



Correspondence Items Presented for Information

July 27, 2026

- 1) Correspondence from AMCTO Re: Advocacy Update – Strong Mayor Authorities Scan – 2nd Edition Results.
- 2) Correspondence from the Director, Fish and Wildlife Policy Branch, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry Re: Notification of Decision under Regulation 828 of the *Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act*.
- 3) Correspondence from the Deputy Clerk, City of Owen Sound Re: Sustainable Provincial Grant Funding for Fire Services in Ontario.
- 4) Correspondence from the Deputy Clerk, City of Owen Sound Re: Heads and Beds Payment-in-Lieu of Taxes Program.
- 5) Correspondence from the Mayor, Town of Bruce Mines Re: Physician Shortage in Northern Ontario and the Practice Ready Ontario Program.

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Advocacy Update

Learn more about our work as we advocate on behalf of AMCTO members

July 16, 2026

Advocacy Update:

Strong Mayor Authorities Scan - 2nd Edition Results

We are excited to present the latest edition of our strong mayor authorities scan – a comprehensive look at how Ontario mayors are using their expanded powers across the province.

Conducted with a 93% response rate from 201 of 216 municipalities, the scan monitors and assesses how mayors and municipalities have used and implemented strong mayor powers, their effect on municipal staff, local governance, and Ontario communities.

This scan, conducted between November 2025 and February 2026, includes responses and input from staff of the 193 municipalities that were added to the strong mayor legislation in May 2025. It also provides concrete quantitative data points on some of the qualitative responses and feedback we've received during our bi-weekly strong mayor powers drop-in sessions between May 2025 and January 2026, and examples of municipal uses we have tracked through our media monitoring.

Our updated strong mayor powers advocacy toolkit and authorities scan:

- Provides members with valuable information to compare how strong mayor powers are being used in Ontario municipalities.
- Allows us to better understand the impacts of the powers on municipal governance, organizational structure, and staffing to support members and municipalities transitioning to the strong mayor framework.
- Invites discussion and continued conversation toward developing better legislative solutions that meet government objectives.

Key Findings

Our latest research confirms what members have been telling us since our first scan (conducted in 2024) and what they've been experiencing on the ground: across municipal administration, budget, committees and legislative powers, the interpretation and implementation of strong mayor powers remain highly inconsistent from one municipality to another. In many cases, the burden of managing that inconsistency falls directly on municipal staff.

Key patterns emerging from the data include:

- Most mayors are delegating organizational structure and employment powers back to the chief administrative officer (CAO); however, a significant number of mayors have retained these powers, and some have exercised them more deeply within the organization.
 - 40% retained the power to appoint or dismiss the CAO
 - 20% of mayors who retained their powers used them to hire or remove the CAO

Frequent changes to leadership can lead to organizational instability, resulting in shifting priorities, increased costs for taxpayers to meet employment contract agreements, and effects on organizational culture and resilience, including eroding staff morale, which can lead to hindered performance and service delivery.

- A total of 126 municipalities reported that their mayor directed staff to do research or provide advice — a widely used authority that

impacted staff workload and neutrality as well as decreased transparency in actions and decision-making.

- Mayoral vetoes, budget preparation practices, and committee restructuring were all applied inconsistently, creating accountability and transparency gaps across the province.
- Smaller municipalities — including many added to the legislation in May 2025 — are more likely to delegate powers, while larger municipalities show greater variation in retention and use.

The findings also reinforce a concern we have raised from the outset: the risk of politicization of local government leadership. Where mayors have exercised employment powers, the effects have reached well beyond senior leadership. As an Association, we have long advocated for a clear distinction between the administrative role of the CAO and the political role of the mayor. This scan reinforces why that distinction matters.

ACCESS THE UPDATED TOOLKIT & FULL SCAN

We will continue to monitor the use of strong mayor powers, paying attention to powers extended to Provincially-appointed regional chairs.

With the municipal elections coming up in October 2026, this marks the first time in an Ontario election cycle where mayoral candidates are seeking office *knowing* they will have these powers at their disposal (if elected). Further research and use cases of these powers will therefore be needed following the 2026 elections, as this may further affect how the powers are used and applied across Ontario.

We continue to call for greater clarity in legislation and regulation, stronger accountability and transparency frameworks, and a meaningful reduction in the administrative burden being placed on municipal staff. We will also continue to monitor how these powers evolve throughout this election cycle and as the legislative landscape continues to shift.

For more information or questions about this research, [contact us](#).

From: Natural Heritage (MNR) <NATURALHERITAGE@ontario.ca>

Sent: Tuesday, July 7, 2026 2:23 PM

To: Natural Heritage (MNR) <NATURALHERITAGE@ontario.ca>

Subject: Notification of decision notice under Regulation 828 of the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act

Date: July 7, 2026

Subject: Notification of decision notice under Regulation 828 of the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act

Good afternoon,

I am writing to let you know that a decision has been made on the proposed changes to R.R.O. Regulation 828 (*Development within the Development Control Area*) under the *Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act* (NEPDA).

After considering all submissions received through the consultation period, we are proceeding with changes that will improve clarity and expand exemptions for low-risk development activities. The exemptions are consistent with the purpose and objectives of the NEPDA and include conditions to mitigate and avoid any environmental impacts.

For more information, please see the decision notice posted on the Environmental Registry at [Amendments to Ontario Regulation 828 \(Development within the Development Control Area\) | Environmental Registry of Ontario](#) or by searching 019-8364.

Sincerely,

Stephen Casselman
Director, Fish and Wildlife Policy Branch
Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

Staci Landry, Deputy Clerk
City of Owen Sound
808 2nd Avenue East
Owen Sound, ON N4K 2H4



Phone: 519-376-4440 ext. 1235
Facsimile: 519-371-0511
Email: slandry@owensound.ca
Website: www.owensound.ca

July 16, 2026

Via Email

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
premier@ontario.ca

Dear Honourable Doug Ford:

Re: Sustainable Provincial Grant Funding for Fire Services in Ontario

City Council, at its meeting held on July 13, 2026, considered the above-noted matter, and passed Resolution No. R-260713-010 as follows:

"THAT in consideration of correspondence received on the July 13, 2026 Consent Agenda respecting sustainable provincial grant funding for fire services in Ontario, City Council:

- 1. Supports the resolution from the Municipality of South Huron; and**
- 2. Directs staff to send this resolution to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of the Solicitor General, the Minister of Infrastructure, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs, the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association, the Ontario Volunteer Fire Fighters Association, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA), and the Municipality of South Huron."**

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Staci Landry
Deputy Clerk

Encl: Municipality of South Huron Council Resolution of June 1, 2026

c: Hon. Michael Kerzner, Minister of the Solicitor General
Hon. Kinga Surma, Minister of Infrastructure
Hon. Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs
Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association
Ontario Volunteer Fire Fighters Association
Association of Municipalities of Ontario
Rural Ontario Municipal Association
Municipality of South Huron



CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH HURON

322 Main Street South P.O. Box 759

Exeter Ontario

N0M 1S6

Phone: 519-235-0310 Fax: 519-235-3304

Toll Free: 1-877-204-0747

www.southhuron.ca

June 10, 2026

Via email: doug.fordco@pc.ola.org

Premier's Office
Room 281
Main Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A5

Dear Hon. Doug Ford

Re: Sustainable Provincial Grant Funding for Fire Services in Ontario

Please be advised that South Huron Council passed the following resolution at their June 1, 2026, Regular Council Meeting:

258-2026

Moved By: Aaron Neeb

Seconded by: Wendy McLeod-Haggitt

That South Huron Council supports the May 13, 2026, correspondence of the Town of Plympton-Wyoming regarding Sustainable Provincial Grant Funding for Fire Services in Ontario; and

That this supporting resolution and the originating correspondence be circulated to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of the Solicitor General, the Minister of Infrastructure, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs, the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association, the Ontario Volunteer Fire Fighters Association, AMO, ROMA and all municipalities in Ontario.

Result: Carried

Please find attached the originating correspondence for your reference.

Respectfully,

Kendra Webster, Legislative & Licensing Coordinator
Municipality of South Huron
kwebster@southhuron.ca

519-235-0310 x. 232

Encl.

cc:

Minister of the Solicitor General, Hon. Michael Kerzner, michael.kerzner@pc.ola.org; Minister of Infrastructure, Hon. Kinga Surma, kinga.surma@pc.ola.org; Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Hon. Rob Flack, rob.flack@pc.ola.org; Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs, info@oafc.on.ca; Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association, admin@ontariofirefighters.org; Ontario Volunteer Fire Fighters Association, communication@ffao.on.ca; AMO resolutions@amo.on.ca; ROMA, roma@roma.on.ca; and all municipalities in Ontario.



Date: 13 May 2026

15

Moved By: Deputy Mayor Netty McEwen

Seconded By: Councillor John van Klaveren

Support for Sustainable Provincial Grant Funding for Fire Services in Ontario

WHEREAS Municipal fire services in Ontario operate under legislative authority established by the province through statutes, regulations, codes, and prescribed standards governing training, equipment, certification, inspection, and operational requirements;

AND WHEREAS municipalities are responsible for implementing and maintaining compliance with these provincially mandated requirements primarily through local property taxation;

AND WHEREAS current provincial fire service grant programs are available to both full-time and volunteer fire departments across Ontario and are distributed through competitive application processes that may not fully reflect the differing financial and administrative capacities of urban and rural municipalities, highlighting the need for a more balanced approach to funding that supports all fire services equitably;

AND WHEREAS volunteer firefighters represent approximately **70–75% of firefighters in Ontario**, protecting the majority of communities across the province and, particularly in rural areas, are frequently **the first emergency responders to arrive on scene ahead of other emergency services**;

AND WHEREAS other provincially regulated emergency services, including policing and paramedic services, receive stable and predictable provincial funding contributions or cost-sharing arrangements;

AND WHEREAS the absence of a comparable and stable funding model for fire services creates a structural imbalance between provincial regulatory authority and municipal financial responsibility;

AND WHEREAS reliance on competitive funding creates budget uncertainty, limits long-term financial planning, and may not reflect the actual operational needs of fire services, contributing to instability, reduced preparedness and the reduction of services within a critical emergency response sector;

AND WHEREAS stable and predictable funding is essential to maintain emergency preparedness, firefighter safety, service sustainability, and equitable protection for residents regardless of municipal size or tax base;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT

The Council of the Town of Plympton-Wyoming respectfully calls upon the Province of Ontario to **transition the current practice of competitive provincial fire service grant programs into a permanent, stable, and predictable non-competitive provincial funding program** that supports municipalities in meeting provincially legislated fire protection requirements;

AND FURTHER THAT this funding be structured to provide equitable and predictable annual support for **operational readiness and training costs associated with volunteer, composite and full-time fire departments across Ontario**;

AND FURTHER THAT the annual value of this funding be reviewed and adjusted to more appropriately reflect the level of provincial funding support currently provided to other provincially regulated emergency services, including policing and paramedic services;

AND FURTHER THAT this resolution be circulated for endorsement to:

- The County of Lambton
- Lambton County Fire Chiefs Association
- All municipalities
- Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs
- Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association
- Ontario Volunteer Fire Fighters Association
- Association of Municipalities of Ontario
- Rural Ontario Municipal Association

AND FURTHER THAT, upon endorsement, this resolution be submitted to:

- Steve Pinnsoneault MPP Lambton-Kent-Middlesex
- Bob Bailey MPP Sarnia-Lambton
- The Honourable Michael Kerzner, Minister of the Solicitor General
- The Honourable Kinga Surma, Minister of Infrastructure
- The Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario

✓		
Carried	Defeated	Deferred

Staci Landry, Deputy Clerk
City of Owen Sound
808 2nd Avenue East
Owen Sound, ON N4K 2H4



Phone: 519-376-4440 ext. 1235
Facsimile: 519-371-0511
Email: slandry@owensound.ca
Website: www.owensound.ca

July 16, 2026

Via Email

Doug Rawson
Mayor, Town of Penetanguishene
c/o Emily Dermott-Simpson, Executive Assistant
edermott-simpson@penetanguishene.ca

Dear Mayor Rawson:

Re: Heads and Beds Payment-in-Lieu of Taxes Program

City Council, at its meeting held on July 13, 2026, considered the above-noted matter, and passed Resolution No. R-260713-011 as follows:

"THAT in consideration of correspondence received on the July 13, 2026 Consent Agenda respecting heads and beds payment-in-lieu of taxes program, City Council:

- 1. Supports the resolution from the Town of Penetanguishene; and**
- 2. Directs staff to send this resolution to the Town of Penetanguishene to express Council's interest in participating in a collective discussion with affected municipalities on this matter."**

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Staci Landry".

Staci Landry
Deputy Clerk



The Corporation of the Town of Bruce Mines

PO Box 220
9126 Hwy. 17 East
Bruce Mines ON P0R 1C0

MAYOR: LORY PATERI
MUNICIPAL CLERK: JUDY DAVIS

Phone: (705)785-3493
Fax: (705)785-3170
Email: info@brucemines.ca
www.brucemines.ca

July 6th, 2026

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

premier@ontario.ca

Re: Policy Without Appropriation: Physician Shortage in Northern Ontario and the Practice Ready Ontario Program

Dear Premier Ford,

On behalf of the Council of the Town of Bruce Mines, we are writing to, once again, address the physician shortage in Northern Ontario. This critical issue has been front and centre for years, and while the *Practice Ready Ontario (PRO)* program—which evaluates internationally educated family physicians to confirm they are ready to practice in Ontario—is widely acknowledged and genuinely applauded, the province appears to have stopped short of closing the loop.

Therefore, council is compelled to express our concern in the gap between the government's opening the door to a solution but falling short of providing the financial framework needed to walk through it.

Northern Ontario's municipalities face a structural imbalance that is fundamentally different from communities in the south. We are small in population, geographically dispersed, and operate with limited tax bases that cannot support the escalating costs associated with physician recruitment, retention, and community health infrastructure. Despite these limitations, municipalities are increasingly expected to shoulder responsibilities that fall squarely within the provincial mandate for health care delivery.

Municipalities **have** stepped in where we can, but we cannot continue to fund physician recruitment packages, housing incentives, locum coverage, or clinic operations without dedicated provincial support. The current model places an unsustainable burden on small

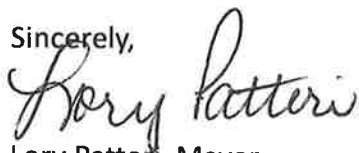
communities that simply do not have the tax revenue to fill the gaps left by the provincial health care system.

We respectfully request that the Province of Ontario:

1. **Establish a dedicated Northern Ontario Physician Recruitment and Retention Fund**, accessible to small and rural municipalities ensuring communities are not forced to subsidize provincial healthcare responsibilities.
2. **Work directly with Northern municipalities** to develop a coordinated strategy that reflects the unique demographic, geographic, and fiscal realities of the North.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further and look forward to a written response from your office.

Sincerely,



Lory Patten, Mayor
Town of Bruce Mines

Cc:

Ms. Marit Stiles

Leader of the Official Opposition
Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario

Mr. John Fraser

Interim Leader, Ontario Liberal Party

The Honourable Sylvia Jones

Deputy Premier of Ontario
Minister of Health

The Honourable George Pirie

Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth

Bill Rosenberg

Member of Provincial Parliament
Algoma—Manitoulin

Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)

Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA)

Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)

Distributed to all Ontario municipalities.