

November 2024

WESTERN ONTARIO
WOWC
WARDENS CAUCUS

Monthly
Update

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Conference Highlights Now Available: Access Photos and Slide Decks



The Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus presented the Ontario West Municipal Conference with a goal of providing relevant, dynamic programming and opportunities to share knowledge and best practices to enhance opportunities and successes, along with many opportunities for networking.

With four streams (Housing, Workforce, Mental Health & Addictions and Economic Development), we had a great line-up of sessions of interest for all our delegates.

[Click here](#) to access the presentation slide decks and conference images.

Ontario Increasing Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund to \$600 Million



On behalf of the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus (WOWC), Vice Chair Andy Lennox attended the announcement of the provincial government's \$100 million increase to the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) over the next two years, raising the fund to \$600 million by 2026.

This critical funding will provide an immediate \$50 million boost in 2025, targeting small, Northern, and rural municipalities.

"The Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus would like to thank the Provincial Government for the significant increase to the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF), supporting small and rural communities," said WOWC Chair Glen McNeil. "OMPF is a critical funding source that empowers our rural communities to deliver essential services and address unique local priorities. This funding ensures that smaller municipalities have the resources to maintain infrastructure and invest in long-term development, fostering economic resilience and quality of life for our residents."

Learn more about the [Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund](#)

Chair Glen McNeil Receives Community Visionary Award from the Southwestern Ontario Isotope Coalition



At the Huron County Council meeting on November 20, 2024, the Southwestern Ontario Isotope Coalition (SOIC) presented Huron County Warden Glen McNeil with its Community Visionary Award.

This inaugural award recognizes a partner of the Southwestern Ontario Isotope Coalition who demonstrates unwavering support for the isotope industry, values the power of relationships, and fosters collaboration amongst SOIC partners.

“Warden McNeil has been steadfast in the early development of the coalition through both his role as Warden and his role as Chair for the Western Ontario Wardens Caucus” said Jessica Linthorne, President and CEO of the Nuclear Innovation Institute and Co-Chair of the SOIC. “He has amplified SOIC advocacy efforts and is helping us build a brighter tomorrow.”

“I am deeply honoured to receive this recognition from the Southwestern Ontario Isotope Coalition,” said Warden Glen McNeil. “The growth of the isotope industry in Southwestern Ontario represents a tremendous opportunity for our communities, and I am proud to be part of this initiative.”

[Learn more](#) about the Southwestern Ontario Isotope Coalition

WOWC Participates in EDCO Queen's Park Day



On Tuesday, November 5th, 2024, WOWC attended the Economic Development Council of Ontario's annual Queen's Park Day, a pivotal opportunity for learning, advocacy, and collaboration.

This event brought together municipal leaders, provincial officials, and stakeholders to discuss the critical economic development initiatives shaping the province.

WOWC Executive Director Kate Burns Gallagher participated in a full day of meetings with key figures, including Hon. Michael Tibollo, Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions; MPP Terence Kernaghan, Critic for Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, and representatives from the Ministry of Transportation.

These discussions emphasized the importance of fostering strong provincial-municipal partnerships to advance shared priorities, such as infrastructure, workforce development, and rural economic growth.

The event underscored WOWC's commitment to advocating for the unique needs of Western Ontario communities while building stronger connections with provincial decision-makers.

Minister Lecce visits Bruce Power to announce new facility to process cancer-fighting medical isotopes



Bruce Power and its partners in the production of medical isotopes have committed to building a hot cell facility in Bruce County, expediting their ability to process short-lived lutetium-177 to ensure it reaches cancer patients around the world in a timely fashion.

Hon. Stephen Lecce, Ontario Minister of Energy and Electrification, made the announcement during today's visit to the Bruce Power site, saying the new facility is another step forward in leveraging the province's expertise and infrastructure as a world medical isotope superpower.

"This year, more than 247,000 Canadians will be diagnosed with cancer, and one of the most consequential tools doctors have available to diagnose and treat this disease will come from Ontario's nuclear generating stations – life-saving medical isotopes," Lecce said. "As someone who has been impacted by cancer in my family like so many Canadians, I know that this initiative will save lives and further cement Ontario's place as a global leader in the production and processing of cancer-fighting medical isotopes."

Minister Lecce also officially announced the start date of Bruce Power's Unit 4 Major Component Replacement Outage during his visit. The Unit 4 MCR outage will begin Feb. 1, 2025, with Bruce Power and its partners doubling the construction activities on site as the Unit 3 MCR continues with the peak of the Asset Management program to invest in Units 5,7,8 until their respective MCRs are completed over the next decade.

In terms of number of activities per day, no utility has ever taken on a project of this magnitude on an operating site. In 2025 alone, Bruce Power will invest \$3 billion in Ontario through MCR and Asset Management investments.

As outlined in the province's recently released paper, [Ontario's Affordable Energy Future: The Pressing Case for More Power](#), the government is committed to a pro-growth agenda that includes nuclear refurbishment and new builds.

Perth County Mourns the Loss of County Councillor and Past Warden Jim Aitcheson



It is with profound sadness that Perth County has learned of the sudden passing of County Council Member and Past Warden James (Jim) Aitcheson.

Jim was a bright spirit and had a significant impact on people in both his personal and political life. Jim was first elected as Councillor for the Downie Ward in the Township of Perth South in 2006. He served as Downie Ward Councillor until 2022 when he was elected Mayor of the Township of Perth South.

Jim spent a total of 13 years serving on Perth County Council. He was elected Warden of Perth County for three years spanning from 2019 to 2022. In his time as Warden, he led the County through the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. It was a difficult time for the community, Council, and Staff. He was a tireless advocate for rural life and participated on many Committees of Council.

"I had the pleasure of working with Jim as a fellow member of County Council and had the fortunate opportunity to work alongside him as Deputy Warden during his time as Warden of Perth County," said Rhonda Ehgoetz, Warden of Perth County. "It has been an honour to work alongside him and his voice and presence will be greatly missed around the Council table."

"We are deeply saddened to learn of Jim's passing." Said Lori Wolfe, Chief Administrative Officer of Perth County. "Jim had a passion for rural life and advocated each day for Perth County. He was a pleasure to work with and will be deeply missed by both Council and Staff."

Beyond his political life, Jim was involved with the Optimist Club of Downie since 1981 and was first elected as Director in 1981. During his tenure with the Optimists, he was involved with the construction of the pavilion in the St. Pauls park in 1994. His service to the community earned him the Ontario Volunteer Service Award in 2010.



**Southern Ontario Tourism
Conference
March 3- 5, 2025 Brantford**

The Southern Ontario Tourism Conference (SOTC) is our region's premier gathering of tourism operators, businesses, industry partners, association bodies, with municipal, provincial and government entities to connect, network and learn. The Conference is presented jointly by Ontario's Southwest (OSW), and Hamilton Halton Brant Regional Tourism Association (HHBRTA).

The Southern Ontario Tourism Conference is a fantastic opportunity to:

- Gain valuable knowledge through workshops, presentations, learning tours, and panel discussions.
- Receive knowledge and insights by staying updated on the latest trends, best practices, and market insights.
- Embrace networking opportunities by connecting with industry peers, potential partners, and experts.
- Learn new skills necessary to create a sustainable future.
- Be inspired by incredible keynote speakers with actionable ideas.
- Discover strategies for growing and improving tourism-related businesses.
- Celebrate the finalists and winners at the Regional Tourism Innovation Awards Gala.

And don't forget, we promise to sprinkle in some laughs and excitement along the way!

[Register now](#)



**Ontario Investing in Skills
Development Capital Stream**

The Ontario government is launching the second round of its [Skills Development Fund \(SDF\) Capital Stream](#) starting November 29, with over \$74 million in available funding to build, expand and retrofit training facilities for workers in the trades, including construction, manufacturing technology and health care.

The announcement was made in Oro-Medonte, where the government is investing nearly \$5 million in the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) to build a new crane training facility, led by the Operating Engineers Training Institute of Ontario (OETIO). The SDF Capital Stream investment from round one will help build a new crane training facility focused on training apprentices in mobile and tower crane operation, as well as heavy equipment. This modern and high-tech centre will include simulation labs, workshops and an outdoor training area for tower cranes, in addition to classrooms, offices and a cafeteria. This full-service training facility will train over 1,600 jobseekers – including youth, Indigenous peoples and newcomers – and foster innovation, while helping to build a talent pipeline for the construction industry in the region and across Ontario.

SDF comprises two streams: the [Training Stream](#) and the [Capital Stream](#). The total investment for both streams is to up to \$1.4 billion.



**Funding to enhance Ontario's agri-
food sector**

The governments of Canada and Ontario are still accepting applications for three initiatives designed to enhance the province's \$50.7 billion agri-food sector through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP).

The following 3 initiatives support greater workforce diversity and supply and on-farm sustainability improvements:

[Agricultural Workforce Equity and Diversity Initiative \(deadline is December 3, 2024\)](#)

[Labour Force Management Strategies Initiative](#)

[Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program](#).

More information on initiative details, delivery partners, and application requirements is available on the [Sustainable CAP](#) web page and can be obtained by contacting the Agricultural Information Contact Centre at 1-877-424-1300, or ag.info.omafa@ontario.ca.

Sustainable CAP is a 5-year, \$3.5-billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen competitiveness, innovation, and resiliency of Canada's agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector.

Webinar - Economic Outlook: Canada in the Midst of a Soft Landing



CANADA IN THE MIDST OF A SOFT LANDING

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

If you missed the webinar you can now access the recorded presentation and Powerpoint in the link below

[Canada in the Midst of a Soft Landing](#)