



**AMO Board of Directors Meeting
Sunday August 15, 2021**

Supplementary Items

INFORMATION ITEM

4a. Board Key Messages – Brian Lambie (Pages 1 – 2)



2021 AMO Conference

Board Key Messages

AMO

- The AMO Conference brings together municipal leaders and the provincial government for one of Canada's largest virtual gatherings of government leaders.
- The conference continues AMO's work with the federal and provincial governments, particularly during the pandemic, to address important challenges and create opportunities for municipal governments.
- Our members' active participation ensures that AMO reflects municipal needs and speaks with the strongest voice possible.

COVID – Municipal Financial Sustainability

- AMO's advocacy helped secure additional funding for municipal operations hit hard by the pandemic as well as social services.
- AMO appreciates support, including:
 - \$4 billion in 2020 from the federal and provincial governments through the Safe Restart Agreement, including critical support for transit systems.
 - An additional \$900 million from the Ontario Government in 2021, including additional investments through the Social Service Relief Fund, to maintain and deliver vital municipal services – a critical, life-saving investment for both economic and social recovery.
- Continued, coordinated federal/provincial support to municipal governments for pandemic costs will be critical to maintain services, support vulnerable people, and create economic growth.

Broadband

- AMO has long advocated for universal access to high-speed, reliable, and affordable broadband and cellular connectivity.
- AMO appreciates the substantial federal and provincial investments to ensure more people can connect and participate in the digital economy:
 - The Province has committed nearly \$4 billion to connect all Ontarians to reliable high-speed internet by 2025.
 - The federal government has committed \$2.75 billion to their universal broadband fund.
- This work needs to leverage previous broadband investments to expand connectivity as broadly as possible.

Climate Change

- Municipal governments are on the front line of climate change.
- We must invest heavily in infrastructure and services to protect property and waterways, secure public safety and build communities that are adaptive to climate change.
- We need strategies in which the environment, social well-being and economic development are complimentary, not competing, priorities.
- To that end, AMO and LAS, are developing a series of papers on the diverse aspects of climate change, from flooding and energy conservation to organics and water systems.

Infrastructure

- Municipal governments own two-thirds of the public infrastructure that people depend on every day.
- To kickstart infrastructure and the economic recovery, the federal government has:
 - Doubled the 2021 Canada Community-Building Fund (formerly the federal Gas Tax Fund) for a total of \$1.6 billion administered directly by AMO to Ontario municipalities.
 - Reallocated funding from the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program to a COVID-19 resilience stream.
- Investing in local infrastructure will contribute to a strong economic recovery across the province.
- Long-term, predictable, and stable infrastructure funding will help sustain our prosperity over the long term.

Public Health

- Public health staff have been working to keep us all safe under immense pressures.
- COVID-19 paused work to modernize public health. It's critical that we now use the pandemic as a lens to strengthen our local public health systems, which are co-funded by the Province and municipal governments.
- The Safe Restart Agreement provided critical federal-provincial support to help public health units manage pandemic response. As the pandemic goes on, continued financial support is essential.

Paramedics

- Paramedic services, especially community paramedicine programs, played a key role in filling local gaps and supporting pandemic response across the province.
- AMO and the Ontario Association of Paramedic Chiefs (OAPC) submitted a joint paper in June 2021 on the need for a Community Paramedicine Policy Framework.

Long-Term Care

- AMO provided input to Ontario's independent commission on long-term care, which investigated the pandemic's disproportionate impact on LTC residents.
- The commission's report is a platform for transforming the LTC system to address long-standing challenges related to resources, staffing and standards of care.
- Given the complex health care services provided by LTC facilities, AMO believes that the municipal property tax base is not a sufficient nor appropriate way to top up provincial funding.

Waste Diversion

- AMO is pleased the provincial government finalized the regulation to move the Blue Box to full producer responsibility by the end of 2025.
- The regulation standardizes acceptable materials, sets target and expands services.
- It's the most important advance in waste diversion since the Blue Box program began and will save municipalities \$150 million a year.

Indigenous Relations

- The recent discovery of unmarked graves at residential schools across Canada has brought the need for truth and reconciliation to the forefront.
- We must all work together to improve quality of life for Indigenous people living in our communities.
- Friendship Centres are places where Indigenous people living in urban communities can gather, connect and receive culturally based services. Last year, AMO signed a mutual friendship declaration with the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres.
- Municipal governments have also signed their own declarations with local friendship centres, with a commitment to collaborate on improving the wellbeing of Indigenous people living in Ontario's municipalities.

Policing

- AMO's input on new policing regulations focuses on accountability and transparency.
- All municipalities must continue to be represented on consolidated OPP Detachment Boards.
- Regulations must meet evolving social needs like better mental health responses and improved relationships with marginalized communities.
- New regulations must deliver value and not increase costs to municipal taxpayers.

Insurance

- Municipalities are experiencing substantial increases in insurance premiums in 2021. Many of the cost drivers are global and outside municipal control, including low interest rates, climate-related disasters and the pandemic.
- As well, Ontario's joint and several liability regime means that municipalities can be on the hook for large settlements even if they are only minimally responsible.
- AMO is exploring new approaches that can balance the need to care for victims while moderating insurance costs for taxpayers.

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