



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **South Central Ontario Region: Government Leaders Meet to Discuss Issues**

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**OCTOBER 16, 2022, Tillsonburg, ON:**

The South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corporation (SCOR EDC) joined five regional MP's and MPP's in to discuss issues facing the five county region. Elected officials from all three levels of government came together to discuss and address critical issues related to community growth; including education, rural transportation, and infrastructure. The meeting provided an opportunity to explore innovative solutions for enhancing the well-being and development of the region.

One of the key discussion topics was undoubtedly rural transportation, an issue of paramount importance to the region's development. Key discussions included:

**Roadway Advancements:** Participants emphasized the necessity of modernizing and maintaining rural road networks to ensure safety and accessibility, especially in light of recent industrial investments in the region. This will be a significant step towards promoting connectivity and supply chain development.

**Public Transportation Expansion:** Participants explored strategies to promote public transportation services, ultimately aiming to foster better links between rural areas and urban hubs. Efficient inter-community transit systems emerged as another significant talking point, with a specific focus on workforce mobility. Participants explored the idea of sustainable transit systems connecting rural and urban areas, a move that promises to significantly enhance workforce mobility.

#### **Nurturing Rural Infrastructure: Laying the Foundation for Progress**

The meeting also underscored the pivotal role played by rural infrastructure in community development, with a strong emphasis on quality education. Attendees delved into strategies to ensure the availability of quality education in rural communities. This commitment involves innovative investments in schools and educational programs.

**Basic Service Enhancements:** The talks aimed to improve access to vital services like water supply and electricity, with the end goal of enhancing the quality of life for residents and continuing to support business in the region.

"Despite the pandemic, surging housing costs, and escalating inflation, rural communities are witnessing remarkable growth. As a five-county region, we share common challenges and are consistently exploring avenues to cooperate with our provincial and federal counterparts," states Bernia Martin, SCOR EDC Chair. "Our approach must be proactive and action-oriented in crafting solutions, which entails not only collaboration with other government levels but also with the non-profit sector and industry."



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#### Fast Facts

- the South Central Ontario Region is comprised of 988,491 hectares or 2.4 million acres and is situated on the north shores of Lake Erie.
- Population of the five county region is just under 1 million year round residents
- The south central Ontario region is comprised of the counties of Brant, Norfolk, Elgin, Middlesex and Oxford. This partnership has been in existence since 2010. SCOR EDC is an action oriented organization that was formed as a result of the decline in the tobacco industry in 2008 and have been instrumental in fostering diversification and success in the five county region.
- Meeting Attendance: MP Karen Vecchio, MP Leslyn Lewis, MP Arpan Khanna, MPP Bobbi Ann Brady, MPP Will Bouma, MPP Ernie Hardeman,

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