

TO THE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION OF THE CLERK AND COUNCIL

January 17, 2014

The Fork in the Road – Highlights of AMO's 2014 Pre-Budget Submission

Today the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) provided its [2014 Pre-Budget Submission](#) to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs and the Minister of Finance.

Quick highlights:

- It calls on the legislature to call the question on key Bills that are beneficial to municipalities but which have languished far too long.
- It sets out a nine point action plan for the coming year's provincial budget which includes the following:
 1. **Infrastructure** - Small, rural and northern municipalities need a permanent, predictable infrastructure fund in the next provincial budget. We also need to discuss how sustainable support for transit and large infrastructure investments can become a reality that works in all parts of Ontario.
 2. **Emergency Service Costs** – Rate of growth of these services is not sustainable and AMO is looking for action on drivers that contribute to this. It continues to advocate for an improved, accountable and transparent arbitration system that gives meaning to capacity to pay.

In addition, the Province must have a more vigorous pursuit of system-wide efficiencies in policing and proceed in earnest in order to deal with the cost drivers for all police forces.

Three-quarters of all Ontario municipalities pay and use the services of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP). Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) reductions and OPP wage increases in 2014 have caused a \$50 million hit for property taxpayers in rural, small urban and northern communities. These same municipalities are facing a proposed new model for OPP billing that helps some and for others the impact is not feasible. Any OPP billing change must involve municipal finance expertise, consider the differing fiscal health of

municipalities, involve various Ministries and a way to validate the OPP costs for its activity centres and examine mitigation techniques.

3. **Municipal Liability** – the Attorney General’s willingness to explore some version of proportionate liability in road cases where a plaintiff has some negligence needs to move into a government and Legislature priority.
4. **Waste Management** - Pass Bill 91, the *Waste Reduction Act*. It reflects municipal perspectives on producers’ responsibility – let’s take action now so that we can cut the waste, reduce the pressure on landfills and eliminate wrap rage.
5. **Improve the rule of law** - Pass Bill 34, the *Highway Traffic Statute Law Amendment Act*, to help municipalities collect unpaid fines. *Provincial Offences Act* reform has been stalled in the legislature since last April.
6. **Housing** - Total housing and homelessness prevention funding must be enhanced and further program consolidation is needed to produce more cost-effective and efficient. Despite the social services upload, property taxpayers in Ontario shoulder the burden of social housing and asked to take a role in providing affordable housing, on top of child care and long term care and public health.
7. **Energy** - A renewed look at energy planning and energy costs so that Ontario can be as competitive as possible.
8. **Growth must pay for growth** - On Development Charges, artificial discounts for transit, etc. and exclusions (e.g. hospitals) need to end.
9. **Loss and Destruction** – Municipalities call on the provincial and federal government to collectively review the recovery programs for natural or man-made disasters to public property.

Municipalities are encouraged to reflect these themes in their discussions with MPPs and their own submissions.