

Date: November 2025

To:

- Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, Ontario Legislature
- Minister Flack, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Subject: Submission on Bill 60 – *Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025*

Dear Members of the Standing Committee and Minister Flack,

This letter provides comment on Bill 60, *Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025*, with a focus on the environmental, governance, and transparency implications of key schedules affecting Ontario's climate commitments, water systems, land use, and public oversight. I support the growth of clean grid public transit across the province. However, while Bill 60 seeks to accelerate infrastructure delivery, the proposed amendments significantly weaken environmental and climate safeguards, limit public and municipal oversight, and reduce transparency, creating risks of long-term negative impacts on Ontario's climate commitments, water quality, natural heritage, and community resilience.

Key Schedule Concerns

Schedule 1 – Building Transit Faster Act, 2020

- **Concern:** Broad ministerial and Metrolinx powers to alter municipal infrastructure may bypass local review and limit democratic oversight.
- **Risk:** Shortened notice periods (15 days) reduce opportunity for municipalities, experts, and the public to identify climate or environmental impacts.

Schedule 3 – Development Charges Act, 1997

- **Concern:** Ministerial review of municipal development charges centralizes decision-making and reduces local accountability.
- **Risk:** Development funding decisions may not adequately reflect climate priorities or support sustainable infrastructure.

Schedule 5 - Highway Traffic Act

- **Concern:**
The standing committee version maintains the province's authority to restrict municipalities from reducing vehicle lanes when adding bike or bus lanes, limiting local

decision-making on transportation design. This centralisation reduces municipal flexibility to respond to community needs and mobility goals.

- **Risk:** Constraining lane reallocation may hinder the creation of effective transit networks, slowing progress on climate objectives. Without clear exemption criteria or performance measures, the risk is that congestion concerns will override evidence-based transportation planning.

Schedule 7 – Municipal Act, 2001

- **Governance Concern:** Rapid transfer of water and wastewater utilities to local municipalities may leave gaps in oversight and continuity.
- **Risk:** Municipalities may face challenges maintaining standards critical to climate adaptation and water protection.

Schedule 8 – Ontario Water Resources Act

- **Concern:** Expanded application to large agricultural sewage works lacks clear oversight requirements.
- **Risk:** Increased risk to watershed health, source water protection, and compliance with environmental standards.

Schedule 10 – Planning Act

- **Concern:** Ministerial discretion to override policy statements and reduced local planning authority undermines transparency.
- **Risk:** Climate and environmental considerations may be subordinated to speed of development.

Schedule 11 – Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act

- **Concern:** Removal of legal recourse and broad regulatory discretion weakens accountability for highway and bridge projects.
- **Risk:** Potential for infrastructure projects that increase emissions or degrade habitats without adequate oversight.

Schedule 15 – Transit-Oriented Communities Act, 2020

- **Concern:** Ministerial agreements with landowners bypass municipal and public planning processes.
- **Risk:** Development may prioritize expediency over climate-smart design, energy efficiency, and ecosystem protection.

Schedule 16 – Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025

- **Concern:** Ministerial control over corporate water service providers may reduce transparency and local accountability.
- **Risk:** Water infrastructure decisions may not reflect climate-adaptive management or long-term sustainability.

Recommendations: I respectfully request that this committee:

1. Reinstate environmental and climate impact assessments for projects affected by these schedules.
2. Incorporate explicit climate, biodiversity, and watershed protections into development, transit, and water management decisions.
3. Ensure meaningful public consultation and transparency in planning processes that will shape long-term environmental and climate outcomes.

Sincerely,