The relationship between local government and Ontario's first peoples is rapidly changing. This is happening not just in Ontario. All across Canada, municipal governments and neighboring Aboriginal communities are developing new stronger relationships predicated on collaboration, reconciliation and treaty obligations. The time has come to acknowledge our responsibilities as treaty people.

As the organization prepares Property Assessment Notices for Ontario's more than five million properties, we invite delegates to join an introduction to the Property Assessment program for the 2016 tax year. This session will provide detailed information on the changes to the Property Assessment Program for the 2016 tax year. Delegates will receive an overview of the program and information on new resources available to assist municipalities in implementing the requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Ontario continues to have a strong commitment to our vision for an accessible province by 2021. The Accessibility Directorate of Ontario is a one-stop resource for municipalities and businesses to achieve this goal. The session will provide information and updates on Ontario’s accessibility journey, with a focus on accessible employment, accessible engagement, and Design of Public Spaces Standard.

OGRA’s Emerging Municipal Leaders Forum

Teach for Canada is a non-profit organization that works with schools in northern First Nations communities to recruit, prepare, and retain committed teachers. Education in Canada is a success story. Teach for Canada is motivated by a simple belief—that a child’s education should not depend on their postal code. By working with communities to recruit, prepare, and retain committed teachers, we can begin to realize education more equitably.

• Do councils have healthy relationships with municipal staff, and how does these impact council operations?

The organizing committee is pleased to announce that the Emerging Municipal Leaders Forum will be returning for a second year. Building on last year’s success, the Forum will feature thought-provoking heads from the municipal sector. These individuals will share their thoughts and experiences with students interested in making an impact at the local level. Students interested in policy, planning, engineering, or elected office are encouraged to register and come prepared with questions for discussion.

This panel discussion will profile the current demographic composition of municipal councils across Ontario, sharing first-hand insights from councillors, wardens, chairs and CAOs about the challenges and opportunities facing municipal leadership.

• Are candidates for council positions coming from a diverse and balanced background?

Another key to the development of best practices and solid governance processes is to make information and resources available to municipalities.

This session will provide information and updates on Ontario’s accessibility journey, with a focus on accessible employment, accessible engagement, and Design of Public Spaces Standard.

This is an OGRA/DOMA combined meeting to discuss the current professional composition of local municipal councils across Ontario, sharing first-hand insights from councillors and CAOs about the challenges and opportunities facing municipal leadership.

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The factors changing the municipal realm are fostering a new interest in the idea of accountability and its twin objective of transparency. Increasingly, municipalities are being forced to be accountable in ways that are increasingly concrete and demonstrable to citizens. Whether one considers climate change, new accountability legislation, open government or transparency, there is a sense that municipalities need to be held to a higher standard and that the public has a right to know how their tax dollars are being spent.

The advent of autonomous vehicles (AVs) is a relatively new phenomena to Ontario in comparison to other jurisdictions, much is overlooked by citizens, city councils, and elected officials. AVs have the potential to reduce traffic congestion and pollution, improve accessibility for people with disabilities, and increase safety for all road users. However, the integration of AVs into our transportation systems is complex and requires coordination among multiple stakeholders, including government, industry, and the public.

The plan is ready and the priorities have been established, but the priorities of the plan are not the public priorities. How do we ensure that the public is engaged in the process and that their concerns are reflected in the plan? This session will discuss how to engage the public in the planning process and how to ensure that the priorities of the plan align with the public priorities.

The growing popularity of roundabouts in the province is much overdue. However, as this type of intersection design is a relatively new phenomena to Ontario in comparison to other jurisdictions, much is overlooked by citizens, city councils, and elected officials. Roundabouts have the potential to reduce traffic congestion, improve safety for all road users, and enhance the aesthetics of our streets. However, the integration of roundabouts into our transportation systems is complex and requires coordination among multiple stakeholders, including government, industry, and the public.

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In January 2015, OGRA was requested by The Honourable Steven Del Duca, Minister of Transportation to take the lead role in the second five-year review of the minimum maintenance standards (MMS). The workshop will explore the high-level discussions surrounding the possible new additions, deletions, and revisions of the existing MMS and how they may impact municipal operations. The audience will also have an opportunity to ask questions of the MMS Task Force about local concerns.

Mike Moffatt is one of Canada’s most dynamic young thinkers. He is the Italia Economics of the Mowat Centre, an Assistant Professor in the Business, Economics and Public Policy (BEPP) group at the毅然 Business School at Western University and a Research Fellow at the Lawrence National Centre for Policy and Management in addition to being a regular contributor to Canadian Business and Macleans. In this keynote address Dr. Moffatt will assess the Ontario’s economic prospects and detail the opportunities and challenges that municipalities are likely to face in the near and mid-term.

The Michael J. Smither Memorial Question Box continues to be one of the most popular sessions at our conference. Here is an opportunity to have your most vexing municipal government questions answered by an all-star roster of experts in the fields of planning, law, construction, drainage, public works and more. Be sure to submit your written questions in Salon A on Monday and Tuesday.