

October 6, 2016

Dear Clerks:

AMO Seeks Council Resolution

On behalf of the AMO Board, I would ask you to place the attached resolution on council's next agenda along with this letter.

AMO wants every council to be involved in the *What's Next Ontario?* project. There is a looming fiscal gap facing Ontario's municipalities. *What's Next Ontario?* is about recognizing the gap and seeking sector support for closing it. The response has been impressive, but there's more to be done! We've boiled down the essence of the challenge we face in the next ten years to a one-page resolution. We urge every council in Ontario to adopt the resolution, and reply to AMO by December 1, 2016.

What does it say? We know Ontarians see infrastructure as the number one challenge facing their community. We know that even if we raise property taxes and user fees by inflation (1.8%), we will still be \$3.6 billion short to fix the infrastructure gap, every year for ten years. This is what we need to address. As elected officials, how do we deal with this challenge? What is the best approach? Ontarians already pay the highest property taxes in the country. How high is too high?

We could finance this gap by increasing property taxes. It would require property tax revenue increases of 4.6% annually for 10 years, sector-wide. And, what happens if the federal or provincial governments pull back on future commitments? We know that could mean property tax revenue increases of up to 8.35% annually for 10 years, sector-wide. How might these numbers translate locally as an annual rate increase?

The attached resolution is a starting point. Thank you for bringing this to your council's attention. My e-mail address is on the resolution and I look forward to receiving council's support.

If you have questions, please contact Matthew Wilson, Senior Advisor, mwilson@amo.on.ca, 416-971-9856 Ext. 323.

Yours sincerely,



Lynn Dollin
AMO President

WHAT'S NEXT ONTARIO? RESOLUTION

WHEREAS recent polling, conducted on behalf of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario indicates 76% of Ontarians are concerned or somewhat concerned property taxes will not cover the cost of infrastructure while maintaining municipal services, and 90% agree maintaining safe infrastructure is an important priority for their communities;

AND WHEREAS infrastructure and transit are identified by Ontarians as the biggest problems facing their municipal government;

AND WHEREAS a ten-year projection (2016-2025) of municipal expenditures against inflationary property tax and user fee increases, shows there to be an unfunded average annual need of \$3.6 billion to fix local infrastructure and provide for municipal operating needs;

AND WHEREAS the \$3.6 billion average annual need would equate to annual increases of 4.6% (including inflation) to province-wide property tax revenue for the next ten years;

AND WHEREAS this gap calculation also presumes all existing and multi-year planned federal and provincial transfers to municipal governments are fulfilled;

AND WHEREAS if future federal and provincial transfers are unfulfilled beyond 2015 levels, it would require annual province-wide property tax revenue increases of up to 8.35% for ten years;

AND WHEREAS Ontarians already pay the highest property taxes in the country;

AND WHEREAS each municipal government in Ontario faces unique issues, the fiscal health and needs are a challenge which unites all municipal governments, regardless of size;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Council supports the Association of Municipalities of Ontario in its work to close the fiscal gap; so that all municipalities can benefit from predictable and sustainable revenue, to finance the pressing infrastructure and municipal service needs faced by all municipal governments.

Please forward your resolution by December 1, 2016 to:
AMO President Lynn Dollin amopresident@amo.on.ca.