



For Immediate Release

## **A Northern Perspective: 2019 Foresight Papers**

**November 12, 2019** – The first installment of the Rural Ontario Foresight Papers was launched in 2017. Once again, the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) in partnership with Northern Policy Institute (NPI), prepared a 2019 version that tackles a variety of rural development challenges and trends.

The Rural Ontario Foresight Papers is a collection of six papers on selected themes as prepared by expert authors. Each Foresight Paper explores a particular topic in view of the current situation in rural and northern Ontario and looks ahead to what directions various stakeholders, governments or non-profits might follow in order to foster vital rural development in light of the trends and opportunities the authors foresee. The Papers offer an opportunity for rural stakeholders to be informed by the perspectives of these authors and to consider the implications for their own work or their own communities.

Included with each of the Papers is a corresponding northern commentary prepared by NPI Policy Analysts Hilary Hagar and Amanjit Garcha. The topics for the 2019 Rural Ontario Foresight Papers are:

**1. Access to Quality Medical and Health Services**

“Rural areas in Ontario, much like other rural areas in Canada and around the globe, typically have poorer access to healthcare services and poorer population health outcomes while simultaneously having a stronger sense of community and willingness to make do with whatever resources are available.”

**2. New Approaches to First Nation Infrastructure Challenges - The Nipissing First Nation Experience**

“The infrastructure deficit in First Nations is a regular feature in any news item about the circumstances of Indigenous people across Canada. These infrastructure deficiencies are highlighted when they have resulted in misery and frustration for local residents and leave most Canadians perplexed and disturbed.”

**3. Energy Use and the Rural Homeowner**

“If one can believe 97% of the world's scientists (and notice the weather), humanity will need to take stronger and stronger actions to address climate change.”

**4. Services for an Aging Rural Population**

“If there is two-tiered medicine in Canada, it's not rich and poor, it's urban versus rural.”

**5. Water, Water Everywhere – When the Stormwater Flows**

“Are we using and treating our abundant water resources to their highest and best uses? Could we be managing our water systems more effectively? Are we getting our best return on investment?”

**6. Workforce Development in Rural Ontario – A Snapshot**

“Generally, across Ontario, areas outside metropolitan centres have an older and aging work force. Participation rates are lower in these places and the employment levels (number of jobs) have also declined.”

“The ROI's vision is to work on building vision, voice and leadership for strong and vibrant rural and northern Ontario communities” says Tanya Stuart, Communications & Project Manager at the ROI, “working on these foresight papers with NPI is the perfect example of strong collaborations that create opportunities to shine light on the issues facing rural and northern Ontario.”

The Rural Ontario Foresight Papers are available on the Rural Ontario Institute's website as well as Northern Policy Institute's website. <https://www.northernpolicy.ca/roi-2019>

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**Media Interviews:** The Rural Ontario Institute, authors Hilary Hagar and Amanjit Garcha and NPI President & CEO Charles Cirtwill are available for comment. To arrange an interview, please contact:

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**About Northern Policy Institute:**

Northern Policy Institute is Northern Ontario's independent think tank. We perform research, collect and disseminate evidence, and identify policy opportunities to support the growth of sustainable Northern communities. Our operations are located in Thunder Bay and Sudbury. We seek to enhance Northern Ontario's capacity to take the lead position on socio-economic policy that impacts Northern Ontario, Ontario, and Canada as a whole.

**About the authors:**

**Hilary Hagar** is originally from Hamilton, ON, but has many summer memories exploring the North. A recent graduate from the University of Guelph with a B.A. (Hons) in International Development, Hilary values interdisciplinary approaches and is passionate about community economic development and poverty alleviation. During her undergraduate degree, Hilary completed participatory research in both Cuba and Bolivia. Closer to home, Hilary has also contributed policy debates on issues ranging from greenhouse gas emissions in Ontario agriculture to Inuit nutrition and health. An avid outdoors enthusiast, she spends as much time as possible camping, hiking, and canoeing.

**Amanjit Garcha** was born in Punjab and raised in Brampton. After graduating from the University of Toronto with a B.A. (Hons) in Criminology and Political Science, she obtained a Masters Degree in Public Administration from Queen's University. Her areas of interest include immigration and social policy, environmental policy, and Indigenous affairs. In her spare time she enjoys experiencing nature and exploring the outdoors.

**Project Partners: Rural Ontario Institute**

Established in 2010, the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) was created through the amalgamation of The Centre for Rural Leadership (TCRL) and The Ontario Rural Council (TORC).

ROI delivers programs that develop strong leaders who are critical voices around opportunities and key issues facing rural and northern Ontario.

Vision: Building Vision, Voice and Leadership for strong and vibrant rural and northern Ontario communities.

Mission: Developing leaders and facilitating collaboration on issues facing rural and northern Ontario.

Key Result Areas:

- Strong leaders, strong organizations and strong rural communities
- Effective facilitation of dialogue and collaboration on rural and northern issues and opportunities

Key Values:

- Diverse perspectives and collaboration
- Respectful, open and honest communication
- Innovation and entrepreneurship
- Economic, social and environmental sustainability in rural and northern Ontario
- Continuous improvement and excellence