

**Ministry of
Municipal Affairs
and Housing**

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234-2020-5110

November 17, 2020

Dear Head of Council:

The Ontario government is committed to helping municipalities improve local service delivery and ensure taxpayers' dollars are being used efficiently. That is why we launched the *Audit and Accountability Fund* in 2019. I am writing today to recognize the great work that all 39 eligible municipalities started under the first intake of the program and announce details of a second intake that will further support your efforts to find efficiencies, while delivering the services your residents and businesses rely on every day.

This year, amid the challenges brought by COVID-19, the province and municipalities have pulled together to help keep our communities safe and support our economy. We understand that the success of Ontario's municipalities is vital to our province's economic recovery – that is why the Ontario government, under the leadership of Premier Ford, secured the historic \$4 billion Safe Restart Agreement with the federal government. This funding is helping municipalities across Ontario address operating budgetary shortfalls they have incurred as a result of COVID-19.

Ontario is currently experiencing the second wave of COVID-19, and it is important that municipalities adapt to this new reality. That is why I am writing to you today to launch the second intake of the *Audit and Accountability Fund (AAF)*. The AAF will allow large municipalities to benefit from further provincial funding to conduct service delivery and administrative expenditure reviews, with the goal of finding efficiencies while protecting and modernizing critical front-line services.

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are making it more important than ever that municipalities can deliver modern, efficient services that are financially sustainable – services that can help improve local resilience and sustainability in these challenging times and respond to the need for new ways of doing business. This year, although we will consider applications related to any area of municipal service delivery, I encourage you to submit proposals that support the following priorities:

- Digital modernization
- Service integration
- Streamlined development approvals

The AAF provides you with the opportunity to identify savings and efficiencies, while protecting front-line services, and ensuring that municipalities are ready to adapt to the new normal.

To apply, you must submit a completed Expression of Interest form with attached supporting documents via the Transfer Payment Ontario (TPON) system by **December 18, 2020**. To get started, access the Transfer Payment Ontario (TPON) system by visiting www.Ontario.ca/getfunding. You will find program guidelines and the Expression of Interest form on that site.

If you have questions on the program, or would like to discuss a proposal, I encourage you to contact your [Municipal Services Office](#) or e-mail municipal.programs@ontario.ca.

By continuing to work together to deliver modern, efficient local services, we are charting a path to a strong recovery and getting Ontario back on track.

Sincerely,



Steve Clark
Minister

c. Chief Administrative Officers and Treasurers