

UPDATE

from the Ministry of Municipal
Affairs and Housing



March 2009

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**McGuinty Government
To Increase Ontario
Child Benefit And
Invest In Affordable
Housing**

**Gas Tax Fuels Better
Public Transit**

**Youth Art Contest
Kicks Off Greenbelt
Anniversary**

**2009 Ontario
Municipal Partnership
Fund Allocation**

**McGuinty Government
Stimulating Economy
With Investment In
Infrastructure**

MESSAGE FROM MINISTER JIM WATSON

I am looking forward to hitting the road once again this spring and attending municipal conferences across the province. It was my pleasure to join other ministers, fellow MPPs and municipal leaders last month at what has become one of the largest municipal conferences in Canada. [Read more](#)



OGRA / ROMA CONFERENCE

The combined conference of the Ontario Good Roads Association and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association brought together more than 1,300 municipal elected officials and staff from across the province. [Read more](#)



RECOGNIZING ONTARIANS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GREENBELT'S SUCCESS

Over the last few years, Ontarians have contributed significantly to a strong and viable Greenbelt. Whether it's an innovative business practicing sustainable agriculture, a community group teaching youth about a greener lifestyle or an individual who has spent years helping preserve a local trail, there are many ways the Greenbelt has been supported. [Read more](#)



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Minister's Message



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

Now that a busy winter season is passing, I am looking forward to hitting the road once again this spring and attending municipal conferences across the province.

It was my pleasure to join other ministers, fellow MPPs and municipal leaders last month at what has become one of the largest municipal conferences in Canada. This issue of UPDATE has photos and an article on this year's combined conference of the Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) in Toronto.

We also are bringing news in this issue about how our government is recognizing the efforts of Ontarians by establishing the *I ♥ Greenbelt Awards*. These new awards are for those who, while contributing to their communities, have helped protect our environment.

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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Retirement System (OMERS)**

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UPDATE

from the Ministry of Municipal
Affairs and Housing

2009 OGRA - ROMA Conference

Down the Road

The combined conference of the Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) was held February 22 to 25 at Toronto's Fairmont Royal York Hotel.

"What's Coming Down the Road" was the theme for this year's conference, which brought together more than 1,300 municipal

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Premier McGuinty and Minister Watson meet with OGRA-ROMA

- elected officials and staff from across the

delegates.

Land Use Planning

province.

◦ Citizens' Guides to Land-use Planning

Premier McGuinty spoke to delegates on the Monday morning of the conference about the economic challenges facing

◦ Related Legislation

Ontario. He detailed benefits of the proposed Green Energy and Green Economy Act, 2009 and the many new jobs

◦ Provincial Policy Statement

expected to follow in the manufacturing, construction, service and financial sectors, once the bill is passed.

◦ Ontario Municipal Board / Planning Reform

The Premier also spoke about the \$10 billion investment

◦ Greenbelt Protection

in infrastructure projects that his government has made

◦ Brownfields Ontario

in the last year alone.

◦ The Oak Ridges Moraine

◦ Central Pickering Development Plan

The following day, Minister Jim Watson spoke at a

◦ Parkway Belt West Plan

plenary session of the conference. He also met with more

◦ Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC)

than a dozen municipal delegations to discuss local

issues.

◦ Municipal Planning & Development Tools

At the plenary session, the Minister presented a slide

◦ Places to Grow

show of local infrastructure projects across the province

◦ Planning Act Approval Authority in Ontario

and proclaimed, "Today, infrastructure spending in Ontario is two to three times higher than it was when our government

took office."



Minister **Watson** addresses delegates at the OGRA-ROMA conference.

Housing

Joint Conference Since 2000

◦ Affordable Housing

The Ontario Good Roads Association and the [Rural Ontario Municipal Association](#)

◦ Rental Housing

combined their respective conferences in 2000. Since then, the OGRA/ROMA

◦ Social Housing Business

Combined Conference has become one of the largest municipal conferences in the

◦ Property Assessment and Taxation System

country.

- **Housing Research Reports**
- **Indoor Marijuana Grow Operations**

The Ontario Good Roads Association represents the infrastructure interests of municipalities through advocacy, education, consultation, training and other services.

Building Regulation

- **Ontario Building Code**

The Rural Ontario Municipal Association is the rural municipal voice of the province and is an integral part of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. ROMA has, for

OnRAMP

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- **Northwestern Ontario**
- **Central Ontario**
- **Western Ontario**

decades, ensured that matters affecting rural communities are brought to the attention of the provincial and federal governments.

Related Links

- [Ontario Good Roads Association](#)
- [Rural Ontario Municipal Association](#)



Parliamentary Affairs Assistant and Huron-Bruce MPP **Carol Mitchell** welcomes OGRA-ROMA delegates to the Ontario Government Reception.

The Learning Centre

- **Introduction**
- **E-Learning**
- **Community Planning Resources**
- **Local Government Resources**
- **Housing Resources**
- **Building Resources**
- **Emergency Management Resources**

Explore Government



AMO President and Ottawa Councillor **Peter Hume** chats with Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister **Jim Watson** at the Ontario Government Reception, held immediately after the Ministers' Forum.

Contacts

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Other Resources

A photograph of two men standing side-by-side in a formal setting. Both are wearing black tuxedo jackets over white shirts and black bow ties. They are also wearing traditional Scottish kilts: the man on the left has a red and green plaid kilt, and the man on the right has a blue and green plaid kilt. They are standing on a patterned carpet in front of a large, ornate chandelier.

Minister **Watson** shows off his Scottish heritage with City of Orillia Councillor **Paul Spears**.

A photograph of two men in business suits standing in front of a display board. The man on the left is wearing glasses and a dark suit. The man on the right is also in a dark suit. The display board behind them has the Ontario Municipal Association (AMO) logo and text that reads "Ontario AMO Knowledge Network" and "Is your approach the best?".

Minister **Watson** chats with AMO president **Peter Hume** at the rebranding launch of the Ontario Municipal Knowledge Network.

A photograph of a man in a dark suit standing at a podium, speaking into a microphone. He is gesturing with his right hand. In the foreground, another man is seated at a table, listening. The background is a stage with a large screen and other people seated at tables.

ROMA President **Bill Vrebosch** listens to Premier **McGuinty's** address to the OGRA-ROMA delegates.

<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page6310.aspx> (4 of 5)25/03/2009 10:00:37 AM



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Recognizing Ontarians Contributions to the Greenbelt's Success

Over the last few years, Ontarians have contributed significantly to a strong and viable Greenbelt.

Whether it's an innovative business practicing sustainable agriculture, a community group teaching youth about a greener lifestyle or an individual who has spent years helping preserve a local trail, there are many ways the Greenbelt has been supported.

I ♥ Greenbelt Awards

On the 4th anniversary of Ontario's world renowned Greenbelt, the McGuinty government is recognizing the efforts of Ontarians by establishing the *I ♥ Greenbelt Awards*.

"The Greenbelt is an important legacy. The *I ♥ Greenbelt Awards* recognize those who have done so much to help protect our environment and contributed to their communities," said Jim Watson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.



Students from St. Patrick Catholic School in Ajax join Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Jim Watson in kicking off a student art contest to design the Province's new *I ♥ Greenbelt Awards*.
Photo: vvcmedia.ca

To help launch the new Greenbelt awards, Ontario students have been asked to help design the new awards and submit original artwork by March 30, 2009. Complete details about the design contest can be found on Facebook at the *I ♥ Greenbelt* page or by visiting ontario.ca/iheartgreenbelt.

The criteria and nomination process for the awards will be finalized later this spring.

Contributing to Local Economies

Ontario's Greenbelt permanently protects 1.8 million acres of agricultural land and environmental resources from sprawling development. It stretches 325 kilometres from the eastern end of the Oak Ridges Moraine, near Rice Lake, to the Niagara River in the west.

Valuable farmland, watersheds, wetlands and forests provide fresh water, clean air and local food, now and for future generations.

The Greenbelt offers plenty of recreation and tourism opportunities as well.

Protecting the environment makes good economic sense. The Greenbelt supports many activities that are key elements of a sustainable, green economy.

Research shows that the Greenbelt provides essential ecosystem services or benefits for eight million residents across the Greater Golden Horseshoe. These services are valued at least at \$2.6 billion annually to local economies.

Related Links

- [Greenbelt Protection](#)
- [Greenbelt Awards](#)

