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Subject AMO Update - Key Legislation for Municipalities Moves Forward

June 4, 2015

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The Ontario Legislative Assembly is recessing June 4th for the summer. Before the summer break, MPPs considered and approved a number of pieces of legislation of interest to municipalities. Below are summaries of the Bills and links to the legislation on the Legislative Assembly site. AMO encourages municipalities to review the statutes to assess local impacts.

Bill 31 - Making Ontario's Roads Safer Act

Bill 31 amends the *Highway Traffic Act* to promote road user safety and to ensure that fines levied under the *Provincial Offences Act* (POA) by municipalities must be paid before vehicle plates can be renewed. Improving the collection of unpaid fines has been a longstanding concern for the municipal sector. AMO applauds the passage of this legislation. The Bill includes among other items:

- Increased fines for distracted driving and harmonizes alcohol and drug impaired driving sanctions;
- Ensures that drivers must wait until pedestrians have left a crosswalk before they can begin driving again;
- Increases fines for motorists that 'door' cyclists and establishes a one-meter passing rule; and
- Denies plates for vehicles with unpaid *Provincial Offences Act* fines.

Municipal Impact: The changes in this Bill should help to make Ontario's roads safer for all users. Municipalities are particularly pleased to see the changes with regard to POA fines collection. This will ensure that all drivers are accountable for their actions. While congratulating the government on passing this Bill, AMO is calling on the Ministry of Transportation to begin working on implementing the POA changes immediately. AMO's President's remarks at Legislative Committee can be found [here](#).

Bill 6 - Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act

Bill 6 establishes principles for infrastructure funding that all public sector organizations must use in their decision making. It also requires that the provincial government establish and update a long term infrastructure plan and that certain projects use architects, engineers and other design professionals, as well as apprentices. The *Act* was amended to include social housing and to establish the authority for the government to regulate municipal and Broader Public Sector asset management plans.

Municipal Impact: While AMO is supportive of the introduction of a long term infrastructure plan for the province and the use of professionals in project design and apprentices on some projects, many municipalities may be cautious about the introduction of a requirement to harmonize municipal asset management plans and its implications for resources. Municipalities have made great strides in recent years, supported by provincial funding and guidance, on implementing asset management as a living decision making tool. AMO and other municipal organizations have created training and guidance to help municipal governments. New rules could jeopardize this momentum. Read [AMO's submission on Bill 6](#).

Bill 66 - Great Lakes Protection Act - Passed Second Reading and Ordered to Standing Committee on General Government

Bill 66 creates a Great Lakes Guardians Council to advise the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change and requires the Minister to create an Ontario Great Lakes Strategy to protect the lakes, and monitor and report on their ecological health. The Bill allows the Minister to establish targets for protection of the lakes and allows establishing initiatives that are focused geographically. To do this, the *Act* requires consultation with municipalities before these initiatives are established. Decisions and plans made under the *Planning Act* and *Condominium Act* must conform to policies designated under the *Act* to achieve protection of the lakes. This has implications for municipalities.

Municipal Impact: As of June 4, 2015, this legislation has passed second reading and has been ordered to standing committee for review. Many municipalities will welcome this *Act* and AMO is pleased to see that some amendments to the Bill have been made since it was originally introduced that reflect the concerns we have raised. Often municipal governments have invested in actions to make their waterfronts and near shore areas more attractive as part of community and economic development plans. Initiatives under this *Act* should support these. However, AMO has raised concerns regarding investments needed to implement initiatives under this legislation and will continue to look to the government to identify these resources. Read [AMO's submission](#) on the *Great Lakes Protection Act*.

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