

August 14, 2020

## **AMO Policy Update – New Recreational Facility Guidance, Canada Healthy Communities Initiative, and 2021-22 Connecting Links Program**

### **More Spaces Can Open in Sport, Fitness, and Recreational Facilities**

The Ontario government has [released](#) additional guidance to support the safe reopening of many sport, fitness, and recreation facilities by applying a capacity limit on a per room basis. This was guidance municipalities and others have been asking for to enable their multi-room facilities to reopen safely which will allow greater use of these community facilities. Beginning August 15, 2020 at 12:01 a.m., these facilities can have up to 50 patrons for each indoor sport or fitness room, while ensuring physical distancing of at least two metres.

Businesses, not-for-profits, and municipalities may need or choose to take more time before implementing this change in capacity limits. Facilities may also adopt their own protocols that are more restrictive than the provincial guidance in consultation with their local medical officers of health.

The Province is also investing \$8 million through the Ontario Amateur Sport Fund to help the Province's sports organizations to continue to serve athletes of all levels as access to sports and recreational facilities increases.

### **Federal Funding for Pandemic Resilient Communities**

The Honourable Federal Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Catherine McKenna, [announced](#) she is making available \$31 million through a new program called the [Canada Healthy Communities Initiative](#). This program seeks to help communities build on initiatives that are being used to adapt to the realities of COVID-19. The program targets non-governmental organizations and community groups to partner with municipalities and identify projects over the next two years.

### **2021-2022 Connecting Links Program Accepting Applications**

The Premier announced on August 13, that the 2020-2021 [intake](#) for applications under the Ontario Connecting Links Program is open to eligible municipalities. Connecting links are municipal roads that connect provincial highways.

The Province allocates \$30 million annually to support capital works on these roads and bridges, however, the Minister of Transportation allocated an additional \$10 million in 2019-20 as part of the COVID-19 Action Plan. The intake is open to municipal applications until **5:00 p.m. on November 20, 2020**.

AMO's [COVID-19 Resources](#) page is being updated continually so you can find critical information in one place. Please send any of your municipally related pandemic questions to [covid19@amo.on.ca](mailto:covid19@amo.on.ca).