

**REPORT TO:** Mayor and Members of Council

**PREPARED BY:** Brandon McLeod, Manager of Public Works

**DEPARTMENT:** Infrastructure & Operations

**DIVISION:** Public Works

**MEETING DATE:** May 6, 2026

**SUBJECT:** DIO-20-2026 – Good Roads Conference – 2026

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Good Roads Conference (GRC26) provided valuable insights into emerging issues and best practices impacting roads and infrastructure across Ontario, including leadership development, technology, delegations, trade show, political figures, and health and safety. Key sessions highlighted updates to getting big things done on budget & on time, as well as Minimum Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highways (O. Reg 239/02 MMS) that are directly applicable to North Middlesex operations. Additional discussions on politics of road safety, Ontario phragmites action plan, Ontario underground mapping strategy, and building better rural road: innovation, safety, and service on rural and low volume roads.

### **LINK TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

**Staff, Culture, Work Environment** [By providing high-quality public services](#)

### **BACKGROUND**

The Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) has been around for 130 years and started the conference in 1984. Good Roads annual conference brings together members and affiliated enterprises for a three-day summit of road-forward thinking. The speaker roster is always first-class, the exhibit hall is loaded with innovations, and the learning is cutting edge.

## DISCUSSION

The 2026 conference highlighted several topics relevant to North Middlesex. A seminar highlighted the proposed amendments to the O.Reg 239/02 Minimum Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highway (MMS). The panel discussion focused on the updating winter maintenance, operational flexibility, significant weather event, and risk mitigation.

Another session was building better rural roads: innovation, safety, and service on rural and low volume roads. The key points the panel talked about was drainage is key for roads, a new bio product that hardens the sub-base of a road, and new technology that help maintain roads.

Various key speakers included Dan Gardner, Dr. Missy Cummings, Mayor Olivia Chow, various representatives from provincial governments, etc.

Several announcements and/or updates were provided on funding opportunities that included the following:

- Northern Ontario Resource Development Support Fund;
- Ontario Transit Investment Fund;
- Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund;
- Buy Ontario for Fleet and Capital Projects; and
- Northern Rideshare Pilot.

Several of these funding opportunities will likely apply to North Middlesex, and Staff will be actively monitoring their status and actioning application accordingly.

## FINANCIAL

This conference was incorporated in the 2026 Operational Budget.

## ATTACHMENT

- N/A

Prepared By: **Brandon McLeod, Manager of Public Works**

Prepared By: **Sam Shannon, Director of Infrastructure and Operations**

Reviewed By: Ralph D'Alessandro, Director of Finance /Treasurer

Approved By: Samuel Shannon, Interim Chief Administrative Officer

**Our Values:**

**Community**

**Innovation**

**Collaboration**

**Stewardship**