



COUNCIL INFORMATION PACKAGE

Friday, July 25, 2025

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Welland City Council

FROM: Amanda Degazio – Manager of Business and Community Services

DATE: July 25, 2025

SUBJECT: ParticipACTION Community Challenge – Final Results and Welland's Impact

The 2025 ParticipACTION Community Challenge has officially wrapped up, and we're proud to highlight Welland's strong performance in this nationwide celebration of physical activity and community engagement.

ParticipACTION is a Canadian non-profit organization that encourages people of all ages to make physical activity a regular part of their lives. Through national campaigns, local partnerships, and annual programs like the Community Challenge, ParticipACTION aims to reduce inactivity and build a healthier, more active Canada.

The annual Community Challenge, held every June, invites municipalities to engage residents and community groups in tracking movement, with communities competing for national and provincial recognition.

The 2025 Challenge saw participation from over 3.1 million Canadians, making it one of the largest and most successful to date. Communities across the country rallied to promote movement, health, and community spirit.

Welland made a strong impact in this year's challenge thanks to widespread community involvement and support:

- 13 local organizations registered and participated alongside the City
- Residents across Welland made individual pledges to get active
- These collective efforts helped Welland achieve:
 - 47th place nationally
 - 10th place in Ontario

These results reflect the power of collaboration and the strong community spirit that exists in Welland. The Challenge not only encouraged physical activity, but also fostered connection, inclusion, and a strong sense of civic pride.

Encouraged by this year's impact, we're already looking ahead to the 2026 ParticipACTION Community Challenge. Our goal is to aim even higher, with more partners, broader outreach, and even more opportunities to get Welland moving.

We want to thank everyone who participated, supported, and promoted this year's challenge. Your enthusiasm and commitment were key to Welland's success. Let's keep the momentum going, keeping Welland active, connected, and ready to make an even greater impact in 2026!

July 17, 2025

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario

Delivered by email
premier@ontario.ca

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Energy and Mines

ministerenergy@ontario.ca

Dear Premier Ford and Minister Lecce:

**Re: Town of Aurora Council Resolution of July 15, 2025
Member Motion 7.1 - Councillor Weese; Re: Opposition to Bill 5, *Protect Ontario
by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025***

Please be advised that this matter was considered by Council at its special meeting held on July 15, 2025, and in this regard, Council adopted the following resolution:

Whereas Bill 5 was granted Royal Assent on June 5, 2025; and

Whereas Bill 5 amends several key pieces of legislation with the goal of fast-tracking economic development and introduces changes in legislation that affect local governance, labour laws and environmental protections; and

Whereas the legislation includes the *Special Economic Zones Act, 2025* (SEZ) that gives Queen's Park the power to designate areas where regulatory approval processes can be amended by the Ontario Government, potentially without input from local decision-makers; and

Whereas the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* has been dissolved and replaced by the *Species Conservation Act 2025*, which environmental critics argue removes important provisions of the former law; and

Whereas the new law also makes changes to the *Ontario Heritage Act* that potentially could impact Heritage site designations; and

Whereas this law has been rushed through the legislature in 49 days, limiting Committee time, public consultation and ensuring rapid passage;

- 1. Now Therefore Be It Hereby Resolved That Aurora Town Council acknowledges the stated goals of economic growth and development in Bill 5, but expresses serious concerns with Bill 5 in its current form as it interferes with local**

planning authorities, limits public consultation, and threatens both heritage designations and endangered species; and

2. Be It Further Resolved That Aurora Town Council urges the Government of Ontario to consider the following:

- **Collaboration with municipalities to determine Special Economic Zones;**
- **Ensure environmental protections and heritage safeguards are strengthened;**
- **Include municipalities and Indigenous partners in shaping regulations; and**
- **Preserve legal recourse for affected communities; and**

3. Be It Further Resolved That this Motion be forwarded to all 444 Ontario Municipalities, Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, and Hon. Stephen Lecce, Ontario Minister of Energy and Mines, and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO).

The above is for your consideration and any attention deemed necessary.

Sincerely,



Ishita Soneji
Deputy Town Clerk
The Corporation of the Town of Aurora

IS/lb

Attachment (Council meeting extract)

Copy: Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
All Ontario Municipalities



7. Consideration of Items Requiring Discussion

7.1 Member Motion - Councillor Weese; Re: Opposition to Bill 5, *Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025*

Main motion as amended

Moved by Councillor Weese

Seconded by Councillor Gaertner

Whereas Bill 5 was granted Royal Assent on June 5, 2025; and

Whereas Bill 5 amends several key pieces of legislation with the goal of fast-tracking economic development and introduces changes in legislation that affect local governance, labour laws and environmental protections; and

Whereas the legislation includes the *Special Economic Zones Act, 2025* (SEZ) that gives Queen's Park the power to designate areas where regulatory approval processes can be amended by the Ontario Government, potentially without input from local decision-makers; and

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Whereas the new law also makes changes to the *Ontario Heritage Act* that potentially could impact Heritage site designations; and

Whereas this law has been rushed through the legislature in 49 days, limiting Committee time, public consultation and ensuring rapid passage;

1. Now Therefore Be It Hereby Resolved That Aurora Town Council acknowledges the stated goals of economic growth and development in Bill 5, but expresses serious concerns with Bill 5 in its current form as it interferes with local planning authorities, limits public consultation, and threatens both heritage designations and endangered species; and
2. Be It Further Resolved That Aurora Town Council urges the Government of Ontario to consider the following:

- Collaboration with municipalities to determine Special Economic Zones;
 - Ensure environmental protections and heritage safeguards are strengthened;
 - Include municipalities and Indigenous partners in shaping regulations; and
 - Preserve legal recourse for affected communities; and
3. Be It Further Resolved That this Motion be forwarded to all 444 Ontario Municipalities, Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, and Hon. Stephen Lecce, Ontario Minister of Energy and Mines, and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO).

Yeas (4): Councillor Weese, Councillor Gilliland, Councillor Gaertner, and Councillor Gallo

Absent (3): Mayor Mrakas, Councillor Thompson, and Councillor Kim

Carried (4 to 0)



2021 Division Road North
Kingsville, Ontario N9Y 2Y9
Phone: (519) 733-2305
www.kingsville.ca

July 17, 2025

Honourable Premier Doug Ford
Via Email: premier@ontario.ca

Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Via Email: rob.flack@ontario.ca

Dear Premier Ford and Minister Flack,

Re: Opposition to Bill 17, Protect Ontario by Building Faster Act, 2025

Please be advised that at its Regular Meeting held Monday, July 14th, 2025, the Council of the Town of Kingsville passed the following resolution respecting the matter referenced in the above subject line:

122-07142025

Moved By: Deputy Mayor DeYong

Seconded By: Councillor Gaffan

Whereas on May 12, 2025, the Government of Ontario (hereafter, the "Province"), enacted Bill 17, also known as the Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025 (hereafter, the "Act"), which will defer Development Charge (hereafter, "DC" or "DCs") revenues and increase collection efforts and costs;

And whereas the DCs collected from developers are necessary to help municipalities fund the capital costs of infrastructure and services required to support new housing;

Now therefore be it resolved that The Council of the Corporation of the Town of Kingsville:

- Requests that the Province of Ontario provide municipalities with clarity on how they should fund the capital costs of infrastructure and services required to support new growth, given the impacts to overall DC revenue;
- Wishes it to be known that the constant change to the Province's planning and development framework is creating uncertainty and is ultimately reducing the construction of housing; and,
- Directs the Clerk to forward a copy of this resolution to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Anthony Leardi, MPP, Essex, Lisa Gretzky, MPP Windsor West, Andrew Dowie, MPP Windsor-Tecumseh, Trevor

Jones, MPP Chatham-Kent-Leamington, AMCTO, AMO and all Ontario Municipalities.

Carried.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angela Toole". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Angela" and last name "Toole" clearly distinguishable.

Angela Toole, Acting Manager of Municipal Governance/Clerk

Email: atoole@kingsville.ca

Phone: 519-733-2305 ext. 223

cc. Anthony Leardi, MPP, Essex
Trevor Jones, MPP, Chatham-Kent - Leamington
Andrew Dowie, MPP, Windsor-Tecumseh
Lisa Gretzky, MPP, Windsor West
AMCTO
AMO
All Ontario Municipalities

July 21, 2025

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford:

It has now been four months since the Municipality of Tweed submitted two detailed proposals for your consideration, both aimed at addressing pressing challenges facing small rural and northern communities. Despite our sincere efforts and outreach, we have yet to receive an acknowledgment or response from your office, your ministers, our local MPP, or the leaders of the opposition parties. This silence is deeply disheartening.

Please know that the Municipality of Tweed is grateful for your commitment to investing billions to protect Ontarians as promised in this year's provincial election. We look forward to the opportunity to capitalize on those investments.

The first proposal, sent directly to your office on March 25, 2025, addressed the *Repatriation of OPP Costs for Small Rural and Northern Communities During this Period of Uncertainty*. Our proposal suggested a temporary repatriation of OPP policing costs as a meaningful way to demonstrate that this government understands and supports the needs of small municipalities.

The proposal included two important conditions: first, that OPP costs be repatriated to the province during this time of economic instability and global uncertainty triggered by U.S. policies; second, that the municipalities benefiting from this relief reinvest those savings directly into community infrastructure projects. In Tweed's case, the annual savings of \$1.2 million would allow us to undertake long-overdue infrastructure upgrades that we simply cannot afford under the current burden of provincial policing costs.

The second proposal, submitted March 27, 2025, focused on *Supporting Small Rural and Northern Ontario Housing Developers* and aligns with your government's own priority to reduce barriers to housing development. This proposal was presented to Minister Surma, AMO President Robin Jones, and MPP Ric Bresee at the 2025 ROMA Conference. During our January 19, 2025 ROMA delegation, Minister Surma expressed interest and committed to raising it with then-Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Paul Calandra. We revisited the proposal with MPP Bresee during a March 13th meeting and have since

shared it with ROMA President Christa Lowry, Federal Minister of Housing and Infrastructure Minister Robertson, and Prime Minister Carney.

We have copied the leaders of Ontario's three main political parties on this letter, as we did when the proposals were originally submitted. We respectfully ask all parties—regardless of political affiliation to consider their merit and potential, and to speak to them in the Legislature. We are eager to work with any partner committed to helping rural and northern Ontario succeed.

Both proposals offered practical, shovel-ready ideas grounded in lived rural experience. And while we remain grateful for ongoing provincial support through the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF: \$2,058,700) and the Ontario Critical Infrastructure Fund (OCIF: \$340,000), it must be acknowledged that these funds are no longer sufficient to meet the growing financial and infrastructure burdens faced by communities like ours. To manage persistent shortfalls, Tweed Council has had to implement tax increases of 7.3% in 2023, 17.8% in 2024, and 15% in 2025. The burden this places on our residents is both significant and unsustainable.

Given that four months have passed without acknowledgment, I am resubmitting both proposals for renewed consideration. It is deeply concerning that when a small rural municipality—operating with limited resources and under significant financial strain—takes the initiative to present tangible and constructive solutions, those efforts are met with silence. We expect such outreach to be met with dialogue. The absence of even basic acknowledgment sends a troubling message: that rural and northern municipalities are to be seen but not heard. Furthermore, I have reached out to AMO and ROMA and unfortunately my faith in both organizations as effective advocates in this regard is waning.

As I have made clear to all parties, I remain more than willing to serve as an engaged and constructive member of any committee or working group convened to address the challenges before us. The situation is serious. Many of us are teetering on the brink. The time to act was yesterday.

I respectfully request your attention to this matter and look forward to your response.

Yours truly,

Don DeGenova
Mayor
Municipality of Tweed
255 Metcalf St.
Tweed ON K0K 3J0
mayor@tweed.ca
613-848-7113

cc. Minister Surma, Minister of Infrastructure

Minister Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Minister Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance
Minister Thompson, Minister of Rural Affairs
MPP Ric Bresee

MPP M. Stiles, Leader of the NDP and Leader of the Opposition
Ms. B. Crombie, Leader of the Liberal Party
MPP M. Schreiner, Leader of the Green Party

Robin Jones, President, AMO
Christa Lowry, President, ROMA
Warden Bonnie Clark, Chair, Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus
Bob Mullin, Warden Hastings County

A copy of this letter has also been sent to all rural and northern Ontario Mayors.

Proposal to Repatriate OPP Costs for Small Rural and Northern Communities During this Period of Uncertainty

July 21, 2025 (Originally submitted March 25, 2025)

As Mayor of the Municipality of Tweed, I am representative of many small rural and northern Ontario communities that face growing financial pressures. Even in the best of times, we operate with limited resources, and now, the threat of President Trump's tariffs only intensifies our financial stress. Municipalities with populations of 10,000 or less are particularly vulnerable. We grapple with the same issues as larger cities—housing shortages, food insecurity, homelessness, healthcare concerns, inflation, and an overwhelming infrastructure funding deficit—but with far fewer financial resources and staffing capabilities. Unlike urban centres, which have access to additional funding streams and economies of scale, small rural and northern communities struggle to provide essential services with minimal support. Moreover, we are disproportionately affected by extreme weather events, further straining our already fragile infrastructure and emergency response capabilities. Without immediate and targeted assistance, many of our communities risk falling into economic and social decline.

With that in mind, we propose a temporary solution that would demonstrate your government's support for small rural and northern Ontario. Premier Ford, has stated that securing a strong majority was essential to investing billions in response to the Trump tariffs. Repatriating OPP policing costs for small rural and northern communities during this period of economic uncertainty would be a swift and impactful show of support. This initiative would immediately benefit 330 municipalities at a cost of less than \$600 million. In the context of multi-billion-dollar expenditures, a \$600 million investment is a meaningful way to show small municipalities that they matter.

This initiative could be structured with two key conditions: it would remain in place while Ontario remains vulnerable to economic pressures, and the funds saved by municipalities would be reinvested into critical infrastructure projects. For example, such a measure for the Municipality of Tweed would free up approximately \$1.2 million, allowing us to address urgent infrastructure needs and support our local economy.

We need all levels of government to recognize that small rural and northern municipalities are extremely vulnerable and now more than ever we need governments so show that they stand with small municipalities. We look forward to discussing our proposal with you.

Don DeGenova
Mayor
Municipality of Tweed
255 Metcalf St.
Tweed ON K0K 3J0

mayor@tweed.ca
613-848-7113

Proposal to Support Small Rural and Northern Housing Developers

July 21, 2025 (Originally submitted March 27, 2025)

The Municipality of Tweed supports all efforts to remove barriers to housing development. To demonstrate our commitment, we have proactively revised our zoning bylaws to encourage housing densification and affordability. We now permit tiny homes (400–600 sq. ft.), smaller homes (900–1200 sq. ft.), mobile homes on rural lots, reduced lot sizes and setbacks, and fewer parking space requirements. Additionally, we do not impose development fees. These measures aim to diversify our housing stock, enhance affordability, and minimize environmental impact.

Our commitment to housing expansion is already delivering results. We are collaborating with builders to develop a 80-unit retirement community and a retirement home, complementing our existing 120-bed extended care facility. In 2024, the Municipality of Tweed led Hastings County in housing starts, issuing 122 building permits, including 38 new homes and a 25-unit geared-to-income apartment complex. Last year, we hosted a Developers Forum, where local developers presented subdivision plans that could bring over 600 new homes to our community within the next five years.

We made a \$4 million+ investment in our lagoon that will allow us to accommodate another 1500 homes. Our current well enhancements allow us to service an additional 750 homes. We are investigating future new water sources to allow us to reach our target of 1500 homes.

However, infrastructure costs for new subdivisions remain a significant barrier. Unlike large urban developers, small rural developers lack the financial backing of major investors and must independently finance subdivision infrastructure, making projects cost-prohibitive. There is a growing perception that federal and provincial housing investments are disproportionately focused on large urban centers, despite billions of dollars being allocated to housing initiatives.

Our proposal seeks financial assistance through interest-free loans for small rural and northern developers to cover infrastructure costs. These loans would be repaid as homes are sold, ensuring the government recoups its investment with the only cost being interest. Unlike current urban housing initiatives—where both principal and interest fall entirely on the province and federal government—this model ensures fiscal responsibility. Additionally, rather than the standard 25–30-year amortization period, our proposal anticipates repayment within five years, making it a practical and innovative solution to the housing crisis in small rural and northern communities.

The demand for housing in regions similar to ours remains strong. Seniors want to age in place, staying close to friends, family, and their established healthcare providers. When seniors relocate to urban centers, they leave behind a gap in healthcare continuity at a critical stage in their lives. Conversely, when seniors transition to retirement communities within rural areas, they free up existing housing stock for younger families. Additionally, the influx of urban retirees to rural communities has further driven demand which in turn increases the housing stock in those urban areas. Housing in small communities like Tweed can be built at a fraction of the cost compared to large urban centers, offering a cost-effective solution to Ontario's housing crisis. The Municipality of Tweed's absence of development fees provides yet another financial incentive for homebuyers and developers alike.

Premier Ford, we have answered your call for municipalities to facilitate housing growth. We urge you to give serious consideration to this proposal, recognizing Tweed as a model for how rural communities can be part of the solution to Ontario's housing crisis. We need all levels of government to recognize that small rural and northern municipalities are key to helping this country and province resolve our housing crisis. We look forward to discussing our proposal with you.

Don DeGenova
Mayor, Municipality of Tweed
255 Metcalf St.,
Tweed ON K0K 3J0

mayor@tweed.ca
613-848-7113

July 25, 2025

Re: Resolution Regarding Strong Mayor Powers Legislation

Please be advised that at its meeting held on June 23, 2025, the Council of the Township of Ramara passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Province of Ontario initially introduced Strong Mayor Powers in 2022 with the stated intent of expediting housing development across municipalities;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Ontario arbitrarily expanded the Strong Mayor Powers legislation to include an additional 169 municipalities in April 2025;

AND WHEREAS municipalities across Ontario have demonstrated a commitment to addressing the housing crisis through local planning approvals and community-led solutions;

AND WHEREAS Strong Mayor Powers fundamentally alter local democratic governance by concentrating decision-making authority in a single individual, thereby weakening the role of elected Councils and disrupting the principles of collaboration and shared leadership;

AND WHEREAS these powers can create uncertainty within municipal organizations, impact staff morale, and risk eroding the trust that underpins effective municipal governance;

AND WHEREAS there are currently no provincial checks and balances or independent oversight mechanisms in place to ensure Strong Mayor Powers are being used appropriately and as intended, and the legislation itself has been described by some as “open to interpretation,” creating a fundamental flaw in the responsible application of these potentially dangerous powers;

AND WHEREAS the primary barriers to housing construction are not rooted in municipal decision-making processes, but in broader market conditions, infrastructure constraints, and the lack of effective provincial and federal policy supports to stimulate affordable and attainable housing development;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Township of Ramara formally request the Province of Ontario to rescind the Strong Mayor Powers legislation in its entirety;

AND THAT, should the legislation not be repealed, the Province immediately remove the Township of Ramara from the list of municipalities designated under the Strong Mayor Powers framework;

AND THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to all Ontario municipalities, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, the Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Honourable Sylvia Jones, MPP for Dufferin-Caledon, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, and the Honourable Jill Dunlop, MPP for Simcoe North, Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Response for their information, support, and consideration.

In accordance with Council's direction, I am forwarding you a copy of the resolution for your reference and consideration. Should you have any questions or require further information, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,
TOWNSHIP OF RAMARA

Jennifer Connor

Jennifer Connor, CMO, AOMC
Director of Legislative & Community Services/Clerk