

Summary of the Ontario Government's

Bill 185:

Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act



Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024

The Province's Next Step in Increasing Housing Supply in Ontario

Ontario is proposing the “Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act.” With the Act, which will be brought forward under Bill 185, the government suggests changes it says will affect a number of current barriers to housing developments. Some of these changes affect current development charges and Ontario’s land-use planning framework; the government says they are intended to reduce development timelines and costs.

As housing continues to be unattainable for many, the Government of Ontario says Bill 185 focuses on providing solutions to support the construction of more housing units, and to meet the Ontario Housing Supply Action Plan target of building 1.5M homes by 2031. The table below highlights the solutions being proposed in Bill 185.

Summary of Key Initiatives Proposed

Initiative	Summary
Reduction in Development Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of the five-year phase-in of development charges implemented under Bill 23. • Development background studies can now be included under capital cost.
Parking Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of requirement for minimum parking for developments within proximity to major transit stations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Subway ○ Rail ○ Rapid Bus Stations • The removal of parking spaces could remove an estimated \$2,000 to \$100,000 in construction cost per space.
Building More Student Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed removal of publicly assisted universities from the Planning Act. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This exemption will help accelerate the construction of new student housing. • This proposal could reduce time spent in approvals and reduce costs with avoiding planning application fees. • These cutbacks will help improve the reduction in barriers correlated to constructing higher density student housing.
Reducing Red Tape in Planning Approvals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-application consultations with municipalities will be voluntary and not mandatory. • Developers can bring a motion to the Ontario Land Tribunal at any time during pre-consultation for a ruling as to whether the requirements for a complete application are reasonable or have been met. • Removal of fee refund provisions from the Planning Act and City of Toronto Act, 2006.
“Use it or Lose it”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developments that have been granted approval on site plans and do not pull permits within a defined period, can result in the withdrawal of approvals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The specified time period will be set by regulation. ○ Default – no less than 3 years if a regulation does not apply.

Initiative	Summary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enabling Municipalities to adopt policies that help enable how water and wastewater servicing can be assigned or reassigned so that upcoming developments that are capable of progressing will face fewer barriers and delays.
Standardized Housing Designs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A standardized housing design is anticipated in the near future.• Ontario proposes a regulation-making authority to exempt standardized housing designs from lengthy approval processes.
Minister's Zoning Orders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ontario has introduced a new go-forward framework for how zoning requests will be received and considered.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ This process will be open and candid while preserving this important key to reduce the current red tape and begin construction sooner.• The proposed removal of The Community Infrastructure Housing Accelerator, which was presented by Bill 23.

Contact Nick Gefucia (ngefucia@ellisdon.com) to talk about what Bill 185 might mean for your development, and how EllisDon Community Builders can help you make significant progress.