

# BACKGROUND

## SUPPORTING NORTHERN ONTARIO

April 11, 2019

Northern Ontario communities face unique economic and demographic challenges to growth, including a lack of economic diversification and gaps in infrastructure. Northern and rural areas also have great potential for economic growth, and the government is committed to providing rural and Northern Ontario communities with the support they need to create more local jobs.

The *2019 Ontario Budget* is helping people and businesses in Northern Ontario by:

- Promoting economic development and meeting local transportation needs in the North by identifying opportunities for bus, passenger rail and rail freight services in Northern Ontario.
- Creating more opportunities for Indigenous people and addressing the North's skilled labour shortage with a new Northern Ontario Internship Program.
- Ending delays blocking development of the Ring of Fire by working with willing partners to ensure sustainable development.
- Encouraging economic growth by developing a forestry strategy and creating a Mining Working Group.
- Easing restrictions blocking economic development in the Far North by consulting on a proposal to repeal the Far North Act, 2010.
- Widening sections of Highway 17 between Kenora and the Manitoba border.
- Supporting the connection of remote communities to the electricity grid, as well as progress on a 450- kilometre transmission line from Thunder Bay to Wawa.
- Expanding natural gas access to more rural, northern and First Nation communities, which can save local residents up to \$2,500 a year.
- Helping smaller postsecondary schools in the North adjust to lower tuition rates for students.
- Helping communities participate in the digital economy by expanding broadband and cellular infrastructure.
- Standing up for workers in Northern Ontario communities by providing support for job creation and employment growth.
- Appointing the Big Game Management Advisory Committee to find ways to make the moose tag allocation process fairer, more accessible and simpler for hunters for the 2020 hunting season.