
Memorandum

CWCD 2026-194**Subject:** 2026 AMO Conference Overview**Date:** Friday, August 21, 2026**To:** Regional Council**From:** Ron Tripp, Chief Administrative Officer

The 2026 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) conference was hosted in Ottawa, Ontario from August 16 to 19. This memo provides a summary of remarks provided by Premier Ford, as well as delegation outcomes.

Premier Address

The Premier's address focused on the provincial government's efforts to support Ontarians while strengthening economic resilience. Premier Ford highlighted measures undertaken in response to ongoing tariff and trade actions by the United States, including supporting local businesses, attracting foreign direct investment, and creating employment opportunities across the province. He also referenced tax relief initiatives and supports for local businesses introduced through Budget 2026.

The Premier noted that the Province continues to work collaboratively with municipalities to deliver the infrastructure needed to accommodate growth. He reiterated that his government is working through applications submitted through the Development Charge Reduction Program and looks forward to making additional funding announcements in the coming weeks.

Delegation Outcomes

Delegation One: Michael Kerzner, Solicitor General and Doug Downey, Attorney General (Councillor Attendees: Foster, Greenwood, Kaiser, Olson)

Request: that the Ministry of the Solicitor General and Ministry of the Attorney General partner in Niagara's Highly Supportive Housing initiative by providing capital and operating funding, in partnership with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Children, Communities and Social Services.

-
- The Solicitor General and Attorney General expressed an interest in the Region's Highly Supportive Housing initiative and recognized the anticipated cross-ministerial cost savings.
 - Both ministries were supportive of continuing discussions following the conference to explore partnership opportunities.

Delegation Two: Graham McGregor, Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism
(Councillor Attendees: Heit, Insinna, Ugulini, Witteveen)

Requests:

1. That the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism expedite permitting approval for the South Niagara Wastewater Treatment Solutions (SNWTS) project.
 2. That a working group be established in partnership with the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement and the Ministry of Red Tape Reduction to support resolutions of an ongoing Burial Site Investigation (BSI) order.
- The Minister was extremely receptive and supportive of both requests and understood the need for provincial partnership.
 - Minister McGregor committed that Ministry staff would follow up with the Region on permitting approvals for the SNWTS. He also confirmed that his Ministry would initiate the creation of a working group to support ongoing BSI challenges. Regional staff look forward to working with the Province on next steps.

Delegation Three: John Jordan, Parliamentary Assistant (PA) to the Minister of Health (Councillor Attendees: Morocco, Bateman, Kaiser)

Requests:

1. That the Ministry of Health partner in Niagara's Highly Supportive Housing initiative by providing capital and operating funding, in partnership with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Ministry of the Solicitor General, the Ministry of the Attorney General and the Ministry of Children, Communities and Social Services.
 2. That the Ministry of Health commit to a minimum of a 1 per cent Public Health base budget increase in the upcoming review of the Public Health funding model.
- PA Jordan acknowledged the growing need for Highly Supportive Housing across Ontario. He inquired if the proposed initiative would complement

Niagara's HART Hub and requested further information be provided on the specific development site to further advance funding discussions.

- PA Jordan recognized that municipalities are awaiting clarity on future Public Health funding agreements. He directed Ministry staff to follow up with the Region on timing following the AMO conference. Regional staff look forward to receiving additional information from the Ministry.

Delegation Four: Greg Rickford, Minister of Indigenous Affairs, First Nation Economic Reconciliation (Councillor Attendees: Greenwood, Insinna, Heit, Seaborn)

Request: that the Ministry provide guidance and standardized protocol for municipal partners during First Nation engagement during Environmental Assessments.

- Minister Rickford acknowledged that there are currently no clear guidelines for municipalities fulfilling the provincially mandated Duty to Consult.
- The Minister advised that his Ministry would be holding a roundtable in the fall or winter of 2026 with municipal partners to further discuss opportunities to streamline the engagement process. Regional delegates confirmed interest in participating in the roundtable and look forward to following up with Ministry staff in Q3/Q4 2026.

Delegation Five: Todd McCarthy, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, and Minister of Infrastructure (Acting) (Councillor Attendees: Morocco, Campion, Insinna, Olson, Foster, Ugulini, Witteveen)

Request: that the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) expedite permitting approval for the South Niagara Wastewater Treatment Solutions (SNWTS) project.

- Minister McCarthy acknowledged that the SNWTS is a priority project for the Region. He recognized that the project is critical to supporting growth across Niagara and will be a key driver in supporting the Government of Ontario in meeting the objectives set out within the Province's Destination Niagara Strategy.
- The Minister committed that Ministry staff would prioritize permitting approval for the project. Regional staff look forward to following up with MECP on next steps.

Delegation Six: Prabmeet Sarkaria, Minister of Transportation (Councillor

Attendees: Olson, Seaborn, Witteveen)

Requests:

1. That the Ministry of Transportation expedite permitting approval for the South Niagara Wastewater Treatment Solutions (SNWTS) project.
2. That the Government of Ontario purchase the CN Rail Corridor between Hamilton and Niagara Falls to immediately advance GO service on the Niagara Line.
 - Minister Sarkaria expressed appreciation for the Region providing advanced notice regarding the SNWTS permitting timelines. He committed Ministry staff to providing support and flagged that there would be a benefit to coordinating all permitting requirements in partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks to ensure staff are aware of project timelines, expediency requirements and sequencing. Regional staff look forward to following up with MTO staff on next steps.
 - The Minister expressed appreciation for Niagara's support for GO expansion. He acknowledged that increasing GO train service directly supports the Government's Destination Niagara Strategy and suggested that a formal request be sent to his team to continue advancing conversations.

Delegation Seven: Michelle Cooper, Parliamentary Assistant (PA) to the Minister of Finance (Councillor Attendees: Insinna, Foster, Heit, Ip, Greenwood)

Request: that the Government of Ontario update the municipal funding framework to reflect the true cost of municipal program delivery and infrastructure expenditures.

- PA Cooper acknowledged the funding pressures that exist for municipalities. To mitigate these pressures, the Minister expressed interest in the status of the Region's Core Services Review and recommended other revenue-generating strategies for certain infrastructure builds, such as fundraising for police and hospital builds.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

Ron Tripp, P.Eng.

Chief Administrative Officer