

Durham Region named 2025 Intelligent Community of the Year!

Whitby, ON – Durham Region is celebrating a global achievement! We've been named 2025 Intelligent Community of the Year by the Intelligent Community Forum (ICF), a recognition of our innovation, workforce development and commitment to inclusion.

Across Durham, strong partnerships and bold ideas are shaping a brighter future—enhancing quality of life and fueling economic growth. This honour reflects the incredible collaboration of our community partners, including our eight local municipalities: Ajax, Brock, Clarington, Oshawa,

Pickering, Scugog, Uxbridge and Whitby, along with 1855 Accelerator, Brilliant Catalyst, Durham College, Ontario Tech University, Trent University Durham GTA, and local boards of trade and chambers of commerce. This win belongs to all of us!

Durham rose to the top against six other outstanding finalists from around the world:

Assaí, Paraná, Brazil
Bursa Metropolitan Municipality, Türkiye
Fairfield/Jefferson County, Iowa, USA
Hilliard, Ohio, USA

Kingston, Ontario, Canada
Las Rozas de Madrid, Spain

The ICF evaluates communities on six pillars of its Community Accelerator Strategy: broadband, sustainability, workforce development, innovation, digital inclusion and engagement. Durham Region's leadership in these areas—through transformative projects and exceptional public services—has secured our place among the world's most forward-thinking communities.

To celebrate, we will be launching the Proud to Call Durham Home campaign, showcasing the partner-

ships and organizations driving innovation and growth across the region.

"I am thrilled that Durham Region has been named Intelligent Community of the Year. Our region is leading the way in economic development, innovation and community excellence. It is an honour to receive international recognition of all the work being done by our local governments, post-secondary institutions and business ecosystem partners as we continue to work to remain a top community of choice to live, work and do business."

- John Henry, Regional

Chair and CEO, Region of Durham

"As a rapidly growing community of more than 750,000 residents, it is essential that Durham Region remains ahead of the curve in terms of planning, sustainability, economic development and inclusion. This recognition demonstrates that our proactive approach to community development is setting us up for a bright future. I applaud the hard-working team, both here at the Region and across our community partners who are committed to creating a vibrant and growing place for everyone."

- Elaine Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer

"This award is about more than technology – it's about people. Collaboration is what makes Durham strong. This award shows that when communities are connected and work together with a shared vision, we can achieve remarkable results. Durham is leading the way toward a future that is connected, innovative, and full of opportunity."

- Alison Burgess, Director of Communications and Engagement



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Scugog 2026 Budget increase lowered from 5.54% to 4.12% due to new residential development and assessment growth in the municipality

Scugog – The Township of Scugog is reporting that the 2026 budget will be deemed adopted following the December 15 Council meeting. Due to the growth in housing in the Township that was added to the assessment roll for 2026, the originally estimated increase of 5.54% is now expected to be 4.12%. This represents

4% for infrastructure needs, such as roads, facilities, vehicles, and equipment, and 0.12% for general operations. The impact on the average residential property equates to a monthly increase of \$6.55. Mayor Wilma Wotten has followed the new strong mayor's legislation and applied strict guidelines for

staff to produce a budget that maintained operations while keeping costs below the cost-of-living average. "I think it's important to note that from the estimated 4.12% increase, 4% goes directly to funding the Township's infrastructure needs. We heard from town hall meetings that those who completed our budget sur-

vey preferred keeping infrastructure investments to help repair our roads and maintain our aging buildings. This is money that goes directly to these projects, and not for day-to-day operational needs," said Mayor Wotten. Through the review of the capital budget, the Township also looked at spreading out

the cost of projects over multiple years or even deferring large projects - like the Queen Street road rehabilitation - while advancing other needed road works to 2026. "I opted to issue one last directive for the 2026 budget to move the Queen Street Corridor Study back to 2028," said Mayor Wotten. "This aligns with

moving the Queen Street and Perry Street roadworks to the 2031 forecast, so that the results received from the Corridor Study will help inform the planned roadworks. It also provides staff with more time to review/revise the scope of the Corridor Study and consult with stakeholders."

SOCC Pool Reconstruction Project – December update

Work continues on the South Oshawa Community Centre Pool reconstruction project, including enhancements to the building's foundation drainage system and improving access to the fire suppression system located within the pool area. Updates on the status of the project are included below.

Project Status

Exterior excavation work supporting the required upgrades to the building's foundation drainage system is nearing completion. The temporary sidewalk closure on Cedar St. has been removed as exterior work at the northwest corner of the building is now finished. The exterior work area has been consolidated to the southwest corner to support the ongoing construction work, reducing risks and minimizing impacts on public safety.

Inside the pool area, installation of engineered platforms and scaffolding to support installation of access structure and improvements to the fire suppression system have been completed, along with removal of the deteriorated pool deck tiles. Installation of access structures for the fire suppression system, along with associated electrical and mechanical work, is now underway.

What to Expect:

- Site Conditions: Fencing and safety signage have been consolidated to the southwest corner of the building and will remain in place for the duration of the project.
- Interior Pool Work: Reconstruction activities inside the pool area are ongoing, including installation of access structures and related mechanical and electrical work.
- Facility Impacts: Temporary closures in other areas of the facility may be required as construction progresses. Advance notice will be provided whenever possible.
- Increased Noise Levels: Periods of elevated noise are expected during certain construction activities.
- Pool Closure: The pool will remain closed for the duration of the construction period.
- Wayfinding Signage: Directional signage is in place to help visitors navigate the area safely.