



Regular Council Meeting Addendum

April 20, 2026, 6:00 pm

Location: Essex Municipal Building, 33 Talbot Street South

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request. Please contact the Clerk’s Office at clerks@essex.ca or 519-776-7336 extension 1136.

Pages

10. Reports from Administration

***10.11 Infrastructure Services-2026-02** 1

RE: All Risk Municipal Grant – Investing in Municipal Risk Resilience

Recommended Action:

Moved by _____

Seconded by _____

That Infrastructure Services Report 2026-02 entitled All Risk Municipal Grant – Investing in Municipal Risk Resilience prepared by Kevin Girard, Director of Infrastructure and RaeAnn Schroeder, Analyst, Economic Development and Business Relations dated April 20, 2026, be received;

That Council direct Administration to make and submit an application to the All Risk Municipal Grant – Investing in Municipal Risk Resiliency Program from the Local Authority Services (LAS) and Intact Public Entities (IPE); and

That Council approve the post-budget capital expenditure in the amount of \$25,000 for the Colchester Weather Monitoring Station Project, to be funded through \$10,000 from the All Risk Municipal Grant – Investing in Municipal Risk Resiliency Program and the remaining balance of \$15,000 from the Town’s Green Fund Reserve.

***10.12 Office of the CAO-2026-04** 10

RE: Ontario Bill 98 Overview and Potential Impacts

Recommended Action:

Moved by _____

Seconded by _____

That CAO Report 2026-04 entitled Ontario Bill 98 Overview and Potential Impacts prepared by Kate Giurissevich dated April 20, 2026 be received; and,

That Council direct administration to forward Appendix 1 and 3, Recommendations for Commentary Submission, to the appropriate consultation intakes.

13. Correspondence

13.2 Correspondence to be considered for receipt and support

***13.2.1 Essex Fire & Rescue Services** 24

RE: International Firefighters' Day May 4, 2026

Moved by _____

Seconded by _____

That the correspondence from Essex Fire & Rescue Services asking Council to consider proclaiming International Firefighters' Day in the Town of Essex be received and supported; and

That Council proclaim May 4, 2026 as International Firefighter's Day in the Town of Essex by adopting the following resolution:

Whereas, Firefighters dedicate their lives to the protection of life and property; and sometimes that dedication is in the form of countless hours volunteered over many years, in others it is many selfless years working in the industry; in all cases it risks the ultimate sacrifice of a firefighter's life; and

Whereas, International Firefighters' Day (IFFD) is a time where the community can recognize and honor the sacrifices that firefighters make to ensure that their communities and environment are as safe as possible; it is also a day in which current and past firefighters can be thanked for their contributions; and

Whereas, International Firefighters' Day is observed each year on the 4th of May on where we remember the past firefighters who have died while serving our community or dedicated their lives to protecting the safety of us all; and show our support and appreciation to the firefighters worldwide who continue to protect us so well throughout the year; and

Whereas, hailing from all walks of life, they are our mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, grandparents, neighbors, and friends. They protect us without wanting of recognition or reward. In our time of need they are there with courage, compassion and loyalty. They are the essence of the true meaning of community.

Therefore, I, Sherry Bondy, Mayor of the Town of Essex, on behalf of the Town Council and community at large, now call upon all citizens of the Town of Essex and upon all patriotic, civic, and educational organizations to observe the day of May 4, 2026, in recognition of the patriotic service and dedicated efforts of our fire and emergency services personnel.



Report to Council

Department: Infrastructure Services

Division: Infrastructure Services

Date: April 20, 2026

Prepared by: Kevin Girard, P.Eng., MBA
Director, Infrastructure Services
RaeAnn Schroeder
Analyst, Economic Development and Business Relations

Report Number: Infrastructure Services-2026-02

Subject: All Risk Municipal Grant – Investing in Municipal Risk Resilience

Number of Pages: 5

Recommendation(s)

That Infrastructure Services-2026-02 entitled, “All Risk Municipal Grant – Investing in Municipal Risk Resilience” prepared by Kevin Girard, Director of Infrastructure and RaeAnn Schroeder, Analyst, Economic Development and Business Relations dated April 20, 2026 be received,

That Council direct Administration to make and submit an application to the All Risk Municipal Grant – Investing in Municipal Risk Resiliency Program from the Local Authority Services (LAS) and Intact Public Entities (IPE); and

That Council approve the post-budget capital expenditure in the amount of \$25,000 for the Colchester Weather Monitoring Station Project, to be funded

through \$10,000 from the All Risk Municipal Grant – Investing in Municipal Risk Resiliency Program and the remaining balance of \$15,000 from the Town’s Green Fund Reserve.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Council’s resolution of support for a grant application to the All Risk Municipal Grant – Investing in Municipal Risk Resiliency Program and to obtain approval for a post-budget capital expenditure for the Colchester Weather Monitoring Station Project.

Background and Discussion

The All-Risk Municipal Grant – Investing in Municipal Risk Resiliency Program was established in 2025 to provide financial support to Ontario municipalities for capital projects that promote innovative risk management practices. Following significant interest in the program in 2025, the grant has reopened in 2026 for a second round of funding.

Under this program, three (3) municipalities will be awarded \$10,000 to implement a cost-effective, innovative, and a new risk management project that addresses municipal-sector risks. To be eligible, projects must demonstrate potential for transferability and replicability in other municipalities across Ontario, ensuring that successful initiatives can benefit the broader municipal sector. Applications for the program are due by May 1, 2026, and the three (3) successful municipalities will be notified by June 30, 2026. Projects must be implemented or budgeted by

November 2026 to qualify for funding. According to the grant guidelines, the following projects are eligible for funding:

- Data Capture Systems
- Dash Cam Initiatives for Municipal Fleet Safety
- Smart Food Monitoring Systems
- Road Safety Audits with AI-Driven Tools
- Playground Safety Enhancement Programs
- Weather Monitoring System

In partnership with the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA), Town Administration identified that the municipality and region would benefit from the installation of a weather monitoring station in the Colchester Area. This station would integrate into the ERCA's current weather monitoring station network to provide accurate, real-time information on weather conditions and patterns, including rainfall, temperature, soil moisture content, and wind direction. The need for a weather monitoring system in the Town was determined to be of great value to the existing data collection, monitoring, and alert system already being administered by the ERCA, especially in light of the recent flooding that occurred in Harrow and Colchester in 2023 and 2025.

The installation of the weather monitoring system will strengthen the Town's ability to proactively manage risks associated with extreme weather events, including flooding, high wind events, and sudden or severe weather changes. Access to real-time, localized data will support more informed operational decision-making, improve emergency preparedness for the Town and its residents,

and reduce the potential impact of weather events on municipal infrastructure and public safety. The project will also help to address the current gap in real-time weather data and modelling, ensuring that ERCA has the information needed to aid the town's residents and operational department to respond quickly and effectively to changing weather conditions.

Through discussions with ERCA and Town Administration, it was identified that installation of a weather monitoring system in Colchester would provide optimal coverage for accurate data collection and community impact, especially that of communities of Colchester, Harrow, and McGregor. Given Colchester's proximity to Lake Erie, it is particularly vulnerable to lake-influenced weather patterns and is a known flood-prone area. Additionally, the proposed location, being at/near the Colchester Sewage Lagoons, would allow for installation on municipally owned lands, ensuring ease of access and security, and provides an open and unobstructed location for accurate data collection.

Financial Impact

The total estimated cost of the weather monitoring system is estimated to be \$25,000. If the Town is successful in securing the grant, \$10,000 will be funded through the program, with the remaining balance funded through the Town's Green Fund Reserve. Ongoing operating and maintenance costs will be assumed by ERCA, resulting in minimal long-term operating financial impact to the Town.

Consultations

Kate Rowe, Director, Corporate Services/Treasurer

Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA)

Link to Strategic Priorities

- Embrace asset management best practices to build, maintain, and continuously improve our municipally owned infrastructure.
- Leverage our Town's competitive advantages to promote jobs and economic investment.
- Take care of our natural environment and strengthen the sense of belonging to everyone who makes Essex "home".
- Deliver friendly customer service in an efficient, effective, and transparent manner while providing an exceptional working environment for our employees.
- Build corporate-level and community-level climate resilience through community engagement and partnership and corporate objectives.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	All Risk Municipal Grant - Investing in Municipal Risk Resiliency - Infrastructure Services-2026-02.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Apr 16, 2026

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



Kate Rowe, Director, Corporate Services - Apr 16, 2026 - 4:05 PM



Kate Giurissevich, Chief Administrative Officer - Apr 16, 2026 - 4:29 PM

Post-Budget Approval Request

Your Name

Kevin Girard

Department

Office of the CAO

Capital Project #

NA

Approved Budget

NA

Amount of Request

\$25,000

Procurement Bylaw in Compliance?

Yes

Has the Scope of Work Changed?

No

Proposed Funding Source:

Green Fund Reserve

Severity of Completion

Medium

Description of Request/Rationale for Overage

Request to Council to construct in partnership with ERCA a weather monitoring station in Colchester. Requesting a budget of \$25,000 total with \$10,000 funded from a grant from All Risk Insurance for a net impact to the Town of \$15,000 which is proposed to be funded from the Green Fund. The request will be contingent on receiving the grant monies.

Finance Use Only

CAO/Treasurer Sign-off

Amount

Date of Council Report

Resolution

Thank You



Report to Council

Department: Office of the CAO
Division: Office of the CAO
Date: April 20, 2026
Prepared by: Kate Giurissevich, CAO
Report Number: Office of the CAO-2026-04
Subject: Ontario Bill 98 Overview and Potential Impacts
Number of Pages: 8

Recommendation(s)

That CAO-2026-04 entitled “Ontario Bill 98 Overview and Potential Impacts” prepared by Kate Giurissevich dated April 20th, 2026 be received, and

That Council direct administration to forward Appendix 1 and 3, Recommendations for Commentary Submission, to the appropriate consultation intakes.

Purpose

To provide Council with an overview of Ontario Bill 98, identification of potential impacts on the Town of Essex, and recommended submissions to the Province during the public consultation period

Background and Discussion

Canada-Ontario Partnership to Build

On March 30, 2026, the Prime Minister and Premier announced the Canada-Ontario Partnership to Build, a joint commitment to provide \$8.8 billion in funding over the next 10 years to a variety of housing and infrastructure projects across Ontario. Information available

on the Partnership can be found here: [Details of the Canada-Ontario Partnership to Build | Ontario Newsroom](#).

Highlights of the partnership which will have a more direct impact on the Town of Essex and our residents are detailed below.

Development Charges Reduction: Ontario and Canada agree to a cost-matched structure to provide a combined \$8.8 billion over 10 years for infrastructure investments in Ontario with Canada's share of the funding flowing through the Build Communities Strong Fund's (BCSF) stream. Ontario and Canada agree that the goal of the initiative is to support housing-enabling infrastructure projects in Ontario, and that the funding will be prioritized for municipalities that reduce and maintain reductions on development charges (DCs), which can add hundreds of thousands of dollars to the cost of a new home in some areas of the province. This new infrastructure funding will offset much of the financial impact of DC reductions on municipalities. Directly from the release are the following detail:

- Municipalities will also be expected to support DC reductions, through other non-DC revenue sources) so that all three levels of government are supporting increased housing supply and affordability.
- Funding will also be made available for non-DC levying municipalities as well as for infrastructure projects prioritized by Ontario, and across a broader range of asset classes and recipients eligible under the BCSF stream.
- Canada and Ontario will also agree on a list of priority municipalities where DCs are seen as cost-prohibitive and where growth is essential to support Ontario's future. For these municipalities, Ontario would require a commitment of substantial residential DC reductions (of between 30 to 50 per cent) for a duration of three years.
- Ontario will work to recognize municipalities that have already reduced their residential DCs provided they maintain the reductions for a minimum three-year period.
- Municipalities would work with Ontario to put forward a list of projects that this funding could be used against, which must be ready-to-build and meet any other requirements agreed to between Ontario and Canada.

- Ontario will also commit to not instituting other taxes that hinder the housing supply for a period of three years.

Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) Rebate on New Homes: The federal government will provide Ontario a payment in the amount of \$875 million, subject to passage of federal legislation, that may be applied against the federal five per cent portion of the HST that is being removed from new homes in Ontario. Together, the combined rebate would remove the full 13 per cent of the HST for eligible buyers of new homes valued up to \$1 million, for a maximum rebate of \$130,000. This maximum rebate of \$130,000 would be maintained for new homes valued up to \$1.5 million, and would decrease proportionally from \$130,000 at \$1.5 million to a maximum of \$24,000 for homes valued at \$1.85 million and above, building on the province and federal government's previous move to [rebate the HST for all first-time buyers of new homes](#) valued at up to \$1 million.

Impacts to the Town are detailed in Appendix 1

- Could spur housing development
 - Possibility of lower home prices, but a tool needs to exist for the DC savings to be passed on to the Homeowner
- New infrastructure funding support
- Reduced municipal revenue from DCs
 - Currently no commitment on what federal/provincial funding support looks like, even with funding support, municipalities are still expected to share the financial burden.
- Need to balance budgets and prioritize infrastructure
- Managing faster growth and service demand
- To date, no additional information has been provided by the federal or provincial government. It is anticipated that further details will be provided by the Province when available.

Bill 98, Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026

The Minister of Municipal Affairs also introduced Bill 98, Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026. Ontario Bill 98, titled the *Transportation and Housing Act, 2026*, is a wide-ranging (omnibus) bill introduced by the Province to address housing supply, infrastructure coordination, and transit integration. The changes are primarily focused on speeding up housing development and giving the Province more control over how and where growth happens. It appears the Bill is an effort of the Province to try and remove or mitigate what it sees as delays or barriers in the current system.

A letter sent to the Town detailing this announcement from Mr. Robert Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, is included as **Appendix 2**. The letter from Mr. Flack invites feedback on the proposals within the Bill, however with a very limited window as most links only remain open until April 30th, 2026. Given this, administration prioritized this and has worked to consolidate all impacts and recommended commentary into **Appendix 3**. It should be noted that the proposals within the Bill are extensive, they propose to amend 9 separate pieces of legislation, and the limited time to review and submit comments means that an all-encompassing review is not possible. Administration had to review and provide feedback on the areas most impactful to the Town, but the list is by no means exhaustive or fully comprehensive given the time constraints.

Financial Impact

There is no immediate financial impact because of the announcements or because of this report. Any resulting Financial Impacts from the recently announced Canada-Ontario Partnership to Build or Ontario Bill 98 will be brought forward to Council through Budget Deliberations or through future reports to Council.

Consultations

Kate Rowe, Director, Corporate Services

Jake Morassut, Deputy CAO/Director, Community Services

Kevin Girard, Director, Infrastructure Services

Joseph Malandrucollo, Director, Legislative Services

Lori Chadwick, Director, Development Services

Link to Strategic Priorities

- Embrace asset management best practices to build, maintain, and continuously improve our municipally owned infrastructure.
- Leverage our Town's competitive advantages to promote jobs and economic investment.
- Take care of our natural environment and strengthen the sense of belonging to everyone who makes Essex "home".
- Deliver friendly customer service in an efficient, effective, and transparent manner while providing an exceptional working environment for our employees.
- Build corporate-level and community-level climate resilience through community engagement and partnership and corporate objectives.

Appendix 1 Canada - Ontario Partnership to Build

Category	What the Bill proposes	Impact on the Town of Essex	Recommendation to Council for Commentary Submission
<p>Development Charge Reductions</p>	<p>To access the Canada-Ontario Partnership to Build funding, municipalities are expected to reduce DCs by between 30% to 50% and maintain the reduced DCs for at least 3 years.</p> <p>List of infrastructure projects for approval with a focus on speed and efficiency</p>	<p>Could spur housing development Possibility of lower home prices, but a tool needs to exist for the DC savings to be passed on to the Homeowner New infrastructure funding support Reduced municipal revenue from DCs Currently no commitment on what federal/provincial funding support looks like, even with funding support, municipalities are still expected to share the financial burden. Need to balance budgets and prioritize infrastructure Managing faster growth and service demand</p>	<p>Request clarity on the program, that as part of the program criteria, the federal and provincial governments waive any stacking rules in order to facilitate the full extent of investment possible. That the Province try to limit the Municipal Non-DC source contribution required given current infrastructure deficits.</p>

**Ministry of
Municipal Affairs
and Housing**

Office of the Minister

777 Bay Street, 17th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 2J3
Tel.: 416 585-7000

**Ministère des
Affaires municipales
et du Logement**

Bureau du ministre

777, rue Bay, 17^e étage
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 2J3
Tél. : 416 585-7000



234-2026-1123

April 1, 2026

On March 30, 2026, our government introduced the *Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026*, (Bill 98). Through this legislation and accompanying measures, we are creating the conditions for Ontario to build the housing and infrastructure it needs to grow and remain competitive. These changes will help get shovels in the ground faster for much-needed housing, and housing enabling-infrastructure projects, while improving the way people and goods move across Ontario.

A brief description of the proposals in this bill are included in this letter below. You are also invited to review the [Environmental Registry of Ontario](#) and [Regulatory Registry of Ontario](#) posting links provided with this letter and share any feedback you may have.

If you have any questions, please reach out to my Director of Stakeholder and Caucus Relations, Tanner Zelenko, at Tanner.Zelenko@ontario.ca

I look forward to our continued collaboration with our municipal partners as we build a more prosperous, resilient and competitive economy that will enhance affordability and the quality of life for Ontario residents and families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Robert J. Flack'.

Hon. Robert J. Flack
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

- c. Prabmeet Sarkaria, Minister of Transportation
- Todd McCarthy, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
- Graydon Smith, Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Robert Dodd, Chief of Staff, Minister's Office
- Matthew Rae, Parliamentary Assistant, Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Laura Smith, Parliamentary Assistant, Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Brian Saunderson, Parliamentary Assistant, Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Martha Greenberg, Deputy Minister, Municipal Affairs and Housing
- David McLean, Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Laurie Miller, Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Sean Fraser, Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal Affairs and Housing

Development Charges Act, 1997 – Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Schedule 3 of the Bill would make amendments to the *Development Charges Act, 1997*.

New section 4.5 would provide that non-profit retirement home developments are exempt from development charges.

The Schedule would also make technical amendments to address out-of-date cross-references in provisions related to front-ending agreements.

You may provide your comments on the proposed changes to the *Development Charges Act, 1997* through the Ontario Regulatory Registry

<https://www.regulatoryregistry.gov.on.ca/proposal/52054>

Municipal Act, 2001 – Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

The Schedule repeals and remakes section 93 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, to address barriers to the development of communal water and wastewater systems and increase housing supply across Ontario.

New subsection 93 (1) of the Act provides that no person shall construct, maintain or operate a non-municipal water or sewage public utility without first applying for and obtaining the consent of the municipality. Under new subsection 93 (2) of the Act, a municipality that receives an application for one of these utilities must review that application and either provide consent subject to conditions and limits that are agreed upon, or, in the case of a regulation having been made setting out criteria or conditions that must be met, and the municipality is of the opinion that regulated requirements have been met, the municipality must provide consent to the application. Regulation-making authority would be made to establish the criteria or conditions related to applications for consent and for the proposed public utility.

You may provide your comments on the proposed changes to the *Municipal Act, 2001* through the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) notice and the Ontario Regulatory Registry ([ERO 026-0302](#)) from March 30, 2026 to April 29, 2026.

Planning Act – Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Schedule 7 of the Bill proposes the following amendments to the *Planning Act* that would help create the conditions necessary to support housing and community development. If passed, the proposed changes would:

- Specify a standardized structure and a standardized set of land use designations for local official plans (i.e., lower- and single-tier municipalities and planning boards).
- Provide a two-phased implementation approach for the new official plan framework which focuses on the 29 large and fast-growing municipalities in the first phase,
- Remove redundant requirement for municipalities to include climate change policies in their official plans,
- Provide the Minister with authority to exempt lower-tier municipalities from requirement to conform with upper-tier official plan to facilitate voluntary early implementation of the proposed official plan framework,

- Provide that for an already approved Protected Major Transit Station Area (PMTSA), only official plan amendments changing the boundaries of the PMTSA or the planned population and jobs for the area would require the Minister's approval,
- Remove the legislative requirement for the Minister to provide notice on proposed amendments to or revocations of Minister's Zoning Orders (MZOs),
- Provide flexibility for removing Simcoe County's planning responsibilities in up to three separate phases, based on municipal readiness, and
- Facilitate the implementation of provisions from Bill 23, the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*, that provide for a new framework for developer-identified land, including encumbered land and privately owned public spaces (POPS) arrangements, to count toward municipal parkland dedication requirements.
- Remove references to "sustainable design" from site plan control and restrict municipalities from requiring an owner of land to provide electric vehicle supply equipment in connection with off-street vehicular parking facilities, so that municipalities may not impose 'enhanced' development standards at the lot level that are not required for health, safety, or environmental performance (e.g., stormwater).
- Provide the Minister with authority to establish a minimum lot size through regulation.

We are interested in receiving your comments on these proposed measures. Comments can be made through the Environmental Registry of Ontario and the Ontario Regulatory Registry from March 30, 2026, to April 29, 2026:

- [ERO 026-0300](#): Proposed Planning Act, City of Toronto Act, 2006, Building Code Act, 1992 and Municipal Act, 2001 Changes (Schedules 7, 2 and 1 of Bill 98, the Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026).

We are also interested in receiving any comments you may have on other associated proposals:

- [ERO 026-0315](#): Consultation on upper-tier official plans, secondary plans, and site and area-specific policies
- [ERO 026-0310](#): Consultation on site plan control reform under the *Planning Act* and the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*
- [ERO 026-0305](#): Proposed Changes to Various Regulations Under the *Planning Act* to Facilitate the Electronic Submission of Information and Materials to Approval Authorities and Allow Notices to be Given Electronically to the Province
- [ERO 026-0314](#): Proposed Changes to Various Regulations Under the *Planning Act* and the *City of Toronto Act, 2006* to Specify Additional "Prescribed Professions" for the Purposes of a Complete Application
- [ERO 026-0313](#): Streamlining the Information and Material that Planning Authorities can Require as Part of a Complete Application
- [ERO 026-0309](#): Proposed Regulation to Prohibit Mandatory Enhanced Development Standards as a Condition of Land Division Approvals
- [ERO 026-0311](#): Proposed Regulatory Approach to Establish a Minimum Residential Lot Size in Urban Areas
- [ERO 026-0304](#): Draft Projection Methodology Guideline to support the implementation of the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024
- [ERO 026-0312](#): Proposed Changes to Support Standardizing of Parkland Requirements Under the *Planning Act*

The Environmental Registry postings provide additional details regarding the proposed changes.

Building Code Act, 1992 – Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Schedule 1 amends the *Building Code Act, 1992* to clarify that standards for the protection or conservation of the environment are included in the meaning of municipal by-laws respecting the construction or demolition of buildings for the purposes of section 35 of the Act.

[ERO 026-0300](#): Proposed Planning Act, City of Toronto Act, 2006, Building Code Act, 1992 and Municipal Act, 2001 Changes (Schedules 7, 2 and 1 of Bill 98, the Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026.

City of Toronto Act, 2006 – Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

The proposed change would, through various amendments to section 114 of the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*, remove references to “sustainable design” in site plan control. Changes would also be made to allow the Minister to establish a minimum lot size through regulation under the *Planning Act*.

[ERO 026-0300](#): Proposed Planning Act, City of Toronto Act, 2006, Building Code Act, 1992 and Municipal Act, 2001 Changes (Schedules 7, 2 and 1 of Bill 98, the Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026

Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025 – Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

The ministry is proposing legislative amendments to the *Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025*. These include:

- Explicitly prohibiting private ownership in any new Water and Wastewater Public Corporation (WWPC) to align with the government’s intent to maintain 100% public sector ownership and respond to the strong feedback we have heard on the issue from the public, unions, associations and municipalities regarding privatization.
- Supporting the continuation of services and existing contracts – so that transferred contracts and agreements are not affected by a transfer to a new WWPC. This includes contracts such as employment or insurance, permits, licenses or a collective agreement, helping to support an efficient transfer and continuity of service during the transfer process.
- Supporting labour and employment continuity by clarifying that certain rights (such as successor, employment, and pay equity rights) are carried forward to a new WWPC.
- This would include regulation-making authority to help ensure continuity of services related to contracts and employees that are transferred to a new WWPC.
- Prohibiting the transfer of long-term municipal water and wastewater debt to a WWPC to provide clarity and reduce lender uncertainty, while creating new regulation-making authority to enable future regulations to address other matters related to municipal debt.

You may provide your comments on the proposed changes to the *Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025* through the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) notice and the Ontario Regulatory Registry ([026-0301](https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/026-0301)) from March 30, 2026 to April 29, 2026.
<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/026-0301>

Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002 – Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Schedule 8 of the Bill proposes a change to the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002 (SDWA)* to clarify that a drinking water system owned by a WWPC would be considered a municipal drinking water system under the SDWA. This change would ensure that WWPCs are subject to the same public health and safety requirements under the SDWA that apply to all municipal drinking water systems.

The Bill also proposes changes to the *Safe Drinking Water Act* that would deem municipal consent to have been provided under the *Safe Drinking Water Act* for a proposed non-municipal drinking water system if consent has been provided by a municipality under the *Municipal Act* and regulated requirements under that Act were met. This avoids duplication of the municipal consent and helps to remove a barrier to development on communal systems.

You may provide your comments on the proposed changes to the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002* through the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) notices related to the *Municipal Act, 2001*, [026-0302](https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/026-0302), and the *Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025*, [026-0301](https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/026-0301) from March 30, 2026 to April 29, 2026.
<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/026-0301>
<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/026-0302>

Fare Alignment and Seamless Transit Act, 2026 – Ministry of Transportation

Schedule 4 of the bill enacts the *Fare Alignment and Seamless Transit Act, 2026*. The proposed legislation would authorize the Minister of Transportation to make regulations:

1. **Prescribing local transit systems** in the GTHA that are subject to the Act.
2. **Establishing One Fare 2.0**, including: setting fare prices and categories; defining eligibility and fare discount policies; establishing fare and transfer policies between prescribed transit systems (e.g., free transfers); requiring participation in a unified fare payment system approved by the Minister (e.g., PRESTO); and determining how fares shall be apportioned among prescribed transit systems in a geographic zone, which could result in the reallocation of fare revenue collected in one prescribed transit system to another prescribed transit system in a different municipality.
3. **Improving service to key regional destinations** by designating new and existing routes as “priority routes”, including routes that may cross municipal boundaries; setting service standards for priority routes; and prescribing requirements for service integration between prescribed transit systems, including requiring a prescribed transit system to provide services outside of its primary service area (i.e., in other municipalities).

4. **Improving specialized transit service**, including requiring prescribed specialized transit systems to: participate in a unified trip booking system approved by the Minister; and provide transportation a prescribed distance outside of its primary service area (i.e., in another municipality) without requiring a person with a disability to transfer to a different passenger transportation system.
5. **Creating exemptions** from the Act or regulations.

Metrolinx Act, 2006 – Ministry of Transportation

Schedule 5 amends *the Metrolinx Act, 2006* to create a voluntary, streamlined compliance reporting process for Metrolinx which will be more scoped than the traditional building permit process. The proposed compliance reporting process does not override the existing building permit process. Instead, it allows for more flexibility for Metrolinx by creating a streamlined process to get building science expertise from municipalities.

The proposed legislative amendments require municipalities, upon receiving a proposed construction or demolition notice from Metrolinx, to provide Metrolinx with a report that includes:

- An assessment of whether the proposal would contravene the Building Code.
 - Municipalities would not include a review of certain *Planning Act* requirements such as municipal zoning bylaw and site plan approvals.
- An assessment of the applicability of the Architects Act or the Professional Engineers Act.
- An assessment of whether every person who prepared the relevant building documents had the correct qualifications under the Building Code.
- Any other prescribed information.

The proposed legislation also enables the Minister of Transportation, through regulation, to prescribe additional exemptions to applicable law and specific timelines for municipal inspections and conveyance of occupancy reports, among other items.

Appendix 3 Bill 98, Building Homes & Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act

Category	What the Bill proposes	Impact on the Town of Essex	Recommendation to Council for Commentary Submission
1. Official Plan Reform:	<p>Introduces standardized provincial formats and rules for municipal official plans</p> <p>Limits municipalities' ability to create unique land-use policies</p> <p>Eliminating the requirement for municipalities to include climate change in their Official Plans. In particular, the changes will remove municipal authority to institute green development standards, making them voluntary for developers.</p> <p>Removing municipal authority to require "enhanced development standards" at the lot level, such as landscaping, aesthetic and ornamental design considerations outside what is needed for health, safety, and accessibility.</p> <p>All references to "sustainable design" in site plan control by-laws are to be removed.</p>	<p>Essex is close to completing a new Official Plan; unknown at this time if we will need to revise this Official Plan any further, and if so how much time it will take, and additional budget required to do so</p> <p>Less flexibility to reflect local priorities (e.g., rural character, agricultural protection nuances); We have a couple special policy areas currently proposed in the Draft new OP (CR 50, Pleasant Valley, Highway 3) and unknown at this time if this can remain</p> <p>Our current OP does make Low Impact Development features voluntary. However, the removal of climate change from OP's should not remove the municipalities rights to protect future residents from the impacts of climate change, including Storm Water Management practices to protect against flooding.</p> <p>It is not clear how this will impact Essex, however, its likely that it will impact our minimum landscape area for the required front yard from our Zoning By-Law.</p>	<p>Request more details on how implementation is expected in an upper & lower tier setting such as Essex County where a new OP was recently approved by the Province; Request more information on prescribed uses under the proposed standardized set of land uses; Encourage the Province to allow municipalities to maintain the rights to protect future residents against Climate Change Impacts.</p>
2. Building Code Review:	<p>Section by section review of the OBC so it better meets modern challenges and the reality of building in Ontario;</p> <p>Could restrict municipalities from imposing additional local construction requirements</p>	<p>OBC has quadrupled in size; streamlining would be a benefit; some requirements are antiquated or irrelevant to some regions in Ontario;</p> <p>Supportive of this initiative; However, if we wanted to, Essex would not be able to require higher local standards (e.g., enhanced energy efficiency beyond the OB. We currently do not, but if we ever wanted to in support of local sustainability/climate goals we would not have this ability.</p>	<p>Generally supportive of the Building Code review in an effort to modernize and streamline, reduce construction costs, and maintain high health and safety standards.</p>
3. Site Plan Control:	<p>Reduces scope (e.g., landscaping, design elements may be restricted)</p> <p>Reduces Municipal Scope (e.g., landscaping, Soil Composition, design elements may be restricted)</p> <p>Remove site plan control as a land use planning tool. Establish new municipal site plan approval streams for different kinds of proposed developments. This would mean a full site plan would only be required for larger, complex developments. Less complex ones would be triaged.</p> <p>Scope site plan review to a short checklist of functional aspects of the site (e.g. health and safety), using certified professionals for acceptance and approval of reports and studies. Cities will not be able to request studies beyond those included in the checklist. If all technical requirements are met in the checklist, site plan approval is granted.</p> <p>Require municipalities to have a maximum of three circulations, after which a mandatory meeting is triggered with all relevant municipal departments to resolve issues and require a municipal arbitration process and/or site plan review panel for site plans that exceed the 60-day timeline and specified number of circulations. This is meant to avoid Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) hearings and speed up approvals.</p>	<p>Less municipal ability to shape urban design and aesthetics; Essex is in the midst of initiating urban design guidelines for downtowns. The Town will need to ensure the principles for these guidelines are written into the OP, otherwise they could be unenforceable</p> <p>The Town will have little say on the aesthetics of a site plan, but this is not much of a concern from an Infrastructure perspective. The Bill states that soil composition comments will be restricted. Given Windsor-Essex unique soil characteristics, we have concerns with the Province limiting geotechnical analysis to determine adequate engineering methods for building infrastructure.</p> <p>It is not clear what a "complex" development will be. This could result in site plan being fully removed for most Essex developments as complex may be relative to large city developments.</p> <p>Its not clear what will be on this checklist. The checklist should allow for enough flexibility to allow for unique geographical and engineering challenges to be imposed by municipalities such as our flat topography and unique soil conditions.</p> <p>No concerns from Infrastructure Services perspective.</p>	<p>Site plan is preferred to remain a land use planning tool under the Planning Act, along with the various O'Regs that support processing applications. Moreover, Council request more details on the new provincial site plan checklist and terms of reference for new arbitration processes, as well as what constitutes a "complex" application that would trigger a full site plan review.</p>
4. Minimum Lot Sizes:	<p>Encourages smaller lot sizes to 175 square metre (1,884 square foot) minimum lot size standard, therefore higher density</p>	<p>More efficient use of land, lower-cost housing types, increases housing supply, however, may may conflict with Essex's traditional low-density or rural character; Potential servicing constraints with more density; Parking/traffic concerns; Unknown if other zoning regulations would be met particularly if ADUs are added on these reduced lots</p> <p>Current min lot size in the Town of Essex is R1, R2 for 360m2 (4000f2) for single unit dwellings</p>	<p>Encourage retaining municipal control to determine appropriate lot sizes for development to meet local needs and context.</p>
5. Non-Profit Retirement Homes:	<p>Exempts DCs for non-profit and seniors housing</p>	<p>Non-profit residential developments, retirement homes or otherwise, in Essex are already exempt from DCs therefore no further impact than we already would have</p>	<p>Supportive of the exemption of DCs for non-profit retirement homes since this is currently a discretionary exemption in the Town's DC By-law.</p>
6. Communal Water & Wastewater Systems:	<p>Supports shared/private communal servicing systems for developments</p> <p>Encourages alternatives where full municipal servicing isn't available</p> <p>Supports shared/private communal servicing systems for developments</p>	<p>Could enable development in areas without full municipal services such as McGregor, and potentially Colchester in the future;</p> <p>Raises concerns about long-term maintenance and oversight, potential risk if systems fail or require municipal takeover later</p> <p>Communal systems have been generally cost prohibitive for the housing market in Windsor-Essex, however, Infrastructure is supportive of this infrastructure so long as the Province continues to allow for responsible approvals, operations/maintenance, flexibility to allow municipalities to enter into capital and maintenance agreements with developers, and the ability to remove these systems when servicing becomes available to the area. It should be noted that not all development applications could/should have a communal systems, and municipalities should have the flexibility to approve or deny such a system based on sound engineering and financial rationale.</p>	<p>Supportive of the use of communal systems where municipal servicing is not available, but only at the discretion of the municipality to ensure that servicing is not reasonably feasible. Further, there needs to be oversight through the ECA process from the MECP for environmental approvals. Municipalities do not have the resources or expertise to be the approval authority for these systems. Municipalities should have authority to enter into capital and maintenance agreements with developers</p>

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7. Parkland Dedication Requirements:	<p>Limits how much land or cash municipalities can require for parks</p> <p>Standardizes parkland dedication rules across Ontario</p>	<p>The proposed changes would reduce municipal parkland contributions from development, either through less land or less cash-in-lieu, placing greater pressure on existing parks as communities grow. Prescribed provincial criteria would limit municipal discretion, constrain the ability to refuse applications that meet minimum standards, and increase appeal risk at the OLT, weakening negotiating leverage with developers. There is also a likely shift away from cash-in-lieu contributions, reducing flexibility to strategically acquire parkland in priority locations or assemble larger, centrally located parks. Collectively, these changes may result in increased costs, legal complexity, and staff resources required to manage appeals, agreements, and compliance.</p> <p>The framework is expected to increase reliance on non-traditional parkland, including encumbered lands and privately owned public spaces, often resulting in smaller, constrained, or fragmented areas integrated into developments rather than dedicated park blocks. While such spaces may meet technical criteria, they may be less functional for recreation, harder to program, and more challenging to manage over the long term due to shared ownership, access, and liability issues. Over time, this could reduce overall parkland quality and continuity, limit the municipality's ability to implement planned park networks, and weaken alignment between development-driven parkland and broader community recreation needs.</p>	<p>Retain Municipal Discretion and Local Context</p> <p>Protect the Ability to Secure Functional, Contiguous Parkland</p> <p>Maintain Municipal Flexibility for Cash in Lieu</p> <p>Reduce Appeal Risk and Protect Municipal Decision Making</p> <p>Address Administrative, Legal, and Long Term Operational Impacts</p> <p>Protect Long Term Park System Planning</p>
8. DCs in Agreements of Purchase & Sale:	<p>Requires greater transparency about DCs in home purchase agreements</p> <p>May fix or limit increases after agreements are signed</p>	<p>Homebuyers get more certainty on total costs</p> <p>Need assurance that if DCs adjust in Essex over time, that our By-law takes precedent over an Agreement of Purchase and Sale</p>	<p>Supportive pending adjustment ability being that if DCs adjust over time, that municipal DC By-laws take precedent</p>
9. Harmonization of Roads Standards	<p>The Province is proposing to standardize municipal road standards across the province.</p> <p>Mandatory reporting and exemption process being imposed</p>	<p>Blanketing road standards across the entire province does not account for various engineering conditions that may exist at the local level such as climate, geography, asset profiles, and labour markets. Standardizing without meaningful consultation and flexibility for local engineering practices to be implemented could result in prematurely failing assets and increase maintenance and operational costs.</p> <p>Could introduce risk and delays to projects. Without defined timelines and service standards, municipalities cannot reliably plan Council-approved programs/projects. Blanket exemptions should be available for well-understood, low-risk practices. It is not clear what the reporting requirements will be, but there is a concern that the requirements will create a burden that will stretch staff resources.</p>	<p>Generally supportive of harmonization efforts so long as local challenges due to climate, geography, and labour markets are considered for local exemptions. Further, that the partnership and collaboration between Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) and MTO continue in the development of these standards.</p>
10. Water/Wastewater Public Corporations Changes	<p>The province is proposing to amend the Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025 to expressly state that these new corporations will be entirely publicly owned. It also creates a framework for the expansion of municipal services corporations across the province.</p> <p>Added multiple employment/employee clauses</p>	<p>This Act is still not in force and has been created to address Peel's transition to a Public Corp. Its not clear if this act will impact Essex at this time, but if the Province intends to force municipalities to form private corporations for water resources this could have fundamental changes to the corporation, employees, governance, finance and debt, and how rates and DCs are collected.</p>	<p>Not supportive of public water/wastewater corporations for the Windsor Essex Region. Municipalities should have the oversight and control to plan for infrastructure from a wholistic perspective. Further, that the Town should be able to make the decisions on water rate impacts to residents including the taking of debt and DCs for water resource projects.</p>

WHEREAS, Firefighters dedicate their lives to the protection of life and property; and sometimes that dedication is in the form of countless hours volunteered over many years, in others it is many selfless years working in the industry; in all cases it risks the ultimate sacrifice of a firefighter's life; and

WHEREAS, International Firefighters' Day (IFFD) is a time where the community can recognize and honor the sacrifices that firefighters make to ensure that their communities and environment are as safe as possible; it is also a day in which current and past firefighters can be thanked for their contributions; and

WHEREAS, International Firefighters' Day is observed each year on the 4th of May on where we remember the past firefighters who have died while serving our community or dedicated their lives to protecting the safety of us all; and show our support and appreciation to the firefighters worldwide who continue to protect us so well throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, hailing from all walks of life, they are our mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, grandparents, neighbors, and friends. They protect us without wanting of recognition or reward. In our time of need they are there with courage, compassion and loyalty. They are the essence of the true meaning of community.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Sherry Bondy, Mayor of the Town of Essex, on behalf of the Town Council and community at large, now call upon all citizens of the Town of Essex and upon all patriotic, civic, and educational organizations to observe the day of May 4, 2026, in recognition of the patriotic service and dedicated efforts of our fire and emergency services personnel.