



MEMO / NOTE DE SERVICE

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TO: Finance and Corporate Services Committee

DESTINATAIRE : Comité des finances et des services organisationnels

FROM: Riley Brockington,
City Councillor, Ward 16 River

Contact :
Riley Brockington
Elected Representatives
613-580-2486
Riley.Brockington@ottawa.ca

EXPÉDITEUR : Riley Brockington,
Conseiller municipal, Quartier 6

Personne ressource :
Riley Brockington
Représentants élus
613-580-2486
Riley.Brockington@ottawa.ca

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FILE NUMBER: ACS2025-OCC-GEN-0012

SUBJECT: NOMA 2025 Conference Delegate Report (Riley Brockington)

OBJET : Le rapport du délégué du congrès annuel de NOMA 2025 (Riley Brockington)

PURPOSE

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

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 and the second largest city in Ontario. As a leading municipality, Ottawa is a member of several municipal organizations responsible for advancing important priorities and engaging with upper levels of government. Our participation allows the City to influence policy development at the provincial and national level, while networking and learning from our peers. To this end, Members of Council are invited to attend various conferences, conventions, and meetings both within and outside the municipality.

The Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association hosted their annual conference in Thunder Bay, Ontario from April 23-25, 2025. Councillor Riley Brockington was in attendance.

DISCUSSION

I would like to provide a brief report concerning my attendance at the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association Conference and Annual General Meeting. The event took place April 23-25, 2025, at the Superior Inn Hotel and Conference Centre in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Following opening remarks, attendees heard from the Leaders of Ontario's opposition parties: MPP Marit Stiles, Leader of the NDP, Ms. Bonnie Crombie, Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party and MPP Mile Schneider, Leader of the Ontario Green Party.

The President and Senior Policy Manager of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) then provided an in-depth overview of the various issues being addressed by AMO.

The afternoon's sessions included:

Northwest Ontario's Electricity Future

The Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) plans for Ontario's electricity needs – today and tomorrow. Municipalities across the province are in a prime position to take charge of their economic futures, by shaping an electricity system that enables growth and prosperity for their communities. Northwestern Ontario municipalities can provide input into electricity infrastructure decisions and secure their energy future.

Key takeaway – Between 2025 and 2050 electricity demand is expected to increase by 75% in Ontario. Ontario needs a diverse supply mix

Working Together to Power Northwestern Ontario

Moderated by: Iain Angus, Co-Chair Northwest Energy Task Force

Panelists: Ian Dunn, President OFIA; Paul Norris, President OWA; Aaron Del Pino Director, Hydro Business Development OPG; Sanjiv (Sonny) Karunakaran, Vice President, Strategic Projects & Partnerships Hydro One; Beverly Nollert, Director, Transmission Planning, IESO.

Key takeaway – The country of Finland has declared energy as a national security issue. They want to cease any and all dependence from Russia.

We also received brief updates on Strong Mayor powers and the current lay of the land at MPAC.

The following day, April 24, I attended the following sessions:

- Innovative Municipal Solutions

Tiny Home Project – Town of Marathon

Micro-Transit System – City of Kenora

By far my favourite one-two presentations of the conference, demonstrating that a small municipality, with a relatively small budget, can still yield positive results for housing and public transit.

- Planning Law for Innovation and Growth
- The Future of AI and How Municipalities Should Prepare
- Keynote: Your Strategy Needs a Strategy: Why Most Strategic Planning is Bad & Doesn't Get You Where You Want to Go

During the lunch break, local federal election candidates engaged in a question-and-answer session.

The afternoon sessions included:

- Harnessing the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program: Strategies for Workforce Sustainability & Economic Growth
- Investment Dollar Earned, Tax Dollar Saved
- Labour Market Trends

I flew back to Ottawa that evening.

The third day (April 25) of the conference consisted of a morning session that was dominated by speeches from provincial Ministers and the very popular Ministers' Table or bear-pit session

I attended this conference to receive a better appreciation and understanding of issues faced by our north-western colleagues – many similar to our own, others unique to their geographic setting. How do smaller municipalities with much smaller tax bases, achieve various successes? You don't have to be as large as Ottawa to make inroads. There are some important takeaways for me, particularly the sessions on tiny homes and micro-transit.

The 2026 NOMA conference and AGM will take place April 22-24, 2026 at the Superior Inn Hotel and Conference Centre in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Riley Brockington
City Councillor, Ward 16 River