



ONTARIO'S RURAL PLAN

January 11, 2006

ISSUE:

The EOWC has expressed concerns that the Province's Ontario's Rural Plan does not have a sufficient municipal perspective nor policies or programs that address the municipal needs of Caucus members including local municipalities.

The Government has identified that it intends to update their Plan regularly and the EOWC seeks input into its revision.

The 2005 Provincial budget also reflected a lack of priority to Rural Ontario.

PROPOSED RESPONSE:

The Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus wants to provide input to a revised Rural Plan for Ontario to better reflect municipal needs and perspectives. The Caucus also seeks to make rural issues generally more of a priority for the Provincial government.

The Caucus is developing a "Prosperity Plan for Eastern Ontario" that it will share with the Province later this year (2006) and hopes that they take it into account in any review of their Rural Plan.

BACKGROUND:

The EOWC last year assessed the Province's Rural Plan and found that it concentrated on issues related to education and health care. While these are important matters to all communities there was little recognition of specific municipal issues in their Plan.

The Province's plan identified spending priorities of \$2.158 billion for schools and health care. The total municipal program spending was noted at \$62.8 million or just 0.028% of the total. Even with the inclusion of COMRIF funding the municipal share was only 0.17%.

The EOWC has commissioned the preparation of an Eastern Ontario Prosperity Plan that will include specific policies and programs designed to improve the economy of the region. Phase one of this effort is being supported by the Eastern Ontario Development Fund and by the CFDC organizations in the region.

Recently, representatives from the EOWC and Provincial Government’s Rural Affairs ministry and the ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing met to discuss the Rural Plan. A fruitful exchange occurred. An application under the Province’s RED program is being made to help fund the writing of the *Prosperity Plan*, which is phase two of the work noted above.

The slides below identify the 2005 Budget priorities for rural Ontario.

2005 Ontario Budget

- Key Policy Document
- Expression of Commitment
- Puts monetary value to policy

**Budget 2005
“Strong Economy”**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$4 b • \$900 m • \$300 m • \$1 b • \$1 b • \$1.4 b • \$297 m • \$60 m • \$55 m • \$13 m • \$5 m • \$15 m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools COMRIF Research – Univ GO Transit TTC Transit Prov Hwys 11,69 N.Ont Hertiage Fund N.Ont prev Fund com N.Ont Grow Bonds (GO) North investor Geological Mapping
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**Budget 2005
“Strong Economy”**

- \$750 m Ont Research Program
- \$142 m Cancer Research
- \$10 m Can Film Center
- \$5 m Royal Cons Music
- \$25 m Toronto Film Fest

\$9,977,000,000

**Budget Commitments specific to
Eastern Ontario**

\$ 0