

## The OAA Issues Statement on Bill 17 and its Proposed Changes

On June 3, following a very expedited legislative process, the Ontario government passed Bill 17, *Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025*. As a result of the speed at which the Bill passed, public consultation was very limited on it.

In its role to regulate the practice of architecture to protect the public interest, the OAA has been monitoring the development of Bill 17 since its introduction on May 12, 2025. The Association has identified some welcome changes and also shares concerns that have been voiced by members of the profession, others in the design/construction community, and the wider public.

Bill 17, which you can [read online](#), amends the following other acts with respect to infrastructure, housing, and transit:

- *Building Code Act, 1992*;
- *Building Transit Faster Act, 2020*;
- *City of Toronto Act, 2006*;
- *Development Charges Act, 1997*;
- *Metrolinx Act, 2006*;
- *Ministry of Infrastructure Act, 2011*;
- *Planning Act*; and
- *Transit-Oriented Communities Act, 2020*.

Among the many changes that the legislation brings about, the OAA is particularly interested in those changes related to complete application rules as well as the proposed updates to the *Building Code Act*.

### Complete Application Rules

Via amendments to the *Planning Act*, Bill 17 mandates changes to complete application rules in order to limit what can be required as part of a complete application. A proposed regulation limits the scope of permitted studies. In removing the “provide any other information or material that the council considers it may need” from Section 34(10.2) of the Act, it enables the exclusion of sun/shadow, wind, urban design, and lighting reports.

While the OAA supports the government’s overarching move to streamline the development approval process, the Association encourages the Province to seek input from the design community, including the architecture and engineering professions, regarding which reports should be included in a truly “complete application.”

### Standardizing Building Standards

Bill 17 updates the *Building Code Act* to prevent municipalities from passing bylaws respecting the construction or demolition of buildings. This seems to suggest that the Bill will cause municipal green building standards to become obsolete, and mandates that uniform building standards (i.e. Ontario’s Building Code [OBC]) be applied province-wide.

Ontario is uniquely positioned to use this time of great change to introduce an energy step code into the OBC. However, in the meantime, energy efficiency standards that are currently in place—such as the Toronto and Whitby Green Standards—should **not** be lost.

Objective, tiered performance metrics help everyone understand energy consumption in buildings, and position Ontario to achieve its 2030 targets. Municipal green standards are an

important step in this—OAA members call the Toronto Green Standard one of the most effective tools available to pitch climate considerations to their clients. In the long term, however, the OAA recognizes that enshrinement of these standards in the OBC will ensure application and acceptance of the standards consistently across Ontario.

### **GR Portal**

The OAA continues to provide consultation to all levels of government in order to fulfil the Association's regulatory responsibility to protect the public interest when it comes to the practice of architecture. To read various correspondence between the OAA and the Province, you can search through the [Government Relations \(GR\) Portal](#) on the OAA Website.