MAFP Unit 2 Course Outline (Integrated Financial Planning)

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Course Description

MAFP Unit 2 builds on Unit 1 by exploring planning, strategy, and policy in Ontario municipal finance, with a focus on how financial planning ties to budgeting, asset management, treasury management, and growth management. Although municipalities each have their own unique approaches to financial planning, the unit introduces current and emerging best practices.

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- Identify connections between long-term financial planning and other types of planning within a municipality
- Outline the stages of a municipal budgeting process and recognize common factors that influence budget decisions
- Explain the legislative requirements for asset management and the key components of asset management plans and policies
- Identify functions within treasury management and the principles that guide responsible handling of investments and debt
- Recognize different types of strategic policy decisions that municipalities must make to support long-term growth and financial sustainability

The MAFP certificate of completion will be issued upon completion of two units:

- Unit 1: Introduction to Municipal Accounting and Financial Reporting
- Unit 2: Integrated Financial Planning

MAFP can be taken on its own or as part of AMCTO's Diploma in Municipal Administration (DMA).

Course Delivery Format

MAFP is delivered online through a combination of readings, quizzes, Zoom sessions, and an online closed-book proctored exam.

Course Structure

The course has five modules followed by an exam. It takes approximately three months to complete the course.

Grading Scheme

Assessment	Weight
Module Review Quizzes (5 quizzes total)	20%
Exam (online, closed-book, and proctored)	80%

The minimum grade requirement to pass each unit of MAFP is 60% on the module quizzes, 60% on the exam, and 60% overall for the unit.

Participation Expectations

The unit includes five module review sessions delivered through Zoom. In each session, an AMCTO facilitator will lead a review of the module content and guide discussions. There is no grade for attendance, but attendance and participation are expected. The sessions will enhance your learning by reinforcing key concepts, making real-world connections, and providing opportunities for you to ask questions and hear perspectives from people who work in different municipalities.

Exam Requirements

The unit ends with an online proctored exam, which must be completed on the date specified by AMCTO. It will be available for a limited window on the exam date. You must ensure that you are available during the exam window.

Academic Integrity

Students in AMCTO’s education programs are expected to abide by the association’s policy on academic integrity (section 4 of the Education Programs Policy), as well as any applicable course- or program-specific policies.

MAFP Unit 2 Topic Outline

Module 1: Introduction to Integrated Financial Planning

- How the concept of integrated planning applies to municipal financial planning
- How an integrated planning framework connects different types of plans across the municipal organization
- The role of performance measurement in integrated planning
- The legislative framework for municipal financial planning
- The key features of a long-term financial plan and how it supports financial sustainability

Module 2: Municipal Budgeting

- The purpose of a budget
- The legal requirements governing the preparation of the annual municipal budget
- Differences between capital and operating budgets and the links between them
- The steps typically followed in the annual budgeting process
- The advantages of different approaches to budgeting and budget formats

Module 3: Asset Management

- What asset management is and how it ties into long-term planning and other existing municipal plans and processes
- The state of municipal public infrastructure and the importance of asset management planning
- Legislative requirements for asset management policies and asset management plans
- The benefits of asset management planning beyond legislative compliance
- Elements of an asset management framework
- The key components of asset management plans and processes

Module 4: Treasury Management

- The various functions of treasury operations and management
- The legislative framework for municipal investment and borrowing
- Factors relevant to the measurement of a municipality’s debt capacity
- Legal documentation related to debenture issues
- Factors to be considered in relation to the issuance of debentures

Module 5: Financial Strategy and Policy

- What a growth management strategy entails, and the key growth funding tools available to municipalities
- The relationship between asset management, capital budgeting, and long-term financial planning
- Different approaches to capital funding, capital financing, and debt management
- Assessing public–private partnerships against traditional delivery models, including value for money, and how to set affordability guardrails
- Strategic financial policies and strategies that support council priorities and incorporate integrated financial planning elements

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