



300 Dufferin Avenue
P.O. Box 5035
London, ON
N6A 4L9

Thursday February 19, 2019

Chair and Members
Corporate Service Committee

RE: AMO Board Meeting Update – City of Toronto, ON, January 24 – 25, 2019

As a Board member of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Board, I am reporting back to City of London Council regarding the matters discussed at the AMO board meeting, held from January 24 – 25, 2019, in Toronto.

The Board's discussions surrounded five topics:

Ongoing provincial consultations

- A number of concurrent and recently completed consultations were discussed, including the *Made-In-Ontario Environment Plan*, and the *Housing Supply Action Plan*, as well as emergent provincial policy impacting municipalities including *Bill 66: Restoring Ontario's Competitiveness Act* and the *Student Choice Initiative*.
- General consensus from the board was that the short consultative timelines and potentially significant impacts of the changes being proposed by the province are proving to be challenging for municipalities.
- Continued communication through municipal networks and associations will assist in ensuring well-aligned responses.

Housing

- AMO's Housing and Planning Task Force presented the framework for a housing policy discussion paper to be released in February. This paper will form the basis for AMO's advocacy to the provincial and federal governments about housing issues.
- In general, positions expressed in the discussion paper are well aligned with the City of London's historic advocacy positions, including the importance of municipal autonomy, as well as a focus on the full continuum of housing, including homelessness shelters, community housing, supportive housing, rental housing, and home ownership.

Broadband coverage

- AMO staff reviewed comments made in support of a submission provided by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) into the joint review of the *Telecommunications Act*, *Radio Communications Act*, and *Broadcasting Act*.
- This review, and AMO/FCM's input, is significant because of regional broadband connectivity initiatives, especially the SouthWest Integrated Fibre Technology (SWIFT) initiative.
- The submissions reflect municipal sector messaging around the importance of broadband connectivity, and the important role municipalities play in regional and national connectivity.

Development charges

- AMO staff presented the outline of AMO's forthcoming submission to the Provincial Government responding to the Housing Supply Action Plan Consultation. The submission will focus on potential changes to development charges, with the following three main points:
 1. Development charges are not a root cause of the affordable housing and supply challenge in Ontario.
 2. A reduction in development charge collections will increase the cost of public services for all residents.
 3. Legislative changes that reduced charges by previous governments has never resulted in reduced housing prices.
- AMO's submission appears to be very well aligned with the City of London's submission to the same consultation.



London
CANADA

300 Dufferin Avenue
P.O. Box 5035
London, ON
N6A 4L9

Cannabis retailing

- AMO has developed a Municipal Cannabis Policy Statement guide for municipalities, which is designed to support municipalities in creating cannabis retail siting policies like the one passed by London's City Council.
- A majority of the communities represented at the board opted to allow cannabis retail, and in conversations generally expressed their councils' interest in accessing as much provincial funding as possible in order to deal with the health and community impacts of legalization.
- Councillors representing communities that chose to opt out indicated significant community interest in not allowing retail, or concerns about outstanding information regarding municipal input on retail siting.

Two significant developments which occurred in the immediate lead-up to the board meeting were also discussed:

Regional Review

- The province has appointed two advisors to lead a review of nine regional governments, with a focus on governance, decision-making and service delivery.
 - Michael Fenn – a former Ontario Deputy Minister, previous municipal chief administrator in several Ontario cities, and founding CEO of Metrolinx.
 - Ken Seiling – former Chair of Waterloo Region who held that position since 1985 and prior as a councillor and Mayor in Woolwich.
 - AMO will be monitoring the review as it progresses and providing input into the process.

Removal of Schedule 10 from Bill 66

- The day before the board meeting, the Minister of Municipal Affairs announced on Twitter that the province would not be proceeding with Schedule 10 of the proposed *Bill 66: Restoring Ontario's Competitiveness Act*.
- Schedule 10 provided municipalities with the ability to pass a site specific "open for business bylaw", which appeared to enable job-creating developments to bypass a large number of provincial approvals.
- There was significant concern and calls for more clarity from a number of stakeholders when the bill was proposed, including municipalities. The Minister made it clear in his statement that the tool was being rescinded as a result of this feedback.

Sincerely,

Anna Hopkins
Councillor Ward 9