

Subject: 2021 AMO Conference Update

To: Council

From: Chief Administrative Office

Report Number: 2021-231

Meeting Date: September 13, 2021

Recommendation:

That Chief Administrative Report 2021-231 regarding the City's delegation meetings at the 2021 AMO Conference be received for information.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the City's delegation meetings at the recent Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Conference.

Background:

The 2021 AMO Conference, hosted by the City of London, was held virtually with over 1400 delegates attending. AMO is a non-profit organization representing almost all of Ontario's 444 municipal governments. City staff submitted seven (7) Ministerial meeting requests and received six (6) meeting confirmations. The City's delegation, comprised of the Mayor, CAO, and Manager of Strategic Initiatives, had meetings with the following Ministers and Parliamentary Assistants:

- The Honourable Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation
- Jim McDonell, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Mike Harris, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry
- Sheref Sabawy, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism, and Culture Industries
- The Honourable Kinga Surma, Minister of Infrastructure
- Donna Skelly, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation, and Trade

Each delegation meeting was fifteen (15) minutes in length. City staff provided agenda items and background information to the Ministerial staff prior to the meetings. A news release was issued the week prior to the conference announcing the Ministerial and Parliamentary Assistant meetings confirmed for Port Colborne's delegation.

Discussion:

The focus of the City's delegation at the 2021 AMO Conference was to increase Port Colborne's profile; discuss priority projects and important issues for our community; build partnerships with decision-makers at Queen's Park; and establish points of contact on key files.

Some of the projects and issues that Port Colborne's delegation highlighted during the Ministerial meetings included: water/wastewater infrastructure funding; developing and funding a marine strategy for investments in ports; COVID-19 and municipal service delivery; a new multi-purpose facility at the City's waterfront; economic recovery and tourism; partnerships to support affordable housing; the City's new cruise ship initiative; flood mitigation and shoreline erosion; and investments in transportation corridors as part of a goods movement strategy.

The City's delegation also watched Ministers Forums, workshops on broadband connectivity and municipal insurance, and presentations by the Premier, the Minister of Infrastructure, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and the Minister of Health.

Thank you letters were sent by the Mayor to each of the Ministers and Parliamentary Assistants summarizing key discussion points and inviting each of them to Port Colborne to tour the City and view current projects and areas of future growth and development. City staff have had subsequent conversations about inviting more provincial Ministers, Parliamentary Assistants, and MPPs to Port Colborne.

Internal Consultations:

Staff from the Office of the Mayor and CAO, Economic Development and Tourism, and Engineering/Public Works worked together on preparing briefing materials. Corporate Communications also assisted in issuing a news release.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications associated with this report. Municipal conferences including AMO and Ontario Good Roads will be held in-person again and staff are recommending that the City have a strong presence at these conferences and request meetings with Ministers and Parliamentary Assistants. Therefore, there will be travel,

accommodation, and conference expenses in the future and these are already budgeted for in the operating budget.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

The City's meetings with Ministers and Parliamentary Assistants and the topics discussed aligned with most of the pillars in the strategic plan, including the following:

- Service and Simplicity - Quality and Innovative Delivery of Customer Services
 - Attracting Business Investment and Tourists to Port Colborne
 - City-Wide Investments in Infrastructure and Recreational/Cultural Spaces
 - Value: Financial Management to Achieve Financial Sustainability
 - Governance: Communications, Engagement, and Decision-Making
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Conclusion:

The City's Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), and the Mayor's Office, are committed to strengthening our working relationships and partnerships with federal, provincial, and regional elected officials and staff as part of a broader plan to enhance our government relations and advocacy strategy. Port Colborne's delegation at the 2021 AMO Conference had six (6) meetings with Ministers and Parliamentary Assistants to discuss important projects and initiatives. Staff will continue the dialogue with provincial contacts on key files and identify other opportunities for Port Colborne's delegation to meet with provincial officials.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Long
Manager of Strategic Initiatives
905-835-2900 x.502
gary.long@portcolborne.ca

Report Approval:

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.