

Members of Council

January 11, 2010

As 2010 begins, it is time to reflect on the progress that we have made as an order of government and what lies ahead. First – your Association wants to congratulate you on the leadership that you bring to the daily lives of those in your community and for the support that you offer to this Association. The Board has had another busy year advancing good public policy that serves our communities and property taxpayers and in developing programs through our corporation, Local Authority Services, which help you stretch those precious tax dollars.

We have seen unprecedented investment in infrastructure across Ontario. Municipal governments have stepped up to the plate and are actively contributing to the province's economic recovery. We have successfully seen the extension of the federal gas tax and I can tell you that your Association has had consistent high marks through various audits for its administration as well as demonstrating the environmental outcomes of its investment. We know that every dollar of infrastructure investment, whether gas tax, economic stimulus or your own capital dollars means jobs through the entire construction supply chain.

And our capacity to do so is in part because of the significant upload of social assistance programs. The wisdom of the PMFSDR agreement continues to be evident. For example, the Ontario Disability Support Program costs alone are about \$35 million larger than was estimated in 2008. Many of the PMFSDR outcomes are in implementation mode – including work to revamp human services delivery to have the 'client' as the focus, not an administrative manual. Work on courts security and roads/bridges review are progressing as well. The Association is particularly proud that our core advocacy resulted in renewed housing funding - \$100 million from the province and another \$1.2 billion in combined federal-provincial funding in their 2009 budgets.

And for many of Ontario's northern and rural municipalities, we were successful in preserving some of the 'mitigation' component of the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund for 2010. It is not all that we hoped for, but up against the province's ever growing health transfers and an almost \$25 billion provincial deficit, it is a much better outcome than the zero that we feared.

These are but a few of our successes in 2009. As we look ahead, your Board will continue its policy and advocacy work on the environmental fronts – integrated waste management including full extended producer responsibility, climate change and energy conservation and joint and severable liability to name but just a few of the areas where outcomes will have direct benefit for your citizens. And we stand on guard to protect all the financial gains that we have made over the years.

I hope you agree that your 2009 membership fee has resulted in solid returns. Considering the times that we are working in, your Board has approved a modest increase of 1.5% in membership for this year. In addition, the registration fee for the annual conference is being kept at the 2009 rate. The theme for the conference is "Propelling Economic Prosperity" and we want as many municipal officials to attend – to garner new ideas, to explore innovations to community well-being, and we will celebrate municipal ingenuity and leadership in the path to economic recovery. The early bird registration closes Friday, April 23, 2010.

On behalf of your Board of Directors, we know that as we look forward, we can count on your membership support in 2010.

Sincerely,



Peter Hume
President

