



TOWNSHIP OF  
**GREATER MADAWASKA**



**The Junction: Health and Wellness Hub**

**Strategic Framework**

*Connecting Health and Community, Closer to Home*

## Authorship and Intent

This framework was prepared on behalf of the Township of Greater Madawaska, and endorsed by Council in October 2025 to guide partnership development and implementation planning.

The Township's intent is to act as an enabler, creating opportunities for expanded access to health and wellness services across Greater Madawaska.

The framework outlines a municipal approach to:

- Establishing the physical infrastructure required to host and support service providers.
- Facilitating collaboration among healthcare, wellness, and community partners.
- Strengthening access to care closer to home for residents across all ages.

This document provides a foundation for funding advocacy, partnership engagement, and community consultation as the Township advances its vision of Connecting Health and Community, Closer to Home.

*Prepared by:* Renée Mask, Chief Administrative Officer

*Endorsed by:* Council of the Township of Greater Madawaska, October 2025

## Executive Summary

Calabogie Junction represents connection. Historically, Calabogie served as a meeting point along the K&P Railway, a junction where people, goods, and opportunity met. Today, the Township of Greater Madawaska is re-imagining that legacy as a place where health, learning, and community life intersect.

The Township of Greater Madawaska is taking a significant step toward improving access to healthcare through the creation of the Calabogie Junction Health and Wellness Hub. This new space will bring together medical, educational, and community services in the heart of Calabogie.

This initiative is more than a building; it represents what residents have been asking for: care and connection close to home. It directly advances Strategic Plan Goal 3.2 – Improve health and wellbeing services available to residents, and reflects the Township’s vision of fostering a resilient, connected, and healthy community.

The Calabogie Medical Centre has outgrown its current Township-owned space. Working together, the Township and the Centre are exploring an expansion that will allow more residents to access care locally and create new opportunities for physicians, allied health providers, and learners. For our community, care closer to home means care within our own Township, where families live, work, and age together.

The Medical Centre’s physicians, affiliated with the Ancient Rivers Family Health Team, have expressed interest in continuing to grow alongside this project. The Township has also initiated discussions with Renfrew Victoria Hospital, the Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team, the County of Renfrew Paramedic Services, and the University of Ottawa School of Family Medicine to explore how their services and expertise can be connected through the Hub. Together, these partnerships have the potential to create a truly integrated model of rural care.

In 2025, the Township acquired 6.47 acres of centrally located land in Calabogie, making this vision possible. The site’s accessibility, proximity to amenities, and location along major County Road corridors make it ideal for a Health and Wellness hub. The Township will act as a facilitator, creating opportunities for investment and collaboration through public, private, and philanthropic partnerships. The property’s size also supports the potential for housing that meets the needs of seniors, health professionals, and working families who want to live and thrive in the community they serve.

The Calabogie Junction Health and Wellness Hub will bring together expanded family medicine, allied health services, mental health supports, wellness programming, and medical training in one place. This investment will improve access to care, support physician recruitment and education, strengthen local employment, and foster a healthier and more connected community.

With land secured, partners engaged, and strong local support, Greater Madawaska is ready to move forward. The Calabogie Junction Health and Wellness Hub will demonstrate how a small rural municipality can lead change through collaboration, innovation, and community vision.

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## 1 Background

The Township of Greater Madawaska is a growing rural community known for its stunning natural landscapes, strong local identity, and close-knit villages. While the quality of life remains one of the Township's greatest assets, residents continue to face challenges in accessing timely and coordinated health services. Primary care and wellness programs are limited within the Township, and many residents travel distances to reach physicians, hospitals, and specialists in neighbouring communities such as Renfrew, Arnprior, Pembroke, or Ottawa. This dependence on regional facilities places strain on patients and caregivers and limits opportunities for preventive and community-based care.

As the population grows and ages, the need for comprehensive health and wellness services continues to rise. The Township of Greater Madawaska has an estimated population of approximately 3,000 residents, with more than 50 percent of the population aged 55 and older, compared to 36 percent Province-wide. Data collected through the Calabogie Secondary Plan Survey, Township Strategic Plan engagement, and feedback from the local medical community consistently highlight access to health services as a top priority for residents. The Township's geographic area spans over 1,018 square kilometres, which intensifies challenges of service delivery and isolation, particularly for seniors and families with limited transportation options. These realities underscore the need for a modern, coordinated approach that integrates clinical care, education, and wellness programming into one accessible community hub.

In addition to its permanent population, Greater Madawaska experiences significant seasonal fluctuations driven by tourism and recreation. The Township is home to the Calabogie Peaks Resort, Calabogie Motorsports Park, and extensive trail systems forming part of the Highlands Tourism region. Each year, thousands of visitors are drawn by skiing, motorsport, cycling, paddling, and outdoor adventure opportunities. During peak months, the population is estimated to increase by three to four times the permanent base, based on local tourism and accommodation data reported through the County of Renfrew Economic Development Department (2024). This influx not only boosts the local economy but also substantially increases the transient population during peak months.

These visitors increase the demand for emergency medical response and strain regional resources. The combination of a growing resident population and a vibrant four-season tourism economy highlights the need for health and emergency services that cater to both permanent and seasonal populations.

The Township has no local paramedic base, and responses are dispatched from Renfrew, which is accessed via indirect routes. Residents and visitors in Calabogie in the east end, and Griffith and Matawatchan further away in the west end of Greater Madawaska, face extended wait times during emergencies.

For example, Centennial Lake Road, part of Ontario's Highlands Ride touring route, is a fifty-kilometre-long, twisty, hilly road that follows alongside the Madawaska River, connecting wilderness attractions in the west end to Calabogie's major recreation attractions in the east. The route attracts thousands of motorcyclists and visitors each season, contributing to the local economy while significantly increasing traffic volumes and emergency service demand. First responders frequently manage incidents that

require coordination across multiple agencies and long travel distances due to the Township's terrain and limited access routes.

The Calabogie Junction Health and Wellness Hub would strengthen local capacity by providing a proximate assessment and stabilization base for both residents and visitors. A paramedic or community paramedicine post within the proposed Health and Wellness Hub could help close this gap and directly serve both permanent and seasonal populations, reinforcing local resilience and emergency preparedness.

Health service delivery within the Township is currently anchored by the Calabogie Medical Centre, which provides essential family medicine and primary care but has reached physical and operational capacity. The Ancient Rivers Family Health Team (ARFHT) provides distributed services across the region, and Renfrew Victoria Hospital (RVH), the Ottawa Hospital, and Pembroke Regional Hospital (PRH) act as principal referral and diagnostic centres for residents. Greater Madawaska's Rurality Index of Ontario (RIO) score confirms its high rurality and eligibility for provincial recruitment and retention incentives.

In recent years, the Township has actively advanced this initiative through presentations and advocacy at ROMA and AMO, meetings with the local MPP, and representatives from the Ministry of Health to promote the concept and explore funding and partnership pathways. These discussions have reinforced that Greater Madawaska's proactive planning, land readiness, and collaborative approach uniquely position it to become a model for rural health access in Eastern Ontario.

Having proactively acquired 6.47 acres of centrally located land in Calabogie in 2025, the Township is now positioned to attract partners and investment to advance health infrastructure. Through this initiative, the Township's role is to serve as landowner and enabler, providing space and alignment for investment, partnerships, and service expansion.

The Township's immediate readiness, owning the land, having a confirmed clinical anchor, and having completed environmental and servicing reviews, sets it apart from most rural municipalities. This readiness allows partners to focus directly on programming and funding alignment rather than preliminary site work.

Comparable municipal initiatives demonstrate the proven value of this approach. Greater Madawaska now seeks to advance the next iteration of that model, applying the principles and best practices of community-led health planning within a rural Eastern Ontario context. The Health and Wellness Hub combines community vision, municipal leadership, and interorganizational partnerships to improve health outcomes and quality of life by connecting health and community. With these challenges clearly defined, the Township's next step is to align local needs with the Province's vision for *Care Closer to Home*.

### Why Calabogie?

- Proximity to Ottawa (just over an hour's drive) offers the best of both worlds, urban proximity with rural quality of life.
- Lower overhead and access to outdoor recreation make the Township an ideal practice location for physicians seeking balance.
- A supportive municipality and a community that values its healthcare providers create a compelling environment for professionals and investors alike.

## 2 Provincial Mandate and Rural Reality

The Province of Ontario's "*Care Closer to Home*" mandate emphasizes improving access to health services through integrated, community-based models that bring care to where people live, work, and age. The principle aims to reduce travel, enhance continuity of care, and support healthier communities by delivering services in local, familiar settings.

Across the Province, much of this progress has occurred in communities with existing hospital and clinical infrastructure. These advancements have been vital to improving access for many Ontarians; yet they also underscore the need to extend the same opportunities to rural and remote municipalities, where populations remain underserved despite the same commitment to the provincial vision.

The proposed Health and Wellness Hub aligns with and operationalizes elements of the provincial mandate through rural-scale, community-driven action by:

- Establishing primary care and allied health services within the Township;
- Creating rural training and placement opportunities for future physicians and health professionals in partnership with the University of Ottawa School of Family Medicine;
- Integrating mental wellness, prevention, and community outreach programs that meet people where they are; and
- Building infrastructure that reduces dependency on travel to larger centers, improving continuity of care and resident wellbeing.

The Health and Wellness Hub approach intentionally moves the policy from concept to practice, translating policy intent into tangible, measurable, community-driven action.

## 3 The Vision

Inspired by Calabogie's railway heritage, a community built on connection and movement, the Calabogie Junction Health and Wellness Hub carries that spirit forward as a new meeting point for health, wellness, and learning. The Calabogie Junction Health and Wellness Hub will serve as the next generation of that connection, linking care and community in a central place designed for rural living and wellbeing.

### 3.1 Hub Identity

The name Calabogie Junction: Health and Wellness Hub honour the legacy of the Kingston and Pembroke Railway, which reached Calabogie in 1884 and helped shape the community's early growth. Although trains no longer run, the former railbed remains visible today as part of the K&P Trail, a reminder that connection and movement have always defined Calabogie's identity.

The Hub's location, on a spur line of the historic rail corridor and surrounded by civic and recreational spaces, reinforces its role as the new gathering place for residents. It celebrates continuity, honouring the past while building a healthier, more connected future for the Township.

*By leading this initiative, the Township aims to demonstrate how the Care Closer to Home approach can be implemented in a rural context in partnership with Ontario Health and the Ministry of Health.*

### 3.2 Phased Development Approach

The Health and Wellness Hub is envisioned around two main areas of focus: the Health Services Hub and the Community Wellness Hub. These components may be developed together or in stages, depending on partner readiness and available funding. This flexible approach allows the Township to respond to opportunities as they arise and ensures that both immediate clinical needs and long-term community wellness can be achieved within an integrated setting.

Experience in other municipalities shows that flexibility in phasing often strengthens advocacy and investor interest. By presenting a clear vision of two complementary facilities, the Township can invite collaboration at multiple levels while ensuring that residents benefit from a coordinated, purpose-built hub of services.

#### **Health Services Hub**

The Health Services Hub will address the Township's most immediate priority: expanding access to clinical care. Anchored by the existing Calabogie Medical Centre, this first phase will add exam rooms, provider work areas, and expanded space for the local pharmacy. Dedicated rooms will support allied health professionals such as physiotherapists, dietitians, and mental health counsellors, while flexible areas will accommodate visiting specialists.

A key feature of this phase will be the inclusion of training and teaching space in partnership with the University of Ottawa School of Family Medicine. This will create rural placement opportunities for medical students and residents, supporting both physician recruitment and retention. Together, these elements advance the priorities of the Ministry of Health and Ontario Health for primary care expansion, team-based practice, and rural physician recruitment, positioning Greater Madawaska as a model for sustainable rural service delivery.

## **Community Wellness Hub**

The Community Wellness Hub represents the second phase of development, focused on prevention, rehabilitation, and community wellbeing. While this phase may follow the Health Services Hub, the Township is open to advancing both components concurrently if funding and partnerships align.

This facility responds to an identified and growing need. Community programming in Calabogie already exceeds the space available, particularly for the Seniors Active Living Centre, which offers vital programs and social wellness activities. A dedicated space will allow these programs to expand and evolve, offering new opportunities based on community input. Local voices have underscored the importance of wellness and connection for older adults. As one SALC Greater Madawaska 55+ Club member shared regarding the SALC start up in our Township: *“This program has done wonders for our community spirit and seniors' involvement in wellness programs, and we are just getting started as programs mature and equipment is improved! Thank you, SALC and the Township of Greater Madawaska.”*

A central feature of the Wellness Hub will be a multi-purpose fitness and rehabilitation area that supports preventative health, active living, and therapeutic recovery. This space will bridge the gap between clinical care and community wellness, accommodating both physician-referred rehabilitation and everyday health programs. Local rehabilitation providers have already expressed interest in referring patients to community-based programs in Greater Madawaska through the SALC program, reinforcing the Hub's role as a transition point between hospital care and long-term recovery at home.

Future phases may include integrated and attainable housing designed for seniors, health professionals, and working families. This housing would complement the health and wellness functions of the site, creating a complete community that supports aging in place, workforce recruitment, and year-round vitality.

By combining active living, allied health, and community supports within one setting, the Community Wellness Hub will strengthen Greater Madawaska's role as a centre for rural health promotion and rehabilitation. Together, the two components will create a seamless model of care that allows residents to receive treatment, recover, and live a healthy life in familiar surroundings close to home.

## **4 Policy and Program Alignment**

### **4.1 Positioning within Ontario's Health Hub Transformation**

Across the province, municipalities have advanced through three stages of health hub development: visioning, implementation, and integration. Communities such as Innisfil and Carleton Place have reached the integration stage, successfully operating completed facilities that bring care closer to residents.

Greater Madawaska is well positioned to move forward with land secured, partnerships established, and business planning underway to attract the necessary capital and development investment. This project also aligns with Ontario Health's Rural and Northern Health Care Framework and Plan, which calls for

improved access to care through decentralized, community-based models that serve smaller and underserved regions.<sup>1</sup>

In October 2025, Ontario Health and the Ministry of Health announced new operating funding for regional Family Health Teams and Interprofessional Primary Care Collectives across the Ottawa Valley. These investments, including support for the Ancient Rivers Family Health Team and Renfrew Victoria Hospital, expand clinical staffing and interprofessional collaboration. The Calabogie Junction Health and Wellness Hub complements this regional progress by providing the facility base needed for those expanded teams to deliver services locally in Greater Madawaska.<sup>2</sup>

The Township’s dual hub model strengthens this alignment by addressing both clinical health and community wellness within one coordinated plan.

“This investment from the province is welcome news for our community. By strengthening primary care, more people across the Ottawa Valley will be able to access the healthcare they need and deserve.”

— MPP Billy Denault

## 4.2 Provincial Alignment – Health Services vs. Community Wellness

The Township recognizes the importance of aligning the Health and Wellness Hub vision with provincial priorities and funding streams.

### **Health Services Hub**

Health services fall under the provincial mandate of the Ministry of Health and Ontario Health. These services are typically organized through Family Health Teams, hospitals, and community health organizations and are eligible for provincial operational funding.<sup>3</sup> Locating them within the Health Services Hub ensures alignment with provincial strategies focused on physician recruitment, and team-based care.

### **Community Wellness Hub**

Community wellness services, while not directly funded by the Ministry of Health, play an essential complementary role in achieving holistic health outcomes and strengthening community resilience. These services include programs offered through the Seniors Active Living Centre, fitness and activity spaces, community initiatives, and dental hygiene supports. They may be eligible for funding through

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<sup>1</sup> Ontario Health (2024). Rural and Northern Health Care Framework and Plan.

<sup>2</sup> Ontario Ministry of Health, “Ontario Connecting 8,700–9,575 More People to Primary Care in Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke,” October 2025. Source: [Billy Denault, MPP announcement](#) and *Pembroke Observer*, “Thousands in Ottawa Valley to be Connected to Family Doctors,” October 2025.

<sup>3</sup> Ontario Ministry of Health. *Connecting People to Home and Community Care: Care Closer to Home Strategy*. Government of Ontario, 2022.

other ministries, such as Seniors and Accessibility or Children, Community and Social Services, as well as through federal programs, private practice models, or community fundraising efforts.<sup>4</sup>

Locating these services within the same facility allows Greater Madawaska to meet both clinical and wellness needs while distinguishing between what falls under provincial health funding and what is supported by community and partner contributions.

### 4.3 Equity Beyond Numbers – Rethinking Rural Need

The Health and Wellness Hub demonstrates how rural equity principles can be translated from policy into practice. While larger centres continue to experience growth in hospital-based care, the solution for rural Ontario lies in strengthening smaller, community-based systems that keep care local.

Historically, towns like Calabogie grew along the Kingston and Pembroke Railway, where connections created opportunity. The Hub continues this tradition by building modern health infrastructure within a small community, allowing residents to live, age, and thrive where they belong. This approach reduces pressure on urban hospitals while advancing the provincial goal of sustainable, community-based care across rural Ontario.

Across the County of Renfrew, strong leadership in Paramedic and Community Paramedicine services has set a provincial benchmark, supported by regional health partners. The Township’s proposal builds on this foundation and advances the next step in achieving equitable, distributed care across the County.

Current funding models often focus on population size but can overlook smaller municipalities where distance and travel time are the real barriers to access. In Greater Madawaska, fewer residents do not mean fewer needs. Geographic isolation, limited service options, and long travel times make access to care more difficult. Expanding the definition of “need” to include access and time to care would ensure that the initiative truly reaches the communities that are farthest from existing infrastructure. Through collaboration with County and health system partners, the Health and Wellness Hub can serve as a provincial demonstration site showing how equitable, place-based investment can deliver measurable improvements in health access and outcomes for rural residents.

“The Rural and Northern Health Care Framework aims to improve access, quality and sustainability of care for rural, remote and northern Ontarians.”

*Ontario Ministry of Health, 2023*

<sup>4</sup> Ontario Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility. *Seniors Active Living Centres Program Guidelines*. Government of Ontario, 2023.

#### 4.4 Cross-Government and Institutional Alignment

The Health and Wellness Hub advances multiple provincial and community priorities through a single, integrated investment. Beyond improving access to care, it serves as a foundation for community wellbeing, education, housing, and economic growth. This alignment positions the Township as a partner in achieving several government objectives simultaneously.

The Community Wellness Hub supports provincial goals for rehabilitation and preventative care, with local rehabilitation providers already expressing interest in referring patients to Township programs. Combined with the Seniors Active Living Centre's active living and educational classes, the Hub provides a practical model for bridging hospital discharge, rehabilitation, and community wellness, helping residents remain healthy and independent.

Co-locating community paramedicine services within the Hub will further enhance emergency readiness and strengthen integration with County Paramedic Services.

The project also supports mandates across several ministries and agencies:

- **Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility:** The inclusion of the Seniors Active Living Centre aligns with the Ministry's mandate to support aging in place and promote accessibility across public facilities. The Community Wellness Hub will create barrier-free spaces for recreation, prevention, and connection, advancing the goal of healthy aging within local communities.
- **Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS):** Community wellness programming, including the Food Bank, Home Support, and family programs, aligns with the Ministry's priorities for poverty reduction, social inclusion, and community resilience.
- **Ministry of Colleges and Universities:** Collaboration with the University of Ottawa School of Family Medicine advances the province's strategy for distributed medical education and rural placements.
- **Ministry of Infrastructure and Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade:** The Hub represents an opportunity for rural infrastructure investment that supports both health and economic vitality. By attracting professionals, stabilizing the workforce, and increasing Calabogie's appeal to families and investors, it supports the province's commitment to building strong, complete communities.
- **Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing:** The Hub's potential for integrated, attainable housing contributes to provincial objectives for workforce stability and aging in place.

At the federal level, the project is eligible for and consistent with the objectives of Infrastructure Canada’s Community, Culture, and Recreation Infrastructure Stream and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities’ Green Municipal Fund, both of which emphasize sustainable rural infrastructure that strengthens local resilience.

“We believe that working collaboratively with our community is our best way to address these priority health concerns in a way that is mutually transformative.”

University of Ottawa School of Family Medicine – *Social Accountability, 2024*

Through these connections, the Health and Wellness Hub demonstrate how a single community investment can advance shared provincial and federal priorities. By linking health, wellness, education, and economic vitality, the Township of Greater Madawaska offers a tangible, place-based example of how collaboration can deliver lasting results for residents and the broader region.

## 5 Implementation Precedents and Readiness

Across Canada, municipalities have enabled health hubs by assembling land, supporting planning approvals, and partnering with health organizations. Greater Madawaska’s approach mirrors these best practices, securing land, building partnerships, and planning phased growth aligned with the province’s direction for community-based care.

### 5.1 Lessons from Other Communities

Municipalities such as Carleton Place, Innisfil, Cold Lake, and Wasaga Beach demonstrate that while governance and financing models vary, successful projects share common themes. Municipalities that effectively expanded local health services focused on facilitation rather than direct delivery. They secured land, supported approvals, and created conditions for health partners and developers to lead.

Governance models differed from community to community. Some chose direct ownership, while others used not-for-profit or public-private partnership structures, each tailored to local needs. Early and consistent engagement with health partners was a critical success factor, as was aligning each project with provincial priorities such as primary care expansion and team-based practice.

Key lessons from these examples include:

- Municipalities act as enablers, not providers. Land, planning approvals, and fee waivers can catalyze projects without municipalities directly delivering healthcare.
- Governance structures vary, from direct ownership to partnerships or service corporations, allowing flexibility and transparency.

- Early engagement with health teams, hospitals, and academic partners builds credibility and strengthens alignment with funding opportunities.
- Projects that clearly demonstrate links to provincial priorities, such as *Care Closer to Home* and physician recruitment, have greater success in attracting support.

These examples confirm that Greater Madawaska’s approach, securing land, building partnerships, and planning phased growth, reflects best practices in rural health delivery and aligns with the province’s direction for modernized, community-based care.

## **Evaluating Different Municipal Approaches**

### ***Direct Municipal Financing and Ownership***

Some municipalities, such as Wasaga Beach, chose to finance and own medical centres directly. This approach gave them full control over design and tenancy but required using municipal debt for facilities outside traditional infrastructure responsibilities. Wasaga Beach could pursue this model due to its larger financial base and access to non-tax revenue, such as casino proceeds. For Greater Madawaska, where debt capacity must remain focused on essential infrastructure, this level of financial exposure would not be sustainable.

### ***Leased Facilities with Municipal Borrowing***

Cold Lake, Alberta, borrowed to finance a clinic and leased the space to physicians. While construction advanced quickly, the municipality assumed significant financial and tenant risk. For a small township with limited fiscal flexibility, this model carries too much uncertainty.

### ***Hybrid Subsidy Models***

Carleton Place offers a balanced example. There, physicians formed a not-for-profit corporation, and a private developer financed and owned the building. The municipality entered into a Municipal Capital Facility Agreement to subsidize rent for a set period. This time-limited contribution helped the project proceed without long-term municipal risk or ownership obligations.

For Greater Madawaska, this type of partnership model provides the most practical balance between financial responsibility and community benefit.

## **5.2 Land Readiness**

The Township has already taken important steps to demonstrate the feasibility of the Health and Wellness Hub. The 6.47-acre parcel in Calabogie has been secured and reviewed for serviceability. A preliminary concept plan (Appendix A) illustrates how the property can accommodate multiple buildings, including parking, and supports up to 36 residential units.

A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment has confirmed that there are no environmental concerns, and servicing analysis has verified that appropriate solutions exist to support the proposed development scale. Together, these studies confirm that the site is well positioned for institutional and community development.

The concept plan also demonstrates the property’s potential to support health, wellness, library, and housing uses within a campus-style arrangement. Servicing assessments, environmental clearance, and zoning alignment further reduce risk, ensuring that partners can move quickly once commitments are in place. Final building sizes and layouts will be confirmed in consultation with tenants to ensure the space meets operational needs and allows for future growth.

### **5.3 Capital Development and Funding Strategy**

The project is envisioned as a developer-led initiative using a public–public–private partnership model. Under this structure, the Township contributes land and planning tools, while a private developer finances, builds, and manages the facility. Health providers and community organizations will lease space, allowing them to focus on program delivery rather than infrastructure.

This model has proven effective in similar municipalities such as Carleton Place, where developer financing expanded community health services without requiring municipal debt. It ensures financial sustainability and protects taxpayers from risk while still allowing the Township to play a leadership role.

Integrating attainable or seniors-oriented housing on-site will further strengthen the model by balancing lease revenue from residential uses with affordable community space. This approach creates a mixed-use campus that supports both social and economic objectives.

#### ***Legal Compliance and Municipal Role***

Under the Municipal Act, municipalities cannot provide direct financial assistance to private businesses, such as selling or leasing land below market value. However, Section 110 of the Act authorizes a Municipal Capital Facilities Agreement (MCFA), which allows municipalities to make land available for projects that provide community benefits in a transparent and compliant way.

The Township may designate the Health and Wellness Hub as a municipal capital facility and may transfer the land at a nominal value to a non-profit organization or developer responsible for the construction. It may also enter into long-term leases at below-market rates while retaining ownership of the property for public benefit.

Carleton Place used this tool to support its medical centre, providing a time-limited lease subsidy while ensuring full legislative compliance. Greater Madawaska can apply the same model to advance its Health and Wellness Hub in a responsible and accountable manner.

#### ***Sustainability and Integrated Housing Opportunities***

Sustainability principles are central to the design and long-term function of the Health and Wellness Hub. The development approach emphasizes efficient land use, low-impact site design, and flexible buildings that can adapt to evolving community needs over time. Integrating green infrastructure, renewable energy options, and active transportation links will ensure the site contributes to both environmental resilience and public health.

Future phases may include attainable and seniors-focused housing integrated within the Hub lands. This housing would provide proximity to care for older adults and housing for health professionals,

supporting aging in place and helping to stabilize the local workforce. Co-locating housing with health and community services promotes walkability, reduces transportation barriers, and strengthens the Township’s goal of creating complete, sustainable communities.

This concept also responds to the Township’s Housing Needs Assessment, which highlights a shortage of smaller, attainable, and seniors-oriented housing forms. With more than half of residents aged 55 and older, and many living in homes larger than they need, integrating housing options within the Hub lands will support aging in place and help address the community's demand for diverse, affordable housing.<sup>5</sup>

These sustainability and housing features also align with provincial and federal policy directions that emphasize climate-resilient infrastructure and healthy, connected living environments. By combining energy-efficient design, adaptable community space, and mixed-use development, the Calabogie Junction Health and Wellness Hub demonstrates how small municipalities can model sustainable growth while addressing immediate health and housing needs.

### ***Funding Approach***

The funding strategy is built on three streams:

- **Private Investment** – the developer finances construction and assumes risk through lease agreements with tenants.
- **Public Investment** – provincial and federal governments provide capital and operating funding aligned with their mandates for primary care, wellness, rehabilitation, and aging in place.
- **Municipal Enabling Role** – the Township contributes land, planning tools, and advocacy, without assuming debt or operational responsibilities.

Tenancy will balance commercial and community tenants. This structure ensures sustainability while maintaining inclusivity.

If developer interest proves limited, the Township may consider an alternative ownership model involving community fundraising and senior government capital contributions. While this option introduces more municipal responsibility, it also provides flexibility and demonstrates readiness to proceed should private financing not materialize.

### ***Readiness Summary***

With land secured, due diligence completed, and partnerships in place, the Township of Greater Madawaska is well positioned to move from planning to implementation. This readiness, combined with a realistic and responsible development model, confirms the Health and Wellness Hub as a credible, fundable, and community-driven project that aligns with provincial goals for equitable access to care.

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<sup>5</sup> Township of Greater Madawaska — Housing Needs Assessment (August 2023)  
<https://www.greatermadawaska.com/en/Township-office/resources/Plans%2C-Reports-and-Studies/Township-of-Greater-Madawaska-Housing-Assessment---August-14th.pdf>

The Township will select a developer partner through a transparent, phased process. This may include initial market sounding to gauge interest, followed by an Expression of Interest to identify qualified proponents. If multiple responses are received, a Request for Proposals will ensure fairness and competitiveness. This approach will attract experienced partners while meeting provincial expectations for open procurement.

## 6 Governance and Stakeholder Engagement

The success of the Calabogie Junction Health and Wellness Hub relies on coordinated leadership, transparent governance, and sustained collaboration among partners. The Township's role is to enable and facilitate rather than directly deliver services, ensuring that the Hub grows through shared responsibility and mutual benefit.

The incidents highlight how emergency responders must often navigate steep landscapes and limited access routes to reach residents and visitors.<sup>6</sup> This need for a proximate emergency base is reinforced by recent paramedic incidents in Calabogie's recreation corridor. The proposed Hub would create a coordinated medical base within minutes of these high-traffic areas, improving both response times and outcomes.

### 6.1 Municipal Role and Governance Model

The Township of Greater Madawaska will serve as landowner, convener, and advocate. Its primary responsibilities include maintaining oversight of land use and infrastructure, facilitating agreements, and ensuring transparency through Council reporting. Partner organizations with professional expertise in clinical care, wellness, and education will manage day-to-day health and wellness programming.

A formal governance structure will be established to guide the next phase of development. This structure will include representation from the Township, primary health partners, and community organizations. Its purpose will be to coordinate site planning, oversee lease and operational agreements, and ensure that the project continues to align with community priorities and provincial policy objectives.

The Township will act as the signatory to the Municipal Capital Facilities Agreement or comparable legal instrument, enabling project delivery in compliance with municipal legislation. This ensures the Township remains an accountable steward of public assets while empowering partners to manage programs and operations efficiently.

### 6.2 Stakeholder Collaboration

Collaboration has been a central component in the development of this initiative. The Township has been establishing relationships with the Calabogie Medical Centre, Ancient Rivers Family Health Team, Renfrew Victoria Hospital, the Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team, and the University of Ottawa School

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<sup>6</sup> County of Renfrew Paramedic Service, "The County of Renfrew Paramedic Sierra Team responded to the area of Eagles Nest (Calabogie) for an injured hiker in critical condition...", Facebook post, June 2025. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/RenCtyParamedic/posts/1318014146991925/>

of Family Medicine. Early engagement with these partners is shaping the vision and confirming local readiness to proceed.

As the project advances, these relationships will transition from consultation to formal partnership agreements. The Township will continue to convene meetings, share updates, and align responsibilities among clinical, educational, and community partners to maintain momentum and clarity of roles.

In parallel, collaboration with County of Renfrew Paramedic Services, rehabilitation providers, and wellness organizations will ensure that emergency response, recovery, and prevention services are integrated within the Hub's design and programming. Collaboration opportunities may also extend to the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), whose Renfrew detachment provides policing services across the Greater Madawaska region. While the Township does not maintain a local detachment, the Hub could include flexible shared space to support joint use for emergency coordination, community-safety programming, or temporary staging during large-scale events or emergencies.

This co-location opportunity would strengthen inter-agency coordination and reinforce the Hub's role as a centre for community resilience. This multi-partner approach allows for a continuum of care from prevention to rehabilitation and ongoing wellness.

### **6.3 Community Engagement**

Meaningful community engagement will remain a cornerstone of this initiative. The Township has already gathered input through the Strategic Plan, the Calabogie Secondary Plan, and public consultations that identified health access as a top priority. Building on that foundation, the next phase will involve targeted engagement with residents, local businesses, and community groups to inform the design of the facility and the development of its programs.

Public engagement will include open houses, information sessions, and online surveys to gather input on building design, accessibility, and programming preferences. Feedback will guide how the Hub's spaces are used, ensuring that they meet the needs of seniors, families, and seasonal residents alike.

Clear and transparent communication will also be maintained through Council updates, media releases, and the Township's website, ensuring the community remains informed and involved as the project progresses.

### **6.4 Academic and Institutional Partnerships**

Establishing a clinical training presence within the Hub would create valuable opportunities for medical students and residents to gain practical experience in rural practice. An academic partnership will help attract future physicians and allied health professionals to the area, while contributing to the broader goal of improving rural health access. The Hub's design will include flexible education and meeting space to accommodate learners and continuing education programs for local providers.

### **6.5 Governance Readiness Summary**

Through early collaboration, clear role definition, and transparent governance, the Township of Greater Madawaska has laid the groundwork for a shared model of leadership that reflects the principles of

accountability, partnership, and sustainability. The Health and Wellness Hub is not solely a municipal project, but a collective initiative built on trust, a shared vision, and a community purpose.

With partners engaged, governance tools identified, and strong local support in place, the Township is ready to move forward with implementation. The governance model ensures that while the Township provides the foundation and oversight, operations remain partner-led, ensuring that the Calabogie Junction Health and Wellness Hub continues to evolve as a true community-driven centre of care and connection.

## **6.6 Partnership Readiness and Opportunity**

The Calabogie Medical Centre stands as the project’s founding partner and will lead clinical operations within the Health Services Hub. Its established relationship with the Ancient Rivers Family Health Team and previous collaborations with the University of Ottawa School of Family Medicine on rural training provide a strong foundation for expansion.

The Township’s discussions with the Renfrew Victoria Hospital, the Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team, and County Paramedic Services have identified opportunities for outreach clinics, remote diagnostics, rehabilitation referral pathways, and a potential community-paramedicine base.

These opportunities are being deliberately cultivated, ensuring that each prospective partner can see how their organizational objectives fit within the Hub’s integrated model. The plan positions Greater Madawaska as a low-risk, high-readiness investment environment, an ideal demonstration site for provincial, academic, and private partners seeking to expand care into rural Ontario.

## **7 Risk Management and Critical Success Factors**

The success of the Calabogie Health and Wellness Hub depends on the Township’s ability to secure sustainable partnerships, external funding, and alignment across health system and government priorities. The Township has demonstrated leadership by acquiring land; however, capital investment must ultimately come from senior governments, health partners, academic institutions, and private contributors.

Each risk area also presents an opportunity, where measured municipal leadership can turn challenges into enablers of success. The Township’s approach to risk management recognizes three core areas of risk: inaction, ownership and delivery, and implementation. Each requires a flexible and balanced approach to ensure long-term sustainability.

### **7.1 Risk of Inaction**

Failure to advance the Health and Wellness Hub would carry significant consequences for residents and health system partners. Without expanded space, physician recruitment opportunities may be lost, limiting the community’s ability to attract and retain doctors. Wellness programming would remain capped by existing facilities, and residents would continue to travel outside the Township for services, creating barriers to care and inequity of access.

At the system level, delayed investment would sustain pressure on regional hospital emergency departments and limit opportunities to strengthen hospital-to-community rehabilitation pathways. Inaction represents not only a missed opportunity for community development but also a tangible risk to health outcomes and the long-term sustainability of the system.

A phased development model helps mitigate this risk. Advancing the Health Services Hub initially provides immediate gains in access and visibility, while maintaining the flexibility to add the Wellness Hub when additional funding becomes available. Early success will establish credibility with funders and enhance future advocacy efforts.

## **7.2 Ownership and Delivery Risk**

The Township's preferred approach is a developer-led partnership; however, there is a possibility that an Expression of Interest may not yield a suitable private partner. In that case, the Township may need to consider direct ownership of the facility. This option would preserve full control over design, tenancy, and alignment with community needs, but it would also introduce financial exposure. Carrying long-term debt or assuming facility liabilities could strain borrowing capacity and divert resources from essential municipal infrastructure.

Municipal ownership could also bring advantages. A Township-led facility may qualify for government capital funding streams not available to private owners and could attract sponsorships and philanthropic contributions through naming opportunities and donor recognition. It would also enable the Township to incorporate community values, such as accessibility, local recruitment, and health equity, directly into the project.

This ownership pathway should remain a contingency option, pursued only if private development proves unviable. To remain prepared, the Township will develop a sponsorship and fundraising strategy, maintain active advocacy with senior levels of government, and ensure that any ownership scenario remains financially feasible and compliant with municipal debt policies.

## **7.3 Implementation Risks**

Even with strong partnerships and alignment, several external factors may still affect implementation. Funding programs at the federal and provincial levels are competitive, and their intake timelines may not align with project readiness. Partner priorities could evolve, altering tenancy or space requirements. Construction costs may rise due to inflation or specialized health facility standards, and community tenants may face challenges sustaining market-rate rents. Political or policy changes could also influence eligibility for funding, and physician recruitment remains dependent on Ontario Health's approval of new clinical positions.

To mitigate these risks, the Township will pursue a diversified funding portfolio that reduces reliance on any single source. Ongoing advocacy will ensure alignment with ministry priorities and Ontario Health's rural access objectives. The phased construction model also provides resilience, as the Health Services Hub can deliver immediate health service expansion even if the Wellness Hub proceeds later.

Capital and operating funding streams remain distinct in Ontario’s health system. While the Province may fund operating costs for new interprofessional teams, no dedicated capital funds are attached to the program. By securing operating commitments through Ontario Health Team-aligned proposals, the Township improves its eligibility for future federal and provincial capital programs. It strengthens its ability to leverage private or institutional investment.

#### **7.4 Key Success Factors**

The long-term success of the Health and Wellness Hub depends on strong community engagement, sustained alignment with provincial and federal priorities, and partnerships with health and academic institutions. Collaboration with health and academic partners will provide clinical leadership, strengthen system integration, and create a foundation for recruitment and training.

A diversified mix of funding sources from government, private, and community contributors will ensure the project's resilience and shared ownership of its success. Integration of community paramedicine services will be a defining strength, linking emergency response with prevention and primary care.

Sustainability will depend on a balanced tenancy model, where community services remain affordable through grants or sponsorships while commercial tenants support long-term operating viability. Long-term sustainability will also depend on measured phasing, ensuring that early success in the Health Services Hub builds investor and public confidence for subsequent expansion.

## **8 Next Steps**

With foundational work completed and a clear development pathway established, the Township of Greater Madawaska is ready to move from planning to implementation. The next steps will focus on confirming commitments, advancing design, and securing capital investment through a transparent and collaborative process.

The Township will formalize its relationship with the Calabogie Medical Centre as the founding tenant and continue structured discussions with health, academic, and community organizations to define roles in service delivery, education, and wellness programming. These commitments will strengthen funding proposals and demonstrate operational readiness to public and private investors.

### **Confirm Partnership Commitments**

Formalizing agreements with key organizations will be the immediate priority. Memorandums of Understanding will confirm space needs, programming objectives, and long-term tenancy expectations. Early confirmation from anchor tenants will provide the foundation for developer engagement and funding applications. The Township will also continue dialogue with educational and health institutions to identify training and placement opportunities that support recruitment and align with Ontario’s distributed medical education model.

### **Initiate Expression of Interest (EOI)**

The Township will launch an Expression of Interest to identify qualified developers and investment partners capable of delivering a project of this scale. This process will gauge market interest, confirm feasibility, and attract experienced proponents who share the Township’s vision

for a community-focused and sustainable health and wellness campus. Information gathered through the EOI will guide the next phase of detailed design, partnership structure, and funding applications.

### **Secure Funding and Investment**

The Township will continue to actively advocate with senior governments to align the Health and Wellness Hub with provincial and federal infrastructure priorities. Applications will be pursued under programs supporting primary care expansion, active living, and community wellness. Private and philanthropic contributions will be explored, including sponsorships, naming opportunities, and partnerships with foundations and regional agencies.

### **Engage the Community**

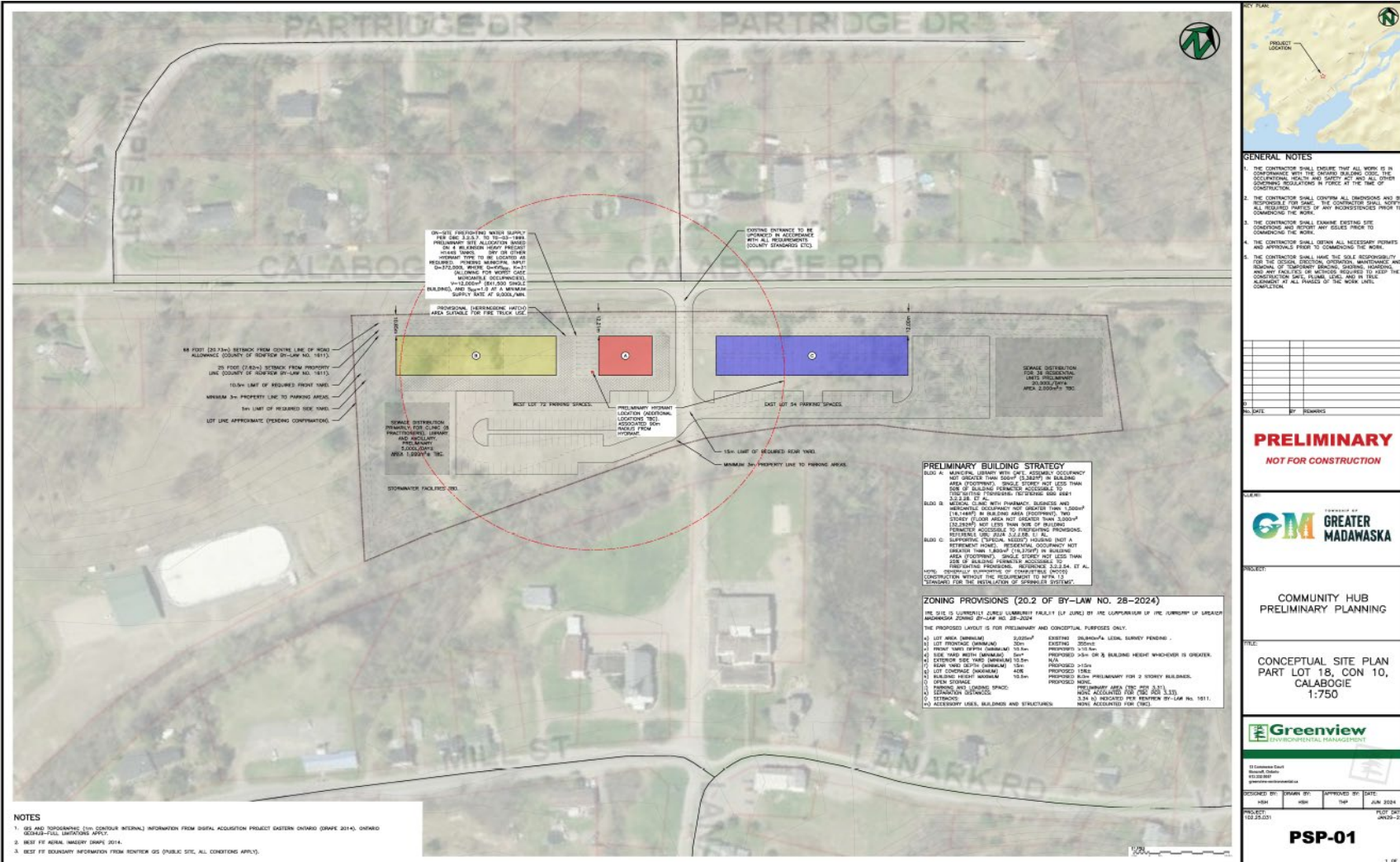
Public engagement will remain a central part of the next phase. The Township will host open houses, online surveys, and community updates to share progress and gather input on design and programming priorities. Feedback will ensure that the Hub reflects the character and values of the community it serves. Ongoing communication through the Township's website, newsletters, and social media will keep residents informed and involved as the project moves toward construction.

The Calabogie Junction Health and Wellness Hub represents an opportunity to redefine how rural health, wellness, and community life connect in Greater Madawaska. It is a forward-looking initiative that reflects the Township's commitment to local care, collaboration, and resilience. With vision, land, and partnerships already in place, Greater Madawaska is ready to take the next step, turning planning into action and bringing care, learning, and community together.

## 9 Appendices

# 9.1 Appendix A – Preliminary Concept Plan

The preliminary conceptual site plan (PSP-01) illustrates how the 6.47-acre parcel can accommodate three buildings (A, B, and C) along with parking and septic servicing.



## 9.2 Appendix B – Strategic Advocacy Brief

### Calabogie Junction: Health and Wellness Hub

#### *Connecting Health & Community Closer to Home*

##### **Purpose**

To brief provincial and health system partners on the Township of Greater Madawaska's readiness to advance the Calabogie Junction Health and Wellness Hub, a rural demonstration project that delivers on Ontario's *Care Closer to Home* framework.

The Township seeks partnership and inclusion in upcoming provincial and federal programs supporting rural primary care, wellness, and community infrastructure, positioning Calabogie as a replicable model for small municipality innovation.

##### **Why it Matters – The Rural Access Gap**

Residents of Greater Madawaska travel long distances for basic medical appointments, diagnostics, and wellness programs. With a population of approximately 3,000 (50% aged 55 and older) spread across 1,018 km<sup>2</sup>, the Township faces high rurality, geographic isolation, and limited local services, all of which translate into inequitable access and system strain. Yet population figures alone understate the reality.

##### **Closer to Home**

For our residents, care closer to home means within our own community — where families live, work, and age together, and where visitors all depend on timely care.

During peak tourism months, the Township's population increases three to four times, as thousands of visitors arrive for skiing, motorsport, cycling, paddling, and four-season recreation. This seasonal influx drives the local economy but also places significant pressure on emergency response and health services that were never designed for such volume.

Key challenges:

- Aging population with limited mobility and higher chronic care needs.
- Seasonal population surge intensifying service demand during peak months.
- Physician recruitment barriers directly tied to the absence of adequate clinical space and teaching facilities.
- No local paramedic base, resulting in extended emergency response times for residents and visitors.

Without expanded infrastructure, Greater Madawaska cannot attract new providers or host rural training placements, perpetuating the cycle of limited access.

These realities make the town of Calabogie an ideal location for a pilot site that advances provincial health equity and strengthens system resilience year-round, specifically designed to address the challenges in small and isolated rural communities.

## The Opportunity – A Ready Rural Solution

The Township of Greater Madawaska has positioned itself to move immediately from vision to implementation.

- 6.47 acres of centrally located land have been secured in 2025.
- Governance framework and partner collaboration in place.
- Community engagement, identifying health access as a top priority.
- Ontario Health Rurality Index of Ontario (RIO) score of 55: 15 base points above the base eligibility for physician incentives.
- Local and regional partners:
  - Calabogie Medical Centre — clinical anchor and expansion lead.
  - Ancient Rivers Family Health Team (ARFHT) — interprofessional collaboration.
  - Renfrew Victoria Hospital (RVH) — specialist outreach and diagnostics.
  - Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team (OVOHT) — system integration.
  - University of Ottawa School of Family Medicine — rural training placements.
  - County of Renfrew Paramedic Service — community paramedicine and emergency readiness.

### PREVENTATIVE SOLUTIONS

Leading change in small and rural communities, the Health and Wellness hub will champion programs focused on the social determinants of health and prevention strategies to reduce non-communicable diseases.

Together, these partnerships transform the Township from a service user to a system enabler, directly supporting provincial health objectives.

## Strategic Solution – The Health and Wellness Hub

The Calabogie Junction Health and Wellness Hub is a purpose-built, multi-partner campus integrating health, wellness, and learning. The Township is also exploring the integration of attainable and seniors-oriented housing within the Hub campus. This model offers affordable living options for healthcare professionals, seniors, and working families, directly supporting workforce recruitment, aging in place, and community vitality. It is situated close to trails, an elementary school, a community centre, a rink and a ballpark, groceries, restaurants, and the Calabogie waterfront.

### Phase 1 – Health Services Hub

Expansion of clinical and diagnostic capacity anchored by the Calabogie Medical Centre. Includes family-medicine offices, allied-health suites, pharmacy, telehealth rooms, and rural medical-learner space in partnership with the University of Ottawa School of Family Medicine.

### Phase 2 – Community Wellness Hub

A complementary facility delivering prevention, rehabilitation, and active-living programs through the Seniors Active Living Centre (SALC), local wellness providers, and community organizations.

Future phases may integrate attainable or seniors-oriented housing to strengthen workforce stability and support aging in place.

## Strategic Alignment Across Government Priorities

Partner / Policy Area	Strategic Objective	Calabogie Junction: Health and Wellness Hub Alignment
<b>Ministry of Health</b>	Care Closer to Home; Rural and Northern Framework	Establishes decentralized access to primary care and allied services within an underserved, high-RIO region.
<b>Ontario Health</b>	Team-based, integrated care; rural equity	Embeds ARFHT and OVOHT collaboration, creating a connected continuum between hospital, clinic, and community.
<b>Ministry for Seniors &amp; Accessibility</b>	Aging in place; accessible infrastructure	Delivers SALC and barrier-free wellness space for seniors and persons with disabilities.
<b>Ministry of Colleges &amp; Universities</b>	Distributed medical education; rural placements	Creates a permanent rural teaching site for medical learners and residents.
<b>County of Renfrew Paramedic Service</b>	Community paramedicine; 24/7 rural readiness	Integrates local paramedic base within the Hub for faster emergency and preventative response.
<b>Ministry of Municipal Affairs &amp; Housing</b>	Build 1.5 million homes by 2031; expand attainable and seniors' housing	Provides integrated, attainable housing within a health and wellness campus, supporting workforce stability and aging in place.

## Delivering Provincial Outcomes

- **System Efficiency** – Reduces emergency department reliance and travel-related inefficiencies by delivering care locally.
- **Workforce Development** – Expands rural medical training and supports physician recruitment and retention.
- **Community Wellbeing** – Promotes prevention, rehabilitation, and social connection closer to home.
- **Equity & Resilience** – Ensures rural residents have the same access to care as urban Ontarians.
- **Economic Vitality** – Creates local employment and professional opportunities, anchoring population growth.
- **Integrated Housing and Workforce Stability** – Adds attainable and seniors-oriented housing to stabilize the workforce.

## The Ask – From Vision to Implementation

The Township of Greater Madawaska invites a partnership to:

1. Designate the Health and Community Hub as a rural demonstration site under the Ministry framework.
2. Include the project in upcoming primary-care and community-infrastructure funding intakes led by the Ministry of Health, Ontario Health, and Infrastructure Canada.

3. Establish a joint working table with the Township, local health service providers, and ministry representatives to refine the scope, capital framework, and funding pathway.
4. Explore partnership through the Ontario Health Team innovation fund and related rural pilot opportunities.

## **Readiness and Next Steps**

### **Immediate Readiness**

- Land secured and environmentally cleared.
- Concept plan and servicing capacity confirmed.
- Governance and partnership model ongoing.

### **Next Steps**

- Confirm provincial collaboration and working table.
- Issue Expression of Interest (EOI) for developer partnership.
- Detailed design and funding commitment phase.
- Continue community and stakeholder engagement