as it should, and we’re constantly reacting,” explained Lyall.

Clive Thurston, president of the OGCA, said Lyall’s appointment is a positive move for the alliance.

“Richard is one of the founding members of the alliance so it is appropriate that he now assumes chairmanship,” he said.

“I think he is going to be a good strong leader for us and it shows the diversity of the alliance having someone from a different sector heading us up. The greatest strength of the alliance is that we have such a mix of associations both residential, highrise, ICI and all of the consultants. I think Richard is well respected and is going to make a great chair.”