



**AMO CONFERENCE**  
**August 17–August 20, 2025**  
**Ottawa**

Last updated : August 14, 2025

<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Meeting Details</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Led by:</b> Confirmed Attending:	<b>Staff Contact</b>
Mon Aug 18 9:35-9:50	<b>MRA</b> <b>Minister Thompson</b>	Rogers Centre Ottawa, Room 209 on the 2nd level.	<b>Ed Ketchabaw</b> Bernia Martin	Richard Gibson 519 718 6375
Mon Aug 18 12:45-1:00 pm	<b>OMAF</b> <b>Minister Trevor Jones</b>	Fairmont Château Laurier Gatineau Room 1 Rideau Street	<b>Bernia Martin</b> Ed Ketchabaw	Nate Hunter <a href="mailto:nate.hunter@ontario.ca">nate.hunter@ontario.ca</a> 519-546-8037
Mon Aug 18 3:05-3:15	<b>MCURES</b> <b>Minister Quinn</b>	Fairmont Château Laurier Palladian Room 1 Rideau Street Ottawa, ON	<b>Ed Ketchabaw</b>	Aoife Fulton <a href="mailto:Aoife.Fulton@ontario.ca">Aoife.Fulton@ontario.ca</a> 437-676-5801
Mon Aug 18 5:25-5:40	<b>MTO</b> <b>Parliamentary Assistant,</b> <b>Hardeep Singh Grewal</b>	Rogers Centre Room 213 Level 2 55 Colonel By Drive.	<b>Ed Ketchabaw</b>	Shahid, Noor (MTO) <a href="mailto:Noor.Shahid@ontario.ca">Noor.Shahid@ontario.ca</a> Tate, Branden (MTO) <a href="mailto:Branden.Tate@ontario.ca">Branden.Tate@ontario.ca</a>
Tues August 19 10:00am	<b>Green Party</b>	New Brunswick Room on the fourth floor of the Westin	<b>Bernia Martin</b> Ed Ketchabaw	Candace LePage <a href="mailto:candicelepage@gpo.ca">candicelepage@gpo.ca</a>
Tues Aug 19 11:30-11:45	<b>MEDJCT</b> <b>Parliamentary Assistant</b> <b>Brian Saunderson</b>	Fairmont Chateau Laurier 1 Rideau St, Ottawa, ON K1N 8S7 L'Orangerie Room	<b>Ed Ketchabaw</b>	Ashakah, Philomena (MEDJCT) <a href="mailto:Philomena.Ashakah@ontario.ca">Philomena.Ashakah@ontario.ca</a>
Tues Aug 19 1:30-1:55	<b>Liberal Party</b>	Newfoundland room in the Westin Ottawa.	<b>Bernia Martin</b> Ed Ketchabaw	Maisie Harrison <a href="mailto:MHarrison@liberal.ola.org">MHarrison@liberal.ola.org</a>



**AMO CONFERENCE**  
**August 17–August 20, 2025**  
**Ottawa**

**Board attendees**

David Bailey	Brant	(226) 387-2490
Jennifer Kyle	Brant	Not attending
Ed Ketchabaw	Elgin	519 619 8432
Todd Noble	Elgin	(519) 636-6608
Sharron McMillan	Thames Centre	519-709-8372
Amy Martin	Norfolk	519 429 9814
Chris Van Paassen	Norfolk	Not attending
Bernia Martin	Oxford	519 788 0639
Deb Gilvesy	Oxford	Not attending
Kimberly Earls	SCOR EDC	519 983 0410

# AMO 2025

CONFERENCE



SOUTH CENTRAL ONTARIO REGION  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

SCOR EDC



## ABOUT SCOR EDC

The South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corporation (SCOR EDC) is a regional partnership comprised of the Counties of Brant, Elgin, Middlesex, Norfolk and Oxford. SCOREDC was incorporated in 2010 as a means to provide planning and coordination for regional issues, implement regional economic development priorities, identify funding sources and to partner with other levels of government, and act as a regional catalyst for investment. SCOR EDC is home to just under 1 million residents living in rural communities and around 1.5 million including the separated cities within our borders. Our five county region represents one-third of Ontario's rural population.

## Key Priorities

- 01** Infrastructure that fosters economic development
- 02** Human Capital and workforce to support economic development
- 03** Sector development with a focus on agriculture and food processing

# SCOR EDC AT A GLANCE

5

Counties

28

Municipalities

1M

Just under 1 M residents

1/3

Ontario's Rural Population

20-30%

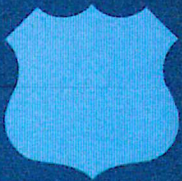
Projected growth of the next 20 years



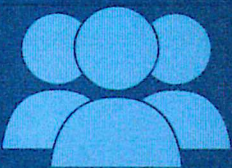
# TRANSPORTATION IN SCOR



Served by Class 1 Railways CN and CP



Intersected and served by 401, 402 and 403 transportation corridors



Located within a 2-hour drive to 1/2 of Ontario's population (nearly 6 million people)



Located within a 3-hour drive to 6 U.S./ Canadian border crossings to Michigan, Illinois, New York and Ohio markets



In the middle of the North American major manufacturing corridor from US through Southern Ontario

# SCOR EDC Board of Directors



**ED KETCHABAW, CHAIR**

Mayor Municipality of Bayham  
Deputy Warden Elgin County



**AMY MARTIN, PAST CHAIR**

Mayor of Norfolk County



**DEB GILVESY, TREASURER**

Mayor Town of Tilsenburgh  
Councillor Oxford County



**JENNIFER KYLE VICE CHAIR**

Councillor County of Brant



**DAVID BAILEY**

Mayor County of Brant



**BERNIA MARTIN**

Councillor City of Woodstock  
Councillor Oxford County



**SHARRON MCMILLAN**

Mayor Thames Centre  
Councillor Middlesex County



**MICHELLE SMIBERT**

Deputy Mayor Thames Centre



**CHRIS VAN PAASSEN**

Councillor Norfolk County



**TODD NOBLE**

Deputy Mayor Central Elgin  
Councillor Elgin County





# THANK YOU

We thank you for your time and consideration of the important issues affecting the South Central Ontario Region. We look forward to our continued partnership.

## Resources and Contributors

County of Brant  
Oxford County  
Norfolk County  
Elgin County  
Municipality of Thames Centre  
Town of Tillsonburg  
Rural Ontario Institute  
Colleges Ontario  
Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie  
Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board  
Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium  
Food and Beverage Ontario  
Trillium Network for Advanced Manufacturing

## SCOR EDC

 4 Elm Street, Tillsonburg , ON N4G 0C4

 519-842-6333

 [kimberly.earls@scorregion.com](mailto:kimberly.earls@scorregion.com)



---

# MINISTRY OF RURAL AFFAIRS

AMO 2025





# Briefing Note

## Ontario Ministry of Rural Affairs

### Ontario Ministry of Rural Affairs Coordinated Rural Inter-Community Transit

August 2025

#### Background

Rural communities rely on coordinated inter-community transit systems to access jobs, healthcare, education, and cultural assets. SCOR EDC's Southwest Community Transit (SCT) connects nine member municipalities, providing affordable and accessible transportation that helps residents stay in their homes longer, reduce housing costs, and maintain access to essential services and employment opportunities.

SCOR EDC has proudly partnered with the [Rural Ontario Institute](#) for many years to advance rural transit solutions that truly work for Ontario.

We were thrilled when the province announced its investment in transit through the OTIF funding. Currently, the province is supporting multiple municipalities that are making important strides in connectivity. However, there is still a lot of room for improved coordination at a broader, regional scale.

We believe that continuing to build on the success of SCT, by growing ridership and enhancing connectivity through the development of strategic transit nodes will lead to organic growth across the western part of the province. This approach opens the door to a unified fare system, shared technologies and practices, and coordinated marketing efforts that will increase public awareness and confidence in rural transit.

SCOR EDC has already laid substantial groundwork in the development of SCT and in collaborating with member municipalities. We are now at a pivotal juncture where support is needed to transition toward a centralized, integrated system that can serve rural Ontario more effectively.

We've already engaged consultants and developed a transitional model that we believe is both practical and scalable. This model includes one manager and two to three staff members dedicated to building out the centralized system. We are applying to OTIF with confidence that this approach will deliver the coordination and efficiency needed to make rural transit truly successful

#### Current Situation

- Southwest Community Transit links rural residents to larger service centres and key destinations.
- The system enhances access to cultural and recreational spaces, contributing to rural quality of life.

**South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corporation (SCOR EDC)**

4 Elm Street, Tillsonburg, ON N4G 0C4

[do@scorregion.com](mailto:do@scorregion.com) | [www.scorregion.com](http://www.scorregion.com)

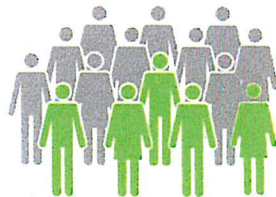


- Provincial support is needed to maintain and expand these services in line with growing community demand.
- The current approach of funding multiple individual communities for inter-community transit presents an opportunity to enhance administrative efficiency and service integration. Each project requires separate application reviews, agreements, and oversight, which can be resource-intensive for provincial staff. A regional model, such as SCOR EDC's Southwest Community Transit (SCT), which serves nine municipalities, offers a streamlined alternative. By consolidating funding and coordination under a single entity, the province can reduce administrative burden and improve alignment with regional transportation goals. This model also supports better resource management at the municipal level, allowing neighbouring communities to share specialized transit expertise rather than competing for it. Operational costs can be further mitigated through economies of scale, including shared technology contracts, unified fare systems, coordinated advertising, and reduced fleet requirements due to shared spare buses branded under a single transit system.

### Key Metrics

- SCT member systems have seen significant ridership growth: from 38,066 riders in 2021 to 119,006 in 2023 — a 213% increase.
- In the first half of 2025 alone, SCT has recorded 115,381 riders, reflecting accelerating demand.
- Many SCT communities are growing at 14–18%, with 80% having populations older than the provincial average.
- The network's model allows each municipality to retain its own transit brand while benefiting from shared marketing, technology integration, and purchasing power.

**30% OF 120,000 RIDERS  
USED TRANSIT FOR WORK = 36,000 RIDERS**



**ANNUAL SALARY  
\$41,600/RIDER**  
(40 HOURS PER WEEK AT \$20 PER HOUR)

ASSUME RIDERS ONLY USE TRANSIT FOR 6 MONTHS OF THE YEAR

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$20,800/RIDER**

**OVERALL ECONOMIC IMPACT**

**\$748,800,000**

(36,000 RIDERS X \$20,800)



**Legend:**

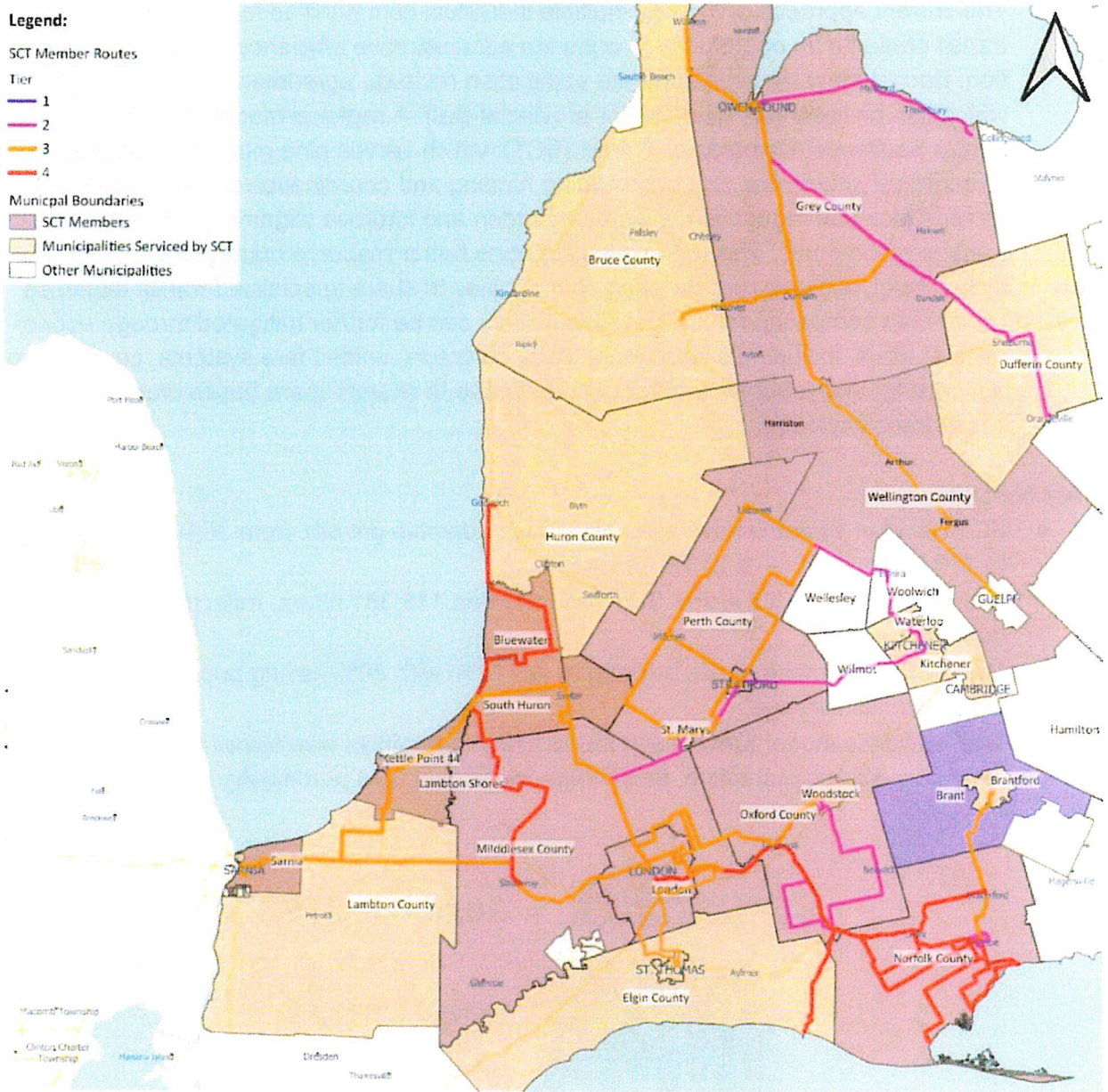
SCT Member Routes

Tier

- Tier 1 (Blue line)
- Tier 2 (Purple line)
- Tier 3 (Orange line)
- Tier 4 (Red line)

Municipal Boundaries

- SCT Members (Pink shaded area)
- Municipalities Served by SCT (Orange shaded area)
- Other Municipalities (White area)





### The Ask

Support SCOR EDC and the SCT model to sustain and expand coordinated rural inter-community transit through a model that is proven successful and is strategically alignment with rural development priorities.

### Rationale & Provincial Alignment

- Directly supports Enabling Opportunity: Ontario's Rural Economic Development Strategy by preserving and upgrading community assets.
- Enhances community livability, workforce mobility, and access to services.
- Aligns with provincial goals to create communities where people want to live, work, and play.

### Expected Outcomes

- Stronger rural connectivity and mobility.
- Increased economic participation for rural residents.
- Greater equity in access to essential services.



**Southwest Community Transit**

[www.ride-sct.ca](http://www.ride-sct.ca)

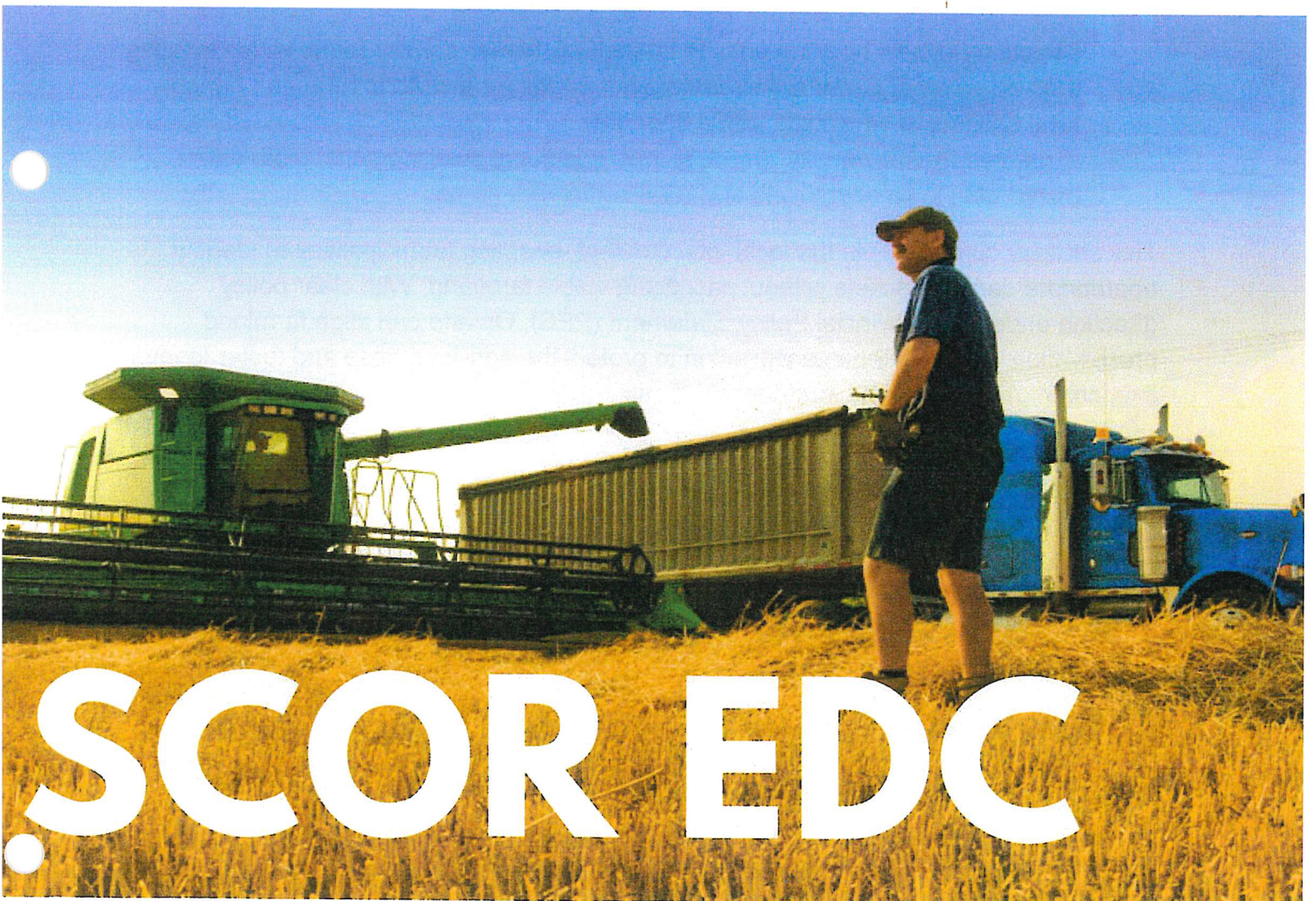




---

# MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND AGRIBUSINESS

AMO 2025





---

## Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Agribusiness Farmland Preservation & Smart Growth

August 2025

### Background

Ontario's prime agricultural land is a strategic, finite resource that underpins both food security and the province's \$48-billion agri-food economy. Yet, recent Census of Agriculture analysis reveals that Ontario is losing approximately 319 acres of farmland every day equivalent to nine family farms per week, according to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. This trajectory is unsustainable and threatens the long-term resilience of our food system.

To safeguard this critical asset while still meeting provincial housing targets, SCOR EDC recommends a growth-management approach that:

- Directs most new housing units to intensified, higher-density forms within existing built-up areas of larger urban centers but allows for growth in rural and agricultural settings to be viewed with a finer lens
- Promotes "gentle density" (modest infill, additional dwelling units, main-street mixed use) in smaller towns and rural settlement areas.

This strategy complements the local-intel concept, enabling municipalities to identify appropriate density pockets without sacrificing viable farmland. With clear policy direction under the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), Ontario can align farmland preservation with targeted intensification to protect the agri-food base and foster innovative, community-supported land-use solutions.

### Current Situation

- Farmland loss continues at a significant rate, threatening Ontario's food security and rural economy.
- Municipalities possess local knowledge that can inform smarter, context-sensitive land-use decisions.
- Agricultural zoning does not always reflect practical land capability or modern farming realities.

### Key Opportunities

- Partnering with the Ministry to pilot locally informed planning solutions that respect PPS intent while optimizing land use.
- Exploring transitional zoning models for parcels that are agriculturally zoned but not viable for modern farming due to size, fragmentation, or soil quality.

**South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corporation (SCOR EDC)**  
4 Elm Street, Tillsonburg, ON N4G 0C4  
[do@scorregion.com](mailto:do@scorregion.com) | [www.scorregion.com](http://www.scorregion.com)



- Considering mitigation strategies such as the creation of dedicated fund financed by development penalties, to support innovative agricultural practices (vertical farming, aquaculture, greenhouse operations).

### **The Ask**

Collaborate with SCOR EDC to:

- Develop and test pilot initiatives that integrate farmland preservation with smart growth strategies.
- Safeguard Ontario's prime farmland by ensuring that any proposed conversion to other uses is guided by local intelligence on agricultural parcel suitability, and supported by the best available measurement tools and assessment criteria before land is taken out of production
- Explore the feasibility of a dedicated fund to offset yield loss and promote sustainable agriculture.
- Clarify Environmental Assessment processes, including the publication of guidelines and criteria relevant to agricultural land use. Where consultation is required, SCOR EDC requests inclusion to provide a local lens and regional expertise. Agricultural regions vary widely, and a "one size fits all" approach risks overlooking critical local factors such as soil quality, drainage, and proximity to agri-food infrastructure

### **Rationale & Provincial Alignment**

- Supports Ontario's agri-food economic strategy and food security goals.
- Aligns with PPS and provincial housing targets through innovative land-use planning.
- Encourages community-driven solutions that reflect local realities and preserve agricultural assets.
- Reinforces the goals of transparency, accountability, and protection of agricultural land from speculative development.

### **Expected Outcomes**

- Reduced farmland loss and stronger protection of Ontario's agri-food base.
- Smarter, more sustainable growth in rural and urban communities.
- Enhanced collaboration between municipalities and the province on land-use innovation.
- Increased public confidence in Ontario's planning and agricultural protection frameworks.





---

# MINISTRY OF COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES, RESEARCH EXCELLENCE & SECURITY

AMO 2025



# SCOR EDC



# Briefing Note Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence & Security

## Strategic Role of Regional Colleges in Workforce Development and Economic Growth

August 2025

### Background

In the South Central Ontario Region, we are fortunate to have several colleges and universities within our borders. This allows for access to students outside of the GTHA and is a critical workforce pipeline supporting broader government goals of investment, housing development, and supply chain growth in critical sectors.

### Colleges & Universities in SCOR

County / Area	Institutions Located There
Brant/Brantford	Laurier Brantford, Six Nations Polytechnic, Conestoga College
Oxford (Woodstock)	Fanshawe College — Woodstock / Oxford Regional Campus
Elgin (St. Thomas)	Fanshawe College — St. Thomas / Elgin Regional Campus
Middlesex (London)	Western University, Fanshawe College — London Campus
Norfolk (Simcoe/Norfolk)	Fanshawe College — Simcoe/Norfolk Regional Campus

### Workforce Development and the Role of Ontario’s Colleges

Ontario colleges offer specialized programs in advanced manufacturing sectors including aerospace, robotics, automotive, and metallurgy. These programs provide hands-on training in mechanical maintenance, pneumatics, hydraulics, welding, and CNC programming, skills directly aligned with industry needs. [Source: Ontario Colleges Sector Overview, 2025]

25% of current job vacancies in Ontario require college credentials, and 36% of employment growth over the next decade will be in jobs requiring college-level training. [Source: Colleges Ontario, 2025]

There are currently 60,000+ students enrolled in apprenticeship and trades and technology programs in Ontario’s colleges.

Nearly half of Ontario’s manufacturing workforce was trained at a public college.

Colleges work with thousands of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and municipalities to tackle real-world challenges with practical, results-driven solutions. This work supports regional growth by ensuring businesses and communities across Ontario have access to the tools, talent and expertise they need to thrive. Colleges offer specialized, tailored solutions for corporate training offering employers targeted expertise where and when its required.



Colleges support businesses and their local communities by:

- Solving product and process challenges
- Accelerating innovation and go-to-market timelines
- Delivering community-based solutions
- Training students on active applied research projects to build in-demand, job-ready skills

### **Graduate Employment & Satisfaction**

The graduate employment rate for Ontario college students is 85.8% six months after graduation. Employer satisfaction with college graduates is 91.8%, and graduate satisfaction is 76.8%. These metrics reflect strong alignment between college training and labour market needs.

[Source: Ontario College KPI Report, 2025]

### **Current Situation**

In the South Central Ontario Region (SCOR), we are fortunate to have several colleges and universities within our borders. This allows for access to students outside of the GTHA and is a critical workforce pipeline supporting broader government goals of investment, housing development, and supply chain growth in critical sectors.

Regional college campuses, while often smaller and located outside of major urban centres, play a vital role in expanding access to postsecondary education across Ontario. They provide opportunities for students who may face geographic, financial, or personal barriers to relocating for school, ensuring that education and training remain accessible to all Ontarians.

These campuses are deeply rooted in their communities, maintaining strong local and regional networks that connect students to meaningful employment opportunities during and after their studies. Graduates from these campuses are not only more likely to remain in the area but also represent a critical pipeline for addressing workforce shortages in key sectors.

### **College Funding Per Province**

- Ontario: \$11,081 per domestic FTE
- Average of all other provinces ("Rest of provinces"): \$20,426 per domestic FTE

Calculated directly from Statistics Canada FINCOL & PSIS using the standard FTE formula (FT + PT/3.5)

### **Key Opportunities**

- **Workforce Development:** Ontario colleges offer specialized programs in advanced manufacturing sectors including aerospace, robotics, automotive, and metallurgy. These programs provide hands-on training in mechanical maintenance, pneumatics, hydraulics, welding, and CNC programming, skills directly aligned with industry needs.
- **Retention of Talent:** Regional campuses increase the likelihood that graduates remain in the area, supporting local workforce needs.
- **Community Collaboration:** SCOR municipalities have a long-standing history of collaboration, positioning them to support provincial priorities through practical, on-the-ground implementation.
- **Economic Development:** Local access to postsecondary education supports housing development, investment attraction, and supply chain resilience.



## The Ask

Support and investment in regional college campuses through:

- Increase funding to Ontario's colleges, particularly regional campuses, to ensure they can continue to deliver high-quality, industry-aligned training. Ontario currently ranks lowest in per capita college funding across Canada, which limits the ability of colleges to scale up programs, hire field-expert instructors, and invest in modern equipment.
- Recognize and support the strategic role of regional campuses in building a "Canadian One Economy" and strengthening Ontario's supply chains. These campuses are essential to training the next generation of skilled tradespeople, especially as the current workforce ages and risks attrition without sufficient replacement.
- Disperse capital investments equitably, ensuring regional campuses have access to innovative equipment and infrastructure upgrades that support productivity and GDP growth across all regions of Ontario.
- Enhanced support for regional workforce development programs aligned with local industry needs.
- Policy recognition of the strategic role regional campuses play in meeting provincial goals

## Rationale & Provincial Alignment

- Labour Market Needs: 25% of current job vacancies in Ontario require college credentials, and 36% of employment growth over the next decade will be in jobs requiring college-level training.
- Graduate Outcomes: Ontario college graduates have an 85.8% employment rate six months after graduation, with 91.8% employer satisfaction.
- Provincial Priorities: Regional campuses directly support provincial goals in housing, economic development, and workforce readiness, particularly in critical sectors like advanced manufacturing and STEM.
- Ontario's colleges, particularly regional campuses, are essential to achieving the province's goals around productivity, GDP growth, and supply chain resilience. With 25% of current job vacancies requiring college credentials and 36% of future employment growth expected in college-trained fields, investing in college education is foundational to economic success. Colleges graduate 25,000 STEM students annually, nearly half of Ontario's total, and offer hands-on training in advanced manufacturing, robotics, and skilled trades; sectors critical to Ontario's competitiveness.
- However, Ontario ranks lowest in per capita college funding across Canada. Without increased investment, colleges face challenges in scaling programs, hiring field-expert instructors, and acquiring innovative equipment. This is especially urgent in the skilled trades, where an aging workforce threatens to leave gaps that cannot be filled without expanded training capacity. Supporting regional campuses ensures that this investment



reaches all corners of the province, aligning with Ontario's commitment to inclusive growth and a "Canadian One Economy."

- College funding reductions disproportionately impact regional campuses, which often serve as the primary conduit for workforce development and training aligned with local industry needs. These campuses play a vital role in supporting economic resilience and talent pipelines in smaller communities Ex. Agricultural equipment operator program at Conestoga College

### Expected Outcomes

- Increased access to postsecondary education for rural and underserved populations.
- Stronger alignment between training programs and local labour market needs supporting supply chain development and investment attraction.
- Improved retention of skilled graduates in SCOR communities.
- Enhanced regional capacity to support provincial economic and infrastructure priorities.
- Increased productivity and GDP growth through a better-trained, locally retained workforce.
- Expanded access to high-quality training in critical sectors, including advanced manufacturing and skilled trades.
- Enhanced capacity at regional campuses to deliver innovative, hands-on education using modern equipment and industry expertise.

### References:

TD Provincial Economic Forecast, June 18, 2025

<https://economics.td.com/provincial-economic-forecast>

BMO Provincial Economic Outlook key forecasts for the Canadian provinces, January 10, 2025

[https://economics.bmo.com/media/filer\\_public/f8/42/f842b92b-6b2a-4b3b-95cb-2b4ac84a853e/outlookprovincial.pdf](https://economics.bmo.com/media/filer_public/f8/42/f842b92b-6b2a-4b3b-95cb-2b4ac84a853e/outlookprovincial.pdf)

RBC: Macroeconomic Outlook, June 13, 2025

<https://www.rbc.com/en/thought-leadership/economics/economy-and-markets/macroeconomic-outlook/canadas-economic-outlook-shifting-tides-as-tariff-threats-de-escalate/>

Statistics Canada, Provincial and Territorial Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by Income and by Expenditure Accounts, 2024

<https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=1902>

OPSEU: A Better Plan Solutions to the Crisis in Ontario's Colleges, April, 2025.

<https://opseu.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/A-Better-Plan-Solution-to-the-Crisis-in-Ontarios-Colleges.pdf>

The Conference Board of Canada: Provincial Outlook

<https://www.conferenceboard.ca/focus-areas/canadian-economics/provincial-outlook/>





---

# MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION

AMO 2025



# SCOR EDC



# Briefing Note

## Ontario Ministry of Transportation

---

### Coordinated Rural Inter-Community Transit

August 2025

#### Background

Rural communities rely on coordinated inter-community transit systems to access jobs, healthcare, education, and cultural assets. SCOR EDC's Southwest Community Transit connects nine member municipalities, offering affordable and accessible transportation options that help residents remain in their homes longer, offset housing costs, and maintain access to community infrastructure.

SCOR EDC has proudly partnered with the [Rural Ontario Institute](#) for many years to advance rural transit solutions that truly work for Ontario. SCT's model supports regional mobility while respecting local identity, allowing each municipality to retain its own transit brand while benefiting from shared marketing, technology integration, and purchasing power.

The province's investment in transit through the Ontario Transit Infrastructure Fund (OTIF) represents a significant step forward in enhancing regional connectivity. While several municipalities have made important progress, there remains substantial opportunity to improve coordination at a broader, regional scale particularly in underserved north-south corridors.

Building on the success of Southwest Community Transit, further growth in ridership and connectivity can be achieved through the development of strategic transit nodes. This approach supports the potential for a unified fare system, shared technologies and operational practices, and coordinated marketing efforts. Collectively, these elements will strengthen public awareness and confidence in rural transit, contributing to a more integrated and resilient transportation network across Southwestern Ontario.

SCOR EDC and Southwest Community Transit have established a strong foundation for regional transit coordination. The initiative is now at a pivotal stage, requiring targeted support to transition toward a centralized and integrated system capable of serving rural Ontario more effectively. This evolution is essential to achieving greater efficiency, consistency, and scalability in service delivery across the region.

Consultants have been engaged to develop a transitional model that is both practical and scalable. This model outlines the evolution toward a centralized system designed to enhance coordination, improve service delivery, and support long-term sustainability. The application to OTIF reflects confidence in this approach as a means to deliver the efficiency and integration required to advance rural transit across Southwestern Ontario.

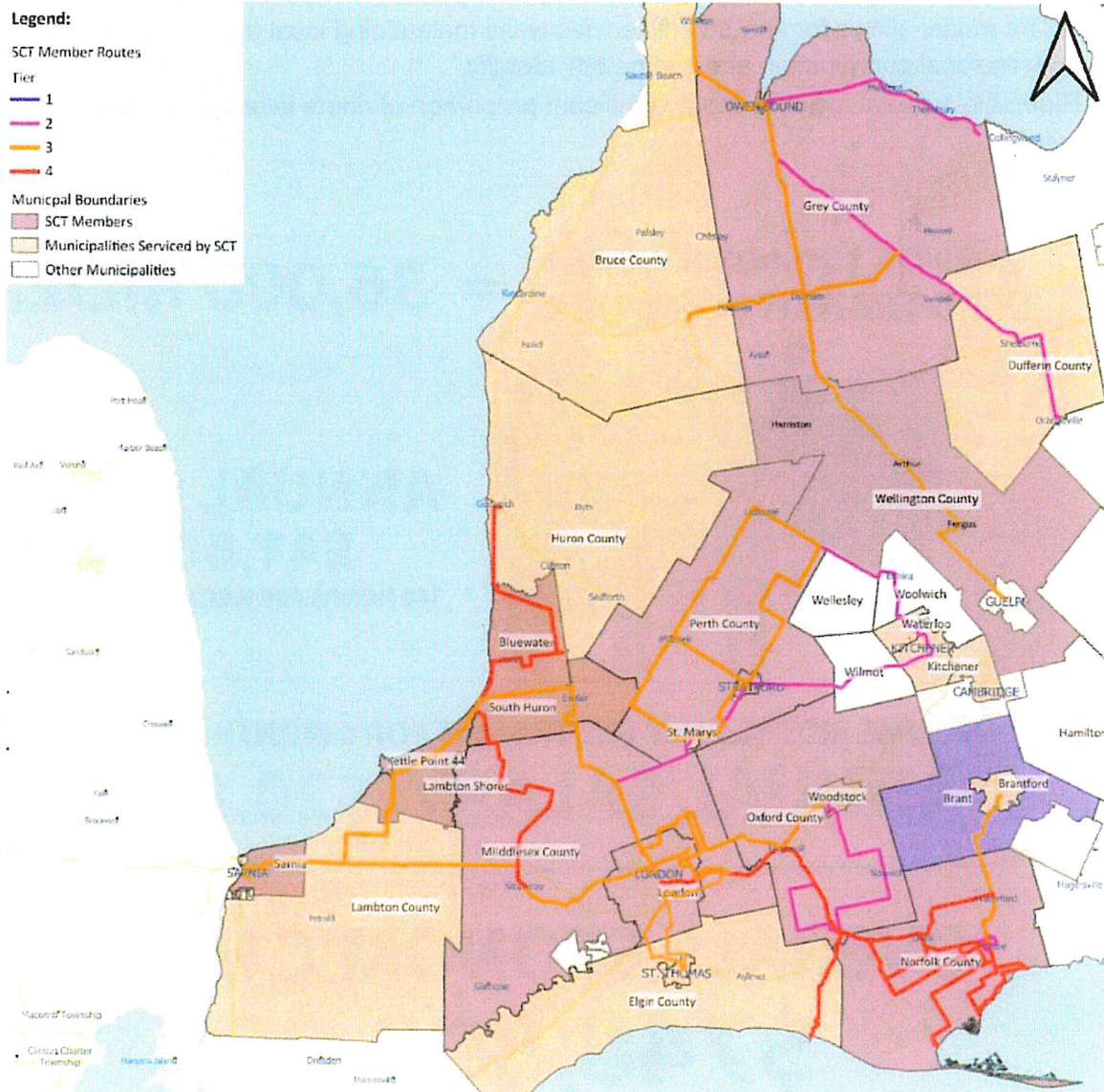
**South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corporation (SCOR EDC)**

4 Elm Street, Tillsonburg, ON N4G 0C4  
[do@scorregion.com](mailto:do@scorregion.com) | [www.scorregion.com](http://www.scorregion.com)



## Current Situation

- Southwest Community Transit links rural residents to larger service centres and key destinations, complementing provincial transit systems and filling critical gaps in regional connectivity.
- The system enhances access to cultural and recreational spaces, contributing to rural quality of life and supporting MTO's goal of creating communities where people want to live, work, and play.
- SCT's success demonstrates the viability of scalable, regionally coordinated transit models that align with MTO's goals for intercommunity transit, modal integration, and economic development.

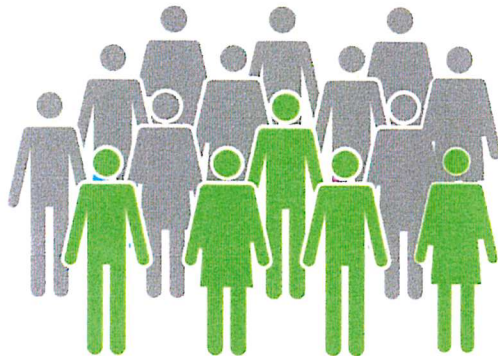




## Key Metrics

- SCT member systems have seen significant ridership growth: from 38,066 riders in 2021 to 119,006 in 2023 a 213% increase.
- In the first half of 2025 alone, SCT has recorded 125,381 riders, reflecting accelerating demand.
- Many SCT communities are growing at 14–18%, with 80% having populations older than the provincial average.
- The network's model allows each municipality to retain its own transit brand while benefiting from shared marketing, technology integration, and purchasing power.
- SCT's model allows for shared efficiencies while maintaining local autonomy, supporting both regional coordination and community identify.
- Ridership surveys indicate that a significant proportion of riders take transit for employment

**30% OF 120,000 RIDERS  
USED TRANSIT FOR WORK = 36,000 RIDERS**



**ANNUAL SALARY  
\$41,600/RIDER  
(40 HOURS PER WEEK AT \$20 PER HOUR)**

**ASSUME RIDERS ONLY USE TRANSIT FOR 6 MONTHS OF THE YEAR**

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$20,800/RIDER**

**OVERALL ECONOMIC IMPACT**

**\$748,800,000**

**(36,000 RIDERS X \$20,800)**



### The Ask

Support SCOR EDC's application to OTIF to fund the evolution of SCT into a centralized, integrated rural transit system. This includes funding for a transitional model dedicated to building out the centralized system, enhancing coordination, and expanding service delivery

### Rationale & Provincial Alignment

- Supports MTO's Southwestern Ontario Transportation Master Plan by improving inter-community transit, enhancing modal integration, and addressing service gaps in rural corridors.
- Advances Enabling Opportunity: Ontario's Rural Economic Development Strategy by preserving and upgrading community assets and improving access to employment, education, and healthcare.
- Aligns with MTO's strategic goals of supporting economic development, improving safety and reliability, and preparing for future mobility technologies.
- Promotes regional collaboration and scalable infrastructure investment, consistent with MTO's emphasis on efficient service delivery and long-term planning.

### Expected Outcomes

- Southwest Community Transit links rural residents to larger service centres and key destinations, complementing provincial transit systems and filling critical gaps in regional connectivity.
- The system enhances access to cultural and recreational spaces, contributing to rural quality of life and supporting MTO's goal of creating communities where people want to live, work, and play.
- SCT's success demonstrates the viability of scalable, regionally coordinated transit models that align with MTO's goals for intercommunity transit, modal integration, and economic development.



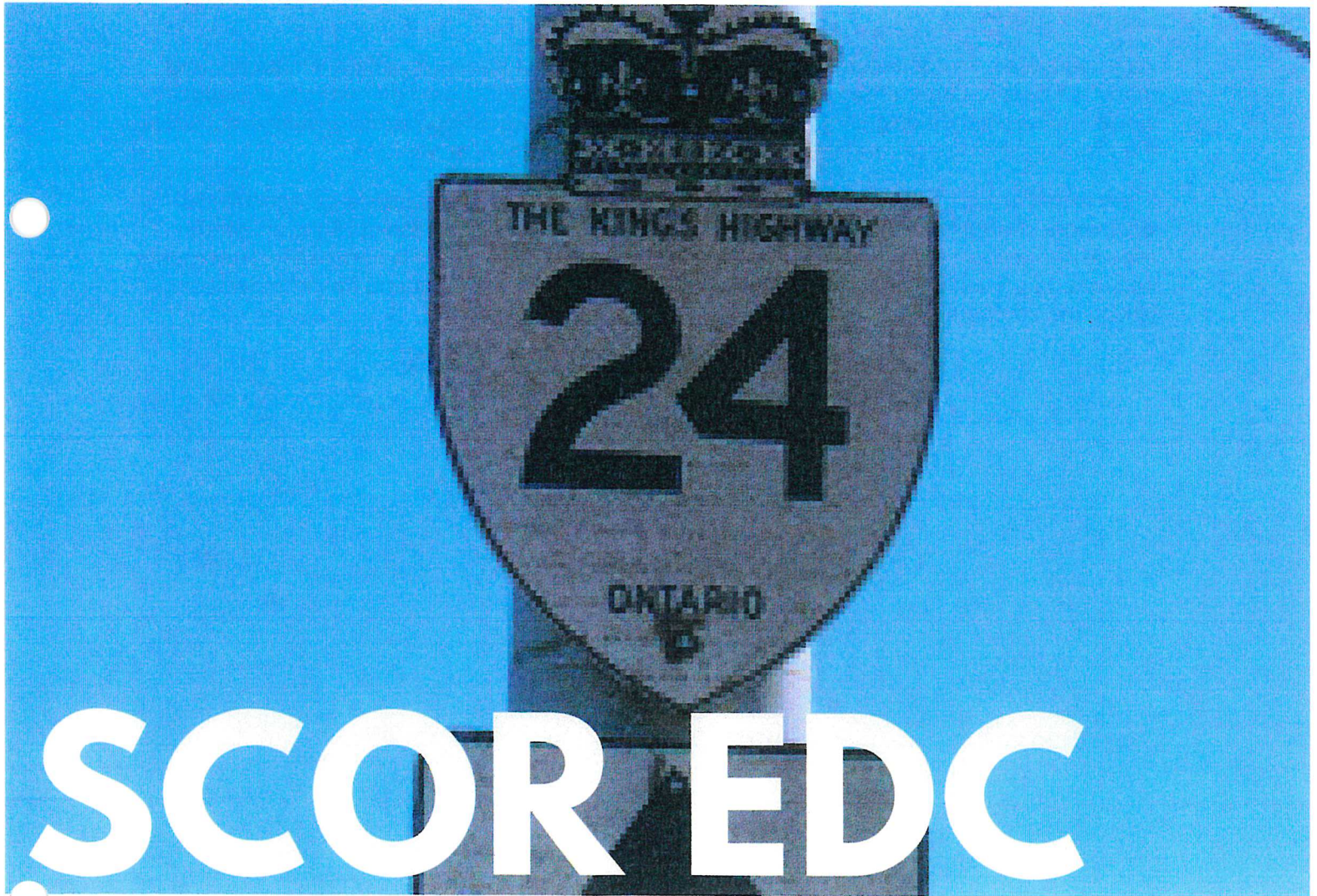




---

# MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION

AMO 2025



### Improved North-South Highway Connections

August 2025

#### Background

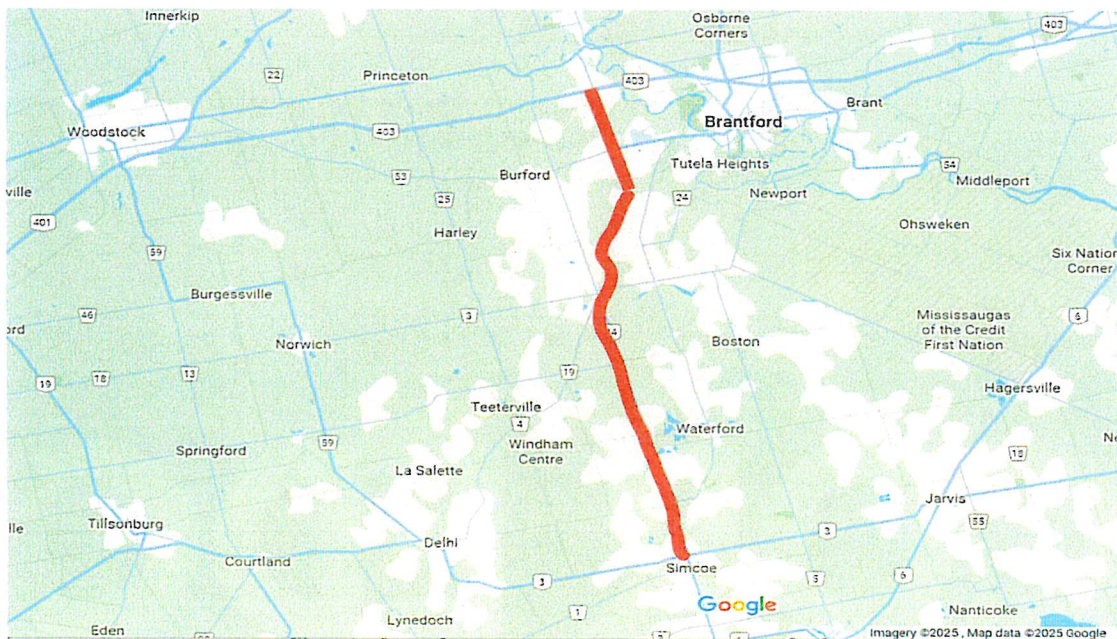
Highway 24 serves as a vital north-south corridor in South Central Ontario, connecting rural communities to the 400-series highways and supporting agricultural, industrial, and residential growth. Recent population increases in the region have placed additional pressure on this route, highlighting the need for strategic investment in infrastructure.

According to Statistics Canada, Norfolk County experienced a population growth of 5.4% between 2016 and 2021, reaching 67,490 residents. The County of Brant saw an even higher growth rate of 10.8%, reaching 39,474 residents in 2021. These increases exceed the national average and contribute to rising traffic volumes on regional roads such as Highway 24. This trend reflects growing road usage and underscores the need for expanded infrastructure.

#### Current Situation

Highway 24 is a key connector for agricultural and industrial transport, linking producers and manufacturers to larger urban centres broader provincial and national markets. Its expansion would improve freight efficiency, reduce congestion, and support economic development across the region and enhance road safety for agricultural and passenger vehicles.

Farm safety is a growing concern, particularly during peak seasons when large agricultural equipment shares the road with commuter and freight traffic. Expansion of Highway 24 will reduce congestion, improve safety for all road users, and ensure reliable access for emergency services. Improved infrastructure will also facilitate north-south transit and freight movement, linking the southern part of the region to the 400-series corridor





## The Ask

SCOR EDC request provincial support to advance the north-south expansion of Highway 24. We are asking the province to prioritize studies to plan, design, and implement improvements that will enhance safety, connectivity, and economic growth across the region.

## Rationale & Provincial Alignment

The proposed expansion of Highway 24 directly supports the Ministry of Transportation's strategic objectives outlined in the Southwestern Ontario Transportation Master Plan, including improving regional connectivity, enhancing freight movement, and supporting economic growth in rural and small urban communities.

Highway 24 serves as a critical link between agricultural producers, manufacturers, and broader provincial and national markets. Its expansion would reduce congestion, improve safety, and facilitate more efficient movement of goods and people. The project aligns with provincial goals to:

- Strengthen rural transportation networks and integrate them with the 400-series highways.
- Support Ontario's agri-food and manufacturing sectors through improved freight corridors.
- Enhance road safety for all users, including farm equipment, passenger vehicles, and emergency services.
- Enable infrastructure planning that responds to population growth and regional development pressures.

By prioritizing planning and design studies for Highway 24, the province can proactively address emerging transportation needs and ensure long-term resilience in the regional road network.

## Expected Outcomes

- Improved freight efficiency and reduced congestion, supporting economic development and supply chain reliability.
- Enhanced road safety, particularly for agricultural vehicles and during peak seasonal traffic periods.
- Reliable emergency access and improved travel times for residents and service providers.
- Stronger regional connectivity, linking rural communities to major transportation corridors and urban centres.
- Data-driven planning and investment, informed by population growth trends and traffic volume increases.





---

# MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION

AMO 2025





# Briefing Note Ministry of Transportation

---

## Transportation Permitting in Support of Economic Development

August 2025

### Introduction

We would like to begin by thanking the Ministry of Transportation staff for their continued support, engagement, and collaboration with SCOR EDC and our member municipalities. Your responsiveness and willingness to connect with our communities has been greatly appreciated and has helped advance key regional priorities. We look forward to building on this strong foundation to further streamline development processes and support economic growth across Ontario.

### Background & Context

Timely and predictable permitting processes are essential to attracting and retaining investment in Ontario. As municipalities work to meet housing targets, support industrial expansion, and build critical infrastructure, they rely on clear and efficient processes from provincial partners. Economic development in Ontario requires coordinated interaction across multiple ministries. Municipalities and economic development officers (EDOs) have noted that while MTO staff are supportive, the complexity and timing of permitting and site plan approvals can sometimes result in delays that jeopardize investment opportunities or increase costs for businesses.

By working together to streamline approvals, we can reduce uncertainty for investors, accelerate project timelines, and strengthen Ontario's competitiveness.

### Current Situation

Municipalities across Southwestern Ontario are experiencing delays in receiving approvals from the Ministry of Transportation for key infrastructure-related processes, including highway access for new developments, business driveways, and site plan applications. These delays can impact economic development timelines and investor confidence.

There are several areas where enhanced coordination could improve outcomes for all parties:

- Clarifying points of contact within MTO for permitting and site plan application reviews would enable municipal staff and economic developers to better support timely approvals.
- Improving transparency around permit timelines and preparation requirements would reduce bottlenecks and facilitate more predictable planning and development processes.
- These improvements would support more efficient infrastructure delivery, align with provincial goals for economic growth and mobility, and strengthen collaboration between municipalities and the Ministry.

**South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corporation (SCOR EDC)**

4 Elm Street, Tillsonburg, ON N4G 0C4

[do@scorregion.com](mailto:do@scorregion.com) | [www.scorregion.com](http://www.scorregion.com)



## The Ask

SCOR EDC and our member municipalities would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with MTO on a pilot initiative to improve permitting and site plan coordination. This could include the development of a regional contact protocol, a permitting readiness checklist, or a shared communications framework to support timely and transparent engagement.

We welcome the opportunity to work with MTO to better understand and support the ministry's development approval process.

## Rationale & Provincial Alignment

Improving coordination between municipalities and the Ministry of Transportation on permitting and site plan approvals directly supports provincial goals for streamlining infrastructure delivery and enabling economic development. A pilot initiative focused on enhanced communication protocols, readiness tools, and shared frameworks would align with MTO's commitment to modernizing processes and reducing administrative bottlenecks.

This proposal complements the objectives outlined in the Southwestern Ontario Transportation Master Plan, particularly in advancing regional connectivity, supporting growth in rural and small urban communities, and fostering collaboration across jurisdictions. By clarifying roles and expectations, the initiative would strengthen partnerships between municipalities and the province, contributing to more predictable and efficient development outcomes.

## Expected Outcomes

- Improved permitting timelines and transparency, resulting in faster approvals and reduced delays for infrastructure and development projects.
- Enhanced collaboration between municipalities and MTO, supported by clear points of contact and shared communication protocols.
- Greater predictability for investors and developers, increasing confidence in Ontario's transportation and planning systems.
- Scalable tools and practices (readiness checklists, regional contact protocols) that can be adapted across jurisdictions to support consistent and efficient engagement

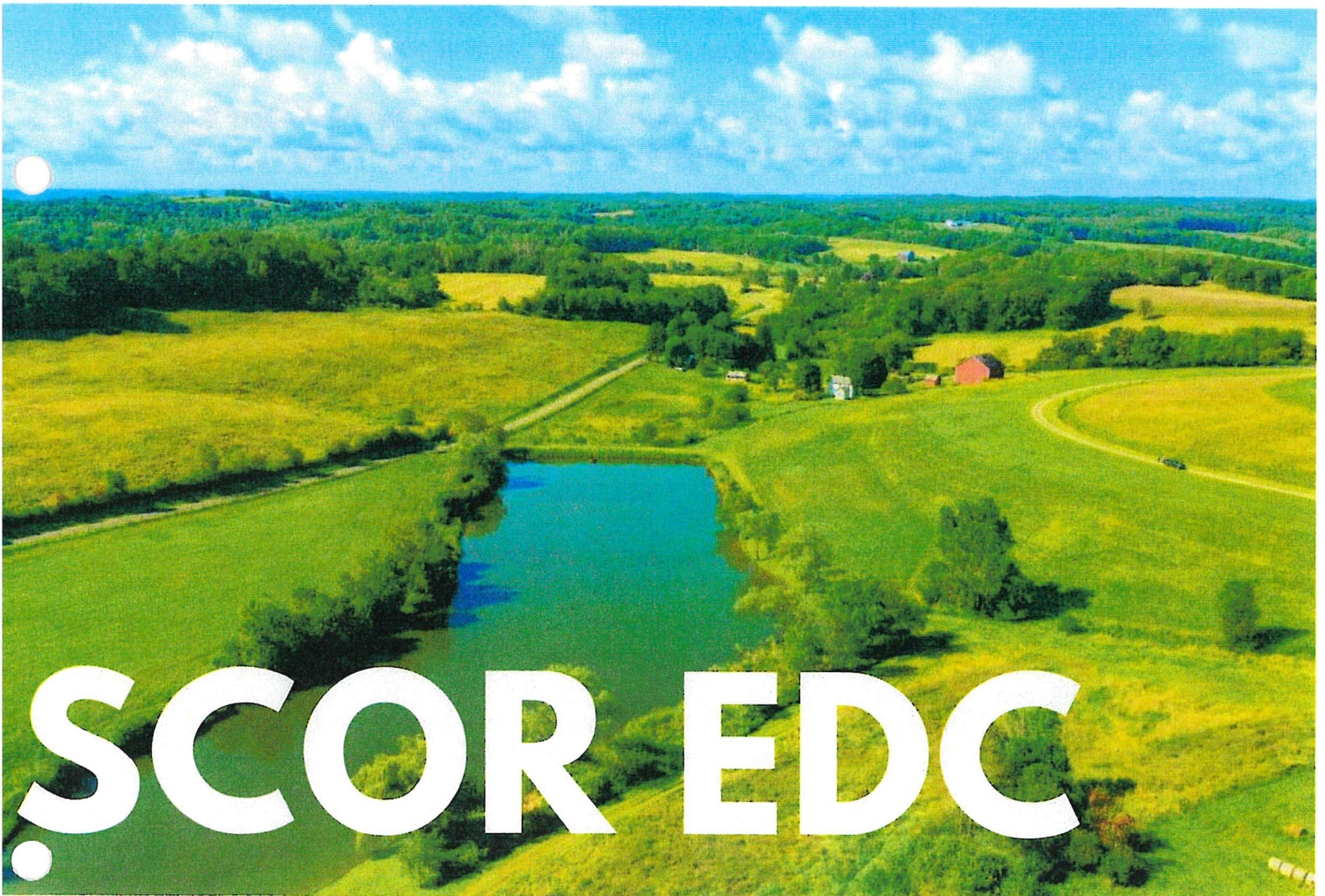




---

# GREEN PARTY OF ONTARIO

AMO 2025





# Briefing Note Green Party of Ontario

---

## Green Party of Ontario

August 2025

### GPO Priorities

Our Plan for Fairness”, which outlines their priorities across a wide range of policy areas. Here are the key highlights and strategic priorities:

#### Core Priorities of the Green Party of Ontario (2025)

##### Housing & Planning

- Freeze urban boundaries and reverse recent expansions to prevent sprawl.
- Require municipalities to permit developments using pre-approved building designs to accelerate affordable housing.
- Update planning laws to allow fourplexes and midrise housing as-of-right in urban areas.
- Reinstate upper-tier regional planning authority for coordinated growth.
- Support brownfield redevelopment for affordable housing

##### Environment & Climate

- Expand the Greenbelt and create a “Bluebelt” to protect waterways.
- Provide \$2 billion annually for municipalities to build climate-resilient infrastructure via a Climate Adaptation Fund.
- Ban 400-series highways through the Greenbelt (cancel Highway 413 and the Bradford Bypass).
- Restore Conservation Authorities and strengthen the Environmental Bill of Rights.

##### Municipal Infrastructure & Transit

- Upload costs for transit, shelters, and community housing to the province.
- Create a predictable, annual infrastructure fund for walking, cycling, and accessible mobility devices.
- Stop provincial interference in municipal transit plans (bike lanes).
- Support virtual net metering and smart grid innovations

##### Healthcare & Mental Health

- Recruit 3,500 doctors and expand family health teams.
- Increase funding for rural hospitals and reduce local cost shares.
- Build 48,000 non-profit long-term care spaces by 2029.
- Reopen and expand safe consumption and treatment sites

##### Equity & Governance

- Remove strong mayor powers and promote local democratic autonomy.
- Allow ranked ballot voting and limit campaign contributions.
- Enact the Intimate Partner Violence Epidemic Act and increase funding for shelters and legal supports.
- Require gender parity on public boards and improve access to multilingual services

##### Economy & Trade

- Develop a “Buy Ontario” strategy and public procurement rules to support local businesses.
- Create a Protect Ontario Fund for businesses impacted by tariffs.
- Provide investment tax credits and support new supply chains

**South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corporation (SCOR EDC)**

4 Elm Street, Tillsonburg, ON N4G 0C4

[do@scorregion.com](mailto:do@scorregion.com) | [www.scorregion.com](http://www.scorregion.com)



## Coordinated Rural Inter-Community Transit

### Background

Rural communities rely on coordinated inter-community transit systems to access jobs, healthcare, education, and cultural assets. SCOR EDC's Southwest Community Transit connects nine member municipalities, offering affordable and accessible transportation options that help residents remain in their homes longer, offset housing costs, and maintain access to community infrastructure.

SCOR EDC has proudly partnered with the [Rural Ontario Institute](#) for many years to advance rural transit solutions that truly work for Ontario. SCT's model supports regional mobility while respecting local identity, allowing each municipality to retain its own transit brand while benefiting from shared marketing, technology integration, and purchasing power.

The province's investment in transit through the Ontario Transit Infrastructure Fund (OTIF) represents a significant step forward in enhancing regional connectivity. While several municipalities have made important progress, there remains substantial opportunity to improve coordination at a broader, regional scale particularly in underserved north-south corridors.

Building on the success of Southwest Community Transit, further growth in ridership and connectivity can be achieved through the development of strategic transit nodes. This approach supports the potential for a unified fare system, shared technologies and operational practices, and coordinated marketing efforts. Collectively, these elements will strengthen public awareness and confidence in rural transit, contributing to a more integrated and resilient transportation network across Southwestern Ontario.

SCOR EDC and Southwest Community Transit have established a strong foundation for regional transit coordination. The initiative is now at a pivotal stage, requiring targeted support to transition toward a centralized and integrated system capable of serving rural Ontario more effectively. This evolution is essential to achieving greater efficiency, consistency, and scalability in service delivery across the region.

Consultants have been engaged to develop a transitional model that is both practical and scalable. This model outlines the evolution toward a centralized system designed to enhance coordination, improve service delivery, and support long-term sustainability. The application to OTIF reflects confidence in this approach as a means to deliver the efficiency and integration required to advance rural transit across Southwestern Ontario.

### Current Situation

- Southwest Community Transit links rural residents to larger service centres and key destinations, complementing provincial transit systems and filling critical gaps in regional connectivity.
- The system enhances access to cultural and recreational spaces, contributing to rural quality of life and supporting MTO's goal of creating communities where people want to live, work, and play.
- SCT's success demonstrates the viability of scalable, regionally coordinated transit models that align with MTO's goals for intercommunity transit, modal integration, and economic development.



**Legend:**

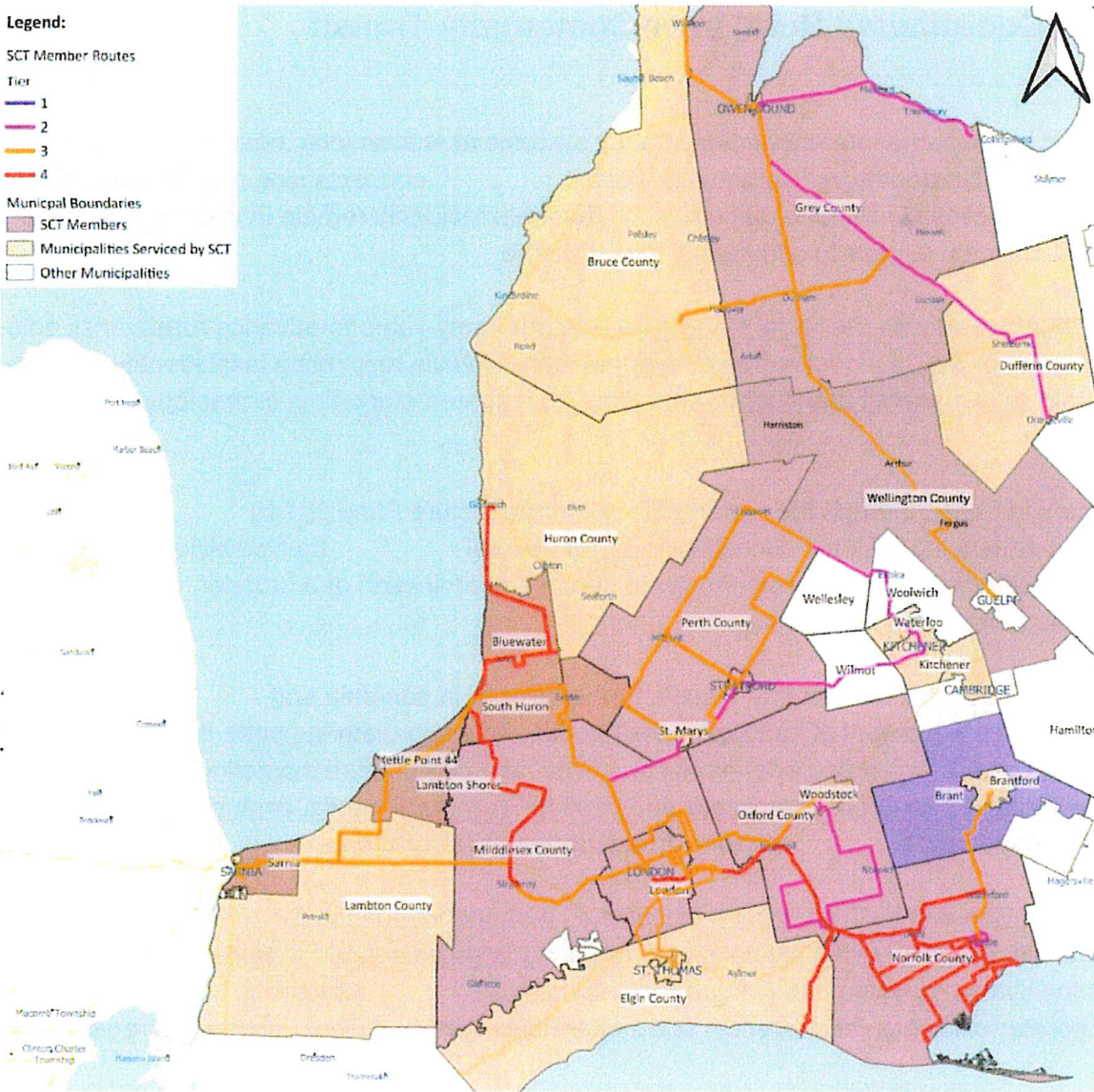
**SCT Member Routes**

**Tier**

- 1 (purple line)
- 2 (pink line)
- 3 (orange line)
- 4 (red line)

**Municipal Boundaries**

- SCT Members (shaded purple)
- Municipalities Serviced by SCT (shaded orange)
- Other Municipalities (white)



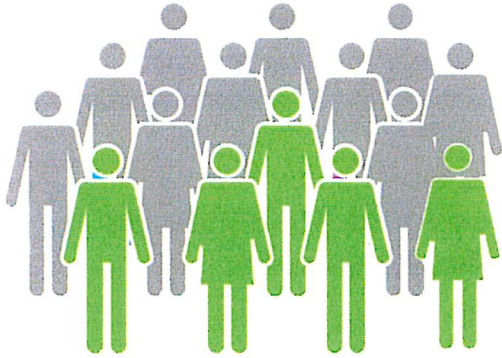
**Key Metrics**

- SCT member systems have seen significant ridership growth: from 38,066 riders in 2021 to 119,006 in 2023 a 213% increase.
- In the first half of 2025 alone, SCT has recorded 125,381 riders, reflecting accelerating demand.
- Many SCT communities are growing at 14–18%, with 80% having populations older than the provincial average.
- The network’s model allows each municipality to retain its own transit brand while benefiting from shared marketing, technology integration, and purchasing power.
- SCT’s model allows for shared efficiencies while maintaining local autonomy, supporting both regional coordination and community identify.



- Ridership surveys indicate that a significant proportion of riders take transit for employment

**30% OF 120,000 RIDERS USED TRANSIT FOR WORK = 36,000 RIDERS**



**ANNUAL SALARY  
\$41,600/RIDER  
(40 HOURS PER WEEK AT \$20 PER HOUR)**

**ASSUME RIDERS ONLY USE TRANSIT FOR 6 MONTHS OF THE YEAR**

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$20,800/RIDER**

**OVERALL ECONOMIC IMPACT**

**\$748,800,000**

**(36,000 RIDERS X \$20,800)**

#### **The Ask**

Support SCOR EDC's application to OTIF to fund the evolution of SCT into a centralized, integrated rural transit system. This includes funding for a transitional model dedicated to building out the centralized system, enhancing coordination, and expanding service delivery

#### **Rationale & Provincial Alignment**

- Supports MTO's Southwestern Ontario Transportation Master Plan by improving intercommunity transit, enhancing modal integration, and addressing service gaps in rural corridors.
- Advances Enabling Opportunity: Ontario's Rural Economic Development Strategy by preserving and upgrading community assets and improving access to employment, education, and healthcare.
- Aligns with MTO's strategic goals of supporting economic development, improving safety and reliability, and preparing for future mobility technologies.
- Promotes regional collaboration and scalable infrastructure investment, consistent with MTO's emphasis on efficient service delivery and long-term planning.



## Expected Outcomes

- Southwest Community Transit links rural residents to larger service centres and key destinations, complementing provincial transit systems and filling critical gaps in regional connectivity.
- The system enhances access to cultural and recreational spaces, contributing to rural quality of life and supporting MTO's goal of creating communities where people want to live, work, and play.
- SCT's success demonstrates the viability of scalable, regionally coordinated transit models that align with MTO's goals for intercommunity transit, modal integration, and economic development.

## Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Agribusiness Farmland Preservation & Smart Growth

### Background

Ontario's prime agricultural land is a strategic, finite resource that underpins both food security and the province's \$48-billion agri-food economy. Yet, recent Census of Agriculture analysis reveals that Ontario is losing approximately 319 acres of farmland every day equivalent to nine family farms per week, according to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. This trajectory is unsustainable and threatens the long-term resilience of our food system.

To safeguard this critical asset while still meeting provincial housing targets, SCOR EDC recommends a growth-management approach that:

- Directs most new housing units to intensified, higher-density forms within existing built-up areas of larger urban centers but allows for growth in rural and agricultural settings to be viewed with a finer lens
- Promotes "gentle density" (modest infill, additional dwelling units, main-street mixed use) in smaller towns and rural settlement areas.

This strategy complements the local-intel concept, enabling municipalities to identify appropriate density pockets without sacrificing viable farmland. With clear policy direction under the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), Ontario can align farmland preservation with targeted intensification to protect the agri-food base and foster innovative, community-supported land-use solutions.

### Current Situation

- Farmland loss continues at a significant rate, threatening Ontario's food security and rural economy.
- Municipalities possess local knowledge that can inform smarter, context-sensitive land-use decisions.
- Agricultural zoning does not always reflect practical land capability or modern farming realities.



## Key Opportunities

- Partnering with the Ministry to pilot locally informed planning solutions that respect PPS intent while optimizing land use.
- Exploring transitional zoning models for parcels that are agriculturally zoned but not viable for modern farming due to size, fragmentation, or soil quality.
- Considering mitigation strategies such as the creation of dedicated fund financed by development penalties, to support innovative agricultural practices (vertical farming, aquaculture, greenhouse operations).

## The Ask

Collaborate with SCOR EDC to:

- Develop and test pilot initiatives that integrate farmland preservation with smart growth strategies.
- Safeguard Ontario's prime farmland by ensuring that any proposed conversion to other uses is guided by local intelligence on agricultural parcel suitability, and supported by the best available measurement tools and assessment criteria before land is taken out of production
- Explore the feasibility of a dedicated fund to offset yield loss and promote sustainable agriculture.
- Clarify Environmental Assessment processes, including the publication of guidelines and criteria relevant to agricultural land use. Where consultation is required, SCOR EDC requests inclusion to provide a local lens and regional expertise. Agricultural regions vary widely, and a "one size fits all" approach risks overlooking critical local factors such as soil quality, drainage, and proximity to agri-food infrastructure

## Rationale & Provincial Alignment

- Supports Ontario's agri-food economic strategy and food security goals.
- Aligns with PPS and provincial housing targets through innovative land-use planning.
- Encourages community-driven solutions that reflect local realities and preserve agricultural assets.
- Reinforces the goals of transparency, accountability, and protection of agricultural land from speculative development.

## Expected Outcomes

- Reduced farmland loss and stronger protection of Ontario's agri-food base.
- Smarter, more sustainable growth in rural and urban communities.
- Enhanced collaboration between municipalities and the province on land-use innovation.
- Increased public confidence in Ontario's planning and agricultural protection frameworks.



# Strategic Role of Regional Colleges in Workforce Development and Economic Growth

## Background

In the South Central Ontario Region, we are fortunate to have several colleges and universities within our borders. This allows for access to students outside of the GTHA and is a critical workforce pipeline supporting broader government goals of investment, housing development, and supply chain growth in critical sectors.

### Colleges & Universities in SCOR

County / Area	Institutions Located There
Brant/Brantford	Laurier Brantford, Six Nations Polytechnic, Conestoga College
Oxford (Woodstock)	Fanshawe College — Woodstock / Oxford Regional Campus
Elgin (St. Thomas)	Fanshawe College — St. Thomas / Elgin Regional Campus
Middlesex (London)	Western University, Fanshawe College — London Campus
Norfolk (Simcoe/Norfolk)	Fanshawe College — Simcoe/Norfolk Regional Campus

## Workforce Development and the Role of Ontario’s Colleges

Ontario colleges offer specialized programs in advanced manufacturing sectors including aerospace, robotics, automotive, and metallurgy. These programs provide hands-on training in mechanical maintenance, pneumatics, hydraulics, welding, and CNC programming, skills directly aligned with industry needs. [Source: Ontario Colleges Sector Overview, 2025]

25% of current job vacancies in Ontario require college credentials, and 36% of employment growth over the next decade will be in jobs requiring college-level training. [Source: Colleges Ontario, 2025]

There are currently 60,000+ students enrolled in apprenticeship and trades and technology programs in Ontario’s colleges.

Nearly half of Ontario’s manufacturing workforce was trained at a public college.

Colleges work with thousands of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and municipalities to tackle real-world challenges with practical, results-driven solutions. This work supports regional growth by ensuring businesses and communities across Ontario have access to the tools, talent and expertise they need to thrive. Colleges offer specialized, tailored solutions for corporate training offering employers targeted expertise where and when its required.

Colleges support businesses and their local communities by:

- Solving product and process challenges
- Accelerating innovation and go-to-market timelines
- Delivering community-based solutions
- Training students on active applied research projects to build in-demand, job-ready skills



## **Graduate Employment & Satisfaction**

The graduate employment rate for Ontario college students is 85.8% six months after graduation. Employer satisfaction with college graduates is 91.8%, and graduate satisfaction is 76.8%. These metrics reflect strong alignment between college training and labour market needs. [Source: Ontario College KPI Report, 2025]

## **Current Situation**

In the South Central Ontario Region (SCOR), we are fortunate to have several colleges and universities within our borders. This allows for access to students outside of the GTHA and is a critical workforce pipeline supporting broader government goals of investment, housing development, and supply chain growth in critical sectors.

Regional college campuses, while often smaller and located outside of major urban centres, play a vital role in expanding access to postsecondary education across Ontario. They provide opportunities for students who may face geographic, financial, or personal barriers to relocating for school, ensuring that education and training remain accessible to all Ontarians.

These campuses are deeply rooted in their communities, maintaining strong local and regional networks that connect students to meaningful employment opportunities during and after their studies. Graduates from these campuses are not only more likely to remain in the area but also represent a critical pipeline for addressing workforce shortages in key sectors.

## **College Funding Per Province**

- Ontario: \$11,081 per domestic FTE
- Average of all other provinces (“Rest of provinces”): \$20,426 per domestic FTE

Calculated directly from Statistics Canada FINCOL & PSIS using the standard FTE formula (FT + PT/3.5)

## **Key Opportunities**

- **Workforce Development:** Ontario colleges offer specialized programs in advanced manufacturing sectors including aerospace, robotics, automotive, and metallurgy. These programs provide hands-on training in mechanical maintenance, pneumatics, hydraulics, welding, and CNC programming, skills directly aligned with industry needs.
- **Retention of Talent:** Regional campuses increase the likelihood that graduates remain in the area, supporting local workforce needs.
- **Community Collaboration:** SCOR municipalities have a long-standing history of collaboration, positioning them to support provincial priorities through practical, on-the-ground implementation.
- **Economic Development:** Local access to postsecondary education supports housing development, investment attraction, and supply chain resilience.

## **The Ask**

Support and investment in regional college campuses through:

- Increase funding to Ontario’s colleges, particularly regional campuses, to ensure they can continue to deliver high-quality, industry-aligned training. Ontario currently ranks lowest in per capita college funding across Canada, which limits the ability of colleges to scale up programs, hire field-expert instructors, and invest in modern equipment.
- Recognize and support the strategic role of regional campuses in building a “Canadian One Economy” and strengthening Ontario’s supply chains. These campuses are essential to training the next generation of skilled tradespeople, especially as the current workforce ages and risks attrition without sufficient replacement.



- Disperse capital investments equitably, ensuring regional campuses have access to innovative equipment and infrastructure upgrades that support productivity and GDP growth across all regions of Ontario.
- Enhanced support for regional workforce development programs aligned with local industry needs.
- Policy recognition of the strategic role regional campuses play in meeting provincial goals

## Rationale & Provincial Alignment

- Labour Market Needs: 25% of current job vacancies in Ontario require college credentials, and 36% of employment growth over the next decade will be in jobs requiring college-level training.
- Graduate Outcomes: Ontario college graduates have an 85.8% employment rate six months after graduation, with 91.8% employer satisfaction.
- Provincial Priorities: Regional campuses directly support provincial goals in housing, economic development, and workforce readiness, particularly in critical sectors like advanced manufacturing and STEM.
- Ontario's colleges, particularly regional campuses, are essential to achieving the province's goals around productivity, GDP growth, and supply chain resilience. With 25% of current job vacancies requiring college credentials and 36% of future employment growth expected in college-trained fields, investing in college education is foundational to economic success. Colleges graduate 25,000 STEM students annually, nearly half of Ontario's total, and offer hands-on training in advanced manufacturing, robotics, and skilled trades; sectors critical to Ontario's competitiveness.
- However, Ontario ranks lowest in per capita college funding across Canada. Without increased investment, colleges face challenges in scaling programs, hiring field-expert instructors, and acquiring innovative equipment. This is especially urgent in the skilled trades, where an aging workforce threatens to leave gaps that cannot be filled without expanded training capacity. Supporting regional campuses ensures that this investment reaches all corners of the province, aligning with Ontario's commitment to inclusive growth and a "Canadian One Economy."
- College funding reductions disproportionately impact regional campuses, which often serve as the primary conduit for workforce development and training aligned with local industry needs. These campuses play a vital role in supporting economic resilience and talent pipelines in smaller communities Ex. Agricultural equipment operator program at Conestoga College

## Expected Outcomes

- Increased access to postsecondary education for rural and underserved populations.
- Stronger alignment between training programs and local labour market needs supporting supply chain development and investment attraction.
- Improved retention of skilled graduates in SCOR communities.
- Enhanced regional capacity to support provincial economic and infrastructure priorities.
- Increased productivity and GDP growth through a better-trained, locally retained workforce.
- Expanded access to high-quality training in critical sectors, including advanced manufacturing and skilled trades.



- Enhanced capacity at regional campuses to deliver innovative, hands-on education using modern equipment and industry expertise.

### References:

TD Provincial Economic Forecast, June 18, 2025

<https://economics.td.com/provincial-economic-forecast>

BMO Provincial Economic Outlook key forecasts for the Canadian provinces, January 10, 2025

[https://economics.bmo.com/media/filer\\_public/f8/42/f842b92b-6b2a-4b3b-95cb-2b4ac84a853e/outlookprovincial.pdf](https://economics.bmo.com/media/filer_public/f8/42/f842b92b-6b2a-4b3b-95cb-2b4ac84a853e/outlookprovincial.pdf)

RBC: Macroeconomic Outlook, June 13, 2025

<https://www.rbc.com/en/thought-leadership/economics/economy-and-markets/macroeconomic-outlook/canadas-economic-outlook-shifting-tides-as-tariff-threats-de-escalate/>

Statistics Canada, Provincial and Territorial Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by Income and by Expenditure Accounts, 2024

<https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=1902>

OPSEU: A Better Plan Solutions to the Crisis in Ontario's Colleges, April, 2025.

<https://opseu.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/A-Better-Plan-Solution-to-the-Crisis-in-Ontarios-Colleges.pdf>

The Conference Board of Canada: Provincial Outlook

<https://www.conferenceboard.ca/focus-areas/canadian-economics/provincial-outlook/>

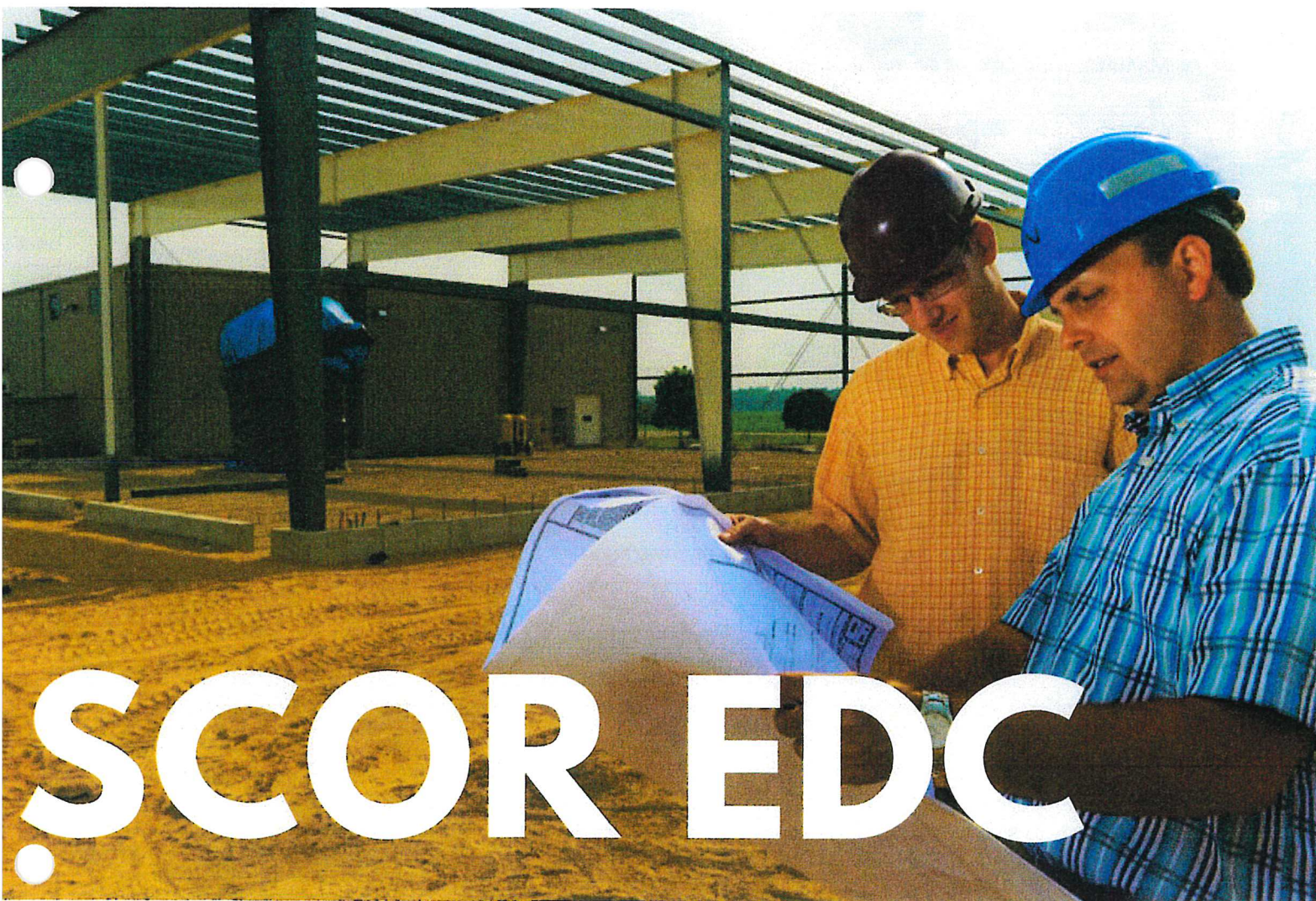




---

# MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, JOB CREATION & TRADE

AMO 2025



# SCOR EDCC



# Briefing Note Economic Development, Job Creation & Trade

## Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade

August 2025

### Background

South Central Ontario Region (SCOR) is a geographically strategic hub for Ontario’s economic development priorities. Our five-county region (Brant, Oxford, Middlesex, Elgin, Norfolk) is home to key contributors in, manufacturing, construction, food processing healthcare, educational ser-vices and agriculture. SCOR EDC has consistently aligned its work with provincial goals, investing in infrastructure, supporting SMEs, and building workforce capacity

SCOR is responding to economic uncertainty and global trade disruption with forward-looking strategies that build regional resilience, support advanced manufacturing, and strengthen Ontario’s supply chains. We are preparing to apply to the Trade-Impacted Communities Program (TICP), aligning our initiatives with its goals of economic resiliency, supply-chain diversification, and trade partnerships

	Brant	Oxford	Middlesex	Elgin	Norfolk
1	Manufacturing	Manufacturing	Health Care and Social Assistance	Manufacturing	Retail Trade
2	Construction	Agriculture	Retail Trade	Construction	Health Care and Social Services
3	Retail Trade	Construction	Educational Services	Agriculture	Manufacturing
4	Health Care and Social Assistance	Wholesale Trade	Construction	Retail Trade	Restaurants and Food Services
5	Educational Services	Transportation and Warehousing	Agriculture	Health Care and Social Assistance	Agriculture
6	Transportation and Warehousing	Retail Trade	Manufacturing	Educational Services	Construction
7	Accommodation and Food Services	Health Care and Social Assistance	Professional, Scientific & Technical	Accommodation and Food Services	Transportation and Warehousing
8	Professional, Scientific & Technical	Educational Services	Public Administration	Transportation and Warehousing	Educational Services
9	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	Accommodation and Food Services	Transportation and Warehousing	Professional Services	Accommodation Services
10	Public Administration	Professional Services	Accommodation and Food Services	Public Administration	Public Administration

Ontario’s manufacturing sector is dominated by SMEs, which make up over 85% of manufacturers and account for 82% of production and 90% of Canada’s exports. Labour shortages persist, particularly in skilled trades such as electricians and millwrights. The transportation and

**South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corporation (SCOR EDC)**

4 Elm Street, Tillsonburg, ON N4G 0C4

[www.scorregion.com](http://www.scorregion.com)



warehousing sector employs nearly 400,000 Ontarians and contributes \$32.8 billion to provincial GDP, with \$13.6 billion in capital expenditures in 2023.

Ontario's agri-food sector generates \$47 billion in GDP and employs 1 in 10 Ontarians.

(Source: ConnectON Dashboard - <https://www.connecton.ca/>)

The transportation and warehousing sector employs 397,100 people in Ontario, making up 5% of the provincial workforce. It contributes \$32.8 billion to Ontario's GDP, with \$13.6 billion in capital expenditures in 2023.

(Source: Job Bank Sectoral Profile – Transportation and Warehousing - <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/job-market-reports/ontario/sectoral-profile-transportation> )

More than 85% of manufacturers in Ontario are SMEs, accounting for 82% of total manufacturing production and 90% of Canada's exports. Labour shortages persist, especially for skilled trades like electricians and millwrights.

(Source: CME 2025 Workforce Report - <https://cme-mec.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/CME-2025-Workforce-Report.pdf>)

## Current Situation

SCOR EDC is responding to economic uncertainty and global trade disruption by adopting forward-looking strategies that build regional resilience, support advanced manufacturing, and strengthen Ontario's supply chains. Our region is not only adapting we are leading transformation through infrastructure investment, workforce development, and cross-sector collaboration.

SCOR EDC has led transformative infrastructure projects, including the Cayuga Rail Subdivision Revitalization, which supported the site selection for PowerCo SE in St. Thomas. This track was destined for decommission but through concentrated efforts between SCOR EDC, partner municipalities and short line rail providers it now serves manufacturing and agricultural customers along the track. It has been a key component in attracting and retaining several businesses. Short line rail supports over 600 jobs in the five county region and moves \$7 billion in goods annually. (SCOR Business economic impact survey 2022)

The Southwest Community Transit (SCT) a network of inter-community transit providers was developed by SCOR EDC to address transportation barriers to employment noted through the Workforce Planning and Development Boards EmployerOne surveys from 2011 to present day. Employer and job seeker surveys identified lack of affordable transportation as one of the top three barriers to employment and recruitment. SCT was developed to connect workforce and residents across southwestern Ontario, with ridership growing over 200% from 2021 to 2023.

SCOR EDC has a long history of responding to economic crisis as proven by diversification from the tobacco industry spurring economic diversification through initiatives like the Sand Plains Community Development Fund. This led the region to develop other agricultural sectors, manufacturing innovations, and tourism assets.

SCOR EDC is preparing to apply to the Trade-Impacted Communities Program, our goals are tightly aligned with that of the program; economic resiliency, supply-chain diversification, and trade partnerships.

SCOR's track record and regional scale make us an ideal candidate for this funding. SCOR



EDC has a proven track record to develop and implement large scale projects that are a catalyst for change and economic prosperity.

### **The Ask**

- Support our application to the Trade-Impacted Communities Program.
- Recognize SCOR's strategic role in building resilient, "Made in Canada" supply chains.
- Advance infrastructure and workforce investments aligned with TICP goals.

### **Rationale & Provincial Alignment**

- Supports MEDJCT's goals in EV, battery, and advanced manufacturing.
- Aligns with TICP priorities: resiliency, diversification, and trade partnerships.
- Builds on SCOR's proven success in multi-jurisdictional collaboration and strategic action

### **Expected Outcomes**

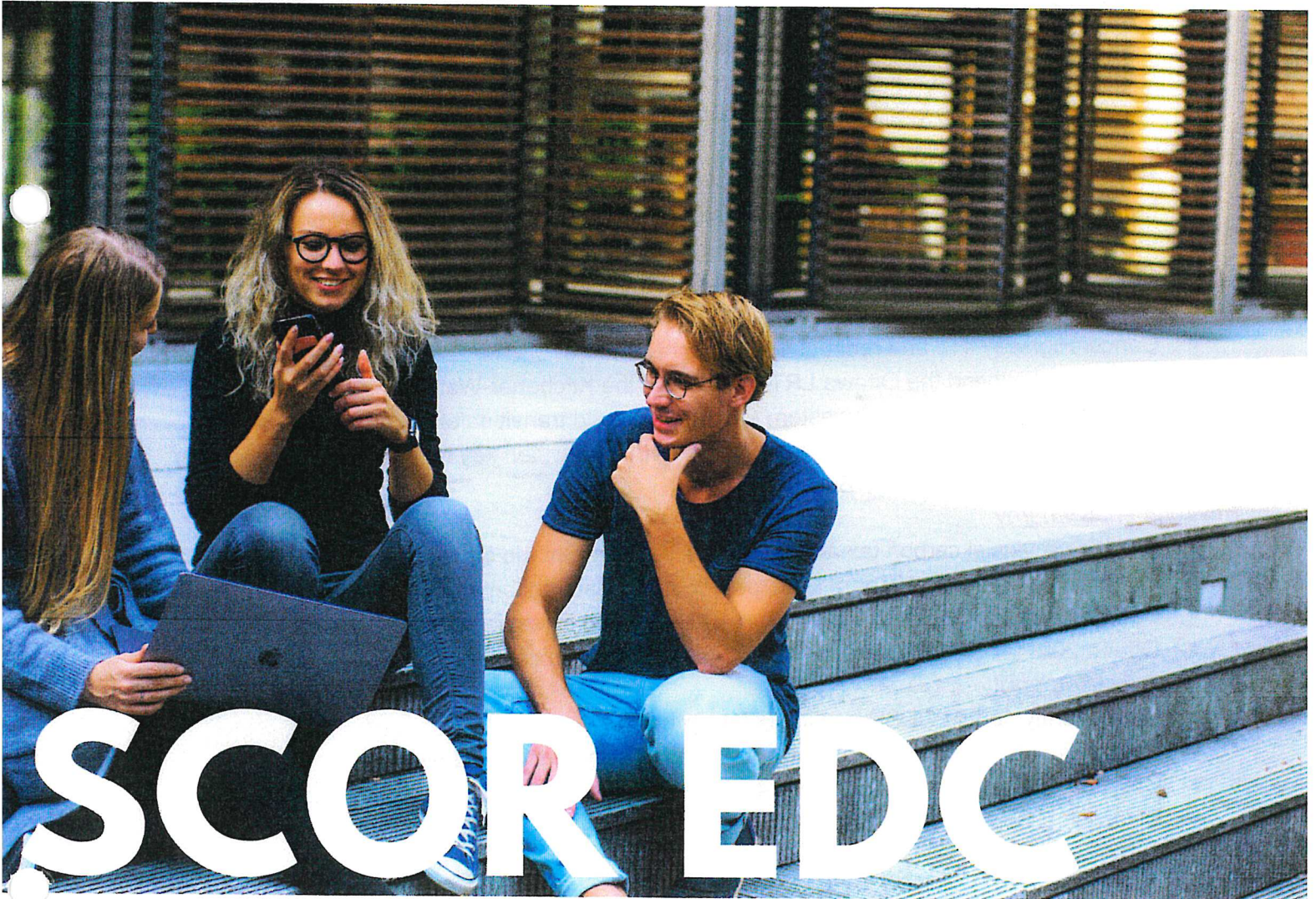
- Strengthened regional supply chains and economic resilience.
- Increased investment and job creation in rural and small urban communities.
- Enhanced connectivity and competitiveness across Ontario



---

# LIBERAL PARTY OF ONTARIO

AMO 2025





# Briefing Note Liberal Party of Ontario

## Liberal Party of Ontario

August 2025

### Liberal Priorities

#### Core Priorities of the Liberal Party of Ontario (2025)

##### Health Care

- Guarantee access to a family doctor for every Ontarian within four years.
- Expand OHIP to cover mental health care.
- Hire 15,000 nurses and 3,500 doctors, and improve nurse-to-patient ratios.
- Build new hospitals and restore full services to urgent care centres.
- Create a Northern Command Centre to support rural health workforce planning

##### Education

- Double annual capital funding to clear the school repair backlog and eliminate portable classrooms.
- Build 90 new schools over four years.
- Provide free school lunches for all students.
- Expand access to STEM, skilled trades, civics, and financial literacy.
- Eliminate interest on OSAP loans and raise repayment thresholds

##### Housing & Infrastructure

- Build or acquire 300,000 affordable rental homes, including 60,000 supportive units.
- Legalize fourplexes and midrise buildings near transit.
- Invest \$2 billion in water and wastewater infrastructure to support housing.
- Remove development charges and land transfer tax for first-time buyers and seniors

##### Transportation & Transit

- Cancel Highway 413 and redirect funding to healthcare.
- Upload and expand the Ottawa LRT and extend the Kitchener-Waterloo LRT.
- Expand GO service in Southwestern Ontario and build transit safety infrastructure.
- Remove tolls from public portions of Highway 407 and widen key highways (QEW, Hwy 69).
- Launch a Northern Rail and Bus Strategy

##### Environment & Energy

- Axe the provincial carbon tax and develop a Made-in-Ontario environmental action plan.
- Protect the Greenbelt, Niagara Escarpment, and create an Ontario Foodbelt.
- Ban Chinese components in energy procurement and invest in wildfire response.
- Offer a 20% tax credit for energy-saving home technologies

##### Economy & Affordability

- Permanently double ODSP and index it to inflation.
- Cut middle-class income taxes and eliminate HST on heating and hydro.
- Create a monthly grocery rebate for 4 million families.
- Establish a Consumer Watchdog Office and a Corporate Crime Bureau.



# Strategic Role of Regional Colleges in Workforce Development and Economic Growth

## Background

In the South Central Ontario Region, we are fortunate to have several colleges and universities within our borders. This allows for access to students outside of the GTHA and is a critical workforce pipeline supporting broader government goals of investment, housing development, and supply chain growth in critical sectors.

### Colleges & Universities in SCOR

County / Area	Institutions Located There
Brant/Brantford	Laurier Brantford, Six Nations Polytechnic, Conestoga College
Oxford (Woodstock)	Fanshawe College — Woodstock / Oxford Regional Campus
Elgin (St. Thomas)	Fanshawe College — St. Thomas / Elgin Regional Campus
Middlesex (London)	Western University, Fanshawe College — London Campus
Norfolk (Simcoe/Norfolk)	Fanshawe College — Simcoe/Norfolk Regional Campus

## Workforce Development and the Role of Ontario’s Colleges

Ontario colleges offer specialized programs in advanced manufacturing sectors including aerospace, robotics, automotive, and metallurgy. These programs provide hands-on training in mechanical maintenance, pneumatics, hydraulics, welding, and CNC programming, skills directly aligned with industry needs. [Source: Ontario Colleges Sector Overview, 2025]

25% of current job vacancies in Ontario require college credentials, and 36% of employment growth over the next decade will be in jobs requiring college-level training. [Source: Colleges Ontario, 2025]

There are currently 60,000+ students enrolled in apprenticeship and trades and technology programs in Ontario’s colleges.

Nearly half of Ontario’s manufacturing workforce was trained at a public college.

Colleges work with thousands of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and municipalities to tackle real-world challenges with practical, results-driven solutions. This work supports regional growth by ensuring businesses and communities across Ontario have access to the tools, talent and expertise they need to thrive. Colleges offer specialized, tailored solutions for corporate training offering employers targeted expertise where and when its required.

Colleges support businesses and their local communities by:

- Solving product and process challenges
- Accelerating innovation and go-to-market timelines
- Delivering community-based solutions
- Training students on active applied research projects to build in-demand, job-ready skills



## **Graduate Employment & Satisfaction**

The graduate employment rate for Ontario college students is 85.8% six months after graduation. Employer satisfaction with college graduates is 91.8%, and graduate satisfaction is 76.8%. These metrics reflect strong alignment between college training and labour market needs. [Source: Ontario College KPI Report, 2025]

## **Current Situation**

In the South Central Ontario Region (SCOR), we are fortunate to have several colleges and universities within our borders. This allows for access to students outside of the GTHA and is a critical workforce pipeline supporting broader government goals of investment, housing development, and supply chain growth in critical sectors.

Regional college campuses, while often smaller and located outside of major urban centres, play a vital role in expanding access to postsecondary education across Ontario. They provide opportunities for students who may face geographic, financial, or personal barriers to relocating for school, ensuring that education and training remain accessible to all Ontarians.

These campuses are deeply rooted in their communities, maintaining strong local and regional networks that connect students to meaningful employment opportunities during and after their studies. Graduates from these campuses are not only more likely to remain in the area but also represent a critical pipeline for addressing workforce shortages in key sectors.

## **College Funding Per Province**

- Ontario: \$11,081 per domestic FTE
- Average of all other provinces (“Rest of provinces”): \$20,426 per domestic FTE

Calculated directly from Statistics Canada FINCOL & PSIS using the standard FTE formula (FT + PT/3.5)

## **Key Opportunities**

- **Workforce Development:** Ontario colleges offer specialized programs in advanced manufacturing sectors including aerospace, robotics, automotive, and metallurgy. These programs provide hands-on training in mechanical maintenance, pneumatics, hydraulics, welding, and CNC programming, skills directly aligned with industry needs.
- **Retention of Talent:** Regional campuses increase the likelihood that graduates remain in the area, supporting local workforce needs.
- **Community Collaboration:** SCOR municipalities have a long-standing history of collaboration, positioning them to support provincial priorities through practical, on-the-ground implementation.
- **Economic Development:** Local access to postsecondary education supports housing development, investment attraction, and supply chain resilience.

## **The Ask**

Support and investment in regional college campuses through:

- Increase funding to Ontario’s colleges, particularly regional campuses, to ensure they can continue to deliver high-quality, industry-aligned training. Ontario currently ranks lowest in per capita college funding across Canada, which limits the ability of colleges to scale up programs, hire field-expert instructors, and invest in modern equipment.
- Recognize and support the strategic role of regional campuses in building a “Canadian One Economy” and strengthening Ontario’s supply chains. These campuses are essential to training the next generation of skilled tradespeople, especially as the current workforce ages and risks attrition without sufficient replacement.



- Disperse capital investments equitably, ensuring regional campuses have access to innovative equipment and infrastructure upgrades that support productivity and GDP growth across all regions of Ontario.
- Enhanced support for regional workforce development programs aligned with local industry needs.
- Policy recognition of the strategic role regional campuses play in meeting provincial goals

## Rationale & Provincial Alignment

- Labour Market Needs: 25% of current job vacancies in Ontario require college credentials, and 36% of employment growth over the next decade will be in jobs requiring college-level training.
- Graduate Outcomes: Ontario college graduates have an 85.8% employment rate six months after graduation, with 91.8% employer satisfaction.
- Provincial Priorities: Regional campuses directly support provincial goals in housing, economic development, and workforce readiness, particularly in critical sectors like advanced manufacturing and STEM.
- Ontario's colleges, particularly regional campuses, are essential to achieving the province's goals around productivity, GDP growth, and supply chain resilience. With 25% of current job vacancies requiring college credentials and 36% of future employment growth expected in college-trained fields, investing in college education is foundational to economic success. Colleges graduate 25,000 STEM students annually, nearly half of Ontario's total, and offer hands-on training in advanced manufacturing, robotics, and skilled trades; sectors critical to Ontario's competitiveness.
- However, Ontario ranks lowest in per capita college funding across Canada. Without increased investment, colleges face challenges in scaling programs, hiring field-expert instructors, and acquiring innovative equipment. This is especially urgent in the skilled trades, where an aging workforce threatens to leave gaps that cannot be filled without expanded training capacity. Supporting regional campuses ensures that this investment reaches all corners of the province, aligning with Ontario's commitment to inclusive growth and a "Canadian One Economy."
- College funding reductions disproportionately impact regional campuses, which often serve as the primary conduit for workforce development and training aligned with local industry needs. These campuses play a vital role in supporting economic resilience and talent pipelines in smaller communities Ex. Agricultural equipment operator program at Conestoga College

## Expected Outcomes

- Increased access to postsecondary education for rural and underserved populations.
- Stronger alignment between training programs and local labour market needs supporting supply chain development and investment attraction.
- Improved retention of skilled graduates in SCOR communities.
- Enhanced regional capacity to support provincial economic and infrastructure priorities.
- Increased productivity and GDP growth through a better-trained, locally retained workforce.
- Expanded access to high-quality training in critical sectors, including advanced manufacturing and skilled trades.



- Enhanced capacity at regional campuses to deliver innovative, hands-on education using modern equipment and industry expertise.

## References:

TD Provincial Economic Forecast, June 18, 2025

<https://economics.td.com/provincial-economic-forecast>

BMO Provincial Economic Outlook key forecasts for the Canadian provinces, January 10, 2025

[https://economics.bmo.com/media/filer\\_public/f8/42/f842b92b-6b2a-4b3b-95cb-2b4ac84a853e/outlookprovincial.pdf](https://economics.bmo.com/media/filer_public/f8/42/f842b92b-6b2a-4b3b-95cb-2b4ac84a853e/outlookprovincial.pdf)

RBC: Macroeconomic Outlook, June 13, 2025

<https://www.rbc.com/en/thought-leadership/economics/economy-and-markets/macroeconomic-outlook/canadas-economic-outlook-shifting-tides-as-tariff-threats-de-escalate/>

Statistics Canada, Provincial and Territorial Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by Income and by Expenditure Accounts, 2024

<https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=1902>

OPSEU: A Better Plan Solutions to the Crisis in Ontario's Colleges, April, 2025.

<https://opseu.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/A-Better-Plan-Solution-to-the-Crisis-in-Ontarios-Colleges.pdf>

The Conference Board of Canada: Provincial Outlook

<https://www.conferenceboard.ca/focus-areas/canadian-economics/provincial-outlook/>

## Coordinated Rural Inter-Community Transit

### Background

Rural communities rely on coordinated inter-community transit systems to access jobs, healthcare, education, and cultural assets. SCOR EDC's Southwest Community Transit connects nine member municipalities, offering affordable and accessible transportation options that help residents remain in their homes longer, offset housing costs, and maintain access to community infrastructure.

SCOR EDC has proudly partnered with the [Rural Ontario Institute](#) for many years to advance rural transit solutions that truly work for Ontario. SCT's model supports regional mobility while respecting local identity, allowing each municipality to retain its own transit brand while benefiting from shared marketing, technology integration, and purchasing power.

The province's investment in transit through the Ontario Transit Infrastructure Fund (OTIF) represents a significant step forward in enhancing regional connectivity. While several municipalities have made important progress, there remains substantial opportunity to improve coordination at a broader, regional scale particularly in underserved north-south corridors.

Building on the success of Southwest Community Transit, further growth in ridership and connectivity can be achieved through the development of strategic transit nodes. This approach supports the potential for a



unified fare system, shared technologies and operational practices, and coordinated marketing efforts. Collectively, these elements will strengthen public awareness and confidence in rural transit, contributing to a more integrated and resilient transportation network across Southwestern Ontario.

SCOR EDC and Southwest Community Transit have established a strong foundation for regional transit coordination. The initiative is now at a pivotal stage, requiring targeted support to transition toward a centralized and integrated system capable of serving rural Ontario more effectively. This evolution is essential to achieving greater efficiency, consistency, and scalability in service delivery across the region.

Consultants have been engaged to develop a transitional model that is both practical and scalable. This model outlines the evolution toward a centralized system designed to enhance coordination, improve service delivery, and support long-term sustainability. The application to OTIF reflects confidence in this approach as a means to deliver the efficiency and integration required to advance rural transit across Southwestern Ontario.

### Current Situation

- Southwest Community Transit links rural residents to larger service centres and key destinations, complementing provincial transit systems and filling critical gaps in regional connectivity.
- The system enhances access to cultural and recreational spaces, contributing to rural quality of life and supporting MTO's goal of creating communities where people want to live, work, and play.
- SCT's success demonstrates the viability of scalable, regionally coordinated transit models that align with MTO's goals for intercommunity transit, modal integration, and economic development.



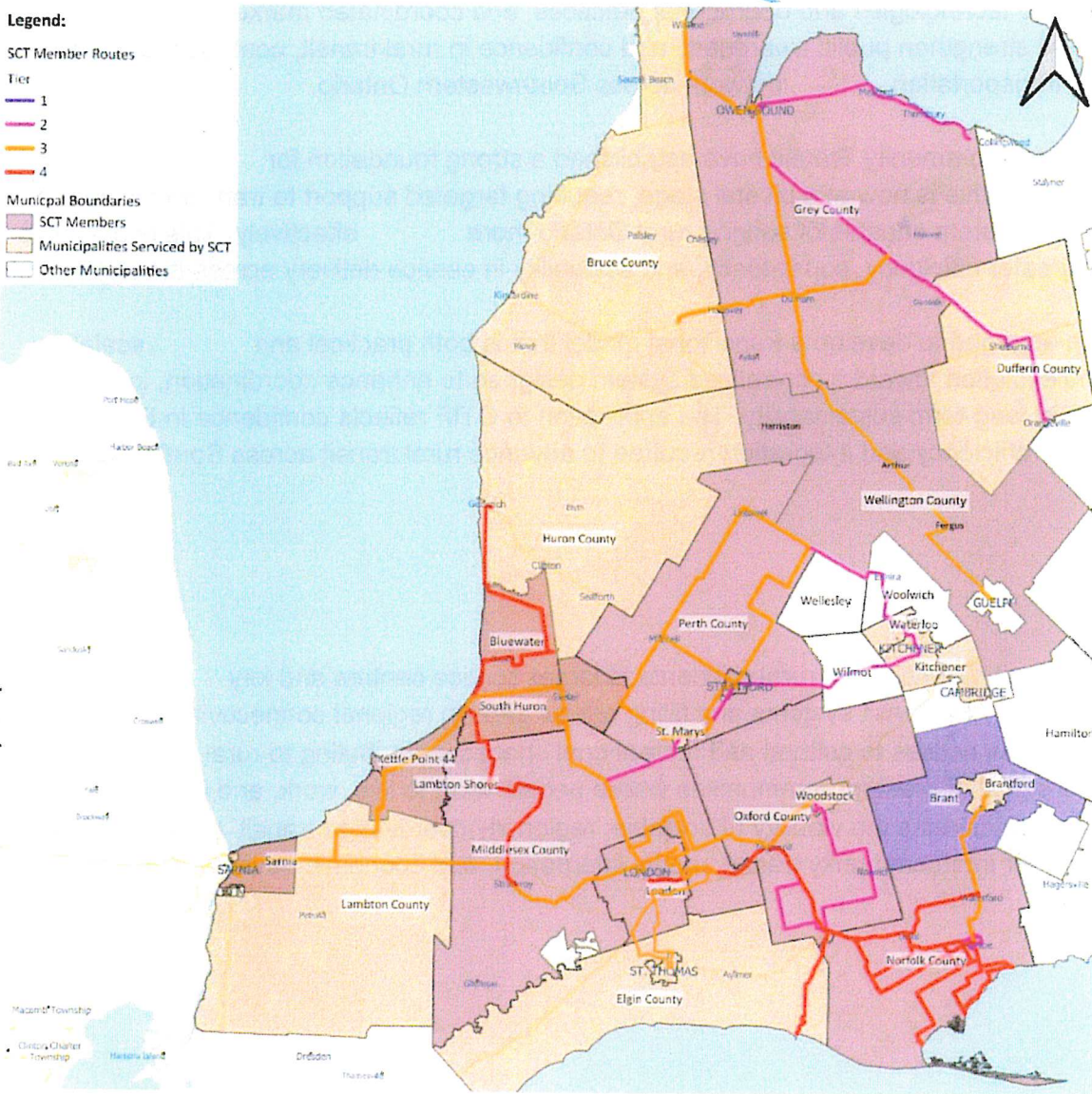
**Legend:**

**SCT Member Routes**

- Tier
- 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4

**Municipal Boundaries**

- SCT Members
- Municipalities Served by SCT
- Other Municipalities

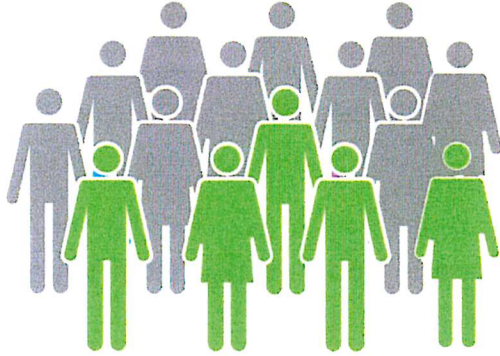


**Key Metrics**

- SCT member systems have seen significant ridership growth: from 38,066 riders in 2021 to 119,006 in 2023 a 213% increase.
- In the first half of 2025 alone, SCT has recorded 125,381 riders, reflecting accelerating demand.
- Many SCT communities are growing at 14–18%, with 80% having populations older than the provincial average.
- The network’s model allows each municipality to retain its own transit brand while benefiting from shared marketing, technology integration, and purchasing power.
- SCT’s model allows for shared efficiencies while maintaining local autonomy, supporting both regional coordination and community identify.
- Ridership surveys indicate that a significant proportion of riders take transit for employment



**30% OF 120,000 RIDERS USED TRANSIT FOR WORK = 36,000 RIDERS**



**ANNUAL SALARY  
\$41,600/RIDER  
(40 HOURS PER WEEK AT \$20 PER HOUR)**

**ASSUME RIDERS ONLY USE TRANSIT FOR 6 MONTHS OF THE YEAR**

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$20,800/RIDER**

**OVERALL ECONOMIC IMPACT**

**\$748,800,000**

**(36,000 RIDERS X \$20,800)**

#### The Ask

Support SCOR EDC's application to OTIF to fund the evolution of SCT into a centralized, integrated rural transit system. This includes funding for a transitional model dedicated to building out the centralized system, enhancing coordination, and expanding service delivery

#### Rationale & Provincial Alignment

- Supports MTO's Southwestern Ontario Transportation Master Plan by improving intercommunity transit, enhancing modal integration, and addressing service gaps in rural corridors.
- Advances Enabling Opportunity: Ontario's Rural Economic Development Strategy by preserving and upgrading community assets and improving access to employment, education, and healthcare.
- Aligns with MTO's strategic goals of supporting economic development, improving safety and reliability, and preparing for future mobility technologies.
- Promotes regional collaboration and scalable infrastructure investment, consistent with MTO's emphasis on efficient service delivery and long-term planning.



## Expected Outcomes

- Southwest Community Transit links rural residents to larger service centres and key destinations, complementing provincial transit systems and filling critical gaps in regional connectivity.
- The system enhances access to cultural and recreational spaces, contributing to rural quality of life and supporting MTO's goal of creating communities where people want to live, work, and play.
- SCT's success demonstrates the viability of scalable, regionally coordinated transit models that align with MTO's goals for intercommunity transit, modal integration, and economic development.

## Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade

### Background

South Central Ontario Region (SCOR) is a geographically strategic hub for Ontario's economic development priorities. Our five-county region (Brant, Oxford, Middlesex, Elgin, Norfolk) is home to key contributors in, manufacturing, construction, food processing healthcare, educational ser-vices and agriculture. SCOR EDC has consistently aligned its work with provincial goals, investing in infrastructure, supporting SMEs, and building workforce capacity

SCOR is responding to economic uncertainty and global trade disruption with forward-looking strategies that build regional resilience, support advanced manufacturing, and strengthen Ontario's supply chains. We are preparing to apply to the Trade-Impacted Communities Program (TICP), aligning our initiatives with its goals of economic resiliency, supply-chain diversification, and trade partnerships

	Brant	Oxford	Middlesex	Elgin	Norfolk
1	Manufacturing	Manufacturing	Health Care and Social Assistance	Manufacturing	Retail Trade
2	Construction	Agriculture	Retail Trade	Construction	Health Care and Social Services
3	Retail Trade	Construction	Educational Services	Agriculture	Manufacturing
4	Health Care and Social Assistance	Wholesale Trade	Construction	Retail Trade	Restaurants and Food Services
5	Educational Services	Transportation and Warehousing	Agriculture	Health Care and Social Assistance	Agriculture
6	Transportation and Warehousing	Retail Trade	Manufacturing	Educational Services	Construction
7	Accommodation and Food Services	Health Care and Social Assistance	Professional, Scientific & Technical	Accommodation and Food Services	Transportation and Warehousing
8	Professional, Scientific & Technical	Educational Services	Public Administration	Transportation and Warehousing	Educational Services
9	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	Accommodation and Food Services	Transportation and Warehousing	Professional Services	Accommodation Services



10	Public Administration	Professional Services	Accommodation and Food Services	Public Administration	Public Administration
----	-----------------------	-----------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

Ontario’s manufacturing sector is dominated by SMEs, which make up over 85% of manufacturers and account for 82% of production and 90% of Canada’s exports. Labour shortages persist, particularly in skilled trades such as electricians and millwrights. The transportation and warehousing sector employs nearly 400,000 Ontarians and contributes \$32.8 billion to provincial GDP, with \$13.6 billion in capital expenditures in 2023.

Ontario’s agri-food sector generates \$47 billion in GDP and employs 1 in 10 Ontarians.  
 (Source: ConnectON Dashboard - <https://www.connecton.ca/>)

The transportation and warehousing sector employs 397,100 people in Ontario, making up 5% of the provincial workforce. It contributes \$32.8 billion to Ontario’s GDP, with \$13.6 billion in capital expenditures in 2023.  
 (Source: Job Bank Sectoral Profile – Transportation and Warehousing - <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/job-market-reports/ontario/sectoral-profile-transportation> )

More than 85% of manufacturers in Ontario are SMEs, accounting for 82% of total manufacturing production and 90% of Canada’s exports. Labour shortages persist, especially for skilled trades like electricians and millwrights.  
 (Source: CME 2025 Workforce Report - <https://cme-mec.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/CME-2025-Workforce-Report.pdf>)

**Current Situation**

SCOR EDC is responding to economic uncertainty and global trade disruption by adopting forward-looking strategies that build regional resilience, support advanced manufacturing, and strengthen Ontario’s supply chains. Our region is not only adapting we are leading transformation through infrastructure investment, workforce development, and cross-sector collaboration.

SCOR EDC has led transformative infrastructure projects, including the Cayuga Rail Subdivision Revitalization, which supported the site selection for PowerCo SE in St. Thomas. This track was destined for decommission but through concentrated efforts between SCOR EDC, partner municipalities and short line rail providers it now serves manufacturing and agricultural customers along the track. It has been a key component in attracting and retaining several businesses. Short line rail supports over 600 jobs in the five county region and moves \$7 billion in goods annually. (SCOR Business economic impact survey 2022)

The Southwest Community Transit (SCT) a network of inter-community transit providers was developed by SCOR EDC to address transportation barriers to employment noted through the Workforce Planning and Development Boards EmployerOne surveys from 2011 to present day. Employer and job seeker surveys identified lack of affordable transportation as one of the top three barriers to employment and recruitment. SCT was developed to connect workforce and residents across southwestern Ontario, with ridership growing over 200% from 2021 to 2023.

SCOR EDC has a long history of responding to economic crisis as proven by diversification from the tobacco industry spurring economic diversification through initiatives like the Sand Plains Community Development Fund. This led the region to develop other agricultural sectors, manufacturing innovations, and tourism assets.

SCOR EDC is preparing to apply to the Trade-Impacted Communities Program, our goals are tightly aligned with that of the program; economic resiliency, supply-chain diversification, and trade partnerships.

SCOR’s track record and regional scale make us an ideal candidate for this funding. SCOR EDC has a proven track record to develop and implement large scale projects that are a catalyst for change and economic prosperity.



## The Ask

- Support our application to the Trade-Impacted Communities Program.
- Recognize SCOR's strategic role in building resilient, "Made in Canada" supply chains.
- Advance infrastructure and workforce investments aligned with TICP goals.

## Rationale & Provincial Alignment

- Supports MEDJCT's goals in EV, battery, and advanced manufacturing.
- Aligns with TICP priorities: resiliency, diversification, and trade partnerships.
- Builds on SCOR's proven success in multi-jurisdictional collaboration and strategic action

## Expected Outcomes

- Strengthened regional supply chains and economic resilience.
- Increased investment and job creation in rural and small urban communities.
- Enhanced connectivity and competitiveness across Ontario



# Hon. Lisa M. Thompson Huron—Bruce

Minister of Rural Affairs

Member of Progressive Conservative Party

Lisa was first elected as the Member of Provincial Parliament for Huron – Bruce in October 2011, and was re-elected in June 2014, June 2018, and June 2022. In the 2018 and 2022 provincial election, Lisa carried more than 50% of the vote, as part of the Ontario PC government.

On June 18, 2021, Lisa was proudly appointed Ontario’s 40th Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs by Premier Doug Ford. After her successful re-election in June 2022, Lisa was reappointed as Minister. Prior to being Agriculture Minister, Lisa served as Minister of Government and Consumer Services, Ontario’s Registrar General and Minister of Education. Additional to her parliamentary roles, Lisa is honoured to represent Ontario as Chair for Commonwealth Women

Parliamentarians—Canada Region.

Lisa was born and raised near Wingham in Huron County, but now calls Bruce County home as she lives near Teeswater on a farm that has been in her husband’s family for 122 years. Lisa is a graduate of the University of Guelph and is also an alumnus of Class 6 of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program and the George Morris Executive Leadership Program. Before entering into politics, Lisa served as the General Manager of the Ontario Dairy Goat Cooperative (ODGC).

Lisa has a long history of being an active and engaged citizen, working with many community organizations. She is a past Chair of the Ontario 4-H Foundation and also served as Vice-chair of Ontario Agri-Food Education Inc. (now known as Agscape).

## Past Positions

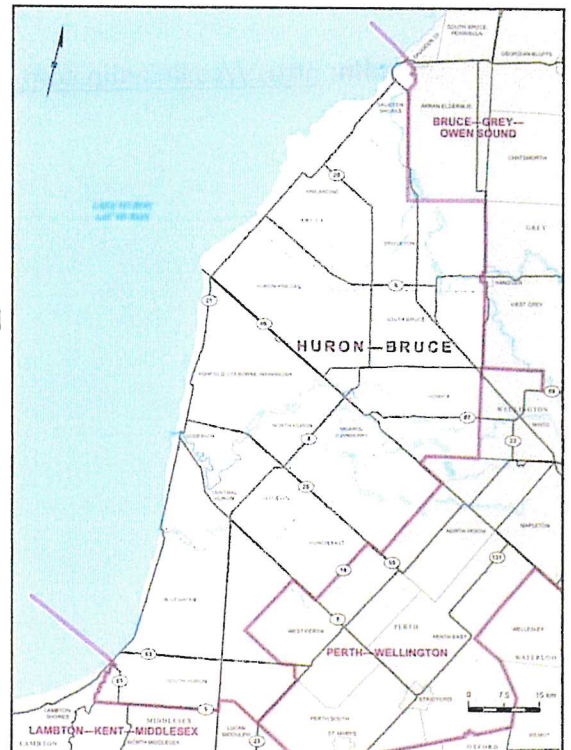
- Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs from 2021 to 2024
- Minister of Government and Consumer Services from 2019 to 2021
- Minister of Education from 2018 to 2019

## Education

- University of Guelph – Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program
- University of Guelph – Bachelors Degree, Economics, Political Science and Political Administration

## Recent News Articles

- Thompson continues to push feds to end carbon tax - April 5, 2024  
<https://cknxnewstoday.ca/midwestern/news/2024/04/05/thompson-continues-to-push-feds-to-end-carbon-tax>



<https://ca.linkedin.com/in/lisa-thompson-617028103>



**Hon. Trevor Jones Riding: Chatham-Kent-Leamington**  
**Minister of Agriculture Food and Agribusiness**

Member of Progressive Conservative Party

On March 19th, 2025, he was appointed Ontario's Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness.

Previously, he served as Associate Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Response (2024-2025) and was Parliamentary Assistant to the Ministers of Economic Development and Agriculture from 2022-2024.

Before being elected to the Ontario Legislature, Trevor served as a municipal Councillor in Leamington.

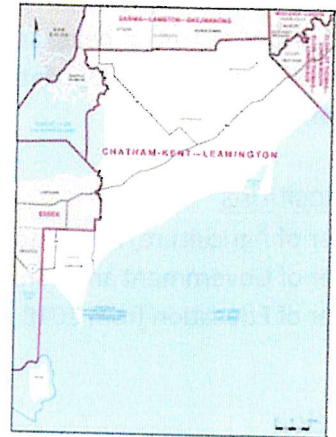
Before elected office, Trevor served as an Ontario Provincial Police officer and worked closely alongside service groups and communities in the agricultural space.

**Education:**

University of Windsor Masters of Arts

University of Windsor: BA Political Science, History

**LinkedIn:** <https://ca.linkedin.com/in/trevor-jones-b75a12237>





# Nolan Quinn – Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry

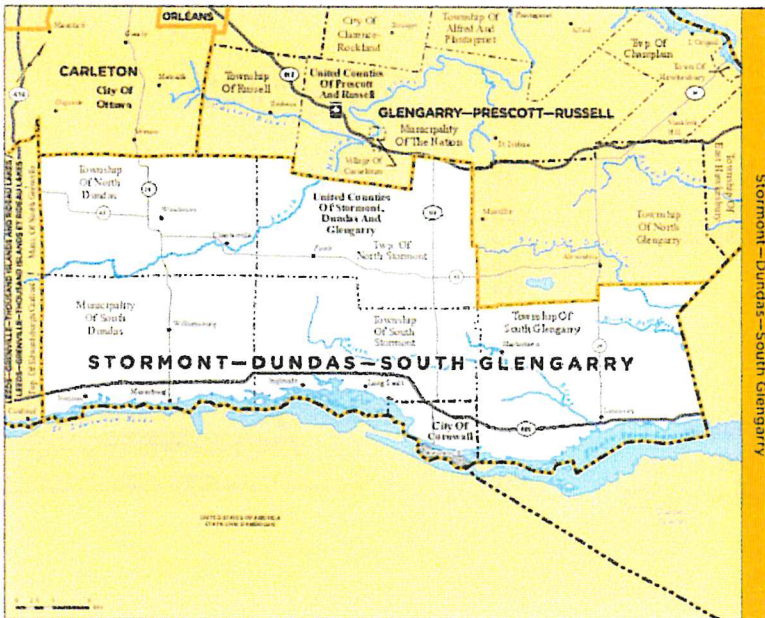
Nolan was born and raised in Cornwall, Ontario, the youngest of five children. He studied at St. Lawrence College, receiving a diploma in Business Management and Human Resources. Nolan and his family reside in St. Andrews West, where he and his wife Kimberly are proud parents to three young children, Norah, Nolan Jr. & Nevyn.

Nolan began his professional career working for Saint Elizabeth Health Care, specializing in Human Resource Management. After leaving Saint Elizabeth, he decided to pursue his entrepreneurial goals, returning to manage the business for the last 15 years that gave him his first job, Dairy Queen Cornwall.

After being asked to join the Children’s Treatment Centre, Nolan has spent the last three years serving on their Board of Directors, where he is a passionate advocate for children’s mental health and wellbeing.

Nolan has volunteered his time and resources to many community endeavours and charities, working with organizations such as the United Way, the Children’s Treatment Centre, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and the Cornwall Community Hospital Foundation. Through his restaurant, Nolan works to support as many community initiatives as possible.

Population in riding: 114,637 (2021). City of Cornwall largest pop centre: Population: 47,845 (Apr 2022)  
<https://cornwalltourism.com/>



## Parliamentary roles

**43rd Parliament (August 8, 2022 – present)**

Minister of Colleges and Universities

August 16, 2024 – present

Associate Minister of Forestry

June 6, 2024 – August 16, 2024

Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Health

March 28, 2024 – June 12, 2024

Member, [Standing Committee on Social Policy](#)

August 10, 2022 – October 21, 2024

Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Children,  
Community and Social Services

June 29, 2022 – March 28, 2024

# Hardeep Singh Grewal

Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Transportation

Member of the Progressive Conservative Party

Brampton East



Hardeep has been an active community member within Brampton over the last decade, including working with the Guru Gobind Singh Children Foundation and C-SASIL (Canadian South Asians Supporting Independent Living).

His involvement in provincial politics started at the age of 18, being elected as one of the youngest local riding presidents in the party's history for Etobicoke North, and later served as the regional director of the Ontario PC Fund.

Hardeep consistently supports provincial projects, specifically in his region of GTA.

## Past Positions

PA to Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming

PA Ministry of Colleges and Universities

Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy.

## Education

Yorkville University Law & Society

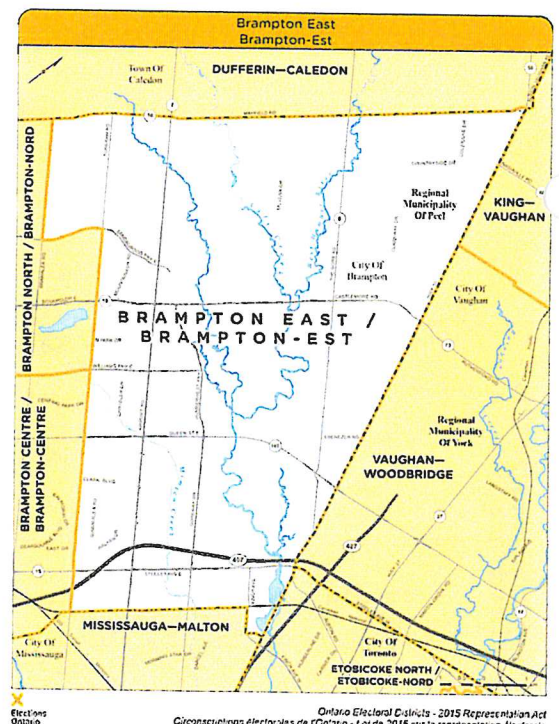
Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA)

## Recent News and Information

Municipal Accountability Act, 2025 : Supported Bill 9 and spoke in favour of single code of conduct

Bill 212 — *Reducing Gridlock, Saving You Time Act, 2024*

Grewal has repeatedly championed big transit/highway builds (Ontario Line, Hazel McCallion LRT, Hwy 413) and framed them as economic drivers, positions consistent with the government's 2025 infrastructure package



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/hardeep-singh-grewal-526761376/>

# Mike Schreiner



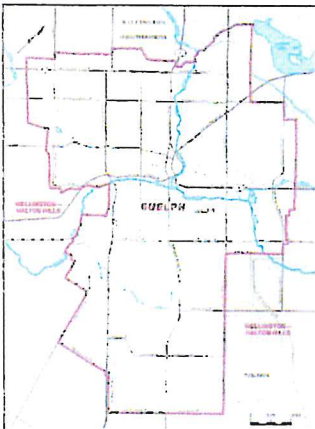
born 9 June 1969 is a Canadian politician who has served as the leader of the [Green Party of Ontario](#) since 2009. Schreiner sits as a [member of Provincial Parliament \(MPP\)](#), representing [Guelph](#); his [2018 election](#) made him the first and only Green Party member elected to the [Legislative Assembly of Ontario](#).<sup>[2][3]</sup>

Prior to making politics a full-time career, Schreiner operated businesses that were food-related. He has been a small business advocate, entrepreneur, and food policy expert.<sup>[4]</sup> Schreiner joined the Green Party of Ontario in 2005 and became leader in 2009, taking over from [Frank de Jong](#).<sup>[5][6]</sup> In 2018, Schreiner was elected with 45 per cent of the vote in the riding of Guelph. His election marked the first time that four different parties were elected to the Legislature since 1951. It was Schreiner's second time running in Guelph, after running in [Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock](#) and [Simcoe—Grey](#) previously.

Schreiner is an [American-born Canadian](#). He grew up on the family grain farm, helping his parents. This is where his interest in food, agriculture and the environment began.

Schreiner earned bachelor's degrees in business administration and history from the [University of Kansas](#) in 1992. He earned his master's degree in history from [Indiana University Bloomington](#) in 1994.<sup>[9]</sup> While at Indiana University, he met his future wife, Sandy Welsh, later a sociology professor and vice provost at the [University of Toronto](#).<sup>[10][5]</sup>

After graduating from Indiana University, Schreiner and his wife moved to Toronto in 1994, and he became a Canadian citizen in 2007.<sup>[5][11]</sup> He and his wife Sandy are the parents of two daughters.<sup>[12]</sup>



## Current parliamentary roles

Member on standing committee on Public Accounts  
**43rd Parliament (August 8, 2022 – present)**

Vice-Chair, [Standing Committee on the Interior](#)  
August 22, 2022 – present

Member, [Standing Committee on the Interior](#)  
August 10, 2022 – August 22, 2022

42nd Parliament (July 11, 2018 – May 3, 2022)

Vice-Chair, Standing Committee on General Government  
October 20, 2020 – May 3, 2022

Member, Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs  
May 12, 2020 – October 9, 2020

Member, Standing Committee on General Government  
July 26, 2018 – October 21, 2020

## Work

<https://ca.linkedin.com/in/mike-schreiner-24a9ba52>

## Education

[University of Kansas](#)



## Hon. Aislinn Clancy

Kitchener Centre

Member, Standing Committee on Social Policy

Member of the Green Party

Aislinn was born and raised in Waterloo region. She was a city councillor for Ward 10 and a school social worker for the Waterloo Catholic District School Board for 11 years.

Over the course of her career, she developed refugee youth and family programming and supported immigrants of many cultures to find a sense of place and lead healthy lives after fleeing war. These experiences have strengthened her commitment to helping newcomers to Kitchener feel safe, valued and welcome. In addition to working face to face to build community, she has also participated in various media communications to promote climate action in local papers, on social media and various online platforms.

Aislinn participated in various projects that empowered women to become confident leaders in their communities as they supported others to act on an individual and systemic level.

### MPP Riding



### Education

Wilfrid Laurier University – Bachelor’s in business

### Aislinn Work and News

HART Hubs <https://aislinnclancympp.ca/statements/>

Plant Based Treaty <https://plantbasedtreaty.org/project/canada/>

Catholic School Board response <https://www.ctvnews.ca/kitchener/article/kitchener-mpp-demands-accountability-for-catholic-trustees-choices-spending/>



<https://ca.linkedin.com/in/aislinn-clancy-2b4bb51b8>



## MPP Brian Saunderson Simcoe Grey

Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade Member of the PC Party

Prior to public service, Brian practiced law for 22 years and taught Business Law and Ethics at Georgian College, Barrie Campus as a part-time instructor from 2012-14. He was also a Lawyer at Christie Cummings Barristers & Solicitor. Brian and his wife, Susie, live in Collingwood and have three adult sons.

Brian was an elite athlete having rowed with the Canadian Rowing Team from 1984-92. He competed in two Olympic Games and three World Championships winning a silver medal in 1990 as a member of the men's heavyweight eight.

Before entering Provincial politics, Brian served as the Mayor of Collingwood from 2018-22 and before that as Deputy Mayor from 2014 -18.

### Past Positions

Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Member of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs  
Member, Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs  
Member of the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy  
Member, Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy

### Education

University of Ottawa LLB  
Western University Bachelor Political Science

### Recent News & Information

- Bill 22 : Ontario University Athletics Week Act, 2025 (Private Member's Bill) Introduced it and spoke in favour declare the first week of October each year as Ontario University Athletics Week"
- Supports Bill 2: Protect Ontario Through Free Trade Within Canada Act, 2025
- Backed Bill 9 Municipal Code of Conduct
- Bill 17 — Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025
- Budget Bill 24 — Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2025



### Other Interests

Capital Campaign Member Capital Campaign Member  
Collingwood YMCA

Chair of Fundraising & Sponsorship Chair of Fundraising & Sponsorship  
Ontario Winter Games

Board Member  
Canoe Ontario, Western Ontario Division

Board Member and Vice-President  
E3 Community Services Inc.

Anti-Doping Review Board Anti-Doping Review Board  
Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/briansaundersonpc/>



## Bonnie Crombie – Simcoe North

She previously served as the sixth mayor of Mississauga from December 1, 2014, until January 12, 2024, and as the member of Parliament (MP) for Mississauga—Streetsville from 2008 to 2011, sitting as a Liberal. From 2011 to 2014, she held the position of councillor for Ward 5 on Mississauga City Council and was a member of the Peel Regional Council. Crombie was elected as the mayor of Mississauga in the 2014 municipal election.

She ran in the 2023 leadership election of the Ontario Liberal Party as a political moderate and fiscally conservative pledging to return her party back to the political centre, and won on the third ballot. She resigned as mayor on January 12, 2024, in order to focus on her leadership of the Ontario Liberal Party,

**Federal politics (2008–2011)** Crombie was elected as the MP for Mississauga—Streetsville in the 2008 Canadian federal election. Following her election, she served as co-chair of the Liberal Caucus Outreach Committee alongside Justin Trudeau and took on the role of the Liberal Party critic for Crown corporations under leader Michael Ignatieff. In the 2011 federal election, Crombie was defeated by Conservative candidate Brad Butt; Butt received 43.8% of the vote to Crombie's 36.9%.

In 1982, she graduated from St. Michael's College at the University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Arts in political science and international relations. Later, in 1992, she earned her Master of Business Administration from the Schulich School of Business.

Before venturing into politics, Crombie worked as a marketing manager for McDonald's Canada and the Walt Disney Company and later worked as manager of government relations for the Insurance Bureau of Canada.

She married Brian Crombie, former-CFO of Biovail Corp. and the Ottawa Senators in 1984, with whom she has three children Alex, Jonathan and Natasha. The couple divorced in 2020.

### **Current platform**

<https://bonnieforontario.ca/>

### **Recent News Articles**

<https://www.sudbury.com/beyond-local/a-look-at-ontario-liberal-party-leader-bonnie-crombie-10154394>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/bonnie-crombie-trudeau-1.7403998>

<https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/here-s-what-the-new-ontario-liberal-leader-bonnie-crombie-promised-1.6669731>