

Highway Service Centres to get makeover

Infrastructure Ontario has its first Transportation redevelopment project to revitalize 23 service centres along Highways 400 and 401.

The move to find a single operator to design, build, finance, maintain and operate Ontario's service centres is a first for the Ministry of Transportation. In this alternative financing and procurement project, the private sector will pay for infrastructure redevelopment and then give the province a share of the revenue generated.



The majority of the service centres were built in the 1960s and are in need of renewal. Many of the leases being held by the oil companies are about to expire, which provides the opportunity to develop a new business model.

Redeveloping the service centres will provide many benefits to motorists. The service centres will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, year-round. They will offer travellers a place to park and rest, stop in to buy fuel and food, and use public telephones, washrooms and drinking fountains.

The operator selected to lease the facilities will be encouraged to provide other services such as showers, Internet stations, and lounges for truckers and other long-distance travelers pausing for longer breaks. As well, Ontario's roads are among the safest in North America and the selected operator will need to demonstrate their commitment to road safety.

The service centres are the only facilities in Ontario with direct access to Highways 400 and 401. Highway 401 also holds particular importance as it is the gateway to the Windsor-Detroit border.

On August 28, a request for qualifications (RFQ) was released and closed on October 24. Submissions will be evaluated and shortlisted bidders will be invited to respond to a request for proposals (RFP), which will be released in early 2008.

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation along with Infrastructure Ontario will manage the procurement phase of this project.

AFP Project Milestones

- Runnymede Healthcare Centre: Winning bidder named October 1, 2007
- Rouge Valley Health System: Financial Close Achieved October 4, 2007
- Bluewater Health: Financial Close Achieved October 4, 2007
- Kingston General Hospital: RFP Released October 5, 2007
- Bluewater Health: Construction Start October 12, 2007
- Rouge Valley Health System: Construction Start October 19, 2007
- Toronto Rehabilitation Institute: RFP Released October 22, 2007
- Runnymede Healthcare Centre: Financial Close Achieved October 31, 2007

AFP Project Opportunities

RFQs issued for the following projects:

- Lakeridge Health-Oshawa (BF): October 25, 2007
- Windsor Regional Hospital- (BF): October 25, 2007
- Royal Victoria Hospital-Barrie (BF): October 25, 2007

OSIFA Loan Program and the City of Kingston

Since 2003, the City of Kingston has taken advantage of Infrastructure Ontario's affordable, long-term financing options to successfully complete multiple water, sewage and road projects. The city recently returned to Infrastructure Ontario for OSIFA loans to finance three new landmark projects – projects signalling that this mature historic city continues to thrive and grow. The projects include:

The Grand Theatre

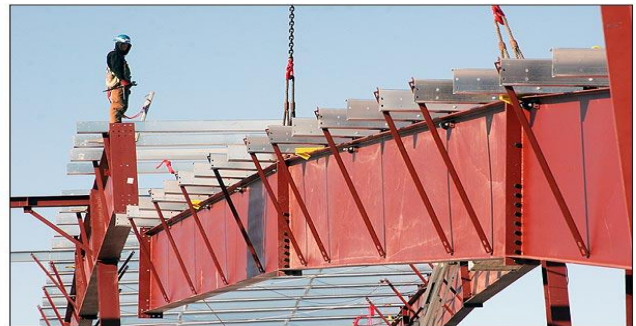
The Grand Theatre Building Improvement Project involves the renovation of a respected Victorian theatre in the core of downtown Kingston. This reconstruction and renewal project will dramatically improve the Grand Theatre – Kingston's traditional cultural centre piece, and an important element of its infrastructure.

Multiplex Community Centre

The Kingston Multiplex Community Centre will be a premiere recreational facility for all Kingston residents housing four NHL size ice pads as well as a mini rink on the upper level for floor hockey. Energy efficiency has been at the forefront of design considerations and it will be a LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) silver certified building.

Kingston Police Headquarters Building

The Kingston Police Headquarters project is a three-storey state-of-the-art building. This sustainable LEED® building contains a variety of areas including administration, police vehicle storage and maintenance, fitness and training facilities, firearms range, detection facilities, forensic identification, victim services, community room as well as other areas related to daily police activities.



IO Profile: Bert Clark

Bert Clark joined Infrastructure Ontario at its inception, and has since been a key member of the senior leadership team. In his current role as Senior Vice President, Projects, he is responsible for developing Infrastructure Ontario's capacity to take on new AFP projects, such as the Ontario Highway Service Centre project.

Bert's prior experience includes senior leadership roles in government, including Special Advisor in the Office of the Premier of Ontario, where he provided capital planning advice to the Premier and directed the development of both the five-year capital plan and 2004-2005 capital budget. Preceding his work in the government, Bert worked as a lawyer in private practice as part of the Business Law Group at Osler, Hoskin and Harcourt LLP.

Bert joined Infrastructure Ontario in order to "employ creativity and innovation in developing a new public service organization".

Bert has earned a BA from McGill University, his LLB from Queen's University Law School and LLM from Duke University School of Law.