

OSPE Submission: **EBR 011-5947 - Policy Proposal Notice**
Northern Ontario Multimodal Transportation Strategy

May 25, 2012

Background:

The Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE) is the voice of the engineering profession in Ontario. We advance the professional and economic interests of our members by advocating with governments, offering valued member services, and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development. We are pleased to respond to this policy proposal notice, which seeks public comments on the *Northern Ontario Multimodal Transportation Strategy* (the Strategy). Our mandate is to promote the professional and economic interests of engineers, many of whom work in transportation and who have a vested interest in Northern Ontario.

In response to the call for comments on the Strategy, OSPE collected feedback from members with expertise in transportation infrastructure. This information is summarized below.

Response:

OSPE considers the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario as a good plan for economic prosperity and quality of life that includes the first nation communities that are a great part of Northern Ontario. The success of this plan depends largely on transportation and communication. The multimodal transportation strategy outlined in the report includes improvements to existing transportation systems, links to major developmental areas and connections to air, rail, road and marine transportation. The Strategy when implemented would certainly complement the Northern Ontario Growth Plan.

OSPE has some suggestions related to planning and integration of the Strategy which it considers worthwhile for the Ministry to include. OSPE encourages the Strategy to mention and emphasize the importance of an 'integrated planning' effort which would include public works engineers from pertinent municipalities in the north. Specific regions/cities/towns may have unique requirements and projects which they would like as part of the Strategy. An integrative multimodal transportation strategy for Northern Ontario should specifically incorporate appropriate transportation engineering recommendations from affected municipalities. This integrative effort ideally should also include city asset managers and accountants to ensure the finance and service use and the life cycle aspects of transportation efforts in the area are covered.

OSPE also urges the Strategy to consider concepts and components of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) where applicable in northern communities. TOD is an important component for northern planners to include as they look for economic development potential in towns and along transportation corridors. We encourage you to look at case studies of where TOD has been successfully implemented.

Engineers will play an important role in most aspects of intermodal transportation planning and development. OSPE welcomes continued collaboration with the Ministry seeking input from engineers and would be pleased to facilitate communication and interaction with engineering professionals in the province. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.