



357-2025-2315

October 7, 2025

Board of Directors and Brian Bates
CEO, Walkerton Clean Water Centre
Email: bbates@wcwc.ca

Dear Board of Directors and Brian Bates:

I am pleased to share our government's 2026-27 priorities for the Walkerton Clean Water Centre.

Agencies are a part of government and are expected to act in the best interests of the people of Ontario. In a time of economic uncertainty, agencies play a critical role in supporting our commitment to Protect Ontario by improving service delivery, driving innovation and ensuring responsible stewardship of public resources – all while adhering to government policies and directives.

In accordance with the Agencies and Appointments Directive, agencies are required to align their goals, objectives and strategic direction with our government's priorities. As Chair, you are responsible for ensuring that the Walkerton Clean Water Centre's business plan clearly demonstrates how the agency will fulfill these expectations. Progress and achievements must be reported through your annual report, and compliance with these requirements will be monitored and reported to Treasury Board/Management Board of Cabinet annually.

This letter sets out my expectations for 2026-27, with a focus on how the Walkerton Clean Water Centre will contribute to protecting Ontario by delivering better services and driving innovation and value for money.

Protect Ontario

1. Expand domestic partnerships within Canada, to promote the development of supply chains and economic opportunities across Canada and support economic resilience, particularly in light of ongoing U.S. tariff threats and economic uncertainty.
2. Procure from Ontario and Canadian businesses whenever feasible.
3. Provide economic relief for Ontario families, consumers and businesses by freezing government fees and fares, unless approved by the oversight minister.

Deliver Better Services

4. Focus on a user-centered client/customer experience by simplifying interactions, improving satisfaction, and expanding and optimizing digital service offerings.
5. Identify opportunities to enhance efficiency, improve services, drive innovation, and achieve cost savings for the people of Ontario, including through the use of AI and other advanced technologies.
6. Eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy and red tape by applying lean methodologies or other modalities to achieve operational efficiency.

Drive Innovation & Value for Money

7. Find innovative solutions to use public resources efficiently and to effectively deliver on the agency's mandate while operating within agency's financial allocation, supported by accurate financial reporting, effective internal controls, and proactive fraud management practices.
8. Manage agency workforce with careful responsibility to stabilize expenditures and preserve long-term financial viability by:
 - strictly adhering to the hiring control parameters, including ceasing hiring for non-business critical and non-public-facing positions, including the use of consultants
 - operating within a defined maximum workforce size (including consultants)
 - ensuring compliance with the *Broader Public Sector Executive Compensation Act* (BPSECA)
 - enhancing productivity and efficiency by using technology whenever possible
9. Create a span of control policy that recognizes different streams of work within the organization and sets minimum span of control benchmarks, and provide it to the minister for approval by March 31st, 2026.
10. Provide to your oversight minister by October 1, 2025, the amended human resource policy, guideline or directive that adheres to the OPS in-office standard of four (4) days per week effective October 20, 2025, and five (5) days per week effective January 5, 2026, and work with your oversight ministry to address any office space constraints.

These are the government-wide commitments for board-governed provincial agencies. Please see the attached guide for further details of each priority and the accompanying outcomes and performance measures that can be utilised if measurements are not currently in place.

I am sharing several priorities specific to the Walkerton Clean Water Centre:

1. Coordinating and delivering a comprehensive range of high-quality education and training across Ontario, with a focus on addressing drinking water system vulnerabilities.
2. Delivering relevant training and technical assistance to owners, operators, managers and community leadership of First Nations drinking water systems throughout the province as well as leading and supporting initiatives that contribute to the improvement of drinking water for First Nations communities.
3. Providing necessary information and advice to clients province-wide to help ensure that drinking water is safe.
4. Supporting owners and operators of vulnerable drinking water systems to resolve operating challenges through applied research and delivery of pilot testing services.
5. Continuing to expand virtual training and e-learning courses available to drinking water system owners and operators and inform potential participants that these courses are available electronically.

At our next meeting, I would be pleased to discuss these priorities, and I look forward to hearing how they will be reflected in the agency's upcoming business plan and in ongoing agency operations.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lee Hawke, Manager, Program Delivery Unit at lee.hawke@ontario.ca.

Thank you and your fellow board members for your continued commitment to the Walkerton Clean Water Centre. Your work and ongoing support is invaluable to our government and the people of Ontario.

Sincerely,



Todd McCarthy
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Enclosure

c: Sarah Harrison, Deputy Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
Lee Hawke, Manager, Program Delivery Unit, MECP