

News Release: The EOWC Announces Chair and Vice-Chair at 2026 Annual General Meeting



Left-to-right: Doug Elmslie, Mayor, City of Kawartha Lakes; Hon. Nolan Quinn, Minister, Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security; Bob Mullin, Warden, Hastings County; Jennifer Murphy, Warden, Renfrew County; Steve Clark, MPP, Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes; Tyler Allsopp, MPP, Bay of Quinte; Rice Bresee, MPP, Lennox and Addington; Earl Provost, Ontario Agent-General, Chicago; Billy Denault, MPP, Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke; Bonnie Clark, Chair, EOWC (Warden of Peterborough County); Bill Saunders, Warden, Frontenac County; Nathan Townend, Vice-Chair, EOWC (Warden of the County of Lennox and Addington); Mario Zanth, Warden, United Counties of Prescott and Russell; Steve Ferguson, Mayor, Prince Edward County; Hon. Lisa Thompson, Minister, Ministry of Rural Affairs; Scott Phelan, Deputy Chief of Staff, Premier's Office and Minister of Intergovernmental Relations; Francois Landry, Warden, United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry; Robin Jones, President, AMO; Christa Lowry, Chair, ROMA; Meredith Staveley-Watson, Executive Director, EOWC; Richard Kidd, Warden, Lanark County.

Kingston, ON – On Friday, January 9, 2026, the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC), representing the region's 103 municipalities, proudly hosted its Annual General Meeting (AGM), welcoming distinguished partners.

The AGM provided an important opportunity to reflect on the progress made throughout eastern Ontario and to look ahead with renewed focus. Bringing together federal, provincial, and municipal leaders, the meeting highlighted shared commitment to strengthening the economic vitality, municipal infrastructure, rural health care, and overall quality of life for businesses and people in eastern Ontario.

The EOWC is pleased to announce Bonnie Clark, Warden of Peterborough County as Chair (acclaimed) and Nathan Townend, Warden of Lennox and Addington County, as Vice-Chair for 2026. Their leadership and experience will be instrumental as the EOWC continues to advance priorities and advocate on behalf of eastern Ontario communities.

EOWC Chair Clark shared the following statement:

"I am honoured to continue to serve as Chair of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus. Over the past year, we made meaningful progress, and I look forward to building on that

momentum in 2026. By working together with our municipal, provincial, and federal partners, we will keep advocating for priorities that matter most to eastern Ontario's rural and small-urban communities."

The EOWC extends its sincere thanks to speakers, Minister Lisa Thompson, Minister Nolan Quinn, Minister Rob Flack, Earl Provost, Ontario Agent - General (Chicago), and EORN Chair, Jennifer Murphy, for sharing their insights at the AGM. Their perspectives and leadership contribute to the advancement shared goals for eastern Ontario.

This year's AGM also included distinguished guests whose participation reinforced the importance of collaboration across all levels of government in addressing current challenges and future opportunities, throughout the region and Canada as a whole.

Thank you to our guests:

- MP Scott Reid
- Minister Nolan Quinn
- Minister Lisa Thompson
- MPP Billy Denault
- MPP Ric Bresee
- MPP Steve Clark
- MPP Ted Hsu
- MPP Tyler Allsopp
- Earl Provost, Ontario Agent-General (Chicago)
- Alexander Kostenko, Commercial Officer at the Ontario Trade and Investment Office in Chicago
- Scott Phelan, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Premier and Ministry of Intergovernmental Relations
- Chad Crew, Stakeholders Relations Advisor, Premier's Regional Office in Ottawa
- Christa Lowry, ROMA Chair
- Robin Jones, AMO President
- Margot Cragg, Executive Director, MARCO
- Karen Nesbitt, Director of Policy and Government Relations, AMO
- Jen Liptrot, Director, Municipal Services Office (East)
- Cole Matthews, Senior Municipal Financial Advisor, Municipal Services Office (East)
- Jason St.Pierre, CEO, Eastern Ontario Regional Network

Over the past year, the EOWC has continued to advance its [strategic priorities](#), including economic resilience, municipal infrastructure, housing, and health care. As part of this work, the [EOWC is pleased to submit its recommendations](#) to the Ontario Government as part of the 2026 Budget Consultations.

As we move into 2026, the EOWC remains ready to work, and ready to grow with our partners to further these priorities. Together, we are building a region that is prosperous, connected, and prepared for the future.



Hon. Lisa Thompson, Minister, Ministry of Rural Affairs



Left-to-right: Hon. Nolan Quinn, Minister, Ministry of College, Universities, Research Excellence and Security; Scott Phelan, Deputy Chief of Staff, Premier's Office and Minister of Intergovernmental Relations; Hon. Lisa Thompson, Minister, Ministry of Rural Affairs; Steve

Clark, MPP, Leeds-Grenville- Thousands Lakes and Rideau Lakes; Bonnie Clark, Chair, EOWC; Earl Provost, Ontario Agent-General, Chicago.



Left-to-right: Bill Saunders, Warden, Frontenac County, Scott Reid, MP, Lanark-Frontenac; Kevin Farrell, CAO, County of Frontenac



Left-to-right: Jennifer Murphy, Chair, EORN and Warden, County of Renfrew; Robin Jones, President, AMO; Bonnie Clark, Chair, EOWC; Christa Lowry, Chair, ROMA.

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About the EOWC

The Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC Inc.) is a non-profit organization representing 103 small-urban and rural municipalities across Eastern Ontario. Spanning 50,000 square kilometres and serving over 1.1 million residents, the EOWC has been a united regional voice for more than 20 years.

It advocates for municipal priorities and collaborates with all orders of government, businesses, non-profits, Indigenous leaders, the media, and the public to drive positive change for Eastern Ontario.

Visit the EOWC's website at eowc.org.

Connect with the EOWC

2026 Chair, Warden of Peterborough County, Bonnie Clark

2026 Vice-Chair, Warden of Lennox and Addington County, Nathan Townend

Executive Director, Meredith Staveley-Watson

info@eowc.org

Meredith Staveley-Watson, Director of Government Relations and Policy | 235 Pinnacle Street | Belleville,
ON K8N 3A9 CA

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