



## **RESCON applauds federal budget for training and immigration initiatives**

April 19, 2021, Vaughan, Ont. – The Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON) commends the federal government for a budget that focuses on addressing fallout from the unprecedented disruption caused by COVID-19, training young workers for the future in construction and other industries, and amending immigration rules to help address Canada’s labour needs.

“We are pleased that the government is taking steps in this budget to deal with the economic crisis caused by COVID-19 but is also focused on the future by investing in programs to ensure that industries like construction will have the skilled workers they need for the future,” says RESCON president Richard Lyall. “These are difficult times, but we must ensure that we are taking the steps that are necessary to ensure our youth get the training they need.”

The \$101-billion budget, dubbed A Recovery Plan for Jobs, Growth, and Resilience, outlines a roadmap for Canada’s future, which includes ensuring that all Canadians have access to vaccines and personal protective equipment.

On training, RESCON applauds the \$470-million investment to establish an Apprenticeship Service, to help Red Seal-trade apprentices find opportunities and jobs with employers, while also providing \$5,000 in training subsidies to employers. This subsidy increases to \$10,000 for employers who take on BIPOC and women apprentices.

In Ontario alone, more than 115,000 construction workers will be needed to offset retirements from the industry within the next decade. The new Sectoral Workforce Solutions Program, which will see \$960 million provided over three years, will help employers design and deliver training to job seekers while also improving recruitment and retention practices to attract more diverse workers.

“We applaud the government’s efforts to encourage young people to seek careers in the trades, and the steps being taken to encourage employers to hire apprentices,” says RESCON VP Andrew Pariser. “Our industry is at risk of a sharp labour deficit and we need to get more youth into the industry. These programs will certainly help with that effort.”

On immigration, RESCON appreciates the proposed amendments to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act that would allow for greater prioritization of candidates in the Express Entry System who can support Canada's labour market demands, which includes the construction industry. Immigration has long been a source of workers for Canada's residential construction industry, and we are pleased to see this initiative put forward.

Meanwhile, RESCON commends the federal government for further investments to improve job opportunities for Black Canadians, and also for increasing support for accessible mental health programs, as COVID-19 has exacerbated mental health challenges faced by people and workers in the construction industry.

"Black Canadians, specifically Black youth, have suffered disproportionately from COVID-19," says Amina Dibe, RESCON's manager of government and stakeholder relations. "RESCON, through the industry-led Anti-Racism Roundtable, is working with stakeholders to create and improve existing opportunities for Black youth to enter the skilled trades."

Strong infrastructure is also crucial to Canada's economic recovery and RESCON is disappointed, however, that no new money was announced to assist municipalities with funding state-of-good-repair projects. We had hoped more funding would have been announced in the budget.

***Background on RESCON:*** *RESCON is the province's leading association of residential builders committed to providing leadership and fostering innovation in the industry.*

For more information:

Grant Cameron  
Senior Director of Public Affairs  
RESCON  
905-638-1706  
media@rescon.com