

Police budget forces increase in Uxbridge property tax

Property tax increase for Township of Uxbridge residents is projected now to increase to about 6 per cent, according to Mayor Dave Barton.

The township had announced a 2025 property tax increase of 4.4 per cent earlier.

"The total proposed tax increase for Uxbridge in 2025, including local and regional components, was originally estimated at 4.4 per cent. However, with the 16.9 per cent increase in the Durham Regional Police Service budget, the total tax increase is now expected to rise to approximately 6 per cent," the mayor explained while commenting on the 2025 budget report.

He broke down the increase to explain Uxbridge local tax increase Operating Needs: 2.41%. Capital Infrastructure 2.98%

Regional Tax Increase: 3% (operations and capital combined).

Police Tax Impact: 16.9% increase in the police budget contributes to the overall rise in the total tax burden.

"The 2025 budget prioritizes operational and capital needs, infrastructure investment, and extremely significant public safety enhancements, driving the total tax increase higher than originally planned," the mayor added.

Hikes across the region

Durham Regional Council has approved the 2025 Business Plans and Budget, which requires a net property tax increase of 7.4 per cent. The 2025 water supply and sanitary sewer user rates will increase by 5 per cent.

Other municipalities announced their levies for 2025 include:

Oshawa approved a 7.87 per cent tax hike

Clarington has proposed a 5.19 per cent tax revenue increase

Ajax announced a 4.89 per cent rise

Whitby has set its budget with 3.99 per cent tax increase

Pickering has proposed a 3.75 per cent levy increase.



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History In The Making



DELIVERING DURHAM'S CONNECTED FUTURE: BROADBAND MILESTONE ACHIEVED AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

Whitby, Ontario – The Regional Municipality of Durham is celebrating a major milestone as it announces substantial completion of Durham OneNet's flagship broadband project, Project Genesis.

Enabled by federal, provincial and Regional funding, Project Genesis is a strategic partnership between the public and private sector to build secure, scalable broadband infrastructure that connects underserved communities, improves Regional services and supports economic competitiveness across Durham Region.

With more than 99 per cent of the underground fibre optic infrastructure constructed, more than 1,800 rural homes, businesses, farms and municipal sites, will now have access to reliable fibre-based broadband and high-speed internet through our project partner, Vianet, bridging a service and cost gap that rural communities have historically experienced.

Completed well ahead of the federal Universal Broadband Fund (UBF) and provincial Improving Connectivity for Ontario (ICON) program timelines, and with almost 30 per cent more premises covered than originally planned, Project Genesis is a great

demonstration of a public-private partnership that is driving connectivity in Durham Region.

Funding provided by federal, provincial and regional governments was instrumental in achieving the vision of a connected Durham. There are 10 Durham Region communities, and many homes and businesses in between, that will benefit from this project including: Ashburn (Balsam, Glen Major, Chalk Lake), Uxbridge (Silver Spring Crescent), Leaskdale (Victoria Corners), Sunderland (Blackwater), Greenbank (Saintfield), Manchester, Myrtle (Myrtle and Myrtle Station), Columbus, Raglan (Raglan and Shirley) and Courtice (south Courtice). Service is available today to more than 90 per cent of the locations through Vianet, with the remaining 10 per cent expected by the end of winter 2025.

To learn more about Durham OneNet, the Regional Broadband Network and current projects, please visit DurhamOneNet.ca.

"The substantial completion of this project has improved broadband infrastructure in Durham Region, opening up new opportunities for economic growth, education and innovation. Congratulations to

the Durham OneNet team, and its partners, on the accelerated delivery of this project." – John Henry, Regional Chair and Chief Executive Officer, The Regional Municipality of Durham, and Chair of the Board, Durham OneNet

"This is a milestone achievement for Durham OneNet and our partnership with Vianet. To see newly connected communities benefiting from Project Genesis—substantially completed ahead of schedule—demonstrates our commitment to delivering a sustainable, connected future as our region continues to experience incredible growth." – Paul Frizado, President & CEO, Durham OneNet

"Vianet is proud to be able to say we have substantially completed the Durham fibre optic project, ahead of schedule and on budget. Thanks to our partnership with Durham OneNet and the contributions of the regional, provincial and federal governments, we have been able to continue to do what we do best—build fibre-to-the-home networks to rural Ontarians. It is with this shared vision that we will close the digital divide between urban and rural Ontario."

– Brian McCullagh, Relationship Manager, Vianet

Ontario Launches "Operation Deterrence" to Strengthen Security Along Ontario-U.S. Border

Provincial police resources will conduct highly visible activities to crack down on illegal cross-border activity

TORONTO – The Ontario government has launched "Operation Deterrence," the province's preparedness and planning framework for enhanced security at international borders and tackling criminal activity that is harming people on both sides of the border.

"Ontario has been calling on the federal government to step up and address safety and security concerns at the border. We need to see words turned into visible action," said Premier Doug Ford. "In the meantime, Ontario is stepping up with Operation Deterrence to crack down on illegal border crossings and illegal guns and drugs. A more coordinated, Team Canada approach that includes more boots on the ground is the only way to detect, deter and disrupt illegal activity and ensure the safety and security of Canadian and American communities."

As part of Operation Deterrence, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) has an emergency response team of 200 officers that, along with frontline and speciality officers, have been and will continue to be engaged to enhance border security. Since December 6, 2024, the OPP has conducted more than 6,000 hours of focused patrols to deter, detect and disrupt illegal border activity using fixed wing aircraft, helicopters, remotely piloted aircraft, boats, off-road vehicles, patrol vehicles and foot patrol. In partnership with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Operation Deterrence activity will be enhanced through the use of the emergency response team, frontline officer and additional speciality resources, including canine units, commercial motor vehicle inspections and criminal investigators.

"Our government has been crystal clear – securing our shared border is essential to keeping streets across Ontario, Canada and America safe," said Solicitor General Michael Kerzner. "Operation Deterrence will put concrete actions in place that will put a halt on the flow of illegal guns and drugs into our province and protect communities on both sides of the border."

Operation Deterrence will target its activities outside of the 14 official border crossings staffed by the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA).

Operation Deterrence is in addition to existing and ongoing efforts to better protect Ontario-U.S. borders and combat cross-border illegal activity. These include the OPP's Joint Forces Border Drug Interdiction Task Force, with participants including the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), RCMP, CBSA and a number of municipal police services, which was stood up as an expansion to a number of ongoing multi-jurisdictional drug investigations.

On Friday, January 3, Ontario officials took part in a joint planning and readiness exercise with federal authorities to promote enhanced coordination aimed at cracking down on illegal border crossings, smuggling and other illicit activity along the province's border with the United States.

Ontario has called on the federal government to address U.S. economic and security concerns, including by matching U.S. tariffs on China, banning Chinese software in cars on Canadian roads, delaying the implementation of the digital services tax and presenting a credible plan to meet and exceed Canada's two per cent NATO defence spending commitments.

Ontario is uniquely positioned to help America bring jobs back home as it decouples from China, including by building up Fortress Am-Can, growing Ontario-U.S. critical mineral supply chains and providing more clean, nuclear power to fuel America's economic growth and promote shared security.

If Ontario were a standalone country, it would be the U.S.'s third-largest trading partner with a near-perfect balance in two-way trade totalling CAD \$493 billion in 2023, employing millions of workers on both sides of the border.

NDP WELCOMES FEDERAL ANNOUNCEMENT TO EXPAND ACCESS TO PRIMARY CARE

Following the announcement that the Canada Health Act will now allow provinces to cover primary care by nurse practitioners, Marit Stiles, leader of the Ontario NDP has issued the following statement:

"This is great news for improving access to primary care in Ontario," said Stiles. "Including Nurse Practitioners, who are ready to provide care to communities, under the Act, is long overdue. But at a time when more than 2 million Ontarians are without access to primary care, we need a government that we can trust to get this done."

"Under Doug Ford's Conservatives, are left waiting for primary care, emergency rooms have been shuttered, and for-profit health care has exploded. While I am happy to see long-overdue changes in our health care, improving access will take political leadership that has so far been absent in our province."

"Addictions affect people from all walks of life, including many working in the trades with high paying jobs. It's time for a government that leads with evidence and empathy instead of stigma. It's time for a government that recognizes the work that Path 525 does, listen to local community members and experts including those with lived experiences and keep it open."