

DRAFT

Hello, my name is Don Young, I am the acting Secretary of FoSTRA, the Federation of South Toronto Residents Associations and I am here today on its behalf. I would like to start by thanking the Committee for hearing our submission on Bill 257. I will be addressing only Schedule 3 of the proposed legislation.

FoSTRA was formed on 23 February 2021, out of a growing frustration with the Progressive Conservative government's sidelining of meaningful public consultation, its blatant disregard for Toronto's needs, and its assault on local democracy and planning.

FoSTRA's boundaries stretch south of Bloor Street to Lake Ontario and the Toronto Islands, from the Don River to the Humber. They encompass five wards with some 400,000 citizens. FoSTRA is a non-partisan federation of residents and community associations that collaborate to:

- help shape the creation of good public policies at all levels of government,
- preserve and enhance the quality of life for Torontonians,
- promote neighborhood identity and vitality, and
- ensure responsible and respectful development within its boundaries.

The Federation's mandate will continue beyond the reign of this false-majority government – which was elected with less than 40% of the popular vote. For the present, the PC onslaught of pro-development, anti-democratic legislation is making local control and planning increasingly irrelevant.

Ever since the PCs took power on 6 June 2018, Ontario – and especially Toronto – has suffered a long list of provincial overreaches and abuses of power but Schedule 3 of this completely unrelated Bill 257 tops them all. What does the creation of **super** MZOs (Ministerial Zoning Orders) have to do with *Supporting Broadband and Infrastructure Expansion*?

The current government:

- is not content to bombard the province with 40 MZOs in 32 months – one-and-a-quarter MZOs per month. (In the 14 years prior to the PC regime, the average was one per year);
- is not satisfied with 'enhanced' MZOs, which stripped municipalities of any say in how MZO lands within their jurisdictions are used;
- now introduces Bill 257's Schedule 3 to retroactively remove **all** provisions of its own Provincial Policy Statement passed in 2020.

Not only is this a blatant attempt to squash lawsuits already lodged under the Ontario Planning Act, but it also aims to remove all future barriers and any possibility of lawsuits resulting from its MZOs.

In short, the Ford government seeks to make legal that which was previously illegal and use its false majority to usurp the authority of the legislature and give itself dictatorial powers.

Let us just remind ourselves of the provisions in the 2020 Policy Statement, and I quote directly: “The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) is a consolidated statement of the government’s policies on land use planning. It gives provincial policy direction on key land use planning issues that affect communities, such as:

- efficient use and management of land and infrastructure
- the provision of sufficient housing to meet changing needs, including affordable housing
- the protection of the environment and resources including farmland, natural resources (for example, wetlands and woodlands) and water
- opportunities for economic development and job creation
- the appropriate transportation, water, sewer and other infrastructure needed to accommodate current and future needs
- the protection of people, property and community resources by directing development away from natural or human-made hazards, such as flood prone areas”

All of these directions will be removed if Bill 257’s Schedule 3 is passed. The legislation proposes the following:

“The *Planning Act* is amended to provide that ministerial zoning orders made under section 47 are not required and are deemed to never have been required to be consistent with policy statements issued under subsection 3 (1).”

Specifically, “Clause 3 (5) (a) does not apply and is deemed never to have applied . . .” And Clause 3 (5) states: “A decision of the council of a municipality, a local board, a planning board, a minister of the Crown and a ministry, board, commission or agency of the government, including the Tribunal, in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter . . . shall be consistent with the policy statements issued under subsection (1) . . .”

If this passes, it will mean, for example, that the Foundry site, which the Ford government secretly agreed to sell to an unknown developer in a no-bid backroom deal, will have no conditions attached other than a hidden, lucrative agreement for both the buyer and seller. The Duffin Creek wetland is still an issue. Who knows what Schedule 3 will mean in the future?

FoSTRA demands that Schedule 3 be struck from the unrelated Bill 257 before passage. If not, we would support a challenge in the courts.