

Public Works

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peelregion.ca

May 16, 2025

Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
College Park, 777 Bay St, 18th Floor
Toronto, ON
M7A 1S5

Re: Special Economic Zones Act, 2025 (ERO 025-0391)

To Whom It May Concern:

Peel Region appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed new law called the Special Economic Zones Act (SEZA), 2025 as part of *Bill 5, Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025*. Peel Region staff generally supports efforts to move projects faster and provide one-window access to services.

PEEL REGION STAFF COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSAL

Peel staff appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on matters of Regional interests within the context of Peel's current roles and responsibilities, which include being service manager for housing and early years and child care, regional roads, waste management, and water and wastewater. The following comments and recommendations are provided by Peel Region staff. If additional comments are provided at the direction of Peel Regional Council, they will be forwarded to the Ministry for consideration.

Similar to Minister's Zoning Orders, Special Economic Zones (SEZs) could provide another valuable tool, which when used strategically, could help achieve community and economic benefits such as affordable housing, public service facilities, and encourage job growth.

Below are Peel's comments for consideration as enactment of the legislation is considered:

- Since SEZs have the benefit of reduced requirements and moving projects forward faster, there is an opportunity for requiring additional community benefits, such as a certain percentage of units being sold at prices that are affordable to low or moderate income households (consistent with the definition in the *Provincial Planning Statement, 2024*), a contribution of land or units for affordable and/or non-market housing, rough-ins for additional residential units (ARUs), and/or a contribution to housing initiatives.
- For mixed-use and non-residential uses in special economic zones, conditions could include co-location with public service facilities such as licensed child-care and early years centres.
- Establishing a process to consult and coordinate with municipalities and service providers prior to designating a SEZA is critical so the Region (and other service

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providers) can plan the necessary infrastructure to support development in the SEZA and to coordinate with other projects in the area.

- As drafted, a SEZA has the potential to override the legal jurisdiction of Peel Region, a SEZA could be a stronger tool than a Ministerial Zoning Order. The legislation should be drafted to be clear that municipalities can continue to collect development charges, water connection fees, and property taxes within a designated SEZ.

Peel Region respectfully requests that the Ministry consider the staff comments provided herein to inform its decisions on the approach. Should the proposal advance, Peel Region looks forward to participating in the consultation on draft regulations and providing further input on the criteria for designating the boundary of a SEZA, and the definitions of a trusted proponent, and a designated project.

I would be pleased to provide any clarifications or additional comments on these matters.

Yours Respectfully,



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