



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Ontario Community Transportation Network Launched**

Aug. 16, 2016 – The [Rural Ontario Institute \(ROI\)](#) and the [Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition \(OHCC\)](#), with funding support from the [Ontario Ministry of Transportation \(MTO\)](#), are collaborating to develop the [Ontario Community Transportation Network \(OCTN\)](#). The OCTN will connect individuals, organizations, and transportation providers interested in exchanging information, experiences and best practices about community transportation services in Ontario. This new project will help to inform, support, consult and collaborate with community transportation stakeholders across the province.

Network activities include the development of a website, newsletter, directory, listserv, webinars and events. The Ontario Community Transportation Network recognizes the importance of accessible, affordable, and available transportation services for Ontarians. Participation is free and open to anyone. The [OCTN welcomes the participation of all community transportation stakeholders](#).

Community transportation is an evolving delivery model in Ontario. On November 25, 2014, the Ministry of Transportation launched the [Community Transportation Pilot Grant Program \(CT Program\)](#). Recipient municipalities and their partnering organizations expressed a strong interest in networking with each other. Norm Ragetlie, Director of Policy & Stakeholder Engagement with the Rural Ontario Institute, says "We have been working with many different stakeholders on transportation issues over the last 4 years. Now, thanks to MTO support, this Network will facilitate ongoing peer-to-peer information exchange whether participants are working on transportation solutions in small towns, rural regions or larger communities."

Communities throughout Ontario have different forms of transportation systems depending on their size and location. Community transportation (CT) refers to all of the transportation services and resources that exist within a geographic area and are available to help meet the needs of local residents. These can include: municipally-funded transit; privately owned transportation; volunteer driver programs; vans that not-for profit organizations, health or social service agencies own and operate for seniors or people with disabilities; shuttle buses for commuting students and workers; and other services.

"Transportation is a vital component of a healthy community, enabling people to access employment, education, health and social services, and recreational activities" says Lorna McCue, Executive Director of the Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition. "This project will support organizations that are undertaking transportation initiatives that will have positive impacts on individuals' health and well-being, and strengthen the inclusiveness and economic vitality of their community."

### **For more information, Contact:**

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