

# AMO Focuses on Housing and Homelessness in Pre-Budget Advice to Ontario Legislature

News Release • February 13, 2023

Increasing the supply of housing and tackling the homelessness crisis in Ontario, brought on by decades of failed provincial social and economic policies, are the top priorities for municipalities across Ontario. That was the message from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario presenting its [2023 Pre-Budget Submission](#) to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

Increasing the supply of housing is a priority for municipalities across Ontario. AMO repeated concerns that the *More Homes Built Faster Act 2022* (formerly Bill 23) may undermine this goal because it is based on false assumptions.

“The provincial government’s belief that the housing supply crisis can be solved by limiting municipal access to infrastructure financing, eliminating environmental protections or changes to municipal governance is unsound,” said AMO President Colin Best. “Unless the costs of Bill 23 are fully offset by the province, it will cost Ontario property taxpayers \$1 billion a year.”

The submission calls on the government for collaboration with the municipal sector, clarity about the province’s commitment to offset the cost impacts of the legislation on property taxpayers and a commitment to reverse legislative measures that are creating unintended consequences.

AMO’s submission also illustrates that the Government of Ontario’s per capita spending on programming is the lowest in Canada at \$2,000 less per person than the national average. It states the homelessness crisis in Ontario is a direct result of decades of provincial underinvestment in areas such as affordable housing, community mental health and income assistance programs.

“This is a made-in-Ontario crisis resulting from provincial underinvestment and poor policy choices made by the government of Ontario,” Best said. “The Government of Ontario has the tools and resources to end the homelessness crisis it has created over decades. It must surely possess the leadership, capability and political will to get the job done.”

AMO’s submission calls for the Ontario Government to commit to ending homelessness:

- Increase the supply of deeply affordable housing through a variety of approaches from rent subsidies to property acquisitions.
- Increase financial assistance to individuals and families and fulfill the government’s promise to transform its social assistance system.
- Invest in health services, community-based mental health services, supportive housing and addictions services.

Ontario’s homelessness crisis is apparent and in every part of the province, including big cities and small towns, and in rural and northern communities.

AMO is a non-profit organization representing almost all of Ontario’s 444 municipal governments. AMO supports strong and effective municipal government in Ontario and promotes the value of municipal government as a vital and essential component of Ontario and Canada’s political system.

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March 8, 2023

*DRAFT to be sent via electronic mail to The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario*

Dear Premier Ford:

Please be advised that the Council of the County of Oxford at its meeting held March 8, 2023 adopted the following:

MOVED BY:

SECONDED BY:

WHEREAS the homeless crisis is taking a devastating toll on families and communities, undermining a healthy and prosperous Ontario;

WHEREAS the homelessness crisis is the result of the underinvestment and poor policy choices of successive provincial governments;

WHEREAS homelessness requires a range of housing, social service and health solutions from government;

WHEREAS homelessness is felt most at the level of local government and the residents that they serve;

WHEREAS municipalities and District Social Administration Boards are doing their part, but do not have the resources, capacity or tools to address this complex challenge; and,

WHEREAS leadership and urgent action is needed from the provincial government on an emergency basis to develop, resource, and implement a comprehensive plan to prevent, reduce and ultimately end homelessness in Ontario.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the County of Oxford calls on the Provincial Government to urgently:

- a. Acknowledge that homelessness in Ontario is a social, economic, and health crisis;
- b. Commit to ending homelessness in Ontario;
- c. Work with AMO and a broad range of community, health, Indigenous and economic partners to develop, resource, and implement an action plan to achieve this goal.

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this motion be sent to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services; the Minister of Health; and to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

Sincerely,

Marcus Ryan  
Warden, Oxford County