

Ontario Taking Further Action to Build More Housing

Province Launches Consultations on Transforming Building Code Services and Releases Second Units Innovation Guide for Homeowners

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Mississauga — Ontario is modernizing services related to the province's Building Code to help speed up the construction of new housing and building projects. Better services, up-to-date tools and new resources will help people better understand and meet Building Code requirements, while maintaining the same high standards for public safety.

"For many years the building sector and the public have been calling on government to do a better job of providing a range of services related to the Building Code," said Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. "We are proposing some solutions and are launching a consultation to find out what people think."

The government is proposing to create an administrative authority that could deliver new and enhanced services, such as:

- Developing digital tools to support municipal e-permitting and make the Building Code easier to use and understand;
- Providing supports to help municipal governments increase the number of building inspectors in Ontario;
- Introducing continuing professional development to make sure registered building code professionals remain up-to-date on Building Code requirements; and
- Providing supports to small, rural and northern municipalities to help them deliver local building services.

Maintaining Ontario's high standards for building safety is a priority, so our government is also proposing to strengthen enforcement tools to address non-compliance with the Building Code.

"A new administrative authority for building services in Ontario could address a range of municipal challenges. E-permitting, for example, would help streamline development. It could also help with capacity issues, training and retention of building officials, and improved enforcement of building codes," said AMO President, Jamie McGarvey, Mayor, Town of Parry Sound. "AMO looks forward to working with the Province to ensure the initiative meets these goals. To create safe and thriving communities, we need to make sure we get this right."

The public and building sector professionals are invited to share their thoughts on the [proposed changes](#) online or in person at regional information sessions in Belleville, Chatham-Kent, North Bay and Vaughan. The consultation closes November 25, 2019.

A new [innovation guide](#) was also released today to help people who want to add a second unit, like a basement apartment, to their home. Second units can help address the shortage of lower-cost rental housing. They can also produce income to help with mortgage payments or provide independent living space for a senior parent or adult child. The guide is the first in a series being developed to encourage a wider range of options in housing.

"This guide is a useful tool to home owners who are looking to create new rental units as well as the municipalities who approve the suites," said Matt Farrell, President, Ontario Building Officials Association (OBOA). "It translates complex building code language into user-friendly information that will help all applicants as they move through the process of developing secondary suites. It needs to be at the front counter of every municipal office so building officials can advise residents accordingly."

QUICK FACTS

- An administrative authority is a not-for-profit corporation that helps ensure Ontario's consumer protection and public safety laws are applied and enforced.
- Ontario's construction industry contributes an estimated \$38 billion annually to the province's economy.
- Over 131,000 building permits were issued in Ontario in 2018.
- Proposed changes to building code services respond to recommendations made by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario in their recent report, [Fixing the Housing Affordability Crisis](#).

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