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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Investing in Critical Infrastructure

Province supporting municipal water projects to help build more housing and spur economic growth

November 09, 2023

[Ministry of Infrastructure](#)

MISSISSAUGA — The Ontario government is investing \$200 million over three years to help municipalities repair, rehabilitate and expand critical drinking water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure. The new funding will support the province’s rapidly growing population, unlock more housing opportunities and spur economic growth.

“We have heard time and time again that municipalities need more options for funding to meet the growing demand for infrastructure in their communities,” said Kinga Surma, Minister of Infrastructure. “We are listening and taking action by launching a new Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund to build stronger, more prosperous communities. At the same time as the province is moving forward with our own program, we continue to call on the federal government for new federal-provincial infrastructure funding to address significant unmet infrastructure needs.”

Ontario’s new Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund will support growing communities, helping municipalities build critical water infrastructure that would not otherwise get built and bringing the province one step closer to the government’s goal to build at least 1.5 million homes by 2031.

“We know that to build homes faster, municipalities need to service those homes. That’s why our government has been stepping up, giving our

partners the tools that they need to build housing-enabling infrastructure,” said Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. “Programs like the Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund are just one of several ways we are working with municipalities to help build more homes.”

As announced in [Ontario’s 2023 Fall Economic Statement](#), the government is also introducing additional measures to help build critical infrastructure faster and smarter. This includes launching the new [Ontario Infrastructure Bank](#) and the building of more rental homes by taking steps to [remove the full eight per cent](#) provincial portion of the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST).

“Ontario is facing a housing crisis like never before and our government will continue to work with partners at every level of government to get shovels in the ground to build more housing,” said Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance. “We will continue building a strong Ontario together through our responsible, targeted approach to get more critical infrastructure built while laying a strong fiscal foundation for future generations.”

The Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund is part of the Ontario government’s most ambitious capital plan in the province’s history to invest in infrastructure that will support growing communities and ensure that infrastructure is built for today and for generations to come. Eligible municipalities will be able to nominate housing-enabling water and wastewater projects through the Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund in early 2024.

Quick Facts

- Much of Ontario’s infrastructure was built in the 1950s and 1960s and requires critical repairs.
- The Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund complements the recently announced [Building Faster Fund](#), a new three-year \$1.2 billion fund that supports municipalities in achieving their housing targets, including housing-enabling infrastructure and other related costs that support community growth.
- Ontario is also exploring additional tools to help fund municipal water infrastructure to support housing growth, such as providing improved

flexibility for municipalities to access loans under the [Infrastructure Ontario Loan Program](#).

- To support the future of Ontario, the government is investing over \$185 billion over the next 10 years in hospitals, long-term care homes, highways, public transit, and other key public infrastructure.
- The [2023 Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review: Building a Strong Ontario Together](#) continues the government's responsible, targeted approach, providing the flexibility needed to help address ongoing economic uncertainty and build critical infrastructure in growing communities while laying a strong fiscal foundation for future generations.

Quotes

"New provincial investments in water and wastewater infrastructure are a helpful step towards supporting communities to grow and add housing. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) hopes the federal government will recognize the urgent demands in Ontario and help to fund."

- Colin Best

Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) President, Halton Regional Councillor

"Lack of housing-supportive infrastructure is a significant obstacle to delivering the 1.5 million new homes required in Ontario to add supply, balance the market and improve affordability. The industry applauds the Province of Ontario for making this crucial investment to enable the unlocking of additional housing in areas like the Regions of Halton and York, and municipalities like Markham, Whitchurch-Stouffville and Collingwood, where infrastructure constraints are limiting, delaying or preventing the addition of new homes. We call on the federal government to match this investment to address the generational challenge of housing supply and affordability."

- Dave Wilkes

President and CEO, Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD)

"The Ontario Municipal Water Association would like to thank the Ontario government for its dedication and commitment to funding Water, Wastewater and Stormwater infrastructure initiatives in the province of Ontario. This funding is critical to the communities of Ontario to ensure the delivery of safe and reliable drinking water as well as upgrades to wastewater treatment and collection systems."

- Justin Pulleyblank

President, Ontario Municipal Water Association

"It is clear with this announcement that Premier Ford and the Ontario government remain focused on building homes faster. Water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure are the most critical infrastructure assets necessary in the residential construction process. This is the first step in building new residential developments, so without these assets being built, homes can't get built. The government's commitment to provide municipalities with \$200 million to build housing enabling infrastructure will have a direct, positive impact on the communities that are experiencing the housing crisis most acutely and will support thousands of high paying employment opportunities in our industry. We appreciate the government's action on getting such a critical piece of the housing supply chain built."

- Patrick McManus

Executive Director, The Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association

"The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) welcomes the Ontario government's focussed \$200 million investment in critical water infrastructure. Premier Ford's leadership to solve the housing crisis recognizes that 1.5 million new homes will need the supporting critical infrastructure. Water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure are essential to accommodate growth and keep existing systems flowing smoothly."

- Nadia Todorova

Executive Director, Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario

Additional Resources

- [2023 Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review: Building a Strong Ontario Together](#)
- [Ontario Builds: our infrastructure plan](#)
- [Ontario connects: making high-speed internet accessible in every community](#)

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