

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

**Sent via email to kate.manson-smith@ontario.ca and
planningconsultation@ontario.ca**

Kate Manson-Smith
Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Province of Ontario
College Park 17th Flr, 777 Bay St
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Dear Deputy Minister Manson-Smith,

RE: Ontario Rebuilding and Recovery Initiative - Accelerating Municipal Infrastructure Consultation

The City of Guelph is pleased to provide comments on the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's consultation on accelerating municipal infrastructure projects. Following best asset management practices, our local capital program ensures the City is continuously working towards building our future in line with the priorities in our Strategic Plan, [Guelph. Future Ready](#). The City's infrastructure initiatives are designed to meet the needs of our local residents as Guelph continues to grow into the future-ready municipality and community we aspire to be.

Our municipality supports the creation of tools that would allow the City to accelerate and advance critical municipal infrastructure projects to the benefit of our local community. In particular, measures to support utility coordination, land assembly, and land entry powers would be helpful in accelerating local infrastructure. The development of provincial guidance on Indigenous engagement, supports for remediation work, the continuation of environmental assessment modernization and measures to streamline the water taking process in a way that ensures environmental sustainability would also be of benefit. The ability to access skilled labour is another challenge when it comes to the delivery of local infrastructure. The City of Guelph encourages the province to continue investing in trades-related skills development and training opportunities so that the City has timely access to the work force it needs to implement its capital program.

To ensure accountability, the public should continue to have opportunities to engage and comment on the creation and delivery of local infrastructure. We encourage the province to create appropriate thresholds to facilitate the identification of local priority projects for acceleration, including potentially requiring a resolution from Council.

As we adapt to the impacts of COVID-19, investing in municipal infrastructure initiatives can facilitate our local recovery by creating meaningful job opportunities

across the employment spectrum. The City is also committed to using its capital program to advance our climate change objectives. Local infrastructure in Guelph is built to contribute to our corporate goal of relying 100% on renewable energy by 2050 and becoming a carbon neutral community by this time frame. Provincial policy changes that accelerate the delivery of innovative and climate friendly infrastructure can support the City in advancing these corporate and community objectives.

I'd like to close by encouraging the province to review and streamline its infrastructure funding programs, including those delivered in partnership with the federal government. Attached to this letter is a recent policy paper on infrastructure from Ontario's Big City Mayors for your consideration. To facilitate growth and address our infrastructure backlog, municipal governments need long-term, predictable and sustainable levels of infrastructure funding from upper levels of government that is timely, flexible, fairly allocated, and adaptable to local priorities. We also encourage the province to remove requirements for a resolution from Council when it comes to smaller grant funding opportunities as this creates administrative burden and results in timing complications when there is a short intake window.

Thank you for considering this input from the City of Guelph. The City would welcome the opportunity to engage further with the province on this initiative. Should you have any questions, I encourage you to reach out to Leslie Muñoz, Manager, Policy and Intergovernmental Relations, for the City of Guelph at leslie.munoz@guelph.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scott Stewart", followed by a horizontal line.

Scott Stewart, Chief Administrative Officer

City of Guelph

T 519-822-1260

TTY 519-826-9771

E scott.stewart@guelph.ca

guelph.ca

C Kealy Dedman, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise, City of Guelph; and Trevor Lee, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Corporate Services, City of Guelph