

 **news release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, December 11, 2009

MAYOR AND OFFICIALS MEET WITH ONTARIO FINANCE MINISTER

City of Greater Sudbury officials met with Ontario Finance Minister, Dwight Duncan, and his staff late yesterday in Toronto. Sudbury MPP, Rick Bartolucci, arranged and attended the meeting to discuss Ontario Municipal Partnership Funding (OMPF) for 2010.

“Minister Duncan listened carefully to our presentation,” said Greater Sudbury Mayor, John Rodriguez. “He clearly understands the challenges we face in delivering municipal services to the largest geographic city in Ontario with such a low population density.”

The Greater Sudbury delegation requested that the Minister continue mitigation funding for 2010 in order to protect the city from a \$6 million reduction under the assessment equalization component of the OMPF. The City of Greater Sudbury experienced the highest overall average residential property valuation increase amongst large Ontario municipalities as a result of the most recent MPAC reassessment – up 55 per cent over 2005.

The delegation also requested that the province develop a new formula for the 2011 OMPF that better addresses the fiscal challenges of cities like Greater Sudbury which must deliver municipal services to low density residential areas at a higher than average per capita cost. Finally, the Minister was asked to stage significant changes to the OMPF grant formula over several years to allow municipalities more time to absorb changes in funding levels.

“We did not make this request lightly because we understand the enormous financial challenges that the McGuinty Government faces in the coming year,” said Mayor Rodriguez. “At the same time, we know that both the city and province are committed to protecting public services through this economic downturn and we need to work together to ensure that we are successful.” The Minister indicated that he would carefully review the information presented by the City of Greater Sudbury and that it would inform his final decisions on the OMPF for 2010.

“I remain hopeful of some positive news on this file,” concluded Rodriguez. “The Minister explained that strong partnerships are critical to the province’s economic recovery and he asked us to stay in touch after this upcoming announcement to work with him to ensure that our citizens’ needs are addressed.”

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