



— **OBCM** —  
Ontario's Big City Mayors

The Honourable Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
[premier@ontario.ca](mailto:premier@ontario.ca)

The Honourable Paul Calandra  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
[minister.mah@ontario.ca](mailto:minister.mah@ontario.ca)

October 24, 2023

Dear Premier Ford and Minister Calandra,

On behalf of Ontario's Big City Mayors (OBCM) I want to thank your government for the creation of the Building Faster Fund (BFF) to help Ontario municipalities meet our housing targets. These funds are essential for our 29 member municipalities to be able to provide the servicing and infrastructure needed to meet our housing goals by 2031.

OBCM is pleased to see the commitment of \$1.2 billion dollars over the next three years in the Building Faster Fund, but we have concerns about the eligibility criteria in place to access these funds.

The Ministry has indicated that it will not count a housing start until a developer pulls the permit. While municipalities can fast track approvals, they do not build homes. Due to issues beyond our control (high interest rates, mounting material costs, labour shortages, etc.), developers have stalled the pulling of many of these permits. This directly impacts our member municipalities' ability to reach the annual housing target required to access this much needed funding.

These issues were also the focus of the recent housing report *Working Together to Build 1.5 Million Homes* (attached to this letter), released by Dr. Mike Moffatt's the PLACE Centre in collaboration with OBCM. In this report, we ask the Province of Ontario to bring all members of the home building process together (e.g., all three levels of government, developers, builders, labour, the higher education sector, the financial services industry, and not-for-profit groups) to create a mutually agreeable plan to reach our shared goal of building 1.5 million homes. It is critical that this plan includes an accountability framework for identifying the barriers to building, and a schedule of annual meetings to allow for us to work together to find solutions for housing delays.

We have heard from our membership on this and understand that you have as well, including most recently a letter from Mayor Shaun Collier from the Town of Ajax.

We all share the same goal; to build more homes for our residents. We hope that you will consider this issue and include the municipal sector in discussions on changes to the eligibility criteria for the Building Faster Fund, and consider our perspective as you look at how to best support municipalities and our joint effort to move the housing portfolio forward.



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Thank you again for your collaborative approach to getting homes built and for your recognition that local leaders are best positioned to make growth decisions for their communities.

Sincerely,

Marianne Meed Ward, Mayor of Burlington

Chair, Ontario's Big City Mayors

cc. Hon. Rob Flack, Associate Minister of Housing  
President Colin Best, Associations of Municipalities of Ontario  
Patrick Sackville, Chief of Staff, Premier's Office  
Michael Klimuntowski, Chief of Staff, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing's Office