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ALERT

MEMBER COMMUNICATION

ALERT N°: 09/043

To the attention of the Clerk and Council
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Government Announces Consultation Process on Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy

Issue: Today, the Honourable Jim Watson, Minister of Municipal Affairs released details on how the government will be moving forward on developing their affordable housing strategy.

Background:

The Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy (LTAHS) builds on key government initiatives including outcomes of the Provincial and Municipal Fiscal and Service Delivery Review (PMFSDR) and the Poverty Reduction Strategy. A key recommendation arising from the PMFSDR was to work towards consolidating the twenty odd housing and homelessness programs into an outcomes based, municipally managed service. This will include a review of the current Social Housing Reform Act (SHRA).

The Poverty Reduction Strategy provided \$5 million annually for the Rent Bank Program but deferred further action on affordable housing to the LTAHS.

The government will be holding consultations sessions across the province from June to September. AMO recommends that municipal representatives attend these sessions to ensure municipal concerns and issues from across the province are heard by the government.

The consultation sessions will focus on five key questions that explore: appropriate roles for each order of government in housing, consideration of changes that may be needed on existing affordable housing and homelessness programs, changes that are needed under the SHRA, suggestions for creative ideas and innovation on affordable housing and suggestions for poverty indicators related to affordable housing in Ontario.

In the 2009 budget, the government, together with the federal government committed \$1.2 billion over two years to renovate 50,000 social housing units and build 4,500 new affordable units.

AMO, together with the provincial government continues to move housing forward in Ontario. Working towards responsive and flexible housing policy in Ontario and advocating for federal involvement in housing have been key outcomes of the joint efforts.

Action: AMO will be attending consultation sessions and developing a comprehensive response through the AMO Social Policy Task Force.

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