

GTA must change its slow approvals process says RESCON

Home Market Update

by Steve Randall 05 Jul 2018



The speed at which building approvals are granted in the Greater Toronto Area needs to be increased to avoid damage to the real estate market and economy.

That's the message from Ontario's building trade body **RESCON** which says a report from the World Bank raises concern that investment in the GTA could be affected by slow approvals.

“Representing Canada, Toronto is 54th out of 190 countries assessed by the World Bank in terms of the efficiency of its approvals process for routine building projects,” says **Richard Lyall, president of RESCON**. “This ranking isn't for an 80-storey mixed-development high-rise – it's for the most basic of buildings such as a warehouse. We are a G7 nation – 54th for Toronto, Ontario and Canada isn't acceptable.”

He adds that the process needs reforming in the next three years to avoid damage to the economy and the loss of potential international investors.

Recommendations to improve approvals

World Bank consultant **Michael de Lint**, RESCON's director of building regulatory reform and technical standards makes some key recommendations for the Ontario government in a new report:

- Pass a Transparency Act to improve timelines and support a transparency checklist;
- Establish a common data/file platform for electronic permitting to move Queen's Park and its 444 municipalities to a state-of-the-art system and out of the world of pen and paper;
- Require a coordinating professional and supportive documentation to ensure all professional submissions are complete and accurate, leading to faster approvals and less red tape.

“The slow approvals process inhibits the ability of builders to provide the supply of new houses and condos that new-home buyers should be able to purchase,” de Lint says. “This report can help point the government in the right direction toward less red tape and faster compliance.”

[His report is available on the RESCON website.](#)