



Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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City of St. Thomas officials engage province at ROMA Conference

ST. THOMAS, ON — City of St. Thomas officials are participating in the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) annual conference from January 23 to 25th. Held virtually again this year in response to COVID-19 concerns, the conference provides an excellent venue for municipalities from across the province to gather, network about issues of joint concern and meet directly with provincial government representatives to discuss rural issues. Over 900 individuals are registered to participate in this year's event.

On Sunday January 23, Mayor Joe Preston was an invited participant in a Rural Housing Roundtable. Hosted by Premier Doug Ford and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Steve Clark. Preston and other municipal politicians shared their advice regarding issues of housing availability and affordability and offered recommendations to create additional housing options in all communities. Advice gathered from this meeting will be used to inform the development of the final report of the province's Housing Affordable Task Force, which is expected to be released by the end of January.

On Monday, January 24, Mayor Preston met with local MPP and Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development, Monte McNaughton to discuss issues related to employment and skills training. Later that day, the Mayor had a delegation meeting with the Minister of Health, Christine Elliot and Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Michael Tibollo, to seek assistance for additional and critical supports for housing, mental and addiction services for the St. Thomas community.

Mayor Preston stated that "Our meetings today provided a good opportunity to engage our provincial stakeholders, to make them aware of our important community needs and to share the City's commitment to creating better outcomes for all citizens. We are pleased with today's discussions and look forward to more opportunities to partner with the province on important initiatives that are essential for our community".

The conference, which has included keynote presentations from Chief Perry Bellegarde, Former National Chief and of the Assembly of First Nations as well as panel presentations from Premier Ford and most provincial ministers, will conclude at end of day, Tuesday January 25. This is one of the last municipal conferences in advance of the June 2, 2022 provincial election.

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For additional Information:

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