

Premier announces \$1.8 billion for 'housing enabling' infrastructure projects

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In a move to bolster housing development across Ontario, the provincial government has committed over \$1.8 billion towards housing-enabling infrastructure projects, aiming to facilitate the construction of at least 1.5 million homes by 2031. This significant investment comprises \$1 billion for the newly established Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program and an additional \$625 million for the Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund, bringing its total allocation to \$825 million. \

"It's a simple fact: to meet Ontario's ambitious housing targets, more housing supportive infrastructure is needed," said **Dave Depencier, president of the Ontario Home Builders Association**. "The Ford government is putting the fact into action and is making the necessary investments in water, wastewater and core infrastructure to support the building of complete communities."

Announcing the funding, Premier Doug Ford emphasized the critical role of infrastructure in expediting housing construction, citing it as a key barrier identified by municipal partners. He highlighted the importance of the \$1.8 billion investment in infrastructure funding, which, combined with existing allocations, aims to accelerate housing development, thereby fostering homeownership opportunities throughout Ontario.

"Time and time again, I've heard from our municipal partners that a lack of infrastructure is one of the biggest barriers to getting more homes built," Ford said. "Today's announcement of more than \$1.8 billion in housing-enabling infrastructure funding, on top of the billions of dollars of infrastructure funding we're already providing, will help get more shovels in the ground so we can keep the dream of homeownership alive in Ontario."

The newly established \$1 billion Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program will prioritize core infrastructure projects essential such as road and water infrastructure, with a goal of expediting critical infrastructure projects, laying the groundwork for increased housing development across the province,

Eligibility and application procedures will be released later this year.

Finance Minister Peter Bethlenfalvy underscored the government's commitment to expedite infrastructure development, emphasizing that increased investments will result in the swift construction of roads, sewers, and reservoirs necessary to support housing expansion.

Ontario also plans to provide \$200 million to \$825 million over three years to help municipalities repair, rehabilitate and expand repairing, rehabilitate and expand drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure. Municipalities can submit applications for the program until April 19, 2024.

Ford says the province will collaborate with municipalities to unlock housing opportunities and urge the federal government to contribute its fair share towards funding housing-enabling infrastructure investments.

The construction industry responded positively to the government's announcement.

Patrick McManus, Executive Director of the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association (OSWCA), praised the substantial investment, highlighting its contribution to modernizing infrastructure, enhancing resilience, and facilitating housing construction.

Nadia Todorova, Executive Director of the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO), lauded the government's commitment to providing municipalities with the necessary funding to meet infrastructure demands.

"Today's announcement continues the government's work on ensuring that municipalities have the funding they need to meet the growing demand for infrastructure," said Nadia Todorova, executive director of RCCAO. "From roads to sewers to housing, this announcement ensures that there is funding for all kinds of critical infrastructure needed to support the province's growing population, unlock more housing opportunities, and spur economic growth."