

A BUSINESS CASE FOR ATTENDING THE Municipal Agriculture Economic Development & Planning Forum



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www.perthcounty.ca/agforum

September 28-29, 2026 | Stratford, ON

INVESTING IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THAT BENEFITS YOUR MUNICIPALITY

Municipalities across Ontario are navigating increasingly complex challenges, including economic growth, housing, agricultural sustainability, land-use planning, infrastructure investment, workforce development, and investment attraction. With the agri-food sector contributing \$52 billion to Ontario's GDP and employing one in nine Ontarians, addressing these priorities requires collaboration across departments, stronger partnerships, and practical local solutions.

The Municipal Agriculture Economic Development & Planning Forum has been developed to bring together municipal leaders, planners, economic development professionals, agricultural organizations, provincial partners, and industry experts to share ideas, learn from successful initiatives, and build the relationships that strengthen Ontario's rural communities.

This is more than a conference, it is an opportunity to experience innovation firsthand and return with practical ideas that can support your municipality's strategic priorities.

PARTICIPANTS WILL GAIN:

Practical Solutions

Learn from municipalities, industry leaders, and provincial partners who are addressing many of the same challenges facing communities across Ontario.

Cross-Department Collaboration

Explore how planning, economic development, agriculture, infrastructure, tourism, and municipal leadership can work together to support sustainable growth.

Valuable Networking

Connect with colleagues from municipalities across Ontario to exchange ideas, discuss common challenges, and build professional relationships that continue long after the event.

Innovation in Action

Experience successful agricultural businesses, rural development initiatives, and investment projects through an immersive Perth County bus tour that showcases innovation beyond the conference room.

Actionable Takeaways

Return with ideas, contacts, and resources that can be shared with colleagues, leadership teams, and Council to support future initiatives and decision-making.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Economic Development Officers
- Municipal Planners
- CAOs
- Clerks
- Chief Building Officials
- Municipal Managers and Directors
- Councillors and Elected Officials
- Agricultural Specialists
- Provincial Ministries
- Conservation Authorities
- Rural Development Organizations
- Community and Industry Partners

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**BUILD KNOWLEDGE.
STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS.
BRING BACK IDEAS.**

WHAT MAKES THIS FORUM DIFFERENT?

Experiential Learning

A guided bus tour featuring innovative agricultural operations, agri-food businesses, value-added processing, rural tourism initiatives, and investment success stories.

Meaningful Networking

An evening reception designed to encourage conversation and collaboration among municipal professionals, provincial representatives, industry leaders, and agricultural partners.

Relevant Conference Sessions

Presentations, panel discussions, and keynote speakers focused on practical solutions and current issues affecting Ontario municipalities.

The result is a learning experience that extends beyond the classroom and provides participants with real-world examples they can apply in their own communities.

ORGANIZATIONAL BENEFITS

- Identify new approaches to supporting economic growth and investment attraction.
- Better understand emerging trends affecting agriculture and rural communities.
- Strengthen collaboration between planning, economic development, and municipal leadership.
- Build relationships with provincial agencies and municipal partners.
- Discover innovative ideas that support Council priorities and strategic plans.
- Bring back practical tools and best practices that can improve service delivery.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Attendees will leave with greater knowledge and confidence to:

- Support economic development initiatives.
- Respond to changing agricultural and land-use priorities.
- Advance community growth and investment opportunities.
- Foster stronger partnerships across municipal departments.
- Identify funding opportunities and provincial resources.
- Apply innovative practices within their own municipality.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Participants will return with:

- New professional relationships.
- Practical ideas ready for implementation.
- A stronger understanding of emerging municipal trends.
- Resources that can be shared across departments.
- Knowledge that supports strategic planning and informed decision-making.
- Inspiration from communities successfully addressing similar challenges.