



MEMO / NOTE DE SERVICE

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TO: Finance and Corporate Services Committee

DESTINATAIRE : Comité des finances et des services organisationnels

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DATE: November 7, 2023

7 novembre 2023

FILE NUMBER: ACS2023-OCC-CCS-0135

SUBJECT: AMO Annual General Meeting and Conference 2023 Member of Council Delegate Report (Councillor Lo)

OBJET : Le rapport du délégué au congrès annuel et à l'assemblée générale de l'AMO 2023 (Conseiller Lo)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to report to Committee following attendance at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Annual General Meeting and Conference.

Pursuant to Section 4 of the Council Expense Policy, Members of Council who undertake City-funded travel must submit a written report to the appropriate Standing Committee detailing their experiences, what they learned at the conference and how the City's position or interests were advanced.

BACKGROUND

The City of Ottawa is the fourth largest city in Canada, the second largest city in Ontario, and the largest city in the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO). In addition to AMO, the city is a member of several municipal organizations.

With greater emphasis being placed on stronger municipalities, the work of these organizations intensifies as they are the bodies responsible for advancing policies and negotiating agreements with the upper levels of government. The City of Ottawa can influence in this policy development and negotiations through participation in these organizations. To this end, Members of Council are invited to attend various conferences, conventions, and meetings both within and outside the municipality.

AMO brings Ontario's 400+ municipalities together to work on shared goals and challenges. The 2023 AMO Annual General Meeting and Conference was held in London, Ontario between August 20-23, 2023.

DISCUSSION

Like FCM, my participation at AMO's 2023 conference was an opportunity to meet and network with other municipal leaders from across Ontario to discuss common challenges and solutions. Unlike the FCM, the chance to discuss matters more intimate to Ontario was rewarding given the common framework within municipalities work in the province.

Keynote speakers included Premier Ford, Catherine McKenna, and Minister Jones, who announced a reversion to a previous funding model for public health units across the province.

Despite my hope to participate in some study tours and seminars, I was generally unable due to commitments in presenting a delegation on behalf of the City of Ottawa to the following provincial ministers:

- Minister Parsa – Children, Community, and Social Services – advocate for a one-time increase in funding to OPH's Healthy Babies, Healthy Children programme

- Minister Kerzner – Solicitor General – advocate for funding levers for next generation 9-1-1 as well as financial support as the Ottawa Fire Services continues implementing the province’s mandatory certification of all firefighters.
- Minister Smith – Natural Resources and Forestry – to discuss strategic mitigation efforts to support residents and reduce government costs related to response and recovery, especially given Ottawa’s recent experiences with natural disasters and the ongoing effects of climate change.
- Minister Sarkaria – Treasury Board – to discuss how emergency management requires a whole-of-society approach with participation from all parties, including some provincially-mandated private operators of long-term care, retirement homes, and supportive homes (Minister Sarkaria has since been moved to the Ministry of Transportation).

Meetings with former minister Clark and Minister Mulroney were declined. We also met with the NDP caucus, while councillors Brockington and Kitts met with additional ministers.

Towards the end of the conference, conference attendees were given an opportunity to ask questions of the provincial cabinet in a panel format. Although I did not participate, several councillors, mayors, and officials presented questions such as:

- Provincial support for Bill 5;
- Ongoing impacts of recent changes to planning legislation;
- Transportation options for smaller communities;
- Supports for social services.

I also had the unique opportunity of presenting Ottawa as next year’s host city along with Ottawa Tourism.

CONCLUSION

It is through the commitment of Members of Council, to attend conferences like the 2023 AMO Annual General Meeting and Conference, that the City of Ottawa’s interests are advanced.

Wilson Lo
Councillor, Ward 24 Barrhaven East