

Daily Briefs:

Monday, October 19, 2026

WHITBY — NEW HOSPITAL LAND TRANSFER STILL NOT COMPLETE

A report published today confirms that work continues to transfer provincial land for Durham's proposed new hospital in Whitby. The proposed 50-acre hospital site is in north Whitby, near Highways 407 and 412. Mayor Elizabeth Roy says negotiations continue with the province and Lakeridge Health. Capital planning grant applications remain under provincial review. Construction cannot begin until additional approvals are completed.

WHY IT MATTERS: Durham's growing population requires additional hospital capacity. Delays in land transfers and planning approvals could affect how quickly residents receive improved health-care services.

OSHAWA - DEVELOPER PROPOSES 99 HOMES IN NORTH OSHAWA

A developer is seeking changes to an approved subdivision near Conlin Road East and Riverton Street. The proposal would replace an earlier plan for 93 detached homes with five detached and 94 semi-detached homes. The applications will be reviewed through the municipal planning process.

WHY IT MATTERS: Housing density, traffic, schools and infrastructure remain important concerns as north Oshawa continues growing.

Tuesday, October 20, 2026

PICKERING / CLARINGTON — REPLACEMENT NUCLEAR EMERGENCY PILLS DISTRIBUTED Durham Region announced October 19 that replacement potassium iodide (KI) pills have been distributed to households within 10 kilometres of the Pickering and Darlington nuclear generating stations. Residents who have not received replacement packages can request them through Prepare to Be Safe. KI pills protect the thyroid from radioactive iodine during certain nuclear emergencies. They should only be taken when directed by Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health.

WHY IT MATTERS: Emergency preparedness remains important for residents living near Durham's nuclear facilities. This is a routine replacement program, not an announcement of a nuclear emergency.

PICKERING — NEW ROAD RESTRICTIONS BEGIN TODAY

Durham Region has announced lane restrictions at Westney Road and Concession Road 6 beginning October 20. Construction involves intersection modifications and is scheduled to continue until November 15.

Wednesday, October 21, 2026

AJAX — MAJOR KINGSTON ROAD RESTRICTIONS ANNOUNCED

Durham Region announced October 20 that additional lane restrictions and traffic changes are coming to Kingston Road between Rotherglen Road and Galea Drive. The work is part of the Durham-Scarborough Bus Rapid Transit project. Affected intersections include Westney Road, Harwood Avenue, Salem Road and Chapman Drive/Ritchie Avenue. Some sections will be reduced to one lane. Construction is expected to continue until late spring 2027.

PORT PERRY / SCUGOG — HIGHWAY 47 CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES

Durham Region confirms that road rehabilitation is underway on Highway 47 between Lake Ridge Road and Highway 12. Work includes culvert replacement, drainage improvements and asphalt resurfacing. Construction is scheduled through June 30, 2027, with a winter pause from December 15 to May 5.

Thursday, October 22, 2026

DURHAM — HIGH-RISK OFFENDER ARRESTED AFTER BREACHING RELEASE CONDITIONS

Durham police announced October 21 that Keith Theodore Constantin, 48, has been arrested after allegedly breaching his court-imposed curfew. Constantin was released into Durham Region on October 11. Police previously issued a public safety warning because of his serious criminal history. Investigators say he breached his curfew October 19 and was subsequently taken into custody. Police confirm he remains in custody following a bail hearing.

PORT PERRY / SCUGOG — ROAD CLOSURE ANNOUNCED FOR BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

The Scugog Township government announced October 20 that a culvert on Scugog Line 2 will be replaced with a prefabricated steel bridge. Construction preparations begin October 23. Scugog Line 2 will close between Old Simcoe Road and Diamond Side Road beginning October 26 at 8 a.m. The project is expected to take approximately two weeks.

AJAX — NEW ROAD RECYCLING TECHNOLOGY COULD CUT COSTS BY 44 PER CENT

The Town of Ajax is testing a new road-resurfacing technique on Rossland Road between Audley Road and Lake Ridge Road. The process heats and reuses existing asphalt instead of removing and replacing it. Town estimates suggest the technique could reduce resurfacing costs by approximately 44 per cent and greenhouse gas emissions by as much as 72 per cent. Construction is scheduled to begin October 26.

PICKERING — CITY SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT ON ACCESSIBILITY

The City of Pickering announced October 21 that it will hold public focus groups in November to help develop its next five-year accessibility plan. Residents, caregivers and community organizations are invited to identify barriers affecting municipal services, buildings, programs and public spaces.

OSHAWA — REDEVELOPED RENAISSANCE PARK OPENS TODAY

The City of Oshawa is reopening Renaissance Park at 1529 Connery Crescent. A community celebration is scheduled today from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Improvements include an accessible playground, splash pad, walking paths, fitness equipment and waterfront trail connections.

DURHAM BUSINESS AND MEDIA — INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OPENS TONIGHT

The Durham Region International Film Festival begins its tenth-anniversary celebration today. Opening night takes place at Whitby's Centennial Building. The festival moves to Ajax on October 23 and Oshawa on October 24. Films, industry discussions and networking opportunities will bring filmmakers, businesses and audiences together.

Friday, October 23, 2026

OSHAWA — SIMCOE STREET NORTH CONSTRUCTION BEGINS MONDAY

Durham Region announced October 22 that lane restrictions will begin October 26 on Simcoe Street North between Glovers Road and Niagara Drive. The work involves relocating Enbridge Gas infrastructure ahead of a future regional construction project. Restrictions are scheduled to continue until November 20. At least one lane in each direction will remain open.

PICKERING — GLENANNA ROAD CLOSURE EXTENDED

Pickering announced October 22 that the temporary closure of Glenanna Road and its west sidewalk, between Pickering Parkway and The Esplanade South, will continue until November 2. The closure accommodates sanitary sewer and watermain installation associated with redevelopment activity. Vehicle and pedestrian detours remain in place.

AJAX — KINGSTON ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND TRAFFIC CHANGES CONTINUE Durham Region is implementing additional lane restrictions and traffic signal changes along Kingston Road between Rotherglen Road and Galea Drive. The work forms part of the Durham-Scarborough Bus Rapid Transit project. **CONTINUES PG. 9**

Ontario Introducing Optional Digital Credentials While Guaranteeing Access to Physical I.D. TOMORROW, AN IMPLANT?

Toronto — As part of its plan to strengthen digital security and give people more choice and convenience, the government is beginning a phased introduction of digital provincial credentials. This process will include proposed legislative changes that would permanently guarantee Ontario residents' access to physical versions of these credentials, while supporting the government's work to lower costs and provide more convenience to Ontario residents.

"As we modernize government services, we're making identification more secure, convenient and cost-effective," said Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement, Stephen Crawford. "Digital credentials will provide a trusted and seamless way to present identification, helping protect personal information while retaining every Ontario resident's right to use physical I.D."

Digital credentials would support a more seamless and connected customer experience while providing an added layer of security by reducing the risk of lost or stolen identification and identity theft. Starting in late 2026, the province will begin consultations to help shape the development of digital credentials. This process will also allow the province to explore potential cost-savings for government and taxpayers as a result of digital credentials.

Following these consultations, the government intends to introduce a digital version of the Ontario Photo Card, which is a government-issued photo identification card for Ontario residents who do not have a driver's licence. It provides official proof of identity and can be used for everyday transactions such as opening a bank account, accessing services, and proving identity when required. Today's announcement, subsequent consultations and Ontario Photo Card use case testing will support the safe and secure introduction of optional digital driver's licences and health cards at a later date.

The province intends to introduce legislation in late 2027 that would protect Ontarians' right to obtain and use only physical identification.

Digital credentials would be optional, offering more choice and flexibility for Ontarians. The province will engage ministries, stake-

holders and the public to inform this work and ensure any changes are introduced in a way that protects privacy, builds public trust and meets the needs of Ontarians.

As Ontario continues to build a more competitive, resilient and self-reliant economy, the province is finding new ways to cut red tape, protect taxpayer dollars, reduce costs and make government services more efficient. More information about how the government continues to make progress on its plan to protect Ontario will be included in the 2026 Fall Economic Statement, which will be released on October 29, 2026.

The province's approach aligns with numerous jurisdictions, including Alberta, Quebec and British Columbia. Digital credentials allow people to store official credentials safely on their mobile devices and use them to access services online or in person.

"Our government is focused on innovation as part of our plan to make life more convenient for families and businesses across the province. Digital options will offer families a convenient, secure, and fraud-proof method of accessing public and business services as we continue to grow our province." - Prabmeet Sarkaria Minister of Transportation

"As part of our plan to protect Ontario, our government is taking innovative action to build a more connected and convenient health care system. Advancing plans to provide optional access to secure digital credentials, including health cards, is one of many ways we are doing just that." - Sylvia Jones Deputy Premier and Minister of Health

"Our government is improving efficiency and giving people more choice and convenience by embracing innovation. By offering secure access to digital credentials, we are making life easier for people and businesses to access the services they need. This initiative will help deliver faster, simpler and more accessible services across the province."

- Peter Bethlenfalvy Minister of Finance

Privacy analysis illustrated through a fictional scenario. Daniel welcomed electronic identification. One scan replaced cards, passwords and paperwork. "Finally," he

told his wife, "something simple."

Then came an implanted identification chip. Participation was optional, but his fictional world gradually stopped accommodating people who refused. Banking became inconvenient.

Workplace entry slowed. Medical registration required extra steps. Daniel surrendered to convenience. Months later, a supermarket terminal rejected him. "Do you have another form of identification?"

"The unsettling possibility is dependence: what happens when a technical failure prevents someone from proving who they are?"

Digital identification does not inevitably lead to implanted chips. Nor does this scenario establish that forced implants are coming.

However, privacy risks deserve scrutiny. Systems that connect identity across services could enable extensive profiling if safeguards fail. Canada's Privacy Commissioner warns that biometric information can enable surveillance and expose people to fraud when breached.

Biometrics and implanted chips are different technologies, but both raise questions about control over sensitive information.

Could forced implantation become real? It is a hypothetical policy concern, not an established Canadian requirement.

Ontario's medical consent framework requires valid consent to treatment, including voluntariness and freedom from duress; its application depends on the procedure and circumstances.

The more immediate question is whether supposedly optional technology becomes practically unavoidable.

Meaningful protection requires usable alternatives, limited data collection, independent oversight and ways to challenge errors.

Before embracing identification technology, citizens should ask: who can access the records, what can be linked, and can access be withdrawn?

Convenience should never make privacy, bodily autonomy or essential services conditional on surrender.



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