

2020 Ontario Ministry of Finance Budget Consultation Submission

Red Tape Reduction

Ontario businesses face unnecessary costs, uncertainties and delays when required to comply with provincial regulations that duplicate or conflict with regulations imposed by other ministries, levels of government, provinces and/or countries. We applaud the government's commitment to reducing red tape by 25 percent by 2022 as stated in the 2018 Fall Economic Statement. Yet, more work must be done to build a stronger Ontario and create an environment which encourages growth.

Recommendations include:

- Defer to federal and international standards where appropriate. Aligning with federal standards will ensure that businesses within Ontario are subject to a competitive and globally relevant set of regulations.
- Work with other provinces and territories to increase regulatory consistency within Canada to facilitate interprovincial trade and investment.
- Accept certification obtained in other countries when standards are equally or more stringent than Ontario's. This will make it easier for multi-national companies to invest in Ontario.
- Move to a regulatory model whereby all proposed legislation and regulations must be supported by a cost-benefit analysis and an analysis on the impact on business as well as reviewed for their degree of conflict and integration with existing legislation.

Two Way All Day GO

Failing to make critical investments in infrastructure and services now may have significant costs, as Ontario's future economy struggles to compete with others replete with robust public infrastructure and services. Currently, the Toronto-Waterloo Innovation Corridor is a top 20 global technology cluster, home to 15,000 tech companies, employing 205,000 technology workers and is responsible for generating 17% of Canada's GDP. Recommendations include:

- Investment now in a fast and frequent two way all day GO service along the Innovation Corridor. As contemplated in the revised Metrolinx business case, this will create a shared economic benefit for the entire province. It is estimated this opportunity could deliver a \$50 billion increase in direct equity value, \$17.5 billion in direct annual GDP and more than 170,000 additional high-quality jobs by 2025. Maintaining the status quo carries the risk of businesses in the corridor beginning to look elsewhere for better business investment prospects.
- The Guelph Chamber is a member of the Connect the Corridor coalition, asking that the 2020 budget include the \$1 billion that is needed to deliver the government's plan for two way all day GO by 2025. This is a plan to extend all day rail service to more line stations and delivering 30-minute peak, 60 minute off peak and 90 minute weekend service along the corridor before 2025.

Transportation Corridors

Another lost economic opportunity and priority project includes the completion of the new Highway 7 between Guelph and Kitchener. Ontario has already spent more than \$120 million, and its due time the project is completed. Not only will it improve the efficiency of the movement of people and goods, it will

ease congestion, and improve safety. Furthermore, the construction of a bypass around the Town of Morriston as well as upgrades to the south end of Highway 6 in Guelph are additional examples of critical infrastructure investments in transportation corridors that are needed to support the positive economic ecosystem in region.