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Rural Ontario Institute unveils Municipal Councillor Profile

Toronto, Ontario, February 24, 2016. Demographic realities and experiences of municipal leaders across rural Ontario have been unveiled through the Municipal Councillor Profile, a recent initiative of the Rural Ontario Institute.

The Municipal Councillor Profile documents demographic characteristics and shares the perspectives of municipal elected officials and staff. The findings from the report are informed through a province-wide survey of municipal leadership, interviews with over 50 mayors, councillors and municipal staff and an analysis of 2014 election data.

“Understanding the demographics of municipal councils has identified where gaps in representation currently exist,” says Ryan Deska, project lead, Rural Ontario Institute. “We are pleased to present this report to share information and facilitate dialogue on emerging issues and opportunities in rural Ontario.”

The profile finds that municipal councillors and mayors in rural Ontario are on average older, more predominantly male, less racially diverse and have higher incomes and more education compared to a typical cross-section of rural community demographics. The top challenges faced by these individuals include managing work-life balance, learning municipal governance and managing conflict.

Deska presented the report at the 2016 Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) and Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) combined conference.

The Municipal Councillor Profile report is available online at <http://www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca/measuring-community-vitality.aspx> as part of the Rural Ontario Institute’s Measuring Rural Community Vitality Initiative.

The Rural Ontario Institute is a non-profit organization committed to developing leaders, initiating dialogue, supporting collaboration and promoting action on issues and opportunities facing rural Ontario.

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