

## DISTRICT OF KENORA UNINCORPORATED AREAS RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

A NON-PROFIT ONTARIO CORPORATION  
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### **Notice of Annual General Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting of the District of Kenora Unincorporated Areas Ratepayers Association (DoKURA) will be held Wednesday, May 21, 2025, beginning at 4 pm at the Pellatt Hall, 1 Firehall Road off Highway 641.

Any resident or property owner in the Unincorporated Areas of the Kenora District is entitled to vote at the meeting.

The meeting is open to the public.

For information on attending in person, please contact association secretary Barry Baltessen at - [dokuraorg@gmail.com](mailto:dokuraorg@gmail.com)

Dated April 20, 2025

Full Details of the AGM including 2024 Minutes, meeting agenda and more are available under the About DoKURA menu on our website.

# Kenora's New Hospital Campus (CONCEPT ONLY)



## Health Care Sites Assured

All that is needed is provincial cabinet approval and Kenora will be on the way to having a new hospital and long-term care facility. Locations for a new hospital and a new long-term care home were secured over the winter with the purchase of the former Kenora Forest Products sawmill site by Ogimaawabiitong (Kenora Chiefs Advisory).

Ogimaawabiitong had purchased the site on the eastern shore of Portage Bay in December 2024 from GreenFirst Forest Products. GreenFirst had acquired the site in 2020 and announced in 2022 it was planning to relocate and open a new Kenora sawmill at another

more suitable site in Kenora. In January Ogimaawabiitong, comprised of 10 area First Nations, committed to providing the planned All Nations Hospital and Wiigwas Elder and Seniors Care facility with 30 acres and 8 acres respectively from the 118-acre site. The remainder of the site will be put to other uses, with discussions being held around housing, mixed commercial and other health care facilities.

The January announcement is a major step forward for the health facilities.

According to a news release from Ogimaawabiitong,

“This purchase is historic for both the region and Treaty 3 territory, with First Nation leadership leading the way in

advancing positive change in health care for everyone. The new hospital will offer a blend of Western medicine and Traditional Healing including a complement of services specifically for Indigenous patients that promote Anishinaabe wholistic worldview(s) of wellness, recognizing that culturally safe spaces help address health disparities.”



The new hospital will have 81 single-patient rooms, compared to 74 beds in multi-bed wards and semi-private rooms in the current hospital. It will include a larger emergency department and several other specialized units. Parts of the current Lake of the Woods District Hospital date back to the 1920s.

The joint planning committee for the new hospital remains optimistic that cabinet approval and funding to begin detailed planning will come once the Ontario Legislature resumes normal business in April. A seven-year time frame to design, build and open the new hospital, once approval for the next stage is given, remains in place.

The Wiigwas Elder and Seniors Care facility will have 160 beds, compared to the current 92 bed facility which was built in 1972.

In Sioux Lookout the community is also awaiting the go ahead for an expanded long term care facility. Verbal assurances were given in 2018, and again in 2024 along with a planning grant of \$2.5 million in December 2024. Formal approval and funding is still pending for an allocation of an additional 75 beds. There is currently 21 beds operated by the Meno Ya Win Health Centre as part of the William A. George Extended Care Facility.

## MRIs Approved

Two area hospitals have been approved for MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) units to enhance their CT scan, X-Ray, ultrasound and mammography diagnostic imaging services.

The province is funding construction of the MRI suites this year at the Lake of the Woods District Hospital and the Meno Ya Win Health Centre in Sioux Lookout. The province has also committed to ongoing funding for their operation. The local hospitals are responsible for funds to purchase the actual machines.

In Kenora, the Beyond the Scan campaign has raised over 90% of the \$8.5 million target, which includes the purchase of a new CT scanner to replace its current 10-year-old model. For information on the Beyond the Scan campaign, follow this link: <https://lwdhf.com/beyond-the-scan/>.

In Sioux Lookout the \$7 million local goal is also well underway with fundraising nearing \$3 million by the end of February. For information on the Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre Foundation's efforts, follow this link: <https://foundation.slmhc.on.ca/mri/>.



Work on the new Kenora suite is currently underway and is expected to open this summer, while the Sioux Lookout unit is anticipated for later in the year.

The MRI units will add to the CT scanners now in use at both hospitals. This means patients will be able to have needed diagnostic tests done faster and closer to home, rather being transferred to Thunder Bay or Winnipeg for the procedures.



## Northwest EMS

Northwest Emergency Medical Services (NWEMS) is dedicated to providing exemplary emergency medical care services through land ambulance for individuals, families, communities, and unincorporated areas within the Kenora District.

With approximately 120 Primary Care Paramedics, a fleet of 37 vehicles, and 10 bases, NWEMS offers coverage across the District to offer emergency support where it is needed, when it's needed most.

Our Primary Care Paramedics have some of the best training available to address emergencies and provide prehospital care, including:

- Cardiac monitoring/defibrillation
- Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP)
- Advanced Emergency Childbirth
- Intravenous & fluid therapy



## MAKE THE RIGHT CALL

### FOR MINOR MEDICAL ISSUES:

Call Health Connect Ontario (8-1-1)	Book a virtual care appointment	Schedule an appointment with your primary care provider	Visit your local pharmacy

For serious symptoms (e.g. shortness of breath, chest pain, severe bleeding, unconsciousness, symptoms of stroke)

**CALL 911**

## HOW 911 CALLS ARE CODED THROUGH THE MEDICAL PRIORITY DISPATCH SYSTEM

<b>PURPLE</b>	Emergent and immediately life-threatening conditions. Critical response required.
<b>RED</b>	Emergent and potentially life-threatening conditions. Time sensitive response required.
<b>ORANGE</b>	Urgent and potentially serious, but no immediate threat to life.
<b>YELLOW</b>	Non-urgent, not serious, and no immediate threat to life, not time sensitive.
<b>GREEN</b>	Non-urgent, not serious, and no immediate threat to life. May be deferred.





## Community Paramedicine Program

Serving to bridge the gap between primary health care and patients, Community Paramedics focus on providing at-home care for the patient and reducing 911 call volume. Working alongside your health care team, our CP (Community Paramedics) will assist in developing a care plan that works for you.

**Check out our video on the CP Program below! KDSB Northwest EMS Community Paramedicine Program:**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ua\\_xePjBvb8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ua_xePjBvb8)

### What to expect during a Community Paramedic Visit? Community Paramedics also

Community Paramedic will arrive at your home during your **provide support for:**

scheduled appointment and will typically walk you through the Wound following: Phlebotomy

- Vital Signs Reading Remote Monitoring
- Physical Assessment Influenza/COVID-19 Vaccines
- Home Safety Scan Referrals to Additional Community
- Falls Risk Assessment
- Medication Compliance
- Chronic Disease Management

- Care
- 
- 
- 
- 

Programs and Health Partners

Health Education

Contact the supervisor:

[recruitment@kdsb.on.ca](mailto:recruitment@kdsb.on.ca)

## Live the Adventure, Join KDSB Northwest EMS!

Becoming a primary care paramedic in Northwestern Ontario can be an exciting and rewarding career path. Each day brings a new challenge, but the goal remains the same, providing exceptional care. Join our dedicated team to help make a difference in everyday lives!

**For more information on Paramedic Training Programs in the district and applying to Northwest EMS:** <https://kdsb.on.ca/our-services/emergency-medicalservices/paramedic-recruitment>

**Apply Today!** <https://kdsb.on.ca/join-our-team>

### Education Cost Recovery Program

The Kenora District Services Board's (KDSB) Northwest EMS offers an education cost recovery program for new Northwest EMS recruits! The program offers up to \$4,000 back per year for two years, assisting in the repayment of tuition, fees, books, and supplies. **Interested in a career as a Primary Care Paramedic?**



### Check out local programs and courses here:

Paramedic Program - Confederation College -  
 Seven Generations Education Institute

**See DoKURA's next issue for information on KDSB's Early Years Programming!**

## High speed Internet Plan Disrupted

Plans by the Ontario government to bring high-speed internet to hard-to-service Northern Ontario communities and homes are once again in limbo. A \$100-million contract with StarLink to provide satellite-based Internet service to 15,000 northern homes and

businesses was announced last November. In February, Premier Doug Ford said the contract with the U.S.-based firm would be cancelled as part of retaliations for tariffs the U.S. was imposing on Canadian products exported to the U.S.

In addition to covering equipment costs, the contract was for Kenora-based FSET to handle the installations. The company had already worked with StarLink and had installed 4,700 of the company's systems under previous arrangements.

How the government will move forward to meet its pledge of universal high-speed Internet service is unknown. The government's Ontario Satellite Internet (ONSAT) program was just one component of an overall plan of spending upwards of \$2.5 billion to bring reliable high-speed internet to every community by the end of 2025.



Work by Bell Canada and other providers using wired fibre-optic cables is continuing a variety of projects throughout the area. For areas where distance and geography make using land lines impractical there are few options.

Telesat Canada has community level service available using the low-earth satellite. The Ottawa-based company hopes to build a 200-satellite network to support Canada, so those relying on Starlink can

shift to a Canadian provider. The project got a \$2.14 billion loan from the federal government in the fall of 2024. There are already a few test satellites in space right now to demonstrate their capabilities. This technology is being developed alongside scientists living in remote communities to understand their specific needs and experiences. The plan is to begin launching additional satellites in early 2026.

Canadian-based Xplornet offers individual home satellite service, but it is not available in all areas. Meanwhile, StarLink remains available on a direct purchase basis by individuals.

## Ontario PC Three-Peat

The Ontario provincial election held in February made history in some ways. The win secured Ford's place in Ontario political history: it was the first time since 1959 that a party leader has won three consecutive majorities. Voter turnout was better than expected but still quite low at 45%. While costing \$189 million, provincial politics is unchanged. The sudden call to the polls at the end of January wasn't totally unexpected and the outcome was predicted by polls even before the campaigning began.

The winter election campaign itself was fairly low-key in the northwest with no changes in representation. Greg Rickford (PC-Kenora Rainy River) and Sol Mamakwa (NDP-Kiiwetinoong) won handily and will return as MPPs for their respective parts of the Kenora District. The two ridings were created in 2018 and Rickford and Mamakwa have been the MPPs since then.

Thunder Bay - Atikokan's Kevin Holland (PC) and Lise Vaugeois (NDP) in Thunder Bay - Superior North (NDP) also retained their seats. For detailed election results click on this link <https://www.elections.on.ca/en.html>.

Provincially the PCs returned to power with 80 members, up from 79 when the election was called, but down from the 83 districts won in 2022. The NDP remain the Official Opposition with 27 seats, and the Liberals improved their count to 14 seats, from nine at dissolution. The Green Party won two seats and one Independent out of six seeking re-election was successful.

Two districts required recounts as there were fewer than 25 votes between first and second place finishers. In Mushkegowuk-James Bay just eight votes separated the NDP and PC

candidates and in Mississauga-Erin Mills, the PC and Liberal candidates were just 20 votes apart. Neither recount changed the outcomes with the NDP remaining the winner in Mushkegowuk-James Bay and the PCs in Mississauga-Erin Mills.

Premier Doug Ford named his new cabinet on March 19. Greg Rickford was re-named as Minister of Indigenous Affairs

and First Nations Economic Responsibility, along with the newly created portfolio of Minister of Ring of Fire Economic and Community Partnerships. Kevin Holland will serve as Associate Minister of Forestry and Forest Products as part of the Ministry of Natural Resources. Both Greg and Kevin are strong advocates for the needs of northwestern Ontario residents. For the full list of cabinet ministers click on this link:

<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1005699/premier-doug-ford-unveils-cabinet-to-protect-ontario>.

The Ontario Legislature is set to resume April 14 with a Throne Speech scheduled for April 15. The key issue facing Ontario is ongoing economic uncertainty due to the threat of tariffs from the Trump administration. Healthcare, housing and education are additional issues identified by the opposition parties.





## **Federal Election April 28, 2025**

Two months after casting ballots in a provincial election, voters in Ontario are heading back to the polls with a federal election called for April 28.

As of April 3, there were five candidates approved or declared to be running for the Kenora-Kiiwetinoong electoral district. They are:

**Kelvin Boucher-Chicago** – Independent.

**Tania Cameron** – New Democratic Party. (Cameron ran as the NDP candidate for Kenora in the 2008 and 2011 federal elections)

**Bryce Dejarlais** – People's Party of Canada.

**Charles Fox** – Liberal Party of Canada. (Fox is a former Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief (1994-2000) and a former Ontario Regional Chief. He ran in the 2018 provincial election for the Ontario Liberals in the Algoma-Manitoulin District).

**John Hobbs** – The Green Party

**Eric Melillo** – Conservative Party of Canada. (Melillo has represented the district since 2019).

The 2024 federal redistribution, which increased the number of seats in the House of Commons from 338 to 343, left this district largely unchanged. District boundaries were adjusted slightly with the First Nation communities of Eabametoong, Neskantaga, Webequie and Nibinamik moved to the neighbouring Thunder Bay-Superior North district and the district name changed to Kenora-Kiiwetinoong.

Population of the federal election district, which extends from the



Thunder Bay-Rainy River District north to Hudson's Bay and from the Manitoba border east to the Thunder Bay-Superior North District is now about 62,000 with an estimated 45,000 voters. Voter turnout in the 2022 election was 58 per cent.

Election day is April 28 for voting at election polls, advance polls will be held April 19-21 at several locations throughout the district. You can vote anytime up to April 26 at the district's main returning offices in Kenora and Dryden. Voters can also cast ballots through vote-by-mail, but must apply to do so by April 22.

For further election information contact Elections Canada at <https://www.elections.ca/home.aspx> or the Kenora elections office at 1-866-241-7853.



### **New Hotel Planned for Dryden**

Dryden will soon be getting a major investment in the form of a new hotel. First announced in early 2024, and now with a site plan approved, construction of the new development is expected begin this summer.

The \$25 million project is a partnership between Wabigoon Lake First Nation and Rideout Bay Developments. They are a northern Ontario real estate developer with property interests in Kenora, Sioux Lookout, Fort Frances, Hornpayne and other locations.

The project will redevelop a nine-acre former RV/mobile home site on Hwy 17 (Government Road/Durance Avenue) near the Dryden Walmart and other large stores. The hotel will be licenced under the Studio 6 Extended Stay brand with 70 suites. It will include a convention hall, space on the site for ample parking, other amenities and other buildings yet to be defined.

Dryden mayor Jack Harrison says the hotel fills a much-needed void. "This will be quite a welcome addition to our community, having another hotel here," Harrison told council at their open meeting where the site plan was approved.

## Stagnant Area Assessment Becoming a Concern

As area municipal councils tackle their annual budgets with property tax increases ranging from 3% to 8% in the Kenora District which they need to fund spending and issues of property assessment (or rather the lack of increases in it), unincorporated areas remain fairly stagnant.

The recent release of assessment totals for 2024 from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC), responsible for valuations on properties in Ontario for tax purposes, is troubling. At least for the North.



Total property valuation for the province was up some \$42.7 billion, or 1.3% for the year. Close to 100,000 new properties were added, with most of that growth in property numbers and total valuation occurring in the southern part of the province.

In Northwestern Ontario, growth as reflected in increased numbers and dollars was much less. The City of Kenora, for example, increased its assessment by a mere \$16

million. With a total assessment in the \$2 billion range that represented a 0.7% increase. While slightly better than the 0.5% the year prior, it still adds very little new assessment to spread on rising municipal costs.

Unincorporated areas didn't fare much better. A \$26 million increase across all three districts in Northwestern Ontario, with \$13 million in the Kenora District.

With a \$3.7 billion assessment base it means assessment growth of just 0.35%, which follows a less than 1% increase the year before.

In an ideal world, rising service costs would be matched with rising assessment from new businesses, industries and homes, but when those lag,

it means existing and future costs show up on the tax bills of the existing property owners.

This may seem less of a concern in unincorporated areas because the province sets a fixed tax rate for two major taxes which are the Provincial Land Tax and the Education Tax that helps funding. But it does mean local roads boards, local service boards and fire departments could struggle paying for rising costs without adding to local tax levies.

## **Funding for District of Kenora**

### **Homes & Community Support Services**

A delegation representing District of Kenora Municipalities met with the Minister of Long-Term Care and the Minister of Finance at this year's Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) conference. They requested funding support from the province to cover unincorporated residents' access to District of Kenora Homes & Community Support Services.

The District of Kenora Homes & Community Support Services agency provides services for seniors and individuals with specific needs that require assistance to help them remain in their own homes for as long as possible. The following programs and community support services are available:

- Adult Day Program
- Congregate Meal Program
- Home Help and Home Maintenance
- Lifeline
- Meals on Wheels
- Supportive Housing
- Transportation

The District of Kenora Homes & Community Support Services agency also operates facilities in Kenora, Dryden and Red Lake with a branch office in Sioux Lookout. The Pinecrest Home in Kenora has 116 beds that includes a 23 bed Dementia Care Unit for residents with special behavioural needs. Princess Court in Dryden operates 97 beds and Northwood Lodge in Red Lake provides 32 beds.

The District of Kenora Homes & Community Support Services budget for 2025 indicates \$32,953,447 in operating expenses, covered by revenues from the Province of Ontario (\$23.3



## **District of Kenora Homes & Community Support Services**

million), Residents (\$4.95 million), Municipalities (\$3.9 million) and other revenue of \$765,000.

The District of Kenora municipality's ask of approximately \$2.0 million is for a reallocation of revenue currently collected from unincorporated residents through the Provincial Land Tax (PLT). An increase in taxation was not advocated for.

Up until legislative revisions and renaming of Ontario's Long Term Care Act in 2010, the province did provide a grant to Northern District municipally owned long term care facilities to reflect the use and shared support of such facilities by Unincorporated Area/Unorganized Territory residents. The grant was approximately \$700,000. Unlike the municipal contribution, which is property assessment based, the unincorporated grant was based on permanent population data. The current Act requires the local municipal contribution to be determined by the percentage share of weighted property tax assessment of the total assessment among municipalities listed as owners of the LTC home.