

MEDIA EVENT: ONTARIO'S CABINET MINISTERS DISCUSS MUNICIPAL ISSUES AT THE AMO MINISTER'S FORUM

August 22, 2023

Time/Location:

3:15 p.m./ London, Ontario

Speakers:

Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education
Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
David Piccini, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
George Pirie, Minister of Mines
Michael Kerzner, Solicitor General
Michael Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services
Nina Tangri, Associate Minister of Housing
Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance
Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation
Kinga Surma, Minister of Infrastructure

Highlights:

Asked about the Waterloo deferred \$68M fund investment of building new homes and when the regulations for Bill 23 will be released, Minister Clark said yesterday's historic announcements is going to provide some financial opportunity for communities. He said, the audits that are being done will help with the decision of moving forward. He said the announcement on the definitions of affordable will provide more clarity on the impacts. The audits will finish in November and hoping it'll be done in time that there won't be significant impact in your budget process.

Asked should EDU support a memo of understanding, or should school boards take the lead on collaboration with school boards, Minister Lecce said Bill 98 will break down the "silo-ization" of school boards and municipalities. He said legislation now includes planning to integrate community planning with school builds. We welcome leadership to build schools where the growth is. "I'm absolutely convinced we will continue to build schools more efficiently across Ontario."

Question from Wellington County - What is the plan to keep the food local and at reasonable costs now that they are building on the Greenbelt? Minister Thompson said the Grow Ontario plan has made Ontario a net producer of food and over 70% is exported to the U.S. She said my definition of local is Ontario then Canada. She said "the future is bright".

Question from Mayor of Red Lake – The Blue Box transition program in industrial, and commercial recycling in small municipalities is challenging for small municipalities. Can you

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commit to a policy that will support this in rural settings? Minister Piccini said the program is standardized across Ontario. He said consultations will be launched this fall.

Question from City of Waterloo - Municipalities have 90 days to complete development applications but there are no tools to require developers with full approval to get shovels in the ground and actually start building. Will you introduce legislation or regulations that require developers with full approvals to build the units our residents need within a specified time frame? Minister Clark said he is open to conversations with municipal colleagues and he intends to table legislation in the fall that will deal with the definition part.

Asked how mining will be more efficient using Bill 71 in Northern and Indigenous communities, Minister Pirie said the bill is about making mining more efficient. He said the critical minerals have to come out of the ground in order to compete in the EV business. He said, "it can't take 15 years to get them out of the ground".

Question from Frontenac Islands - Asked will the government commit to amending the Emergency Services Act to help the firefighters and emergency services in small communities to work more collaboratively? Minister Kerzner said he will look into this. He said he will speak with the Minister of Transportation too. He said rural volunteer firefighters also play a role.

Asked will the ministry commit to ending homelessness in communities by raising the rates of social assistance to help those that are most vulnerable? Minister Parsa said, it's important that "we don't leave anyone behind" and that's why rates have been raised. Housing is "front and centre". He said it is a collaborative effort.

Question from Brampton - Intimate partner violence is an epidemic, what is the plan for the province to address this? Minister Parsa said, "no one should fear persecution in this province". He said, "This issue requires action." And we'll "do whatever it takes to prevent this crime from happening all across our communities."

Question from York Region - Asked what will be done to provide social housing for those on a fixed income? Will you commit to provide funding to municipalities to build social housing. Minister Clark said "all governments need to do their part." He said core housing need is higher than any other province and territory. Minister Tangri said, we're working with multi ministries and want to make sure we get those supports to those who need it. But we noticed the Homeless Preventive Program "just wasn't enough which is why we increased it." The one thing we did do is made the program flexible – each municipality's needs are different and we wanted to allow you to use those funds as you saw best fit.

Question from Tecumseh - Asked how Climate change is affecting the great lakes and St. Lawrence and what is the plan to strengthen coastal resiliency and identify risks, Minister Smith said he recognizes the need. He said key infrastructure funding is important and said, "this must be a three level of government approach."

Question from Burlington, on tax revenue and can the government commit to working with municipalities and review who does what so that we can work together. Minister Bethlenfalvey said stressed the importance of the federal government's role and said, "The federal government gets 39% of the revenues when a household is built and the income from that and they pay 7% of the infrastructure costs. So we have to address these issues together."

Question from Kenora – You launched a consultation portal on how to strengthen municipal code of conduct. Bill 5 was not supported and we know this government has a history of passing things quickly. What is the delay here and when will you commit to taking this seriously enough to push through? * half of room did standing ovation * Minister Clark said, this is something that the government takes very seriously. We've been monitoring a lot – especially after last Fall's election. He said he is "very concerned that there's an even bigger problem emerging in councils across the province" – too many CAOs and clerks that have recently left. He said, there is a challenge around codes of conduct but there is a bigger problem that we collectively need to ensure that people are actually trained to understand what it is to be a councilor and the relationship between council and staff. He said he is "tired of sending members of my ministry to sit in council chambers to watch the proceedings. I agree with you – there is a challenge that both you and AMO have identified but I see a much bigger problem here." He said "There is a systemic problem in terms of how we train new councilors and how we interact with councils and how they interact with staff." Minister Williams encourages us "to keep moving towards holding people accountable when we do our jobs as elected officials."

Question from Oshawa - Asked about noise pollution in transportation, factories and land uses, it has been 4 years, are there any updates on the bill to amend this? Minister Mulroney said this is a cross-ministerial issue. Minister Piccini "this is a holistic approach we have to take working together."

Question from Orangeville - how do smaller municipalities like mine fit into the provincial housing framework? Minister Clark said based on many delegations at AMO and people that have applied for federal funding, the federal accelerator fund should have 10% carveout for rural, small municipalities. "We wanted to ensure that you had a bit of line of sight on how you can participate and that funding in BFF would provide that." He said "we think having a fund over three year with \$1.2 billion serves the fastest growing"

Question from Renfrew County - Will the gov't commit to a 1% sales tax added to the HST to help put money back into local economies for infrastructure? Minister Bethlenfalvey said "we will wait for the audits" and "we need the federal government, particularly on things like HST".

Question about the ICIP program, will the province work with the Feds to get the work done? Minister Surma said government is waiting to meet with the federal new Infrastructure minister.

[End of Recording]

Questions from Elected Officials:

Unidentified 1: Please welcome back to the stage the Honorable Minister Clark.

Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing: Can you do me a favour? Can you give all my caucus and my cabinet colleagues a big round of applause? Welcome to the Minister's Forum.

Unidentified 1: Please welcome Jim Pine.

Moderator: Well good afternoon, everyone and welcome to the Minister's Forum. it's great to have you here today. Let's have some fun. This is going to be a great event, so let's get right to it. Now, starting on my left and joining us today, I'll do some quick introductions, is the Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity, the Honourable Charmaine Williams.

Next to Minister Williams is Associate Minister of Housing the Honourable Nina Tangri. Next to Minister Tangri is the Minister of Seniors and Accessibility the Honourable Raymond Cho. Next to Minister Cho is the Minister of Mines the Honourable George Pirie. Next to Minister Pirie is the Minister of Northern Development and the Minister of Indigenous Affairs the Honourable Greg Rickford. Sitting next to Minister Rickford is the the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services the Honourable Michael Parsa. Next to Minister Parsa is the Minister of Long-Term Care and Minister of Legislative Affairs the Honourable Paul Calandra. Sitting next to Minister Calandra is the Solicitor General for Ontario, the Honourable Michael Kerzner. Next to the SG is the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, the Honourable Neil Lumsden. Next to Minister Lumsden is the Minister of Finance the Honourable Peter Bethlenfalvy. Next to Minister Bethlenfalvy is the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, the Honourable David Piccini. Next to Minister Piccini is the Minister of Transportation and the Minister of Francophone Affairs, the Honourable Caroline Mulroney. And I'm not sure who the next guy is, but I think he's the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing the Honourable Steve Clark and to my right, the Deputy Premier and Minister of Health Sylvia Jones.

Sitting next to Minister Jones is the Minister of Infrastructure, the Honourable Kinga Surma. Next to Minister Surma is the Minister of Education, the Honourable Stephen Lecce. Next to Minister Lecce is the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, the Honourable Graydon Smith. Next to Minister Smith is the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, the Honourable Vic Fedeli. Sitting next to Minister Fedeli is the Minister of Energy, the Honourable Todd Smith. Next to Minister Smith is the Attorney General for Ontario the Honourable Doug Downey. Next to the Attorney General is the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Honourable Lisa Thompson. Next to Minister Thompson is the Minister of Colleges and Universities the Honourable Jill Dunlop. Next to Minister Dunlop is the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery, the Honourable Kaleed Rasheed. The President of the Treasury Board is next the Honourable Prabmeet Sarkaria. Next to Minister Sarkaria is the Associate Minister of Transportation, the Honourable Stan Cho. And finally the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, the Honourable Michael Tibillo. Welcome all.

We have a very great turnout. Now, just to recap on some of the rules for the Minister's Forum. Those of you who have been here before will know these rules but just as a reminder, first and foremost, you need to remember that this is an opportunity for registered delegates who are elected officials to ask questions of elected officials from the province. So remember that you have to be an elected official to be able to ask a question. My job as the moderator is simply to try and get as many questions on the floor as fast as possible. So I will try to be as vigilant as I can be. I'm going to take questions in order of the Forum microphones just so you know, the questions must be of a general municipal nature and not about a specific local matter. Those should be addressed in the delegations. And I will ask you not to repeat a question that's already been asked of the minister. You have about 45 seconds to pose your question, we know that sometimes you need a bit of a brief preamble in order to ask that question, but it's certainly not intended as an opportunity for statements, and so please keep that in mind. And if you really get off track I'll bring you back and get you to ask your question. Delegates are limited to one question. Supplemental and multipart questions can't be accommodated in fairness to the other delegates. If you have a second question, that's okay. Just please go to the back of the line and wait your turn. And as Nigel Bellchamber and others have said before, please be mindful that I do have some authority up here to cut a microphone off if I absolutely have to, but I don't think that'll happen. Ministers are also asked to keep their responses brief and not longer than two minutes. Past two minutes, I may ask you to wrap up if that's okay. And of course, the last rule is one that can be added at the discretion of the moderator. I've tried to think of something but I have been unsuccessful so far. And just as a reminder, when you get to the microphone, please

identify yourself, your municipality and the Minister to whom you are posing the question. And if you have a question for Ministers Gill or McNaughton or Ford, who can't be here today. Minister Clark will take them. Okay? So with that said, Microphone Number 1.

Q. Diane Freeman, City Councillor, City of Waterloo: Thank you. My question is for Minister Clark. My name is Diane Freeman. I work as a member of council with the City of Waterloo and I'm a professional civil engineer. Earlier this year, the City of Waterloo deferred a \$68 million dollar development charge funded investment that would support our shared goal of building eight hundred new homes because we don't know how we can pay for this growth. Yesterday's announcement of \$1.2 billion through the "Building Faster Fund" will not cover these costs. You said municipalities will be made whole when your government passed Bill 23. When will the regulations for Bill 23 be released?

Moderator: Minister?

Minister Clark: Thanks. Thanks for the question. You know, there are multiple things the government's doing, obviously, yesterday's historic announcement by Premier Ford of the "Building Faster Fund" is going to provide some financial opportunity for communities like yours. We've also indicated very clearly that the reason we're doing the audits in those selected communities of, you know, Peel Region, Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon and Newmarket is to take what we find from those audits in terms of the information regarding the impacts of Bill 23. And that will help inform us of the decision that we'll move forward on. As well, the announcement that I made today on the definitions of affordable, I think will in the long run, after consulting with AMO, provide more clarity on the impacts. You know, our audits are scheduled to be finished in November. We're hoping that they'll be done in time, that there won't be a significant impact in your budget process. So all of those things feed into your question.

Moderator: Thank you, Minister. Microphone Number 2.

Q. Stephanie Jaworski, Councillor, Township of South Glengarry: Thank you. I'm Stephanie Jaworski. I'm the Councillor of the Township of South Glengarry, located in the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. My question is for Minister Lecce. Minister Lecce, I was very pleased to hear your statement about joint news projects in your opening remarks on the debate on Bill 98 "The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act. There is indeed a great benefit to a community large or small if a school board and a municipality can collaborate on building and operating a school, a community centre, a library, a recreation facility together instead of doing them in silent silos. The amendment to the Education Act to require school boards to collaborate with municipalities to facilitate early and integrated planning for schools to meet current and future needs is a welcome change because although that collaboration is already recommended by the Ministry's Community, Planning and Partnership guidelines from 2015, compliance with that guideline has been inconsistent across the province. My question is to support that goal of collaboration, will the Ministry of Education support a municipality developing a memorandum of understanding or other solid framework with a school board to facilitate that early and integrated planning. Or is the expectation that school boards take the lead on those initiatives? Thank you.

Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education: Thank you so much Stephanie. The work of the Community School Alliance, I think, is actually worthy of applause because they fought hard to protect rural schools in the province when there were systematic closures, so we appreciate your leadership and collaboration. So Bill 98, the spirit of it is to break down the siloization that takes place between municipalities and school boards. But the core competence of the

municipalities is to build communities. That isn't necessarily the core competence of the school board. And I believe we need to end the examples in right across Ontario where a municipality wants to build a school where there is growth. You know, Graydon and I have spoken about examples of this in the past where there was growth and then a school being built somewhere outside of that growth area. So the legislation now codifies the requirement of school boards to work at the front end to integrate their school planning with community planning. And that's a key ask of AMO which we deliver now in the bill. Collaboration between school boards, collaboration between non-profits, YMCAs in schools, recreation facilities. Look in the provinces, there's 5,000 schools, there's only 40 doing these projects. So culturally, it's not something we do a lot of and we're now incentivizing it. So to your question, we would absolutely welcome leadership on both sides to build schools where the growth is, the bill will now reduce the timeline to build. I see no burden with us, I mean we can approve a school in Halton, in Oakville and open it in two years and that requires all of us to shave down the site time approvals, it requires the ministry to approve these things quicker. So we're doing our part, we encourage everyone to do theirs and I'm absolutely convinced we will continue to build schools more efficiently and more quickly across Ontario.

Moderator: Thank you, Minister. Microphone number three.

Q. Mary Lloyd, County of Wellington Councillor: Thank you very much. My name is Mary Lloyd, I'm an elected official from the County of Wellington. And I would like to say, first of all, thank you to Minister Thompson for coming to visit us. We are economically driven by agriculture. I've been talking an awful lot about housing. What we're concerned about in Wellington County is the fact that we are facing over a thousand acres being taken up directly for housing without any consultation with our agricultural partners. We're quite concerned that as we continue to have the house areas up on ie the Greenbelt and various other problems from agriculture lands into housing lands, we're driving the desire to have local food not be local any longer. What is the plan of this whole province to keep the food local to the people who need it and at a reasonable cost?

Moderator: Thank you, Minister?

Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs: Thank you very much and I appreciate the question coming from Wellington, because we all recognize the the thriving agricultural industry that you have and the proud farmers that do- work 365 days of the year. And that can be said for all farmers across Ontario. I want to share with you that last year we hosted a forum that dotted the I's and cross the T's, if you will, stemming from our forum in 2022. And we created a strategic plan called Grow Ontario, and we have three pillars in that plan. First and foremost, a safe and secure supply chain. Our second pillar is research and innovation, and the third is attracting the very best talent. And we have been informed by our commodity organizations and our general farm organizations, our food beverage industry, our meat and poultry industry, the manufacturers of food across Ontario. The list could go on and on, and it's been incredibly well received. With that said, I want everyone in this room today to appreciate the fact that the fact of the matter is because of the amazing work of Ontario farmers, Ontario is actually a net exporter of food, to give you an example our produce growing in greenhouses in Ontario is phenomenal, and over 70 percent- well over 70 percent is exported to the United States. We also have it's known across Canada that Ontario holds the title of the food manufacturing hub of all of Canada. So when we're talking local with all due respect my definition of local is Ontario and then Canada. And with that we need to appreciate the fact that there are multinational organizations coming to Ontario to either expand their food manufacturing because our farmers are producing safe and stable and regular yields and

increasing their yields year over year. For instance, there was a beef farmer from Perth County just south of here that was explaining that he was thrilled, he had over a 14 percent increase in the soft red winter wheat this year compared to last year and why is that important? Because just east of Toronto the Premier and Minister Fedeli and myself and some caucus colleagues, we were on site for a groundbreaking for Wonderbrands. Wonderbrands is aggregating all the disparate facilities if you will into one compound where all the food manufacturing will take place in one location and the distribution will take place right next door in the compound, and then they're looking to expand a centre of excellence-

Moderator: Minister-

Minister Thompson: This is great news because it represents 3,000 new jobs. I could go on and on. Just know, the future is bright for the [inaudible] industry in Ontario.

Moderator: Thank you Minister. Microphone number four.

Q. Fred Mota, Mayor of the Municipality of Red Lake: Thank you. My name's Fred Mota, Mayor of the Municipality of Red Lake, vice president of the Northern Ontario Municipal Association and board member of AMO. And just before I ask my question, I'm just wondering my two daughters would be really happy if any Minister had any extra tickets to Taylor Swift. Just in case. No? Okay. My question is for Minister Piccini, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks. Minister, thank you for your efforts to transition waste diversion programs to full producer responsibility. The blue box transition is successfully underway due to strong collaboration by your ministry, producers, service providers and municipalities. However, industrial, commercial and institutional recycling is a big concern for small municipalities. The program, as it is constructed, would leave small businesses on the hook for recycling. Minister will you commit to following through on your government's commitment to implement a policy or program that will support the collection of paper, packaging and packaging materials from the broader industrial, commercial and institutional sectors so they remain out of our municipal landfills?

Moderator: Thank you. Minister?

David Piccini, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks: Thank you Fred. I'll start with the bad news first. I don't have Taylor Swift tickets but but I appreciate the question. As everybody knows here, it's this government that's really expanded extended producer responsibility across Ontario, taking a bold step to standardize what goes into the blue box system across Ontario. We know that many of you are facing escalating costs on your blue box systems, yet under the previous government, diversion rates remain stalled across Ontario. Status quo bottom line was not acceptable. We wanted to hear more from landfills. That's why under the current system, we've ensured that it's standardized across Ontario, more can go in a couple boxes and we're expanding it to more communities across Ontario. But we understand, obviously, that with respect to some municipalities, who look specifically in a rural setting who do some ICNI collection that there's a specific element of the reg that is challenging that through transition. I would add they can continue those collections to those small businesses throughout the 2026. We've launched consultation, Fred, this fall I've on the blue box program and I know municipalities are going to be active partners in those consultations and we welcome getting this right the two plus years we have to 2026. But I think for everyone, I want to thank you for your feedback. It's this government that's taken this bold step to standardize it across Ontario under Premier Ford's leadership. And we recognize that we have more to do, but we'll do it together. So I look forward for your input in consultations this fall. Thank you.

Mayor Mota: Thank you very much.

Moderator: Thank you, Minister. Microphone number one.

Q. Mary Lou Roe, City of Waterloo Councillor: Hi. My name is Mary Lou Rowe, and I'm a councillor with City of Waterloo. My question is for Minister Clark. Minister, Waterloo has 23,000 housing units at different stages in the development pipeline. Municipalities now have 90 days to complete development applications. However, there are no tools to require developers with full approval to get shovels in the ground and actually start building. Will you introduce legislation or regulations that require developers with full approval to build the units our residents need within a specified time frame?

Moderator: Minister?

Minister Clark; So I'm very open to having a conversation with my colleagues about other measures. I've said before at a different conferences the one thing that we were very clear on last summer in the election, that under the leadership of Premier Ford, we would have a housing supply action plan every year in our mandate. I gave some intent today that I intend to table legislation in the fall that, if passed, would be able to deal with the definition part. But I'm open. I've said this to AMO and I've said it at ROMA and [Inaudible] and others in in in private meetings that if you've got some ideas on how we can get shovels in the ground faster, you heard Premier Ford yesterday, we're all ears. If there are suggestions on how we can get projects that are serviced in the ground and to give you the credit for that housing start so you can access some Building Faster Fund, then, you know, we're open to any suggestions. Said it to Colin that we'll you know obviously some of the conversations around the Building Faster Fund will take place this fall as we lead to implementation in 2024. So by all means, you know, work with AMO. And and we're open to that conversation.

Moderator: Thank you Minister. Microphone number two.

Q. Warren Badiuk, Municipality of Red Lake Councillor: My name is Warren Badiuk. I am a councillor with the Municipality of Red Lake. My question is for the Honorable Minister Pirie. Minister Pirie, how will the changes in the Building More Mines Act benefit northern and Indigenous communities?

George Pirie, Minister of Mines: Well, thanks very much for the- for this question. And again, thank you much for hosting this recently in Red Lake where we visited the exciting developments that Kinross has, just south of Red Lake. Certainly, Evolution and also Pure Gold. And Red Lake is buzzing right now. As you can understand, they're anticipating the development of the lithium project just north of Red Lake, [inaudible]. But the- this- this bill is all about making mining, the business of mining more efficient. As you know, Côté Lake was just recently commissioned. That's a mine, a gold mine south of Timmins, there's about- about \$20 million- a... 20 million ounces of gold there. And it took 17 years to permit this and that is totally unacceptable. And this, Bill 71, is an incredible bill. It- it... for a couple of very important points. There's not a word changed in- in it- in the- the duty consult from the old bill to the new bill. And in relation to Ontario's environmental, world class environmental protections, not a word has changed. We're developing the regulations right now as we speak with the full consultation of Indigenous communities. And Côté Lake, you must understand, what are they doing now? They're employing 1,600 people. It's a \$2 billion project. The Indigenous communities are fully employed at [inaudible] First Nation and Flying Post. And on top of that, they don't, they will not discharge water at this project. So it's good for all communities in southern Ontario, in northern

Ontario and Indigenous communities. That's what this bill means. It's incredibly important as we develop a critical minerals strategy, which, as you know, is based on the [inaudible] in critical minerals amount in northern Ontario that will be, and again, if you're going to participate in electronic revolution that's happening right here across this province and Canada and globally, the minerals have to come out of the ground and it can't take 15 years to get them out of the ground. So that's what this bill is all about. Building the highest quality mines in the world with the world's best miners and doing it so we can secure the supply chain with critical minerals, and marriage- and marry the critical minerals and [inaudible] with the manufacturing prowess in southern Ontario.

Q. Councillor Badiuk: Thank you, Minister.

Moderator: Microphone number three.

Q. Judy Greenwood-Speers, Mayor of Frontenac Islands: Judy Greenwood-Speers, Mayor of Frontenac Islands. My question is for Solicitor General, the Honorable Minister Kerzner. But I'd also like to thank Minister Cho who welcomed us early on as Minister of Seniors and Accessibility. And when I [inaudible] there, was a lot of applause. So I know this has a broad base. Would you please look to amend the Emergency Services Act and Land Transfer Act that would allow rural and isolated communities to have their firefighters or EMS drive the patients? Because right now, we do not have accessible health care for emergency services. It's a numbers game with ambulances. It can be no [inaudible] hour. It can be over two hours before we ever get anybody to a hospital and we need to have that ability. I've spoken to my own fire chief and EMS, and I want to be able to transfer those patients, whether it's an older decommissioned ambulance or loaded into one of their vehicles. But I'm talking life and death and I'm a registered nurse of 39 years. And this affects a lot of small rural communities that no longer have ambulances because they're all tied up either at the hospital or in big cities or inter-transfers. And the union will tell you that you need more people. I'm dealing with life and death. Let us help.

Moderator: Thank you. Minister?

Michael Kerzner, Solicitor General of Ontario: Well, I want to... I want to thank you for your question and I absolutely will look into this. But what I can say, and I had a great meeting today with the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs led by Rob Grimwood, and I have a very good- good collaboration conversation with him. You know, the firefighters in Ontario play in a very important role. And you're exactly correct. But it's not only the professional firefighters, many rural municipalities that are here depend on their volunteer firefighters. And some of you are volunteer firefighters who are sitting here and people from our own caucus, our Caucus Chair MPP Will Bouma, you know, he is a volunteer firefighter. I understand the important role that volunteer firefighters play. We're looking at a number of things, including simultaneous notification, which will help dispatch in other areas where they have- they have EMS and fire together to work more collaboratively. So this is something that we're looking on. But specifically to your question, I'll look into the matter. I will speak to the Minister of Transportation, because it also intersects with who can transport somebody who has a need. But again, I just want to say there's never been a government in my generation that's more concerned about our firefighters, the volunteer firefighters, the chiefs and everything they do to keep Ontario safe.

Moderator: Thank you, Minister.

Q. Mayor Greenwood: My volunteers are 29 volunteers.

Moderator: Microphone number four.

Q. Wendy Landry, Mayor of the Municipality of Shuniah: Thank you very much. Wendy Landry, Mayor of the Municipality of Shuniah, President of Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association and [inaudible] board member. And I just wanted to tell you Fred [inaudible] really wants those tickets for himself, not his daughters. Thank you to all of you that, on behalf of [inaudible], thank very much for the Ministers that were able to make it to our Northern Hospitality Suite last night. I really we [inaudible] on a really good attendance and thank you very much. And my question is really on a collaborative question between Ministers of Housing, Children, Social Services, Health and Indigenous Affairs. But in the interest of time, I'll direct my question to Minister Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services. You know, it's all hands on deck when we talk about ending homelessness, and I'm hoping your ministry- collaboratively the ministries commit to working together with the municipality, with our [inaudible] and Indigenous partners to help us end homelessness and- and help people get into homes and out of the tent city. So I'm asking, Minister Parsa, if you'll commit to working collaboratively with all of us in the ministry... in ministries, as well as our municipalities and [inaudible], to work together to fight homelessness?

Moderator: Thank you. Minister?

Michael Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services: Thank you very much [inaudible]. Thank you for the question. And I can tell you and I appreciate that meeting and our conversation. Look, you know, when it comes to supporting Ontarians, and I do want to give a big shout-out to Minister Clark and Associate Minister Tangri, as well as [inaudible] and Matthew Rae for the work that they did on the Homelessness Prevention Program, providing \$202 million to all the municipalities and [inaudible] across the province. And that... it's important because as I work in my ministry to make sure that we don't leave anyone behind. You know, goes back to the conversation that we had when it comes to social assistance, raising the rate on ODSP by five percent last year, indexing it at [inaudible] to inflation which adds- which increased the funding by another six and a half percent this year. And also going a step further, those who can and who are able to work on social assistance, we allow- raise the threshold from \$200 to \$1000 to make sure that they can have bigger paychecks. But issue of housing is front and center. You know all this. That's why the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has been working so hard in collaboration with all of you. In my previous role as Associate Minister of Housing, I made a commitment to all of you, I travelled the province to make sure that we end this cycle. We live in one of the best provinces in the world, the best province and the greatest country in the world. But we can only remain that way if we don't leave anyone behind, your worship. So it is a collaborative effort. You have heard the Premier on many occasions talk about housing supports for everyone. You've heard it's front and center by the Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister. And with your partnership, we will have that provide supported and you certainly have my commitment to make sure that happens.

Q. Mayor Landry: Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you, Minister. Microphone number one.

Q. Rowena Santos, Regional Councillor for City of Brampton: Thank you, very much for that. Rowena Santos, Regional Councillor from the City of Brampton. council outside the. My question is for Minister Parsa. Again, hate to put you on the spot again. Riya Rajkumar, a young woman, a constituent of mine in 2019, was murdered by her father on her eleventh birthday as a

form of retaliation against his ex-wife. Sadly, stories like this are not uncommon across the entire province. Gender-based violence and intimate partner violence is a growing challenge in all of our communities, big and small. The AMO Board has joined with many municipalities and the federal government in acknowledging the situation as an epidemic. Recognizing the importance of an urgent and prioritized response, what is the province's plan for working with the municipalities to address the issue of gender-based violence and intimate partner violence?

Minister Parsa: Thank you, Councillor Santos for [inaudible] and for the work that you're doing. Every single one of- every single one of you attended the meeting yesterday, and certainly many people here in this room. You know, Councillor Santos, no one in this province, no woman, no girl in this province should ever have to fear persecution, violence in this province. And we got to do everything we can to make sure that we put an end to that. Councillor, we have dealt, we have passed legislation, making sure that we hold offenders to account. We have, this year, we are investing \$240 million in support for victims and we're investing \$10.2 million in preventative support, which is very important. But it's also important to note, this is a very important issue and it requires action and action that's backed by investments across our government to make sure that happens. But every single one of us have a role in making sure we say no to it, in our communities and our province and across the country. We're working with you, as I mentioned, collaboratively, we'll do whatever it takes to make sure we prevent this crime from happening all across our communities.

Q. Councillor Santos: Thank you, Minister.

Moderator: Thank you, Minister. Microphone number two.

Q. Karen Rea, City of Markham Councillor: Thank you. Karen Rea City of Markham Ward Councillor. Question is for Mr. Clark? We can all agree that we need more housing but what we're missing is affordable social housing. York Region has 15,000 people on a wait list and continues to grow. What are you going to do to provide social housing for those on a fixed income, many which are seniors that cannot afford market rent? Will you commit to provide funding to us the municipalities in order to build social housing that is that is badly needed.

Moderator: Thank you, Minister?

Minister Clark: That's a- that's a- maybe I'll split the question with Minister Tangri. So a start. first of all, I think every government of all political stripes at all levels need to do their part. You know I was quite clear in my in my speech, we've got to- no one- no one at the federal level disputes my numbers. That our core housing need is higher, greater than every other province and territory. We're short about \$480 million and go right to municipalities and our service managers. But we practice what we preach. Minister Bethlenfalvy's last budget had significant increases for municipalities to create capacity. And, you know, I'll share the question with Minister Tangri because she's been an expert in the work we've done on supportive housing and and HPP. So I'll- I started and I'll let Minister Tangri finish.

Nina Tangri, Associate Minister of Housing: Thank you, Minister Clark and thank you for the question. We recognized last year when we launched the Homelessness Prevention Program that we also needed to have what we call a by name list of those people who are homeless. And each of your municipalities and your service managers have done an amazing job at bringing those lists. And it doesn't only tell us who is homeless, it actually also lets us know what kind of supports they need. So we are working diligently with multi ministries, Ministry of Health, Mental Health and Addictions, Children, Community and Social Services. And we just want to make

sure that we get those supports to everyone who needs them. However, with the Homelessness Prevention Program, we also saw last year that it just wasn't enough, which is why we increased it another \$202 million for this fiscal year to almost \$700 million. And we've been seeing that the plans that you've been bringing to us and they've been phenomenal in the supports that you'll be able to provide for all of your constituents. And the one thing that we did do with this program is we made it flexible. Each and every municipality is very different, the needs are different, each individual's needs are very different. So we wanted to allow you to be able to use those funds. As you saw best fit, it's been working and we will continue to work and we're continuing to listen to each and every one of you on better ways to be able to bring that program and make it more better for that. Also with Minister Williams, earlier this year we collectively did a program for supportive on the Special Priorities program, and we met with many service managers and service providers on how we can make it much more easier for people to get on that program so we can get them the housing they needed much faster, especially those that we heard fleeing gender based violence, intimate partner violence, and get them into a home or a transitional home or into permanent housing much faster. So thank you to all of you and the work that you've done bringing this information to us. We've heard throughout this delegation, as I travel across this province, right across from all parts. Every community has a massive need. They have a homelessness program that- a problem that we need to help deal with. And rather than it all being centred to the GTA, each community needs to have their share of homelessness prevention funding and I think when we saw the need, places like Thunder Bay, for example, received an almost 200 percent funding because that need was just so desperate in areas such as theirs. So I want to thank you for the question, and we're always willing to listen to your suggestions and comments on how we can better bring that program forward. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you, Minister. Thank you. Microphone number three.

Q. Gary McNamara, Mayor of Tecumseh: Thank you very much, Jim. And my name's Gary McNamara, I'm the Mayor of the Town of Tecumseh and also a councilor of Essex County. My question is to the Minister of the Environment. And climate change Minister is increasing to frequency and with catastrophic events are happening on the shores of the Great Lakes and the St Lawrence, where more than 90 percent of our population lives and with limited tools to municipalities to protect our people, property and infrastructure. Our American neighbours are about to start a major coastal resiliency study of the Great Lakes through the Army Corps of Engineers that will identify climate change risks and identify solutions to local decision makers. To our friends in the South. While we recognize that the federal and provincial governments and our conservation authorities are already doing work to access the coastal zone risk the Great Lakes and St Lawrence [inaudible] initiatives of which Tecumseh, and more than 100 other municipalities in Ontario are members want to see similar comprehensive study of the Great Lakes in Canada. What is- my question, Minister, is what is Ontario's plan for strengthening coastal resiliency in the Great Lakes? And would you join our call to the federal government to lead a similar Made in Canada resiliency assessment of the Great Lakes shoreline communities of our Great Lakes and St. Lawrence?

Minister Piccini: Thanks Gary.

Moderator: Minister?

Minister Piccini: Thank you. That's an excellent question. Short answer, yes. As someone who lives along the Great Lakes and Lake Ontario and Port Hope, I recognize the need- we acknowledge that with climate change we're seeing increasing extreme weather events that are having an impact. I would first start by saying that look, we all acknowledge- you hear half the

questions here with respect to supportive housing, housing of different stripes. Our province is growing and so too must our resiliency as a province. And that involves infrastructure funding. So I know, Minister Surma, I have both spoken to the federal government about the importance of incorporating adaptation and resiliency component of any future [inaudible] sort of 2.0. I was heartened, despite the fact that we didn't have a representative at our FPT meeting, we did meet with the federal government as deputy and share those concerns. I've spoken with my federal counterpart. He recognizes the need to invest in in doing that. I would also note smaller projects that are supported through Canada Ontario Agreement and Great Lakes Local Action Fund, community based decisions that are led by local local groups in our community and are engaging thousands of volunteers that are building resiliency in the communities today. But I acknowledge you know the impact this is having on infrastructure, we're seeing bypass overflows that are that are having a detrimental impact on our lakes. And we recognize that this must be a three level of government approach. And so in short, yes, I will continue that advocacy. I know Minister Surma and all my Cabinet colleagues are doing that, and I was heartened to hear that the federal government, it looks like they will be announcing this in the fall and with or without them, I know we'll come out with a program ourselves here in Ontario. So , thank you.

Mayor McNamara: Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you, Minister. Microphone number four.

Q. Marianne Meed Ward, Mayor of Burlington: Good afternoon, Ministers, and thank you so much for being here and taking the time to answer our questions. I'm Marianne Meed Ward, the Mayor of the City of Burlington, the chair of Ontario's Big City Mayors Caucus and a member of the Large Urban Caucus of the AMO Board this question is directed to the Minister of Finance. There's a saying that the federal government has all the money, the provincial government has all the power, and municipalities have all the problems. And we are- we receive \$0.09 on the dollar of tax revenue under a municipal framework. That hasn't changed in 100 years, and we are increasingly under strain as we are asked to do more in health, social service- social services, housing, homelessness with limited revenue tools. So my question is this will your government commit to working with municipalities to review who does what and ensure that proper revenue tools are in place to support these responsibilities?

Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance: Well, thank you, Marianne, and congratulations on being Chair of the Ontario Big City Mayors. And thank you for asking that same question yesterday [Inaudible] think about it. You know, it's-

Q. Mayor Meed Ward: I was giving you a warm up.

Minister Bethlenfalvy: Bigger audience. You know, it's- we understand the pressures municipalities face. And I'm glad you mentioned your your your three level government framework there, because there's no question that we learned something in COVID when we work together, municipal, provincial and federal, and say there's one tax payer but we're going to get it done, that's when we get it done together and and you know, there's another thing. The federal government gets 39 percent of the revenues when a household is built and the income from that and they pay 7 percent of the infrastructure costs. So we have to address these these issues together. I think housing, we've all acknowledged that we have a shared responsibility. Again, it's not just municipalities, just provincial and federal, too and I really hope that the meeting in Prince Edward Island is going to yield real results. Minister Clark mentioned that in our budget in 2023 on page 84, which I'm sure all of you have read. On page 84, I think it is, it

talks about an idea about deferring as the- as Minister Clark said, a letter that I sent to Chrystia Freeland saying let's defer [inaudible] building a purpose built large scale rental by deferring or waiving the HST. And we'll take that at the province so what- and I'm waiting for an answer. And I would encourage everyone to continue to work with, obviously, us we're here, but also the federal government and work towards shared- a shared goal of getting things done. Now, you talked about the fiscal framework, the new fiscal framework. As you know, I've always been available and our government is available to have these conversations. And, you know, we've collaborated and done a lot of things together, you know, not- least of which was through COVID. And we continue to provide funding and supports. And you can count on the province being an active partner with you, with all of you in this room, as well as the federal government, because we have to get these things done together. Thank you.

Q. Mayor Meed Ward: Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you, Minister. Microphone number one.

Q. Lindsay Koch, Councillor, City of Kenora: Hello. Good afternoon. Thank you for this opportunity. My name is Lindsay Koch. I'm a Councillor from the City of Kenora. And my question for today is for Minister Clark. In 2021, you launched a consultation portal to receive feedback on how to strengthen the municipal code of conduct, to increase accountability. This government states there is zero tolerance for workplace violence and harassment of any kind. Therefore, municipally elected officials who have and continue to perpetrate these acts without repercussions. Further, more than 150 municipalities in Ontario have passed resolutions in support of the previously proposed Bill 5 in e-mails [inaudible] related to calls for legislation to strengthen municipal codes of conduct and enforcement. At the Western Ontario Municipal Association conference in April you responded to my question on this that your government would be taking action to implement changes to hold municipally elected officials accountable to workplace violence and harassment policies. Since then, Bill 5 was disappointingly not supported. Municipal staff, local boards and co-councillors deserve to know they can do their work in a safe environment that contributes directly to building Ontario. The longer it takes to implement these changes, the more opportunity there is for people to be mistreated in serious and egregious ways. This government has demonstrated its capability to push through legislation very quickly. What is the delay here and by the way, will you commit to taking this seriously enough to push through?

Minister Clark: I want to thank you for the question. And this is something that the government does take very seriously. We've been monitoring a lot of our local councils, especially after the last fall's election. I am very concerned that there's an even bigger problem that's emerging in councils across the province. There's far too many CEOs and clerks that have recently left. There are far too many councils who have councillors who have left. You know, I think there is obviously know you all agree that there's a challenge around codes of conduct. I think there's a bigger problem out there that that we collectively, municipalities, AMO, the ministry need to ensure that people are actually trained to understand what it is to be a Councillor and the relationship between council and staff. I'm pretty unique that I was glad that I was a mayor and a CEO. But there's a lot of things that I'm not happy with and I'm tired of sending members of my ministry in to sit in council chambers to watch the proceedings. I talked to the ministry about it this morning, so I agree with you. There is a challenge that both you have identified and AMO has identified. But I see a much bigger problem here. Like I think there is a systemic problem that the ministry has to deal with in terms of how we train new councillors, how we interact with councils, how councils interact with staff, because far too many CEO's and clerks and other employees are leaving and far too many councilors who just literally got elected in the fall have

packed it in. And I think there's something that we need to do as a ministry and I think there's a role for AMO and us to look at this bigger picture because it's a problem.

Unidentified 2: I would like to add if I may. So, I used to be a City Councillor myself and one thing I know that every person who is elected has the right to work in an environment where they are respected and every woman has the right to be at that table and contribute to the conversation. And when spaces are not saved for women to be there, women will leave and I know that Minister Clark, all of us here are committed to finding a solution, and we will find a solution and I encourage us to keep moving towards holding people accountable and having integrity when we do our jobs as elected officials. It's an important role that we play in our communities, and each one of us has to ensure that we're doing it with respect for our electorate, but also for our colleagues and you know I want us to keep our scope broad because I also know how dangerous it can be when we put the power in our own hands on a council or at the table to decide who sits at that table or not. And it can be damaging or harmful for women and people of colour. And I've sat amongst rooms and tables with elected officials, people of colour, and they've all said the same thing: that there could be a risk that if I say the wrong thing or do the wrong thing, then my seat could be in jeopardy. So we have to make sure that what kind of legislation we put forward that is going to be protected and actually accomplish the big problems and address the things that Minister Clark is talking about. So we are committed to making this right. And I want to see more women feel comfortable and confident at the table in council. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you Minister. Microphone Number Two.

Q. Derek Giberson, City Councillor, City of Oshawa: Thank you. Good afternoon ministers. My name is Derek Giberson. I'm a City Councillor from the City of Oshawa. And my question is directed to Minister Mulroney, Minister of Transportation. I would encourage the Ministers of Environment, Health and Mental Health and Addictions to tune in, because it's also costing your ministries money. So we have ample evidence that noise pollution is damaging to human health in so many ways, cardiovascular, hypertension, anxiety, mental health impacts. It also has economic impacts in the hundreds of millions of dollars in lost productivity in our economies every single year. In the last few years, we've seen the proliferation of these noise devices and replacement of factory mufflers on vehicles all across the province, and it's proliferating with impunity. Right now, the tools that we have as municipalities are feeble an \$85 ticket, and it's under the current legislation, quite challenging to even enforce to begin with. However, four years ago, this government did pass legislation under the bill Better For People, Stronger For Business to give those tools to municipalities under Section 75.1 amendments that would not only give the tools for enforcement, but also increased fines to \$300 to \$1,000 dollars and then upwards to five digits for later-

Moderator: [Inaudible] get to your question please?

Q. Councillor Giberson: So, my question. Thank you. My question this year is identical to my question at AMO last year because now it's been four years. We are waiting on royal ascent of that part of the bill. Has there been any updates? Are there any updates coming so that we will have the tools to bring peace and well-being back into our communities because our constituents are desperate?

Moderator: Thank you. Minister?

Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation: Thank you very much for the question. And obviously this is a cross ministerial piece of legislation that affects environment, municipal affairs and obviously transportation. We get a lot of requests from municipalities to review issues related to transportation and noise. And with respect to that bill, it's something that we've been looking at. We're continuing to talk to stakeholders to see what we can do to make sure that when we bring it in, it's effective. So thank you for raising it. I'll turn it over to Minister Piccini to see if he's got anything else to add.

Minister Piccini: Thank you and I appreciate the question. As it pertains to Ministry of Environment, we have numerous instances across Ontario where we see fundamentally incompatible use between the land use of subject A and not being compatible with residential nearby and I have to say, you know, we've seen numerous examples with the Ministry of Environment where local municipalities have approved these fundamentally incompatible land uses. So I think this is a holistic approach we have to take working together. We certainly work with proponents to ensure abatement plans are in place, where there's complaints. I think I spoke to attacking it at the root cause, which is good land use planning. But secondary, we have teams all across Ontario that are willing to to work with proponents. I was just at a landfill yesterday and saw the work being done from both an odour and a noise perspective with regards to the landscape. So there's always a willingness to engage from the standpoint of our ministry, and I appreciate that question.

Moderator: Thank you, Minister. We'll move on to microphone number three.

Q. Lisa Post, Mayor of Orangeville: Thank you very much. My question is for Minister Clark. My name is Lisa Post, and I'm the Mayor of Orangeville and a County Councillor with the County of Dufferin. I was so pleased to be present for Premier Ford's announcement yesterday of the Building Faster Fund, to hear a commitment of 1.2 billion to support municipalities. But I walked away from the presentation wondering where my small urban municipality fits in. We're a town that's just outside of the GTA, deep in the heart of the housing crisis, particularly as it relates to affordability and of course, lack of rental options. But we are a dedicated council committed to our growth targets and with the desire to support the province's initiatives in any way that we can. But we are too small because we're not forecasted to go to 50,000. We don't have the land or infrastructure to increase our targets to that. We're surrounded by communities like Caledon, with highly aggressive growth targets, and our community infrastructure will be significantly impacted by their growth. But we're also too big and not rural enough to qualify for this fund either. And so, I walked away from yesterday's presentation feeling like we don't have a place in the province's plan. And I'm fearful that we will quickly become a forgotten municipality. In discussion with many of my municipal counterparts last night, I quickly realized that I wasn't the only one feeling that way. So my question, Minister Clark, is how do smaller municipalities like mine fit into the provincial framework?

Minister Clark: So as the Premier indicated that, you know, a 10 percent or \$120 million is going to be available for communities that aren't part of the 50 that have indicated- that we've indicated that we would like to work with on a- on a growth target. As well, I believe that, you know, based on many delegations that have received at AMO of people that have applied for federal funding, that the Federal Accelerator Fund should have a guaranteed 10 percent carve out for, you know, small municipalities, rural northern communities. You know, I think moving forward, you need to have that certainty. We wanted to ensure that you had a bit of line of sight on how you can participate and that funding in the Building Faster Fund would that would provide that. You know, I know Minister Surma continues to advocate to her federal colleagues for further infrastructure dollars, but we wanted to make sure at AMO, that there was- there was

some clarity that the government feels that, you know, having a fund over three years with \$1.2 billion, you know, obviously serves the fastest growing but doesn't forget about everyone else.

Moderator: Thank you, Minister. Microphone number four. Is it? Just check, [inaudible]. I don't know, I didn't do it on purpose Jen.

Q. Jennifer Murphy, Mayor of Bonnechere Valley: I think you did. This is what retirement looks like, Jim.

Moderator: Sure.

Q. Mayor Murphy: Thank you. Hi, I'm Jennifer Murphy, I'm the Mayor of Bonnechere Valley and a County Councillor in the County of Renfrew. And apparently, microphone four really likes Finance Minister Bethlenfalvy. Hi, Minister. The City of Toronto recently proposed a one percent sales tax to help with their deficit. If approved, would you consider the previous request to add one percent to the HST known as the local share to put money back into our local economies for much needed infrastructure needs?

Moderator: Thank you, Jen.

Minister Bethlenfalvy: Well, thank you, Jennifer. You're frequent flier. You've asked me a lot of questions over the years. I remember you when I was at Treasury Board asking me a question.

Q. Mayor Murphy: But I never, never go behind your back.

Minister Bethlenfalvy: You... absolutely, no. And I appreciate that. And that's why you get reelected all the time too, I think. Look, it's a very important question. You know, as you know, our government is not in favor of tax increases. There may be a time, not for, not now. A lot of people are hurting in this province and we have to, as I said, work together on the various things that our citizens want. You know, the audit that Minister Clark's talked about, we've talked about is working through the system. So we want to see the results of that as well. I talked about the provincial government willing to reduce taxes, to incent building. And, you know, that's one of the things that, as Minister Clark said, you know, we have some tools that we can use, but we need the federal government, particularly on things like HST, which they govern the HST. So there's some things we can't do unilaterally. But make no and make... have no doubt that we are very committed to supporting collectively, as I said earlier, that we will work together. We'll wait for the audits. We'll look at the various tools that we have. And I can't- I really want to come back to that stat that I gave you that was in the City of Toronto's report that the federal government received 39 percent of the tax income when a house is built and pays for seven percent of the infrastructure. And I think as Marianne had talked about the power, I would add- I would add, Marianne, that they do have some fiscal- fiscal powers as well, because they are, you know, the lowest debt to GDP in the world, in the G7. And so, they... and I think they will come to the table and work with us so that with municipalities, with the province and with the federal government, together, we will support all communities right across Ontario. And I do want to weigh in on the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund. You know, that was in my first budget. We doubled the investment. I'm getting applause from my colleagues. So... But, you know, the idea there was to provide infrastructure support to many of the communities across Ontario, in the rural and more suburban areas with smaller populations for infrastructure. And we doubled it and we made that commitment for five years to provide not only funding but certainty around those funds. So, you know, we have done some things and will continue to work on things with you. Thank you, Jennifer.

Moderator: Thanks, Minister. We'll go to microphone number one.

Q. Nancy Peckford, Warden of United Counties of Leeds and Grenville: Thank you. It's Nancy Peckford of North Grenville, Ontario and also Warden of the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville. A fleeting reference has been made to ICIP a number of times, the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. So for Minister Clark or Minister Surma, can you speak to how optimistic he was that the feds will come to the table quickly with ICIP 2.0? We all know how crucial it is. It was a game changing and enabled many many different initiatives. I personally will be outraged if the feds don't move quickly and work collaboratively with Ontario to get this program into place. I know Ontario say it would go alone, but quite frankly, I think we do have the feds. And I'd love to hear from Minister Surma or Minister Clark on how we can support you on locking that down as quickly as possible. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Minister Surma?

Kinga Surma, Minister of Infrastructure: Thank you so for the question. And I'd also like to thank Minister Clark, because he's played an integral role in terms of advocating for infrastructure dollars with the federal government as well. Listen, when we released the Green Stream, which was very popular, we knew that that was the last stream of ICIP program. So right away we took action and we started conversations with the federal government because we knew we needed to build a new infrastructure program. And that was some time ago. We're hopeful and optimistic. There was a mention that something would be in this- in their last budget. There was not. We met out in B.C. All of the provinces and territories were aligned. And I just want to thank AMO and the Big City Mayors as well, who very quickly put together letters of support and endorsement letters which we handed to the federal Minister, got his attention for endorsing the three streams and the program that we would like here in Ontario. Coming out of that meeting, the federal Minister said publicly to the press that he anticipates to have an infrastructure program in the fall and some information about that in their Fall Economic Statement. However, there was a cabinet shuffle shortly thereafter, which was a bit of a... took all of us by surprise. Certainly not something we anticipated. We are waiting to meet with the new Minister. We hope the work has not been delayed in anyway. Should that not be the case, we know what the priorities are. We've been very clear with all of you. You've communicated back to us and we are ready to go. Now, I don't want to lose the opportunity of having those federal dollars because I can support many more projects to unlock housing and economic development opportunities to help you grow. And so, a little bit more time. But we're ready. We're ready to support you.

Moderator: Thank you, Minister. Minister Clark, did you have anything? Okay, thank you.

Unidentified 3: Minister [inaudible], I did [inaudible].

Moderator: We're going to move on.

Unidentified 3: I do have Taylor Swift tickets, but you have to negotiate with my 15-year-old daughter. Come and see me if you want to start bargaining.

Moderator: You might be the most popular person here. Microphone number two.

Q. Christa Lowry, Mayor of Mississippi Mills: Thanks, Jim. I'm Christa Lowry . I'm the Mayor of Mississippi Mills and a Councillor with Lanark County. I'd like just to thank Minister Clark and Cabinet for being here. You've been really generous with your time today and throughout...

[End of Recording]

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