

Today's News - Thursday, October 12, 2017

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Premier Kathleen Wynne was at the Fleming Centre in Beamsville to announce up to \$6.9 million in funding over five years for the Regional Municipality of Niagara's social housing, contingent on carbon market proceeds. This investment is part of an Ontario-wide program to improve these homes for low-income and vulnerable tenants and to provide the support and opportunity that people need to live their best lives. This investment will also reduce energy bills for social housing providers and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by making buildings more energy efficient. Improvements include installing energy-efficient boilers, windows, lighting and insulation. The government is investing in social housing retrofits through proceeds from carbon market auctions as part of [Ontario's Climate Change Action Plan](#), which includes a target of cutting GHG emissions to 80 per cent below 1990 levels by 2050. By law, the province must invest carbon market proceeds in programs to help households and businesses reduce GHG pollution, which helps save money on energy costs. This investment includes supporting a variety of energy-efficiency building retrofits and making electric vehicles more accessible.

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Also Today:

- Ontario launched [Budget Talks](#), an online consultation that allows the public to help shape policies and programs that will be part of Ontario's future. The government will provide up to \$5 million to fund up to five proposals identified and voted on by the public as part of the 2018 Budget. Charles Sousa, Minister of Finance, and Yvan Baker, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Finance, made the announcement today in Toronto. This is the fourth year in a row the government has engaged the public in the development of the Ontario budget through Budget Talks, and the second year that funding will be allocated directly to citizen-led proposals. Through [Ontario.ca/budgettalks](#), people are invited to share ideas on five focus areas, including child care, seniors, small business, students and healthy living. To be eligible, proposals must:
 - o Be submitted [online](#) by midnight on November 3, 2017
 - o Be for a new fund, pilot project, study, event or digital service
 - o Fall within the scope of the Ontario government to deliver
 - o Help support one of the [five focus areas outlined on Budget Talks](#)
 - o Require a one-time investment of no more than \$1 million
 - o Show progress or completion by spring 2019

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- Ontario is kicking off Public Library Week with improvements to digital services at 307 libraries and library organizations across the province. Eleanor McMahon, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport was at the Burlington Public Library today to recognize the valuable role that libraries play in Ontario communities and announce funding for the local library system. The Burlington Public Library is receiving support from the Improving Library Digital Services fund to offer more resources for people in the community to use at its

Ideaworks Studio, including a new 3D printer, digital embroidery machine and new digital media software. People will be able to enjoy these specialized technologies for their own interests and to help with projects and schoolwork. Ontario is increasing access to technology, digital services and training opportunities at public libraries in towns, cities and Indigenous communities across the province. Funding is helping libraries offer more technology in their communities, such as wireless internet connections, new computers, and e-books, as well as classes on topics like social media and computer literacy. Minister McMahon also announced the shortlist finalists for this year's [Ontario Public Library Service Awards](#), recognizing excellence in library services.

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Our government's plan to build a stronger, healthier Ontario includes **historic new investments in health care**, including free **medications for everyone 24 and under through OHIP+: Children and Youth Pharmacare**, providing free **tuition to over 210,000 students** and on-the-job learning opportunities to help land a great job, helping 100,000 kids access quality, licensed child care and making it more affordable for families, making everyday life more affordable by **reducing electricity costs by 25 per cent** on average through our proposed Fair Hydro Plan, and taking action to **make housing more affordable** for homebuyers and renters through our Fair Housing Plan.