

MEDIA BRIEFING

***Building Homes and
Improving Transportation
Infrastructure Act***



**PROTECT
ONTARIO**

**Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Ministry of Transportation**

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Ontario 

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1. Building on our Plan to Protect Ontario

The *Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act* will advance the government's plan to protect Ontario by building a stronger and more self-reliant province. It will continue to drive Ontario's growth and prosperity by improving the way people and goods move across Ontario, enhancing road safety and supporting continued investments in highways, roads, transit and key trade routes. It will also build on the strong foundation laid with Bill 17, the *Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act*, and Bill 60, the *Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act*, by continuing to get more shovels in the ground on new housing projects and housing-enabling infrastructure.

These changes, if passed, and related actions would:

- enable the government to make public transit more convenient, consistent and connected for customers by simplifying fares, improving transit across municipal borders and enhancing specialized transit service across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) through future regulations
- make it easier to obtain technical and engineering reviews from municipalities for provincial transit projects, allowing transit projects to proceed faster
- reduce barriers to homebuilding and increase economic efficiency by creating a simplified and standardized format for official plans and clarifying and streamlining site plan rules
- reinforce the government's clear commitment to public ownership with the Public Utility model, while helping Peel transition to this model
- increase public transparency by consulting on the disclosure of development charges and other hidden costs directly in agreements of purchase and sale

2. Building Transit Infrastructure

The Ontario government is creating more opportunities to keep people moving quickly and safely across the GTHA.

We will do this by:

- implementing One Fare 2.0, which would explore creating one single fare structure in the GTHA, allowing transit customers to pay the same fare and have transfers regardless of where they start their journey
- improving service on priority routes that cross municipal borders
- facilitating a better specialized transit experience in the GTHA

Improving transit connections and travel between municipalities will make people's trips easier and faster.



Building Transit Infrastructure

Fare and Service Integration

- Since launching in 2024, the One Fare program has saved Ontarians over \$230 million and enabled nearly 72 million transfers across participating transit agencies.
- The program has made travel across the GTHA more affordable and convenient, protecting Ontarians' pocketbooks and helping to build a more integrated transit network.
- Building on the success of the One Fare program, the government is introducing legislation that would allow for transit fare and service integration in the GTHA.
- This legislation will lay the groundwork to explore regulations to advance the province's vision for One Fare 2.0, which could enable the province to work with municipal and regional transit organizations to:
 - require transit agencies across the GTHA to adopt a single unified fare structure with common fares, discounts and free transfers, providing more seamless and affordable trips across municipal borders
 - improve service on priority routes that cross municipal borders
 - allow accessible transit services to use a unified trip-booking system and provide more seamless, direct service across municipal borders for passengers with disabilities
- This legislation would make transit easier, faster and more seamless for customers in the GTHA.

Fare and Service Integration — Journey Examples

This legislation will make these customers' trips easier, faster and more affordable:

One Fare 1.0:

Karissa rides the Lakeshore West GO train from Confederation GO station to Clarkson GO station, transfers to a MiWay bus to reach the University of Toronto Mississauga and **doesn't pay a second fare.**

Radha **only pays one fare** when she commutes to her job in Rexdale using Brampton Transit and the TTC. However, the fare that she pays depends on which municipality her journey starts in.

One Fare 2.0 and Other New FSI Initiatives:

Lena travels from Mississauga to Durham to visit her family, **paying the same fare** for both legs of her trip, instead of paying different fares. Her trip is also faster due to more frequent service on her route.

Using a **unified trip booking system** for **accessible transit services**, Lee books a direct, door-to-door trip from Burlington to Hamilton, for a health care appointment, avoiding the need to transfer or coordinate with multiple services.

Building Transit Infrastructure

Fare Evasion

- Fare evasion is a challenge for all transit agencies. As of November 2025, the GO Transit rail network had a fare evasion rate of 5.1 per cent, which represents approximately \$21 million in lost revenue annually.
- Fare evasion can result in higher transit fees for riders as agencies attempt to recover lost revenue.
- Metrolinx currently deploys 47 Revenue Protection Officers who inspect about 2.4 per cent of all rail boardings, so as the system continues to grow, the Ministry of Transportation will work with Metrolinx to update the fare evasion fine structure before the end of 2026 by raising fines to further help prevent evasion.
- The ministry will also work with Metrolinx to hire additional Revenue Protection Officers, improve station infrastructure (e.g., fare readers, station design enhancements, gates) and target fare enforcement at identified hotspots.
- This proposal will reduce revenue loss and increase Metrolinx's ability to inspect more of the system.

Current and Proposed Fare Evasion Penalties

Number of Non-Compliance Interactions	Current Penalties	Future Penalties
First	\$35	\$200
Second	\$50	\$300
Third	\$100	\$400
Fourth	Provincial Offence Notice up to \$200	\$500

Metrolinx will continue to issue Provincial Offence Notices in circumstances involving chronic and repeat offenders.

Building Transit Infrastructure

Northlander Rideshare Framework

- The Northlander is an essential service for northern Ontario residents. Service is planned to resume this year, restoring a vital transportation connection for communities along the corridor.
- Many of these communities are remote and have no taxis, local transit, rideshare or community transportation options, making it difficult for residents to reach Northlander stations or complete end-to-end trips.
- To address these gaps, the government is proposing a framework to permit rideshare services in communities along the Northlander corridor.
- This framework will complement the implementation of end-to-end transportation connections, or first-mile/last-mile services, being led by the Ontario Northlander.
- These measures will improve transportation options in communities the Northlander serves and enable municipalities to launch sustainable first-mile/last-mile services, creating more reliable mobility options.
- Final consultations and regulatory work will occur this spring, with the framework launching to align with the Northlander's return to service.



Building Transit Infrastructure

High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes Off Peak Hours

- The government is proposing a regulatory amendment to the *Highway Traffic Act* that will allow single-occupant vehicles to use High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes during off-peak hours, making better use of existing highway infrastructure to help reduce gridlock and keep drivers moving on provincial highways.
- This change will take place before the end of 2026, following a period of public consultation.
- Existing HOV lane rules will continue to apply outside of off-peak hours, which will be identified through analysis of current traffic data and consultations. These times will not include the busiest weekday morning or evening commute periods.
- These measures will increase highway lane choice during off-peak hours, supporting traffic flow while preserving peak-period benefits for transit and carpooling vehicles.

Building Transit Infrastructure

Standardize GO Station Design/Cost

- Costs to build GO stations continue to rise due to higher construction and material costs, while construction timelines are being extended as projects are becoming increasingly complex and require extensive coordination to deliver.
- The Ministry of Transportation will continue to work with Metrolinx to standardize GO station design to reduce construction costs by implementing simpler, more efficient engineering practices to ensure value for money.
- This work reduces station infrastructure requirements that will speed up timelines and keep costs low for new stations, such as Grimsby GO.

Transit Enablers – Development and Approvals Process

- The government is introducing amendments to the *Metrolinx Act, 2006*, to streamline the process by which Metrolinx obtains technical and engineering support from municipalities to advance new transit projects, including LRT projects and subway, LRT and GO Transit stations.
- This will give Metrolinx the flexibility to obtain a report confirming a project meets technical and engineering requirements without going through the building permit process (which requires compliance with up to 47 separate processes).
- This proposal could decrease project timelines by up to 12 months and save approximately \$9 million per year for transit projects across the province.

Building Transit Infrastructure

Road Standards Harmonization

- It is estimated that over 10,000 different municipal road construction standards are currently in use across Ontario, and industry has told us inconsistency can lead to inefficiencies.
- Following consultations with industry and municipalities, the Minister of Transportation is bringing forward a regulation to make Ontario Provincial Standards for municipal road construction mandatory with respect to hot mix asphalt, aggregates, drainage and general conditions of contract for municipalities throughout the province.
- These requirements would apply to municipal road construction projects starting on or after July 1, 2027.
- The regulation will also establish an exemption request process and reporting requirements.
- These changes will ensure all municipalities use a common set of road construction standards, resulting in project time and cost savings due to improved efficiencies, streamlined procurement processes and faster project approvals.

Class A Driver's Licence Waiting Period

- Currently, there is no required waiting period between obtaining a Class G driver's licence (required for driving passenger vehicles) and a Class A driver's licence (required for driving large trucks and tractor-trailer combinations).
- The ministry intends to bring forward a regulatory amendment requiring a mandatory waiting period between obtaining a Class G driver's licence and commercial Class A licence.
- This amendment will improve road safety and reduce fraud in the driver licensing system by requiring on-road driving experience before drivers can obtain a Class A licence.

3. Building Homes, Fighting Delays, Reducing Costs

The government is introducing legislation to get homes built faster, building on previous legislative reforms.

To achieve this, these changes and related actions will:

- simplify and standardize official plans
- clarify site plan rules
- modernize minimum lot sizes
- streamline the Building Code

It also strengthens water and wastewater governance by supporting Peel's transition to a public utility and will expand housing opportunities in remote and rural areas that lack access to municipal water systems.

Together, these changes build upon the work our government has already taken to simplify planning and speed up approvals. They will support efforts to get shovels in the ground on new homes.



Building Homes, Fighting Delays, Reducing Costs

Official Plan Reform

- Official plans set out long-term land-use rules to guide the future growth of a community. Today, official plans have become lengthy, complicated and highly restrictive, with varying formats, rules and content that make them difficult to navigate.
- The government is proposing changes that will introduce a simplified official plan format that will include a mandatory, standardized set of land-use designations and a common structure setting out a table of contents and schedules (maps) that would be applied consistently provincially. This will make plans clearer and easier for home builders, municipalities and the public to navigate.
- These changes will reduce uncertainty for home builders and municipalities, shorten official plan approval times, and make planning for Ontario's continued growth simpler and more effective.

Building Code Review

- The Ontario Building Code sets out the standards that new construction must meet to ensure the safety and well-being of residents.
- However, over the years, this tool has become overly complex, with content that does not reflect the reality of building in Ontario. Some provisions place undue hardship on builders (such as having to specially manufacture materials to meet the Building Code at 7x the cost), while others are duplicative.
- Since the introduction of Ontario's first Building Code, it has more than quadrupled in size.
- For the first time in 40 years, the government is proceeding with a section-by-section review of the Building Code so it better meets modern challenges, while maintaining Ontario's high health and safety standards.
- To help guide this review, the government is establishing an expert third-party advisory body — consisting of engineering, construction and code specialists — which will help identify where rules can be modernized or streamlined.
- A streamlined Building Code will make it more efficient to plan and build a new home in Ontario, reducing delays and costs that slow down construction and price more people out of the housing market.

Building Homes, Fighting Delays, Reducing Costs

Site Plan: Prohibit Mandatory Municipal Enhanced Development Standards

- Site plan control is a municipal review process that focuses on the detailed design of a site, such as landscaping, further aesthetic considerations and building placement. In many large urban municipalities, these requirements have expanded well beyond functional considerations, adding time and cost to projects.
- The government is proposing to prohibit municipalities from imposing mandatory enhanced development standards — such as landscaping and foliage requirements, soil composition and ornamental and design considerations — beyond what is required for health and safety.
- This would prevent inconsistent, costly local rules that delay construction and make it harder to build homes at reasonable prices, while maintaining important safeguards like stormwater management.

Site Plan Reform Consultation

- Recent estimates by the Ontario Association of Architects put the cost of municipal site plan control related delays at \$3.5 billion per year to the Ontario economy.
- The government is consulting on major structural reforms to site plan control process, such as reducing repeated rounds of municipal feedback on proposed homebuilding applications.
- Faster, more predictable approvals mean projects can move forward without unnecessary delay, while improving the economic efficiency of the Ontario economy.

Building Homes, Fighting Delays, Reducing Costs

Implementation of Water and Wastewater Public Corporation in Peel Region

- The government is continuing work to advance public corporations for water and wastewater, which will offer a way for municipalities to amortize the cost of needed infrastructure over decades. Currently, infrastructure is often paid through a mixture of federal-provincial-municipal investments and, notably, development charges that then get passed squarely on to new home buyers.
- The province has been clear that water is a public resource and will remain that way. Changes through this legislation will reinforce the government's existing commitment to public ownership, while facilitating the continuity of contracts, seniority and employee rights.
- Recognizing extensive municipal interest, this will also create a foundation to enable the model to be widely adopted across the province.

Building Homes, Fighting Delays, Reducing Costs

Minimum Lot Sizes

- Minimum lot sizes determine how small a residential lot can be. Today, inconsistent local standards often force larger lots than necessary, which can reduce housing supply and affordability.
- The government is proposing new legislative authority to set provincial rules for minimum lot sizes for urban residential land through regulation. Concurrently, the province is consulting on a regulation that would set an approximately 175 square metre (1,884 square foot) minimum lot size standard.
- This would allow more efficient use of land and enable a wider range of lower-cost housing options.

Exempt Non-Profit Retirement Homes

- The government is proposing to exempt non-profit retirement homes from development charges to help reduce construction costs and expand affordable housing options for seniors.
- This builds on the success of similar exemptions, such as those applied to long-term care homes, which have supported new construction across the province by saving operators millions of dollars in municipal fees.
- Lowering the cost of building non-profit retirement housing helps increase supply and provides more choice for older Ontarians who are looking to downsize, freeing up further housing supply in the market.

Building Homes, Fighting Delays, Reducing Costs

Amendments and Revocations of Notice of Minister's Zoning Orders (MZOs)

- The government is proposing to bring consultation requirements for MZO amendments and revocations in line with how MZOs currently operate under the existing framework. This would allow certain adjustments, such as addressing minor, administrative or time-sensitive needs to proceed without delay.
- Substantive amendments that impact the functioning of an MZO will continue to be posted for public consultation.

Revocation of the Parkway Belt West Plan and Associated MZOs

- The Parkway Belt West Plan is a 1978 development plan covering areas in the western Greater Toronto Area (GTA). It was originally created to protect future infrastructure corridors, notably hydro corridors and future land for highway expansions that have now been completed (Highways 401, 403, 407 and the 427).
- Furthermore, modern provincial policies such as the Provincial Planning Statement now provide stronger but less cumbersome protections for the same areas, making the 1978 plan outdated, inefficient and duplicative.
- The government is consulting on revoking the Plan and its MZOs because the protections they were designed to provide are already fully captured under current land-use planning tools.
- This will streamline the provincial planning framework while ensuring important corridors and infrastructure needs continue to be safeguarded.

Building Homes, Fighting Delays, Reducing Costs

Communal Water and Wastewater Systems

- Lack of access to water and wastewater infrastructure has historically posed a barrier to development in areas that would otherwise be good candidates for growth.
- Communal water and wastewater systems that serve multiple homes (between approximately 20 to 200) enable new communities to be built in remote and rural areas that cannot currently access municipal water systems.
- Typically initiated by home builders as a tool to facilitate needed development, they have been used with great success in other jurisdictions like Europe. They are often leveraged as an interim solution for growing cities until municipal infrastructure can catch up and reach new communities.
- This legislation would create a new, robust regulatory framework that would facilitate wider use across Ontario, while putting safeguards and provincial backstops in place to ensure they remain safe, financially sustainable and will be properly operated and maintained.
- This enables new housing in communities that otherwise could not support growth, helping unlock additional supply while maintaining public health protections.

Building Homes, Fighting Delays, Reducing Costs

Upper-Tier Planning Responsibilities – in Simcoe County

- Through the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*, transfer of land-use planning from Simcoe County to its municipalities was enabled. At the time, some of those municipalities were not in a position to adopt responsibility for land-use planning due to fiscal and operational constraints. As some of them are now in a position to do so, including Innisfil, New Tecumseth, and Bradford West Gwillimbury, we are proceeding with the transfer of power where and when appropriate.
- Smaller municipalities will continue to receive provincial planning support, while larger municipalities will receive planning authority, as has been requested by local leadership.
- This phased approach would ensure a smooth transition, minimize administrative disruption and support municipalities as they adjust to their updated roles in planning and growth management.

Parkland Dedication Requirements

- On certain builds, developers must allot a specified percentage of land to deliver public recreational space. In lieu of that, they can offer cash. The maximum parkland rate varies by municipality.
- These dedication requirements are highly limited in scope. Under the current system, serviceable land may not be accepted if the land rests atop below-grade infrastructure like parking garages or gas lines (otherwise known as encumbered land) despite the infrastructure not impacting the suitability of the land.
- The government is proposing to implement a new framework that would enable high-quality encumbered lands to count towards municipal parkland dedication requirements, along with publicly-available spaces like courtyards.
- Through regulations, the government is ensuring that provided land meets strict quality standards that will ensure they can continue to be used and enjoyed as parkland. This innovative approach will help deliver new public spaces within urbanized municipalities.

Building Homes, Fighting Delays, Reducing Costs

Break out Municipal Development Charges in Agreements of Purchase and Sale

- Municipal development charges (DCs) are adding extensive costs to new homes in certain municipalities. For example, in the City of Toronto, development charges are costing homebuyers nearly \$140,000 for a semi-detached home.
- The government is consulting on the disclosure of municipal DCs and other previously hidden taxes and fees directly in new home agreements of purchase and sale, as supported in a recent motion unanimously passed by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.
- By being transparent about these costs, the government aims to give new home buyers greater cost predictability and increase accountability.
- See below for an example of what DC charges and fees go towards, and what a mandated disclosure in a purchase and sale agreement could look like:

Services	Hypothetical DC Costs on a Single and Semi-Detached Unit
Transit	\$50,000
Parks and Recreation	\$20,000
Libraries	\$2,500
Long Term Care	\$2,000
Road Maintenance	\$25,000
Public School	\$7,000
Water and Wastewater	\$20,000
Police and Ambulance Services	1,500
Total	\$128,000

4. Looking Ahead

The *Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act* continues to build on our legislative and regulatory efforts to reduce delays and keep costs down. It does this by modernizing planning rules, simplifying transit delivery and strengthening the infrastructure needed to support growth.

These changes, if passed, and related actions would make transit more convenient and consistent across municipal borders, allow provincial transit projects to move faster, reduce barriers to homebuilding through clearer and more standardized planning tools, reinforce public ownership of water and wastewater systems, unlock new housing opportunities in hard-to-service areas and improve transparency around the costs facing homebuyers.

Together, these measures directly address today's challenges and help get homes and infrastructure built faster to protect Ontario's workers and economic future.