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November 3, 2025

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of Executive Committee,

Re: EX27.1 - Impacts of Provincial Legislation that Weakens Rental Protections

We commend you for pushing back against *Bill 60, Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025* much as you did against *Bill 212, Reducing Gridlock, Saving You Time Act, 2024* last fall. The proposed changes would seriously harm Toronto renters. And from Cycle Toronto's perspective, making rental housing more insecure would directly impact people's choices to live in communities with more transportation options and near new or existing cycling corridors.

We must take this opportunity to highlight that **buried deep in Bill 60 are additional provisions that would expand and escalate Bill 212's attack on evidence-based decision-making around safe and convenient transportation options** and further handcuff municipalities from making meaningful decisions about their roads.¹

Controlling how municipalities plan and build their cycling networks wasn't enough; now **Queen's Park is making explicit to Ontarians that roads are for cars.**

As amended under *Bill 212, Reducing Gridlock, Saving You Time Act, 2024*, the Highway Traffic Act currently does not allow prescribed municipalities to install bike lanes that would impact car lanes without Ministerial approval. Since the legislation received Royal Assent last November, however, **no municipalities have been prescribed, and no regulations have been issued** governing the criteria and information required for approvals.

Minister of Transportation Prabmeet Sarkaria once downplayed the alarm advocates were raising about Bill 212. "And yes, we need bike lanes — where they make sense" he wrote in an op ed.² He continued:

In short, what we need is a common sense, evidence-based bike lane policy — one that takes all the very real concerns about bike lanes on main streets into account. That's why, in the next few days, **our government will unveil our plan to work with our municipal partners around the province** to ensure bike lanes are introduced in a way that reflects the need of the entire community: Cyclists, drivers, transit user and local businesses.

¹ https://www.cycleto.ca/ontario_banning_new_bike_lanes

² https://www.thestar.com/opinion/contributors/ontarios-transport-minister-we-should-only-be-putting-bike-lanes-in-places-that-make-sense/article_efc7be7e-87ec-11ef-b867-832ab5aa9343.html

It's been a year. There was no plan. There is no partnership.

Currently under Bill 212:

*195.3 (1) In the circumstances described in subsection (2), a **prescribed municipality** does not have the power to construct, install or mark a bicycle lane on a highway or part of a highway under its jurisdiction and control **unless the design for the bicycle lane has been approved by the Minister** and, in considering whether to give such approval, the Minister may require information from the municipality including traffic information relating to the design for the bicycle lane and the highway.*

Proposed under Bill 60:

195.3 (1) Except as permitted by the regulations, a municipality shall not, by by-law or otherwise, reduce or permit a reduction in the number of marked lanes available for travel by motor vehicles on a highway or a portion of a highway under the municipality's jurisdiction and control for any of the following purposes:

- 1. A bicycle lane.*
- 2. **Any other prescribed purpose.***

Cycle Toronto's legal victory in July, which successfully challenged the provisions of Bill 212 that would have removed the bike lanes on Bloor, Yonge, and University, also made clear that the province's own experts and consultants know that bike lanes do not cause traffic congestion. It was also an affirmation of Toronto's own process of planning, approving, and building its cycling network to date.

The decision also affirmed our position (contrary to talk radio hysteria) that there are no positive rights to bike lanes, but that "the increased risk of harm results from action that will not further the government's objective of reducing congestion, the government action is arbitrary and breaches s. 7 of the Charter."³

From a practical standpoint, does Bill 60 really change anything for cycling in Toronto? Under the current wording of 195.3 (1) despite no regulations being issued, the result has been to effectively freeze Toronto cycling projects, even Council approved, in indefinite limbo. Under Bill 212, Toronto was required to seek Ministerial approval for bike lanes. Under Bill 60, the onus has merely been reversed. The new language makes clear that the intent was never limited to Toronto. Every municipality in Ontario now faces these restrictions.

So what does "any other prescribed purpose" mean? Whatever Minister Sarkaria or Premier Ford want it to be whenever they want it to be. Our friends at TTCriders⁴ and Environmental Defence⁵ have raised serious concerns about what this could mean for RapidTO and other transit priority projects.

Yes, in the October 23, 2025 press conference about Bill 60, Minister Sarkaria deflected those questions about bus lanes, CafeTO, and street festivals, and said he was focused on bike lanes.⁶

³ https://assets.nationbuilder.com/cycletoronto/pages/8767/attachments/original/1753891585/Cycle_Toronto_v._AGO_Reasons_for_Judgment_PBS_July_30_2025.pdf

⁴ https://www.ttcriders.ca/transit_riders_to_premier_ford_hands_off_of_our_transit_lanes

⁵ <https://environmentaldefence.ca/2025/10/23/bill-60-jeopardizes-transit-and-low-cost-homes-ontario/>

⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9X4Fd0sxyQw>

But recall back in the October 15, 2024 press conference about Bill 212, it was reported that “Sarkaria said there **aren’t current plans to order the removal of the lanes.**”⁷ Two weeks later the amended legislation declared “the Minister shall remove the bicycle lanes located on Bloor Street, University Avenue and Yonge Street.”

Sometimes, I suppose, Minister Sarkaria (or Premier Doug Ford) changes his mind.

But this isn’t about politics or personalities. This isn’t about whether you’re in favour of bike lanes, or where they do or don’t belong. This is about accountability, transparency, and local decision-making.

On January 28, Cycle Toronto and our legal team will return to court to defend our rights against the province’s appeal. We urge City Council to continue standing firm against this escalating pattern of provincial interference that undermines housing security and evidence-based transportation planning. Toronto’s ability to build healthy and sustainable communities depends on it.



Michael Longfield
Executive Director

⁷ <https://toronto.citynews.ca/2024/10/15/ontario-bike-lanes-traffic-law-bloor-street-west-toronto/>

