

This week, AMO signed an agreement with the Province to administer its \$26m Main Street Revitalization Initiative for Ontario's lower and single-tier municipalities (except for the City of Toronto). This initiative ensure investment in communities' main street/downtown areas to support small businesses.

AMO is pleased to announce that our administrative efficiencies mean that 413 municipalities will receive about 4% more than originally indicated in January when the program was announced by the province. The final allocations, compared to the original estimate, is attached.

Funding will follow a model similar to the Federal Gas Tax Fund (GTF) so there is no application process. Municipal governments will need a by-law authorizing it to sign a funding agreement with AMO. As with the GTF, treasurers are the administrator of this contract. Municipalities will need to identify the program category, the project(s), anticipated results and estimated cost when council deals with the agreement by-law. Please send this project information to AMO by sending an email to mainstreets@amo.on.ca.

AMO will be distributing your municipal agreement the week of March 19th. Watch for it – it will be an electronic delivery from one of AMO's staff – Brittany Ardiel. It's critical that the funding agreement by-law be put on Council agendas as soon as possible to avoid potential municipal lame duck provisions, particularly for any 2018 projects.

What projects qualify?

The funding can be used to support revitalization efforts related to energy efficiency, accessibility, aesthetics and marketability. There will be two program categories:

1. Implementing priorities under existing Community Improvement Plans (includes grants for renovations, retrofits and structural improvements); and/or,
2. Funding for municipal improvements that will support main street businesses, such as signage, streetscape improvement and marketing plan implementation.

Municipalities can fund projects in one or both categories.

Information on eligible projects and cost along with reporting requirements will be in a Guide that accompanies the funding agreement. Please read it. Like the GTF accountability framework, municipalities will need to demonstrate due diligence around project progress, financial controls and risk management. Individual projects should include plans to promote and communicate the benefits, just as we do for the GTF.

AMO looks forward to working with all of you to ensure Ontario municipalities can put this funding to work in support of our main streets.

AMO Contact: Pat Vanini, Executive Director