



**MASONRY
WORKS**

**BRICK.
BLOCK
STONE**

JULY 2020

MASONRY MOVING FORWARD

Embracing The New Norm



This year the world has been presented with a multitude of generation defining challenges which in turn, has forced us to reconsider and change the ways that we do business. By now, three months into a global pandemic, many of us have realized the potential of telecommuting and we have also come to appreciate the value that comes with personal interactions and meetings. While the challenges of 2020 have been difficult for everyone, it has also allowed many to take a step back and reflect on the type of world we want to live in after the global pandemic is over. Although 2020 has presented us with new challenges, it doesn't mean that the very important issues we faced before have been solved. Climate change is still a very real threat to the long-term viability of our society and as many of us take a step back to consider how we can be better citizens and correct the vulnerabilities both in Canada and globally, an opportunity presents itself. The consequences of COVID-19 have led to broader discussions on how we can rebuild the economy in a way that considers all of the challenges we face including climate change, equity imbalance within the economy and the preparation for future pandemics. We now have the opportunity to hit the proverbial reset button to build a more sustainable, just and compassionate society.

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In Ontario, all levels of government are in the initial stages of planning for a COVID-19 recovery. The economic impacts of the pandemic have been significant and there is no doubt that the economy will require major stimulus. All levels of government will likely come together to fund infrastructure projects with the intention of stimulating the economy which now presents government with an opportunity to build infrastructure with the intention of addressing a number of challenges that Canada and Ontario face. This includes the building of sustainable and resilient infrastructure which provides long term value in regards to tax dollars spent and in relation to potential climate change impact. As jurisdictions across Canada look to the federal government for help in the economic recovery, the federal government has indicated that it realizes the opportunity which has presented itself to develop an infrastructure network which addresses climate change. Federal Infrastructure Minister Catherine McKenna has therefore stated that the government is looking to achieve the most value for dollars spent and will consider “shovel worthy projects” over simply “shovel ready projects”. The Federal Government intends to apply an equity lens to the recovery, which means strong consideration will be given to the impacts, or lack thereof on minority and under-represented cohorts of the population. This lens will be applied to three priority areas of infrastructure funding; public transit, green infrastructure and access to high speed internet. Given that the Federal Government will be flipping most of the bill for infrastructure funding it is important that provincial jurisdictions such as Ontario, and its subsequent municipalities, assess whether or not their roster of potential infrastructure projects meet the standard of “shovel worthy”.



We're now on



Masonry Works Ontario

The masonry industry plays a significant role in Ontario's construction sector. In fact, the masonry industry accounts for a **\$3.7-billion-dollar** economic impact in Ontario, while contributing **\$1.9-billion** to the province's GDP. Given this impact, the industry understands the pivotal role it can play in the recovery of the provincial economy. Dollars spent on masonry intensive infrastructure (hospitals, schools, institutional buildings etc.) will directly impact the economy in an effective and positive manner. The role that masonry can play in the recovery of the economy is complemented by the role it can play in addressing the long-term infrastructure goals of all levels of government. Masonry products are durable and sustainable and therefore address issues such as long-term value for dollars spent and good environmental practice. A 2020 study completed by the University of Windsor, School of Engineering considers the impacts of masonry walls constructed with block through subjecting the wall assembly to a cradle to grave Life Cycle Analysis (LCA). The study subjected three different types of wall assemblies to a cradle to grave LCA which showed that interior wall construction using concrete block has **49%** less environmental impact than steel wall assemblies and **29%** less environmental impact than wood stud wall assemblies. When considering the long-term environmental impacts of infrastructure decisions masonry construction provides a viable solution in regards to sustainability, durability and the reduction of green house gas emissions.

Although 2020 has been a challenge, there are also opportunities to address many of the issues which Ontario and Canada have been grappling with in recent years. As we look forward to rebuilding the economy the masonry industry stands ready to partner with government and community builders to ensure that the Ontario of tomorrow is more sustainable, resilient and more adaptive to the currents of a changing world and the challenges it presents.

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