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October 29, 2020

Dear Head of Council:

I am writing to announce the release of the 2021 Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) allocations.

Last fall, we committed to providing OMPF allocations well in advance of the municipal budget year. Today, we are delivering on that commitment by ensuring municipalities have the information they need to plan their budgets.

Our government recognizes the importance of the OMPF for many of Ontario's communities. We also know that stability is a priority for municipalities, particularly in these uncertain times.

That is why the Premier committed to maintain the overall structure and \$500 million program envelope for the 2021 OMPF, as announced at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) conference this past August.

In addition to ensuring stability, I am pleased to advise that maintaining the program envelope will allow for a further \$5 million in support to be targeted to northern and rural municipalities. The Rural Communities Grant will be increased to \$152 million to further support rural municipalities with the highest levels of farmland. The Northern and Rural Fiscal Circumstances Grant will be increased to \$92 million to further support northern and rural municipalities with the most challenging fiscal circumstances.

The 2021 OMPF will also continue to be responsive to changing municipal circumstances through annual data updates and related adjustments.

As in prior years, Transitional Assistance will ensure that the 2021 funding guarantee for municipalities in northern Ontario will be at least 90 per cent of their 2020 OMPF allocation and for municipalities in southern Ontario will be at least 85 per cent of their 2020 OMPF allocation.

Northern and rural municipalities with the most challenging fiscal circumstances will continue to have their guarantee enhanced up to 100 per cent of the prior year's allocation.

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The Ministry of Finance's Provincial-Local Finance Division will be providing your municipal Treasurers and Clerk-Treasurers with further details on the 2021 OMPF. This information and other supporting materials will be posted online at <https://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/budget/ompf/2021>.

As you know, our government has been reviewing the OMPF in consultation with municipalities, to ensure the program meets the needs of local communities, especially small, northern and rural municipalities. Given the unprecedented circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, we will be taking more time for the review. Discussions with municipal partners are expected to resume later this year.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to acknowledge the extraordinary challenges municipalities are facing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Ontario government, in partnership with the federal government, is providing up to \$4 billion in one-time assistance to Ontario's 444 municipalities and 110 public transit systems as part of the Safe Restart Agreement. This includes up to \$2 billion to assist municipalities with operating pressures and up to \$2 billion for COVID-19 related financial impacts to municipal transit agencies.

This historic funding commitment will help local governments protect the health and well-being of the people of Ontario, while continuing to deliver critical public services such as public transit and shelters. Together, Ontario will continue down the path of renewal, growth and economic recovery.

We respect our municipal partners and remain committed to listening and working together to improve the quality of life for people across Ontario. By continuing to work closely with municipalities, our government is charting a path to a strong recovery and getting Ontario back on track.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

The Honourable Rod Phillips
Minister of Finance

c: The Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing