

# A concrete presence in Ottawa for decades, MCON continues to contribute

*The foundation of Ottawa's growth is MCON's concrete products*

As the City of Ottawa enjoys explosive growth, so too does MCON, a local, family-owned business that manufactures precast concrete infrastructure products, the building blocks of development.

MCON's roots extend back 68 years ago, when a company called Central Precast began manufacturing a variety of products for the construction industry. As the company grew, Luigi Mion and his two sons, and his brother Gustavo saw an opportunity for expansion and established MCON in 1989 in Carp.

MCON's products and manufacturing capabilities now include reinforced concrete pipe, maintenance holes, catch basins, oil grit separators, box culverts, and Stone Strong systems retaining walls. Since 2014, the plant has doubled in size to 11,300 sq.ft, says Marco Mion, who is the third generation to work in the business.

With major capital investments to the manufacturing facility and procurement of new equipment, the plant can produce up to 500 tonnes of finished concrete products a day, Mion says, adding that MCON employs 73 staff on the production team and 23 staff on the office team. A quick appraisal of any large project or major infrastructure in Ottawa would show the presence of MCON's products, which have maintained premium quality for decades and

decades.

"The products that we produce are in Ottawa's communities, and they last for 75 to 100 years. We'd like to continue to contribute to the community and know that our products will be in service for the generations to come," Mion says.

"We are very bullish on Ottawa," says Claudio Mion, VP of Operations at MCON. "The city is in a very good place compared to other regions," he says, adding that a lot of workers are coming from Toronto to find more affordable living conditions. "The growth of Ottawa is going to make us into a world-class city,

as long as you have the roads and infrastructure, and that's where MCON comes into play."

Presently, MCON has a hand in many of the projects that form the foundation of the city's growth but that may not be as obvious as infrastructure such as a central library or a hospital.

For example, the City of Ottawa's LRT stations' retaining walls, as well as improvements and upgrades to culverts that travel under roadways.

"We improve them because they were either specified as corrugated steel or plastic, so we're supplying concrete pipe which lasts 75 to 100 years, which is way more sustainable for the city and environment," Mion says.

MCON is also working with major homebuilders such as Minto and Mattamy Homes to provide products for many of their subdivisions and new communities that are cropping up around the city, he adds.

## ONGOING EXPANSION

"We've been continually expanding the production plant, recognizing that there is more of a need for custom and larger structures related



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to our market. So we've invested in new formwork and are expanding the manufacturing facility to give us more capabilities to produce these larger products and to service the growth," Mion says.

"The benefits of precast are that we save time for contractors in the field because our products are delivered to site ready to be installed, and we are always manufacturing in the same climate controlled environment," says Mion of the efficient practices the company has honed over the years.

All products meet provincial standards, he adds, and a lot are produced ahead of time. "They're readily available for pickup when these different projects are awarded," he says.

It is this forward-looking mindset that has carried the company far over the years. If there are any obstacles, it is imperative to improve and challenge the status quo, Mion says.

"Instead of management leading

top-down, we've involved and empowered the production team to come up with innovative ideas on how to make the jobs easier, and how to improve our current processes," he says, adding that MCON has European equipment on site that's automated and specialized.

And while Mion is excited about

the prospect of Ottawa's growth, he says it could be going at a faster rate, with the holdup mostly due to an excess of bureaucracy. "It's exciting to be involved in these projects. We're attracting tourism, we're investing in our health with these hospitals and roads that are being built. It's an exciting time," he says.

