

TECHNICAL BRIEFING

Building a More Competitive Economy Act, 2025



**PROTECT
ONTARIO**

Ministry of Red Tape Reduction

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Ontario

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Overview: Building a More Competitive Economy Act, 2025

Through the Building a More Competitive Economy Act, 2025, Ontario is protecting and strengthening the province's economy by cutting red tape, streamlining regulatory processes, championing local businesses, advancing labour mobility and increasing competitiveness. These measures will help build a more resilient and self-sustaining economy that can withstand disruption and make Ontario the best place in the G7 to invest, do business and create jobs.

Streamline Permits & Approvals

Slow and complicated permitting processes make it harder for businesses and municipalities to get projects off the ground. By simplifying and speeding up approvals, Ontario is **enhancing competitiveness, attracting investment and strengthening its position as the most attractive and competitive jurisdiction to do business in the G7**, while fostering a more agile and responsive economy, that can adapt quickly to global challenges and opportunities.

Support for Workers & Buy Local

Ontario is making it easier for workers to move and apply their skills where they are needed most. By **improving labour mobility and reducing barriers to credential recognition**, the province is helping employers **find talent and creating more pathways to good jobs**. Through Buy Local consultations, Ontario is focusing on supporting the workers and businesses that make and build products right here at home.

The Case for Change

- A fast and predictable regulatory environment can lower risk for businesses, attracting investment and job creation in major projects, enhance the province's ability to expand infrastructure, and foster economic growth in strategic sectors like critical minerals, forestry and energy.
- Regulations, if designed and implemented properly, can safeguard key public interests in health, safety and the environment while providing certainty and clarity for proponents to advance economic activity.
- That's why, since 2018, Ontario has taken action to save businesses over 1.8 million compliance hours and \$1.2 billion annually through 15 Red Tape Reduction Packages and 8 housing, transit, and infrastructure legislative packages.

Despite progress, Ontario will need to address **3 key issues** to unlock its economic potential and protect itself by making it the most competitive place in the world to do business:

A. Long Timelines for Approval

Ontario businesses face **longer approval timelines compared to peer jurisdictions** for key economic activity, such as advanced manufacturing, and resource development, which could make Ontario less competitive for jobs and investment.

B. Fragmented & Confusing System

A **complex web of overlapping approvals** from multiple government entities creates confusion and inefficiency (as well as burden on Indigenous communities), and there are few accessible and comprehensive digital tools or resources to help businesses navigate the system.

C. Lack of Transparency & Accountability

Businesses face uncertainty in timelines and requirements, which affects investment decisions. Ontario could **create certainty (and drive progress) by tracking approval timelines**, especially compared with competing jurisdictions.

The Case for Change

Overall Goal:

Make Ontario the fastest and easiest-to-navigate jurisdiction in the G7 for permitting and approvals for key economic activity, including infrastructure, advanced manufacturing, and resource development.

KPIs

A. Reduce & Streamline Permissions

Review all 332 business-facing permits and approvals in Ontario by 2028 and set an ambitious goal to eliminate or streamline 35%.

B. Simplify System Navigation

Digitize all transformed business-facing permits through a one-window system administered by ServiceOntario, starting with mines in 2025 and expanding to other permits.

C. Improve Accountability

All ministries are in compliance with service standards for permits and licences issued to businesses. Reduction in permitting approval time with bi-annual reporting to Cabinet.

Streamline Permits & Approvals

Ontario is making it easier for businesses to get approvals, fostering a more agile and responsive economy that can adapt quickly to global challenges and opportunities.



Streamline Permits & Approvals

Ontario has **300+ permits and approvals**. In summer 2025, MRTR completed an inventory of provincial permits and approvals.

Ontario is committed to eliminating or streamlining at least 35% of them. Why? Ontario businesses can face **long approval timelines** for key economic activity, such as advanced manufacturing, and resource development, which could make Ontario less competitive for jobs and investment. Ontario must unlock its economic potential.

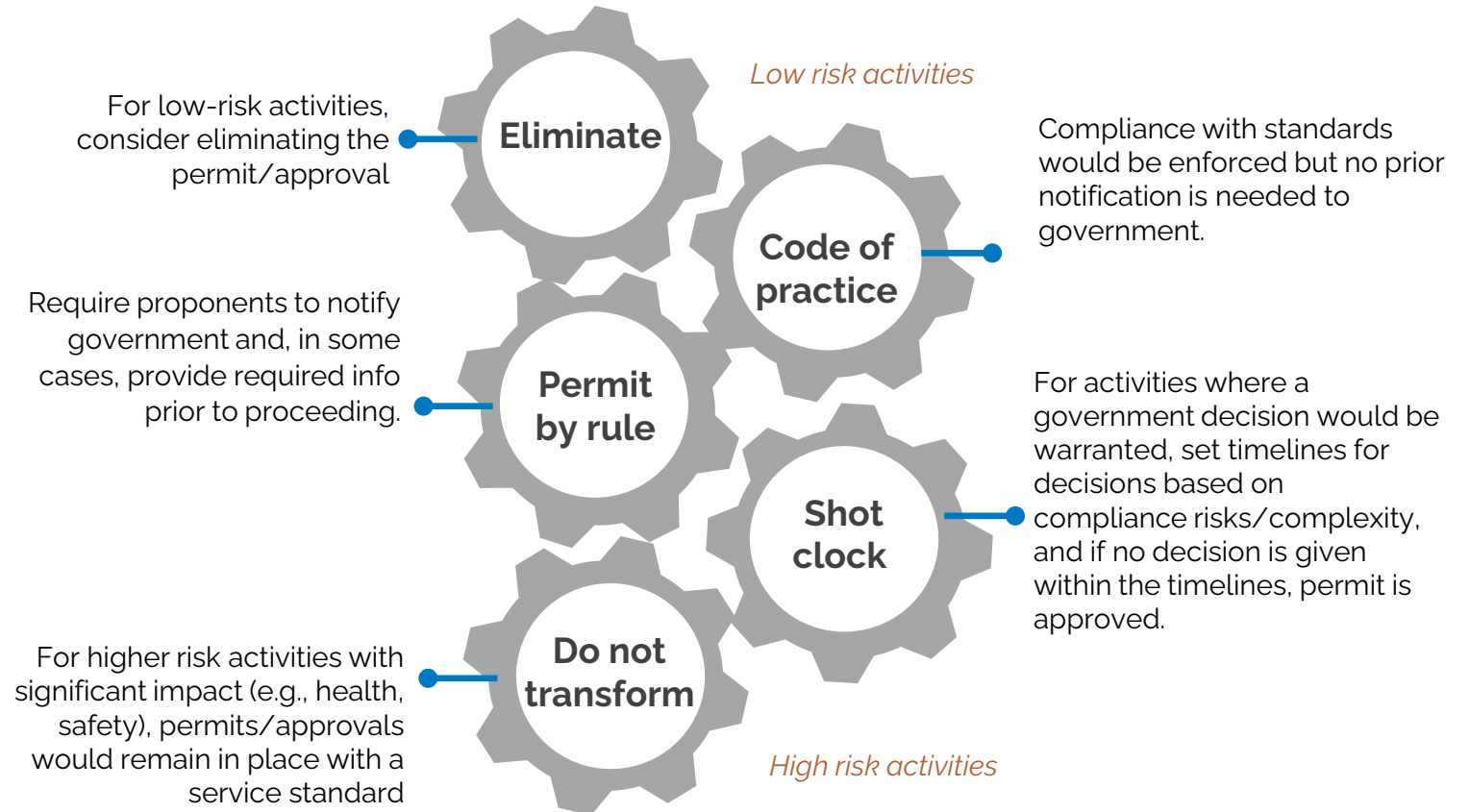
Initiative	Current State	Future State
Streamline Permits and Approvals - Report back on progress with enterprise review of government permits and approvals (MRTR)	For Ontario to unlock its economic potential, it needs to simplify the approval process for economic development-focused permits and approvals.	All reviews to be completed by 2028 to position Ontario as a leading jurisdiction for investment in the G7 following review of hundreds of Ontario government economic development-focused permits and approvals. MRTR will support ministries in eliminating and streamlining Ontario government economic development-focused permits and approvals without compromising health, safety, or the environment.

Streamline Permits & Approvals

MRTR is leading a review of Ontario government's economic development permits to identify **duplicative, unnecessary, and/or outdated permits and approvals** that could be eliminated or streamlined, without compromising health, safety and the environment.

The review is expected to be completed by 2028, with implementation starting as reviews are completed.

Factors for how permits and approvals are reviewed, eliminated or streamlined



Streamline Permits & Approvals

Initiative	Current State	Future State
Streamline permissions – Improving the business experience, enablers for new digital permitting applications and approvals system (enabling information sharing) (MPBSDP)	Businesses often need multiple permits and must apply to each ministry separately to get them. This can be a fragmented, lengthy and inefficient process that puts jobs and investment at risk at a time we can least afford it. Separate processes in each ministry creates confusion and different points of contact for proponents. For example, there are up to 30 permits in the mining industry alone, taking 3 to 5 years to approve while archaeology approvals for critical infrastructure projects can take up to 64 months.	First targeting the mining sector, the government is working with businesses to build a centralized and digital system to get the permits they need. The system will allow applicants to apply once through a centralized portal, designed to meet their needs by providing a seamless, user-friendly platform with processing timelines, key dates and the status of their applications. The ministry expects to have the first versions of this system online by September 2026, with improvements made through to March 2028. Over time, the system will be expanded to benefit a wider range of businesses to reduce duplication and make government services work better for business.. The ministry expects this service to be expanded to other sectors starting in 2028. Proponents would apply once through a central portal, leading to greater transparency and certainty around permits and approvals processes.

Streamline Permits & Approvals

Initiative	Current State	Future State
Proclaimed One Project One Process (1P1P) into force on October 17, 2025 (MEM)	Permitting for mine projects in Ontario were previously managed through fractured ministry-specific processes including for the Indigenous consultation process. There were limited whole-of-government mechanisms to align permitting and authorization timelines or consultation activities across ministries. Key Actions: • Proclaim section 153.0.1 of the <i>Mining Act</i> into force – establishing the 1P1P framework. • Operationalize the framework - through internal and external guidance documents, tools and templates. • Implement a coordinated, project-level delivery model – through a multi-ministry <i>Mine Authorization and Permitting Delivery Team (MAPDT)</i>, led by a Team Lead from the Ministry of Energy and Mines, to facilitate permitting and Indigenous consultation processes for designated projects.	• Legislated coordinated approach, enabling faster, more predictable permitting. • 50% reduction in government review timelines for permits and authorizations. • One primary point of contact for proponents and Indigenous communities providing concierge services. • Dedicated project delivery team to navigate permitting and authorization processes across ministries. • Project-level Indigenous consultation rather than on a permit-by-permit basis. • Defined service standards improving predictability and accountability across ministries.

Streamline Permits & Approvals

Initiative	Current State	Future State
Streamline permissions – Legislative changes to streamline approvals and accelerate the protection of Ontario's drinking water sources (MECP)	Ontario's current process for making routine changes to established source water protection plans, such as adding a new well where protections to source water already exist, is overly complex and slow - delaying the expansion of drinking water systems and placing unnecessary burden on municipalities and Ontarians seeking to use these expanded systems. For example, if a municipal well has structural issues and a new well needs to be built next to the existing one, the current process requires updating the source protection plan, including completing two consultation periods and obtaining Minister approval before the new well can be used. This takes about 21 months, even when changes or impacts are minimal. Ontario will make changes to the <i>Clean Water Act</i> so source protection authorities can approve routine updates to source protection plans. Ontario is also proposing regulatory updates to enable the use of new drinking water sources faster to support growing communities including: simplifying consultation; expanding what counts as a minor change to a source protection plan; removing duplicate steps; and clarifying how approvals work. Other updates include changes under the <i>Safe Drinking Water Act</i> to allow new wells or intakes to supply water before plan updates are finalized, where protections are already in place, and creating a new Minister's regulation to make rules for policies, annual reporting, and reviews more consistent and transparent.	The proposed changes will enable the delivery of safe drinking water faster while supporting housing and infrastructure development. The process will be faster, clearer and more consistent while keeping Ontario's strong protections for source water in place. The changes will reduce administrative burden, maintain strong environmental and public health protections and ensure timely, effective safeguards for municipal drinking water sources, with continued public and Indigenous consultation and ministry oversight for significant amendments.

Streamline Permits & Approvals

Initiative	Current State	Future State
Amendments to the <i>Crown Forest Sustainability Act</i> (MNR)	Since 2018, MNR has significantly changed the legislative regulatory framework for commercial forestry activities in support of Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy while continuing to provide for the sustainability of Ontario's forests. Current state of proposed amendments: • MNR administers over 350 harvest approvals annually. Harvest approvals are required before industry can commence harvesting operations. The harvest approval is part of the process for tracking the movement of harvested wood (i.e., scaling and billing systems and industry accounting systems). • Forest management plans are prepared for each management unit • Regulation making authority for the <i>Crown Forest Sustainability Act</i> (CFSA) lies with the Lieutenant Governor in Council (LGIC), which includes government committee approvals. • Administrative Monetary Penalties exist only for Forest Resource Licences and are an efficient and effective compliance tool.	The amendments are intended to save the forest industry time and effort by streamlining annual approvals and reducing administrative burden. If passed, the changes would align with Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy to improve cost competitiveness. The changes to the <i>Crown Forest Sustainability Act</i>, are responsive to requests from the Ontario Forest Industries Association (OFIA) for red tape reduction. If passed, would: • Reduce potential delays for the forest industry and strengthening enforcement by eliminating annual wood harvest approvals and replacing them with requirements in regulation related to licensing terms and conditions, while also extending stop work order powers to address non-compliance. • Support integrated and cost-effective forest management planning by enabling the forest industry to prepare a single forest management plan that spans multiple management units. • Accelerate implementation of forest policy changes by shifting approval of amendments to the regulated forest manuals from LGIC to the MNR Minister. • Improve compliance tool by extending Administrative Monetary Penalties to include Permit to Remove trees.

Streamlining Through Technical Changes

Initiative	Current State	Future State
<i>Species Conservation Act (SCA) and updates to related legislation (MECP)</i>	The <i>Species Conservation Act</i> (SCA) was introduced in spring 2025 to modernize how the province manages projects that affect species-at-risk. By shifting to a registration-first approach, the legislation is designed to streamline approvals while maintaining strong environmental protections and enforcement. Before the SCA can take effect, it will need to replace references to the <i>Endangered Species Act</i> in existing laws. Ontario is proposing amendments to the SCA to ensure the language is clear and consistent, including explaining when the minister can issue a habitat protection order and clarify that one of the purposes of the SCA is to protect species at risk. The proposed updates to legislation (such as <i>the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, 1994</i>) will replace references to the ESA with the new SCA.	Once implemented, the SCA will provide a clear, modernized approach to species protection by allowing proponents to follow a streamlined registration-first approach while maintaining strong environmental safeguards. The SCA will also support the province's efforts to enable faster development to help Ontario's industries thrive, respond to trade issues like U.S. tariffs, and support the long-term strength and security of the province and its economy.
Technical and Consequential Amendments to the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> (MCM)	There is an incorrect reference to investigations with a section that deals with the Minister's inspection powers in the English version of the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i>. The Act also references an outdated trade agreement.	Amendment would make the language consistent with French version of the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> and would reflect the current trade agreement. These amendments do not change policy intent.

Support for Workers & Buy Local

Ontario is introducing legislative and regulatory changes to make it easier to work across Canada and buy and sell goods. This positions Ontario as a destination for innovation and growth, rooted in local talent and entrepreneurship.



Support for Workers & Buy Local

Initiative	Current State	Future State
Expanding labour mobility through “As of Right” (MOH)	Ontario’s “As of Right” rules currently apply to individuals from four health professions (nurses, physicians, respiratory therapists and medical laboratory technologists) who are registered in another province or territory, and who are in good standing with their home jurisdiction. These rules also apply to fully qualified American-licensed nurses and physicians. “As of Right” rules allow those individuals to work in Ontario for up to six months, while they apply for registration with their Ontario health regulatory college.	Ontario’s “As of Right” rules will apply to an additional 16 regulated health professions, allowing more Canadian-registered health professionals, in good standing, to work in Ontario immediately, for up to six months, while they apply for registration with their Ontario health regulatory College. The 16 additional health professions are: Audiologists/Speech-Language Pathologists, Chiropodists, Dental Hygienists, Dental Technologists, Dentists, Denturists, Dietitians, Medical Radiation and Imaging Technologists, Midwives, Occupational Therapists, Opticians, Optometrists, Pharmacists/Pharmacy Technicians, Physician Assistants, Physiotherapists and Psychologists.
Expanding labour mobility through automatic recognition (MOH)	Canadian-registered physicians or nurses must apply for an Ontario certificate of registration, submit documentation that demonstrates they meet permitted registration requirements, such as holding professional liability insurance	A first-in-Canada approach that will automatically recognize Canadian-registered nurses and physicians who are in good standing and of good character in their home jurisdiction. This is achieved by removing documentation requirements, cutting duplicative requirements, and issuing certificates of registration within two business days. In addition to legislative changes, work is ongoing with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario and the College of Nurses of Ontario on reducing fees and administrative requirements for those using automatic recognition.

Support for Workers & Buy Local

Initiative	Current State	Future State
Expanding labour mobility through “As of Right” (MLITSD)	Starting January 1, 2026, certified workers from other provinces or territories (e.g., architects, engineers, teachers) can work in Ontario as deemed certified for up to six months under the new “As of Right” process. However, many authorizing statutes for regulatory authorities do not clearly recognize the “deemed certified” status, creating enforcement and compliance gaps.	Certified workers from across Canada can start working in Ontario faster, ensuring that regulatory authorities have clarity to enforce deemed certification under the “As of Right” process. Technical amendments to the <i>Ontario Labour Mobility Act, 2009</i> will ensure deemed certified individuals are treated as certified under relevant regulatory statutes, including for enforcement. These technical amendments support implementation of initiatives under Bill 2: the <i>Protect Ontario through Free Trade within Canada Act, 2025</i>.
Local procurement of vehicle fleets for the broader public sector, OPS, including Ontario Provincial Police and municipalities (MPBDSP, MTO)	Manufacturing workers in Ontario, including those in the auto industry, are already feeling the impact of President Trump's tariffs, including job losses that are the direct result of the economic uncertainty he has caused. Key actions: • Create a “Made-in-Ontario” vehicle policy for the Ontario Public Service, broader public sector and for municipalities. • Undertake specific actions to promote buying domestic products particularly in public capital infrastructure projects	Ontario will consult on a policy to support Ontario's domestic automobile industry and protect auto sector jobs by leveraging the purchasing power of the public sector.