

Report from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario Conference

August 20 – 23, 2023

London, Ontario

Along with Councillors Blackwell and Cavanagh and staff members CAO Bellchamber-Glazier and Strategic Initiatives Manager Fioze, I attended the AMO Conference in London, August 20 – 23.

AMO provides opportunity for municipal councils to meet Provincial cabinet ministers and their staff, to advocate for funds or cooperation from those ministers in completing municipal projects, and to network with other councils and staff from across Ontario. We hear from the leaders of all the provincial political parties as they present their vision for the future of Ontario. We also hear from a number of organizations that want us to buy their products and / or support their causes.

The Municipality of Kincardine delegation met with two Provincial Ministers. First was the Honourable Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs who was pleased to hear that the Municipality was drawing attention to the Alternative Land Use Systems. ALUS provides expertise, resources and direct financial support to communities where farmers build nature-based solutions on their land to deliver ecosystem services to sustain agriculture, help build community resilience and fight climate change and biodiversity loss for the benefit of future generations. Grey-Bruce joined ALUS in 2012 but there is a renewed interest in using farmland for carbon sequestration as we move closer to a “net zero” economy.

We also met with Parliamentary Assistant MPP Deepak Anand from the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. As we continue to advocate for more opportunities to develop skilled tradespeople within our region, we notice a fragmented approach rather than a coordinated approach in the training efforts. We asked for Provincial assistance, not that they should take over the local efforts but rather that they support a regional leadership model in supplying this training. We continue to support the leadership of the Bruce Community Futures Development Corporation, and the provincial funding they receive, in this work.

There were lots of interesting exhibitors promoting goods and services as well. I saw an interesting three-wheeled electric vehicle suited for tourism. Airbnb spoke about their work lobbying the provincial government for short term rental regulations. I have an interesting report about the financial viability of local airports. And various insurance companies are trying to offer affordable and easily accessible liability insurance for residents who utilize public spaces. I offer any of these reports to councillors or staff who are interested.

Respectfully submitted,

Mayor Kenneth Craig.