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# Archived - 2014 Mandate letter: Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure

Premier's instructions to the Minister on priorities for the year 2014



September 25, 2014

The Honourable Brad Duguid  
Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure  
Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure  
Eighth Floor, Hearst Block  
900 Bay Street  
Toronto, Ontario  
M7A 2E1

Dear Minister Duguid:

I am honoured to welcome you to your role as Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure. We have a strong Cabinet in place, and I am confident that together we will build Ontario up, create new opportunities and champion a secure future for people across our province. The people of Ontario have entrusted their government to be a force for good, and we will reward that trust by working every day in the best interests of every person in this province.

As we implement a balanced and comprehensive plan for Ontario, we will lead from the activist centre. We will place emphasis on partnerships with businesses, communities and people to help foster continued economic growth and make a positive impact on the lives of every Ontarian. This collaborative approach will shape all the

work we do. It will ensure we engage people on the issues that matter the most to them, and that we implement meaningful solutions to our shared challenges.

Our government's most recent Speech from the Throne outlined a number of key priorities that will guide your work as minister. Growing the economy and helping to create good jobs are fundamental to building more opportunity and security, now and in the future. That critical priority is supported by strategic investments in the talent and skills of our people, from childhood to retirement. It is supported through the building of modern infrastructure, transit and a seamless transportation network. It is supported by a dynamic business climate that thrives on innovation, creativity and partnerships to foster greater prosperity. And it is reflected across all of our government, in every area, and will extensively inform our programs and policies.

As we move forward with our plan to grow the economy and create jobs, we will do so through the lens of fiscal prudence. Our 2014 Budget reinforces our commitment to balancing the budget by 2017-18; it is essential that every area adhere to the program-spending objectives established in it. We will choose to invest wisely in initiatives that strengthen Ontario's competitive advantage, create jobs and provide vital public services to our families. The President of the Treasury Board, collaborating with the Minister of Finance, will work closely with you and your fellow Cabinet members to ensure that our government meets its fiscal targets. The President of the Treasury Board will also lead the government's efforts on accountability, openness and modernization as we implement new accountability measures across government.

As Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure, you will help to build a strong, diversified and globally competitive economy that will provide jobs, increase productivity and result in more prosperity for all Ontarians. You will ensure that our economic recovery is being felt in all areas of the province, and by all our people — including our youth. You will support a dynamic business climate — supported and enhanced by an innovative health care sector and a dynamic education system — that will help the province continue to attract new businesses to Ontario and compete globally for jobs and investment. You will co-ordinate the province's investments in world-class infrastructure — fostering economic growth and prosperity throughout the province.

Your ministry's specific priorities include:

## **Supporting a Dynamic Business Climate on a Foundation of Fiscal Responsibility**

- Promoting Ontario's existing strengths and enhancing its reputation as a destination of choice for foreign and domestic private sector investments. You will create partnerships with business through new initiatives, such as the 10-year, \$2.5-billion Jobs and Prosperity Fund — and continue existing initiatives, such as the Eastern and Southwestern Ontario Development funds, and — working with the Minister of Northern Development and Mines — the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund.
- Collaborating with the Minister of Finance, the President of the Treasury Board and partner ministers to develop a framework to identify and evaluate optimal partnership investments. Your goal is to strengthen the province's approach to business supports while balancing the government's commitment to fiscal sustainability.
- Developing strategies for key-growth sectors, such as advanced manufacturing and automotive, agri-food, cleantech, financial services, information and communications technology, natural resources, tourism, media and culture. Together, these strategies will represent the government's broader economic policy objectives and will support investment and job creation. I ask that you work in co-operation with partner ministers, industry, postsecondary institutions and the not-for-profit sector to develop these strategies.
- Leading work, as the minister responsible for trade policy — in co-operation with the federal government and Canada's provinces and territories — to find ways of reducing trade barriers and increasing exports nationally and internationally.
- Partnering with the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade to increase Ontario exports and promote Ontario-made goods and services.

- Working with the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade to establish a ministerial working group. You and the minister will co-chair the group, which will include the ministers of: Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; Education; Energy; Health and Long-Term Care; Northern Development and Mines; Research and Innovation/Training, Colleges and Universities; Tourism, Culture and Sport and other ministers, as appropriate. The committee's objective is to ensure strong collaboration and information-sharing — and maximize international trade and foreign investment opportunities.
- Expanding the reach of Ontario's exports — particularly to fast-growing emerging markets — in partnership with the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade. You will jointly pursue initiatives that expand the opportunity for Ontario firms to connect with foreign buyers and investors, showcase innovative goods and services, and find new markets.
- Providing support to communities that are still recovering from the global recession, with particular focus on Southwestern and Northern Ontario. You will work with partner ministers to develop strategies to attract new investment and jobs — and connect the demand for jobs with our highly trained workforce in these areas.
- Working in partnership with business and entrepreneurs to build on our existing commitment to create a strong social enterprise market in Ontario.
- Continuing to work with partner ministers and industry to explore initiatives to reduce regulatory and administrative burdens, as proposed in the Better Business Climate Act, 2014. If the legislation is passed, I ask that you begin to work with key partners to develop regional cluster plans. Your goal is to adopt smarter regulatory practices without putting public safety at risk.
- Continuing to implement the Ontario Youth Jobs Strategy, in partnership with the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. The strategy aims to address the youth unemployment rate by investing \$295 million in measures to connect young people with promising careers — and increase opportunities for youth across the province.
- Increasing the number of employment opportunities for Ontarians of all abilities by establishing new partnerships with business and persons with disabilities.
- Working with partners to build an accessible Ontario by 2025. I ask that you explore options to develop new accessibility standards in the education or health sector.

## Building Modern Infrastructure

- Working with your colleagues in the legislature to seek the passage of Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, which would establish the requirements for long-term infrastructure planning.
- Leading the development of the province's long-term infrastructure plan. You will collaborate with partner ministers to identify the government's strategic priorities for infrastructure investment.
- Prioritizing the government's infrastructure investments — in partnership with the President of the Treasury Board — to ensure alignment with Ontario's economic development priorities.
- Continuing to support strong communities across Ontario by launching the new permanent Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund. The initiative will provide \$100 million per year for investment in roads, highways and water infrastructure projects in Ontario's small and mid-sized communities.

## Developing Infrastructure Investment Strategies

- Seeking opportunities to further refine our capital investment strategies for infrastructure. Your goal is to align these strategies with asset management planning, growth planning, our economic goals, environmental priorities and the needs of Ontarians.
- Embracing opportunities to encourage the adoption of innovative technologies that support economic growth and long-term savings. I ask that you ensure that public infrastructure investments encourage the adoption of approaches that maximize the value of our infrastructure dollars and minimize the long-term cost of maintaining infrastructure assets — including ensuring resiliency to the impact of climate change.
- Implementing the proposed Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2014, if passed. The act would enshrine evidence-based, long-term infrastructure planning in Ontario and support opportunities for apprenticeships, at-risk youth and local communities.

## Maintaining Models of Alternative Financing and Procurement

- Continuing to refine the approach to delivering Ontario's highly effective Alternative Financing and Procurement (AFP) model — learning from the experience of past projects and current best practices. Your goal is to ensure that AFP remains the best system possible to deliver transit and other infrastructure projects on time, on budget and to specification.

## Extending Access to Natural Gas

- Fulfilling our government's commitment to create a new Natural Gas Access Loan — which will provide up to \$200 million over two years to help communities partner with utilities to extend access to natural gas supplies. I also ask that you establish a \$30-million Natural Gas Economic Development Grant to accelerate projects with clear economic development potential. Your goal is to provide consumers in underserved communities more energy choices, make commercial transportation more affordable, attract new industry to Ontario, and benefit our agricultural producers.

We have an ambitious agenda for the next four years. I know that, by working together in partnership, we can be successful. The above list of priority initiatives is not meant to be exhaustive, as there are many other responsibilities that you and your ministry will need to carry out. To that end, this mandate letter is to be used by your ministry to develop more detailed plans for implementation of the initiatives above, in addition to other initiatives not highlighted in this letter.

I ask that you continue to build on the strong relationships we have with the Ontario Public Service, the broader public sector, other levels of government, and the private, non-profit and voluntary sectors. We want to be the most open and transparent government in the country. We want to be a government that works for the people of this province — and with them. It is of the utmost importance that we lead responsibly, act with integrity, manage spending wisely and are accountable for every action we take.

I look forward to working together with you in building opportunity today, and securing the future for all Ontarians.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Wynne  
Premier

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