



## 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

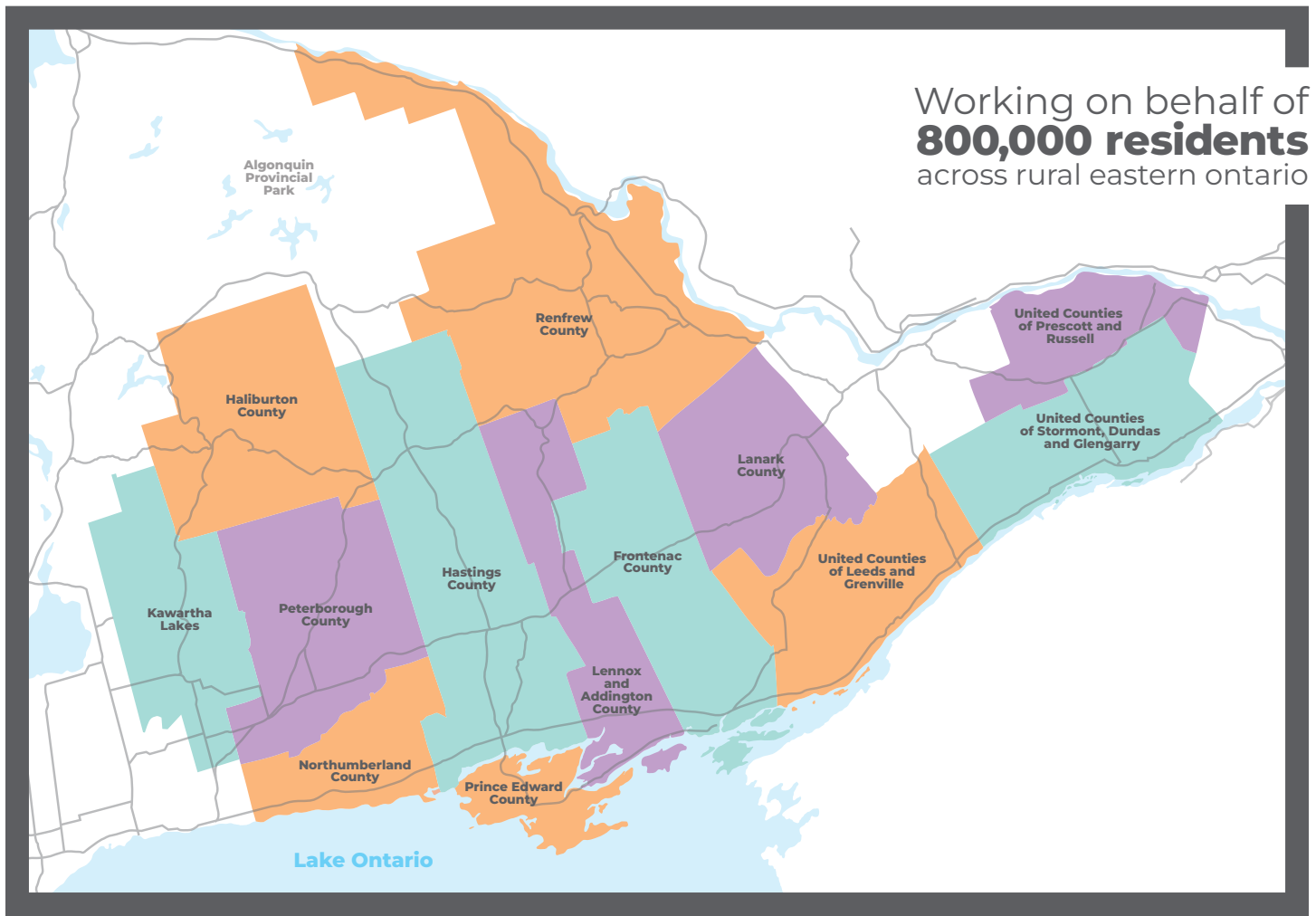
## RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ 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**



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