

ERO 026-0300 Submission: Climate and Local Governance Considerations for Bill 98, Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026

Climate Action Newmarket Aurora is submitting several climate and local governance considerations regarding Bill 98, Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026. We respectfully request that this submission be entered into the public record.

It is essential that this legislation does not unintentionally weaken the local leadership that is helping communities grow in a responsible and climate resilient way. Key considerations are outlined below.

1. Protecting Local Climate Action

Municipalities such as Newmarket have been advancing practical climate solutions, including green development standards, low emissions building approaches, and transit oriented planning that reduces community wide emissions. These efforts reflect local realities and community needs.

As Bill 98 moves forward, municipalities should retain the flexibility to design and implement these measures. Streamlined approvals and standardized planning approaches, while well intentioned, could limit the ability to require energy efficient buildings, climate resilient infrastructure, and effective stormwater systems.

Maintaining this local capacity is essential to ensuring that growth aligns with York Region and municipal climate commitments.

2. Infrastructure Capacity and Climate Resilience

Across York Region, including Newmarket and Aurora, infrastructure capacity, particularly water and wastewater, remains a key constraint in meeting growth targets. Regional planning documents show that capital needs are outpacing available funding, with development charge revenues not keeping pace with rising costs.

If growth approvals proceed faster than infrastructure delivery, communities may struggle to build housing in a sustainable and resilient way. Gaps in water and wastewater investment can affect stormwater management, increase flood risks, and lead to more energy intensive solutions over time.

Aligning growth with infrastructure readiness is critical. Bill 98 can support this by ensuring municipalities are able to coordinate development with these foundational systems.

3. Transportation and Sustainable Mobility

The Bill's focus on transportation presents an opportunity, but it requires alignment with local priorities. In York Region, municipalities are working toward transit oriented communities, expanded active transportation networks, and complete streets that reduce emissions and improve quality of life.

This direction is reinforced by the federal government's recently announced transit funding agreement, which emphasizes long term investment in public transit, housing enabling infrastructure, and complete communities. Together, these commitments reflect a shared objective across governments to link growth with sustainable mobility.

Without alignment, accelerated processes or standardized approaches could unintentionally favour road expansion over transit and active transportation. Supporting municipal leadership helps ensure transportation investments advance both mobility and climate goals.

4. Regional Planning Coordination

Municipalities such as Aurora and Newmarket rely on coordinated regional planning to integrate housing, infrastructure, and climate objectives. These collaborative frameworks support consistency in emissions reduction, green infrastructure, and stormwater management.

It is important that Bill 98 respects and maintains these regional relationships rather than replacing them with uniform approaches that may not reflect local conditions.

Recommendations

To align Bill 98 with sustainable growth and long term resilience, we recommend:

- Preserve municipal climate leadership by protecting the ability to adopt and implement local green development standards
- Strengthen infrastructure coordination and support for water, wastewater, stormwater, and transit systems
- Maintain meaningful consultation and local input to ensure community needs and environmental standards continue to be reflected

Top Sources

1. York Region Official Plan and infrastructure planning
[Regional Official Plan](#)
2. Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund and climate adaptation resources
[Sustainable Communities, Stronger Canada](#)
3. Government of Canada public transit funding and housing enabling infrastructure
[Zero-emission public transit for York Region | Prime Minister of Canada](#)