PCA Welcomes Budget 2026's Focus on Competition, Resources and the Skilled Trades

(Ottawa, ON - November 5, 2026) – The Progressive Contractors Association of Canada (PCA) welcomes the federal government's Budget 2026, *Masters of Our Destiny*, as a strong step toward a more competitive, investment-ready Canada. The budget's emphasis on competition, natural resource development, major projects, the skilled trades, and smarter regulation sends a clear signal that Canada is serious about getting major projects built.

"This is a budget that understands that competition is what builds a country," said Paul de Jong, President and CEO of PCA. "Canada has the resources, the workers, and the ambition to lead. Budget 2026 puts the focus where it belongs: on attracting investment, removing barriers, and ensuring we have the skilled workforce to deliver."

PCA particularly welcomes the following measures:

- **A clear competition agenda:** The government's commitment to strengthening competition and improving Canada's investment climate reflects principles PCA has championed for more than 25 years. Open markets deliver better value for taxpayers, owners, and workers alike.
- **Natural resource exploration and development:** Continued and expanded support for resource exploration, critical minerals, and major projects will unlock investment, create well-paying construction jobs, and strengthen Canada's position as a global energy and resource leader.
- **Support for tradespeople:** Extending Employment Insurance benefits from 14 to 18 weeks for apprentices attending in-class training is a practical measure that eases financial pressure on apprentices, helps more of them complete their programs, and strengthens the pipeline of skilled workers Canada needs.
- **Regulatory competitiveness:** The new Cabinet Directive on Regulatory Competitiveness and Red Tape Reduction shows a keen eye for the cost of regulation. Requiring regulators to assess competitiveness impacts will bring greater certainty to proponents and help get projects built faster.

“Our members build the projects that power this country, and they need skilled tradespeople to do it,” said de Jong. “Providing apprentices with greater support during their classroom training and reducing the red tape that delays investment are exactly the kinds of practical measures that will help Canada build faster and smarter.”

While the overall direction of the budget is positive, PCA is concerned about the extension of the Clean Electricity and Clean Technology Investment Tax Credits to the end of 2040, particularly the prevailing wage requirements attached to them. Under the current rules, businesses must pay wages tied to “eligible collective agreements” to qualify for the full credit rate or accept a rate that is 10 percentage points lower. In practice, these conditions favour only certain collective agreements, create artificial wage requirements, discourage open competition, and add cost and complexity to the same projects the government wants to accelerate.

“The government has rightly made competition a centrepiece of this budget, and that same principle should apply to its clean economy tax credits,” said de Jong. “Locking prevailing wage conditions in until 2040 narrows the pool of qualified contractors and workers, raises costs for taxpayers and investors, and runs counter to the government’s own competitiveness goals. We urge Ottawa to remove these requirements so projects can stay on time and on budget and every contractor and worker can help build Canada’s clean energy future.”

PCA looks forward to working with the federal government to ensure Budget 2026 delivers on its promise of a more competitive, prosperous Canada, where projects are built on time and on budget by a skilled and diverse workforce.

About the Progressive Contractors Association of Canada (PCA)
PCA is a national association of leading construction companies that build major infrastructure and capital projects. Its members employ more than 35,000 unionized construction workers who are represented primarily by CLAC. PCA advocates for a fair, open and competitive construction market.

For further information, contact:
Karen Renkema, krenkema@pcac.ca | 416-768-4848