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Subject AMO Policy Update - Ontario Government Launches
Consultation on Infrastructure Funding for Areas Outside of
GTHA

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Ontario Government Launches Consultation on Infrastructure Funding For Areas Outside of Greater Toronto and Hamilton Areas (GTHA)

The provincial government is beginning consultations on **Moving Ontario Forward - Outside the GTHA**. The consultation will run through the summer with a number of roundtables to be announced and comments are due by **September 18, 2015**.

Move Ontario Forward is the government's 10-year, \$31.5 billion strategy to fund infrastructure across Ontario. Of this funding \$16 billion is available to support transit within the GTHA and \$15 billion is dedicated to areas outside of the GTHA. Of the \$15 billion for projects outside of the GTHA, the government has committed some funding already to programs such as Connecting Links, Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF), and natural gas initiatives. This consultation is focused on the remaining \$11.5 billion.

The released discussion document is intended to frame consultations. It identifies the Province's principles for use in designing the funding program with emphasis on projects with a regional focus, underpinned by strong business cases and the potential to maximize returns through economic growth as well as social and environmental benefits, among others.

AMO members are encouraged to attend the roundtables once they are announced and develop their own responses to the guide. To help members respond, AMO suggests using the following considerations:

- **Equity** - Can the funding be distributed in a way that treats areas of the province (Northern, Eastern, Western, etc.) in a manner that is seen to be fair and equitable? How can both smaller municipalities and larger ones be given the same access to potential funding?
- **Transparency** - Residents and communities are entitled to have access to documentation that shows now and in the future what funding requests were received by the Province, what projects are committed to, when funds are spent, and any change effected. Funding should not be re-profiled, re-announced, or re-committed without being transparently tracked.
- **Municipal access** - Can submission requirements be commensurate to the scale of the project?
- **Accounts for local fiscal challenges** - Can the funding recognize the local infrastructure challenges in a municipality and the contribution of core investments to the local economy?

AMO anticipates that members also may be interested in looking at the scale of economic returns on infrastructure projects and how these are viewed in various perspectives: local, regional, provincial, and national. The Province has made the largest commitment to infrastructure funding. At the same time, all municipalities have significant needs but not enough fiscal capacity, so there will be a substantial interest in how this funding is designed.

To read the discussion guide and consultation questions and receive information on how to participate, including attending roundtables, go to:

<http://www.ontario.ca/business-and-economy/infrastructure-consultation>.

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