

Province announces funding for small communities to modernize process to address housing supply crisis

By Rob Paul

The Ontario government is providing over \$28 million to help 322 small and rural

municipalities find better and more efficient ways to deliver local services for residents and businesses.

The funding is being delivered through the Municipal Modernization Program and will support the following projects: records management modernization for the Town of Caledon \$198,432, fleet management program solution for the County of Dufferin (\$49,608), service delivery and organizational review for the Town of Mono (\$76,320), service delivery and organizational review for the Town of Shelburne (\$81,408), and digital modernization for the Township of Amaranth (\$19,080).

"I am pleased that projects in these municipalities and the county have received this provincial funding," said Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones. "This money will be used to upgrade and improve processes and delivery of services that we rely on every day."

Municipalities can use the funding to conduct reviews of local services and administrative operations to find efficiencies, including accelerating the creation of new housing through streamlined development approvals and working with neighbouring municipalities to share services.

"COVID-19 has highlighted the need for municipalities to be as efficient and nimble as possible, while ensuring services remain financially sustainable today and in the future," said Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. "Through the Municipal Modernization Program, our government continues to support our municipal partners to operate more efficiently and streamline processes to deliver high-quality, sustainable services for residents and businesses, when and where they need them."

With the Municipal Modernization Program, as well as the new Streamline Development Approval Fund and the Audit and Accountability Fund, the government is helping municipalities across the province make their planning and approvals processes more efficient in order to unlock and fast-track new housing to address the housing supply crisis.

Over the lifespan of the Municipal Modernization Program and Audit and Accountability Fund, Ontario is providing up to \$350 million to help municipalities identify and implement modern solutions.

At the January 19 Ontario-Municipal Housing Summit, Ontario announced a new \$45 million Streamline Development Approvals Fund, as well as an additional investment of over \$8 million through the Audit and Accountability Fund, to help large urban municipalities identify efficiencies and streamline processes, such as development approvals, with the goal of building more homes faster to address the housing supply crisis.

The Province's ongoing work to address housing supply complements its continued supports for affordable housing for the most vulnerable Ontarians.

Through the Community Housing Renewal Strategy and Ontario's response to COVID-19, the province is providing more than \$3 billion between 2020 and 2022. This includes over \$1 billion through the Social Services Relief Fund to municipal and Indigenous partners, which is one of the largest investments in affordable housing and homelessness supports in the Province's history.