

Chair's Message

CHAIR OF THE BOARD, DR. F. HAIDER ALVI

This past year, while Ontario's broader public sector faced ongoing transformation and new challenges, we also found opportunities for greater sector collaboration and collaborative sourcing success. The Board of Directors continued to work in partnership with management to guide OECM's strategic principles and priorities, fueling the organization's success and performance. We are proud to celebrate another year of outstanding growth and corporate achievements, topped by record spend.

OECM is well-established as the trusted collaborative sourcing partner to Ontario's schools, colleges, universities, municipalities, hospitals, long-term care homes, and several other customers across the broader public sector and not-for-profit community. Reaching the \$4 billion milestone in accumulated collaborative spend is a clear indication of this growth and success and I am confident in OECM's ability to carry forward this momentum in 2024 and beyond.

This year, the Board endorsed several strategic initiatives from management that promote organizational performance and add value to OECM's offerings, including investment in the following:

- a formalized Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) strategy and framework validated through an alliance with the Canadian Collaboration for Sustainable Procurement (CCSP),
- enhanced business intelligence and data utilization tools to support strategic decision-making,
- a robust thought leadership and outreach strategy to drive brand awareness and credibility,
- the establishment of a collaboration agreement with the Supply Ontario agency driving procurement modernization and creating value,
- the development of an enhanced People Strategy including a comprehensive Professional Development program for OECM staff,
- the initiation of an enriched Supplier Recognition Program (SRP), a new Supplier Working Group (SWG) and a Supplier Success Program (SSP),
- and an Indigenous and Métis Engagement Strategy deeply focused on relationship-building, listening and learning.

We continue to support these and many other initiatives that are in alignment with OECM's Multi-Year Strategic Plan and value proposition to drive savings, choice, and service.

The Board is steadfast in our commitment to fostering innovation in our governance practices through rigorous, skills-based evaluation and renewal, ensuring we have the necessary expertise to fulfill our oversight duties effectively. This year, we welcomed three new members to the Board, adding depth and strength in the domains of ESG, healthcare, and government services. We also announced the recruitment of four new Customer Council Committee (CCC) members who bring immense sector knowledge and wide expertise to the Committee table. The CCC continues to serve as the voice of OECM's customers and is a direct conduit for customer engagement and influence at the Board level.

This summer, OECM's President and CEO, John Sabo informed the Board of his intention to retire in 2024, which initiated succession planning. An Executive Search Committee has been appointed and an executive recruitment firm engaged. The Board recognizes and celebrates John's exceptional leadership over the last eight years. We will continue working closely with him in 2024 to build on the strong foundation and legacy he leaves behind while setting the stage for OECM's next phase.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to maintaining strong partnerships with government and other key stakeholders across all sectors. We continue to evolve, expand, and strengthen our commitment to robust governance required for OECM over the long term and we endorse OECM's strategies to be the premier customer-driven supply management partner in Ontario. Strengthening customer, supplier, and stakeholder relationships will help drive long-term growth and value creation.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the entire OECM team for their dedication to delivering exceptional work over the last year. I would also like to thank the Board of Directors for their constructive collaboration and oversight of OECM. We will continue to work together to oversee the implementation of OECM's business priorities and serve the best interest of Ontario's education sector, broader public sector and not-for-profit community.



Dr. F. Haider Alvi
Chair, Board of Directors, OECM