

**Ministry of
Municipal Affairs
and Housing**

Office of the Minister

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Ontario

November 1, 2019

Dear Head of Council:

Our government understands that municipalities are closest to the people. We also know that each municipality is unique, and one size does not fit all. This approach is reflected in a number of announcements that we have made recently, which are summarized below.

Regional Government Review

After careful consideration of the feedback we heard through the course of the Regional Government Review that was launched in January 2019, and in consultation with my Cabinet colleagues, our government is committed to partnering with municipalities without pursuing a top-down approach. We will work collaboratively and in partnership, and we will not impose any changes on municipalities.

Renewal of funding programs to identify efficiencies

The government has announced \$143 million in funding for municipalities across the province to help lower costs and deliver important services to residents over the long term. The new programs include:

Audit and Accountability Fund

- We will extend funding for 39 large urban municipalities, by providing up to \$6 million annually for three years beginning in fiscal year 2020-21. More information on the application process will follow in the coming months.

Municipal Modernization Program

- Building on Ontario's previous investment to modernize municipal service delivery, 405 small and rural municipalities will have access to an application-based program, which will provide up to \$125 million until 2022-23. The first round of funding under this program will be available in the current provincial fiscal year to support service delivery reviews, similar to the types of reviews eligible under the Audit and Accountability Fund. Details on eligibility and application process for this year's funding are coming soon.

Municipal Fiscal Year

The government is committed to consulting with the municipal sector in 2020 on the alignment of the municipal fiscal year with the Province's. We believe municipalities will be able to provide valuable input regarding how the current budget cycles affect funding allocations for their programs – and if aligning the municipal and provincial budget cycles could enhance public transparency and improve program and service delivery.

Voters' List

Our government is also proposing to work with Ontario's Chief Electoral Officer to eliminate duplication by combining the provincial and municipal voters' lists and giving Elections Ontario the responsibility of managing one voters' list.

Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund

In addition, I would like to highlight that the Minister of Finance recently sent out letters to all Heads of Council regarding the 2020 Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) allocations. This is the earliest that OMPF allocations have ever been announced. As indicated in that letter, the government is maintaining the current structure of the OMPF for 2020.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to delivering efficient, effective and modern services to the people of Ontario. I look forward to continuing to work together to help the people and businesses in communities across our province thrive.

Sincerely,



Steve Clark
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

c: The Honourable Rod Phillips, Minister of Finance