

New Apprenticeship Grant, Tax Cuts for Small Businesses at Centre of Fall Economic Statement

Today's 2017 Fall Economic Statement tabled in the Legislature by the Honourable Charles Sousa, Minister of Finance contains a number of initiatives aimed at Ontario's communities and residents.

Foremost amongst them was support for small businesses in Ontario that includes a 1% corporate tax cut and other supports up to \$500 million. The Minister also announced initiatives to help small businesses access provincial procurements by dedicating one-third of Ontario procurements to small businesses by 2020. These initiatives come amid proposed tax reductions in other jurisdictions and as the province confirms its intention to increase the minimum wage next year.

The Statement also confirmed that Ontario's provincial fiscal plan is forecast as balanced for the next two budgets as well as the current year. This means that these changes are being financed out of revenues rather than borrowing.

The Statement also contained a number of other initiatives that are aimed at helping residents and communities across the province. This included a new apprenticeship grant for businesses hiring workers

The Fall Economic Statement also confirmed:

- Ontario's long-term infrastructure plan includes investments of \$190 billion over 13 years starting in 2014-15
- Pharmacare expansion to Ontarians under 25 as of January 1st, 2017
- Licensed child care expansion by 24,000 spaces this year
- Ontario's expansion of Long Term Care beds by 5,000 by 2020 and 30,000 beds over the next decade

Although today's statement did not have a municipal focus, the 2018 Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund will be increased by \$5 million and details will be coming likely next week. AMO will provide you with an OMPF update once that information is available.