



EOWC  
**2024 CANADA  
PRE-BUDGET  
CONSULTATION**

FEBRUARY 9, 2024

**EOWC**  
Eastern Ontario  
Wardens' Caucus

# The EOWC's Recommendations

## Undertake a New Municipal Growth Framework

The EOWC joins the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to request that the Federal Government work with municipal governments to negotiate a [Municipal Growth Framework](#) that would improve affordability and quality of life for Canadians.

A new Municipal Growth Framework means revenue tools that grow with the economy, and a redefinition of how we engage across orders of government. By linking revenue to growth dynamics, we can better support Canadians with the infrastructure, services, and amenities that will support their quality of life.

It is time for a national conversation about how we support Canadians by supporting municipalities. For too long – more than a century – municipal responsibilities have expanded while resources have remained unchanged.

- Municipalities are operating within a 19th century revenue system to respond to 21st century responsibilities and evolving needs of Canadians.
- Municipalities manage more than 60 percent of Canada's public infrastructure yet only receive between eight and 10 cents for each tax dollar collected.
- When adjusting for inflation and population growth, Federal and provincial sales and income taxes have increased rapidly as we emerge from the pandemic while overall municipal property tax revenue has remained flat, or even declined.



Municipalities are rising to meet complex community challenges with leadership and innovation but are constrained by an outdated framework that was not designed for the realities of 2024 or beyond. Our country's successful growth is intrinsically linked to our municipalities. With a modernized framework in place, municipalities will be better empowered to continue to contribute solutions to Canada's pressing national challenges and to improve the quality of life for all Canadians. Both urban and rural communities must be part of the conversation, decision-making, and planning ahead. Simply doing things the way they were done before is not an option if we are to meet our nation's growth objectives and build a better life for all Canadians.

## Increase investment in housing across the continuum



- That the Federal Government commits to providing annual direct financial investment in the [EOWC 7 in 7+ Regional Housing Plan](#).  
Under the plan, EOWC member municipalities aim to build at least 7,000 community rental units in the next seven years. The plan requires partnership among Federal and Provincial Governments, as well as the private and non-profit sectors, and Indigenous partners. Using a mixed-model approach, the 7 in 7+ plan has the added benefit of adding up to 21,000 additional market-rate units across the region. This would total 28,000 housing units as part of the plan and would help to relieve those who are waiting up to 10 years for municipal housing units in our region.
- That the Federal Government further provides programs, funding and policies to support rural municipalities with innovative housing and infrastructure development to build more housing more quickly. All municipalities, including those in upper-tiers, need to be eligible to enable projects to move forward. The Federal Government should be working together with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to implement equity and access to current government and CMHC funding streams for rural and upper-tier municipalities.

In Ontario, municipalities are legislated by the Provincial Government to operate community housing and require funding to maintain and build new supply. The EOWC's counties / Service Managers (CMSMs) across Eastern Ontario currently own and manage 14,800 community housing units. It only makes sense that these municipalities be able to access any provincial or federal funding programs. As one example, the CMHC Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) does not allow for upper-tier municipalities, who are responsible for owning and managing housing in Ontario, to apply. The EOWC believes that rural communities should have every opportunity to be able to access programs and funding that fits with rural resources and communities.

The lack of housing has become a fundamental systemic barrier to the economic and social well-being of residents in our region, and across Canada.

Increasing the supply of all types of housing across Eastern Ontario requires all three orders of government, government agencies, Indigenous communities, private and not-for-profit builders, and financial institutions to come together to tackle this priority. The need is so great that some say it requires an all-in war-time effort.

If governments can resume direct investment, the EOWC is confident that people in partnership among members of the public, private sector, and not-for-profit sectors will solve the housing supply challenge.

### Organizations that have indicated support for funding of the 7 in 7+ Regional Housing Plan in the 2024 Budget:



**United Way  
Centraide**  
East Ontario  
Est de l'Ontario



**Eastern Ontario  
Mayors' Caucus**



**Ontario  
Home Builders'  
Association**

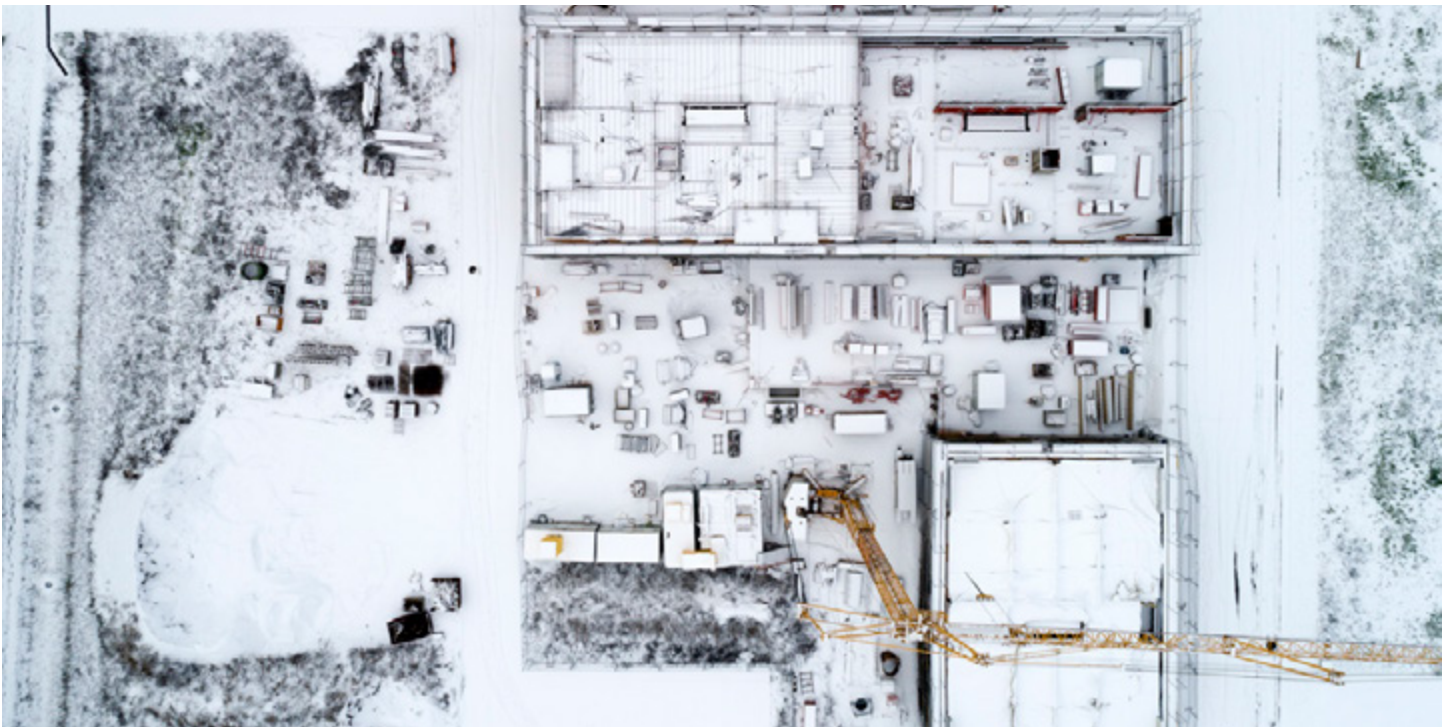


## Invest in next generation infrastructure to build rural communities

- That the Federal Government further develop infrastructure programs and funding eligibility from a rural perspective, including last-mile funding where infrastructure exists. Small investments can go a long way in rural communities.
- That the Federal Government work with the Province of Ontario reach an agreement to reinstate a grant-based, multi-year funding program so municipalities can execute their asset management plans

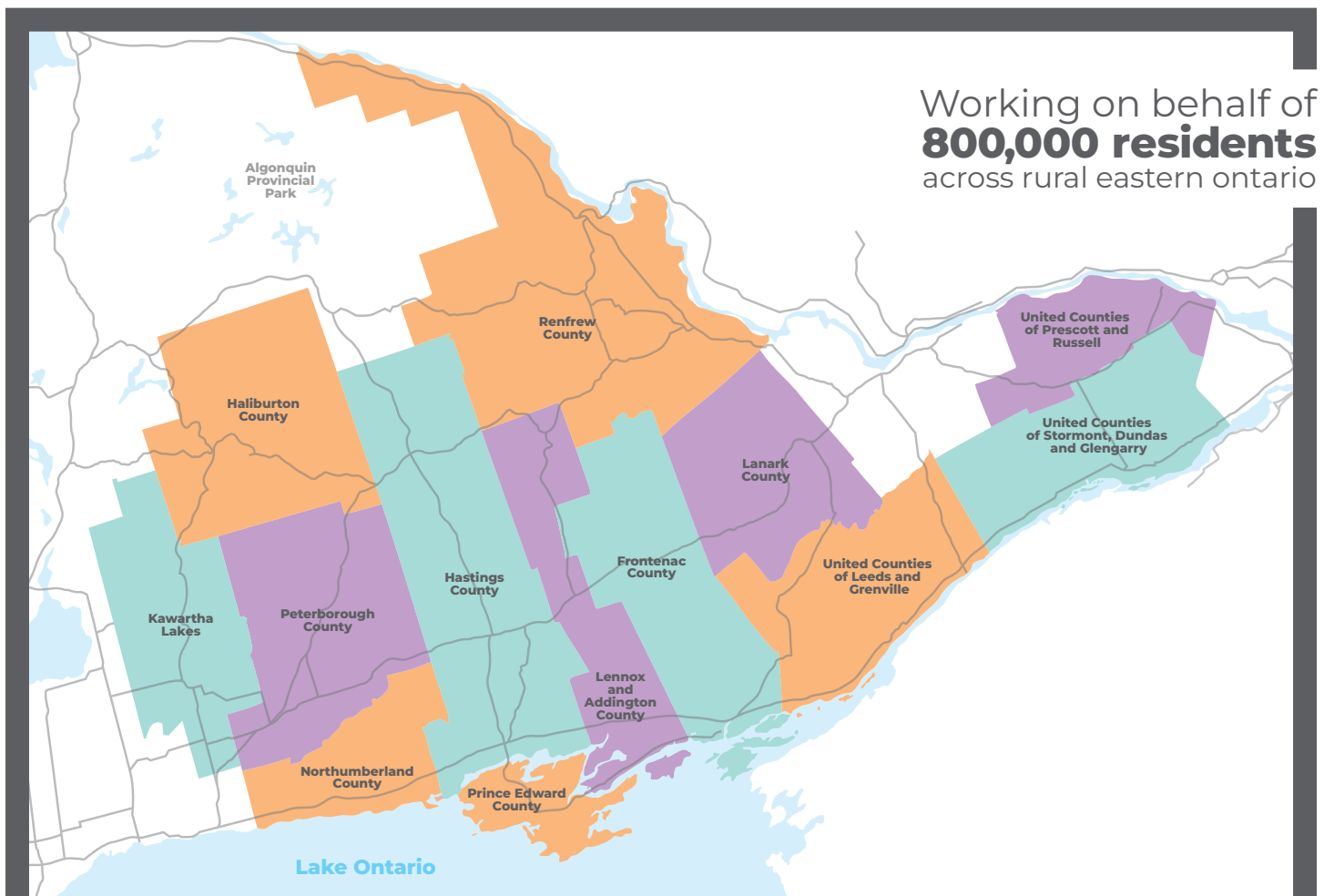
At present, the Federal Government and Ontario Government have not solidified an agreement on investing in municipal infrastructure that provides predictable, multi-year, grant-based funding that will allow municipalities to plan. This has left a gap in maintaining and building infrastructure projects across Ontario. Heading into 2024 and looking ahead to 2025, there needs to be multi-year funding allocated to asset management. Property taxpayers cannot fund this on their own.

Ontario's municipal governments have a July 2024 deadline to complete their asset management plans. Municipalities need the Federal and Ontario Governments to come together to support the maintenance and growth of municipal capital assets for the future. Without an agreement between the Federal and Ontario Governments, municipalities are unable to plan for and fund multi-year infrastructure projects.



# 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



Contact the EOWC at

EOWC Chair, **Peter Emon**  
*(Warden of Renfrew County)*  
info@eowc.org

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

Manager of Government Relations and Policy  
Meredith Staveley-Watson  
647-545-8324  
Meredith.Staveley-Watson@eowc.org

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