



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Arran-Elderslie Delegation Concludes Successful Meetings at ROMA 2026

CHESLEY, ON: January 21, 2026 – Representatives from the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie have completed a successful series of ministerial meetings at the 2026 Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference in Toronto.

Mayor Steve Hammell, Deputy Mayor Jennifer Shaw, Councillor Moiken Penner, and Chief Administrative Officer Emily Dance attended discussions beginning Sunday and continuing through Tuesday afternoon. The conference provided an important opportunity for Arran-Elderslie to bring forward key rural issues directly to Provincial officials.

Over three days, Council members met with the **Ministry of Natural Resources, Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Energy**, highlighting several priority concerns that significantly impact residents, rural services, and future community development.

Arran-Elderslie highlighted several priority concerns to Provincial ministries, including challenges with flood protection grant funding for the Paisley Dyke, the urgent need for predictable long-term funding to address more than \$28 million in rural bridge repairs essential for safe transportation. Discussions with the Ministry of Health focused on unsustainable municipal pressures created by provincial healthcare gaps and the critical need to restore 24/7 Emergency Department service in Chesley. With the Ministry of Energy, Council stressed the importance of early mapping, screening tools, transparency after the Tara BESS project collapsed due to undisclosed constraint areas.

Mayor Hammell noted that ROMA continues to play a crucial role in ensuring small rural municipalities are heard at Queen's Park:

"Arran-Elderslie is committed to working closely with the Province, but we need fair, reliable support for the essential services our rural residents depend on. These meetings gave us a valuable chance to share our concerns directly and push for solutions that reflect the realities of rural Ontario."



The Municipality will continue working with provincial ministries, local partners, and community stakeholders as follow-up discussions progress in the months ahead.

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Photo: Arran-Elderslie delegation meets with the Ministry of Natural Resources at the ROMA 2026 conference.

L-R, MPP Vickers, GSCA Chair Rob Uhrig, CAO Dance, Minister Mike Harris, Deputy Mayor Shaw, and Councilor Penner.