

AMO 2025

Ministry of Municipal Affairs
and Housing
August 19, 2025



MUNICIPALITY OF
West Grey



westgrey.com/conferences

With a population of over 13,500 the Municipality of West Grey is the largest geographic municipality in Grey County (876 square kilometres), with the River Styx and Rocky Saugeen, Beatty Saugeen and South Saugeen Rivers being the connecting links between our rural communities of Elmwood, Durham, Neustadt and Ayton.

Benefits of Bills 5 and 17

West Grey acknowledges and supports the Ontario government's objectives in

Bill 5: Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025 and

Bill 17: Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025.

- **Accelerated Infrastructure Development:** Streamlining environmental and planning approvals will help fast-track essential projects.
- **Support for Strategic Economic Zones:** Bill 5 introduces mechanisms to boost mining and energy sectors, which are vital to Ontario's economy.
- **Housing and Transit Expansion:** Bill 17 facilitates faster development of housing and transit-oriented communities, addressing urgent needs.

Challenges for Rural Municipalities

Despite the benefits, rural municipalities face unique challenges that may hinder full participation in the provincial mandate:

- **Small Tax Base:** Limited financial resources restrict our ability to invest in infrastructure needed to support growth.
- **Infrastructure Deficit:** West Grey, like many rural communities, faces aging roads and bridges, and lacks the capital to upgrade or expand services.
- **Service Delivery Gaps:** With reduced development charges and streamlined approvals, municipalities may struggle to fund and deliver essential services.
- **Limited Capacity:** Rural municipalities often lack the technical and administrative capacity to respond quickly to new development pressures.

Examples of Infrastructure Deficits in Rural Ontario

- **Roads:** Many rural roads are in poor condition and require resurfacing or reconstruction.
- **Bridges:** Aging bridge infrastructure poses safety risks and limits connectivity.
- **Water/Wastewater Systems:** Expansion is needed to support new housing, but funding and capacity are limited.

Our Asks: Supporting Rural Ontario Through Bills 5 and 17

To ensure rural Ontario can contribute meaningfully to provincial goals, we urge the province to commit to an integrated, systems-based approach for collective impact.

- **Establish a Rural Infrastructure Fund:** Dedicated funding stream to address infrastructure deficits in small municipalities.
- **Create a Rural Capacity Support Program:** Technical and administrative support for municipalities to manage development pressures.
- **Ensure Equitable Access to Development Opportunities:** Mechanisms to help rural areas attract and service new developments.
- **Engage in Meaningful Consultation:** Include rural voices in the design and implementation of regulations under Bills 5 and 17.
- **Support Long-Term Planning:** Help municipalities develop asset management and capital investment plans aligned with provincial goals.