



# Township of Minden Hills

## AGENDA

Special Meeting of Council  
Thursday, June 18, 2026 @ 1:00 PM  
Municipal Council Chambers

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The meeting is being held in-person and electronically, in accordance with the Municipal Act, which provides for electronic participation.

To observe Council proceedings please visit the [Township's website](#) or click this [live-stream link](#)

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1. **Roll Call**
2. **Land Acknowledgment**

We respectfully acknowledge that the Township of Minden Hills is located on Treaty 20 Michi Saagiig territory, and in the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Nations, collectively known as the Williams Treaties First Nations, which are Curve Lake, Rama, Hiawatha, Alderville, Scugog Island, Beausoleil and Georgina Island First Nations.

We acknowledge a shared presence of Indigenous nations throughout the area, and recognize its original, Indigenous inhabitants as the stewards of its lands and waters since time immemorial.

3. **Call to Order/Approve Agenda**

- a) **Approval of Agenda**

Recommendation:

Be it resolved that the June 18, 2026 Special Council Meeting Agenda be approved as circulated.

4. **Declaration of Pecuniary Interest or General Nature Thereof**

5. **Items of Business**

- a) **Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) Community-wide Affordability and Governance Structure Study.**

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[Presentation - Engagement Session 2026-06-18 Final - Additional Slides](#)

[What to Expect - Council Consultations](#)

[Affordability and Governance Structure Study Overview](#)

Recommendation:

That Council receives a presentation provided by EORN to gather Council's input for the Community-wide Affordability and Governance Structure Study, as information.

6. **Closed Session**

- a) **Closed Session**

**To proceed into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing one (1) item pursuant to Section 239(2)(f) of the Municipal Act, 2001 as amended, regarding advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege. (Legal Advice)**

Recommendation:

Be it resolved that Council proceed into Closed Session at \_\_\_\_\_ for the purpose of discussing one (1) item pursuant to Section 239(2)(f) of the Municipal Act, 2001 as amended, regarding advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege. (Legal Advice)

**7. Open Session Resume**

**a) June 18, 2026 Open Session Resume**

Recommendation:

Be it resolved that Closed Session adjourned and Open Session resumes at \_\_\_\_\_.

**8. Report from Closed Session**

**a) Report from Closed Session**

Recommendation:

Be it resolved that the direction given in closed session be approved.

**9. Confirming By-law**

**a) Confirming Bylaw 26-61**

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[By-law 26-61 June 18, 2026 Confirmatory - Special Meeting](#)

Recommendation:

That By-law 26-61 being a by-law to confirm the proceedings of Council held during its Special meeting of June 18, 2026 be received and read a first time, considered read a second and third time and finally passed with the Corporate Seal affixed.

**10. Adjournment**

**a) Adjournment of the June 18, 2026 Special Meeting**

Recommendation:

Be it resolved that the June 18, 2026 Special Council Meeting is hereby adjourned at \_\_\_\_\_.

# Township of Minden Hills Affordability and Governance Structure Study Engagement Session

June 18, 2026



**EORN**  
EASTERN ONTARIO  
REGIONAL NETWORK

# Today's Session

## Discussion points

- Understand current municipal financial environment
- Explore future planning pressures and approaches
- Gather perspectives on potential long-term approaches

## How you can participate

- Individual reflection and group discussion
- Feedback on handouts and theme consolidation
- Post-survey input



# Study Overview



## Why now

- Growing fiscal pressures and a challenging 2026 budget
- Forecasted costs rising - Haliburton County Council directed staff to investigate
- Aligns with provincial expectations

## What the study will do

- Clarify each municipality's financial state and future pressures
- Analyze governance models and best practices from other jurisdictions
- Build capacity, maximize investment and equip 2026–2030 councils
- Demonstrate due diligence and strengthen provincial advocacy

# What EORN is Analyzing

- Haliburton County's unique context
- Municipal budgets and financial statements
- Service delivery review results
- Community feedback on local perspectives
- Models from other municipalities - lessons learned



# EORN Project Team

## Project Leads

Lisa Severson

EORN Director of Communications

Jason St. Pierre

EORN CAO

## Project Management

Linda Assad

EORN Project Manager

## Finance

Jennifer Stover

Peterborough County Director of Corporate Service



## Communications and Engagement

Andrea Montgomery

Redbrick Communications

Jacqueline Demers

Redbrick Communications

Jim Pine

Jim Pine Consulting

Maureen Adams

Maureen Adams Consulting

# Study Engagement Plan



Date	Group
June 1, 2026	CAOs and Senior Management Focus Groups
June 2, 2026	Senior Management Focus Groups
June 15, 2026	Municipal Staff Focus Group
June 16, 2026	Former Politicians Focus Group (hybrid)
	Community Leaders Focus Group (hybrid)
June 17, 2026	Municipal Staff Focus Group
June 18, 2026	Community Leaders Focus Group (hybrid)
June 19, 2026	Library Staff Focus Group (hybrid)
June 23, 2026	Public Open House, afternoon: Dysart
	Public Open Houses, evening: Highlands East
June 24, 2026	Virtual Public Open House
June 25, 2026	Public Open House, afternoon: Algonquin Highlands
	Public Open House, evening: Minden Hills

**June 8 to 28:**  
 Community survey  
 Municipal staff survey

[wadein.haliburtoncounty.ca](http://wadein.haliburtoncounty.ca)



# Community Communications and Engagement



## Key Goals

- Build trust in the Study process
- Reach as many people as possible
- Provide clear, accurate information
- Offer many engagement opportunities
- Demonstrate collaboration and listening

## Sample Communications Tactics

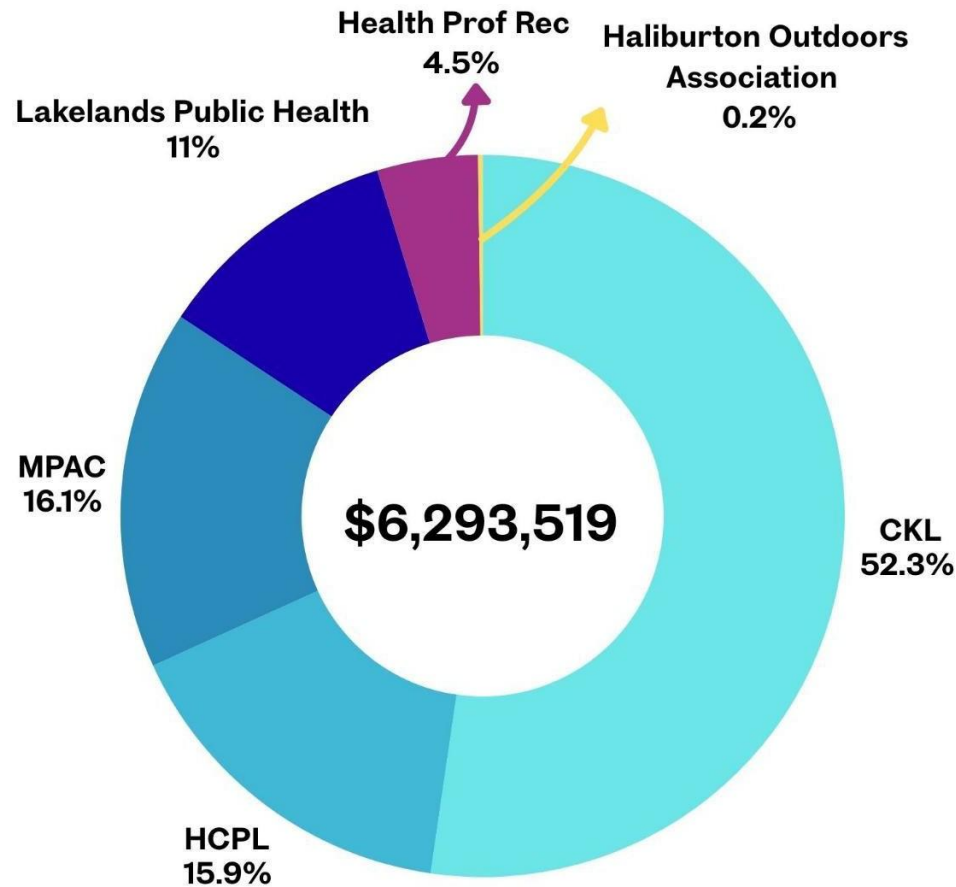
- Waste In page and social media
- Study one pager
- Package for elected officials
- Designated staff liaisons in each municipality
- Targeted outreach to lake associations and others
- Targeted media and advertising

# The County and its Fiscal Context



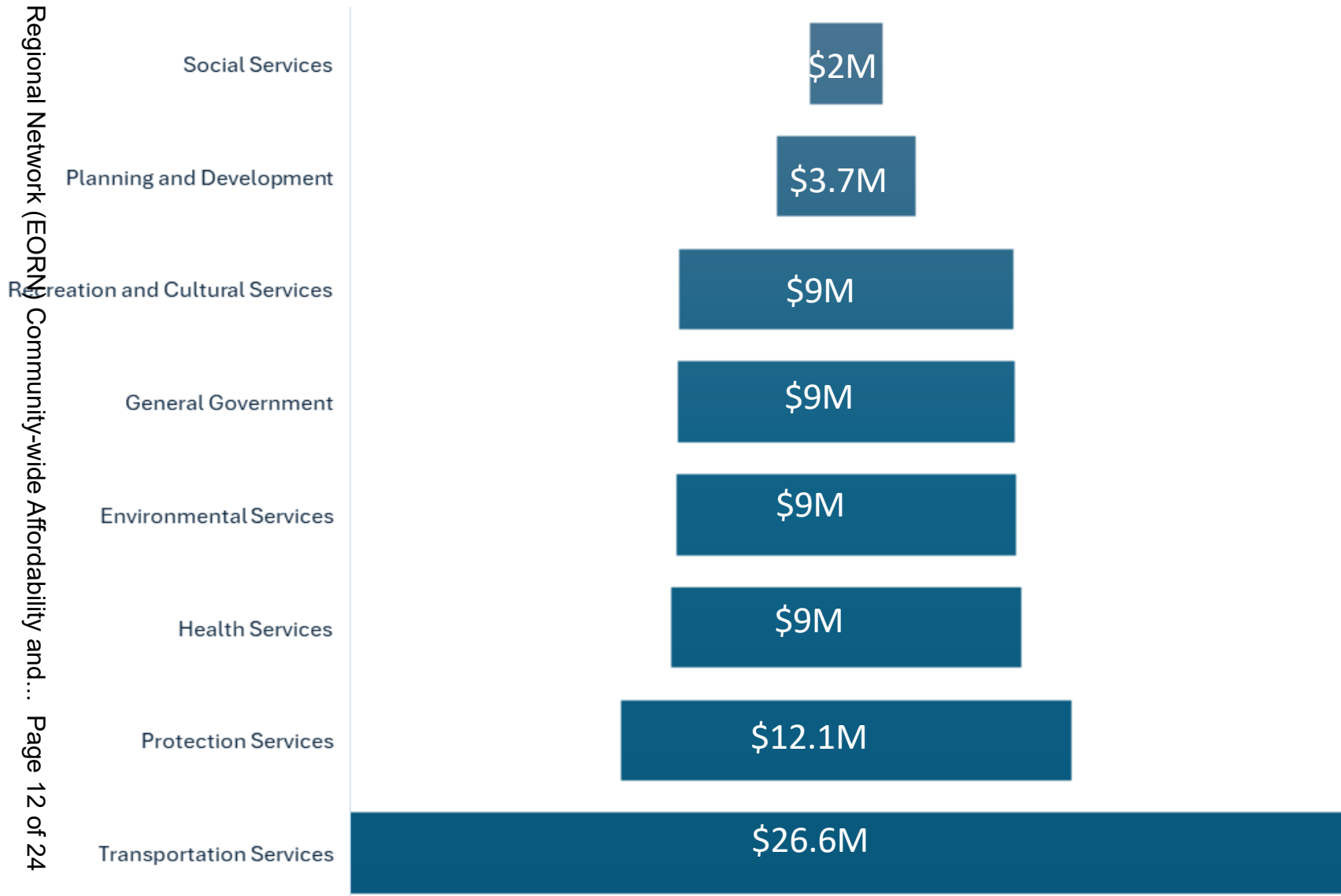
- Tax base is 98% residential
- No property reassessment completed by MPAC since 2016
- The average household income is 17% below the provincial average
- Haliburton County relies heavily on a tourism-based economy with seasonal service demands
- High-cost services mandated beyond local control
- Federal and provincial Infrastructure funding unpredictable and insufficient

# 2026 External Pressures



More than 35% of the 2026 increase goes to these services - **local priorities are being left behind**

# Combined Expenses \$80.8 Million



Tax levy  
\$58 million

# Combined Assets



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Total Value of Assets:	\$1B
Annual Funding Gap:	\$8M
Total Debt:	\$31M
Total Reserves:	\$39M

# Haliburton Councils Pre-Survey Summary

## Key themes, pressures, and opportunities

### Key messages

**Modernization is supported** — respondents see room to streamline operations and improve service delivery.

**Financial pressure is rising** — tax affordability, infrastructure, service levels, housing, and reserves are the main concerns.

**Governance is workable but not optimal** — the current two-tier structure is seen as moderately effective, with openness to change if outcomes improve.

**Status quo carries risk** — many respondents see meaningful risk in leaving current structures unchanged.

**Change must protect local identity** — concerns focus on service disruption, cost increases, and loss of community voice.

**Implication:** The strongest path forward is targeted modernization, shared services, and long-term financial planning—while preserving local voice and minimizing disruption.

### Survey Results

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Need for study	8	2	3	0
Areas could be streamlined	4	9	0	0
Municipalities collaborate effectively	0	5	8	0
Open to governance changes	8	4	0	1
Roles/responsibilities clear	0	6	7	1

# Haliburton County Staff Survey - Summary Dashboard

Total Respondents: 105 | Survey Period: June 8-12, 2026 | 5 Municipalities + County

## RESPONDENTS BY MUNICIPALITY

Dysart et al.	33
Algonquin Highlands	19
County of Haliburton	19
Minden Hills	18
Highlands East	16

## AFFORDABILITY CONCERNS

Very concerned	39
Somewhat concerned	29
Neutral	7
Not very concerned	7
Not at all concerned	1

## QUALITY OF LIFE RATING

Very good	14
Good	43
Fair	24
Poor	4

## TOP PRIORITIES FOR THE COUNTY

Improving affordability for taxpayers	68
Efficient service delivery	60
Sufficient staffing	58
Infrastructure investment	53
Economic growth	51
Modern tools and technologies	40
Speed of decision-making	35
Preserving identity	31
Community revitalization projects	29
Local autonomy	24

## SERVICES NEEDING MORE COLLABORATION

Roads and Public Works	21
Planning and Development	15
Emergency Services	10
Administration	9
None - current works well	8
Other	8
Environmental Services	5
Building and By-law	5
Finance	3
Information Technology	3

## TWO-TIER GOVT EFFECTIVENESS

1 - Very Effective	7
2 - Effective	19
3 - Neutral	33
4 - Ineffective	16
5 - Very Ineffective	13



# Staff survey

## Key Themes

<b>High Affordability Concerns</b>	82% concerned; top priority with 68 votes
<b>Roads &amp; Infrastructure Gaps</b>	#1 area needing collaboration (21 votes)
<b>Planning Inconsistencies</b>	Different zoning/fees across municipalities
<b>Duplication of Services</b>	4-5 separate departments for small population
<b>Mixed Views on Governance</b>	Ratings centered on "Neutral" (33 responses)
<b>Staffing &amp; Workload Concerns</b>	#3 priority; workloads often unmanageable
<b>Desire for Better Collaboration</b>	Strong support, but current collaboration rated poor
<b>Job Security Anxiety</b>	Staff asking, "Will my job be at risk?"

## Summary of key themes from comments

Theme	Summary	Sentiment
1. Roads & Infrastructure	Most cited issue needing improvement; seen as disjointed across municipalities	Negative
2. Planning Inconsistencies	Different rules, fees, and bylaws across municipalities cause confusion	Negative
3. Service Duplication	4-5 separate departments for small population; desire for consolidation	Mixed
4. Job Security	Staff anxious about layoffs; want to be kept informed	Concerned
5. Autonomy vs Amalgamation	Divided views - some want consolidation, others want to preserve uniqueness	Polarized
6. What Works Well	Customer service, libraries, snowplowing, economic development praised	Positive
7. Service Gaps	Need pool/rec centre, public transit, more emergency services, shared legal	Needs attention
8. Geographic Concerns	County too large for single office; preserve local identity and character	Cautious

# Haliburton County public survey week one : Key Themes and Top Priorities

## Key Themes:

### Affordability Concerns:

86% are concerned about the cost of living;  
75% about rising taxes and service costs.

### Desire for Change:

65% say significant changes are needed;  
89% want more municipal cooperation.

### Quality of Life:

75% rate quality of life as good/very good;

## Top Values:

Natural environment (75%)  
Quiet lifestyle (66%)  
Lakes/waterfront (62%)  
Small-town feel (58%)  
Sense of community (52%).

## Governance:

10% prioritize local identity over cost control;  
85% believe local identity can be maintained under a new model;  
70% say the current two-tier system does not serve residents well

## Top Priorities:

Enhance inter-municipal cooperation  
Address affordability and financial sustainability  
Protect and improve service quality  
Preserve community character and representation  
Support quality of life and environmental values

## Most important service priorities:

emergency services (71%),  
snow clearing (58%),  
roads/bridges (55%),  
environmental protection (41%),  
recreation (40%).

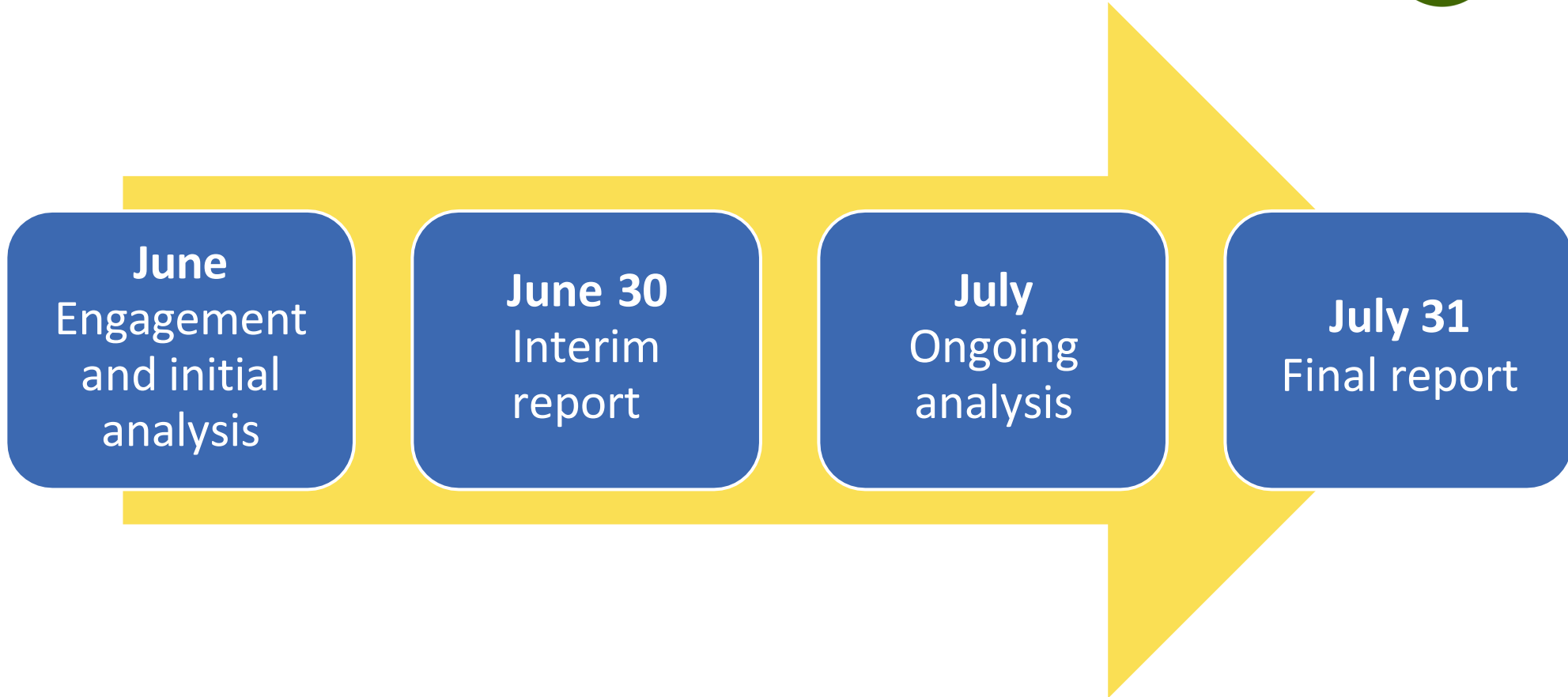
# Foundational Question for Engagement



How might the municipalities across Haliburton County:

- Achieve long-term financial resiliency to deliver more affordable services?
- Create more capacity locally that improves the quality of life for taxpayers?
- Preserve the unique identities in each municipality?

# Engagement and Study Next Steps



# Discussion

Exploring the Future of  
Haliburton County



**EORN**  
EASTERN ONTARIO  
REGIONAL NETWORK



## *What to Expect*

### Council Consultations

#### Haliburton County Community-wide Affordability and Governance Structure Study

##### **Study Purpose:**

Assess options for how Haliburton County municipalities might achieve **long-term financial health** to deliver more affordable services and **create more capacity** to improve the quality of life for taxpayers while preserving unique municipal identities

#### **Goals for the Study consultations**

- Strengthen trust and buy in for the process
- Demonstrate collaboration and listening
- Offer many engagement opportunities
- Reach as many people as possible
- Prepare the community for potential future changes

#### **Purpose of the leadership consultations**

- Understand the barriers to building capacity and supporting community investment and growth (financial and otherwise)
- Understand future planning pressures and approaches
- Gather perspectives on community values, identities and service level needs
- Understand perspectives on the benefits, opportunities, challenges and risks of the current governance structure
- Gather perspectives about potential long-term approaches

#### **Setting expectations**

With any consultation, being clear about what is in and out of scope for the discussion is important. As well, diverse viewpoints are welcome. We are not seeking consensus.

Please remember that all options are on the table and no decisions have been made. This consultation is about helping EORN gather good information to inform our final report.

<b>What the Study IS</b>	<b>What the Study IS NOT</b>
Focussing on putting taxpayers first	A predetermined amalgamation process
Assessing options for long-term fiscal sustainability and capacity building	A restructuring decision
Understanding current and future service delivery pressures	An exercise seeking to change or lose unique local municipal identities exercise
Understanding impacts and trade-offs	A staffing review
Evaluating governance effectiveness	A cost-cutting measure

***Thank you for your participation. We look forward to your input.***



# We need to talk about the future.

## The County of Haliburton's Community-wide Affordability and Governance Structure Study

The County of Haliburton has launched a study to learn more about what we can do today to ensure that we can deliver high-quality, affordable services over the long term. The Study will look at ways to simplify government processes and provide better value for taxpayers.

### About the Study

We want to have an open discussion about building a stronger future for our communities. To have that discussion, we need reliable and accurate information about our options.

No decision would be made right away. The Study is about getting more information to help inform what we do next. Ultimately, any decisions around the future of Haliburton County will be made by the 2026-2030 councils.

The Study project is scheduled to run from **April 30 to July 31, 2026.**

### Have Your Say

We need to talk about the future of our communities and we want to hear from you. The Study Team has developed a community engagement plan with opportunities for as many people as possible to share ideas, including a public survey and in-person and virtual open houses.

## Study Engagement Opportunities

A **public survey** is available June 8 - 28, 2026. Scan the QR code below to complete the survey online, or pick up a paper copy at your local library or municipal office.

Learn more about the Study and share your thoughts and ideas at one of five **public open houses** in June:

- Tuesday, June 23, 2 - 4 p.m. at the Haliburton Legion
- Tuesday, June 23, 6 - 8 p.m. at the Lloyd Watson Memorial Community Centre in Wilberforce
- Wednesday, June 24, 6 - 8 p.m. Virtual Open House
- Thursday, June 25, 2 - 4 p.m. at the Dorset Recreation Centre in Algonquin Highlands
- Thursday, June 25, 6 - 8 p.m. at the Minden Community Centre

## Why is a Study Needed?

Municipal governments are responsible for delivering high-quality services in a way that is efficient and affordable for local taxpayers. It's no secret that the County of Haliburton and our local municipalities are under growing financial pressure. Much of that pressure is outside of our control, including costs for services provided by third-parties like housing, childcare and emergency management.

We want to make sure that Haliburton County has a strong economy for years to come. To do that, we need growth and we need to attract ongoing investment. Based on forecasted numbers, we know that we will be facing considerable pressures to fund investments in roads, bridges and other infrastructure over the next ten years. Getting more information about different paths forward would help us understand how we can keep services reliable and costs manageable, while investing in our future.

Scan the QR code to take the survey and learn more.

[wadein.haliburtoncounty.ca](https://wadein.haliburtoncounty.ca)



**The Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills**

**BY-LAW NO. 26-61**

**Being a by-law to confirm the proceedings of Council  
at its Special Council Meeting held on June 18, 2026**

**WHEREAS** under the authority of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, Municipal Council is required to exercise its powers by by-law unless specifically authorized to do otherwise;

**AND WHEREAS** in many cases, action which is taken or authorized to be taken by Council or by a Committee of Council does not lend itself to an individual by-law;

**AND WHEREAS** Council deems it expedient to confirm the proceedings of Council at its Special Council Meeting of June 18, 2026;

**NOW THEREFORE**, The Council of The Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills enacts the following:

1. That the action of the Council of The Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills at its Special Council Meeting on June 18, 2026, with respect to each resolution and other action passed and taken by the Council at its meetings, is hereby adopted, ratified, and confirmed as if such proceeding and action were expressly adopted and confirmed by by-law.
2. That the Head of Council and the proper officers of the Municipality are hereby authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to the said action or to obtain approvals where required, and, except where otherwise provided, the Head of Council and Clerk, or their designates, are hereby authorized and directed to execute all necessary documents and to affix the corporate seal of the Municipality to all such documents.

**READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME**, passed and signed and the Corporate Seal attached hereto, this 18th day of June, 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bob Carter, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Vicki Bull, Clerk