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INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER RULES MINISTER CONTRAVENED ACT

- Last year the Ontario government removed 7,400 acres of land from the designated Greenbelt around the GTA to contain urban sprawl and protect valuable farmland, to build 50,000 homes
- Another 9,400 acres in other locations were added back into the Greenbelt to replace the 7,400 acres removed
- The province's Integrity Commissioner was called upon to investigate these actions on the part of the government
- The Integrity Commissioner's enquiry was limited to determining whether the actions of Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Steve Clark, contravened the Integrity Act
- The Integrity Commissioner and his staff received evidence from 61 witnesses and from Minister Clark and reviewed other pertinent documents
- Based on his investigation, the Integrity Commissioner's determined that Minister Clark had contravened the Integrity Act, that he had failed to oversee the land selection process and that the interests of certain developers were advanced improperly
- The Integrity Commissioner recommended that he be reprimanded by the Ontario legislature

DCN REPORTS ON IMMIGRANT NOMINEE PROGRAM INVITATIONS

In case you missed it, the Daily Commercial News recently reported on invitations issued by the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD) under the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program. According to the DCN, for the week prior to August 18th, 5,450 invitations were issued in the Program's four streams:

- Employer Job Offer, International Student
- Employer Job Offer, Foreign Worker
- Employer Job Offer, In Demand Skills
- Human Capital Priorities

Invitations to live and work permanently in Ontario were issued to 256 candidates in the "Employer Job Offer, In Demand Skills" stream including carpenters, drafting technologists and technicians, welders and related machine operators.

COCA'S MOST CONSEQUENTIAL LEADER PASSES AWAY



In the almost 50 year history of the Council of Ontario Construction Associations (COCA), Dr. David Surplis was unquestionably the provincial construction federation's most consequential leader. David passed away on the afternoon of Wednesday, August 23rd with family by his side.

David earned a BA in political science at the University of Alberta, an MA and a PhD, both in political economy, at the University of Toronto.

He taught political science as an associate professor at the University of Guelph from 1970 to 1976. There he influenced the futures of many of his students including David Frame who is very well known in our industry and who went on to work under David's leadership at COCA and subsequently served in the president's role at COCA.

From 1976 to 1984 David served as director of research and special assistant to several cabinet ministers including the Minister of Health, Dennis Timbrell, a role in which he played a key role in shaping health policy in the province .

In 1984 David took his leadership and government relations skills to the Ontario Dental Association, a role in which he served for six years.

He joined COCA in 1990 and served as the federation's president until 2001 when he retired for personal health reason.

From 2001 until 2009 he operated his own communications, government relations and public affairs consultancy and from January to August 2008 he returned to COCA as President while a search for a new leader was ongoing.

David was blessed with a superior intellect, possessed knowledge that spanned an impressively broad array of subjects, he knew political history like no one else, was insightful, analytical, eminently engaging, friendly and unassuming but didn't suffer fools easily. He was a bit "old school" maybe more than a bit but was always a gentleman or if not always at least when the occasion called for gentlemanly behaviour. He had in his brain a vast library of jokes and stories, some not suitable for mixed company, but something suitable for every occasion. It was always a delight to be in his company.

He had many loves in his life but by far his greatest love was for his late wife Davina and the stepfamily he inherited when they married. He loved politics but was dismayed by the hyped up partisan political environment of today. He loved golf and had been an excellent golfer in his earlier days and at one point considered a career in golf but eventually decided to pursue higher education. He loved his Toronto Hunt Club and often said that, after deciding to ask Davina to marry him, the best decision he ever made was joining The Hunt. He loved people, especially the army of friends at The Hunt who loved him right back. He was a wonderful and loyal friend to many.

Rest in Peace David. You will be missed.

\$160 MILLION FUNDING TO TRAIN SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS AND THOSE WITH CRIMINAL RECORDS

On August 25th Ontario Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development announced the third tranche of funding under the Skills Development Fund Training Stream banner.

- This third tranche SDF Training Stream funding totals \$160 million
- It is designed to tackle the labour shortage and help at least 100,000 workers get free training to meet the needs of employers hiring in their communities.
- It prioritizes programs that propose innovative training solutions to help people on social assistance and with prior criminal records find meaningful employment in critical industries like healthcare, auto-manufacturing, information technology, hospitality and the skilled trades.

The provincial government's announced SDF Training Stream funding is targeted to organizations that propose innovative projects that address challenges to hiring, training, or retaining workers, including apprentices, to drive Ontario's economic growth. SDF Training Stream funding now totals more than \$860 million. In addition to the SDF Training Stream funding, earlier this year the provincial government announced a \$224 million SDF Capital Stream funding to support the building of new training centres and the renovation or expansion of existing ones.

For more information on the Skills Development Fund Training Stream and how your association might apply click on the following link:

[Ontario Investing an Additional \\$160 Million to Train Workers | Ontario Newsroom](#)

FORMER LG BARTLEMAN PASSES

Former Ontario Lieutenant-Governor, James Bartleman passed away on August 14, 2023 at age 83. He served as the Province's LG from 2002 until 2007.

- Born December 24, 1939
- Member of the Chippewas of Mniikaning First Nation
- Earned a BA degree in History from Western University
- Had a distinguished 35+ year career in the Canadian Foreign Service before his appointment as LG.
- He served as Lieutenant Governor of Ontario 2002 - 2007
- His priorities in the role of LG were: i) reducing the stigma of mental illness; ii) fighting racism and discrimination; and iii) promoting literacy among First Nations children
- He died on August 14, 2023

NEW GOVERNMENT FUND INCENTS MUNICIPALITIES TO ACHIEVE HOUSING TARGETS

The government of Ontario recently announced a new fund designed to incent municipalities in the province to achieve their new home construction targets. It's called the Building Faster Fund and here's the skinny:

- The government of Ontario has set a provincial objective to build 1.5 million new homes by 2031
- 50 municipalities in the province have been assigned new home construction targets for 2031 by the provincial government
- The total amount of the Building Faster Fund is \$1.2 billion over three years or \$400 million each year for each of the three years of the fund
- municipalities that achieve 80% of their annual new home construction target will be eligible to receive their prorated share of the fund based on their assigned target in relation to the total objective of 1.5 million new homes
- municipalities that exceed their targets will also qualify to receive bonus funds in addition to the amount received for achieving 80% of their target
- A portion of the overall funding will also be allocated to single and lower tier municipalities that have not been assigned housing targets, to address their unique needs
- Municipalities can direct funds received from the Building Faster Fund toward housing-enabling infrastructure and other related costs that support community growth. Eligible expenses will be determined following consultations between the province, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the City of Toronto and the Housing Supply Action Plan Implementation Team.

PROPERTY TAX REASSESSMENT POSTPONED AGAIN PENDING SYSTEM REVIEW

- Property taxes and user fees are the primary revenue streams of municipalities.
- Both the Federal and Ontario governments primarily raise their revenues from income taxes and sales taxes but municipalities in this province do not have that ability
- The amount of the property tax assessed on a particular property is based on a formula that uses the assessed value of that property as a factor
- To be current, property reassessments are supposed to be conducted at regular intervals
- The reassessment that was scheduled for 2020 was postponed due to the pandemic
- Municipalities currently use property assessments from the 2016 reassessment
- The 2020 reassessment was recently postponed again pending a review of the assessment system

PCS CONTINUE TO LEAD DESPITE AUDITOR'S GREENBELT REPORT – ABACUS POLL

A survey of 1,040 Ontario adults between August 18th and August 20th (after the release of the Auditor General's Greenbelt report but before the resignation of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing's chief of staff) conducted by Abacus Data in partnership with the Toronto Star, produced the following results:

With respect to awareness of the AG's Greenbelt report, 17% of respondents hadn't heard anything about it, 44% only heard about it but aren't following it closely, 28% are following news about it pretty closely and 11% are following news about it very closely

When asked if the AG's report made them feel better or worse about Doug Ford, 4% of respondents said it made them feel much better 9% said somewhat better, 37% said no difference, 23% said somewhat worse and 28% said much worse

7% of respondents reported that they strongly approve of Premier Doug Ford's job performance and 24% said they mostly approve for an approval of 31%; 19% said they mostly disapprove and 28% said they

strongly disapprove for a disapproval of 47%. Ford's approval rate decreased by 4% from July's Abacus survey while his disapproval increased 4%

59% of respondents said they believe that the decisions made by Premier Doug Ford and his government are primarily about what's in the best interests of Ford's friends and supporters

38% of respondents said that if an election was held on the day they were polled, they would vote PC, down 3% from the July Abacus survey; 25% said they would vote Liberal, up 1%; 24% said NDP also up 1%; 7% said they would vote Green, unchanged; and 6% said they would vote Other, up 1%

Respondents who had voted conservative in the last provincial election and in the last federal election are less likely to move their vote to another party than respondents who had voted Liberal or NDP

For the complete results, click on the following link:

[Has the Greenbelt scandal hurt the Ford PCs in Ontario? - Abacus Data](#)

OLP LEADERSHIP FUNDRAISING UPDATE

According to recent reporting from Elections Ontario, here's where the candidates stand on the fundraising front:

- Bonnie Crombie - \$493,000
- Nate Erskine-Smith - \$208,000
- Ted Tsu - \$194,000
- Yasir Naqvi \$128,000
- Adil Shamji - \$72,000

Elections Ontario's figures do not include donations below \$200.