



**Town of Arnprior
Regular Meeting of Council: February , 2022**

Correspondence Package No. I-22-February-03

Recommendation:

That the Correspondence Package No. I-22-February-03 be received as information and filed accordingly.

General Information Items:

1. Correspondence from the Province of Ontario

- a) Government Programs and Services Now More Convenient, Reliable and Accessible for People and Businesses
- b) Ontario Working for Workers by Moving Towards Expanding Health and Wellness Benefits
- c) Ontario Increasing Mentoring Opportunities for Children, Youth in Care
- d) Ontario Easing Temporary Visiting Restrictions at Long-Term Care Homes
- e) Ontario Offering Free Training for Food and Beverage Careers
- f) Ontario Investing in the Future of Agricultural and Horticultural Societies
- g) Ontario Continues to Drive Booster Vaccine Rollout, Support Businesses and Families During COVID-19
- h) Ontario Building and Improving Schools
- i) Ontario Building New Licensed Child Care Spaces
- j) Premier Ford Renews Calls on Federal Government for Immediate Increase to Federal Share of Health Care Funding
- k) Ontario Publishes Housing Affordability Task Force Report
 - i. Report of the Ontario Housing Affordability Task Force

- l) Ontario Making Life More Affordable This Tax Season with Tax Credits for Workers, Seniors and Families
- m) Ontario Takes Action to Protect Students and Children
- n) Ontario Extending Free Rides to Vaccination Sites for People with Mobility Issues
- o) Ontario Extending Health Card Renewal Requirement
- p) Ontario Expands Plan to Combat Islamophobia in Schools
- q) Ontario Investigating Options for New Ultra-Low Overnight Electricity Rate
- r) Ontario Expanding Access to Free Rapid Tests for General Public
- s) Now Open – Applications for the Ontario Small Business Relief Support Grant
- t) 2022 Property Tax Decisions

2. Correspondence from County of Renfrew

- a) County Council Approves 2022 Budget for the County of Renfrew
- b) County of Renfrew Representative Advocate for Key Priorities at 2022 ROMA Conference
- c) County of Renfrew's Economic Development Division Seeking! Input From Local Businesses
- d) Ontario Minister of Health Commits to Continued Funding for RC-VTAC

3. Correspondence from Renfrew County & District Health Unit

- a) COVID-19 Case Summary – February 3, 2022
- b) Renfrew County and District Health Unit COVID-19 Epidemiology Update - January 27, 2022
- c) RCDHU Participates in Provincial Contact Centre's Booster Dose Auto Dial Campaign
- d) RCDHU Announces Move From Local Vaccination Booking System to Provincial Booking System
- e) Technical Issue with Local Booking System Creates Invalid Vaccination Appointments

- 4. Correspondence from New Campus Development – For the Ottawa Hospital**
 - a) [A Modern Parking Structure for a Transit-Oriented, Accessible, Tree-Covered Site](#)
- 5. Correspondence from Canadian Nuclear Laboratories**
 - a) [NSDF Virtual Visitor Centre – Now Open](#)
- 6. Correspondence from the Greater Arnprior Chamber of Commerce**
 - a) [Newsletter](#)
- 7. Correspondence from Arnprior Public Library**
 - a) [February Newsletter](#)
- 8. Correspondence from Town of Arnprior**
 1. [Fam Fest – February 21, 2022](#)
- 9. Correspondence from Ottawa Valley Business**
 - a) [February 1, 2022](#)
- 10. Correspondence from Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)**
 - a) [Watch File – January 20, 2022](#)
 - b) [Watch File – January 27, 2022](#)
 - c) [Watch File – February 3, 2022](#)

STATEMENT

Government Programs and Services Now More Convenient, Reliable and Accessible for People and Businesses

Expanded access to high-speed internet, more convenient online services, and less red tape thanks to Ontario Onwards Action Plan

January 28, 2022

[Treasury Board Secretariat](#)

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[Government and Consumer Services](#)

[Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade](#)

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TORONTO — Today, Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance and Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria, President of the Treasury Board, issued the following statement about how programs and services have been improved thanks to the *Ontario Onwards Action Plan*:

“Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, our government has focused on protecting the health and well being of the people and businesses of Ontario. The pandemic revealed that now, more than ever, Ontario’s programs and frontline services need to be more accessible, more reliable, and more convenient.

That is why, in October 2020, we launched [Ontario Onwards: Ontario’s COVID-19 Action Plan for a People-Focused Government](#). Through more than 30 projects and a \$500 million Acceleration Fund, our goal was to put the people of Ontario and Ontario businesses at the centre of everything we do.

As a result of the Action Plan, and the dedicated Future State Modernization Committee, our progress has been sweeping and government looks much different today than when we started. For example:

- Patients can now speak to their physicians from the comfort of their own home or book appointments on their smartphones.
- It is now easier and more convenient for Ontarians to get a recommendation on what to do next if they have been exposed to COVID-19, have symptoms or for screening by using the province’s [COVID-19](#) self assessment and screening tools. These tools have been used more than 58 million times by Ontarians.
- Our government made a historic investment of nearly \$4 billion to connect every community with reliable access to [high-speed internet](#) by the end of 2025. We have already committed over \$900 million in provincial funding that is expanding access to high-speed internet to more than 375,000 homes and businesses across the province. This includes over 175 unique projects that are either in planning or underway.
- People can electronically submit more than 500 types of court documents, virtually witness wills, securely pay court fees remotely, [search court cases online](#), and verify legal and business documents from the convenience of home or a mobile device. As part of [Ontario’s Justice Accelerated Strategy](#), new online case management platforms are helping Ontarians interact more seamlessly with courts and tribunals.
- Information now flows more seamlessly from police to the courts through the implementation of the [eIntake](#) platform. This initiative has freed up thousands of hours for police and hundreds of hours for court staff, and allowed police officers to file over 46,000 criminal charges electronically.

- People can get digital notices to renew common government documents, driver's licences and health cards thanks to a [digital reminders](#) system. This convenient system is expected to save more than \$29 million in postage and mailing costs over five years and reduce the need for 80 million pieces of paper (roughly 16,000 boxes, equivalent to the height of 6 ½ CN towers).
- It is faster and easier for the people of Ontario to renew their Ontario Photo Card by using an online [renewal](#) system. Since the start of the pandemic, more than 24,000 people have renewed their cards online.
- By eliminating [red tape](#) and simplifying policies, businesses and people in Ontario have saved approximately \$373 million annually and there has been a 6.5% reduction in the number of requirements businesses must comply with to operate.
- [Supply Ontario](#), a new provincial agency, was established to address challenges in Ontario's supply chain system. It will transform and move public procurement forward, leveraging Ontario's \$29 billion annual purchasing power to further advance modernization to benefit our economy, businesses, and Ontarians.

While the work of the Future State Modernization Committee has now ended, the work will continue, benefiting people and businesses for years to come."

Related Topics

Business and Economy

Information about Ontario's economy and how to do business here. Includes economic development opportunities, research funding, tax credits for business and the Ontario Budget. [Learn more](#)

Government

Learn about the government services available to you and how government works. [Learn more](#)

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Get help navigating Ontario's health care system and connecting with the programs or services you're looking for. [Learn more](#)

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Information for families on major life events and care options, including marriage, births and child care. Also includes planning resources for municipalities. [Learn more](#)

Jobs and Employment

We've got the resource and supports to help connect job seekers with employers. [Learn more](#)

Law and Safety

Ontario's laws and related information about our legal system, emergency services, the Ontario Provincial Police and victim services. [Learn more](#)

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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Working for Workers by Moving Towards Expanding Health and Wellness Benefits

Province seeking advice on designing benefits plan tied to workers, not employers

February 03, 2022

[Labour, Training and Skills Development](#)

QUEEN'S PARK — The Ontario government is seeking advice on designing a plan that provides workers with benefits such as health, dental and vision care, even if they change jobs. Currently, millions of people, including those working in retail, the gig economy and hospitality have limited-to-no benefits coverage. To start, the government intends to create and appoint an advisory panel to recommend a system— making Ontario the first province in Canada to pursue such a comprehensive benefits program.

“Whether you’re bussing tables, working the cash, or giving rides, we are making sure necessities like dental care and affordable medication is within reach for more families,” said Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development. “The future of work is here, and our government is working for workers to make sure no one is left behind.”

Most workers in Ontario with full-time, permanent jobs have medical insurance and dental coverage. In comparison, less than a quarter of those who work part-time or in precarious jobs have similar benefits, which means these workers, and their families, often have to make difficult choices between their health and other necessities like food and shelter. Independent contractors, low-wage workers, newcomers, younger workers, and racialized people are also less likely to have workplace benefits.

The proposed advisory panel will look at how benefits could reside with the worker and will provide recommendations on how best to administer the new program. This could be especially beneficial for digital platform and gig workers, and others in the service industry, who switch jobs more frequently.

Establishing this panel was a key recommendation in the Ontario Workforce Recovery Advisory Committee’s [final report](#). The Committee was responsible for several items in the government’s recent [Working for Workers](#) legislation, including being the first province in Canada to [introduce the “Right to Disconnect”, as well as the banning of non-compete clauses](#).

As we build back a better Ontario, our government is working for workers by taking steps now to ensure our province remains the best place to work, live and raise a family.

Quick Facts

- Once approved and appointed by spring 2022, the up to five advisory panel members will conduct research and consultations on how to create a portable benefits strategy for Ontario, including providing a final recommendation to the government.
 - Panel members would have sectoral and technical expertise including the structure and administration of benefit plans, financial issues and workplace issues.
 - Two-thirds of people in Ontario agree that “it is important that we have government benefits available based on where they live not who they work for”, according to a 2021 survey by Ipsos for the Ontario Workforce Recovery Advisory Committee.
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Additional Resources

- [Ontario's Workforce Recovery Advisory Committee: Leading the future of work in Ontario](#)
 - [The Future of Work in Ontario](#)
-

Related Topics

Jobs and Employment

We've got the resource and supports to help connect job seekers with employers. [Learn more](#)

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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Increasing Mentoring Opportunities for Children, Youth in Care

Investment in Big Steps to Success helping kids succeed in school

February 03, 2022

[Children, Community and Social Services](#)

TORONTO — The Ontario government is investing \$2.2 million in a first-of-its-kind program by the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada to change the lives of children and youth in care. Funding for Big Steps to Success will provide youth with a trusted mentor who will help guide and inspire them to improve their school performance and graduate high school.

"Our government is committed to removing barriers and supporting the youth of Ontario in realizing their full potential. Having a positive mentor to inspire young people can greatly contribute to their success," said Jane McKenna, Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues. "Big Steps to Success offers a model for consistent, well-structured and widely available access to adult mentors for young people involved with the child welfare system in locations across Ontario."

The program connects kids in care with positive adult mentors to help them benefit from having a caring and consistent relationship with a trusted adult and to improve their educational outcomes at the primary and secondary school levels, supporting higher rates of high school graduation. It focuses on children and youth ages 7-14, considered a critical time for intervention as kids this age are most likely to be receptive to adult role models and experience long-term academic benefits.

Ontario's investment in the national program supports delivery sites in Toronto, London, Halton-Hamilton and North Bay. The North Bay site is focused on Indigenous children and youth, in partnership with local Indigenous communities.

One of the program goals is addressing the significant challenges faced by young people, such as systemic racism, which often lead to outcome disparities for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, Black, racialized and LGBTQ2S+ children and youth in care.

Supporting Big Steps to Success is a direct investment in educational supports for children and youth in care, a key tenant of Ontario's child welfare redesign strategy. Ontario also funds Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada's mentoring for children and youth through the School-Based Mentorship program, which received \$1.5 million annually since 2018 to support students facing adversity, including children and youth in care.

"Providing students with school-based mentoring programs is another way we can support children and youth in care — allowing them to overcome barriers, build their leadership skills and realize success," said Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education. "The presence of a caring adult in a child's life is a crucial factor to student success and well-being, and it's partnerships like these that are giving young people, especially those in underserved communities, greater opportunities to thrive and succeed."

"With this new approach, our goal is to close the achievement gap that children in care have experienced for too long. Through Ontario government support, plus private-sector philanthropic investment — and participating local child welfare agencies — we are creating a community of practice whose aim is advancing the academic success and long-term stability of young people involved with the child welfare system," said Valerie McMurtry, President and CEO, Children's Aid Foundation of Canada.

"When potential is ignited early in life, youth are better able to face and navigate life's adversities. We are dedicated to helping enrich young people's lives through the power of one-to-one mentoring. Our data shows that for every dollar invested, there is a 23-fold return. Not only do the children benefit, but also the communities where they live benefit. We are proud to collaborate with our partners to create a positive social impact and equalize opportunities for youth experiencing the child welfare system," said W. Matthew Chater, President and CEO, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada.

Quick Facts

- More than 12,000 children and youth are in the care of children's aid societies in Ontario.
 - Children and youth leaving the child welfare system are more likely to experience a range of negative outcomes, such as homelessness, mental health concerns, unemployment, lack of education and involvement in the justice system.
 - Big Steps to Success supports a pillar of Ontario's child welfare redesign strategy by better meeting the educational and employment needs of youth in and leaving care.
 - Ontario's investment supports only program sites in the province. The program is also receiving a national investment of \$2.5 million from BMO.
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Additional Resources

- Learn more about [Big Steps to Success](#), the [Children's Aid Foundation of Canada](#) and [Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada](#).
 - Learn more about [Ontario Strengthening Educational Supports for Children and Youth in Care](#).
 - Learn more about [Mental Health Supports in Ontario Schools](#).
 - Learn more about redesigning [Ontario's child welfare system](#), including the [five pillars of the provincial redesign strategy](#).
-

Related Topics

Education and Training

Learn about Ontario's early years, education and training systems. Includes information on child care, elementary schools, secondary schools, colleges, universities, skills training and financial aid. [Learn more](#)

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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Easing Temporary Visiting Restrictions at Long-Term Care Homes

Social day trips will also resume for most residents

February 04, 2022

[Long-Term Care](#)

TORONTO — With key public health and health care indicators continuing to show signs of improvement, the Ontario government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, is cautiously and gradually lifting temporary public health measures at long-term care homes starting February 7, 2022.

“Our government responded swiftly to the Omicron variant to protect the health and safety of residents and staff in long-term care homes,” said Paul Calandra, Minister of Long-Term Care. “With public health and health care indicators now improving, we are cautiously lifting these measures so our residents can spend time with more friends and family that play such an important role in their health and wellbeing.”

Effective February 7, the maximum number of designated caregivers per resident is increasing from two to four and will continue to be subject to a limit of two per resident at one time. In addition, residents who have had at least three doses of COVID-19 vaccine will be able to resume social day trips.

Effective February 21, general visitors five years and older who have had at least two doses of COVID-19 vaccine will be able to resume visits to long-term care residents. The number of visitors at a time, per resident will also increase from two to three, including caregivers. In addition, all residents, regardless of vaccination status, will be able to resume social day trips, and residents who have had at least three vaccine doses will be able to enjoy overnight social absences.

The return of general visitors to homes will mean adult day programs can resume along with the return of entertainers and external personal care services in the homes. Social group activities should remain small, with up to 10 individuals.

Effective March 14, general visitors under five years old will be able to resume visits and the number of visitors at a time, per resident will increase from three to four, including caregivers. All residents regardless of their vaccination status will also be able to enjoy social overnight absences.

Testing requirements for all staff, caregivers and visitors continue to be in place. The government will closely monitor the situation in long-term care homes and continue to adjust measures as necessary to keep homes safe for residents and staff.

The COVID-19 vaccine remains the single best protection against COVID-19 and variants. The province continues to urge everyone in Ontario to “boost up” and get their third dose at the earliest opportunity.

Quick Facts

- It is important for Ontarians to not let their guard down in the ongoing fight against the pandemic. All staff, caregivers, visitors and residents in long-term care homes need to continue to practice basic public health measures as required such as screening and testing at entry, masking, physical distancing, hand hygiene and staying at home when sick.
 - As of February 3, 2022, provincial data shows that about 84 per cent of eligible long-term care staff and about 91 percent of eligible residents have received their third dose. In addition, a fourth dose is being offered to eligible residents.
-

Additional Resources

- For public inquiries, please contact the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900 (TTY for people who are deaf, hearing-impaired or speech-impaired: 1-866-797-0007).

- For resources in multiple languages to help local communication efforts in responding to COVID-19, visit Ontario's [COVID-19 communication resources webpage](#).
 - Visit Ontario's [website](#) to learn more about how the province continues to protect the people of Ontario from COVID-19.
-

Related Topics

Government

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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Offering Free Training for Food and Beverage Careers

Program is preparing jobseekers for in-demand, well-paying jobs that feed Ontario families

February 04, 2022

[Labour, Training and Skills Development](#)

TORONTO – The Ontario government is investing almost \$1 million to prepare over 600 people across the province for rewarding careers in food and beverage processing. This funding to Food and Beverage Ontario provides jobseekers with training, mentorship, and job placements with local employers in baking, food science, and food production and processing.

“Ontario’s food and beverage workers have kept shelves stocked and our province running throughout the pandemic,” said Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development. “I’m proud to support this exciting project, which is giving people a head start in pursuing rewarding careers while ensuring employers have access to the trained, highly-skilled workers they need to grow our economy and strengthen communities across the province.”

Workers in food processing, transportation and warehousing, where job postings have nearly doubled over the past year and a fifth of the workforce is preparing to retire, can earn upwards of \$25 an hour. Food and Beverage Ontario’s (FBO) CareersNOW! program will help address this labour shortage by delivering:

- Free online training and coaching on topics such as workplace safety, employee-employer relations, and safe food handling, to prepare people for jobs in food and beverage manufacturing.
- A regional pilot program with the City of Brampton to assess challenges and opportunities in connecting local jobseekers with employers, focusing on underrepresented groups in the industry, including women and people of colour.
- A virtual career mentorship series delivered in partnership with Ontario colleges and universities that provides students with opportunities to connect with professionals in the industry and explore education and career pathways.
- Online job fairs to connect jobseekers with open positions.

“With this important investment, Food and Beverage Ontario has kickstarted a critical workforce development program for Ontario’s food and beverage processors, and the participation by employers and jobseekers has been extraordinary,” said Chris Conway, CEO of the Food and Beverage Ontario. “Our thanks to the Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development for supporting the launch of CareersNOW! so that we have the systems in place to engage jobseekers and students, and facilitate connections with employers offering great jobs. This program is our top priority.”

“We know that Ontario’s food and beverage processors have great jobs to offer and we appreciate the role these processors play, every day, as an important link in Ontario’s food supply chain,” said Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. “Training our future workforce with the much-needed skills required and matching them with employers in need, will support the growth of our province’s agri-food sector and maintain our confidence in our local food supply which all-told, strengthens our province’s economy as well.”

This initiative is part of Ontario’s over \$200-million Skills Development Fund investment, designed to support fresh ideas for training and skills development that will help our economy recover and prosper.

Quick Facts

- [Applications are now open](#) to jobseekers and employers
- Students or jobseekers who wish to participate in the program can register through [FBO CareersNOW! Jobseeker](#). Employers who wish to participate, by posting job openings, mentoring trainees, or participating in job fairs, can apply through [CareersNOW! Employer](#).
- The program is already live and will run until March 31, 2022.

- Across Ontario, there were over 6,127 online job postings in the food, beverage and tobacco product manufacturing sectors in 2021, an increase of 71 per cent in the number of postings advertised in 2020 (3,569).
 - There are more than 4,000 food and beverage manufacturers in Ontario.
 - Ontario's Skills Development Fund is supported through labour market transfer agreements between the Government of Canada and Government of Ontario.
-

Additional Resources

- [Skills Development Fund](#)
 - [2021 Budget - Ontario's Action Plan: Protecting People's Health and Our Economy](#)
 - [CareersNOW! Resources](#)
-

Related Topics

Education and Training

Learn about Ontario's early years, education and training systems. Includes information on child care, elementary schools, secondary schools, colleges, universities, skills training and financial aid. [Learn more](#)

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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Investing in the Future of Agricultural and Horticultural Societies

Province investing an additional \$1 million to support agricultural and horticultural societies through the pandemic

February 04, 2022

[Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs](#)

TEESWATER — The Ontario government is providing \$1 million to support the province's agricultural and horticultural societies who continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This will help them continue to operate and support their important efforts to educate people about the value and significance of agriculture in the province.

"Ontario's agricultural and horticultural societies have long-enriched communities throughout the province and we look forward to them continuing to make significant contributions, from main street beautification projects to hosting the long-standing tradition of agricultural fairs, throughout the province in 2022," said Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. "These investments reflect the value of the societies' contributions and our government's recognition of the pandemic-caused pressures these organizations have been weathering."

The funding will flow through the [Agricultural and Horticultural Support and Recovery Funding Initiative](#) and builds on previous [investments](#) of more than \$7 million to assist these organizations during the pandemic.

This initiative features two funding streams:

- **Base Support Funding** will be issued to all eligible Agricultural and Horticultural Societies through funding payments of \$1,000 as a means of supporting their continued incorporation and activities.
- **Hardship Funding for eligible Agricultural Societies** will provide additional support which will be based on reported gate revenues from 2019. This will help off-set operating losses, liabilities, and fixed overhead costs related to land and buildings.

Eligible agricultural and horticultural societies can expect to receive funding before March 31, 2022.

"The Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies (OAAS) appreciates OMAFRA's continued financial support for our over 200 agricultural societies. This new funding shows Minister Thompson's and OMAFRA's confidence in our agricultural societies and the impact the societies and their members have on their local communities. During the pandemic, our agricultural societies have continued to creatively promote agriculture and food awareness and engage their communities through in-person and virtual fairs, events and activities" said Vince Brennan, Manager of the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies.

"The members of the Ontario Horticultural Association express their gratitude to Minister Thompson and the Ontario government for their continued support during these challenging times," said Charles Freeman, President of the Ontario Horticultural Association. "This funding will assist the societies and clubs in their ongoing endeavours to serve and beautify their communities."

Agricultural and Horticultural Societies play a critical role in educating Ontarians on the importance of agriculture and celebrating a rural way of life. Supporting this important sector, at this time, will ensure the long traditions and economic contributions of the societies will continue and strengthen as the province manages the impacts of COVID-19 and moves forward into the future.

Quick Facts

- Agricultural and horticultural societies across Ontario are represented by two independent associations: The Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies represents 213 rural Agricultural Societies, and the Ontario Horticultural Association

represents over 270 Horticultural Societies.

- [Ontario's Action Plan: Protecting People's Health and Our Economy](#) brings total investments to \$16.3 billion to protect people's health and \$23.3 billion to protect our economy. Ontario's COVID-19 action plan support now totals \$51 billion.
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Additional Resources

[Ontario Supporting Agricultural and Horticultural Societies During COVID-19](#)

[Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies](#)

[Ontario Horticultural Association](#)

[COVID-19 in Ontario](#)

Related Topics

Rural and North

Information about the province's Far North and rural communities. Get connected to business improvement organizations and learn more about funding and programs that support rural, northern and Indigenous communities. [Learn more](#)

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STATEMENT

Ontario Continues to Drive Booster Vaccine Rollout, Support Businesses and Families during COVID-19

Government remains focused on protecting people while setting stage for a full economic recovery

February 04, 2022

[Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade](#)

TORONTO – Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, issued this statement following today's monthly employment release by Statistics Canada, which shows employment in Ontario decreased by 145,700:

"Today's news of a setback is a reminder that, despite the boom in job creation we'd experienced as a province since September, the fight against COVID-19 is not over. There is still plenty of work left to do.

Vaccination remains the key to healthy families and a healthy economy. Thanks to the incredible vaccine uptake and effort of Ontarians, Ontario is leading the country in third doses. As of February 2, more than 6.4 million third doses have been administered across the province.

As a result of these successful vaccination efforts, and the measures our government put in place to blunt transmission of Omicron, we're seeing signs of stabilization in key public health and health system indicators. This week, we saw a gradual easing of public health and workplace safety measures.

For businesses that continue to be the most impacted by necessary public health and workplace safety measures or capacity limits due to Omicron, our government continues to have your back.

Last month, as part of a comprehensive plan to support workers and businesses, our government announced the Ontario COVID-19 Small Business Relief Grant for small businesses that are subject to closure under the modified Step Two of the Roadmap to Reopen. This program will provide eligible small businesses with a grant payment of \$10,000.

Further, we are providing 21 days of electricity rate relief and online applications for the previously announced [Ontario Business Costs Rebate Program](#) are now being accepted. This program provides eligible businesses that are required to close or reduce capacity with rebate payments for up to 100 per cent of the property tax and energy costs they incur while subject to public health and workplace safety measures in response to the Omicron variant.

We also continue to make meaningful investments in Ontario businesses that are creating good jobs and helping to protect our economy.

We know that small businesses and entrepreneurs are the backbone of our economy. That's why Ontario has provided an estimated \$10.1 billion in unprecedented support to Ontario businesses in 2021. As we move forward together, our government will continue to do everything we can to support them."

Related Topics

Business and Economy

Information about Ontario's economy and how to do business here. Includes economic development opportunities, research funding, tax credits for business and the Ontario Budget. [Learn more](#)

Jobs and Employment

We've got the resource and supports to help connect job seekers with employers. [Learn more](#)

Media Contacts

BACKGROUND

Ontario Building and Improving Schools

February 04, 2022

[Education](#)

The Ontario government is investing \$565 million to build 26 new schools and support 20 permanent additions and renovations across the province. This funding is provided through the Capital Priorities Program. These infrastructure projects will lead to the creation of 19,732 new student learning spaces and 1,525 new licensed child care spaces.

Ontario has committed to provide \$14 billion in education capital grants over ten years.

To find out more about projects across Ontario, visit the [Ontario Builds map](#).

The new projects are:

Project Name	School Board	Project Description	Funding (millions)
Listowel Eastdale Elementary School Addition	Avon Maitland DSB	An addition at Listowel Eastdale Public School in Listowel to serve 98 elementary students including 49 licensed child care spaces.	\$4.3
Legacy Oak (New Prince Andrew) Addition	Greater Essex County DSB	An addition at Legacy Oak Public School in Windsor to serve 167 elementary students.	\$4.0
Eagle Heights PS Addition	Thames Valley DSB	An addition including the rightsizing of the school's library and office area to Eagle Heights Public School in West London to serve an additional 300 elementary students.	\$7.2
New Elementary School - Southwest London	Thames Valley DSB	A new English public elementary school in Southwest London to serve 804 students including a child care centre with 88 licensed child care spaces.	\$20.7
New Elementary School - North Woodstock	Thames Valley DSB	A new English public elementary school in North Woodstock to serve 660 students including a child care centre with 88 licensed child care spaces.	\$17.6
Lower Yonge Precinct Elementary School	Toronto DSB	A new English public elementary school in Toronto to serve 455 students.	\$44.0

Project Name	School Board	Project Description	Funding (millions)
York Memorial CI Addition	Toronto DSB	An addition to York Memorial Collegiate Institute in Toronto to serve 368 secondary students.	\$11.0
Northglen Neighbourhood School	Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB	A new English public elementary school in Clarington to serve 769 students including a child care centre with 73 licensed child care spaces.	\$19.9
Unnamed Markham Centre ES	York Region DSB	A new English public elementary school in Markham to serve 638 students.	\$14.5
Unnamed Oak Ridges SS	York Region DSB	An addition and renovation to existing Dr. Bette Stephenson Centre for Learning to build a new secondary school in Richmond Hill to serve 1250 students.	\$24.4
Banting Memorial Replacement School	Simcoe County DSB	A new English public secondary replacement school in New Tecumseth to serve 1288 students including a child care centre with 49 licensed child care spaces.	\$41.4
Killarney Beach PS Addition	Simcoe County DSB	An addition including a gymnasium addition and renovation of internal space to Killarney Beach Public School in Lefroy to serve 184 elementary students.	\$7.2
New Orillia elementary school	Simcoe County DSB	A new English public elementary school in Orillia to serve 334 students.	\$9.0
New Centre Wellington Elementary School	Upper Grand DSB	A new English public elementary school in Centre Wellington to serve 308 students.	\$8.5
Ellengale PS Addition	Peel DSB	An addition at Ellengale Public School in Mississauga to serve 642 elementary students including 73 licensed child care spaces.	\$16.5
Oakville NE #3 PS	Halton DSB	A new English public elementary school in Northeast Oakville to serve 788 students including a child care centre with 88 licensed child care spaces.	\$20.8
Oakville NE #1 HS	Halton DSB	Addition to Oakville NE #1 High School to create 88 licensed child care spaces in Oakville.	\$2.9
Milton SE #13 PS	Halton DSB	A new English public elementary school in Southeast Milton to serve 788 students including a child care centre with 88 licensed child care spaces.	\$20.8

Project Name	School Board	Project Description	Funding (millions)
Nash - Upper Stoney Creek PS	Hamilton-Wentworth DSB	A new English public elementary school in Upper Stoney Creek to serve 650 students including a child care centre with 49 licensed child care spaces.	\$16.7
South Niagara Falls Elementary PS	DSB of Niagara	A new English public elementary school in Niagara to serve 608 students including a child care centre with 49 licensed child care spaces.	\$15.9
Caledonia PS (joint) New Caledonia Elementary School (Joint)	Grand Erie DSB Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic DSB	A new joint school with Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic DSB in Caledonia with the English public elementary portion of the school serving 441 students including a child care centre with 49 licensed child care spaces. A new joint school with Grand Erie DSB in Caledonia with the English Catholic elementary portion of the school serving 305 students.	\$12.3 \$8.1
New Breslau-Hopewell Crossing PS	Waterloo Region DSB	A new English public elementary school in Breslau to serve 611 students including a child care centre with 73 licensed child care spaces.	\$16.6
St. Mary School addition	Northwest Catholic DSB	An addition at St. Mary School in Fort Frances to serve 69 elementary students.	\$2.6
St. Hilary Catholic School Addition	Superior North Catholic DSB	An addition at St. Hilary Catholic School in Red Rock to serve 23 elementary students.	\$1.0
St. Anne's St. Thomas Addition	London Catholic DSB	An addition at St. Anne's Catholic School in St. Thomas to serve 210 elementary students.	\$4.9
Queensville Catholic Elementary School	York Catholic DSB	A new English Catholic elementary school in Queensville, East Gwillimbury to serve 409 students including a child care centre with 49 licensed child care spaces.	\$11.4
Mount Pleasant Catholic Elementary School	Dufferin Peel Catholic DSB	A new English Catholic elementary school in Mount Pleasant, Brampton to serve 435 students including a child care centre with 73 licensed child care spaces.	\$12.4
Innisfil South Catholic Elementary School addition	Simcoe Muskoka Catholic DSB	An addition to the Innisfil South Catholic Elementary School project in Innisfil to serve an additional 92 elementary students.	\$2.2

Project Name	School Board	Project Description	Funding (millions)
Unnamed Seaton#1 Catholic Elementary School	Durham Catholic DSB	A new English Catholic elementary school in Pickering to serve 622 students including a child care centre with 88 licensed child care spaces.	\$17.0
St. Anne CS Addition	Durham Catholic DSB	An addition at St. Anne Catholic Elementary School in Oshawa to serve 184 elementary students.	\$4.2
Milton #9 Catholic Elementary School	Halton Catholic DSB	A new English Catholic elementary school in Milton to serve 671 students including a child care centre with 88 licensed child care spaces.	\$17.9
Milton #3 CSS Addition	Halton Catholic DSB	An addition at Milton #3 Catholic Secondary School in Milton to serve 69 students.	\$2.0
Guardian Angels CES Addition	Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic DSB	An addition at Guardian Angels Catholic Elementary School in Waterdown to serve 118 students including 49 licensed child care spaces.	\$4.5
New Rosenberg Catholic Elementary School	Waterloo Catholic DSB	A new English Catholic elementary school in Kitchener to serve 527 students.	\$12.1
New St. Patrick Catholic Elementary School	Waterloo Catholic DSB	A new English Catholic elementary school in Kitchener to serve 527 students including 88 licensed child care spaces.	\$15.0
New Lincoln Elementary School	Niagara Catholic DSB	A new English Catholic elementary school in Lincoln to serve 421 students.	\$10.1
Findlay Creek (Leitrim CES)	Ottawa Catholic DSB	A new English Catholic elementary school in Gloucester to serve 507 students including 39 licensed child care spaces.	\$13.2
J. J. O'Neill CES Addition	Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic DSB	An addition at J. J. O'Neill Catholic Elementary School in Greater Napanee to serve 331 students including 49 licensed child care spaces.	\$9.9
ÉÉP Whitby-Ajax	Conseil scolaire Viamonde	A new French public elementary school in Ajax to serve 317 students including 49 licensed child care spaces.	\$9.9

Project Name	School Board	Project Description	Funding (millions)
ÉSP Ronald-Marion Retrofit	Conseil scolaire Viamonde	A retrofit at École publique Ronald in Durham to convert elementary classrooms into program specific secondary classrooms to serve 69 Grade 7-12 students.	\$0.4
ÉÉP Orléans Sud	Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario	A new French public elementary school in South Orléans to serve 354 students including 49 licensed child care spaces.	\$10.7
École secondaire Monseigneur-Bruyère	Conseil scolaire catholique Providence	A new Grade 7-12 French Catholic replacement school in London to serve 587 students.	\$18.9
ÉÉC Saint-Michel addition	Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir	An addition at École élémentaire catholique Saint-Michel In Toronto to serve 92 elementary students.	\$2.4
ÉÉC Saint-René-Goupil addition	Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir	An addition at École élémentaire catholique Saint-René-Goupil in Guelph to serve 138 elementary students.	\$3.3
ÉÉC Saint-Viateur addition	CSD catholique de l'Est ontarien	An addition at École élémentaire catholique Saint-Viateur in Limoges to serve 115 elementary students.	\$2.8
ÉSC Paul-Desmarais addition	CSD catholique du Centre-Est de l'Ontario	An addition at ÉIC-ÉSC Paul-Desmarais in Stittsville to serve 389 Grade 7-12 students.	\$12.0

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BACKGROUND

Ontario Building New Licensed Child Care Spaces

February 04, 2022

[Education](#)

The Ontario government is investing \$42.6 million to create more than 1500 additional licensed child care spaces across the province, including 18 infant rooms (180 new spaces), 28 toddler rooms (420 new spaces), 36 preschool rooms (864 new spaces), and seven family age group rooms (105 new spaces).

As part of Ontario's plan to support access to safe, affordable and high-quality child care, Ontario has committed up to \$1 billion to create up to 30,000 new licensed child care spaces over five years. To date, over 23,000 new spaces have been approved, which will support families and ensure a strong and accessible child care system.

To find out more about projects across Ontario, visit the [Ontario Builds map](#).

The following 32 child care centres will receive funding from the province that will go towards renovations or additions:

School Name	School Board	Project Description	Funding (millions)
Milverton Public School (PS)	Avon Maitland District School Board (DSB)	Addition to create 39 licensed child care spaces in Milverton	\$1.1
St Edmunds PS	Bluewater DSB	Renovation to create 39 licensed child care spaces in Tobermory	\$0.6
Mother Teresa Catholic School (CS)	Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario	Renovation to create 24 licensed child care spaces in Russell	\$0.5
École élémentaire catholique (ÉEC) Sainte-Marie	Conseil des écoles catholiques (CÉC) du Centre-Est de l'Ontario	Renovation to create 39 licensed child care spaces in Gloucester	\$0.6
École élémentaire L'Harmonie	Conseil scolaire (CS) Viamonde	Addition to create 73 licensed child care spaces in Waterloo	\$2.1
École élémentaire Marie-Curie	CS Viamonde	Renovation to create 39 licensed child care spaces in London	\$0.3
École élémentaire Pavillon de la jeunesse	CS Viamonde	Addition to create 49 licensed child care spaces in Hamilton	\$1.6
École élémentaire Renaissance	CS Viamonde	Addition to create 49 licensed child care spaces in Burlington	\$1.6

School Name	School Board	Project Description	Funding (millions)
ÉÉC du Sacré-Coeur - Toronto	Conseil scolaire catholique (CSC) MonAvenir	Renovation to create 24 licensed child care spaces in Toronto	\$0.3
ÉÉC Sainte-Marguerite-Bourgeoys - Brantford	CSC MonAvenir	Addition to create 24 licensed child care spaces in Brantford	\$0.5
ÉÉC Sainte-Madeleine	CSC MonAvenir	Renovation to create 39 licensed child care spaces in North York	\$0.5
Lakeview PS	DSB of Niagara	Addition to create 88 licensed child care spaces in Grimsby	\$2.8
San Lorenzo Ruiz Elementary School (ES)	Dufferin-Peel Catholic DSB	Renovation to create 73 licensed child care spaces in Mississauga	\$1.6
Our Lady of Mercy ES	Dufferin-Peel Catholic DSB	Renovation to create 73 licensed child care spaces in Mississauga	\$1.6
Sunderland PS	Durham DSB	Addition to create 49 licensed child care spaces in Sunderland	\$1.6
Rosebank Road PS	Durham DSB	Addition to create 49 licensed child care spaces in Pickering	\$1.6
Cobblestone ES	Grand Erie DSB	Addition to create 64 licensed child care spaces in Paris	\$2.2
Banbury Heights	Grand Erie DSB	Addition to create 64 licensed child care spaces in Brantford	\$2.2
Lillian Berg PS	Keewatin-Patricia DSB	Renovation to create 15 licensed child care spaces in Vermilion Bay	\$0.9
Ignace School (Elementary)	Keewatin-Patricia DSB	Renovation to create 15 licensed child care spaces in Ignace	\$0.9
St. Louis School	Kenora Catholic DSB	Renovation to create 15 licensed child care spaces in Keewatin	\$0.4
Northeast London ES	London District Catholic School Board	Addition to create 88 licensed child care spaces in London	\$2.7
St. Mary's Catholic School, West Lorne	London District Catholic SB	Renovation to create 15 licensed child care spaces in West Lorne	\$0.6

School Name	School Board	Project Description	Funding (millions)
W. E. Gowling PS	Ottawa-Carleton DSB	Renovation to create 39 licensed child care spaces in Ottawa	\$0.6
Cashmere Avenue PS	Peel DSB	Addition to create 73 licensed child care spaces in Mississauga	\$2.1
Agnes Taylor PS	Peel DSB	Addition to create 73 licensed child care spaces in Brampton	\$2.1
Tecumseth Beeton ES	Simcoe County DSB	Renovation to create 39 licensed child care spaces in Beeton	\$1.1
St. Marguerite Bourgeoys CS	Toronto Catholic DSB	Addition and renovation to create 49 licensed child care spaces in Scarborough	\$0.5
St. Florence CS	Toronto Catholic DSB	Renovation to create 49 licensed child care spaces in Scarborough	\$0.8
St. Malachy CS	Toronto Catholic DSB	Addition to create 49 licensed child care spaces in Scarborough	\$1.6
Elmlea Junior School	Toronto DSB	Addition to create 88 licensed child care spaces in Etobicoke	\$2.7
St. Patrick Catholic ES	Wellington Catholic DSB	Addition to create 64 licensed child care spaces in Guelph	\$2.1

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STATEMENT

Premier Ford Renews Calls on Federal Government for Immediate Increase to Federal Share of Health Care Funding

February 04, 2022

[Office of the Premier](#)

TORONTO — Today, Premier Doug Ford issued the following statement following the virtual meeting of Canada's Premiers:

"As we continue to face the pressures of the Omicron variant and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has underscored many challenges facing our country's health care system.

I, along with my fellow Premiers, are renewing our call for the Prime Minister to commit to increasing the federal share of provincial and territorial health care costs through the Canada Health Transfer to 35 per cent, and to maintain this level over time with an appropriate escalator.

Our government is making unprecedented investments to build a health and long-term care system that delivers the quality of care our loved ones deserve, including investing \$30.2 billion over the next 10 years to build, expand and renovate hospitals across the province. To reduce the surgery backlog and wait times, we are investing up to \$324 million to allow Ontario's hospitals and community health sector to perform more surgeries, MRI and CT scans and procedures. To ensure that qualified health care workers are by a patient's side when they need care, we are growing the health care sector workforce by adding and upskilling over 5,000 registered nurses and registered practical nurses and 8,000 personal support workers.

As Premiers have advocated for over the past few years, we need the federal government to join us at the table as a fuller partner and provide provinces and territories with sustainable, predictable, and adequate health care funding for the long-term. Rebuilding our health care system after a once-in-a-century pandemic requires an all-hands-on-deck approach. It is more important than ever that the federal government work with provinces and territories to urgently resolve the structural funding shortfall facing our health care systems.

I stand ready to work with Premiers across Canada and the Prime Minister to secure a new funding agreement on health care to continue building strong, resilient health care systems that the people of Ontario and Canada can rely on and deserve."

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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Publishes Housing Affordability Task Force Report

Task Force report is part of the government's consultations with municipalities, public and industry to increase market housing supply

February 08, 2022

[Municipal Affairs and Housing](#)

TORONTO — Ontario has published the [report from the Housing Affordability Task Force](#), which highlights expert recommendations for additional measures to increase the supply of market housing to address the housing crisis. The Task Force is part of Ontario's ongoing three-part consultation with industry, municipalities, and the public to help the government identify and implement real solutions to address the housing supply crisis.

"Everyone has a role to play in addressing the housing supply crisis. As our government consults with municipalities, the public, and industry leaders and experts, we are balancing these perspectives to develop practical, forward-thinking policies that unlock and fast-track all types of housing for all types of Ontarians," said Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. "I'd like to thank Jake Lawrence and the entire Task Force for their hard work, including conducting extensive consultations with other stakeholders, to develop their report."

The Task Force report's recommendations include five main areas to quickly increase the supply of market housing, to meet a goal of adding 1.5 million homes over the next 10 years:

- Make changes to planning policies and zoning to allow for greater density and increase the variety of housing.
- Reduce and streamline urban design rules to lower costs of development.
- Depoliticize the approvals process to address NIMBYism and cut red tape to speed up housing.
- Prevent abuse of the appeal process and address the backlog at the Ontario Land Tribunal by prioritizing cases that increase housing.
- Align efforts between all levels of government to incentivize more housing.

Additionally, the Task Force's report makes other recommendations to increase housing supply over the long-term, including to digitize and modernize the approvals and planning process, grow the skilled labour workforce, and encourage new pathways to home ownership.

"When Premier Ford and Minister Clark created the Task Force our instructions were clear: to deliver concrete, actionable recommendations to address the housing affordability crisis by getting more homes built," said Jake Lawrence, Chair of the Housing Affordability Task Force and Chief Executive Officer and Group Head, Global Banking and Markets at Scotiabank. "Lengthy reviews, bureaucratic red tape, and costly appeals are making it too difficult to build new housing. We propose an ambitious and achievable goal to build 1.5 million homes over the next ten years and the steps needed to get there."

The Task Force report is part of the government's broader plan to seek feedback from a variety of sources, including through municipal and public consultations, to identify and implement measures to address the housing supply crisis and get homes built faster. In January, Premier Ford and Minister Clark hosted the [Ontario-Municipal Housing Summit](#) and the [Rural Housing Roundtable](#) to coordinate efforts with municipalities, and the government recently held an [online public consultation](#) for Ontarians to share their input, which received over 2,000 responses.

Quick Facts

- The Task Force, chaired by Jake Lawrence, represents a diverse range of experts in not-for-profit housing, Indigenous housing, real estate, home builders, financial markets and economics. To develop their report, the Task Force also engaged with tenant and landlord associations, labour and economic development organizations, environmental groups, affordable housing advocates, municipal associations, academics and research groups, and more.

- A recent [Scotiabank housing report](#) found that Ontario is last in the country in the supply of homes per capita, and Canada has the lowest amount of housing per capita of any G7 country.
 - The provincial government's housing policies under [More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan](#) are working to increase the supply of the full range of housing options, from missing middle to high-rises and family-sized rentals, to single-family homes.
 - In 2021, two years after we implemented More Homes, More Choice, Ontario had the highest level of housing starts since 1987, and the highest level of rental starts in 30 years.
 - The shortage of housing supply impacts all Ontarians, no matter your background or budget. The province's ongoing work to increase the supply of market housing complements our historic investments to increase the supply of supportive and affordable housing for our most vulnerable Ontarians.
 - Through the [Community Housing Renewal Strategy](#) and Ontario's response to COVID-19, the province is providing more than \$3 billion between 2020 and 2022 to strengthen the sector and increase the supply of supportive and affordable housing. This includes over \$1 billion in flexible supports through the Social Services Relief Fund to municipal and Indigenous partners, which is one of the biggest investments the province has made in affordable housing and homelessness supports in Ontario's history.
-

Additional Resources

- [The Housing Affordability Task Force report](#)
 - [Ontario Appoints Housing Affordability Task Force](#)
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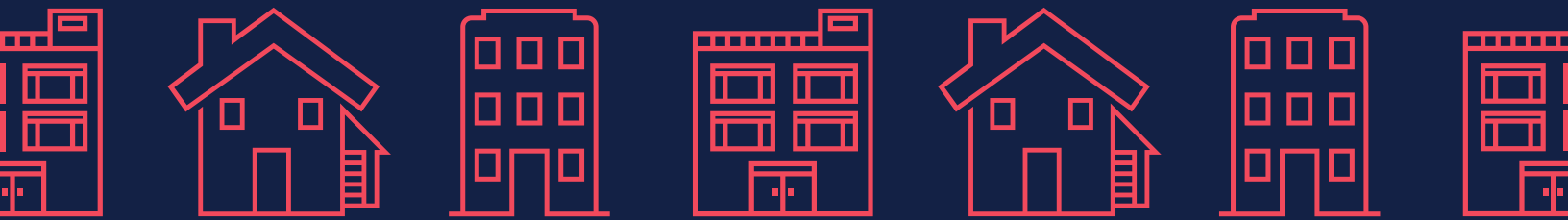
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Report of the
**Ontario Housing
Affordability Task Force**



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Letter to Minister Clark

Dear Minister Clark,

Hard-working Ontarians are facing a housing crisis. For many years, the province has not built enough housing to meet the needs of our growing population. While the affordability crisis began in our large cities, it has now spread to smaller towns and rural communities.

Efforts to cool the housing market have only provided temporary relief to home buyers. The long-term trend is clear: house prices are increasing much faster than Ontarian's incomes. The time for action is now.

When striking the Housing Affordability Task Force, you and Premier Ford were clear: you wanted actionable, concrete solutions to help Ontarians and there was no time to waste. You asked us to be bold and gave us the freedom and independence to develop our recommendations.

In the past two months, we have met municipal leaders, planners, unions, developers and builders, the financial sector, academics, think tanks and housing advocates. Time was short, but solutions emerged consistently around these themes:

- More housing density across the province
- End exclusionary municipal rules that block or delay new housing
- Depoliticize the housing approvals process
- Prevent abuse of the housing appeals system
- Financial support to municipalities that build more housing

We present this report to you not as an “all or nothing” proposal, but rather as a list of options that the government has at its disposal to help address housing affordability for Ontarians and get more homes built. We propose an ambitious but achievable target: 1.5 million new homes built in the next ten years.

Parents and grandparents are worried that their children will not be able to afford a home when they start working or decide to start a family. Too many Ontarians are unable to live in their preferred city or town because they cannot afford to buy or rent.

The way housing is approved and built was designed for a different era when the province was less constrained by space and had fewer people. But it no longer meets the needs of Ontarians. The balance has swung too far in favour of lengthy consultations, bureaucratic red tape, and costly appeals. It is too easy to oppose new housing and too costly to build. We are in a housing crisis and that demands immediate and sweeping reforms.

It has been an honour to serve as Chair, and I am proud to submit this report on behalf of the entire Task Force.



Jake Lawrence

Chair, Housing Affordability Task Force

Chief Executive Officer and Group Head, Global Banking and Markets, Scotiabank

Executive summary and recommendations

House prices in Ontario have almost tripled in the past 10 years, growing much faster than incomes. This has home ownership beyond the reach of most first-time buyers across the province, even those with well-paying jobs. Housing has become too expensive for rental units and it has become too expensive in rural communities and small towns. The system is not working as it should.

For too long, we have focused on solutions to “cool” the housing market. It is now clear that we do not have enough homes to meet the needs of Ontarians today, and we are not building enough to meet the needs of our growing population. If this problem is not fixed – by creating more housing to meet the growing demand – housing prices will continue to rise. We need to build more housing in Ontario.

This report sets out recommendations that would set a bold goal and clear direction for the province, increase density, remove exclusionary rules that prevent housing growth, prevent abuse of the appeals process, and make sure municipalities are treated as partners in this process by incentivizing success.

Setting bold targets and making new housing the planning priority

Recommendations 1 and 2 urge Ontario to set a bold goal of adding 1.5 million homes over the next 10 years and update planning guidance to make this a priority.

The task force then recommends actions in five main areas to increase supply:

Require greater density

Land is not being used efficiently across Ontario. In too many neighbourhoods, municipal rules only allow single-family homes – not even a granny suite. Taxpayers have invested heavily in subway, light rail, bus and rail lines and highways, and the streets nearby are ideally suited for more mid- and high-rise housing. Underused or redundant commercial and industrial buildings are ripe to be redeveloped into housing or mixed commercial and residential use. New housing on undeveloped land should also be higher density than traditional suburbs, especially close to highways.

Adding density in all these locations makes better use of infrastructure and helps to save land outside urban boundaries. Implementing these recommendations will provide Ontarians with many more options for housing.

Recommendations 3 through 11 address how Ontario can quickly create more housing supply by allowing more housing in more locations “as of right” (without the need for municipal approval) and make better use of transportation investments.

Reduce and streamline urban design rules

Municipalities require numerous studies and set all kinds of rules for adding housing, many of which go well beyond the requirements of the provincial Planning Act. While some of this guidance has value for urban design, some rules appear to be arbitrary and not supported by evidence – for example, requiring condo buildings to include costly parking stalls even though many go unsold. These rules and requirements result in delays and extra costs that make housing either impossible to build or very expensive for the eventual home buyer or renter.

Recommendation 12 would set uniform provincial standards for urban design, including building shadows and setbacks, do away with rules that prioritize preservation of neighbourhood physical character over new housing, no longer require municipal approval of design matters like a building’s colour, texture, type of material or window details, and remove or reduce parking requirements in cities over 50,000 in population.

Depoliticize the process and cut red tape

NIMBYism (not in my backyard) is a major obstacle to building housing. It drags out the approval process, pushes up costs, and keeps out new residents. Because local councillors depend on the votes of residents who want to keep the status quo, the planning process has become politicized. Municipalities allow far more public consultation than is required, often using formats that make it hard for working people and families with young children to take part. Too few technical decisions are delegated to municipal staff. Pressure to designate buildings with little or no heritage value as “heritage” if development is proposed and bulk listings of properties with “heritage potential” are also standing in the way of getting homes built. Dysfunction throughout the system, risk aversion and needless bureaucracy have resulted in a situation where Ontario lags the rest of Canada and the developed world in approval times. Ontarians have waited long enough.

Recommendations 13 through 25 would require municipalities to limit consultations to the legislated maximum, ensure people can take part digitally, mandate the delegation of technical decisions, prevent abuse of the heritage process and see property owners compensated for financial loss resulting from designation, restore the right of developers to appeal Official Plans and Municipal Comprehensive Reviews, legislate timelines for approvals and enact several other common sense changes that would allow housing to be built more quickly and affordably.

Fix the Ontario Land Tribunal

Largely because of the politicization of the planning process, many proponents look to the Tribunal, a quasi-judicial body, to give the go-ahead to projects that should have been approved by the municipality. Even when there is municipal approval, however, opponents appeal to the Tribunal – paying only a \$400 fee – knowing that this may well succeed in delaying a project to the point where it might no longer make economic sense. As a result, the Tribunal faces a backlog of more than 1,000 cases and is seriously under-resourced.

Recommendations 26 through 31 seek to weed out or prevent appeals aimed purely at delaying projects, allow adjudicators to award costs to proponents in more cases, including instances where a municipality has refused an approval to avoid missing a legislated deadline, reduce the time to issue decisions, increase funding, and encourage the Tribunal to prioritize cases that would increase housing supply quickly as it tackles the backlog.

Support municipalities that commit to transforming the system

Fixing the housing crisis needs everyone working together. Delivering 1.5 million homes will require the provincial and federal governments to invest in change. Municipalities that make the difficult but necessary choices to grow housing supply should be rewarded, and those that resist new housing should see funding reductions.

Recommendations 49 and 50 call for Ontario government to create a large “Ontario Housing Delivery Fund” and encourage the federal government to match funding, and suggest how the province should reward municipalities that support change and reduce funding for municipalities that do not.

This executive summary focuses on the actions that will get the most housing units approved and built in the shortest time. Other recommendations in the report deal with issues that are important but may take more time to resolve or may not directly increase supply (recommendation numbers are indicated in brackets): improving tax and municipal financing (**32-37, 39, 42-44**); encouraging new pathways to home ownership (**38, 40, 41**); and addressing labour shortages in the construction industry (**45-47**).

This is not the first attempt to “fix the housing system”. There have been efforts for years to tackle increasing housing prices and find solutions. This time must be different. **Recommendations 50-55** set out ways of helping to ensure real and concrete progress on providing the homes Ontarians need.

Introduction

Ontario is in a housing crisis. Prices are skyrocketing: the average price for a house across Ontario was \$923,000 at the end of 2021.^[1] Ten years ago, the average price was \$329,000.^[2] Over that period, average house prices have climbed 180% while average incomes have grown roughly 38%.^{[3][4]}

Not long ago, hard-working Ontarians – teachers, construction workers, small business owners – could afford the home they wanted. In small towns, it was reasonable to expect that you could afford a home in the neighbourhood you grew up in. Today, home ownership or finding a quality rental is now out of reach for too many Ontarians. The system is not working as it should be.

Housing has become too expensive for rental units and it has become too expensive in rural communities and small towns.

While people who were able to buy a home a decade or more ago have built considerable personal equity, the benefits of having a home aren't just financial. Having a place to call home connects people to their community, creates a gathering place for friends and family, and becomes a source of pride.

Today, the reality for an ever-increasing number of Ontarians is quite different. Everyone in Ontario knows people who are living with the personal and financial stress of not being able to find housing they can afford. The young family who can't buy a house within two hours of where they work. The tenant with a good job who worries about

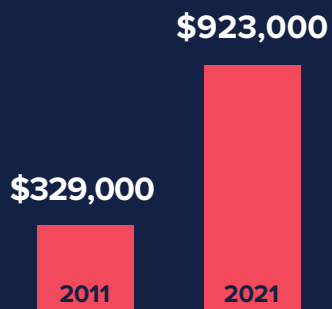
where she'll find a new apartment she can afford if the owner decides to sell. The recent graduate who will have to stay at home for a few more years before he can afford to rent or buy.

While the crisis is widespread, it weighs more heavily on some groups than on others. Young people starting a family who need a larger home find themselves priced out of the market. Black, Indigenous and marginalized people face even greater challenges. As Ontarians, we have only recently begun to understand and address the reality of decades of systemic racism that has resulted in lower household incomes, making the housing affordability gap wider than average.

The high cost of housing has pushed minorities and lower income Ontarians further and further away from job markets. Black and Indigenous homeownership rates are less than half of the provincial average.^[5] And homelessness rates among Indigenous Peoples are 11 times the national average. When housing prevents an individual from reaching their full potential, this represents a loss to every Ontarian: lost creativity, productivity, and revenue. Lost prosperity for individuals and for the entire Ontario economy.



Average price for a house across Ontario



Over 10 Years



average house prices have climbed

+180%



while average incomes have grown

+38%

As much as we read about housing affordability being a challenge in major cities around the world, the depth of the challenge has become greater in Ontario and Canada than almost anywhere in the developed world.



Canada has the lowest amount of housing per population of any G7 country.

How did we get here? Why do we have this problem?

A major factor is that there just isn't enough housing. A 2021 Scotiabank study showed that Canada has the fewest housing units per population of any G7 country – and, our per capita housing supply has *dropped* in the past five years.^[6] An update to that study released in January 2022 found that two thirds of Canada's housing shortage is in Ontario.^[7] Today, Ontario is 1.2 million homes – rental or owned – short of the G7 average. With projected population growth, that huge gap is widening, and bridging it will take immediate, bold and purposeful effort. And to support population growth in the next decade, we will need one million more homes.

While governments across Canada have taken steps to “cool down” the housing market or provide help to first-time buyers, these demand-side solutions only work if there is enough supply. Shortages of supply in any market have a direct impact on affordability. Scarcity breeds price increases. Simply put, if we want more Ontarians to have housing, we need to build more housing in Ontario.

Ontario must build 1.5 million homes over the next 10 years to address the supply shortage

The housing crisis impacts all Ontarians. The ripple effect of the crisis also holds back Ontario reaching its full potential.

Economy

Businesses of all sizes are facing problems finding and retaining workers. Even high-paying jobs in technology and manufacturing are hard to fill because there's not enough housing nearby. This doesn't just dampen the economic growth of cities, it makes them less vibrant, diverse, and creative, and strains their ability to provide essential services.

Public services

Hospitals, school boards and other public service providers across Ontario report challenges attracting and retaining staff because of housing costs. One town told us that it

could no longer maintain a volunteer fire department, because volunteers couldn't afford to live within 10 minutes drive of the firehall.

Environment

Long commutes contribute to air pollution and carbon emissions. An international survey of 74 cities in 16 countries found that Toronto, at 96 minutes both ways, had the longest commute times in North America and was essentially tied with Bogota, Colombia, for the longest commute time worldwide.^[8] Increasing density in our cities and around major transit hubs helps reduce emissions to the benefit of everyone.

Ontario must build

1.5M

homes over the next 10 years
to address the supply shortage.



Our mandate and approach

Ontario's Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing tasked us with recommending ways to accelerate our progress in closing the housing supply gap to improve housing affordability.

Time is of the essence. Building housing now is exactly what our post-pandemic economy needs. Housing construction creates good-paying jobs that cannot be outsourced to other countries. Moreover, the pandemic gave rise to unprecedented levels of available capital that can be invested in housing – if we can just put it to work.

We represent a wide range of experience and perspectives that includes developing, financing and building homes, delivering affordable housing, and researching housing market trends, challenges and solutions. Our detailed biographies appear as [Appendix A](#).



We acknowledge that every house in Ontario is built on the traditional territory of Indigenous Peoples.



People in households that spend 30% or more of total household income on shelter expenses are defined as having a “housing affordability” problem. Shelter expenses include electricity, oil, gas, coal, wood or other fuels, water and other municipal services, monthly mortgage payments, property taxes, condominium fees, and rent.

Our mandate was to focus on how to increase market housing supply and affordability. By market housing, we are referring to homes that can be purchased or rented without government support.

Affordable housing (units provided at below-market rates with government support) was not part of our mandate.

The Minister and his cabinet colleagues are working on that issue. Nonetheless, almost every stakeholder we spoke with had ideas that will help deliver market housing and also make it easier to deliver affordable housing. However, affordable housing is a societal responsibility and will require intentional investments and strategies to bridge the significant affordable housing gap in this province. We have included a number of recommendations aimed at affordable housing in the body of this report, but have also included further thoughts in [Appendix B](#).

We note that government-owned land was also outside our mandate. Many stakeholders, however, stressed the value of surplus or underused public land and land associated with major transit investments in finding housing solutions. We agree and have set out some thoughts on that issue in [Appendix C](#).

How we did our work

Our Task Force was struck in December 2021 and mandated to deliver a final report to the Minister by the end of January 2022. We were able to work to that tight timeline because, in almost all cases, viewpoints and feasible solutions are well known. In addition, we benefited from insights gleaned from recent work to solve the problem in other jurisdictions.

During our deliberations, we met with and talked to over 140 organizations and individuals, including industry associations representing builders and developers, planners, architects, realtors and others; labour unions; social justice advocates; elected officials at the municipal level; academics and research groups; and municipal planners. We also received written submissions from many of these participants. In addition, we drew on the myriad public reports and papers listed in the [References](#).

We thank everyone who took part in sessions that were uniformly helpful in giving us a deeper understanding of the housing crisis and the way out of it. We also thank the staff of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing who provided logistical and other support, including technical briefings and background.

The way forward

The single unifying theme across all participants over the course of the Task Force’s work has been the urgency to take decisive action. Today’s housing challenges are incredibly complex. Moreover, developing land, obtaining approvals, and building homes takes years.

Some recommendations will produce immediate benefits, others will take years for the full impact.

This is why there is no time to waste. We urge the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and his cabinet colleagues to continue measures they have already taken to accelerate housing supply and to move quickly in turning the recommendations in this report into decisive new actions.

The province must set an ambitious and bold goal to build 1.5 million homes over the next 10 years. If we build 1.5 million new homes over the next ten years, Ontario can fill the housing gap with more affordable choices, catch up to the rest of Canada and keep up with population growth.

By working together, we can resolve Ontario’s housing crisis. In so doing, we can build a more prosperous future for everyone.

The balance of this report lays out our recommendations.

Focus on getting more homes built

Resolving a crisis requires intense focus and a clear goal. The province is responsible for the legislation and policy that establishes the planning, land use, and home building goals, which guide municipalities, land tribunals, and courts. Municipalities are then responsible for implementing provincial policy in a way that works for their communities. The province is uniquely positioned to lead by shining a spotlight on this issue, setting the tone, and creating a single, galvanizing goal around which federal support, provincial legislation, municipal policy, and the housing market can be aligned.

In 2020, Ontario built about 75,000 housing units.^[9] For this report, we define a housing unit (home) as a single dwelling (detached, semi-detached, or attached), apartment, suite, condominium or mobile home. Since 2018, housing completions have grown every year as a result of positive measures that the province and some municipalities have implemented to encourage more home building. But we are still 1.2 million homes short when compared to other G7 countries and our population is growing. The goal of 1.5 million homes feels daunting – but reflects both the need and what is possible. In fact, throughout the 1970s Ontario built more housing units each year than we do today.^[10]

The second recommendation is designed to address the growing complexity and volume of rules in the legislation, policy, plans and by-laws, and their competing priorities, by providing clear direction to provincial agencies, municipalities, tribunals, and courts on the overriding priorities for housing.

- 1. Set a goal of building 1.5 million new homes in ten years.**
- 2. Amend the Planning Act, Provincial Policy Statement, and Growth Plans to set “growth in the full spectrum of housing supply” and “intensification within existing built-up areas” of municipalities as the most important residential housing priorities in the mandate and purpose.**



The “missing middle” is often cited as an important part of the housing solution. We define the missing middle as mid-rise condo or rental housing, smaller houses on subdivided lots or in laneways and other additional units in existing houses.

Making land available to build

The Greater Toronto Area is bordered on one side by Lake Ontario and on the other by the protected Greenbelt. Similarly, the Ottawa River and another Greenbelt constrain land supply in Ottawa, the province's second-largest city.

But a shortage of land isn't the cause of the problem. Land is available, both inside the existing built-up areas and on undeveloped land outside greenbelts.

We need to make better use of land. Zoning defines what we can build and where we can build. If we want to make better use of land to create more housing, then we need to modernize our zoning rules. We heard from planners, municipal councillors, and developers that "as of right" zoning – the ability to by-pass long, drawn out consultations and zoning by-law amendments – is the most effective tool in the provincial toolkit. We agree.

Stop using exclusionary zoning that restricts more housing

Too much land inside cities is tied up by outdated rules. For example, it's estimated that 70% of land zoned for housing in Toronto is restricted to single-detached or semi-detached homes.^[11] This type of zoning prevents homeowners from adding additional suites to create housing for Ontarians and income for themselves. As one person said, "my neighbour can tear down what was there to build a monster home, but I'm not allowed to add a basement suite to my home."

It's estimated that

70%

of land zoned for housing in Toronto is restricted to **single-detached** or **semi-detached** homes.



While less analysis has been done in other Ontario communities, it's estimated that about half of all residential land in Ottawa is zoned for single-detached housing, meaning nothing else may be built on a lot without public consultation and an amendment to the zoning by-law. In some suburbs around Toronto, single unit zoning dominates residential land use, even close to GO Transit stations and major highways.

One result is that more growth is pushing past urban boundaries and turning farmland into housing. Undeveloped land inside and outside existing municipal boundaries must be part of the solution, particularly in northern and rural communities, but isn't nearly enough on its own. Most of the solution must come from densification. Greenbelts and other environmentally sensitive areas must be protected, and farms provide food and food security. Relying too heavily on undeveloped land would whittle away too much of the already small share of land devoted to agriculture.

Modernizing zoning would also open the door to more rental housing, which in turn would make communities more inclusive.

Allowing more gentle density also makes better use of roads, water and wastewater systems, transit and other public services that are already in place and have capacity, instead of having to be built in new areas.

The Ontario government took a positive step by allowing secondary suites (e.g., basement apartments) across the province in 2019. However, too many municipalities still place too many restrictions on implementation. For the last three years, the total number of secondary suites in Toronto has actually declined each year, as few units get permitted and owners convert two units into one.^[12]

These are the types of renovations and home construction performed by small businesses and local trades, providing them with a boost.

Underused and vacant commercial and industrial properties are another potential source of land for housing. It was suggested to us that one area ripe for redevelopment into a mix of commercial and residential uses is the strip mall, a leftover from the 1950s that runs along major suburban streets in most large Ontario cities.

“As of right” zoning allows more kinds of housing that are accessible to more kinds of people. It makes neighbourhoods stronger, richer, and fairer. And it will get more housing built in existing neighbourhoods more quickly than any other measure.

- 3. Limit exclusionary zoning in municipalities through binding provincial action:**
 - a) Allow “as of right” residential housing up to four units and up to four storeys on a single residential lot.
 - b) Modernize the Building Code and other policies to remove any barriers to affordable construction and to ensure meaningful implementation (e.g., allow single-staircase construction for up to four storeys, allow single egress, etc.).
- 4. Permit “as of right” conversion of underutilized or redundant commercial properties to residential or mixed residential and commercial use.**
- 5. Permit “as of right” secondary suites, garden suites, and laneway houses province-wide.**
- 6. Permit “as of right” multi-tenant housing (renting rooms within a dwelling) province-wide.**
- 7. Encourage and incentivize municipalities to increase density in areas with excess school capacity to benefit families with children.**

Align investments in roads and transit with growth

Governments have invested billions of dollars in highways, light rail, buses, subways and trains in Ontario. But without ensuring more people can live close to those transit routes, we’re not getting the best return on those infrastructure investments.

Access to transit is linked to making housing more affordable: when reliable transit options are nearby, people can get to work more easily. They can live further from the centre of the city in less expensive areas without the added cost of car ownership.

The impacts of expanding public transit go far beyond serving riders. These investments also spur economic growth and reduce traffic congestion and emissions. We all pay for the cost of transit spending, and we should all share in the benefits.

If municipalities achieve the right development near transit – a mix of housing at high- and medium-density, office space and retail – this would open the door to better ways of funding the costs. Other cities, like London, UK and Hong Kong, have captured the impacts of increased land value and business activity along new transit routes to help with their financing.

Ontario recently created requirements (residents/hectare) for municipalities to zone for higher density in transit corridors and “major transit station areas”.^[3] These are areas surrounding subway and other rapid transit stations and hubs. However, we heard troubling reports that local opposition is blocking access to these neighbourhoods and to critical public transit stations. City staff, councillors, and the province need to stand up to these tactics and speak up for the Ontarians who need housing.

The Province is also building new highways in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, and it’s important to plan thoughtfully for the communities that will follow from these investments, to make sure they are compact and liveable.



8. Allow “as of right” zoning up to unlimited height and unlimited density in the immediate proximity of individual major transit stations within two years if municipal zoning remains insufficient to meet provincial density targets.
9. Allow “as of right” zoning of six to 11 storeys with no minimum parking requirements on any streets utilized by public transit (including streets on bus and streetcar routes).
10. Designate or rezone as mixed commercial and residential use all land along transit corridors and redesignate all Residential Apartment to mixed commercial and residential zoning in Toronto.
11. Support responsible housing growth on undeveloped land, including outside existing municipal boundaries, by building necessary infrastructure to support higher density housing and complete communities and applying the recommendations of this report to all undeveloped land.

Start saying “yes in my backyard”

Even where higher density is allowed in theory, the official plans of most cities in Ontario contain conflicting goals like maintaining “prevailing neighbourhood character”. This bias is reinforced by detailed guidance that often follows from the official plan. Although requirements are presented as “guidelines”, they are often treated as rules.

Examples include:

- Angular plane rules that require successively higher floors to be stepped further back, cutting the number of units that can be built by up to half and making many projects uneconomic
- Detailed rules around the shadows a building casts
- Guidelines around finishes, colours and other design details

One resident’s desire to prevent a shadow being cast in their backyard or a local park frequently prevails over concrete proposals to build more housing for multiple families. By-laws and guidelines that preserve “neighbourhood character” often prevent simple renovations to add new suites to existing homes. The people who suffer are mostly young, visible minorities, and marginalized people. It is the perfect

example of a policy that appears neutral on its surface but is discriminatory in its application.^[14]

Far too much time and money are spent reviewing and holding consultations for large projects which conform with the official plan or zoning by-law and small projects which would cause minimal disruption. The cost of needless delays is passed on to new home buyers and tenants.

Minimum parking requirements for each new unit are another example of outdated municipal requirements that increase the cost of housing and are increasingly less relevant with public transit and ride share services. Minimum parking requirements add as much as \$165,000 to the cost of a new housing unit, even as demand for parking spaces is falling: data from the Residential Construction Council of Ontario shows that in new condo projects, one in three parking stalls goes unsold. We applaud the recent vote by Toronto City Council to scrap most minimum parking requirements. We believe other cities should follow suit.

While true heritage sites are important, heritage preservation has also become a tool to block more housing. For example, some municipalities add thousands of properties at a time to a heritage register because they have “potential” heritage value. Even where a building isn’t heritage designated or registered, neighbours increasingly demand it be as soon as a development is proposed.

This brings us to the role of the “not in my backyard” or NIMBY sentiment in delaying or stopping more homes from being built.



New housing is often the last priority

A proposed building with market and affordable housing units would have increased the midday shadow by 6.5% on a nearby park at the fall and spring equinox, with no impact during the summer months. To conform to a policy that does not permit “new net shadow on specific parks”, seven floors of housing, including 26 affordable housing units, were sacrificed.

Multiple dry cleaners along a transit route were designated as heritage sites to prevent new housing being built. It is hard not to feel outrage when our laws are being used to prevent families from moving into neighbourhoods and into homes they can afford along transit routes.

NIMBY versus YIMBY

NIMBYism (not in my backyard) is a large and constant obstacle to providing housing everywhere. Neighbourhood pushback drags out the approval process, pushes up costs and discourages investment in housing. It also keeps out new residents. While building housing is very costly, opposing new housing costs almost nothing.

Unfortunately, there is a strong incentive for individual municipal councillors to fall in behind community opposition – it's existing residents who elect them, not future ones. The outcry of even a handful of constituents (helped by the rise of social media) has been enough, in far too many cases, to persuade their local councillor to vote against development even while admitting its merits in private. There is a sense among some that it's better to let the Ontario Land Tribunal approve the development on appeal, even if it causes long delays and large cost increases, then to take the political heat.

Mayors and councillors across the province are fed up and many have called for limits on public consultations and more “as of right” zoning. In fact, some have created a new term for NIMBYism: BANANAs – Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anything, causing one mayor to comment “NIMBYism has gone BANANAs”. We agree. In a growing, thriving society, that approach is not just bad policy, it is exclusionary and wrong.

As a result, technical planning decisions have become politicized. One major city has delegated many decisions to senior staff, but an individual councillor can withdraw the delegation when there is local opposition and force a vote at Council. We heard that this situation is common across the province, creating an electoral incentive for a councillor to delay or stop a housing proposal, or forcing a councillor to pay the electoral cost of supporting it. Approvals of individual housing applications should be the role of professional staff, free from political interference.

The pressure to stop any development is now so intense that it has given rise to a counter-movement – YIMBYism, or “yes in my backyard,” led by millennials who recognize entrenched opposition to change as a huge obstacle to finding a home. They provide a voice at public consultations for young people, new immigrants and refugees, minority groups, and Ontarians struggling to access housing by connecting our ideals to the reality of housing. People who welcome immigrants to Canada should welcome them to the neighbourhood, fighting climate change means supporting higher-density housing, and “keeping the neighbourhood the way it is” means keeping it off-limits. While anti-housing voices can be loud,

a member of More Neighbours Toronto, a YIMBY group that regularly attends public consultations, has said that the most vocal opponents usually don't represent the majority in a neighbourhood. Survey data from the Ontario Real Estate Association backs that up, with almost 80% of Ontarians saying they are in favour of zoning in urban areas that would encourage more homes.

Ontarians want a solution to the housing crisis. We cannot allow opposition and politicization of individual housing projects to prevent us from meeting the needs of all Ontarians.

12. Create a more permissive land use, planning, and approvals system:

- a) Repeal or override municipal policies, zoning, or plans that prioritize the preservation of physical character of neighbourhood
- b) Exempt from site plan approval and public consultation all projects of 10 units or less that conform to the Official Plan and require only minor variances
- c) Establish province-wide zoning standards, or prohibitions, for minimum lot sizes, maximum building setbacks, minimum heights, angular planes, shadow rules, front doors, building depth, landscaping, floor space index, and heritage view cones, and planes; restore pre-2006 site plan exclusions (colour, texture, and type of materials, window details, etc.) to the Planning Act and reduce or eliminate minimum parking requirements; and
- d) Remove any floorplate restrictions to allow larger, more efficient high-density towers.

13. Limit municipalities from requesting or hosting additional public meetings beyond those that are required under the Planning Act.

14. Require that public consultations provide digital participation options.

15. Require mandatory delegation of site plan approvals and minor variances to staff or pre-approved qualified third-party technical consultants through a simplified review and approval process, without the ability to withdraw Council's delegation.

- 16.** Prevent abuse of the heritage preservation and designation process by:
 - a) Prohibiting the use of bulk listing on municipal heritage registers
 - b) Prohibiting reactive heritage designations after a Planning Act development application has been filed
- 17.** Requiring municipalities to compensate property owners for loss of property value as a result of heritage designations, based on the principle of best economic use of land.
- 18.** Restore the right of developers to appeal Official Plans and Municipal Comprehensive Reviews.

We have heard mixed feedback on Committees of Adjustment. While they are seen to be working well in some cities, in others they are seen to simply add another lengthy step in the process. We would urge the government to first implement our recommendation to delegate minor variances and site plan approvals to municipal staff and then assess whether Committees of Adjustment are necessary and an improvement over staff-level decision making.

Cut the red tape so we can build faster and reduce costs

One of the strongest signs that our approval process is not working: of 35 OECD countries, only the Slovak Republic takes longer than Canada to approve a building project. The UK and the US approve projects three times faster without sacrificing quality or safety. And they save home buyers and tenants money as a result, making housing more affordable.^[15]

A 2020 survey of development approval times in 23 Canadian cities shows Ontario seriously lagging: Hamilton (15th), Toronto (17th), Ottawa (21st) with approval times averaging between 20-24 months. These timelines do not include building permits, which take about two years for an apartment building in Toronto. Nor did they count the time it takes for undeveloped land to be designated for housing, which the study notes can take five to ten years.^[16]

Despite the good intentions of many people involved in the approvals and home-building process, decades of dysfunction in the system and needless bureaucracy have made it too difficult for housing approvals to keep up with the needs of Ontarians. There appear to be numerous reasons why Ontario performs so poorly against other Canadian cities and the rest of the developed world. We believe that the major problems can be summed up as:

- Too much complexity in the planning process, with the page count in legislation, regulation, policies, plans, and by-laws growing every year
- Too many studies, guidelines, meetings and other requirements of the type we outlined in the previous section, including many that go well beyond the scope of Ontario's Planning Act
- Reviews within municipalities and with outside agencies that are piecemeal, duplicative (although often with conflicting outcomes) and poorly coordinated
- Process flaws that include reliance on paper
- Some provincial policies that are more relevant to urban development but result in burdensome, irrelevant requirements when applied in some rural and northern communities.



All of this has contributed to widespread failure on the part of municipalities to meet required timelines. The provincial Planning Act sets out deadlines of 90 days for decisions on zoning by-law amendments, 120 days for plans of subdivision, and 30 days for site plan approval, but municipalities routinely miss these without penalty. For other processes, like site plan approval or provincial approvals, there are no timelines and delays drag on. The cost of delay falls on the ultimate homeowner or tenant.

The consequences for homeowners and renters are enormous. Ultimately, whatever cost a builder pays gets passed on to the buyer or renter. As one person said: "Process is the biggest project killer in Toronto because developers have to carry timeline risk."

Site plan control was often brought up as a frustration. Under the Planning Act, this is meant to be a technical review of the external features of a building. In practice, municipalities often expand on what is required and take too long to respond.

Then: In 1966, a draft plan of subdivision in a town in southwestern Ontario to provide 529 low-rise and mid-rise housing units, a school site, a shopping centre and parks was approved by way of a two-page letter setting out 10 conditions. It took seven months to clear conditions for final approval.

And now: In 2013, a builder started the approval process to build on a piece of serviced residential land in a seasonal resort town. Over the next seven years, 18 professional consultant reports were required, culminating in draft plan approval containing 50 clearance conditions. The second approval, issued by the Local Planning Appeals Board in 2020, ran to 23 pages. The developer estimates it will be almost 10 years before final approval is received.

An Ontario Association of Architects study calculating the cost of delays between site plan application and approval concluded that for a 100-unit condominium apartment building, each additional month of delay costs the applicant an estimated \$193,000, or \$1,930 a month for each unit.^[17]

A 2020 study done for the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) looked at impacts of delay on low-rise construction, including single-detached homes. It estimated that every month an approval is delayed adds, on average, \$1.46 per square foot to the cost of a single home. A two-year delay, which is not unusual for this housing type, adds more than \$70,000 to the cost of a 2,000-square-foot house in the GTA.^[16]

Getting rid of so much unnecessary and unproductive additional work would significantly reduce the burden on staff. It would help address the widespread shortages of planners and building officials. It would also bring a stronger sense among municipal staff that they are part of the housing solution and can take pride in helping cut approval times and lower the costs of delivering homes.

Adopt common sense approaches that save construction costs

Wood using “mass timber” – an engineer compressed wood, made for strength and weight-bearing – can provide a lower-cost alternative to reinforced concrete in many mid-rise projects, but Ontario’s Building Code is hampering its use. Building taller with wood offers advantages beyond cost:

- Wood is a renewable resource that naturally sequesters carbon, helping us reach our climate change goals

- Using wood supports Ontario’s forestry sector and creates jobs, including for Indigenous people

British Columbia’s and Quebec’s building codes allow woodframe construction up to 12 storeys, but Ontario limits it to six. By amending the Building Code to allow 12-storey woodframe construction, Ontario would encourage increased use of forestry products and reduce building costs.

Finally, we were told that a shift in how builders are required to guarantee their performance would free up billions of dollars to build more housing. Pay on demand surety bonds are a much less onerous option than letters of credit, and are already accepted in Hamilton, Pickering, Innisfil, Whitchurch-Stouffville and other Ontario municipalities. We outline the technical details in [Appendix D](#).

- 19.** Legislate timelines at each stage of the provincial and municipal review process, including site plan, minor variance, and provincial reviews, and deem an application approved if the legislated response time is exceeded.
- 20.** Fund the creation of “approvals facilitators” with the authority to quickly resolve conflicts among municipal and/or provincial authorities and ensure timelines are met.
- 21.** Require a pre-consultation with all relevant parties at which the municipality sets out a binding list that defines what constitutes a complete application; confirms the number of consultations established in the previous recommendations; and clarifies that if a member of a regulated profession such as a professional engineer has stamped an application, the municipality has no liability and no additional stamp is needed.
- 22.** Simplify planning legislation and policy documents.
- 23.** Create a common, province-wide definition of plan of subdivision and standard set of conditions which clarify which may be included; require the use of standard province-wide legal agreements and, where feasible, plans of subdivision.
- 24.** Allow wood construction of up to 12 storeys.
- 25.** Require municipalities to provide the option of pay on demand surety bonds and letters of credit.

Prevent abuse of the appeal process

Part of the challenge with housing approvals is that, by the time a project has been appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal (the Tribunal), it has usually already faced delay and compromises have been made to reduce the size and scope of the proposal. When an approved project is appealed, the appellant – which could just be a single individual – may pay \$400 and tie up new housing for years.

The most recent published report showed 1,300 unresolved cases.^[18] While under-resourcing does contribute to delays, this caseload also reflects the low barrier to launching an appeal and the minimal risks if an appeal is unsuccessful:

- After a builder has spent time and money to ensure a proposal conforms with a municipality’s requirements, the municipal council can still reject it – even if its own planning staff has given its support. Very often this is to appease local opponents.
- Unlike a court, costs are not automatically awarded to the successful party at the Tribunal. The winning side must bring a motion and prove that the party bringing the appeal was unreasonable, clearly trying to delay the project, and/or being vexatious or frivolous. Because the bar is set so high, the winning side seldom asks for costs in residential cases.

This has resulted in abuse of the Tribunal to delay new housing. Throughout our consultations, we heard from municipalities, not-for-profits, and developers that affordable housing was a particular target for appeals which, even if unsuccessful, can make projects too costly to build.

Clearly the Tribunal needs more resources to clear its backlog. But the bigger issue is the need for so many appeals: we believe it would better to have well-defined goals and rules for municipalities and builders to avoid this costly and time-consuming quasi-judicial process. Those who bring appeals aimed at stopping development that meets established criteria should pay the legal costs of the successful party and face the risk of a larger project being approved.

The solution is not more appeals, it’s fixing the system. We have proposed a series of reforms that would ensure only meritorious appeals proceeded, that every participant faces some risk and cost of losing, and that abuse of the Tribunal will be penalized. We believe that if Ontario accepts our recommendations, the Tribunal will not face the same volume of appeals. But getting to that point will take time, and the Tribunal needs more resources and better tools now.

Recommendation 1 will provide legislative direction to adjudicators that they must prioritize housing growth and intensification over competing priorities contained in provincial and municipal policies. We further recommend the following:

- 26.** Require appellants to promptly seek permission (“leave to appeal”) of the Tribunal and demonstrate that an appeal has merit, relying on evidence and expert reports, before it is accepted.
- 27.** Prevent abuse of process:
 - a) Remove right of appeal for projects with at least 30% affordable housing in which units are guaranteed affordable for at least 40 years.
 - b) Require a \$10,000 filing fee for third-party appeals.
 - c) Provide discretion to adjudicators to award full costs to the successful party in any appeal brought by a third party or by a municipality where its council has overridden a recommended staff approval.
- 28.** Encourage greater use of oral decisions issued the day of the hearing, with written reasons to follow, and allow those decisions to become binding the day that they are issued.
- 29.** Where it is found that a municipality has refused an application simply to avoid a deemed approval for lack of decision, allow the Tribunal to award punitive damages.
- 30.** Provide funding to increase staffing (adjudicators and case managers), provide market-competitive salaries, outsource more matters to mediators, and set shorter time targets.
- 31.** In clearing the existing backlog, encourage the Tribunal to prioritize projects close to the finish line that will support housing growth and intensification, as well as regional water or utility infrastructure decisions that will unlock significant housing capacity.

Reduce the costs to build, buy and rent

The price you pay to buy or rent a home is driven directly by how much it costs to build a home. In Ontario, costs to build homes have dramatically increased at an unprecedented pace over the past decade. In most of our cities and towns, materials and labour only account for about half of the costs. The rest comes from land, which we have addressed in the previous section, and government fees.

A careful balance is required on government fees because, as much as we would like to see them lowered, governments need revenues from fees and taxes to build critically needed infrastructure and pay for all the other services that make Ontario work. So, it is a question of balance and of ensuring that our approach to government fees encourages rather than discourages developers to build the full range of housing we need in our Ontario communities.

Align government fees and charges with the goal of building more housing

Improve the municipal funding model

Housing requires more than just the land it is built on. It requires roads, sewers, parks, utilities and other infrastructure. The provincial government provides municipalities with a way to secure funding for this infrastructure through development charges, community benefit charges and parkland dedication (providing 5% of land for public parks or the cash equivalent).

These charges are founded on the belief that growth – not current taxpayers – should pay for growth. As a concept, it is compelling. In practice, it means that new home buyers pay the entire cost of sewers, parks, affordable housing, or colleges that will be around for generations and may not be located in their neighbourhood. And, although building

affordable housing is a societal responsibility, because affordable units pay all the same charges as a market unit, the cost is passed to new home buyers in the same building or the not-for-profit organization supporting the project. We do not believe that government fees should create a disincentive to affordable housing.

If you ask any developer of homes – whether they are for-profit or non-profit – they will tell you that development charges are a special pain point. In Ontario, they can be as much as \$135,000 per home. In some municipalities, development charges have increased as much as 900% in less than 20 years.^[20] As development charges go up, the prices of homes go up. And development charges on a modest semi-detached home are the same as on a luxury 6,000 square foot home, resulting in a disincentive to build housing that is more affordable. Timing is also a challenge as development charges have to be paid up front, before a shovel even goes into the ground.

To help relieve the pressure, the Ontario government passed recent legislation allowing builders to determine development charges earlier in the building process. But they must pay interest on the assessed development charge to the municipality until a building permit is issued, and there is no cap on the rate, which in one major city is 13% annually.

Cash payments to satisfy parkland dedication also significantly boost the costs of higher-density projects, adding on average \$17,000 to the cost of a high-rise condo across the GTA.^[21] We heard concerns not just about the amount of cash collected, but also about the money not being spent in the neighbourhood or possibly not being spent on parks at all. As an example, in 2019 the City of Toronto held \$644 million in parkland cash-in-lieu payments.^[22] Everyone can agree that we need to invest in parks as our communities grow, but if the funds are not being spent, perhaps it means that more money is being collected for parklands than is needed and we could lower the cost of housing if we adjusted these parkland fees.



A 2019 study carried out for BILD showed that in the Greater Toronto Area, development charges for low-rise housing are on average more than three times higher per unit than in six comparable US metropolitan areas, and roughly 1.75-times higher than in the other Canadian cities.

For high-rise developments the average per unit charges in the GTA are roughly 50% higher than in the US areas, and roughly 30% higher than in the other Canadian urban areas.^[19]

Modernizing HST Thresholds

Harmonized sales tax (HST) applies to all new housing – including purpose-built rental. Today, the federal component is 5% and provincial component is 8%. The federal and provincial government provide a partial HST rebate. Two decades ago, the maximum home price eligible for a rebate was set at \$450,000 federally and \$400,000 provincially, resulting in a maximum rebate of \$6,300 federally and \$24,000 provincially, less than half of today’s average home price. Buyers of new homes above this ceiling face a significant clawback. Indexing the rebate would immediately reduce the cost of building new homes, savings that can be passed on to Ontarians. When both levels of government agree that we are facing a housing crisis, they should not be adding over 10% to the cost of almost all new homes.

- 32.** Waive development charges and parkland cash-in-lieu and charge only modest connection fees for all infill residential projects up to 10 units or for any development where no new material infrastructure will be required.
- 33.** Waive development charges on all forms of affordable housing guaranteed to be affordable for 40 years.
- 34.** Prohibit interest rates on development charges higher than a municipality’s borrowing rate.
- 35.** Regarding cash in lieu of parkland, s.37, Community Benefit Charges, and development charges:
 - a) Provincial review of reserve levels, collections and drawdowns annually to ensure funds are being used in a timely fashion and for the intended purpose, and, where review points to a significant concern, do not allow further collection until the situation has been corrected.
 - b) Except where allocated towards municipality-wide infrastructure projects, require municipalities to spend funds in the neighbourhoods where they were collected. However, where there’s a significant community need in a priority area of the City, allow for specific ward-to-ward allocation of unspent and unallocated reserves.
- 36.** Recommend that the federal government and provincial governments update HST rebate to reflect current home prices and begin indexing the thresholds to housing prices, and that the federal government match the provincial 75% rebate and remove any clawback.

Government charges on a new single-detached home averaged roughly \$186,300, or almost 22% of the price, across six municipalities in southcentral Ontario. For a new condominium apartment, the average was almost \$123,000, or roughly 24% of a unit’s price.

Make it easier to build rental

In cities and towns across Ontario, it is increasingly hard to find a vacant rental unit, let alone a vacant rental unit at an affordable price. Today, 66% of all purpose-built rental units in the City of Toronto were built between 1960 and 1979. Less than 15% of Toronto’s purpose-built rentals were constructed over the ensuing 40 years in spite of the significant population growth during that time. In fact, between 2006 and 2016, growth in condo apartments increased by 186% while purpose-built rental only grew by 0.6%.^[22] In 2018, the Ontario government introduced positive changes that have created growth in purpose-built rental units – with last year seeing 18,000 units under construction and 93,000 proposed against a 5-year average prior to 2020 of 3,400 annually.^[23]

Long-term renters often now feel trapped in apartments that don’t make sense for them as their needs change. And because they can’t or don’t want to move up the housing ladder, many of the people coming up behind them who would gladly take those apartments are instead living in crowded spaces with family members or roommates. Others feel forced to commit to rental units at prices way beyond what they can afford. Others are trying their luck in getting on the wait list for an affordable unit or housing co-op – wait lists that are years long. Others are leaving Ontario altogether.

66%

of all purpose-built rental units
in the City of Toronto were
built between **1960** and **1979**.



A pattern in every community, and particularly large cities, is that the apartments and rented rooms that we do have are disappearing. Apartment buildings are being converted to condos or upgraded to much more expensive rental units. Duplexes get purchased and turned into larger single-family homes.

A major challenge in bridging the gap of rental supply is that, more often than not, purpose-built rental projects don't make economic sense for builders and investors. Ironically, there is no shortage of Canadian investor capital seeking housing investments, particularly large pension funds – but the economics of investing in purpose-built rental in Ontario just don't make sense. So, investments get made in apartment projects in other provinces or countries, or in condo projects that have a better and safer return-on-investment. What can governments do to get that investor capital pointed in the right direction so we can create jobs and get more of the housing we need built?

Some of our earlier recommendations will help, particularly indexing the HST rebate. So will actions by government to require purpose-built rental on surplus government land that is made available for sale. ([Appendix C](#))

Municipal property taxes on purpose-built rental can be as much as 2.5 times greater than property taxes for condominium or other ownership housing.^[24]

The Task Force recommends:

37. Align property taxes for purpose-built rental with those of condos and low-rise homes.

Make homeownership possible for hardworking Ontarians who want it

Home ownership has always been part of the Canadian dream. You don't have to look far back to find a time when the housing landscape was very different. The norm was for young people to rent an apartment in their twenties, work hard and save for a down payment, then buy their first home in their late twenties or early thirties. It was the same for many new Canadians: arrive, rent, work hard and buy. The house might be modest, but it brought a sense of ownership, stability and security. And after that first step onto the ownership ladder, there was always the possibility of selling and moving up. Home ownership felt like a real possibility for anyone who wanted it.

That's not how it works now. Too many young people who would like their own place are living with one or both parents well into adulthood.

The escalation of housing prices over the last decade has put the dream of homeownership out of reach of a growing number of aspiring first-time home buyers. While 73% of Canadians are homeowners, that drops to 48% for Black people, 47% for LGBTQ people^[5] (StatsCan is studying rates for other populations, including Indigenous People who are severely underhoused). This is also an issue for younger adults: a 2021 study showed only 24% of Torontonians aged 30 to 39 are homeowners.^[25]

In Canada, responsibility for Indigenous housing programs has historically been a shared between the federal and provincial governments. The federal government works closely with its provincial and territorial counterparts to improve access to housing for Indigenous peoples both on and off reserve. More than 85% of Indigenous people live in urban and rural areas, are 11 times more likely to experience homelessness and have incidence of housing need that is 52% greater than all Canadians. The Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls report mentions housing 299 times – the lack of which being a significant, contributing cause to violence and the provision of which as a significant, contributing solution. The Province of Ontario has made significant investments in Urban Indigenous Housing, but we need the Federal Government to re-engage as an active partner.

While measures to address supply will have an impact on housing prices, many aspiring homeowners will continue to face a gap that is simply too great to bridge through traditional methods.

The Task Force recognizes the need for caution about measures that would spur demand for housing before the supply bottleneck is fixed. At the same time, a growing number of organizations – both non-profit and for-profit are proposing a range of unique home equity models. Some of these organizations are aiming at households who have sufficient income to pay the mortgage but lack a sufficient down payment. Others are aiming at households who fall short in both income and down payment requirements for current market housing.

The Task Force heard about a range of models to help aspiring first-time home buyers, including:

- Shared equity models with a government, non-profit or for-profit lender holding a second “shared equity mortgage” payable at time of sale of the home
- Land lease models that allow residents to own their home but lease the land, reducing costs
- Rent-to-own approaches in which a portion of an occupant’s rent is used to build equity, which can be used as a down payment on their current unit or another market unit in the future
- Models where the equity gain is shared between the homeowner and the non-profit provider, such that the non-profit will always be able to buy the home back and sell it to another qualified buyer, thus retaining the home’s affordability from one homeowner to the next.

Proponents of these models identified barriers that thwart progress in implementing new solutions.

- The Planning Act limits land leases to a maximum of 21 years. This provision prevents home buyers from accessing the same type of mortgages from a bank or credit union that are available to them when they buy through traditional homeownership.
- The Perpetuities Act has a similar 21-year limit on any options placed on land. This limits innovative non-profit models from using equity formulas for re-sale and repurchase of homes.
- Land Transfer Tax (LTT) is charged each time a home is sold and is collected by the province; and in Toronto, this tax is also collected by the City. This creates a double-tax in rent-to-own/equity building models where LTT ends up being paid first by the home equity organization and then by the occupant when they are able to buy the unit.
- HST is charged based on the market value of the home. In shared equity models where the homeowner neither owns nor gains from the shared equity portion of their home, HST on the shared equity portion of the home simply reduces affordability.
- Residential mortgages are highly regulated by the federal government and reflective of traditional homeownership. Modifications in regulations may be required to adapt to new co-ownership and other models.

The Task Force encourages the Ontario government to devote further attention to avenues to support new homeownership options. As a starting point, the Task Force offers the following recommendations:

- 38.** Amend the Planning Act and Perpetuities Act to extend the maximum period for land leases and restrictive covenants on land to 40 or more years.
- 39.** Eliminate or reduce tax disincentives to housing growth.
- 40.** Call on the Federal Government to implement an Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy.
- 41.** Funding for pilot projects that create innovative pathways to homeownership, for Black, Indigenous, and marginalized people and first-generation homeowners.
- 42.** Provide provincial and federal loan guarantees for purpose-built rental, affordable rental and affordable ownership projects.

Support and incentivize scaling up housing supply

Our goal of building 1.5 million homes in ten years means doubling how many homes Ontario creates each year. As much as the Task Force’s recommendations will remove barriers to realizing this ambitious goal, we also need to ensure we have the capacity across Ontario’s communities to deliver this new housing supply. This includes capacity of our housing infrastructure, capacity within our municipal planning teams, and boots on the ground with the skills to build new homes.

There is much to be done and the price of failure for the people of Ontario is high. This is why the provincial government must make an unwavering commitment to keeping the spotlight on housing supply. This is also why the province must be dogged in its determination to galvanize and align efforts and incentives across all levels of government so that working together, we all can get the job done.

Our final set of recommendations turns to these issues of capacity to deliver, and the role the provincial government can play in putting the incentives and alignment in place to achieve the 1.5 million home goal.

Invest in municipal infrastructure

Housing can’t get built without water, sewage, and other infrastructure

When the Task Force met with municipal leaders, they emphasized how much future housing supply relies on having the water, storm water and wastewater systems, roads, sidewalks, fire stations, and all the other parts of community infrastructure to support new homes and new residents.

Infrastructure is essential where housing is being built for the first time. And, it can be a factor in intensification when added density exceeds the capacity of existing infrastructure, one of the reasons we urge new infrastructure in new developments to be designed for future capacity. In Ontario, there are multiple municipalities where the number one barrier to approving new housing projects is a lack of infrastructure to support them.

Municipalities face a myriad of challenges in getting this infrastructure in place. Often, infrastructure investments are required long before new projects are approved and funding must be secured. Notwithstanding the burden development charges place on the price of new housing, most municipalities report that development charges are still not enough to fully cover the costs of building new infrastructure and retrofitting existing infrastructure in neighbourhoods that are intensifying. Often infrastructure crosses municipal boundaries creating complicated and time-consuming “who pays?” questions. Municipal leaders also shared their frustrations with situations where new housing projects are approved and water, sewage and other infrastructure capacity is allocated to the project – only to have the developer land bank the project and put off building. Environmental considerations with new infrastructure add further cost and complexity. The Task Force recommends:

- 43. Enable municipalities, subject to adverse external economic events, to withdraw infrastructure allocations from any permitted projects where construction has not been initiated within three years of build permits being issued.**
- 44. Work with municipalities to develop and implement a municipal services corporation utility model for water and wastewater under which the municipal corporation would borrow and amortize costs among customers instead of using development charges.**

Create the Labour Force to meet the housing supply need

The labour force is shrinking in many segments of the market

You can't start to build housing without infrastructure. You can't build it without people – skilled trades people in every community who can build the homes we need.

The concern that we are already facing a shortage in skilled trades came through loud and clear in our consultations. We heard from many sources that our education system funnels young people to university rather than colleges or apprenticeships and creates the perception that careers in the skilled trades are of less value. Unions and builders are working to fill the pipeline domestically and recruit internationally, but mass retirements are making it challenging to maintain the workforce at its current level, let alone increase it.

Increased economic immigration could ease this bottleneck, but it appears difficult for a skilled labourer with no Canadian work experience to qualify under Ontario's rules. Moreover, Canada's immigration policies also favour university education over skills our economy and society desperately need. We ought to be welcoming immigrants with the skills needed to build roads and houses that will accommodate our growing population.

The shortage may be less acute, however, among smaller developers and contractors that could renovate and build new "missing middle" homes arising from the changes in neighbourhood zoning described earlier. These smaller companies tap into a different workforce from the one needed to build high rises and new subdivisions. Nonetheless, 1.5 million more homes will require a major investment in attracting and developing the skilled trades workforce to deliver this critically needed housing supply. We recommend:

45. Improve funding for colleges, trade schools, and apprenticeships; encourage and incentivize municipalities, unions and employers to provide more on-the-job training.
46. Undertake multi-stakeholder education program to promote skilled trades.
47. Recommend that the federal and provincial government prioritize skilled trades and adjust the immigration points system to strongly favour needed trades and expedite immigration status for these workers, and encourage the federal government to increase from 9,000 to 20,000 the number of immigrants admitted through Ontario's program.

Create a large Ontario Housing Delivery Fund to align efforts and incent new housing supply

Build alignment between governments to enable builders to deliver more homes than ever before

All levels of government play a role in housing.

The federal government sets immigration policy, which has a major impact on population growth and many tax policies. The province sets the framework for planning, approvals, and growth that municipalities rely upon, and is responsible for many other areas that touch on housing supply, like investing in highways and transit, training workers, the building code and protecting the environment. Municipalities are on the front lines, expected to translate the impacts of federal immigration policy, provincial guidance and other factors, some very localized, into official plans and the overall process through which homes are approved to be built.

The efficiency with which home builders can build, whether for-profit or non-profit, is influenced by policies and decisions at every level of government. In turn, how many home developers can deliver, and at what cost, translates directly into the availability of homes that Ontarians can afford.

Collectively, governments have not been sufficiently aligned in their efforts to provide the frameworks and incentives that meet the broad spectrum of housing needs in Ontario. Much action, though, has been taken in recent years.

- The Ontario government has taken several steps to make it easier to build additional suites in your own home: reduced disincentives to building rental housing, improved the appeal process, focused on density around transit stations, made upfront development charges more predictable, and provided options for municipalities to create community benefits through development.
- The federal government has launched the National Housing Strategy and committed over \$70 billion in funding.^[26] Most recently, it has announced a \$4 billion Housing Accelerator Fund aimed at helping municipalities remove barriers to building housing more quickly.^[27]
- Municipalities have been looking at ways to change outdated processes, rules, and ways of thinking that create delays and increases costs of delivering homes. Several municipalities have taken initial steps towards eliminating exclusionary zoning and addressing other barriers described in this report.

All governments agree that we are facing a housing crisis. Now we must turn the sense of urgency into action and alignment across governments.

Mirror policy changes with financial incentives aligned across governments

The policy recommendations in this report will go a long way to align efforts and position builders to deliver more homes.

Having the capacity in our communities to build these homes will take more than policy. It will take money. Rewarding municipalities that meet housing growth and approval timelines will help them to invest in system upgrades, hire additional staff, and invest in their communities. Similarly, municipalities that resist new housing, succumb to NIMBY pressure, and close off their neighbourhoods should see funding reductions. Fixing the housing crisis is a societal responsibility, and our limited tax dollars should be directed to those municipalities making the difficult but necessary choices to grow housing supply.

In late January 2022, the provincial government announced \$45 million for a new *Streamline Development Approval Fund* to “unlock housing supply by cutting red tape and improving processes for residential and industrial developments”.^[28] This is encouraging. More is needed.

Ontario should also receive its fair share of federal funding but today faces a shortfall of almost \$500 million,^[29] despite two thirds of the Canadian housing shortage being in Ontario. We call on the federal government to address this funding gap.

- 48.** The Ontario government should establish a large “Ontario Housing Delivery Fund” and encourage the federal government to match funding. This fund should reward:
 - a) Annual housing growth that meets or exceeds provincial targets
 - b) Reductions in total approval times for new housing
 - c) The speedy removal of exclusionary zoning practices
- 49.** Reductions in funding to municipalities that fail to meet provincial housing growth and approval timeline targets.

We believe that the province should consider partial grants to subsidize municipalities that waive development charges for affordable housing and for purpose-built rental.

Sustain focus, measure, monitor, improve

Digitize and modernize the approvals and planning process

Some large municipalities have moved to electronic tracking of development applications and/or electronic building permits (“e-permits”) and report promising results, but there is no consistency and many smaller places don’t have the capacity to make the change.

Municipalities, the provincial government and agencies use different systems to collect data and information relevant to housing approvals, which slows down processes and leaves much of the “big picture” blank. This could be addressed by ensuring uniform data architecture standards.

Improve the quality of our housing data to inform decision making

Having accurate data is key to understanding any challenge and making the best decisions in response. The Task Force heard from multiple housing experts that we are not always using the best data, and we do not always have the data we need.

Having good population forecasts is essential in each municipality as they develop plans to meet future land and housing needs. Yet, we heard many concerns about inconsistent approaches to population forecasts. In the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the forecast provided to municipalities by the province is updated only when the Growth Plan is updated, generally every seven years; but federal immigration policy, which is a key driver of growth, changes much more frequently. The provincial Ministry of Finance produces a population forecast on a more regular basis than the Growth Plan, but these are not used consistently across municipalities or even by other provincial ministries.

Population forecasts get translated into housing need in different ways across the province, and there is a lack of data about how (or whether) the need will be met. Others pointed to the inconsistent availability of land inventories. Another challenge is the lack of information on how much land is permitted and how much housing is actually getting built once permitted, and how fast. The Task Force also heard that, although the Provincial Policy Statement requires municipalities to maintain a three-year supply of short-term (build-ready) land and report it each year to the province, many municipalities are not meeting that requirement.

At a provincial and municipal level, we need better data on the housing we have today, housing needed to close the gap, consistent projections of what we need in the future, and data on how we are doing at keeping up. Improved data will help anticipate local and provincial supply bottlenecks and constraints, making it easier to determine the appropriate level and degree of response.

It will also be important to have better data to assess how much new housing stock is becoming available to groups that have been disproportionately excluded from home ownership and rental housing.

Put eyes on the crisis and change the conversation around housing

Ours is not the first attempt to “fix the housing system”. There have been efforts for years to tackle increasing housing prices and find solutions so everyone in Ontario can find and afford the housing they need. This time must be different.

The recommendations in this report must receive sustained attention, results must be monitored, significant financial investment by all levels of government must be made. And, the people of Ontario must embrace a housing landscape in which the housing needs of tomorrow’s citizens and those who have been left behind are given equal weight to the housing advantages of those who are already well established in homes that they own.

- 50.** Fund the adoption of consistent municipal e-permitting systems and encourage the federal government to match funding. Fund the development of common data architecture standards across municipalities and provincial agencies and require municipalities to provide their zoning bylaws with open data standards. Set an implementation goal of 2025 and make funding conditional on established targets.
- 51.** Require municipalities and the provincial government to use the Ministry of Finance population projections as the basis for housing need analysis and related land use requirements.
- 52.** Resume reporting on housing data and require consistent municipal reporting, enforcing compliance as a requirement for accessing programs under the Ontario Housing Delivery Fund.
- 53.** Report each year at the municipal and provincial level on any gap between demand and supply by housing type and location, and make underlying data freely available to the public.
- 54.** Empower the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to lead an all-of-government committee, including key provincial ministries and agencies, that meets weekly to ensure our remaining recommendations and any other productive ideas are implemented.
- 55.** Commit to evaluate these recommendations for the next three years with public reporting on progress.

Conclusion

We have set a bold goal for Ontario: building 1.5 million homes in the next 10 years.

We believe this can be done. What struck us was that everyone we talked to – builders, housing advocates, elected officials, planners – understands the need to act now. As one long-time industry participant said, “for the first time in memory, everyone is aligned, and we need to take advantage of that.”

Such unity of purpose is rare, but powerful.

To leverage that power, we offer solutions that are bold but workable, backed by evidence, and that position Ontario for the future.

Our recommendations focus on ramping up the supply of housing. Measures are already in place to try to cool demand, but they will not fill Ontario’s housing need. More supply is key. Building more homes will reduce the competition for our scarce supply of homes and will give Ontarians more housing choices. It will improve housing affordability across the board.

Everyone wants more Ontarians to have housing. So let’s get to work to build more housing in Ontario.

APPENDIX A:

Biographies of Task Force Members

Lalit Aggarwal is President of Manor Park Holdings, a real estate development and operating company active in Eastern Ontario. Previously, Lalit was an investor for institutional fund management firms, such as H.I.G. European Capital Partners, Soros Fund Management, and Goldman Sachs. He is a past fellow of the C.D. Howe Institute and a former Director of both Bridgepoint Health and the Centre for the Commercialization of Regenerative Medicine. Lalit holds degrees from the University of Oxford and the University of Pennsylvania. He is also a current Director of the Hospital for Sick Children Foundation, the Sterling Hall School and the Chair of the Alcohol & Gaming Commission of Ontario.

David Amborski is a professional Urban Planner, Professor at Ryerson University's School of Urban and Regional Planning and the founding Director of the Centre for Urban Research and Land Development (CUR). His research and consulting work explore topics where urban planning interfaces with economics, including land and housing markets. He is an academic advisor to the National Executive Forum on Public Property, and he is a member of Lambda Alpha (Honorary Land Economics Society). He has undertaken consulting for the Federal, Provincial and a range of municipal governments. Internationally, he has undertaken work for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, and several other organizations in Eastern Europe, Latin America, South Africa, and Asia. He also serves on the editorial boards of several international academic journals.

Andrew Garrett is a real estate executive responsible for growing IMCO's \$11+ Billion Global Real Estate portfolio to secure public pensions and insurance for Ontario families. IMCO is the only Ontario fund manager purpose built to onboard public clients such as pensions, insurance, municipal reserve funds, and endowments. Andrew has significant non-profit sector experience founding a B Corp certified social enterprise called WeBuild to help incubate social purpose real estate projects. He currently volunteers on non-profit boards supporting social purpose real estate projects, youth programs and the visual arts at Art Gallery

of Ontario. Andrew sits on board advisory committees for private equity firms and holds a Global Executive MBA from Kellogg School Management and a Real Estate Development Certification from MIT Centre for Real Estate.

Tim Hudak is the CEO of the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA). With a passion and voice for championing the dream of home ownership, Tim came to OREA following a distinguished 21-year career in politics, including five years as Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario.

In his role, Tim has focused on transforming OREA into Ontario's most cutting-edge professional association at the forefront of advocacy on behalf of REALTORS® and consumers, and providing world-class conferences, standard forms, leadership training and professional guidance to its Members. As part of his work at OREA, Tim was named one of the most powerful people in North American residential real estate by Swanepoel Power 200 for the last five years. Tim is married to Deb Hutton, and together they have two daughters, Miller and Maitland. In his spare time, Tim enjoys trails less taken on his mountain bike or hiking shoes as well as grilling outdoors.

Jake Lawrence was appointed Chief Executive Officer and Group Head, Global Banking and Markets in January 2021. In this role, Jake is responsible for the Bank's Global Banking and Markets business line and strategy across its global footprint. Jake joined Scotiabank in 2002 and has held progressively senior roles in Finance, Group Treasury and Global Banking and Markets. From December 2018 to January 2021, Jake was Co-Group Head of Global Banking and Markets with specific responsibility for its Capital Markets businesses, focused on building alignment across product groups and priority markets to best serve our clients throughout our global footprint. Previously, Jake was Executive Vice President and Head of Global Banking and Markets in the U.S., providing overall strategic direction and execution of Scotiabank's U.S. businesses. Prior to moving into GBM, Jake served as Senior Vice President and Deputy Treasurer, responsible for Scotiabank's wholesale funding activities and liquidity management as well as Senior Vice President, Investor Relations.

Julie Di Lorenzo (GPLLM, University of Toronto 2020), is self-employed since 1982, operates one of the largest female-run Real Estate Development Companies in North America. She was instrumental in the Daniel Burnham award-winning Ontario Growth Management Plan (2004) as President of BILD. Julie served as the first female-owner President of GTHBA (BILD) and on the boards of the Ontario Science Centre, Harbourfront Toronto, Tarion (ONHWP), St. Michael's Hospital, NEXT36, Waterfront Toronto, Chair of IREC Committee WT, Havergal College (Co-Chair of Facilities), York School (interim Vice-Chair), and Canadian Civil Liberties Association Board. Julie has served various governments in advisory capacity on Women's issues, Economic Development, Innovation and Entrepreneurship. Awards include Lifetime Achievement BILD 2017, ICCO Business Excellence 2005 & ICCO Businesswoman of the Year 2021.

Justin Marchand (CIHCM, CPA, CMA, BComm) is Métis and was appointed Chief Executive Officer of Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS) in 2018. Justin has over 20 years of progressive experience in a broad range of sectors, including two publicly listed corporations, a large accounting and consulting firm, and a major crown corporation, and holds numerous designations across financial, operations, and housing disciplines. He was most recently selected as Chair of the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association's (CHRA's) Indigenous Caucus Working Group and is also board member for CHRA. Justin is also an active board member for both the Coalition of Hamilton Indigenous Leadership (CHIL) as well as Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig, located in Bawaating. Justin believes that Housing is a fundamental human right and that when Indigenous people have access to safe, affordable, and culture-based Housing this provides the opportunity to improve other areas of their lives.

Ene Underwood is CEO of Habitat for Humanity Greater Toronto Area), a non-profit housing developer that helps working, lower income families build strength, stability and self-reliance through affordable homeownership. Homes are delivered through a combination of volunteer builds, contractor builds, and partnerships with non-profit and for-profit developers. Ene's career began in the private sector as a strategy consultant with McKinsey & Company before transitioning to not-for-profit sector leadership. Ene holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) from the University of Waterloo and a Master of Business Administration from Ivey Business School.

Dave Wilkes is the President and CEO of the Building Industry and Land Development Association of the GTA (BILD). The Association has 1,300 members and proudly represents builders, developers, professional renovators and those who support the industry.

Dave is committed to supporting volunteer boards and organizations. He has previously served on the George Brown College Board of Directors, Ontario Curling Association, and is currently engaged with Black North Initiative (Housing Committee) and R-Labs I+T Council.

Dave received his Bachelor of Arts (Applied Geography) from Ryerson.

APPENDIX B:

Affordable Housing

Ontario's affordable housing shortfall was raised in almost every conversation. With rapidly rising prices, more lower-priced market rental units are being converted into housing far out of reach of lower-income households. In parallel, higher costs to deliver housing and limited government funding have resulted in a net decrease in the number of affordable housing units run by non-profits. The result is untenable: more people need affordable housing after being displaced from the market at the very time that affordable supply is shrinking.

Throughout our consultations, we were reminded of the housing inequities experienced by Black, Indigenous and marginalized people. We also received submissions describing the unique challenges faced by off-reserve Indigenous Peoples both in the province's urban centres and in the north.

While many of the changes that will help deliver market housing will also help make it easier to deliver affordable housing, affordable housing is a societal responsibility. We cannot rely exclusively on for-profit developers nor on increases in the supply of market housing to fully solve the problem.

The non-profit housing sector faces all the same barriers, fees, risks and complexities outlined in this report as for-profit builders. Several participants from the non-profit sector referred to current or future partnerships with for-profit developers that tap into the development and construction expertise and efficiencies of the private sector. Successful examples of leveraging such partnerships were cited with Indigenous housing, supportive housing, and affordable homeownership.

We were also reminded by program participants that, while partnerships with for-profit developers can be very impactful, non-profit providers have unique competencies in the actual delivery of affordable housing. This includes confirming eligibility of affordable housing applicants, supporting independence of occupants of affordable housing, and ensuring affordable housing units remain affordable from one occupant to the next.

One avenue for delivering more affordable housing that has received much recent attention is inclusionary zoning. In simple terms, inclusionary zoning (IZ) requires developers to deliver a share of affordable units in new

housing developments in prescribed areas. The previous Ontario government passed legislation in April 2018 providing a framework within which municipalities could enact Inclusionary Zoning bylaws.

Ontario's first inclusionary zoning policy was introduced in fall 2021 by the City of Toronto and applies to major transit station areas. Internationally, inclusionary zoning has been used successfully to incentivize developers to create new affordable housing by providing density bonuses (more units than they would normally be allowed, if some are affordable) or reductions in government fees. Unfortunately, the City's approach did not include any incentives or bonuses. Instead, Toronto requires market-rate fees and charges for below-market affordable units. This absence of incentives together with lack of clarity on the overall density that will be approved for projects has led developers and some housing advocates to claim that these projects may be uneconomic and thus will not get financed or built. Municipalities shared with us their concerns regarding the restriction in the provincial IZ legislation that prohibits "cash in lieu" payments. Municipalities advised that having the option of accepting the equivalent value of IZ units in cash from the developer would enable even greater impact in some circumstances (for example, a luxury building in an expensive neighbourhood, where the cost of living is too high for a low-income resident).

Funding for affordable housing is the responsibility of all levels of government. The federal government has committed to large funding transfers to the provinces to support affordable housing. The Task Force heard, however, that Ontario's share of this funding does not reflect our proportionate affordable housing needs. This, in turn, creates further financial pressure on both the province and municipalities, which further exacerbates the affordable housing shortages in Ontario's communities.

Finally, many participants in Task Force consultations pointed to surplus government lands as an avenue for building more affordable housing and this is discussed in [Appendix C](#).

We have made recommendations throughout the report intended to have a positive impact on new affordable housing supply. We offer these additional recommendations specific to affordable housing:

- Call upon the federal government to provide equitable affordable housing funding to Ontario.
 - Develop and legislate a clear, province-wide definition of “affordable housing” to create certainty and predictability.
 - Create an Affordable Housing Trust from a portion of Land Transfer Tax Revenue (i.e., the windfall resulting from property price appreciation) to be used in partnership with developers, non-profits, and municipalities in the creation of more affordable housing units. This Trust should create incentives for projects serving and brought forward by Black- and Indigenous-led developers and marginalized groups.
- Amend legislation to:
 - Allow cash-in-lieu payments for Inclusive Zoning units at the discretion of the municipality.
 - Require that municipalities utilize density bonusing or other incentives in all Inclusionary Zoning and Affordable Housing policies that apply to market housing.
 - Permit municipalities that have not passed Inclusionary Zoning policies to offer incentives and bonuses for affordable housing units.
 - Encourage government to closely monitor the effectiveness of Inclusionary Zoning policy in creating new affordable housing and to explore alternative funding methods that are predictable, consistent and transparent as a more viable alternative option to Inclusionary Zoning policies in the provision of affordable housing.
 - Rebate MPAC market rate property tax assessment on below-market affordable homes.

APPENDIX C:

Government Surplus Land

Surplus government lands fell outside the mandate of the Task Force. However, this question came up repeatedly as a solution to housing supply. While we take no view on the disposition of specific parcels of land, several stakeholders raised issues that we believe merit consideration:

- Review surplus lands and accelerate the sale and development through RFP of surplus government land and surrounding land by provincially pre-zoning for density, affordable housing, and mixed or residential use.
- All future government land sales, whether commercial or residential, should have an affordable housing component of at least 20%.
- Purposefully upzone underdeveloped or underutilized Crown property (e.g., LCBO).
- Sell Crown land and reoccupy as a tenant in a higher density building or relocate services outside of major population centres where land is considerably less expensive.
- The policy priority of adding to the housing supply, including affordable units, should be reflected in the way surplus land is offered for sale, allowing bidders to structure their proposals accordingly.

APPENDIX D:

Surety Bonds

Moving to surety bonds would free up billions of dollars for building

When a development proposal goes ahead, the developer typically needs to make site improvements, such as installing common services. The development agreement details how the developer must perform to the municipality's satisfaction.

Up until the 1980s, it was common practice for Ontario municipalities to accept bonds as financial security for subdivision agreements and site plans. Today, however, they almost exclusively require letters of credit from a chartered bank. The problem with letters of credit is that developers are often required to collateralize the letter of credit dollar-for-dollar against the value of the municipal works they are performing.

Often this means developers can only afford to finance one or two housing projects at a time, constraining housing supply. The Ontario Home Builders' Association estimates that across Ontario, billions of dollars are tied up in collateral or borrowing capacity that could be used to advance more projects.

Modern "pay on demand surety bonds" are proven to provide the same benefits and security as a letter of credit, while not tying up private capital the way letters of credit do. Moving to this option would give municipalities across Ontario access to all the features of a letter of credit with the added benefit of professional underwriting, carried out by licensed bonding companies, ensuring that the developer is qualified to fulfill its obligations under the municipal agreement.

Most important from a municipal perspective, the financial obligation is secured. If a problem arises, the secure bond is fully payable by the bond company on demand. Surety companies, similar to banks, are regulated by Ontario's Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions to ensure they have sufficient funds in place to pay out bond claims.

More widespread use of this instrument could unlock billions of dollars of private sector financial liquidity that could be used to build new infrastructure and housing projects, provide for more units in each development and accelerate the delivery of housing of all types.

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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Making Life More Affordable This Tax Season with Tax Credits for Workers, Seniors and Families

Province offers wide range of credits for training, childcare and low-income workers

February 08, 2022

[Finance](#)

TORONTO — The Ontario government continues to deliver on its commitment to put more money in the pockets of seniors, workers and families by offering tax credits this tax season.

“The people of Ontario work hard and our government understands that taxpayers are under pressure,” said Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance. “As people gear up for another tax season, I want to encourage everyone to explore the credits they could be eligible to receive.”

Ontario residents should file their 2021 Income Tax and Benefit Return to get tax credits and benefits, even if they have no taxable income to report. The government’s suite of tax credits and benefits includes:

- The [Ontario Jobs Training Tax Credit](#) helps workers get training that may be needed for a career shift, re-training or to sharpen their skills. The credit provides up to \$2,000 in relief for 50 per cent of a person’s eligible expense. The government is extending this tax credit to the 2022 tax year, to help more workers continue to upgrade their skills and transition back to the labour force.
- The [Seniors' Home Safety Tax Credit](#) helps make seniors’ homes safer and more accessible so they can stay in their homes longer. The credit is worth 25 per cent of up to \$10,000 in eligible expenses for a senior’s principal residence in Ontario, to a maximum credit of \$2,500. The government is also extending this tax credit to the 2022 tax year, to help seniors who may not have had a chance to use it in 2021.
- The [Low-Income Workers Tax Credit](#), known as Low-income Individuals and Families Tax (LIFT) Credit, provides up to \$850 each year in Ontario personal income tax relief to low-income workers, and can be used to reduce or eliminate an individual’s Ontario personal income tax, excluding the Ontario Health Premium.
- The [Ontario Child Care Tax Credit](#) (known as Ontario Childcare Access and Relief from Expenses (CARE) Tax Credit), which puts more money in the pockets of families and provides the flexibility they need to choose the child care options that work best for them. The government is providing a 20 per cent top-up to this tax credit for 2021, increasing support from \$1,250 to \$1,500, on average.
- The [Ontario Seniors' Public Transit Tax Credit](#) is a refundable tax credit to help seniors with public transit costs.
- The [Ontario Energy and Property Tax Credit](#) is a refundable tax credit to help low to moderate income individuals and seniors with property taxes and sales tax on energy costs.
- The [Northern Ontario Energy Credit](#) is a refundable tax credit to help Northern Ontarians with higher home energy costs.

Individuals and families should also save their receipts for local travel in 2022, to claim the [Ontario Staycation Tax Credit](#) next tax season.

This tax credit encourages Ontario families to explore the province, helping the tourism and hospitality sectors recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. It allows Ontario residents to claim 20 per cent of their eligible 2022 accommodation expenses (for example, for a stay at an eligible hotel, cottage or campground) of up to \$1,000 as an individual or \$2,000 if you have a spouse, common-law partner or eligible children, to get back up to \$200 as an individual or \$400 as a family.

These tax credits build on the government’s efforts to make life more affordable for people and families, such as:

- As of January 18, 2022, electricity prices for residential, small businesses and farms who pay regulated rates set by the Ontario Energy Board were automatically set to the off-peak rate of 8.2 cents per kilowatt-hour, less than half the cost of the current on-peak rate, for 24 hours a day until February 7. This measure supported workers and families spending more time at home while the province was in Modified Step Two.

- As of January 1, 2022, the government of Ontario increased the general minimum wage to \$15.00 per hour, and eliminated the separate minimum wage for liquor servers, raising their hourly wage to \$15.00. With this change, more than 760,000 workers in Ontario are expected to see their take-home earnings increase.
 - The provincial government's housing policies under [More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan](#) are working to make housing more affordable by increasing the supply of the full range of housing options, from single-family homes to midrise housing to apartment buildings, and the [Housing Affordability Task Force](#) has provided the government with recommendations on additional measures to address market housing supply and affordability. Premier Doug Ford and Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, also met with big city mayors and regional chairs at the Ontario-Municipal Housing Summit on January 19, 2022 to coordinate efforts to increase the supply of all kinds of housing across the province. Premier Ford and Minister Clark also met with smaller, rural, remote, and northern municipalities at the Rural Housing Roundtable on January 23 to discuss their unique experiences with the housing crisis and other opportunities to collaborate to increase supply.
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Quick Facts

- The deadline for most individuals to file their personal 2021 Income Tax and Benefit Return is Monday, May 2, 2022.
 - Individuals can plan ahead and save time filing by using the Canada Revenue Agency's suite of [digital services](#) to view and update their information in advance.
 - The government is also improving cash flows for Ontario businesses by making up to \$7.5 billion available through a six-month interest- and penalty-free period for Ontario businesses to make payments for most provincially administered taxes. This penalty and interest-free period started on January 1, 2022. This supports businesses now and provides the flexibility they will need for long-term planning.
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Additional Resources

- Find out what benefits you may be eligible to claim by answering a few questions through Ontario's anonymous [Find Benefits and Programs](#) service.
-

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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Takes Action to Protect Students and Children

First Canadian Jurisdiction to Disclose Criminal Proceedings on Public Registers

February 08, 2022

[Education](#)

MAPLE — To further protect students and children, Ontario is becoming the first Canadian jurisdiction to publicly disclose and make parents and guardians aware of educators that have been involved in sexual abuse and other serious criminal proceedings. Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education, joined by Jane McKenna, Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues, announced this change to ensure that parents are aware of information related to the safety and security of their children and to deliver greater transparency for families. The Government also announced that all certified educators must now complete a comprehensive mandatory sexual abuse prevention program – the only province in Canada to do so.

While these actions build upon other measures the government has taken to combat professional misconduct in schools and child care settings, it is clear that more must be done to inform parents of criminal proceedings *before* a verdict is imposed.

Minister Lecce has already announced a series of actions to strengthen safety, including:

- Lifetime bans on any educator who has engaged in physical sexual relations with a student or is involved in any way with child pornography.
- The lifetime ban imposed on educators for engaging in physical sexual abuse of students and children also applies retroactively for previous similar acts by teachers and early childhood educators whose memberships were reinstated or were not revoked in the first place.
- A requirement that both the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) and the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE) provide funding for therapy and counselling to students and children who are victims of sexual abuse, a prohibited act involving pornography or prescribed sexual acts prohibited under the *Criminal Code* (Canada).
- A requirement to make publicly available information about disciplinary decisions made by the Colleges' Discipline Committees, including for less serious acts leading to reprimands and admonishments, on the OCT and CECE registers and websites on a permanent basis.

The Government of Ontario is taking further action now by giving clear authority to the OCT and CECE to make information public about criminal proceedings involving their members on the public registers. In the interest of transparency, parents are able to know which educators have been involved in criminal proceedings that are relevant to their practice, when such information is known to the Colleges.

"Our government takes a zero-tolerance approach for anyone who would abuse or threaten children," said Minister Lecce. "I ensured that any educator involved in this heinous criminality faces a life ban from working in any school or licensed child care program again, along with a permanent record on a public registry. We are going further by making information about criminal proceedings related to teachers and early childhood educators public with one aim: to protect the safety of Ontario's children."

These changes are some of the ways the Ontario government is taking action to make the education profession more accountable to families, with a zero-tolerance approach to crimes against students and children.

In addition to promoting greater transparency, the government is firmly committed to prevention by stopping sexual abuse before it begins. As of January 1, at the direction of the Minister of Education, the OCT has put in place a sexual abuse prevention program that all certified OCT members in good standing are required to complete by September 15, 2022. New and returning OCT applicants from January 1, 2022, are required to complete the sexual abuse prevention program (along with all other certification requirements) to receive their certifications. For the CECE, completion of the sexual abuse prevention program will form a component of all members' continuous professional learning, beginning in July 2022.

Educators across Ontario ensure that students and children have access to high-quality education and child care that support their learning, development and well-being. Whether it is in classrooms, child care facilities, including EarlyON Child and Family Centres, or before- and after-school programs, these dedicated professionals are helping to put students and children on a path to success. The Ontario government values the important role that educators across the province play to support young learners and give them the best start in life. These changes are focused on protecting what matters most – our students and children – with the full support of the OCT and CECE.

Quick Facts

- The Ontario government has released [Keeping Students Safe – Policy Framework for School Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols](#), which requires all school boards to put in place local anti-sex trafficking protocols. The government is also [investing \\$2.4 million](#) in necessary training and resources to ensure school boards and school staff have the tools to recognize, identify, respond and prevent the sex trafficking of children and youth.
 - In the elementary [Health and Physical Education curriculum](#), which was updated in 2019, students learn to recognize and assess potentially dangerous situations, including online scenarios. Students learn skills to identify, develop and maintain healthy relationships, to identify and respond to exploitive and coercive behaviour, and how to seek help as needed. Students learn strategies and decision-making skills that can be used to prevent or respond to situations of verbal, physical, and social bullying, and sexual harassment.
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Quotes

"The safety of children in every classroom is our top priority. To help ensure every learning environment is free from abuse, we're taking decisive action to provide parents with information on educators who have been involved in sexual abuse or other serious criminal proceedings."

- Jane McKenna
Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues

"The College has been working with the government to better protect student safety inside and outside of the classroom. We are pleased to see more proactive steps toward providing the public with greater protection and strengthened accountability."

- Diana Miles
Council Chair, Ontario College of Teachers

"Transparency is key to our student safety mandate. We will always welcome improvements that strengthen the public register's role as a vital resource for parents and families."

- Dr. Derek Haime
OCT, Registrar and CEO, Ontario College of Teachers

"The College of Early Childhood Educators shares the government's commitment to safeguarding Ontario's youngest learners and welcomes these changes, which reflect our practice of transparent information-sharing and the profession's commitment to ongoing learning and the protection of children."

- Beth Deazeley
Registrar and CEO, College of Early Childhood Educators

"We support the steps taken by government today to further protect children and youth at schools and in child care settings. We welcome opportunities to continue working towards changes that centre on the rights and holistic safety of children and youth and support vulnerable children, youth and families."

- Nicole Bonnie
CEO, Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies

Additional Resources

- [Ontario Regulation 563/21: General \(under the Ontario College of Teachers Act\)](#)
- [Ontario Regulation 176/10: Teachers' Qualifications \(under the Ontario College of Teachers Act\)](#)

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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Extending Free Rides to Vaccination Sites for People with Mobility Issues

Helping more Ontarians get vaccinated

February 08, 2022

[Seniors and Accessibility](#)

TORONTO — The Ontario government is helping vulnerable Ontarians get safe and reliable access to COVID-19 vaccines and booster shots by extending the Accessible Drive to Vaccines program to March 31, 2022.

This investment of \$3.7 million will help people with disabilities, including seniors with mobility issues, get transportation to and from vaccination sites. Children aged 5 to 11 with disabilities or mobility issues, along with their parent or caregiver, are also eligible for this initiative.

[Accessible Drive to Vaccines](#) is delivered in partnership with the Ontario Community Support Association. The program connects eligible individuals with rides to vaccination sites across the province, provided by staff and volunteers who will pick them up and take them home after their vaccine appointment.

“Our government is supporting Ontarians who may have trouble getting to a vaccination site due to mobility issues and lack of accessible transportation,” said Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility. “Extending this program will mean more people can get their vaccinations and boosters, providing greater protection from COVID-19 to all Ontarians.”

The Accessible Drive to Vaccines program prioritizes people who cannot get to vaccine sites through transportation from family members, neighbours or community organizations.

“Our community support service providers have been providing safe, reliable rides to vaccination sites for vulnerable people from the start,” said Deborah Simon, CEO of the Ontario Community Support Association. “This funding ensures they can continue to provide this vital support, and extends the reach of these important community programs so that people can continue to get vaccinated and stay healthy and protected in this pandemic.”

All Ontarians over age 18 are eligible for COVID-19 booster shots three months after their second dose. Vaccinations and boosters are vital tools in Ontario’s fight against the pandemic.

Quick Facts

- Individuals must have a vaccine appointment booked for the date of transportation requested.
 - Eligible individuals must be a person with a disability within the meaning of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.
 - One caregiver or support person can accompany the eligible individual for their vaccine appointment.
-

Additional Resources

- [COVID-19: Supports for seniors and people with disabilities](#)
 - [How to book an Accessible Drive to Vaccine](#)
-

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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Extending Health Card Renewal Requirement

Individuals Have Until September 30, 2022 to Renew

February 09, 2022

[Health](#)

TORONTO — The Ontario government is extending the requirement to renew health cards until September 30, 2022.

"In response to the pandemic our government extended the renewal requirements for Ontario health cards," said Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. "While the majority of Ontarians have continued to renew their documents throughout the pandemic, we are committed to ensuring all Ontarians have the opportunity to renew while continuing to access the care they need, when they need it."

Ontarians will continue to be able to use their expired health card, including a red and white health card, to access insured health care services. Health care providers can continue to accept expired health cards following the previous February 28, 2022 deadline.

To make it easier and more convenient for Ontarians to renew health cards online, ServiceOntario is taking steps to enable online health card renewal using Ontario Photo Cards in the coming months.

An individual who faces difficulties renewing their health card, for whatever reason, should contact ServiceOntario at 1-866-532-3161 (TTY : 1-800-387-5559) to inquire about options for their specific situation.

Additional Resources

- [Health card renewal](#)
 - For public inquiries call ServiceOntario, INFOLine at 1-866-532-3161 (Toll-free in Ontario only)
-

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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Expands Plan to Combat Islamophobia in Schools

Additional Investment to Support Resources to Fight Discrimination

February 09, 2022

[Education](#)

[Citizenship and Multiculturalism](#)

MISSISSAUGA — The Ontario government continues to invest in its plan to challenge Islamophobia and provide new supports and programs for students who have experienced discrimination. Too many students in Ontario schools face hate, racism, and divisive rhetoric that has no place in this province or country.

To decisively counter the threat of racism in schools and communities, Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education, joined by Parm Gill, Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism, and Kaleed Rasheed, Member of Provincial Parliament for Mississauga East-Cooksville, announced funding and partnerships that will help create province-wide guides, resources, and materials to counter Islamophobic narratives in culture, online, and in the classroom. The resources are designed for school staff and students, and to support Muslim families, students, and educators.

As reported by Toronto Police, hate crimes across all categories rose 51 per cent in 2020 and kept rising in 2021. In 2020, the Muslim Association of Canada's (MAC) Masjid Toronto saw six major incidents at both of its locations since the start of the pandemic, including spray-painted racial slurs and broken glass.

As part of Priorities and Partnerships Funding (PPF) COVID-19 Equity Supports, and in support of Muslim students in Ontario's publicly funded school system, the provincial government is providing:

- \$150,000 to the Muslim Association of Canada to create new resources, including online courses, training modules, videos, and a web-based tool for educators, mentors, newcomer students, and parents. These resources will address mental health and well-being issues in connection with racism, discrimination, and the pandemic.
- \$50,000 to Naseeha Youth Helpline to support the growing demand for counselling support from Muslim students as well as racialized students, parents, and families during the pandemic. The funding will enhance Naseeha's capacity to provide direct supports and resources.

"We have one message to racist bullies in our schools: it ends now," said Minister Lecce. "Senseless attacks and hateful rhetoric against Canadians of Islamic faith – including students and staff – underscore why we are taking further action to counter Islamophobic narratives in culture, online, and in the classroom. Developed by Muslim leaders and youth, these province-wide resources will empower educators, parents, and students to address racism head-on to inspire change, respect, and inclusion."

The announcement builds on past initiatives intended to support safe and welcoming schools, including targeted investments for [Muslim students](#). This includes partnerships with Muslim-led organizations to counter racism and empower students and communities to confront hate wherever they see it.

Last year, Ontario provided:

- \$225,000 to the Muslim Association of Canada that supported the development of digital resources for educators, students, and parents to raise awareness about Islamophobia.
 - \$50,000 to the National Council of Canadian Muslims, which implemented community check-in sessions for Muslim newcomer families in multiple languages in locations across the province.
-

Quick Facts

- For this school year, Ontario's Priorities and Partnerships Funding (PPF) COVID-19 Equity Supports includes funding for initiatives that focus on combatting racism and other forms of discrimination, including anti-Asian racism, Islamophobia

and [antisemitism](#), promoting equity and academic success for Black youth and families, and supporting newcomer parents.

- As part of the Safe Return to Class Fund, the Ontario government directed \$6.4 million to support equity-related projects. This included funding to community organizations to address anti-Asian hate, antisemitism, and Islamophobia support for Black, Indigenous and 2SLGBTQI+ students as well as support for newcomer youth, parents, and families to enhance access to school and community resources, and culturally appropriate mental health and well-being supports for youth, families, and teachers.
- [On January 31, 2022](#), the Ontario government announced it was doubling its investment in the [Anti-Racism Anti-Hate Grant Program](#) and bringing the total funding for the grant program to \$3.2 million over two years. The funding will help support more community-led public education and awareness projects.
- To hold educators accountable for racist remarks and behaviour, Ontario amended regulations to explicitly set out remarks and behaviours that expose persons to hatred based on a prohibited ground of discrimination under the Human Rights Code as acts of professional misconduct, effective November 5, 2020.
- Ontario requires all school boards to have an anti-bullying policy in place to help foster more welcoming and supportive school communities. As announced in November 2021, for the first time, there are specific references regarding religiously motivated discrimination, such as anti-Islamophobia, along with discrimination based on sexual orientation, and racism.

Quotes

"One of the greatest strengths we have as a province comes from our cultural and religious diversity, and this is reflected in schools and classrooms across Ontario. Our government remains committed to creating conditions that combat racism, and today's announcement is another important step toward ensuring classrooms are free from discrimination and students can feel safe and secure in their schools. "

- Parm Gill

Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism

"I would like to thank Minister Lecce for his dedication and involvement with the Muslim community to help the fight against Islamophobia. This is a continuation of our government's commitment to make our province safer and more inclusive. Our government, under the leadership of Premier Ford, has been with the Muslim community every step of the way. When we were told more funding supports were needed to combat Islamophobia, we listened and have acted in a meaningful way by providing support to the Muslim Association of Canada and Naseeha Youth Helpline to create new resources to address mental health and racial discrimination."

- Kaleed Rasheed

Member of Provincial Parliament for Mississauga East-Cooksville.

"We all share a responsibility in the fight against hate and discrimination in Ontario and across the country. The Muslim Association of Canada is dedicated to working with the Government of Ontario to ensure that Muslim students learn in an environment that is free of Islamophobia and intolerance. Offering resources and tools to students to support their mental health and well-being will be built on the success of our www.IslamAwareness.ca web portal, which was established in collaboration with the Ministry of Education."

- Sharaf Sharafeldin

Executive Director of the Muslim Association of Canada

"We are seeing the effects of COVID-19 every day at Naseeha, and the challenges Muslims and other racialized groups are facing. Social isolation, violence, and other unhealthy behaviours affecting students must end. Increasing our capacity through this funding will have a direct impact in our ability to answer more calls and build on much-needed support systems."

- Muhsin Kermalli
Executive Director of Naseeha Youth Helpline

Additional Resources

- [Ontario Combatting Islamophobia in Schools](#)
- [Historic Level of Public Education Funding With Additional Supports to Keep Students and Staff Safe](#)
- [Education Funding, 2021-22](#)

Related Topics

Education and Training

Learn about Ontario's early years, education and training systems. Includes information on child care, elementary schools, secondary schools, colleges, universities, skills training and financial aid. [Learn more](#)

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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Investigating Options for New Ultra-Low Overnight Electricity Rate

New electricity price plan could reduce electricity bills, benefit shift workers and support electric vehicle adoption

February 09, 2022

[Energy](#)

MISSISSAUGA – Ontario’s Energy Minister Todd Smith has asked the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) to provide him with options to implement a new ultra-low overnight Time-of-Use electricity price plan as the province continues to provide Ontario families with more ways to save money and take more control of their energy bills. The new ultra-low overnight rate could help shift workers and residential consumers that use more electricity at night save money while supporting electric vehicle (EV) adoption, by reducing overnight EV charging costs when province-wide electricity demand is lower. Today, Ontario also launched a public consultation on the proposal.

“Our government has reversed the trend of skyrocketing electricity prices and given families and businesses more control when it comes to their energy bills,” said Todd Smith, Minister of Energy. “Introduction of a new ultra-low overnight price plan that would benefit shift workers and support EV adoption is our next step as we focus on helping electricity customers save money and take more control of their energy bills.”

Since the Ontario Government introduced [Customer Choice](#) in 2020, many residential and small business consumers have benefitted from switching their electricity pricing plan to one that best suits their lifestyle or business – either Time-of-Use or Tiered. The introduction of a third electricity price plan would give even more control to families and small businesses to find savings and reduce their electricity costs.

Delivery of a new ultra-low overnight price is possible as Ontario continues to have excess electricity during overnight hours. Shifting electricity use to these hours would make better use of Ontario’s clean electricity supply when province-wide demand is low, increasing grid efficiency and generating value for all Ontario ratepayers. An ultra-low overnight rate could also further support decarbonization by using more nighttime electricity, which is typically generated from non-emitting resources. Supporting EV adoption through lowering overnight charging costs also supports objectives in the government’s [Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan](#) and [Driving Prosperity automotive sector strategy](#).

“Since taking office, our government has introduced significant initiatives to help Ontario families and businesses save money,” said Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. “As outlined in our Driving Prosperity auto plan, Ontario is uniquely positioned to be a North American hub for developing and building the car of the future and this new ultra-low overnight electricity price plan is an example of the new initiatives we’re implementing to secure long-term success and growth for the benefit of Ontario’s auto workers and the communities that depend on it.”

Minister Smith’s [letter to the OEB](#) requests the OEB to examine and report back by April 2022 on potential designs for a new optional Time-of-Use price plan featuring an ultra-low overnight rate. The government will consider the OEB’s report along with stakeholder feedback received through the public consultation on the Environmental Registry of Ontario with the intention of making the new price plan available to customers by April 2023.

“Electric vehicles are a powerful tool in the fight against climate change and a critical way to reduce emissions,” said David Piccini, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. “Making EVs more affordable and building them in Ontario are just some of the ways we are empowering Ontarians to do their part to create a cleaner, greener future for our province.”

“Helping Ontarians keep more money in their pockets is a priority for our government. This new initiative will help electric vehicle owners save on costs, while also supporting the use of these environmentally-friendly vehicles across the province,” said Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation. “As we build Ontario’s transportation network for the future, we continue to invest in low-carbon travel options that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and get people where they need to go.”

Quick Facts

- The Independent Electricity System Operator's [2021 Annual Planning Outlook](#) projected an annual growth rate of 22 per cent in electric vehicle electricity demand by 2042. Ontario generates electricity at a lower cost, while emitting less carbon in its generation during overnight hours.
- As of November 1, 2020, most families, small businesses, and farms now have a choice between electricity rate plans: a Time-of-Use rate or Tiered rate plan.
- The Auditor General advised in 2014 that a more significant difference between on-peak and off-peak electricity pricing would have a more tangible impact on consumption patterns.
- This work builds on pilots commissioned by the [OEB to test new pricing structures](#), including one led by Alectra Utilities where participants opted into being charged a higher on-peak electricity price in exchange for an ultra-low overnight price.

Quotes

"Today's announcement recognizes that electricity is an essential fuel for the province's economic recovery and electrification is key to economic growth. It is also supported by the EDA's own research that shows a new rate model would make Ontarians more likely to buy an electric vehicle. Ontario's local hydro utilities are ready and able to assist, operate, and own charging infrastructure services to plug in the growing demand for private and public electrified transportation."

- Teresa Sarkesian
President and CEO, Electricity Distributors Association

"We know that about 80% of electric vehicle (EV) drivers plug their cars in at home at night. An ultra-low off peak rate makes so much sense as it does two important things - it makes driving an EV even more affordable and at the same time helps the province by making using the surplus power available off peak. It's a win-win!"

- Cara Clairman
President and CEO, Plug'n Drive

"I am extremely pleased that Alectra's pilot has helped create an opportunity for another electricity rate plan option for Ontarians. This new rate will attract and reward electric vehicle users, incent consumption behaviours that help us better manage the electricity grid, and provide our customers with the choice that they value."

- Brian Bentz
President and CEO, Alectra Inc.

"Our government understands the past two years have been incredibly challenging. The new ultra-low overnight Time-of-Use electricity price plan is just another example of the many ways we are helping families and businesses across the province save money and take control of their energy bills."

- Nina Tangri
MPP for Mississauga–Streetsville

Additional Resources

[Electricity Price Plans](#)

Learn about the different types of electricity price plans you can choose from.

[Find programs to reduce your electricity bill](#)

Learn about programs and credits to reduce your electricity bill.

[Made-In-Ontario Environment Plan](#)

Learn about Ontario's plan to address climate change and protect our air, land and water.

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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Expanding Access to Free Rapid Tests for General Public

5 Million Free Rapid Tests Available Each Week at over 2,300 Pharmacy and Grocery Stores Across the Province

February 09, 2022

[Health](#)

TORONTO — To further support the province's cautious easing of public health measures, the Ontario government is expanding access to free rapid testing kits to the general public for at-home use. As a result of the province's direct procurement, Ontario will be distributing 5 million rapid tests each week for eight weeks through pharmacy and grocery locations across the province, as well as 500,000 each week through community partners in vulnerable communities. In total, the province is making 44 million rapid tests available to the public for free over the coming weeks.

"As we continue to carefully ease public health measures, rapid tests are providing another layer of protection and offer the public an additional tool to confidently do the things they love, like visiting family or dining at their favourite local restaurant," said Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. "In addition to the millions of rapid tests deployed each week to support priority settings, including hospitals, long-term care homes and schools, working with our retail and community partners we are increasing access to at-home rapid tests."

Starting February 9, over 2,300 participating grocery and pharmacy locations will provide free rapid tests while supplies last, with a limit of one box of five tests per household per visit. Participating retailers will receive additional supply from the province each week and have the ability to determine how tests are distributed in order to best serve the community, including through appointment bookings, at checkout or through online orders. The province intends to bring additional locations online in the coming weeks, including independent grocers and pharmacies. A list of participating retailers as well as information on how retail locations are distributing rapid test kits can be found at [Ontario.ca/rapidtest](https://ontario.ca/rapidtest).

To support access to tests for communities that have been impacted disproportionately by COVID-19 and face barriers to testing, including language, income and transportation, lead agencies working as part of the [High Priority Communities Strategy](#) will be distributing rapid tests through existing local partnerships, such as community centres, community health centres, places of worship, and food banks. Lead agencies will also have discretion to provide additional boxes depending on individual circumstances, such as a multi-generational home or an immunocompromised family member.

"Providing expanded access to testing for Ontarians will support the province's cautious approach to easing public health measures," said Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health. "While testing is a critical component in our response to COVID-19, vaccination remains the best defence against the virus and its variants. Over the next few months, we need to continue following the public health measures that remain in place and vaccinate those who have yet to receive their doses to protect our communities and health care system capacity."

Providing expanded access to free rapid testing kits to the general population builds on Ontario's comprehensive testing strategy focused on the province's priority sectors and workplaces. Over 10 million rapid tests are deployed weekly to these sites and any other sector eligible for the [Provincial Antigen Screening Program](#). As of February 8, over 75 million rapid antigen tests have been deployed since November 2020, with over 33 million deployed to priority sectors to provide an additional layer of protection for hospitals, long-term care and retirement homes. Additionally, approximately 26 million tests have been deployed to support school and licensed child care settings.

To date, Ontario has directly procured a total of about 157 million rapid tests, including 126 million between December 2021 and January 2022 alone. Ontario continues to also work closely with the federal government to address delays in shipments from Health Canada and is also directly procuring additional rapid tests where possible to ensure continued widespread access to rapid antigen tests for Ontarians. Of the 54.3 million rapid tests the federal government committed to provide Ontario in January, about 36 million have been delivered.

Quick Facts

- Free rapid tests provided by the government are intended for personal use. The province can fine any businesses and individuals who may be in breach of the government's emergency order which prohibits charging unfair prices for necessary goods.
- A person who tests positive on a rapid antigen test is no longer required or encouraged to get a confirmatory PCR or rapid molecular test. If you test positive on a PCR, rapid molecular or a rapid antigen test, you must isolate. Visit [Ontario.ca/exposed](https://ontario.ca/exposed) to learn more about isolation directions.
- As part of the Provincial Antigen Screening Program, 3.62 million rapid antigen tests are being shipped biweekly to the education and child care sectors for use when children or staff are symptomatic.
- PCR testing is available for [eligible individuals](#) at over 250 assessment centres or community labs, in addition to over 760 participating pharmacies, many of which offer pick-up/drop-off of self-collection kits. Visit [Ontario.ca/covidtestinglocations](https://ontario.ca/covidtestinglocations) to find a testing location.
- [On January 31, 2022](#), Ontario began its cautious and phased approach to easing public health measures, including increasing or maintaining capacity limits at 50 per cent in select indoor public settings as well as increasing social gathering limits to 10 people indoors and 25 people outdoors.
- Ontario has received a limited supply of Paxlovid from the federal government and is prioritizing treatment for individuals at the highest risk of severe outcomes. Visit Ontario's [webpage](#) to learn if you are eligible to receive COVID-19 antiviral treatment and where to get it.

Quotes

"Everyone at Walmart Canada has had an enormous sense of pride to be part of helping turn the tide on the COVID pandemic. From our associates providing an essential service to our pharmacists administering more than 800,000 vaccines – Walmart has been there. Now, we are pleased to help ensure more people have access to free Rapid Antigen Tests. From the very beginning of this pandemic, our goal has always been to help as many customers as possible and our commitment to our customers' health and well-being is stronger than ever."

- Shelly Kiroff

Senior Vice President, Health and Wellness, Pharmacy, Walmart Canada

"By providing free access to rapid test kits, the Ontario Government, in partnership with grocery and pharmacy retailers, is reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission. In addition to getting a third booster shot, community testing acts as a powerful way to reduce the spread of contagion, by diagnosing early and isolating. Today's support by grocery and pharmacy retailers in delivering test kits to communities shows us all how, working together, we can support the safe reopening of Ontario."

- Diane J. Brisebois

President and CEO, Retail Council of Canada

"Across the province, millions of Ontarians visit our grocery and pharmacy locations each week, and our teams have stepped up in many ways to support public health measures to combat COVID-19. Today, we're happy to continue that work, distributing free rapid tests provided by the Ontario government in nearly 700 of our locations, making testing convenient and accessible to customers in almost every community."

- Anthony Spina

SVP Pharmacy, Loblaw Companies Limited

"Expanding access to free rapid testing kits at pharmacies is another important milestone in Ontario's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ontarians across the province can now pick up a free rapid testing kit from participating neighbourhood pharmacies, to test safely and effectively at home. This initiative will reduce the spread of COVID-19 by making it convenient for the public to test and make informed decisions."

- Sherif Guorgui
co-CEO/Chief Strategy, Stakeholder & Government Relations Officer, OnPharm-United

"The Sobeys team is so proud to support the rapid antigen test kit distribution in Ontario. Since day one of the pandemic, the health and safety of our teammates and our communities has been our top priority. Across Canada, our teammates have been on the front line of ensuring that our customers had access to the essentials throughout the pandemic. We recognize that rapid testing is another important part of reducing the risk of asymptomatic transmission, and we thank the Ministry of Health for inviting us to participate in the vital distribution of these free testing kits in our communities."

- Krista Payne
Vice President of Operations : Sobeys Full Service, Sobeys Inc.

Additional Resources

- [Ontario Outlines Steps to Cautiously and Gradually Ease Public Health Measures](#)
- [Ontario Updating Public Health Measures and Guidance in Response to Omicron](#)
- [COVID-19 Integrated Testing & Case, Contact and Outbreak Management Interim Guidance: Omicron Surge](#)
- For public inquiries, please contact the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900 (TTY for people who are deaf, hearing-impaired or speech-impaired: 1-866-797-0007).
- For resources in multiple languages to help local communication efforts in responding to COVID-19, visit Ontario's [COVID-19 communication resources webpage](#).
- Visit Ontario's [website](#) to learn more about how the province continues to protect the people of Ontario from COVID-19.
- Business who have questions about public health and workplace safety measures can call the Stop the Spread Business Information Line at 1-888-444-3659.
- For public inquiries call ServiceOntario, INFOline at 1-866-532-3161 (Toll-free in Ontario only)

Related Topics

Government

Learn about the government services available to you and how government works. [Learn more](#)

Health and Wellness

Get help navigating Ontario's health care system and connecting with the programs or services you're looking for. [Learn more](#)

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Kaila Zamojski

From: Honourable Lisa MacLeod, Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries
<minister.macleod@ontario.ca>
Sent: February 9, 2022 2:12 PM
To: Kaila Zamojski
Subject: Now Open: Applications for the Ontario Small Business Relief Support Grant



Honourable Lisa MacLeod
Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries



On February 8th, the government announced that eligible small businesses required to close in early January under the modified Step Two of the Roadmap to Reopen can apply for the Ontario COVID-19 Small Business Relief Grant (OSBRG).

The Ontario Small Business Relief Grant application portal is now open until March 11 for eligible applications from:

- Newly established businesses
- Businesses that may not have previously applied to the Ontario Small Business Support Grant in 2021
- Businesses that were previously deemed ineligible but are now eligible.

In the spirit of efficiency, the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade emailed eligible businesses that received previous grants in 2021 to pre-screen their eligibility for this new funding stream. These businesses do not need to re-apply if you completed the pre-screen and were verified to receive this grant.

Small businesses eligible for the OSBRG include:

- Restaurants and bars
- Facilities for indoor sports and recreational fitness activities (including fitness centres and gyms)
- Racing venues, casinos, bingo halls and gaming establishments
- Performing arts venues and cinemas
- Museums, galleries, aquariums, zoos, science centres, landmarks, historic sites, botanical gardens and similar attractions
- Meeting or event spaces
- Tour and guide services
- Conference centres and convention centres
- Driving instruction for individuals
- Before- and after-school programs

The [OSBRG User Application Guide](#) provides additional information about applying for the grant.

For more information on available business supports, please visit: [Businesses: Get help with COVID-19 costs | Ontario.ca](#)

Call Centre Information:

If you need help, call centres are open from Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., excluding government and statutory holidays. The call centres are closed on Saturday and Sunday.

Toll-free: 1-855-216-3090

TTY: 416-325-3408

Toll-free TTY: 1-800-268-7095

Ontario Small Business Relief Grant - Application Guide:

<https://www.app.grants.gov.on.ca/msrf/assets/osbrgGuide.pdf>

Information on Available Business Supports:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/businesses-get-help-covid-19-costs>

COVID-19 Public Health Measures and Advice:

<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/public-health-measures>

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Le français suit l'anglais.

January 18, 2022

Dear Municipal Treasurer / Clerk-Treasurer:

I am writing to advise you of a number of important property tax decisions for the 2022 taxation year. Regulations implementing the property tax policy decisions have been enacted and will be available on the e-laws website at www.ontario.ca/laws.

Reassessment

As announced in the *2021 Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review*, property assessments for the 2022 and 2023 tax years will continue to be based on the same valuation date that was used for 2021. This will maintain stability for municipalities and taxpayers.

The input that has been received during the Property Assessment and Taxation Review will help to inform decisions regarding future reassessments. The government remains open to receiving further advice related to property assessment accuracy and stability.

Education Property Tax Rates

Education property tax rates for 2022 will remain unchanged from the previous year as assessments continue to be based on the same valuation date used for 2021. This means that the residential education tax rate will remain at 0.153 per cent and the business education tax (BET) rate reductions implemented in 2021 will be maintained. BET rates have been reduced to 0.88 for 95 per cent of Ontario municipalities. The 2022 BET rates for your municipality are attached.

BET rates for certain properties where municipalities are permitted to retain the education portion of payment in lieu of taxes (PILs) will also remain at the rates set for 2021. The government is aware of municipal concerns that the federal government may no longer make PIL payments at the BET rates prescribed in provincial regulation. The Province continues to encourage the federal government to make its payments at the prescribed rates, and has issued a [technical bulletin](#) and corresponding amendment to the *Education Act* that provide the legislative clarity for the federal government to pay at the regulated rates. The Province also continues to support municipalities as they work together to ensure the federal government is fully aware that failure to make payments at the

regulated PIL rate would have a very negative financial impact on local Ontario communities.

Small Business Property Subclass

Municipalities currently have the flexibility to target tax relief for small businesses through the adoption of the small business property subclass. As announced in the *2020 Budget*, the government will also consider matching municipal property tax reductions with education property tax reductions to provide further support for small businesses.

Municipalities may submit a request to the Minister for matching municipal reductions for 2022, with a copy to info.propertytax@ontario.ca, by **March 31, 2022**. The submission may include the by-law outlining the program requirements; the estimated municipal tax relief to small businesses; a summary of the consultations held with business stakeholders; and the registry of eligible properties, if available.

Measures announced in the *2021 Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review*

Small-Scale On-Farm Business Subclass

To enhance property tax programs that support farm businesses and to encourage their growth, the Province is increasing the assessment threshold for the small-scale on-farm business subclass. Currently, municipalities have the option of adopting this subclass which provides a reduced tax rate on the first \$50,000 of eligible assessment.

Starting in 2022, municipalities that adopt the small-scale on-farm business subclass will have the option to maintain the current assessment threshold of \$50,000 for municipal tax purposes, and they may also adopt a second subclass that would increase the amount of eligible assessment to \$100,000. The Province will apply a reduced business education tax rate to this increased \$100,000 threshold for all eligible properties, regardless of whether municipalities adopt the subclass.

It is anticipated that the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation will be identifying eligible properties and notifying affected property owners and municipalities by March 2022.

Brownfields Financial Tax Incentive Program

The Brownfields Financial Tax Incentive Program (BFTIP) incents the redevelopment of unproductive contaminated lands by providing for the reduction of municipal and education property taxes on brownfield sites that undergo rehabilitation.

To increase the incentive provided under this program, the Province will extend the period for offering matching education property tax assistance from the current three-year period to up to six years for business developments and up to ten years for residential developments.

These enhancements also support the objectives of *More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan*.

OPTA's Education Property Tax Reports and Financial Information Returns

In 2020, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) updated the municipal Financial Information Return (FIR). The *Education Property Tax Reports (EPT Reports)* in the Online Property Tax Analysis (OPTA) system was updated accordingly with a new report reflecting the changes in the FIR.

Information from OPTA's new report is uploaded each spring to MMAH, when it is complete, to automatically update the FIR template for those municipalities that enter their EPT information, including payments and rebates and write-offs, in OPTA. This simplifies and streamlines the task of reporting in-year changes in the FIR.

For the 2021 FIR, eligible municipalities that enter the required information by April 4, 2022, will have their 2021 FIR template updated and available for download from MMAH, by May 2022. Municipalities can benefit from this option as this simplifies the completion of the FIR for municipalities and helps reduce the reporting burden.

Other Property Tax Decisions

Municipal Property Tax Flexibility – Levy Restriction

Municipalities with property classes subject to the levy restriction will continue to have the flexibility to apply a municipal tax increase to those classes of up to 50 per cent of any increase applied to the residential class. For instance, a municipality levying a 2 per cent increase in residential taxes could raise taxes on any restricted class by up to 1 per cent. A full levy restriction applies to multi-residential properties with a tax ratio greater than 2.0 in 2021.

New Construction Classes for Education Property Tax Purposes

As a result of the 2021 BET rate reduction, which lowered rates below the previous new construction BET rates, the new construction property classes implemented for education tax purposes (properties with RTC codes of X, Y, Z and K) are no longer differentiated from the main business properties classes. To simplify and streamline the property tax system, properties in these classes will be returned to their respective main property classes. To ensure a smooth transition, this roll over will be reflected in the December 2022 Property Assessment Roll for the 2023 taxation year. This change would have no impact on property taxes paid by businesses.

If you have any questions related to these decisions, please contact Chris Broughton, Director of the Property Tax Policy Branch at Chris.Broughton@ontario.ca or 416-455-6307.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Allan Doheny
Assistant Deputy Minister

County of Renfrew
2022 Business Education Tax (BET) Rates

BET Rate - Broad Classes

Business Property Class	2022 BET Rate	2022 New Construction BET Rate	2022 Payment-in-Lieu of Taxation (PILT) BET Rate	2022 New Construction PILT BET Rate
Commercial	0.880000%	0.880000%	1.250000%	0.980000%
Industrial	0.880000%	0.880000%	1.250000%	0.980000%
Pipeline	0.880000%	n/a	0.980000%	n/a
Landfill	0.880000%	n/a	0.980000%	n/a
Small-Scale On-Farm (Commercial & Industrial)	0.220000%	n/a	n/a	n/a

BET Rate - Optional Classes

Business Property Class	2022 BET Rate	2022 New Construction BET Rate	2022 Payment-in-Lieu of Taxation (PILT) BET Rate	2022 New Construction PILT BET Rate
Commercial Residual	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Office Building	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shopping Centre	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Parking Lot	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Industrial Residual	0.880000%	0.880000%	1.250000%	0.980000%
Large Industrial	0.880000%	0.880000%	1.250000%	0.980000%



County Council Approves 2022 Budget for the County of Renfrew

Posted on Wednesday, January 19, 2022

COUNTY OF RENFREW: The County of Renfrew has approved its budget for 2022. County Council approved the budget during the annual budget workshop held on Monday January 17th, 2022, led by County of Renfrew Warden Debbie Robinson, and Councillor Jennifer Murphy, Chair of the County's Finance & Administration Committee. Warden Robinson and Chair Murphy each commended elected officials and county staff for the delivery of the budget, as well as for meeting all of the targets set by County Council for 2022.

The County of Renfrew continues to adopt the principles outlined in the long-term financial plan, ensuring that the County remains focused on today and the future. With the budget for 2022 approved, the County of Renfrew will continue to operate and deliver all of its existing programs and services, as well as fund the \$296 million asset renewal program over the next 10-year planning period.

At the September 2021 session of County Council, elected officials clearly communicated how they would like the first draft of the budget prepared in order to minimize the financial impact on Renfrew County residents to the CAO and staff. Council has passed a budget that will include investments in projects for social housing, long-term care, more efficient service delivery at the County administration building, as well as rehabilitation and construction of major infrastructure, including roads, bridges and culverts, throughout the municipality.

The 2022 approved levy, adjusted for growth, equates to a residential property tax impact of \$6.56 increase per \$100,000 value of a home. The median residential property value in Renfrew County currently sits around \$203,000, meaning that a typical homeowner would see an impact of \$13.32 for 2022. With a very modest tax rate increase of 1.7%, the County of Renfrew can continue to deliver high quality services to our community such as two long-term care homes, paramedic services, and community services.

“On behalf of County Council, I would like to sincerely thank our standing committee members for all of their hard work and dedication as they reviewed the draft budgets over the last several weeks”, stated Warden Robinson, “Reviewing budgets can be a daunting task at the best of times, but given the added pressure on residents and local businesses due to the ongoing pandemic, these decisions are more complicated than ever. I am proud to work alongside both County Council and County of Renfrew staff who are focused on ensuring that we continue to focus on affordability for our residents and provide quality services to our community.”

“I am pleased to report that CAO Paul Moreau and his staff have once again delivered a consolidated budget for 2022 that meets our targets”, says Chair Murphy, “I must commend the County of Renfrew elected and staff on their efforts to find savings within their respective areas of the budget. We have a very effective and efficient budget process that allows Council to debate, review and approve a budget that provides clear direction to our staff, allowing them to do their jobs and deliver services to our residents in a timely manner.”

A recommendation for the 2022 budget was officially adopted as a by-law immediately following the budget presentation on Monday.

Additional Information for Consideration:

With only a modest 1.7% increase to the tax rate, County Council was able to ensure that quality services provided by the County of Renfrew continue to be available for Renfrew County residents, including:

- Increased service delivery efficiency through consolidating services at the County Administration Building in Pembroke
- Ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic impact mitigation efforts
- Continued investment in capital asset renewal in 2022 (\$32 million)
- Investments in active transportation via major upgrades to the Algonquin Trail
- Ongoing support to Renfrew County residents through the Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC)
- Continued operation of a Community Paramedic Program to support seniors awaiting placement in long-term care facilities
- Investing in many community services initiatives, including increased capacity for affordable housing in Renfrew County

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL:

Paul Moreau Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk, County of Renfrew 613-735-7288
Jeff Foss Treasurer, County of Renfrew 613-735-7288



County of Renfrew Representatives Advocate for Key Priorities at 2022 ROMA Conference

Posted on Thursday, January 27, 2022

COUNTY OF RENFREW: Representatives from the County of Renfrew met with several provincial MPPs during the Virtual 2022 Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference to discuss issues and challenges faced by rural municipalities in Ontario.

The conference, which took place virtually from January 23rd – 25th, 2022, was a chance for elected officials and staff from the County of Renfrew to join more than 800 participants in a series of panels, delegations and presentations at the annual Conference.

“I look forward to participating in the annual ROMA conference each year”, says County of Renfrew Warden Debbie Robinson. “The conference is tailored to address the needs of rural communities in Ontario, and this year we were fortunate to take part in four delegations related to affordable housing, community infrastructure funding, future county funding applications for the completion of the Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail and the municipal role in public health and its funding.”

Warden Robinson’s recent reappointment as Chair of the Eastern Ontario Wardens’ Caucus (EOWC), allowed her to lead a joint delegation with George Cornell, Chair of the Western Ontario Wardens’ Caucus (WOWC), where they had the opportunity to speak with Minister of Health Christine Elliott, regarding elected municipal representation on governance boards of all Ontario Health Teams. Minister Elliot has committed to discussing this initiative further in the weeks to come.

Warden Robinson was also a presenter, along with four health-care sector representatives, in the concurrent session: ‘Taking a Pulse Check on Rural and Northern Health’. She used the opportunity to speak about the successes and

importance of the Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC) and the family physician shortage in the County of Renfrew.

“I’m pleased that we’ve opened the door for further discussion to ensure the services RC VTAC provides to our residents remain intact,” says Warden Robinson. “I want to sincerely thank our MPP John Yakabuski, for attending the County of Renfrew’s delegations. His presence sends a subtle message to his colleagues that he is supportive of our issues and is prepared to assist our lobbying efforts. He is well respected by his political colleagues in all three parties, and it is a privilege to work with him as the Warden on these important issues.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL:

Paul Moreau Chief Administrative officer/Clerk, County of Renfrew 613-735-7288

Sierra Stinson Media Relations Coordinator, County of Renfrew 613-735-7288

© 2020 County of Renfrew, 9 International Drive, Pembroke ON K8A 6W5, Phone: [1-800-273-0183](tel:1-800-273-0183), Fax: [613-735-2081](tel:613-735-2081) | [Staff Login](#) | [Staff Email](#)

Designed by [eSolutionsGroup](http://www.esolutionsgroup.ca) (<http://www.esolutionsgroup.ca>).



County of Renfrew's Economic Development Division Seeking Input From Local Businesses

Posted on Thursday, January 20, 2022

COUNTY OF RENFREW: The County of Renfrew Economic Development Division is conducting a short survey of the local business community within Renfrew County.

"The continuing business challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the business and social activity restrictions implemented to protect public health due to the Omicron variant, have stalled the much-anticipated economic recovery", notes County of Renfrew Warden, Debbie Robinson. The Warden added that "In order to best frame a coordinated response from the County, we are requesting the assistance of local business owners and managers by asking that they complete a short survey."

Alastair Baird, Manager of Economic Development & Tourism, stated that "the objective of the survey, which takes no more than 10 minutes to complete, is to gain a better understanding of the current state and outlook for our local businesses community and of the local economy overall".

The County's Business Development Officer, David Wybou, has been coordinating with partner organizations to ensure the entire business community receives the survey and has asked that the survey be completed by Friday, February 4th, 2022.

Development & Property Committee Chair, Bob Sweet said that "The results of this survey will assist the County of Renfrew to directly assist local businesses and to convey current information to the Federal and Provincial governments to shape business support and recovery programs."

The County of Renfrew Economic Development Services would like to thank everyone in advance for their cooperation and assistance.

You can find the link to the survey on the County of Renfrew Economic Development website at www.InvestRenfrewCounty.com, on our social media feeds and a direct link here: <https://bit.ly/32h7qt0>

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL:

Craig Kelley Director of Development & Property, County of Renfrew 613-735-7288

Alastair Baird Manager, Economic Development & Tourism 613-735-7288

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Ontario Minister of Health Commits to Continued Funding for RC VTAC

Posted on Wednesday, February 09, 2022

COUNTY OF RENFREW: The Ontario Minister of Health, Christine Elliott, recently announced that the Ontario Government has committed funding for the Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC), ensuring that County of Renfrew residents without a family doctor will continue to have access to primary care until March 31, 2023.

The announcement, made on Wednesday, February 9th, comes amid increased lobbying efforts by County of Renfrew representatives who have been working alongside MPP John Yakabuski to get the issue in front of Minister Elliott. Securing funding for RC VTAC has been a top priority for the County of Renfrew due to the ongoing health-care crisis caused by a shortage of family physicians that greatly affects services to County residents.

"RC VTAC became a lifeline for residents of Renfrew County throughout the COVID-19 pandemic," says County of Renfrew Warden, Debbie Robinson. "Every week, an average of 1,648 people call RC VTAC staff and speak with a doctor who either provides immediate treatment options over the phone or video, consults with community paramedics to arrange a same-day visit for an in-person clinical assessment, refers to another local health-care service, prescribes medication, diagnostic testing or coordinates a paramedic transfer to the nearest hospital."

This, in conjunction with standard registration, testing and vaccination functions of RC VTAC, has been hugely beneficial in the County of Renfrew's response to the pandemic and reducing strain on an already overwhelmed healthcare system.

"Minister Elliott has been very clear about her support for RC VTAC and she is well aware of the positive impact it is having on the residents of Renfrew County," MPP Yakabuski said. "Renfrew County created an innovative solution to dealing with the pandemic and the family physician shortage, and those efforts continue to be

supported by Premier Doug Ford, Minister Elliott and my colleagues at Queen's Park."

"The commitment made today by Minister Elliott and supported by MPP Yakabuski is a great step towards ensuring that the approximately 25 percent of residents without a family doctor continue to receive the care they so desperately need," says Warden Robinson, "RC VTAC is filling a void and has become a primary care access point for non-urgent medical needs in response to the physician shortage in rural Ontario. We are thrilled that Minister Elliot and Mr. Yakabuski see the benefit of this innovative program in our community and we are looking forward to continuing our partnership with the province."

For More Information Call:

Paul Moreau Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk, County of Renfrew 613-735-7288

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Designed by [eSolutionsGroup](http://www.esolutionsgroup.ca) (<http://www.esolutionsgroup.ca>).



Renfrew County and District Health Unit

COVID-19 Case Summary

February 03, 2022

<p>Total Confirmed Cases in Renfrew County and District (RCD): 2895</p> <p>(590 cases have confirmed variant of concern (VOC) lineage or have screened positive for a VOC)</p> <p>Cases Reported in the Last 7 Days: 211</p> <p>Incidence Rate^a in the Last 7 Days: 194.3 per 100,000 individuals</p>		<p>Current Status of Cases in RCD</p> <p>Self-Isolation: 242</p> <p>Hospitalized: 26</p> <p>Hospitalized in Intensive Care Unit: 4</p> <p>Resolved: 2602</p> <p>Deceased: 21</p>	
Outbreak Setting	Cumulative Number of Outbreaks	Active Number of Outbreaks	
Community	7	0	
Hospital	6	2	
Long-Term Care Home/ Retirement Home/Congregate Living	30	8	
School (all levels)	16	0	
Workplace	15	0	
Total	74	10	
<p>Total Number of tests completed for RCD residents: 136,591</p>		<p>Percent Positivity^b of tests completed for RCD residents (January 20, 2022-January 26, 2022) 17.7%</p>	
<p>RCDHU has responded to 58,024 COVID-19 inquiries from residents and community partners since March 18, 2020.</p>			

^a Incidence rate is calculated by dividing the total number of confirmed cases in a 7-day period by the population size, and then multiplying by 100,000. It takes into account the size of the population, and can be compared to other regions. It's trend (increasing or decreasing) suggests the trajectory of transmission within a region. Data source: Population Projection of Renfrew County and District Health Unit [2020], Ontario Ministry of Health, IntelliHEALTH Ontario

^b Percent positivity is calculated by dividing the number of tests with a positive result by the total number of tests processed during the same time frame, and then multiplying by 100. A higher percent positivity suggests higher community transmission and that there are likely more people with COVID-19 in the community who haven't been tested yet. Data source: Ontario Ministry of Health, Ontario Laboratory Information System (OLIS), Visual Analytics Hub.

RENFREW COUNTY AND DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT COVID-19 EPIDEMIOLOGY UPDATE

January 27, 2022



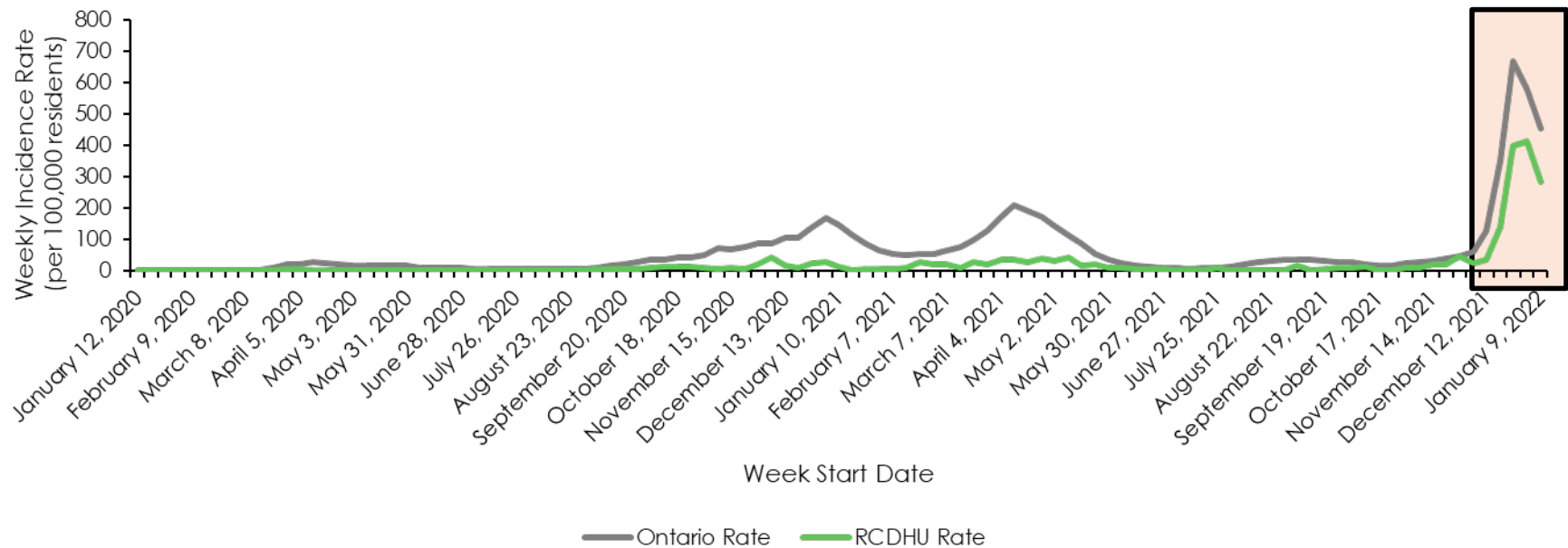
Renfrew County and District Health Unit

"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

Weekly COVID-19 Incidence Rates

COVID-19 incidence rates rapidly increased in early December 2021 and have surpassed rates observed during previous COVID-19 waves.

Weekly Incidence Rate in Ontario and RCD,
By Reported Date

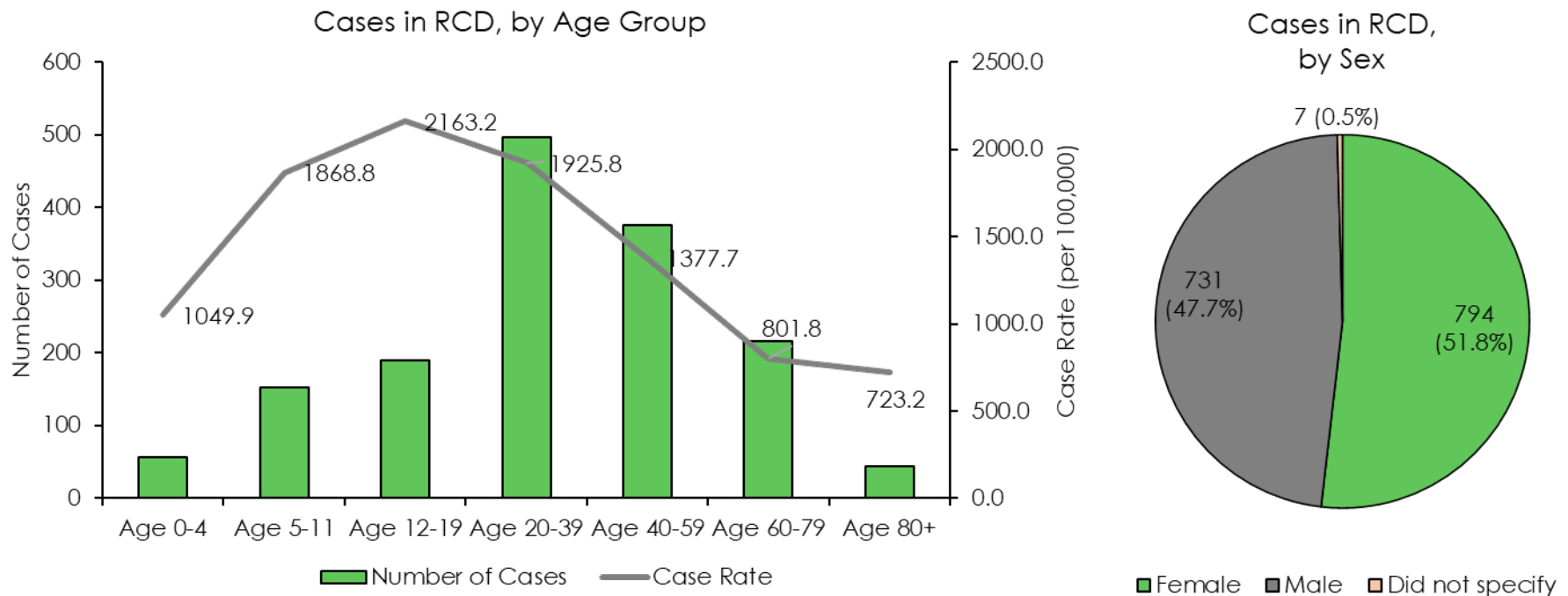


Renfrew County and District Health Unit
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

Data source: Public Health Ontario. Ontario COVID-19 data tool [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2022 [extracted 2022 Jan 19 11:00 a.m.]. Available from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/data-and-analysis/infectious-disease/covid-19-data-surveillance/covid-19-data-tool>

Characteristics of Cases in RCD*

*Reported March 1, 2020 to December 31, 2021



In RCD, nearly 1 out of every 3 cases were between the ages of 20-39. Individuals aged 5-11, 12-19, and 20-39 had the highest incidence rates.



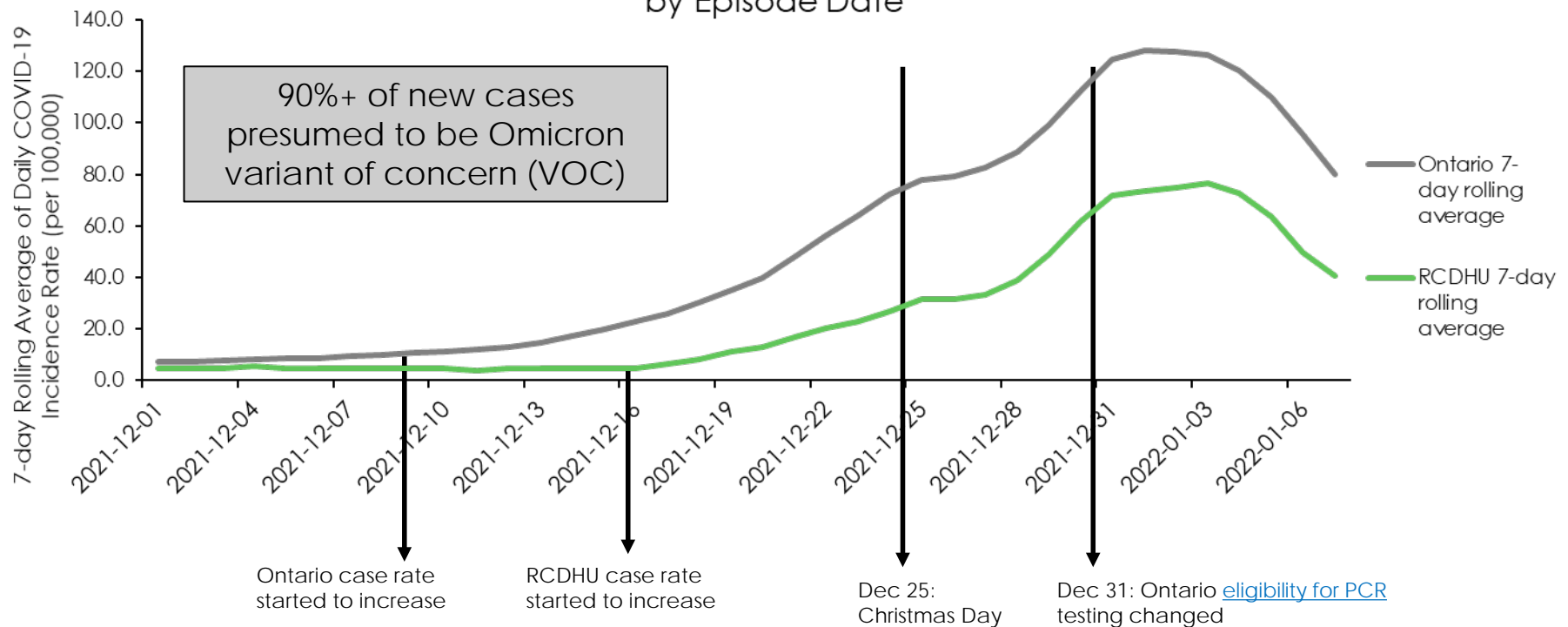
Renfrew County and District Health Unit
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

Data source for cases in RCD: Provincial Case and Contact Management (CCM) system [extracted 2022 Jan 19 10:00 a.m.].

Data source for 2021 age group population estimates: Statistics Canada. Population estimates 2001-2020: Table 1 annual population estimates by age and sex for July 1, 2001 to 2020, health regions, Ontario [unpublished data table]. Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada; 2021 [received 2021 Apr 22] as per Public Health Ontario.

Daily Incidence Rates Since December 1, 2021

Daily COVID-19 Incidence Rate per 100,000 in Ontario and RCD,
by Episode Date



In December 2021, case numbers began to surge in RCD ~1 week after Provincial surge observed. Incidence rates in RCD remain lower than Provincial rates.

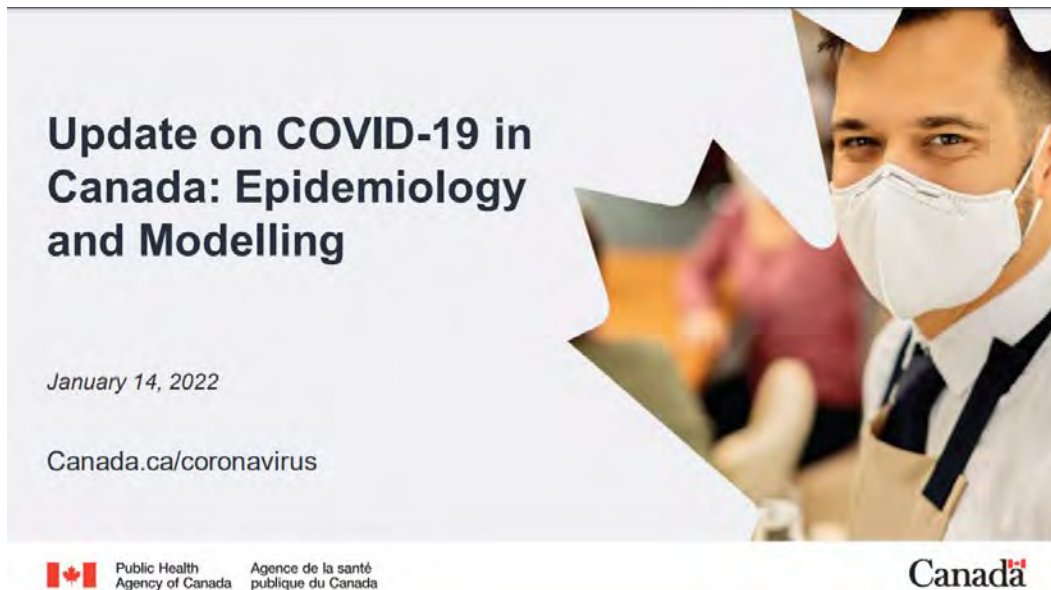


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Data source: Public Health Ontario. Ontario COVID-19 data tool [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2022 [extracted 2022 Jan 19 11:00 a.m.]. Available from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/data-and-analysis/infectious-disease/covid-19-data-surveillance/covid-19-data-tool>

Data source for Omicron prevalence: Public Health Ontario. Early dynamics of omicron in Ontario, November 1 to December 23, 2021. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2022.

Public Health Agency of Canada – Update on COVID-19 Epidemiology and Modelling



“Omicron associated with a smaller proportion of cases requiring hospital care, but sudden and record volume of cases results in heavy impact”

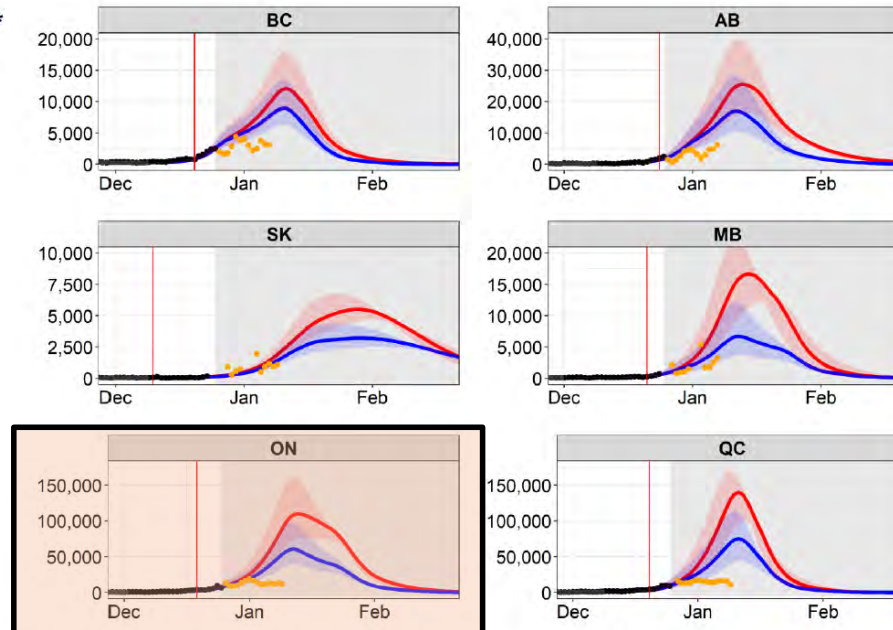


Renfrew County and District Health Unit
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Public Health Agency of Canada. (2022). Update on COVID-19 in Canada: Epidemiology and Modelling – January 14, 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/diseases-maladies/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/epidemiological-economic-research-data/update-covid-19-canada-epidemiology-modelling-20220114-en.pdf>

Public Health Agency of Canada – Daily Case Projections

Daily cases*



Without the recent strengthening of public health measures



If current public health measures strongly reduce transmission

Orange points – recent surveillance data

* The forecast number of cases will not be captured by surveillance due to limitations on testing during the period identified in grey.

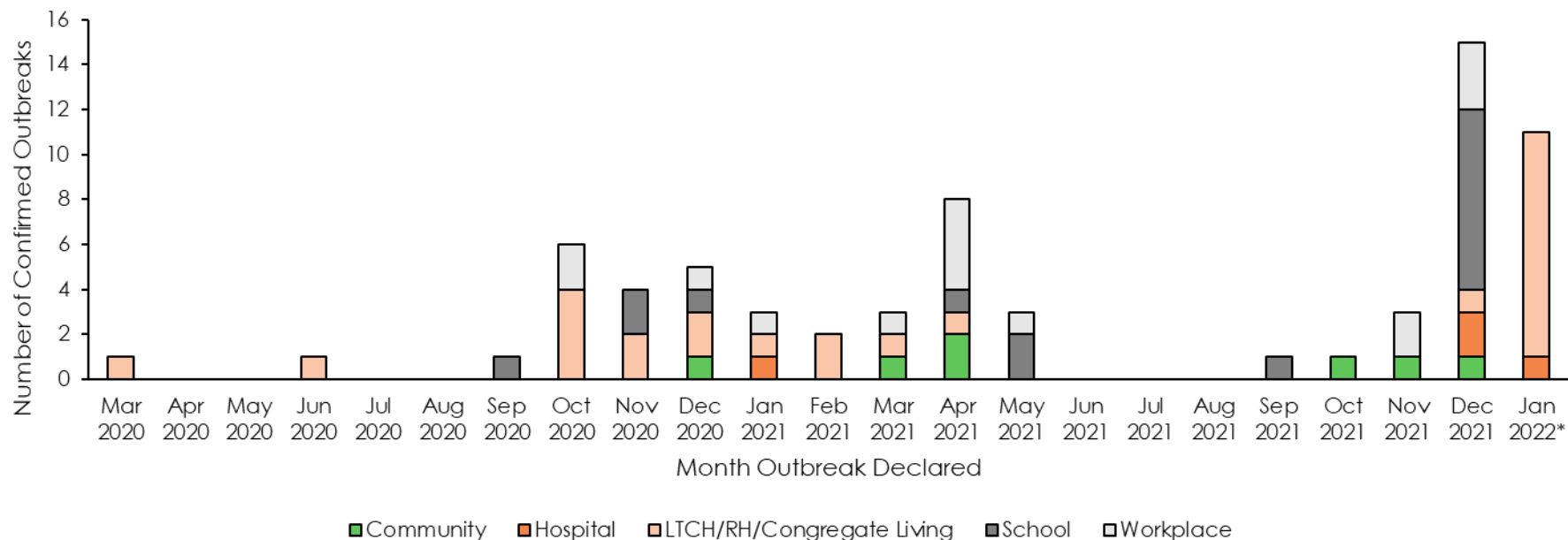
Daily number of new COVID-19 cases appear to have peaked or will soon peak in Ontario.



Renfrew County and District Health Unit
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

Public Health Agency of Canada. (2022). Update on COVID-19 in Canada: Epidemiology and Modelling – January 14, 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/diseases-maladies/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/epidemiological-economic-research-data/update-covid-19-canada-epidemiology-modelling-20220114-en.pdf>

Confirmed COVID-19 Outbreaks in RCD



As of January 19, 2022, RCDHU has declared 68 COVID-19 outbreaks in various setting across RCD.

Notes:

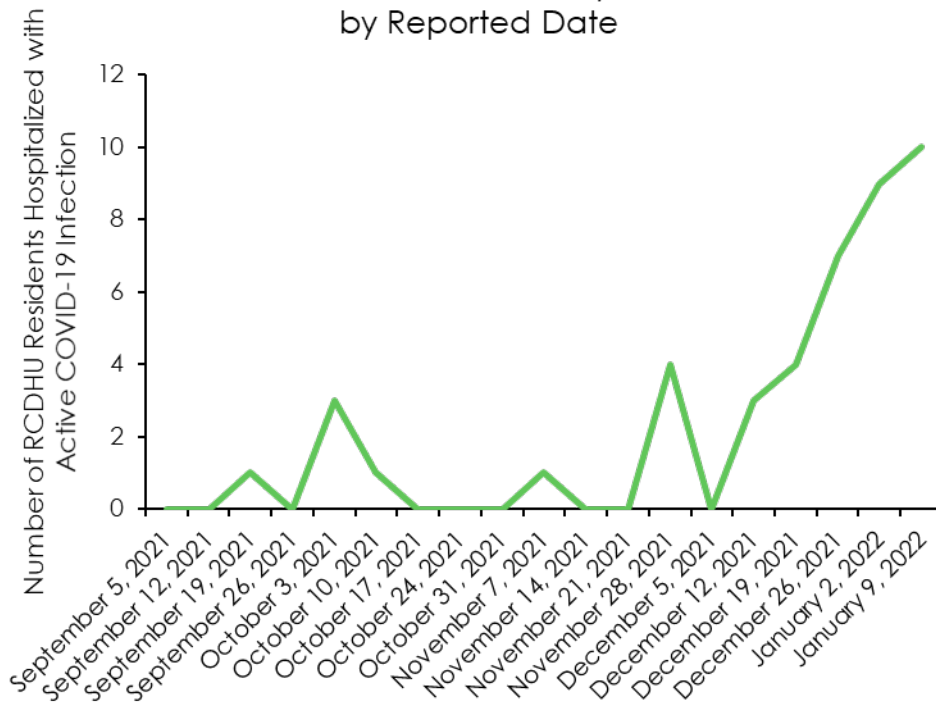
- School category includes all levels of education and childcare settings (including daycares)
 - LTCH/RH/Congregate Living = Long-term care home, retirement home, or congregate living facility
 - In alignment with [Provincial guidance regarding the Omicron surge](#) released at the end of December 2021, RCDHU has shifted their focus to managing individuals with the highest risk of transmission, as well as mitigating outbreaks and transmission to vulnerable individuals in highest-risk settings.
 - *Month of January 2022 not yet complete.
- Data source: Renfrew County and District Health Unit



Renfrew County and District Health Unit
 "Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

Hospitalized RCD COVID-19 Cases

RCDHU Residents Hospitalized with Active COVID-19 Infection, as of January 15, 2022, by Reported Date



- The number of RCDHU residents hospitalized with active COVID-19 infection is increasing.
- In Ontario overall, 53% of COVID-19 cases currently admitted to hospital were admitted for COVID-19 (reported Jan 19, 2022)



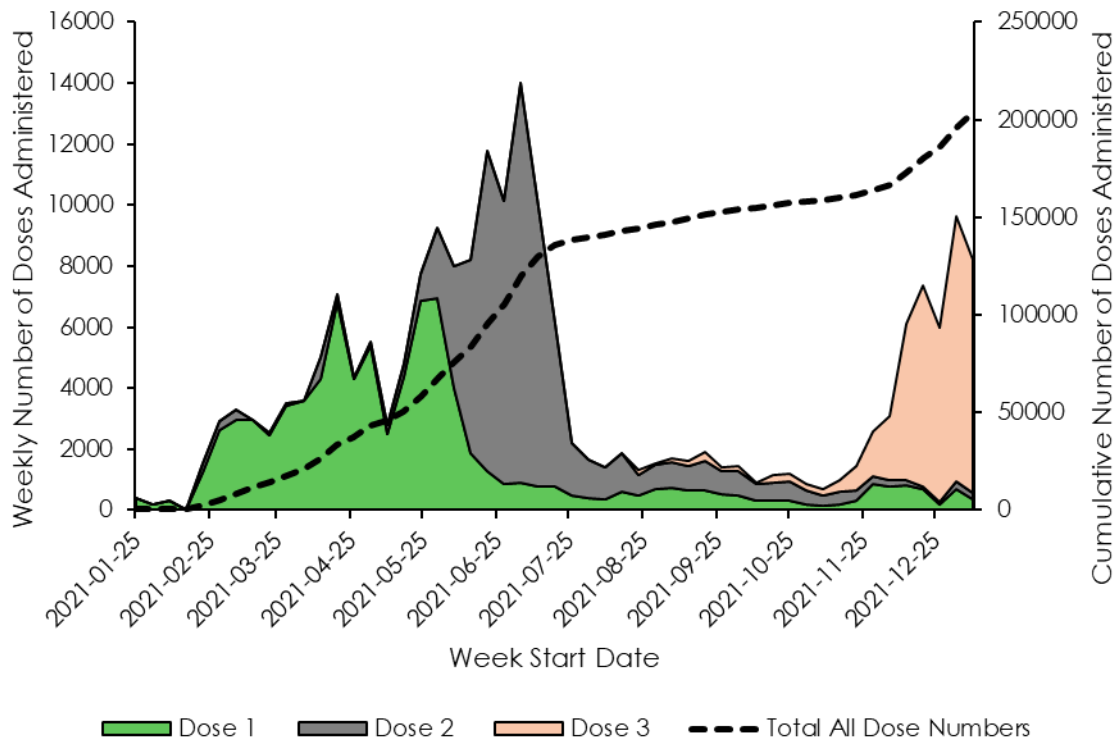
Renfrew County and District Health Unit
 "Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

Data Source for RCD Hospitalizations: Public Health Ontario. Ontario COVID-19 data tool [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2022 [extracted 2022 Jan 19 11:00 a.m.]. Available from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/data-and-analysis/infectious-disease/covid-19-data-surveillance/covid-19-data-tool>
 Data Source for Provincial Hospitalization Data: Government of Ontario (2022). COVID-19 Hospitalizations. Retrieved from <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/data/hospitalizations>

COVID-19 Vaccinations in RCD*

*as of January 17, 2022

204,000+ doses of vaccine administered in RCD**



COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage in RCD***

Age	% at least with 1 dose	% with at least 2 doses
Age 5-11	42%	2%
Age 12+	91%	88%

Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFIs) for COVID-19

Area	RCDHU	Ontario
Reported AEFIs	236 (122 per 100,000 doses)	17,011 (60 per 100,000 doses)
Serious AEFIs	31 (15 per 100,000 doses)	963 (3.4 per 100,000 doses)

**Does not include the number of doses that have been administered to Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members.

***Includes Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members residing in RCD, according to Garrison Petawawa medical services

Data source for doses administered in RCD: COVaxON via IntelliHealth [extracted 2022 Jan 17 8:00 a.m.].

Data source for vaccination uptake: Renfrew County and District Health Unit

Data source for 2021 population estimates: Statistics Canada. Population estimates 2001-2020: Table 1 annual population estimates by age and sex for July 1, 2001 to 2020, health regions, Ontario [unpublished data table]. Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada; 2021 [received 2021 Apr 22] as per Public Health Ontario.

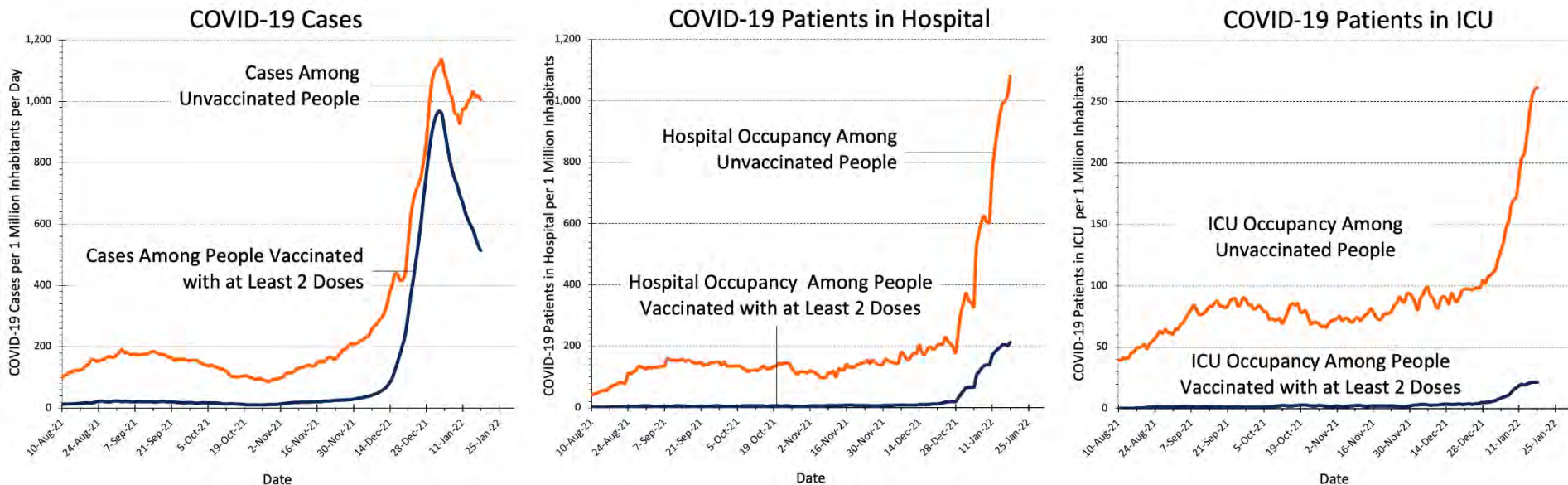
Data source for AEFIs: Public Health Ontario. Weekly summary: adverse events following immunization (AEFIs) for COVID-19 in Ontario: December 13, 2020 to January 9, 2022. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2021.

Note: In Ontario, AEFIs that meet the serious definition are events that required hospital admission and/or reports of death



Renfrew County and District Health Unit
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Provincial Trends Among Unvaccinated People vs. People Vaccinated with at Least 2 Doses



Provincial rates of hospitalization and ICU admissions among unvaccinated individuals are **higher** compared rates among individuals with at least 2 doses of vaccine.



Take Home Messages

- COVID-19 incidence rates rapidly increased in early December 2021 and have surpassed rates observed during previous COVID-19 waves
 - COVID-19 testing is now limited to the most vulnerable individuals and individuals associated with the highest risk settings. In recent weeks, the number of confirmed cases reported by RCDHU underestimates the true number of people with COVID-19 in RCD.
- According to [Public Health Agency of Canada projections](#), COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations appear to have peaked or will soon peak in Ontario
 - Trends in RCD generally lag behind Provincial trends by ~1 week
- Vaccination against COVID-19 continues to be highly effective and offers strong protection against severe illness





Renfrew County and District Health Unit
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

For Immediate Release

(Pembroke, Ontario, 4:00 p.m., January 26, 2022)

RCDHU Participating in Provincial Contact Centre Auto Dial Calls for Booster Doses

Today, Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) is confirming that residents who have not received a booster dose, and it has been greater than 84 days since their second dose, will receive an automated call from Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Moore. This automated call is part of the provincial campaign to encourage individuals to pursue a booster dose COVID-19 vaccination appointment.

Eligible RCD residents (18+) can expect to receive this automated booster dose encouragement call starting **today, January 26th** from a caller ID displaying the **number 888 and "ONT GOVT" (for carriers that allow call display)**. Please note that calls will be batched to target cohorts of descending ages (e.g., the province will start with 65-69, then 60-64, etc.).

Residents looking to get vaccinated or receive their booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine can walk-in to any RCDHU clinic (no appointment necessary) or book an appointment online through a local pharmacy or RCDHU's website. To view the latest COVID-19 vaccination schedule, visit [RCDHU's COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout webpage](#) or check out RCDHU's social media profiles on Facebook and Twitter.

For more information, visit RCDHU's website at <https://www.rcdhu.com/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccine-rollout/> or call 613-732-3629 or 1-800-267-1097.

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Renfrew County and District Health Unit
Fax: 613-735-3067
media@rcdhu.com
www.rcdhu.com



Renfrew County and District Health Unit
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

For Immediate Release

(Pembroke, Ontario, 3:50 p.m., January 27, 2022)

RCDHU Announces Move from Local COVID-19 Vaccination Booking System to Provincial Booking System

Today, Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) is announcing the move from the local COVID-19 vaccination booking system to the provincial vaccination booking system.

Starting Tuesday, February 01, 2022, at 12:01 a.m., residents can book an appointment through the [Provincial COVID-19 vaccination portal](#) or by calling the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900. Anyone who does not have an Ontario Health Card and is unable to book their vaccination appointment online must call RCDHU's COVID-19 Vaccination Information Line at 613-732-9436 or toll free at 1-833-773-0004.

- **To book an appointment at a clinic prior to February 01**, use the local booking system linked here: <https://covid-vacc-rcvtac.mychamp.ca/>.
- **As of February 01**, appointments can be booked for COVID-19 vaccination clinics in Pembroke and Deep River through the provincial booking system: <https://covid19.ontariohealth.ca/>.

While no appointments are necessary as walk-ins for residents 12 years of age and older are accepted at all COVID-19 vaccination clinics across Renfrew County and District (walk-in availability for children 5-11 years of age varies based on paediatric vaccine supply), there are some benefits to booking. By booking your vaccination appointment, residents have a better sense of timing as your appointment slot is protected.

Additionally, advantages of the provincial booking system are that it allows for more seamless data collection and sharing, while the user experience is improved.

For more information on COVID-19 vaccination, visit <https://www.rcdhu.com/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccine-rollout/>.

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Renfrew County and District Health Unit
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

For Immediate Release

(Pembroke, Ontario, 10:40 a.m., February 2, 2022)

Technical Issue with Local Booking System Creates In-valid Vaccination Appointments - Only Pembroke and Deep River Clinics Booking Appointments

Today, Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) is acknowledging a technical issue with the previous booking system that has allowed some residents to book appointments in the month of February. **Any resident with an appointment scheduled within the month of February must have booked through the provincial booking system ONLY. Please discard any appointment booked on the previous booking system through the RC VTAC website for February.** RCDHU apologizes for any inconvenience.

RCDHU has received reports of several residents showing up to the Ma-te-way Activity Centre in Renfrew with appointments. **Please be advised that there is NO clinic being held in Renfrew today.**

Be sure to check the most recent [clinic schedule](#) for the most up-to-date clinic information and locations. No appointments are necessary, as walk-ins for anyone 12 years of age and over, are accepted at all vaccination clinics across Renfrew County and District. Walk-in availability for children ages 5 to 11 varies, based on the paediatric vaccine supply.

Residents can book appointments for ONLY Pembroke or Deep River through the [Provincial COVID-19 vaccination portal](#) or by calling the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900. Anyone who does not have an Ontario Health Card and is unable to book their vaccination appointment online must call RCDHU's COVID-19 Vaccination Information Line at 613-732-9436 or toll free at 1-833-773-0004.

Residents can also check with local pharmacies to get their dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Call the pharmacy ahead of time as vaccine supply varies and appointments may be required.

For more information on COVID-19 vaccination, visit <https://www.rcdhu.com/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccine-rollout/>.

Français



CHECKPOINT



A modern parking structure for a transit-oriented, accessible, tree-covered site

A leisurely stroll with picturesque views across Dow's Lake. A quiet cup of coffee in a sunny pavilion before an appointment. A moment of contemplation in a healing garden. A convenient, safe place to park your bike or your car on the way to the hospital.

The parking structure at The Ottawa Hospital's new campus will provide all of these experiences for people coming to the site.

In addition to providing enough parking for thousands of patients, families and health-care workers, the structure provides a direct, enclosed and accessible link between the nearby LRT station and the main hospital building.

And, it will include a large public park with areas for recreation, rest and contemplation.

[Read more](#)



How will people get to the new campus?

Thousands of people will come to the new hospital every day for care, to visit their loved ones, and to work or learn. This means that ensuring that the entire new campus site is accessible needs to be a core part of the planning process.

[Read more](#)



Fast facts: Travel distances from the Dow's Lake LRT station to the hospital

The design team considers a wide range of factors while creating the site plan, including factors like the fixed location of the LRT line. They've created easy-to-follow pedestrian routes along the shortest possible walking distances between the transit line, the parking garage, and the main hospital.

[Read more](#)



Creating a naturalized landscape

TOH is committed to planting five trees for every tree that needs to be removed during construction of the hospital and parking garage. The landscape will be a climate positive

design through tree preservation, new shelter belts, green infrastructure and pollinator gardens

The rooftop park will be planted with thickets of trees and other vegetation. The tree species that are being considered, like birch, have been selected because they are native or adapted to the area and well suited to the environment. Larger trees will be planted along the scalloped edges of the garage at the ground level throughout the site.



Visit our website



From: >ERM Stakeholder Relations <ERMStakeholder@cnl.ca>

Sent: February 8, 2022 4:32 PM

To: >ERM Stakeholder Relations <ERMStakeholder@cnl.ca>

Cc: Quinn, Pat <pat.quinn@cnl.ca>; LeBlanc, Nicole <nicole.leblanc@cnl.ca>; MacKay, Mitch <mitch.mackay@cnl.ca>

Subject: NSDF Virtual Visitor Centre - Now Open!



Please note this site is most compatible with Firefox, Chrome or similar browsers.

Environmental Remediation Management (ERM) Stakeholder Relations



From: Greater Arnprior Chamber of Commerce <info@gacc.ca>

Sent: January 25, 2022 9:53 PM

To: Kaila Zamojski <kzamojski@arnprior.ca>

Subject: Your Chamber News vol. 13



New Year, New You! New Business Hours?

[Click Here](#) to update your Chamber Profile

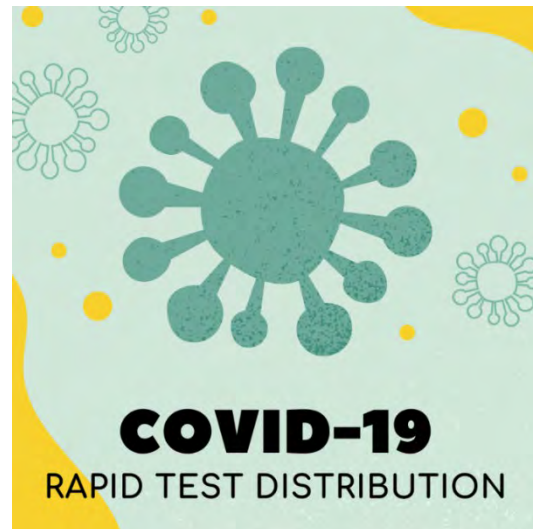
In the Know

The County of Renfrew's Economic Development division is looking for your input! Be sure to complete this survey and let them know how you feel.

COMPLETE SURVEY

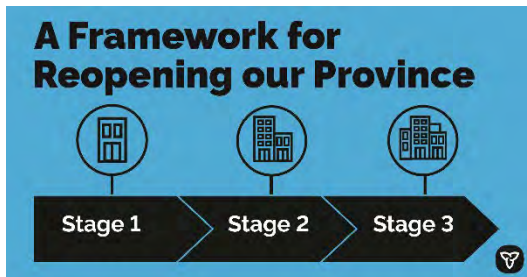


There are currently multiple Grants and supports being offered by the Ontario Government and Federal Government for small businesses that have continued to be effected by the restrictions put in place as a result of the pandemic. Click the image above to review and apply for any funding applicable to your business.



As you may have heard, our shipments of rapid tests have been indefinitely delayed as a result of the global supply chain constraints. The Ontario Government does seem to be beginning to distribute testing kits to certain sectors once again so we can only hope that our business community will have them in hand once again. At this time, we have closed all appointment bookings due to ongoing provincial shipment disruptions. We do continue to sit in on meetings and are working diligently with our partners to see the issue resolved as soon as possible.

If your business wishes to take part in the program, please complete the [order form](#) to be contacted when we receive more inventory.



Ontario Announces Lifting of Public Health and Safety Measures

On Thursday, January 20, the Ontario government announced they will be lifting certain public health and safety measures. The province will follow a phased approach to gradually easing COVID-19 restrictions, with 21 days between each step, starting January 31, 2022.

For the full list of details please

review the [Ontario Outlined Steps for a Cautious Reopening](#).



We are bringing back the Employee of the Month program.

We know how hard you all work and how much you value your team members. Whether your business has nominated someone in the past or not, PLEASE EMAIL info@gacc.ca your submissions for your employee of the month and LET US thank them for all they do.

[Like us on Facebook](#)



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Member Exclusive Offers



Did you know you could have health insurance for your employees through our Chamber Members Plan? Be sure to email Heather for more information. (heather@doucettinsurance.ca)



They believe that the fullness of life comes from the warmth of human connection and being surrounded by people who care. For Island View, each day is filled with new possibilities. Refer a new resident who you know would benefit from living with them and receive \$2000* when they move in. Contact Lynn Russett for more details.

lynn.russett@siennaliving.ca
613-622-0002

***Terms and conditions apply.**



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Greater Arnprior Chamber of Commerce · PO Box 351 · Arnprior, On K7S 3H6 · Canada



As COVID restrictions begin to lift, we are excited to resume some of our in-person programming. Our capacity limits will remain at 50%; masks remain mandatory; and the Café has reopened for public use.



The Library has partnered with the Canadian Red Cross to distribute free N95 masks to the general public. You can ask for yours at the circulation desk during regular hours of operation beginning February 3. Please note, quantities are limited.

We continue to provide COVID related printing for free. Additionally, we are providing lamination services for wallet sized Proof of Vaccination QR Codes for \$3 each.

WINTER HOURS

Monday - Wednesday
Noon - 7pm
Thursday - Friday
10am - 5pm
Saturday 10am - 2pm

The Library will be **CLOSED** on Monday February 21st for Family Day.



Back by popular demand is our **Blind Date with a Book**.

Sign out a wrapped book based on a little clue. Return your book *score card* and your name will be entered into a draw for a great prize pack!

Speaking of prize packs, our Book Bingo launched last month is still going strong.

You can pick up your book bingo card at the circulation desk.



You have until March 18th to return your bingo card and have your name entered into the draw for a gift basket valued at \$180.

There are Book Bingo cards for adults as well as children. There's also a fantastic prize pack for kids.

Read lots and enter often!

Just for Kids

We are excited to announce that we can resume Baby Rhyme Time (for babies 5-12 months) and Friday Morning Story Time (13 months to school age).



Friday Morning Story Time for toddlers and preschoolers will also resume in February. Please visit us at the circulation desk to register for either a 10am or 11am spot. Parents or caregivers attending with children will be required to provide proof of vaccination. We ask that you register a minimum of 24 hours in advance of the program so that a craft kit can be created for your child.

We have Valentine's craft bags available at the desk for children to pick up when they sign out their books. We are also handing out Valentine board books that were generously provided by the kind folks at Super Lucky Dollar Store.



February's Let's Talk Science Kits have arrived! The kit for grades 2-6 includes an activity about viruses and the importance and effectiveness of handwashing, and the kit for grades 6-10 includes materials to make two viruses from tinfoil and compare the effect of soap on the one with a fatty layer and on the one without a fatty layer. Please ask at the desk for your kit.



Family Discovery Kits will be available for pick up at the library on Friday, February 18 to help you celebrate Family Day on Monday, February 21. Register for your kit on our website starting Friday, February 11 and have fun reading, crafting and exploring as a family!

Plans are currently underway for March Break. We are planning for virtual events if required, and will move as many of those as possible to in-person events if allowed. Please follow us on Facebook and Twitter for updates.

It's a moving target!



The Library will be hosting a Pathfinder Game on Mondays after school. Grab your companions, dust off your old spell books and join other brave adventurers as we explore the wonders, dangers and riches the fantasy world of Golarion has to offer! Open to all fully-vaccinated teens, no prior TTRPG experience or equipment necessary. Spaces are limited so please [email](#) today for more information and register to secure your spot in what will be, as one sorcerer said in passing, "a thrilling encounter."

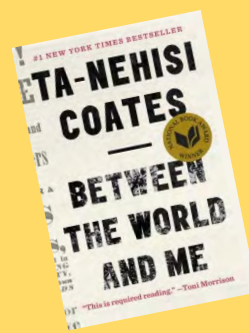
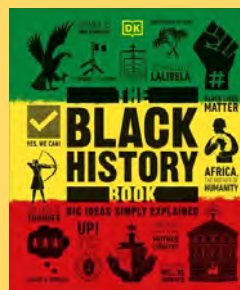
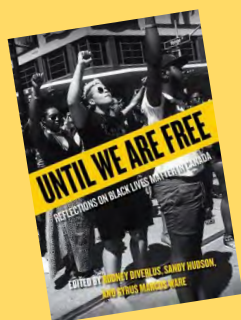
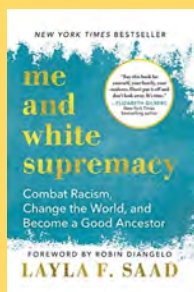
REMINDER...

We will be accepting applications for summer student employment until February 28. We are looking for a creative and enthusiastic student to assist with the planning and delivery of our summer programs.

The successful candidate will possess strong verbal and written communication skills, the ability to work effectively as a member of a team, solid organizational skills and experience working with children. The length of the contract will be determined once our grant status is known. Resumes should be forwarded to the attention of Carolyn Swayze, Youth Services Librarian at youth@arnpriorlibrary.ca.



FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH.



CELEBRATE THIS MONTH. CELEBRATE EVERY MONTH.

There have been a few changes to the layout in the library. In the lower level, there are new homes for some of our fiction collections - namely Westerns, Romance and Graphic Novels. Our light therapy lamp is set up in the Café area, and please note that the used book sale is well stocked.

On the main level, the new PopUp Art Exhibit has been met with great enthusiasm. We've also created a themed book display to complement the art.



SPECIAL EVENT

On Saturday February 26 join OV-CAOS community poet Andy Tull to play with words amongst the tallest trees in Ontario. This word inspired workshop will begin at the library Pop Up Art Gallery, where we will view and interact with the Tree Story Exhibition.

Participants will then walk or drive to Gillies Grove where we will play with words inspired by the trees and winter landscape.

Participation is free, but you must register on our website in advance.

FamFest

Join us for a day full of family activities!

Monday February 21, 2022

Nick Smith Centre

Free Pancake Breakfast

Community Hall

9:00am-12:00pm



Free Family Swimming

Community Pool

10:00am, 11:00am, 2:00pm, 3:00pm



Free Family Skating

Arenas

9:00am, 10:00am, 1:00pm



Family Entertainment

Community Hall - 9:00am-4:00pm

FREE

One-Man Band, Magic Shows, Balloon Animals, Board Games, Video Games, Arts & Crafts

Broomball

TRY & LEARN

Learn with members of the upcoming Senior Provincial Broomball Tournament

Bert Hall Arena - 11:00am-12:00pm



Sledge Hockey

Learn to play with Canadian Paralympian Rebecca Sharp

Bert Hall Arena - 12:00pm-1:00pm

TRY & LEARN

\$5.00 Lunch

Visit the canteen for a \$5 lunch of pizza or hotdog plus a can of pop

Anyone attending the Nick Smith Centre must enter through the front doors.

All visitors 12-years of age and older must be fully vaccinated (two doses plus 14 days) and show proof of vaccination (QR Code) and identification at the front door.

Programs do not require pre-registration and are at a first-come, first-serve basis.

Mandated capacity limits will be in place.



Ottawa Valley BUSINESS

Renfrew, Lanark and regional business news.

www.ovbusiness.com | admin@ovbusiness.com



Issue No. 318

Published by: Forward Thinking

February 1, 2022

What The Trucker's Convoy Is Teaching Us Can we disagree and still be friends? Let's hope so

By: Jennifer Layman
jenn@ovbusiness.com

The trucker's convoy is certainly a major event in this country. I was trying to remember a cause that brought people together across all provinces and territories in unity and the best I could think of was the Vancouver Olympics and the torch run. It was a prideful moment, and those seem to be the ones that capture our hearts.

I followed along online with live recordings of different truck drivers, seeing what they saw as they drove mile after mile along the cold Canadian highways en route to Ottawa. I watched hours and hours of the live feeds and it felt like I was sitting in the passenger seat right along with them. I wasn't prepared for how I would feel seeing so many people lining the roads and overpasses as the trucks drove on past. The number of Canadian flags waving, the cheers, the love for a country and blue-collar workers - it was often too much to watch without completely



Photo: Chris Braun on Convoy to Ottawa 2022 Restart

breaking down in tears. They weren't tears of sadness; they were tears of immense pride for that waving Canadian flag. It gets me every single time.

Yes, there were other flags being waved too. The "f [maple leave] ck Trudeau" was one of them. Personally, I wish they would have chosen a Canadian flag, but I have talked with enough people to know that the government rules have been devastating to so many, and I understand that flag. We were all

in the same boat until governments started making rules. Since then, it has never been equal. We are not all in this together.

Whether you agree with the trucker's convoy or not, it has shown us that there are some things that we need to fix.

Redefining Leadership

When the leader of the country tells Canadians that truckers and the people who support them are racists and white supremacists because they don't believe

everyone should be mandated to be vaccinated with the COVID-19 drugs, we have a problem with leadership. Race has nothing to do with taking a drug.

That kind of talk doesn't help anyone. The prime minister doesn't decide that people have either acceptable or unacceptable views, making them either good Canadians or racists. There are many people who believe that we should continue to take COVID-19 medications until there are no cases of COVID in the country. There are people who believe that COVID-19 is something we should learn to live with and improve treatments so people can recover more easily. Both of those beliefs are different but neither is an unacceptable view.

We need to make leadership roles in this country more attractive to people who can be comfortable with an electorate that isn't all the same.

Continued on page 3



Pick up the Winter 2020 issue today!

Copies have been distributed around Renfrew County and the surrounding area so pick up your copy today. Great advice and helpful information on a variety of topics to help you make good, healthful choices in all areas of your life. Thanks to our incredible contributors.

HealthMatters

www.ovhealth.ca | behealthy@ovhealth.ca

Ottawa Valley BUSINESS

ABOUT US

Ottawa Valley Business (OVB) publishes on the first and third Tuesday of every month. OVB covers business news and events throughout Renfrew, Lanark and Pontiac counties as well as the surrounding areas. OVB is published by Forward Thinking Marketing Agency.

WHO READS US

Ottawa Valley Business is delivered by email to 3,600 subscribers in businesses, organizations and local and regional government.

HOW TO SUBSCRIBE

Subscriptions are free. Send an email to jenn@ovbusiness.com to be added to our distribution list.

ADVERTISING RATES

Advertising rates are as follows:

1/8 Page	\$75
1/4 Page	\$150
1/3 Page	\$175
1/2 Page	\$275
2/3 Page	\$325
Full Page	\$475

Regular Advertising Special: Run three ads for the price of two. Run the same ad twice and the third time you run the ad it's free!

Graphic design is included in the price of your ad. If submitting artwork, please request our ad dimensions.

CONTENT & SUBMISSIONS

Submissions on items related to business are welcome. This includes news, events, new hires, tender and letters to the editor. Content will be edited to fit the space available. If you have an event that is not business-related, please consider 101 Things To Do in the Valley at a cost of \$25. 101things@travelourbackyard.com

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2113 Petawawa Boulevard,
 Pembroke, Ontario K8A 7G8

Events

February 2, 2022

Dong Business with the Government of Canada. Free webinar. Find out if the government buys your goods or services. Register in the supplier database, find key purchasing contracts, search and bid on opportunities, obtain security clearances and more. 10:00am-12:00pm. 1-800-668-5378.

February 2, 2022

Writing Successful Web Content. Write better content for your website that will appeal to your audience, search engines such as Google. Free webinar. 7:00pm-8:30pm. www.obiaa.com/events

February 2, 2022

Introduction to Bookkeeping: Logan Katz Learning Series. 9:30am-11:30am. Free webinar. Hosted by Invest Ottawa. Register online at www.investottawa.ca/events

February 8, 2022

Dong Business with the Government of Canada. Find out if the government buys your goods or services. Register in the supplier database, find key purchasing contracts, search and bid on opportunities, obtain security clearances and more. Free webinar. 12:00pm-2:00pm. 1-873-355-9796

February 8, 2022

Business Break-Ups: A Legal Perspective. MDK Business Law will share a number of issues and lessons learned from the planned or forced parting of ways of business partners. 10:00am-11:30am. Free webinar. Hosted by Invest Ottawa. www.investottawa.ca/events

February 8, 2022

Content Marketing: Everything you need to know about planning and monetizing content. A simple and easy-to-use system for planning and creating the right content for your audience. 10:00am-11:00am. Free webinar. Hosted by Small Business Advisory Centre. 613-283-7002 x.108 or cjames@smallbizcentre.ca

February 8, 2022

Maximizing Your Online Advertising and Digital Marketing Budget. In this hands-on workshop, you'll learn the tricks and tools needed to market your business effectively on a shoestring budget. Free online webinar. 2:30pm-4:00pm. www.obiaa.com/events

February 9, 2022

Bankruptcy: What is it? Join Community Futures, for an online workshop with Doyle & Salewski and find out why Bankruptcy may not be your only option. All registration information is purely confidential. Sign up today at <https://bankruptcy.eventbrite.ca>

February 9, 2022

Bidding on Opportunities. For those who are ready for a more detailed overview of the bidding process for the federal government and key information to help you bid on opportunities. 10:00am-12:00pm. Free webinar. 1-800-668-5378

February 10, 2022

How To Get Free Google Advertising. 10:00am-11:30am. Free webinar. Hosted by Invest Ottawa. www.investottawa.ca/events

February 15, 2022

Social Enterprise 101. A unique type of business that uses revenue-generating activities to achieve a social, environmental or cultural good. 12:00pm-1:00pm. Free webinar. Hosted by Invest Ottawa. www.investottawa.ca/events

February 15, 2022

Introduction to Instagram

Advertising. A foundational understanding of Instagram advertising and further their knowledge to create improved advertisements that really work. 9:00am-10:00am. Free webinar. Hosted by Small Business Advisory Centre. 613-283-7002 ext.108 or cjames@smallbizcentre.ca

February 16, 2022

Supplying Professional Services to the Government of Canada. Key information to help you bid on professional services opportunities. 10:00am-12:00pm. Free webinar. 1-800-668-5378

February 16, 2022

Small Business Websites 101. Free webinar. This beginner-level workshop covers everything from choosing and registering a domain name, building the website and security. 9:00am-10:30am. www.obiaa.com/events

February 16, 2022

Ask The Expert- All About Taxes. MQ Accounting will discuss taxes and payroll as well as provide tips and feedback in a Q&A session. 10:00am-11:00am. Free webinar. Hosted by Small Business Advisory Centre. 613-283-7002 x.108 or cjames@smallbizcentre.ca

February 22, 2022

Dong Business with the Government of Canada. Find out if the government buys your goods or services. Register in the supplier database, find key purchasing contracts, search and bid on opportunities, obtain security clearances and more. Free webinar. 12:00pm-2:00pm. 1-873-355-9796

More events are listed on page 9

Deadlines

Ottawa Valley BUSINESS

Publishing: February 15, 2022
 Deadline: February 8, 2022

Publishing: March 1, 2022
 Deadline: February 22, 2022

Publishing: March 15, 2022
 Deadline: March 8, 2022

Publishing: April 5, 2022
 Deadline: March 29, 2022

101 Things To Do in the Valley

FOUR ISSUES PER YEAR

Winter Edition

Due to the government COVID rules impacting events, we are not publishing this edition.

Spring Edition

Publishing: April 19, 2022
 Deadline: April 12, 2022

Summer Edition

HealthMatters

Winter Edition

This issue has been distributed

Spring Edition

Deadline: April 1, 2022
 Publishing: April 21, 2022

Summer Edition

Deadline: July 1, 2022
 Publishing: July 21, 2022

We Need Media To Tell The Story

They are our best way to hold people accountable



Photo: Convoy To Ottawa 2022 Restart Facebook Page

Continued from page 1

It might seem easier if everyone always followed suit and never objected to anything, but when that happens, I think we lose more than we could ever gain. It would certainly mean a great change to the lifestyle we have known as Canadians.

Accountability Resources

One way to ensure that government hears from the people they represent is to have those voices brought forward by the media. The media used to have the role of keeping agencies and organizations accountable - if you weren't comfortable with the world knowing about it, maybe you shouldn't be doing it. Today, that is not the case.

Today, I watched a professionally-trained media person, working for an outlet that is funded by my tax dollars, suggest through a series of uncomfortable stumbles that Russia might be behind the trucker's convoy. That used to be a fireable offence. I would have failed journalism class for that. Today, it was treated as a legitimate story - no facts, no truth, no value.

Our media has to do better. I

have always loved CBC, but since this whole pandemic, I have felt tricked by them. First, the trucker convoy wasn't being covered as a story at all, and then when it was, it wasn't being covered truthfully. I was embarrassed for CBC. I was embarrassed for all the media who chose to do the same - pretty much everyone.

Outlets that told a truthful story were Druthers, Rebel News, True North Media and Blacklock's Reporter. The first three have been on the ground on Parliament Hill (and other locations) telling the story, often live. So yes, when you're live you get some curse words and strange sounds on the mic, but that's the truth of what's happening there. There is also some investigative reporting taking place. True North is offering a reward on the identity of the one person carrying the lone Nazi flag in order to get to the truth of the story. Some others have joined in and the reward is now \$6,500! They chose this route instead of reporting that all truckers and their supporters are white supremacists.

And finally, Blacklock's Reporter. They charge \$341 for

an annual online subscription. Do you know why it's worth it? Their lead story today is that Canada Revenue Agency claimed truckers from the convoy had ransacked office buildings in a violent protest. However, Ottawa Police Service said that was not true and did not happen. They also carried the story that the House of Commons ethics committee passed a 10-0 vote for Canada's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Theresa Tam, to appear before the committee to explain the data collected from 33 million Canadian cellphone users. She declined to attend. I'd like to know more about this.

Here are the links to these media outlets:

www.druthers.net

www.rebelnews.com

www.tnc.news

www.blacklocks.ca

Who's Right About Rights?

Brian Peckford, the former Premier of Newfoundland, is the lead applicant in a legal case that suggests the Government of Canada might be overstepping on banning people who are not COVID-vaccinated from traveling by air.

Continued on page 4

Finance

Dedicated Telephone Service: Income Tax Service Providers

The Canada Revenue Agency has a dedicated telephone service (DTS) for small and medium-sized income tax service providers. Any income tax service provider can register and benefit from the service, provided they do not belong to a firm with greater than 50 partners. For details visit <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/campaigns/dedicated-telephone-service.html>

CRA Releases 2021 Forms For Home Office Expense Claims

The CRA released the 2021 versions of the T2200S Declaration of Conditions of Employment for Working at Home Due to COVID-19 (T2200S) and T777S Statement of Employment Expenses for Working at Home Due to COVID-19 (T777S) for employee home office expense claims. Both forms are similar to last year's versions. The CRA has also highlighted the criteria that must be met for employers interested in automating the completion of electronic T2200S forms. You can download the form links directly at www.cpacanada.ca and follow the link for Canadian Tax News and COVID-19 Updates.

CRA Updates On Employee Benefits Due To COVID-19

The CRA published their administrative positions for employer-provided benefits and allowances pertaining to home office expenses. The CRA has further updated their guidance with this change: the positions are now effective from March 15, 2020 to December 31, 2022 (the previous announcement indicated the positions were effective to December 31, 2021). Note that the \$500 limit for certain equipment applies for the entire period.

More finance on page 8

Charter Signer Takes Canada To Court

Canada only developed country to ban unvaccinated air travelers

Continued from page 3

While the trucker's convoy is asking for the vaccine mandate to be dropped, Brian Peckford is taking it to court.

Peckford's Notice of Application for Judicial Review with the Federal Court says that the Minister of Transport used the Aeronautics Act to ban Canadians who were not COVID-vaccinated from flying because it posted "significant risk, direct or indirect, to aviation safety or the safety of the plane." Peckford says the COVID vaccine is still experimental and as such is a gross violation of Charter rights.

Further, the notice states "Vaccinated and unvaccinated Canadians can be infected with and transmit Covid-19. However, individuals under 60 years old without co-morbidities have an approximately

99.997% chance of recovery from Covid-19."

Therefore, not being vaccinated cannot be a significant risk to aviation safety or the safety of the public.

A link to Peckford's Notice of Application for Judicial Review is at www.ovbusiness.com

There are a few other things that make the case interesting.

First, Peckford was a drafter and signatory of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. At 79, he is the only signatory still alive.

Second, Canada is the only country in the developed world to have banned travelers from air travel if they have not been COVID-vaccinated.

It is time for this discussion to be had because many people are impacted by the mandated vaccination policies of the government, private businesses and organizations. However, this

decision turns out, if you believe that getting the COVID-19 vaccinations is good for you to do so, you can still continue to do so. What it also allows is for people who believe it is not the right choice for them to also be equally treated for that decision.

We all know that by taking a medication, we can only impact ourselves. Your neighbour's flu does not get better when you take flu medication. Your partner's HIV status does not change based on your decision to take antiviral medication. Your likelihood of getting cancer does not change when your sister decides to stop taking chemotherapy treatments.

So perhaps the final thing we can take away from this situation in our country is that you can still be kind or love or respect someone if they think differently than you. Imagine if we all decided to do that?

What I Watched

The trucker's convoy has posted a lot of videos of what is happening on Parliament Hill and in other areas connected to the movement. The main one with a lot of links is Convoy to Ottawa 2022 Restart. It's called "restart" because the initial page was taken down by Facebook before January 29th. It caused a disruption but organizers got the second page up pretty quickly. Many of the videos of truckers driving to Parliament Hill were lost in the restart of the page.

Another person involved in a lot of media for the convoy is Pat King. You can follow his page at www.facebook.com/therealpatking

Finally, Canada Unity has some videos of driving to Ottawa. Their page is at www.facebook.com/CanadaUnity



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ovjobs.ca

Post your job FOR FREE as an OVTA member!

The Ottawa Valley Tourist Association (OVTA) is making it free for members to post their job openings on www.ovjobs.ca! Just email your job to employers@ovjobs.ca and indicate you are an OVTA member to take advantage of this offer. If you're not an OVTA member, but want to have free job postings, contact the association about joining!

Visit www.ottawavalley.travel or email enorris@countyofrenfrew.on.ca

 www.facebook.com/ovjobs
www.ovjobs.ca

Business News Around The Valley

Building Permits

The Town of Petawawa issued a total of 393 building permits in 2021. There was a total building permit value of \$43,901,174.09 and the municipality earned \$904,946.68 in building permit fees. This is almost double the activity and value of 2020. Admaston Bromley recorded 82 building permits in 2021 for a total construction value of \$6,812,500. This was an increase of approximately \$1 million over 2020. Horton recorded 85 building permits in 2021 for a total of \$13,277,800 in construction value. This was just less than double the construction values in 2020 and 2019.

Bridge Closing In Pontiac

On January 28, MRC Pontiac had posted a notice that the Ministère des Transports du Québec will be closing bridge P-08574 which is located on the Black River Road in Waltham. This closure is due to the river level becoming problematic for

the bridge. The Campbell's Bay Service Centre is in the process of installing signage for the closure. The bridge will be reopened when the river level no longer touches the bridge.

Grants in Petawawa

The owner of 3227 Petawawa Boulevard, home of The Urban Lounge Salon and Spa, has applied for \$5,000 under the Town of Petawawa's community improvement plan, building facade improvement grant program. The business plans to install two new vinyl windows.

Chamber Recruiting Board Members

The Renfrew & Area Chamber of Commerce is looking for board members to fill vacancies on its board of directors for 2022. The board meets each month on the third Tuesday at 8:00am. As a chamber director, you will have an opportunity to help shape the future success of our business community and the way in which we do business.

Interested Renfrew & Area Chamber of Commerce members can contact Gail at the Chamber office at info@renfrewareachamber.ca on or before February 11, 2022.

Roll-Off Truck Purchase In Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards.

Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards council put forward a motion to purchase 2003 Mack Granite Triaxle Roll-off truck from Sheehan's Truck Centre Inc. delivered to the works yard in the amount of \$49,950.00.

Umperson Earns Certification

Darren Umperson, a Lanark County employee, has earned his Certified Road Supervisor certification from the Association of Ontario Road Supervisors (AORS).

Admaston Bromley Considers

Extending Paving Contract
Greenwood Paving had been awarded the contract to apply a double surface treatment to

Campbell Line in Admaston Bromley in the 2021 season and now they are seeking an extension to complete this job in 2022. Greenwood is willing to hold the 2021 pricing for surface treatment into the 2022 year. The township decided to forego completing the road in 2021. \$181,600 was budgeted in 2021 for its construction, however only \$91,325 was spent. Council is considering extending the contract with Greenwood Paving.

Health Wardens In Quebec

On January 26, the Province of Quebec announced that unvaccinated people are not permitted to go inside of a large (ie: big box) store unless accompanied by a "health warden" who will monitor them so they only purchase food and medicine. They are not allowed to purchase anything else.

Submit your business news to admin@ovbusiness.com

Need A Job? We Can Help!

www.petawawaemployment.ca



The labour market is changing...but employers are hiring!

Let Employment Service help you be better prepared and less stressed. We help you:

- identify new and existing opportunities
- prepare for online applications and interviews
- feel confident and supported throughout the job search process

Serving job seekers from Petawawa to Deux Rivieres. Contact us today to see how we may help.

Petawawa: 613- 687-1717 | Deep River: 613- 584-1717

PMFRC
Petawawa Military Family Resource Centre



CRFMP
Centre de ressources pour les familles des militaires de Petawawa

MFSP
MILITARY FAMILY SERVICES PROGRAM



PSFM
PROGRAMME DES SERVICES AUX FAMILLES DES MILITAIRES

EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO

Your job is out there. We'll help you find it.

EMPLOI ONTARIO

Votre emploi vous attend. Nous vous aiderons à le trouver.

This Employment Ontario service is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

It's A Fact

Care Occupations In Canada

3.2 million

Persons employed in paid care occupations

19%

Canadian employed population in paid care occupations

9%

Paid care occupations who are registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses

9%

Paid care occupations who are elementary school and kindergarten teachers

8%

Paid care occupations who are nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates

7%

Paid care occupations who are light-duty cleaners

75%

Paid care occupations occupied by women

46%

People working in paid care occupations who had a university certificate or degree at the bachelor level or above

25%

People not working in care occupations with a university certificate or degree at the bachelor level or above

29%

Women in paid care occupations who had a college credential as their highest level of education

16%

Men in paid care occupations who had a college credential as their highest level of education

24%

Total Canadian workers who are immigrants

44%

Women in paid care occupations who held a university certificate, diploma or degree at the bachelor level or above

51%

Men in paid care occupations who held a university certificate, diploma or degree at the bachelor level or above

29%

Women who held professional occupations in nursing such as registered nurses, registered psychiatric nurses and nursing co-ordinators and supervisors

11%

Men who held professional occupations in nursing such as registered nurses, registered psychiatric nurses and nursing co-ordinators and supervisors

45%

Men who held professional occupations such as general practitioners and family physicians, specialist physicians and dentists

16%

Women who held professional occupations such as general practitioners and family physicians, specialist physicians and dentists

\$59,300

Average employment income of women in paid care positions

\$73,400

Average employment income of men in paid care positions

Source: Statistics Canada

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Ottawa Valley
BUSINESS

FREE Transportation to COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics in Renfrew County



This service is available to all residents of Renfrew County who are eligible for vaccination and to individuals who require wheelchair specialized transportation.

Not sure who to call? Call 1-833-617-4357 for your local transportation provider.

If you require transportation or wheelchair accessible transportation to your vaccination appointment in Renfrew County, your Community Support Services will provide your transportation free of charge.

To book a drive, call:

**Arnprior McNab
Braeside Seniors at
Home Program**

Phone: 613-623-7981

**Renfrew & Area Seniors
Home Support**

Phone: 613-432-7691

**Calabogie & Area Home
Support**

Phone: 613-752-2828

**Eganville & District
Seniors**

Phone: 613-628-2354

**Carefor Health &
Community Services
(Pembroke)**

Phone: 613-732-9993

**Barry's Bay & Area
Senior Citizen's Home
Support**

Phone: 613-756-2772

**North Renfrew Long-
Term Care Services
(Deep River)**

Phone: 613-584-1900

Government News In Brief

Gas tax funds, electricity savings, business program

Ontario Gas Tax Funding

Ontario's Gas Tax program supports public transit in municipalities across Ontario by providing two cents per litre of the provincial gas tax to improve and expand transit. Local municipalities receiving funding include: Bancroft (Hastings Highlands, Wollaston) received \$78,270, Lanark County received \$434,033, Pembroke (Laurentian Valley) was provided with \$103,817 and a conglomeration of municipalities including Renfrew, Admaston Bromley, Bonnechere Valley, Greater Madawaska, Horton and Whitewater Region received \$249,782.

Electricity Savings For Business

As of January 1, 2022, industrial and commercial electricity customers could see an additional four per cent savings compared to their bills last year. Starting on January 1, 2021, the Comprehensive Electricity Plan reduced overall Global Adjustment (GA) costs for industrial and commercial customers who do not participate in the Regulated Price Plan (RPP) by shifting the forecast above-market costs of non-hydro renewable energy, such as wind, solar and bioenergy, from the



rate base to the province. As part of its COVID response, Ontario had deferred a portion of GA between April and June 2020 for industrial and non-RPP commercial customers, with more than 50,000 customers benefiting. Those same businesses paid back these deferred GA costs over 12 months, between January 2021 and December 2021. Now that the GA deferral repayment period is over, industrial and non-RPP commercial customers will benefit from the full cost reductions provided to them by the comprehensive electricity plan. This means that beginning January 1, 2022, these businesses could see an additional four per cent savings on their bills compared to 2021, depending on their location and consumption. For example, a manufacturer with an average maximum monthly electricity demand of five megawatts could

see electricity savings of about 15 per cent, or about \$30,000 per month, in 2022. Actual savings for consumers would vary depending on consumption and location.

Applications Now Open for Ontario Business Costs Rebate Program

Eligible businesses required to close or reduce capacity due to the current public health measures put in place to blunt the spread of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 can apply for the new Ontario Business Costs Rebate Program which opened January 18. The government will provide eligible businesses with a rebate payment of up to 100 per cent for property tax and energy costs they incur while subject to these restrictions. Eligible businesses required to close for indoor activities, such as restaurants and gyms, will receive a rebate payment equivalent to 100 per cent of their costs. Those required to reduce capacity to 50 per cent, such as smaller retail stores, will receive a rebate payment equivalent to 50 per cent of their costs.

Election Watch

Ontario Election June 2, 2022

How to become a candidate: You must be 18 years of age or older on election day, a Canadian citizen, a resident in Ontario for at least six months before election day and not disqualified by any legislation. You must be nominated by having signatures and addresses of at least 25 eligible electors in the electoral district in which you are running. Once you receive a Certificate of Nomination, your name will appear on the ballot and you will be registered according to the *Election Finances Act* and eligible to start financial activity. There is no fee to become a candidate.

For more information on the Ontario provincial election, visit www.elections.on.ca

Municipal Election October 24, 2022

May 2, 2022: First day to file a Nomination Paper for mayor, councillor and school board trustee.

August 19, 2022: Deadline for candidates to file a nomination, withdraw a nomination or change office.

Who can be a candidate? You must be a resident of the municipality, a non-resident owner or tenant of land in the municipality or the spouse of such non-resident owner or tenant, a Canadian citizen and at least 18 years old, you must not be legally prohibited from voting and not disqualified by any legislation from holding municipal office. You will need 25 signatures on your nomination form and must pay a fee of \$100 (\$200 for mayor).

There is a 90-minute online course that explains the role of running for municipal council.

For information on municipal elections in Ontario, visit www.amo.on.ca



Boudens BOOKKEEPING

Do you have a
bookkeeping vacancy
at your business that you
can't seem to fill?

Do you need to free up
some time to work on
other areas of your
business?

Are you ready to move to a
bookkeeping service?

Contact Kim Boudens. Phone: 613-401-8052 or boudens1@nrtco.net

College Faculty On Work-To Rule

“Members cannot be intimidated, coerced or retaliated against”

In a January 7, 2022 letter to Graham Lloyd, Chief Executive Officer of the College Employer Council, Warren Thomas, OPSEU/SEFPO president noted that faculty members represented by OPSEU/SEFPO working at Ontario's 24 public colleges have now begun Phase 2 of the work-to-rule campaign. This is part of a legal strike action, which began on December 18, 2021. This includes Algonquin College.

Thomas says that work-to-rule is a legally recognized form of strike action, as per the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act (CCBA). In his letter shared on Facebook, he writes that OPSEU/SEFPO has been abundantly clear about the scope and has clearly communicated that members will not be performing tasks

outside of the strict letter of the collective agreement, and where applicable, the requirements of their SWFs, including participation in orientation events. Such tasks are considered struck work, and performing them would be equivalent to crossing a picket line. The letter continues that any direction from the employer to faculty to not engage in strike activity - or any reprisal, or threat of reprisal for doing so - will be considered interference with the union and OPSEU/SEFPO will take any, and all, appropriate steps required. He concludes that "we will not allow our members to be intimidated, coerced or retaliated against."

Colleges Buoyed By International Tuition
Ontario's Auditor General,

Bonnie Lysk, released a report in December noting that the number of domestic students to Ontario's 24 colleges has declined by 15 per cent, while the number of international students has increased 342 per cent. Today, international students comprise 30 per cent of Ontario college students. In addition, Lysk noted that 62 per cent of international students are coming from one country - India. China is next at six per cent and Vietnam is third at four per cent. The college system now relies on international students for 68 per cent of its tuition fees.

Finance

CEBA Loan Repayment Deadline Extension

On January 12, the government announced the repayment deadline for CEBA loans to qualify for partial loan forgiveness is being extended to December 31, 2023, for all eligible borrowers in good standing. Repayment on or before the new deadline will result in loan forgiveness of up to a third of the loan value (up to \$20,000). Outstanding loans would subsequently convert to two-year term loans with interest of five per cent per annum commencing January 1, 2024 with loans fully due December 31, 2025. Also, the repayment deadline for partial forgiveness for CEBA-equivalent lending through the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund is extended to December 31, 2023.

Source: CPA Canada

COMMUNITY FUTURES FRANCOPHONE JOB CREATION PROGRAM

50% WAGE SUBSIDY

THE COMMUNITY FUTURES FRANCOPHONE JOB CREATION PROGRAM WILL PROVIDE FINANCIAL INCENTIVES TO RENFREW COUNTY EMPLOYERS TO HIRE FRANCOPHONE SPEAKING EMPLOYEES THROUGH A 50% WAGE SUBSIDY.

Renfrew County employers are eligible for the following for a new francophone hire:

- Up to 50% employee wage subsidy
- Up to 50% advertising contribution for job position

Employees hired on or after September 24, 2021 eligible. Available through to March 31, 2022.

CALL 613-431-3951 EXT. 229
OR EMAIL KELLEY.LEMENCHICK@RCCFDC.ORG
FOR MORE INFORMATION.

PROGRAMME FRANCOPHONE POUR LA CRÉATION D'EMPLOIS

SOCIÉTÉ D'AIDE AU DÉVELOPPEMENT DES COLLECTIVITÉS (SADC)

SUBVENTION SALARIALE DE 50 %

LA SADC OFFRIRA UNE SUBVENTION SALARIALE DE 50 % AUX EMPLOYEURS DU COMTÉ DE RENFREW QUI EMBAUCHENT DES EMPLOYÉS FRANCOPHONES VIA LE PROGRAMME FRANCOPHONE POUR LA CRÉATION D'EMPLOIS.

Les employeurs du comté de Renfrew qui embauchent des employés francophones pourront recevoir :

- une subvention allant jusqu'à 50% des dépenses salariales encourues;
- un soutien financier allant jusqu'à 50% des frais pour annoncer ces postes.

Les subventions sont disponibles jusqu'au 31 mars 2022.

POUR EN SAVOIR PLUS, VEUILLEZ COMMUNIQUER AVEC NOUS AU 613-431-3951 POSTE 229 OU KELLEY.LEMENCHICK@RCCFDC.ORG

Events

February 22, 2022

Developing A Powerful Community On LinkedIn. A guide through the process of completing and optimizing a professional LinkedIn profile and developing a powerful community on LinkedIn. 9:00am-10:00am. Free webinar. Hosted by Small Business Advisor Centre. 613-283-7002 ext.108 or cjames@smallbizcentre.ca

February 22, 2022

Developing A Powerful Community On LinkedIn. A guide through the process of completing and optimizing a professional LinkedIn profile and developing a powerful community on LinkedIn. 9:00am-10:00am. Free webinar. Hosted by Small Business Advisor Centre. 613-283-7002 ext.108 or cjames@smallbizcentre.ca

February 23, 2022

Grow Your Brand on Instagram. Free online webinar. 7:00pm-8:30pm. This workshop is for those that have already dipped your toes into the world of Instagram, and are looking to grow your business's reach on the platform. www.obiaa.com/events

February 23, 2022

Protecting Your Future : Business Insurance Guide. Community Futures welcomes insurance representative, Samuel Brisco to discuss how having adequate insurance can protect your business from commonly experienced losses and why cyber security is more important than ever. Register at <https://bankruptcy.eventbrite.ca>

February 23, 2022

Upper Ottawa Valley Chamber of Commerce annual general meeting.

Virtual meeting at 1:00pm. Contact the chamber for more details - manager@uovchamber.com

February 24, 2022

Dong Business with the Government of Canada. Find out if the government buys your goods or services. Register in the supplier database, find key purchasing contracts, search and bid on opportunities, obtain security clearances and more. Free webinar. 12:00pm-2:00pm. 1-873-355-9796

March 2, 2022

Teeny Tiny Conference Webinar 3. Renewed, Refreshed and the New Rural. Keynote by Robin Jones, Chari of ROMA. Opportunities for rural Ontario in a post-COVID world. 10:00am. www.teenytinysummits.omafrabdb-events.ca

March 3, 2022

Bookkeeping 101: What business owners need to know. Free online webinar. 9:00am-11:00am. Allowable expenses, write-offs, annual and quarterly remittances, vehicle expenses and more. Hosted by Small Business Advisor Centre. 613-283-7002 ext.108 or cjames@smallbizcentre.ca

March 8, 2022

Creating and Utilizing Facebook Groups. This webinar will focus on the benefits of setting up a Facebook Group as a value-add for your business. 9:00am-10:00am. Free webinar. Hosted by Small Business Advisor Centre. 613-283-7002 ext.108 or cjames@smallbizcentre.ca

March 8, 2022

Renfrew & Area Chamber of Commerce annual general meeting. For more information contact Gail at info@renfrewareachamber.ca

Submit your business event to admin@ovbusiness.com

Tenders

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

APN – Petawawa Construction Program for FY 2021-2022 with Security Requirements

FOR SALE

FD-2022-01 Surplus Tender

Sale of Land – Head, Clara & Maria

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Coagulant Supply

Request for Proposal – DP-2022-01 Design-Build of an Affordable Multi-Residential Housing Project

2021-CORP-08
Land Needs Study

TENDERS

Supply and Delivery of a Robotic Total Station and Data Collector 22-PW-001

ES-2022-4 RFQ 2022-2024 Curbside Leaf Collection Program

Janitorial and Building Maintenance Services – Pembroke OPP Detachment

Request for Tender T-22-01 RFT BM-2022-01-V2 HVAC Upgrades, Bonnechere Manor

PW-M-38-2022-22-E3 – 3 Cable Guide Rail and Steel Beam Guide Rail Maintenance

PW-C-11-2022-22-E0 – Supply and Place Shoulder Gravel

PW-C-10-2022-22-E0 – Culvert Replacements

PW-C-12-2022-22-E0 – Micro Resurfacing

PW-C-09-2022-22-E0 – Road Rehabilitation of County Road #43 (Highway 43)

PW-C-08-2022-22-E0 – Road Rehabilitation of County Road #20 (Waba Road)

PW-C-07-2022-22-E0 – Road Rehabilitation of County Road #18 (Port Elmsley Road)

PW-C-06-2022-22-E0 – Road Rehabilitation of County Road #17 (Blakeney Road)

PW-C-05-2022-22-E0 – Road Rehabilitation of County Road #14 (Narrows Lock Road)

PW-C-04-2022-22-E0 – Road Rehabilitation of County Road #10 (Scotch Line)

PW-C-02-2022-22-E0 – Road Rehabilitation of County Road #9 (Tatlock Road)

PW-C-01-2022-22-E0 – Road Rehabilitation of County Road #6 (Christie Lake Road)

PW-M-32-2022-22-E2 – Supply and Application of Water Based Traffic Paint for Pavement Markings

W0107-19M048/A – Cable TV Services

For full tender listings and results, visit www.ovbusiness.com

Do you have a tender to promote? You can post it with us for free on our website and it is promoted in our twice-monthly newsletter. Send your details to admin@ovbusiness.com

You can send us information to be published for free! We take business events, tenders and request for proposal, business news, employee news, facts related to business or industry and more!

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BUSINESS
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Picking Favourites

Why it can help to carve out your niche



By: Jennifer Layman
jenn@fwdthink.net

As a business, we like to be available to everyone. Deep in our *raison d'être* is knowing that we are going to get paid for helping someone, and you will always have that opportunity. In addition, it's a good time to zero in on your favourites and develop a plan to cater to them.

You can choose your favourite customers by how they contribute to your bottom line, how they align with why you do what you do or a combination of both. For example, as an accountant, you want clients who will pay their bills, but you also prefer to do non-profit type of work so your favourite customer might be financially secure non-profits.

When you know your favourite customer, you can build your marketing around attracting them. Using the accountant example above, maybe you offer

seminars for non-profits, sponsor events that would draw their attendance or submit an article on a specific topic for their board to consider, even if they already use another accounting firm. Marketing can become easier when you get more specific about the niche audience you want to pursue.

Is there a risk in putting all your eggs in one basket? A diversified client base is always a good thing, a bit of a safety net if something goes sideways in one area of your business. The best way to answer that question will come from evaluating your own version of risk. Are you comfortable pursuing a niche audience for 25 per cent of your business? Maybe 50 per cent? If you want to build your business with clients that you truly enjoy, you will need to carve out a space to do that.

The benefits of targeting a certain type of customer are that you can give them more of your attention, which usually results in a stronger relationship and more sales. It also drives more of the same type of customer to your door when you become known for serving a certain clientele. Using the accountant example again, as you build the non-profit clientele, you might

take continuing education in that sector and then your expertise increases which makes you stand out amongst your peers. That expertise can also open other doors for you and your company down the road.

The other thing to remember is that your favourite customers can sometimes change as you grow in your business. When you're the newer kid on the block, you might align with a certain customer. As you become known, you might draw the attention of other customers and find a missing piece of the marketplace that you can easily fill. Your customer focus can also be driven by how you grow your business - the strengths that employees bring to the table, and it can be driven by downsizing your business on the way to retirement.

Whatever stage of business you might be in, it is always a good position to be aware of who your best customers are and who you most enjoy working with. We spend a lot of our lives at work, so the more you enjoy what you do, the better work-life balance you are likely to have.

Jennifer is the president of Forward Thinking Marketing Agency. Her column appears in every issue.

Work Wellness

Office Walk

Over the lunch break, map out a 20-minute walk route for a group to join in and get some exercise. Keep the same time and route location to make it easier for people to join in. The route can change periodically or with the seasons. Let everyone in the office know they are welcome to join and walk at their own pace - with each other or with headphones in and just for some peaceful time alone. Remote employees can walk at the same time with their own route.

The Origin of Sayings: Crocodile Tears

Modern English speakers use the phrase "crocodile tears" to describe a display of superficial or false sorrow, but the saying actually derives from a medieval belief that crocodiles shed tears of sadness while they killed and consumed their prey. The myth dates back as far as the 14th century and comes from a book called *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*. Wildly popular upon its release, the tome recounts a brave knight's adventures during his supposed travels through Asia. Among its many fabrications, the book includes a description of crocodiles that notes, "These serpents sley men, and eate them weeping, and they have no tongue." While factually inaccurate, Mandeville's account of weeping reptiles later found its way into the works of Shakespeare, and "crocodile tears" became an idiom as early as the 16th century.

Quotable

"I am not a product of my circumstances. I am a product of my decisions."
(Stephen Covey)

"Success seems to be connected with action. Successful people keep moving. They make mistakes, but they don't quit."
(Conrad Hilton)

Be the business you
know you can be.

forwardthinking
MARKETING AGENCY

www.fwdthink.net | Phone: 613-732-7774
jenn@fwdthink.net



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January 20, 2022

In This Issue

- Community housing regulatory posting.
- ROMA Conference 2022: Information you need to know to participate.
- AMO/LAS *Municipal Energy Symposium* March 31 - April 1. Registration open.
- AMO/LAS *Municipal Energy Symposium* - Call for Proposals.
- Managing your Occupational Health and Safety Program with 4SafeCom.
- Blog: Does your municipality use safety technology?
- New Year's Resolution: Help staff performance with LED lighting.
- Canoe vendor spotlight: Siemens Canada.
- Canoe webinar: Sharp Technology.
- Careers: Brampton and the Ontario Securities Commission.

Provincial Matters

The government has a community housing [regulatory posting](#) for public comment until February 18. The changes are expected to be potentially significant for municipalities and District Social Administration Boards concerning community housing service agreements, service levels, and access. AMO will provide a submission in response to the posting.

Eye on Events

All registered delegates will receive platform log-in credentials on **Friday, January 21 from chime.ca** to participate in the virtual 2022 ROMA Annual Conference. Remember to check your spam and junk folders. If you haven't registered and wish to participate in the conference, [click here](#).

AMO and LAS are excited to host a virtual *Municipal Energy Symposium* March 31 - April 1. This leading edge event takes a critical look at the intersection of climate change, land use planning and energy post-COP26. Explore examples of how municipalities are planning for the future and what this means to daily operations. Register [here](#).

AMO and LAS are calling on municipalities and partners to showcase initiatives and innovation in addressing municipal energy and climate change at the seminal virtual *Municipal Energy Symposium*, March 31 - April 1. For more information and to submit your proposal, [click here](#). Deadline for proposals is February 4.

AMO's Health & Safety Partner, 4S Consulting Services Inc., will conduct a live demonstration of the 4SafeCom Online Safety Training & Management System. The focus of the demo will be to show how municipalities can manage their OHS program easily and effectively. Demos are on [January 25](#) and [February 1](#). Register today.

LAS

Safety management software can help your municipality in managing your Ontario

Health Service program real-time across departments. Read our [latest blog](#) by 4S Consulting Services, Inc.

Did you know that better lighting can boost staff morale and enhance productivity? Use our [Facility Lighting Service](#) to improve light levels, reduce energy consumption and help your staff do their best. [Give us a call](#) for a free budget proposal.

We're pleased to welcome Siemens Canada to the [Canoe Procurement Group](#), expanding our offerings of surveillance systems, fire protection, building automation, and more. [Contact Tanner](#) to find out about this and our other 180+ vendors.

[Canoe Procurement Group](#) vendor Sharp Electronics is one of the leading suppliers of printers, multifunction devices, displays and more. Join us virtually on January 26 at 11 am to see how your offices can benefit. Be sure to [register here](#).

Careers

[Government Relations Specialist - City of Brampton](#). This role contributes to the development and implementation of government relations initiatives to support the Mayor, Councillors, Chief Administrative Officer and the Corporate Leadership Team. Apply [online](#) by January 26, 2022.

[Senior Analyst, Domestic Affairs - Ontario Securities Commission](#). The Senior Analyst is accountable for keeping abreast of domestic policy and matters, and providing advice, analysis and recommendations on domestic securities policies and regulatory affairs to stakeholders across the Commission. Apply [online](#) by January 26, 2022.

About AMO

AMO is a non-profit organization representing almost all of Ontario's 444 municipal governments. AMO supports strong and effective municipal government in Ontario and promotes the value of municipal government as a vital and essential component of Ontario's and Canada's political system. Follow [@AMOPolicy](#) on Twitter!

AMO Contacts

[AMO Watch File](#) Tel: 416.971.9856

[Conferences/Events](#)

[Policy and Funding Programs](#)

[LAS Local Authority Services](#)

[MEPCO Municipal Employer Pension Centre of Ontario](#)

[ONE Investment](#)

[Media Inquiries](#)

[Municipal Wire, Career/Employment and Council Resolution Distributions](#)

AMO's Partners



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January 27, 2022

In This Issue

- Proposed updated Standards of Care under *PAWS Act*.
- Inclusive Communities Grant.
- AMO/LAS *Municipal Energy Symposium* March 31 - April 1. Registration open.
- AMO/LAS *Municipal Energy Symposium* - Call for Proposals.
- Keynote confirmed for AMO-LAS *Energy Symposium*.
- ROMA's action plan *Opportunities for Rural Ontario in a Post-Covid World* launched.
- Canoe webinar: Doosan & Bobcat.
- Canoe vendor spotlight: FLO.
- Careers: Georgian Bay and Vaughan.

Provincial Matters

The Ministry of the Solicitor General is proposing updated standards of care for dogs kept outdoors under the PAWS Act. The [consultation](#) is open for comment until March 7, 2022.

Applications are now open for the 2022-23 Inclusive Community Grants program. Funding is available for local projects that will help older residents and people with disabilities participate in community life. The deadline to apply is March 3, 2022. Information and how to apply is found on the government [website](#).

Eye on Events

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March 31 - April 1, AMO and LAS will hold the in demand *Municipal Energy Symposium*. Keynote Dr. Sarah Burch will explore opportunities in addressing climate change at the local level. [Register today](#).

ROMA Matters

A key event at the 2022 ROMA Conference was the launch of the ROMA Board's action plan for economic and social growth and sustainability in rural Ontario. [Read the ROMA Board's strategies](#) that rethink rural Ontario for today and into the future.

LAS

Canoe Procurement Group vendors Doosan and Bobcat provide a wide array of equipment from lawn care to loaders to forklifts. Join our webinar on February 9 at 11 am to learn how our Canoe vendors can help you keep your communities beautiful. Registration is open.

Looking to add electric vehicles to your fleet or expand your charging capability? We're pleased to welcome FLO Services Inc. to the Canoe Procurement Group. Their contract includes many solutions from EV charging stations for public or fleets to monitoring systems and maintenance. Contact Tanner to find out about this and our other 180+ vendors.

Careers

Chief Administrative Officer - Township of Georgian Bay. The CAO is responsible for leadership and general management of the Corporation, acting as key advisor and liaison to Council. Interested candidates email a cover letter and your resume to Kartik Kumar by February 28, 2022.

Director & Chief Licensing Officer - City of Vaughan. This role is responsible for managing and providing direction of the overall operations and staff of the By-Law & Compliance, Licensing & Permit Services Department. To obtain a detailed Position Profile or to be considered for the position, please contact Kartik Kumar at careers@lesp.ca by February 11, 2022.

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Conferences/Events

Policy and Funding Programs

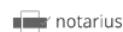
LAS Local Authority Services

MEPCO Municipal Employer Pension Centre of Ontario

ONE Investment

Media Inquiries

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February 3, 2022

In This Issue

- Inclusive Communities Grant.
- Webinars announced for Subwatershed Planning Guide Consultation.
- Webinars announced for *Conservation Authorities Act* Phase 2 Regulations.
- Factsheets available for Excess Soil Registry.
- AMO/LAS *Municipal Energy Symposium* March 31 - April 1. Registration open.
- AMO/LAS *Municipal Energy Symposium* - Call for Proposals.
- Webinar: eScribe election webinar series.
- Canoe vendor spotlight: Geotab.
- Canoe webinar: Doosan & Bobcat.
- Blog: Citizen Insights to Boost Your Community Engagement.
- Sponsored message from NWMO.
- Careers: Simcoe and Toronto.

Provincial Matters

Applications are now open for the 2022-23 Inclusive Community Grants program. Funding is available for local projects that will help older residents and people with disabilities participate in community life. The deadline to apply is March 3, 2022. Information and how to apply is found on the government [website](#).

MECP will be hosting webinars on the proposed [Subwatershed Planning Guide](#) on [February 16, 2022 from 1:00-2:30 p.m.](#) and [February 24, 2022 from 9:00-10:30 a.m.](#) Follow the link on each date to register.

MECP will be hosting 90-minute webinars on the proposed [Conservation Authorities Act Phase 2 Regulations](#) on February 4 (10:00 am), February 8 (2:00 pm), and February 10 (10:30 am). Register by emailing ca.office@ontario.ca with the subject line "CAA Phase 2 Webinars" and indicate your preferred session date.

To support implementation of the [O. Reg. 406/19: On-Site and Excess Soil Management](#) (Excess Soil Regulation), a series of fact sheets are available now through the MECP's [Handling excess soil](#) webpage.

Eye on Events

AMO and LAS are excited to host a virtual *Municipal Energy Symposium* March 31 - April 1. This leading edge event takes a critical look at the intersection of climate change, land use planning and energy post-COP26. Explore examples of how municipalities are planning for the future and what this means to daily operations. Register [here](#).

AMO and LAS are calling on municipalities and partners to showcase initiatives and innovation in addressing municipal energy and climate change at the seminal virtual *Municipal Energy Symposium*, March 31 - April 1. For more information and to submit your proposal, [click here](#). Deadline for proposals is **February 4**.

Are you thinking about the municipal election? While it's not happening until October, it is time to start thinking today how to get your meetings ready for your new Council. On February 16 at 11 am ET join eScribe, AMO's preferred partner for electronic meeting management, for a webinar to learn how you can prepare for a seamless election season. [Register today](#).

LAS

We are pleased to welcome Geotab to the [Canoe Procurement Group](#)! Geotab offers vehicle monitoring and telematics solutions to keep your fleet operating as efficiently as possible. [Contact Tanner](#) to learn more.

[Canoe Procurement Group](#) vendors Doosan and Bobcat provide a wide array of equipment from lawn care to loaders to forklifts. [Join our webinar](#) on February 9 at 11 am to learn how buying through Canoe makes it easier to keep your communities beautiful.

Have you ever wondered how your municipality can keep up and continue to engage citizens in an increasingly digital world? Our [guest blogger](#) shares some interesting facts and stats.

Sponsored Message from NWMO

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) is federally mandated through the *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act* (2002) and is responsible for the safe, long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel. The NWMO plans to select a single site for a Deep Geological Repository in 2023 and will share updates through the AMO Watchfile.

Learn more about the [NWMO and Canada's plan](#). Stay tuned for more information about this national infrastructure project. If your municipality has questions or is interested in a project briefing, please contact [Norman Sandberg](#) or 416.303.2254.

Careers

[Deputy Clerk - County of Simcoe](#). The Deputy Clerk assists the County Clerk, and Director of Statutory Services and Archives in the performance of all of the statutory duties assigned to the Clerk under the *Municipal Act* and other related Acts and Regulations of the Legislature and County By-laws. [Apply online](#) by February 17, 2022.

[Site Contract Manager - City of Toronto](#). Reporting to the Manager of Landfill Operations, you will assist with the management of contracted services for the solid waste landfilling and disposal operations at the City of Toronto's (City) Green Lane Landfill site. [Apply online](#) quoting Job ID 20275, by February 24, 2022.

About AMO

AMO is a non-profit organization representing almost all of Ontario's 444 municipal governments. AMO supports strong and effective municipal government in Ontario and promotes the value of municipal government as a vital and essential component of Ontario's and Canada's political system. Follow [@AMOPolicy](#) on Twitter!

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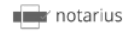
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