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FEDERAL BUDGET: Renewed focus on housing and infrastructure the right move, but no clear help for cities

Vaughan, Ont. – RCCAO welcomes the focus on housing and infrastructure investment in the Federal Government's Budget 2022 but is troubled that there is no new dedicated funding to help cities with the cost of state-of-good-repair projects.

"The pandemic created significant impacts on municipal budgets, especially those with large transit systems. Large municipalities are facing funding gaps and will be forced to use capital program budgets to address operating pressures without additional government support," said RCCAO Executive Director, Nadia Todorova.

"Cities needed to see more concrete and dedicated funding to directly help them address these pressures. We are hopeful that the adjustment to the Canada Infrastructure Program's funding profile will create flexibility to provide municipalities with necessary financial assistance in recognition of the delays and overall impacts of the pandemic on priority infrastructure projects and their state-of-good-repair."

The extension of the Canada Infrastructure Program's construction deadline from October 2027 to October 2033 is a welcomed recognition of the building disruptions caused by the COVID pandemic. RCCAO supports the accompanying adjustment to the program's funding profile to ensure that funding is available when needed to support priority projects of provinces in a dynamic way.

RCCAO is pleased to see the Federal government's focus on housing and acknowledgement that every order of government has a role to play in facilitating additional housing supply. The fulsome suite of proposed housing policies is a step in the right direction for addressing a critical need of many Canadians shut out by the housing crisis.

"We look forward to learning more about the intended flexibility that the federal government wants to create within the Canada Community-Building Fund to tie access to infrastructure funding to actions by the province to increase housing supply," said Nadia Todorova. "It is important that infrastructure funding, especially a permanent and stable funding source like the Canada Community-Building Fund, or the Gas Tax as it was previously known, does not create uncertainty or additional barriers to accessing funding for critical municipal infrastructure projects."

RCCAO Executive Director Nadia Todorova is available for interviews.

Background on RCCAO: *The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) is a labour-management construction alliance. Since its formation in 2005, RCCAO has been a leading industry advocate for infrastructure investment. It has commissioned 60 independent, solutions-based research reports to help inform decision makers. www.rccao.com*

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