



November 20, 2025

Tamara Gilbert
Assistant Deputy Minister
Ministry of Transportation
Integrated Policy & Planning Division
438 University Ave., 12th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 1Z8

Dear Ms. Gilbert:

**RE: York Region Response – York Region Response – ERO 025-1140 ERO 025-1071
– Bill 60 amendments harmonizing roads standards and vehicle lane reductions**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on *Bill 60, Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025* related to *Harmonization of Municipal Road Construction Standards and Prohibiting Vehicle Lane Reductions*. Regional staff request the Ministry consider these recommendations when developing regulations under the *Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act* and *Highway Traffic Act*, respectively to ensure they accelerate construction of road infrastructure required to support Provincial growth and transportation priorities.

Proposed changes need to be carefully implemented to avoid delays in delivering roads projects that help reduce traffic congestion

York Region staff support the Province taking action to reduce gridlock, as traffic congestion is a major concern for York Region residents. With a rapidly growing Region, it is important that roads projects, including new or widened roads and bridges, be able to proceed in an efficient manner to help reduce traffic congestion. The Provincial proposal has the potential to create additional administrative burdens and delay roads projects. It is recommended the Province consider the recommendations in this response when proceeding with regulations.

York Region leverages existing Provincial roads standards whenever possible; needing to regularly seek exemptions could delay projects that reduce gridlock

York Region staff support consistent standards and typically use current Ontario Provincial Standards for Roads and Public Works (OPS-MUNI) as it is a good business practice when undertaking roads projects. However, there are situations that require slight deviation from these standards, such as different road uses, soil conditions, and other factors. Road construction requirements can vary between projects on aspects like depth of granular materials, number and thicknesses of asphalt layers, and asphalt mixes that are dependent on types of uses, speed limits, and volumes of heavy vehicles. For example, there are significant differences in traffic volumes and speed limits between a local subdivision road and a collector or arterial road. Strict roads standards would also stifle innovation, York Region has worked with

universities on asphalt mixes that are extending the lifecycle of roads and ultimately reducing gridlock. Requiring strict use of current OPS-MUNI standards could delay projects if exemptions routinely need to be sought.

Any regulated requirements to use OPS-MUNI standards will need to be limited to standard roads projects and allow for variation where required for certain road uses and local conditions. If municipalities need to regularly seek Minister's exemptions from roads standards requirements, it will add red tape that would delay necessary roads projects and prolong traffic issues related to construction activities, undermining Provincial efforts to tackle gridlock.

Allowing municipalities flexibility to stipulate contractual requirements enables risk mitigation and ensures timely project delivery

Region staff understand the Province's intent to reduce red tape and accelerate projects, this needs to be balanced with effective project delivery. Region staff are deeply concerned by the Province's unprecedented proposal to impose legal terms and conditions in contracts between a municipality and contractor, as such measures would create significant liability and financial risks for municipalities. Municipal contract provisions are carefully designed to reduce the risk of delays in project delivery, ensure roads meet the needs of users, and can withstand stresses. These requirements help ensure roads meet their anticipated lifecycle, which ultimately reduces the need for costly repairs and ongoing traffic disruptions. Mandated contractual language for a project would result in significant liability and financial risks for municipalities and contribute to continued gridlock.

It is critical that municipalities retain the ability to manage their contractual language to include provisions to mitigate risk associated with a project to ensure projects can be delivered in an effective and efficient manner and close loopholes quickly when they're discovered. It is strongly recommended that any provincially developed contractual requirements and/or language, be provided solely as templates or best practice documents for municipalities and remain strictly voluntary. While the Province providing a toolbox of contractual language could support certain municipalities, there needs to be flexibility in how municipalities use these or other tools to ensure a project is completed effectively. A voluntary approach respects municipal autonomy while supporting shared objectives for timely and high-quality project delivery.

Delivering roads and transit construction projects help reduce gridlock and need to be exempted from limitations on lane restrictions

The Minister indicated that the Province would define criteria that limit the ability of a municipality to remove a lane of vehicle traffic on a permanent or temporary basis for any purpose. York Region does not remove vehicle lanes for bicycle lanes or transit rights-of-way but does need to close lanes for extended periods to complete roads, transit, and water and wastewater construction projects. Lanes are only closed to the extent required to ensure the safety of workers and road users. These closures may result in short-term traffic congestion, but completion of these projects ultimately alleviates gridlock by enabling more efficient movement of people and goods, while water and wastewater supports Provincial housing targets. An inability to close lanes for construction would significantly increase the cost and duration of projects and, in many cases, make them impossible to undertake. It is strongly recommended

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that roads, transit, and water and wastewater construction projects be exempted from any restrictions under the regulations to support growth and housing demands, along with the development of Transit-Oriented Communities.

Regional Council engagement on this response was not possible ahead of the comment deadline. This response will be reviewed at the December 4, 2025, York Region Committee of the Whole meeting. It is requested that the Province consider any supplementary comments provided by Regional Council as part of York Region's official response.

If there are questions regarding these comments or if the Ministry would like to engage Region staff on the Act and regulations, please contact Mike Rabeau, General Manager of Capital Infrastructure Services at Mike.Rabeau@york.ca.

Sincerely,



Laura McDowell, P. Eng.
Commissioner
Public Works
The Regional Municipality of York

cc Erin Mahoney, Chief Administrative Officer, York Region
Mike Rabeau, General Manager, Capital Infrastructure Services, Public Works, York Region
Kyle Catney, General Manager, Operations and Services, Public Works, York Region
Beth O'Connor, Director, Cabinet, Regulatory, Intergovernmental and Strategic Policy Branch, MTO
Noor Shahid, Manager, Municipal and Intergovernmental Relations Office, MTO
Alison Breitman, Manager, Strategic Policy and Priority Projects Office, MTO
Alena Grunwald, Director, System Optimization Policy Branch, MTO
Katie De Palma, Director, Transportation Policy Branch, MTO
MTO ERO mto.ero@ontario.ca

YORK #17016553