

Ontario Trails Pre-Budget Assessment

Ontario Trails is pleased to provide you with highlights of the entire budget as a result of being in lock-up today.

New – The Ontario Government indicates in the Budget it will create or facilitate the following programs:

Create a new Northern Ontario Internship Program that will remove a requirement that internship applicants be recent university or college graduates, allowing new workers, people starting a new career, the unemployed and the underemployed to be eligible for the program.

Introduce legislation that, if passed, would let municipalities make rules about where alcohol can be consumed in public areas, such as parks.

Change regulations such that wineries, cideries, breweries and distilleries will have greater flexibility to promote their products by removing the required serving sizes offered at manufacturing sites.

Partner with the Rick Hansen Foundation to launch the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™ program to help the 43 per cent of seniors living with a disability. With a \$1.3 million investment over two years, the program will prepare accessibility assessments of businesses and public buildings and determine ways to remove any barriers for people with visible and invisible disabilities.

Transit:

- Promote economic development and meeting local transportation needs in the North by reviewing opportunities for bus, passenger rail and rail freight services in Northern Ontario.
- ☐ Move towards two-way, all-day service every 15 minutes on core segments of the GO Transit rail network.
- ☐ Improve service through the largest increase in GO Transit rail services in five years, including more trips per day, introducing route expansion and looking at the feasibility of providing flexible food and beverage services across the GO Transit rail network.
- ☐ Allow kids age 12 and under to travel free of charge on all GO Transit trains and buses.

Increase Conservation – Conservation of Ontario’s rich biodiversity and natural resources is an important way to mitigate the impact of a changing climate on such areas. The government is improving the resilience of sensitive natural ecosystems, such as wetland and grassland habitats through good government, planning, stewardships and partnerships. The government will work with indigenous organizations, the forest industry and communities in supporting sustainable forest management to help reduce emissions. (No funding attached page 157)

Create more opportunities for Indigenous people and addressing the North’s skilled labour shortage with a new Northern Ontario Internship Program. (Page 212)

Support the horse racing industry, by investing in rural communities by ensuring a strong and viable horse racing industry the Ontario Lottery and gaming Corporation will support a long term 19 year agreement providing 105 million per year to race tracks and horse people, as well as 10 million to support breeding and industry development programs. (Page 219)

Expand the Scope of the Francophone Community Grants Program, that supports community-based projects, businesses, entrepreneurs and relevant not-for profit organizations to support initiatives that promote the economic and cultural growth of the Francophone Community (page 175 no funds declared)

Explore Ways to Support Regional Economic Development – the Governments Open for Business, Open for Jobs Strategy will help create an environment that supports economic development and job creation all over the province (page 174 no funds declared)

Support Charitable Fundraising by removing a fee applied to the sale of break open tickets thereby saving charities and non-profits 4 million dollars per year. (Page 88)

Review the Gas Tax Program – the province will not move forward with the changes to the municipal share of the gas tax funding. Over the next few months the government will consult with municipalities on the program parameters and identify opportunities for improvement. (Page 75 no funding declared)

Break Down Inter-Provincial Trade Barriers – reducing interprovincial trade barriers would have a positive impact on the Ontario economy equaling 15-20 billion over 10 years. (Page 203)

Support Northern and Rural Communities – the government will continue to put rural and Northern Ontario at the forefront of government's strategies to help insure these communities can improve on their competitiveness and attract investment.

Ministerial Directions

Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs – while partnering with farming community there is a reduction in the ministry budget from 1162 2018-19 to 878.2 a reduction of 284 million, (page 284)

Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade – the province is focused on making Ontario more attractive for investment and cutting red tape, while supporting business support programs – 2018-19 968, 2019-20 782.2 a reduction of 185.8 million

Energy Northern Development and Mines – reductions in consumer electricity costs by 12% is the target as is the continuance of putting northern Ontario at the forefront of Ontario's Plan for the people, 2018-19 (interim) 5751, 2019-20 5185.2 a reduction of 575.8 million

Environment, Conservation and Parks – no change in budget 2019-2020, remains at 631.2 million (page 288) However some single year(s) time funding from the federal government from 2017-18 and 2018-19 is no longer on the table, that paired with the reduction in the MNRF budget of 161 million and no continuance in the new CA ministry of EC and P, may be a cut to CA's directly as the province has not maintained the ECP budget at the inflated levels that supported CA management.

Ontario Parks is expected to increase visits by 1 million visits and this revenue will be accrued in part due to trails and amenities on sites.

Infrastructure – the province will make strategic investments seeing an increase in overall funding from 453 million to 523.8 million (page 292)

Indigenous Affairs – the Ministry plans to promote collaboration and coordination across ministries on indigenous issues, but this sees a reduction in funding from 2018-19 of 146 to 74.4 million in 2019-20 (page 292)

Municipal Affairs and Housing – the plan will be flexible so that communities can build the houses they require while protecting sensitive areas like the greenbelt, preserve cultural heritage and maintaining Ontario's vibrant agricultural sector reduction from 1375 in 2017-18 to 1117.6 2019-20 page 294

Natural Resources and Forestry – living on Ontario means to have the ability to fish, hunt and enjoy world class recreational opportunities, it is the provinces duty to promote these activities and the economic opportunities they offer while continuing to be a world leader in managing Ontario's natural environment for generations to come. The province will refocus the Ministry on its core mandate which is to develop and support Ontario's natural resource and forestry sectors. The Ministry will continue to invest in capital assets such as buildings, dams, aircraft and fleets. 2018-19 834 – 2019-20 672.3 a reduction of 161.7 million. Page 294

Seniors and Accessibility – the province is leaving existing services intact. 2017-18 48 upped to 51.1 million 2019-20 page 294

Tourism Culture and Sport - the government will continue to make strategic investments in the tourism culture and sport sectors and its agencies ensuring Ontario is open for business and open for visitors 2018-19 1552 base – 2019-20 1493.4 a decrease of 59.4 million Plan page 295

...make strategic investments to create the conditions for Ontario to be the destination for tourists and be the best place to play and be an athlete. Investments will provide economic opportunity and prosperity for the people of Ontario. Page 219

Increase participation in sport by taking steps to unite the sector, assist with collaboration and focus resources to help build a stronger sports system. This includes developing a sport and recreation Action Plan for all levels and all abilities page 220

This strategy declares a willingness on the part of the Ministry and the government to work with sport organizations, municipalities, the education sector and indigenous communities to develop a plan that sees safe participation from playground to podium. Page 220

Build a New Tourism Strategy – the government concluded its consultations and will be leveraging the findings into a new made-in-Ontario Tourism Strategy. Page 221

Transportation – the province will work with municipalities to build the transportation infrastructure that will best serve the needs of communities. Investments in roads, bridges and highways are creating a truly integrated and safe transportation system across the province. 2018-19 4676 – 5187.5 an increase of 511.5 million