

# City to benefit from Ontario budget: MPP

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Greater Sudbury will benefit from the new McGuinty budget, said Sudbury MPP Rick Bartolucci Tuesday after Finance Minister Dwight Duncan delivered the budget Tuesday afternoon.

Bartolucci was commentating on his government's sixth balanced budget since being elected in 2003. Highlights of specific announcements related to the city will be made by Bartolucci today at noon at the Older Adult Centre.

Debbi Nicholson, president and CEO of Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce, said her organization was generally pleased with the budget.

"The government has fast-tracked the Business Education Tax (BET) rate cut for northern business four years earlier than expected."

Another aspect the Chamber president liked was the 10 year Ontario income tax exemption for new corporations that commercialize intellectual property developed by qualifying Canadian universities, colleges or research institutes.

According to Ward 6 Councillor André Rivest, more money is needed for the long-suffering roads budget in the city.

"Municipal roads are a responsibility of the city but our government knows Ontario cities, including Greater Sudbury, are struggling to resurface roads and repair potholes," said Bartolucci.

"There are many ways to do this and over the next few days I will be making announcements indicating there are a lot of ways the provincial government can help aging infrastructure locally," said Bartolucci.

With respect to health, the province is allocating money to train more doctors and hire more nurses and it's increasing training spaces for midwives and nurse practitioners. As well, the government will hire 9,000 nurses by 2012 and invest \$90 million to help nursing graduates find full-time employment.

"It speaks to the foresight of this government to address a real shortage of nurses throughout the province," said Dan Draper, dean of health sciences at Cambrian College, which trains about 75 nurses a year. He added the new funding will eventually help create more work placement sites for nursing students, sites which are crucial to their learning.

More primary health care practitioners will also be trained, 200, up from 150.

And training spaces for midwives will increase from 60 to 90. This will give Laurentian University, one of three Ontario schools to offer the training, 10 new spaces.

Other budget highlights include hiring 2,000 nurses and 2,500 personal support workers for long-term care homes, adding \$13 million to the Northern Health Travel Grant, giving \$180 million to shorten emergency room wait times and allocating \$20 million to programs for children with complex mental health needs.

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