



Electronic Council Communication Information Package

Friday, December 19, 2025

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In accordance with the Procedural By-law, please advise the Municipal Clerk at Clerks@Kitchener.ca, if you would like to include one of these items on the next regular agenda of the appropriate Standing Committee, along with the proposed resolution for disposition of the matter. Items will be added to the agenda if the Municipal Clerk is advised by Wednesday at noon the week prior to the appropriate meeting, otherwise the item will be included on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled meeting of the applicable Committee.

Accessible formats and communication supports are available upon request. If you require assistance to take part in a city meeting or event, please call 519-741-2345 or TTY 1-866-969-9994.

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December 15, 2025

Re: Drowning Prevention and Swim Safety in Ontario

Hamilton City Council, at its meeting held on Wednesday, December 10, 2025, passed the following resolution:

Item 9.2 of the General Issues Committee Minutes 25-017:

9.2 Drowning Prevention and Swim Safety in Ontario

WHEREAS, drowning is one the of the leading causes of preventable deaths among children in Ontario;

WHEREAS, research by the Lifesaving Society of Ontario shows that most children who drown never intended to be in the water;

WHEREAS, evidence demonstrates that even basic swimming and water survival skills significantly reduce the risk of drowning;

WHEREAS, many children in Ontario do not have equitable access to swimming lessons out side of school due to financial, cultural, or geographic barriers;

WHEREAS, several municipalities across Ontario have expressed strong interest in improving water safety education for children; and

WHEREAS, the Ministry of Education has the authority to incorporate water safety and survival training into the regular elementary school curriculum as universal, life-saving skill comparable to fire safety and road safety instruction;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That Hamilton City Council respectfully urge the Government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Education, to incorporate mandatory water safety and Swim-to-Survive training into the elementary school curriculum for all Ontario students;
- (b) That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Honourable Minister of Education of Ontario, local Members of Provincial Parliament, all Ontario Municipalities, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and The Federation of Canadian Municipalities with a request for support and/or endorsement; and,

- (c) That staff be directed to assess all Hamilton waterfronts to ensure adequate public water safety measures are in place, any opportunities to expand Swim to Survive Programs at city pools, and report back with recommendations to the Emergency and Community Services Committee.

Regards,



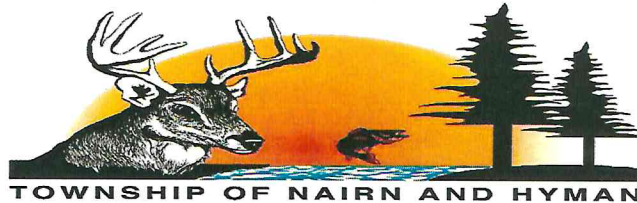
Matthew Trennum
City Clerk

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December 17, 2025

The Right Honourable Mark Carney
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister:

Re: Support Resolution

Please be advised our Council adopted the following resolution at their meeting of December 8, 2025:

**SUPPORT REQUEST FOR NATION-BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS TO HIGHWAY
11/17 (2+1 & FOUR LANE OPTIONS)**

RESOLUTION # 2025-14-241

MOVED BY: Karen Richter

SECONDED BY: Wayne Austin

WHEREAS Canada's east-west trade and national mobility rely on the Trans-Canada Highway system, including Highways 17 and 11 across Northern and Eastern Ontario, which carry significant freight volumes but remain predominantly two-lane corridors; and

WHEREAS four-laning the entirety of Highway 17 is the ultimate goal of the communities along the corridor; and

WHEREAS the proven "2+1" highway design - alternating passing lanes with a continuous median barrier - delivers safety outcomes comparable to full twinning at substantially lower cost, land, and environmental impact, and can be scaled or converted to four lanes (2+2) as volumes grow; and

WHEREAS the Government of Ontario has announced a 2+1 pilot between North Bay and Temagami and a further extension toward Cochrane, creating a near-term implementation pathway; and

WHEREAS modernizing Highways 17 and 11 will improve safety, reduce closures, strengthen supply-chain reliability for mining, forestry, agriculture, tourism and manufacturing, and enhance national resilience and emergency response capacity; and

WHEREAS a phased 2+1 build - prioritizing Highway 11 (North Bay --+ Cochrane, then Cochrane--+ Nipigon) and key sections of Highway 17 (western border of County of Renfrew--+ Sudbury; Sault Ste. Marie --+ Sudbury; Thunder Bay--+ Kenora) - aligns with nation-building criteria, supports economic reconciliation with Indigenous partners, and enables integrated EV charging and low-carbon construction practices;

WHEREAS analysis summarized by the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities, (FONOM} demonstrates high freight demand on these routes and strong safety/economic rationale for a 2+1 program;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Nairn and Hyman formally endorses the adoption and phased implementation of a 2+1 highway program on Highways 17 and 11 as a nation-building project; and

THAT the Government of Canada be urged to designate this initiative as a project of national interest under the Building Canada Act and to partner with Ontario to co-fund and accelerate planning, design, procurement, and construction; and

THAT the Government of Ontario be urged to expand the announced pilot to a corridor-wide program, sequencing works as follows (subject to readiness and safety benefit):

THAT the Government of Ontario prioritize these projects into the Ministry of Transportation's Major Projects Division; and

THAT both governments ensure early, ongoing, and capacity-supported engagement with affected Indigenous Nations, with opportunities for Indigenous training, contracting, and equity participation; and

THAT the program incorporates corridor-wide safety features (barrier-separated 2+1 cross-sections, controlled passing frequency, wildlife considerations}, resilience measures (closure mitigation, climate adaptation}, and clean-growth elements (EV charging readiness, recycled aggregates, lower-carbon materials; and

THAT this resolution be sent to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Transport (Canada}, the Minister of Infrastructure (Canada}, the Ontario Minister of Transportation, local MPs and MPPs, Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM}, Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA}, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO}, Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM}, Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA}, Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC} for support.

CARRIED

Sincerely Yours,



Belinda Ketchabaw
CAO Clerk - Treasurer

BK/mb

cc: Federal Minister of Infrastructure
Federal Minister of Transport
Premier of Ontario
Ontario Minister of Transportation
FONOM
NOMA
AMO
FCM
ROMA
EOWC
Local Member of Parliament
Local Member of Provincial Parliament

For Immediate Release

Northern Ontario Hill Days: NOMA and FONOM Bring a Unified Northern Voice to Ottawa

Thunder Bay, ON / North Bay, ON — December 3, 2025 — The Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) and the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) have concluded two highly productive days of meetings on Parliament Hill as part of **Northern Ontario Hill Days**, a coordinated advocacy mission that brought municipal leaders directly to federal decision-makers to advance the priorities of Northern communities.

Over the two-day mission, representatives from NOMA and FONOM met with **MPs from all parties, Cabinet Ministers, Opposition Leaders, and senior federal officials**, underscoring a shared message: **supporting the North is essential to strengthening Canada's economy, infrastructure, and communities.**

High-Impact Meetings Across Parliament Hill

Throughout the mission, the delegation engaged in focused discussions with:

- **Staff from the Leader of the Official Opposition**
- **MP Marcus Powlowski (Thunder Bay–Rainy River)**
- **MP Pauline Rochfort (Nipissing–Timiskaming)**
- **Finance Minister François-Philippe Champagne**
- **Minister Patty Hajdu**
- **Minister Mélanie Joly**
- **Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and Housing Jennifer McKelvie**
- **Parliamentary Secretary for Immigration Peter Fragiskatos**
- **Housing Critic Scott Aitchison (CPC)**
- **MP Eric Melillo (Kenora / Kiiwetinoong - CPC)**
- **Senior staff in the Prime Minister's Office**

These discussions centred on the urgent needs of Northern communities and the unique role the region plays in national economic growth, resource development, supply chain reliability, and community safety.

Advancing Key Priorities for Northern Communities

NOMA and FONOM presented a coordinated set of priorities, including:

■ **Strengthening the Trans-Canada Highway System**

Northern Ontario is home to the most vulnerable stretch of the Trans-Canada Highway. The delegation called for federal investment in 2+1 highway models, redundancy around critical pinch points, and long-term resilience planning to ensure the continuity of Canada's national supply chain.

▪ **Addressing Labour Shortages Through Tailored Immigration Pathways**

Municipal leaders emphasized that severe labour shortages are slowing growth across essential services, small businesses, and major industrial projects. The delegation pressed for rural- and Northern-specific immigration solutions to attract and retain workers and to support regional post-secondary institutions facing enrolment pressures.

▪ **Community Safety and Meaningful Bail Reform**

Delegates urged the federal government to take decisive action on chronic reoffending, improve accountability within the bail system, and support measures that restore safety and confidence in Northern communities.

▪ **Unlocking Economic Growth and Critical Minerals Development**

NOMA and FONOM highlighted the global significance of Northern Ontario's critical mineral potential and called for accelerated permitting, strategic infrastructure investments, and continued support for Indigenous-led partnerships.

Quotes:

"Northern Ontario's highways are Canada's highways. The Trans-Canada corridor through our region is the most vulnerable stretch in the entire country, and without real federal investment in redundancy, expansion, and safety upgrades, the national supply chain remains at constant risk. At the same time, our communities are facing historic labour shortages across every sector. We made it clear in Ottawa that Northern Ontario is ready to grow, but we need the workers—and the safe, reliable transportation infrastructure—to support that growth."

— **Rick Dumas, President, Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA)**

"Municipalities across Northern Ontario are confronting a community safety crisis driven by chronic and repeat offenders, and we pressed the federal government for meaningful bail reform that protects victims, reinforces accountability, and ensures our communities can feel safe again. At the same time, labour shortages are holding back everything from small businesses to major resource projects. Northern Ontario needs a federal partner committed to real solutions on both fronts if we are going to thrive."

— **Dave Plourde, President, Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)**

A Strong and Collaborative Presence

Northern Ontario Hill Days showcased unprecedented collaboration between the two regional associations, presenting a united and solutions-focused voice to federal leaders. Together, NOMA and FONOM affirmed that **a strong, growing Northern Ontario is foundational to building a strong and competitive Canada.**

Looking Ahead

NOMA and FONOM expressed their commitment to continuing this momentum through **annual federal engagement**, ensuring that the issues facing Northern communities remain front and centre in national discussions.

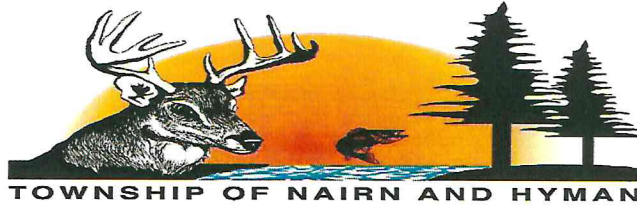
Both organizations also extended an invitation to federal leaders, stating that they **look forward to welcoming MPs, Ministers, and the Prime Minister** to their upcoming conferences to continue dialogue, strengthen relationships, and advance shared priorities for Northern Ontario.

—30—

Media Contacts:

Dave Plourde, President, FONOM
705-335-1615 | fonom.info@gmail.com

Rick Dumas, President, NOMA
807-683-6662 | admin@noma.on.ca



64 McIntyre Street • Nairn Centre, Ontario • P0M 2L0 ☎ 705-869-4232 📠 705-869-5248
Established: March 7, 1896 Office of the Clerk Treasurer, CAO E-mail: belindaketchabaw@nairncentre.ca

December 17, 2025

Association of Municipalities of Ontario
800 – 155 University Ave
Toronto, ON M5H 3B7

Re: Elect Respect Pledge

Please be advised our Council adopted the following resolution at their meeting of December 8, 2025:

SUPPORT RESOLUTION - RE: ELECT RESPECT PLEDGE

RESOLUTION # 2025-14-243

MOVED BY: Karen Richter

SECONDED BY: Wayne Austin

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the correspondence from the Township of Chapple regarding the Elect Respect pledge; be received and supported as outlined below:

WHEREAS democracy is healthy when everyone is able to participate fully and safely and contribute to the well-being of their community; and

WHEREAS we are witnessing the dissolution of democratic discourse and respectful debate across all levels of government and in neighbouring jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS Ontario's municipally elected officials and municipal staff are dealing with increasingly hostile, unsafe work environments facing threats and harassment; and

WHEREAS social media platforms have exacerbated disrespectful dialogue, negative commentary, and toxic engagement which disincentivizes individuals, especially women and candidates from diverse backgrounds from running for office; and

WHEREAS better decisions are made when democracy is respectful and constructive and the voices of diverse genders, identities, ethnicities, races, sexual orientation, ages and abilities are heard and represented around municipal council tables; and

WHEREAS the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's Healthy Democracy Project has identified concerning trends with fewer people voting in local elections and running for municipal office; and

WHEREAS in 2024, female elected representatives from across Halton formed a group called H.E.R. (Halton Elected Representatives) which pledged to speak out against harassment and negativity in politics and called on elected officials to uphold the highest standards of conduct; and

WHEREAS H.E.R. Halton has launched a campaign called Elect Respect to promote the importance of healthy democracy and safe, inclusive, respectful work environments for all elected officials and municipal staff that encourages individuals to participate in the political process.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Township of Nairn and Hyman supports the Elect Respect pledge and commits to:

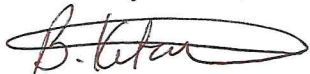
- Treat others with respect in all spaces—public, private, and online
- Reject and call out harassment, abuse, and personal attacks,
- Focus debate on ideas and policies, not personal attacks,
- Help build a supportive culture where people of all backgrounds feel safe to run for and hold office,
- Call on relevant authorities to ensure the protection of elected officials who face abuse or threats, and
- Model integrity and respect by holding one another to the highest standards of conduct; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That the Council of the Township of Nairn and Hyman calls on elected officials, organizations and community members to support the Elect Respect campaign and sign the online pledge at www.electrespect.ca; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, MP Jim Belanger and MPP Hon. Bill Rosenberg, and all Ontario Municipalities.

CARRIED

Sincerely Yours,



Belinda Ketchabaw
CAO Clerk - Treasurer

BK/mb

cc: Federation of Canadian Municipalities
MP Hon. Jim Belanger
MPP Hon. Bill Rosenberg
All Ontario Municipalities

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The Corporation of the Township of Chapple

P.O. Box 4, Barwick, Ontario P0W 1A0 CANADA

Phone: (807) 487-2354

www.chapple.on.ca

Fax: (807) 487-2406

CAO@chapple.on.ca

November 12, 2025

Sent via email: resolutions@amo.on.ca

Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
800 – 155 University Avenue
Toronto, ON M5H 3B7

RE: Elect Respect Pledge

Please be advised that at its Regular meeting on November 12, 2025, Council of the Township of Chapple passed the following resolution:

RES-173-2025

Moved by: Vaughan Wilson

Seconded by: Trish Neilson

Be it resolved that the correspondence from the Township of Southgate regarding the Elect Respect pledge; be received and supported as outlined below:

Whereas democracy is healthy when everyone is able to participate fully and safely and contribute to the well-being of their community; and

Whereas we are witnessing the dissolution of democratic discourse and respectful debate across all levels of government and in neighbouring jurisdictions; and

Whereas Ontario's municipally elected officials and municipal staff are dealing with increasingly hostile, unsafe work environments facing threats and harassment; and

Whereas social media platforms have exacerbated disrespectful dialogue, negative commentary, and toxic engagement which disincentivizes individuals, especially women and candidates from diverse backgrounds from running for office; and

Whereas better decisions are made when democracy is respectful and constructive and the voices of diverse genders, identities, ethnicities, races, sexual orientation, ages and abilities are heard and represented around municipal council tables; and

Whereas the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's Healthy Democracy Project has identified concerning trends with fewer people voting in local elections and running for municipal office; and

Whereas in 2024, female elected representatives from across Halton formed a group called H.E.R. (Halton Elected Representatives) which pledged to speak out against harassment and negativity in politics and called on elected officials to uphold the highest standards of conduct; and

Whereas H.E.R. Halton has launched a campaign called Elect Respect to promote the importance of healthy democracy and safe, inclusive, respectful work environments for all elected officials and municipal staff that encourages individuals to participate in the political process.

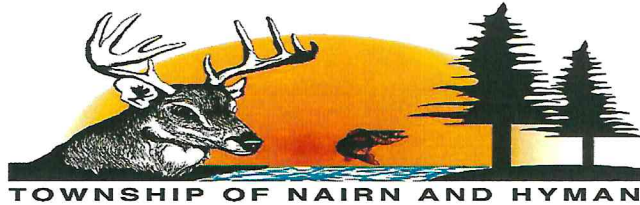
Now Therefore Be It Resolved That the Council of the Township of Chapple supports the Elect Respect pledge and commits to:

- Treat others with respect in all spaces—public, private, and online
- Reject and call out harassment, abuse, and personal attacks,
- Focus debate on ideas and policies, not personal attacks,
- Help build a supportive culture where people of all backgrounds feel safe to run for and hold office,
- Call on relevant authorities to ensure the protection of elected officials who face abuse or threats, and
- Model integrity and respect by holding one another to the highest standards of conduct; and

Be It Further Resolved That the Township of Chapple Council calls on elected officials, organizations and community members to support the Elect Respect campaign and sign the online pledge at www.electrespect.ca; and

Be It Further Resolved That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, MP Doug Shipley and MPP Hon. Doug Downey, the Ontario Provincial Police, and all Ontario Municipalities.

Cindy Nielson
CAO Clerk-Treasurer
Township of Chapple



64 McIntyre Street • Nairn Centre, Ontario • P0M 2L0 ☎ 705-869-4232 📠 705-869-5248
Established: March 7, 1896 Office of the Clerk Treasurer, CAO E-mail: belindaketchabaw@nairncentre.ca

December 17, 2025

The Right Honourable Mark Carney
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister:

Re: Support Resolution

On behalf of the Council of the Township of Nairn and Hyman, I am writing to formally convey Council's support for recent federal measures aimed at stabilizing and strengthening Canada's steel and softwood lumber sectors.

As a small Northern Ontario municipality whose economy is closely tied to the continued operation of Interfor, a local softwood lumber mill, Council is increasingly concerned that ongoing trade pressures and market uncertainty are placing added strain on the long-term viability of this key employer. Any reduction in operations or a potential closure would have significant and lasting consequences for local employment, municipal revenues, and the overall economic and social wellbeing of our community.

In this context, and in response to the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities' November 26, 2025 media release, Council adopted the enclosed resolution at their meeting of December 8, 2025:

SUPPORT FOR STEEL AND LUMBER SECTORS

RESOLUTION # 2025-14-247

MOVED BY: Karen Richter

SECONDED BY: Wayne Austin

WHEREAS the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) has issued a media release dated November 26, 2025, welcoming the Government of Canada's new measures to support the steel and softwood lumber sectors in response to ongoing U.S. tariff pressures; and

WHEREAS the federal actions—including strengthened protections for domestic producers, expanded financial supports, and increased incentives to utilize Canadian steel and lumber in federal infrastructure and housing projects—represent important steps in stabilizing industries that are vital to Northern Ontario's economy; and

WHEREAS municipalities across the North continue to experience the economic impacts of industry closures, including the recent shutdown of Domtar a pulp and paper mill in the neighboring Town of Espanola, which has demonstrated the vulnerability of resource-dependent communities and the need for coordinated intergovernmental support; and

WHEREAS the Township of Nairn and Hyman recognizes the significant role of Interfor, our local soft-wood lumber mill, as a major employer and economic anchor in our region, and further recognizes that any threat to its continued operation would have devastating consequences for workers, families, and local businesses; and

WHEREAS the Province of Ontario has a shared responsibility to ensure the long-term sustainability of the forestry, lumber, and steel sectors, which are foundational to the economic wellbeing of Northern and rural communities;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council of the Township of Nairn and Hyman commends the Government of Canada for its leadership and for implementing substantial measures to support Canada's steel and softwood lumber industries during this period of trade volatility; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Council respectfully urges the Government of Ontario to introduce additional financial, regulatory, and policy-based supports to ensure that Ontario's steel, forestry, and lumber sectors remain competitive, resilient, and able to withstand ongoing international trade pressures; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Council specifically calls upon the Province of Ontario to work directly with industry stakeholders, including municipalities and major employers such as Interfor, to create programs and investments that will help protect jobs, maintain production capacity, and support long-term industry growth in Northern Ontario; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, the Minister of Northern Development, FONOM, MP Jim Belanger, MPP Bill Rosenberg and all Ontario Municipalities.

CARRIED

Sincerely Yours,



Belinda Ketchabaw
CAO Clerk - Treasurer

BK/mb

cc: Premier of Ontario
Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry
Minister of Northern Development
FONOM
MP Hon. Jim Belanger
MPP Hon. Bill Rosenberg
All Ontario Municipalities

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 26, 2025

FONOM Welcomes Federal Support for Steel and Lumber Sectors Impacted by U.S. Tariffs

Northeastern Ontario – The Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) welcomes today's announcement by Prime Minister Mark Carney outlining new federal measures to support Canada's steel and softwood lumber industries, which continue to face unprecedented challenges due to aggressive U.S. tariff actions.

The federal plan includes strengthened protections for domestic producers, expanded financial supports for companies facing liquidity pressures, and new incentives to increase the use of Canadian steel and lumber in national infrastructure and housing projects. These measures aim to stabilize sectors vital to the economies of many Northern Ontario communities.

Prime Minister Carney announced that Canada will significantly tighten tariff-rate quotas on foreign steel imports, opening an estimated **\$850 million in domestic demand** for Canadian producers. In addition, the federal government is allocating **\$500 million in new financing** for softwood lumber firms, paired with a further **\$500 million expansion** of the Business Development Bank of Canada's softwood guarantee program.

FONOM is encouraged by the federal government's recognition of the pressures facing Northern resource-based communities, where steel and lumber operations support thousands of jobs and anchor local economies.

"These measures acknowledge what Northern Ontario has long understood — that our steel and lumber sectors are national economic pillars," said FONOM President Dave Plourde **"U.S. tariffs continue to destabilize communities across the North, and today's announcement provides needed tools to help our workers and industries adapt, compete, and grow."**

FONOM also welcomes the federal commitment to **reduce interprovincial freight rates by 50 per cent** for steel and lumber shipments beginning next spring. Lower transportation costs will help Northern producers access new domestic markets and move product efficiently while north-south trade remains constrained.

As part of the plan, the federal government will also advance the **Buy Canadian Policy**, ensuring that major defence, construction, and infrastructure projects prioritize Canadian steel, aluminum,

and wood products. This aligns strongly with FONOM's longstanding advocacy for procurement policies that support Canadian jobs and supply chains.

"Keeping Canadian dollars working in Canada is essential," added the President. "These steps will create new demand for made-in-Canada materials while helping stabilize communities affected by unpredictable U.S. trade actions."

FONOM looks forward to continued collaboration with federal officials to ensure the timely rollout of these programs, and to ensure that Northern Ontario municipalities and industries can fully benefit from the measures announced today.

Media Contact:

Dave Plourde, President

Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)

705-335-1615 | fonom.info@gmail.com



**The Corporation of the
Township of Perry**

Box 70 1695 Emsdale Road Emsdale, Ontario P0A 1J0

Date: December 17, 2025

Resolution No.: 2025- 448

Moved By: Joe Lumley Seconded By: Paul Sowrey

Be it resolved that the Council of the Township of Perry hereby support the October 21, 2025 resolution of the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury regarding the removal of the HST/GST from new homes purchased as primary residences to support housing affordability;

And that Council endorse the related November 3, 2025 supporting resolution of the Municipality of South Huron;

And that Council's supporting resolution be circulated to the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury, Municipality of South Huron, the Prime Minister of Canada, Minister of Finance and the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, the Premier of Ontario, the Ontario Minister of Finance, the Ontario Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, MP Scott Aitchison and MPP Graydon Smith, AMO, and to all municipalities in Ontario.

Carried: Defeated: Norm Hofstetter, Mayor

RECORDED VOTE		
Council	For	Against
Councillors Jim Cushman		
Joe Lumley		
Margaret Ann MacPhail		
Paul Sowrey		
Mayor Norm Hofstetter		



SMITHS FALLS

RISE AT THE FALLS

December 16, 2025

*Honourable Doug Ford,
Premier of Ontario*

Re: Urging Province to Re-instate the Eligibility for Curbside Blue Box Collection

Please be advised that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls passed the following resolution at their December 15, 2025 Council meeting:

WHEREAS the Province of Ontario designated producers to be responsible to collect recycling in the Province; and

WHEREAS nonprofit organizations, including our local food banks, have been deemed ineligible for producer blue box collection effective January 1 2026; and

WHEREAS food insecurity is a local, provincial and federal issue; and

WHEREAS food banks need to receive grocery items that are delivered in cardboard boxes and cartons which generate copious amounts of recyclable material; and

WHEREAS food banks are volunteer and donation based with no revenue collected to pay for services such as removal of recyclable materials;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of Town of Smiths Falls strongly urges the Province to re-instate the eligibility for curbside blue box collection January 1 2026, for nonprofit organizations, such as food banks; and



SMITHS FALLS

RISE AT THE FALLS

THAT this motion be forwarded to Premier Doug Ford, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, to the local MP and MPP, Eastern Ontario Mayor's Caucus, AMO, and all Ontario municipalities for support.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions and/or concerns.

Yours truly,

Kerry Costello
Town Clerk



December 16, 2025

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy
Ontario Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks

Re: Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

Please be advised that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls passed the following resolution at their December 15, 2025 Council meeting:

WHEREAS the Conservation Authorities Act (1946) enables municipalities to establish local conservation authorities, and when municipalities choose to form such authorities, they assume responsibility for governance and funding through the appointment of a Board of Directors and the provision of an annual levy;

AND WHEREAS local municipalities established the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority in 1966, and currently provide approximately 50% of total conservation authority funding, while the Province of Ontario provides approximately 3%;

AND WHEREAS municipalities have governed their respective conservation authorities for decades, tailoring programs and services to local watershed needs, maintaining accountable services standards, and ensuring fair and predictable costs for ratepayers;

AND WHEREAS Bill 68 (Schedule 3) and ERO posting 025-1257 proposes to consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional authorities and create the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, a Crown agency that would assume oversight over conservation authorities and have the ability to levy authorities to cover its costs;

AND WHEREAS the Province already possesses the authority to establish overarching legislation, regulations, standards and policies across all conservation authorities through



SMITHS FALLS

RISE AT THE FALLS

the Conservation Authorities Act and the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Town of Smiths Falls calls on the Government of Ontario to maintain local, independent, municipally governed, watershed-based conservation authorities to ensure strong local representation in decisions related to municipal levies, community-focused service delivery, and the protection and management of conservation lands;

AND FURTHER THAT while the Town of Smiths Falls supports provincial goals for consistent permit approval processes, shared services and digital modernization, imposing a new top-down agency structure without strong local accountability and governance risks creating unnecessary cost, red tape, and bureaucracy, thereby undermining efficiency and responsiveness to local community needs;

AND FURTHER THAT the Town of Smiths Falls supports efforts to balance expertise, capacity and program delivery across the province, and requests that the province work collaboratively with municipalities and local conservation authorities to determine the most effective level of strategic consolidation to achieve both provincial and local objectives;

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this resolution be sent to the Ontario Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, to the local MP(s) and MPP(s), the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Rural Ontario Municipal Association, the local conservation authority(s), and all municipalities in Ontario.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions and/or concerns.

Yours truly,

Kerry Costello
Town Clerk

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLEDecember 2nd, 2025Report #PD-2025-21
Noelle Reeve, Planner**PROPOSED BOUNDARIES FOR THE REGIONAL CONSOLIDATION OF ONTARIO'S
CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES****STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended:

“THAT, staff submit comments to the Environmental Registry of Ontario posting <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/025-1257> Proposed boundaries for the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities;

AND THAT, this report be circulated to the Honourable Todd J. McCarthy, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks; the Honourable Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance; local MPP the Honourable John Jordan; Mayor Christa Lowry, the Chair of the Rural Ontario Municipal Association; and Sommer Casgrain Robertson, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority; Sally McIntyre, Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority.”

BACKGROUND

On November 7, 2025, the province of Ontario introduced <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/025-1257> “Proposed boundaries for the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities” for public comment by December 22, 2025.

The province states that, “Ontario's 36 conservation authorities play a vital role in watershed management and protecting communities from natural hazards like floods. Conservation authorities deliver programs and services that further the conservation, restoration, and management of natural resources. Conservation authorities review permit applications and issue permits to builders, municipalities and property owners for development activities such as housing developments, installation of sewage systems in areas affected by risks of natural hazards such as floodplains, shorelines, river and stream valleys, and wetlands. Permitting administered by conservation authorities helps to ensure that development does not happen in unsafe areas and that it does not worsen the impacts of flooding or erosion in surrounding areas.”

However, the province believes, “The current system of 36 separate conservation authorities is fragmented, with each conservation authority following different policies, standards, fees and levels of staffing and technical capabilities. This has led to unpredictable and inconsistent

turnaround times for approvals across all conservation authorities, creating uncertainty and delays for builders, landowners and farmers seeking permits, and undermining conservation authorities' ability to protect communities from floods and natural hazards."

Therefore, the province intends to "consolidate the province's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional conservation authorities" (see Attachment 1 Map). Tay Valley Township would be included in the proposed St. Lawrence Regional Conservation Authority (see Attachment 2 Map).

The proposed St. Lawrence Regional Conservation Authority would include 5 conservation authorities (the Rideau Valley, Mississippi Valley, Cataraqui, Raisin Region, and South Nation Conservation Authorities) containing 46 municipalities ranging in population from large (Ottawa, Kingston, Cornwall) to small (Front of Yonge, Westport) and in geographical size from Greater Madawaska to the Town of Merrickville-Wolford (see Attachment 3 for a list).

On November 6, 2025 the province introduced Bill 68, Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2025 (No. 2). Schedule 3 of Bill 68 proposes to amend the Conservation Authorities Act to establish the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency – a provincial board-governed agency – "to provide centralized leadership, efficient governance, strategic direction, and oversight of Ontario's conservation authorities".

"Where the Minister considers it to be in the public interest to do so, the Minister may issue directions to the Agency. The Agency may issue directions to one or more conservation authorities but must first provide the Minister with a copy of the proposed direction, allowing the Minister the opportunity to take specified actions."

"The Agency is authorized to establish and require the payment of fees and to take steps to recover its costs and expenses. Other provisions include limitations on personal liability for specified persons and the barring of specified proceedings. Regulation-making authorities for both the Lieutenant Governor in Council and the Minister are also added to the Act."

DISCUSSION

Since Ontario municipalities are the primary funders of conservation authorities, they should decide the structure of these organizations moving forward. Local municipalities currently provide between 25 per cent and 50 per cent of total conservation authority funding, while the province of Ontario provides approximately three (3) per cent.

There will be 47 municipalities included in our proposed region, going all the way from Deseronto to the Quebec border, Ottawa and close to the Bancroft area. These watersheds vary widely from clay plains to granite bedrock making uniform application of province-wide standards complex. Ensuring that regional authorities can adapt provincial standards to local hydrological and ecological conditions will be critical.

We really appreciate the local connection we have with our conservation authorities and are concerned about what affect the change will have on the local presence of conservation authority staff. Amalgamation of Health Units in our area has seen the closure of 4 local

offices. We would not want to see a similar reduction in service from Conservation Authorities.

It is not clear how the proposed Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency will interact with the new Regional Conservation Authority Boards. It seems like an additional layer of bureaucracy that municipalities will have to pay for.

Turnaround time on permitting through local conservation authorities in Eastern Ontario is currently fast, and according to Peter Young, Planning and Economic Development Director, United Counties of Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry, permitting costs are between 33 and 50 per cent of the costs seen in other conservation authorities across the province.

Will we be saddled with extra costs for the extra layer of bureaucracy the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency represents? Tay Valley Township has experience with the amalgamation of Police Services Boards into one Lanark County Board and the extra costs that brought.

Thousands of acres of land have been donated as personal legacies for long-term protection and stewardship, entrusted specifically to local conservation authorities, and Bill 68 could negate that giving in the future because of the loss of local connection.

A one-size fits all approach does not always work. It is not clear how many seats local municipalities would have on a regional board. Local influence and representation could be impacted.

The province has asked five questions as part of its public consultation:

- 1) What do you see as key factors to support a successful transition and outcome of regional conservation authority consolidation?

No reduction in levels of protection. Levels of environmental protect should be uniformly raised to the highest level in the same Region. No reduction in service levels to municipalities e.g., report cards on state of watersheds, catchments, etc., provision of permits to the public, etc.

- 2) What opportunities or benefits may come from a regional conservation authority framework?

Providing smaller conservation authorities with better modelling capacity for climate change impacts.

- 3) Do you have suggestions for how governance could be structured at the regional conservation authority level, including suggestions around board size, make-up and the municipal representative appointment process?

For each municipality to have representation, a 47 member board would be needed which seems unwieldy.

- 4) Do you have suggestions on how to maintain a transparent and consultative budgeting process across member municipalities within a regional conservation authority?

Get the proposed budget into the hands of the municipal representative by August since most municipalities start work on their budgets in September.

- 5) How can regional conservation authorities maintain and strengthen relationships with local communities and stakeholders?

Increase communication staff so that messages can be delivered in a timely manner.

STRATEGIC PLAN LINK

Strong Community and Thriving Economy – Water is life. Without clean water and safety from flooding and drought there is no economy.

Healthy Environment – Without local environmental knowledge, natural heritage will be lost.

CLIMATE CONSIDERATIONS

Information on microclimates and ecological niches may be lost due to management at a higher level.

CONCLUSION

The Planner concludes that the Township should comment on the Environmental Registry of Ontario posting so that the province hears which of the proposals the Township supports and hears our concerns about the specific potential negative impacts on our rural area.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Map of Proposed 7 Regional Conservation Authorities
- 2) Map of Proposed St. Lawrence Regional Conservation Authority
- 3) List of Current Conservation Authorities and Municipalities that Would Fall Within the Proposed St. Lawrence Regional Conservation Authority

Prepared and Submitted By:



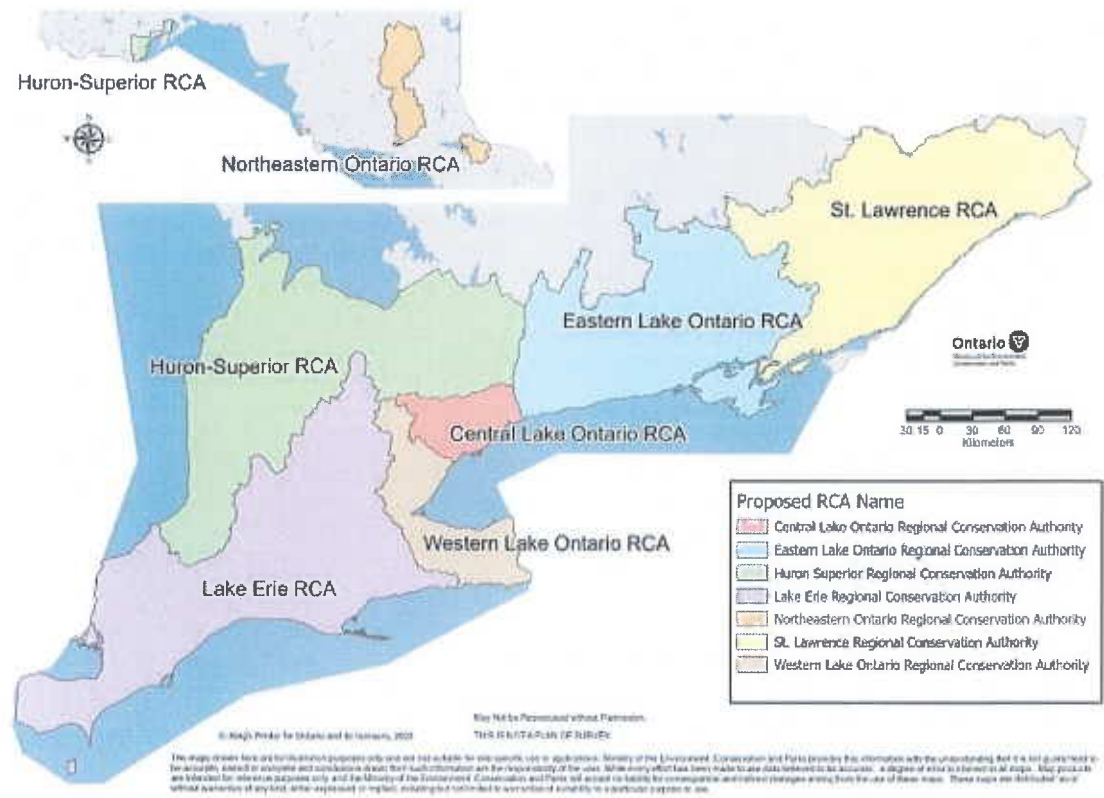
**Noelle Reeve,
Planner**

Approved for Submission By:

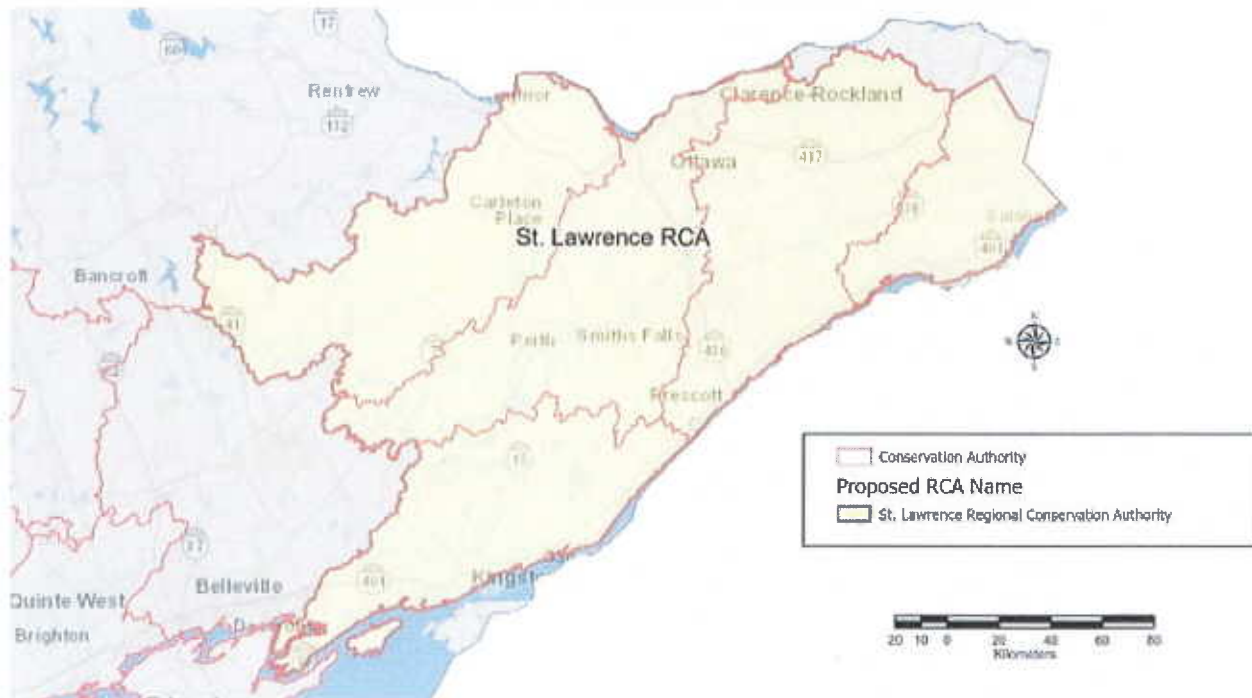


**Amanda Mabo,
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk**

PROPOSED 7 REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES (RCA)



ST. LAWRENCE REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY



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 Ministry of Transportation
 416-325-9696

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Attachment 3

Municipalities that would fall within the proposed St. Lawrence Regional Conservation Authority include:

- City of Brockville
- City of Clarence-Rockland
- City of Cornwall
- City of Kingston
- City of Ottawa
- Municipality of Mississippi Mills
- Municipality of North Grenville
- Municipality of South Dundas
- Municipality of The Nation
- Town of Carleton Place
- Town of Gananoque
- Town of Greater Napanee
- Town of Perth
- Town of Prescott
- Town of Smiths Falls
- Township of Addington Highlands
- Township of Alfred and Plantagenet
- Township of Athens
- Township of Augusta
- Township of Beckwith
- Township of Central Frontenac
- Township of Champlain
- Township of Drummond/North Elmsley
- Township of East Hawkesbury
- Township of Edwardsburgh/Cardinal
- Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley
- Township of Front of Yonge
- Township of Greater Madawaska
- Township of Lanark Highlands
- Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands
- Township of Loyalist
- Township of Montague
- Township of North Dundas
- Township of North Frontenac
- Township of North Glengarry

18

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- Township of North Stormont
 - Township of Rideau Lakes
 - Township of Russell
 - Township of South Frontenac
 - Township of South Glengarry
 - Township of South Stormont
 - Township of Stone Mills
 - Township of Tay Valley
 - Village of Casselman
 - Village of Merrickville-Wolford
 - Village of Westport

Current conservation authorities that would make up the proposed St. Lawrence Regional Conservation Authority include:

- Cataraqui Region CA
- Rideau Valley CA
- Mississippi Valley CA
- South Nation River CA
- Raisin Region CA



December 16, 2025

The Honorable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

Sent by Email

Dear: Honorable Doug Ford,

RE: Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities.

The Council of the Corporation of Tay Valley Township at its meeting held on December 9th, 2025, adopted the following resolution:

RESOLUTION #C-2025-12-14

MOVED BY: Wayne Baker

SECONDED BY: Angela Pierman

“WHEREAS, water resources and water availability is the defining issue of this century due to the impacts of climate change which Tay Valley Township has already experienced (through dry wells and below normal river levels this summer and floods in 2017 and 2019),

AND WHEREAS, Ontario's Conservation Authorities play a critical role in watershed management, flood mitigation, drought mitigation, and public safety;

AND WHEREAS, Tay Valley Township has already experienced negative consequences of centralized management of water resources from afar (the Ministry of Natural Resources staff in Toronto have previously directed the depth of water at the Pike Lake Dam be lowered during a pickerel spawn event resulting in the death of the pickerel);

AND WHEREAS, municipalities must retain a strong, meaningful voice to ensure that local knowledge, local priorities and local risks are fully considered;

AND WHEREAS, the Conservation Authorities Act (1946) enables municipalities to establish local conservation authorities, and when municipalities choose to form such authorities, they assume responsibility for governance and funding through the appointment of a Board of Directors and the provision of an annual levy;

AND WHEREAS, local municipalities established the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority in 1966 and the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority in 1968 and currently provide over 50% of total conservation authority funding, while the Province of Ontario provides less than 5%;

AND WHEREAS, municipalities have governed their respective conservation authorities for decades, tailoring programs and services to local watershed needs, maintaining accountable services standards, and ensuring fair and predictable costs for ratepayers;

AND WHEREAS, Bill 68 (Schedule 3) and ERO posting 025-1257 propose to consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional authorities and create the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, a Crown agency that would assume oversight over conservation authorities and have the ability to levy authorities to cover its costs;

AND WHEREAS, the Province already possesses the authority to establish overarching legislation, regulations, standards and policies across all conservation authorities through the Conservation Authorities Act and the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, Tay Valley Township strongly urges the Provincial Government of Ontario to withdraw all sections of Bill 68 related to Amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Tay Valley Township calls on the Government of Ontario to maintain local, independent, municipally governed, watershed-based conservation authorities to ensure strong local representation in decisions related to municipal levies, community-focused service delivery, and the protection and management of conservation lands;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Province be requested to re-introduce any proposed changes as a standalone bill to proceed through the regular legislative process (First and Second Readings, Committee Review, stakeholder submissions and public consultation) to ensure the impacts on watershed management, environmental protection and public safety are fully and transparently captured;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, while Tay Valley Township supports provincial goals for consistent permit approval processes, shared services and digital modernization, imposing a new top-down agency structure without strong local accountability and governance risks creating unnecessary cost, red tape, and bureaucracy, thereby undermining efficiency and responsiveness to local community needs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Tay Valley Township supports efforts to balance expertise, capacity and program delivery across the province, and requests that the province work collaboratively with municipalities and local conservation authorities to determine the most effective level of strategic consolidation to achieve both provincial and local objectives;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Tay Valley Township calls on the province to consider any potential amalgamation of Conservation Authorities on the basis of their abiotic, biologic and cultural characteristics (i.e. remove the Cataraqui Region and all lands not draining to the Ottawa River);

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the province maintains the local knowledge of the unique natural resources, weather and climactic features of the RVCA and MVCA watersheds through local staffing;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the current assets (including financial reserves and land trusts) of the RVCA and MVCA remain with them to recognize their fiscal prudence and are not used to subsidize conservation authorities with fewer assets or developed upon;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the province ensure that any future governance framework for Ontario's Conservation Authorities includes robust and clearly defined municipal representation, recognizing municipalities as essential partners in protecting watershed and mitigating risks;

AND BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT, a copy of this resolution be sent to the Premier of Ontario, Ontario Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, Ontario Minister of Finance, to the local MPP, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Rural Ontario Municipal Association, the local conservation authority(s), and all municipalities in Ontario."

ADOPTED

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at (613) 267-5353 ext. 130 or deputyclerk@tayvalleytwp.ca

Sincerely,



Aaron Watt, Deputy Clerk

cc: Hon. Todd J. McCarthy Ontario Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks,
Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy Ontario Minister of Finance,
John Jordan, MPP Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston,
Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), RVCA, MVCA and all Ontario Municipalities
Sally McIntyre, General Manager, Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority
Sommer Casgrain-Robertson, General Manager, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority

/Enclosure



Town of The Blue Mountains

32 Mill Street, Box 310
THORNBURY, ON N0H 2P0
<https://www.thebluemountains.ca>

OFFICE OF: Mayor Andrea Matrosovs

Email: mayor@thebluemountains.ca

Phone: 519-599-3131 Ext 406

December 5, 2025

Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks
College Park
5th Floor
777 Bay St.
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3
Email: minister.mecp@ontario.ca

RE: Town of The Blue Mountains Opposition to Bill 68 and the Proposed Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities

Honourable Minister McCarthy,

The Town of The Blue Mountains Council would like to express our concerns regarding Bill 68 and the proposed consolidation of Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities into seven regional authorities. As a community with a strong and long-standing partnership with our local conservation authorities, we believe the proposed regional restructuring does not align with the best interests of our residents or the unique environmental needs of our community.

As a Council, we support provincial efforts to enhance efficiency through standardized fee schedules, policies, guidelines and online permitting systems. However, we believe that these improvements can be achieved without compromising the local expertise, responsiveness and accountability that watershed-based authorities currently provide.

The proposed consolidation raises significant concerns for The Blue Mountains Council regarding the loss of local expertise and the reduction of accessible, timely support for residents, builders and developers. Local conservation authorities possess a deep knowledge of watershed conditions, natural hazards and community priorities that cannot be effectively replicated at a broader regional scale. Centralizing the functions of local conservation authorities risks diluting the community-driven programming and tailored services that protect natural resources and support sustainable development in The Blue Mountains, while also diminishing meaningful municipal representation in decision-making. We are further concerned that a top-down

structure may introduce unnecessary transition costs, red tape and additional layers of bureaucracy, which hinder efficiency, rather than improve it.

Given these concerns, we urge you to reconsider the implications of the proposed amalgamation and to directly engage with municipalities and conservation authorities before finalizing any consolidation boundaries or legislative amendments. We respectfully request that the province consider alternative approaches that maintain local, municipally governed, watershed-based conservation authorities while supporting shared objectives of modernization and efficiency improvements. We believe that strengthening and supporting existing structures, rather than replacing them, will help to preserve local expertise, ensure consistent service delivery, and uphold the principles of community-focused governance.

Thank you for considering the perspective of the Town of The Blue Mountains. We look forward to your response and hopeful reconsideration of this proposal.

Warm regards,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Matrosovs', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mayor Andrea Matrosovs
Town of The Blue Mountains

December 16, 2025

VIA EMAIL

RE: Bill 68 and Proposed Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

At its meeting held December 10, 2025 Oxford County Council passed the following resolution:

Moved By: Brian Petrie
Seconded By: David Mayberry

Resolved that Correspondence Item 7.4 be received as information; and,

Whereas the Conservation Authorities Act (1946) enables municipalities to establish local conservation authorities, and when municipalities choose to form such authorities, they assume responsibility for governance and funding through the appointment of a Board of Directors and the provision of an annual levy to cover expenses; and,

Whereas the local municipalities of Oxford County established the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) with other consenting municipalities within the watershed. (initially formed in 1947) along with Grand River Conservation Authority (1948), Catfish Creek Conservation Authority (1950) and Long Point Conservation Authority (1948); and,

Whereas local municipalities currently provide approximately 35% of total conservation authority funding, while the Province of Ontario provides approximately 2% (2026 budget); and,

Whereas municipalities have governed and invested local rate payer funds in their respective conservation authorities for decades, tailoring programs and services to local watershed needs, maintaining accountable service standards, and ensuring fair and predictable costs for ratepayers; and,

Whereas conservation authorities collectively own and manage thousands of acres of land. Many of these properties were entrusted to the UTRCA for long-term protection, stewardship, and the public good, with the expectation that such lands would be cared for by locally governed conservation authorities; and,

Whereas Bill 68 (Schedule 3) proposes the creation of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, a Crown corporation that would assume governance responsibilities and consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional authorities, with municipal cost apportionment yet to be defined; and,

Whereas the Province already possesses the authority to establish overarching legislation, regulations, and standards through the Conservation Authorities Act and the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks;

Now therefore be it resolved that the Council of the County of Oxford calls on the Government of Ontario to maintain local, independent, municipally governed, watershed-based conservation authorities to ensure strong local representation in decisions related to municipal levies, community-focused service delivery, and the protection and management of conservation lands;

And further that while the County of Oxford supports provincial goals towards consistent permit approval processes, shared services, and digital modernization, it does not support it through imposing a new top-down agency structure creating unnecessary cost, red tape, and bureaucracy, undermining efficiency and responsiveness to local community needs;

And further that the County of Oxford supports efforts to balance expertise, capacity, and program delivery across the province, and requests that the Province work collaboratively with municipalities and local conservation authorities;

And further that the Province respect the roles that Municipalities and Conservation Authorities play in conservation and governance; And further that Oxford County advocate that it is not in favour of the proposed changes;

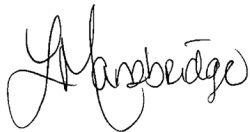
And further that a copy of this resolution be sent to:

- the Ontario Minister of Environment, Conservation, and Parks,
- local MPPs,
- Association of Municipalities of Ontario,
- Rural Ontario Municipal Association,
- area Indigenous communities,
- all Ontario municipalities,
- Conservation Authorities, and
- Conservation Ontario

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Should you require anything further or have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Mansbridge', written in a cursive style.

Lindsey A. Mansbridge
County Clerk



December 18, 2025

Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks
College Park
5th Floor.
777 Bay St.
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3
Email: minister.mecp@ontario.ca

Honourable Minister McCarthy,

Re: Municipality of Meaford Response to Proposed Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities

Please be advised that the Council of the Municipality of Meaford adopted the following resolution at its meeting on December 15, 2025.

Moved by: Councillor Uhrig
Seconded by: Deputy Mayor Keaveney

Whereas the Conservation Authorities Act enables municipalities to establish local conservation authorities, and when municipalities choose to form such authorities, they assume responsibility for governance and funding through the appointment of a Board of Directors and the provision of an annual levy to cover expenses; and

Whereas the municipalities within Grey and Bruce Counties established the North Grey Region Conservation Authority in 1957 and the Sauble Valley Conservation Authority in 1958 which amalgamated into the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) in 1985; and

Whereas local municipalities currently provide approximately 44% of total GSCA funding, while the Province of Ontario provides approximately 7%; and

Whereas municipalities have governed their respective conservation authorities for decades, tailoring programs and services to local

watershed needs, maintaining accountable service standards, and ensuring fair and predictable costs for ratepayers; and

Whereas conservation authorities collectively own and manage thousands of hectares of land, much of which was donated or sold by local residents and entrusted to conservation authorities as a personal legacy for long-term protection, stewardship, and the public good, with the expectation that such lands would be cared for by locally governed conservation authorities; and

Whereas Bill 68 (Schedule 3) proposes the creation of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency whose objects include overseeing conservation authorities and the transition to a regional watershed-based framework for conservation authorities in Ontario with municipal cost contribution yet to be defined; and

Whereas the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks has posted Environmental Registry Notice No. 025-1257 ("Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities"), proposing to reduce Ontario's 36 conservation authorities to 7 regional entities as part of a broader restructuring; and

Whereas under this proposal, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) would be consolidated into a new "Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority" that is over 23,000 square kilometres in size and consists of 80 municipalities; and

Whereas the Province already has the authority to establish overarching legislation, regulations and standards through the Conservation Authorities Act and the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks to address issues related to permitting, by establishing guidance, online permitting platforms and technical standards through legislation that could help build homes; and

Whereas the GSCA has already undertaken significant modernization work aligned with provincial objectives, including Information Technology / Information Management, and leveraging technology to streamline

planning and permit review processes processing 100% of major permits within the provincial timelines in 2024;

Therefore be it resolved that the Municipality of Meaford calls on the Government of Ontario to maintain local, independent, municipally governed, watershed-based conservation authorities to ensure strong local representation in decisions related to municipal levies, community-focused service delivery, and the protection and management of conservation lands; and

Be it further resolved that the Municipality of Meaford does not support the proposed “Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority” boundary configuration outlined in Environmental Registry Notice 025-1257 as the proposal lacks sufficient justification, would significantly diminish local governance, and fails to recognize the effectiveness and efficiencies already achieved within existing watershed-based models; and

Be it further resolved that the Municipality of Meaford affirms that large-scale regional consolidation is unnecessary, would introduce substantial transition costs, and would divert resources away from frontline watershed programs. The Council further asserts that restructuring at this scale would erode local decision-making, weaken municipal accountability, and disrupt long-standing community partnerships that are central to delivering responsive watershed management; and

Be it further resolved that while the Municipality of Meaford supports provincial goals for consistent permit approval processes, shared services, and digital modernization, imposing a new top-down approach structure without strong local accountability and governance risks creating unnecessary cost, red-tape, and bureaucracy, thereby undermining efficiency and responsiveness to local community needs; and

Be it further resolved that the Municipality of Meaford urges the Province to strengthen centralized standards, resources, and tools rather than undertaking broad structural amalgamation and to provide sustainable, predictable provincial funding across conservation authorities to enable local CAs to advance ongoing digitization and systemization work that has



already resulted in improved efficiency and consistency in recent years;
and

Be it further resolved that the Municipality of Meaford believes that the Province's proposed new online permitting portal can be implemented within the existing conservation authority framework without requiring structural amalgamation; and

Be it further resolved that the Municipality of Meaford requests that the Ministry engage meaningfully and collaboratively with affected municipalities, conservation authorities, and local Indigenous communities before advancing any consolidation, to ensure that any changes reflect both local needs and the practical realities of implementation; and

Be it further resolved that this resolution be included in the Municipality's ERO response and forwarded to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, all of Ontario's municipalities, MPPs, conservation authorities, AMO, and Conservation Ontario.

Carried - Resolution #2025-46-09

Yours sincerely,

Allison Penner

Deputy Clerk / Manager, Legislative Services

Municipality of Meaford

21 Trowbridge Street West, Meaford

519-538-1060, ext. 1110 | apenner@meaford.ca



cc: The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
All Ontario Municipalities
All Ontario Members of Provincial Parliament
All Ontario Conservation Authorities
Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
Conservation Ontario
Submission to Environmental Registry Notice 025-1257



The Corporation of the Township of Drummond/North Elmsley

310 Port Elmsley Road • Perth • Ontario • K7H 3C7

December 12th, 2025

Hon. Todd McCarthy, Ontario Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks
Scott Reid, MP
John Jordan, MPP Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston
Association of Municipalities of Ontario
Rural Ontario Municipal Association
Rideau Valley Conservation Authority
Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority
All Municipalities in Ontario

Re: Proposed Consolidation of Conservation Authorities & New Provincial Conservation Agency

At its Council meeting on December 9th, 2025, the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Drummond/North Elmsley adopted the following motion:

Resolution Number 25-122

WHEREAS, the *Conservation Authorities Act* (1946) enables municipalities to establish local conservation authorities, and when municipalities choose to form such authorities, they assume responsibility for governance and funding through the appointment of a Board of Directors and the provision of an annual levy;

AND WHEREAS, local municipalities established the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority in 1966 and the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority in 1968, and currently provide over 50% of total conservation authority funding, while the Province of Ontario provides less than 5%;

AND WHEREAS, municipalities have governed their respective conservation authorities for decades, tailoring programs and services to local watershed needs, maintaining accountable services standards, and ensuring fair and predictable costs for ratepayers;

AND WHEREAS, Bill 68 (Schedule 3) and ERO posting 025-1257 proposes to consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional authorities and create the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, a Crown agency that would assume oversight over conservation authorities and have the ability to levy authorities to cover its costs;



The Corporation of the Township of Drummond/North Elmsley

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AND WHEREAS, the Province already possesses the authority to establish overarching legislation, regulations, standards and policies across all conservation authorities through the *Conservation Authorities Act* and the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Township of Drummond/North Elmsley calls on the Government of Ontario to maintain local, independent, municipally governed, watershed-based conservation authorities to ensure strong local representation in decisions related to municipal levies, community-focused service delivery, and the protection and management of conservation lands;

AND FURTHER THAT, while the Township of Drummond/North Elmsley supports provincial goals for consistent permit approval processes, shared services and digital modernization, imposing a new top-down agency structure without strong local accountability and governance risks creating unnecessary cost, red tape, and bureaucracy, thereby undermining efficiency and responsiveness to local community needs;

AND FURTHER THAT, the Township of Drummond/North Elmsley supports efforts to balance expertise, capacity and program delivery across the province, and requests that the province work collaboratively with municipalities and local conservation authorities to determine the most effective level of strategic consolidation to achieve both provincial and local objectives;

AND FURTHER THAT, a copy of this resolution be sent to the Ontario Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, to the local MP(s) and MPP(s), the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Rural Ontario Municipal Association, the local conservation authority(s), and all municipalities in Ontario.

CARRIED

Sincerely,

Janie Laidlaw,
Clerk