

Council Memorandum

Date:	April 7, 2026
To:	Committee of the Whole
From:	Deputy Mayor Richardson
Re:	Agricultural Community Concerns regarding ALTO Consultation Process

Recommendation

That the Memorandum from Deputy Mayor Richardson, **regarding Agricultural Community Concerns regarding ALTO Consultation Process**, be received;

That the City of Kawartha Lakes formally oppose the ALTO project in its current form as expressed by Eastern Ontario Wardens’ Caucus as it only proposes a single stop in the Eastern Ontario region, benefitting urban residents at the expense of rural residents and lands;

That the City of Kawartha Lakes formally request Alto provide additional, accessible, in-person consultation opportunities within the City of Kawartha Lakes prior to advancing any decisions related to the Alto initiative;

That this resolution be forwarded to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Minister of Transport and the Member of Parliament for Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes; and

That this recommendation be forwarded to Council for consideration at the next Regular Council Meeting.

Rationale

The concerns identified by the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus regarding the ALTO initiative underscore broader regional issues of equity, accessibility, and rural representation. Their position highlights that the current proposal, which includes only a single stop in Eastern Ontario, risks disproportionately benefiting urban populations while placing potential burdens on rural communities, including impacts on agricultural lands, environmental sustainability, and local infrastructure.

The proposed ALTO initiative by the Government of Canada has significant potential implications for rural municipalities, including the City of Kawartha Lakes, particularly with respect to agricultural land use and the long-term viability of the agricultural sector. Concerns raised by the local agricultural community further reinforce the need for a more inclusive and transparent consultation process that meaningfully reflects the perspectives of rural residents and stakeholders.

At present, the consultation process has been limited in scope and accessibility, creating barriers for participation among agricultural producers and rural landowners who may be directly affected. Providing additional, accessible, in-person consultation opportunities within the City of Kawartha Lakes would help ensure that local voices are heard, foster greater public trust, and support informed decision-making at the federal level.

Encouraging residents, farm organizations, and stakeholders to actively participate in the consultation process prior to the April 24 deadline reinforces the City's commitment to advocacy, civic engagement, and the protection of agricultural interests. Broad participation will help ensure that feedback submitted reflects the diversity of perspectives within the community.

For these reasons, it is appropriate for the City to formally oppose the ALTO project in its current form while advocating for a more equitable approach that better considers the needs and contributions of rural and agricultural communities.



EOWC Opposition
to ALTO