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## Construction in Ontario June 2009 - One Page

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### COCA Developing New Strategic Road Map for the New Reality

Recognizing the new economic reality of today and further to a motion passed at the April 8<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors meeting regarding the development of a new strategic plan for COCA, on Tuesday June 2nd and Wednesday June 3<sup>rd</sup> a representative group of nine dedicated, experienced and knowledgeable COCA members and the COCA staff met at the Centre for Health and Safety Innovation to lay the ground work for a new road map into the future for COCA.

The two all-day sessions were capably facilitated by Steve Howse, an adjunct professor at the DeGroot School of Management at McMaster University and a professor in that institution's Directors College and principle in the governance and strategy consultancy, Millington & Associates; Steve had addressed the COCA Board of Directors on contemporary governance practices at the meeting on April 8, 2009.

Steve initially led the group through an exercise designed to develop consensus on where COCA is today. This exercise was followed by the Porter's 5 Forces analysis, PEEEST analysis and a SWOT analysis. Each of these involved small break-out working groups followed by a coming to consensus exercise among the whole group.

A list of COCA objectives was identified and Steve used his "Big -Easy" model which he had shown the Board to prioritize them.

With all of the outputs captured at the planning sessions and with guidance and assistance from Steve Howse, COCA staff will prepare a draft strategic plan. This draft will be reviewed by those who participated in the planning sessions and their feedback will be sought. The draft will be refined based on this input and the updated draft will be circulated to a broader audience for review and comment and it will be fine-tuned again. It will then go to the Executive and finally to the Board of Directors for consideration and approval possibly as early as the September Board of Directors meeting.

Special thanks to the following individuals for their commitment to COCA and for actively participating in our strategic retreat: Steve Coleman (MCAO), Martha George (GVCA), John Mollenhauer (TCA), Eryl Roberts (ECAO), Jim Coates (Past Chair), Dan Lancia (Chair), Domenic Mattina (1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair), Don Gosen (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair), Robert LeChien (Treasurer), Sue Ramsay (Operations & Communications Manager), David Zurawel (VP Government Relations).

### New Tory Leader to be Announced at Convention

The quest for the leadership of the Ontario PC Party will conclude at a convention on June 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> at the Markham Convention Centre. On June 21<sup>st</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> party members have the opportunity to cast their ballots at polling stations in ridings across the province and the winner will be announced at the convention in Markham. In the Party's one member-one vote system, members will assign rankings for each of the four leadership candidates on the ballot, from first to fourth.

While surveys indicate the race has tightened up since its outset, Niagara West-Glanbrook MPP Tim Hudak still appears to be the frontrunner. High energy and enthusiasm are traits that distinguish Hudak, who was first elected as part of the Common Sense Revolution that swept Ontario in 1995, from the rest of the pack. His platform focuses on fostering small business growth, promoting middle class family values and proposes to scrap the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal in favour of a court-based system.

Christine Elliott was a respected real estate, corporate and estate lawyer in the Region of Durham before she was first elected to the Ontario Legislature in a by-election in Whitby-Oshawa in 2006. The wife of federal Minister of Finance, Jim Flaherty, Elliott promotes implementing a flat rate of provincial income tax, freezing the minimum wage and allowing employees the opportunity to voluntarily choose to work up to 60 hours per week as planks in her platform for the leadership.

Considered a moderate and a centrist, Newmarket-Aurora MPP Frank Klees touts his business experience (founder and Executive Vice President of Municipal Gas), his experience in the Legislature (Chief Government Whip, Deputy House Leader and Minister of Tourism & Recreation and Minister of Transportation) and his ability to work with the ethnic communities in his diverse riding as the answer to "Why Klees?" He is also a proponent of free votes in the Legislature and would allow MPPs to vote as they choose.

The fourth candidate is Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington MPP and former IBEW member and former federal project manager, Randy Hillier. Elected in the fall of 2007 and the candidate with the least experience in the Ontario Legislature, Hillier presents the most controversial array of policies including private sector competition for the WSIB, changing journeymen to apprentice ratios from 3 to 1 to 1 to 1, allowing corner stores to sell beer and abolishing the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal.

The contest to identify the successor to John Tory has been a yawner and has attracted little mainstream media attention so far. The last of the campaign's five debates will be aired on TVO at 8:00 pm on June 18th and that one might be worth watching as the candidates have their final opportunity to seek the first or second ballot rankings of party members.

### WSIB developing Mandatory Coverage operational regulations

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The WSIB Revenue Divisions has established a working group and has begun developing operational regulations legislated to come into effect in 2012 as part of Bill 119, an *Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

The working group is presently developing its work plan for the summer months with the goal of being able to hold consultations to present draft operational policies to the construction industry, including COCA, by the end of the summer season.

Along with regulations, the WSIB is also seeking to develop the systems essential to e-clearance and e-registration by 2011, allowing for adequate testing and trial time so as to facilitate a seamless and efficient implementation of all aspects of Bill 119 by 2012.

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### **New President Takes Over at TTMGO**

The Board of Directors has elected Rick Giacomini as President and Director of the Terrazzo, Tile & Marble Guild of Ontario, Inc. (TTMGO), effective May 12, 2009.

Mr. Giacomini, Vice-President of Toronto-based Gem Campbell Terrazzo & Tile Inc. and President of Gem Campbell (Eastern) Inc., joined the company as Controller in 1995 and was promoted to VP in 1999. He has a strong management and financial background and brings over 26 years of industry experience to the table.

Rick has been active in the Guild as a Director and Officer in various capacities for six years, most recently as Vice-President, as well as a member of the Negotiating Committee. The Terrazzo, Tile & Marble Trade School and The Toronto & District Marble, Tile & Terrazzo Contractors' Association have also benefited from his dynamic leadership. Rick is a member of the Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC) and the Local Apprenticeship Committee and is a strong proponent for apprenticeship training for the trade.

*"Training skilled apprentices is key to the future success of our industry and we need a strong program to attract and prepare young people for our trade," he said.*

**"Developing new directions to revitalize the Guild is a key priority", Giacomini said. "We need to encourage active participation from a broad spectrum of members to address common issues as well as critical concerns that may only impact specific geographic areas."**

On another front, Rick intends to work with Guild Contractor signatories and the Brick & Allied Craft Union/OPC to create and implement strategies to promote the value of using unionized trade contractors/labour and strengthen market share for the betterment of the industry.

*"We need to educate our Clients, Architects and Developers on the myriad benefits derived from using TTMGO unionized Contractors. We have a great deal to offer and it makes good business sense," he added.*

Rick Giacomini succeeded Mel Merker, a founding member of the Trade School and a driving force at the Guild for over 20 years. Mr. Merker is President of Richmond Tile Corp. in Woodbridge, Ontario.

*The Guild is active in many aspects of the Hardsurface industry and represents Ontario contractors who are signatory to the Union Agreement for natural stone, tile and terrazzo trades in the ICI and Residential construction sectors.*

*For more information, contact:*

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### **April Building Permits Erase March Gains, stimulus funding remains a novel notion**

After a one month reprieve, April building permits declined 5.4% from March to a value of \$4.3 billion. Lower demand for commercial construction permits in Ontario and institutional permits in British Columbia were largely responsible for the total value of non-residential permits to decline 14.4% to a value of \$2 billion, easily outpacing a modest 4.1% increase in residential permits valued at \$2.3 billion.

Within the non-residential sector, the value of commercial permits fell 22.1% to \$1.1 billion, a sharp contrast to March's 45.8% increase as the demand for office buildings fell off primarily in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia.

The value of institutional permits fell by 16.2% to \$619 million as intentions for medical facilities fell primarily in Quebec and British Columbia.

Industrial permit values rose sharply by 41.6% to \$310 million, demonstrating continued volatility as the sector saw an 8.8% decline in intentions in March after experiencing a 14.7% increase in February.

What is becoming increasingly clear with each passing month is that the construction sector will likely not be the panacea for the Canadian and Ontario economies as it was so widely hoped to be. Building intentions illustrate two important factors about the current economy. First, the gradual thawing of financial liquidity will give rise to fragile and unstable recovery, marked by sharp swings as investments return to the markets. Second, stable sector growth will only result if governments actually deliver on pledged infrastructure stimulus funding.

Growing opinion is that the 2009 construction season is now a missed opportunity for government and the two year emergency stimulus window has now effectively been reduced to one. The result will be increased pressure on all involved to realize some sort of result for our collective benefit. The initial pledge was to create long-term net new skilled jobs during a time of economic hardship while renewing core infrastructure to ensure the core supports were in place to facilitate the eventual economic recovery. Now all we can do is wait to see

if anything close to these commitments materializes.

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### **Rollout of WSIB New Service Delivery Model Complete**

The WSIB completed its rollout of its *New Service Delivery Model* at the end of April.

Now that the program has been fully implemented, the WSIB will be contacting various industry stakeholders seeking user feedback on the performance and effectiveness of the program.

COCA members interested in the association hosting the WSIB at a future Board of Directors meeting in order to discuss the new system and to provide feedback based on their experiences to date can contact David Zurawel at [dzurawel@coca.on.ca](mailto:dzurawel@coca.on.ca).

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