

MEMBER COMMUNICATION

ALERT N°: 09/083

To the attention of the Clerk and Council
December 1, 2009

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AMO Recognizes the Need for Affordable Access to Recreation for Ontarians

Issue:

At their recent meeting, the AMO Board of Directors supported the recommendations of the [Policy Framework for Affordable Access to Recreation for Ontarians](#). AMO will now seek commitment from the provincial and federal governments to move this important policy ahead.

Background:

AMO is supporting what many Ontarian's identify as one of the highest valued services delivered by municipalities -- recreation.

Building on research demonstrating the benefits of recreation for low income families, the Ontario Task Group on Access to Recreation developed a policy framework and approach to creating local access policies that reflect both community need and capacity.

The Task Group, comprised of numerous stakeholder groups and government representatives, developed a vision supported by policy objectives and strategic considerations to guide decision makers in creating and promoting local access policies that promote the understanding that everyone should have access to affordable recreation in their community in order to enjoy the health and social benefits, and to improve their prospects for a better future.

Municipal engagement in providing access to recreation for low income families can also benefit the taxpayer. Research clearly demonstrates that recreation improves the prospects of a person's mental and physical health, which leads to greater financial independence and benefits to the taxpayer. Local communities are encouraged to implement access policies in a manner that responds to both local needs and capacities.

But municipalities cannot go it alone in providing this important service. AMO's advocacy goal is for the provincial and federal governments to assist communities and citizens through formal policies and funding.

Action: AMO will advise the provincial government of its support for affordable access policies and seek provincial support and commitment to moving forward on this policy. AMO will also request a commitment from the federal government to increase access to recreation for Ontarians.

This information is available in the Policy Issues section of the AMO website at www.amo.on.ca.