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**AMO Delegation  
Ministry of Health**

**Representative:** Hon. Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 19, 2025  
**Time:** 1:25 PM – 1:40 PM  
**Location:** Rogers Centre, Room 102  
**Attending:** Saugeen Shores Delegates

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**Summary Ask**

**That the Ministry:**

**Create a dedicated capital funding stream for high-growth, small-sized municipalities to support the development or expansion of primary care facilities.**

**Further, the Province formally recognizes and fund municipalities as health infrastructure partners to reduce the reliance on local property taxes for health-care related activities and capital projects.**

**Summary Issue**

**Positioning for Growth Readiness:**

Saugeen Shores is recognized as the fastest-growing community in Bruce County, currently accommodating roughly 30% of Bruce Power's workforce of over 4,000 permanent employees—more than any other municipality within the region—and is home to 18 nuclear suppliers. Indicators demonstrate that all economic sectors within the Town are experiencing robust performance, supporting ongoing and substantial growth.

A gap in provincial capital funding for primary health care infrastructure is placing undue pressure on municipalities like Saugeen Shores, effectively downloading the cost of health care facilities onto local taxpayers.



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## Supporting Background

Saugeen Shores is experiencing significant population growth, a **16%** increase in population since the last census—nearly three times the provincial average, leading to increased demand for local health services. Current provincial funding models do not adequately support capital infrastructure for primary care in small and mid-sized communities. As a result, municipalities are being forced to step in – often using property tax revenues – to fund the construction or expansion of health care facilities, which should be a provincial responsibility. This creates long-term financial strain on local governments and risks service delays for residents.

Recruitment and retention of health care professionals is increasingly challenging in rapidly expanding communities without adequate facility funding, risking future service gaps as demand outpaces supply.

Jurisdictions such as Saskatchewan’s Patient Medical Home in Swift Current, Nova Scotia’s Bayers Lake Community Outpatient Facility, and British Columbia’s capital funding stream for urgent and primary care have shown that dedicated health infrastructure funding streams in rapidly growing municipalities can expedite project timelines, enhance health outcomes, and promote economic stability.

The Town’s physician group has been working to expand the Ontario Health Team (OHT) model in partnership with the neighbouring Kincardine Family Health Team. In June 2023, both groups collaboratively submitted an expression of interest for interprofessional primary care teams with the aim of broadening services in each municipality, increasing patient rosters to reduce the number of unattached patients, and improving recruitment efforts by offering a care model attractive to new physicians. However, the application was not successful. It identified the need for capital investment to renovate an existing medical clinic within the Town.

In the current year, this physician group partnered with the Grey Bruce Health Team to submit an application focused on the priority area NOH. The outcome of this submission is still pending. It was noted that the application criteria were oriented toward urban settings, which may place their proposal at a disadvantage in the approval process. If successful, capital will be required to create spaces for the primary care options detailed in the application.



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## Provincial Alignment

**Supports Provincial Commitment to Health Equity:** Aligns with Ontario's mandate to ensure equitable access to primary health care across all communities, including rapidly growing small and mid-sized municipalities.

**Advances the Province's Growth Management Objectives:** Facilitates proactive infrastructure planning, supporting sustainable population and economic growth as prioritized in the Provincial Policy Statement and the Growth Plan for Northern and Southern Ontario.

**Strengthens Provincial-Municipal Partnerships:** Recognizes municipalities as essential partners in health infrastructure delivery, supporting the government's collaborative approach to addressing local and regional health system needs.

**Reduces Fiscal Pressure on Local Taxpayers:** Directly addresses provincial objectives to lessen the financial burden on property owners by appropriately allocating health infrastructure funding responsibility at the provincial level.

## Saugeen Shores Delegation Members

Luke Charbonneau	Mayor	mayor@saugeenshores.ca
Bud Halpin	Councilor, Port Elgin Ward	bud.halpin@saugeenshores.ca
Kara Van Myall	CAO	kara.vanmyall@saugeenshores.ca
Jill Roote	Manager of Strategic Initiatives / AMO Contact	jill.roote@saugeenshores.ca



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## **Saugeen Shores: A Growing Rural Community and Host to Bruce Power**

The Town of Saugeen Shores is a host community to Bruce Power housing upwards of 30% of their labour force. Saugeen Shores stands out as a community defined by its unique blend of urban advantages and rural character. As one of Ontario's fastest-growing municipalities, the Town has seen a **16%** increase in population since the last census—nearly three times the provincial average. This momentum, sustained through consecutive census years, illustrates a place where modern conveniences and rural tranquility coexist. The community is attracting families with children under 15 (**27.8%**) and adults aged 25 to 44 (**29.4%**), reflecting the appeal of a setting that offers both the dynamism of a growing town and the welcoming nature of a rural environment.

Economic opportunity in Saugeen Shores is anchored by Bruce Power, Canada's largest nuclear generation station, which supports a balanced, forward-thinking local economy. The Life-Extension Program at Bruce Power has sustained thousands of jobs, drawing talent and expertise from a wide area and fostering a climate where innovation meets the values of small-town living. This integration of industry and community creates an environment where residents benefit from stability and connection—enjoying the best elements of both urban and rural life.

Tourism continues to play a vital role in Saugeen Shores, with seasonal visitors often returning to become part of the community. The population of residents aged 65 and older has grown by **36.2%** since the last census, highlighting the Town's appeal to those seeking a balanced lifestyle post-retirement. Here, newcomers and long-time residents alike find opportunities to enjoy local amenities, outdoor spaces, and a pace of life that complements personal and professional aspirations.

Saugeen Shores' diversity adds further depth to its character. Over **11%** of residents are newcomers to Canada, and nearly **8%** identify as racialized. Close collaboration with Saugeen First Nation, through shared facilities and ongoing projects, reflects a commitment to inclusivity and partnership. Across backgrounds and stages of life, people are drawn to the Town for its balanced mix of opportunities, services, and community spirit.

Today, Saugeen Shores continues to evolve as a regional hub where the richness of urban amenities meets the warmth of rural tradition. This balance—carefully cultivated and naturally present—offers residents and newcomers alike the space to thrive, connect, and enjoy a lifestyle that truly offers the best of both worlds.