

## New Day for Publicly Funded Universities: Proposed Changes for Public Post-Secondary Institutions Under the Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024

*Signe Leisk, Jennifer Evola, Peter Voltsinis*

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On April 10, 2024, the Ontario Government introduced Bill 185: *Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024* (Bill 185). Arguably the biggest change introduced through Bill 185 is to exempt undertakings of public post-secondary institutions from the *Planning Act* and site plan control provisions of the *City of Toronto Act*. “Except as otherwise prescribed,” this would exempt undertakings from the requirement to obtain official plan amendments, zoning by-law amendments, site plan approvals, and plans of subdivision approvals (among others). The only clear statutory limitation is where such undertakings are on land within the Greenbelt. Private institutions will not benefit from these exemptions.

While these proposed changes are seemingly broad, limitations are expected prior to enactment. Of note:

- The accompanying compendium to Bill 185, the Minister’s press release, and Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) posting no. 019-8369, indicate that only student housing projects on lands owned by the post-secondary institution will benefit from the exemption.
- There are no exemptions proposed to other laws and municipal by-laws that regulate construction and development, which will continue to apply.

The Ministry’s press release further indicates that “All colleges and universities would also be required to publish student housing policies to ensure students have access to and awareness of student housing options that are safe, affordable and within an easy commute to campus.”

For more information on further changes that Bill 185 proposes, see our summary [here](#).

**What’s Next:** These changes are subject to public consultation through the ERO (posting linked above) **until May 10, 2024**. The Ontario Legislature is in session up to and include June 13, 2024. It is anticipated that Bill 185, which may be subject to further change, will be adopted prior to the legislature breaking for the season. Interested persons are encouraged to submit their comments through the ERO.