

VANCOUVER – The Consulting Engineers of BC (CEBC) applauds the decision by the Government of Canada to provide flexibility on the stimulus funding deadline on projects for which funding has already been approved but may have experienced legitimate delays during implementation.

CEBC believes that public infrastructure is a core business of government and is important to the social, economic and environmental quality of life in Canada. CEBC recognizes the importance of infrastructure commitments from successive governments in recent years, including the current stimulus programs. CEBC acknowledges that the primary purpose of the current stimulus spending program was to create jobs and opportunities for Canadians and that it is important to spend stimulus money as quickly as possible. The announced extension will allow a timely and orderly conclusion to the stimulus program.

The announcement follows one of the key recommendations made by CEBC in a *Review of Government Infrastructure Stimulus Spending* report, released in December 2009, analyzing the impact of government infrastructure programs and making recommendations on how to maximize taxpayer benefits. Key recommendations outlined in the report included:

- Using a Qualification Based System (QBS) of Procurement for consulting engineering services at all levels of government
- Extending the federal March 2011 project completion deadline
- Utilizing a variety of infrastructure project delivery methods
- Improving program transparency
- Outsourcing program delivery
- Streamlining Provincial / Federal environmental assessment processes

The complete report can be obtained at the CEBC website:

<http://www.cebc.org/files/pressreleases/cebcGovernmentInfrastructureSpending.pdf>

In February 2009, CEBC announced its vision for maximizing employment and economic benefits in British Columbia from the announced \$20 billion in federal and provincial infrastructure spending to be spent over the next two years. CEBC's vision recommended a balanced portfolio of phased infrastructure investments to impact today's jobs and economic activity, while planning processes such as environmental assessments to allow all levels of government to make long term investments that will continue to pay dividends well into the future.

According to CEBC Executive Director, Glenn Martin, "We are pleased that the federal government has shown flexibility in allowing funding for these projects to continue until October 31, 2011. While the majority of projects receiving stimulus funding will be completed by the original March 31st deadline,

some have faced unavoidable delays, and the prospect of cancellation. The announced one-time extension allows these projects to be completed, maximizing the economic benefits of the program.”

The Conference Board of Canada in its recent series of reports *Lessons from the Recession and Financial Crisis* (March 2010) concluded that of all fiscal stimulus measures, infrastructure investment has had the largest impact on economic growth. This clearly demonstrates the importance of infrastructure spending in strengthening our economy. CEBC looks forward to opportunities to continue working with government and other stakeholders to develop a long-term infrastructure investment strategy to ensure British Columbia’s continued economic health.

About the Consulting Engineers of BC

CEBC represents the consulting engineering firms that are the front-line service providers in BC for infrastructure projects. Its members have benefitted from the government's increased funding of infrastructure programs and they play a critical role in the delivery of these programs.

CEBC members provide diverse engineering design and project management services that enable projects to be safely and cost effectively constructed, operated and maintained. More information about CEBC can be found at www.cebc.org

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