

# NOVÆ RES URBIS

## GREATER TORONTO & HAMILTON AREA

WEDNESDAY,  
JULY 9, 2025

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■ PEEL REGION WORKING TO MODERNIZE INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING MODEL AMID HOMEBUILDING CRISIS

## LEAP OF FAITH

Matt Durnan

**T**he **Region of Peel** is taking a bold step to address housing need in its three municipalities, by creating a new model for infrastructure funding that will have a direct impact on bringing more housing to the region, more quickly.

At its June 26 meeting, Peel regional council approved a motion to both defer and cut development charges by 50 per cent for all new residential units in Peel, starting on July 10, a move that is largely dependent on anticipated financial support in the form of grant funding from both the provincial and federal governments.

The new infrastructure funding model will defer development charges without interest on new residential developments in Peel Region until the first occupancy permit is issued, reducing the upfront

costs for builders. Development charges (DCs) will also be temporarily reduced by 50 per cent for new residential units until November 13, 2026, to be funded by grants-in-lieu until the provincial and federal governments provide funding.

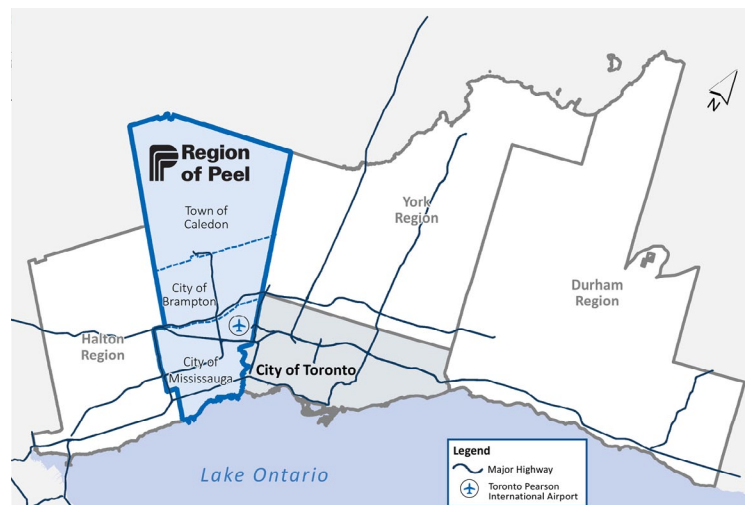
"It's become clear that municipalities can't keep funding the bills on just municipal tax for everything

that we own. In 1988, at the municipal level, all across Canada, municipally and regionally, we were responsible for getting four per cent of all the taxes of Canadians, and we're up to about 10 per cent now, and we've never been worse off," Region of Peel chair **Nando Iannicca** told *NRU*.

"This is the fundamental point. We own 65 per cent of

the stuff, whether it is roads or bridges, water and wastewater systems, libraries, community halls. We own 60 to 65 per

CONTINUED PAGE 10 ■



Map showing Halton, Peel, York, and Durham regions, and the city of Toronto. At its June 26 meeting, Peel regional council voted to adopt a new infrastructure funding model for new residential developments. The new model defers development charges (DCs) for new residential developments and cuts them by 50 per cent until November 13, 2026 in an effort to get more shovels in the ground on housing projects proposed in areas without servicing. The Region has proceeded with this model based on the understanding that it will be reimbursed for the value of the DC reductions by the provincial and federal governments. Peel is eager to get stalled projects, particularly in North Brampton and in Caledon, moving and new housing built to fulfill its housing targets of 400,000 new units by 2031.

SOURCE: PEEL REGION

## UPCOMING DATES

### JULY

- 9 Brampton Council, 9:30 a.m.  
Georgina Council, 9:00 a.m.  
Halton Regional Council, 9:30 a.m.  
Hamilton General Issues Committee, 9:30 a.m.  
Richmond Hill Council, 9:30 a.m.
- 10 Peel Regional Council, 9:30 a.m.
- 14 Milton Council, 7:00 p.m.  
Newmarket Special Council, 1:00 p.m.  
Uxbridge Council, 10:00 a.m.
- 15 Aurora Council, 7:00 p.m.—  
CANCELLED  
Burlington Council, 9:30 a.m.  
Caledon Planning & Development Committee—  
Public Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 16 Hamilton Council, 9:30 a.m.
- 22 East Gwillimbury Committee of the Whole Council, 10:00 a.m.  
East Gwillimbury Council, 2:00 p.m.
- 24 East Gwillimbury Committee of the Whole Council, 2:00 p.m.  
East Gwillimbury Council, 6:00 p.m.
- 28 Brock Council, 10:00 a.m.
- 29 Hamilton Planning Committee, 9:30 a.m.
- 30 Georgina Public Planning Meeting, 7:00 p.m.



## ■ PROVINCE MOVES TO ACCELERATE MASS TIMBER CONSTRUCTION AND RESEARCH IN ONTARIO

# KNOCKING ON WOOD



Lana Hall

A provincial strategy designed to increase the manufacturing and use of made-in-Ontario wood building products could speed up housing development, improve sustainability, and reduce reliance on imported wood products, say some in the construction industry.

On June 26, the **Province of Ontario** announced its new ‘Advanced Wood Construction Plan,’ which will see funding and support allocated towards local companies and institutions working in the wood products sector.

In a statement, the Province said the strategy would help build more homes and “create a more resilient forestry sector in response to U.S. tariffs by attracting investment, increasing revenues and providing economic opportunities that create and sustain local jobs.”

As part of the strategy, the province has allocated over \$13-million to wood

product manufacturers and organizations that undertake related research and education. This includes \$8-million to **Element5**, Ontario’s first fully-automated manufacturer of cross-laminated timber, \$3-million for wood-based construction research and training led by organizations such as the **Canadian Wood Council** and the **Canadian Wood Construction Research Network**, and \$1.5-million towards the construction of educational buildings at **George Brown College** and the **University of Toronto** that incorporate mass timber into their design.

Mass timber is generally considered to be a lower-carbon construction material

than concrete or steel, and can be pre-fabricated off-site and assembled on location for more efficiency.

In 2015, the Province of Ontario amended its building code to permit the development of six-storey mass timber structures, and in January of this year, announced the code would permit mass timber buildings of up to 18 storeys. But despite these allowances, mass timber construction hasn’t had quite the take-up its proponents were hoping for, according to **West End Homebuilders Association** (WE HBA) CEO **Mike Collins-Williams**. In a previous interview with **NRU**, he said part of this lacklustre take-up is caused by supply problems.

CONTINUED PAGE 3 ■

There’s been a chicken-and-an-egg situation in which there was lack of folks building mass timber, so you didn’t have the supply chain existing because there was a lack of demand.

- Mike Collins-Williams

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# KNOCKING ON WOOD

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“There’s been a chicken-and-an-egg situation in which there was lack of folks building mass timber, so you didn’t have the supply chain existing because there was a lack of demand,” Collins-Williams said. “But then on the other side, you had a lack of supply chain, meaning those that were potentially interested in building the product couldn’t get the product.”

As it stands, some early Canadian adopters of mass timber structures have had to import material from as far away as Austria. The investment in local mass timber production will hopefully change that, allowing for more activity in the mass timber construction space, says

University of Toronto **Mass Timber Institute (MTI)** executive director **Rasoul Yousefpour**. The MTI, which leads cross-sectoral partnerships to advance mass timber research, education, development, and export, will receive more than \$300,000 as part of the provincial action plan. The allocation is intended to support the MTI’s research into methods of using “underutilized wood” and wood-based modular housing development.

“If we ship it from Austria or elsewhere, I’m not sure we are getting the full economic and environmental benefits,” Yousefpour tells *NRU*. “We are in historical times, and we need to accelerate the use of wood

and mass timber in Ontario’s construction sector ... and it’s not just one person’s job.”

Part of the problem, says Yousefpour, is that while Ontario is home to many tree species, many of them, such as red pine, are considered to be of low-grade material for construction purposes. In Canada, there are regulatory limitations to building with red pine, although it is permitted to be used in mass timber production in the United States. Such discrepancies, says, Yousefpour, could be solved with more up-to-date research and development. The MTI is undertaking a research project to determine whether red pine could be treated in such a way that it could meet requirements for mass timber construction in Canada.

Calling advanced wood construction “a technology whose time has truly come,” Canadian Wood Council executive director **Steven**

**Street** said the provincial investment will provide high-quality jobs and help deliver urgently-needed housing supply.

“This is about solving today’s challenges while laying the groundwork for long-term economic growth—with industrialized wood construction driving that transformation forward,” Street said in a statement. 🌱

Rendering of the 10-storey residential building proposed for the site at 1113-1125 Dundas Street West in Toronto. Once completed, the 94-unit purpose-built rental building be the first mass timber project to be developed on a City-owned site. With its newly-released “Advanced Wood Construction Action Plan,” the Province of Ontario is allocating over \$13-million to Ontario wood manufacturers and organizations to support further research on mass timber construction and education. This investment, say stakeholders, could help build more mass timber projects similar to this one in Ontario faster and more affordably.

SOURCE: CITY OF TORONTO  
ARCHITECT: BROOK MCILROY





# TYING IT ALL TOGETHER



**Matt Durnan**

**T**he **City of Pickering** is in the midst of establishing a new land use planning framework for a large vacant area in the city's northeast that will see it develop into a new complete community over the next 30 years, accommodating a range of housing types, employment, and retail uses, while tying into the overarching planning vision for this area of Durham Region.

At its June 9 meeting, Pickering planning and development committee received a report on the Northeast Pickering secondary plan land use concepts and preferred land use plan, which once finalized will guide growth in the roughly 1,600-hectare area in Pickering's northeast over the next 30 years.

"In June of 2021, council directed staff to kickstart work on the Northeast Pickering secondary plan, in anticipation of the **Region of Durham's** new 'Envision Durham' official plan," City of Pickering director of development **Kyle Bentley** told **NRU**.

"That official plan was adopted by Durham regional council in September of 2024, and approved by the Province in December of 2024, and allowed for the urban boundary

expansion for Northeast Pickering."

The lands that make up the Northeast Pickering secondary plan area are largely vacant agricultural lands that are bounded by Highway 7/Sixth Concession Road to the south, Lake Ridge Road to the east, which borders the town of Whitby, Eighth Concession Road to the north, and Westney Road to the west. Highway 407 bisects the area from east

to west through the southern portion of the secondary plan area.

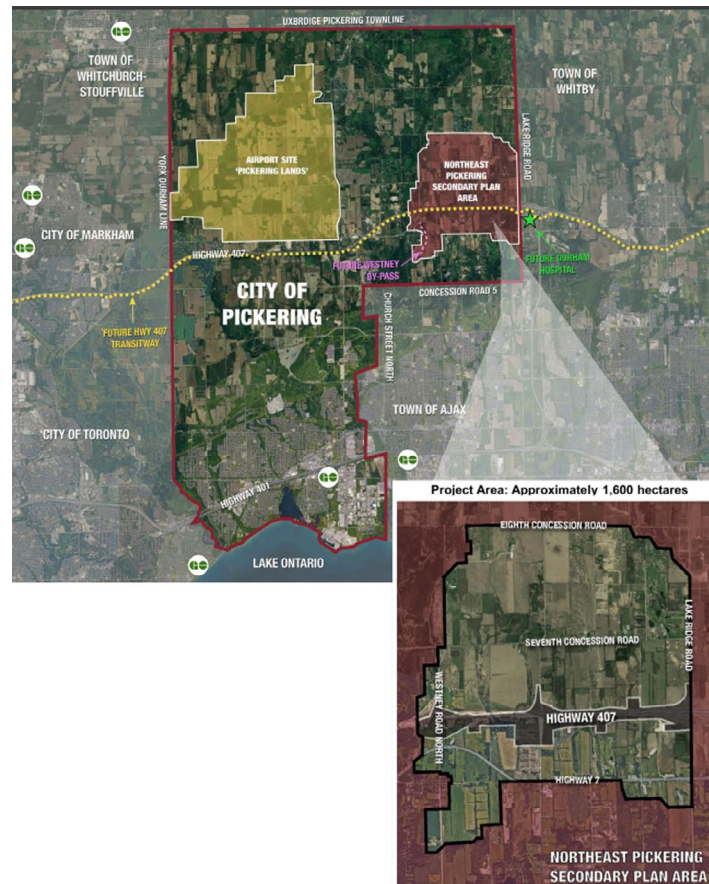
In November of 2022, as part of the Envision Durham municipal comprehensive review (MCR), 1,195 hectares of land within the Northeast Pickering area were recommended for inclusion in the Region's urban boundary through a settlement area boundary expansion.

The Envision Durham

growth management study anticipated that the Northeast Pickering area could accommodate as many as 44,910 residents and 4,315 jobs in the future, on lands designated as "Community Area", plus an additional 6,600 jobs in a designated Employment Area.

The Northeast Pickering secondary plan area is being envisioned as the site of a complete community that will bring innovative approaches to people-centred design and sustainability, while being a multi-generational, economically-diverse community with walkable neighbourhoods and vibrant

CONTINUED PAGE 5



Aerial images showing the City of Pickering as a whole, and the location of the Northeast Pickering secondary plan area (inset). The City of Pickering is currently in the midst of creating a new secondary plan for the roughly 1,600-hectare area in the city's northeast. The secondary plan area consists mostly of vacant agricultural land and borders the Town of Whitby to the east, and is bisected by Highway 407 in the southern portion of the area. The Northeast Pickering secondary plan area is projected to accommodate nearly 45,000 residents once built out, along with 4,315 jobs in areas designated as "Community Area", and another 6,600 jobs in areas designated as "Employment Area".

SOURCE: CITY OF PICKERING

# TYING IT ALL TOGETHER

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

public spaces.

“These lands have always been part of the ‘Whitebelt’ which is an area that makes the most sense for this type of development,” City of Pickering director of economic development and strategic projects **Fiaz Jadoon** told *NRU*.

While the planning vision for Northeast Pickering makes note of the need to create complete communities, there is also a keen eye towards creating a new employment area for Pickering, with a focus on manufacturing and ancillary uses.

“We’re looking at a balanced approach to employment and commercial uses and looking at lessons learned from other communities,” said Jadoon. “We started our journey on our employment lands in the Seaton community [through the Central Pickering Development Plan, 2006] and we’re almost out of employment lands in that community.”

On the housing front, the Northeast Pickering secondary plan area is would include a variety of housing options, densities, and levels of affordability, with a unit-type mix of mostly low and medium-density housing,

accommodating nearly 45,000 residents.

Central to the planning for the Northeast Pickering area is the presence of Highway 407, which bisects the entire area from east to west. However, in the absence of an interchange in the area, the highway offers little as a means of transportation for future residents of Northeast Pickering.

Pickering staff have been in conversation with the **Ministry of Transportation** (MTO) on the potential for a

new Highway 407 interchange within the Northeast Pickering area.

“Through our transportation work, there were a number of options for different interchanges, and so one of them will be moving forward. And that will come through further discussions with MTO,” **SGL Planning and Design** principal and head of urban design **Catherine Jay** told *NRU*.

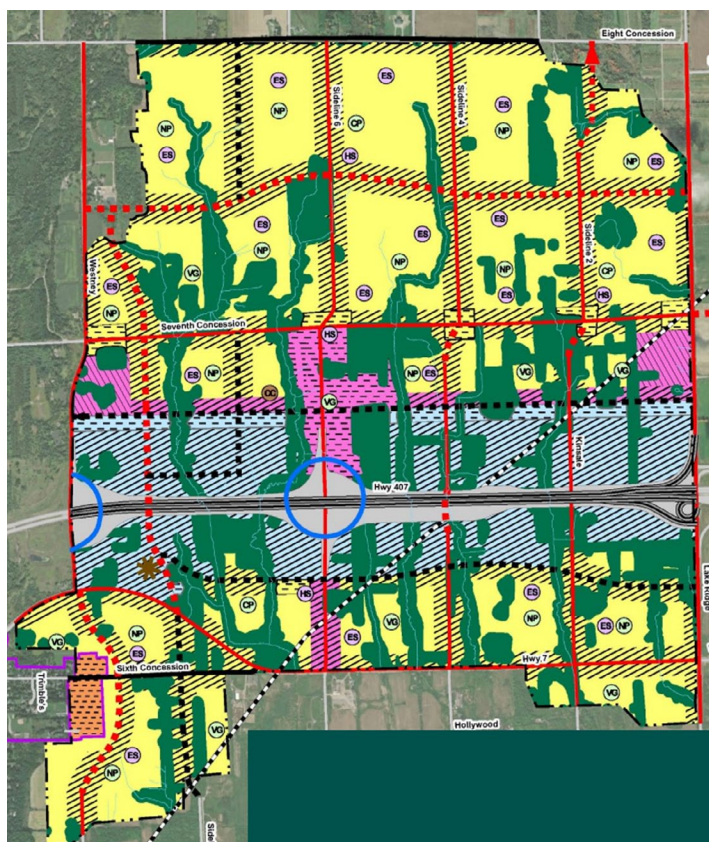
“My understanding has always been that at least one more interchange has always been contemplated in this area, so it’s working with the MTO to confirm that it will move forward. And one of the big points is to not only serve the employment lands, but also for access to this community.”

While the secondary plan

work focuses specifically on how this area of Pickering will take shape and grow into a new community in the coming decades, there is another layer to the planning process that takes into account how this community will fit into the larger picture of Durham Region’s plans, given its close proximity to both Whitby to the east and Ajax to the south.

A new Durham Region hospital is being planned for a site at the corner of Highway 407 and Lake Ridge Road in Whitby, which will one day serve Northeast Pickering residents, so planners on the project team are taking care to ensure that the neighbouring

■ CONTINUED PAGE 6



Preliminary preferred land use concept for the Northeast Pickering secondary plan area. City of Pickering is currently in the public consultation stage for the new secondary plan, which encompasses a roughly 1,600-hectare area in Pickering’s northeast. The areas shaded yellow in the image represent low-density residential areas, while the yellow areas with black diagonal lines represent medium-density residential proposed along the area’s planned arterial roads. Areas shaded purple represent local nodes (including community nodes, regional centres, and mixed corridors). The areas of the image shaded light blue with diagonal lines represents prestige employment areas that would accommodate heavier uses, like manufacturing, while the light blue areas with perforated horizontal lines represent business areas that would accommodate commercial and office uses not permitted in prestige employment areas. The small circles dispersed throughout the area represent elementary schools (ES), high schools (HS), neighbourhood parks (NP), community parks (CP), and community centres (CC).

SOURCE: CITY OF PICKERING



# TYING IT ALL TOGETHER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

municipalities grow in a coordinated manner.

“SGL is actually working on the Whitby official plan as well, so this has been very easy for us to coordinate. Particularly, there are a couple of roads that are coming through the Whitby OP [official plan], and they’re moving a little bit ahead of where Pickering is with their planning, so it’s just ensuring that those roads are lining up well and coordinating with those land uses in Whitby as

well,” said Jay.

“This can be a livable community in Northeast Pickering with the medium-density housing. And when you put this all together, it’s not just the road system that’s in the plan, but the road system it connects to. It’s the services, the community facilities. With the density that’s planned, there are quite a number of schools and parks, and they’re distributed with this idea of creating neighbourhoods throughout

the plan area. So this becomes a balancing act of what this whole area can accommodate and what makes sense.”

Overall, the Northeast Pickering secondary plan is in close alignment with the Envision Durham official plan for the area with respect to the population and job densities it will accommodate, while adding in more details of what the central focal points and neighbourhood hubs will look like on the ground floor.

“The City of Pickering held public information centre three on June 18. Currently staff are gathering comments from agencies and the public on the preliminary land use concept plan,” Pickering special projects senior project manager **Zahrah**

**Khan** told *NRU*.

“Staff anticipate receiving the draft secondary plan policies and preferred land use concept plan in mid-July from SGL. Following a circulation period, a statutory public meeting is anticipated in fall of 2025.” 🌱

LAND SERVICES GROUP

BLOOR STREET

East

COURTICE, ONTARIO

FUTURE COURTICE

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HWY 401

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BLOOR ST E

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TOWNLINE RD S

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Located within the Bayview (Southwest Courtice) Secondary Plan area, the property is designated High Density Residential / Mixed Use which allows for the development of apartment buildings and buildings with commercial uses located on the ground floor with apartment units above. The minimum and maximum building heights within this designation are 7 and 12 storeys, respectively, and the minimum density is 48 units per acre (120 units per hectare).

The offering represents an exciting opportunity to develop within a growing community of Clarington and to help better connect the existing neighbourhoods with new and needed housing stock.

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# ON THE ALTAR OF POSSIBILITY



Lana Hall

As religious congregations across Canada dwindle in size and older church buildings become increasingly costly to maintain, the city-building sector must make it easier for faith-based assets to undergo adaptive re-use or intensification, says a new report released by the **Canadian Urban Institute** (CUI). The alternative, say the report authors, is losing thousands of square feet of space often used by religious organizations to provide vital social and community services for their neighbourhoods.

In its report “Sacred Spaces, Civic Value: Making the Case for the Future of Faith-Based Assets,” CUI points to a 2019 study by **National Trust For Canada**, which determined that shrinking congregations and the financial challenges of maintaining aging buildings could result in one-third of Canada’s 27,000 churches and faith-based spaces closing within the next decade.

Many of these spaces

provide more than just religious services to their communities; they’re often vital hubs for childcare, cultural events, food banks, and more. Many of them also serve as architectural landmarks.

To preserve these spaces as critical community infrastructure, religious leaders and the private sector must collaboratively investigate whether reinvestment, shared governance, and adaptive reuse

could transform these faith-based spaces into affordable housing, educational centres, or mixed-use spaces that serve the broader public, says the report.

“It’s not only about the built form, which many people recognize as being a part of their neighbourhood, but it’s also about acknowledging that these spaces have served communities for generations,” says CUI managing director of

CONTINUED PAGE 8 ■

Rendering of a redevelopment project involving St. Monica’s Roman Catholic Church in midtown Toronto. The redevelopment will see a smaller place of worship built and integrated into a larger development that includes a residential tower. As many churches see their congregations diminish in size and the costs of maintaining aging church buildings increase, thousands of faith-based spaces in Canada are at risk of shuttering altogether, says a new report from the Canadian Urban Institute. One solution is to make it easier for religious organizations to remain on-site by reimagining these faith-based assets as mixed-use sites that continue to serve congregants while also benefiting the broader public.

SOURCE: CANADIAN URBAN INSTITUTE  
ARCHITECT: KPMB ARCHITECTS





# ON THE ALTAR OF POSSIBILITY

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

programs, planning and policy  
**Jennifer Barrett.**

“And the loss of those spaces will not be easily replaced; both the physical space but also the cost of those spaces, which are often discounted because they’re being offered by a church, which has tax exemption.”

According to the CUI report, faith-based spaces make up more than 450 million square feet of space across Canada.

Out of necessity, some religious organizations have already been exploring the idea of adapting or converting their properties for a mix of uses. In Toronto, the **Donway Covenant United Church (DWUC)** partnered with non-profit developer **Options For Homes** to propose a redevelopment for its 1.0-hectare site on the Donway West. The proposal calls for the church and three adjacent low-rise buildings used for community programming

to be demolished, and replaced by a six-storey mixed-use building that integrates 271 new residential units and a smaller, more modern worship space into the ground floor. In a previous interview regarding the DWUC redevelopment, Options For Homes then-CEO **Heather Tremain** told *NRU* the partnership with the church allowed Options For Homes to acquire property while supporting a religious community that desperately needed to use its land more efficiently.

“That’s a very big challenge for churches in general right now,” said Tremain at the time. “This allows that congregation

to stay in that neighbourhood in a meaningful way that maybe it wouldn’t be able to do otherwise. The church runs a number of community-based programs out of their facility, so those will be able to continue.”

In Pickering, **Kindred Works**, an organization that manages land on behalf of the **United Church of Canada**, requested a zoning by-law amendment to add residential space to a church site at 1066 Dunbarton Road, home to the Dunbarton-Fairport United Church. In that project, the church will remain in situ, while the adjacent surface parking lot will be demolished to make way for 41 rental dwelling units. At a **City of Pickering** planning and development committee meeting, Kindred Works development manager and senior planner **Carly Forrester** told the committee the redevelopment would

permit the church to maintain its place of worship, while better utilizing the land to serve the community — something that might not happen, should the site be sold to a commercial developer.

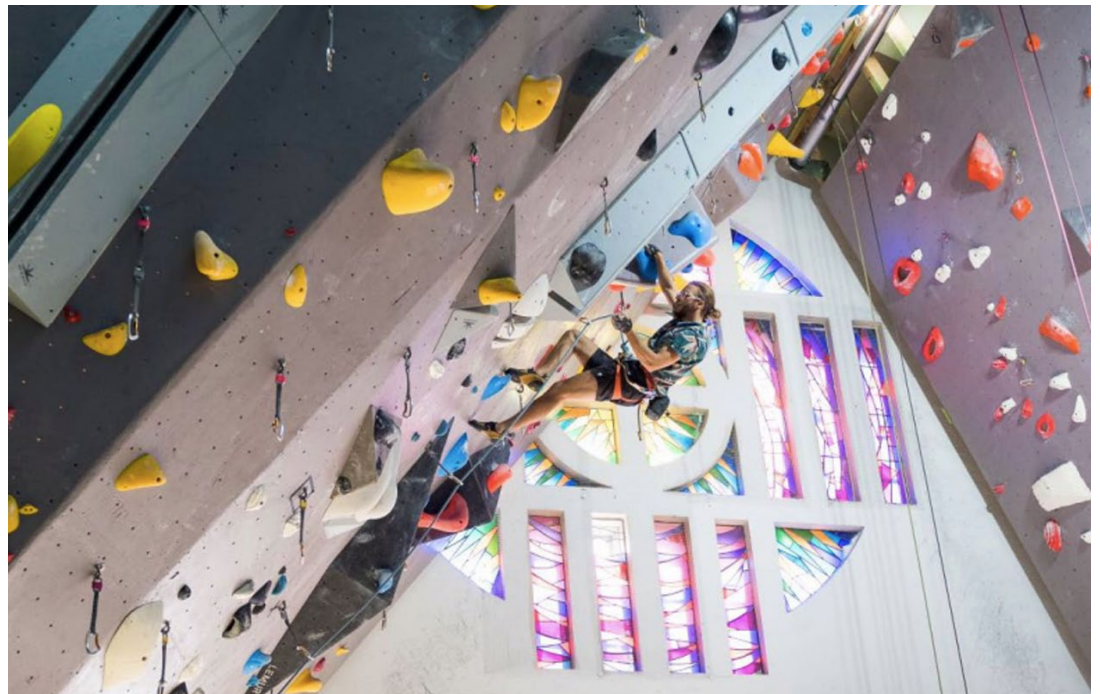
“...This development is needed for the retention and remaining use of the church,” she said. “Without a development such as this, it is likely to close and be sold off to the highest bidder.”

Other adaptive re-use projects involving church sites have focused on filling cultural and community needs. In Old Quebec City, Quebec’s contemporary **Maison de la Littérature** is housed in the former Wesley Methodist Temple. The 19th century Neo-Gothic building now contains a public library and cafe that hosts a variety of programming throughout the year, including

CONTINUED PAGE 9 ■

Image of a climbing gym built into the interior of a transformed Gothic Revival-style church known as Eglise Christ-Roi in Sherbrooke Quebec. Despite shrinking congregations, says a report by the Canadian Urban Institute, churches often provide critical community infrastructure through programs such as childcare, food banks, recreation or other social services.

SOURCE: VERTIGE ESCALADE





# ON THE ALTAR OF POSSIBILITY

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

creative studios, a stage, comic book workshops and a writing residency. In Sherbrooke Quebec, a private company transformed the Gothic Revival-style church known as Église Christ-Roi into a climbing gym.

But redevelopments like this are not always simple, warn the CUI report authors. Many older churches require costly repairs and upgrades to support new uses, and may require a more complex adaptive re-use approach due to heritage or craftsmanship considerations. Church leadership, while perhaps well-intentioned, may also lack the planning and development expertise to undertake re-visioning of a site and navigation of land-use policy or planning approval processes. They may also lack the funding to hire such expertise. Additionally, places of worship are identified as “institutional use” in zoning by-laws, limiting development opportunities without undertaking complicated, and sometimes costly, policy changes.

In fact, says Barrett, it’s almost impossible for a church organization to execute the redevelopment of a faith-based site on its own.

“Partnerships are really

key to it. There were very few examples of a single organization that was able to pull off an adaptive re-use or a conversion by themselves,” she tells *NRU*.

“By partnerships, that could be a number of organizations involved in collectively determining what the future use will be, but it can also be partnerships with financial support, as well.”

Based on these challenges, both religious and secular entities need to lead a series of policy and societal shifts to encourage mainstream adaptive re-use of faith-based spaces, say the report authors. These changes could include establishing a national inventory of faith-based properties based on location, type, and ownership status, as well as a system for measuring the social impact of faith-based assets.

Municipalities should identify “strategic opportunity sites” to direct investment for maximum civic benefit, such as faith properties located on main streets or major transit station areas.

Ideally, say the report authors, municipalities would also prioritize collaboration with those faith-based organizations to help with co-design of redevelopment

projects and assistance navigating land use plans and zoning by-laws. This could even mean pre-emptively amending zoning by-laws for faith-based sites.

“Even though there’s a diversity of activities that are happening in these spaces, we have considered them in the regulatory [and land-use planning] environment as a singular use, which is a place of worship,” says Barrett.

Additional solutions could involve the creation of a faith asset adaptation guidebook for religious institutions and establishing a national network of practitioners with expertise in adaptive re-use of faith-based spaces.

Given the financial challenges that often come with these projects, the CUI report authors also suggest identifying funding opportunities from both the public and private sectors, leveraging joint venture partnerships, and utilizing social purpose financing options, such as community land trusts, to fund acquisition and adaptation of these sites.

Without solutions like this, says Barrett, communities across Canada risk losing critical “third spaces” that churches provide if they can’t find a feasible way to repurpose the space on their own terms.

“[Something that was] really significant to us was the tens of thousands of square footage of space that would be lost to community groups, and what that does in creating

opportunities for social connection,” she says.

To read the full report “Sacred Spaces, Civic Value: Making the Case for the Future of Faith-Based Assets”, please visit the Canadian Urban Institute website [here](#). 

# LEAP OF FAITH

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

cent of all the capital and infrastructure, and we're expected to fund it on just 10 cents on the dollar of all taxes collected from Canadians."

The infrastructure funding challenges facing regional municipalities in Ontario have been lingering in the background for some time and have come to greater public attention in the midst of a nationwide housing crisis, as both federal and provincial governments have set lofty housing targets, with Region of Peel set to bear a large share of those new builds.

The Province has set a target of 1.5 million new homes by 2031; 400,000 of those are expected to be built in Peel.

"We're happy to do that, but with interest rates being the way they are and the cost of infrastructure what it is, it just isn't feasible to get a product to market. We're being told by the development industry that people can't afford this. So we understand that, and we want to be part of the solution," Iannicca said.

"The genesis of this goes back to conversations I've had for a long time with [Mississauga] Mayor **Carolyn Parrish** and her housing task force, along with [Brampton] Mayor **[Patrick] Brown** and

[Caledon] Mayor **[Annette] Groves**. And they're asking what we can do to get more housing because we're acutely aware that we need more."

While the Region can rebate and reduce rates on infrastructure, the fact of the matter is that the infrastructure has to be built to support new housing developments, and at the end of the day, someone has to pay for those pipes that go into the ground for a new subdivision. And that money has to come from somewhere.

In Ontario municipalities, when infrastructure is built, it is funded largely through development charges that are paid by developers, with those costs passed down to the end user—the future homeowner. In short, higher infrastructure costs lead to higher development charges, and in turn, lead to higher costs for homes.

In Peel's municipalities

of Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon, a portion of development charges collected goes to the collecting municipality, and a portion goes to the Region of Peel.

Under Peel's new infrastructure funding model, those Peel development charges are the ones that will be seeing both a deferral without interest and a reduction by 50 per cent, in an effort to make building homes in Peel's lower-tier municipalities more feasible for developers.

The **City of Mississauga** has already taken action on the development charges front, with Mississauga city council adopting the Mayor's Housing Task Force recommendations in January, which, among other initiatives, reduced residential DCs on new residential projects in Mississauga by 50 per cent for projects obtaining building permits before November 13, 2026 (See: *"Partnerships and Priorities", Novae Res Urbis GTHA, January 29, 2025*).

"According to one agency in the U.S., we [Peel Region] were the second-largest active

capital program for water and wastewater in North America. So there is a lot happening here, and you need to fund that, and our whole program is funded through development charges," Region of Peel chief administrative officer (CAO) **Gary Kent** told *NRU*.

"So if not this, then what? Do we do like Mississauga and Vaughan, and kind of take a leap of faith? Peel council decided to take this leap of faith based on receiving funding from the provincial and federal governments. We heard Prime Minister **Mark Carney** say the feds would fund 50 per cent discounts on DCs. And of course, the provincial government has been encouraging us to go down that path as well."

This leap of faith is heavily-reliant on the federal and provincial governments delivering on their promises to provide funding to municipalities to offset the reduced development charges that the Region will be collecting on residential development. There are other levers to pull at the regional level such as offering rebates on development charges, but ultimately, they just put the Region deeper in the hole when it comes to its infrastructure funding, as while the rebates may help developers get projects built, the Region still has to come up with the funds to build the infrastructure.

"The most important

Peel council decided to take this leap of faith based on receiving funding from the provincial and federal governments. We heard Prime Minister Mark Carney say the feds would fund 50 per cent discounts on DCs. And of course, the provincial government has been encouraging us to go down that path as well.

- Gary Kent

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# LEAP OF FAITH

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thing is that our pipes and roads already have to be there. [Developers] can't be pulling permits on units and subdivisions that aren't serviced. We have to come first, which means we have to tender it, build it, and pay the people that build it in advance of everybody else," said Iannicca.

"It's all well and good to reduce levies, but you're giving me a bigger problem, because I need to pay today. You can defer what they pay, but they have to have my pipes ready to go. There are tens of thousands [of units] that could have permits today and their servicing is in place, but the problem is nobody wants to build condos right now. The market is saturated and the numbers don't work. The development industry tells us that what does work now—and this brings me to a phrase I've used with [Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister] **Rob Flack**—is that you've got to build things with a front door, which is singles, semis, and townhomes."

While areas in Peel such as downtown Brampton and downtown Mississauga are quite densely populated, there is still an expanse of vacant land in areas like northern Brampton and Caledon that can support those "homes with

front doors" of which Iannicca speaks. The issue is that these lands are not development-ready.

"We have to service it. There's no pipes in that area right now, so we have to pay for those pipes and get them in the ground as quickly as possible. But we still have to pay for them."

Peel regional council has given the go-ahead on deferring development charges and reducing DCs by 50 per cent, but all of this depends on the Region reaching a financial agreement with the **Province of Ontario** by October 17 of this year. If no financial agreement is reached, the development charge reduction will automatically be terminated, and regional council will be forced to re-evaluate the DC reduction.

"Council has asked me to work with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Province

over the summer to develop an agreement that works. We haven't started those conversations yet, and I expect that's going to take a little bit of time to figure out all of our numbers," said Kent.

Region of Peel chief financial officer (CFO) **Davinder Valeri** says this move is really a shifting of the burden when it comes to funding housing infrastructure, but adds this is by no means a "silver bullet" when it comes to addressing housing affordability.

"We're trying to identify our housing targets, and recognizing where new builds are going to be happening," Valeri told *NRU*.

"We're still working on what this model is going to look like, but this is a break for the development community, and is shifting the burden of infrastructure funding. Will this result in the end-user [homebuyers] seeing savings? I'm not sure. There's no one solution to the housing crisis, but this is an important piece."

Iannicca says that the housing crisis is at the worst point that he has seen in homebuilding history in the

Greater Toronto Area in his more than 35 years working in the public sector. But his optimism is unwavering that the right steps are being taken.

"I'm convinced that this is the greatest crisis that we've ever seen in homebuilding in the history of the GTA and Peel, and yet I've never had more hope that we might not just find a solution in the short term, but [also] a long-term solution that we so badly need," Iannicca said.

"This is a leap of faith, but I'm more confident than I've ever been that we're going to get there, because the Premier [**Doug Ford**] and Minister Flack have been earnest in approaching this. I believe everybody is being sincere in the face of the biggest crisis we've seen. We need this to help get over this hump, and maybe, in the process, create a new model for the next generation." 🌸

I'm convinced that this is the greatest crisis that we've ever seen in homebuilding in the history of the GTA and Peel, and yet I've never had more hope that we might not just find a solution in the short term, but [also] a long-term solution that we so badly need.

- Nando Iannicca



# IN BRIEF

## [Brock announces date of mayoral by-election, opens nominations for candidates](#)

The **Township of Brock** has announced the date of its mayoral by-election as Monday, September 8 and has opened nominations for candidates. The Township declared the office of the mayor vacant on Monday, June 9, following the resignation of former Mayor **Walter Schummer**. Nominations for candidates for the office of the mayor opened on Monday, July 7, and will close on Friday, July 25 at 2:00 p.m. For more information on the Township of Brock's mayoral by-election, please visit the Township's website [here](#).

## [Markham announces date of ward 7 councillor by-election, opens nominations for candidates](#)

The **City of Markham** has announced the date of its by-election for the vacant ward 7 council seat previously held by **Juanita Nathan** as Monday, September 29, and has opened nominations for candidates. Nathan resigned her seat on council on May 14 after being elected member of parliament (MP) for Pickering-Brooklin in the 2025 federal election. For more information on the City of Markham's by-election to fill the ward 7

council seat, please visit the City website [here](#).

## [Burlington seeking public input on new draft zoning by-law for residential zones](#)

The **City of Burlington** is seeking public input on the first draft of its new zoning by-law for residential zones, based on research by **SGL Planning + Design** with **Dillon Consulting**. The new residential zoning by-law seeks to support more housing options in Burlington Neighbourhoods by expanding the range of permitted uses, imposing less restrictive regulations, and supporting appropriate opportunities for residential intensification and gentle density. Members of the public are invited to review draft mapping and the first draft of the proposed new zoning by-law for residential zones in Burlington, and to provide comments on them by visiting the City website [here](#) by Tuesday, August 5. The feedback collected by members of the public will help the project team to continue to develop the by-law and the mapping for it.

## [Burlington seeking public input on draft recommendations for downtown parking plan](#)

The **City of Burlington** has

been studying parking in its downtown to inform the development of a new downtown parking plan. The plan will help the City determine how best to accommodate parking needs while supporting growth and land use in Burlington's downtown. Members of the public are invited to participate in an online survey on draft recommendations for the plan. To learn more about the City of Burlington's downtown parking plan, please visit the City website [here](#). To participate in the online survey on draft recommendations for the downtown parking plan, please visit the City website [here](#) by Friday, July 18.

## [King seeking public feedback on its age-friendly action plan](#)

The **Township of King** is developing an Age-Friendly Action Plan to ensure that its programs and services available to older adults (55+ years of age) are responsive to the evolving needs of an aging population. Similar to many Ontario municipalities, the proportion of older adults in King has been increasing over the past decade, creating a stronger demand for programs and services designed for older adults. In alignment with the **World Health Organization's (WHO)**

identification of the eight dimensions of an age-friendly community, King is striving to address the needs of current and future older adults in the following areas:

- Transportation
- Housing
- Social participation
- Respect and social inclusion
- Civic participation and employment
- Communication and information
- Community support and health services
- Outdoor spaces and public buildings

King residents are invited to participate in an online survey that the Township will use to inform the development of its age-friendly action plan. To participate in the survey, please visit the King Township website [here](#). 🌸

# COMMITTEE AGENDAS



## HAMILTON

### Approval recommended for Rymal Road East mid-rise development

At its July 8 meeting, **Hamilton** Planning Committee considered a [staff report](#) recommending approval of official plan and zoning by-law amendment applications by **2324780 Ontario Inc.** for 1809-1843 Rymal Road East. The applicant proposes to develop the lands with four 12-storey buildings and two blocks of two-storey townhouses. A total of 2,650 square metres of ground floor commercial space and 812 dwelling units are proposed.



## HALTON

### Approval recommended for Aldershot mid-rise development

At its July 7 meeting, **Burlington** Committee of the Whole considered a [staff report](#) recommending approval of official plan and zoning by-law amendment applications by **2816544 Ontario Inc.** for 35 Plains Road East. The applicant proposes to develop a 13-storey mixed-use building containing 457 square metres of retail space at grade and 161 residential units above.

### Oakville to proceed with Community Planning Permit system for Midtown

At its July 8 meeting, **Oakville** Planning & Development Council considered a [staff report](#) presenting and seeking endorsement of key directions for a Midtown Community Planning Permit System by-law, as well as direction for staff to prepare a draft Midtown Community Planning Permit System by-law in accordance with the endorsed key directions for public consultation. The actions build on the Town's recently adopted Official Plan Amendment 70, which introduced a new planning framework for the Midtown Oakville area.



## PEEL

### Draft Brampton Rental Conversion and Demolition By-law considered

At its July 7 meeting, **Brampton** Planning & Development Committee considered a [staff report](#) presenting a [draft City-initiated by-law](#) to regulate rental conversion and demolition city-wide to protect Brampton's existing supply of rental housing. The report seeks direction for staff to report back to Planning & Development Committee with the results of the associated

public consultation meeting, and a recommendation on how to proceed.

### Approval recommended for Brampton Gore development

At its July 7 meeting, **Brampton** Planning & Development Committee considered a [staff report](#) recommending applications by **Candevcon Limited** to amend the Highway 427 Industrial Secondary Plan, with a zoning by-law amendment and draft plan of subdivision for 4584 Castlemore Road. The applicant proposes to develop the 16.26-hectare site with 111 single-detached dwellings, 48 standard and 90 stacked townhouses, and 436 apartment units in a high-density residential block. Also proposed are blocks for new streets, a park, a stormwater management pond, district retail, and retention of existing natural heritage features on the site. An existing listed heritage dwelling on the site is proposed to be retained and relocated to a

new lot within the subdivision.

### Approval recommended for Bramalea City Centre towers

At its July 7 meeting, **Brampton** Planning & Development Committee considered a [staff report](#) recommending approval of a rezoning application by **Bramalea RR GP Ltd. c/o LEV Developments Inc.** for 30 Peel Centre Drive. The applicant proposes to redevelop the lands, which currently contain the Bramalea Retirement Residence, with three towers including a 50-storey 570-unit tower, a 55-storey 668-unit tower, and a 20-storey tower containing 300 retirement suites.



## YORK

### Approval recommended for Victoria Glen subdivision

At its July 8 meeting, **Markham**

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## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13



# OLT NEWS

## WOODBIDGE MID-RISE DEVELOPMENT APPROVED, SUBJECT TO HEIGHT CUT

In a July 2 decision, OLT Members **Andrew Snowden** and **Pavel Tomilin** allowed appeals by **My Place On 7 Inc.** against the **City of Vaughan's** failure to make a decision on its official plan and zoning by-law amendment applications for 4850 Highway 7 and 79 Arrowhead Drive.

My Place submitted applications proposing to redevelop the assembled site with a 12-storey mixed-use development containing

retail space at grade and 86 residential units above. The City of Vaughan did not make a decision within the *Planning Act* timeframes, and My Place appealed the applications to the OLT. The City and **Vaughanwood Ratepayers Association Inc.** (VRA) attended the hearing in opposition to the appeals.

On behalf of My Place, the Tribunal heard evidence from planner **Michael Vani** and urban designer **Shane Morgan** (both with **Weston Consulting**), and from transportation planner **Richard Pernicky** (**Nextrans**

**Engineering**).

On behalf of the City of Vaughan, the Tribunal heard evidence from planner **Judy Jeffers** and from urban designer **Chrisoula Assimopoulos**, both Vaughan city staff. Planner **Martin Rendl** (**Martin Rendl Associates**) gave evidence for VRA.

My Place's witnesses opined that the proposal represented an appropriate form of development for the site, which is located along the Highway 7 bus rapid transit corridor, and within the Wigwoss-Helen Protected Major Transit Station

Area ("PMTSA"), with an associated minimum density of 160 residents and jobs combined per hectare.

They indicated that the existing density of the area in 2021 was 80 residents and jobs combined per hectare, and thus the proposal would assist the City with achieving the minimum density target for the PMTSA. They opined that the proposal is well-designed to provide appropriate transition to the adjacent lower-scale area.

The City and VRA objected to the scale of the proposed

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### ± 13 ACRES OF PRIME EMPLOYMENT LAND IN NORTHEAST BRAMPTON

CBRE's Land Services Group is pleased to offer for sale the ± 13 acre property located at 5130 Countryside Drive in the City of Brampton, Ontario. The property is designated as Prestige Industrial and is situated near the future Highway 413 interchange, making it an attractive opportunity for industrial developers, investors, and end-users. The site is zoned Agricultural, allowing for potential rezoning with site-specific provisions based on the buyer's desired use.

The property is strategically located near the Highway 427 interchange, providing easy access to major highways in the GTA. Its proximity to Toronto Pearson Airport and the CPKC Vaughan Intermodal Facility also makes it an ideal location for industrial development. The surrounding area is experiencing significant growth, with several recent developments and many more in the approvals process, including a nearly 850,000 sq. ft. facility expected to be completed in Q4 2026.

OFFER DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED

MLS: W12219771

[CLICK TO VIEW BROCHURE](#)

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\*Sales Representative \*\*Broker

development, which they contended could be more accurately described as a 13 or 14-storey building due to the inclusion of a mezzanine floor plus a mechanical penthouse and rooftop indoor and outdoor amenity space. They asserted that the in-force heights and densities under the Vaughan official plan would enable the City to achieve its minimum density target for the PMTSA. They opined that the proposed development is not well-designed and would have negative impacts on privacy and sunlight access for residents of the adjoining lower-scale neighbourhood.

The Tribunal found that My Place's proposed development was excessively scaled and incompatible with the existing surrounding development. However, it ruled that a 10-storey building height, excluding rooftop amenity space, would represent an appropriate built form to mitigate impact on surrounding properties while supporting the achievement of the planned minimum density for the PMTSA.

The Tribunal therefore allowed the appeal but directed My Place to formally revise its applications in accordance with the directions contained in the decision. The Tribunal withheld its final order until such time that revised official plan and zoning by-law

amendments are provided, to the City's satisfaction, and for the Tribunal's final approval.

Solicitors involved in this decision were **Matthew Helfand (Aird & Berlis)** representing My Place on 7 Inc., **Raj Kehar (WeirFoulds)** and **Max Rubin** representing the City of Vaughan, and **Amber Stewart (Amber Stewart Law)** representing Vaughanwood Ratepayers Association Inc. [See *OLT Case No. [OLT-24-000565](#)*.]

## BURNHAMTHORPE-HURONTARIO INFILL TOWER APPROVED

In a July 3 decision, OLT Member **Félix Lavoie** allowed appeals, in part, by **Kaneff Properties Limited** against the **City of Mississauga's** failure to make a decision on its official plan and zoning by-law amendment applications for 3575 Kaneff Crescent.

The Kaneff Crescent site currently accommodates a surface parking lot surrounded by four streets, set within an apartment neighbourhood with numerous older high-rise buildings, and located in close proximity to the future Hurontario Light Rail Transit corridor.

In May 2020, Kaneff submitted applications to the City proposing to develop the site with a 29-storey residential tower. Through

subsequent resubmissions, Kaneff increased the height of the proposed development to 33 storeys, and then to 40.

In 2023, Kaneff appealed its applications to the OLT due to the City's failure to make a decision within the *Planning Act* timeframes. The City of Mississauga opposed the appeals, arguing that development on the site should be limited to a maximum of 32 storeys. It also objected to the size of the proposal's tower floor plate, the amount of proposed amenity space, and the absence of affordable housing in the proposed development.

On behalf of Kaneff, the Tribunal heard evidence from architect **Raza Mehdi (Turner Fleischer)**, planner **Paul Lowes (SGL Planning & Design)**, landscape architect **Scott Henderson (Adesso Design)**, and wind engineer **Andrew Slihas (Gradient Wind)**.

On behalf of the City, the Tribunal heard evidence from planner **Andrea Dear**, from urban designer **Edward Nicolucci**, and from landscape architect **Janet Squair**, all City staff.

The Tribunal agreed with Kaneff's witnesses that the proposed 40-storey height and 850-square-metre floorplate are appropriate for the context of the site. On the subject of amenity space, the Tribunal ruled that the applicant must increase the amenity space ratio from 4 square metres per dwelling unit to 5.6 square metres per dwelling unit, to meet the requirement of the

City's zoning by-law.

The Tribunal allowed the appeal, in part, on an interim basis and subject to the fulfillment of several conditions, including the submission of a new zoning by-law amendment to reflect the change to the required amenity space ratio.

Solicitors involved in this decision were **Mark Flowers** and **Lauren Yan Lin Cao (Davies Howe)** representing Kaneff Properties Limited and **Peter Pickfield** and **Alex Ciccone (Garrod Pickfield)** representing the City of Mississauga. [See *OLT Case No. [OLT-23-000836](#)*.] 🌱

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### Erratum

In the July 2 issue of NRU GTHA, a 'People' entry noting Hassaan Basit's appointment as the Province of Ontario's first-ever chief conservation executive effective August 4, 2025 misidentified the city for which Basit is currently chief administrative officer (CAO). Basit is currently CAO for the City of Burlington. NRU regrets the error.