AORS ADVANCE

FALL 2026

THE NEWSLETTER FOR ONTARIO'S PUBLIC WORKS PROFESSIONALS

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Association of Ontario Road Supervisors

Promoting knowledge ➔ Pursuing excellence

AORS MUNICIPAL PUBLIC WORKS TRADESHOW

PROUDLY HOSTED BY

RENFREW COUNTY ROAD SUPERVISORS ASSOCIATION

A Celebration of Public Works

THE 2026 AORS MUNICIPAL PUBLIC WORKS TRADE SHOW **WAS ONE FOR THE BOOKS**

Held June 3rd and 4th at the Petawawa Civic Centre and hosted in partnership with the Renfrew County Road Supervisors Association, the Trade Show brought together more than 1,500 attendees from across Ontario. With more than 200 exhibitors showcasing the latest equipment, technology, products and services, there was no shortage of opportunities to learn, connect and see what is new in the municipal public works industry.

From the moment the doors opened, the energy throughout the event was incredible. Municipal public works professionals had the opportunity to connect with colleagues from across the province, meet with suppliers and industry partners, explore new equipment and technologies, and share ideas about the challenges and opportunities facing municipalities today.

For Trade Show Committee Chair Brad Faught, CRS-S, seeing the event come together was a rewarding experience: “It is wonderful to see so many municipal industry professionals, exhibitors, sponsors, and guests gathered together here once again. Events like this are only possible thanks to the strong partnerships and shared commitment that exists throughout our industries.”

Brad and the entire Trade Show Planning Committee deserve tremendous recognition for the months of work that went into making the event such a success. From logistics and exhibitor coordination to volunteers, municipal partnerships and countless details behind the scenes, the success of the Trade Show was a true team effort.

AORS President Cyrus Rife, CRS-I, also recognized the incredible support that makes the Trade Show possible year after year: “This event continues to grow every year because of the incredible support from our exhibitors, sponsors, volunteers, municipal members, and industry partners. Whether you’re here representing a municipality, visiting from the private sector, attending as a student, or simply coming out as a member of the public, there’s something for everyone.”

There truly was something for everyone.

The Petawawa event showcased the breadth of the municipal public works industry—from heavy equipment and fleet vehicles to road maintenance products, safety equipment, technology, infrastructure solutions and much more. The Trade Show also provided an opportunity to introduce students and members of the public to the important work being done by municipal public works professionals across Ontario.

1 Colvoy Equipment— Winner of the Best Outdoor Booth

2 E.S. Hubbell—Winner of the Best Indoor Booth

AORS extends a heartfelt thank you to the Renfrew County Road Supervisors Association, the Trade Show Planning Committee, our volunteers, exhibitors, sponsors, municipal members, industry partners and everyone who attended. Your support, enthusiasm and commitment made the 2026 Trade Show an outstanding success.

Petawawa may have been the host community, but for two incredible days, it felt like the entire Ontario municipal public works community came together in one Eastern Ontario community.

SAVE THE DATE
FOR THE 2027 TRADE SHOW

MARK YOUR CALENDARS—the AORS Trade Show is coming to St. Thomas in 2027! Join us June 2-3, 2027, at the Joe Thornton Community Centre, proudly hosted by the Elgin County Municipal Supervisors Association. This is Ontario's largest public works trade show, bringing together public works professionals, municipal leaders, suppliers, and innovators from across the province.

See you in St. Thomas!

AORS MUNICIPAL PUBLIC WORKS TRADESHOW

Perhaps most importantly, the Trade Show demonstrated the strength of the public works community.

Municipal staff travelled from communities across the province to reconnect with old friends, build new relationships and share their knowledge and experiences. Suppliers and industry partners brought their latest products and innovations directly to the people who use them every day. And the many volunteers who supported the event helped create an atmosphere that was welcoming, professional and distinctly AORS.

The event also highlighted the important role public works professionals play in keeping Ontario's communities safe, connected and moving. As Renfrew County Warden Jennifer Murphy noted during the opening ceremonies, public works employees are often the people who are already on the road when an ice storm hits, a river rises or a road washes out—quietly doing the essential work that keeps communities operating.

The 2026 Trade Show was a tremendous reflection of that spirit.

> **“Whether you’re here representing a municipality, visiting from the private sector, attending as a student, or simply coming out as a member of the public, there’s something for everyone.”**

ALLTRADE
EQUIPMENT
CORP
STEPP MFG
SPH 2.0

BEYOND BELIEF
60"

NEW WAY
A Federal Signal Corporation Company
PETAWAWA
CIVIC CENTRE

ROAD
CLOSED
TOWN OF
PETAWAWA

2026 AORS ANNUAL TRUCK SAFETY ROADEO

Seth Martin Crowned the 2026 Driver of the Year

The best municipal operators from across Ontario competed at the 2026 AORS Provincial Safety Truck Roadeo in Owen Sound on September 23. After navigating a challenging course designed to test driving precision, safety knowledge and technical expertise, this year's top three drivers were officially crowned.

Out of 49 competitors from across the province, Seth Martin from the Municipality of Grey Highlands has been awarded Driver of the Year, with a high score of 374 out of a possible 390 points. Joining him on the podium was Marc Groulx from City of Ottawa in second place and Jeff Nielsen from Municipality of Trent Hills in third.

"I want to congratulate every driver who competed in the Roadeo—reaching the provincial level is a huge accomplishment. Every operator on the course demonstrated incredible skill, focus and professionalism," said Paul Stevenson, Representative for the Grey County Public Works Association.

The Roadeo is much more than just a driving competition. It celebrates the operational excellence and dedication of Ontario's municipal public works operators who keep our roads safe throughout the year. The success of the 2026 Provincial Roadeo was made possible through the hard work and effort of the host associations, volunteers and industry partners.

AORS would like to extend its sincere gratitude to the Grey County and Bruce County Public Works Associations for co-hosting this year's event, as well as the generous sponsors and exhibitors for their continued support of municipal public works in Ontario.

Congratulations to all who competed!

Roadeo Champion Seth Martin from the Municipality of Grey Highlands

Roadeo Winners: Left to Right, Jeff Neilsen from the Municipality of Trent Hills (Second Runner-Up), Seth Martin from the Municipality of Grey Highlands (Driver of the Year), and Marc Groulx from City of Ottawa (First Runner-Up)

AORS update

AORS Suppliers and Directors Connect for Annual Meeting

AORS recently welcomed our supplier members and Directors to the Annual Supplier / Director Meeting at the Elm Hurst Inn in Oxford County for a day focused on connection, collaboration and the future of municipal public works.

The annual meeting provides an important opportunity for AORS to bring together the two sides of our industry that work so closely together every day. Our municipal members understand the operational challenges facing public works departments, while our supplier members bring products, equipment, technology and expertise that help municipalities deliver the services their communities rely on. Creating opportunities for these two groups to share ideas and perspectives is an important part of AORS' role.

The morning meeting provided an opportunity to look back at the work AORS has undertaken over the past year, including advocacy, training and professional development, workforce development, member engagement and communications. Discussions also focused on some of the issues having a direct impact on our supplier members and the municipal public works industry, including investments in infrastructure, municipal procurement, changing standards and regulations, workforce shortages, and the importance of continuing to build strong relationships between municipalities and industries.

The meeting wasn't all business, however. Following the morning session, suppliers and Directors had the opportunity to get out and enjoy some of what Oxford County has to offer.

AORS **SUPPLIERS AND DIRECTORS** ANNUAL MEETING

A Little Friendly Competition on the Golf Course

Golfers headed to Oxford Hills Golf Course for an afternoon on the links. And, in keeping with AORS tradition, there was a little friendly competition—although perhaps not the kind of competition you might expect!

The first-ever Paul Dalton Memorial Award was up for grabs, presented to the team who had the most fun—which, naturally, means the team with the highest golf score!

This year's winners were 1st Vice-President and AORS Director Jim Borton, Ken Farkas of the Oxford County Road Supervisors Association, AORS Director Ann Carr of the Nipissing Road Association, and Dan Hayes of Cornell Construction.

The award honours our Past President Paul Dalton, who loved the game of golf—even though, as we like to say, golf didn't always love him back!

MORE THAN A MEETING

The Annual Supplier / Director Meeting is about much more than a formal meeting. It is an opportunity to strengthen relationships, have candid conversations and better understand the perspectives of the people who make up the municipal public works industry.

AORS greatly values the participation and support of our supplier members. Their involvement in AORS events, training, communications and industry discussions helps strengthen the connection between municipalities and the businesses that provide the equipment, products, services and expertise they depend on.

As the municipal public works sector continues to face challenges around infrastructure, workforce, budgets, regulations and changing technology, working together has never been more important.

Thank you to all of our supplier members, Directors and Local Association representatives who joined us for this year's event—and to 1st Vice President Jim Borton, CRS-S, and the Oxford County Road Supervisors Association for helping make the day such a success.

We look forward to continuing the conversations, strengthening our partnerships and working together to build a stronger municipal public works industry across Ontario.

Touring the Dairy Capital of Canada

For those who opted for the Wine & Cheese Bus Tour, the afternoon offered a very different—but equally enjoyable—way to experience Oxford County.

The group made stops at Red Dragon Dairy, Gunn's Hill Artisan Cheese and Golspie Dairy, learning more about the local dairy industry and the people behind it.

At Gunn's Hill Artisan Cheese, participants were treated to a full farm tour, providing a behind-the-scenes look at the operation and an opportunity to learn how cheese is made from farm to finished product. The tour offered a great reminder of the importance of local agriculture and the many businesses and people that contribute to Oxford County's reputation as the "Dairy Capital of Canada."

PRESIDENT'S Message

2026 President Cyrus Rife, CRS-I

As the leaves turn and the temperatures begin to drop, our municipal public works professionals across Ontario begin to shift gears. Fall is a transitional time of year for our crews—wrapping up summer capital projects while also preparing fleets, equipment and facilities for the winter months ahead. This forward-looking approach reflects AORS at its core: always anticipating needs, planning ahead and working tirelessly for the betterment of our communities.

Now about halfway through my term as President, I am deeply proud to look back on everything our association has accomplished during this time. It is truly an honour to serve in this role and represent such a passionate, hard-working community of professionals. You should be incredibly proud of the work you do to keep our province moving.

From maintaining our roads and bridges to managing stormwater infrastructure, your dedication forms the foundation of safe, resilient municipalities throughout our province. You are the unsung heroes of public service, doing work each day that impacts communities across the province, often without the recognition it deserves. This is especially true in the winter months, when our operators work around the clock in extreme weather conditions to clear roads and maintain emergency routes.

As our teams work hard to keep the public safe, we must also ensure their safety is a priority. Over the last few years, we've seen an increasing number of frontline workers facing abuse and harassment from the public. Let me be clear: no worker should ever have to tolerate hostility while simply doing their job.

If you or your team have experienced these challenges at work, we want to hear from you. We strongly encourage you to complete our Public Interference & Worker Safety in Municipal Operations survey and have your voice heard. Your first-hand experiences will help us advocate for stronger protection and meaningful legislative change.

Thank you for your continued dedication, resilience, and unwavering service to the people of Ontario. Please stay safe out there this coming season, look out for one another, and know that your work makes a difference every day.

Sincerely,
Cyrus Rife, CRS-I,
President, Association of Ontario Road Supervisors (AORS)

YOUR AORS 2026 EXECUTIVE

At the AGM in March, your new AORS Executive was announced.

Your Executive L-R: Geoff Carleton, CRS (Muskoka Association of Road Supervisors), 1st Vice President Jim Borton, CRS-S (Oxford County Road Supervisors Association), Immediate Past President Karla Musso-Garcia, CRS-S (Simcoe County Road Supervisors Association) and President Cyrus Rife, CRS-I (Transportation Professionals of Waterloo Region).

SPOTLIGHT

Larry Maddeaux , CRS-I
Spotlight Committee Co-chair

It's amazing how quickly the summer months can disappear. While writing this article in early September, next week we will be hosting our annual Suppliers/Directors Golf Meeting, followed by our Provincial Truck Roadeo and yes, our push to secure as many Municipal Supplier ads as needed, to help put together another great publication of the most informative Municipal Supplier magazine published in Ontario, Canada.

The 41st edition of Spotlight had an amazing kick off at our recent Trade Show in Petawawa. Suppliers as well as Trade Show attendees lined up to get a copy of the 40th edition of Spotlight and to renew their ad for the 2027 edition.

My Co-chair, Derek Scholten (Colvoy Equipment) and I were extremely proud of this edition as it brought comments of praise from past presidents, retired members, suppliers and contractors.

I have to say that the Spotlight committee did an excellent job in helping Spence Print produce the best edition of Spotlight I have seen so far. The committee or "team" as I wish to refer to them, will be contacting existing suppliers as well as new suppliers in the next couple of months to secure ads for our 2027 edition.

Securing an ad early in the year allows the supplier to be entered into two Spotlight draws. The first is a chance to win a free Trade Show booth at the upcoming year's AORS Trade Show (draw has taken place in Petawawa) and the second is a chance to win your Spotlight ad free (draw to be held at the September suppliers meeting)

Other advantages of placing a Spotlight ad in Ontario's largest directory of products and services for municipal public works, are:

- You are not invoiced until the spring 2027
- Your ad will be distributed in a hardcopy print of 4000 copies, which approx. 2000 will be mailed out to AORS members, Municipal Supervisors, Fleet Managers and Municipal Purchasing personal.
- The remainder will be distributed at various Trade Shows and other events throughout Ontario.
- Your ad will also be added to the AORS online Flip Book copy at no extra charge.

Spotlight is printed on high-quality recycled paper using safe printing inks held together with a strong plastic coil.

The clarity and ink colours in every ad are must-see. In my opinion, they are the best on the market, and you will not be disappointed. Our rates are below the average advertising rates offered by others, so don't delay—get your ads in ASAP.

The "Spotlight team" is a combination of AORS members as well as supplier members, and we are always looking for new recruits, so if you have a phone, a computer and a little time, you will be a welcome addition. We also have a draw for anyone who brings in a new supplier ad for the next edition. Your name will be entered into a draw to possibly win $1000. So, don't hesitate to help us put together another great edition of Spotlight.

In closing I wish to thank the entire Spotlight team, our incredibly loyal suppliers, our publisher (Spence Print) and the AORS staff for all their support and dedication. A special shout out to our long time AORS Spotlight Member, Dennis O'Neil CRS-S, Member Services Coordinator, who has served on this committee for many years and has taken the official plunge into retirement. We wish him well and thank him for his passion and loyalty to Spotlight.

Remember—"Is Your Spotlight Handy?"

Keep it close by for your next project. It's a great way to have hundreds of quality suppliers at your fingertips and when dealing with a supplier, let them know you found their name, product or services in the hardcopy or flipbook of the Spotlight Directory.

S&B Services Ltd. won their 2027 AORS Municipal Public Works Trade Show booth for FREE for getting their Spotlight application in before the end of the 2026 trade show!

1

2

3

4

At the 2026 Trade Show we recognized 20 Year Spotlight Advertisers

1 DiCan

2 Ground Force Training

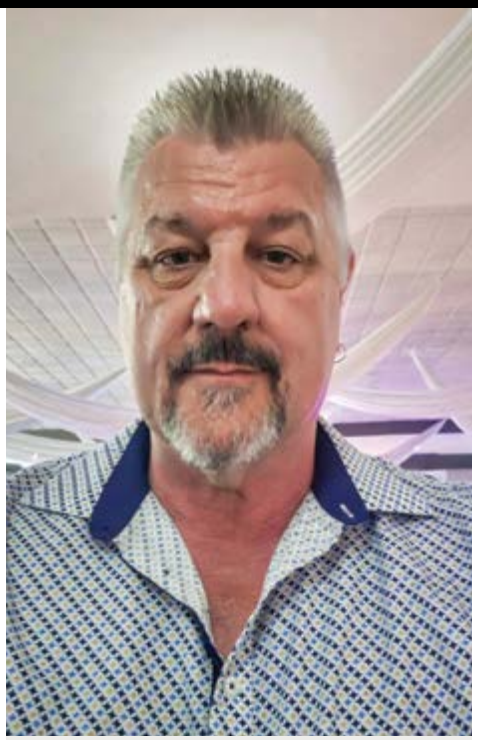
3 Whites Wearparts

4 Aebi Schmidt

MEET OUR NEW AORS STAFF

Alexa Graham

Alexa joined the AORS team in July 2026 as the Marketing and Communications Specialist. She graduated from the University of Ottawa with a bachelor's degree specializing in communications and business management. She spent the last five years working in communications for the Government of Saskatchewan, with a focus on the province's water resources. She is excited to join the AORS team and looks forward to working with municipalities and public works professionals across the province.



John Fletcher

After working for the City of Brantford for over 37 years, I'm excited to be joining AORS.

I started with the city in 1989 as an apprentice mechanic, was hired on as a mechanic in 1993, while with the city, I was promoted to Lead Hand in 1994 and then to Fleet Supervisor in 2004. I've been involved with the County of Brant Road Supervisors Association for over 20 years, currently holding the positions of President and Treasurer. I'm currently the President of the MEOA, representing municipal fleet managers and municipal operators and their vendors from all over Ontario. In my spare time, I enjoy playing old timers slo-pitch and spoiling my 5 grandchildren as much as possible

E-Blast SUBSCRIPTION

The AORS e-newsletter is the perfect way to stay up to date with all things public works, including job opportunities, upcoming training, advocacy updates and announcements. Scan this QR code to get signed up to have all this information fall right into your inbox every Tuesday! And of course, you can unsubscribe at any time.

MEET THE NEWEST **AORS BOARD MEMBERS**

Your AORS Representative brings forward your concerns, questions and ideas to the Board of Directors, so be sure to reach out to them! Welcome to our new Directors.

Mike Fletcher

Niagara Road Supervisor Association

I am a Supervisor of Road Operations with Niagara Region, where I oversee municipal road maintenance and operations with a focus on public safety, service delivery, and supporting the staff who keep our transportation network moving.

I have built my career in municipal public works, holding progressively responsible positions with both Niagara Region and Norfolk County. Throughout my career, I have developed extensive experience in road operations, winter maintenance, infrastructure maintenance, staff leadership, and delivering effective municipal services to the public.

I hold my Certified Road Supervisor—Intermediate (CRS-I) and Certified Municipal Manager (CMM III) designations. I have also completed several leadership and public works programs, including the AORS Public Works Leadership Development Program, executive leadership training through McMaster University's DeGroote School of Business, and leadership studies through the University of Waterloo.

I have been actively involved with the Niagara Roads Supervisors Association, including serving on its executive, and have greatly valued the opportunity to connect and work with public works professionals throughout Niagara and across Ontario.

Outside of work, I am a proud father of three daughters who keep me busy and remind me there is never a dull moment in my personal life.

I'm excited for the opportunity to serve on the AORS Board of Directors and to work alongside other public works professionals from across Ontario. I look forward to building new relationships, sharing ideas and experiences, and giving back to the organization.

Mitch McCrank

Northeastern Ontario Public Works Organization

I am honoured to serve on the Board of Directors for AORS and represent the Northeastern Ontario Public Works Organization (NEOPWO).

I currently serve as the Director of Transportation Services for the City of Temiskaming Shores, where I oversee municipal roads, bridges, transit, fleet operations, and capital infrastructure projects. Throughout my career in municipal public works, I have been passionate about improving transportation infrastructure, fostering strong relationships with staff and stakeholders, and delivering practical solutions that benefit our communities. Prior to the municipal world I worked in engineer consulting on mainly civil and mechanical projects.

I now hold the Certified Road Supervisor (CRS) designation through AORS, as well as the Certified Engineering Technologist (C.E.T.) and Project Management Professional (PMP) designations. I serve as President of the NEOPWO and remain actively involved in advancing professional development and collaboration across the public works sector.

I look forward to representing the interests of municipalities across Northeastern Ontario, contributing to the continued success of AORS, and helping strengthen the public works profession through collaboration, education, and leadership.

REMEMBERING JIM BORTON

It is with profound sadness that the Association of Ontario Road Supervisors mourns the passing of Jim Borton, CRS-S.

Jim was the 1st Vice-President of AORS, Director of Public Works for the Township of Blandford-Blenheim, and Secretary/Treasurer and AORS Representative for the Oxford County Road Supervisors Association. He was a dedicated municipal public works professional and an important leader within our association.

But to those of us who had the privilege of knowing Jim, he was so much more than his titles.

Jim was a friend. He was a mentor. He was someone you could count on.

He was the person who would stop to answer a question, offer a suggestion, share something he had learned or simply take the time to listen. He had an incredible depth of knowledge and experience, but never made you feel that you were asking too much. Jim genuinely wanted to help people. That generosity of spirit was one of the things that made him so special.

Jim gave so much of himself to AORS and to the municipal public works community. His leadership with the Oxford County Road Supervisors Association helped strengthen the local association and the connections between public works professionals throughout the region. He was also instrumental in bringing the AORS Municipal Public Works Trade Show to Oxford County in 2025, helping deliver what became a record-setting event for the Association.

As 1st Vice-President of AORS, Jim continued to bring that same commitment to the provincial association. He represented the practical, everyday perspective of municipal public works and was never afraid to share his experience or speak up for the people doing the work in our communities.

Earlier this year, Jim joined a panel at the Good Roads Conference to share his experience managing big-city level-of-service expectations in a small rural municipality. It was exactly the kind of conversation Jim excelled at—practical, honest, and grounded in decades of experience.

> **“Jim was someone who always had your back. He was incredibly knowledgeable and experienced, but what stood out most was how willing he was to share that knowledge with others.”**

For AORS President Cyrus Rife, CRS-I, Jim's greatest contribution was the impact he had on the people around him. “Jim was someone who always had your back. He was incredibly knowledgeable and experienced, but what stood out most was how willing he was to share that knowledge with others. Whether it was a question about public works, an issue we were working through at AORS or just a conversation at the end of a long day, Jim was always willing to help. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to work alongside him and, more importantly, to call him a friend. His loss is deeply felt by all of us, and I know I will miss his advice, his sense of humour and simply having Jim there.”

AORS Executive Director Kelly Elliott captures the loss of Jim: “I don't think any of us are quite ready to imagine AORS without Jim. He was one of those people who made an organization feel like a family. I could call Jim with a question and know that he would take the time to help me, whether the answer was easy or complicated. He was generous with his knowledge, generous with his time and, most of all, generous with people. Jim was a mentor to so many of us and I will forever be grateful for his encouragement, his honesty, his humour and his friendship. We are absolutely devastated by this loss. There will be an empty chair at the AORS table, but Jim's impact will continue to be felt in the people he helped, the knowledge he shared and the organization he cared so deeply about.”

Jim believed in the importance of municipal public works. He understood the people behind the trucks, roads, bridges, water systems and community infrastructure. He understood that our profession is about much more than maintaining infrastructure—it is about taking care of our communities and taking care of each other.

Jim took care of people quietly. He did it without seeking recognition. He simply showed up, shared what he knew and helped wherever he could. That is the kind of legacy that lasts.

The AORS family extends our deepest condolences to Jim's family, friends, colleagues and everyone in the Township of Blandford-Blenheim and Oxford County who had the privilege of working alongside him.

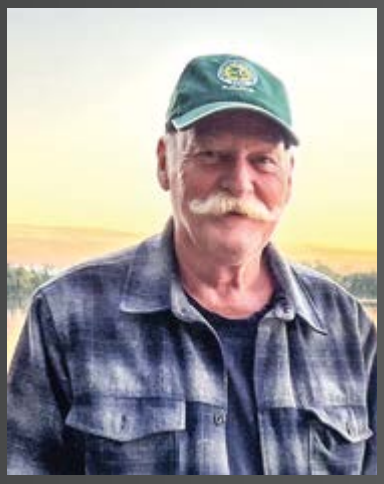
Jim leaves an enormous hole in AORS, in Oxford County and in the municipal public works community.

We will miss seeing him at the Board table. We will miss his advice. We will miss his stories. We will miss his laughter. We will miss knowing that Jim was just a phone call away.

Most of all, we will miss our friend.

Thank you, Jim, for everything you gave to AORS. Thank you for your leadership, your mentorship and your friendship. Thank you for always being willing to lend a hand, share your knowledge and help the next person along.

You made AORS stronger. You made the people around you better. And you will be missed by so many. Rest in peace, Jim. Your AORS family will never forget you.



REMEMBERING **LLOYD NELSON**

AORS' Executive Committee, Board of Directors and Staff are saddened to share the news of the passing of Past President Lloyd Nelson. Lloyd served as AORS President in 2000 representing County of Peterborough-City of Kawartha Lakes Public Works Association. Lloyd began his working life as a welder before building a long and respected career in municipal roads. He worked with the City of Brampton, eventually becoming a Superintendent, before continuing his career with Harvey Township in Buckhorn and later in Otonabee-South Monaghan. He wrapped up his career with the City of Kawartha Lakes as a Manager of Public Works before retiring.

He was a committed member of the association and a good friend to many. He will be deeply missed by all. AORS extends our sincere condolences to Lloyd's family, friends, and colleagues.

BY **ALEXA GRAHAM**, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Targeted Grazing

Oro-Medonte's New Pilot Project

Could utilizing goats for vegetation management be a game changer in hard-to-maintain landscapes? The Township of Oro-Medonte is putting this theory to the test.

This summer, the township took an innovative approach to vegetation control after noticing a significant increase in poison ivy and other noxious weeds on municipal lands.

Several of these sites presented complex challenges, including difficult terrain, limited access and environmental sensitives, meaning traditional herbicide application was not a viable management option.

Targeted goat grazing offers a sustainable and environmentally friendly solution to this obstacle. Goats naturally browse shrubs, vines, broadleaf plants, and dense vegetation that can be difficult to manage through conventional methods. Their agility allows them to thrive in rugged terrain that machinery cannot always reach.

.Goats have specialized digestive systems that allow them to consume poison ivy and other toxic plants without experiencing any harmful or adverse effects. This makes them excellent candidates for this type of initiative.

To explore this approach, the township partnered with Goats at Work, a local, family-run business specializing in eco-friendly land management. Together, they launched a pilot project at the township's North Yard site, where there is heavy growth of noxious and invasive weeds in the equipment storage areas.

"This idea arose from needing an alternative to herbicide application in areas adjacent to a drainage channel," said Karla Musso-Garcia, CRS-S, Operations Manager with the Township of Oro-Medonte. "Using goat grazing gives us a flexible, eco-friendly tool to control weeds and noxious plants in environmentally sensitive areas."

If the pilot project is successful, municipal staff will evaluate opportunities to expand this program to additional areas like roadside and other hard-to-reach locations.

The township emphasized that targeted grazing is intended to complement, not replace, existing vegetation control methods. Herbicide application and mechanical removal will continue to be used where appropriate.

They came, they saw, they chewed—these four-legged recruits might just be the new G.O.A.T.s—Greatest Of All Time—of municipal vegetation management.

BUILDING **STRONGER LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS** TOGETHER

BY **KELLY ELLIOTT**, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Collaboration, conversation, and sharing best practices were at the heart of this year's AORS Local Association Workshop.

On June 18, Local Association executives from across Ontario gathered at Horseshoe Resort for the annual AORS Local Association Workshop. The event brought together dedicated volunteers from across the province to exchange ideas, discuss common challenges, and identify new opportunities to strengthen local associations and better support municipal public works professionals.

Throughout the morning, attendees reviewed the results of the 2026 Municipal Member Survey and Local Association Fee Survey, providing valuable insight into what members value most about their local associations and where opportunities for growth exist. Networking, professional development, guest speakers, and knowledge sharing continue to be the primary reasons members participate in local associations, while staffing shortages, workload pressures, travel distance, and communication remain the most common barriers to attendance.

While the survey results provided an important foundation, it was the roundtable discussion that became the highlight of the workshop.

Representatives from local associations openly shared both the successes they have experienced and the challenges they continue to face. The conversation quickly evolved into a collaborative exchange of practical ideas, with participants offering solutions, resources, and proven strategies that others could take back and implement within their own associations.

Several common themes emerged throughout the discussion.

Participants emphasized the importance of encouraging municipal leadership—including Directors, Managers, Supervisors, CAOs, and elected officials—to recognize the value of local association participation. Supporting employees in attending meetings not only benefits individual professional development but also strengthens municipal operations through increased networking and knowledge sharing. AORS also reaffirmed its willingness to support local associations by assisting with presentations to municipal leadership teams when requested.

Communication was another key topic. One simple but effective suggestion was to accompany meeting notices with Outlook calendar

Continued on page 20

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invitations, making it easier for members to reserve meeting dates. Participants also discussed maintaining accurate contact lists, particularly following municipal elections and staffing changes, to ensure communication reaches the right people.

Finding engaging guest speakers remains a priority for many local associations. Participants recommended developing a centralized list of speaker ideas and contacts that associations could access when planning meetings. Suggestions included representatives from the Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO), Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA), Conservation Authorities, Watersheds Canada, phragmites management organizations, and other subject matter experts.

Meeting costs and volunteer recruitment were also common discussion points. Associations shared practical approaches such as hosting meetings in municipal facilities, partnering with community organizations for catering, utilizing supplier sponsorships, and rotating executive responsibilities between municipalities to encourage broader participation and leadership development.

There was also strong support for continuing to engage retired members, recognizing the wealth of knowledge and experience they bring to the profession. Ideas such as "Retiree Coffee" gatherings and continued invitations to local meetings were viewed as meaningful ways to maintain these valuable connections.

Many participants also highlighted the success of joint meetings between neighbouring local associations. These collaborative events provide expanded networking opportunities, attract new participants, and make it easier to secure high-quality guest speakers while sharing hosting costs. Additional ideas to reinvigorate local associations included hosting Roadeos, trade shows, educational bus tours, and equipment demonstrations.

One topic that received enthusiastic support was the AORS Hospitality Suite during the Good Roads Conference. Participants recognized the value of inviting municipal leaders and elected officials to this networking event as an opportunity to build relationships and increase awareness of the important work performed by Ontario's municipal public works professionals.

The workshop concluded with a shared commitment to continue supporting one another and strengthening local associations across the province.

To capture the many ideas and best practices shared throughout the day, AORS has developed a Local Association Success Toolkit. This practical resource provides local association executives with strategies to increase member engagement, attract new participants, reduce meeting costs, identify guest speaker ideas, and build sustainable executive teams. Additional resources—including a centralized guest speaker directory—are currently being developed based on feedback received during the workshop.

Local Associations remain one of the greatest strengths of AORS. They foster professional connections, provide opportunities for learning and mentorship, and create a forum where municipal public works professionals can collaborate, share ideas, and support one another.

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's workshop and contributed to another successful day of collaboration. Together, we continue to build stronger local associations and a stronger municipal public works community across Ontario.

“Local Associations remain one of the greatest strengths of AORS. They foster professional connections, provide opportunities for learning and mentorship, and create a forum where municipal public works professionals can collaborate, share ideas, and support one another.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S Message

One of the greatest strengths of the Association of Ontario Road Supervisors has always been, and will continue to be, our people.

Unlike many organizations, AORS is truly a grassroots association. Our foundation is built upon the dedication of municipal public works professionals who volunteer their time, share their expertise, and work together through our 34 local associations to strengthen our industry. The ideas, challenges and successes experienced in municipalities across Ontario help shape the work we do provincially, ensuring that AORS continues to represent the needs of those working on the front lines of municipal public works.

The success of our local associations is essential to the continued success of AORS. They provide opportunities to connect with colleagues, exchange knowledge, recognize achievements, and build the relationships that make our profession so strong. Every member who attends a meeting, volunteers on an executive, mentors a colleague, or simply shares their perspective contributes to something much larger than themselves. It is this engagement, commitment and passion that allows our Association to thrive.

Over the past several years, AORS has experienced tremendous growth. While our commitment to education and professional development remains at the heart of what we do, our mandate has expanded significantly. We continue to develop new training opportunities, strengthen professional certification, enhance member services, and build meaningful partnerships that benefit municipalities across Ontario.

Perhaps most importantly, AORS has become an increasingly respected voice on behalf of municipal public works professionals. Advocacy is no longer just one aspect of our work—it is a core responsibility. Whether we are providing input on provincial legislation, participating in government consultations, raising awareness of worker safety, or championing issues that directly impact municipalities, we remain committed to ensuring the voices of our members are heard. The experiences and expertise of our members help guide these conversations, allowing us to advocate with credibility and purpose on issues that matter most to Ontario's municipal public works community.

Our continued growth would not be possible without an exceptional team working behind the scenes. This summer, we were pleased to welcome two new members to the AORS family. Alexa Graham has joined us as our new Marketing and Communications Specialist, bringing enthusiasm, creativity and a passion for connecting with our members. We also welcomed John Fletcher as our new Member Services Coordinator. John's extensive municipal experience with over 37 years at the City of Brantford, along with his commitment to member service, will be tremendous assets as we continue to enhance the value we provide to municipalities and our membership.

At the same time, this issue marks the end of an incredible chapter as we say "see you later" to Dennis O'Neil on his retirement. Dennis's contributions to AORS span decades—not only as a dedicated member, Past President and volunteer leader, but also as a valued member of our staff. His knowledge, steady guidance, unwavering commitment and genuine passion for this Association have left a lasting impact on countless members and helped shape AORS into the organization it is today. While we suspect Dennis won't be able to stay away from AORS for very long, we wish him and Katie every happiness as they embrace this exciting new chapter—travelling, spending time together, and enjoying the fruits of their labour in the garden. Dennis, thank you for everything you have done for AORS and the municipal public works profession.

As we look ahead, I remain incredibly optimistic about the future of our Association. The challenges facing municipalities continue to evolve, but so does AORS. Guided by the strength of our local associations, the engagement of our members, the leadership of our Board of Directors, and the dedication of our staff, we are well positioned to continue growing, advocating and delivering meaningful value for our members.

Thank you for your continued support of your local association and of AORS. Together, we are building a stronger profession, stronger municipalities, and a stronger future for municipal public works across Ontario.

I look forward to connecting with many of you in the months ahead.

Kelly Elliott
Executive Director

“Perhaps most importantly, AORS has become an increasingly respected voice on behalf of municipal public works professionals. Advocacy is no longer just one aspect of our work—it is a core responsibility.

Honouring Our Past, Building Our Future

On September 10, AORS Past Presidents gathered at the Elm Hurst Inn for their annual Past Presidents Advisory Committee meeting—an opportunity to reconnect with fellow leaders, reflect on the past year and look ahead to the future of our Association.

The meeting provided an opportunity for AORS staff to share updates on the many initiatives and projects that have taken place over the past year, as well as what is on the horizon for the Association. From advocacy and member services to training, communications, events, workforce development and organizational growth, the Past Presidents heard about the work being done to continue strengthening AORS and supporting municipal public works professionals across Ontario.

The annual meeting is also an important opportunity for AORS to draw upon the experience and institutional knowledge of those who have previously served as president. Our Past Presidents have collectively dedicated many years to the Association and have a unique understanding of where AORS has come from, the challenges it has faced, and the opportunities that lie ahead. Their knowledge, perspective, and experience are invaluable to AORS as we continue to move forward.

The Past Presidents Advisory Committee provides an important connection between AORS's history and its future. As the Association enters a new period of leadership and organizational growth, the advice and perspective of those who have previously led AORS helps ensure that we continue to build on the strong foundation established by generations of municipal public works leaders.

Preserving the History of AORS

Over the past year, AORS has been working on the History of AORS Project, creating a dedicated section on our website where members can explore the people, photographs, artifacts, and memories that have helped shape our Association.

As part of the project, we have compiled a list of AORS Past Presidents and are adding photographs wherever they are available. The photographs have been organized by decade, allowing members to take a trip through AORS history and see the many individuals who have provided leadership to the Association over the years. We have also begun documenting and sharing historical artifacts from the Association's archives, giving members a chance to see some of the items that tell the story of AORS and its evolution over the decades.

The History of AORS Project will continue to grow. This year's AORS budget included funding to have VHS tapes from the Association's archives converted to digital files. Once complete, the recordings will be uploaded to YouTube and linked through the History of AORS webpage. AORS also has boxes of photographs and historical materials that we are continuing to review and document.

Our History Helps Shape Our Future

The History of AORS Project is about more than looking back. It is about recognizing the people whose dedication built the Association we have today and preserving their knowledge so that it can continue to inform the generations that follow.

We are grateful to all our Past Presidents for the time, leadership and commitment they have given to AORS and to the municipal public works profession. Their contributions are an important part of who we are—and their continued involvement through the Past Presidents Advisory Committee ensures that their experience remains an important part of where AORS goes next.

We encourage all AORS members to take a few minutes to explore the History of AORS webpage, browse the Past Presidents by decade, discover some of our historical artifacts and read the memories that have been shared. And if you have something that could help us add to the story, we would love to hear from you!

> **“The History of AORS Project will continue to grow... Once complete, the recordings will be uploaded to YouTube and linked through the History of AORS webpage.**

Ontario Dig Authority and AORS **Partner to Advance Safe Excavation**

Ontario Dig Authority and the Association of Ontario Road Supervisors (AORS) are partnering to strengthen damage prevention education and support safer excavation practices across Ontario's road and public works sector.

Formerly known as Ontario One Call, Ontario Dig Authority continues its longstanding commitment to protecting Ontario's underground infrastructure while expanding resources and educational opportunities available to industry professionals.

A New Name, the Same Commitment

For 30 years, our organization has worked alongside municipalities, contractors, underground infrastructure owners and public works professionals to help protect Ontario's underground infrastructure and support safe excavation.

Our new name reflects how our organization and Ontario's damage prevention system have evolved. While our identity has changed, our mandate, services, operations, responsibilities and stakeholder requirements remain the same. Ontario Dig Authority continues to administer Ontario's locate notification system, provide damage prevention education and resources, and work with industry partners across the province.

Our new identity is a reflection of our commitment to evolving alongside the province we serve. As Ontario grows and the excavation industry becomes more complex, we will keep adapting to the needs of the excavation community and ensuring our services, education and resources remain relevant.

For more information about the transition, visit the Rebrand Resource Centre for FAQs, timelines and additional resources.

Supporting Ontario's Road and Public Works Professionals

Safe excavation is a shared responsibility. Road supervisors, public works teams, contractors, excavators, underground infrastructure owners and locate service providers each bring an important perspective to the work.

Industry partnerships help connect those perspectives, share knowledge and develop resources that reflect how infrastructure work is being planned and carried out across Ontario. Through our partnership with AORS, Ontario Dig Authority is strengthening connections between the damage prevention and public works communities while expanding access to practical, industry-focused education.

Working closely with AORS helps ensure our programs and resources remain relevant to the realities facing Ontario's road and public works professionals.

GroundWork: Building Confidence in the Locate Process

GroundWork is designed for people who submit, manage or oversee locate requests and construction projects. Through short, practical lessons, it provides step-by-step guidance on Ontario's locate process, helping users submit accurate requests and manage them effectively from planning through excavation.

Learners who successfully complete GroundWork receive a certificate of completion and earn one CCA Gold Seal Credit.

KnowR!sk: Applying Damage Prevention in Practice

KnowR!sk is Ontario Dig Authority's scenario-based compliance and damage prevention training program. Short micro-learning modules use realistic situations to help learners understand excavation responsibilities, recognize

Training for Your Entire Team

Both GroundWork and KnowR!sk include supervisor access when training is purchased for five or more learners. This gives supervisors one place to manage training across a team and helps ensure employees responsible for locate requests, excavation planning or field work are receiving consistent information.

For organizations onboarding new employees, standardizing processes or refreshing existing knowledge, the feature provides an easier way to incorporate damage prevention training into ongoing professional development.

To learn more about GroundWork and KnowR!sk, visit the Ontario Dig Authority Learning Centre and use promo code AORS to receive 15% off your training registration.

AORS Member Benefit

As part of the partnership, AORS members receive **15% off** Ontario Dig Authority's GroundWork and KnowR!sk training programs using the code **AORS**.

Continued on page 24

risky behaviours and apply regulatory requirements to day-to-day work.

KnowR!sk earned Gold for Best Compliance Training Program at the 2026 Brandon Hall Group HCM Excellence Awards for its practical approach to compliance education and damage prevention training.

Completion of the full program earns one CCA Gold Seal Credit.

Moving Safe Excavation Forward

The transition to Ontario Dig Authority represents a new chapter, but the work continues to be shaped by the people and organizations delivering infrastructure projects across Ontario.

Ontario Dig Authority works to bring these perspectives together and support safer, more informed excavation across the province.

As Ontario builds, maintains and renews critical infrastructure, we look forward to working alongside AORS and its members and building relationships that support safer projects, connected communities and the people doing this work every day.

Before you dig, submit your locate request through OntarioDigAuthority.ca. Taking the time to locate underground infrastructure helps protect your crew, the public, and the infrastructure communities rely on, helping everyone get home safely at the end of the day.

Click Before You Dig

It's the Law at OntarioDigAuthority.ca

Township of Blandford-Blenheim Road 12 Project

BY **JIM BORTON, CRS-S**, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS WITH THE TOWNSHIP OF BLANDFORD-BLENHEIM

Note from AORS: *Jim wrote this article prior to his sudden death. We are grateful to have the chance to share his knowledge, experience and words with you one last time.*

As with most rural townships, we have our fair share of "difficult roads". Township Road 12 stretches across the entire township at approximately 20 km in total length. The Nith River winds its way through the township and crosses Township Road 12 in three different locations. It runs parallel with the road along the section I will be discussing.

The west and east end of the road sit at a high elevation, whereas the centre 1.3 km is a low-lying area, known for seasonal and flash flooding.

Because this was a recurring challenge, the township was fortunate that there were no residential lots along this section of road. However, closures still caused inconvenient detours for local drivers and emergency services.

This was not a planned priority, but rather a "rainy day" project to tackle if the chance arose. In 2022, the township started a large-scale municipal drain & urbanization project in the Village of Princeton. During project planning, we determined that it would be necessary to lower the road profiles in order to complete the proposed work. This meant that we would have over 50,000-cubic metres of fill to relocate. At each stage of the project, the excess fill was stockpiled at a site in Princeton to be tested in accordance with the excess soil regulations.

The Township Road 12 project was a viable site for some of this excess fill. We raised the road profile 15 inches on the west end to 30 inches on the east end, topped it with 4-6 inches of A gravel and then reopened it to the public.

The road was monitored for the remainder of 2025 and early 2026. We wanted to see how the fill and road would respond after going through some freeze-thaw cycles and the springtime wet conditions to properly determine what other actions would be required. The township was happy to report that for the first time; this section of Township Road 12 did not have to be closed due to flooding.

As previously mentioned, this section of road runs parallel with the river, so it is known to be swampy and wet. The township had planned to surface treat the road now that it had been raised. To ensure a strong base for the surface treatment without breaking the budget by adding more gravel, I started to look at different alternatives.

During the Good Roads Conference earlier in the year, I was part of a panel discussion on maintaining low volume roads. Also on the panel with me was Tyler Whale from BioDiffusion Technologies Inc. (BDT). I met with him to discuss the project on Township Road 12, explain what had been done and that we had plans to surface treat the road later in the year. Tyler and BDT were excellent to work with and provided some great information on the product and previous uses. BDT bio-resin strengthens existing road base—without adding height—delivering **60–100% strength gains** and extending pavement life.

Why it's worth considering

- **Stronger base = longer-lasting roads** (well-established principle)
- **No change to road profile** (ideal for constrained urban areas)
- **Freeze-thaw and water resistant** (validated in Canadian conditions)
- **Fast construction** (3–4 km/day; ready for paving in ~24 hours)
- **Lower lifecycle cost** (validated through independent analysis)
- **Carbon benefit** (reduced material use + carbon capture)

Where it fits best

- Priority / high-value roads (especially during reconstruction where base material is being replaced)
- Roads with drainage or curb height constraints
- Projects with limited budgets for full reconstruction but where base-strength is needed
- Situations where you want to reduce asphalt thickness, convert to surface treatment or extend gravel road life

After reviewing the data and speaking with Tyler about the project, I was intrigued and felt that this situation was a good candidate for the bio-resin. I prepared a report to council to seek their approval. They were initially skeptical about this new product, but after reviewing the cost savings and benefits for the road, they trusted my judgement and gave approval to move ahead.

There were several different ways to install the bio resin, and we decided to use an on-site mixing approach using our own municipal equipment. Our crew used two graders to windrow the gravel, then applied three tank loads of bio-resin to achieve a 100 mm treatment depth, shaped the road to a 3% crown and compacted it with a 10-ton smooth roller.

The product's durability was proven earlier than expected. After closing the road overnight, I drove out the next morning to inspect it and was surprised to see ATV tracks visible across the fresh surface. Fortunately, the tracks were purely cosmetic. The riders had tried to dig ruts into the road and the shoulder, but the bio-resin had already set, and the base held perfectly.

The next challenge we faced was surface treatment on the road.

Again, this is the first time the bio-resin has been used before a surface treatment. Our surface treatment contractor identified a problem—the bio-resin had hardened the road, but it still had some loose stone on top. In discussions with the contractor, there was concern that the emulsion would not receive a proper bond unless the loose stone could be removed. Running a grader over the road only loosened more stone, but our crew successfully resolved the issue by using a power broom with light down-pressure to clear the loose stones to the shoulder in preparation for the treatment.

The Township Road 12 project has had more than a few challenges. The scope of the project was to build a road that is climate resilient, provide another hard-surfaced road for detour routes and most importantly, create a road that is safe and long lasting for the motoring public. I believe we did just that.

Professionals in our position have some form of responsibility to continually try to improve what we're doing. Municipal infrastructure is very expensive and important, and taxpayers deserve to have public works teams who are always thinking about efficiency and impact when spending their money. Another huge benefit of BDT is the carbon reduction. I believe that we all must try a lot harder to do what is right for the planet.

They say you should always be open to trying something new, and after 22+ years of working for municipalities, I have learned a lot throughout this project. When you collaborate with good people, anything can be accomplished. I would like to thank Kevin Death from KSmart Engineering group, Tyler Whale from BioDiffusion Technologies, Derek Nunn from Walker Construction, The Township of Blandford-Blenheim Public Works department for listening and accomplishing my vision and my Council from the Township of Blandford-Blenheim for believing and trusting me to bring this project across the finish line.

I hope you enjoyed hearing about our innovative project.

For more information on bio-resin application, contact Tyler Whale **tyler@biodiffusion.ca**

AORS Advocacy

Building the Workforce and Protecting the People Who Keep Ontario Moving

BY **KELLY ELLIOTT**, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Advocacy remains one of the most important ways AORS serves Ontario's municipal public works professionals. Across the province, we continue to engage with government, industry partners, municipalities, local associations and the next generation of workers to ensure that the voice of municipal public works is heard when decisions are being made that affect our communities, our infrastructure and the people who keep Ontario moving.

Promoting Municipal Public Works Careers to the Next Generation

One of the most important advocacy priorities for AORS is helping build the future workforce for municipal public works. This fall, AORS will once again be participating in Level Up Career Fairs across Ontario, introducing secondary school students to the wide range of rewarding career opportunities available in municipal public works.

These events provide an opportunity to show students that a career in municipal public works can offer much more than a job—it can provide a long-term career where they can develop valuable technical skills, work with modern equipment and technology, solve problems and make a direct difference in their communities.

Our work does not stop at the provincial career fairs. AORS is also working with local associations to participate in local career fairs, visit schools and make presentations to career classes. We encourage our local associations to continue looking for opportunities to introduce students to the people and careers behind the roads, bridges, winter maintenance, traffic operations and infrastructure they rely on every day.

The need to promote these careers has never been clearer. Skills Ontario identified road construction as one of the top five in-demand skilled trades jobs in Ontario for 2026. This recognition reinforces what municipal public works professionals already know: Ontario needs skilled people to build, operate, maintain and renew the infrastructure that supports our communities and economy.

In response, AORS has written to the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development to highlight the work we are already doing to promote municipal public works careers and to explore opportunities for greater partnership with the province. We believe there is an opportunity to work together to ensure that young people understand the demand for these careers and the important role they can play in building and maintaining Ontario's communities.

Protecting the People Who Protect Our Communities

While we work to attract the next generation of public works professionals, we must also ensure that the people currently doing this work are protected.

Municipal public works employees are out on Ontario's roads every day performing essential work in challenging environments. Increasingly, these employees are facing abuse, harassment, threats and interference from members of the public while simply trying to do their jobs safely.

AORS continues to advocate for stronger protections for municipal public works employees and for greater recognition of the unique challenges faced by frontline workers. Our advocacy has focused on ensuring that workers have the tools, protections and legislative support necessary to carry out essential public services without fear of intimidation or abuse.

This issue also connects directly to the province's work on municipal accountability and codes of conduct. Bill 9, the *Municipal Accountability Act, 2026*, has introduced significant changes to municipal codes of conduct and the enforcement framework, including a role for the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario and stronger potential consequences for serious misconduct by elected officials.

While AORS recognizes the importance of strengthening accountability, concerns remain about whether the legislation provides sufficient protection and effective enforcement mechanisms for municipal staff who experience abuse, harassment or interference from elected officials. AORS will continue to participate in the consultation and implementation process and will be submitting recommendations to ensure that municipal employees are properly protected and that there are meaningful avenues for addressing inappropriate conduct.

Our position is simple: municipal employees should be able to do their jobs without being subjected to harassment, intimidation or abuse—regardless of where that conduct originates.

Keeping Municipalities at the Table on the Proposed Alberta-to-Sarnia Pipeline

AORS is also monitoring major infrastructure projects that could have significant implications for municipal public works.

Following the province's announcement of its support for the proposed Northern Shield Energy Corridor, a proposed 3,300-kilometre pipeline connecting Alberta's oil sands to Sarnia, AORS will be watching the project closely.

While the project is still in the feasibility and planning stages, its potential scale means municipalities need to be at the table early. In particular, there may be significant implications in areas where a pipeline would need to leave existing MTO corridors and connect with transportation infrastructure, including the area around London and the Highway 402 corridor.

The proposed corridor could have impacts across a significant portion of Ontario, including Huron, Lambton, Middlesex, Perth, Wellington, Dufferin, Simcoe, Muskoka, Parry Sound, Nipissing, Northeastern Ontario, North of Superior and Kenora.

For municipal public works departments, major linear infrastructure projects can have implications ranging from road use and construction traffic to crossings, drainage, emergency response, maintenance responsibilities and long-term impacts on municipal infrastructure. AORS will continue to monitor the project as it develops and will work to ensure that the municipal public works perspective is represented at the table.

Harmonizing Municipal Standards—Without Unintended Consequences

AORS also continues to advocate on the proposed harmonization of municipal road construction standards. We are working with the Ministry of Transportation and the Ontario Road Builders' Association (ORBA) to help ensure that implementation of the new framework through the MTO is practical, informed by municipal experience and does not create unintended consequences for municipalities.

This work is particularly important because changes to standards can have significant operational and financial implications for municipalities. AORS wants to ensure that the voices of municipal public works professionals—the people responsible for applying these standards in the real world—are part of the conversation.

AORS currently has a survey open to municipalities to gather detailed feedback on the potential impacts of harmonization. We are seeking information not only about the internal impacts municipalities are anticipating, but also about the concerns and challenges where AORS can assist in developing communication and resources to better support municipalities.

We strongly encourage members to complete the survey and to share it with others within their local associations. AORS is undertaking this work in collaboration with ORBA so that we can better understand the municipal perspective and use that information to strengthen our advocacy.

The current implementation timeline anticipates that the first group of standards will be developed between October 2026 and February 2027, with the exemption process expected to go live in January 2027. The current intention is for the first group of standards to become mandatory on July 1, 2027.

This is an important opportunity for municipalities to ensure their experiences and concerns are understood before changes are implemented.

AORS Responds to ERO 026-0329

AORS also recently provided feedback on ERO 026-0329, the province's proposed updates to the Technical Guide—River and Stream Systems: Flooding Hazard Limit and the new Technical Bulletin—Special Flooding Hazard Conditions in River and Stream Systems. The consultation proposed updated technical guidance for municipalities and conservation authorities related to identifying and mapping flood hazards.

AORS' feedback focused on the importance of ensuring that changes to technical guidance recognize the practical realities faced by municipalities and the public works professionals responsible for maintaining drainage systems, roads and other infrastructure. As with all our advocacy, our goal is to ensure that provincial policy and technical requirements are practical, clear and achievable for municipalities while supporting safe and resilient communities.

Continuing to Be the Voice of Municipal Public Works

From promoting municipal public works careers in our schools, to advocating for stronger protections for frontline workers, monitoring major infrastructure projects and working to ensure new standards are practical for municipalities, AORS continues to be actively engaged on the issues that matter to our members.

We will continue to work on behalf of Ontario municipalities and our members on the issues impacting municipal public works. Our advocacy is strongest when it is informed by the experiences of the professionals working in communities across Ontario.

If there is an issue you believe AORS should be addressing through its advocacy efforts, please reach out to Kelly Elliott, Executive Director, at **kellyelliott@aors.on.ca**.

From promoting municipal public works careers in our schools, to advocating for stronger protections for frontline workers, monitoring major infrastructure projects and working to ensure new standards are practical for municipalities, AORS continues to be actively engaged on the issues that matter to our members.

LA News

SUBMIT
YOUR LA NEWS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS

to be featured in the newsletter and/or on AORS social media

CONTACT
alexagraham@aors.on.ca

Jeff Fiske Receives his PWLDP

Dennis O'Neil CRS-S presents Jeff Fiske, CRS-I with his PWLDP Certificate of Completion.

Greg Demers Gets Married!

AORS Past Presidents joined Past President Greg Demers, CRS-S at his wedding earlier this year!

Our 34 Local Associations (LA) are the basic 'close to home' organizational element of AORS.

AORS COMMUNITY

They offer our members immediate, easy and cost-effective opportunities to:

- Participate in activities and events
- Utilize their right to vote and hold office
- Attend educational programs
- Network with colleagues and peers in a professional setting
- Exchange public works technologies/trends with colleagues, and
- Help support and promote our Association.

These stories are the best examples of the LA contribution to our Association and to our communities!

MARS Truck Safety Roadeo Highlights Safety and Skill

The Muskoka Association of Road Supervisors (MARS) successfully hosted its annual Truck Safety Roadeo, bringing together public works professionals from across Muskoka for a day of skills competition, training, and networking.

MARS extends its appreciation to the volunteers, judges, vendors, and municipal staff who contributed to the event's success and congratulates all competitors for their commitment to safety and professionalism. A special thanks to Valley Blades, Joe Johnson Equipment, Colvoy Equipment, Cooper Rentals, Heat Design Equipment, White's Wear Parts, Cubex, and to Cathy at Cedar Signs for an amazing sign blade for the winner!

Congratulations to Jon Smith from Georgian Bay Township and Britt Bowers from the Town of Huntsville, who will both move and to represent MARS at the Provincial Roadeo in September.

Dave Parker Receives his PWLDP

Pictured (L-R): Espanola Mayor Doug Gervais, Dave Parker CRS-S, Ron Kingenberg, CRS-I of the Municipality of Central Manitoulin

LANews

District 8 Local Roadeo Winners

District 8 held their local roadeo on September 16, 2026, at the Cataraqui Arena in Kingston. Taylor Blackburn and Tyler Knight went on to represent District 8 at the Provincial Roadeo in Owen Sound on September 23. **Pictured (bottom right)** are the top three drivers from the local roadeo, along with Curtis O'Brien, CRS-I Supervisor of Public Works with the City of Kingston (L-R: Matt Lessard—3rd place—Township of Stone Mills; Tyler Knight—2nd place—Loyalist Township; Taylor Blackburn—1st place—Township of Central Frontenac; Curtis O'Brien, CRS-I—City of Kingston)

Canadian Public Works Association and Ontario Public Works Association Roger Brown Award

The Town of Newmarket received the Canadian Public Works Association and Ontario Public Works Association Roger Brown Award. This award is given to municipalities that demonstrate outstanding efforts in commemoration of National Public Works Week. This includes hosting events to celebrate and promote the public works profession under this year's theme of "Rooted in Service, Powered by the Community". Congratulations to the Town of Newmarket on this achievement!

OXFORD COUNTY TRADE SHOW 2025 DONATIONS

The Oxford County Road Supervisors Association was fortunate enough to have hosted the largest show to date. The Municipal Trade Show welcomed over 2,000 attendees who visited over 300 vendors.

Hosting a trade show takes a lot of work and a lot planning. Oxford was able to make it look seamless only because of the great team we had that worked together for a common goal. Hosting an event like this also brings benefits to the host city and county. Many restaurants, hotels and small businesses benefit from events like these. After all the dust settles and bills are paid, the hope is to break even and maybe even show a profit.

The OCRSA was very pleased to learn that we profited $111,385.04.

The trade show committee is happy to share that we will be donating $91,385.04 back into the community and Oxford County. The three hospitals—Woodstock Hospital in Woodstock, Alexandra Hospital in Ingersoll, and Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital in Tillsonburg—will receive $22,846.00 each. The remaining $22,847.04 will be split amongst the food banks operating in Oxford County.

As great as the trade show was, it gives the committee greater pleasure knowing that we were able to give back to the communities where we live and work.

PWAzone

Public Works Academy Training + Professional Certification

So, it's **Re**-Retirement!!

It seems like just yesterday that I retired from the municipality of East Zorra Tavistock and joined the AORS team.

My how time flies!

As I look back at my past with AORS I realize how lucky I was to be a part of this great organization. I have made so many friends and important contacts here, that it is hard to imagine doing my municipal job for 32 years without them. Then to have the opportunity to work even more closely with the municipal and supplier members for a further 10 years has been a real honour. I have always said that the networking and personal contacts I made over the years with AORS was by far my greatest professional asset and nothing could be more true.

I would like to start by thanking the AORS board and past executives for their cooperation, foresight, and dedication. I have had the opportunity to work along side many very talented presidents, committees and board members, not to mention the numerous local association executives

THE AORS VALUE PROPOSITION

To all those invested in public works training and professional development, AORS aims to meet the needs of our members by providing the following:

AORS EXPERTISE

- 60+ training courses designed and delivered through a variety of options/formats
- Cooperative Local Association/LA (i.e. close-to-home) programs to reduce fees for courses, seminars and professional development programs
- Customized adult 'peer to peer' learning experiences to accommodate specific needs
- Strategic cooperative agreements with other professional and private sector organizations (e.g. Good Roads, SWANA) to deliver a wide range of cost-effective, high-quality programs
- Volunteer Education Committee and Certification Board to organize and approve all training and professional development programs
- Professional training and human resource development staff committed to quality control and on-going improvement
- Public works career professional development paths with clear guidelines to ensure verification of public works expertise and improved employability

and members who give their time and talent freely.

We have had our challenges both at the board and local levels, with some very heated debates, but consistently our leaders and decision makers put the membership's needs first and together we have built an amazing organization.

To the supplier members, I have made some lifelong friends here and at the same time maintained professional relationships with you. AORS is one of very few organizations where the supplier members are not just allowed to attend or support functions but are valued members who are genuinely appreciated by the municipal members.

I have seen firsthand and heard many comments about how AORS municipal members maintain their professional relationship with the suppliers while at the same time develop great friendships. This has built an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

I also had the good fortune to have worked alongside many very talented staff over the years.

In my early days on the board of directors and president, with Bryan Clark as the Executive Director who led us through some very challenging times. As long-time chair of the Education Committee I was able to work with Brian, Graham Zeisner and Mick Scott to take the AORS training program from a couple of springtime sessions to a very relevant and professional program. When Bryan retired and John Maheu came on board, I was very excited to see where he would take us and in short time I and the board realized it would be a very positive direction.

When I was hired by AORS in 2016 as Member Services Coordinator, I had the pleasure of working with John in many areas where we were able to make great strides for the association, both in program and brand recognition, while at the same time growing the membership. I thoroughly enjoyed working under John's leadership. John was a great leader who worked tirelessly to advance AORS in many ways, and together I think we accomplished a lot over our almost 10 years together. In the relatively short time that I have worked with Kelly Elliott, now the new Executive Director, and Christie Little, many more advancements have been made by the association, and I can only see more great things to come.

Over the years the office staff has grown from 1, Shirley Dufton who (let's be honest) looked after us all, to now 3 who keep AORS ticking along. A special thank you to Cheryl Leitch, whom I have worked with for 10 years. Cheryl is very dedicated to AORS and has been a great friend. Katherine Cope and Ann Flannigan joined the team in 2024, and it has been a pleasure to work with them as well. I am sure Alexa Graham, our new Marketing and Communications specialist, will also have lots to add to the AORS team.

I am also very confident that John Fletcher, my replacement, will do a great job and will be a real asset to all of the 34 local associations. I have gotten to know John over the years through LA activities and he is a very dedicated public works professional.

And finally, and most importantly, we all know you do not do any kind of public works job without the full support of your family, so I would like to send a huge thank you to my beautiful wife Katie (and our dog Bubbles) for her unwavering support over the past 35+ years, and the companionship on numerous road trips. Couldn't have done it without you. Also, to my sons Jordan and Jesse for the time given up with their dad and the support they showed.

In closing I would like to just thank the AORS Board of Directors (even Darrell Townsend) and staff for the opportunity to work for the most relevant public works association in the country!

I would also like to thank the AORS membership at large for your support and cooperation through the years. And the many supplier members that I have worked with; too many to name but some great friends.

As I said when I left my municipality, my hope is that I leave the association just a bit stronger than when I started.

PS: I do intend to continue with involvement on the Education Committee and as a Past President, so you may still see me around.

Thank you.
Dennis O'Neil
RETIRED!! Again

PWAzone

TRAINING UPDATE

Building the Public Works Workforce of Tomorrow

BY **CHRISTIE LITTLE**, AORS PROGRAMMING & TRAINING COORDINATOR AND **DENNIS O'NEIL**, AORS MEMBER SERVICES COORDINATOR

This fall brings an important transition for municipalities across Ontario. With municipal elections taking place, new councils and councillors will be joining communities, while returning councils will begin another term with an opportunity to set priorities for the years ahead.

For many, the focus will understandably be on roads, infrastructure, growth, budgets and service delivery. But behind every one of those priorities is something just as important: the people responsible for delivering those services.

Public works is changing. Experienced employees are retiring, new employees are entering the profession, technology and equipment continue to evolve, and municipalities are being asked to do more with limited resources and increasing expectations from residents. This makes education and training more important than ever.

The challenge isn't simply finding a course when someone needs one. It is building a workforce with the knowledge, skills and confidence to perform today's work safely and effectively—and preparing that workforce for what comes next.

Training at Every Level

A strong public works education strategy needs to recognize that employees are at different stages of their careers and have very different training needs.

A new municipal employee may need foundational training to understand equipment, workplace safety, municipal operations and the expectations of working in a public environment.

An experienced operator may need specialized equipment or operational training to expand their capabilities.

A supervisor may need additional knowledge around legislation, risk management, communication, employee management or operational planning.

And an experienced manager or director may benefit from professional development focused on leadership, finance, strategic decision-making and the broader challenges of municipal service delivery.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to public works education.

That is why AORS continues to look at education as a pathway that supports employees throughout their careers—not simply as a collection of individual courses. Technical training, health and safety, regulatory education, equipment training, leadership development and professional certification all have a place in developing a strong public works workforce.

What's New in AORS Education

AORS continues to evolve its Education & Professional Development program to respond to the changing needs of municipalities and their employees. Our training portfolio continues to include opportunities across a broad range of public works needs, from hands-on operational and equipment training to safety, traffic control, winter maintenance and professional development.

At the same time, AORS continues to develop and refine programs that support employees as their responsibilities grow, including the PWLDP and CRS pathways.

The goal isn't simply to offer more courses. It is to provide more relevant opportunities for people to build the knowledge and skills they need at every stage of their public works career.

What's Growing

One of the most important changes we are seeing is a broader understanding of what "training" really means.

Training isn't only about mandatory certifications or checking a box. It can mean:

- Giving a new employee the confidence to safely operate equipment.
- Helping an experienced operator learn a new technology or piece of equipment.
- Ensuring supervisors understand their responsibilities and have the tools to manage people and operational risk.
- Helping experienced public works professionals prepare for the next stage of their careers.
- Making sure knowledge is transferred before an experienced employee retires.

In other words, training is workforce development.

A municipality that invests in education is investing in its ability to maintain services, manage risk, retain employees and respond to changing demands.

A Message for New Councils and Councillors

For newly elected councillors, public works can be a complex area to understand. Roads, winter maintenance, drainage, fleet, construction, parks and other services involve legislation, standards, safety requirements, budgets and significant public expectations.

One of the best investments a Council can make is to understand the people and systems responsible for delivering those services.

Training should not be viewed simply as an employee benefit or another line item in the municipal budget. It is

> **“The challenge isn't simply finding a course when someone needs one. It is building a workforce with the knowledge, skills and confidence to perform today's work safely and effectively—and preparing that workforce for what comes next.**

part of risk management, succession planning and service continuity. A well-trained workforce is better positioned to make sound decisions, recognize risks, operate equipment safely, respond to changing conditions and deliver services consistently.

For new Councils, this is an opportunity to ask some important questions:

- Are our employees receiving the training they need to safely perform their current roles?
- Where are our biggest skills or competency gaps?
- Are we keeping up with changes in equipment, technology, legislation and standards?
- Are supervisors prepared for the responsibilities they have today?
- Are we developing employees who may take on greater responsibilities in the future?
- What knowledge could be lost when experienced employees retire?
- Does our training budget reflect the workforce we will need three, five or ten years from now?

These aren't just Human Resources questions. They are municipal service-delivery questions.

No One Organization Can Provide It All

A strong municipal education strategy doesn't mean relying on one organization for every training need. Public works is too broad and specialized for that.

AORS has an important role to play in providing education that is directly connected to the public works profession, but municipalities should also look beyond their traditional training sources and take advantage of the expertise available through other organizations, associations, colleges and industry partners. Organizations such as Good Roads, along with specialized training providers and other sector partners, can provide valuable education that complements the training available through AORS.

AORS is also seeing the value of partnerships that connect public works professionals with organizations outside of traditional public works training. Our partnerships with Ontario Dig Authority (formerly Ontario One Call) and Smart About Salt are perfect examples. Bringing together organizations with different areas of expertise creates opportunities to address issues that cross municipal departments and responsibilities, while giving public works professionals access to current, specialized knowledge.

For municipalities, the goal shouldn't be: *“Where can I get all of my training?”*

It should be: *“Where can I find the best training for the skills my employees need?”*

That approach creates opportunities for organizations to work together, share expertise and reduce duplication. When credible organizations collaborate, municipalities benefit from a broader range of learning opportunities, while employees benefit from different perspectives and specialized areas of expertise.

For AORS, building those relationships is an important part of the future of Education. Building partnerships with industry organizations, specialized training providers, colleges and other sector partners helps create a stronger, more connected public works education ecosystem—one that gives municipalities access to a broader range of knowledge, expertise and learning opportunities.

The objective isn't for AORS to provide every course. It is to help municipalities and public works professionals access the right education, from the right source, at the right time.

What's Next

AORS Education is continuing to look at how it can support municipalities through this changing environment. That includes expanding training opportunities, reviewing delivery models, strengthening relationships with training partners, supporting professional development and continuing to evolve certification and education pathways.

It also means listening to municipalities.

The training needs of a large urban municipality may be very different from those of a small rural municipality. An employee new to public works has different needs than a 20-year veteran. A roads supervisor has different professional development needs than an equipment operator.

The future of municipal education needs to reflect that diversity. Flexibility, accessibility and relevance will be critical.

Start Planning for 2027 Now

As municipalities begin preparing their 2027 budgets and work plans, education and professional development should be part of that conversation.

Don't wait until an employee needs a course to start thinking about training. Don't wait until an experienced employee retires to realize how much knowledge is leaving with them. And don't wait until a safety incident, operational challenge or staffing change exposes a skills gap.

Instead, look at your workforce as a whole.

- Who needs foundational training?
- Who needs specialized technical training?
- Who needs safety or regulatory training?
- Who is ready for greater responsibility?
- Where are your knowledge gaps?

And what skills will your public works team need three, five or ten years from now?

The next generation of public works professionals is already working in your municipality. The opportunity now is to identify their needs, invest in their development and give them the tools to succeed.

AORS Education will continue working with municipalities, public works professionals and our industry partners to provide the pathways, programs and partnerships needed to support that development. Investing in public works education isn't just about today's workforce. It's about building the capable, knowledgeable and resilient public works teams that Ontario's municipalities will need tomorrow.

ALL LANES OPEN TO YOUR PUBLIC WORKS CAREER

5 BENEFITS OF BEING A REGULATED PROFESSION

CRS

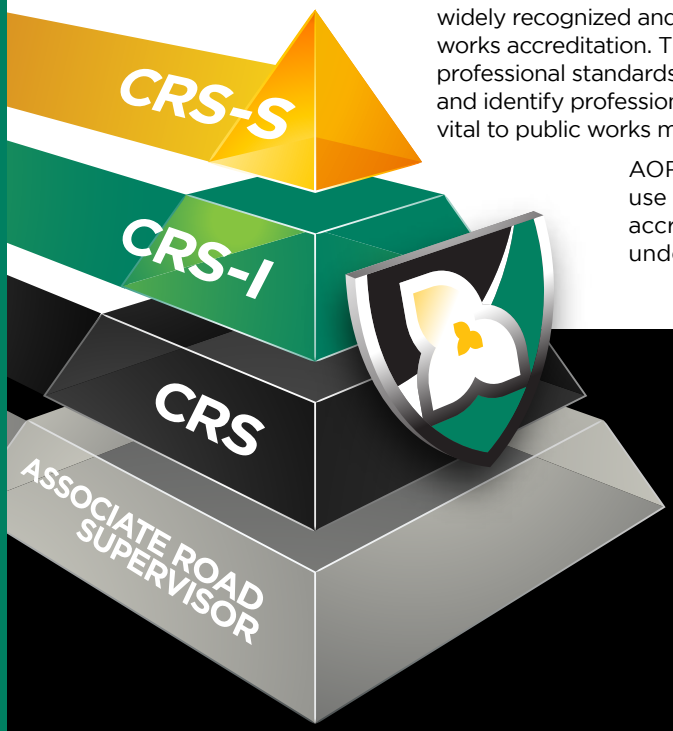
1. Confirms the importance of the profession
2. Increases public trust in the profession
3. Increases career opportunities in the marketplace
4. More consultation by government on related policy issues
5. More credibility as public works experts

CRS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

education+experience

The Certified Road Supervisor (CRS) is a legislated, widely recognized and highly successful professional public works accreditation. The CRS program is designed to raise professional standards, improve individual performance, and identify professionals who demonstrate the knowledge vital to public works management.

AORS has the exclusive right to use the CRS designation. Our accreditation program is recognized under provincial statute law.



Who is eligible for the CRS?

If you are an employee within the private/municipal sector hired to supervise construction, rehabilitation or maintenance of core civil public works infrastructure, you are eligible to apply for AORS CRS public works professional development accreditation.

5 STEPS TO CERTIFICATION

1. Gain hands-on supervisory experience in the public works industry
2. Expand your experience with training
3. Decide which certification applies to you: complete the application
4. Display your CRS certificate and Code of Ethics
5. Progress to the next level of certification

The Provincially recognized designation of Certified Road Supervisor (CRS) is well recognized and respected throughout the public works industry in Ontario. Each quarter the AORS Certification Board considers applications from public works professionals to obtain their CRS designation. The various levels of certification require a specific number of years of roads related supervisory experience as well as designated courses. AORS, in cooperation with Good Roads, have strived to make these courses available through the pandemic, to allow individuals to continue to pursue their CRS certification or to advance to various levels of designation. The following lists represent those individuals who have been granted certification or reclassification over the last year. ***Congratulations to all!!***

1900+
TOTAL CERTIFIED
TO AUGUST 2026
(including Associate Members)

Certified At Certification Board Meeting May 7, 2026		
Mitchell Azevedo	Reg. Mun. of Peel	Assoc. R.S.
Stephen Bernyk	Town of Amherstburg	Assoc. R.S.
Nicholas Brinklow	Mohawk Bay of Quinte	CRS
David Brinkos	Town of New Tecumseth	Assoc. R.S.
Jamie Adam Cornwell	City of Brantford	CRS
Jordan Cozzi	City of Hamilton	CRS
Corey Dunsby	Twp. Of North Kawartha	Assoc. R.S.
Nicolas Emilio	Reg. Mun. of Peel	Assoc. R.S.
Allan Gorman	Town of Smiths Falls	CRS
Evan Grieger	Mun. of Trent Lakes	CRS
Chris Hasson	U.C. of Leeds & Grenville	Assoc. R.S.
Donald Hastings	County of Huron	CRS-I
Jarett Hoglund	County of Middlesex	CRS
Matthew Humphreys	Town of Deseronto	CRS
Tyler Hunter	Reg. Mun. of Peel	Assoc. R.S.
Tammy Ibey	Twp. of Schreiber	CRS
Andrew Keech	Mun. of Chatham-Kent	CRS
John Loewen	City of St. Thomas	Assoc. R.S.
Joey Lorentz	City of Guelph	Assoc. R.S.
Terry Lyman	Town of Greater Napanee	CRS
Andrew Malpass	Twp. of St. Clair	Assoc. R.S.
Brian Marrison	Town of Greater Napanee	CRS
Steve Martin	City of Brantford	CRS
Mitchell Martin	Town of Grimsby	Assoc. R.S.
Mitchell McCrank	City of Temiskaming Shores	CRS
Jordan Noble	City of Hamilton	CRS
Jason Oliver	City of Orillia	Assoc. R.S.
Richard Potter	Mun. of Mississippi Mills	Assoc. R.S.
Jeremy Riddolls	City of Pickering	Assoc. R.S.
Jeremy Sallows	County of Huron	CRS
Connor St. Michel	Town of Blind River	Assoc. R.S.
Brooke Tackaberry	County of Northumberland	CRS-I
Arsenio Tavares	Reg. Mun. of Waterloo	Assoc. R.S.
Daryl Thompson	Twp. Of Chatsworth	Assoc. R.S.
Aaron Turner	Town of Plympto-Wyoming	CRS
Steven Walker	Mun. of Chatham-Kent	CRS

Certified At Certification Board Meeting Aug. 13, 2026		
Kristy Baidy	Town of East Gwillimbury	Assoc. R.S.
Bryson Bennett	Mun. of Centre Hastings	CRS
Ryan Black	Twp. of East Garafraxa	CRS
Fred Bourbonnais	Township of Russell	CRS-I
Frank Bufalino	Town of Lincoln	CRS-I
David Coulter	Mun. of Dysart et al	CRS
Spencer Croft	City of Welland	Assoc. R.S.
Corey Crow	Mun. of Chatham-Kent	CRS
Matthew Dow	City of Toronto	CRS-S
Danny Fernandes	City of Burlington	Assoc. R.S.
Brent Goudey	Town of Gananoque	Assoc. R.S.
Jamie Grainger	City of Ottawa	CRS-S
Sam Greene	Greater Toronto Airport	CRS
Kyle Greenside	City of St. Catharines	CRS-I
Dean Holly	Mun. of Killaloe, Hagarty & Richards	CRS
Jeremy Hull	City of Sarnia	Assoc. R.S.
Jeffrey Lloyd	County of Haldimand	Assoc. R.S.
Brandon Lowe	Twp. of Brock	Assoc. R.S.
John McGillivray	Twp. of Oro-Medonte	CRS
Karla Musso-Garcia	Twp. of Oro-Medonte	CRS-S
Jon Oakley	Twp. of Oro-Medonte	Assoc. R.S.
Josh Parent	Twp. of Mapleton	Assoc. R.S.
Steven Posteraro	Miller Maintenance	Assoc. R.S.
Christopher Stephens	City of Cambridge	CRS-I
Jason Stephian	County of Haldimand	Assoc. R.S.
Michael Szajner	City of Vaughan	Assoc. R.S.
Jillian Townsend	City of Cambridge	CRS-S
Ekaterina Vasileva	Reg. Mun. of Peel	Assoc. R.S.
Paul Walker	Mun. of Chatham-Kent	CRS
Richard Wayne	Twp. of Tay	CRS
Kris Wiszniak	Town of Collingwood	CRS
Craig Worsley	County of Lambton	CRS
Steve Zdzierak	City of Woodstock	Assoc. R.S.

Bridging the Infrastructure Gap in Rural Ontario

Public works professionals across Ontario continue to develop innovative, effective approaches to municipal infrastructure management, as demonstrated by a recent project in the Township of Stone Mills.

Stone Mills was the first municipality in Ontario to adopt a new modular bridge technology to solve a key infrastructure challenge. The aging Flynn Bridge had served its community well but was nearing the end of its life and required a replacement. A permanent closure of the bridge was not a viable option as it would result in significant detours for local drivers.

After evaluating several construction options, the township chose to use Armtec's Bridge in a Box design, a prefabricated modular steel bridge ideal for rural areas like Stone Mills.

Bridge in a Box provides substantial cost and time savings over traditional bridge replacement methods. It can be installed in as little as 1-2 days upon arrival at the construction site. The expediated installation saves several months of site work, allowing municipal staff to reallocate time and resources to other township priorities. It also uses more cost-effective material and has lower transportation costs compared to other options.

This innovative model also offers long-term maintenance advantages. The original bridge's concrete deck required frequent repair, whereas Bridge in a Box's steel design substantially reduces ongoing maintenance demands. From a sustainability perspective, the bridge's steel structure offers a smaller carbon footprint compared to a conventional concrete bridge.

"Bridge in a Box is a fantastic way to quickly address outdated or failing bridge structures which could have roads closed for significant amounts of time," said Sean Peconi, Regional Sales Manager with Armtec. "Replacing them with such a modern product aligns with modern day asset strategies of any municipality."

Although Bridge in a Box has already been successfully implemented in several communities in Western Canada, Stone Mills was the first municipality in Ontario to adopt this technology. "Armtec is confident this will be the first of many BIAB to come in Ontario," said Peconi.

With an anticipated service life of 75 years, this bridge can expect to see many freeze-thaw cycles and a wide range of winter weather. This design performs exceptionally well in these conditions due to the expansion joints in the structure, another key engineering advantage of this technology.

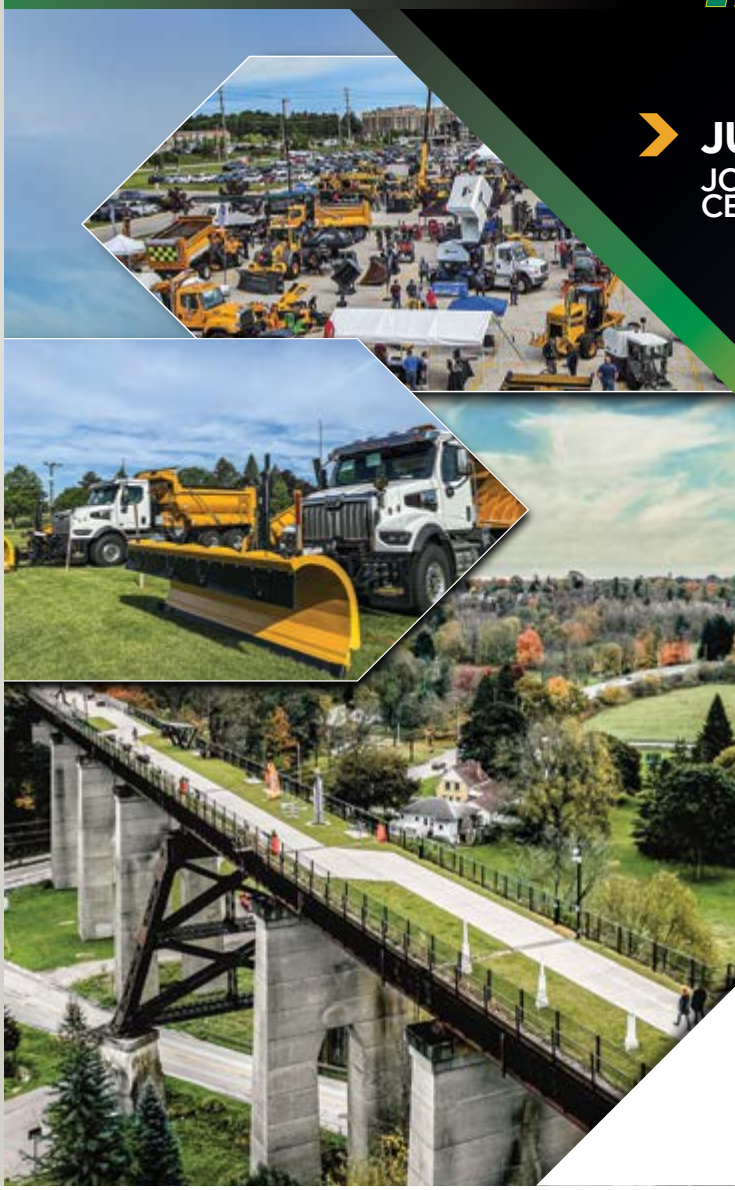
"This is exactly the kind of innovation Ontario municipalities need," said Jeff Thompson, Public Works Manager with the Township of Stone Mills. "So many communities, especially rural ones, are facing aging infrastructure and tight budgets with no easy detours available. Bridge in a Box proves there's a faster, more affordable, lower-impact way forward—without ever compromising on load capacity or safety."

The Flynn Bridge officially reopened to traffic on July 23, 2026.

"Don't hesitate," added Thompson, offering advice to other municipalities facing similar challenges. "This is a full-load, expertly engineered structure with clear, easy-to-follow drawings from Armtec and our contracted engineers at GroundWorks, who designed the new abutments and led quality control throughout installation."

Association of Ontario Road Supervisors

2027 AORS MUNICIPAL PUBLIC WORKS TRADESHOW



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AORS

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