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Subject AMO Breaking News - Provincial Election Status Report on
AMO's Top 12 Asks

TO THE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION OF THE CLERK AND COUNCIL

October 29, 2013

AMO Marks Two-year Anniversary of 2011 Provincial Election with Status Report on AMO's Top 12 Asks

This October marks the halfway point in the four-year statutory legislative term under the *Election Act*. It is an ideal time to take stock of what the government and MPPs in the legislature have achieved related to the priorities of municipal governments. Attached is the Report that AMO issued today to all MPPs on the status of the Association's "Provincial Election Check List: AMO's Top 12 Asks". The Asks reflect the practical, pragmatic priorities of municipal governments which require action from the province – legislative and programmatic.

The Report sets out how each party responded to our 12 Asks during the 2011 election and the progress since then at Queen's Park. Several items have been met and where this is the case, AMO applauds the work of the government and the opposition parties to make it happen. However, in too many cases there is more work to be done by the legislature and the government to deliver on these priorities. For matters before the House, we have called on the House Leaders to find a way to give them priority. For matters within ministries where the government agreed to our Ask, we have reminded the affected Ministries to move forward quickly.

AMO's core message is – we are committed to working with the government and MPPs to deliver the improvements embedded in our 12 Asks, which permit municipal governments to serve their communities better.

What can AMO's members do? Review the attached progress Report on the Top 12 Asks and to discuss the importance of finishing this work with your local MPPs and with members of your community.

These are not the only policy and program issues we are working on. Matters such as sustainable policing, new *Waste Reduction Act*, property assessment matters, energy policy reviews, model for social services integration, housing strategy and infrastructure

funding including negotiations of permanent Canada Gas Tax agreement, are just a few of the other activities of the Association. For more information on these matters, refer to AMO's website.

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PLEASE NOTE AMO Breaking News will be broadcast to the member municipality's council, administrator and clerk. Recipients of the AMO broadcasts are free to redistribute the AMO broadcasts to other municipal staff as required. We have decided to not add other staff to these broadcast lists in order to ensure accuracy and efficiency in the management of our various broadcast lists.

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AMO_PolicyProgressReport2013_FINAL.pdf

Policy Progress Report 2011-2013

Prior to the 2011 provincial election, AMO issued "12 Asks" that highlighted policy priorities that would support municipal governments and create thriving communities. Two years later, this report reviews the progress so far on these critical policy initiatives. We have made some headway. Several matters need to move through the legislature or have been passed. On others, more work is needed to move forward. AMO will continue to press for action so that communities across Ontario get the support they need.



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AMO ASK	2011 – WHAT WE WERE TOLD	NOW
Will meet (or beat) promised upload of \$1.5 billion in social service and court security costs by 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberals and NDP agreed to honour the upload agreement to 2018. • Liberals stopped annual reconciliation of the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund in 2010. NDP would have continued it. • PCs would cap the uploading to 2011 commitments (\$947 million). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The upload continues and is worth \$1.36 billion to municipalities in 2013. • As of 2013, the upload includes: all Ontario Drug Benefit and Ontario Disability Support Program benefits and administration, 29% of the municipal share of Ontario Works benefits, and \$35.7 million in court security costs. • By 2018, the Agreement will upload about \$1.77 billion in annual provincial costs from the municipal property tax base.
Won't download costs, or add new ones to Ontario's limited property tax base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberals pledged not to add new programs or costs. • PCs said they had no plans to do so (beyond the added municipal costs from capping the upload agreement). • NDP stated no position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2011, municipal governments have incurred some new costs, such as increased Ontario Works benefits and more costs for household hazardous waste. • Continued vigilance is needed at Queen's Park.
Will create a separate, new, predictable and permanent fund for municipal roads and bridges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberals agreed to permanent roads and bridges funding. • PCs proposed provincial gas tax funds for those without transit, while preserving funding for those with transit. • NDP said they would create a three-year funding program for small and rural municipalities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An application-based process for the new \$100-million small, rural and northern fund was recently announced for 2013. • A permanent, predictable fund, which is critical to municipal capital planning, may be created in the next provincial budget.
Will make permanent provincial gas tax revenue of about \$318 million for transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberals agreed to permanent provincial gas tax funding. • In an expanded program, PCs proposed preserving provincial transit funding. • NDP proposed increased transit funding and freezing fares. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent provincial gas tax revenue was legislated in June 2013. • Permanent, predictable funding is important to transit capital planning.
Will ensure arbitration process achieves affordable, accountable and transparent decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NDP and PCs agreed to work with municipalities to alleviate costs. • PCs committed to requiring arbitrators to consider municipalities' ability to pay for awards. • Liberals would not change the arbitration system, but were open to suggestions to encourage more negotiated settlements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Liberal government tabled changes in the 2012 budget that did not pass. They released draft proposals later that fall. • Advocacy efforts saw the government commit in the 2013 Throne Speech to "sit down with its partners across all sectors to build a sustainable model for wage negotiation." • Two PC bills in 2013 failed to get second reading. • AMO continues to advocate for an improved, accountable and transparent arbitration system to ensure essential local services remain affordable.

AMO ASK	2011 – WHAT WE WERE TOLD	NOW
Will protect taxpayers from excessive insurance claims (by addressing joint and several liability)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberals would see how municipal concerns could be addressed. • NDP said they would work with municipalities to control insurance costs. • PCs stated no position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the 2013 AMO Conference, Liberals appeared willing to explore some version of proportionate liability in road cases where a plaintiff has some negligence. • Municipal insurance costs continue to rise at an alarming rate.
Will promote personal and producer responsibility for waste (it's costly; polluters should pay)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberals agreed that municipalities should not bear waste costs. • PCs proposed exploring extended producer responsibility initiatives used in other provinces; wanted to ensure convenient programs for residents. • NDP agreed producers should be responsible for the waste they generate and that costs should not be borne by municipalities or consumers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The legislature is currently debating if Bill 91, the <i>Waste Reduction Act</i>, will move beyond Second Reading. It reflects municipal perspectives on producers' responsibility for their products and packages. It would offer relief to property taxpayers by providing more industry funding for waste diversion. • PCs say they cannot support the Bill as it stands. • NDP is supportive of Bill 91 but wants to propose changes at Standing Committee.
Will provide tools to collect \$1 billion in unpaid Provincial Offences Act fines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All three parties expressed a willingness to improve fine collection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All three parties have spoken in favour of Bill 34, the <i>Highway Traffic Statute Law Amendment Act</i>, to help municipalities collect unpaid fines. Introduced in March 2013, it has not yet received Second Reading. • <i>Provincial Offences Act</i> reform will improve the administration of justice. AMO wants the Bill to pass.
Will consolidate housing programs with current or more funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberals committed to consolidating housing and homelessness programs with more funding. • PCs and NDP stated no position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Liberal government consolidated five of more than 20 housing programs. • Total housing funding must be protected and further consolidation is needed to produce more cost-effective programs that allow municipalities to decide how best to deliver local services.
Won't introduce property assessment or taxation caps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberals and NDP agreed not to introduce caps. • PCs agreed not to introduce caps pending the results of the 2013 MPAC assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment caps have not been introduced. • The Ministry of Finance is currently reviewing assessment issues, such as billboards, mills and landfills, which could drive up residential property tax rates.
Will provide clear, fair energy policy that supports sound planning and investment in our electricity system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberals required project proponents to satisfy municipal concerns; continued to pursue green energy and associated jobs. • PCs wanted to restore local land use planning authority, end the FIT program, and invest in proven clean energy technologies. • NDP wanted to place energy planning back into public hands, with large-scale publicly-owned generation that is accountable and affordable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Liberal government has recommitted to energy conservation, working with willing host communities and halted approval of large FIT projects until a new Long Term Energy Plan is developed. • A regional energy planning initiative is being finalized. It would provide greater municipal input into energy needs and sources, as well as integrate energy planning and municipal planning.
Will review Development Charges Act (growth should pay for itself)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberals said they would not open the Act. • NDP committed to a review. • PCs stated no position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the 2013 AMO Conference, Liberals changed course and agreed to review the Act, including concerns of the development industry related to parkland requirements and bonuses for density. • Artificial discounts for transit, etc. and exclusions (e.g. hospitals) need to end.