



October 17, 2023

Gord Clark
Chair
Algonquin Forestry Authority
gord.clark@gmail.com

Dear Gord Clark:

I am pleased to share our government's 2024-25 priorities for the Algonquin Forestry Authority (AFA). As Chair, you play a vital role in helping the Algonquin Forestry Authority achieve its mandate. It is important that your agency's goals, objectives, and strategic direction continue to align with our government's priorities and direction. As part of the Government of Ontario, agencies are expected to act in the best interests of the people of Ontario and ensure that they provide value for money to taxpayers.

Agencies are also required to adhere to government policies and directives. Per the requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive, this letter sets out my expectations for Algonquin Forestry Authority for 2024-25. These priorities include:

1. Competitiveness, Sustainability and Expenditure Management

- Operating within the agency's financial allocations.
- Identifying and pursuing opportunities for revenue generation, efficiencies and savings through innovative practices, and/or improved program sustainability.
- Complying with applicable direction related to accounting practices and supply chain centralization, including leveraging Supply Ontario's bulk purchasing arrangement and working with Supply Ontario on strategic procurement initiatives.
- Complying with realty interim measures for agency office space.
- Leveraging and meeting benchmarked outcomes for compensation strategies and directives.

2. Transparency and Accountability

- Abiding by applicable government directives and policies and ensuring transparency and accountability in reporting.
- Adhering to accounting standards and practices, and responding to audit findings, where applicable.
- Identifying appropriate skills, knowledge and experience needed to effectively support the board's role in agency governance and accountability, and providing the Minister with annual skills matrices to ensure boards have qualified appointees.
- Reviewing and updating agency KPIs annually to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability.

3. Risk Management

- Developing and implementing an effective process for the identification, assessment, and mitigation of agency risks, including cyber security, and any future emergency risks.

4. Workforce Management

- Optimizing your organizational capacity to support the best possible public service delivery, including redeploying resources to priority areas, where needed.
- Supporting the implementation of the Community Jobs Initiative (CJI) by identifying opportunities to relocate new or existing agencies to lower cost communities across Ontario (as per MBC Realty Directive, s. 5.4), as applicable.
- Aligning Human Resource and Accommodations strategies with OPS directives and policy.
- Adhering to TB/MBC labour and bargaining mandates.
- Prudently and efficiently managing operational funding and workforce size.

5. Diversity and Inclusion

- Developing and encouraging diversity and inclusion initiatives by promoting an equitable, inclusive, accessible, anti-racist and diverse workplace.
- Adopting an inclusion engagement process to ensure all voices are heard to inform policies and decision-making.

6. Data Collection

- Improving how the agency uses data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting, to inform outcome-based reporting and improve service delivery.
- Increasing data sharing with Supply Ontario when applicable regarding procurement spending and planning, contract arrangements and vendor relations to support data-driven decision-making.

7. Digital Delivery and Customer Service

- Exploring and implementing digitization for online service delivery to ensure customer service standards are met.
- Using a variety of approaches or tools to ensure service delivery in all situations.

In addition to these government-wide priorities, I expect AFA to focus on:

- AFA will continue to implement strategies to increase revenues and reduce costs to ensure continued financial viability.
- AFA will take steps to improve communications, build stronger relationships, and increase transparency with local forest industry representatives.
- Continuing to focus on the purposes for which the corporation was established as outlined in the *Algonquin Forestry Authority Act*:
 - Ensure the sustainable management of the Algonquin Park Forest;
 - Plan all forestry operations;
 - Harvest and distribute wood products to mills consistent with Ministerial Commitments;
 - Monitor forestry operations; and
 - Undertake such forest management activities as the Minister may authorize in the Algonquin Park Forest.

- Exploring opportunities to further engage Indigenous communities in the governance of the AFA as well as in any economic development initiatives available.
- Supporting my ministry's efforts to achieve greater inclusivity and diversity within the AFA staff and across the board of directors when recruiting and undertaking succession planning.
- Implementing and updating the strategic plan and ensuring alignment with the forest sector strategy.

Ministry staff would be happy to discuss these priorities with you at anytime, and I look forward to hearing how the priorities will be reflected in the agency's upcoming business plan and in ongoing agency operations.

Thank you and your fellow board members for your continued commitment to the AFA. Your work and ongoing support is invaluable to me and the people of Ontario.

Should you have any questions, please contact margaret.chapman@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Graydon Smith
Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry

Attachment: Government Priorities for Agency Sector Chart

- c: Jeff Leavey, General Manager, Algonquin Forestry Authority
Trevor Griffin, A/Regional Director, Southern Region
Beth Brownson, A/Regional Resources Manager, Southern Region
Hassan Mohamed, Regional Forest Operations Specialist, Southern Region
Aklilu Yietagesu, Regional Resources Planning Supervisor, Southern Region
Elizabeth Dorff, Executive Assistant to the ADM, Regional Operations Division
Margaret Chapman, Controllership and Risk Advisor, Strategic Management and Corporate Services Branch