



AMO Priorities 2020 Region of Durham

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Broadband Infrastructure

The Region of Durham is applying to the Improving Connectivity in Ontario (ICON) program to establish a Regional Broadband Network.

There is an immense need for broadband service in Durham, particularly in our rural areas. Since Durham is part of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, our rural areas have been ineligible for previous broadband funding programs. This has caused a digital divide between our urban centers and the rest of Durham. COVID-19 has exacerbated the inequities experienced by businesses, families and students who don't have access to broadband.

The Regional Broadband Network is a transformative project that will extend high-speed fibre optic cables into our underserved areas and provide off-ramps into each community. Without the cost of building the long backbone network, Internet Service Providers (ISPs) can focus on building quality high-speed networks inside these communities to deliver faster, more reliable internet service to residents and businesses. It will take several hundred kilometers of fibre to serve all of Durham Region. For this application, we are focused on areas of greatest need.



We can't do this alone and so we have engaged partners who already have a fibre footprint and serve customers in Durham. This project will expand this service to our underserved areas. We have agreement from our area municipalities who will work with us to streamline processes and reduce the red tape associated with permitting.



Broadband infrastructure is a key priority. The Region is invested in moving this forward. In addition to a potential financial contribution, the Region is committed to digitizing and automating our processes, facilitating coordination and approvals with the area municipalities. We will also leverage our facilities to expedite the delivery of services.

We look forward to a successful application and a partnership with the Province to extend broadband services to Durham's rural residents.

Durham Home Energy Savings Program

The Region of Durham is preparing our residents for the low carbon and highly efficient energy system of tomorrow. In early 2021, we will launch the Durham Home Energy Savings program as the first community-scale initiative to be implemented from the Durham Community Energy Plan. The program will encourage and support Durham homeowners to undertake deep energy renovations on their homes. The program will feature an innovative data-driven digital marketing platform to engage participants, as well as a home energy coach to facilitate a homeowners' journey through the steps required to undertake an energy renovation project, including:



- performing a home energy audit
- accessing rebate programs



- finding qualified contractors
- securing low-cost financing



Participating in the Durham Home Energy Savings program will increase long-term energy affordability for residents. Further, it will spur post-pandemic job creation in the local skilled trades industry.

The Program is a partnership between the Region of Durham, local municipalities, energy utilities and financial institutions. We are also seeking funding from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities for program implementation. We urge the Province, as a leader in the low carbon energy transition to partner with the Region on the Home Energy Savings program. We request that the Province consider:

Working with the Minister of Environment Conservation and Parks to implement the \$400 million emissions reduction fund outlined in the Made in Ontario Environment Plan to leverage private capital to invest in residential energy efficiency

Enhancing funding and program support for utility-led residential conservation and demand management

Developing digital tools for comprehensive energy data analysis for all municipalities on a single platform



We look forward to partnering with the Province to help mobilize public and private sector capital to support Durham residents with making low carbon and energy efficient investments in their homes.

Long-Term Care

There is high demand for Long-Term Care in the Central East LHIN which covers the Region of Durham. We recognize the Province's efforts to address this demand with the recent announcement of 320 LTC beds at Lakeridge Health in Ajax. Durham remains in critical need of LTC beds to continue to reduce our waitlist of more than 7,800 residents.

To meet the growing needs of the Region, we urge the Province to also consider the Region's application for a 200-bed LTC home in the neighbourhood of Seaton in Pickering. If funded, the Seaton LTC facility would be the fifth Regionally owned and operated LTC home. We have a stellar reputation for providing high quality, person-centred care to residents. The Seaton facility would further alleviate the additional capacity pressure on our local hospitals. The Region's application proposes the development of a Behavioural Specialized Unit and a unit to support High Priority Access patients. These specialized facilities will improve the flow of alternate level of care patients from the hospital to more appropriate placements.



In addition to new beds, COVID-19 has highlighted the need for staffing changes and additional infection prevention and control measures. Operational funding needs to ensure there is an adequate number of properly trained staff in a LTC facility at all times. As recommended in the Long-Term Care Staffing Study by the Honourable Eileen E. Gillese, we request that the Province consider funding 4 hours of direct care per resident and earmarking specific funding to support education and training of LTC staff.



Together, an increased number of beds supported by appropriately trained staff will help ensure our residents can live with dignity, safety and comfort while they get the care they need.

Supportive Housing

COVID-19 has highlighted the need for all residents to have safe, affordable and suitable housing for their own health and safety, and the health and safety of the community. During the pandemic, the Region and our many partners mobilized to provide support for vulnerable populations. We joined Mission United with our community agency partners to provide a centralized location for social services agencies at the Back Door Mission in Oshawa. We also opened the In and Out of the Crisis (IOTC) program in partnership with Scouts Canada, operating out of Camp Samac. The facility creates a temporary solution to improve physical distancing in the shelter system for public health and safety.

Durham is developing a Housing Master Plan. As a response to COVID-19, supportive housing options for unsheltered residents have been prioritized and steps to develop supportive housing are being expedited.

The Region is actively pursuing innovative solutions for supportive housing. Regional Council has granted pre-budget approval of:

Modular Housing: An approximate 50-unit modular supportive housing project with a 5,000 square foot ancillary structure for support services

Microhome pilot: Construction of microhomes will provide temporary supportive housing on Regionally owned lands



To achieve the goals of these supportive housing projects in an expedited timeframe, the Region will piggy-back on the City of Toronto's expedited supportive housing phase 1 development project.

We strongly urge the Province to approve the \$5,620,900 from the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative required to support this work. In addition, long-term sustainable operational funding is required to provide the 24/7 support services needed for this client group to remain successfully housed and achieve positive life outcomes.

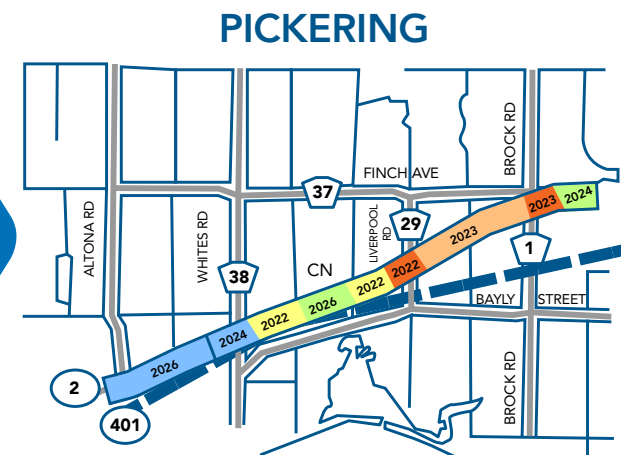


Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program

The Region of Durham applied to the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) Public Transit Stream to advance our Rapid Transit System Vision. Within the ICIP applications are projects for Durham's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) System that will connect Oshawa to Scarborough (Urban Growth Centres) along Highway 2. Over 12,000 daily transit customers use this corridor today in Durham, with forecasted ridership to increase by 20% once the BRT system is complete. The Scarborough-Durham BRT is crucial infrastructure for Durham. It is needed to support the collective efforts of the MTO, Metrolinx, Durham Regional Transit and the broader 905, to implement effective integration opportunities to enhance inter regional travel into Toronto and increase transit ridership.

The initial business case for the entire BRT corridor indicated more than \$680 million in economic benefits (a benefit to cost ratio - BCR - of 1.29). Construction of the remaining BRT segments would not be feasible prior to the 2027 completion deadline specified in ICIP and so only the most crucial segments were included in the ICIP applications. The main application, DUR-01, will fund the design and construction of median-lane BRT through Pickering. When the ICIP projects are complete in 2027, the Region is committed to completing the 4 short sections that will remain.

The ICIP project for the median-lane BRT through Pickering has triggered a business case to satisfy an MTO requirement for ICIP funding. When considered in isolation, this segment of the BRT scored a lower BCR (0.9) than the project as a whole, but this segment is needed to connect the BRT from Scarborough through Pickering, to the existing BRT lanes in Ajax. We strongly urge MTO to consider approving ICIP project DUR-1 for median BRT lanes through Pickering, in the context of the entire BRT route.



We thank the Province for moving our other ICIP projects forward. We look forward to a speedy resolution for this final segment, so Durham can realize our vision for a connected region.

Bowmanville GO Rail Service Extension

In 2011, Metrolinx and the Province committed to extending GO passenger rail service through Oshawa to Bowmanville along the CP Rail line, with stops at Thornton's Corners, Central Oshawa, Courtice and Bowmanville. In 2020, the Metrolinx Board approved the Bowmanville GO Rail Service Extension Initial Business Case, reconfirming the strategic, economic and financial benefits in support of the Extension that includes the current Oshawa GO station (Option 2A).

The 2020 approved route leverages \$150 million in Regional infrastructure projects to support the Extension.

Bowmanville GO Rail Service Extension: Stimulus for Post-Pandemic Recovery

The Extension and development of four new GO stations will stimulate:



- \$1.1 billion in transit-oriented urban development
- 7.8 million ft² of commercial space



- 21,000 new jobs
- 6,000 new homes



The Region of Durham has created a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) office to support the implementation of its rapid transit projects, including coordination with the Province for the Bowmanville GO Rail Service Extension.

The development of four new GO stations on an expedited timeline provides an opportunity to unlock the economic potential of the Region, while creating several new high-density mixed-use communities, and improving the quality of life in local communities by promoting affordable, convenient and sustainable housing, energy and transportation options.

The Bowmanville GO Rail Service Extension is crucial to rebuilding public transit ridership and reducing highway congestion.



We urge the provincial government to commit to the Bowmanville GO Rail Service Extension and the creation of four additional transit stations on an expedited timeline to rebuild public transit ridership and support economic recovery in Durham.

Durham: Ontario's Energy Capital

Durham's business community includes a vibrant cluster of energy, environmental and engineering (EN3) businesses making Durham Region Ontario's Energy Capital and a leader in energy innovation. Durham produces about 30 per cent of Ontario's electricity and is a recognized energy cluster with two nuclear generating stations with a combined generating capacity of approximately 6,600 megawatts.

Durham Region's strengths in EN3 sectors are converging into a large integrated sector with services and manufacturing interests that span all three domains. Energy in Durham is deeply linked to other sectors in ways that are not immediately obvious. We have knit together companies, teaching and research institutions and government to enable advancements in socially advantageous technology such as micro grids, electric vehicles, electric-vehicle infrastructure, fuel cells, vertical farming, life-saving cancer treatments, and small modular nuclear reactors.

The cluster of EN3 businesses, suppliers, and research institutions provides synergies that increase productivity, drive innovation, and stimulate new business throughout the region. We are home to the Microgrid Research and Innovation Park, an energy from waste facility and significant investment and advancement in electric mobility. Durham Region has over 250 EN3-related businesses that employ over 11,000 individuals, making Durham Region the top employer of EN3 professionals in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). Our strength in these sectors will continue to grow with the launch the Centre for Canadian Nuclear Sustainability in Pickering.

Businesses located in Durham Region have access to a substantial talent pool of individuals who graduate from programs at Durham College and Ontario Tech University. With specialized programming in sustainable energy systems, Nuclear Design Engineering and Health Physics and radiation science, these graduates have the skills needed to support energy innovation and a thriving EN3 sector.

The Province's new investment attraction agency, Invest Ontario, is leading the investment and economic development opportunities across the province. With a focus on outreach to three strategic sectors, Advanced Manufacturing, Life Sciences and Technology, the Province will certainly encounter EN3 companies looking for a home in Ontario.

We urge the Province to recommend Durham Region. Our Economic Development team would be happy to work with you on a collective strategy for EN3 investment in Durham Region to support business strategic business growth.

