



FRONTLINE

We are pleased to present the inaugural issue of **FRONTLINE** the Ontario Construction Consortium Newsletter – for January/February 2020.

This newsletter will be published every two months – to update you on OCC initiatives and events. We hope you find it informative.

Visit our website <https://www.ontarioconstructionconsortium.org/> - it showcases our publications and activities and is regularly updated.

Please contact Executive Director Phil Gillies should you have any questions about OCC. Email – phil@ontarioconstructionconsortium.org Phone - 416-479-1646



WORKING FOR A STRONGER ONTARIO

For the betterment of the construction industry and communities across the province.

In the construction industry, we can't afford to let the quality of work, professionalism and knowledge become lax. OCC will be diligent in supporting a workforce that sets the standard across Canada. By working with government, industry, media and the public – the Consortium will prepare briefs, whitepapers and other materials to inform government and stakeholders of issues within Ontario's construction sectors: industrial, commercial, institutional and residential.

In this inaugural edition of **FRONTLINE** we tell you a bit about ourselves, we present our policy paper on apprenticeship and training, and update you on OCC's articles, columns and interviews in the media.

The Ontario Construction Consortium – a new voice for quality work, a robust training sector and safe workplaces.

Formed in 2018, the Ontario Construction Consortium is an organization dedicated to strengthening the construction industry through Advocacy, Education, Networking and Workforce Development. The OCC will be conducting research for dissemination to government, industry, media and the public. The Consortium will prepare briefs, position papers and other materials to inform government and stakeholders of issues within Ontario's construction sectors: industrial, commercial, institutional and residential. The Consortium will make presentations to inform stakeholders of issues and developments within the industry.

Policy Paper – Apprenticeship and Skills Training: Ontario at the Crossroads

Our most ambitious policy paper to date discusses the history and role of apprenticeship in Ontario, the current situation and proposals for change. Some things the government has put forward are positive and supportable, other proposals cause us concern.

<https://www.ontarioconstructionconsortium.org/apprenticeship-and-skills-training-ontario-at-the-crossroads/>

OCC in the News

Current Articles

In January, OCC reported in Daily Commercial News on the recent Prism Research report on workforce trends in the Ontario construction sector. The report, prepared for the Ontario Construction Secretariat, shows how the current shortage of skilled tradespeople could get much worse in coming years.

<https://canada.constructconnect.com/dcn/news/labour/2020/01/industry-perspectives-op-ed-ontario-workforce-trends-in-prism-report-a-concern-occ>

Also, in January, OCC's Phil Gillies joined the fray in ReNew Canada magazine – refuting claims that British Columbia's apprenticeship sector was strengthened by moving to portable skills sets. In fact, BC is moving away from skills sets, recognizing the need for well-trained tradespeople prepared under a robust apprenticeship system.

<https://www.ontarioconstructionconsortium.org/renew-op-ed-on-b-c-training-and-apprenticeship/>

Selected Reads from the Last Year

Daily Commercial News wrote about OCC in August of 2019 – *There’s a new kid on the block that will be working to influence the Ontario Government and stakeholders about issues affecting the ICI and residential construction sectors.*

<https://canada.constructconnect.com/dcn/news/associations/2019/08/occ-ontario-constructions-new-think-tank?fbclid=IwAR3eMDyiG-gFWifvTvrIs3BJjVZtq8VGPRY4TG3rwchKnxGLHGGdnuHXxL4>

Back in March of last year, OCC Executive Director Phil Gillies wrote a column in the **Toronto Sun** defending the high quality standards and good safety record of the unionized construction force – at a time when the Province’s Bill 66 was allowing municipalities to tear up their construction union contracts. Our sector mounted a strong campaign that saw the contracts saved at Toronto City Hall.

<https://torontosun.com/opinion/columnists/opinion-avoid-shoddy-work-by-using-unionized-tradespeople-for-public-construction-projects>

We were back in the **Daily Commercial News** last October – applauding the Ford government’s portfolio realignment – which saw skills and apprenticeships moved to the Ministry of Labour, but voicing concerns about proposals arising out of the 2019 Ontario Budget that would see the province moving our apprenticeship system to one of ‘portable skills sets’.

<https://canada.constructconnect.com/dcn/news/associations/2019/10/stakeholders-laud-new-skills-portfolio-but-urge-rethinking-of-skill-sets>

FRONTLINE is a publication of the the Ontario Construction Consortium - a think tank / lobby supported by unionized contractors and stakeholders from the province’s construction sector. We welcome your feedback. You can unsubscribe at any time by emailing phil@ontarioconstructionconsortium.org with the word Unsubscribe in the subject line.

Around and About



Painters Union President Bruno Mandic and OCC's Phil Gillies talked with Hon Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development at his Empire Club speech on January 15th



Toronto Mayor John Tory with OCC Executive Director Phil Gillies at the Canadian Club luncheon on December 4, 2019



OCC's Phil Gillies with Vaughan Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua at his Empire Club presentation on December 2, 2019



OCC Executive Director Phil Gillies has been elected to the Board of the Public Affairs Association of Canada, Ontario Chapter. Phil, second from the right, is pictured with his fellow directors.



OCC's Phil Gillies met with the City of Toronto's Colleen Dignam on February 11th. Colleen handles the Community Benefits file at Employment and Social Services department at City Hall. Phil assured her of the Consortium's strong support for this program.