

Newsletter

July 2026

EOWC Advocacy Update

The EOWC Elects New Vice-Chair for 2026, Warden Mario Zanth



Left-to-right: Mario Zanth, Vice-Chair, EOWC; Bonnie Clark, Chair, EOWC.

The EOWC is pleased to announce that [Warden Mario Zanth of United Counties of Prescott and Russell has been elected as the EOWC's Vice-Chair for the remainder of 2026](#), following the July 17 EOWC Board of Directors meeting.

"I am truly honoured to have been elected Vice-Chair of the EOWC, representing the UCPR. I am proud to work alongside such an outstanding team of Wardens, Mayors, Chief Administrative Officers, and municipal staff who are committed to making eastern Ontario stronger. Thank you to my colleagues for the confidence

they have placed in me, and I look forward to working with our Chair, Mrs. Bonnie Clark, as well as the entire EOWC team. Together, through collaboration and partnership, we will continue to build a stronger future for our region," said Vice-Chair Zanth.

We look forward to Vice-Chair Zanth's leadership and contributions as the EOWC continues to advance the shared priorities of eastern Ontario municipalities and strengthen advocacy on issues that matter most to our rural and small-urban communities.

The EOWC Attends the Frontenac Municipal Service Tour



Left-to-right: Scott Aitchison, MP, Parry Sound-Muskoka; Ron Vandewal, Mayor of the Township of South Frontenac; Bonnie Clark, Chair, EOWC; John Jordan, MPP, Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston; Hon. Rob Flack, Minister, Municipal Affairs and Housing; Hon. Todd McCarthy, Minister, Infrastructure; Jennifer McKelvie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Federal Minister of Housing and Infrastructure; Gerry Lichty, Mayor, Township of North Frontenac; Bill Saunders, Warden, Frontenac County.

EOWC Chair Bonnie Clark joined Frontenac County Warden Bill Saunders for a site tour and working discussion focused on how municipally owned water and wastewater infrastructure can help unlock housing development in rural Ontario.

The tour brought together leaders from all levels of government who had the chance to visit development sites in Verona and Sharbot Lake to explore innovative servicing models that can transform municipally owned land into viable housing opportunities.

The projects, led by Frontenac Municipal Services, are expected to deliver approximately 140 new housing units across the two communities. The visit highlighted the importance of strong partnerships between municipalities and the Province in advancing rural housing priorities, reducing development timelines, and creating the infrastructure needed to support sustainable growth in rural communities.

[Learn More](#)

EOWC Resolution: Request for Urgent Provincial Action on the Accuracy of Municipal Voters' Lists

At the July 17 meeting of the EOWC Board of Directors, a resolution was passed urging for the Ontario Government to immediately encourage prioritization of the review of data specifically related to non-resident property owners to ensure voter lists are as accurate as possible prior to August 14, 2026.

Voters can visit registertovote.on.ca to check or update their voter registration until August 12. All [eligible electors](#) including non-resident voters (i.e. owners, tenants, and their spouses) will be able to register subject to showing [proof of identify and property eligibility](#).

Following the August 12 deadline, Elections Ontario will provide municipal clerks with the preliminary voters list. Clerks will continue to be able to add, remove, and update voter information to ensure all eligible electors are registered. Individuals who are unable to update their information before the deadline can contact their municipal clerk directly to register or make changes to their voter record.

AMO's Healthy Democracy Project, in partnership with Toronto Metropolitan University, is providing municipalities with tools, resources, and educational sessions to support voter engagement initiatives. AMO has also launched a province-wide campaign promoting participation in the 2026 municipal election. Additional information and resources are available on the [their website](#).

[Read the Resolution](#)

In The Media

EOWC's Eastern Ontario Economic Transformation Action Plan Featured in Today's Farmer

The EOWC's plan to create an Eastern Ontario Economic Transformation Action Plan was featured in the [July 28 issue of Today's Farmer](#), mentioning the EOWC's request for proposals, which recently closed on July 21.

The **Eastern Ontario Economic Transformation Action Plan** will be a transformational project that will establish a long-term economic vision for one of Ontario's fastest-growing regions.

The initiative aims to identify opportunities to attract investment, support business growth, strengthen regional competitiveness, and position eastern Ontario as a destination for industry, innovation, and talent.



More Than 1,100 New Military Home Coming to Petawawa

[A major housing investment is coming to Garrison Petawawa, with nearly \\$600 million earmarked for new homes](#) and infrastructure as part of the federal government's \$3.7-billion military accommodation plan. The project is expected to deliver more than 1,100 new housing units, helping address a wait-list of over 650 Canadian Armed Forces members and long-standing concerns about housing quality on base



Peterborough's Innovation Cluster Among ROD funding Recipients

Peterborough's Innovation Cluster is among five local recipients sharing more than \$260,000 in Ontario Rural Ontario Development funding.

[The Innovation Cluster will receive \\$145,000 to support rural entrepreneurship](#), while additional funding will help advance Peterborough's economic development strategy, rural business planning, a community farm initiative, and a rural transportation feasibility study across the region



Ontario Expands Primary Care Access in Kawartha Lakes

The [Kawartha North Family Health Team and Community Care City of Kawartha Lakes has received approximately \\$3.5 million to expand services](#) and have already connected more than 2,500 patients to care since August 2025.



Peterborough Opens New Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment Hub

[A new Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment \(HART\) Hub has opened in Peterborough](#), expanding access to integrated mental health, addictions and housing supports.

The hub, led by Four Counties Addictions Services Team in partnership with local organizations, provides services including primary care, mental health and

addictions treatment, supportive housing, employment assistance and Indigenous services.



New Long-Term Care Home Opens in Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory

Construction is completed on [Tsi Thonwatíhsnye's Long-Term Care Home in Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory, adding 128 modern long-term care beds for the community.](#)

Developed by the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, the new home will provide culturally appropriate care that helps Elders stay connected to their language, culture and community. Designed with resident-centered living spaces, therapy and recreation areas, and outdoor amenities, the home will also create approximately 170 local jobs.

Cobourg and Port Hope Receive Investment for Public Transit

Canada and Ontario are investing nearly [\\$1.8 million in public transit improvements in Cobourg and Port Hope.](#) The funding will support new transit vehicles, accessibility upgrades, contactless payment technology and a new transit operations office in Cobourg, while Port Hope has replaced three aging transit vehicles. The investments aim to improve reliability, accessibility and sustainability for local transit users.



Province Invests \$114K in Renfrew County Economic Development

More than [\\$114,000 in provincial funding has been awarded to support five economic development projects across Renfrew County through Ontario's Rural Ontario Development Program.](#) The funding will help leverage more than \$280,000 in total project investments across the region.



Province Invests \$118K in Stormont-Dundas-Glengarry Through Rural Development Program

The [Ontario government is investing \\$118,000 in two projects across Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry](#) through its Rural Ontario Development Program

The United Counties of SDG will receive \$68,000 to support a regional healthcare workforce recruitment campaign led by the Great River Ontario Health Team, aimed at attracting doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals. The Township of North Dundas will receive \$50,000 to begin a Water and Wastewater Master Servicing Study, helping the municipality plan for future infrastructure needs and growth.

Partner Updates



AMO's Conference Social Media Toolkit

Help showcase your municipality's priorities and conference involvement with the AMO Conference 2026 social media toolkit. Access ready-to-use graphics, customizable templates, and practical tips to create engaging content and connect with your community before, during, and after the conference.

Resources

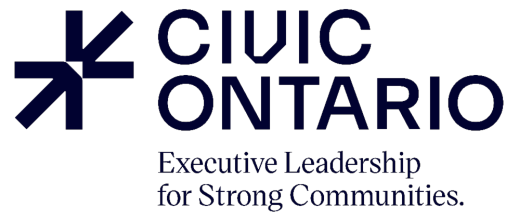
- [AMO Conference 2026 Social Media Toolkit and Guide](#)
- [Customizable Social Media Graphics \(Canva Templates\)](#)
- [Template Media Advisory](#)
- [AMO Conference Key Messages](#)
- [AMO Policy Backgrounders](#)



AMO's New Council Program: AMO's Local Leadership Foundations

AMO has modernized its post-election onboarding with [Local Leadership Foundations](#), developed with the Institute on Governance and delivered by experienced municipal governance experts.

Guided by consultations with municipal associations, staff groups, and AMO's Executive Committee, the program reflects what members need to lead with confidence.



OMAA Announcement: Introducing Civic Ontario Rebrand

For decades, the Ontario Municipal Administrators' Association (OMAA) has supported Ontario's Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) and aspiring CAOs through a culture of discretion, integrity, and professional respect. As the municipal landscape grows more complex, fast-moving, and publicly visible, the association is expanding its role to not only support leaders but help define the future of executive leadership. Recognizing evolving career paths and the need for continuous learning and stronger peer networks—the association has undertaken a full rebrand and is now known as Civic Ontario.

This evolution reflects its emergence as a premier institution for executive leadership, grounded in public purpose and a cross-system perspective. The rebrand will better align the Association's outward presence with its core strength: a trusted peer environment for senior leaders navigating increasingly consequential roles.

Look for a new website and social media channels in early August.



The HEAR Initiative Survey is Live

The HEAR, the Health, Economy, and Adaptation in Rural Communities Initiative, is a University of Guelph research initiative designed to better understand the experiences, challenges, and strengths of rural, small-town, and northern communities across Ontario through large-scale community data collection.

Rural communities are often underrepresented in the data used to inform policy, funding, planning, and service delivery decisions. HEAR aims to help close this gap by collecting community-level information on health and well-being, economic conditions, affordability, housing, employment, belonging, and adaptation to environmental change.

[Take the Survey](#)



The 2026 Municipal Climate Internship Comes to a Close

The Municipal Climate Internship (MCI) has wrapped for 2026! The EOWC was pleased to be a partner on this program, hosting five interns in four municipalities across our region. During their six-month placement, MCI interns contributed to research, policy and community initiatives related to environmental and climate action in their municipality (see [here](#) for a summary of their work).

The interns also had a chance to attend an EOWC Board of Directors meeting and see strategic planning and collaboration amongst municipal staff and elected officials in action. It was great to see their enthusiasm for learning about municipal government and supporting local communities.

[Read About the Interns' Impact](#)



EORN
EASTERN ONTARIO
REGIONAL NETWORK

EORN Spring 2026 Newsletter

EORN has issued their spring 2026 newsletter. The issue includes:

- Cell Gap Project update
- Paramedic chief speaks about improved connectivity
- EORN board and Chair elected
- 40 New 5G Cell Towers are Now Operational Across Eastern Ontario
- New [EORN website](#)
- Meet EORN staff

[Read EORN's Newsletter](#)

Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada



Canada Pre-Budget 2026 Consultations are Open

The Government of Canada is seeking input from Canadians as it prepares Budget 2026. Share your ideas and priorities through the online questionnaire or a formal submission by September 8, 2026, and help shape Canada's future.

[Submit Here](#)



Canada and Ontario Investing Additional \$12M in the Agricultural Stewardship Initiative

The governments of Canada and Ontario are investing [an additional \\$12 million through the Agricultural Stewardship Initiative to help farmers](#) improve efficiency, lower costs and strengthen long-term resilience. The funding will support projects focused on soil health, water quality and energy efficiency, including upgrades to on-farm equipment and clean energy technologies. Applications for the latest funding intake open July 8, 2026.

Ontario and United Kingdom Sign Agreement to Strengthen Critical Mineral Supply Chains

[Ontario and the United Kingdom have signed a new agreement to strengthen critical mineral supply chains](#) and reduce reliance on foreign suppliers. The partnership will support investment, innovation and research while advancing secure supplies of minerals essential for batteries, electric vehicles, defence technologies and advanced manufacturing.

Ontario Expands 110 km/h Speed Limits on Provincial Highways

[Ontario is increasing the speed limit from 100 km/h to 110 km/h on an additional 938 kilometres](#) of provincial highways, with changes rolling out between late June

and September 2026. Once complete, nearly 89% of the province's highway network will have a 110 km/h speed limit, up from 43% today.

Ontario Modernizes Immigration Program to Address Workforce Needs

[Ontario has launched a redesigned Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program to better match skilled newcomers with in-demand jobs](#) and evolving labour market needs. The program will be streamlined from eight immigration streams to four, beginning with the new Ontario Workforce Priority stream, which connects eligible workers with Ontario employers and pathways to permanent residence.

The changes include updated language, education and work experience requirements, expanded access for smaller rural and northern employers, and greater flexibility for workers transitioning into related occupations.

Ontario Invests Over \$90 Million to Expand Shipbuilding Capacity

[Ontario is investing more than \\$90 million through the Ontario Shipbuilding Grant Program to strengthen the province's shipbuilding industry](#), support Canada's National Shipbuilding Strategy and create thousands of skilled jobs.

Funding will support infrastructure upgrades, workforce training and new equipment at shipyards across Ontario, while up to \$64 million in additional funding will be made available through future program intakes.

Upcoming Events



AMO Conference

The AMO 2026 Conference will take place from August 16 to August 19, 2026, in Ottawa.

[Register](#)



OMAA 2026 Fall Conference

The OMAA 2026 Fall Conference will take place from October 7 to 9, 2026, in Westin Trillium House Blue Mountain.

Register

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About the EOWC

The EOWC is a regional non-profit organization representing 13 upper and single-tier municipalities across eastern Ontario. The EOWC supports and advocates on behalf of 103 municipalities and serves 1.1 million residents. The EOWC covers an area of approximately 50,000 square kilometers from Northumberland County to the Québec border.

The EOWC has gained support and momentum by speaking with a united voice to champion regional municipal priorities and work with government, business leaders, the media, and the public.

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 the United Counties of Prescott and Russell, Mario Zanth

Executive Director, Meredith Staveley-Watson

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