



# Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario

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Please direct all correspondence to the office of the Chair

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September 26, 2022

The Honourable Steve Clark  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
College Park, 17th Floor  
777 Bay Street  
Toronto, Ontario  
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Re: Request for Provincial Extension to Municipal Streamlining Development Approval Fund (SDAF)

On behalf of the Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario (RPCO), I am writing to request a Province-wide municipal extension to the funding deadline for the Streamlining Development Approval Fund (SDAF). We are very appreciative of the Province of Ontario making these funds available to municipalities.

RPCO is an organization whose members provide planning services and give planning advice to municipal Councils who represent over 75% of Ontario's population. As such, we are fully engaged on a daily basis in matters which are urban and rural; northern and southern; small town and big city. We also understand the universal importance of having a healthy development industry to support community vitality across Ontario.

There are three main reasons we see as supporting an extension to this very important Provincial Fund. The first is common to so many sectors of the Provincial economy, namely a shortage of people. Municipalities have been no exception to the dearth of people available over the past few years to support and improve the planning process, and we have heard from many communities that this has been the case. This people shortage has also affected the consulting industry that many municipalities rely on to effect change.

The second reason for an extension is the need to thoroughly develop and test options that may be the "right changes", and in some cases, to test detailed prototype solutions. In conjunction with this step is the need to continue collaboration with the development industry to "road test" potential solutions. This collaboration is essential before changes are agreed upon and implemented, especially systemic changes, to avoid unintended consequences.

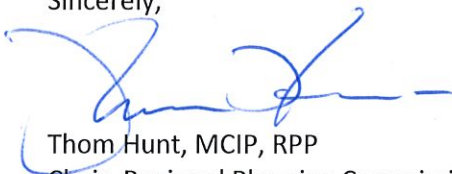
The third reason for an extension relates to the concurrent implementation of the requirements of Bill 109 and SDAF work. Municipalities continue to ready themselves for new rules coming into effect in January of 2023, and “in-house” resource use is ineligible for SDAF funding. What’s more, many of the same staff and consultants involved in SDAF-driven improvements are helping municipalities to implement their (Bill 109) development review process changes.

We have already reached out to the Ontario Home Builders’ Association’s new Chief Executive Officer (Mr. Luca Bucci) to request to meet and explore ongoing opportunities to make planning processes and outcomes better in a variety of ways. We are hopeful that our discussions will include new private-public sector partnerships wherein the development industry would build a range of affordable housing using new and scalable funding models. This was an opportunity we also included in our letter to you earlier this year (dated February 11, 2022) regarding the Housing Affordability Task Force findings. We have also reached out to Mr. David Wilkes, President and CEO of Building and Land Development Association (BILD), to engage in these discussions.

We appreciate that your Government is seeking improvements to be made by municipalities sooner rather than later. We would therefore suggest an extension of approximately six months (i.e. to the end of July 2023) for all municipalities in Ontario who received this funding. It would be unfortunate for the current shorter-term deadline (of February 2023) to pre-empt good outcomes like shorter processing times and improved tracking systems.

I am happy to discuss this matter further with you at your convenience. In the interim, please know that municipalities are appreciative and remain active in using the Fund to improve their systems and processes. This must include ongoing work with the development industry, and all in the interests of making a better Ontario.

Sincerely,



Thom Hunt, MCIP, RPP  
Chair, Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario

Cc

Mr. Ryan Amato, Chief of Staff, MMAH  
Ms. Hannah Evans, Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal Services Division, MMAH  
Mr. Colin Best, President, AMO  
Mr. Jae Truesdell, Office of the Premier  
Mr. Luca Bucci, Chief Executive Officer, OHBA  
Mr. David Wilkes, BILD  
Mr. Ed Archer, RSTCAO Chair  
RPCO Members