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**REPORT TITLE:**      **2022 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Annual Conference**

**FROM:**                Gary Kent, CPA, CGA, ICD.D, Chief Financial Officer and Commissioner of Corporate Services

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the approach outlined in the report of the Chief Financial Officer and Commissioner of Corporate Services, listed on the March 3, 2022 Government Relations Committee agenda titled "2022 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Annual Conference", be endorsed.**

## **REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- The 2022 AMO Annual Conference (Conference) will take place from August 14 - 17, 2022 in person in Ottawa.
- The Conference presents the first major opportunity for municipalities to meet with provincial decision makers after the 2022 Provincial Election, including the opportunity to meet with newly appointed ministers, senior staff and opposition party leaders.
- It is recommended that this year's delegation meetings be used to raise priorities focused on immediate funding needs, longer term economic recovery and addressing historical funding challenges related to provincially mandated services.
- It is also proposed that the Region present policy opportunities and solutions to address challenges related this year's priorities.
- To validate the Region's advocacy positions and messaging with Regional Councillors, it is proposed that a workshop be held mid-July.
- To help avoid scheduling conflicts with local delegation meetings, staff will connect with local municipal staff to coordinate delegation participants.
- The Region will pursue other engagement initiatives including a briefing session with Peel MPPs & MPs prior to the conference to help raise awareness of the Region's priorities.

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## **DISCUSSION**

The 2022 AMO Annual Conference (Conference) will take place from August 14 - 17, 2022. AMO has indicated that the Conference will take place in person in Ottawa. Due to current COVID restrictions, details on registration, hotel bookings, sponsorship and exhibitor packages will be delayed until the end of March.

The Conference presents the first major opportunity for municipalities to meet with provincial decision makers after the 2022 provincial election. This includes the opportunity to meet with newly appointed ministers, senior staff and opposition party leaders. These delegation

## **2022 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Annual Conference**

meetings help the Region build and strengthen relationships as well as advance Peel's advocacy priorities.

Once AMO has opened the delegation request portal, staff will submit delegation requests based on the themes noted in this report. Staff will also lead the coordination and development of materials to support discussions with relevant ministries and opposition leaders.

While AMO has yet to confirm this year's program, the conference usually includes several keynote addresses by subject matter experts, provincial party leaders and cabinet ministers. In addition, previous Conferences have included Ministers' Forums where ministers will answer questions from elected municipal officials.

### **1. Ministerial Delegations**

It is proposed that this year's delegation meetings be used to raise both immediate and long-term priorities. This includes looking at priorities focused on immediate funding needs, longer term economic recovery and addressing historical funding challenges related to provincially mandated services. In addition, similar to last year's conference, it is also proposed that the Region present policy opportunities and solutions to address challenges related this year's priorities. AMO is expected to confirm the deadline to submit requests for delegation meetings in the coming weeks.

It is important to note that any position advanced related to specific service areas have been endorsed by Regional Council. The Region has started to look at addressing priorities focused on recovery and the longer-term, however, as the Region's response to COVID-19 continues to evolve, the approach outlined in this report will be amended as needed.

### **2. 2022 Region of Peel Proposed Advocacy Priority Themes**

The advocacy priorities that are proposed to be advanced at this year's Conference relate to the following policy themes:

- Address COVID-19 impacts, now and beyond
- Support our community growth
- Focus on affordable housing solutions
- Safeguard quality of life for seniors
- Prioritize investment in mental health
- Invest in child care as an economic catalyst
- Keep the economy moving
- Investing in a green economy
  - Climate Change
  - Energy
  - Waste Management

### **3. AMO Conference Preparation Workshop**

To help prepare for the Conference, staff recommends holding a workshop in July (tentatively scheduled for mid - July). This workshop will be used to confirm messaging and allow staff to incorporate any input received from GRC members into the briefing materials and other documents being prepared to support advocacy efforts at the conference.

### 4. Coordination with Local Municipalities

The Region is usually notified by Ministers' offices whether the delegation request has been accepted approximately one to two weeks prior the start of the AMO Conference. As meeting delegations are confirmed, to avoid scheduling conflicts, Region of Peel staff will coordinate Mayor/Councillor participation in the specific meetings with staff from Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga. This will also provide an opportunity to coordinate appropriate representation at delegation meetings based on conference participants' interest and availability.

The Region will also work with local municipal staff to seek joint delegations, where appropriate.

### 5. Additional Initiatives

It is also proposed that the Region pursue additional advocacy opportunities including:

- Hosting a briefing session with Peel MPPs & MPs prior to the conference to help raise awareness of the Region's priorities.
- Requesting delegation meetings with leaders of the opposition parties and other key officials.

## CONCLUSION

The 2022 AMO Conference presents the first major opportunity to discuss and advance the Region's priorities with newly elected ministers, senior staff and opposition party leaders after the 2022 Provincial Election. It also provides a valuable opportunity to present policy solutions and demonstrate how the Region can collaborate with the new provincial government as it begins its mandate and implements its policy priorities and economic recovery efforts to address the impacts of the pandemic.

Following the Conference, the Chair of the GRC and staff will provide the Committee with an update on Conference activities, follow up action items and future opportunities to advance Regional priorities.

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*Authored By: Sonia Mistry, Advisor, External Relations*