

This could cut \$70m from cost of Ontario homes

Home Market Update

by Steve Randall 06 Nov 2017

Utilizing technology for building permits could save \$70 million on the cost of new homes in Ontario with millions more saved in the non-residential sector.

The Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON) wants to run a pilot program for e-permitting following a study with Ryerson University's Centre for Urban Research and Land Development.

An investigation into how other jurisdictions use e-permitting is also being undertaken by University of Toronto professor Arash Shahi.

"We're talking really of a two-stage process, where the first stage is e-permitting, the submission of plans and applications electronically, which are reviewed manually at the municipality," says Shahi. "The second stage, which produces the most savings, is automated e-permitting, where those plans and applications are submitted online and then automatically reviewed using software — and there are quite a few companies making this software."

Shahi is part of RESCON's working group looking into a pilot project in the province.

If the use of software which links into the CAD document speeds up the permit process as expected, it would cut costs for developers which could be passed onto homebuyers.

"While there are online submissions today in Toronto, they end up printing off the documents and reviewing them," says Shahi. "What we're talking about is reviewing the documents on large screens the size of televisions and using software to automate the process."