

## 2023–26 Business Plan Highlights

Approved by the Board of Directors	February 7, 2023  Date	
Approved by the Minister of Finance		
Original signed by	March 31, 2023	
Signature	Date	
The Honourable Peter Bethlenfalvy Minister of Finance		

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Ontario Financing Authority (OFA) is a Provincial Crown agency established by the *Capital Investment Plan Act*, 1993. The initiatives in the OFA's 2023–26 Business Plan will focus on achieving the objectives set out in the Act and those set out in the OFA's mandate letter from the Minister of Finance issued September 30, 2022. The Business Plan covers a three year planning horizon. Initiatives for the 2023–26 Plan include:

- Executing the Province's borrowing program including the Green Bond program, in a manner that
  minimizes Interest on Debt (IOD) costs over the term of the fiscal plan and beyond, while operating
  within prudent risk exposure limits and balancing, to the degree possible, the Province's debt maturity
  profile.
- 2. Managing the Province's debt, investments, Ontario Nuclear Funds and financial risk, and contributing to the development of the Province's fiscal plan and outlook including progress reporting on Ontario's debt burden reduction strategy.
- 3. Managing key financial relationships by building and maintaining connections with investors in both existing and new markets, as well as relationships with banks, financial service providers and investment dealers.
- 4. Providing cash management and banking services on a centralized basis to all ministries and ensuring that services are provided effectively.
- 5. Advising on, and implementing, corporate and electricity finance projects and policies by providing analysis and advice on cost-effective borrowing, investing and risk management by public bodies and other financing proposals, and on business cases for business supports.
- 6. Managing the availability, integrity, security and capacity of the highly customized and integrated financial systems and information technology environment to ensure the OFA and OEFC can deliver on their mandates.
- 7. Promoting and enhancing the OFA's cultural values as the organization transitions to a shared hybrid work environment. The OFA's People Plan will outline a guiding vision and purpose, aligning key priorities to maximize connection and engagement for current and future OFA employees.
- 8. Prioritizing digital transformation initiatives to better support the new hybrid workforce model, strengthen data use for decision making and reporting, and create efficiencies to better support growing Business, Information Technology (IT) and cyber security demands.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN**

### **Economic Conditions**

Global economic growth expectations have eased since the beginning of 2022 due to higher-than-expected inflation and rising interest rates, slower-than-expected growth in China and the continued impact of the war in Ukraine.

Ontario's real gross domestic product (GDP) rose 0.4 per cent in the third quarter of 2022, following an increase of 0.9 per cent in the previous quarter. Growth in the quarter was led by higher exports and an accumulation of inventories. As of the third quarter, Ontario's real GDP was 4.0 per cent above the prepandemic level in 2019Q4.

While Ontario experienced strong economic growth through the first three quarters of 2022, there is economic uncertainty on the horizon. High inflation has prompted central banks in many countries to raise policy interest rates, putting upward pressure on government bond rates and lowering the outlook for economic growth. The Ontario economy is expected to experience slow growth in 2023 due in part to the impact of central bank tightening. Private-sector forecasters<sup>1</sup>, on average, project Ontario real GDP growth to slow from 3.3 per cent in 2022 to 0.5 per cent in 2023 before accelerating to 1.6 per cent in 2024, 2.5 per cent in 2025 and 2.5 per cent in 2026.

The future path of inflation remains a key risk to the outlook. If central banks determine that there is a significant risk that consumer and business expectations for elevated inflation are becoming entrenched, they may move even more aggressively and for longer. This represents a significant downside risk for global economies, including for the U.S. economy. Rising interest rates also pose a risk to asset markets, including housing, as prices adjust to reflect changing monetary policy conditions.

Supply chain disruptions and geopolitical risks continue to affect the global economy, including impacts on commodity markets from the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. Although supply disruptions are expected to ease, they continue to pose a heightened risk to the global economy, which is compounded by recent disruptions to major commodity markets.

The United States is Ontario's largest trading partner, accounting for almost 78 per cent of the Province's international merchandise exports in 2021. According to the survey average of leading business economists compiled by *Blue Chip Economic Indicators*, U.S. real GDP increased by 1.9 per cent in 2022. Forecasters, on average, expect U.S. real GDP growth to slow to 0.5 per cent in 2023 and to rise 1.2 per cent in 2024.

Strengthening demand and Ukraine war disruptions pushed oil prices higher as West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil prices rose from \$68 U.S. per barrel in 2021 to \$95 per barrel in 2022. Expectations for slower economic growth and improved supply conditions are expected to lower oil prices, with WTI crude oil prices projected to decline to \$83 U.S. per barrel in 2023, \$80 U.S. per barrel in 2024 and \$79 U.S. per barrel in 2025 and 2026.

The Canada-U.S. exchange rate declined from an average of 79.80 cents U.S. in 2021 to 76.80 cents U.S. in 2022. Private-sector forecasters expect the Canadian dollar will rise gradually from 75.1 cents U.S. in 2023 to 79.7 cents U.S. in 2026.

### **Financial Markets**

High inflation has prompted central banks in many countries to raise policy interest rates. The Bank of Canada this year raised its target overnight rate from 0.25 per cent to 4.25 per cent, contributing to higher government bond rates. In 2022, the Canadian three-month Treasury bill yield averaged 2.2 per cent.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Based on the average of private sector forecasts as of January 13, 2023.

According to private-sector forecasters, the Canadian three-month Treasury bill yield is expected to average 4.2 per cent in 2023 before moderating to 3.3 per cent in 2024, 2.7 per cent in 2025 and 2.6 per cent in 2026. Private-sector forecasters expect the three-month U.S. Treasury bill yield to average 4.5 per cent in 2023, 3.4 per cent in 2024, 2.6 per cent in 2025 and 2.5 per cent in 2026.

The 10-year Government of Canada bond yield averaged 2.8 per cent in 2022. According to private-sector forecasters, the 10-year Government of Canada bond yield is projected to rise to an average of around 3.1 per cent between 2023 through 2025 before rising modestly to around 3.2 per cent in 2026. Private-sector forecasters expect the 10-year U.S. government bond yield to average 3.6 per cent in 2023 and 3.2 per cent between 2024 and 2026.

### **Government Initiatives**

The OFA will continue to monitor the Green Bond market to identify future issuance opportunities under its Green Bond program. The OFA will continue to provide loans to public bodies in support of government initiatives.

The OFA will also provide financial analysis and advice as required on evaluating the Province's assets, including its investments in its business enterprises, and analysis and advice to reduce costs, enhance efficiency and maximize value.

### **Regulatory Compliance**

The OFA will ensure that information required to be disclosed by the Province in its debt securities offerings related documents, periodic published reports (including the Ontario Budget, the quarterly finances, the Public Accounts and the Fall Statement) and other disclosures filed or submitted under applicable securities legislation, rules and regulations in the United States, Luxembourg, Australia, Switzerland and Singapore is filed on time and otherwise in accordance with those requirements. Regulatory requirements will be monitored continually to ensure the Province has ongoing access to these markets.

### **COMMUNICATION PLAN**

### **Business Plan**

The OFA Business Plan serves as an internal tool for management and staff in the development of program plans and, through the regular reporting of the status of initiatives to the Board of Directors, it serves as a performance measurement tool. The plan also communicates the OFA's business objectives to the Minister of Finance and MOF.

### **OFA People Plan**

The OFA's People Plan provides strategic direction and vision to maximize connection and engagement for current and future OFA employees, and serves as a guide for transformation by aligning key priorities with people and culture experiences at the OFA.



### **Other Communications**

The OFA has a number of external stakeholders, including institutional and retail investors, investment dealers, banks, and credit rating agencies. In 2023–26, the OFA will communicate with stakeholders using various methods including:

- 1. Websites (including expense information): <a href="www.ofina.on.ca">www.ofina.on.ca</a>; <a href="www.ofina.on.ca">w
- 2. Budget, Fall Statement, Public Accounts and quarterly updates: develop borrowing and debt management components;
- 3. Fact sheets, investor relations presentations, Green Bond Newsletter, CEO Video Updates, and other investor materials (available on the OFA's website, LinkedIn, Twitter);
- 4. Annual Report;
- 5. Regulatory filings; and
- Business Plan:

Other methods of communication to be used throughout the year include investor relations meetings and regular discussions with credit rating agencies. In addition, the OFA is responsible for the development of communication vehicles for OEFC and will continue to maintain the OEFC website, <a href="www.oefc.on.ca">www.oefc.on.ca</a>, and to produce the OEFC annual report.

### 2023-26 OBJECTIVES

Key objectives for 2023–26 are listed below. The OFA will continue to adapt and address any issues that may arise related to ongoing economic uncertainty.

- 1. Execute the Province's borrowing program including the Green Bond program
- 2. Manage the Province's debt, investments, Ontario Nuclear Funds and financial risk, and contribute to the development of the Province's fiscal plan and outlook including progress reporting on Ontario's debt burden reduction strategy
- 3. Manage key financial relationships
- 4. Provide services related to cash management, banking, settlement, payment, financial and reporting, and other client services
- 5. Advise on and implement corporate and electricity finance projects and policies
- Manage the availability and security of the information technology environment necessary to deliver on mandate
- 7. Continuing evolution and transformation of the OFA's cultural values
- 8. Prioritize digital transformation initiatives

### MANDATE AND GOVERNING LEGISLATION

The OFA is a provincial Crown agency established by the *Capital Investment Plan Act*, 1993. The Act sets out the objects of the OFA. The OFA:

- conducts borrowing, investment and financial risk management for the Province of Ontario (the Province);
- manages the Provincial debt;
- manages the Province's key financial relationships with investors, financial institutions, rating agencies and public bodies;
- provides centralized financial services for the Province including banking and cash management;
- advises ministries, Crown agencies and other public bodies on financial policies and projects;
- assists Crown agencies and other public bodies to borrow and invest money;
- acts at the direction of the Province in lending to certain public bodies;
- invests on behalf of some public bodies;
- with OPG, manages the investment activities of the Ontario Nuclear Funds; and
- carries out the day-to-day operations of OEFC and provides a broad range of financial services to Infrastructure Ontario.

In addition, the OFA's objects include:

- providing such other financial services as are considered advantageous to the Province or any public body; and
- any additional objects as directed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

In pursing its mandate, the OFA is committed to its core values of respect, innovation, teamwork and accountability.

The FAA also sets out certain financial powers which OFA employees exercise on behalf of the Minister of Finance to carry out the Province's borrowing, manage the Province's debt and invest its liquid reserves.

# OVERVIEW OF CURRENT AND FUTURE PROGRAM AND ACTIVITIES AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: 2023–26

Activities will focus on supporting the strategic directions listed below.

1. Execute the Province's borrowing program including the Green Bond program

The OFA endeavours to ensure that borrowing by the Province and OEFC is cost-effective, operated within prudent risk exposure limits and balances the Province's debt maturity profile. Total long-term public borrowing is currently forecast at \$32.2 billion for 2022–23, \$38.4 billion for 2023–24 and \$32.3 billion for 2024–25. These objectives may be challenging to implement due to the state of the global economy/market and the resource constraints within which the OFA is operating.

### Implementation Plan

- Meet the Province's funding requirements in as cost-effective and prudent manner as is possible in the current economic and fiscal environment.
- Continue to wind down the Ontario Savings Bond program.
- Continue to monitor the Green Bond market to identify future issuance opportunities under the Green Bond Program. Ontario continues to be a leader in the Canadian dollar Green Bond space and will continue to collaborate with other provinces/ issuers such as the Federal government (Finance Canada) in implementing their Green Bond program, which was announced in the federal Fall Budget.
- Complete regulatory filings with the U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC), Luxembourg
  Stock Exchange (LuxSE), Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) and any other applicable securities
  regulator. Conduct due diligence conference calls, as required, with the dealers and underwriters of
  the Province's debt securities offerings and their legal counsel.
- 2. Manage the Province's debt, investments, Ontario Nuclear Funds and financial risk, and contribute to the development of the Province's fiscal plan and outlook including progress reporting on Ontario's debt burden reduction strategy

The OFA manages the debt and liquid reserve portfolios, and centralized/segregated investment funds, for various public bodies, and jointly manages the Ontario Nuclear Funds with OPG. Financial risks associated with capital market activities are mitigated by adhering to prudent risk management policies which minimize financial risk by ensuring exposures and losses remain within approved limits. Risk management policies and program exposure limits are reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors on an annual basis. The OFA also contributes IOD, borrowing, debt management and total and net debt objectives and forecasts, and electricity sector fiscal impact projections to the Budget, the Ontario Economic Outlook and Review (Fall Statement) and other quarterly financial updates; in addition to providing final actuals for Public Accounts. It also contributes updates related to progress on Ontario's debt burden reduction strategy to the Budget and Fall Statement.

### Implementation Plan

- Generate IOD savings from liquid reserve investment activities within prudent risk exposure limits, as well as centralized/segregated investment funds, for various public bodies. Manage Nuclear Fund investments, working together with OPG.
- Ensure interest rate, foreign exchange and credit exposures are within approved policy limits.
- Contribute to the Province's annual Budget, Fall Statement, Public Accounts and quarterly finances, including the electricity sector outlook; advise on the potential impact of fiscal scenarios and initiatives on IOD, total and net debt and debt sustainability ratios (including net debt-to-GDP, IOD-to-revenue,

and net debt-to-revenue), borrowing objectives, credit ratings and financial markets' reactions. Continue playing an important role in the development of the Province's annual Budget, Fall Statement and quarterly statements through the provision of timely and accurate financial information, and preparation of the Borrowing and Debt Management and debt burden reduction strategy sections of the Budget and Fall Statement.

### 3. Manage key financial relationships

The OFA ensures investors and the financial community in Canada and abroad receive financial updates on a timely basis to make informed decisions about Province of Ontario debt securities. Investor Relations activities support borrowing program objectives by maintaining and broadening the Province's investor base. The OFA also ensures credit rating agencies understand government policies, budget, and fiscal performance, properly reflecting these factors in their reports and rating decisions.

The OFA manages the government's relationships with financial institutions, primarily the major Canadian and global banks, their investment dealer subsidiaries, and custodial and fiscal agents. This involves the acquisition and oversight of cost-effective products and services for the Province and certain Crown corporations.

### Implementation Plan

- Support the Province's borrowing program by building and maintaining relationships with investors in
  existing and new markets. Provide Investor Relations information products, including updates to the
  OFA website, and the OFA social media channels, on a timely basis.
- Maintain close relationships and ongoing dialogue with credit rating agencies to keep them informed
  of the Province's financial status, priorities, and initiatives.
- Manage Ontario's relationships with banks, financial service providers and investment dealers.
- Liaise with OAGO staff to obtain the Auditor General's consent to use her Independent Auditor's Report in the Province's offering documents and financial disclosure documents filed with international securities regulatory authorities, in accordance with assurance standards in the CPA Canada Handbook.
- Implement and maintain collateralized swap agreements with bank counterparties to limit potential financial losses as a result of a credit event.
- Manage changes in financial and regulatory reform, liaising with regulators and legal counsel, as required.
- 4. Provide services related to cash management, banking, settlement, payment and financial and reporting, and other client services

The OFA provides centralized banking and cash management services to the Province. The effective provision of these services allows for the efficient delivery of provincial services and contributes towards minimizing IOD expenditures. The OFA is responsible for settlements, payments and accounting/reporting functions associated with the Province's and OEFC's debt management programs, as well as agency financial reporting.

### Implementation Plan

Identify and implement effective treasury solutions for the Province and its client agencies. Continue
to leverage the lessons learned from a number of alternate and innovative measures implemented
over the pandemic towards more efficient and effective program delivery, in particular revenue
collection and disbursement mechanisms post pandemic including expanding the use of bulk Interac
e-transfer to an enterprise solution for use by all ministry programs.

- Continue to work with ministries and central agencies as a priority to move services online and enable
  online payment mechanisms to allow for reduction in physical offices operations and cheque mail-ins.
  The OFA and Ministry of Finance are exploring an emerging banking solution to collect revenue via
  an e-mail request, "Request to Pay".
- Ensure that the Province has sufficient cash available at all times to meet its financial obligations, particularly in light of borrowing programs that exceed \$30 billion per annum and the continuing impact of the pandemic related restrictions.
- While compliance with Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standards is now in its
  sustainment phase, the OFA will continue to work with the other Ontario Public Service (OPS)
  stakeholders and the credit/debit card acquirer to ensure that the mandatory external reviews
  continue to ensure that the Province is in compliance with all applicable PCI data security standards,
  which are reviewed and updated periodically by the PCI Council.
- Continue to work with TD Merchant Services, the Province's card acquirer, to explore options for the Province to begin accepting new value-added card products and technology, e.g. tokenization, security enhancements, ApplePay and Google Wallet.
- Continue to collaborate with industry associations and provincial and federal jurisdictions on modernization initiatives and issues unique to the public sector.
- Continue the delivery of timely and accurate settlement/payment services for the Province and OEFC, including OEFC power supply contract settlements.
- Continue to provide timely and accurate financial reporting for the Province on debt, derivatives and investments. Continue to provide timely and accurate agency financial statements that satisfy the scrutiny of the Board and the OAGO.
- Continue to work with the Office of the Provincial Controller to provide feedback on Chapter 2 of the OAGO Annual Report that deals with Ontario's Public Accounts.
- Continue to monitor and assess any new accounting developments of national and international
  accounting setting bodies that affect reporting for the Province and its agencies. Provide advice to the
  Provincial Controller and external accounting oversight bodies on how changes to accounting
  standards would affect the Province's debt and IOD.
- 5. Advise on and implement corporate and electricity finance projects and policies

The OFA provides financial modelling, analysis and advice to MOF, other ministries, OEFC, Crown agencies, and other public bodies, on financial policies and projects, electricity sector policies and initiatives, and borrowing from capital markets. The OFA also provides assistance in structuring and completing financial transactions, and securing and using private sector financial advisers. The OFA will continue to work with MOF, other ministries, and Infrastructure Ontario on reducing costs and maximizing the value of government assets. The OFA also supports and facilitates the implementation of other government initiatives, as required.

### Implementation Plan

- Develop interest rate and other borrowing, investing and risk management policies, and advise ministries, agencies and public bodies on interest rates and other financing issues.
- Provide advice to ministries, agencies and other public bodies on cost-effective borrowing, investing, credit enhancement strategies, and risk management by public bodies, including on the OFA loans to public bodies program, and assist with structuring financial transactions as required.
- Provide support to the government on MOF loans and loan guarantees as required.
- Provide advice on transactions requiring a provincial guarantee or those that may otherwise increase the indebtedness or contingent liabilities of Ontario.
- Support analysis and advice on government initiatives including business support proposals for Ontario's various industry sectors.

- Continue to work closely with Venture Ontario staff on approaches for managing the Province's investment in the Ontario venture capital sector.
- Provide advice as required on evaluating the Province's assets, including investments in its business enterprises.
- Provide financial advisory services to ministries and government agencies to support governance, analysis, and implementation of key policy initiatives.
- Provide policy and financial analysis, and modelling support, as required, for policies and initiatives
  related to the electricity sector that could have fiscal, financial and/or economic implications for the
  Province and/or OEFC.
- Provide financial due diligence and advice to the Minister of Finance on applications received under the Aboriginal Loan Guarantee Program (ALGP) to facilitate Indigenous equity participation in electricity infrastructure projects.
- Provide loan administration services to the Ministry of Energy for a \$1.3 billion Provincial loan to support a project connecting 16 remote First Nation communities to the Ontario electricity grid.
- Monitor and provide electricity sector fiscal and financial projections for the Province and OEFC, including analysis and advice to the Minister of Finance on the stranded debt, as well as continued reporting on OEFC's revenue sources and expenses, and management of Non-Utility Generator (NUG) contracts.
- Provide analysis and advice to support the effective administration of the Ontario Nuclear Funds
  Agreement (ONFA) and other initiatives related to nuclear liabilities, including advising on OPG's
  proposed ONFA Reference Plan update, and monitoring and reviewing OPG's on-going
  implementation of its ONFA obligations, approval of yearly ONFA budgets, and monitoring the value
  of the Nuclear Funds in connection with the CNSC's financial guarantee requirement.
- Provide analysis and advice on nuclear supply, financing and cost recovery issues, including for nuclear refurbishments and small modular reactors.
- 6. Manage the availability and security of the information technology environment

Reliable and secure information technology is essential to the OFA's ability to deliver its mandate. The OFA's financial business functions are supported by Strategic Corporate Services Division's (SCSD) technology infrastructure, providing availability, integrity, security, and capacity via high-performance, highly-redundant systems at a competitive cost. SCSD can effectively deliver and maintain state-of-the-art financial systems and services because of OFA's internal management of information technology.

### Implementation Plan

- Provide a highly available technology environment capable of supporting a 99.98 per cent annual uptime during normal business hours.
- Continuous monitoring of systems availability, capacity and performance.
- Regularly conduct vulnerability and critical patch management processes.
- Promote a culture of cyber security at all levels of the organization through continued communications, user security awareness, partnerships and enhancements to technology.
- Continue to strengthen cyber security program through established risk based roadmap aligned to modern cyber security framework(s).
- Continuously modernize and enhance systems to mitigate technology risk.
- Pursue solutions that support compliance and efficiency of OFA processes.
- Review and update the Corporate Business Continuity Plan (BCP) framework by incorporating lessons learned from simulation events and the transition to hybrid work.
- Optimize and enhance resiliency of remote and hybrid work solutions.
- Review the security environment, in partnership with the internal audit team, by continuing to conduct regular cybersecurity penetration testing and periodic IT general controls testing as part the annual internal audit plan.

7. Continuing evolution and transformation of the OFA's cultural values

In 2018, the OFA adopted Respect, Innovation, Teamwork and Accountability (RITA) as its core values.

### Implementation Plan

- A Release of the OFA's People Plan in September 2022, a guiding vision and purpose strategy
  founded on the OFA's core values, demonstrates the evolution of RITA in actionable form. The OFA's
  People Plan, formally known as the ONE OFA People Plan, recognizes the OFA as a community of
  valuable individuals who make important contributions towards our mandate and focuses on three
  aspirations:
  - 1. We are ONE team of diverse professionals, led by accountable and transparent leadership, working towards a shared vision.
  - 2. We believe in investing in everyONE's learning and development in order to thrive in our current roles and prepare us for future opportunities.
  - 3. We recognize the future of work is here and we must actively modernize to remain ONE step ahead and build resilience towards change.
- Continue to build capacity for tomorrow's workforce through the Student Engagement Committee for OFA co-op students and through the Capital Markets Division rotational Development Program.
- Promote the OFA Innovation Lab as an opportunity for employees to build capabilities and a mindset for innovation through workshops and training while providing an outlet for open conversations.
- 8. Prioritize Digital Transformation initiatives

The OFA plans to accelerate digital transformation initiatives to better support the new hybrid workforce model, strengthen data use for decision making and reporting, and create efficiencies to better support growing business, IT and cyber security demands.

### Implementation Plan

- Prioritize future state transformation initiatives to provide modern hybrid tools and new capabilities for the business to deliver on its mandate.
- Embrace a cloud first approach, which will include a data strategy, for IT solutions and services to reduce ongoing operational overhead costs towards establishing and maintaining a resilient and sustainable IT program.
- Augment capacity constraints with contracted services to accelerate change.

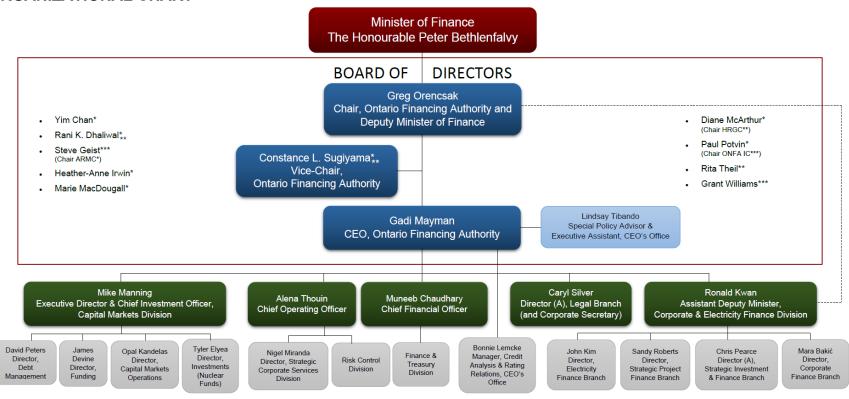
### INITIATIVES INVOLVING THIRD PARTIES

As described in the Business Plan, the OFA has several active relationships with third parties for the purpose of delivering on its mandate.

Ontario Financing Authority

Business Plan 2023–26

### **ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**



<sup>\*</sup> ARMC = Audit & Risk Management Committee

As of September 7, 2022

<sup>\*\*</sup> HRGC = Human Resources & Governance Committee

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> ONFA IC = Ontario Nuclear Funds Agreement Investment Committee