

EASTERN ONTARIO'S ECONOMY GETS RENEWED FOCUS

Kingston, Ontario (September 18, 2015) – The Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC) and the Eastern Ontario Mayors' Committee (EOMC) have launched a new Leadership Council to foster a collaborative approach to achieving economic growth throughout the region.

Launched today at the Ontario East Municipal Conference, the two groups of elected leaders, along with the Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) and the Ontario East Economic Development Commission (OEEDC), will form the Leadership Council. It will focus specifically on coordinating region-wide efforts to implement the [Eastern Ontario Economic Development Strategy](#).

A key recommendation of the strategy was to create a Council to coordinate efforts across the region. It will be a platform for collaboration, sharing information, monitoring and reporting on regional economic performance, and advocating for regional interests.

The Leadership Council will work with the many stakeholders involved in economic development, such as municipalities and First Nations, business groups, Community Futures Development Corporations, post-secondary institutions as well as the provincial and federal governments.

The Economic Development Strategy was a joint initiative of the Wardens' Caucus and the Mayors' Committee. It focuses on three main priorities for Eastern Ontario, related to workforce development and deployment, technology integration and innovation and creating integrated and intelligent transportation systems.

QUOTES

"This is an important day for us. It represents a real step forward in promoting a coordinated approach to growing our economy here in eastern Ontario, something we are all committed to doing. This is another example of what we can do when all municipal players row in the same direction."

- *Bryan Paterson, Mayor of Kingston and Chair of the Mayors' Committee.*

"On behalf of the 13 members of the Wardens' Caucus I am thrilled to be a part of this exciting initiative. This will be a platform for thinking and acting regionally. Along with our other permanent partners, EORN and OEEDC, the Council will harness the collective efforts of the region's economic development community to drive growth and hopefully create new jobs and new prosperity for our citizens."

- *Eric Duncan, Warden of the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry and Chair of the EOWC.*

“Ontario East is built on the premise that we all do better when we are working together to create a stronger Eastern Ontario. We are pleased to be part of the Leadership Council and to bring our focus on the economic potential of Eastern Ontario to the table.”

- *Dan Borowec, President, Ontario East Economic Development Commission*

“The Eastern Ontario Regional Network has helped the region improve the broadband connectivity that is so critical to economic growth. The Leadership Council will help align our continued efforts to connect Eastern Ontario to the world with the region’s broader economic goals.”

- *David Burton, Reeve of the Municipality of Highlands East, Chair of EORN*

About EOWC and EOMC

The Eastern Ontario Wardens’ Caucus brings together thirteen Eastern Ontario Counties and single-tier municipalities across the rural region. The Eastern Ontario Mayors’ Committee is a group of 11 mayors representing separated municipalities (towns and cities) in Eastern Ontario from Peterborough in the west to Cornwall in the east and Pembroke in the north.

Both work to advance regional issues and collaborate to improve the area’s economic and social circumstances. Together, the EOWC and EOMC will provide strategic direction to the Leadership Council and advocate for policies that support economic growth in the region.

About EORN

EORN has improved high-speed internet access to 99 per cent of the homes and businesses in rural Eastern Ontario through a \$170-million network completed in fall 2014. Spearheaded by the EOWC, the project was funded with support of the federal, provincial and municipal governments, as well as the private sector. EORN’s role on the Leadership Council will be focused on leveraging the broadband network and technology to achieve the region’s economic goals.

About Ontario East

The Ontario East Economic Development Commission promotes Eastern Ontario as a centre for investment. Ontario East represents over 200 communities. It will play a critical role on the Leadership Council as a link to the economic development community and other business and trade organizations. Ontario East is also a driver of regional marketing, training, economic research and information gathering.

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