

Intergovernmental Relations

Advocacy Priorities - Owen Sound

Communication and relationships are foundational elements of Intergovernmental Relations. All areas of municipal operations are impacted by the policy, service and program decisions of other levels of government. These decisions impact the lives of residents and can have significant financial implications. The long-term outcome of having advocacy priorities and activities will be that Owen Sound is better positioned to assert its interests to other levels of government and a wider range of partners.

Key Priorities for 2024-2025

Physician Recruitment

- Lack of doctors and access to primary healthcare can impede the growth of a community.
- Owen Sound as regional hub requires access to existing provincial incentives that its neighbouring municipalities receive.
- Funding models for nurse practitioners in health team would expand access to much needed primary care.

Sustainable Funding

- Municipal budgets are spread too thin and are being hijacked by the cost of insurance, the declining power of the tax dollar and the limited ability to raise revenues.
- The timeline for the awarding of grants from MTO needs to align with the Municipal budget process and the provision of longer timelines to complete construction work.
- There is a need for sustainable funding to offset the actual cost of providing court security. Currently, the funding model being deployed only covers approximately 50% of the municipality's burden for providing court security.
- The annual increases to the City's insurance premiums have been one of the most significant constraints in limiting yearly tax increases over the past four years.



The City will continue to support the advocacy work of The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Western Ontario Warden's Caucus (WOWC), and Grey County related to the topics of:

- Affordable Housing
- Mental Health and Addictions
- Indigenous Relations
- Workforce Development
- Land Use Planning
- Climate Change

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Core Activities

Advocacy and Coordination:

- While Owen Sound has its own unique character, challenges and needs, it competes with many other small population centres for the attention and resources of senior levels of government.
- Small municipalities across Ontario and Canada share common concerns. On some of these issues, it is most effective for municipalities to speak with a united voice. The City of Owen Sound primarily works with two municipal advocacy organizations: the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO).

Relationship Support and Development:

- Coordinate and facilitate relationships and partnerships with other orders of government, municipalities and municipal organizations, and key external stakeholders.
- Support efforts to address intergovernmental, regional, inter-municipal and other external stakeholder priorities and issues.

Research and Analysis:

- Monitor and analyze trends and issues that are intergovernmental or inter-municipal in nature and are of interest to the City, the region, neighbouring municipalities and partner municipal organizations.
- Review federal and provincial policy, and legislative and program changes as they relate to the City, region, municipalities in general or other key external stakeholders.
- Communicate and foster an understanding of intergovernmental and inter-municipal issues and trends (including major policy changes and milestones) across the corporation.