



Correspondence Items Presented for Information April 14, 2025

- 1) Correspondence from the Deputy Clerk, City of Owen Sound Re: Support resolution respecting Driver Training and Examinations Auditor General Report.
- 2) Correspondence from the Ontario Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Re: Strong mayor powers.
- 3) Correspondence from Raymond Botten Re: Deputation to Owen Sound Police Service Board.
- 4) Correspondence from the Chair, Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus Re: Tariff response.
- 5) Correspondence from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Re:
 - a) Policy update – new provincial cabinet.
 - b) Policy update – advocacy on development charges, buy-Canadian and buy-Ontario initiatives.
- 6) Correspondence from the following municipalities Re: Tariff impact and response.
 - a) County of Bruce
 - b) County of Lanark
 - c) Municipality of Assiginack
 - d) City of Peterborough

Allison Penner, Deputy Clerk
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March 21, 2025

Via Email

G. Scharback
City Clerk
City of Brampton

Dear G. Sharback:

**Re: Support for Resolution Respecting Driver Training and Examinations
Auditor General Report**

Owen Sound City Council, at its meeting held on March 10, 2025, considered the above-noted matter, and passed Resolution No. R-250310-006 as follows:

"THAT in consideration of correspondence received on the March 10, 2025 Consent Agenda respecting the Driver Training and Examinations Auditor General Report, City Council:

- 1. Supports the resolution passed by the City of Brampton to endorse the Auditor General Value-for-Money Audit Driver Training and Examination Report (AG Report) - its findings and 18 recommendations to ensure that we have safe and qualified drivers on our roads;**
- 2. Directs staff to send this resolution to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, the Honourable Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria, Minister of Transportation, Paul Vickers, MPP for Bruce-Grey Owen Sound, leaders of all parties at Queen's Park, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and the Owen Sound Police Service Board; and**
- 3. Directs staff to send this resolution to the City of Brampton with a request that an update respecting any actions resulting from the resolution be provided to the City of Owen Sound."**

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A. Penner

Allison Penner
Deputy Clerk

Encl: City of Brampton Council Resolution of February 20, 2025

cc: The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Paul Vickers, MPP for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound
Honourable Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria, Ontario Minister of Transportation
Marit Stiles, Leader of the Ontario New Democratic Party
Mike Schreiner, Leader of the Green Party of Ontario
Bonnie Crombie, Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party
Association of Municipalities of Ontario
Owen Sound Police Service Board

February 20, 2025

Sent by email

See Distribution List on page 5

Re: Driver Training and Examinations Auditor General Report

The following recommendation of the Committee of Council Meeting of January 15, 2025 was approved by Council on January 22, 2025, pursuant to Council Resolution C027-2025:

CW009-2025

Whereas:

- It is a relief that Premier Ford was unharmed in the accident on the 401 in Pickering involving a reckless driver (age 18) from Oshawa on January 8, 2025 (Source: <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/ontario-premier-doug-ford-uninjured-in-highway-401-collision-says-his-office-1.7168982>)
- In addition to tragic loss of life and injury, vehicle collisions cause higher auto-insurance rates, unwanted congestion, lost productivity, and significant costs associated with emergency response (police, fire, paramedics, hospital emergency rooms and healthcare);
- According to the OPP, there were more car collision-related deaths (**568**) on Ontario highways in 2023 than in any year since 2007, making it **the deadliest year in over 15 years** and "...it's so critically important that we understand the rules of the road and we share the road safely, responsibly and understand the consequences for making a bad decision can be deadly." (Source: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/opp-number-fatalities-last-year-deadly-year-1.7204528>);
- That same year 26,425 were injured in vehicle collisions according to the MTO Preliminary 2023 Ontario Road Safety Annual Report (Source: <https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-07/mto-orsar-preliminary2023-en.pdf>)
- As of Thanksgiving 2024, the OPP notes that **296** drivers, passengers, pedestrians and cyclists died in car collisions, and the vast majority of those road incidents were preventable and attributed to poor and careless actions and behaviours (Source: <https://barrie.ctvnews.ca/nearly-300-people-missing-from-thanksgiving-tables-opp-1.7070787>), one-fifth involving a transport truck (as at July 2024 Source: <https://www.baytoday.ca/local-news/one-fifth-of-fatal-collisions-in-2024-involve-transport-trucks-9177343>)

- 2024 is the most dangerous year for pedestrians and cyclists who have been particularly at risk this year, with fatalities in these two road user classes up 100 per cent and 82 per cent respectively over this time last year (Source: <https://www.mondaq.com/canada/rail-road-cycling/1565790/how-2024-has-quickly-become-the-deadliest-year-for-cyclists-and-pedestrians>);
- By far, the most common type of conviction of the Highway Traffic Act (HTA) and cause for fatalities was speeding, representing 60.4% of all HTA convictions (Source: <https://www.g1.ca/driving-statistics/>);
- Peel Region had 25 fatalities due to car collisions - 13 in Brampton and 12 in Mississauga;
- The most dangerous places to drive in Ontario are Brantford (0.7/5), Kingston (0.7/5), Burlington (0.8/5) and Brampton (1.1/5), which impacts road safety and insurance affordability for everyone in these communities (Source: <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/top-10-safest-and-most-dangerous-cities-to-drive-in-ontario-in-2024-889054846.html>);
- From January to September 2024 the following traffic violation charges have been made by Peel Police:
- 632 careless driving charges (345 in Brampton, a 25% increase compared to Jan-Sep 2023)
- 559 cellphone use while driving charges (125 in Brampton, a 29% increase compared to Jan-Sep 2023)
- 6,367 speeding charges (830 in Brampton, a 117% increase compared to Jan-Sep 2023)
- 1,992 “Fail to Stop” at a stop sign charges (874 in Brampton, a 74% increase compared to Jan-Sep 2023);
- To mitigate speeding drivers, The City of Brampton has made historic investments in ASE cameras, an ASE processing centre, speed bumps, road diets, lower speed limits, police enforcement and other traffic calming measures, however like all municipalities, lacks jurisdiction over driver training and examinations, an area requiring urgent reform under the Provincial Government;
- Under the HTA, the Ministry of Transportation (Ministry) is responsible for protecting the public by restricting the privilege of driving to those who demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to drive safely;

- Ensuring that drivers receive appropriate and effective training and testing before they get a driver's licence is a crucial step in keeping Ontario's roads safe;
- The Auditor General (AG) conducted a value for money audit (AG Report) which includes 18 recommendations (***summary attached to this motion***) for the Provincial Government Ministry, published in December 2023 and concludes by highlighting:

“Our audit concluded that the Ministry of Transportation did not have effective evidence-based driver examination programs to evaluate and test novice drivers thoroughly and consistently. The Ministry did not provide effective oversight of novice driver training and driver examination service providers to ensure desired service outcomes with due regard to economy. Ministry oversight of driving schools and instructors was limited. It does not regulate driver training services outside of the optional Beginner Driver Education program, curbing its ability to identify and/or deter substandard training practices within the industry. In addition, the Ministry's monitoring programs were not designed to proactively identify drivers with repeat suspensions or high-risk medical conditions, impeding the effectiveness of these programs to maximize road safety in Ontario. (Source Page 4:

https://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arreports/en23/AR_drivertraining_en23.pdf);

- In March 2024, CBC Marketplace broke an investigative story “Driving schools selling shortcuts to insurance discounts and faster road tests” where schools submit false information to government saying drivers completed 40 hours of training, consistent with concerning findings in the AG Report (Source: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/marketplace-driving-schools-education-fee-1.7134557>); and
- The provincial government has not provided a substantial update on any action taken regarding the recommendations in the AG Report to improve driver training and examination for safer drivers and improve safety on our roads.

Therefore be it resolved that:

1. The City of Brampton endorse the Auditor General Value-for-Money Audit Driver Training and Examination Report (AG Report) - its findings and 18 recommendations to ensure that we have safe and qualified drivers on our roads; and
2. The City of Brampton share this motion and endorsement with the Premier, Minister of Transportation, all local MPPs, and the leaders of the official opposition and third party; and

3. The City of Brampton request a formal update from the provincial government and meeting with the Minister of Transportation regarding any action taken to date based on the recommendations described in the AG Report, particularly those that prioritize improved driver training and examination for safer drivers on our roads; and
4. The City of Brampton forward this motion and attachment to any cities or towns listed in the AG Report and the top dangerous cities in Ontario, encouraging them to pass a similar motion; and CC them in the follow-up correspondence to the province; and
5. The City of Brampton forward this motion, attachment, and follow-up correspondence to the Region of Peel, Peel Police, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), Driving Instructors Association, and Young Drivers of Canada.
6. Staff report back with data to identify road safety hotspots with the intention to use the data strategically with Peel Police to improve Brampton's status as a safe city to drive.
7. Staff report back on bylaw enforcement tactics regarding driving instructors as referenced on page 22 of the AG Report: "In some municipalities, such as Brampton, municipal bylaw officers patrolled test routes and issued fines to driving instructors who lingered around exam routes".

A summary of recommendations in the Auditor General Value-for-Money Audit Driver Training and Examination Report is attached.

By copy of this correspondence to Robert Higgs, Director, Enforcement and By-law Services, Legislative Services, and Shane Loftus, Director, Road Maintenance and Operations, Public Works and Engineering, they are requested to carry out the directions outlined in clauses 6 and 7. Item **RM 5/2025** has been added to the Referred Matters List for the report requested.

Yours truly,

Sonya Pacheco

Sonya Pacheco
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(CW – 7.2)

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Robert Higgs, Director, Enforcement and By-law Services, Legislative Services
Shane Loftus, Director, Road Maintenance, Operations and Fleet, Public Works and Engineering
Christopher Ethier, Director, Municipal Transition and Integration, Office of the CAO
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Moved by: Santos

ATTACHMENT: Summary of recommendations published by the Auditor General Value – “Value-for-Money Audit: Driver Training and Examination” December 2023

NOTE: The following list of recommendations have been copied directly from the report.

Issue and Recommendations (Pg16-38)

https://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arreports/en23/AR_drivertraining_en23.pdf:

4.1 Driver Examinations

4.1.1 Novice Drivers from Urban Areas Who Took Road Tests at Rural or Suburban Drive Test Centres Were Involved in More Collisions

1. So that driver examinations effectively assess whether novice drivers are sufficiently prepared to drive safely on Ontario’s roads, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation:
 - assess the impact on road safety of novice drivers from urban areas taking their road tests at rural and suburban DriveTest Centres; and
 - based on that assessment, identify and put in place reasonable restrictions that prohibit urban novice drivers from taking their road test at a DriveTest Centre outside of where they live, work or study.

4.1.2 Ministry Reduced the Requirements for the G (Highway) Road Test Without a Full Review and Formal Evaluation of Road Safety Impacts

2. To understand the full impact of the reduced G (highway) road test and make evidence-based decisions about the reduced test, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation:
 - conduct a thorough policy analysis of the impact of the reduced G (highway) road test, including the impact related to drivers from countries with no reciprocal driver’s licence exchange agreement with Ontario;
 - track and compare the collision rates of drivers who pass the reduced G (highway) road test to those who passed the full G (highway) road test over a sufficient period of time to determine if it increases road safety risk; and
 - based on these analyses, determine whether it is appropriate to continue to use the reduced G (highway) road test.

4.1.3 Novice Drivers Can Repeat the Knowledge Test as Many Times as Necessary in One Sitting to Pass

3. To encourage novice drivers to study the rules of the road more effectively prior to attempting the G1 knowledge test, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation review best practices in other jurisdictions, such as Quebec and British Columbia, and determine whether it should introduce a wait period before an individual can retake the test or limit the number of tests that can be taken in a single day.

4.2 Driver Training

4.2.1 Drivers Allowed to Shorten Their G1 Supervised Driving Period Were Involved in More Collisions

4. So that novice drivers are better prepared to drive safely on Ontario’s roads, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation:
 - review and identify opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of the Beginner Driver Education program (program) for novice drivers, including the sufficiency of the existing minimum number of driving practice hours;
 - based on leading practices in other jurisdictions, reassess the time discount provision that allows novice drivers to shorten the supervised driving period after the completion of the program;

Continued 4 of 7

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Moved by: Santos

- based on its review of these areas, implement necessary changes to improve the program; and subsequent to making changes to the program, determine whether all novice drivers should be required to complete the program.

4.2.2 Ministry Provided Limited Guidance Regarding Necessary Driving Practices for New Drivers Compared to Other Jurisdictions

5. So that novice drivers are well prepared to drive safely on Ontario roads, and to protect the integrity of the Ministry's driver examination process, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation:
- review the types of driver training services available in the marketplace (including the practice of route training) and assess their impact on novice drivers and on the integrity of the driver examination process;
 - based on that assessment, propose regulatory changes to prohibit driver training services that compromise the Ministry's ability to assess the driving skills of novice drivers through the Ministry examination process; and
 - implement monitoring and enforcement tools to deter prohibited driver training services.

4.2.3 Unregulated Driver Training Services May Undermine the Integrity of Driver Examinations

4.2.4 Weak Oversight of Beginner Driver Education Driving Schools

6. To strengthen the oversight of driving schools, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation:
- develop and implement a formal policy to require timely on-site follow-ups at driving schools where audits identified either serious or a high number of compliance violations to assess if the violations have been resolved;
 - develop and implement a strategy for routinely conducting cost-effective mystery shops on driving schools that it identifies as high-risk; and
 - regularly document and assess progress reported through follow-ups with driving schools to direct the Ministry's future oversight and enforcement actions.

4.3 Graduated Licensing System May Not Adequately Prepare Less-Experienced Drivers from Other Countries to Drive in Ontario

7. To better prepare novice drivers from other countries for driving in Ontario, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation:
- research whether drivers from other countries have unique challenges that may contribute to their involvement in a higher proportion of collisions;
 - reassess the impact of waiving the 12-month wait period between the G1 (knowledge) and G2 (city) road test; and
 - based on the results of Ministry research and reassessment, make necessary changes to the training and examination programs.

4.4 Monitoring High-Risk Licensed Drivers

4.4.1 Ministry Rarely Requires Drivers with Repeat Driving Suspensions to Take Retraining Courses

8. To encourage road safety and provide early remedial measures for drivers with a history of repeat driving offences and suspensions, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation:
- routinely identify drivers with a record of repeat driving offences and suspensions who Ministry data indicates are at increased likelihood to cause a collision; and
 - expand the criteria for requiring drivers to complete remediation and retraining to include these drivers.

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Moved by: Santos

4.4.2 Elderly Drivers' Ability to Drive Safely Not Effectively Assessed

9. To enhance road safety for the growing number of elderly drivers, we recommend the Ministry of Transportation review and adopt best practices from other jurisdictions, such as:
- re-examining elderly drivers' driving skills; and
 - requiring regular medical assessments for all Drivers 80 and older.

4.4.3 Reporting of Drivers Who May Be Medically Unfit to Drive Could Be Improved

10. For more complete and timely identification, assessment and suspension of drivers with high medical risks, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation periodically conduct educational and outreach initiatives to increase awareness among doctors, nurses and optometrists to report patients for medical assessment.

4.4.4 Supporting Evidence for Ministry's Medical Suspension Decisions Not Always Complete

11. To help ensure that decisions to suspend driver's licences are based on all medically relevant information, and that the suspension decisions are consistent and adequately supported, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation:
- redesign the forms doctors use to provide condition-specific medical information to the Ministry to include all necessary information, such as test or treatment results;
 - require medical assessors to consistently document their rationale for decisions related to complex driving suspensions and reinstatements; and
 - implement a quality-assurance process to routinely review the completeness and appropriateness of medical assessments.

4.5 Driver Examination Services Contract Management and Oversight

4.5.1 Ministry's Contract Administration Was Ineffective, and Failed to Improve Driver Examination Services for Ontarians

12. To better motivate the service provider to improve service rather than incur penalties, and to hold the service provider accountable for contract deliverables, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation:
- design and implement performance measures that incorporate effective penalties for performance failures, including delays in contract deliverables;
 - collect an upfront contingency deposit for performance penalties based on historical records; and
 - design and implement incentives (in addition to penalties) to promote compliance and appropriate responses from the service provider.

13. To promote effective contract management and relations between the Ministry of Transportation and its service provider, and to avoid undermining the contractual position of the Ministry, we recommend that the Ministry ensure that communications with contractors use appropriate contract channels.

4.5.2 Ministry's Compliance Audits of Driver Examination Services Were Inconsistent and Incomplete

14. To better monitor and report on the driver examination service provider's compliance and performance, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation strengthen its audit function by implementing a program of risk-based audits to examine all key operational processes of driver examination services, including road tests.

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Moved by: Santos

4.5.3 Ministry Paid Additional Funds to Maintain Service Levels That Were the Responsibility of the Service Provider

15. To provide for better accountability of funds provided to third parties for driver examination services to Ontarians, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation:
- administer contracts such that risks and costs are allocated between the parties in accordance with contractual terms; and
 - conduct thorough reviews on all relief, subsidization or reimbursement requests from service providers and render decisions that are consistent with the Ministry's contractual obligations.

4.5.4 Ministry Awarded New Contract to the Service Provider Despite Poor Performance and Issues of Concern

16. To provide for more effective oversight of driver examination service providers, and to provide Ontarians with better quality of service, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation:
- ensure adequate lead time to comply with government policies on procurement when contracting with a service provider;
 - consider past performance in negotiating future contracts;
 - compare its experience relative to other Canadian provinces to identify best practices in structuring driver examination services; and
 - use independent research to immediately evaluate the costs and benefits of various options for an examination service delivery partnership.

4.6 Ministry Overrode Its Own Proof of Identification Requirements When Issuing Driver's Licences

17. To better prevent fraud and identify theft, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation:
- develop internal guidelines and formal procedures to evaluate and document the extenuating circumstances for ID escalations;
 - educate Serco and ServiceOntario staff on these guidelines and procedures; and
 - put in place a process to monitor that these guidelines and procedures are followed.

4.7 Ministry Did Not Incorporate Key Safety Data When Determining the Effectiveness of Its Road Safety Programs

18. To measure the effectiveness of its driver training and examination programs on a timely basis, we recommend that the Ministry of Transportation:
- expand the use of business intelligence tools to conduct additional analytics that leverage data from related information systems, linking driver information to the driver examination, collisions and driver medical databases;
 - establish a comprehensive set of road safety indicators, including those related to collision rates, based on the objectives of its driver training and examination programs; and
 - monitor its driver training and examination programs using these indicators, and report on the results annually.

**Ministry of
Municipal Affairs
and Housing**

**Ministère des
Affaires municipales
et du Logement**



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Please find attached a letter from Minister Flack. Please note that the English version of this correspondence is being shared now, French to follow on Thursday.

Veuillez trouver en pièce jointe une lettre du ministre Flack. Sachez que seule la version anglaise de cette lettre vous est communiquée à l'heure actuelle. La lettre française vous sera envoyée jeudi.

Your Worship

Mayor Ian Boddy

City of Owen Sound

234-2025-1568

Dear Mayor Ian Boddy,

To further support municipalities in delivering much-needed housing and other provincial priorities, I am pleased to inform you that our government intends to expand strong mayor powers to your municipality.

Following previous expansions, we have seen strong mayors put these transformative powers into action to support growth, from proposing budgets to setting up organizational structures to proposing by-laws to help advance provincial priorities such as building more homes and constructing and maintaining infrastructure to support housing.

Our government's expectation is that you will make use of these powers in a similar way, supporting provincial priorities that will help our province and our communities grow. These priorities include supporting the construction of new homes, economic development and building infrastructure that supports community growth, including

housing-enabling infrastructure like water and wastewater infrastructure, as well as roads, highways, transit and more.

Heads of council in strong mayor municipalities can:

- Choose to appoint the municipality's chief administrative officer.
- Hire certain municipal department heads, and establish and re-organize departments.
- Create committees of council, assign their functions and appoint the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of committees of council.
- Propose the municipal budget, which would be subject to council amendments and a separate mayoral veto and council override process.
- Veto certain by-laws if they are of the opinion that all or part of the by-law could potentially interfere with a provincial priority, such as housing, transit and infrastructure.
- Bring forward matters for council consideration if they are of the opinion that considering the matter could potentially advance a provincial priority.
- Propose certain municipal by-laws if they are of the opinion that the proposed by-law could potentially advance a provincial priority. Council can pass these by-laws if more than one-third of council members vote in favor.

If you have any questions, please reach out to my Director of Stakeholder and Caucus Relations, Tanner Zelenko, at 437-996-2487 or tanner.zelenko@ontario.ca.

Please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by

Hon. Rob Flack

Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

c:

Robert Dodd, Chief of Staff

Martha Greenberg, Deputy Minister

Caspar Hall, Assistant Deputy Minister, Local Government Division

Sean Fraser, Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal and Housing Operations Division

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

Briana Bloomfield, City Clerk

From: **Ray Botten** [REDACTED]

Date: Mon., Mar. 31, 2025, 2:34 p.m.

Subject: Request for deputation...

To: <owensoundpsb@gmail.com>

March 31, 2025

Greetings!

Hello, my name is Raymond Botten a resident here in Owen Sound ON.

Today, I thought to ask permission to share a deputation at our Police Services Board meeting in April 2025.

My input for this deputation is to inform the Police Board and the Public of an area of concern re: accessibility in our local taxi companies.

This past week on Monday March 24, 2025, I called to have a taxi from Bayshore Taxi Company in Owen Sound.

At about 7:34 a.m. I needed to go to the Owen Sound Hospital. I was in great distress medically. I was informed by Bayshore's dispatch person that I was welcome to use their service as long as I was able to get in and out of the car. I shared that I am in a wheelchair and a amputee and a heart patient. ...and unable to lift my chair. The Woman dispatcher said their policy is that they are unable to accommodate me with a wheelchair as it is a liability issue on their part. I have traveled often in this region with zero problems. Fyi

Now, after this incident on that very day I asked that their day Manager to get back to me regarding this issue.

They did not.

I spent a whole week in hospital and have had 2 surgical irrigation and debridement on my left stump. I was filled deeply in the area of my stump with Infection. I am now home but feel it is prudent to address this issue for myself and others. Not being able to get to our hospital is unacceptable and especilly after hours! Understanding the now present laws under the A.O.D.A Acccesibilty of Ontario Disabilty Act (as of January 01, 2025) to assist with an Ontario wide law for our accessibility. ...is my reason to bring this forward.

I do understand that the Police Sevices Board in Owen Sound is the regulatory body and enforcement for the taxi companies.

I am also aware that the Corporation of the City of Owen Sound is the entity that approves licenses for Taxi Companies in Owen Sound.

I hope to see a admirable resolve that supports both our Taxi Companies our City and our Police Sevices Board and mostly above All Our handicapped persons in Owen Sound.

My deputation with your permission would be a appreciated!

Sincerely,

Raymond Botten

[REDACTED] Owen Sound ON

[REDACTED]

Cell#

[REDACTED]

Email:

[REDACTED]



Tuesday, March 18, 2025

The Honourable Mark Carney
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington St
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
pm@pm.gc.ca

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building, Room 281
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A1
premier@ontario.ca

Dear Prime Minister Carney and Premier Ford,

On behalf of the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus (WOWC), I want to thank you both for your strong leadership on behalf of Ontario and Canada through the continued uncertainty around tariffs and international trade.

The WOWC is a not-for-profit organization representing 15 upper and single-tier municipalities and 1.6 million constituents across rural Western Ontario, aiming to enhance the prosperity and overall well-being of rural and small communities across the region.

As Chair of the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus (WOWC), I want to express our ongoing support for the Governments of Ontario and Canada as you work to navigate the challenges posed by tariffs, inter-provincial trade barriers, and other trade restrictions.

Western Ontario's economy is closely linked to trade, particularly with the United States, but also within Canada. Economists highlight that sectors most vulnerable to the imposition of tariffs and trade barriers—potentially leading to layoffs or significant economic challenges—include automotive, construction, energy, agriculture, and consumer goods. In terms of industry GDP, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and transportation and warehousing are expected to be among the most affected industries.

Regional export data, defined as both domestic and international exports outside of Western Ontario, is available through Lightcast Analyst. Western Ontario's exports outside of the region totaled over \$226 billion in 2022. Exports outside the Western Ontario region in the largest industry, manufacturing, totaled close to \$145 billion in 2022, representing 64% of total regional exports. Tariffs on agriculture and food also present substantial risks to the regional economy. This industry accounts for nearly \$12 billion in goods in regional exports.

The WOWC recognizes that trade barriers—whether international or inter-provincial—create significant challenges for industries that are vital to our region's economic stability, job



creation, and long-term prosperity. Restrictions on the movement of goods, services, and labour between provinces can hinder economic growth, increase costs for businesses, and limit opportunities for rural communities. Addressing these inter-provincial trade barriers is crucial to ensuring that businesses in Western Ontario can compete effectively in the national and global marketplace.

The WOWC will remain a vocal advocate for solutions that protect our industries and communities, as we are committed to working with all levels of government to safeguard our region's economic future. As part of this commitment, the WOWC strongly supports efforts to develop and implement procurement policies that alleviate some of the financial and administrative burdens on municipalities. We recognize that municipalities are often constrained by procurement regulations that limit flexibility and increase costs. By collaborating with provincial and federal governments, we can work towards policies that streamline procurement, promote local economic development, and enhance the efficiency of public investments.

Western Ontario's strength comes from our ability to adapt and respond as a region, and the WOWC remains dedicated to partnering with all stakeholders to ensure our communities remain strong and resilient. We look forward to continued collaboration with both levels of government to address these pressing economic and trade-related challenges.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Amy Martin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small dot at the end.

Mayor Amy Martin
Chair, Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus
chair@wowc.ca

cc.

Hon. Lisa Thompson, Ontario Minister of Rural Affairs
Rebecca Bligh, President, Federation of Canadian Municipalities
Robin Jones, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario
Christa Lowry, Chair, Rural Ontario Municipal Association
Bonnie Clark, Chair, Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus
Western Ontario MPs and MPPs
Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus Counties and Municipalities

New Provincial Cabinet

Policy Update • March 20, 2025

Premier Ford Unveils New Cabinet

Yesterday, Premier Ford unveiled his new cabinet following his government's electoral victory at the end of February. The cabinet is largely the same as its pre-election make-up, with some notable changes including the appointment of a new Minister and Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

AMO is writing letters to these select Ministers to offer congratulations and advance AMO's top advocacy priorities:

- Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Graydon Smith, Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on the urgent need to:
 - Establish a more sustainable municipal-fiscal framework
 - Secure stimulus to enable municipalities to emerge stronger from trade disruptions and tariffs
 - Develop an 'all of government' plan to tackle homelessness, and
 - Implement municipal codes of conduct.
- Lisa Thompson, Minister of Rural Affairs on top rural municipal advocacy priorities including their access to housing-enabling infrastructure funding, homelessness, improving access to primary and hospital care, and supporting energy, broadband and cellular infrastructure expansion.

- Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade offering support and collaboration in response to trade disruptions, including on reviewing inter-provincial trade barriers, retooling supply chains, and leveraging local municipal economic development capacity.
- Stephen Crawford, Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement on the impact of international trade and tariff negotiations on municipal procurement and the need for provincial clarity on 'Buy Canadian' strategy in collaboration with our sector.
- Stephen Lecce, Minister of Energy and Mines on continued collaboration in support of successful long-term electricity procurements, finalization of the provincial Integrated Energy Plan and Natural Gas Policy, and clarity on the province's broadband implementation plan following Ontario's Starlink cancellation.
- Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health on the implementation of the Primary Care Action Plan, aligning public health standards to funding levels, making the community paramedic program permanent, and building a continuum of community mental health and addictions services to help tackle the root causes homelessness.
- Natalia Kusendova-Bashta, Minister of Long-Term Care on ensuring provincial operating grants better reflect real costs of operating municipal long-term care homes and reviewing proposed amendments to the *Fixing Long-Term Care Act*, 2021.
- Doug Downey, Attorney General on the need for a third-party review of the provincial offenses system.
- Michael Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services on development of a new administrative funding model for municipal delivery of social services, improvements to income security to help address the homelessness crisis, and preparing for a potential surge of asylum seekers.
- Paul Calandra, Minister of Education on advancing the extension and implementation of a renewed Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) bilateral agreement, and future planning for primary and secondary schools.

AMO will be engaging the Ministers of Finance and Infrastructure with a revised 2025 pre-budget submission. The submission will outline economic impacts of the ongoing

trade war on municipalities. It will also call for stimulus investments in community housing and municipal infrastructure to help sustain Ontario's construction sector and invest in critical community infrastructure. Lastly, it will re-affirm the continued importance of action on long-standing municipal priorities including infrastructure, reducing municipal subsidies for areas of provincial jurisdiction, and tackling the root causes of homelessness.

Contact:

Policy

policy@amo.on.ca

T 416.971.9856

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AMO Policy Update – New Advocacy on Development Charges, Buy-Canadian & Buy-Ontario Initiatives, and Codes of Conduct

Municipal & Development Sector Collaboration on Development Charges Reform

Ontario's housing crisis persists, with housing starts continuing to lag. All partners in Ontario's housing system – including municipalities and developers – must do their part and find new ways to increase housing supply.

AMO's evolving approach to this important issue is informed by:

- Ontario's persistent housing supply shortage, exacerbating affordability challenges. Tariffs and trade measures could continue to impact housing starts, creating additional urgency.
- Municipal development charges (DCs) and planning approvals continue to be unfairly blamed for the crisis. Both federal and provincial governments have committed to reducing DCs.
- A shifting approach to development sector advocacy. In January, the Ontario Home Builders Association (OHBA)/BILD released [a study](#) that recognized DCs as essential for growth, and advocated for targeted DC modernization as opposed to blanket reductions.

To build momentum for constructive and informed progress, AMO and OHBA have partnered to call for DC reform that is mutually agreeable. AMO and OHBA [wrote to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing](#) to identify preliminary areas for reform to be considered collaboratively by homebuilding, provincial, and municipal partners. A cross-sector expert working group could recommend targeted and measured DC reform aimed

at reducing housing production barriers and increasing clarity and predictability around DCs.

AMO consulted municipal finance experts to identify potential areas for reform. While the letter initiates the desired discussion, much work remains to be done. AMO has invited the Municipal Finance Officers Association (MFOA) and their DC expert table to support discussion. Their participation will be key in assessing impacts on municipal property taxes and user fees, informing recommendations that promote affordability by considering the total cost of homeownership.

Results of AMO Survey on Municipal Procurement from US

To help inform policy discussions around banning US suppliers from participating in government procurement, AMO has conducted a survey of municipalities regarding non-construction procurement and is releasing [a summary of the survey results](#).

Municipalities reported that over 98% of their procurement is from companies with Canadian addresses, but many of those businesses are integrated with the US market. US procurement was primarily for goods and services without Canadian alternatives, and needed to deliver essential services including:

- IT and communications products
- Emergency services equipment and medical supplies
- Heavy machinery and vehicles
- Health and safety including chemicals and equipment for water treatment.

AMO will continue to provide guidance to the province on how municipalities can support provincial buy-Canadian and buy-Ontario initiatives without impacting essential service delivery.

AMO Advocacy on Code of Conduct Legislation

[AMO wrote to Minister Flack](#) urging the government to reintroduce code of conduct legislation with two recommended amendments:

- Removal of office vote requirement should be adjusted from unanimous to a supermajority (2/3 vote). A vote to remove an elected municipal official from office is different than a regular council vote and should have a higher threshold, but given the other checks and balances built into the process a unanimous vote is too high a threshold.
- The legislation should include a progressive range of discipline options for integrity commissioners. The province should use the penalty framework established under the Education Act in 2023, including censure of a member, barring attendance at meetings, barring a member from sitting on committees, and barring a member from being chair or vice chair of committees

Corporation of the County of Bruce
30 Park Street, P.O. Box 70, Walkerton, ON, N0G 2V0

brucecounty.on.ca



March 24, 2025

The Right Honourable Mark Carney,
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2 (sent via email: pm@pm.gc.ca)

RE: Enabling a Municipal Response to Tariffs


Dear Prime Minister Carney,

The County of Bruce continues to monitor the situation with respect to proposed tariffs by the United States. Tariffs and the corresponding responses are inherently macro-economic in nature. Given this fact, the tools available to municipalities are limited.

The County of Bruce is adopting a strategy to respond to the impacts of tariffs locally which includes implementation of procurement policies focused on purchasing from Canadian sources, where permitted by trade agreements.

The County calls on the federal and provincial governments to take action to ensure that municipalities have the tools they need to protect Canadian consumers and businesses and ensure the continued prosperity of the Canadian economy. The attached resolution provides the details of the County's formal request.

Regards,


Luke Charbonneau,
Warden
warden@brucecounty.on.ca

cc. The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
(premier@ontario.ca)
Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) (policy@amo.on.ca)
Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) (resolutions@fcm.ca)
All Ontario Municipalities

Agenda Number: b.
Resolution Number BCC-2025-042
Title: Government Relations - Implication of Tariffs on
Bruce County
Date: March 20, 2025



Moved by Councillor Jay Kirkland
Seconded by Councillor Mark Goetz

Resolution on Supporting Municipal Response to Tariffs

Whereas the United States' Executive Administration is enacting tariffs under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, which will significantly impact the economic stability of both countries; and

Whereas federal and provincial leaders are encouraging Canadians to buy Canadian; and

Whereas municipalities have significant purchasing power through capital and infrastructure programs; and

Whereas the Association of Municipalities of Ontario reports that Ontario municipalities are expected to spend \$250 to \$290 billion on infrastructure over the next 10 years; and

Whereas trade agreements and legislation have traditionally prevented municipalities from giving preference to Canadian products and services; and

Whereas municipalities can help combat tariffs and support businesses through procurement for capital and infrastructure programs;

Now therefore be it resolved that the Council of County of Bruce calls on the federal and provincial governments to:

1. Empower municipalities to buy Canadian;
2. Remove any impediments to municipalities preferring Canadian companies for capital projects and supplies when appropriate and feasible;
3. Work with municipalities on measures to protect Canadian consumers and businesses.
4. That the federal and provincial governments be requested to remove interprovincial trade barriers.

Be it further resolved that this resolution be forwarded to Prime Minister Mark Carney, Premier Doug Ford, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and all Ontario municipalities.

Carried



LANARK COUNTY

lanarkcounty.ca

99 Christie Lake Road, Perth, ON K7H 3C6

All Ontario Municipalities

2024.03.27

To Whom it May Concern:

On Wednesday March 12th, 2025 Lanark County Council passed the following motion:

MOTION #CC-2025-39

MOVED BY: P. McLaren

SECONDED BY: B. King

WHEREAS the United States has placed 25% tariffs on Canadian goods and 10% tariffs on energy exports from Canada; and

WHEREAS trade between Ontario and the U.S. is very important to our residents and local economies, and requires all levels of government to work together in the best interest of those residents; and

WHEREAS according to data from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, across Ontario, municipalities are expected to spend between \$250 and \$290 billion on infrastructure in the next 10 years; and

WHEREAS Ontario municipalities have traditionally treated trade partners equally and fairly in all procurements in accordance with our established international trade treaties; and

WHEREAS municipalities play a crucial role as part of the Team Canada approach to combat tariffs and support businesses in our procurement of capital and infrastructure programs; and

WHEREAS there are trade barriers between Canadian provinces and territories.

NOW THEREFORE; be it resolved that Lanark County stand with Team Canada; and

THAT Lanark County shall immediately institute a “Buy Canadian” approach with routine and regular purchases within the mandate of existing trade agreements; and



99 Christie Lake Road, Perth, ON K7H 3C6

THAT Lanark County supports the Canadian and Ontario governments on measures they have put in-place in response to the U.S. tariffs on Canadian goods; and

THAT Lanark County requests that Canadian and Ontario governments remove any impediments to municipalities preferring Canadian companies and services for capital projects and other supplies; and

THAT Lanark County requests the Canadian and Ontario governments take action to remove trade barriers between provinces as a response to U.S. tariffs and support Canadian businesses; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk forward this resolution to the following organizations:

- All Ontario Municipalities
- The Rural Ontario Municipal Association and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario
- The Premier of Ontario
- The Prime Minister of Canada
- The local MP and MPP

Thank you,

M. Beson

Megan Beson, Deputy Clerk

Cc: Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, Right Hon. Mark Carney, Prime Minister, Scott Reid, MP, John Jordan, MPP





**BOX 238, MANITOWANING, ONT., P0P 1N0
(705) 859-3196 or 1-800-540-0179**

Tuesday, March 18, 2025, 7:00 pm
Agenda Item 6. J) Request for Support – US Tariffs, Buy Local

058-03-2025 R. Maguire – J. Hooper

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Township of Assiginack, in response to foreign countries recent actions on tariffs to Canada, Council supports the Provincial and Federal Governments call to action of a “Canadian Business First” policy;

AND THAT Council recognizes there may be circumstances where this may not be possible;
AND THAT in situations where Canadian goods are not available staff, our suppliers, and those held in contract with the Township will source from countries that do not have tariffs applied to Canada.

Carried



**Resolution of Council
City Council Meeting**

Title: Tariff Motion
Date: February 24, 2025

Whereas the federal government is currently in negotiations with the U.S. government on their proposed 25% tariffs on Canadian goods exported to the U.S.; and

Whereas Premier Doug Ford has outlined several plans to combat the impact the proposed tariffs would have on Ontario including Fortress Am-Can which focus on strengthening trade between Ontario and the U.S. while bringing good jobs back home for workers on both sides of the border; and

Whereas the federal government has also outlined several ways to address the current relationship with the U.S. including establishing the Council on Canada-U.S. relations to support the federal government as it negotiates with the U.S on tariffs; and

Whereas Ontario is the number one or number two customer for at least seven US states including New York, Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Missouri, and trade between Ontario and the United States is very important to our residents and local economies and requires all levels of government to work together in the best interest of those residents; and

Whereas according to data from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, across Ontario municipalities are expected to spend between \$250 and \$290 billion on infrastructure in the next 10 years; and

Whereas municipalities, although currently subject to various trade agreements including the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement have traditionally treated all procurements from trade partners equally and fairly; and

Whereas municipalities can assist in the Team Canada effort to combat tariffs and support businesses in our procurement for equipment, materials and supplies for both operating and capital infrastructure programs; and

Whereas there are trade barriers between Canadian provinces that add costs and create inefficiencies in the movement of goods.

Therefore, be it resolved that, the City of Peterborough supports Team Canada and the provincial and federal governments on the measures they have put in place in response to the proposed U.S. tariffs on Canadian goods and ask that they take any and all measures to protect the interests of Ontario in any upcoming trade negotiations;

And that federal and provincial governments remove any impediments to municipalities preferring Canadian companies and services for capital projects and other supplies;

And that the provincial and federal governments take action to remove trade barriers between provinces as a response to US tariffs and support Canadian businesses.

And that the Commissioner of Finance and Corporate Support Services be directed to bring back a report detailing a temporary procurement policy that integrates and addresses these concerns to the greatest extent possible;

Be it further resolved, that copies of this motion be sent to:

- **The Right Hon. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada**
- **The Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario**
- **The Hon. Melanie Joly, Minister of Foreign Affairs**
- **The Hon. Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade**
- **The Hon. Nate Erskine-Smith, Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities**
- **The Hon. Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing**
- **Rebecca Bligh, President, FCM and Councillor, City of Vancouver**
- **Robin Jones, President, AMO and Mayor of Westport**
- **Bonnie Clark, Chair, Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus**
- **John Beddows, Chair, Eastern Ontario Mayors' Caucus**
- **All provincial and territorial Premiers**
- **All local MPs and MPPs**
- **All Ontario Municipalities for their support.**

The above resolution, adopted by City Council is forwarded for your information and action, as required.
Thank you.


John Kennedy, City Clerk