

From: AMO Communications <communicate@amo.on.ca>
Sent: Friday, April 5, 2024 2:00 PM
To: Jennifer E. Willoughby <jwilloughby@shelburne.ca>
Subject: AMO President's Board Update - April 2024

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AMO President's Update - April 2024

The AMO Board last met on March 21 and 22 to discuss a variety of municipal issues and organizational matters. Please visit the [Board Elections FAQ](#), if you are considering putting your name forward for the August Board election.

As part of its Committee of the Whole meeting, the Board heard from outgoing Emergency Services Steering Committee (ESSC) Chair, Norm Gale, who provided a presentation to the board regarding the increasing costs to deliver of emergency services.

Renewal of the Canada Community-Building Fund

The Board authorized AMO to execute a new 10-year [Canada Community-Building Fund](#) (CCBF) funding agreement between Canada, Ontario, AMO, and the City of Toronto. The renewed agreement will cover the 2024-2033 period and enable AMO to administer nearly \$8 billion over this period for municipal infrastructure projects. Funding allocations will continue to be distributed according to the existing model and asset management will continue to guide infrastructure investments.

The federal government committed to tie future infrastructure funding to actions that increase housing supply and municipalities will be expected to use CCBF funds to alleviate housing pressures where it makes sense to do so. There will be some new housing reporting requirements for municipalities with 30,000 or more residents, but AMO has worked to ensure that new reporting requirements do not impact those municipalities under 30,000 population that do not have housing pressures.

All parties are expected to seek final approval in April. Once signed, AMO will prepare agreements with each municipality for signing prior to the first round of payments. AMO

will provide more information on the new agreement to all municipalities once the agreement is signed and finalized.

AMO Education

The Board heard an update of AMO's expanded [education offerings](#). AMO now offers an advanced Councillor Training series to continue the learning of New Councillor Training that many members enroll in following municipal elections. AMO is also offering upcoming sessions and workshops that help Councillors understand and address anti-Semitism and Islamophobia and issues such as cybersecurity.

LAS Feasibility Study for Water and Wastewater Utility

LAS Board is investigating the feasibility of creating a water and wastewater utility. The feasibility study will take a business case perspective on creating one or more water and wastewater utility using the joint municipal services corporation provision within the *Municipal Act*. The feasibility study will include considerations of governance, investments required and already planned, the financing and pricing related to Ontario's water and wastewater systems as well as exploring what degree of change that might be required (e.g., utility would need to operate in a regulated environment). The feasibility study is to be completed by December 2024.

Approach to Homeless Encampments

The Board approved an advocacy approach to the federal and provincial governments and to undertake member education about homeless encampments. On February 13, the Federal Housing Advocate released a [final report](#), which recommended the establishment of a National Encampments Response Plan by August 31, 2024, among other recommendations. The federal government is required to respond within 120 days.

AMO will produce an advocacy and guidance paper that reiterates municipalities' commitments to address encampments within the context of ending homelessness, while firmly calling on the federal and provincial governments to meet their human rights obligations and support municipalities and District Social Service Administration Boards to address the root causes of encampments as a symptom of homelessness.

Other Policy & Advocacy Matters

At this meeting, the AMO Board also:

- Approved that AMO prepare an affidavit in support of the proposed class action on behalf of Canadian municipalities against companies responsible for manufacturing, marketing, and distributing opioids in Canada.

- Endorsed an advocacy approach in response to *Bill 165, Keeping Energy Costs Down Act*, highlighting the critical importance of reliable, affordable and sustainable energy sources as Ontario moves towards decarbonization.
- Heard an update on AMO's advocacy regarding environmental assessment modernization.
- Endorsed a refreshed advocacy approach on provincial offences, including a recommendation that the province conduct a third-party review.

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From: AMO Communications <communicate@amo.on.ca>

Sent: Monday, April 8, 2024 1:14 PM

To: Jennifer E. Willoughby <jwilloughby@shelburne.ca>

Subject: AMO Policy Update – New Federal Infrastructure & Housing Items in Upcoming 2024 Budget

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Policy Update – New Federal Infrastructure & Housing Items in Upcoming 2024 Budget

Recently, the Federal Government announced new investments in [infrastructure](#), changes to increase construction of [rental apartments](#).

and actions to protect and increase [affordable housing](#) that will be coming forth in Canada's 2024 Budget.

New Infrastructure Investments

A new Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund will provide:

- \$1 billion directly to municipalities to support urgent infrastructure needs
- \$5 billion for agreements with provinces and territories for longer-term priorities.

Agreements with provinces and territories will require commitment to housing-related conditions, for example:

- Adoption of four units as-of-right
- Implementation of measures from the Home Buyers' Bill of Rights and Renters' Bill of Rights
- A three-year freeze on increasing development charges for municipalities with a population greater than 300,000

In addition, the announcements noted a **top-up to the Housing Accelerator Fund** with an additional \$400 million, and signaled criteria to access the federal government's forthcoming public transit fund.

These much-needed investments to municipal infrastructure required for growth can help to offset the almost \$100 billion in growth-related infrastructure that Ontario's municipalities are planning for over the next 10 years. Significant questions remain regarding funding eligibility, including accessibility for regional municipal governments and the scope of eligible investments, as well as the potential impact of key conditions – most notably the three-year freeze on development charges.

AMO is working with municipal staff to unpack potential implications to help inform next steps with provincial and federal partners.

Measures to Improve Housing Affordability and Rent

Investments and changes to the Canada Construction Loan Program, including:

- An additional \$15 billion investment in the program
- Modifications to conditions (e.g., extending loan terms, extending access to financing to include housing for students and seniors)
- A partnership program to help support provincial and territorial housing plans

The new funding can help get more residential rentals built, including affordable units and is consistent with recommendations in AMO's [Blueprint for Action: An Integrated Approach to Address the Ontario Housing Crisis](#).

At the same time, the federal government also announced a series of actions to support rental tenants with housing affordability, including:

- Launching a new \$15 million Tenant Protection Fund
- Creating a new Canadian Renters' Bill of Rights, to be developed and implemented in partnership with provinces and territories
- Making sure renters get credit for on-time rent payments

AMO looks forward to additional details on the Home Buyers' Bill of Rights and Renters' Bills of Rights in the federal Budget.

Measures to Protect and Create New Affordable Housing Apartments

The federal government will be launching a new \$1.5 billion Canada Rental Protection Fund intended to protect affordable housing and create thousands of new affordable apartments.

The fund will provide \$1 billion in loans and \$470 million in contributions to non-profit organizations and other partners so they can acquire units and preserve rent prices in the long term.

These measures are responsive to AMO advocacy dating back to 2022.

Additional Announcements

The Federal Government also announced funding for a [National School Food Program](#), investing \$1 billion over 5 years to provide meals to 400,000 more kids every year, beyond those served by existing school food programs. [AMO wrote to Minister Freeland](#) in March expressing our support for the implementation of a national school food program and we are pleased to see it will be included in the 2024 Budget.

A [\\$2.4 billion investment](#) in Artificial Intelligence measures were also announced.

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From: AMO Communications <communicate@amo.on.ca>

Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 6:50 PM

To: Jennifer E. Willoughby <jwilloughby@shelburne.ca>

Subject: AMO Policy Update - Bill 185, Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024

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Policy Update – Bill 185, *Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024*

Today the Government [introduced Bill 185](#), the *Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act*. This omnibus bill includes changes to [a range of legislation](#) including changes to development charges and Ontario's land-use planning framework with the stated intent of removing barriers to building 1.5 million homes by 2031.

Changes to Development Charges

In response to AMO advocacy, Bill 125 would make significant steps towards restoring municipalities' ability to fund growth-related infrastructure by:

- repealing the five-year phase-in of development charges introduced under Bill 23, and
- restoring studies as eligible development charge costs.

The bill moves forward with development charge exemptions for affordable units, with a commitment to release a bulletin by June providing necessary implementation information. AMO has supported these exemptions following the inclusion of income criteria in the definition of affordable.

AMO will continue to highlight the need to reinstate both housing services and the cost of land as eligible DC costs. Together, these changes are costing municipalities around \$4 billion over a 10-year period and will have a material impact on municipalities' ability to invest in community housing.

AMO recognizes that that these changes are the result of a renewed approach to collaboration between the province and municipalities. The proposed changes make progress in walking back elements of Bill 23 that significantly undermined municipalities' ability to support housing. They do not, however, replace the need for a comprehensive conversation to update the provincial-municipal fiscal framework to support sustainability, affordability and economic prosperity.

Minister's Zoning Orders

Bill 185 would replace the Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator (CHIA) tool with a new Minister's Zoning Order (MZO) [framework](#) that requires:

- Demonstration of how infrastructure servicing will be addressed;
- Anticipated timelines for downstream approvals and project completion;
- Evidence that they deliver on a provincial priority or are supported by a single-tier or lower-tier municipality.

The new MZO framework takes steps towards improving transparency, but fall short of AMO's recommendations that the government:

- use MZOs only in collaboration with municipalities
- use MZOs only in situations of extraordinary urgency, and
- enshrine this requirement in legislation.

Land-Use Planning Changes

Bill 185 includes a number of changes intended to streamline planning processes and speed up housing development, including:

- Allowing municipalities to reallocate infrastructure servicing allocations from stalled developments to ready-to-build ones in order to better support growth
- Removing the planning application fee refund framework introduced through 2022's Bill 109
- Exempting public universities from planning approvals to facilitate faster construction of student residences
- Limiting third-party appeals for approved Official Plans and Zoning By-laws
- Authorities needed to move forward with removing planning authorities from seven upper-tier municipalities

Along with these measures, the government is introducing the next edition of the Building Code and will be sharing an updated draft of the next Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) for a 30-day consultation.

AMO calls on the province to support effective implementation of measures by limiting future changes to the land-use planning process and restoring stability and certainty to the system.

Other Items

Bill 185 also proposes to streamline the anti-bonusing exemptions process by providing the Lieutenant Governor in Council the authority to allow municipalities to grant direct or indirect assistance to specific types of businesses, subject to certain conditions.

Bill 185 makes changes to the *Hazel McCallion Act (Peel Dissolution)* which would require the transition board to provide recommendations on the transfer of powers, responsibility or jurisdiction from Peel

Region with respect to land use planning, water and wastewater, storm water, highways and waste management. AMO will continue to monitor the work of the Peel Transition Board to identify any policy recommendations that may impact municipalities in the future.

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