

UPDATE

from the Ministry of Municipal
Affairs and Housing



March 2008

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Investing in Ontario Communities

McGuinty Government Boosts Municipal Infrastructure Investment

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Earth Hour – March 29

MESSAGE FROM MINISTER JIM WATSON

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GROWING THE GREENBELT

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A DAY OF CELEBRATION

The 17th floor of 777 Bay Street was the site of celebration for Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion's lifetime commitment to public service. Minister Jim Watson honoured Her Worship by renaming his boardroom "The Hazel McCallion Boardroom." [Read more](#)



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Minister's Message



Minister Jim Watson with OGRA Past President Jim Harrison and Chris White, the Past Chair of ROMA, after his address to the 2008 conference

View a [slide show](#) of the 2008 Ontario Good Roads Association / Rural Ontario Municipal Association conference.

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 municipal and housing sectors.

OGRA/ROMA

A few weeks ago, I had the pleasure of participating in the annual Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) / Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) conference. This was my first OGRA/ROMA conference as Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and it was a great opportunity to discuss the important issues facing Ontario's rural municipalities. I was pleased that we had a record number of ministers participating as well.

Municipal Climate: Adapting to Change was the theme of this year's conference. Today, change is constant, and the key is to harness change to strengthen our communities.

Ontario's rural and urban municipalities share a number of concerns, although rural municipalities also have some unique needs. At the conference, I heard from many local representatives about how municipalities are changing to meet their communities' challenges. We also exchanged many ideas about how the province and municipalities can continue working in partnership to find the

creative solutions to address these challenges.

Premier McGuinty spoke at the conference and announced that the province is making [additional investments](#) in municipal infrastructure. Another \$150 million will be added to the \$300 million Municipal Infrastructure Investment Initiative that our government launched last fall. This investment will provide municipalities across Ontario with more money to build and repair roads, bridges and other public facilities, and create about 6,700 construction jobs.

Over the last five years, one of our government's top priorities was to improve the relationship between the province and municipalities. Together, we have made some great progress, but we know we still have more work to do. I am confident that together, we will deliver services that we can all be proud of and ensure a strong, sustainable future for all Ontarians.

Investing in Communities

My colleague, Finance Minister Dwight Duncan, and I have just [announced](#) the government's intention to introduce legislation next week that would, if passed, designate a portion of the provincial surplus to municipalities for their infrastructure needs.

The proposed Investing in Ontario Act would direct a portion of provincial surpluses for municipal infrastructure and would help our municipal partners invest in key infrastructure projects such as roads, bridges, transit, social housing or other capital priorities.

This Issue.....

I recently hosted a ceremony celebrating Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion's lifelong commitment to public service. This issue of UPDATE carries an account of our naming the main boardroom at the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in her honour.

We have just celebrated the third anniversary of Ontario's award-winning Greenbelt and this issue of our e-newsletter reports on the release of [draft criteria](#) for growing the Greenbelt.

Building Code

We are seeking the views of municipalities, stakeholders and the public on proposed Building Code amendments. We are also coordinating a series of consultations with the Office of the Fire Marshal on changes that would require fire sprinkler systems in newly constructed multiple-unit residential buildings higher than three storeys. Details on these consultations can be found on the [Building Code website](#).

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



Minister Jim Watson and Premier Dalton McGuinty greet OGRA Past President Jim Harrison and Chris White, the Past Chair of ROMA, before the Premier's address last month to the OGRA/ROMA annual conference.



Rick Bartolucci, Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, Attorney General Chris Bentley and Transportation Minister Jim Bradley during the Ministers' Forum.



Madeleine Meilleur, Minister of Community and Social Services, Hearst Mayor Roger Sigouin, MMAH Assistant Deputy Minister Liz McLaren and Minister Jim Watson share a laugh at the Government of Ontario reception at the OGRA/ROMA conference.



Carol Mitchell, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Minister Jim Watson share a dance during the Government of Ontario reception.

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Growing the Greenbelt

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing celebrated the Greenbelt's third anniversary in February by releasing draft criteria that it will use, once they are finalized, to consider municipal requests to grow the Greenbelt.

The Greenbelt permanently protects 1.8 million acres of environmentally sensitive and agricultural land around the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

The announcement event at the Gallery Grill in Hart House at the University of Toronto doubled as a celebration of the university's commitment to serving local foods in its cafeterias and restaurants.

"We are moving forward with our plan to further protect the Greenbelt and our most precious natural resources," said Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Jim Watson. "We want to ensure that it remains a legacy for future generations of Ontarians."

The government is looking for input on the draft criteria from municipalities, stakeholders and members of the public. MMAH, and its partner ministries, will be hosting consultation meetings across the Greater Golden Horseshoe area in April.

Details on meeting dates and locations will be available on the ministry's website later this month.

The criteria are available as part of the discussion paper, "[Growing the Greenbelt](#)."

The criteria are also posted on the [Environmental Bill of Rights Registry](#).

Comments must be received by April 30, 2008.

"We look forward to hearing from Ontarians on the draft criteria as we work together with them and stakeholders to develop the final criteria," said Minister Watson.

Links

- [Greenbelt Protection](#)
- [Environmental Bill of Rights Registry](#)

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At an announcement event at the Gallery Grill at the University of Toronto Chef Suzanne Baby shows Dr. Robert Elgie, Chair of the Greenbelt Council, and Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Jim Watson some of the Greenbelt products she uses at the restaurant.

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A Day of Celebration

The 17th floor of 777 Bay Street was the site of celebration for Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion's lifetime commitment to public service. Minister Jim Watson honoured Her Worship by renaming his boardroom "The Hazel McCallion Boardroom."

"It's a real pleasure to honour one of Ontario's great public servants — an individual who has served her community so well for so many years," said Watson.

The event attracted elected officials including GTA mayors and Mississauga MPPs. Also present were Mississauga municipal staff and family and friends of Mayor McCallion. All were on hand to celebrate a career recognized with such diverse accolades as America's Woman of the Year, Germany's Order of the Cross of Merit and the Order of Canada to name a few.



Minister Jim Watson and Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion with a plaque honouring the mayor that now hangs in his boardroom.

Although Mayor McCallion has served [Mississauga as mayor](#) since 1978, she has been active in municipal government since 1964. She was first elected mayor of Streetsville in 1970.

"I don't work only for the citizens of Mississauga. I try to benefit the taxpayers of all municipalities in Ontario. It's when we work as a team, as a city and as a province that we bring about great results," said McCallion.

The day was a celebration of Mayor McCallion's birthday as well. The crowd sang "Happy Birthday", and the Minister presented her with a bouquet of roses and a cake. "I don't feel a day over 57," quipped the Mayor.

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