



**The Corporation of the Township of Malahide
CORRESPONDENCE AGENDA
April 4, 2024 – 7:30 p.m.**

(G) Correspondence:

1. Association of Municipalities of Ontario - WatchFile – March 21, 2024, and March 28, 2024
2. City of St. Thomas – Notice of Completion – Major Arterial Roadway Connection Municipal Class Environmental Assessment
3. Southwestern Public Health – Actions to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harms Report
4. Prince Edward County – Support for a call to action to meet the deadline of an Accessible Ontario by 2025
5. Municipality of Powassan – Support for Township of Amaranth Resolution – Requesting fairness from the Province of Ontario for Operational Budget Funding across municipalities



AMO Watchfile



March, 21 2024

In This Issue

- Conservation Authority regulations.
- Information to assist Municipalities in flood preparedness.
- Consultation on *Ontario Energy Board Act* changes
- Consultation on *Seniors Active Living Centres Act*.
- Consultation on Rural Economic Development Strategy.
- Nominations open for Lieutenant Governor's Award.
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) data.
- Applications open: My Main Street Fund.
- Applications open: Rural Transit Solutions Fund.
- Consultation: 2025 National Construction Codes.
- Disability inclusion workshop and discussion: Beyond AODA compliance.
- Managing Communications through Uncomfortable Times - Limited space.
- Strategies for Navigating Conflict Relationships for Strong Council Outcomes.
- Land Use Planning - Foundations and Deeper Dive workshops.
- Anti-Semitism and Anti-Islamophobia: Spring workshops.
- Advanced Councillor Training Series to Revitalize Your Leadership.
- Municipal Codes of Conduct Workshop: Essential to Good Governance.
- OSUM 2024 Conference - Register today.
- Blog: How AI is changing cybersecurity and impacting accessibility.
- Using the Energy Planning Tool to its fullest.
- Book your 2024 road and sidewalk inspections now.
- Invasive Species Action Fund.
- Energy procurements webinar for elected officials
- Future of Aging Summit: May 15-17.
- Careers.

Provincial Matters

Regulatory changes under the Conservation Authorities Act to support streamlined, timely and consistent conservation authority permitting decisions and ensure permit decisions are focused on natural hazard considerations will [come into effect April 1](#).

As Ontario flood season arrives, MNRF has circulated a [fact sheet](#) with [roles and responsibilities](#) to assist municipalities in flood preparedness (French versions [1](#) & [2](#)). Information is also available [online](#).

The Ministry of Energy is considering [changes to the Ontario Energy Board Act](#) that would require broader consultation by the OEB (including with municipalities) and increase the leave to consult threshold. Submissions due by April 7.

MSAA is [proposing a new regulation](#) that would prescribe entities that could contribute towards a Seniors Active Living Centre program's operational cost. The deadline for comments is March 22, 2024.

The province is conducting a [survey](#) to inform the creation of a Rural Economic Development Strategy. Share your ideas on how the province can support rural communities plan for economic success.

Nominations are open for the Lieutenant Governor's Medal of Distinction in Public Administration,

Ontario's highest honour for public service. [Nominate someone](#) from your municipality by April 30.

Federal Matters

CMHC developed housing data [Qs and As](#) for Ontario municipalities, to address questions following their recent webinar. The webinar deck is [here](#), which the Qs and As reference.

The Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario and the Canadian Urban Institute are offering [two streams of funding](#) for initiatives to support main streets in southern Ontario. Apply by March 31.

Infrastructure Canada is now accepting applications for the Planning and Design Projects Stream of the Rural Transit Solutions Fund (up to \$50,000). Visit their [website](#) for more information.

The Canadian Board for Harmonized Construction Codes is [consulting on proposed changes](#) for the 2025 national codes. Feedback collected will also serve as [consultation for Ontario's 2026/27 Building Code](#). Submissions due April 14.

Education Opportunities

Participants will leave this workshop with a greater depth of knowledge and understanding of building accessible and inclusive communities as an elected official. Register for the [March 25 Disability Inclusion Workshop](#).

The [Managing Communications through Uncomfortable Times](#) interactive will teach participants how to manage all aspects of crisis communications during an emergency or large-scale event. Book your seat today for this interactive and exclusive workshop. Space is limited (only 8 spots remain).

AMO's Navigating Conflict for Elected Officials is an invaluable resource for AMO members and your councils. Hone your skills at the [June 26 - 27 Navigating Conflict workshop](#). If you have completed this training already, take your skills to the next level at the [April 9 - 10 Advanced Strategies to Navigating Conflict workshop](#).

AMO's is offering two education opportunities focused on planning issues and strategies: [April 17 Foundations in Planning workshop](#) builds foundational knowledge and insight into planning legislation and municipal requirements and roles and the [April 18 Advanced Land Use Planning workshop](#) works through case studies and lessons learned to build your strategic management and decision making on local planning issues.

Register for the [April 24 antisemitism workshop](#) and the [May 15 anti-islamophobia workshop](#) and don't miss this limited opportunity. These informative workshops provide you invaluable insight on the historical and contemporary roots of antisemitism and anti-islamophobia, how to address these and how to build relationships and allyships.

As an elected municipal official we know the pressure you deal with is real and we are here to support you. AMO has developed Advanced Councillor Training in 3 sessions focused on core elements of leadership. Register for the [May 8 Session 1 workshop](#), [May 29 Session 2 workshop](#), and the [October 2 Session 3 workshop](#).

As AMO and municipalities await provincial direction, your Association has developed a course that helps and guides municipal leaders in the development, communication, adherence, and issues management of codes of conducts. [Register for the April 25 Code of Conduct workshop](#) today

Join your small urban colleagues in Orillia May 1 - 3 in discussion, examination and advocacy on matters unique to your communities and to hear provincial leaders. [View the full program](#) and [register today](#).

LAS

The effect of Artificial Intelligence is being felt across industries and sectors. Our [latest blog](#) focuses on its

impact on cybersecurity - especially as it pertains to government.

The LAS Energy Planning Tool is your 3-in-1 resource for all your energy reporting needs: 1) commodity database, 2) project tracking, and 3) CDM plan generation. Watch [this video](#) to see how it works, then contact ept@las.on.ca to get started.

Beat the summer rush and get your road and sidewalk inspections in the queue. The [LAS Road & Sidewalk Assessment Service](#) provides accurate data resulting in better management decisions for your community. [Contact Tanner](#) for a free quote

Municipal Wire*

The Invasive Species Centre with support from Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry opens the [Invasive Species Action Fund](#) intake. The fund assists municipalities in combating priority species. Apply by April 11.

The Independent Energy Systems Operator (IESO) is hosting an [information session](#) with multiple provincial ministries on March 26 at 1:00 PM. The session will address project siting, land use planning approvals, and environmental assessments.

The Future of Aging Summit in Toronto from May 15-17 will bring together policymakers and others focused on building age-friendly societies. See the speaker lineup and register at agingsummit.ca.

Careers

[Tenant Services Coordinator - County of Simcoe](#). Closing date: March 28.

[Senior Economic Development Officer - County of Simcoe](#). Closing date: March 29.

[Chief Administrative Officer - Township of Muskoka Lakes](#). Closing date: April 12.

[Manager - Diversity and Inclusion - Peel Regional Police](#). Closing date: April 1.

[Manager of Tenant Services - City of Greater Sudbury](#). Closing date: April 4.

[Director of Ontario Works - County of Wellington](#). Closing date: April 5.

About AMO

AMO is a non-profit organization representing almost all of Ontario's 444 municipal governments. AMO supports strong and effective municipal government in Ontario and promotes the value of municipal government as a vital and essential component of Ontario's and Canada's political system. Follow [@AMOPolicy](#) on Twitter!

AMO Contacts

[AMO Watchfile](#) Tel: 416.971.9856

[Conferences/Events](#)

[Policy and Funding Programs](#)

[LAS Local Authority Services](#)

[MEPCO Municipal Employer Pension Centre of Ontario](#)

[ONE Investment](#)

[Media Inquiries](#)

[Municipal Wire, Career/Employment and Council Resolution Distributions](#)



March, 28 2024

In This Issue

- 2024 is an AMO Board election year!
- Application for the PJ Marshall Awards is open.
- Conservation Authority regulations.
- Information to assist Municipalities in flood preparedness.
- Consultation on *Ontario Energy Board Act* changes.
- Consultation on Rural Economic Development Strategy.
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- Strategies for Navigating Conflict Relationships for Strong Council Outcomes.
- Land Use Planning - Foundations and Deeper Dive workshops.
- AntiSemitism and Anti-Islamophobia: Spring workshops.
- Councillor Training - Refresh and refine your leadership, May workshop.
- Advanced Councillor Training Series to revitalize your leadership.
- Municipal Codes of Conduct Workshop: Essential to Good Governance.
- Understanding Competing Human Rights - Upcoming workshop.
- OSUM 2024 - Join the OSUM Executive and colleagues in beautiful Orillia.
- Canoe spring webinar series starts soon.
- Upcoming webinar: Measurement and Verification for Energy Projects.
- Don't forget to vote for Elliot Lake on March 29 and 30 - Kraft Hockeyville!
- Ontario Bike Summit - April 3 - 5, 2024, Waterloo.
- Captive wildlife resolution.
- Leading local change through Canada's net-zero building codes.
- Call for delegates to SIESLR Conference.
- Invasive Species Action Fund.
- Recorded webinar on energy project siting.
- Future of Aging Summit: May 15-17.
- Careers: Guelph, Georgina, and Peel Regional Police.

AMO Matters

Elections for positions to the AMO Board of Directors will occur at the AMO Annual Conference, hosted by the City of Ottawa in August 2024. [Click here](#) for answers to some frequently asked questions if you are considering running.

The Peter J. Marshall Municipal Innovation Award celebrates municipal governments in Ontario that implement new and innovative ways to make public services, facilities, and infrastructure better for Ontarians. View [full details here](#).

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Regulatory changes under the *Conservation Authorities Act* to support streamlined, timely and consistent conservation authority permitting decisions and ensure permit decisions are focused on natural hazard

considerations will [come into effect April 1](#).

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Don't miss this time limited opportunity: register for the [April 24 antisemitism workshop](#) and the [May 15 anti-islamophobia workshop](#). These important workshops provide you invaluable insight on the historical and contemporary roots of antisemitism and anti-islamophobia, how to address these and how to build relationships and allyships.

The Councillor Training interactive workshop delves into the key areas of your responsibility as an elected official in a forum where you can ask questions that you can't always raise locally. Register for the [May 14 Councillor Training workshop](#) today.

As an elected municipal official we know the pressure you deal with is real and we are here to support you. AMO has developed [Advanced Councillor Training](#) in 3 sessions focused on core elements of leadership. Register for the [May 8 Session 1 workshop](#), [May 29 Session 2 workshop](#), and the [October 2 Session 3 workshop](#).

As AMO and municipalities await provincial direction, your Association has developed a course that helps and guides municipal leaders in the development, communication, adherence, and issues management of codes of conducts. [Register for the April 25 Code of Conduct workshop](#) today.

AMO and Hicks Morley have developed training to support municipal elected officials and council in understanding their obligations related to human rights and understanding how to manage seemingly competing human rights. Register for this important [Competing Rights May 23 workshop](#).

Join your small urban colleagues May 1 - 3 for discussion, examination and advocacy on matters unique to your communities and to hear provincial leaders. [View the full program](#) and [register today](#).

LAS

The Canoe Procurement Group is hosting a [series of webinars](#) this spring. Join our colleagues at Canoe on **April 11 at 11am** as they discuss their experience helping governments prepare for natural disasters like floods and fires. [Register here](#) to attend.

'You can't manage what you can't measure'. Measurement & Verification is the missing link that plays a crucial role in energy projects. Join SaveONenergy with us on **April 18 at 2:30pm** to explore how to monitor and assess your project outcomes. [Register here](#) today.

Municipal Wire*

Elliot Lake was named as a Top 4 Finalist for Kraft Hockeyville, the only Ontario community to be in this year's contest and they are looking for all of Ontario's support for votes! On March 29 and 30, please visit [Kraft Hockeyville](#) and vote for Elliot Lake. There is no limit to how many votes you can cast so don't miss your chance to vote!

The [Ontario Bike Summit](#) (OBS) is Canada's largest cycling and active transportation conference. OBS brings together municipal and industry leaders, policy makers, and advocates from communities across the province to share their expertise and best practices, in an effort to make Ontario more bicycle friendly.

World Animal Protection is asking municipalities to support and adopt a [resolution to restrict the keeping of exotic wild animals](#) in Ontario.

Efficiency Canada's [Municipal Guides](#) contain everything you need to leverage the 2020 model codes to enhance building performance, drive decarbonization, and amplify local benefits in climate action initiatives.

Explore economic trends impacting Canada and the world at the [Summer Institute on Economic Security and Local Resilience](#) (SIESLR) conference on July 18-19, 2024 in Orillia. Register by June 1.

The Invasive Species Centre with support from Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry opens the [Invasive Species Action Fund](#) intake. The fund assists municipalities in combating priority species. Apply by April 11.

A [recording is available of a March 26 webinar](#) with representatives from IESO, MECP, MNRF, OMAFRA and MMAH to discuss how municipalities can address siting considerations for energy projects.

The Future of Aging Summit in Toronto from May 15-17 will bring together policymakers and others focused on building age-friendly societies. See the speaker lineup and register at [agingsummit.ca](#).

Careers

[Program Manager of Zoning Services - City of Guelph](#). Closing date: April 14.

[Senior Development Planner - Town of Georgina](#). Closing date: April 10.

[Analyst-Time and Labour - Peel Regional Police](#). Closing date: April 9.

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[MEPCO Municipal Employer Pension Centre of Ontario](#)

[ONE Investment](#)

[Media Inquiries](#)

[Municipal Wire, Career/Employment and Council Resolution Distributions](#)

Notice of Completion

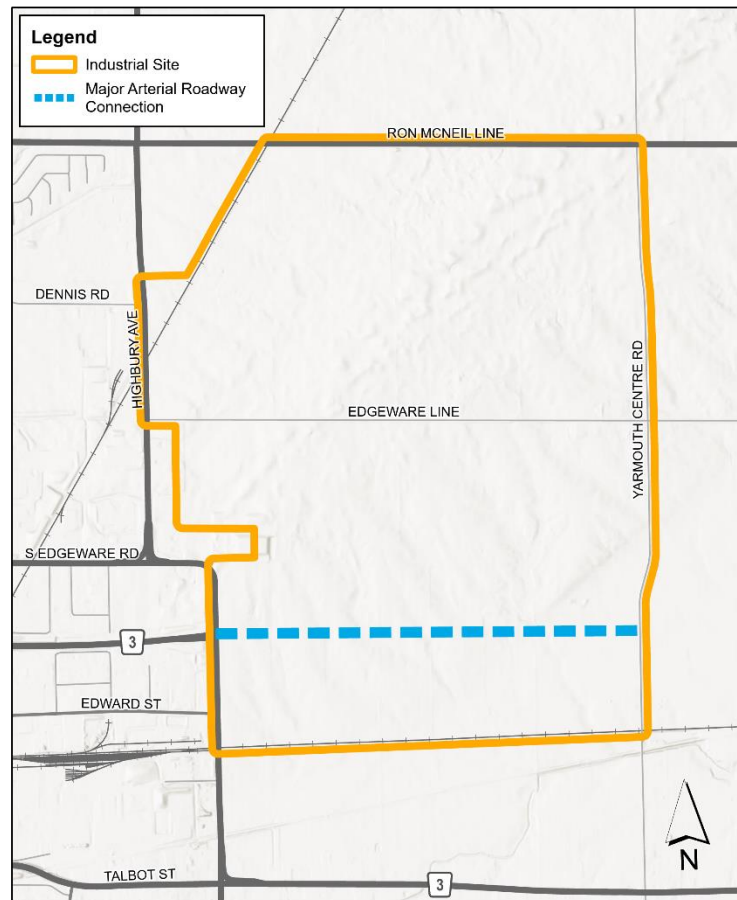
Major Arterial Roadway Connection Municipal Class Environmental Assessment

The Study

The City of St. Thomas has completed an Environment Study Report (ESR) under the Municipal Engineers Association Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (March 2023, as amended) for the Major Arterial Roadway (MAR) Connection between the existing intersection of the St. Thomas Expressway and Centennial Avenue easterly to Yarmouth Centre Road.

The City of St. Thomas is establishing a new industrial subdivision in the northeast. To accommodate growth and development, and to provide access to this new subdivision, a new arterial road is needed.

The new road will be a major arterial road that connects Centennial Avenue and Yarmouth Centre Road, as shown in the study area map.



The Process

This study has been carried out as a **Schedule 'C'** project under the Municipal Engineers Association Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (March 2023, as amended), which is a planning process approved under *Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act*. The ESR has documented the Class EA process from Phase 1 to Phase 4 of the planning process.

This Notice of Completion is issued with respect to the Schedule 'C' project.

Get Involved

Starting on **March 27, 2024**, the ESR for the MAR will be available for a 30-day public review (along with supporting environmental and technical studies, and public meeting materials) until **April 26, 2024** at <http://www.stthomas.ca/MajorArterialEA>

Your participation is an important part of this process and we welcome your input. Comments about the project may be submitted online at <http://www.stthomas.ca/MajorArterialEA> or by contacting:

Nathan Bokma, P. Eng.

Senior Project Manager
Industrial Development
City of St. Thomas
nbokma@stthomas.ca
545 Talbot St., PO Box 520
St. Thomas, ON N5P 3V7

David O'Gorman

Consultant Project Manager
Arcadis
David.OGorman@arcadis.com
350 Oxford Street West, Suite 203
London, ON N6H 1T3

Arrange a meeting with the Project Manager if you have significant concerns that may require additional information. If major concerns are raised, the City will attempt to negotiate a resolution of the issues. If the issues remain unresolved, you have the option to request the Minister of the Environment, by order, to require the City to comply with a Section 16 Order Request. The request for a Section 16 Order must also be submitted to the study team at the same time it is submitted to the Minister.

In this circumstance the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks has the authority to require further consideration of the Class EA project, or impose conditions on it. A request can only be made on the grounds that the requested order may prevent, mitigate or remedy adverse impacts on constitutionally protected Aboriginal and treaty rights.

Before exercising their authority, the Minister is required to consider all written objections received within 30 days after the Notice of Completion of the ESR is first published. If you have discussed your objections with the City of St. Thomas, you can submit them in writing to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks no later than **April 26, 2024**, to the address provided below. All submissions must clearly indicate that an objection is being submitted and describe any negative impacts to matters of provincial importance or Aboriginal treaty rights.

**Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
Environmental Assessment Branch**

Attention: Minister Andrea Khanjin
Address: 777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3
Email: minister.mecp@ontario.ca

Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the *Environmental Assessment Act*, unless you request that your personal information remain confidential, any personal information such as name, address, telephone number and property location included in a submission will become part of the public record files for this matter and will be released, if requested, to any person.

With the exception of personal information, all comments will become part of the public record of the study.

This notice first issued March 27, 2024.



March 25, 2024

Mayor Dominique Giguere
Township of Malahide
87 John Street South
Aylmer, ON N5H 2C3

Nathan Dias
Chief Administrative Officer
Township of Malahide
87 John Street South
Aylmer, ON N5H 2C3

Dear Mayor Giguere, and Mr. Dias,

RE: Actions to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harms Report

We are writing to draw your attention to the recent report presented to the Southwestern Public Health (SWPH) Board of Health entitled [Actions to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harms](#) (see attached). As you are aware, municipalities play an important role in promoting and protecting the health of their residents, especially in the context of decreasing harm due to alcohol.

The report outlines the policy actions that are proven to reduce harm to the population due to alcohol, and the Board of Health for SWPH has voted to move all recommendations forward. Specifically, the Board has instructed SWPH to collaborate with local municipalities to review and propose amendments to existing bylaws and alcohol-related policies to address the locations of alcohol retailers through zoning and distancing with consideration for high-density neighbourhoods, schools, and childcare centres.

We want to emphasize that the alcohol retail system in Ontario is changing, and these changes will have significant local implications. ⁽¹⁾ The recent announcement by the Province of Ontario to expand alcohol retail sales to convenience and big box stores may seem like a risk-free action, but expanding access to alcohol outlets has proven to have negative implications for our local population's health. With an estimated average of 76 deaths, 388 hospitalizations and 3,707 emergency department visits annually in our region, we are concerned that expanded access will cause harm in our community. ⁽²⁾ When alcohol becomes more accessible and affordable, the following issues have consistently been found to increase: street and domestic violence, chronic diseases, sexually transmitted infections, road crashes, youth drinking, injury ⁽³⁾ and suicide. ^(4,5)

SWPH asks that you review your existing bylaws and policies to address the locations of alcohol retailers through zoning and distancing. Municipalities can limit harm to their local populations and help maintain control over what happens in their communities through local by-law implementation and municipal alcohol policy. ^(6,7)

Municipal staff can find additional information in the [Alcohol Policy Review: Opportunities for Ontario Municipalities](#) report and [An Integrated Approach to Mental Health and Addictions](#) report by The Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

We kindly request that the staff responsible for alcohol-related policies with the municipality contact SWPH. We can provide information about municipal alcohol policies, potential by-laws, and local demographics. We can describe how impending alcohol policy changes impact vulnerable people within our communities and could lead to inequitable harm among priority populations.

Please contact Jacqueline Deroo at 519-421-9901 Ext. 3493 or at jderoo@swpublichealth.ca to start the discussion. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Dr. Ninh Tran
Medical Officer of Health
Southwestern Public Health



Cynthia St. John
Chief Executive Officer
Southwestern Public Health

c: Bernia Martin, Board of Health Chair
Peter Heywood, Program Director
Marcia Van Wylie, Program Manager
Jacqueline Deroo, Public Health Nurse

Attachment: Actions to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harms Report to the Board of Health

References

1. Ontario News Room. News Release: Ontario Consumers Will be Able to Buy Beer, Cider, Wine and Low-Alcohol Ready-to-Drink Beverages at Convenience, Grocery and Big Box Stores. [Online].; 2023 [cited 2024 01 09. Available from: <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1003988/ontario-consumers-will-be-able-to-buy-beer-cider-wine-and-low-alcohol-ready-to-drink-beverages-at-convenience-grocery-and-big-box-stores>.
2. Ontario Health and Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Burden of Health Conditions Attributable to Smoking and Alcohol by Public Health Unit in Ontario. Toronto, ON;; 2023.
3. Babor T, Casswell S, Graham K, Huckle T, Linington M, Osterber E, et al. Alcohol: No Ordinary Commodity Research and Public Policy. 3rd ed.: Oxford University Press; 2023.
4. Stockwell T, Wettlaufer A, Vallance K, Chow C, Giesbrecht N, April N, et al. Strategies to reduce alcohol-related harms and costs in Canada: a review of provincial and territorial policies. Victoria, B.C.: Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research,; 2019.
5. Ontario Public Health Association. OPHA Issue Series: Alcohol Outlet Density. [Online]. [cited 2023 May 9. Available from: <https://opha.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Alcohol-Outlet-Density.pdf>.
6. Giesbrecht N, Wettlaufer A. Municipal Alcohol Policies and Public Health: A Primer. Toronto, ON. Queen's Printer for Ontario: Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario); 2016.
7. Liem S. Alcohol Policy Review: Opportunities for Ontario Municipalities. Liem Strategic Integration Inc.; 2018.
8. Public Health Ontario. Provincial municipal alcohol policy (MAP) scan: summary of findings from a public health unit survey. Toronto, ON;; 2015.



BOARD REPORT

| | |
|---------------|--|
| MEETING DATE: | October 26, 2023 |
| SUBMITTED BY: | Peter Heywood, Program Director |
| SUBMITTED TO: | Board of Health |
| PURPOSE: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Decision <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Receive and File |
| AGENDA ITEM # | 5.1 |
| RESOLUTION # | 2023-BOH-1026-3.1 |
| Report Title: | Actions to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harms Report |

SITUATION

Experts have described alcohol as the most far-reaching and harmful drug. (1,2) It has been classified as a type one carcinogen, within the same group as tobacco and asbestos, since 1988. (3) The main types of cancer that alcohol can cause include breast, colon, rectum, mouth and throat, liver, esophagus and larynx cancer. (4) Moreover, the consumption of alcohol has been linked to 200 different disease and injury conditions, some of which are considered secondary harms that affect people other than those who consume alcohol themselves (i.e. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, impaired driving crashes, child abuse, and injuries). (5,6)

Local Concerning Trends

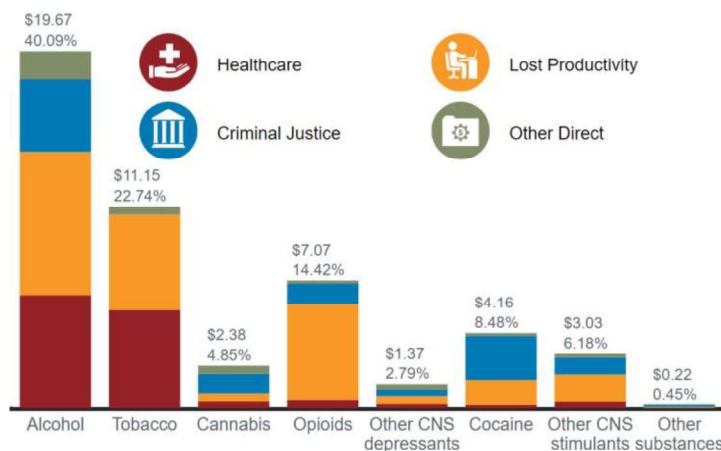
The local alcohol-related mortality rate (with and without drug involvement) increased between 2018 and 2021, whereas the provincial rate decreased during the same time. In 2021, the rate in the Southwestern Public Health Region (SWPH) region surpassed the provincial rate, reaching a high of 3.4 per 100,000 (compared to 2.5 per 100,000 across Ontario). The mortality rate of female SWPH residents also increased consistently during that time, nearly matching the historically higher rate among male residents in 2021 (3.3 per 100,000 versus 3.5 per 100,000, respectively). (7) Also very concerning, there has been an increase in the proportion of women who gave birth reporting any alcohol exposure during pregnancy, increasing from 2.8% in 2018 to 3.7 % in 2022. Data from June of 2023 indicates that this rate continues to increase. (8) A recent [report](#) published by Public Health Ontario estimates the burden of health conditions attributed to alcohol in people older than 15. The Southwestern Public Health (SWPH) region showed an estimated average of 76 deaths, 388 hospitalizations and 3,707 emergency department visits annually. (9)

The Cost of Alcohol-Related Harms

Research shows that when alcohol becomes more available and affordable, the following problems increase: street and domestic violence, chronic diseases, sexually transmitted infections, road crashes, youth drinking, injury (6) and suicide. (10,11) There are also increased costs of health care, lost productivity, criminal justice and other direct costs. (12) Furthermore, this association was examined following the 2015 expansion of alcohol sales to grocery stores in Ontario, and there was an increase in emergency department visits shown to be attributable to alcohol. (13)

In Canada, alcohol is the costliest substance in terms of healthcare, criminal justice, lost productivity, and other direct costs. Despite taxes on alcohol, alcohol creates a deficit of \$6.196 billion each year across all sectors. (14,12) Chart 1 below visually demonstrates that the costs and harms to Canadians from alcohol are significant and higher than all substance categories. (12) Generally, alcohol causes injuries and deaths of people at a younger age (considered working ages of under 65 years) (12), and therefore was responsible for more years of productive life lost, which drove costs up for every year studied. Out of all criminal justice costs, alcohol accounts for nearly 40% because of its role in violent and non-violent crime and impaired driving. (12)

Chart 1: Costs (in billions) related to substance use in Canada from 2007 to 2020. (12)



From the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addictions and Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research at the University of Victoria [LINK](#)

The Alcohol Harm Paradox

It is important to note that the harms due to alcohol are disproportionately shouldered by individuals with low socio-economic status (SES), compared to those of high SES, even though this population consumes the same or less amounts; this phenomenon is described as the alcohol harm paradox. (15,16) The reasons for the alcohol harm paradox can only be theorized at this point, and research has not confirmed the causes. Theories of what causes the alcohol harm paradox are often related to having a lower income. This includes higher stress levels, less social support, fewer resources to cope and other risk factors such as lack of access to healthy foods and opportunities to be active. (16) Furthermore, exposure to higher alcohol-dense environments, choice of alcohol and occurrence of binge drinking may also help to explain the alcohol harm paradox. (15,16) Alcohol policy related to Minimum Unit Pricing, as demonstrated

in Scotland, is an effective intervention for equitable actions that could be taken to address this. (17)

The Canadian Guidance on Alcohol and Health

On January 17, 2023, the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA) released the new *Canadian Guidance on Alcohol and Health* (CGAH) after a two-and-a-half-year process utilizing the best available evidence. The CGAH replaces the 2011 version of the *Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines* and provides the public with information about the range of risk, rather than recommending specific amounts. Everyone has a different risk tolerance, and it provides people with information to make decisions based on their ideas of what is worth the risk. The lowest risk category is based on a one in 1,000 chance of premature death (17.5 years of life lost), which corresponds to one to two drinks a week. A more moderate risk of one in 100 is associated with three to six drinks a week. After seven drinks per week, the risk of premature death is even greater. (4)

Locally, 61% of adult respondents to the Canadian Community Health Survey self-report having no-risk or low-risk alcohol use, while 39% report moderate to high-risk alcohol use, meaning they drink three or more alcoholic beverages per week. (18) It should be noted that self-reported data has been shown through research to underestimate the amount people consume, sometimes by 50-75%, and therefore, the rate of moderate to risky drinking is likely higher. (19)

ASSESSMENT

The actions taken to address alcohol consumption must match the magnitude of the problems it causes. Effective interventions proven to decrease alcohol-related harms have been extensively studied by researchers in Canada and abroad. It is widely recognized that the most cost-effective strategies to reduce the harmful effects of alcohol include:

- Increasing taxes on alcoholic beverages,
- Restrictions on the physical availability of alcohol,
- Restrictions on alcohol advertising and marketing,
- Enforcing drunk driving countermeasures, and
- Implementing screening, brief interventions, referral and treatment. (4,5,16,9,14,13)

Comprehensive tobacco control policies are highly effective in decreasing Canada's smoking rates and lung cancer deaths. (9,12) To control harm, the strategies used for tobacco control should be applied to alcohol. As tobacco regulations have gradually become more robust, alcohol regulation has been dismantled over the past few decades. Furthermore, to reduce alcohol consumption and population-level harms, consideration for alcohol control policies is required across all levels of government.

Municipal Level Policy Considerations:

Municipal-level policies can protect people and reduce alcohol-related harm to individuals, families, communities, and neighbourhoods. While most alcohol policy is governed at the provincial and federal level, municipalities can address alcohol-related risk and harm on municipally-owned property through Municipal Alcohol Policies (MAPs) and off municipally-owned property through by-laws, zoning and licensing restrictions as described by the report:

Alcohol Policy Review: Opportunities for Ontario Municipalities provides interventions that can be used at the local level. (20)

In 2022, geographic image system (GIS) maps were created to assist with tracking alcohol patterns in our region. As seen in Images 1 and 2 below, it is possible to see how alcohol availability has increased post-2021, demonstrated by the light-gridded areas suddenly disappearing and shaded areas becoming darker as residents became closer to alcohol outlets. (21)

Image 1

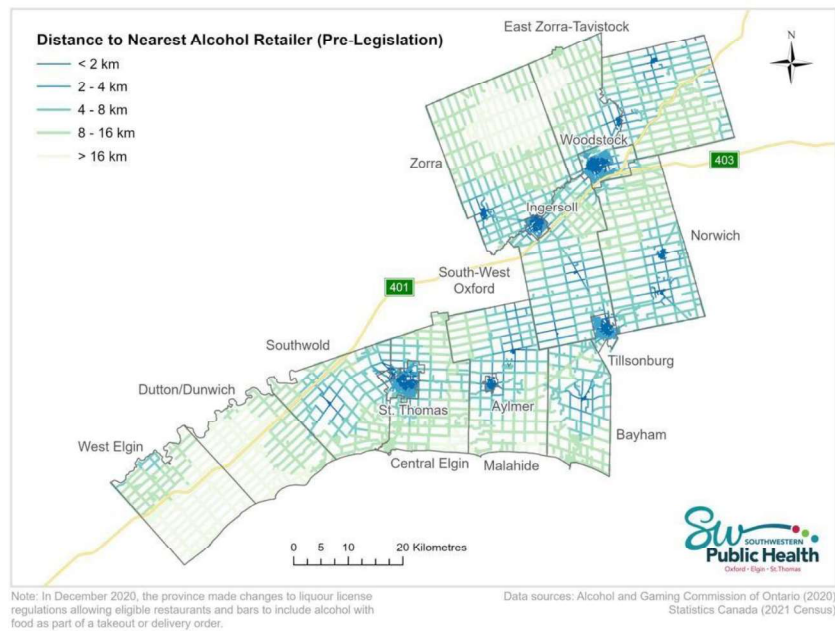
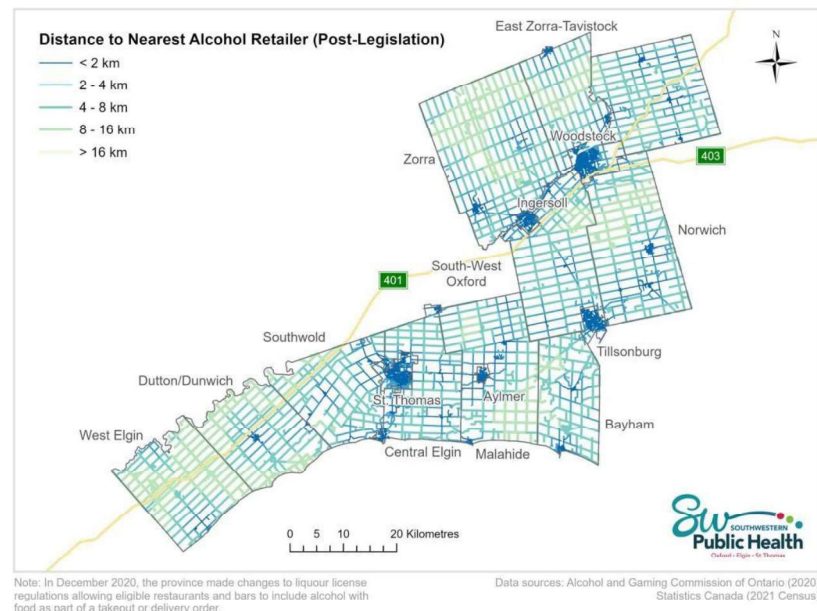


Image 2



The GIS maps also illustrate variations across regions, identify potentially disadvantaged areas, and uncover the linkage between population characteristics and accessibility (21). One correlation observed across the SWPH Region was that a moderate to strong negative association was found between lone-parenthood/ socio-economic distress and distance to alcohol and cannabis retailers. This finding suggests that lone parenthood families and communities of socio-economic distress are more exposed to alcohol retailers. When it comes to disadvantaged populations, alcohol tends to create harm at higher rates than those with more advantages, despite equal or lesser amounts of alcohol consumed by those with disadvantages. (15) This correlation shows how, locally, there is increased availability for those who are disadvantaged and lone-parent families, which could contribute to the disproportionate harms previously discussed. (21)

Municipalities can use information from the GIS maps to make informed decisions weighing the costs and benefits of alcohol policy that improves local well-being and decreases alcohol-related harms. Actions of this nature have already been taken by the municipalities of Oshawa and Ajax, where both Durham Region Public Health and the municipalities worked together, using local data, to oppose a convenience store's application for alcohol licensing due to the harm it would cause their citizens. Using local data can assist municipalities in choosing the right policies for their communities based on local needs.

Provincial Level Policy Considerations:

In Ontario, alcohol sales are regulated at the provincial level and consist of a mixed private and government-run retail system. As discussed above, alcohol availability has recently increased due to provincial alcohol policy decisions. In response, the Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) has prepared and sent a [letter](#) outlining effective measures to decrease alcohol-related harms to the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Health. The main recommendations provided were:

1. Reduce retail density, especially in low socio-economic status (SES) neighbourhoods.
2. Maintain or decrease hours of sale, with no exceptions.
3. Strengthen Ontario's alcohol pricing policies, including taxation, minimum pricing or other means.
4. Stop further privatization of alcohol sales.
5. Apply a whole of government, health-in-all-policies approach to alcohol modernization.

Federal Level Policy Considerations:

Policy decisions made at the federal level also affect our local citizens. Unlike other substances, alcohol is not regulated under one act. The federal government could regulate alcohol through new legislation, which could include the following policy actions:

- Indexation of excise taxes based on alcohol content.
- Regulations and enforcement systems to control, restrict or ban alcohol marketing, including digital media.
- Enacting mandatory health and safety labelling for alcohol products, including clear standard drink information, health warnings, and nutritional labelling.
- Enacting a national minimum legal drinking age, preferably 21 years of age.

Lack of Public Knowledge of Alcohol Harms

The level of awareness of the harms of alcohol use plays a role in policy change at all levels. While it has become common knowledge that tobacco causes lung cancer, most Canadians do not know that alcohol causes cancer. (22) The evidence in this area shows that as consumers' understanding of the connection between cancer and alcohol increases, they become more supportive of alcohol policy measures controlling pricing, availability and marketing. (23,24) Therefore, SWPH has a role in widely sharing the new *Canadian Guidance for Alcohol and Health* to provide the public with information about alcohol risk to support informed decision-making and to increase support for alcohol control policies.

The Role of the Industry

A structural element at play when considering alcohol policy and effective interventions is the role of the Alcohol Industry itself. A growing amount of information documents how private sector activities affect people's health and chronic disease rates, otherwise known as the Commercial Determinants of Health (CDoH). (25,26,27) Discussion on the CDoH allows us to shift the current thoughts and practice in health from blaming individual behaviours and inadequate environments to the structural elements that keep unhealthy behaviours and environments in place. (27) Evidence on the CDoH has been categorized into four areas:

1. Health behaviours and choices related to risk factors for chronic disease,
2. Social Determinants of Health factors affecting daily living conditions,
3. Corporate political and business practices influencing regulatory environments; and
4. Globalized political and economic environments sanctioning corporate activities. (26)

With a Commercial Determinant of Health lens, we can better understand how the ubiquitous actions of the alcohol industry can affect public health policy in negative ways, thereby harming the public on a grand scale. One documented tactic is how the industry intentionally confuses the public about the harms of alcohol. (28) One Canadian example of Alcohol Industry influence recently played out in 2018, when a Health Canada funded study in the Yukon was altered due to the Alcohol Industry's influence and threats of legal action. Despite their claims having no legal merit, the study was altered because the Yukon Government did not have the funds to fight legal battles with the Canadian Alcohol Industry. The Alcohol Industry successfully halted labels from being put on alcohol bottles that informed the public that alcohol causes cancer. (28,29) The Commercial Determinants of Health should be considered whenever policy or higher-level actions are taken.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE BOARD'S CONSIDERATION

1. Request that the members of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA) adopt a resolution developed by Southwestern Public Health that requests the provincial and federal governments to promote comprehensive public education campaigns, stricter regulations on advertising, increasing alcohol taxes, development of a prevention model, and improving access to addiction treatment and support services at the next scheduled Annual General Meeting in June 2024.
2. Send a letter supporting the Ontario Public Health Association's letter regarding modernizing the alcohol marketplace and product sales.
3. Collaborate with local municipalities to review and propose amendments to existing by-laws and alcohol-related policies to address the locations of alcohol retailers through

zoning and distancing with consideration for high-density neighbourhoods, schools and childcare centres. This will be reviewed in tandem with Cannabis and Tobacco Policy.

CONCLUSION

Alcohol causes harm in immeasurable ways, and with consideration of our local data, it is obvious that alcohol is harming our community. The public does not know enough about the harms of alcohol, and the Alcohol Industry distorts or denies the evidence, minimizing the harmful effects of alcohol consumption. Increasing awareness of industry messaging strategies may generate more critical coverage of industry lobbying activities and increase public support for alcohol policies. Evidence indicates that as individuals become aware of the link between cancer and alcohol, their support of alcohol policy increases. (28,24) Education alone is less effective in changing population-level behaviours than policy. However, education has positive impacts when coupled with alcohol policy regulating price, availability, and marketing. (6,10,14) Healthy public policies at the local, provincial, and federal levels are important to create environments that positively influence alcohol consumption and support people who want to consume less alcohol. (12)

Southwestern Public Health has a vital role in supporting our community to grow stronger together, and the evidence exists to guide this effort.

MOTION: 2023-BOH-1026-3.1

That the Board of Health for Southwestern Public Health approve the Actions to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harms Report for October 26, 2023.

Definitions

Alcohol Harm Paradox: Phenomenon observed where harms and hospitalizations due to alcohol are disproportionately shouldered by individuals with Low Socio-economic Status (SES), compared to those of high SES, even though this population consumes the same or less amounts. (15,16)

Commercial Determinants of Health: Commercial determinants of health are the private sector activities that affect people's health, directly or indirectly, positively or negatively. (25)

Health in All Policy Approach: Health in All Policies (HiAP) is an approach to public policies across sectors that systematically considers the health implications of decisions, seeks synergies and avoids harmful health impacts to improve population health and health equity. It improves policy-makers accountability for health impacts at all policy-making levels. It includes an emphasis on the consequences of public policies on health systems' determinants of health and well-being. (30)

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March 28, 2024

Please be advised that during the regular Council meeting of March 26, 2024 the following resolution regarding support for 'a call to action' to meet the deadline of an Accessible Ontario by 2025 was carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-151

DATE: March 26, 2024

MOVED BY: Councillor MacNaughton

SECONDED BY: Councillor Pennell

WHEREAS the Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act (AODA) is ground-breaking legislation, created to help people with disabilities fully participate in society, bring them to the table in crafting regulations, and build mechanisms to enforce standards;

WHEREAS Rich Donovan, an expert in accessibility issues, was appointed as the Independent Reviewer of the Act in 2022, and in his 2023 legislative review declared a crisis as a necessary catalyst to get Ontario back on track for accessibility;

WHEREAS at least 2.9 million Ontarians currently live with a disability, representing at least 22% of the consumer base and the workforce, but due to barriers, Ontarians with disabilities are too often falling short of their full potential;

WHEREAS the AODA aims to develop, implement and enforce standards related to goods, services, accommodation, employment and buildings before Jan. 1, 2025, and municipalities, as the level of government closest to the people are at the front lines, developing, implementing and enforcing these standards without meaningful guidance on its implementation and/or enforcement by the Province;

WHEREAS people with disabilities and advocates, including Prince Edward County's Accessibility Advisory Committee, note the slow pace of current and previous Ontario governments in implementing the AODA and there are growing concerns there will be no renewed push to keep accessibility issues at the forefront after 2025;

WHEREAS Prince Edward County is dedicated and committed to creating a welcoming environment so that all people may have equitable access to programs, goods, services and facilities, but making investments to achieve the AODA

standards has been challenging given the lack of consistent and stable funding for municipalities to remove accessibility barriers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of Prince Edward County strongly encourages action on the part of the Provincial Government to urgently:

- a) create a "Municipal Accessibility Fund" for municipalities to develop, implement and enforce AODA standards related to goods, services, accommodation, employment and buildings. Such a fund could be modeled after the Canada Community-Building Fund or the Ontario Cannabis Legalization Implementation Fund on a per household basis;
- b) to commit to working with municipalities to implement the Donovan Review immediate crisis recommendations;

AND FURTHER THAT the Mayor write a letter in support of this resolution to the Minister of Seniors and Accessibility, and that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Seniors and Accessibility, the Minister of Children, Community, and Social Services, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and the Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus, and all Ontario Municipalities.

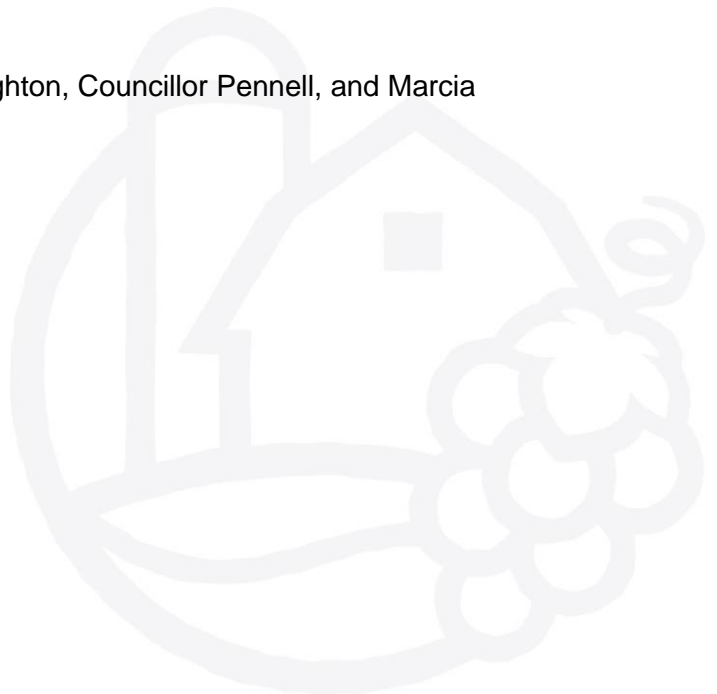
CARRIED

Yours truly,



Catalina Blumenberg, **CLERK**

cc: Mayor Steve Ferguson, Councillor MacNaughton, Councillor Pennell, and Marcia Wallace, CAO





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March 20, 2024

Hon. Paul Calandra
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Sent by email to: Paul.Calandra@pc.ola.org

Re: Operational Budget Funding

At its regular meeting of Council held on March 19, 2024, the Council of the Municipality of Powassan passed the following resolution:

Resolution #: 2024-93

Moved by: M. Wand **Seconded by:** R. Hall

That the council of the Municipality of Powassan supports the request of the Township of Amaranth calling upon the Province of Ontario to treat all municipalities fairly and provide equivalent representative operational budget funding amounts to all Ontario municipalities.

If you have any questions regarding the above, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Allison Quinn
Clerk
Municipality of Powassan

Cc: Premier of Ontario; AMO; Ontario Municipalities



374028 6TH LINE • AMARANTH ON • L9W 0M6

March 12, 2024

Hon. Paul Calandra
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Sent by email to: Paul.Calandra@pc.ola.org

Re: Operational Budget Funding

At its regular meeting of Council held on March 6, 2024, the Township of Amaranth Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution #: 4

Moved by: G Little

Seconded by: A. Stirk

Whereas all Ontario municipalities are prohibited from running budget deficits for operating purposes, and;

Whereas all Ontario municipalities have similar pressures with respect to aging infrastructure and operating costs for policing, and;

Whereas the City of Toronto has recently received Provincial funding to cover a \$1.2 billion dollar operating shortfall and approximately \$12 million in Federal and Provincial funding for their Police operating budget, and;

Whereas the City of Toronto has the lowest tax rates in the Province, approximately 40% less than the average Dufferin rural municipal tax rate.

Be it Resolved That the Township of Amaranth call on the Province of Ontario to treat all municipalities fairly and provide equivalent representative operational budget funding amounts to all Ontario municipalities.

CARRIED

Please do not hesitate to contact the office if you require any further information on this matter.

Yours truly,

Nicole Martin, Dipl. M.A.
CAO/Clerk
C: Premier of Ontario; AMO; Ontario Municipalities