

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW COMING FROM THE AMO CONFERENCE

Provincial Announcements affecting municipal governments:

Child Care:

- Previously announced changes to implement an 80-20 provincial municipal cost-sharing for child care expansion starting in 2020 will now be phased-in over a three-year period.

Public Health:

- The cost sharing arrangement in 2020 will be at 70-30 provincial-municipal split and those public health units already contributing 30% or more will not be impacted. Those that are impacted will see one-time transitional funding.
- In the first year, no public health unit will experience an increase over 10 per cent of current public health costs as a result of this cost-sharing change.
- The Ministry will soon launch renewed consultation on the province's proposed larger regional public health structure approach, recognizing it "inspired widespread and spirited discussion". The consultation will see a discussion paper available, it will ensure enough time is provided and it will be supported by an expert advisor. AMO will keep members posted on these next steps.

Paramedic Services:

- Paramedic services will receive a 4% increase in 2019.
- A further increase in 2020 can be expected, subject to the next provincial budget.
- Funding letters have been sent to EMS services informing them of the new allocation.
- Consultation on paramedic services restructuring is also to be done by the expert advisor.

Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF):

- There will be no changes to the structure of the 2020 Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund and the allocations will come in time to provide municipal governments with greater certainty for their 2020 budget work.

Social Assistance funding:

- There will be no changes for 2020 to the Ontario Budget's planned Ontario Works program administration funding.

Infrastructure:

- On September 3, 2019, the province is opening up the Community, Culture and Recreation Stream under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program for projects such as community centres, sports arenas and cultural centres. Watch for this announcement.
- The province (Infrastructure and Transportation) will work with AMO as they review the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF) and the Ontario Gas Tax for Transit.

Conservation Authorities:

- Conservation Authorities received letters on August 16th from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks regarding direction on expected CA core business. This raises questions on what happens to non-core activities. AMO will look at this and other implications of the province's plans.

Federal Gas Tax program:

- In July, AMO distributed \$970 million in gas tax funds. It included \$650 million in top-up funding along with the first installment of the existing 2019 allocation.
- The remainder of the 2019 allocation will be distributed in November. That payment will be supplemented with an additional \$12 million in funding generated through efficiencies in the administration of the program.

Recent AMO work of interest to members:

Community Benefit Charges (CBC) - Submission:

- The AMO Board endorsed the Municipal Financial Officers Association detailed submission on this new tool which allows for the collection of fees on soft services needed as generated by development. Community facilities, and parks for example are no longer eligible for Development Charges fees. DCs are restricted to hard services which now includes waste and ambulance. Both tools come with additional conditions and reporting requirements. A panel discussion occurred at the conference and can be viewed here.
- Minister Clark continues to state his commitment to ensuring that growth continues to pay for growth. It is a key principle of importance to the successful financing of the public services which support new housing and development.

Housing:

- AMO has released “Fixing the Housing Affordability Crisis: Municipal Recommendations for Housing in Ontario.” The paper consolidates AMO’s outstanding recommendations to address housing affordability and will guide future advocacy on federal and provincial housing initiatives.

Looking at Property Assessment:

- AMO has developed an interactive map to show how the property tax burden has shifted over time in every Ontario municipality. Check out our tax map!
- This is some preliminary work on investigating the impact that the disruptive economy may bring to the market value assessment and tax equation. The conference had four speakers on topics related to the disruptive economy and property assessment. All are on AMO’s website. Look for plenary hall speakers on Monday and Tuesday.

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