

Brief submitted to the Land-Use Planning Committee

**Consultation on Bill 76 entitled *Act to amend various legislative provisions
principally with regard to the awarding process for
contracts made by municipal bodies***

More than transparency!

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Summary

For a number of years, the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec has been concerned about the professional engineering services offered to public bodies, especially municipalities. Given the current crisis of confidence about the integrity and transparency of the contract-awarding process and the lack of resources within Québec municipalities to manage their public infrastructures in total transparency, the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec wants to act quickly to restore citizen confidence and ensure healthy competition in professional engineering services. We must however resist the temptation to adopt patchwork solutions and instead we must re-examine the whole process of awarding contracts, especially those for professional engineering services for the municipalities of Quebec.

It is the opinion of the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec that we should profit from the adoption of Bill 76 and the work of the advisory group that will follow in the next few months to expand the focus beyond the contract-awarding process. This will make it possible to ensure that the municipalities are better served upstream and make the best decisions, those that will guarantee optimum service at the best cost. The current system giving preponderance to price in awarding contracts for professional engineering services contracts at the municipal level must be revised, as was done in 2006 for public bodies, so that the competence of the technical resources and the quality of the solutions proposed to the municipalities can also be taken into account.

To make this task easier for municipalities, the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec suggests that by way of internal hiring, collaboration or simply through the expertise of Infrastructure Québec, they be given access to competent, honest and independent resources. Such resources will be able to validate, at every step, the more technical elements that guarantee that municipalities and their citizens ultimately get their money's worth. That is the only way for the municipalities of Québec to adequately manage their infrastructures and make the decisions allowing them to ensure their sustainability and the lasting economic development of our communities.