



Ontario's residential builders call on province to support streamlined e-permitting initiative

Dec. 17, 2020, Vaughan, Ont. – The [Residential Construction Council of Ontario \(RESCON\)](#) is encouraging the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) to support an initiative to establish data exchange guidelines and standards that would help streamline the development approvals process in the province.

“Municipalities across Ontario would benefit from having a more streamlined e-permitting standard as it would speed up the development approvals process for builders and result in construction of thousands of more homes and condo units being built,” says RESCON president Richard Lyall. “Government has already made the digitization of government services a priority and this is in line with the Ontario Treasury Board’s recently announced Ontario Onwards Action Plan.”

RESCON has signed a letter backing the [One Ontario](#) initiative that was launched by AECO Innovation Lab, a consortium that is driving digital transformation across the architecture, engineering and construction sectors. It would set the stage for a comprehensive e-permitting system that would replace the current patchwork of varying systems and streamline the process across Ontario’s municipalities by developing new guidelines that will establish a set of provincial data exchange standards.

RESCON supports the initiative and agrees that a unified data exchange framework would significantly reduce costs by eliminating redundant digital customizations in every municipality.

“We acknowledge that addressing permitting challenges requires remarkably close co-operation and management amongst stakeholders – from developers, to municipalities and applicable law agencies – and want to express our support on behalf of the residential construction community,” RESCON states in the letter.

According to the World Bank, Canada ranks 64th out of 185 countries on development approval efficiency for routine building projects and if Ontario continues to fall behind it could lead to potential investors avoiding the province, the letter states. One Ontario, meanwhile, could help improve the ranking of the province and ensure it remains competitive.

RESCON encourages innovation and believes that the One Ontario initiative, with its goal of streamlining the development approvals process, will result in faster construction and bring significant value to its members. The organization intends to work with One Ontario to encourage relevant organizations and municipalities to co-operate, exchange information, and work to build a better Ontario.

A [recent report](#) prepared for RESCON by the Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis bolstered the case for adoption of a harmonized and digitized e-permitting system. The report found that 33,100 more homes could be built in Ontario beyond current baseline trends over the next five years if the overall development approvals process was reduced by six months. Such a reduction could also result in a contribution of \$4.5 billion to Ontario's economy annually by 2025 and support 40,500 jobs.

"Our hope is that the One Ontario initiative will be a first step towards modernizing the approvals process across Ontario municipalities," says Lyall. "The construction industry is a key driver of our economy and streamlining the system would help boost our recovery and enable the building of much-needed new housing."

Background on RESCON: *RESCON is the province's leading association of residential builders committed to providing leadership and fostering innovation in the industry.*

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