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From: Salisko, Holly <HSalisko@ptbocounty.ca>
Sent: March 6, 2025 10:46 AM
To: Township Clerks <TownshipClerks@ptbocounty.ca>
Cc: Stevenson, Kari <KStevenson@ptbocounty.ca>
Subject: Peterborough County Council Resolution RE: Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus Correspondence

Good morning,

Please note at their meeting on March 5, 2025, Peterborough County Council passed the following resolution:

Resolution No. 50-2025

Moved by Councillor Whelan

Seconded by Councillor Webb

That correspondence item 4 received from the Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus be sent to the local tier municipalities requesting that they place it on an agenda.

Carried

Please see attached referenced EOWC correspondence. Should you have any questions or concerns please contact Kari Stevenson, Director of Legislative Services/Clerk at kstevenson@ptbocounty.ca.

Thanks!

Holly Salisko

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Ready to Work, Ready to Grow: Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus Ontario Election Priorities

February 18, 2025, Eastern Ontario – As the united voice for Eastern Ontario's small-urban and rural municipalities, the [Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus \(EOWC\)](#) has set clear priorities for the upcoming Ontario election. On behalf of nearly one quarter of Ontario's 444 municipalities, the EOWC has outlined four priorities and 13 top recommendations in the **2025 Ontario Election Priorities package: [Ready to Work, Ready to Grow](#)**.

"Eastern Ontario's future must be a priority in the Ontario election. The EOWC's municipalities are already driving progress, and we are ready to do even more for the region. We need provincial leaders who are ready to work with us to tackle issues around infrastructure, housing, health care, and the economy. The EOWC remains '*Ready to Work and Ready to Grow*.'" – **EOWC Chair, Bonnie Clark (Warden of Peterborough County)**

"Our municipalities are the backbone of Ontario's future, and this election is a pivotal moment to ensure Eastern Ontario priorities are heard. Together with our provincial partners, we can unlock the full potential of our communities and drive meaningful progress for residents." – **EOWC Vice-Chair, Steve Ferguson (Mayor of Prince Edward County)**

The EOWC's priorities for Ontario's next government include:

1. **Regional Economy and U.S. Tariff Threats:** Ensure municipalities are part of Ontario's approach to U.S. government tariff threats and eliminate barriers to enable municipalities to buy local and give preference to Canadian companies.
2. **Municipal Infrastructure:** Increase investments in municipal infrastructure to grow the region's economy, create jobs, and close our municipal infrastructure deficit, which is now over \$6 billion across the region.
3. **Housing:** Support municipalities to build all types of housing through capital investments and modernizing provincial programs to prevent homelessness.
4. **Health Care:** Continue provincial funding for community paramedicine programs that are proven to succeed.

Eastern Ontario is poised for growth. The region has the land and is building its workforce. The EOWC is committed to working with all provincial leaders to ensure Eastern Ontario remains a vibrant, competitive and sustainable region.

About the EOWC

The EOWC is a non-profit organization advocating for 103 small-urban and rural municipalities across Eastern Ontario. The EOWC covers an area of 50,000 square kilometres, serving 800,000 residents. For more than 20 years, the EOWC has gained support and momentum by speaking with a united voice to champion regional municipal priorities and work with the government, businesses, non-profit organizations, Indigenous leaders, the media, and the public.

Media Contacts:

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Steve Ferguson, Vice-Chair (Mayor of Prince Edward County)

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THE EOWC'S 2025 PROVINCIAL ELECTION PRIORITIES

The EOWC and its 103 municipalities remain 'Ready to Work and Ready to Grow.' We continue to partner together with the Federal Government and Ontario Government to strengthen our region given the social, economic and political challenges facing us ahead.

Our region is poised for growth. We have land, we are building our workforce, we coordinate strategically, and we have the political will.

Regional Economy and Approach to U.S. Tariff Threats

The EOWC's communities are strong contributors to the economy and major exporters to Ontario and other jurisdictions. Our region generates over \$102B in total economic activity and exports over \$42B outside our regional boundaries every year (2021).

We stand together with our Canadian and Ontario Government partners and support the measures they have put in place around the threat of U.S. government tariffs thus far. The EOWC has gathered regional data around exports, sectors and job impacts. We have reached out to partners in the U.S. and across our region to call for allyship and share information.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Continue to ensure municipalities are part of the coordinated approach and leverage local expertise and relationships
- ✓ Invest in infrastructure and housing to stimulate and stabilize Canada's economy
- ✓ Eliminate trade and legislative barriers to ensure municipalities can buy local
- ✓ Remove any impediments to ensure municipalities can give preference to Canadian companies in capital projects and for other supplies

Infrastructure

The EOWC's municipalities are responsible for managing over \$12B in physical assets. Our municipalities spend \$402M annually to keep assets in good repair, not including what is spent on building new infrastructure.

Infrastructure in Eastern Ontario is lagging behind the rest of Ontario, with more assets in poor or very poor condition. Across Canada, municipalities manage 60% of public infrastructure but only receive 10% of the overall tax revenues. Despite taxpayers' investment, the region's infrastructure deficit is now over \$6B, which has deepened 58% since 2011.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Increase funding to fill the municipal infrastructure deficit gap, prevent critical infrastructure failures, and support new infrastructure that will attract residents and grow revenue
- ✓ Provide predictable investments that support small-urban and rural municipalities to complete and implement their Asset Management Plans given the July 2025 provincially-mandated deadline
- ✓ Under any Municipal Service Corporations (MSC) model to support water and wastewater infrastructure, capital and operating responsibilities should remain together and not be separated



Market Housing

The EOWC's municipalities are committed to facilitating housing development faster. We have compiled a list of 'build-ready' municipal lands. With capital investment from government partners, our communities can build more types of housing on these lands that meet the needs of our growing and diverse population.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Support municipalities to prepare publicly owned land for new housing development by:
 - Providing capital funding to build housing across the spectrum
 - Expanding the process of dispossession for provincial lands for housing development
- ✓ Consider the small-urban and rural contexts in housing policy and program development to spur innovation that supports rural environments, rather than bring urban-city programs to small rural communities

Affordable Housing and Homelessness

It's clear that more action is needed to help provide enough housing options for everyone. The EOWC recognizes the importance of all types of housing across our communities. County or city service managers provide housing options across the spectrum, from shelters to rent-geared-to-income housing.

80,000 people are homeless across Ontario, and 1,400 encampments exist in public parks (AMO). The EOWC is working to gather regional data around homelessness, mental health, and related services across the region and looks forward to sharing outcomes with government partners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Modernize provincial systems and coordinate across ministries using a 'housing first' approach to address homelessness and mental health issues
- ✓ Invest in social housing, mental health and addiction services, and basic income supports. Municipalities cannot subsidize underfunded provincial programs and we need to work together to solve the crisis of homelessness and mental health
- ✓ Increase funding to the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit together with the Federal Government

The EOWC endorses the ['vote like your quality of life depends on it'](#) campaign and the [comprehensive homelessness study](#) analysis led by AMO outlining the risk of inaction and how we can work together across governments toward a solution. The EOWC stands with the Ontario Big City Mayors, the Eastern Ontario Mayors' Caucus, and the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus in our joint call to support the ['Solve the Crisis'](#) campaign to combat homelessness and mental health issues across communities, small and big.

Health Care

While health care is not a direct municipal responsibility, the EOWC's communities support public health and other community health services and advocate for expanded care. The Ontario Government has made strides, including investing in the Learn and Stay Program, a new nursing program, opening new medical schools, and expanding the scope of practice for nurse practitioners and pharmacists. The EOWC applauds the Ontario Government for taking initiative and focusing on the improvement of systemic primary care issues, and we look forward to seeing results across Eastern Ontario.

Programs like the community paramedicine program are working, but gaps remain. We need to see the expansion of continued investments into community paramedicine as a model that is proven to work.

Provincial investments in community paramedicine are going farther in Eastern Ontario.

- The EOWC region covers 12 paramedic services, supporting 1.1 million people
- 11,400 people are actively enrolled in community paramedicine and report being 'very satisfied.'
- 10% reduction in emergency department use; 7% reduction in hospital admissions
- Expanded scope of care that fits small rural context

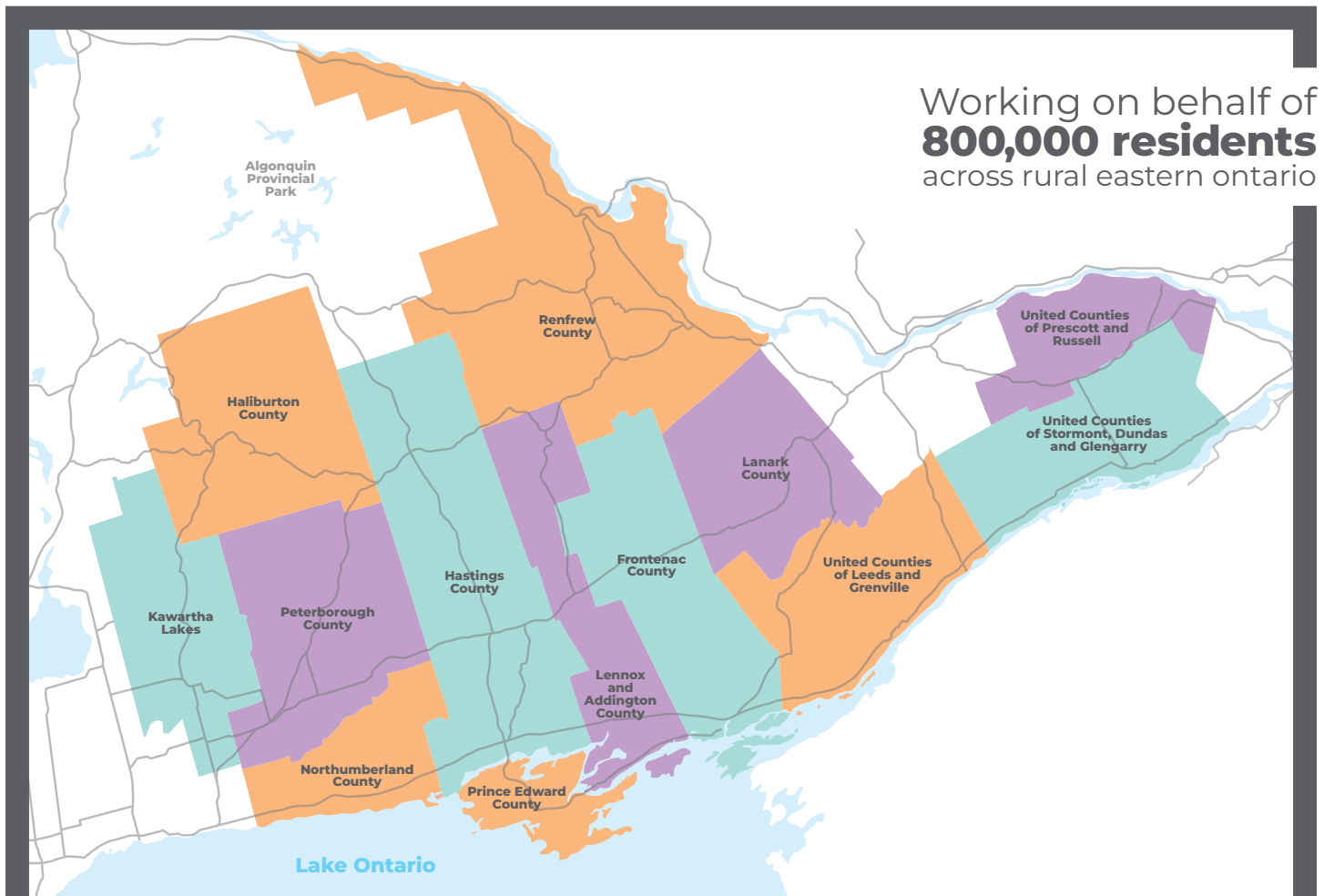
RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Continue the provincial funding for the community paramedic program. The scalability and sustainability of these programs are hindered by challenges such as unstable funding, administrative complexity and health human resource challenges



About the EOWC

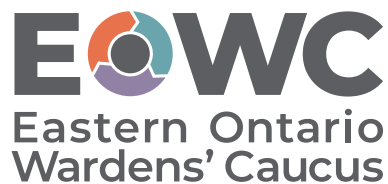
The Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC) Inc. is an incorporated non-profit organization comprised of the Heads of Council of 13 municipalities (11 upper-tier counties and two single-tier municipalities). The EOWC covers an area of approximately 50,000 square kilometres from Northumberland County east to the Québec border. The EOWC supports and advocates on behalf of its 90 lower-tier municipalities and 800,000 residents across the region. The EOWC has gained support and momentum by speaking with a united voice to champion regional municipal priorities and work with the government, business leaders, the media, and the public.



EOWC Members

- County of Frontenac
- County of Haliburton
- County of Hastings
- City of Kawartha Lakes
- County of Lanark
- United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
- County of Lennox and Addington
- County of Northumberland
- County of Peterborough
- United Counties of Prescott and Russell
- Prince Edward County
- County of Renfrew
- United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry

LET'S KEEP WORKING TOGETHER



Contact the EOWC at

EOWC Chair, **Bonnie Clark**
(Warden of Peterborough County)
info@eowc.org

EOWC Vice-Chair, **Steve Ferguson**
(Mayor of Prince Edward County)
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Regional Economy and Approach to U.S. Tariff Threats

RECOMMENDATIONS

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Infrastructure

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- ✓ Increase funding to fill the municipal infrastructure deficit gap, prevent critical infrastructure failures, and support new infrastructure that will attract residents and grow revenue
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Housing

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Support municipalities to prepare publicly owned land for new housing development by:
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- ✓ Consider the small-urban and rural contexts in housing policy and program development to spur innovation that supports rural environments, rather than bring urban-city programs to small rural communities
- ✓ Modernize provincial systems and coordinate across ministries using a 'housing first' approach to address homelessness and mental health issues
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Health Care

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Continue the provincial funding for the community paramedic program. The scalability and sustainability of these programs are hindered by challenges such as unstable funding, administrative complexity and health human resource challenges

SPEAKING POINTS FOR EOWC MEMBERS

EOWC 2025 Ontario Election Priorities

“Ready to Work, Ready to Grow”

- As a member of the Eastern Ontario Wardens’ Caucus representing nearly one quarter of Ontario’s 444 municipalities, we are already doing our part to step up to support our communities, businesses and residents.
- We look forward to working with the next provincial government to deliver on the critical issues facing the people of Eastern Ontario.
- The EOWC is a strong partner to the provincial government. We can help get priorities across the finish line, and we have the local knowledge and political will to back up recommendations that come forward from our Caucus.
- With less than two weeks to go until the Ontario election, the EOWC remains *'Ready to Work, and Ready to Grow.'*
- Our 4 priorities for Ontario’s next government include:

1. Make municipalities part of Ontario's approach to U.S. tariff threats, and eliminate barriers to enable municipalities to buy local and give preference to Canadian companies.

- The EOWC has gathered regional data and reached out to allies across the border, as well as our local chambers of commerce, to share how our region’s sectors and businesses could be impacted.
- Legislation should ensure municipal procurement policy can prefer Canadian companies for projects and supplies (rather than U.S.).

2. Increase investments in municipal infrastructure to grow the region's economy, create jobs, and fill our infrastructure deficit, which is now over \$6 billion across the region.

- We need to work together to prevent critical infrastructure failures and help municipalities to implement our municipal asset management plans.

3. Support municipalities to build all types of housing through capital investments and modernizing provincial programs to prevent homelessness.

- We support the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, who in their recent homelessness study, shows that 80,000 people across Ontario are homeless. We agree that we need to act now to get people housed and ensure problems do not get worse.

4. Continue provincial funding for community paramedicine programs that are proven to succeed.

- Community paramedicine programs keep people in their homes and out of hospitals.
- It's a program that has worked extremely well across our region in smaller communities. We need to ensure municipalities have stable funding to plan ahead.

- Our top 13 recommendations under each priority are on the EOWC website.
- I look forward to speaking with my local candidates about our recommendations that will support the region in the years to come.