



OHBA ACTIVITY Summary

Keeping Members Informed

April 2017

DATES TO NOTE

- **Throughout April:** Institute of Building Excellence [summer course registration](#)
- **April 24:** Presidents' and Executive Officers' Seminar and Industry Leaders Dinner
- **May 1:** Awards of Distinction [online entries open](#) and OHBA Conference [early-bird registration begins](#)
- **May 28 – June 1:** Sweden – International Housing Tour. To register, contact [Mike Collins-Williams](#)

CHANGES TO TARIION and ONTARIO'S NEW HOME WARRANTY SYSTEM

The Minister of Government and Consumer Services, Hon. Tracy MacCharles, announced the government's plan to make significant changes to Ontario's new home warranty system. The announcement follows the release of the [final report from Justice Cunningham](#) on the Ontario New Home Warranties Act and the Tarion Warranty Corporation. The proposed changes include:

- Tarion will no longer act as both the warranty provider and the regulator.
- Make the dispute resolution process easier for homeowners if they discover a problem in the construction of their new home.
- Give government responsibility in making rules and setting standards and introducing modern oversight measures to improve accountability and transparency.
- Immediately ask Tarion to introduce new deposit protection measures to better reflect today's home prices and deposit requirements for new homes and condominiums.

The Minister stated that the government intends to table legislation this fall. OHBA will continue to be engaged in the consultation process. For more information, [view the Ministry's News Release Bulletin](#).

OHBA QUEEN'S PARK ADVOCACY DAY

On March 20th, OHBA hosted its annual Queen's Park Advocacy Day with builder and renovator members from across the province. In meeting with MPPs, Cabinet Ministers and policy makers, OHBA members educated and advised them on how provincial policy decisions impact the supply, choice, and affordability of housing across Ontario.

OHBA looks forward to continuing to have an evidence-based conversation with all parties on important issues that impact the supply, choice, and affordability of housing in Ontario.



OHBA and OREA CALL ON PROVINCE TO STRIKE A HOUSING PANEL

Population growth and a strong economy in the GTHA have created a high demand market where housing supply is critically low and prices are becoming out of reach for many buyers. OHBA and the OREA are [urging the Provincial Government to create a housing experts task force](#) to provide ideas for increasing housing supply in Ontario, to improve home affordability for Ontarians.

OHBA and OREA have made four initial recommendations that the provincial government can take action on to relieve the underlying housing supply crunch that threatens the dream of home ownership for young families and future generations:

1. Fix the "One Size Fits All" Growth Plan
2. Improve the Planning Approvals Process
3. Address the "Missing Middle" of Housing Supply
4. Target Infrastructure to Support New Housing Supply

OHBA and OREA agree that sustainable, long-term solutions are necessary to get to the root of the affordability problem, and it starts with increasing housing supply. Together our two associations are appealing to the provincial government to take stock of the housing supply problem and work with real estate industry leaders to design solutions that will improve home affordability for all Ontarians.

PROVINCIAL BUDGET 2017

Following hot on the heels of the Federal Budget on March 22nd, the upcoming Ontario Budget has been scheduled for April. OHBA notes that our industry has contributed significantly to the rebound in provincial finances as reported in the [2017-17 Third Quarter Finances](#). The report notes that the government is projecting a lower deficit, primarily due to the strength of Ontario's housing market. HST revenue alone is \$803 million higher than projected, which the Minister of Finance attributed to the housing market. Also, Land Transfer Tax revenue is up \$514 million over and above last year's targeted budget. The OHBA [pre-budget submission](#) delivered a number of key messages and priorities to the Provincial Government including:

- OHBA's primary recommendation is that the provincial government forms a Housing Panel to examine factors that are driving price escalation. The panel should focus on a data-driven process to better inform future public policy decisions and to address housing affordability.
- Address the underground economy and climate change through a Home Renovation Tax Credit, specifically targeting improving the energy efficiency of Ontario's 4.8 million existing homes.

- The HST has had direct impacts for residential construction and prices have escalated significantly since the \$400,000 threshold was established in 2009. As part of the mandate of a Housing Panel, it should review the \$400,000 threshold.

COORDINATED REVIEW

In January, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs posted a Regulation Proposal on Amendments to the Greenbelt Area Boundary Regulation to the [Environmental Registry \(O12-9247\)](#) on [proposed minor changes to the Greenbelt's boundary](#). [OHBA submitted recommendations to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs on February 27th, 2017](#). Key OHBA recommendations with respect to the Greenbelt included:

- Recognizing the province is sponsoring boundary adjustments, OHBA recommends that an open and transparent process be established to review designations and boundary refinements. This process must include clear criteria and a timeframe to consider site-specific requests for boundary adjustments. Further, the province should complete this process in a transparent and consultative manner with all stakeholders including municipalities, Conservation authorities and landowners.
- OHBA also supports the proposed expansion into 21 Urban River Valley corridors on publicly owned land and associated coastal wetlands as URV areas into the Greenbelt Area in the Greenbelt Plan.

On March 9, 2017, OHBA submitted a letter to the Ex-officio Advisor to the Premier, Hazel McCallion, which generally supported the December 2016 *Report on the Government of Ontario's Co-ordinated Land Use Planning Review including the Proposed Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and the Proposed Greenbelt Plan*. This report was a result of discussions that took place at the GTHA Mayor and Chairs Summit.

As part of the [Co-ordinated Land Use Planning Review](#), OHBA, BILD and other local Home Builders' Associations made submissions to the Province. OHBA made two submissions with industry recommendations: [Growth Plan Submission](#) and a [Greenbelt Submission](#). OHBA continues to meet with provincial officials regarding the proposed amendments to the four plans in the Coordinated Review.

ONTARIO MUNICIPAL BOARD

The Province is continuing to review the OMB and plans to introduce legislation soon. OHBA has submitted two submissions to government – [a preliminary set of recommendations in August](#) and a detailed [submission outlining OHBA's recommendations in December](#), in response to the consultation document. OHBA Policy Director, Mike Collins-Williams appeared on a panel discussion on [The Agenda with Steve Paikin on February 1 to discuss "Do we need the OMB?"](#). OHBA thanks BILD, the Greater Ottawa HBA, Simcoe County HBA and the Sudbury & District HBA for putting in their own OMB submissions to the province.



On March 20th the Attorney General, Yasir Naqvi addressed the OHBA regarding the OMB and discussed a range of issues including adequately resourcing the Board, mediation services and the political dynamics of local councils. The OHBA Executive Committee also met directly with the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Hon. Bill Mauro to discuss the review of the OMB as well as the Coordinated Review of the Greenbelt and Growth Plan. Legislation to reform the OMB is anticipated later this spring.

RENT CONTROL PMB

On March 20th, MPP Peter Tabuns (NDP) introduced a [Private Member's Bill](#) that, if passed, would end the post-1991 rent control exemption. Andrea Horwath, the leader of the NDP, called on the Premier to take action to end the rent control exemption. The Federation of Rental Housing Providers of Ontario (FRPO) issued a [news release](#) clarifying the importance of the exemption in encouraging new rental housing supply at this critical time and has called for formal consultation and consideration of the need for the exemption to be maintained.

OHBA shares FRPO's concerns that new rental controls will negatively impact bringing much needed, new rental housing supply to the market.

SECONDARY SUITES

OHBA has consistently supported as-of-right secondary suites. OHBA's 2010 and 2015 [Long-Term Affordable Housing Submissions](#) both addressed and supported allowing as-of-right secondary suites. OHBA and the Pembina Institute co-authored a [Make Way for Laneway](#) report that also addressed secondary suites.

OHBA was supportive of provisions in the *Strong Communities through Affordable Housing Act, 2011* that amended various sections of the Planning Act to facilitate the creation of second residential units. On March 7th, 2017 a new regulation ([Environmental Registry O12-9694](#)) was proposed:

- A maximum of one parking space would be required for a second residential unit, where second residential units are permitted
- A second residential unit, where permitted in the zoning by-law, may be occupied by any person in accordance with s. 35(2) of the Planning Act, and, for greater clarity, regardless of whether the primary unit is occupied by the owner of the property
- A second residential unit, where permitted, would be permitted without regard to the date of construction of the primary building

OHBA is generally supportive of the regulation which has a purpose to facilitate implementation and creation of second units. Comments are due by June 5th, 2017. OHBA is seeking feedback from members – please direct comments to OHBA Director of Policy, [Mike Collins-Williams](#).

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILL TABLED TO ADDRESS ELEVATORS

MPP Han Dong (Trinity—Spadina) introduced [legislation](#) that would require additional consumer protection for elevators. Elevators that break down must be repaired within 14 days for most buildings, seven days for long-term care homes and retirement homes. The proposed changes include:

- Individuals seeking a permit to construct a building with seven or more stories to show that the building will have enough elevator capacity
- Elevator maintenance contracts would be subject to the Consumer Protection Act

