



BUILDING A GREATER GTA
Building Industry and Land
Development Association

The following recommendations were shared with the Government of Ontario. These recommendations provide BILD's perspective on construction activities that should be considered as the government implements return to work strategies. BILD is in regular contact with government officials to provide further context on these activities.

Supporting Ontario's Job and Recovery Strategy **April 20, 2020**

BILD recognizes that the province will be cautious in its consideration to opening up work sites and associated activities further until they are confident that in doing so it will not facilitate the spread of COVID-19, which we as an industry support.

BILD applauds the provincial government for the commendable work and steps that you continue to take so that residents and workers of this province feel safe during this unprecedented time.

Our industry accepts the responsibility that we have an important role in curbing the spread of COVID-19, and during Ontario's State of Emergency it is important that we do our part to protect workers, contractors, suppliers, our customers and their families by adhering to Ontario Public Health rules, Ministry of Labour guidelines, and by proactively enhancing the health and safety conditions on our active jobsites. These are unprecedented times and our industry is committed to doing its part to keep people safe during Ontario's COVID-19 State of Emergency.

We are committed to ensuring that construction operations be maintained in a properly controlled work environment establishing safe practices on site, where the amount of construction work during certain stages can be phased, and where workers will have regard for physical distancing measures and any other matters that are essential to meet Ministry of Labour requirements. Many BILD members have gone over and above to make sure that they have stringent requirements and policies in place to adhere to these health and safety measures.

Recognizing the provincial commitment to the priority of housing and development, the financial significance of the construction sector on the economy, and the continued demand for housing and places of employment, we can collectively find ways to keep construction activity moving in a safe environment.

It is also important to recognize that when this crisis comes to an end, we will need to be in a position to continue delivering housing supply and jobs. By allowing more infrastructure and construction projects to move forward now, we can be in that position.

The season for completing certain servicing, such as earthworks and roadworks in the GTA is short. Many of our members have indicated that losing the month of April will account for roughly fifteen percent of their season. Therefore, it is vital that the industry commence work as soon as

weather permits. If we lose seasonal opportunities, the economic and social impacts of this crisis will be extended much longer, and the industry will be at risk of losing an entire construction season, delaying the delivery of homes and places of employment for potentially up to twelve months.

That being said as discussions occur to reopen Ontario's economy BILD wanted to share examples of the types of activities that could be undertaken that would both ensure physical distancing be maintained as well as facilitate the ongoing supply of housing.

In this context, when the province is in a position to broaden scope of essential activities the following be considered:

- Recognizing that every operator is in its own machine, separated by hundreds of metres from each other without any physical contact, and that new policies and protocols are in place as per the Emergency Order, that the province permit earthworks to proceed. Earthworks are, in many instances, the first mobilization on any type of site and without it, all future projects have the potential to be put on hold since no other activity can occur until this stage is complete.
- In relation, the province allow for site and land-servicing projects where new, pending or existing permits are available to commence or continue critical infrastructure works on private lands (new residential, industrial, commercial and institutional developments). Underground servicing, the installation of storm water controls, water pipes, sanitary sewer pipes, road construction including curbs and sidewalk, landscape works, trails, parks and utilities (telecommunications, water, gas, electricity, etc.) are necessary for the activation of new homes and eventual occupancy of residents. There is also a public safety element which requires the maintenance or completion of these essential works.
- That the industry be permitted to continue to manage sites where new, existing and pending permits are available to keep these sites safe from erosion and water run-off such as grading, storm water ponds and channel construction, where again, machine operators are safely secure in their operating vehicles, where labour is outside, separated and not hand in hand, and where construction is highly sensitive to good seasonal weather.
- Work be permitted to commence/continue where new, pending and existing below grade permits are in place, and that below grade construction be added to the list of essential services, recognizing that a safe and physically distant work environment can be maintained with the number of trades being limited on site, and that this stage is key for the continuance of the entire project.