

New Policy Resources Available for a New Year

1. AMO's Key Messages – Amplifying AMO's Key Messages for Ontario Budget 2019

Councils and members are encouraged to review and reinforce themes from AMO's [submission](#). To help advance municipal interests and influence the Budget preparation, please use the following key messages with your local MPPs and Ministers.

Seven highlights of AMO's Submission include:

1. Ontarians already pay the highest property taxes in the country generally driven by the transfer of social housing and other services, a role in healthcare, and emergency service cost growth.
2. Polling shows us municipal services are important to Ontarians. More than eight in ten Ontarians say they would be concerned if the Province placed new demands on municipal governments that result in higher property taxes.
3. For almost half of Ontario's municipal governments, a 1% property tax increase raises less than \$50,000. Every municipality and every local economy is different. Many communities have a very limited tax base and fiscal capacity. This demonstrates that others are experiencing incredible growth that puts significant pressure on expanding services.
4. In 2018, \$133.7 billion in provincial spending went to all transfer payment recipients. Support for municipal governments accounts for just \$4.2 billion of that amount or 5.6% of provincial spending. This is small but the support these dollars provide locally is huge.
5. AMO estimates municipal governments need \$4.9 billion per year for ten years on top of the existing federal and provincial transfers to continue delivering today's services and close the infrastructure gap.
6. Development charge revenue must not be eroded. Shortchanging the public services Ontarians depend on is no way to build the communities people want to live in.

7. Municipal governments are important to the provincial government. We are the front line. We deliver many of the services that make communities strong and we build the infrastructure needed to grow the economy.

The [Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs](#) is accepting written pre-budget submissions by 5:00 pm on Tuesday January 29, 2019.

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2. AMO Health Discussion papers released and upcoming webinar

AMO is pleased to release [two policy discussion papers](#) on health issues entitled, "[Partners for a Healthy Ontario: A Check-up on the Municipal Role for Health](#)", and its accompanying document, "[A Compendium of Municipal Health Activities and Recommendations](#)". The papers are the product of AMO's Health Task Force and approved by AMO's Board. The Task Force was co-chaired by AMO Board members Mark Taylor, former Deputy Mayor and Councillor of Ottawa and Graydon Smith, Mayor of Bracebridge.

The starting place for the paper is the fact that Ontario's municipal governments are deeply invested in the public health and health care services. This level of involvement has been evolving over time and is not generally understood by the public, Province, or stakeholders. Municipal governments contributed \$2.1 billion for health costs in 2017, an increase of 38% since 2012. This does not include support services, like social services, housing, and recreation.

The paper reviews the current municipal role in health and provides recommendations to modernize and strengthen the provincial-municipal working relationship. With local knowledge and expertise, municipal governments can provide valuable input into the health system. Given the level of financial investment, municipal governments should also have greater say over health delivery decisions that affect municipal costs and services. This should also lead to better local health outcomes in a way that is fair to property taxpayers and residents.

AMO is hosting a [free webinar](#) on health policy and service issues for municipal officials and staff on **Thursday, January 24th** from 10 – 11 a.m. It will provide an overview of the health policy paper including our key municipal recommendations to the Province to improve local health services. Register today to learn about municipal governments' evolving role in the healthcare and public health systems.

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3. **AMO's Response to Provincial Environmental Plan available now**

November 29, 2019 saw the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks release Ontario's new [Environmental Plan](#), a broad strategy for environmental action in the province for the next four years and beyond. The plan includes proposals that touch on water and wastewater, climate change, waste management, energy conservation and extreme weather, to name a few. To provide input into the plan and help municipal governments understand sector-wide implications of the proposals AMO has developed a [response](#) to the government which compliments our [earlier input](#) into the generation of the document. Municipal staff and officials are encouraged to review these documents in formulating local responses.

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