

4.3 Establish criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of strategic goals and publicly publish these targets to ensure transparency

KEY MESSAGES:

- There are currently no published evaluation criteria regarding government projects.
- The OCC is calling on the newly elected government to establish criteria for measuring progress towards attaining strategic goals, and publicly publish targets for greater transparency.
- By establishing evaluation criteria, Ontario will ensure a commitment to evidence-based planning and accountability.

Ontario's long-term planning for many growth industries lacks transparency and measurable targets. For example, Ontario's tourism industry has forgone \$16 billion in visitor spending since 2005 due to a lack of measurable targets for strategic growth.¹ Similarly, it is essential that the Government of Ontario consider accountability methods to ensure that its infrastructure spending commitments are being met. For example, producing annual public documents highlighting the progress made against previous fiscal year funding commitments. This will ensure that government is maximizing the available infrastructure funding and the economic benefits of infrastructure investments.

The government's long-term planning cycles must include a framework for specific and measurable growth targets, as well as a timeline to achieve those goals. It should review future spending commitments to ensure that they are planned methodically, fully, and in a transparent fashion (a practice adopted by many other jurisdictions).

The government should also clearly define the outcomes it intends to achieve as well as methods for measuring and evaluating checkpoints and achievements. Measurement ensures that plans remain on track, reach targets on time, and value for dollars invested is achieved. There should also be transparency of project funding that allows tracking from project announcement to implementation.

Establishing these types of criteria and measurement will ensure a commitment to evidence-based planning and accountability. As the government is establishing notable funding commitments as well as implementing significant legislative changes, it is imperative that there are solid criteria for measuring progress and creating transparency to ensure that government is accountable to taxpayers.

¹ Boutilier, Scott. *Closing the Tourism Gap: Creating a Long-Term Advantage for Ontario*. Ontario Chamber of Commerce, 2016. http://www.occ.ca/wp-content/uploads/Report_Closing-the-Tourism-Gap.pdf