

MTO – ORBA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

Date: April 29, 2026
Time: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Location: MTO – 95 Arrow Road, North York

ATTENDEE

Andrew Weltz (ORBA) (Chair)
 Malcolm Croskery (ORBA)
 Walid Abou-Hamde (ORBA) regrets
 Steven Crombie (ORBA)
 Rick Tamburro (ORBA)
 Mark Mallet (ORBA)
 Jamie Dilaudo (ORBA)

ATTENDEE

Alain Beaulieu (MTO)
 Eric Doidge (MTO)
 Michelle McGrath (MTO)
 Michelle Pasqua (MTO)
 Malvika Rudra (MTO)
 Bruce Cane (MTO)
 Susan Nichol (MTO)
 Sharene Dubroy (MTO)
 Bruce Macgregor (MTO)
 Andrew Alkins for Jason Ranger (MTO)
 Gary Weiss (MTO)
 Kevin English (MTO)
 Jenn Meleschuk (MTO)

1. INTRODUCTION / ANNOUNCEMENTS	
- Michelle McGrath opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. - Roundtable was held for introductions. - MTO shared that Bruce Cane will be retiring at the end of May, and Kevin English will be the new Director of the Standards and Contracts Branch with some overlap for information sharing. ACTION: MTO to provide new Org chart once available.	

OPEN ITEMS		Lead
2.	Review of previous minutes/action items - Quarterly minutes for October 23, 2025, posted on the Transportation Consultation Portal (TCP) on March 10, 2026, with supporting documents. - No concerns with the previous meeting notes. ACTION: Notes from previous meeting were shared in advance and all agreed accurate.	MTO / ORBA

OPEN ITEMS	Lead
3. Major Projects Update - Major projects like Highway 413 and the 410 extensions are progressing with tenders and procurement activities planned for summer and fall. - The Ring of Fire project is active with strong industry interest and ongoing consultations. - Challenges include tight timelines, especially for Expression of Interest (EOI) submissions and technical proposals. - Emphasis on aligning technical proposals with presentations to ensure consistency. - Indigenous partnerships are integral to project evaluations and procurement processes. - There is recognition of positive progress in industry engagement and collaboration, with stakeholders noting strong examples that should be acknowledged and shared to help guide future planning. - Additionally, there is interest in exploring greater transparency in collaborative procurements, specifically the possibility of publishing ranked bidder lists. This question has been raised by industry, though it is not currently standard practice in either IO-led or recent MTO collaborative procurement models.	MTO
4. Capital Program Update MTO provided an update on the 2026-27 budget and tender projections - see deck. - The 2026-27 budget saw a \$1.2 billion increase over the previous year, mainly in design/property acquisition and the “other transportation” programs. - Budget includes carryover projects and new tenders planned for the upcoming year. - Tender projections remain consistent in volume with last year but show increased value. - Early strong tender activity noted, with about 20 tenders in April and 37-42 expected in Q1.	MTO

5.	Reducing Risk AC Price Index Review Process and Posting - Fuel prices used in the 2026 calculations are expected to be lower than 2025 averages, reflecting overall lower fuel costs throughout most of 2025 despite recent increases. These rates apply primarily to Time & Material work, which represents a small portion of the overall program, while standard contract work continues to be managed through fuel price adjustment provisions. No changes are recommended to the averaging methodology. - Labour rates remain unchanged, as the Labour Adjustment Factor (LAF) could not be updated due to delays in the release of U.S. wage data; therefore, the 2025 value has been carried forward. - The Machinery Equipment Price Index (MEPI) has remained relatively stable, with minimal increases observed. This is largely due to limited tariff impacts, as Canada did not impose tariffs on most heavy construction equipment and much of the equipment supply is sourced from outside the U.S. 2025 - OPSS 127 Schedule of Rental Rates for Construction Equipment - The ministry shared the initial equipment list for the 2026 OPSS 127 Equipment Rental Rates with ORBA (January 28, 2026) and is currently conducting a detailed review of select equipment, including models, specifications, and pricing. Remaining equipment rates will be updated using the methodology jointly established with ORBA in 2019. - A comprehensive analysis of equipment usage—based on Time and Material payments and contractor-reported data—has been completed to identify outdated equipment and prioritize items reflective of current industry practices. - The ministry remains on schedule to publish the 2026 rates in July and will provide ORBA with the global variables used in rate calculations in advance of publication. Tariff Working Group - The proposal to establish a construction equipment working group, initially raised in June 2025 as part of ORBA's tariff impact submission did not advance, as no members were nominated by	MTO
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	ORBA. Following discussion, both MTO and ORBA at the Contracts and Documents Subcommittee agreed to close the item at their March 2026 meeting. It is recommended that this item now be formally closed.	
6.	CMS Update The CMS Team continues to work with ORBA members through the CMS working group. No major recent system updates.	
7.	Harmonization of Municipal Road Construction Standards - Progress is ongoing across multiple streams to advance regulatory updates and implementation readiness. Regulatory feedback is being consolidated and analyzed to inform proposed amendments to the Minister's Regulation, which remain under development. Stakeholder engagement efforts are underway to establish and populate the governance structure. - In parallel, work has begun on the review and prioritization of municipal road construction standards to support phased harmonization. Technical enablement activities are also in progress, including the development of a TCP to support consultation processes and implementation of exemptions.	
8.	GC Update - MTO and ORBA reached consensus on proposed updates to the General Conditions at the March 4 Contracts and Documents Subcommittee meeting, supported by additional collaborative discussions. - The updated GC document was targeted for completion by the end of April, with responses to consultation feedback now posted on the Technical Consultation Portal. - Implementation of the new General Conditions is planned for Fall 2026 to allow time for training, transition, and user readiness. - Overall, the update is considered a significant collaborative achievement between MTO and industry partners. - Both parties acknowledged work on General Conditions can continue at the Contracts and Documents Committee, and updates can be made in between comprehensive reviews as required	

9.	Maintenance Updates • The ORBA Highway Maintenance Committee (HMC) held its monthly meeting on June 2. • A joint meeting between MTO and maintenance contractors took place on April 14, where benchmarking, litter pickup, and opportunities to improve salt supply chain management were discussed. • Several sub-working groups have been reactivated, including the Maintenance Applications and Maintenance Materials Working Groups.	MTO
10.	O/O Permit turnaround time • Single trip permits are within service level agreements • Construction season preparedness: ○ Increased staffing capacity: Hired 7 additional Traffic Analysts and 2 summer students in April to support anticipated seasonal demand. ○ Improved onboarding and training: Streamlined training materials to accelerate ramp-up time and ensure consistency in decision-making. ○ Prototype routing solution: Developed and launched an interim routing tool (outside the permitting system) that is expected to reduce processing time for applications requiring route validation at the application level.	
12.	VMR • MTO is working to finalize a modernized Vendor Performance Management (VMR) framework this summer, with proposed updates across key areas including pre-qualification, procurement, performance assessment, and oversight. • The VMR team will engage stakeholders to review and discuss proposed changes, particularly those impacting construction bidding, contracts, and vendor requirements.	

NEW ITEMS

13.	BUY ONTARIO – SPECIAL PROVISION • MTO has developed contract language to comply with Buy Ontario Procurement Directive for Capital Infrastructure, effective April 13, 2026.. • MTO engaged with ORBA during the development phase (March 27) to review proposed requirements for design-bid-build contracts, with ORBA expressing support for the approach. • A new Notice to Bidders was introduced on April 10, requiring contractors to submit and maintain a Domestic Supply Chain Plan and declaration throughout the duration of the construction contracts. Similar requirements have been applied to Design-Build and CMGC contracts, with details shared with ORBA and will be incorporated into contracts, in some cases through addenda ensuring compliance on all contracts advertised on and after April 13, 2026.	
14.	STRENGTHENING INDUSTRY • Discussion emphasized the importance of maintaining open communication and strong collaboration between stakeholders to effectively address challenges and enhance overall industry outcomes.	
15.	SLOW DOWN IN CONSTRUCTION ZONE DISCUSSION • Discussion around opportunities for MTO and ORBA to collaborate on enhancing public awareness around construction zone safety, including ideas such as branded bumper stickers and social media campaigns encouraging drivers to slow down. • There was interest in leveraging existing infrastructure, such as electronic/variable message signs, to reinforce safety messaging, while recognizing operational constraints and competing priorities for traffic management communications. • Participants highlighted the importance of clear, concise messaging and adhering to established guidelines when using signage. Overall, there was strong alignment on exploring multiple communication approaches to improve driver awareness and enhance safety for workers, particularly given ongoing concerns about incidents involving maintenance and construction crews.	

16.	Acceleration Workshop • MTO hosted a collaborative acceleration workshop with representatives from ORBA, consulting engineers, and internal staff to identify ways to speed up construction delivery. • The session generated strong participation and several “quick wins” that are being implemented immediately, including earlier contractor involvement in design discussions, increased designer participation during construction, and encouraging early consideration of change proposals to improve timelines. • MTO is also exploring broader opportunities that require further review, particularly related to managing traffic impacts, adjusting closure tolerances, and updating guidelines (e.g., Book 7) to support more efficient construction staging and operations. • The workshop emphasized balancing faster project delivery with traffic impacts, along with the importance of clear public communication. • Overall, the initiative is seen as a positive step toward improving collaboration and identifying practical solutions to accelerate project timelines.	MTO
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INFORMATION SHARED FOR THIS MEETING		
Document Title	Shared By	Format
Capital Program/Highway Projects Update	MTO	PDF

NEXT MEETINGS
• July 22, 2026 – virtual • October 22, 2026, in person – ORBA to host