

UPDATE

from the Ministry of Municipal
Affairs and Housing



February 2008

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**Ontario Communities
Get \$65 Million Boost
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**Government of
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Toronto Agreement
on Cooperation and
Consultation**

MESSAGE FROM MINISTER JIM WATSON

I have always found conferences like the one later this month, co-organized by the Ontario Good Roads Association and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association, to be great venues for dialogue with municipal representatives from across the province. [Read more](#)



ONTARIO'S GREENBELT CELEBRATES THIRD ANNIVERSARY

As each year passes and Southern Ontario's landscape continues to change, the significance of the Greenbelt becomes more and more evident. [Read more](#)



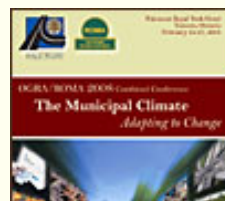
\$65 MILLION BOOST FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Federal, provincial and municipal officials gathered in Ajax last month to announce \$65 million in affordable housing funding for Ontario municipalities. [Read more](#)



ADAPTING TO CHANGE IS MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE THEME

Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Jim Watson will speak later this month at the combined conference of the Ontario Good Roads Association and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association. [Read more](#)



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Minister's Message

Welcome again to UPDATE, the e-newsletter of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Our goal is to keep you informed on progress in the housing and municipal sectors.

I am happy to be attending, later this month, my first OGRA-ROMA conference as Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. I have always found conferences like this one, co-organized by the Ontario Good Roads Association and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association, to be great venues for dialogue with municipal representatives from across the province.

I hope those of you who do attend the conference will visit our ministry's displays, which will be among the more than 20 Government of Ontario booths at this year's conference.

Readers may remember that in a recent issue of UPDATE we profiled one of the first participants in the Municipal Internship Program. The goal of this program is to help develop future municipal managers and administrators. During a recent visit to Kingston I announced our government will be contributing to the salaries of four interns during the program's second year. We are pleased to continue working with the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario to encourage young people to consider building careers in the municipal sector.

This issue of our e-newsletter previews the upcoming third anniversary of Ontario's award-winning Greenbelt and provides details on the recently-announced additional funding of more than \$65 million for affordable housing. Our government continues to partner with the federal and municipal governments on increasing the availability of affordable housing across Ontario because we believe that every family should have a safe, healthy, affordable place to call home.

I encourage you to provide us with your feedback on UPDATE. If this issue has been forwarded to you and you would like to continue receiving our e-newsletter, please take the time to subscribe.

Jim Watson
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing



Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Jim Watson met Lucia Salazar and Kyle Pratt, 2007-08 municipal interns, during a recent tour of the Municipal Services Office in Kingston. Lucia is working for the Town of Greater Napanee and Kyle for the County of Hastings.

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Ontario's Greenbelt Celebrates Third Anniversary



Whether you ski, skate or enjoy local food and wines, you can celebrate the Greenbelt this winter.

February 28 marks the third anniversary of Ontario's award-winning Greenbelt.

As each year passes and Southern Ontario's landscape continues to change, the significance of the Greenbelt becomes more and more evident.

In one of the fastest growing regions in North America, the Greenbelt permanently protects some of Ontario's richest farm lands and environmental resources as well as many vibrant rural communities.

"The Greenbelt is a remarkable achievement that will benefit future generations – our children and our children's children," says Jim Watson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Permanent Protection

The Greenbelt permanently protects some of Ontario's most valuable green spaces, farmland, forests, wetlands and watersheds.

It extends 325 kilometres from the eastern tip of the Oak Ridges Moraine, near Rice Lake to the Niagara River in the west.

The Greenbelt helps to protect our air and water quality. It also protects our farmlands so that Ontarians can continue to enjoy foods that are grown and raised close to home.

Greenbelt Awards

The Greenbelt earned planning accolades in its third year. The government received awards from both the [Ontario Professional Planners Institute](#) and the [Canadian Institute of Planners for the Greenbelt](#).

The Greenbelt is part of the McGuinty government's commitment to environmental protection. It is also a key component of the province's reform of the planning system, which includes changes to the Provincial Policy Statement and the creation of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Reforms to the Planning Act that came into force on January 1, 2007, complement the Greenbelt by providing additional municipal tools that encourage sustainable development.

Related Links

- [Ontario's award winning Greenbelt](#)

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\$65 Million Boost for Affordable Housing

Federal, provincial and municipal officials gathered in Ajax last month to announce \$65 million in affordable housing funding for Ontario municipalities.

The announcement was made near 40 Station St., the site of a future affordable housing complex.

Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program

The event marked another milestone in the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program, which comprises a commitment of \$301 million each from the federal and provincial governments.

The latest funding announcement will support 34 projects, resulting in 946 new affordable rental units. In addition, 129 renter households will receive down payment assistance to purchase their first home.

Warmed by coffee and a crowd eager to hear the news, Jim Watson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, said, "The McGuinty government is pleased to continue increasing the availability of affordable housing across the province. We believe that every Ontario family should have a safe, healthy, affordable place to call home."



Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Jim Watson recently participated in an announcement in Ajax of a \$65 million boost for affordable housing in Ontario.

Ajax Announcement

Also participating in the announcement were, Joe Dickson, MPP for Ajax-Pickering, Barry Devolin, MP for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, Oshawa Regional Councillor April Cullen, Chair of Durham Region Health and Social Services Committee, and Colleen Jordan, Ajax Regional Councillor.

Cullen called the 131 new units in Durham Region "very welcome relief for 131 families" who are on regional waiting lists for housing.

Watson presented project sponsors with engraved shovels to commemorate their efforts in helping build a better and stronger future for Ontarians.

Related links

- [Ontario Communities Get \\$65 Million Boost For Affordable Housing](#)

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Adapting to Change Is Municipal Conference Theme

Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Jim Watson will be among the speakers later this month at the combined conference of the Ontario Good Roads Association and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association.

Mayors, councillors, municipal officials and ministers and staff from the Ontario government will gather at Toronto's Fairmont Royal York to discuss issues in the ever-changing municipal environment.

The Municipal Climate: Adapting to Change is the theme for the three-day conference, which expects a record number of delegates.

Change has been a theme of the McGuinty government. The uploading of the costs of the Ontario Disability Support Program and the Ontario Drug Benefits program and amendments to the Municipal Act, 2001 are just a few of the positive changes that municipalities have benefited from in recent years.

Provincial Participation

Premier Dalton McGuinty will speak on the first morning and Transportation Minister Jim Bradley, Public Infrastructure Minister David Caplan and Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, will also address the annual gathering.

Provincial ministries will be meeting with municipal delegations, with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing again coordinating delegation requests.

Delegates can pose questions to provincial ministers and parliamentary assistants at a forum on the second day of the OGRA/ROMA conference.

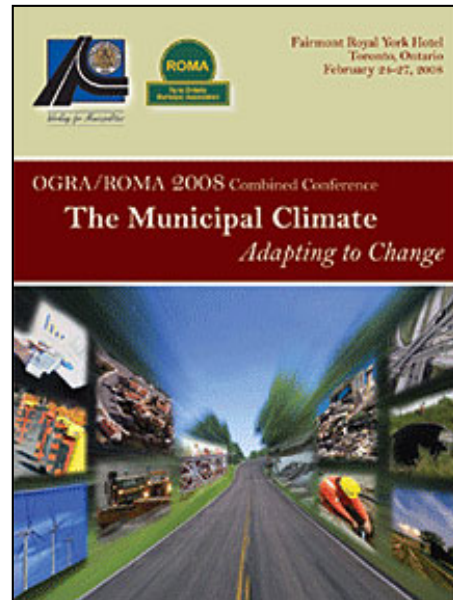
There also will be an opportunity to visit more than 20 Government of Ontario booths set up at the conference venue.

Workshops

The conference will have workshops on a variety of topics including waste management, Aboriginal affairs, alternative financing of public infrastructure projects and the impact of climate change on public works.

Related links

- [OGRA/ROMA Combined Conference](#)



The annual conference of the Ontario Good Roads Association and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association takes place later this month in Toronto.

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