

UPDATE

from the Ministry of Municipal
Affairs and Housing



February 2009

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MESSAGE FROM MINISTER JIM WATSON

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AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT BEGINS CONSTRUCTION IN MARKHAM

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NEW DEPUTY MINISTER

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CITIZEN'S GUIDES TO LAND USE PLANNING

A series of Citizen's Guides have been updated to help Ontarians understand how the land use planning process in the province works. [Read more](#)



OGRA / ROMA CONFERENCE

The combined conference of the Ontario Good Roads Association and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association takes place later this month. Mayors, councillors, municipal officials and ministers and staff from the Ontario government will gather at Toronto's Fairmont Royal York. [Read more](#)



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Minister's Message



Welcome to UPDATE. Keeping you informed of developments in the municipal and housing sectors is the goal of our Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing e-newsletter.

Fareed Amin has been appointed deputy minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and John Burke is now deputy minister of the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services. I am looking forward to working with Mr. Amin who is actually returning 'home.' Learn more in our profile.

Last month I had the pleasure in participating in a ceremony to mark the start of construction of an East Markham Non-Profit Homes project. This issue of UPDATE provides information on this complex, which is sponsored by the Markham Interchurch Committee for Affordable Housing, and other Affordable Housing Program projects.

We also are bringing news in this issue about a series of Citizen's Guides that have been updated to help Ontarians better understand how our land use planning process works.

I am looking forward to the upcoming OGRA-ROMA conference in Toronto. In this UPDATE you will find some advance information about the annual conference, which is co-organized by the Ontario Good Roads Association and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association.

Please provide us with your feedback. If this issue of UPDATE 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

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Affordable Housing Project Begins Construction in Markham

Low-income families, seniors, and people with special needs will soon benefit from the development of a new affordable housing complex in the Town of Markham.

Construction of the East Markham Non-Profit Homes is now underway at 25 Deverill Court. The project is sponsored by the Markham Interchurch Committee for Affordable Housing (MICAH).

A First

With capital costs in the range of \$25-million, which includes \$8.4 million in funding under the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program (AHP), the project will provide 120 safe, affordable housing units for individuals, families and seniors who are living with lower incomes.

Minister Jim Watson joined Michael Chan, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and MPP for Markham – Unionville, Lois Brown, MP for Newmarket-Aurora, York Region Chairman and CEO Bill Fisch, Frank Scarpitti, the Mayor of Markham, and Pamela Roth, President of the Board of the MICAH, on January 20 for a ceremonial sod-turning at the construction site.



Participating in an event, marking the start of construction of 120 new affordable housing units in Markham were **Pamela Roth**, Board President, Markham Interchurch Committee for Affordable Housing; **Lois Brown**, Member of Parliament for Newmarket - Aurora; the **Honourable Michael Chan**, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and MPP for Markham - Unionville, **Gordon Landon**, Markham City Councillor; **Minister Jim Watson**; **Bill Fisch**, York Regional Chair and CEO; and **Frank Scarpitti**, Mayor of the Town of Markham.

The celebration was a special one, as this project is the first built in Markham under the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program.

Good for Our Economy

"Access to safe, affordable housing is vitally important to the economic and social well-being of Ontario's communities," Minister Watson told the crowd gathered at the ceremony. "Besides the obvious social benefits, it's good for our economy. Investments in affordable housing create jobs. As a result of this particular investment by the Province of Ontario, the federal government and our not-for-profit housing partners at the Markham Interchurch Committee for Affordable Housing, dozens of person-years of labour will be created."

Pamela Roth called it a very exciting day for the Town of Markham and for the Markham Inter-Church Committee for Affordable Housing, as well as the Board of East Markham Non-Profit Homes.

Another Milestone

The event marked another milestone in the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program, which comprises a commitment of \$301 million from each of the two senior levels of government.

Also on January 20, an additional \$1.75 million in AHP funding was committed for the creation of 16 new rental units in the Counties of Lanark and Dufferin and over \$913,000 in down payment assistance to 144 renter households to purchase homes in the Counties of Lanark, Dufferin, Renfrew, Leeds & Grenville and the City of Chatham-Kent.

The Homeownership component of the AHP helps renter households through interest-free down-payment assistance loans. The assistance helps renters get a foothold in the housing market, while freeing up much-needed affordable rental housing in our communities.

Related Links

- [Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program](#)
- [Construction Set to Begin for Affordable Housing in Markham](#)

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New Deputy Minister

Fareed Amin was appointed deputy minister of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in December.

Mr. Amin may be a familiar face to many UPDATE readers. He has returned to the ministry where he started his public service career as a student planner.

Mr. Amin was most recently deputy minister of the Ministry of Economic Development and the Ministry of International Trade and Investment. He also has served as deputy minister in other ministries or portfolios, including: Citizenship and Immigration; Intergovernmental Affairs; Small Business and Entrepreneurship; and as deputy minister responsible for Seniors and for Women's Issues.

Mr. Amin has an undergraduate degree in Applied Geography and Planning from the University of Guyana; a Certificate in Public Administration from the University of Toronto; and a Masters of Public Administration from Queen's University in Kingston.

Essential Team Work

Mr. Amin has also served as deputy city manager for the City of Toronto, responsible for corporate oversight, administrative governance and co-ordinating the collective expertise on major city-wide initiatives and projects.

His portfolio included Building, City Planning, and the Waterfront Secretariat.

"Through my experience I have learned the valuable lesson that team work is essential to meeting objectives and delivering service excellence," Mr Amin says.

John Burke, the Ministry's former deputy minister, is now deputy minister of the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services.



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Citizen's Guides to Land Use Planning

Land use planning helps each community in the province to set goals about how it will grow and balances the interests of individual property owners with the wider interests and objectives of the whole community.

The guides have been prepared to provide general information about land use planning and help the average citizen understand the process better. They are not an interpretation of the Planning Act or any other act and readers are advised to refer to legislation for specific requirements and procedures.

The ten Citizens' Guides were originally issued in 1997 and nine were recently updated to reflect recent changes to planning legislation. The guide on mediation has not changed, as planning reform did not affect this particular publication.

The titles of the Guides are:

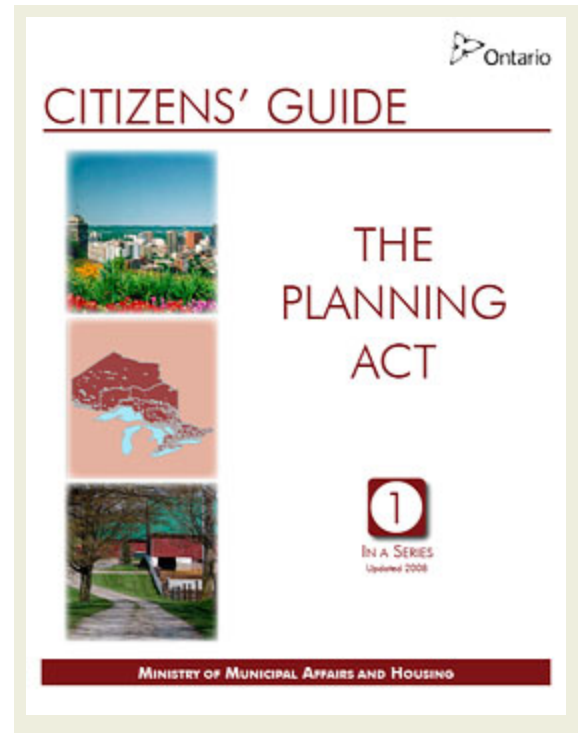
1. The Planning Act
2. Official Plans
3. Zoning By-laws
4. Subdivisions
5. Land Severances
6. Ontario Municipal Board
7. Northern Ontario
8. Building Permits
9. The Plan Review and Approval Process
10. Making mediation work for you.

"There may be occasions when a layperson needs to learn more the land use planning process," says Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Jim Watson. "We have developed these guides to be informative and useful resources for those who want more information about this important subject."

The Guides can be found on the [MMAH website](#).

Related Links

- [Citizens' Guides to Land Use Planning](#)



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OGRA / ROMA Conference

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

Mayors, councillors, municipal officials and ministers and staff from the Ontario government will gather at Toronto's Fairmont Royal York between February 22 and 25, 2009.

"What's Coming Down the Road" is the theme for this year's conference, which will bring together more than 1300 municipal elected officials and staff.

Premier Dalton McGuinty is scheduled to speak on the opening day of the conference and others, including Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Jim Watson, Energy and Infrastructure Minister George Smitherman, Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and Transport Minister Jim Bradley, will also address the annual gathering.

Provincial ministries will be meeting with municipal delegations and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has received more than 400 delegation requests for this year's conference.

Delegates can also pose questions to provincial ministers and parliamentary assistants at a forum during the second afternoon of the conference. The annual gathering also will have workshops on a variety of topics, including food safety, broadband and new technology for bridges.

There also will be an opportunity to visit the Government of Ontario and other booths set up at the conference venue.

Related links:

- [OGRA/ROMA Combined Conference](#)



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