



Sent by e-mail: Minister.MAH@ontario.ca

August 28, 2015

The Honourable Ted McMeekin
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
College Park
17th Floor
777 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario M5G 2E5

Dear Minister McMeekin:

Thank you for taking the time from your extremely busy schedule to meet with ROMA and the AMO Rural Caucus at the recent AMO Conference in Niagara Falls. While we discussed many topics, one request is of great importance to many, if not all, rural municipalities in Ontario; infrastructure funding.

When the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF) was established in 2011, municipalities were excited that the new annual \$100 million dollar fund was created to address infrastructure needs in smaller municipalities. At the time it was 100% by application, where each municipality had to meet criteria, apply to the Province, and hope they would be successful in receiving a grant.

At the 2014 AMO Annual Conference, Minister Leal committed to make a portion by application and a portion by allocation. Shortly thereafter, the fund was broken into two streams where \$50 million dollars would be by application and \$50 million by allocation. This was a positive move as the allocation approach provides long term stable funding so that projects could be planned and executed in a predictable way. At subsequent meetings, the government indicated it would go to 100% allocation and "hopefully" increase the amount in the future.

Recently, to that end, Minister Duguid conducted meetings across the province seeking advice on the distribution of the \$11.5 billion "Moving Ontario Forward" outside the GTHA. One of the potential programs identified was the "Expanded Ontario Community

Infrastructure Fund". Specifically the consultations asked if there should be changes to the funding methodology and if the funds were sufficient.

Minister, you heard at the ROMA meeting that ROMA and the AMO Rural Caucus officially requested the following:

1. Make the OCIF funding 100% by allocation.
2. Increase the OCIF fund from \$100 million per year. We suggest you consider a very significant increase as the infrastructure shortfall across the province is in the order of \$6 billion per year.

Further, with this type of funding there would be an opportunity to leverage federal gas tax money in a more effective way to address the significant infrastructure funding gap that exists. This approach gives smaller municipalities a better tool to meet the needs of asset management and our deteriorating infrastructure.

Again, thank you for making a visit to the ROMA Board a priority during the conference. It was a productive discussion and we look forward to working together to strengthen rural and northern municipalities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ronald E. Holman".

Ron Holman
ROMA Chair