TORONTO

Mayor's Agenda Item

Opposing the Provincial Government's Interference in Toronto Hydro and Rejecting Privatization

Date: November 19, 2026
To: City Council
From: Mayor Olivia Chow

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Mayor recommends that:

1. City Council reaffirms its position that Toronto Hydro is and should remain solely owned by the City of Toronto for the benefit of the people of Toronto by protecting the long-term financial sustainability of Toronto Hydro and the City of Toronto while keeping electricity safe, clean, reliable, and as affordable as possible for Toronto's residents and businesses.
2. City Council requests the Ontario Minister of Energy and Mines and Ontario Minister of Red Tape Reduction to withdraw Schedule 16 of *the Building Ontario Faster Act, 2026* and express its strong opposition to the proposed changes to the governance of municipal electricity systems.
3. City Council rejects the recommendations of the PULSE Report that suggest bringing private investment into public, municipal electricity systems

SUMMARY AND COMMENTS

As a Council, we are again contending with interference from the Provincial Government that could have a long-lasting negative impact on the people of Toronto.

Just one day after the municipal elections, the Province of Ontario introduced a new bill that removes Toronto's elected representatives from the board of Toronto Hydro. Bill 140, Building Ontario Faster Act, reduces democratic oversight of our public electricity utility and disempowers the people of Toronto. It removes our three Councillor board positions, allowing only one to remain but without voting rights. Toronto City Council was not consulted on this unacceptable change to Toronto Hydro's governance.

Alongside this new bill, the Minister of Energy released a report by his Panel for Utility Leadership and Service Excellence (PULSE) that explicitly makes the case for private

investment and ownership of municipal electricity utilities, as well as proposes changes to the tax code and other regulatory changes that would enable privatization. The report highlights that private investors are most interested in Ontario's large electricity utilities, like Toronto Hydro, and most interested in majority ownership of those utilities.

These Provincial actions leave very little room for interpretation. It is apparent that the Provincial Government is laying the groundwork to privatize Toronto Hydro. Removing our Board representation is merely the first step. We have a responsibility as a Council to stop them, because we know that privatizing public utilities leads to higher costs for people, less oversight and accountability, and public dollars siphoned to private profits.

The City of Toronto has been responsible in its financial management of Toronto Hydro.

In 2024, Council invested $1.3 billion into Toronto Hydro over the next ten years for infrastructure upgrades and planning for Toronto's growing electricity needs. This was done by providing Toronto Hydro $300 million directly through equity investment, and by enabling Toronto Hydro to retain $1.017 billion in dividends to reinvest in capital needs. Any dividends generated by Toronto Hydro belongs to the people of Toronto, not private investors.

In addition to the $1.3 billion in capital investment, Toronto has also provided $577 million over 10 years in upgrading street lighting infrastructure.

Toronto City Council has spoken out already against privatization. At the June City Council meeting, I brought a motion reaffirming public ownership of Toronto Hydro and rejecting any movement towards private investment, private ownership and private profits. My motion received overwhelming support from Councillors on all sides of the political spectrum.

As Mayor, I was re-elected with clear mandates to oppose Provincial interference in Toronto and to stop the privatization of our public utilities. To safeguard the future of Toronto's electricity and restore democratic oversight over Toronto Hydro, I am moving that we again reaffirm our commitment to keeping hydro public, while demanding the Province return our Board positions and reject the recommendations of the PULSE report that drive us toward privatization.

SIGNATURE

Oliva Chow
Mayor