



November 15, 2022

Hon. Laurie Scott, Chair  
c/o Isaiah Thorning, Clerk  
Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy  
99 Wellesley Street West Room 1405  
Whitney Block Toronto, ON M7A 1A2

*Submitted electronically*

**RE: Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022**

The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) is pleased to provide comments to the Standing Committee regarding Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act.

RCCAO is an alliance of key labour and management stakeholders derived from the residential and civil construction sectors. RCCAO's goal is to work in cooperation with government and related stakeholders to offer realistic solutions to a variety of challenges facing the construction industry and which also have wider societal benefits.

Our membership includes the Greater Toronto Sewer and Watermain Contractors Association; Heavy Construction Association of Toronto; International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 793; Joint Residential Construction Association, LiUNA Local 183; Ontario Formwork Association; and Toronto and Area Road Builders Association.

We commend the work to date by the Government of Ontario and Minister Clark. Positive steps have been made to boost housing supply and remove red tape, including through Bill 108, *More Homes, More Choice Act*, Bill 109, *More Homes for Everyone Act*, the launch of the Housing Affordability Task Force, the release of the Task Force's report and recommendations, and Bill 3, *Strong Mayors, Building Homes Act, 2022*.

Bill 23, *More Homes Built Faster Act*, continues the Province's work to address Ontario's housing crisis. The proposed legislation provides strong next steps to help build momentum for more development to meet the critical infrastructure demands of a growing province. The legislation addresses several key elements of necessary housing reforms, including enabling the building of "missing middle" housing across Ontario; incentivizing affordable housing and streamlining the planning process.

These reforms are welcomed and long overdue. Once enacted, they will provide predictable parameters and timelines to get shovels in the ground faster while providing greater certainty to builders and homebuyers. This certainty will allow the development process to shift from years to months.

RCCAO appreciates the far-reaching aspects of the proposed legislation, which includes proposed improvements to the delivery of underground utility locates information. Locating underground utilities is a vital safety measure in the infrastructure and construction industry and an essential step in building residential housing in Ontario.



RCCAO supports the proposed amendments to the *Ontario Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act* to allow the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery to appoint an administrator of Ontario One Call in certain circumstances. We believe that this proposal aligns with the administrative authorities that the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery has oversight of.

These proposed amendments build on the positive work that the Government of Ontario has recently undertaken to improve the delivery of underground utility locate information, including the recent passage of the *Getting Ontario Connected Act, 2022*. The Act aims to improve the locate delivery system, enhance governance and oversight of Ontario One Call, and improve compliance tools.

RCCAO believes that the proposed amendments would help to improve accountability and oversight and be more consistent with requirements of administrative authorities. The Ontario One Call Board has responsibility for education and enforcement of the *Ontario Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act*. The majority of One Call board members represent utility members and many observers believe that the lack of charges or convictions for late locates is because directors representing utilities are unwilling to prosecute fellow utilities.

Prior to the passing of the *Getting Ontario Connected Act*, the *Ontario Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act* stipulated that a person or entity may be liable to fines for failure to deliver locates within the legislated timeframe, and Section 17.2 of Ontario Regulation 92/14 allows for an “accessor” to impose an administrative penalty against a member or excavator. However, not a single administrative penalty has been issued to a member of Ontario One Call. This may be because Ontario One Call’s authority to levy fines was not clearly defined and contributed to its reluctance to administer fines, which in turn has fostered an environment of impunity and clear contravention by members of Ontario One Call.

The lack of enforcement and accountability is reflected in the fact that half of call tickets for September 2021 took longer than 15 days across the province, with only 14 percent being completed within the legislated five-day timeline. This means that over 80 percent of all locate requests were delivered late, a trend which has not only continued, but has gotten worse over the 2022 digging season.

The delivery of late locates have a cascading effect on infrastructure and housing construction, resulting in work stoppages, significant delays in project completion and increased project cost. For example, each hour of idle time in the sewer and watermain sector costs \$1,000; in the roads sector, the price tag is \$10,000 a day.

Given the significant financial, workforce and social implications of late delivery locates, it is imperative that Ontario One Call develops and executes firm, consistent and predictable enforcement tools to ensure its members are compliant and delivering locates within the legislated timeline. RCCAO believes the proposed amendments in Bill 23 will help support greater accountability, increased oversight and provide assurances to the public that One Call is carrying out its statutory duties and empowers the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery to take appropriate action if that is not the case.



Bill 23 continues the positive and forward-thinking work by the Government of Ontario to building housing in Ontario. However, with over 1.5 million additional units needed in the province, there is no magic bullet to address the current housing crisis. Solutions will continue to require long-term strategies, coordination at all levels of government and continuous process improvements to ensure that momentum is not lost.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments to the Standing Committee and look forward to continuing our engagement with the Government of Ontario as it works to address the housing and infrastructure needs of the province.

Sincerely,

Nadia Todorova  
Executive Director