

## Monica Hawkins

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**From:** The Rural Ontario Municipal Association <roma@roma.on.ca>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 10, 2020 10:44 AM  
**To:** Monica Hawkins  
**Subject:** What happened at #ROMA2020?

### ROMA Insider - February 2020



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### 2020 ROMA Conference highlights

The 2020 ROMA Conference welcomed about 1,300 participants to Toronto at the end of January to connect, learn and advocate on behalf of rural Ontario.

Key highlights of the event included:

- The Premier and Cabinet committed to consulting with municipal governments, with the Premier promising “no surprises” in the upcoming provincial budget.
- Minister of Finance Rod Phillips confirmed 2021 funding of \$500 million for the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund. This funding is critically important to the municipalities that rely on it to make ends meet.
- Conference delegates participated in an open question and answer session with provincial ministers. Popular topics included support for rural economic development, infrastructure funding, and climate change.
- Sessions were held on critical matters such as public health and paramedics, broadband, and social challenges like the opioid crisis and human trafficking.

“The event was a great success thanks to the excellent turnout from rural leaders from across Ontario. We also appreciate the active participation of the provincial government, which held more than 350 delegation meetings over the course of just two and half days,” said ROMA Chair Allan Thompson.

The Board was also pleased to welcome its newest member, Kevin Holland, Mayor of the Township of Conmee, who was acclaimed as the Zone 10 representative when nominations closed

on December 20. The Board created the new Zone 10 to strengthen representation from northwestern Ontario.

Participants in the conference found value in connecting with peers, subject matter experts and provincial staff, with many gathering ideas and insights to take back home.

Presentations from the conference are available [online](#). You can also hear a recap of the event via the latest AMO ON Topic [podcast](#).



## AMO Pre-Budget Submission speaks to rural priorities

AMO's pre-budget submission, presented to the Ontario government just days after it was presented at the ROMA Conference, speaks to a number of priorities shared by rural Ontario governments.

Ontario's municipal sector delivers \$50 billion in services and investment, making it critical to the daily lives of Ontarians and to the fundamental success of Ontario.

The submission notes that currently, Ontario's municipal governments are spending about \$3 billion annually on responsibilities that are traditionally considered provincial. At the same time, Ontario's provincial spending per capita is the lowest in Canada.

Key rural challenges, like housing, roads and bridges, broadband, and climate change adaptation will only be addressed by a strong partnership and a commitment by the province to make strategic investments in priorities that can drive growth and prosperity.

Read the full [submission](#) to get a complete picture of the municipal financial context, growing pressures and how provincial changes affect our communities.

## Ready-made digital solutions for municipal government

While digital solutions can help improve efficiency and modernize governments, navigating suppliers and technology is a challenge. AMO and LAS have done the legwork, partnering with leading companies to offer scalable, affordable, and easy-to-use technologies. All have offerings targeted to smaller municipalities. Learn more about current digital [partnerships](#), which include platforms for customer service, meeting management, digital signatures, occupational health and safety, and websites.

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**Our mailing address is:**  
200 University Ave., Suite 801  
Toronto, ON  
M5H 3C6

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