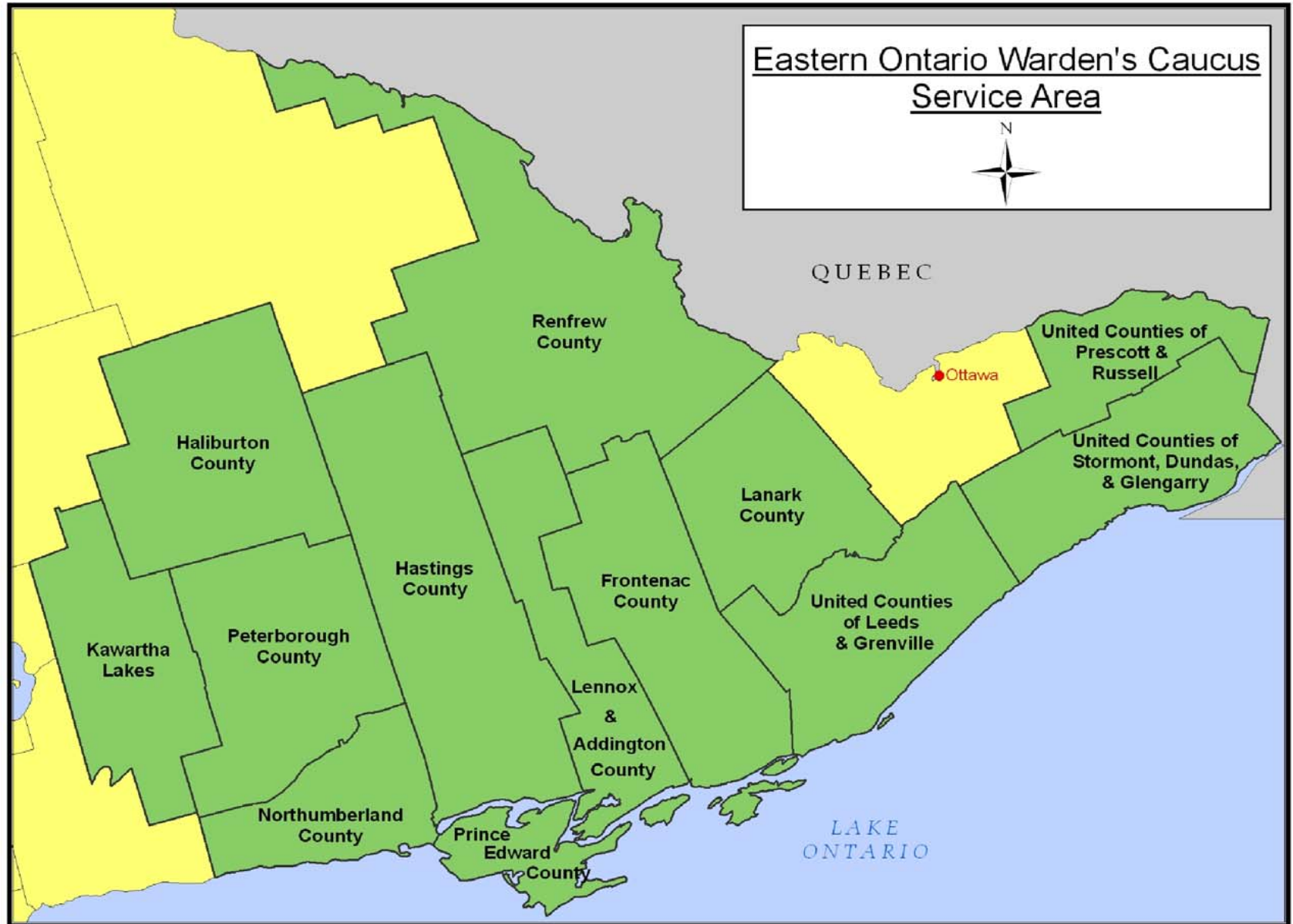




Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus

# Eastern Ontario: Developing a Rural Agenda

**AMO - 2005**



Eastern Ontario Warden's Caucus  
Service Area



QUEBEC

Ottawa

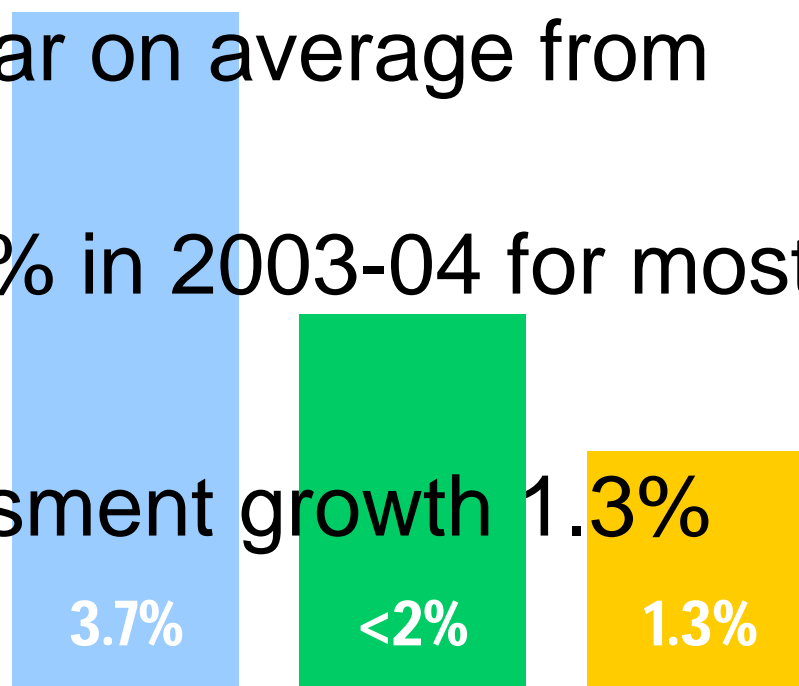
LAKE  
ONTARIO

# **Our Fiscal Challenges:**

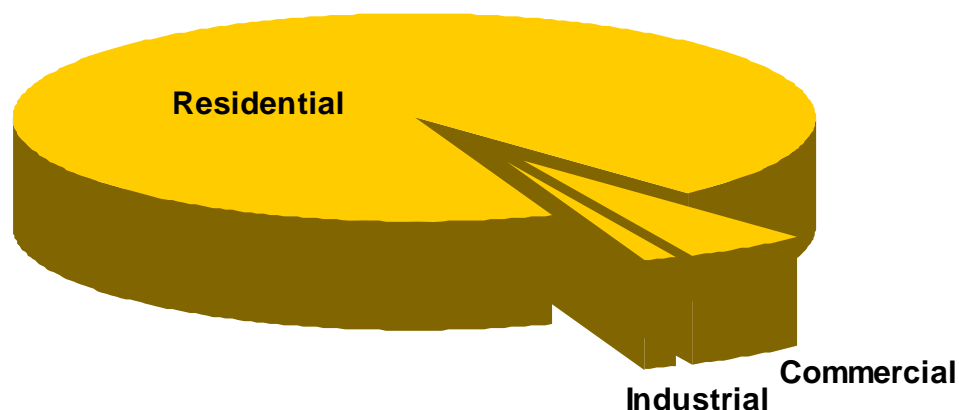
- Tax base is stretched
- Growing gap in provincial funding
- Need to invest in infrastructure

# Slowing assessment growth

- Grew by 3.7% a year on average from 1998 to 2003
- But new growth <2% in 2003-04 for most counties...
- ... and 2005 assessment growth 1.3%



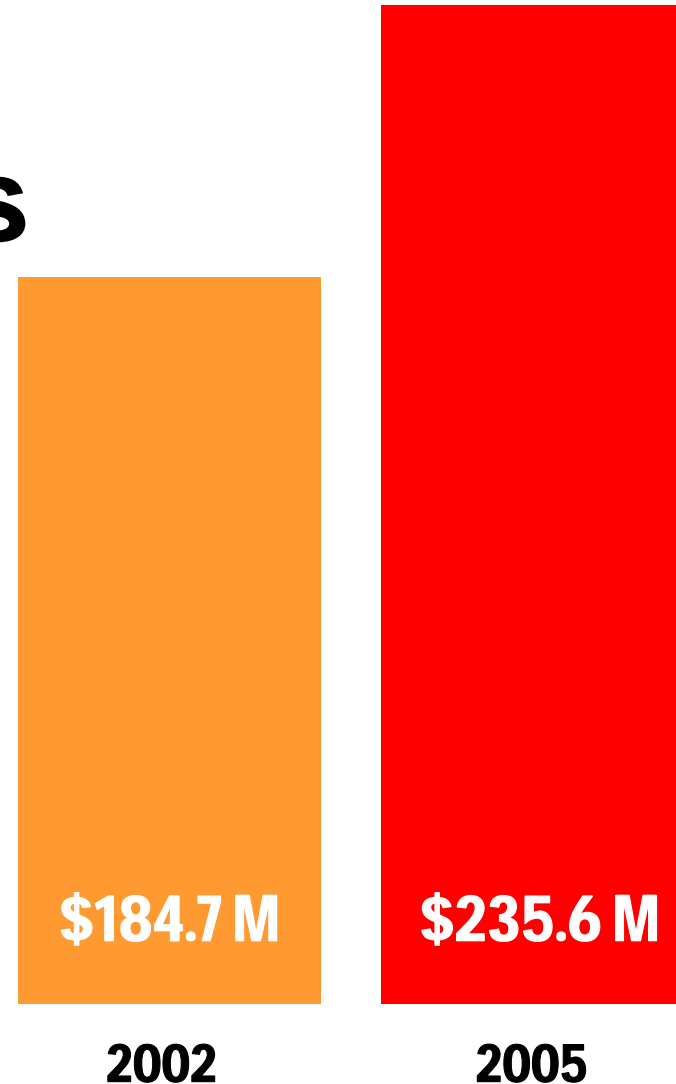
# Homeowners bear the tax burden



- Commercial grew, but is only 4.9% of total assessment
- Industrial accounts for only 1.4%

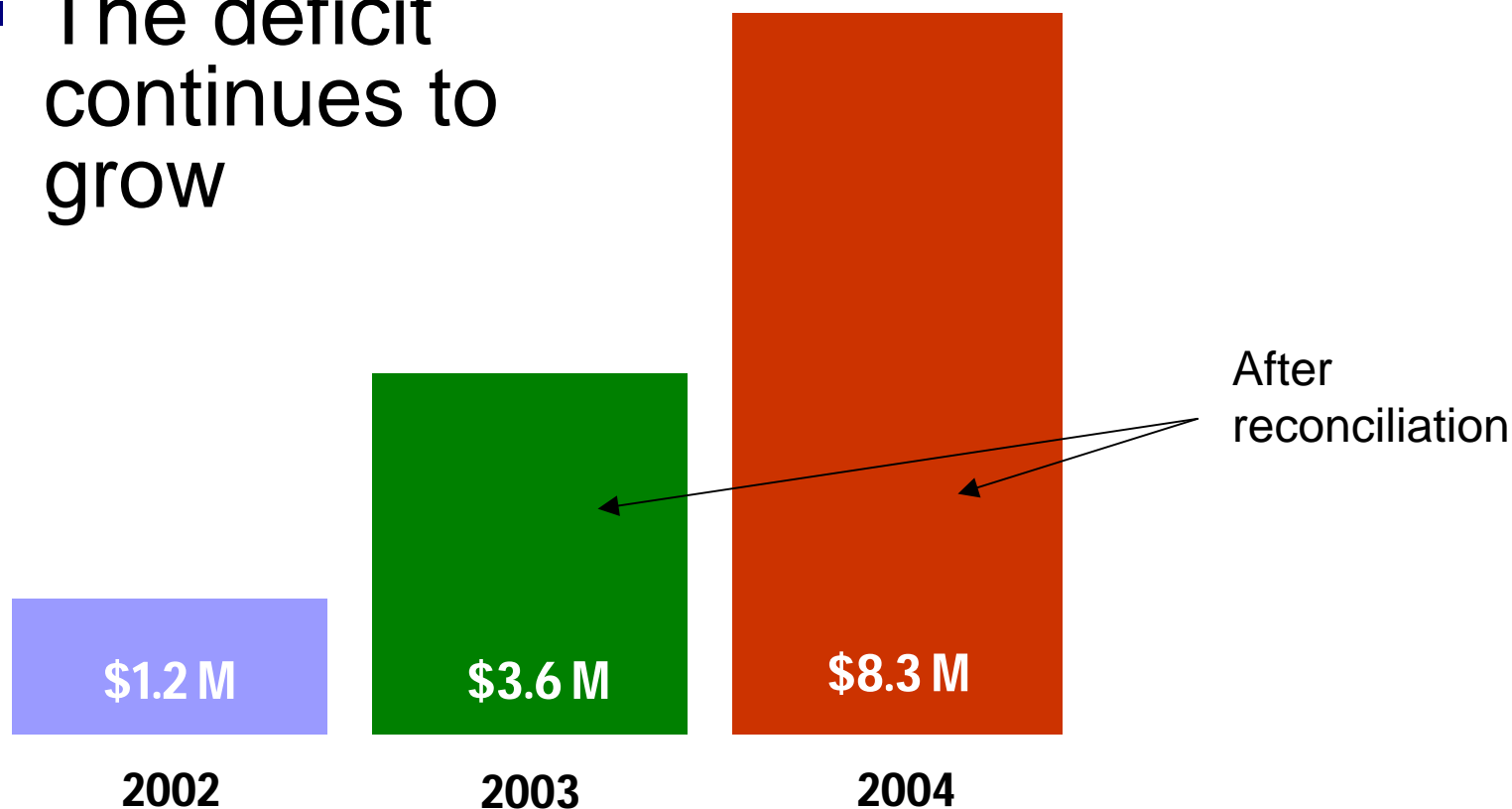
# Pressure on property taxes

Total county  
levy for EOWC  
members has  
grown by 25%  
in three years



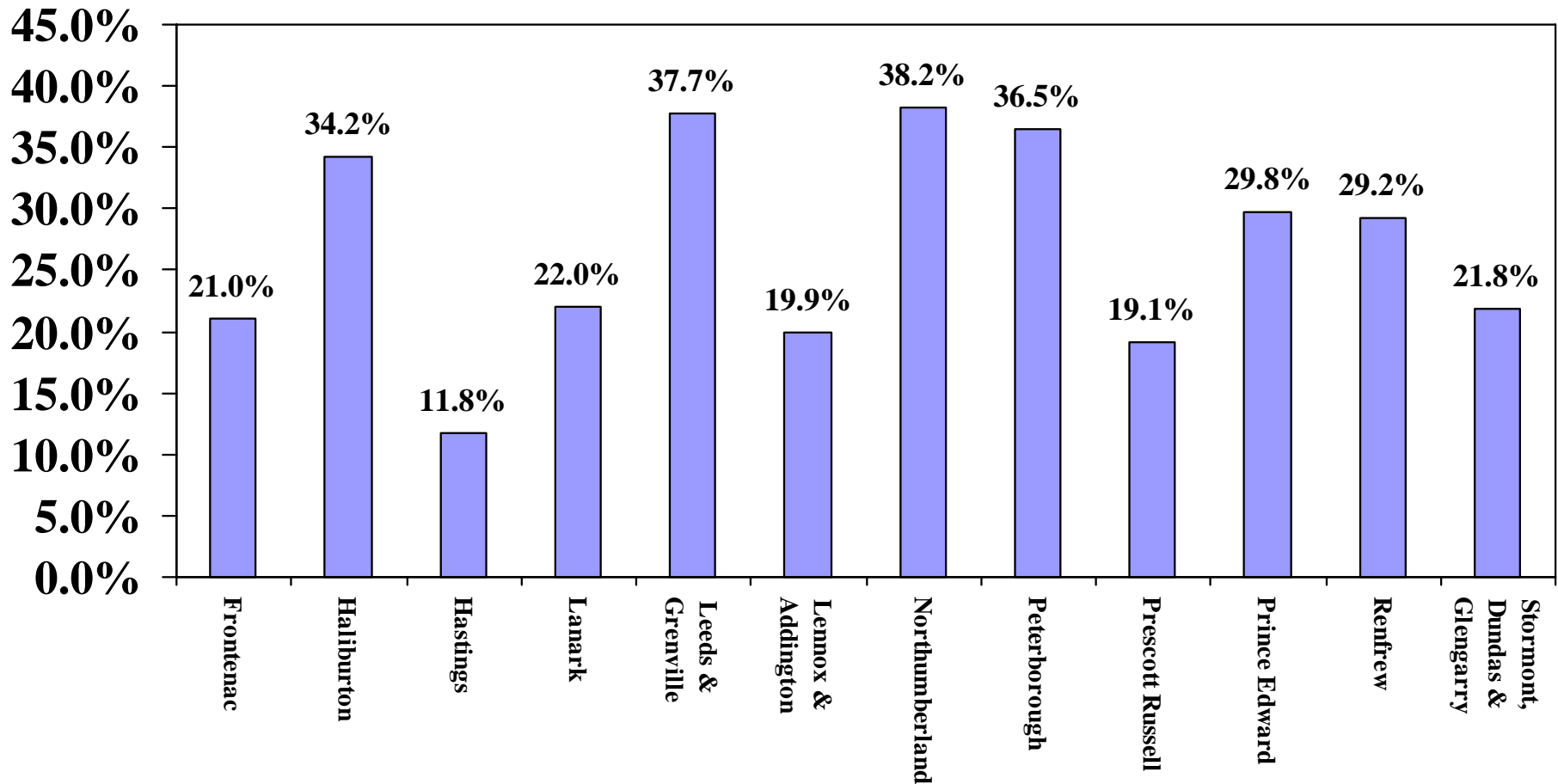
# Local Services Realignment

- The deficit continues to grow



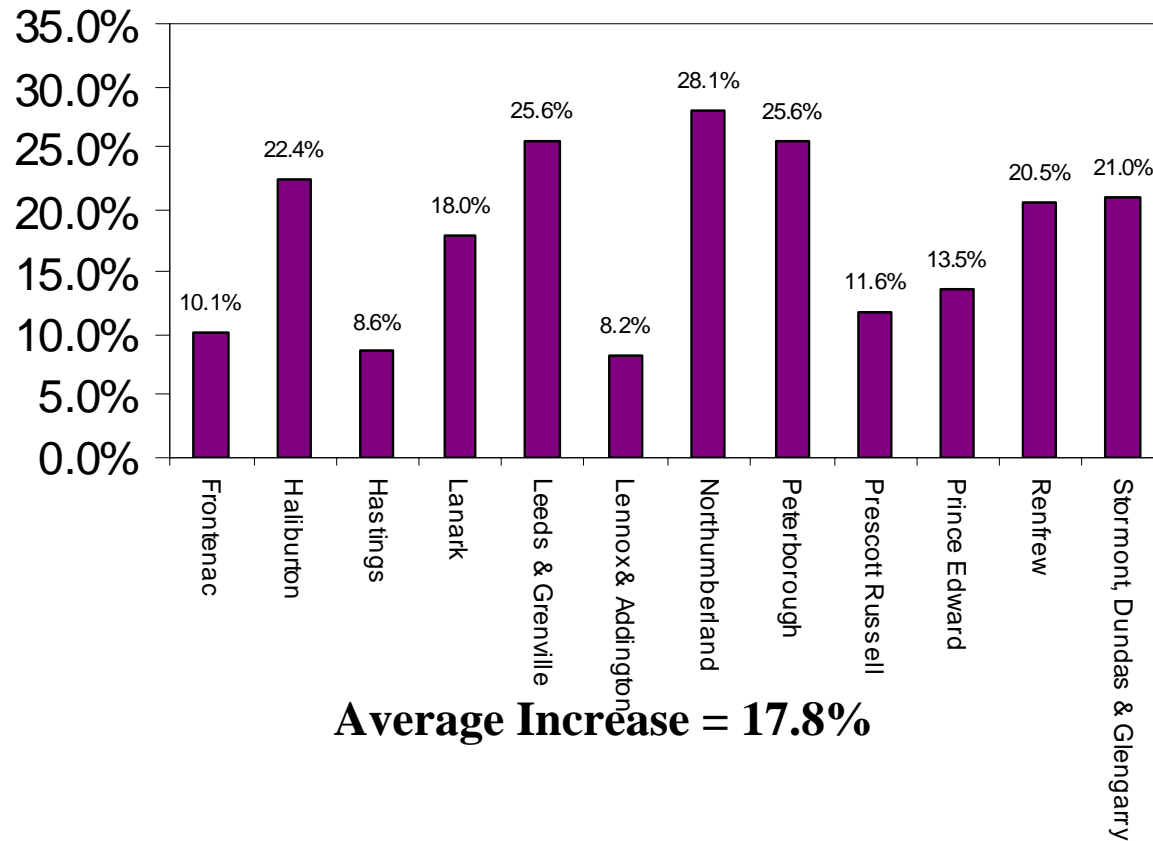
# Future Directions Update 2005

## % Increase in County Levy since '02



**Average Increase = 27.6%**

## Future Directions Update 2004 Percentage Increase in County Levy since 2002

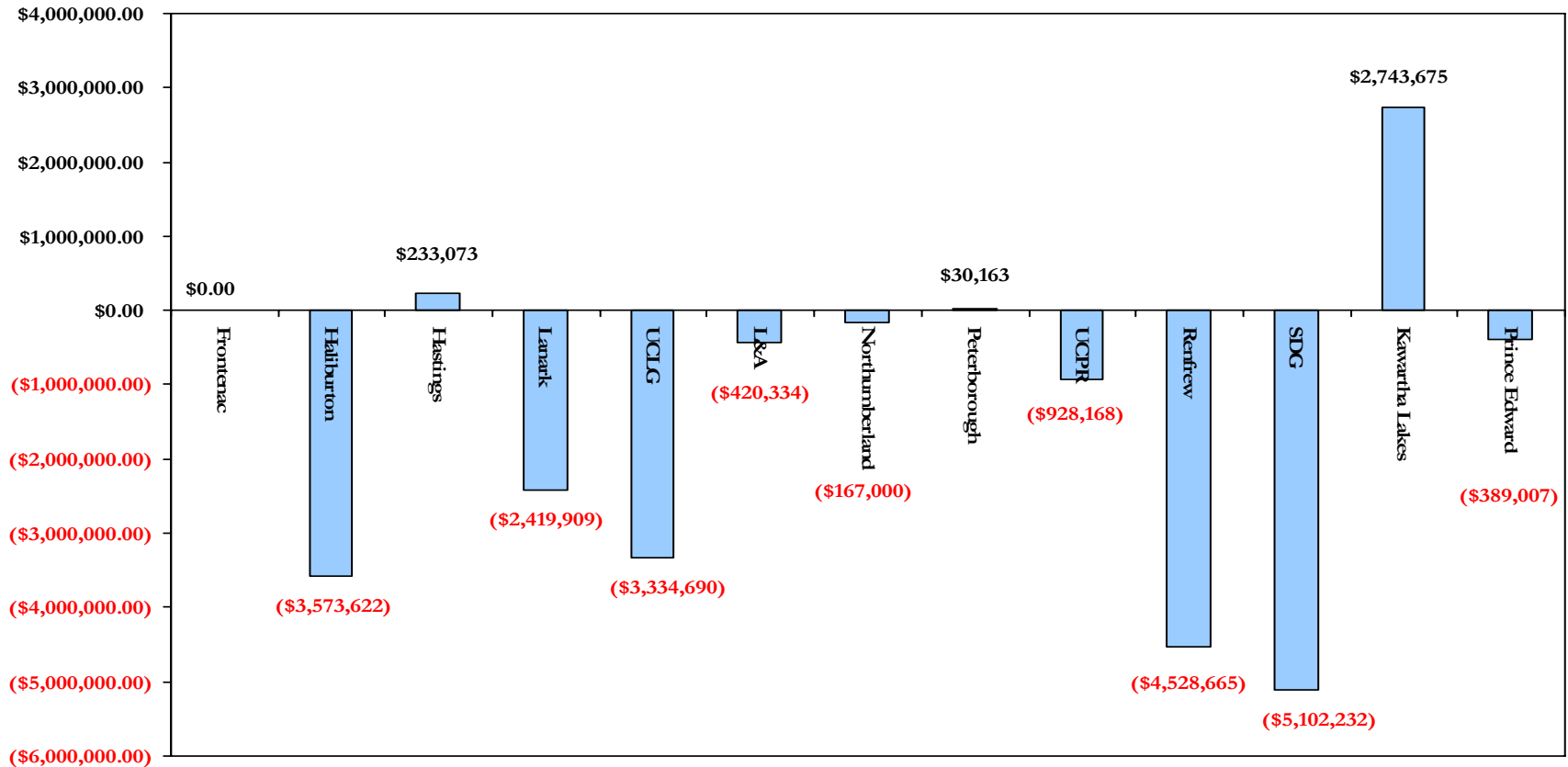


# Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund

- Leaves EOWC short by \$19.5M
- Deficit will grow as \$16.3M stable funding guarantee is phased out
- At maturity, OMPF annual deficit will be >\$35M for EOWC
- This is 15% of 2005 EOWC levy

# OMPF Impact

## Change in OMPF From 2004 Reconciled CRF



**Total Decrease After Phase In for All Eastern Ontario Counties = \$17,856,717**  
**(8.1 % tax increase)**

# Land ambulance



- Widening gap between costs and provincial funding
- 2004 shortfall roughly \$7.9 M (before uncollectible cross-border amounts)

# Downloaded highways

- State of highways a serious concern
- Maintaining 1,268 km costs >\$21M a year
- COMRIF funded only one project on a downloaded highway



# Conclusions

- Slow growth, major needs will continue
- Provincial funding gap is widening
- Eastern Ontario needs:
  - ☑ Better economic base
  - ☑ Better deal with the Province

# Working with the Feds



- Eastern Ontario Development Fund (EODF) set up in October 2004
- Response to EOWC and CFDCs
- Means direct federal investment in our communities

# EODF supports:

- Business development
- Access to capital
- Skills development
- Attracting and keeping the young
- Enhancing technology

# EODF progress:

- \$10M funding in 2004
- \$8.2 funding in 2005
- Creating strong connections to CFDCs

# Eastern Ontario Opportunity Action Plan

- First project funded under EODF
- Goal: identify ways of growing/keeping jobs and wealth
- Sets out 30 recommendations
- Key resource in redesigning Rural Plan

# Ontario's Rural Plan

- EOWC committed to working with AMO, the Province and WOWC on a new Plan
- Rural Plan must be achievable and meaningful
- EOWC members' staff and elected officials are ready to help
- Plan redesign is a priority!

