

Skills Ontario, PCA, RESCON, RCCAO, LiUNA applaud provincial government for focus on skilled trades

Ontario Construction News staff writer

Last week's provincial budget is getting good reviews from the construction industry, especially for the focus on skilled trades training and digital innovation.

"Reducing barriers to development by cutting red tape, simplifying policies and modernizing and digitizing government services to streamline the approvals process is critical to increasing housing supply necessary to support demographic trends and improve quality of life," said Richard Lyall, president at the Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON).

"We have had a chronic under supply of housing for a generation which has driven up costs."

Through the government's Skilled Trades Strategy, the budget also focuses on key themes that are crucial to enabling the trades to be considered a viable employment option for the next generation, such as simplifying the apprenticeship system and related career pathways as well as encouraging greater employer participation.

"We are heartened to see the government commit such extensive resources to the skilled trades in Ontario," Lyall said. "This is a reflection of the province's understanding of the importance of construction and the need for sufficient skilled trades supply over the next decade to facilitate the economic recovery and success of Ontario."

On behalf of the Labourers' Inter-



national Union of North America, Joe Mancinelli, LiUNA International vice president and regional manager for central & eastern Canada, commended the province for its "significant focus on skilled trades."

"Working collaboratively with government and industry we are taking steps forward to amplify opportunities in the trades, expand training initiatives and build Ontario's future skilled workforce," Mancinelli said in a statement on Twitter.

"The implementation of the Skilled Trades Strategy is yet another example of this government's commitment to the men and women who are at the root of community building."

The province also got two thumbs up from the Progressive Contractors Association of Canada (PCA).

"We are delighted that funding increases make it possible for more of our member companies to take on

and train skilled workers and apprentices, especially now during Ontario's economic recovery," said Stephen Hamilton, PCA public affairs Ontario director.

"Today's budget investments keep the focus where it should be: providing more opportunities for people to get trained and ready for careers in the skilled trades while recognizing and supporting the needs of ALL construction employers, specifically those that are progressively unionized."

Skills Ontario is hopeful that aspects of the budget will remove barriers to growth and create jobs – especially the \$100 million dedicated funding in 2020–21 through Employment Ontario for skills training programs to help more workers and job seekers get advice, training and other assistance."

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