

**CONSTRUCTION LAW CHANGES IN ONTARIO**

As of September 24, 2020

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**Provincial Government Bills**

***1st Session, 42nd Parliament***

Most Recent Sitting ***was September 24, 2020***

**Bill 171, Building Transit Faster Act, 2020**

**(Minister of Transportation)**

This bill is intended to expedite the planning and construction of 4 rail transit projects, namely the Ontario Line (formerly referred to as the downtown relief line), the Scarborough Subway Extension (to Scarborough Town Centre), the Yonge Subway extension (to Richmond Hill) and the Eglinton Crosstown West Extension (from the unfinished western terminus of Mt. Dennis station to the Toronto International Airport. The bill would exempt the projects from certain development permit requirements within the respective corridors so that things that pose a danger to construction can be removed immediately, things that pose an obstruction to construction can be removed more quickly. The Bill will also eliminate the need for certain expropriation hearings that would otherwise impede the projects.

- Royal Assent received July 8, 2020

**Bill 186, Employment Standards Amendment Act (Infectious Disease Emergencies), 2020**

**(Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development)**

This bill (consisting of only 4 pages) amends the Employment Standards Act, 2000 to grant the right to workers to have a leave of absence without pay due to being ordered to remain in isolation or quarantine due to the Covid-19 pandemic, or if the worker is needed to provide care or assistance to prescribed individuals or any other reason prescribed by the regulations. The regulations can have a retroactive impact. The statute came into full force and effect as of March 19, 2020.

- Royal Assent received March 19, 2020.

**Bill 188, Economic and Fiscal Update Act, 2020**

**(Minister of Finance)**

This bill provides specific forms of financial assistance to Ontario businesses and residents, including: raising the threshold upon which Employer Health Tax is paid from \$400,000 to \$1,000,000 for the 2020 fiscal year. This Act came into force on March 25, 2020.

- Royal Assent received March 25, 2020.

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**Bill 189, Coronavirus (COVID-19) Support and Protection Act, 2020**

**(Minister of Education)**

This bill provides certain relief measures and time extensions under a variety of statutes, including time extensions for development charge by-laws under the Development Charges Act, 1997; allowing the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to make regulations under the Planning Act to deal with the Covid crisis; and an extension of repayment terms under the Education Act.

- Royal Assent received April 14, 2020.

**Bill 192, Protecting Small Business Act, 2020**

**(Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing)**

This Bill amends the Commercial Tenancies Act to prohibit certain actions by landlords if the landlord is or would be eligible to receive certain federal emergency assistance. The Bill prevents enforcement of certain writs of possession or evictions between May 1 and September 1, 2020.

- Royal Assent received June 18, 2020.

**Bill 195, Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020**

**(Ontario Solicitor General)**

The purpose of this Bill is to provide a transition from the current series of orders under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act to a series of temporary amending orders in relation to the Covid pandemic. The authorities granted to various Ministers under this Bill would cease to apply after one year.

- Royal Assent received July 21, 2020.

**Bill 197, COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020**

**(Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing)**

This Bill (115 pages in length) amends several statutes including the Building Code Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Planning Act and the Environmental Assessment Act. The changes to the Building Code Act allow the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to make regulations instead of the Lieutenant Governor in Council (cabinet). The changes to the Environmental Assessment Act is more than 30 pages of amendments to a statute that was originally 23 pages in length. The longer term impact will be to replace the EA classes, e.g. GO Transit Class, Municipal Class and Waterpower Projects Class, with a series of new regulations.

- Royal Assent received July 21, 2020.

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***Bill 204, Helping Tenants and Small Businesses Act, 2020***

***(Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing)***

***This Bill amends several statutes including the Commercial Tenancies Act, to provide temporary eviction protection for certain commercial tenants where the landlord is eligible but has not sought assistance through the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance program.***

- ***First reading carried September 17, 2020***
- ***Second reading debated September 23 and 24, 2020.***

**Private Members' Bills  
1st Session, 42nd Parliament**

**Bill 33, Rea and Walter Act (Truss and Lightweight Construction Identification), 2018**

**(Pettapiece, Randy, PC, Perth -- Wellington)**

This Bill is identical to Bill 105 introduced on March 9, 2017 and progressed through to Second Reading and which was reintroduced on March 27, 2018. If passed, this Bill would amend the Building Code Act, 1992 regarding the identification of truss (wooden) and lightweight construction in specified buildings that are under construction or to be constructed. A new section 15.8.1 will require a truss identification emblem to be affixed to a building in prescribed size and location.

- First reading September 19, 2018
- Second Reading debated October 4, 2018
- Second Reading carried October 4, 2018 and referred to Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills

**Bill 62, Protecting Vulnerable Road Users Act, 2018**

**(Bell, Jessica, NDP, University -- Rosedale)**

This Bill would amend the Highway Traffic Act to stiffen the penalties of vehicle drivers who seriously injure or kill vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and construction workers.

- First reading November 21, 2018

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### **Bill 70, Registered Professional Planners Act, 2019**

**(Coe, Lorne, PC -- Whitby)**

This Bill would impact Professional Planners by repealing the Ontario Professional Planners Institute Act, 1994, a private statute dating back to 1994, with a new public statute to regulate the planning profession. The new public statute would mandate a disciplinary investigation and sanction process for members, in a manner similar to the regulation of other professions such as architects.

- First Reading carried February 19, 2019
- Second Reading debated and carried February 28, 2019 and ordered referred to Standing Committee on General Government

### **Bill 71, Paris Galt Moraine Conservation Planners Act, 2019**

**(Schreiner, Mike, Green Party -- Guelph)**

This Bill would establish additional protection against any land development that might cause an adverse environmental impact within a defined region known as the Paris Galt Moraine. The legislation would also require official plan amendments for certain municipalities and municipal planning authorities.

- First Reading carried February 20, 2019
- Second Reading debated March 7, 2019
- Second Reading carried March 7, 2019 and ordered referred to the Standing Committee on General Government

### **Bill 92, Labour Relations Amendment Act (Replacement Workers), 2019**

**(Gelinias, France NDP - Nickel Belt)**

This Bill would restore certain provisions of the 1992 version of the state that were repealed in 1995, namely to restrict business from replacing striking or locked-out workers with replacement workers.

- First Reading carried March 28, 2019

### **Bill 111, Speaking Out About Workplace Violence and Workplace Harassment Act, 2019**

**(Gelinias, France NDP - Nickel Belt)**

This Bill would amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act to provide better protection for workers against reprisals for speaking out about workplace violence and workplace harassment. The amendments provide that a reprisal is any measure taken against a worker that adversely affects the worker's employment.

- First Reading carried May 7, 2019

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**Bill 119, Respecting Injured Workers Act (Workplace Safety and Insurance Amendment), 2019**

**(Gates, Wayne NDP - Niagara Falls)**

This Bill would amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 to ensure that any deemed earnings from suitable and available work would actually be suitable and available to the worker unless the worker refuses such employment in bad faith.

- First Reading carried May 27, 2019

**Bill 128, Ontario Water Resources Amendment Act, 2019**

**(Dunlop, Jill PC - Simcoe North)**

This Bill would amend the Ontario Water Resources Act to provide an exemption for water taking permits where such permits is associated with the constructing, operating, altering, improving or repairing a dam, if the dam is associated with the production of electricity and the activity has been approved by a Minister's order under the Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act.

- First Reading carried June 5, 2019

**Bill 169, Home Warranties to Protect Families Act, 2019**

**(Rakocevic, Tom NDP - Humber River -Black Creek)**

This Bill would amend the Ontario New Home Warranties Plan Act to discontinue the current warranty plan under the Act by the Tarion Warranty Corporation with a multi-provider system of new home warranty providers, having prescribed qualifications. Providers would compete with each other for homeowner business.

- First Reading carried December 12, 2019

**Bill 191, Workplace Safety and Insurance Amendment Act (presumption Respecting COVID-19), 2020**

**(Gates, Wayne NDP - Niagara Falls)**

This Bill would amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 regarding workers at essential businesses under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, so that if a worker at such a business receives a positive test result for COVID-19 at any time on or after January 25, 2020, it is presumed to be an occupational disease.

- First Reading carried May 19, 2020

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***Bill 200, Employment Standards Amendment Act (Sick Notes), 2020***  
***(Mike Schreiner, Green Party - Guelph)***

***This Bill would amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 regarding workers' entitlement to sick leave, it would allow workers to provide reasonable evidence of illness as an alternative to a certificate from a qualified health practitioner.***

***- First Reading carried May 19, 2020***

**Pending Proclamations of Bills**

**Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, 2010**

Royal Assent October 25, 2010. As of **Sep 24, 2020** most of the Act has not yet been proclaimed in force.

**Regulations**

(reflects contents of the Ontario Gazette through to **Sep 25, 2020**)

**Ontario Regulation 117/18**

**FAIRNESS IN PROCUREMENT ACT, 2018**

This regulation was published in the April 14, 2018 edition of the Ontario Gazette. It designates suppliers of certain construction services and supplies from the state of New York as being subject to reciprocal restrictions to provide services to government agencies in the Province of Ontario, a response to restrictive legislation passed by the State of New York which prohibits certain construction services and materials originating outside of the US. The regulation will come into force upon the date that the Fairness in Procurement Act, 2018 is proclaimed into force.

**Ontario Regulation 88/19**

**BUILDING CODE ACT, 1992**

This regulation, which was published in the May 18, 2019 issue of the Ontario Gazette, implements a large number (139 pages) of amendments to the Ontario Building Code. Most of the changes came into effect on May 2, 2019 however several others came into force on January 1, 2020 and a limited number of other changes which will come into force as of January 1, 2022.

Changes since the September 9, 2020 report are in ***blue bold italic text with yellow highlighting***

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### Ontario Regulation 406/19

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT, R.S.O. 1990**

This regulation, which was filed on December 4, 2019 but has not yet been published in the Ontario Gazette, establishes a new regulatory framework for the management (including the sampling, testing, handling, storing, transporting, treatment and placement) of excavated soils and the conditions under which such soils are or are not regulated as a waste. The new regulation is also part of the establishment and operation of an excavated soil registry accessible by the public which will allow searches of registered soil movements and the sites from which such soils originated. As the majority of construction sites involve some form of excavation, the new regulatory framework for excavated fill and soils will, as it is phased into force, with several sections coming into force on July 1, 2020 and other sections coming into force on January 1, 2022, January 1, 2025 and January 1, 2026. Through O. Reg 270/20, the coming into force has been postponed from July 1, 2020 to January 1, 2021.

### Ontario Regulation 408/19

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT, R.S.O. 1990**

This regulation, which was filed on December 4, 2019 but has not yet been published in the Ontario Gazette, amends the General Waste Management Regulation, Ontario Regulation 347 to establish new definitions for the terms “excess soil” and “liquid soil”. These amendments are an integral part of the Ontario government’s establishment of a new regulatory framework for the management (including the sampling, testing, handling, storing, transporting, treatment and placement) of excavated soils and the conditions under which such soils are or are not regulated as a waste. This Regulation comes into force on July 1, 2020. Through O. Reg 272/20, the coming into force has been postponed from July 1, 2020 to January 1, 2021.

### Ontario Regulation 409/19

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT, R.S.O. 1990**

This regulation, which was filed on December 4, 2019 but has not yet been published in the Ontario Gazette, amends Registration of Waste Management Systems Regulation, Ontario Regulation 351/12. These amendments are an integral part of the Ontario government’s establishment of a new regulatory framework for the management (including the sampling, testing, handling, storing, transporting, treatment and placement) of excavated soils and the conditions under which such soils are or are not regulated as a waste. When excavated soils are managed in a prescribed manner, they are exempted from certain sections of the Environmental Protection Act. This regulation comes into force on July 1, 2020. Through O. Reg 273/20, the coming into force has been postponed from July 1, 2020 to January 1, 2021.

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### **Ontario Regulation 306/20 HIGHWAY TRAFFIC ACT**

This regulation, which was filed on June 25, 2020 and published in the July 10, 2020 issue of the Ontario Gazette expands the types of mobile cranes that are subject to mandatory inspections. The regulation will be phased in through 2 stages, one effective January 1, 2021 and the second phase as of July 1, 2021.

### **Ontario Regulation 464/20 EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS ACT, 2000**

*This regulation, which was published in the September 12, 2020 issue of the Ontario Gazette, will continue employee eligibility for certain employment leaves, if the leave is the result of an order made under the Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, instead of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.*

### **Ontario Regulation 492/20 EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS ACT, 2000**

This regulation, which was filed on September 3, 2020, amends Ontario Regulation 228/20 to extend the end date of the “COVID-19 period” from September 4, 2020 to September 2, 2021. O. Reg. 228/20 stipulated that during the relevant period, COVID-19 is an infectious disease for purpose of section 50.1 (Emergency Leave) of the Employment Standards Act.

### **Ontario Regulation 527/20 WORKPLACE SAFETY AND INSURANCE ACT, 1997**

*This regulation, which was filed on September 23, 2020, amends Ontario Regulation 175/98 effective January 1, 2021. The amendment removes the term “residential building instruction” and replaces it with the term “non-residential building construction” in class G of Schedule 1.*

End of Report