

March 22, 2019

Your Round-Up – Things You Need to Know

The past two weeks were full of government announcements and significant news relevant to our members. AMO was also active representing members at Queen's Park. This roundup identifies good news as well as decisions that will have negative municipal impacts. AMO will continue to work with the government to attempt to mitigate these as much as possible. Here are the highlights:

Federal Budget 2019: Progress on Municipal Priorities

The 2019 Federal Budget included increased funding to municipal priorities including: \$2.2 billion Top-Up for the federal Gas Tax Fund to double funding to municipal governments this year; \$2.7 billion (\$5-6 billion with leveraged funds) for rural and northern broadband expansion with the goal of connecting every Canadian to high-speed internet services by 2030; and \$1 billion to help municipal governments improve energy efficiency in municipal facilities, commercial, and residential properties. Federal funding for asset management planning capacity building was also included. More information is found in AMO's [Policy Update](#) sent Tuesday.

AMO Contact: Craig Reid, Senior Advisor, creid@amo.on.ca, 416.971.9856 ext. 334.

Infrastructure Funding

Ontario [announced](#) application intakes for road and bridge projects under the federal Rural and Northern Infrastructure Fund. Details are on the [Grants Ontario](#) website. Federal and provincial Public Transit Infrastructure Fund will open soon. Funding under the Community, Culture and Recreation, and Green Infrastructure streams are pending, anticipated later this year. The Ministry of Infrastructure will be holding webinars to provide information on these two streams starting in mid-April. AMO understands invitations will go to municipal governments shortly.

Ontario also announced that the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF) would expand to \$200 million for the formula component in 2019, as previously announced.

However, the government will be redesigning OCIF and will not flow any of the 2018 or 2019 OCIF Top-Up (the application portion). This amounts to \$150 million. Road and bridge projects submitted in 2018 will be fast tracked under Rural and Northern and leaves the status of submitted water related projects uncertain. Any inquiries related to Rural and Northern Fund or OCIF Top-Up projects should be directed to OMAFRA directly by phone or e-mail at 1-877-424-1300 or ICIPRural@ontario.ca.

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Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) 2019 Allocations Announced

The total 2019 funding envelope to municipalities decreases by \$5 million to \$505 million. These dollars are distributed to 389 municipalities, providing unconditional operating support for local frontline services. More information is found in AMO's [Policy Update](#).

AMO Contact: Matthew Wilson, Senior Advisor, mwilson@amo.on.ca, 416.971.9856 ext. 323.

Unconditional Grant for Small and Rural Municipalities to Improve Local Service Delivery and Efficiency

405 municipalities have received notice of a one-time payment from a \$200 million sum to help local service delivery and effect operational efficiencies. The allocations are formula based that predominantly targets municipalities with under 25,000 households.

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Bill 66: *Restoring Ontario's Competitiveness Act*

AMO President Jamie McGarvey presented to the Standing Committee sharing advice on a number of its Schedules - construction employer designation, the repeal of the *Pawnbrokers Act*, and childcare standards. The Committee accepted AMO's amendment request to extend protection against construction employer designation to include local housing corporations, and district social service administration boards. Schedule 10 that proposed to enable municipal governments to pass 'open for business' bylaws will be removed from the Bill when it passes Third Reading. See AMO's [submission](#) and prior [analysis](#) of the municipal implications with the Bill.

AMO Contact: Michael Jacek, Senior Advisor, mjacek@amo.on.ca, 416.971.9856 ext. 329.

Centralized Procurement: Clarification Needed On Applicability to Municipal Governments

The government [announced](#) it is committed to building a modern centralized procurement system that is anticipated to drive significant cost savings. It will apply to Ontario ministries, provincial agencies, as well as broader public sector organizations such as hospitals and schools. There was no mention of municipal governments. AMO's [Local Authority Services](#) is already active in the bulk procurement of services and products for municipal governments. AMO will be following up to clarify.

AMO Contact: Michael Jacek, Senior Advisor, mjacek@amo.on.ca, 416.971.9856 ext. 329.

Changes to Hydro Have Municipal Impact

Changes are on the way to Ontario Hydro including reform to conservation programs, the Ontario Energy Board, and ending the previous government's Fair Hydro Plan. There will be impact on Local Distribution Companies (LDCs). By uploading the delivery of conservation programs to the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), LDCs will no longer receive up to \$150 million in bonus payments for achieving targets. For more information, see the Ontario [Newsroom](#).

AMO Contact: Michael Jacek, Senior Advisor, mjacek@amo.on.ca, 416.971.9856 ext. 329.

Private Member's Bill Introduced to Change MPAC Board Composition

Private Member Bill 86 proposes to increase the number of designated taxpayer representatives from four to seven. Left unchanged are the existing two provincial government representatives and the seven municipal government representatives. The rationale for this change is unclear as municipal government appointees are, in fact, taxpayer representatives.

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