

MTO - ACEC-ONTARIO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date: September 10, 2025
Time: 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Location: MS Teams
 95 Arrow Road, Toronto

ATTENDEES - ACEC-ONTARIO

Duane Girard (GHD)
 Sunil Kothari (AtkinsRéalis)
 Tanya Cross (Dillon)
 Steve Pilgrim (EGIS)
 Bernard James (Parsons)
 Laurie Lambie (ACEC-Ontario)
 Andrew Hurd (ACEC-Ontario)

ATTENDEES - MTO

Eric Doidge
 Alain Beaulieu
 Susan Nichol (Chair)
 Michelle McGrath
 Michelle Pasqua
 Malvika Rudra (regrets) – Anthony Akomah
 Bruce Cane
 Jenn Meleschuk
 Wan Chi Ma

1. INTRODUCTION / ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Susan Nichol is the Director of the Design and Engineering Branch (DEB).
- Malvika Rudra is the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Major Highway Projects Division. Anthony Akomah (Manager of Major Planning and Innovation, Major Highway Projects) will be presenting on Malvika's behalf.

OPEN ITEMS		Lead
2.	CONTRACT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CMS) - UPDATE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued enhancement and support work for CMS is ongoing • MTO continues to meet monthly with ACEC CA working group. Valuable feedback provided in the sessions (December 6, February 7, March 7 and April 4 meetings). • User feedback survey to be issued this fall. DISCUSSION: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACEC noted delay in posting of the change order approval in CMS that leads to delay in payment. ACTION: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTO is planning for future engagement and training for the use of CMS. 	MTO

3.	<p>UPDATE ON THE CAPITAL PROGRAM, TENDERING ACTIVITY AND PROJECT PIPELINE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTO's capital budget continues to increase – the 25/26 budget is \$4.5B, which is an increase of ~ 450M from last year's budget. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The largest increase is in the other category, which increased by \$260M, largely due to MTO funding commitments with the City of Toronto for the Gardiner Expressway rehabilitation. There have also been increases in Construction funding, about \$100M, and in Design and Property, about 100M. MTO is forecasting a 25/26 tender volume of 79-110, which is similar to last year, however the forecasted value is higher, with a cost estimate range of \$1.5B-\$2.0B. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Q1 33 construction contracts were tendered, which was within the expected range. Q3 is expected to be a higher volume quarter, as MTO aims to tender as much as possible in the fall to maximize the upcoming construction season. <p>Engineering Project Pipeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The next Engineering Project Pipeline update was provided to ACEC on November 6, 2025. <p>Contract Administration Pipeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CA pipeline follows closely with the OHP and tendering plan and fluctuates with the delivery of the construction contracts. MTO is looking at balancing the use of the various delivery models which may shift as noted above. Suggest that the CA subcommittee review potential pipeline information that could be shared and appropriate timing of release for most effective information sharing. <p>DISCUSSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timing and the method used for CA procurement are based on time constraint and the complexity of the project. <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation deck to be circulated after the meeting A meeting in the fall with the CA subcommittee. 	MTO
4.	<p>ACCELERATED PROCUREMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerated procurement working group last met January 2025 and proposed a number of acceleration options. ACEC-Ontario sought input from different firms. These options will be carried forward to Vendor Management Review as the framework work is completed to allow for integration into new processes. MTO is waiting for feedback from ACEC on five most critical information needs for precontract announcements to start partnering conversations. MTO is to consult internally on the potential use of Non-Disclosure Agreements to provide advance information on future procurements. <p>DISCUSSION:</p>	ACEC- ONTARIO/ MTO

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTO is facing pressure to deliver projects more quickly and is looking to the ACEC team for innovation ideas to accelerate delivery such as exploring strategies used in other jurisdictions. <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both ACEC and MTO will bring ideas into the next committee meeting for discussion. 	
5.	<p>MTO DEBRIEFS</p> <p>BACKGROUND:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACEC-O agenda item: ACEC to bring forward. As part of the OPS Procurement Directive (September 1, 2023) <i>Vendors have a right to a debriefing only after the legal agreement between the successful vendor(s) and the Ontario Government has been signed.</i> Debriefs are to be provided only after award/execution of contract. The question from ACEC regarding the possibility / preference of a debriefing after a Phase I of procurement (vs waiting until award of Phase II) has been raised at the ACEC Engineering Subcommittee at several meetings. MTO provided the guidance above, for debriefs to be provided only after award/execution of contract in compliance with the OPS Procurement Directive. <p>DISCUSSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACEC noted that consultants believe earlier debriefings and more detailed information would support their investment planning and business decision-making. MTO emphasized that the procurement process must adhere to legal requirements and take into account actions by other involved parties. <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTO requests ACEC to leverage its experience and industry connections to inform MTO about the types of information other jurisdictions are providing to bring in forward at the next committee meeting. 	ACEC-O
6.	<p>MAJOR PROJECTS UPDATE (Highway 413 /Bradford Bypass/Highway 401 Tunneling Discussion)</p> <p>Highway 413 Highway 413 reached 90% preliminary design last fall. This fall, MTO will release the draft Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) for a 30-day consultation period. Pending receipt of input during the consultation, the preliminary design will be finalized, and the ministry will conclude the overall delivery strategy and begin preparing and releasing design packages in 2026.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTO will be hosting a stakeholder engagement event this fall (date to be determined – potentially in October) to discuss phasing and industry capacity. MTO has reached out to ACEC to schedule this event. <p>DISCUSSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTO will share its approach to project delivery at the upcoming meeting. Acceleration efforts include advancing construction activities as early as possible. 	MTO

	<p>Bradford Bypass</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Bradford Bypass project has been divided into three segments (west, central and east). The west section is now in detail design with utility relocations underway. The construction work for the 10th Sideroad Detour is currently underway. Utility relocation for the main grading contract is also underway. We anticipate the construction contract for the main grading work will be available for tendering early 2026, with a spring 2026 construction start, subject to approvals. The central and east sections are in procurement for the detail design contracts which are expected to be awarded this fall. In addition, a procurement for a program management consultant is underway. The program consultant will be responsible for oversight, integration and coordination of all three sections. <p>DISCUSSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> East and Central RFPs are under evaluation and the results are anticipated to be announced in October. <p>401 Tunnel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A procurement for a feasibility study of the 401 tunnel is underway. A contract award is to be announced soon. <p>DISCUSSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The evaluation stage is currently underway. Additional discussions are required, especially given the public visibility and impact of procurement outcomes. <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	
7.	<p>VENDOR MANAGEMENT MODERNIZATION</p> <p>CPR Pause Integrated into VMR</p> <p>MTO has launched a comprehensive Vendor Management Review (VMR) to modernize the vendor management system. VMR will examine all interconnected components, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-qualification Procurement and Tendering Performance Assessment and Contractor Performance Rating (CPR) Appeals and Infractions Governance and Oversight <p>This initiative is essential to maintaining trust and engagement with industry partners, contractors, and engineering consultants.</p> <p>VMR Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applies proven OPS methodologies: Lean and Service Design Begins with deep discovery to address root causes, not symptoms Collaborative and inclusive: input from internal staff and external stakeholders (e.g., ACEC-O) <p>Current State of CPR</p>	MTO

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPR was paused in April 2023 for review and potential redesign. • Previously used in RFP/RFQ evaluations, but low completion rates and convergent scores reduced its effectiveness. • New appraisal forms introduced in 2023 show greater score differentiation, supporting a CPR reset. • Completion rates remain low but are improving. <p>Future Direction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 2025 Workshop with ACEC-O explored: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Purpose of performance-based models ○ Alternatives to CPR ○ Potential changes if CPR continues <p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review workshop feedback (September) • Conduct jurisdictional scan and evaluate proposed models • Share consultation plan with ACEC-O for input • Continue deep discovery through Spring 2026 <p>DISCUSSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A framework is being developed to manage vendor engagement and address existing gaps. • The goal is to establish a foundational framework by Spring 2026. <p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to engage ACEC through the VMR work. 	
8.	<p>SUCCESSION MANAGEMENT UPDATE AND CREATION OF AN MTO/ACEC-ONTARIO SUCCESSION MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTO and ACEC participated in a workshop on March 25th and 26th. • The facilitated workshop was attended by approximately 25 people and looked at broad industry issues around attraction, retention and succession management. • The final report has been received; and a number of actionable items are included in the report. • With ACEC Exec's endorsement at the last meeting, a Succession Management subcommittee has been formed and a Terms of Reference drafted. • This working group will incorporate items from the workshop report as well as succession management items previously incorporated in both the Engineering and Contract Administration subcommittees. • ACEC has been solicited for membership to the committee through Laura Lambie. • The first meeting is scheduled for September 17. • MTO and ACEC have been invited to present at the TAC Workforce Development Council meeting (Sunday) in Quebec City on the work we've done to date. <p>DISCUSSION:</p>	MTO

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An internship program is being considered to support international engineers in obtaining their P.Eng. designation. Early STEM engagement with high school students. <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTO will confirm the number of attendees and identify preferred dates for the upcoming subcommittee session. 	
9.	<p>US BID RESTRICTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTO has addressed Bidder, Service Provider and Proponent questions on a case-by-case basis to support the policy. <p>DISCUSSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On May 23, Ontario's Procurement Restriction Policy was implemented. Industry stakeholders have been reaching out for clarification on the scope and application of the policy. Municipalities are currently reviewing their procurement policies to align with the provincial directive. <p>ANTICIPATED IMPACTS OF US TARIFFS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTO will continue to monitor the uncertainty surrounding tariffs and their potential impacts. If tariffs are levied, MTO will assess the situation. If MTO determines the effects of the tariffs as well-defined impacts, MTO will provide appropriate relief to those specifically affected. <p>DISCUSSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requests are being evaluated on a case-by-case basis. So far, there have been 28 inquiries and three (3) formal compensation requests. In the construction sector, price increases have not yet been observed. <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTO will continue to monitor cost escalation trends and assess potential compensation needs as they arise. 	
10.	<p>MUNICIPAL ROAD STANDARDS HARMONIZATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The province committed to harmonizing municipal road-building standards across Ontario and consulting with municipalities and industry stakeholders. Ongoing policy development and stakeholder consultations will occur. <p>DISCUSSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will focus on how the engineering community views municipal harmonization, starting with material specifications and expanding into contract general conditions and various design components. There is interest in developing a mandatory framework that integrates harmonized standards into the design and sign-off process. <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTO's Municipal Harmonization Team has scheduled a initial consultation meeting for later this week. 	

INFORMATION SHARED FOR THIS MEETING		
Document Title	Shared By	Format
MTO Capital Program Update	MTO	PDF

NEXT MEETING
February 11, 2026. (TBC)