



## Media Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – January 31, 2020**

### **Economic Development moves forward in Western Ontario**

**Guelph, ON** – The Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus is pleased to announce the return of Kate Burns Gallagher as the Executive Director of Economic Development for Western Ontario.

In partnership with the Western Ontario Community Future Development Corporation Association (WOCFDCA) and the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus, Ms. Burns Gallagher will be implementing the actions outlined in the Economic Development Strategic Plan.

The plan underlines the region's commitment to working together and speaking with one unified voice on critical economic issues in southwestern Ontario, including workforce planning, infrastructure investment, sector strategies, marketing and promotion.

Kate has been an active member of the economic development industry for more than a decade. She has developed lasting and meaningful relationships within the industry and has been an innovator in developing new programs for today's economy. Kate will be returning to the role that she previously held in 2018.

"We are excited to continue the regional economic development program. From Essex to Simcoe, we all have similar economic concerns and we look forward to working collaboratively to address our workforce, technology and infrastructure challenges," said George Bridge, Chair of the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus Economic Development Committee.

"We are very excited about working with the Warden's network of county and municipal partners to cross-promote programs including SOFI, our Southern Ontario Fund for Investment in Innovation, where we can provide financial support of up to \$500,000 and sometimes more. As always, our 22 CFDCs will continue to invest in innovative rural businesses and we are looking forward to further collaboration with the WOWC in business development opportunities across Western Ontario." stated Allan Simm Chair of the Western Ontario Community Futures Association.

The Western Ontario Warden's Caucus (WOWC) is a not-for-profit organization representing 15 upper and single tier municipalities in Southwestern Ontario, representing more than 3 million residents. The WOWC aims to enhance the prosperity and overall wellbeing of rural and small urban communities across the region. For more information, visit [www.wowc.ca](http://www.wowc.ca).