

# Proposed Regulatory Changes In Ontario To Expedite Office Conversions To Residential Use



Ontario is on the brink of implementing significant regulatory changes aimed at expediting the conversion of office spaces to residential units. This initiative promises to streamline redevelopment processes and address the growing housing demand in the province.

The proposed changes focus on removing existing barriers that hinder the redevelopment of brownfields and commercial buildings. One of the key elements of the proposal is the expansion of exemptions from filing Records of Site Condition (RSC) for changes to existing commercial or community-use buildings. This exemption is designed to facilitate quicker conversions by reducing bureaucratic hurdles and associated costs.

Furthermore, the restrictions on changes to building envelopes and exterior additions are set to be modified. These modifications would allow for the addition of floors above the ground floor, enabling more buildings to qualify for the six-storey exemption. This change could significantly increase the number of buildings that can be converted into residential spaces, thereby contributing to the housing supply.

In addition to these modifications, the Ministry has proposed the removal of the requirement to submit an RSC for filing in situations where it is deemed unnecessary. This includes scenarios where land is transferred with no known contamination or past activities suggesting potential contamination. By eliminating this requirement, the regulatory process becomes more efficient without compromising environmental safety.

It is important to note that these regulatory changes are currently in a public comment period and cannot be adopted until January. Stakeholders and the general public are encouraged to provide their feedback during this period to ensure that the final regulations are both effective and balanced.

If adopted, these changes could play a pivotal role in addressing the housing shortage while streamlining redevelopment processes.

*The content of this article is intended to provide a general guide to the subject matter. Specialist advice should be sought about your specific circumstances.*

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