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Premier Doug Ford
Premiers Office, Room 281
Main Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON
M7A 1A5

Sent via email: premier@ontario.ca

August 20th, 2026

Re: Funding for Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law Reviews

Dear Premier Ford,

On behalf of the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Latchford, I am writing to provide you with a copy of Resolution No. 26/150, adopted by Council on August 18, 2026.

Small, rural and northern municipalities require current Official Plans and Zoning By-laws to support housing, attract investment, encourage economic development and responsibly plan for infrastructure and municipal services. However, completing comprehensive reviews of these documents can place a significant financial burden on municipalities with limited tax bases, staffing capacity and financial resources.

The Town of Latchford recently applied to the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation for assistance with modernizing its land-use planning framework. The Town was advised that stand-alone studies are not eligible under the current program guidelines. This funding gap may force smaller municipalities to delay necessary planning updates or redirect limited municipal funds away from other essential services.

Council is respectfully requesting that the Government of Ontario establish a dedicated, sustainable and recurring funding program to assist municipalities with the costs of reviewing and updating Official Plans and Comprehensive Zoning By-laws. The program should recognize the differing financial and administrative capacities of municipalities and provide enhanced assistance to small, rural, northern and lower-tier municipalities.

Eligible expenses should include professional planning services, technical studies, public and Indigenous consultation where applicable, mapping and geographic information system updates, growth analyses, servicing and infrastructure assessments, and other supporting work required to develop modern and effective planning documents.

We respectfully ask your government to recognize Official Plans and Zoning By-laws as critical housing-enabling and economic development infrastructure. Providing municipalities with the resources to complete this important work will help remove barriers to development, create greater certainty for residents and investors, and better position communities across Ontario for responsible and sustainable growth.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further with you or the appropriate provincial representatives.

Kindest Regards,

MRobinson

Malorie Robinson
CAO/Clerk-Treasurer
Town of Latchford

Cc:

Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Rob Flack minister.mah@ontario.ca

Minister of Finance, Peter Bethlenfalvy minister.fin@ontario.ca

Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, Vic Fedeli, medjct.minister@ontario.ca

Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth, George Pirie mnedg.minister@ontario.ca

Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Patti Hadju patty.hajdu@parl.gc.ca

MP Nipissing – Timiskaming, Pauline Rochefort pauline.rochefort@parl.gc.ca

MPP Timiskaming – Cochrane, John Vanthof jvanthof-qp@ndp.on.ca

Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) resolutions@amo.on.ca

Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) fonom.info@gmail.com

Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) roma@roma.on.ca

Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) admin@noma.on.ca



CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF LATCHFORD RESOLUTION

Resolution No.: 26/150

Date: August 18th, 2026

MOVED BY: Councillor Newell

SECONDED BY: Councillor McDonald

Whereas, municipalities are required to plan for responsible growth, housing, economic development, infrastructure, environmental protection and the long-term needs of their communities through comprehensive land-use planning documents, including Official Plans and Zoning By-laws;

And whereas, Official Plans and Zoning By-laws must be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure they remain consistent with current provincial legislation, policies, community needs, development pressures and opportunities for economic growth;

And whereas, the cost of undertaking comprehensive Official Plan and Zoning By-law reviews can represent a significant financial burden, particularly for small, rural and northern municipalities with limited tax bases, staffing capacity and financial resources;

And whereas, outdated planning documents can create barriers to residential, commercial and industrial development, limit a municipality's ability to respond to changing economic opportunities, and make it more difficult to identify and prepare lands for future growth;

And whereas, modern and current planning documents provide municipalities, residents, businesses and investors with greater certainty regarding where and how development can occur and allow municipalities to proactively plan for housing, employment lands, infrastructure and municipal services;

And whereas, investment in municipal planning is an investment in economic development, housing readiness and community growth, as updated Official Plans and Zoning By-laws can help municipalities remove unnecessary barriers to development and establish clear policies to support new investment;

And whereas, the Town of Latchford applied to the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) for assistance with the modernization of its land-use planning framework and was advised that stand-alone studies are ineligible under the current NOHFC program guidelines;

And whereas, municipalities should not be required to choose between funding essential municipal services and undertaking the comprehensive planning work necessary to position their communities for future housing and economic growth;

Now therefore be it resolved that, the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Latchford hereby calls upon the Government of Ontario to establish a dedicated and

sustainable funding program to assist municipalities with the costs associated with reviewing, updating and modernizing Official Plans and Comprehensive Zoning By-laws;

And further that, such a funding program recognize the differing financial and administrative capacities of municipalities and provide enhanced funding opportunities for small, rural, northern and lower-tier municipalities where the cost of comprehensive planning reviews can represent a disproportionate burden on the municipal tax base;

And further that, eligible costs include, but not be limited to, professional planning services, technical studies and background reports required to support Official Plan and Zoning By-law reviews, public and Indigenous consultation where applicable, mapping and geographic information system updates, growth and development analysis, infrastructure and servicing assessments, and other supporting work necessary to establish modern and effective municipal planning documents;

And further that, the Province recognize municipal Official Plans and Zoning By-laws as critical economic development and housing-enabling infrastructure that provide the regulatory foundation necessary to support investment, development and sustainable community growth;

And further that, consideration be given to establishing a recurring funding intake so municipalities can undertake required planning reviews proactively rather than delaying necessary updates because of financial constraints;

And finally that, a copy of this resolution be circulated to the Premier of Ontario; the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; the Minister of Finance; the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade; the Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth; the Minister of Infrastructure; the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor); John Vanthof, MPP for Timiskaming—Cochrane; Pauline Rochefort, MP Nipissing-Timiskaming; the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO); the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM); the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA); the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA); and all municipalities in Ontario, requesting their support and endorsement of this resolution.

CARRIED