

Dufferin County recognizes sustainable housing through Green Development Program

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Dufferin County is encouraging more sustainable residential development through a regional program recognizing homes and communities designed to be energy-efficient, climate-resilient and affordable over the long term.

The Green Development Program officially launched Oct. 13, in partnership with Grey and Wellington counties, and set up a voluntary framework to encourage environmentally responsible building practices.

Mulmur mayor and Dufferin County Coun. Janet Horner was joined by representatives from Wellington and Grey counties for the occasion. Horner said that the program will help encourage local community growth while, at the same time, reducing long-term costs

“When we talk about housing affordability, the focus is often on what it costs to buy or rent a home. But long-term affordability also includes what it costs to live in a home and community over many years,” she said. “The Green Development Program will help reduce long-term costs related to energy, transportation and sustainable infrastructure in the development stage.”

“Together with our partners at Grey and Wellington Counties, Dufferin is excited to launch the Green Development Program and make decisions today that will serve our growing communities for decades.”

The program aims to encourage developers to incorporate sustainability measures into new construction rather than relying on costly retrofits later, as Dufferin County continues to grow in population. These features are meant to help reduce energy and maintenance costs, improve residents' comfort and better prepare communities for extreme weather.

Developments are assessed using a scorecard of 18 features across three categories: natural environment, community and transportation, and built environment. Projects earn points for incorporating eligible features, with total scores determining Bronze, Silver or Gold recognition.

There were four developments across the different counties that were recognized during the program's launch as some of the first to win awards for their efforts.

Orangeville's Five Creek Estates, developed by Great Gulf, received the Bronze recognition with nine points in total. The 103-unit development includes native plants, pedestrian-friendly streets, cycling infrastructure, access to parks and public transit, and a mix of different housing types.

Elements of Meaford, a 26-unit mixed-use development by Sarlie Canada, received Silver recognition with 18 points. Its sustainability features include fully electric construction, prefabricated wood framing, native landscaping and improved pedestrian connections.

Baycrest Apartments by SkyDev in Owen Sound also earned Silver recognition with 16 points. The 712-unit mixed-use development incorporates high-efficiency lighting, water-saving fixtures, electric vehicle charging and naturalized outdoor spaces.

Baybounds by Sinclair Homes in Meaford received Gold recognition with 26 points. The net-zero community's first phase includes 55 residential units designed with heat pumps, rooftop solar panels and electric vehicle chargers.

The program is open to new residential developments that have received or will be receiving occupancy after Jan. 1, 2025.

The initiative was originally made for projects with 10 or more units, but developments of any size can still apply.

Participation is free and will not delay the standard approval process.

Builders and developers can get started by completing the Program Interest Form on Dufferin County's website. Once sufficient project details are confirmed, applicants must submit a completed Program Scorecard and supporting documentation to planner@dufferincounty.ca. County staff will review applications before projects are recognized following any required planning approvals.

More information is available at: dufferincounty.ca/planning-development/green-development-program.