

# 5 Things Friday



What your government did for you this week.

## **Ontario's Fair Housing Plan**

As part of its Fair Housing Plan, Ontario is establishing an expert forum to offer suggestions and engage in discussion on how to make housing more affordable in the province. This housing forum, which met for the first time this week and will continue to meet quarterly, brings together housing experts and partners including economists, academics, developers, community groups and the real estate sector. The forum will advise the province on continued steps to make housing more affordable and accessible. The government is also releasing further information on the Non-Resident Speculation Tax (NRST). Between April 24 and May 26, there were 18,282 transactions in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region, of which 4.7 per cent were by individuals who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada, or by foreign corporations, and may be subject to the NRST. Introduced as part of the Fair Housing Plan, the NRST is helping to address unsustainable demand in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, while ensuring Ontario continues to be a place that welcomes all new residents.



## **Age-Friendly Community Recognition Program**

Ontario is providing additional support to detect potential hearing loss in newborns sooner and ensure that families with children who have permanent hearing loss, or are at risk, get the supports they need. The province-wide program screens babies for hearing loss soon after birth, and provides families with services that children need to develop language and literacy skills during the most critical period of development. The province's support will reduce wait times for families and increase the program's service capacity. With the early identification of permanent hearing loss, families can make informed decisions about what supports their children need, such as hearing aids or communication and language development services. These services also help children get ready to start school.

## **Forest Fire Season**



With forest fire season well underway in Ontario, the province has increased the maximum fines for individuals and corporations for starting forest fires. If found responsible, individuals can now be fined up to \$25,000 for starting a forest fire, with fines for corporations that start a forest fire going up to \$500,000. These increased maximum fines will help deter human started fires. Approximately half of all forest fires are started by people. Forest fires can cause considerable risk to public safety, can cause expensive property damage and have broader impacts on communities and regional industry.

## **Interactive Digital Media**

Ontario is investing in its growing Interactive Digital Media sector with new support for 97 companies to help build a vibrant digital media industry, create jobs and grow the economy. Ontario's support helps companies develop innovative projects including video games, mobile apps and interactive digital magazines.



## **Carrot Rewards**

Ontario is encouraging people to make healthy and active lifestyle choices by partnering with Carrot Rewards, an innovative health promotion mobile phone application that rewards users for being active, eating healthy and quitting smoking. Ontario's investment in Carrot Rewards supports a one-year pilot for the app, with the goal of reducing the risk of chronic diseases by promoting health and active living. Approximately 200,000 people in Ontario are already actively using Carrot Rewards.