

## **EOLC launches 2019 Refresh of *Regional Economic Strategy***

*Release of Refreshed Strategy Kicks off Implementation of Priority Projects*

Cornwall, September 30, 2019 – The [Eastern Ontario Leadership Council](#) (EOLC) officially launched the “refreshed” version and the implementation plans for the *Eastern Ontario Economic Development Strategy* earlier this month as part of the Ontario East Municipal Conference (OEMC) in Cornwall.

The EOLC’s unique regional governance model was first developed in 2015 with the goal of advancing economic development opportunities in Eastern Ontario and pursuing opportunities to maintain and enhance its economic prosperity. Its five partners are the Eastern Ontario Wardens’ Caucus, the Eastern Ontario Mayors’ Caucus, the Eastern Ontario Regional Network, the Ontario East Economic Development Commission, and Community Futures Ontario East.

“Through the EOLC, Eastern Ontario became the first region in Ontario to undertake the development – and now, the refresh and forthcoming implementation – of a regional strategy,” stated EOLC Co-Chair Ron Higgins, Warden of the County of Frontenac. “The EOLC was also able to accomplish this in accordance with the Province’s regional economic development planning process, thereby becoming a model for the rest of Ontario.”

The implementation plans unveiled at the OEMC Conference represent the three foundational pillars and priorities of the *Strategy* – Workforce Development and Deployment; Technology Integration and Innovation; and Integrated, Intelligent Transportation Systems – as well as a new, fourth priority, Digital Infrastructure. These implementations plans will guide the EOLC’s work through 2024 and allow for project development funding to the three working groups.

“The Strategy Refresh has confirmed that the economic issues affecting the region in 2014 are still very much present today. In a region dominated by small businesses, there is a sense that workforce issues and digital infrastructure are more important than ever,” explained EOLC Co-Chair Diane Therrien, Mayor of the City of Peterborough. “However, these implementation projects – such as the creation of the Municipal Innovation Certification Program – will be the fundamental tools required to advance the regional economy and fulfill the EOLC’s vision.”

The EOLC would like to recognize the financial support of the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade in completing the Strategy Refresh process. To read the Strategy Refresh and learn more about the EOLC’s implementation process, including the presentations made at the OEMC Conference, please visit [www.eolc.info](http://www.eolc.info).

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For more information about this news release, please contact EOLC Co-Chairs Ron Higgins at [mayorhiggins@xplornet.com](mailto:mayorhiggins@xplornet.com) and Diane Therrien at [dtherrien@peterborough.ca](mailto:dtherrien@peterborough.ca).

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