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February 13, 2019

Dear Head of Council:

We are writing to provide you with an update on the 2019 Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF).

Recognizing that we are already well into the municipal budget year, the government will be maintaining the current structure of the OMPF for 2019 as well as Transitional Assistance. This means that the program and funding will remain virtually the same as in 2018, while allowing for annual data updates and related adjustments. We heard the concerns of municipalities and that is why we are now providing the certainty they need to begin finalizing their budgets.

Ministry staff are working to finalize data updates to ensure the OMPF continues to be responsive to changing municipal circumstances as is the case under the current program. Allocation notices with funding details for each municipality, as well as supporting material, will be available in mid-March. At that time, the final 2019 funding envelope will also be announced. Consistent with prior years, Transitional Assistance will continue to gradually decline as fewer municipalities require this funding.

As we communicated previously, Ontario inherited a \$15 billion deficit. The rising cost of servicing our massive debt, if left unchecked, will imperil our hospitals, schools and other public services. We cannot allow this to happen. We continue to review government transfer payments, including the OMPF, as we work to put our province back on a sustainable and responsible fiscal path.

In the coming months, we will continue to consult with municipalities to ensure the OMPF program is sustainable and focused on the Northern and rural municipalities that need this funding the most. As we noted in December, the OMPF will be reviewed. For this reason, we are committed to announcing 2020 allocations well in advance of the municipal budget year so that municipalities have appropriate time to plan.

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We respect our municipal partners and remain committed to listening and working together constructively to find smarter and more efficient ways to make life better for our communities.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by

Vic Fedeli
Minister of Finance

c: The Honourable Steve Clark, Minister, Municipal Affairs and Housing
Jamie McGarvey, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario