

## Council Memorandum

<b>Date:</b>	June 3, 2025
<b>To:</b>	Committee of the Whole
<b>From:</b>	Councillor Warren and Councillor Doble
<b>Re:</b>	Concerns with Elements of Bill 5

### Recommendation

**That** the Memorandum from Councillors Warren and Doble regarding, **Concerns with Elements of Bill 5**, be received;

**That** the City objects to specific provisions in Bill 5 that would reduce environmental protections or override municipal planning authority; and

**That** the City requests the Province of Ontario to advance housing and infrastructure growth through policies that respect sound environmental planning principles and uphold the planning tools available to local governments; and

**That** this resolution be forwarded to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, and the Minister of Health; and

**That** this recommendation be forwarded to Council for consideration at the next Regular Council Meeting.

## Rationale

With the introduction of Bill 5: Protecting Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy Act, 2025 by the Government of Ontario, substantial changes have been proposed to environmental planning legislation, including the repeal of the Endangered Species Act and the creation of “Special Economic Zones” that may override local planning authority. While the City supports and is achieving progress on increasing our housing supply and economic growth, our Strategic Plan includes having a Healthy Environment as well as Good Government as two of our Priorities. Therefore, our growth must be achieved without undermining environmental protections or compromising the integrity of municipal planning processes. Bill 5, as proposed, risks weakening safeguards for Ontario’s natural heritage and reducing the role of municipalities in managing growth in a responsible and locally informed manner.

Furthermore, there is a duty to consult First Nations with respect to development, and this Bill risks limiting that consultation or worse, removing it entirely as well as any legal recourse for actions taken under this proposed legislation. The lack of clarity with respect to the language used in the Bill, such as “trusted proponents”, “designated projects” and “special economic zones” leaves too much room for assumptions as to what may or may not be meant by those terms. Without clear descriptions and protections for existing, important requirements, such as consultations with First Nations, we should urge the Province to reconsider these aspects of the Bill to ensure legislation and planning processes that protect our environment remain intact.