

February 19, 2021

Chair and Members  
Corporate Services Committee

**RE: Report on Association of Municipalities of Ontario Board Advocacy**

**OVERVIEW:**

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Board meets five times per year and met most recently on January 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. The AMO Board Executive Committee meets monthly, as does the joint AMO-Province of Ontario Memorandum of Understanding table. These meetings have been more frequent, and more important than ever, over the past year, as cities work together to ensure provincial and federal supports meet the needs of Ontario cities and residents.

**AMO-Provincial Memorandum of Understanding:**

As chair of the Large Urban Caucus, I sit on the AMO Board Executive and participate in discussions at the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) table. The MOU meetings bring together the AMO executive and provincial ministers to engage in confidential conversations about priority issues and upcoming legislation.

In 2020, the AMO executive participated in a record 15 formal MOU meetings, covering 70 agenda items. These productive discussions have resulted in decisive action between both levels of government. I am very glad to be able to represent London's perspective during these conversations, as they touch many of our highest priorities as a Council. Some examples of topics covered at the MOU table in 2020 include:

- Child Care and Early Years Review
- Supportive Housing and Community Housing Engagement
- Conservation Authorities Review
- New Responsibility Regulation for the Blue Box
- Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy
- Age-Friendly Communities
- Water Quality Management
- Environmental Assessment Modernization

In addition to formal MOU meetings, the province has continually engaged AMO and its members on the government's response to COVID-19. A strong provincial-municipal partnership is vital for the ongoing management of the pandemic. Discussions through the AMO MOU table have helped deliver better outcomes and provides a high-impact way to communicate the municipal perspective on important provincial initiatives.

**Large Urban Caucus:**

There have been some changes to the membership of the Large Urban Caucus over the recent months. Guelph Mayor Cam Guthrie has been replaced as chair of the Ontario Big City Mayors (OBCM) by Barrie Mayor Jeff Lehman. As a result, Mayor Lehman now sits on the Large Urban Caucus as well.

At our January meeting, the board also approved Dan Chapman, CAO at the City of Kitchener, to fill the final vacancy in the caucus. The Large Urban Caucus is now at a full complement of seven members, four of whom are Mayors. We have already had very productive conversations around shared mid- and large-sized city priorities, and I am excited to work with this dedicated and energetic group of municipal representatives to ensure the perspective of cities like London is clearly reflected in AMO's overall advocacy work.

**2021 AMO Annual Conference:**

Finally, as you are aware AMO formalized the decision to hold the 2021 conference as an online-only event. London remains the host city despite the change, and City staff have already begun working with AMO's events staff on the early decisions. There will still be opportunities for Council to participate and ensure that London's presence is recognized, so expect to see more on this in the coming months.

I also want to recognize Tourism London, RBC Place, and local hoteliers, who worked directly with AMO to make compromises and avoid any significant penalties for the change in schedule. This work has also secured London as the host city for the 2027 conference in addition to the 2021 and 2023 conferences, providing additional economic benefits in the future.

I will continue to keep Council updated on my work on your behalf at AMO.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Anna Hopkins  
Councillor, Ward 9