

# Enbridge Feedback on the Proposed Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026

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## *About Enbridge Gas Inc.*

*Enbridge Gas is Canada's largest natural gas storage, transmission and distribution company based in Ontario, with more than 175 years of service to customers. The distribution business provides safe, affordable, reliable energy to about 3.9 million homes, businesses and industries in Ontario and is supporting the transition to a clean energy future through net-zero emissions targets and investments in innovative low-carbon energy solutions. With the recently announced acquisition of three gas utilities serving customers in five US states, Enbridge owns and operates the largest gas utility franchise in North America. The storage and transmission business offers a variety of storage and transportation services to customers at the Dawn Hub, the largest integrated underground storage facility in Canada and one of the largest in North America. Enbridge Gas is owned by Enbridge Inc., a Canadian-based leader in energy transportation and distribution.*

Learn more at [www.enbridgegas.com](http://www.enbridgegas.com).

## Introduction

Enbridge Gas Inc. (Enbridge) commends the Government of Ontario (Government) for its leadership in introducing the *Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026* (Bill 98) which we believe streamlines requirements to build homes by removing barriers slowing the construction of housing and infrastructure across the province and reinforcing the primacy of the Ontario Building Code (OBC). Enbridge appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback and remains committed to delivering the reliable, affordable, and scalable energy needed to support Ontario's housing and economic objectives.

## Executive Summary

Enbridge supports the changes to the Planning Act, City of Toronto Act, 2006, Building Code Act, 1992 and Municipal Act, 2001 proposed within Bill 98, that have the effect of:

- Removing municipal authority to require certain mandatory Enhanced Development Standards (EDS) at the lot level, outside of buildings (e.g., green development standards), that are not specifically required for health or safety (e.g., stormwater management).
- Providing even greater clarity that green building/construction standards are voluntary and cannot be imposed by municipalities.

Ontario stands at a critical juncture in its effort to streamline development approvals, reduce housing costs, and accelerate the delivery of affordable and accessible new housing for Ontarians. At a time when federal and provincial governments are focused on reducing internal trade barriers and unlocking housing potential, it's important that efforts at the municipal level align with, rather than hinder, these goals.

In addition, Enbridge supports the Government's direction via Bill 98 (and previously via Bills 60 and 17) to reinforce the primacy of the OBC and clarify municipal authority in this area. We believe that Bill 98 removes the remaining ambiguities which allowed municipalities to impose a patchwork of Green Development Standards (GDS) and other mandatory energy performance and equipment standards to both new construction and existing buildings, where applicable.

Localized initiatives often create conflicting or duplicative obligations, introduce uncertainty and delays for builders, and work against the very harmonization efforts Provinces and Territories are seeking to advance in respect to the Reconciliation Agreement on Construction Codes. In many cases, GDS are implemented without sufficient alignment with provincial energy planning objectives or a robust cost-benefit analysis demonstrating tangible benefits for homeowners relative to the often-incremental building requirements and costs.

Critical considerations of direct and indirect impacts, such as impacts on electricity demand, the costs and feasibility of expanding transmission and distribution infrastructure, and measurable greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions are frequently overlooked or insufficiently examined. This lack of integrated planning risks increasing housing costs and placing unnecessary strain on local electricity grids, and the provincial electricity system, while also potentially narrowing consumer energy choices at a time when housing affordability is already under significant pressure.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations identify additional measures through which future government legislation and regulation can help address the housing crisis by accelerating construction, improving affordability, preserving consumer energy choice, and reducing regulatory burden.

**Recommendation 1: Future harmonization and development of the Ontario Building Code should focus on health and safety while maintaining affordability.**

The Ontario Building Code (OBC) stands as a national model in its balance of energy efficiency, affordability, and practical construction standards. Developed through a rigorous, consultative process that considers both the costs and benefits, the OBC reflects a thoughtful approach to regulation that supports both industry and public policy goals. Updates to the 2024 OBC eliminated more than 1,700 technical discrepancies with the National Building Code (NBC), underscoring Ontario's leadership in harmonizing building standards with the NBC. Preserving the OBC as the single, mandatory framework for building construction and demolition ensures regulatory consistency while supporting the province's continued objective of accelerating housing supply.

As the Province considers updates to the OBC to further harmonize with the recently released 2025 National Model Codes (NMC), it's critical to avoid ideology driven requirements that could result in energy outcomes that could undermine affordability and harm Ontario's manufacturing base (including steel and cement), from the adoption of uncosted policy driven objectives with no demonstrated benefit to Ontarians. This includes the introduction of operational greenhouse gas requirements within the 2025 NMC and the planned introduction of embodied greenhouse gas requirements within the 2030 NMC. Enbridge believes that the 2025 NMC should be repealed and that 2030 NMC development should be paused until affordability, evidenced-based decision-making, and a determination that code changes truly lead to the optimized outcomes are incorporated into the code development process. The Canadian Home Builders Association (CHBA) estimates that the 2025 NMC will add over \$100,000 to the construction cost of a typical new home if the highest tier is adopted<sup>1</sup>. Ongoing operational costs have not been considered within this costing analysis.

Ontario's approach to adopting the 2025 National Model Codes must prioritize affordability, evidence-based analysis, and real, demonstrable benefits for Ontarians. Proceeding without a clear understanding of cost impacts and system-wide consequences risks higher housing prices, increased operating costs, and unintended harm to key domestic industries. Enbridge is committed to supporting the Government of Ontario's harmonization activities.

**Recommendation 2: Continued reinforcement of the OBC as the sole mandatory framework for building in the Province of Ontario:**

Enbridge supports the government's Bill 98 updates to address and eliminate remaining ambiguities that permitted the application of mandatory Green Development Standards (GDS) and Municipal Retrofit Mandates. These updates clarify the limits of municipal authority over building equipment and protect existing building owners from prescribed equipment changes that could adversely affect system resiliency and consumer energy choice. Municipalities that previously had mandatory GDS in place should clearly communicate that these standards are no longer required and, where necessary, repeal the associated by-laws.

Municipalities are increasingly proposing Building Emission Performance Standards (BEPS) to drive reductions in energy use and GHG emissions from existing buildings. These policies set performance targets, typically tied to energy efficiency or emissions intensity, that buildings must meet within specified timelines. Many developing BEPS by-laws are designed in a way that makes electrification the primary pathway for compliance. This approach risks limiting consumer choice, reducing access to affordable energy solutions, and imposing costly expenditures on households and businesses already facing cost-of-living pressures.

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<sup>1</sup> Canadian Home Builders' Association, *Pause All Things Codes: A White Paper* (March 2026), online: Canadian Home Builders' Association, [available here](#).

Municipalities are also proposing penalties for non-compliance with BEPS targets, which could place additional financial strain on building owners and tenants.

Enbridge supports the amendments in Bill 98 to the Building Code Act, City of Toronto Act, and the Planning Act, to remove municipal authority to implement bylaws that are out of alignment with provincial goals and policy including those that solely “*prescribe construction standards for the protection or conservation of the environment*”. Enbridge interprets this change to include the removal of municipal authority to implement mandatory retrofit mandates and appliance standards over and above the Ontario Building Code, however, if this is not the case, we recommend the Government of Ontario further amend section 35 of the *Building Code Act* to clarify that a municipality cannot use its broad powers under the *Municipal Act, 2001* to pass by-laws with respect to “..materials, appliances, systems and equipment installed in buildings”. This language, which matches language included within the OBC, clarifies that municipalities are not able to enact or enforce unique building standards that conflict with the OBC, ensuring consistency and clarity across the province. In addition, Enbridge suggests that the definition of construct, included within section 35 of the Building Code Act, is amended to include equipment. For example, the definition of construct could be amended to the following:

*" Under the Building Code Act 1992 “construct” means “to do anything in the erection, installation, extension or material alteration or repair of a building (including equipment upgrades) and includes the installation of a building unit fabricated or moved from elsewhere”.*

## Conclusion

Enbridge supports the Government’s direction to reinforce the primacy of the OBC and clarify municipal authority via the “Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure” Act (Bill 98). Clear consistent regulation is essential to unlocking the infrastructure and investment required to meet Ontario’s ambitious housing and affordability targets and economic growth objectives. Enbridge stands ready to work in partnership with the Government of Ontario to advance an integrated energy and development strategy – one that delivers growth, prosperity, resilience and opportunity for communities across the province.

For any further inquiries or additional information, please contact Jessica Maga, Manager, Government Affairs ([jessica.maga@enbridge.com](mailto:jessica.maga@enbridge.com)).