

NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO ASSOCIATED CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE (NOACC)

2009 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **Rosehart Recommendations Priority**

Be it resolved that the Rosehart recommendations be implemented by NOACC priority, as it is fiscally responsible and that they receive high priority for consideration when Grow North policy is being formulated.

2. **Endangered Species Act**

Be it resolved that the NOACC urges the Government of Ontario to:

1. Ensure that the “Endangered Species Act” (ESA) not replace the forest management planning process, but rather complement this process and provide opportunities to integrate species and habitat protection requirements into current and future forest management plans, and further that;
2. Live up to the commitment made by the Minister of Natural Resources in May, 2007 when he stated “specific recognition of the Crown Forest Sustainability Act (CFSA) and Forest Management Plans as equivalent processes” which plan for species at risk.

3. **Federal Standing Committee On Natural Resources Recommendations**

Be it resolved that NOACC urges the Government of Ontario to:

1. Agree with The Committee and “ believes that it would be in the public interest for the Prime Minister to convene a National Summit, with all stakeholders, on the future of the Canadian forest industry with a view to developing a national strategy to support the renewal of the industry.”
2. Be it resolved that the Committee report recommendations relating to the need for additional Research & Development including the need to “consider investments in innovative research and development programs that stimulate cooperation and facilitate the formation of industrial forest clusters” as well as a recommendation to “establish a national forest industry innovation fund”. The report also recommends increased funding for research and development on bioenergy and bioproducts to assist in cutting greenhouse gas emissions and improving energy conservation.
3. Be it resolved that the Committee report recommendations of various tax measures to assist the forest industry in working through the recovery process. These recommendations include an improvement to the scientific research and experimental development (SR&ED) tax incentive program, a full extension for the next five years of the accelerated capital cost allowance (CCA) treatment for

investments in manufacturing and processing machinery, and changes to income tax rules and regulations to facilitate the deduction of forest management expenses.

4. **Infrastructure As The Initial Economic Development Basis For The Northern Growth Plan**

1. Be it resolved that transportation infrastructure form the basis of the Northern Growth Plan.
2. Be it resolved that the transportation strategies of Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie and Timmins be emphasized in the Grow North Plan.
3. Be it resolved that the “Federal Infrastructure” funding be utilized for the economic development of Northern Ontario.
4. Be it further resolved that northern communities are supported with infrastructure development.

5. **Doing Business with the Province**

Be it resolved that the NOACC urges the Government of Ontario to:

1. Prorate the level of liability insurance with the level of risk, and the amount of other financial requirements (e.g. performance bonds) to the value of the contract.
2. Incorporate a clause into the terms and conditions to state that:

Awarding of the contract is subject to the successful bidder having satisfactory insurance coverage; and/or

Bids must be supported by an “undertaking of insurance letter” from the bidder’s insurance provider confirming their insurability to the level required by the contract.

3. Provide more transparent guidelines and province-wide marketing of the government procurement process.

6. **Creating A Fair Paper Procurement Policy**

Be it resolved that NOACC urges the Ontario Government to act immediately to amend the Ministry of Government Services’ 2007 procurement policy and instead, adopt a policy requiring the Ontario government’s paper come from forests certified by any one of the three standards they endorse.

7. **Enhancement of the Role of the Northern Development Councils (NDC)**

1. Be it resolved to expand the transparency of the Northern Development Council (NDC) systems by publishing all reports including monthly reports, minutes of meetings held and annual reports.
2. Be it resolved that the NDC’s are enhanced and play an important role in the Grow North Plan.

3. Be it resolved that the NDC's be utilized to build policy capacity in the North and ensure northerners have a strong voice in the policy development process
4. Be it further resolved that a Pilot Project policy think tank be attached to the Northern Development Council system for the Northwest and be adopted as the model once the Northwestern model has proven to be viable.

8. **Building A Policy Institute Or Policy Capacity In The North**

- 1) Be it resolved that Northwestern Ontario be proactive by the establishment of a Northwestern Ontario Policy Institute that would assist with the development of Growth North policies. The policy institute would be non-partisan.
- 2) Be it resolved that senior government support the establishment of a Northwestern Ontario Policy Institute that would operate at arm's length from government and have a mission to analyze data on economic, business, technological, scientific and social issues; and generate policy advice that can be applied to the region's economic and social development.
- 3) Be it resolved that examples of Arm's Length relationships such as Fire Marshall's Office to MCSCS or the Niagara Escarpment Commission to MNR be considered.
- 4) Be it resolved that the Rosehart Recommendation 5.2.1 be adopted, and that once the Northwestern model has proven to be valuable, that it becomes a pan northern program.

9. **Twinning Of The Trans Canada Highway 11-17**

Be it resolved that the Province of Ontario develop and implement a long range plan including the commitment of specific sums of money over the long term to create a four-lane divided highway through Northern Ontario.

Be it further resolved that the Province of Ontario partner with the Federal Government to plan to twin all sections of the Trans Canada Highway, starting where there is no alternate Canadian highway route. This planning stage should be targeted for completion within two years. Subsequent to that development to begin by spring of 2010.

10. **Far North Road Development**

- 1) Be it resolved that as an interim measure to developing all-weather roads in Ontario's Far North, the senior levels of government support the realignment of winter roads to routes less dependent on ice roads and to locations more suitable to all weather road alignments.
- 2) Be it further resolved that Ontario commit in principle to supporting the Far North all-weather road development initiative, and make funding available in each of the next two years to lead a consultation process with environmental groups, communities, other levels of government and industry groups to work towards a detailed implementation plan that could be agreed upon by all stakeholders.

11. **Demographics And Population Decline Challenge - Building Opportunity For All In Northern Ontario**

- 1) Be it resolved that the positive growth and the increase of aboriginal population be recognized as a key factor in the economic future of Northern Ontario.
- 2) Be it resolved that there is recognition that the population of Ontario over the next 25 years will increase by 33%, while in Northern Ontario it is estimated that the population will decline by 5.8% during the same time period.
- 3) Be it further resolved that additional enhanced programs (health and education) be formulated and implemented to support the aboriginal population increase that translates into economic development for Northern Ontario.

12. **Northern Ontario Immigration**

- 1) Be it resolved that a working group composed of federal, provincial and community representatives be established and resourced to review opportunities and identify actions needed, for immigration to play a role in providing a skilled and entrepreneurial workforce to meet the future needs of diversifying the economy of Northwestern Ontario.
- 2) Be it resolved that incentives are provided to under serviced communities in Northwestern Ontario, to attract immigrants to the area and remove barriers to entry for immigrants.
- 3) Be it resolved to establish processes and resources to assist under serviced communities, in Ontario, to ensure effective and coordinated settlement of newcomers. For instance, establish positions and/or organizations that serve as immigration support agencies to coordinate, facilitate and deliver services to employers and immigrants.
- 4) Be it further resolved that immigration be promoted and integrate evaluative mechanisms to recommend potential immigrants who have the greatest opportunity for economic success. Develop evaluation tools (online) for instance a credential assessment database that employers can use to quickly obtain eligibility, for employers or immigration support agencies to ensure those immigrants who have a high rate of economic success are identified and accepted into Canada. Provide similar tools for accreditation and financial assistance to employers for immigrants to pursue additional training needed for them to meet Canadian standards.

13. **Poverty Reduction/Aboriginal Education**

Be it resolved that there be significant rethinking of the jurisdictional responsibilities and delivery of elementary school education, particularly in far north communities. Several Aboriginal school boards, having devolved funding from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), would in a non-traditional way become formally part of the Ontario school system.

14. **Supporting Apprenticeship Training**

Be it resolved that NOACC urge the Government of Ontario to:

1. Extend the existing Ontario “Co-operative Education” tax credit from industries defined as “leading edge technologies” to include all employers participating in apprenticeship training programs.
2. Assess the economic impacts of the tax credit to determine if it is adequate to contribute positively to the desired outcome of reducing the skilled trades shortage.

15. **Apprenticeship Training**

Be it resolved that the makeup of the boards need to have active representation from Northwestern Ontario people who are hands on and understand the working conditions in this area; and further that a change from the 3-1 ratio to a 1-1 ratio be made as soon as possible.

16. **Apprenticeships**

Be it resolved that NOACC urges the Government of Ontario to:

1. Sponsor a coordinated effort among all stakeholders to enhance the image of the skilled trades, with our youth, their parents and teachers.
2. Redirect and target funds for technical education in Ontario’s schools, including investing in pupil places, qualified teachers and modern equipment and technology, so that Ontario is positioned to provide world-class programs in technology education.
3. Encourage business to offer experiential learning opportunities for cooperative education students (high school and college/university) and provide new opportunities and incentives to business to participate in providing classroom infrastructure and technical support.

17. **Policy Ensuring Fair And Equal Representation In Northern Ontario**

Be it resolved that NOACC urges the Government of Canada to have a policy that ensures that Northern Ontario have a minimum of ten (10) Members of Parliament regardless of population.

Be it resolved that NOACC urges the Government of Ontario to have a policy that ensures that Northern Ontario have a minimum of 10 (ten) Members of Provincial Parliament regardless of population.