

BULLETIN

OMERS 2025 PROVINCIAL REVIEW COTAPSA GETS RESULTS!

As you are aware, COTAPSA regularly monitors the activities and public statements of OMERS, the City of Toronto's statutorily designated pension plan for all City employees. We have some important updates to share.

OMERS GOVERNANCE: FUNDAMENTALLY UNFAIR TO COTAPSA MEMBERS

[In our public comments](#) on OMERS governance, transparency, investment performance and accountability over the last few years, COTAPSA has been focused on one key goal: advancing the interests of OMERS management/non-union members, which includes COTAPSA Members.

OMERS is governed by two boards: the OMERS Administration Corporation (AC) Board and the OMERS Sponsors Corporation (SC) Board. COTAPSA Members are among the nearly [1 in 4 OMERS members](#) designated as "management/non-union," who currently have **NO** formal representation on either of these two boards. We have always maintained this to be an UNFAIR and INEQUITABLE situation.

The Sponsors Corporation's governance has been of particular concern to us as they are the notoriously expensive body responsible for determining OMERS contribution rates and retirement benefits.

OMERS 2025 REVIEW

In December 2024, the Ontario government announced a formal OMERS Governance Review would take place to determine if the governance model served members fairly and equitably and maintained long-term fiscal sustainability. Robert Poirier, a businessman and former Port Authority Chair, was appointed by the Province to conduct the review, which included consultations with a broad range of OMERS stakeholders.

Following a series of public letters COTAPSA addressed to Mr. Poirier, he agreed to meet with us in June 2025 to discuss our concerns in detail, Mr. Poirier's mandate was to collect, review and analyze the information he received through his stakeholder discussions and prepare a report with formal recommendations for change.

Earlier this month, the Ontario government published [Mr. Poirier's full](#) report, including major changes being made to the OMERS governance to create a more transparent and equitable structure.

We are pleased to share that due in large part to COTAPSA's lobbying, major changes to OMERS governance are forthcoming. Two of the most positive recommendations include:

1. Dissolving the dysfunctional Sponsors Corporation and its board of directors, to be replaced with a more transparent and collaboratively-minded "Sponsors Council". Its original constitution as a "corporation" allowed this board to hide important information on our pension plan, claiming their primary fiduciary duty was to the "Corporation" and NOT OMERS members.

COTAPSA has demanded the dismantling of the Sponsors Corporation for several years, claiming it to be costly and overly bureaucratic, and have openly criticized their expenses, sometimes being the only "voice of reason" on this matter; however, we are pleased to say others finally see our perspective on this ineffective board.

2. Adding five non-voting observer seats to the new Sponsors Council, one of which would represent non-union/management Plan members and will be appointed collectively by COTAPSA and our colleagues at AMCTO (The Association of Municipal Managers) and OMHRA (The Ontario Municipal Human Resources Association).

COTAPSA'S CONCERNS WITH THE REVIEW

While we are happy with these two governance changes, there are recommendations made by Mr. Poirier with which we disagree:

- We had hoped that the tens of thousands of unaffiliated members paying into OMERS could finally have formal representation in the plan's governance. The possibility of a non-voting, observer seat on the Sponsors Council is appreciated, but falls short of the full voting rights we had sought.
- We also question Mr. Poirier's recommendation to "*establish a transition period and increase the term limit from 12 to 16 years for the current Sponsor-*

appointed independent chair” of the OMERS Administration Corporation. We believe, in contrast, that it is time to thank the [incumbent OMERS Administration Corporation Chair George Cooke](#) for his service after more than a decade in the Chair’s position, and begin afresh with new leadership.

- Mr. Poirier also recommends to “[e]nshrine the current 12-year board term limits in the Act [for OMERS board members]...”. COTAPSA’s view is that we have had an excessive number of multi-term board members over the years at OMERS. Despite the supposed value of this collective “experience,” OMERS remains the **only** large defined benefit Ontario-based public sector pension plan still in a [deficit position as far as its long-term obligations](#).
- COTAPSA recommends a “clean sweep” of the OMERS governance structure in order to wipe away the cozy culture prevailing at the OMERS board levels and instead bring on **new** board members with a [singular focus on ensuring high levels of management accountability](#). We would prefer these board members to serve no more than two to four.

NEXT STEPS

The Ontario government is wasting no time when it comes to acting on Robert Poirier’s proposed changes to OMERS governance. Bill 68, which was introduced to the legislature in November, incorporates a section devoted to translating Mr. Poirier’s ideas [into formal legislative](#) changes to the OMERS Act, plus into relevant regulatory changes.

We will continue to monitor and, when and where appropriate, formally respond to the Ontario government’s actions on the review, as COTAPSA and its Members are carefully taking note.

COTAPSA will also be meeting with AMCTO and OMHRA soon to determine the best mechanism to select our representative on the new Sponsors Council.

Should you have any questions, please contact the COTAPSA office by phone at (647) 519-5115 or by email cotapsa@toronto.ca