



**Ontario**  
Home Builders'  
Association

# The High Cost of Slow Housing Approvals

Delays and uncertainty in Ontario's housing approval process are driving up costs for new homebuyers and discouraging investment. While progress has been made through the province's Housing Supply Action Plans, the Housing Affordability Task Force (HATF), and the new Provincial Planning Statement, slow and inconsistent municipal approvals remain a major barrier to getting homes built.

With 444 municipalities each operating unique approval processes, requirements vary widely—some municipalities require up to 124 studies per application, while others require as few as 20. This patchwork of regulations contributes to inefficiency, delays, and rising costs.

To streamline approvals and increase housing supply, OHBA urges the province to advance further policy reforms, including:

- Expanding "as-of-right" zoning to reduce unnecessary approvals.
- Prohibiting mandatory performance-based design standards that create additional red tape.
- Allowing single-stair egress in small multi-unit residential buildings.
- Making employment land conversion requests appealable to permit more mixed-use development.
- Require municipalities to swap existing letters of credit with surety bonds to free up capital for homebuilders.
- Addressing redundancies in municipal and provincial reviews to speed up approvals.
- Increasing height and density permissions near higher-order transit to maximize housing potential.

As committed in the recent provincial election, OHBA supports the standardization of required development studies and the adoption of AI tools to fast-track approvals by ensuring compliance with the Ontario Building Code, zoning bylaws, and site plan requirements.

Ontario's housing crisis demands bold action—cutting red tape, reducing approval times, and eliminating municipal backlogs are critical to delivering the homes Ontarians need.