

NEWSLETTER / NOVEMBER 2021

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LINKED 



A concrete mix truck delivers material for the construction of a new condominium apartment building in downtown Toronto on Sept. 13, 2021.

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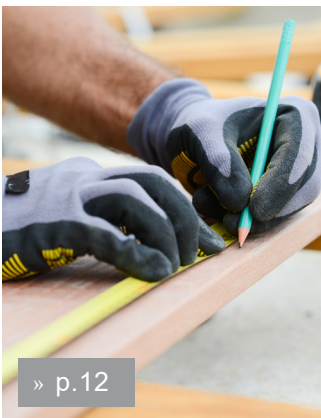
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LABOUR, SUPPLY CHAIN, IMMIGRATION & TECHNOLOGY ARE CRITICAL ISSUES

Richard Lyall

Our industry was going flat-out prior to the pandemic. Once it hit, it introduced a whole new set of challenges

I recently had the pleasure of being [interviewed](#) by Leslie Roberts, host of Ottawa at Work on CFRA 580 News Talk Radio.

Purpose of the interview was to talk about the labour situation in construction. There have been a number of stories in the media lately about the subject and several reports have been produced indicating that we are in dire need of young people to replace the anticipated number of older workers retiring in the next few years.

We covered a lot of ground on the issue during the interview but, as is often the case with radio, we also veered into other subjects, such as how COVID-19 has affected the supply chain, immigration, the outlook for the industry, and how youth can get into construction.

On labour, I acknowledged it is an issue that has been going on for a while now – and it is something the industry will deal with. I noted there are still people on CERB and as they come off that assistance, it may help the situation.

We face challenges, though, as noted in a recent report by the thought leadership team at Royal Bank of Canada. The report indicates the Canadian workforce will see a 10,000-worker deficit in 56 nationally recognized Red Seal trades over the next five years, a scarcity that could be widened tenfold when 144 provincially regulated trades are added into the mix.

So, there is a lot of work to do there.

COVID-19 has certainly made a bad situation worse. Our industry was going flat-out prior to the pandemic and, of course, once it hit it introduced a whole new range of challenges. There is no question that COVID affected the supply chain and knocked production schedules out of whack.

We were able to deal with the COVID situation, thanks in large part to extended work hours being implemented by the province, but social distancing and other measures imposed on worksites slowed down production.

As I explained in the radio interview, it's a bit of a pig in a python right now where we're working our way through the delays. Our industry works very much like automotive production and when parts are missing along the way it disrupts the whole system. For example, there was a disruption in some of the manufactured products used in

homes because a hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico disrupted the supply of glue.

We presently still have challenges with the availability of copper and steel and certain wire products for construction.

When the supply chain is upset, schedules get out of whack and the just-in-time system becomes a real challenge – but it is getting better.

Roberts and I also spoke about our immigration system and the need for more people who are entering Canada to have a skilled trades background.

We have been doing a heck of a job with the Government of Ontario to promote the sector but we're not hitting our immigration targets and specifically attracting those with construction backgrounds.

On the technology front, we are in the late beginning stages of a real bump-up in advancements in construction.

On the technology front, I noted that we are in the late beginning stages of a real bump-up in advancements in construction. A lot of people don't realize that construction is already technology-based. The industry is advancing rapidly and will provide additional opportunities for youth entering construction in the years to come.

The talent management departments of companies in our industry are looking for the right people with the right attitudes and the right skills.

I highlighted the RESCON Residential Construction Management program at George Brown College as an example of collaboration between the industry and education to get youth into construction careers. The college has been a leader, not just in Ontario, but globally in terms of construction management training.

There are many union and joint labour-management programs and training centres in Ontario that also do a terrific job in developing and training people.

So, while there are issues, we are heading down the right track.

[Click here](#) listen to the full interview.



WE NEED MORE OF THE IN-DEMAND TRADESPEOPLE

Andrew Pariser

Not all skilled trades are experiencing identical shortages, hence we need to target our efforts on the areas with the highest needs.

Labour supply is one of the top issues impacting the residential and broader construction industry in 2021. The message captured in the media right now is, “We need more skilled tradespeople.” The message I want to share is, “We need more of the in-demand tradespeople.”

Essentially the messages are the same, but the second relies on LMI data and lines it up with our specific labour needs for building houses, condos and homes. Not all skilled trades are experiencing identical shortages, hence we need to target our efforts on the areas with the highest needs.

The residential sector is the largest of Ontario’s seven construction sectors, and tremendous demand for houses (over the last 30 years) has created specialization within the carpentry and construction craft worker trades. This means that workers and employers in the GTA have specialized and developed expertise in specific trade areas, similar to how a doctor or healthcare professional would specialize in one part of the medical field.

As a result, we need specialized workers or individuals interested in specialized careers to meet the skilled trades labour demand we have.

How did we get here?

Our current labour shortage is the result of many factors. However, there are two reasons that stand out.

First, Ontario was demographically blessed, meaning over the last 20 to 30 years, we had lots of skilled trade workers in their prime working years (25 to 55). This golden age meant employers, unions and the government under-invested in training from 1990 to 2010. Further, these workers are now starting to retire, and now virtually all LMI reports cite that we will need approximately 100,000 new skilled trades workers over the next decade. It is important to note that the government in the last four years has dramatically enhanced skilled trades funding (especially in Ontario), and filling the skills gap is now a top priority for almost all ministries across the Ontario government. These investments are both noticed and greatly appreciated.

See *Tradespeople* on Page 5



Tradespeople

Second, we had lots of people interested in the trades both domestically and internationally. Specifically, high schools had shop classes, and new immigrants either had or were willing to learn the specialized skill sets we require in residential construction, including but not limited to low-rise forming, house framing, high-rise forming and other finishing careers.

So what can we do now?

Moving forward, we can address the skills shortage through two streams:

targeted immigration and improved domestic supply. For immigration, we need to remove barriers and red tape and get back to targeting the specific skill sets and skilled trades careers that are in demand. Ontario needs the same rights as Quebec to select the immigrants needed to fill in the demand for specialized careers.

With respect to domestic supply, we need to: recognize how the residential construction industry operates and the specialized skill sets required; create and expand the specialized skill set training programs; and expand employer incentives related to specialized skill sets.

In addition, we need to remove barriers and stigmas impacting the skilled trades, and invest in a workplace culture that will appeal to today's youth and new immigrants. Specifically, we need to focus on recruiting skilled individuals into the sector and then retaining them. Three steps to achieve this are:

- **Onboarding and Mentorship:** Training providers, employers, unions, and the government are investing heavily in trades promotions which is excellent. What is even better is investing in new workers and initial experiences to ensure those interested in the trades stay in the trades.
- **DEI Programs including Anti-Racism and Women in the Trades Initiatives:** Traditional recruitment methods via family and friends will no longer suffice to sustain our workforce. Key opportunities exist to reach out to traditionally underrepresented groups – women and BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour). Individuals need to be encouraged to enter the industry, and we must ensure that construction is a welcoming and safe place for them. Construction can no longer function as a male-dominated industry. We launched the #BIPOCinConstruction campaign to showcase BIPOC workers in our industry who love working in



construction in an effort to attract more diverse people to the trades. For more RESCON initiatives focused on DEI, see our recent blog [here](#).

- **Improve Pathways and Information:** The Ontario government and MLTSD have made this a priority, and skilled trades have received increased attention and focus over the last four years. These efforts are incredible and have already started to create markable improvements.

As the Ontario skilled trades strategy continues, we need to double down and increase our focus on the specialized skill sets needed to build Ontario homes.

In conclusion, more work is required, and we have a great foundation to build on.

As a final thought, I would like to provide links to four associations/programs that do incredible work. For more information, reach out to me at pariser@rescon.com or peruse one of the links below:

- **[Building Opportunities for Life Today \(BOLT\)](#)** - An organization that specializes in helping underprivileged youth obtain education, training, and careers in the skilled trades. They recently launched a new video series highlighting construction careers in high-rise residential construction.
- **[Skills Ontario](#)** - The pre-eminent skilled trades promotion association that provides today's youth (and their influencers) with vital information on all skilled trades. It is important to note the incredible number of virtual events, competitions and webinars Skills Ontario has been able to produce since the pandemic started.
- **[Step to Construction](#)** - Are you a high school student (or parent of one) in TDSB? This program allows students to experience a variety of trades through on-site job-shadowing opportunities.



HOUSING CRISIS, LABOUR SHORTAGE IN THE MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

Grant Cameron

The housing crisis and labour shortage were key issues highlighted by RESCON in October, along with the need for a standardized, streamlined and digitized development approvals process across all municipalities.

Lack of housing received considerable attention from party leaders during the federal election campaign and the conversation continued beyond the hustings as the media remained focused on the issue in October.

RESCON president Richard Lyall wrote about the crisis in [The Toronto Sun](#) and noted that no one level of government can bring about meaningful change on its own.

"The federal government has levers it can apply to produce housing, but to move the needle it will need the province, regions and municipalities on side as well," he wrote.

He's correct, of course. When it comes to dealing with barriers to the development approvals process and housing, there are myriad issues.

"Housing is an incredibly complex industry – perhaps the most regulated of our industries," Lyall wrote in the article. "We have hundreds of contractors, tens of thousands of workers, many different kinds of materials, and a development approvals process that includes up to 45 different government agencies, ministries and organizations."

The labour shortage was also an issue that received considerable media attention in October. Our thoughts on the matter were covered by several publications.

Lyall was [interviewed](#) by host Leslie Roberts on CFRA 580 News Talk Radio in Ottawa and spoke about the need for more people to take up the trades as well as how to get into the industry.

In a [column](#) in Canadian Real Estate Wealth, he noted that we need more youth, women and underrepresented people to take up training and pursue careers in the construction industry to offset anticipated retirements.

Ontario Citizenship and Multiculturalism Minister Parm Gill noted at a recent webinar sponsored by RESCON that over the next decade the province's construction industry will need 100,000 workers to keep pace with growth of the industry and the number of Baby Boomers expected to retire.

Unfortunately, that's almost 22,000 more workers than are likely to enter the industry over the 10-year period.

In a [Globe & Mail](#) article, RESCON VP Andrew Pariser stated that the industry is experiencing a tighter labour

market than ever before, and that approximately 100,000 new workers are needed over the next decade.

He suggested a couple of ways to fix the problem: train more people who are presently in Canada and recruit through immigration.

In a [Builder Bites](#) column, Lyall outlined three ways to get more people into the trades: marketing and promoting the industry to youth and new immigrants; enabling jobseekers to easily get information about in-demand careers and industries and find out where to get opportunities and training; and putting supports in place to help employers who hire and employ skilled tradespeople.

In a [Toronto Storeys](#) article on the issue, he pointed out that RESCON has been sounding the alarm on the issue for some time now and more work needs to be done to get students into the trades instead of being ushered into post-secondary institutions.

"Getting a degree in philosophy is great, but maybe you'd be better off reading Plato on the side because that isn't going to get you a job," Lyall stated in the article.

On the issue of digitization, RESCON director of building science and innovation Paul De Berardis noted in a story in [Daily Commercial News](#) that the development approvals process is too slow, lags behind other jurisdictions and needs to be digitalized.

Research from other jurisdictions around the globe has shown that breaking down barriers between provincial, regional and municipal governments and bringing the process to a digital platform is the only way forward.

RESCON, meanwhile, distributed two press releases in October – one on [lowering WSIB premiums](#), the other on [Mental Illness Awareness Week](#).

Our press release on the premiums ran in [Daily Commercial News](#), [Canadian HR Reporter](#) and [Canadian Business Journal](#).

For Mental Illness Awareness Week, I penned an article in [Rock to Road](#) publication and noted that work-related stress, depression and anxiety are now the most reported workplace health and safety issues in the construction industry.

Our [Women in Construction conference](#) was covered in a story in [Daily Commercial News](#) which noted women are still facing barriers to entering the industry.

"The top reason," as explained by France Daviault, executive director of the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum, "is that there is still harassment and bullying on worksites."



ONTARIO BUILDING CODE CHANGES WILL BE IN EFFECT AT END OF 2023

Paul De Berardis

Stairs, guards, and handrails

As a reminder to all RESCON members, please be advised that changes to stair, guard and handrail requirements will be in effect in Ontario for all permits applied for on or after January 1, 2022.

For more details about the upcoming changes, click [here](#).

Proposed changes for the next edition of Ontario's Building Code (OBC)

The Government of Ontario has committed to increasing harmonization of the technical requirements in construction codes across Canada. A Reconciliation Agreement was signed on August 27, 2020, by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, committing Ontario to:

- Reducing the number of technical differences between its Code and the National Codes.
- Releasing increasingly harmonized editions of its Code within specific timeframes following the release of new National Codes, including making the upcoming next edition of Ontario's Building Code in effect 24 months after the release of the next National Codes.

It is expected that the next edition of Ontario's Building Code will be in effect at the end of 2023, pending the anticipated December 2021 release of the 2020 National Construction Codes. As part of getting to the next edition of the OBC, the ministry has planned two rounds of public consultation:

- **Fall 2021:** Existing technical variations between Ontario's Building Code and the current 2015 National Construction Codes.
- **Winter 2022:** Following the release of the 2020 National Construction Code (expected December 2021), new technical variations between the OBC and NBC will seek to further harmonize.

As part of the Fall 2021 consultation currently underway and set to close on December 4, 2021, the harmonization proposals include the following major areas:

- Secondary suites in houses (e.g., defining secondary suites and establishing ceiling heights)
- Standpipe systems (e.g., adhering more closely with NFPA 14, "Installation of Standpipe and Hose Systems")
- Fire sprinklers, fire alarm systems and carbon monoxide alarms (e.g., requiring sprinklers and fire alarm systems in more buildings and expanding the use of carbon monoxide alarms)

- Braced-wall panels (e.g., applying to a wider range of scenarios)
- Mezzanine designs (e.g., changing the design of mezzanines in large commercial buildings)
- Soil gas/radon (e.g., adopting a proactive approach to address radon)
- Various plumbing requirements (e.g., removing certain provisions related to floor drains and separate services)
- House ventilation requirements (e.g., greater application of the use of cleaning devices to address contaminants)
- Guard design for balconies and stairways (e.g., allowing climbable elements in guards located up to 4.2 metres from adjacent floor levels)

Approximately 60 per cent of Ontario's code is currently consistent with the National Construction Codes. These fall 2021 proposals include changes that would further reduce the number of technical variations between Ontario's Building Code and National Construction Codes.

It is expected that the next edition of Ontario's Building Code will be in effect at the end of 2023, pending the anticipated December 2021 release of the 2020 National Construction Codes.

RESCON is engaged in the consultation and will be reviewing the approximately 700 proposed building code changes relating to increasing the harmonization of national construction codes and will be submitting feedback to the ministry on behalf of our members.

The detailed list of proposed harmonization changes for the fall 2021 consultation can be found by clicking [here](#).

Moving forward, the upcoming winter 2022 consultation will bring additional proposed changes for the next edition of Ontario's Building Code that will focus on further harmonization with the soon-to-be-released 2020 National Construction Code changes.

RESCON members are welcome to engage in the consultation process either directly with the ministry or through the comments RESCON will be preparing.



#BIPOCINCONSTRUCTION CAMPAIGN OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED THIS WEEK

Amina Dibe

Last September, RESCON officially launched the Anti-Racism Roundtable. This roundtable, chaired by me, consists of 52 members, which includes RESCON members (residential builders/developers), residential and infrastructure subtrades, unions, training providers (secondary and post-secondary), employment agencies, health and safety professionals, and the provincial government.

We've established three subcommittees through the roundtable: workplace policies; training and education; and marketing and communications.

In both general roundtable meetings and subcommittee meetings, RESCON policy and programs analyst Ahd AlAshry and I continuously heard a common concern among all members – “How do we attract more diverse youth into the construction industry and skilled trades?”

We know that by 2031, in Ontario alone, 100,000 construction workers will need to be recruited and trained to offset retirements from the industry. We also know that traditional recruitment methods alone will no longer be sufficient to sustain our workforce.

Looking at the general labour pool, we find a real opportunity to sustain our workforce by reaching out to underrepresented groups – including youth from BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) communities.

Towards informing our efforts to attract BIPOC youth to our industry, we launched the BIPOC Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) this past April through the Training and Education subcommittee. This YAC gave us first-hand insight into the experiences of BIPOC youth just getting started in construction.

When asked about how they got into the industry, most of them noted a lack of clear outreach and promotion about careers in construction. Moreover, once they got on jobsites, they noticed that not many workers looked like them.

Hearing both these points led us to create the #BIPOCinConstruction campaign to highlight the diverse voices in our industry in an effort to attract more BIPOC youth into construction.

The campaign officially launched this week to line up with National Skilled Trades and Technology Week and National Construction Day which was Nov. 3.

Over the summer and early fall, we interviewed over 10 BIPOC workers in construction – spanning subsectors of the industry (ICI, residential) and from

both construction management and trades roles, to gather testimonials about their experience working in the industry as racialized people.

We heard from Shaynne Harper, a construction craft worker apprentice in residential high-rise forming. He joined the industry through the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program for grade 12 students and later joined the Construction Craft Worker program at the LiUNA Local 183 Training Centre.

Shaynne's dad was a welder, and many of those around him growing up were in the trades too, which always inspired him to join the industry.

When asked about what he likes about the job, he said, “Having a hardworking and collaborative crew and a mentoring foreman makes the work less of a job and more of a hobby and seeing the result after all the hard work you and your crew put in is my favourite part of the job.”

We also heard from MJ, a concrete former with Local 27. She grew up in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. She had family members who worked in the construction industry, but despite all the family ties, getting into the industry in Canada and having someone give her a chance was very difficult. However, she was able to get her first opportunity through Toronto Youth Job Corps and has been in the industry since.

When asked about what inspires her as a woman in construction, she noted, “seeing another girl on site and how she rocked and rolled like crazy made me know that I can do it ... it helped me believe in myself.”

She also noted that when dealing with difficult situations and difficult people on site, the best thing to do is speak up and make sure you have a mentor.

She has had multiple mentors that have provided advice and guided her on her career journey. She noted it also helps when mentors and the people you work with on site look like you.

To hear more testimonials from BIPOC workers in construction, go to [RESCON's Twitter site](#).

We are encouraging roundtable members to share the testimonials on social media, in upcoming newsletters, and use them in future career outreach and promotion.

These testimonials can be shared with school boards, teachers, guidance councillors, and students – and we hope they raise awareness about careers in construction and that construction is a welcoming industry for BIPOC youth.

WHERE WILL PEOPLE LIVE?

COLUMN



By Richard Lyall
for The Toronto Sun
Oct. 8, 2021

There was plenty of talk during the federal election campaign about the housing crisis we face in this country, and I am hopeful that the conversation will continue beyond the hustings and lead to concrete action.

The Liberals pledged to speed up housing construction, build or repair as many as 1.4 million homes over the next four years, and invest in e-permitting technology to help communities streamline the planning process.

However, it was correctly pointed out at various times during the campaign that no one level of government can effect meaningful change on their own. The federal government has levers it can apply to produce housing, but to move the needle it will need the province, regions and municipalities on side as well.

When it comes to dealing with barriers to the development approvals process and housing, there are a labyrinth of issues.

Housing is an incredibly complex industry – perhaps the most regulated of our industries. We have hundreds of contractors, tens of thousands of workers, many different kinds of materials, and a development approvals process that includes up to 45 different government agencies, ministries and organizations.

Without that alignment at the provincial, regional and municipal level – and with the various players involved in the process at each level – it will be difficult to make gains.

Some of the housing numbers floated on the campaign trail just weren't achievable. There is no way to suddenly

turn on the tap and produce hundreds of thousands of extra housing units. We're not producing enough as it is. I don't think the party leaders were intentionally misleading the public, but the whopping numbers spoke to the fact they really don't understand the industry and were making up policy on the fly.

The situation is dire and action is needed. The time required to navigate the approvals process is excessive by any comparable measure. Canada ranked 64th out of 190 countries when it comes to construction permitting, according to the World Bank.

Projects get tied up for years due to red tape. Meanwhile, the supply chain is a mess.

Presently, we can't build enough housing for our existing population. With immigration set to top 400,000 a year for the next few years, where are these people going to live?

Reports commissioned by RESCON have shown the delays are growing. Other reports recently completed by the Board of Trade and the CD Howe Institute highlight the threat to Toronto's future economic prospects.

It's a very disturbing situation but it can be fixed. There is no good reason why we can't speed-up the approvals process and begin to meet demand. Builders are resilient. If you give them the tools, they will meet the challenge. We need to modernize and digitize the approvals process so we can find market equilibrium again.

RESCON is looking at organizing a housing supply summit in February to bring the various levels of government, industry and thought leaders to the table to figure out a way to produce more housing. Housing is a need, not a want. We must find a way to build more housing. Our economic future depends on it.

OPINION:

DEVELOPERS STILL FACING ROADBLOCKS

COLUMN

By Richard Lyall
for Canadian Real Estate Wealth
October 27, 2021

We're in desperate need of housing in the GTA. Yet, developers still face roadblocks when they try to take action to boost supply.

A big part of Toronto's problem is that NIMBYism is being allowed to dictate housing policy. NIMBYs often put pressure on city councillors to vote against any kind of development. They threaten development of all forms of accommodation, whether it be rental, affordable, or private housing.

In North York, for example, the Bayview Woods Neighbourhood Association was recently formed to object to an ambitious proposal to build 15 apartment buildings of various height with a total of 1,504 units on the Tyndale University site at 3377 Bayview Ave., south of Steeles Avenue. The group has cited a number of concerns, one being that Bayview is not designated as a high-density corridor.

In the Liberty Village area of Toronto, meanwhile, a proposal to add three 30-storey condos is facing opposition because the local residents' association doesn't want more condos built in the area.

According to new research done by the Smart Prosperity Institute, Ontario will need 910,000 new homes over the next decade. But that is unlikely to happen as Toronto is lagging other jurisdictions. The city's housing starts rose by only 1.4 per cent (or 500 units) compared to the 2015 to 2019 average – well short of the national rate of 26 per cent over the same four-year period.

If we are to solve the housing situation, Toronto needs an Official Plan that is more reflective of the present housing situation. The city is presently updating the plan, so it's the perfect time to right the wrongs. The plan must allow a greater mix of housing and permit more housing near transit stations.

There are many neighbourhoods where more housing could be built, especially along main streets and avenues. More mid-rise and multi-plex buildings, semi-detached homes, townhouses could be built in these areas. We must allow more density if we are to keep up with anticipated population growth.

The Ontario government has taken steps to encourage cities to put higher density, mixed-use developments



near transit as a means of boosting housing supply and increasing transit ridership. Minister of Transportation (GTA) Kinga Surma has explained that the program will bring housing closer to transit, helping to increase ridership, reduce congestion and stimulate economic growth.

It's an approach that has been used with great success in Vancouver and a number of other jurisdictions around the world, including Tokyo, Japan, London, U.K., Sydney, Australia, and Washington, D.C.

However, Toronto's planning division recently did an analysis of more than 180 potential major transit station areas and determined that six per cent, or 11 stations, would not be appropriate areas to increase density. In other words, the city is pushing back against the provincial mandate and determined that city policy trumps provincial policy.

This is unacceptable. The population of the GTA is expected to grow by 2.27 million people over the next 10 years. People must be able to live near transit.

Presently, families are living in hovels while bureaucrats split hairs. It's pointless, irrational, and unnecessary. Smacks of a make-work project to block, rather than promote, new homes and rentals being built.

There is plenty of space available in Toronto for intensification. The city must do better.

THREE WAYS

TO GET MORE PEOPLE INTO THE TRADES

COLUMN

By Richard Lyall
for Builder Bites
Oct. 18, 2021

If we don't take action, the construction industry faces a shortage of skilled trades in the not-too-distant future.

Over the next decade, the province's construction industry will need 100,000 workers to keep pace with the growth of the industry and the number of skilled trades set to retire. However, latest projections show that we are destined to fall roughly 22,000 workers short of that mark.

Clearly then, we must get more people to take up the tools. That means we must reach out to more youth, women and underrepresented groups to make up for the Baby Boomers that are set to retire.

There will be more demand for skilled trades on the ICI side of construction because of investment in infrastructure such as subways, rail electrification projects and hospital projects in the GTA. In residential construction, a pent-up demand and immigration will fuel the need for housing. In other words, there will be plenty of construction work to go around, just not enough talent.

Our industry must find ways to recruit and retain workers, so we can build the supply of much-needed housing and rentals.

We set out our thoughts on this issue in a submission to the Ontario Workforce Recovery Advisory Committee (OWRAC). The committee was established by Labour, Training and Skills Development Minister Monte McNaughton to provide recommendations to shape the future of work in the province.

First, we must start by marketing and promoting the industry to youth and new immigrants. By adjusting our immigration program, we prioritize those who are interested in specialized careers in the residential construction sector, including but not limited to low-rise forming, concrete and drain workers, and various finishing trades.

In construction, specific voluntary-based skilled trades continue to rely on skilled foreign workers to offset domestic training programs. The current immigration system does not prioritize these careers adequately and therefore has created barriers for immigrants with these employable skills.

The trade equivalency assessment process should consider an immigrant's skill sets and his or her potential



contributions to the construction industry at equal footing to other skilled workers across construction and the broader economy.

Second, jobseekers must be able to easily get information about in-demand careers and industries and find out where to get opportunities and training.

Existing marketing materials and digital tools should be used by industry and government alike. The Job Talks video series, which profiles almost 50 careers in the construction trades, is a great example of ways to engage students.

A digital portal that's being created as a result of Skilled Trades Ontario being formed will help ensure that apprentices are progressing through their training and remain on track to certification.

Third, supports must be put in place to help employers who hire and employ skilled tradespeople, in particular graduates of specialized training and college programs. Consideration should be given to rewarding employers with robust mentorship programs.

Government-funded training programs should have significant mentorship components to ensure that youth are guided through their career pathways. They should also be extended to non-apprenticeable trades.

Because many workers in the residential sector learn on the job, employers should be compensated for the training they provide. Our future depends on ensuring we have enough skilled trades to work in construction. There is no time to waste.

TRAINING:

COLUMN



MORE PEOPLE NEEDED IN THE TRADES

*By Richard Lyall
for Canadian Real Estate Wealth
Oct. 6, 2021*

The housing crisis facing our country is finally receiving the attention it deserves, but there is another equally troubling situation that the construction industry must contend with that also threatens our economic recovery.

The construction industry faces a shortage of skilled trades. We need more youth, women and underrepresented people to take up training and pursue careers in the industry to offset anticipated retirements. Without the workers, we will not be able to build that much-needed housing.

Ontario Citizenship and Multiculturalism Minister Parm Gill noted at a recent webinar sponsored by RESCON that over the next decade the province's construction industry will need 100,000 workers to keep pace with growth of the industry and the number of Baby Boomers expected to retire.

Unfortunately, that's almost 22,000 more workers than are likely to enter the industry over the 10-year period. We must get more people into the industry – whether it be in the field or in the office.

Hefty investments in infrastructure such as subway expansions, rail electrification projects in the GTA and a number of large hospital projects will fuel demand for

trades on the industrial, commercial, institutional side. On the residential side, an upward swing in housing starts is expected over the coming decade, bolstered by pent-up demand and immigration-driven population growth.

The challenge our industry faces is how to recruit and retain workers, and ensure the province has the talent it needs to build the supply of housing and rental buildings.

“ We need more youth, women and underrepresented people to take up training and pursue careers in the industry to offset retirements. ”

RESCON has three solid ideas.

First, we must focus on marketing in-demand careers to youth and immigrants, second, enable jobseekers and workers to easily access information about in-demand careers and industries, and third, provide supports for employers who hire and employ skilled trades.

We outlined our plan recently in a submission to the Ontario Workforce Recovery Advisory Committee (OWRAC). The committee was established by Labour, Training and Skills Development Minister Monte McNaughton to provide recommendations to shape the future of work in the province.

See *Shortage* on Page 14

LABOUR:

INDUSTRY GRAPPLES WITH SHORTAGE

NEWS



By Neil Sharma
Storeys
Oct. 21, 2021

The labour shortage in Toronto's construction industry has left developers scrambling to meet project delivery deadlines and, according to the Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON), the problem shows nary a sign of dissipating anytime soon.

"You do have a lot of mobility within the construction industry with people going from job to job, and there certainly have been challenges internally. Because of the pandemic, people couldn't go to work, sometimes because they had a relative at home with an immunocompromised system," Richard Lyall, President of RESCON, said.

Many of the problems began with supply chain delays, which catalyzed widespread scheduling problems. Construction crews would sometimes have to halt work at one site because materials hadn't arrived and move on

to the next site, at which point they'd be unable to return to the first site when materials were eventually delivered. Moreover, many projects that were supposed to launch in 2020 were postponed until this year, and with too many active job sites and too few trades, there have invariably been delays.

"It's been an unusual set of circumstances with COVID throwing a wrench into the supply chain and that has affected demand," Lyall said.

"We do have certain supply chain problems where jobs can get held up because of material delivery delays. We have peak demand times in the spring and the fall, and that puts additional pressure on labour, but ultimately we have had problems with scheduling causing things to happen in fits and starts."

The labour shortage is especially acute in the home renovation sector of the construction industry where cash jobs are commonplace.

See *Labour* on Page 14

Shortage

To ensure Ontario is the top jurisdiction for talent, it is crucial that greater focus is put on high-growth sectors like construction and the jobs that are in demand.

Construction will continue to drive the economic recovery of Ontario so marketing and promotion of our industry must be aimed at youth and immigrants who are looking to settle in Ontario.

Many of the anticipated jobs, including bricklayers, stucco installers, concrete and drain workers, elevator installers, crane operators and other finishing trades are in the residential construction sector and will require specialized skill sets.

We must recruit individuals who are willing to learn the specialized skill sets needed to have a fulfilling and lucrative career in residential construction.

Ontario needs to go back to what worked before and welcome immigrants interested in specialized careers in the residential sector. In construction, specific voluntary-based trades continue to rely on skilled foreign workers to offset domestic training programs. The current immigration system has trouble recognizing these careers as skilled and therefore has created barriers for immigrants with these skills.

The trade equivalency assessment process should consider skilled immigrants and their contributions to the construction industry.

We must also support workers by ensuring that jobseekers can easily access information publicly about in-demand careers and industries and find out what requirements are needed and where to go for training.

Digital tools and existing marketing materials should continue to be used by industry and government alike.

Labour

Anecdotally, Lyall has heard of people collecting Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB) payments while taking cash jobs on the side, with virtually no incentive to work full-time.

However, the owner of Greengold Construction confirmed to STOREYS that finding subcontractors is indeed arduous for that very reason.

“Right now, there’s more of a labour issue than a supply chain issue, because with CRB a lot of the labour force isn’t going to work anymore, so it’s harder to find labour,” Zach Goldstein said.

“It’s been happening for the last six to eight months and it’s getting worse. I think material and labour shortages will persist for another six to eight months.”

The dearth of skilled trades was inevitable. Even before the pandemic, RESCON had been sounding the alarm on a looming shortage of up to 90,000 workers over the next 10 years in Ontario because of retirements and a largely barren pipeline of young workers.

Lyall says that high school students are often dissuaded

For example, the Job Talks Construction resource is an open-source video series profiling 25 different jobs in the construction skilled trades.

These visual tools are a great way to help students learn more about the trades.

I am encouraged that a digital portal will be created through the formation of Skilled Trades Ontario to help ensure that apprentices are progressing through their training and remain on track to certification.

Our hope is that the digital portal will be easy to use, for both apprentices, jobseekers, journeypeople and employers.

Employers must also be fully supported so they can adapt to today’s ever-changing environment. The government should consider increasing on-the-job supports for employers who hire and employ skilled trades people – specifically graduates of specialized training and college programs.

Most skilled trade workers in the residential construction industry fall under voluntary trades. This means that training is largely done on the job.

Employers should be compensated for the training they provide.

Employers with robust mentorship programs should be rewarded and government-funded training programs should have significant mentorship components to ensure that youth are guided through their career pathways. This will ensure youth are kept on track and reduce drop-off rates among new trainees.

Training the next generation for a career in construction needs to be a priority.

Our economic future is at stake.



It’s been an unusual set of circumstances with COVID throwing a wrench into the supply chain and that has affected demand.

from entering the trades and are instead ushered into post-secondary institutions, even though there’s an overabundance of graduates vying for fewer and fewer jobs.

“Getting a degree in philosophy is great, but maybe you’d be better off reading Plato on the side because that isn’t going to get you a job,” he said.

“Thankfully, the government is engaged in improving the situation with college trades and highlighting the benefits of a career in construction. Although there’s been some reform of provincial training and apprenticeship systems, we’re not out of the woods yet because more work has to be done with respect to attracting skilled trades through immigration.”

LOWER RATES

SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS ARE WORKING

NEWS

Oct. 6, 2021, Vaughan, Ont. – The Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON) is pleased that the province is reducing WSIB premiums as it will enable construction employers to put the money towards making worksites safer.

“Today’s announcement will allow employers in the construction industry to increase their investment in health and safety and grow their businesses, allowing construction to continue to lead the economic recovery,” says RESCON VP Andrew Pariser, who is also chair of the organization’s health and safety committee.

“Premium rate decreases highlight that health and safety efforts in residential construction are working. RESCON supports the approach that the risk should be reflected in the rate. Lower rates show our safety improvements are working.”

Labour, Training and Skills Development Minister Monte McNaughton announced that the WSIB will cut premium rates in 2022 by \$168 million, bringing the total reduction in premiums since 2018 to \$2.4 billion. Legislation will also be introduced to allow for a significant portion of the WSIB’s current reserve, currently valued at about \$6.1 billion, to be distributed to safe employers.

RESCON supports the change as it will provide some relief to construction employers in Ontario who have been dealing with COVID-19 and ensuring that their worksites are safe for workers.

Premium rate decreases highlight that health and safety efforts in residential construction are working.

- Andrew Pariser

It is equally important to note that these rate reductions are the direct result of tremendous improvements to the WSIB’s sufficiency ratio which once was below 80 per cent and is now well above 115 per cent. As a result, the WSIB system remains in a funding surplus and the change proposed by the government will have no impact on taxpayers or at the expense of injured workers.

Currently, the WSIB is not permitted to distribute surpluses to employers. New legislation intended to be introduced later in the fall would, if passed, require the WSIB to return excess funds to employers once the WSIB’s surplus reaches 125 per cent, with the option to do so earlier, thus ensuring premiums paid by employers reflect the risk associated.

“Linking the premium ceiling to inflation protects workers and gives construction employers the flexibility they need to invest in safety, their businesses and the Ontario economy,” Pariser adds. “RESCON applauds the funding corridor approach as it improves future rate predictability and balances the needs of employers and workers.”



SILENT EPIDEMIC

MORE DIALOGUE NEEDED ON MENTAL HEALTH

ARTICLE



By Grant Cameron
for Rock to Road
October 2021

Slips, trips and falls often top the list when safety issues on construction jobsites are discussed. But there's another less visible threat that's just as dangerous – mental illness.

Alarming, it is the number one cause of disability in this country. Work-related stress, depression and anxiety are now the most reported workplace health issues in the construction industry.

Mental illness affects people of all ages, education and income levels and, while 44 per cent of Canadians say they have coped with a mental health challenge, sadly only 25 per cent get the help they need.

As Richard Lyall, president of the Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON), points out, COVID-19 has brought on even more new challenges and amplified the struggles that Canadians face, so we must reduce the stigma and encourage open conversation about mental health issues, as that is the first step to helping those who are struggling.

"Many Canadians in construction and other industries are living with mental health conditions year-round," says Lyall. "We must work towards a Canada where all those who need mental health resources can ask for help and get the support they need without feeling weak or labelled

inadequate.

"We must ensure that people who work in the construction industry are aware of the benefits and resources available through industry health and wellness funds as well as government programs."

Indeed, RESCON is encouraging more dialogue about mental health issues within the construction industry – whether it be amongst the skilled trades who work on site or employees in the offices.

The organization made combating mental health and addictions a strategic priority back in 2017 and now hosts an annual mental health and addictions symposium every November to raise awareness, share resources and best practices. The focus of the event this year is on the opioid crisis as well as mental health first-aid training.

RESCON VP Andrew Pariser, who is chair of the organization's health and safety committee, says Ontario's construction workforce has been tested by the COVID-19 pandemic.

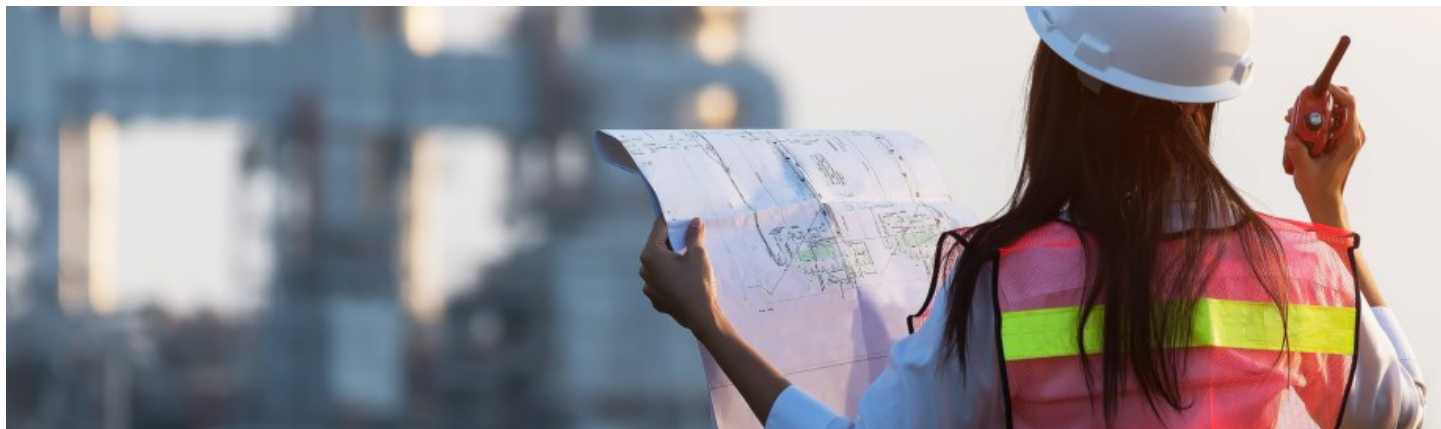
"The pandemic has increased mental and physical strain and added to the stress felt by workers on construction sites.

"We must tackle the issue of addressing mental health in Ontario's construction workforce by making sure that all workers on a jobsite know how to get help when they need it and reach out for assistance with the mental health challenges they face."

See *Epidemic* on Page 18

WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION

BLOG



RESCON HOLDS INAUGURAL WEBINAR

*By Grant Cameron
RESCON blog
October 25, 2021*

With 100,000 additional workers required in Ontario's construction industry over the next decade, there is a need for more women to take up the tools, Colleges and Universities Minister Jill Dunlop said in remarks at the first-ever Women in Construction webinar organized by RESCON.

"It's no secret that the construction industry has historically been composed largely of men," she told the audience. "Women account for just over 12 per cent of employment in construction in Ontario.

"This tells us that we need to do things differently."

Dunlop said there needs to be greater awareness generated among women about the rewarding careers that exist in the skilled trades, including the construction industry.

"That means we need to break down barriers that make it difficult for women to pursue careers in the field."

Dunlop, a longtime champion of women in the skilled trades, was keynote speaker at the event. She noted that the construction industry accounts for 7.2 per cent, or \$50.9 billion of Ontario's GDP, and is essential to the economy – even more so as the province continues to recover from COVID-19.

She said a career in the skilled trades offers great earning potential, a chance to use cutting-edge technology, offers many paths to advancement, and workers get paid while they learn and earn transferrable skills.

"Skilled labour jobs are good jobs that can provide a meaningful, financially stable career path for many in Ontario, including women."

Achieving equal representation for women in traditionally male-dominated industries is a priority for government, Dunlop said, and through partnerships between colleges, training providers, unions, government and organizations like RESCON, the situation for women is improving.

As the mother of three determined daughters, she said she wholeheartedly believes that women can accomplish anything they set their minds to. "We know that in the past and present, women have been crushing stereotypes and doing remarkable work in fields like engineering and construction." Dunlop said she is encouraged by events like RESCON's webinar that continue the conversation and inspire dialogue.

France Daviault, executive director of the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF), also spoke at the event. She shared research on participation rates among women in the skilled trades and presented information about the barriers they face and why they end up leaving.

See Webinar on Page 18

Webinar

That was followed by a panel discussion with Bailey Wood, a plumber and gasfitter with UA Local 46, Alexandra Wells, the first female tilesetter with LiUNA Local 183 who now works for a firm in the Niagara area, and Maryam Amin, an assistant production manager at Great Gulf. The women shared their experiences and gave advice for young women who are thinking of a career in the trades.

The discussion was moderated by Jennifer Green, director of competitions and young women's incentives at Skills Ontario.

Daviault noted that the proportion of total female apprenticeship registrations in construction, manufacturing and transportation is low, rising only slightly to 4.5 per cent in 2018 from 3.9 per cent in 2014.

Thirty years of research done on why women are underrepresented in the skilled trades, she said, shows there are a number of barriers to women entering the industry, such as the reputation of the industry, schedules that are difficult when women are primary caregivers, job postings don't state they are welcome, and the fact women don't see themselves in the ads, although that is changing.

Reasons cited for leaving include harassment or bullying on worksites, issues with access to washrooms, PPE does not fit, and difficulty finding caregivers.

There are remedies, though. For example, setting temporary quotas until there are more women represented in the workforce has been shown to work, said Daviault. She also suggested companies should implement a zero-tolerance policy for harassment on worksites and enforce them.

Companies also must ensure women have access to proper fitting PPE and suitable washroom facilities,

consider how to accommodate caregiving, and provide mentorship and support to women, she said.

Daviault also talked about the [Supporting Women in Trades initiative](#) which is aimed at creating sustained and measurable change for women.

The three female panelists, meanwhile, spoke about their experiences on the job, the barriers they've faced and what needs to be done to make the trades more appealing to women.

The consensus was they feel a need to prove themselves to their male counterparts even though they have the same credentials. They also felt the industry is getting better for female employees in the trades.

Wood said that on worksites where there is a dedicated washroom for women, it is often locked and sometimes can take days to get a key to open it. She said the keys should be readily accessible.

For Wells, a big hurdle has been making sure her ideas are heard. In the past, she'd find her suggestions ignored but when a male co-worker offered up the same idea it was approved. The solution, she said, is to talk to co-workers and keep at it every day – and not be afraid to ask questions.

Amin explained there are many benefits to working in construction management because she gets to learn new things every day and work with people on site as well as homeowners.

By way of advice, she noted there are many different divisions in construction, like planning or land and development, and women should educate themselves about the industry occupations that are available to them.

[Click here](#) to watch a recording of the webinar.

Epidemic

RESCON has long advocated for dedicated construction statistics to better understand the scope and depths of the issue. While actual statistics are difficult to come by, those that are available point to the fact that mental health injuries in the construction industry are higher than those in other sectors.

Last fall, then Ontario chief prevention officer Ron Kelusky noted in his remarks at RESCON's mental health symposium that work-related stress, depression and anxiety had overtaken musculoskeletal disorders as the most reported workplace health issue in the construction industry.

A report released last year shows 2,500 Ontarians died of drug overdoses in 2020, a 60-per-cent increase from the year before, and of those who died, 30 per cent were construction workers – by a wide margin the industry most impacted. The report was prepared by the Ontario Drug Policy Research Network, the office of the Chief Coroner for

Ontario, and Public Health Ontario.

Research by the Construction Industry Rehabilitation Plan (CIRP) in B.C. showed that 83 per cent of construction industry workers have experienced some form of moderate to severe mental health issue.

RESCON manager of government and stakeholder relations Amna Dibe, who recently completed a course on mental health first-aid, noted that several U.S. studies have found that suicide rates in the construction industry are up to three times higher than in other industries. Other studies indicated that at least one in five construction workers suffer from mental illness.

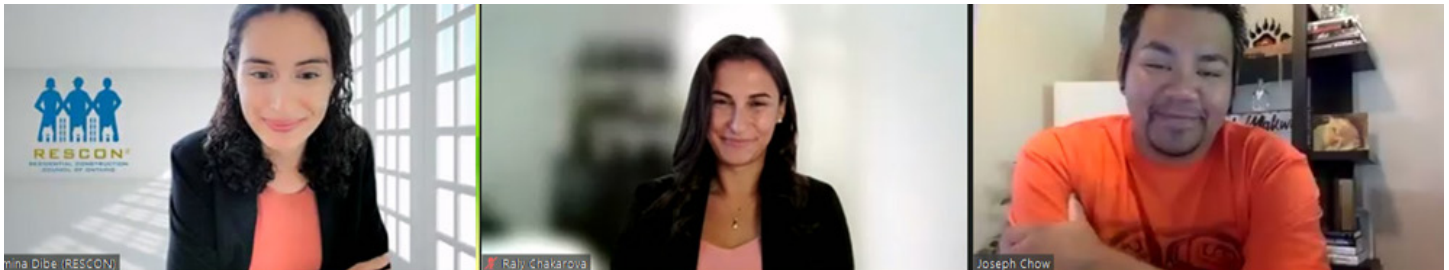
RESCON, through its annual symposium, is educating employers about the effects of mental illness and encourages any construction worker who is experiencing a mental health injury to seek help.

We have made progress on the issue, but there is still a long way to go.

ANTI-RACISM

EFFORTS MUST BE SUSTAINABLE, PANEL SAYS

ARTICLE



By Angela Gismondi
Daily Commercial News
October 6, 2021

There is a “racial reckoning” that has occurred over the past year and although many companies have taken action to combat racism, it’s important these actions go beyond the immediate gut reaction and are sustainable in the long-term.

That was the consensus from panellists at the second annual Addressing Racism in Construction event organized by the Residential Construction Council of Ontario.

“There is a reckoning happening but one of the challenges that I see in this line of work is the opportunity that we should not miss to make this work sustainable,” said Nosa Ero-Brown, assistant deputy minister with the Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate. “Quite often it’s easy for organizations and individuals to take action by talking or by Tweeting or various actions that it would appear on the surface that we are doing something but then the tendency is to go right back to the way we are doing things.”

Having those difficult conversations, keeping them going, getting to the heart of the matter and figuring out how to make progress is key, she added.

“A year later (after the murder of George Floyd) I will admit this time it does seem like a lot of investments but we absolutely need to do more, it’s not enough,” Ero-Brown said. “I think working with industry, with government, we need to come together to really have a community solution to what we are seeing in terms of systemic racism and hate.

“I’m in the Ontario public service and I can tell you just because you have an increase in the number of Black people in leadership doesn’t mean those Black people are safe, doesn’t mean they feel like they belong. There is a next level that needs to be done.”

Chris Campbell, equity and diversity representative with the Carpenters’ District Council of Ontario, said while

he applauds the various levels of government for putting millions of dollars into recruiting and training BIPOC youth and women in the construction industry, it’s just as important to have a statistical data breakdown of various racialized groups and to measure their successes and failure in the trades.

“My big thing is to be able to measure our progress. To do that we need all different facets of industry players to start putting this information together, that way we can pinpoint which community needs help and we can decipher it and from there go at it instead of guessing and throwing money at the issue,” said Campbell.

Joseph Chow, a service technician with Tridel and a First Nation, Metis and Inuit student adviser for the York Region District School Board, said one of the long-term challenges for his culture is needing to prove to the government that they self-identify as First Nations.

“We are the only culture that needs to show a status card to say, ‘I am First Nations,’” said Chow. “You can say you’re First Nation but the government doesn’t see you as being First Nation. To assist with the statistics we could have 150, 200 First Nation people on a jobsite but they don’t self-identify as First Nations because the government doesn’t see them as First Nations. That is one of the largest hurdles for our long-term goals, for my culture coming into the construction field: getting everybody self-identified that needs to be self-identified and who wants to be self-identified.”

Campbell said the stigma and the myth that hinders Black youth from seeking opportunities in the industry needs to be addressed. “Perception is reality,” Campbell said. “Let the customer, the client, the individuals we’re aiming TV ads, radio ads at...we should let them be portrayed more in these ads and these messages. Show the 21-year-old young person as a tradesman leaving work in his truck going to his home...showing him achieving to let them see how achievable this is.”

VACCINATIONS

ARTICLE



UNVACCINATED INDIVIDUALS WILL MISS OUT

By Ahd AlAshry & Andrew Pariser

RESCON blog

October 2021

For just over 19 months, COVID-19 has dominated every aspect of our lives, killed almost 9,900 Ontarians, and reshaped our future in ways we could not have imagined just two years ago.

However, hope is on the horizon, and it is remarkable to see how things flipped once vaccines – which are safe and effective – became widely available.

First, vaccines work. The data shows that the 85 per cent of the population that is double vaccinated account for only 15 per cent of all ICU cases in Ontario.

Second, the current public health and safety policies/restrictions in place (vaccine passports and immunization deadlines) mean if you aren't double vaccinated you are going to miss out. Miss on what? Here is a list of things:

No Vaccine, No Service!

Unvaccinated individuals over the age of 12 are prohibited from entering businesses that require a proof of vaccination, such as: restaurants and bars; sporting and recreational fitness facilities (e.g. gyms); waterparks; casinos, bingo halls, and all other gaming establishments; indoor meetings and event spaces; any food or drink establishments with dance facilities (night clubs and wedding receptions); and any rail or air travel.

Watching Ontario's daily COVID case counts go from 4,000+ a day to as low as 100+ says nothing less than vaccines are effective and our only way out of this pandemic. Specifically, the Ontario COVID-19 taskforce has set the vaccination target at 90 per cent. Unfortunately, there remains a minority of Ontarians who are still hesitant or resistant to getting their double shots, meaning there continues to be a lot of vaccine promotion still to be done.

RESCON, in partnership with several industry representatives, launched a vaccine survey to get a clear picture of the vaccination rates in the construction industry to better inform our vaccine promotion efforts. The survey ran from August to September, and we collected 1,000 responses from both on-site and in-office workers in all sectors of construction. Through the responses, we were able to learn about the main reasons why some people have not yet had their double shots, and which promotional efforts did and did not work.

When we went through the data, we found that in September, the vaccination rate in the construction industry essentially mirrored the public rate when looking at working-aged Ontarians. We also found that the two main reasons some were still afraid of getting their double shots were that they were "worried about the side effects/health implications" and were "waiting for more data on vaccine safety from the government." Please note, the majority of responses came in before Pfizer and Moderna had received full approval.

To help address these concerns, RESCON hosted Dr. Edward Wasser – founder of Medeva Inc. – during its last COVID-19 webinar, titled Vaccine Policy and Promotion in the Workplace. He helped answer and resolve these questions. [Click here](#) to watch the presentation. We encourage everyone to watch this extremely informative presentation as it answers questions about the vaccine, how it works, and dispels the myths.

Thank you to our members, industry partners, and broader construction industry for the extraordinary COVID-19 efforts that have been made, including but not limited to sharing the survey, COVID-19 safety information, and promoting vaccination.

We are close to the end, but it will only come with increased vaccination rates.

ONE ONTARIO

LETTER

On behalf of the One Ontario coalition, AECO Innovation Lab has sent the following open letter to Ontario Premier Doug Ford, calling on him to take immediate action to establish a Development Approval One Window Data and Information Exchange Standard that will lay the groundwork necessary for streamlining and digitizing the development approvals process.

Dear Premier Ford,

I am writing on behalf of the One Ontario coalition, representing the residential and ICI construction sector; mayors, administrators and building officials from every municipality; pertinent software providers; and various applicable law agencies and ministries. We need your leadership and support for the establishment of a Development Approval One Window Data and Information Exchange Standard that will lay the groundwork necessary for streamlining and digitizing the development approvals process. The One Ontario proposal is a tangible solution presented to the government by an unprecedented coalition of stakeholders who operate in this space, understand the problem and have researched best practices from around the world.

After extensive preparation, in March of this year, we submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs

and Housing (MMAH). It is aligned with the Simpler, Faster, Better Services Act. However, we are still waiting for guidance, much less approval. With recovery underway and a critical ever-growing housing demand exceeding supply, there is an urgent need to act.

According to the World Bank, Canada currently ranks 64th out of 190 countries in the world on development approval efficiency for routine building projects, and we are behind the many jurisdictions that have taken innovative steps to modernize and digitize their systems. Research shows that streamlining and integrating the development approval process will result in up to a 70% reduction in approval time to develop projects.

While some digitization of the building permit process is occurring in various Ontario municipalities, existing e-permitting platforms are siloed, fragmented and don't take into consideration the up to 45 applicable law agencies involved in broader development approvals. While positive, this route is inefficient and incomplete in scope. The fact is no single municipality can solve this problem on its own without provincial engagement and leadership. The current patchwork of digitization efforts is hindering broader streamlining efforts as municipal, regional and ministerial agencies each pursue their own unique digital solutions that are not interconnected and therefore restrict interoperability. Research shows that a top-down approach is necessary to implement impactful modernization. In our situation, this means a solution requires the support of the Ontario government.

One Ontario's proposal will lay the groundwork for a modern solution that will ensure Ontario remains a growing, economically robust, and innovative province. It will also eliminate data silos, giving the government of Ontario the complete transparency and visibility that it needs to facilitate increased housing supply across Ontario.

As a successful businessman and leader of Canada's economic powerhouse, you understand, innovation is time-sensitive and requires action. Developers and builders are trying their best to bring more housing to market faster but are forced to deal with the current regulatory approvals process that is slow and lacks transparency or accountability for applicants. We therefore need your leadership to kick-start this critical step.

Thank you for your consideration of this vital matter.
Sincerely and on behalf of the One Ontario Coalition,

Arash Shahi, Ph.D., P.Eng, PMP
CEO of AECO Innovation Lab and Principal Researcher
of One Ontario Initiative



#BIPOC IN CONSTRUCTION

TESTIMONIALS

RESCON, with the help of the Anti-Racism Roundtable, launched the first #BIPOCinConstruction testimonial campaign on Nov 1, in line with National Skilled Trades and Technology Week (Nov 1 – 5) and National Construction Day (Nov. 3).

Purpose of the campaign was to highlight the diverse

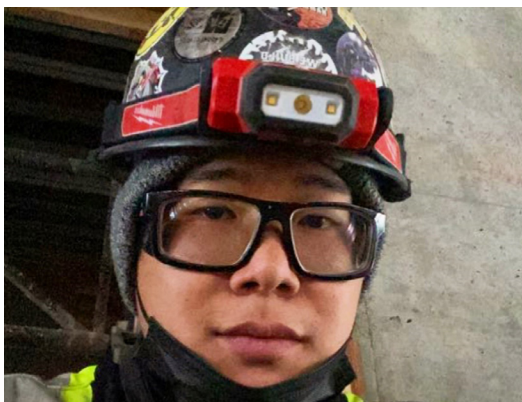
and racialized workers in construction in efforts to attract more BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) youth to our industry.

During the week, we shared testimonials of different workers.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the campaign.



MJ is a concrete former with Local 27. She grew up in St Vincent and the Grenadines and had family members who worked in the construction industry but despite all the family ties, getting into the industry in Canada and having someone give her a chance was very difficult. However, she was able to get her first opportunity through Toronto Youth Job Corps and has been in the industry since. Her favorite part about being part of the construction industry is the sense of accomplishment you feel of being part of growth.



David Kim is a Concrete Former third-year apprentice with Local 27 who came to Canada from South Korea at 12. When he was a teenager, he was shocked to learn from his friend, an ironmaker, how much you could make in the skilled trades, especially because construction is stigmatized as a 'bad job' in his community. He likes working in the industry because the potential is limitless, and construction can help young people reach their dreams and goals faster.



Shaynne is a craftworker in residential high-rise forming. He joined the industry through the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) for grade 12 students and later joined the Construction Craft Worker (CCW) program at the LIUNA Local 183 Training Centre. Shaynne's dad was a welder, and many of those around him growing up were in the trades too, which always inspired him to join the industry.

CAREERS IN CONSTRUCTION

The BOLT Foundation has launched a new five-part educational video series called [Careers in Construction](#) to better inform and inspire youth to pursue the most in-demand professions in the industry.

Sponsored by BMO, RESCON, Tridel, and the Ontario government, two videos profiling more than 10 different careers in the residential sub-sector have already been released, with three others to be released before the end of the year:

1. [Drywall and Painting Trades](#)
2. [Finishing Trades](#)
3. Forming Trades
4. Building Systems Trades
5. Site Management

“Stereotypes about the industry and lack of information on the career options and how to get started are main reasons why not enough young people are self-selecting into these in-demand and well-compensated careers,” says BOLT executive director Raly Chakarova. “Creating the videos is also a way to shine a light on lesser-known professions in the industry and spark an interest to learn more and consider them as careers.”

“This series is different from other great promotional videos like Job Talks because they take a more technical view of what each professional actually does and the critical role they play in the overall building process.”

The Careers in Construction webpage contains

information on starting salary and earning potential, relevant college programs and skilled training and unions.

“Research shows that youth with access to good career information make better career decisions,” says RESCON VP Andrew Pariser. “It also shows that youth exposed to construction careers are more likely to pick a career in construction.”

“These videos utilize that leading research and make information on construction careers accessible to Ontario’s youth. They are a critical resource for our educational partners and will help address our labour shortage.”

Over the next 10 years, Ontario will need to hire, train, and retain more than 115,000 construction workers, 55 per cent of whom will be in new housing, renovation, and maintenance, according to the latest BuildForce report. The average starting salary in construction is between \$22 and \$24 per hour, which is closer in line with Toronto’s living wage of \$22.08 per hour.

“Statistics show that there are challenges with youth unemployment and the community needs more tradespeople to keep the housing supply growing,” says Bill Hawryschuk, professor at the Centre for Construction and Engineering Technologies at George Brown College who was commissioned to film and narrate the series. “Young people will see from this campaign that there is more out there for them than just minimum wage jobs as they start their careers.”

RCCAO REPORT

- RCCAO welcomed the new Federal Cabinet, including Dominic LeBlanc who stays on as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs but also takes on the portfolios of Infrastructure and Communities. For more on RCCAO’s reaction to the new Cabinet, [click here](#).

- RCCAO Executive Director Nadia Todorova and Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association Executive Director Patrick McManus recently took part in a podcast discussing the impacts delayed utility locates have on the construction and infrastructure sector and what are some solutions to these issues. You can hear the podcast [here](#).

- New [Excess Soil Regulations](#) are slated to come into effect on January 1, 2022, around testing, tracking and registration of excess construction soils. As part of these upcoming regulatory changes, the [Resource Productivity & Recovery Authority \(RPPRA\)](#) is developing a registry where required notices will be filed. The Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks is currently holding topic-specific webinars to provide additional information on each element of the new regulation. Sessions on Source and Reuse Sites were held at the end of October and a session on Transportation of Excess Soil was held on

November 3rd. The Ministry is considering making more sessions available on these or other topics based on demand.

Infrastructure Projects

Friday November 5, 9 am to 11 am

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/194861545127>

Excess Soil Registry Regulatory Requirements

Friday November 12, 9 am to 11 am

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/194856309467>

Vac Trucks and Liquid Soil Management

Friday November 19, 9 am to 11 am

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/194852648517>

Qualified Persons (QP) and Excess Soil Planning

Wednesday November 24, 9 am to 11 am

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/195058494207>

Soil Depots and Storage Sites

Friday November 26, 9 am to 11 am

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/195065946497>