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# RCCAO pre-budget submission focuses on infrastructure, immigration

**The organization is calling for the province to invest in new critical infrastructure, fund state-of-good-repair work for existing infrastructure, and reform the immigration system to bring more skilled trade workers to Ontario.**

With the provincial government set to table its next budget on March 23, the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) has released details of its pre-budget submission.

The organization is calling for the province to fulfill its investments for new critical infrastructure, fund state-of-good-repair work for existing infrastructure, and reform the immigration system to bring more skilled trade workers to Ontario.

Specifically, it urges the government to carry forward on plans to build new critical transportation projects such as the Bradford Bypass, Highway 413, and the Ontario Line subway project. It explains that the Greater Toronto Area is among the fastest growing regions in North America. It expects to add 2.8 million people over the next 25 years, with 58% of that population growth destined for York, Halton, and Peel regions.

The expected population growth will increase demand for critical infrastructure for everything from water, wastewater, housing, transit systems, highways, and roads.

Building these projects, it says, are key to economic development, and to supporting the province's goal of increasing future housing stock and building future communities and.

The construction of Highway 413 in particular, it says, will create up to 8,000 jobs a year during construction, generate \$2.3 billion in earnings for Ontario workers, create up to 600 apprenticeship opportunities, produce \$906 million in tax revenues for governments.

RCCAO added that the government needs to continue to invest in the maintenance of current infrastructure assets across the province.

Investing in state-of-good-repair work is a foundational element to keeping regional economies strong and en-

suring Ontario's economic growth and competitiveness, it says. Such investments also maximize the lifespan of infrastructure assets.

Finally, the submission calls for the government to enact a series of specific immigration changes that would make a positive impact to the labour supply. These include doubling the allocations for the National Occupational Classification-Level C pilot that aims to increase permanent resident pathways for in-demand workers with Ontario job offers, and simplifying the application process for various Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program streams, particularly the In-Demand Skills stream.

"Ontario needs more skilled trades and construction workers," said RCCAO executive director Nadia Todorova. "Enacting immigration reforms to at least double the allocations for the NOC-C Pilot will have an immediate impact to expand industry's capacity to meet the needs of the province and get more people working to help build Ontario."

RCCAO is an alliance of labour and management stakeholders derived from the residential and civil construction sectors across the Greater Toronto Area.