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**From:** AMO Policy <policy@amo.on.ca>  
**Sent:** Friday, December 6, 2024 11:43 AM  
**To:** Jennifer E. Willoughby <jwilloughby@shelburne.ca>  
**Subject:** AMO Policy Update – Gender-Based Violence Toolkit

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## AMO Policy Update – Gender-Based Violence Toolkit

### AMO Releases Toolkit of Gender-Based Violence Resources for Municipal Elected Officials

Today is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. To mark this day, AMO is proud to launch a toolkit of [Gender-Based Violence Resources for Elected Officials](#). Municipalities play a multifaceted role in addressing gender-based violence through their roles in public safety, community outreach, resource planning, and service delivery.

In 2023, AMO joined over 90 of our members in recognizing that gender-based and intimate partner violence is an epidemic in Ontario that requires urgent and coordinated government action. We also recognize the

disproportionate rates of intimate partner violence experienced by Indigenous women and the multiple barriers Indigenous women face when seeking help. By making this declaration, AMO recognizes that municipal governments are key partners in responding to issues of intimate partner violence, gender-based violence, and violence against Indigenous women and girls.

We have heard from many of our members that since making their declarations, they have grown, expanded, and initiated new responses to intimate partner violence and gender-based violence. This toolkit includes resources from organizations working in communities across the province and provides valuable resources to support elected officials in responding to gender-based violence in their communities.

In 2025, AMO will continue to provide members with opportunities to learn more about how their communities can address gender-based violence. Look out for more education opportunities coming soon in the new year.

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*This policy update is also available on [AMO's Website](#).*

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**From:** AMO Policy <policy@amo.on.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 5, 2024 4:57 PM  
**To:** Jennifer E. Willoughby <jwilloughby@shelburne.ca>  
**Subject:** AMO Policy Update – Pre-Budget Submission, Advocacy on Water, Recent Bills and Building Officials

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## **AMO Policy Update – Pre-Budget Submission, Advocacy on Water, Recent Bills and Building Officials**

### **AMO 2025 Pre-Budget Submission Preview**

AMO understands that the provincial-municipal fiscal framework is broken. Municipalities across Ontario are facing immense pressure this budget season, largely created by growing costs in areas of provincial jurisdiction. For almost a year, AMO has been calling for a Social and Economic Prosperity Review. Unfortunately, the provincial government has not come to the table. However, we know the problem remains and we are evolving our strategy.

AMO sent a [letter](#) to all elected AMO members, CAOs, and Treasurers highlighting the key elements of our upcoming 2025 pre-budget submission. That submission will be released in mid-January and will call for provincial action in three key areas that would support municipal fiscal sustainability and improve quality of life for Ontarians:

- Long-term and predictable provincial investments in municipal infrastructure
- Reducing the province's reliance on municipal property taxes to fund health and social services
- Addressing the root causes of homelessness, building off an ambitious research project on homelessness that AMO and key partners will release in January

We know our sector is strongest when speaking with one unified voice. AMO will be following up in the coming weeks with a variety of communications tools to support member's participation in ROMA delegations, and advance municipal fiscal sustainability and homelessness priorities.

## **\$1 Billion Loan Program for Water Systems**

The province recently [announced](#) a new Infrastructure Ontario financing program for water infrastructure projects that enable the construction of more homes.

This program will complement the existing provincial infrastructure funding programs that AMO has advocated for to achieve the province's ambitious goal of 1.5 million new homes by 2031. This new financial tool for municipalities offers the following features:

- Flexible borrowing terms with deferred interest payments during construction
- Longer debenture repayment terms of up to 40 years
- More flexible repayment terms, and
- Lower administration costs

Applications will be open in early December and more details are available in a short [newsletter](#).

## Omnibus Red Tape Reduction Bill

Bill 227, Cutting Red Tape, Building Ontario Act, 2024 was [introduced](#) on November 20 and includes a broad range of proposals from most ministries. Those impacting municipalities the most include:

- A new allowance for minor errors on forms and changes to prevent delays in decision-making could help reduce the Landlord and Tenant Board backlog
- Providing credit agencies access to Landlord and Tenant Board orders related to missed payments, which could help landlords make more informed decisions about prospective tenants
- Recent regulatory changes in support of Ontario One Call streamlined the dedicated locator model for broadband projects, potentially speeding up implementation and reducing costs. In response to feedback from our sector, some municipal underground infrastructure owners can now conduct their own locates instead of the broadband project owner. The province is seeking input on implementing these changes
- Proposals to streamline the release of Ontario Heritage Trust lands without heritage value and the approval process for brownfield development could help unlock more land for development. AMO has long advocated for the province to review its own processes and approvals to enable development and welcomes these efficiencies

Many other proposals are housekeeping amendments or have no direct impact on the municipal sector.

The bill was fast-tracked, bypassing public hearings. AMO will be commenting on some elements of the bill posted to the Environmental Registry.

## Environmental Bill

Bill 228, Resource Management and Safety Act, 2024, was [introduced](#) on November 25 including a range of environmental proposals along with a proposal to help attract more surveyors to the profession in support of building safe and affordable housing options.

AMO will comment on elements of the Bill posted in various Environmental Registry proposals, focusing on:

- Changes that could impact municipalities' activities in wildland fire management and require new resources. AMO will advocate for the province to absorb any new costs
- Commending the province for taking action on climate change with its proposal for commercial carbon storage projects. AMO will support the proposed municipal role in decision-making for these projects
- Support for protecting communities from the hazards of deteriorating oil and gas wells

## Support for Removing Barriers for Qualified Building Officials

AMO supported the government's proposal to streamline the process for qualified Manitoba building officials to work in Northern Ontario in its Environmental Registry [comments](#). AMO also continued to advocate for measures that will attract and retain building officials to address the shortage across the province.

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**From:** AMO Policy <policy@amo.on.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 12, 2024 12:23 PM  
**To:** Jennifer E. Willoughby <jwilloughby@shelburne.ca>  
**Subject:** AMO Policy Update – Homelessness Encampments Legislation

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## AMO Policy Update – Homelessness Encampments Legislation

Later today, the government will table bills to introduce the *Safer Municipalities Act* and the *Restricting Public Consumption of Illegal Substances Act* that focus on increasing enforcement around encampments and public drug use. AMO will be closely reviewing the legislation when it is tabled.

The province also announced other measures intended to assist municipalities to address homelessness encampments:

- \$75.5 million in provincial and federal funding for housing and

homelessness supports, including \$5.5 million to increase the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB), \$20 million for emergency shelters and temporary accommodation, and \$50 million for ready-to-build affordable housing projects.

- Additional requirements for municipal service managers to report back to the province on the number of individuals moved from encampments into new accommodations and to submit spending plans for Homelessness Prevention Program funding for MMAH approval.

AMO has called for provincial guidance that clarifies municipal enforcement powers around encampments. The lack of shared understanding of municipal authorities across municipal Councils, police services, and community members has led to divisive local confrontations and undermined effective responses to encampments.

Enforcement alone will not effectively address encampments. Only serious investments and coordinated action on transitional, supportive and community housing, mental health, addictions and social services, and income supports can address the impacts of decades of provincial policy.

*“AMO shares the province’s perspective that the 1400 homeless encampments across Ontario must be addressed. Municipalities appreciate every dollar that the province puts towards homelessness. But more is needed. Only provincial investments in housing, health and social services can truly address encampments.”* Robin Jones, AMO President and Mayor of Westport

*“Encampments are not a justice or policing issue, they are a social safety net issue. The 1400 homeless encampments in Ontario today are the result of decades of provincial under investments in income security, mental health and addictions services, and deeply affordable housing. Provincial leadership and resources are needed to solve this crisis that is undermining Ontario’s prosperity and quality of life.”* Brian Rosborough, AMO Executive Director

More information about AMO’s position is found in [Homelessness Encampments in Ontario: A Municipal Perspective](#).

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**From:** AMO Policy <policy@amo.on.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 12, 2024 4:38 PM  
**To:** Jennifer E. Willoughby <jwilloughby@shelburne.ca>  
**Subject:** AMO Policy Update – Municipal Codes of Conduct Legislation

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## AMO Policy Update – Municipal Codes of Conduct Legislation

As the most trusted and transparent level of government, accountability is a core value of the municipal sector. For years, municipalities have called on the province for better tools to codify and enforce higher standards of accountability for elected officials. These tools are needed to reinforce the accountability of the municipal sector and to support a safe and respectful work environment for members of council and for municipal staff.

Legislation was promised three years ago following an extensive public consultation process that concluded in fall 2021. If passed and once regulations are finalized, this legislation will largely deliver on that promise by:

- enabling standardization of municipal codes of conduct and integrity commissioner investigation processes;
- creating a role for the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario in municipal codes of conduct and integrity commissioner matters; and
- establishing a mechanism to remove and disqualify from office members of council and certain local boards for the most serious violations.

AMO welcomes this legislation that responds to what municipalities' have consistently requested. AMO will review the details in the bill and engage fully in the legislative process during the next legislative session. Members should be aware that the bill will not become law if the Premier calls an election before the bill passes.

*“Municipal councils in Ontario have asked for legislation that holds elected officials to a higher standard of accountability. If passed, this bill would deliver on ensuring that, as members of council, we are living up to the trust that residents put in us. We commend Minister Calandra for getting to this point.”*  
– Robin Jones, AMO President and Mayor of Westport

*“Municipal government is the most trusted, open and transparent order of government. This bill, if passed, will help municipal councils fulfil their commitment a higher standard of accountability, and to address situations of serious misconduct when they arise.”* – Brian Rosborough, AMO Executive Director

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**From:** [AMO Policy](#)  
**To:** [Jennifer E. Willoughby](#)  
**Subject:** AMO Policy Update - Pre-Budget Key Messages for Use at ROMA Delegations, Conservation Authority Fees, Energy Supply and Distribution Plans, Environmental Bill  
**Date:** Monday, December 16, 2024 3:27:43 PM

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## **AMO Policy Update – Pre-Budget Key Messages for Use at ROMA Delegations, Conservation Authority Fees, Energy**

# Supply and Distribution Plans, Environmental Bill

## Pre-Budget Key Messages for Use at ROMA Delegations

Ontario's municipalities are strongest when they speak with one voice, highlighting issues that are important to communities across the province and consistently asking for the same fix from the province.

The 2025 ROMA Conference provides an important opportunity to link local examples to what municipalities are saying province-wide on key priorities. AMO asks that you consider incorporating AMO's [pre-budget key messages](#) into your conversations with Ministers at ROMA. Messages focus on the need for:

- new ways to fund housing-enabling infrastructure
- the province to reduce its reliance on municipal tax dollars, to help municipalities to focus on rising costs of core municipal responsibilities like policing
- the province to make significant and comprehensive investments in income support, mental health and addictions services as well as community and supportive housing to address homelessness

In addition to these key priorities, we know that many ROMA members plan to raise concerns with *Provincial Offences Act* administration. Recently, AMO wrote to Minister Downey calling for a third-party review of the system to address ongoing challenges. You may wish to consider key messages from the [letter](#) as part of a consistent, sector-wide ask.

## Conservation Authority Fee Freeze

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry recently provided direction to Conservation Authorities that it will be freezing conservation authority fees for another year, until the end of 2025. The freeze was originally put in place on January 1, 2023 to help the province build 1.5 million homes by 2031. This will mark the third year that the freeze is being extended.

Conservation Authorities provide key services that benefit municipalities by protecting residents, safeguarding infrastructure, and enhancing the overall quality of life within the community. AMO will continue to advocate for:

- The ability of conservation authorities to set fees that accurately reflect the value of their services. These fees should be transparent, defensible, and publicly available.
- A fee structure that establishes a reliable, long-term funding model for conservation authorities. This would mitigate potential financial risks for municipalities while addressing concerns about strained staffing capacity within these crucial environmental organizations.

## Province Expanding Energy Procurements

The Minister of Energy and Electrification [has announced](#) direction to the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) to increase energy procurements by:

- Expanding the amount of new electricity generation infrastructure being procured under the Second Long-Term Procurement (LT2) by 50%. IESO will award contracts annually between 2026 and 2029
- Developing options for additional procurements to:
  - Get “long-lead resources” such as hydroelectric and long-duration energy storage, and
  - Re-contract existing and get new small-scale electricity generation such as small solar installations

AMO anticipates that this expanded approach to energy procurement will lead to an increase in requests for municipal approvals on proposed energy projects within their communities. AMO continues to collaborate with the IESO and the province to ensure municipalities have the necessary support to make informed decisions on energy projects. This includes AMO’s development of a municipal toolkit, which will be launched in the New Year.

## OEB New Connections for Housing Development

AMO [provided comments](#) to the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) on proposed changes to the Distribution System Code. These changes aim to lower the upfront costs for homebuyers in new developments by directing electricity companies to recover the costs of building new ‘last mile’ power lines over a longer period. This could spread costs across a larger pool of residents, making housing more affordable. AMO continues to advocate for a solution

that ensures the cost and risk shift away from homebuyers without burdening municipalities or local distribution corporations.

## Response to Environmental Bill

AMO [provided comments](#) on Environmental Registry postings related to Bill 228, Resource Management and Safety Act, 2024. Comments addressed a range of environmental proposals, including:

- Advocacy for the province to absorb any new costs associated with a new wildland fire modernization framework
- Support for the province’s plan to reduce oil and gas well hazards, and
- Support for the province’s efforts to mitigate climate change through the development of a commercial carbon storage framework.

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