



ELIMINATION OF VACANCY REBATE AND REDUCTION PROGRAMS BEGINNING WITH THE 2019 TAXATION YEAR

With the release of its **2016 Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review**, the Province announced that municipalities would be given flexibility to modify the vacancy rebate and reduction programs to meet local circumstances, while considering the impact of such changes on the business community. Municipalities could implement changes to the existing vacancy rebate and reduction programs by notifying the Minister of Finance of their intent to utilize this flexibility and providing details of the proposed changes along with a council resolution.

The Province clarified that in two-tier municipal jurisdictions, such as the County of Renfrew, the decision to eliminate the program must be made at the upper level, and must be made jurisdiction-wide.

At a session of County Council held on April 25, 2018, the County Council passed a resolution to eliminate the vacancy rebate and a resolution to eliminate the vacant and excess land subclasses. The April 25, 2018 Council resolutions were sent to the Ministry of Finance requesting a change to the *Municipal Act, 2001* regulations for the County of Renfrew.

On December 10, 2018 the County received confirmation from the Province that the regulation implementing the requested changes to the vacancy rebate and reduction programs had been approved and enacted as **Ontario Regulation 490/18** under the *Municipal Act, 2001*:

For the purposes of subsection 313 (1.3) of the Act, the County of Renfrew is authorized to pass a by-law providing that a tax rate reduction in paragraph 2, 3, 4 or 5 of subsection 313 (1) of the Act does not apply for a taxation year after 2018.

Effective for the 2019 and subsequent taxation years, there will be no vacancy rebate and no reduction for the vacant and excess land subclasses.