Alberta's proposed Expedited 120-Day Approvals Act (Bill 30)

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Background

In March 2026, Alberta's Premier and Minister of Energy and Minerals attended CERAWeek, one of the world's leading energy conferences, where they signaled the Government of Alberta's intention to accelerate the regulatory approval process and position the province as a reliable alternative to unstable global energy sources. Shortly thereafter, on April 14, 2026, the Government of Alberta tabled Bill 30, the *Expedited 120-Day Approvals Act* (Bill 30).

Regulatory approvals have long been identified as a source of uncertainty and delay for major projects in Alberta. If passed, Bill 30 will give the provincial cabinet the ability to fast-track regulatory approvals for certain major projects, with the primary goal of accelerating major project development in the energy, mining, and industrial sectors.

Key features of the *Expedited 120-Day Approvals Act*

At the heart of Bill 30 is the concept of a qualified project. Qualified project designation unlocks the Act's core benefit: a mandatory maximum timeline of 120 business days for decisions to be made on all required project approvals.

To apply for qualified project designation, a proponent must provide certain information to the Minister, including the following:

- a description of the project and its anticipated timeline;
- the minimum capital spending threshold;
- a list of required approvals;
- the status of any required environmental impact assessment reports under the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*; and
- the status of any planned, ongoing, or completed consultations with Indigenous communities.

Notably, Bill 30 does not alter or circumvent any Indigenous consultation or environmental impact assessment required for a project. Instead, the status of these

activities will be explicitly considered as part of the application process. Applicants will have to demonstrate that environmental impact assessment and Indigenous consultation processes have reached an appropriately advanced stage before a project can be expedited under the proposed legislation.

Factors considered for designation

When deciding whether to approve or deny an application for qualified project designation, the Minister may consider a broad range of factors, including:

- whether the project strategically aligns with the Government's priorities, goals and outcomes;
- whether the project is of strategic importance to Alberta's economy through increased economic activity, investment, jobs, and Government revenue;
- whether the project benefits outweigh any residual impacts;
- whether the project's minimum capital spending threshold exceeds $250 million; and
- whether the project advances national and provincial security by recognizing provincial autonomy.

Approval, continuance or rescission of designation

If a proponent's application is approved, an order will be issued designating the project as a qualified project and identifying all required approvals. These orders will trigger the mandatory 120-business day timeline within which all listed approval decisions must be made.

While Bill 30 mandates that approval decisions be made within 120 business days, it does not mandate all approvals be granted. Proponents should not treat designation as a shortcut past substantive regulatory requirements, but rather as a mechanism to impose decisional discipline on regulators.

Notably, the proposed legislation does not currently contemplate any enforcement mechanisms applicable to regulators that fail to make approval decisions within the mandated timeline. If enacted, future regulations made under the legislation may introduce accountability measures or procedural consequences to backstop the timeline requirements, but such regulations are not guaranteed.

Bill 30 also contemplates the possibility that additional approval requirements may arise following the initial qualified project designation and allows for a continuation of the designation where necessary.

However, proponents should be aware that designation is not irrevocable. If the project is materially affected by extraordinary circumstances, the qualified project designation can be rescinded. Bill 30 does not define "extraordinary circumstances," leaving this up to ministerial discretion.

Conclusion

Ultimately, the Government of Alberta expects the acceleration of project approvals to lead to increased investments, bolstered production, and greater access to international markets.

While introducing Bill 30 in the Alberta Legislature, Minister Brian Jean indicated that in the past year approximately $12 billion in capital investments from Canadian-based energy companies has been lost to the United States as a result of uncertain and inefficient approval processes. This piece of legislation is intended to signal the province's commitment to getting important major projects built in Alberta.

BLG will continue to monitor the progress of Bill 30 as it receives further consideration by the Alberta legislature and will provide further updates as they become available. Our infrastructure, construction, and major projects lawyers are available to answer questions about how Alberta's Bill 30 may affect those in the industry.

Reach out to any of the key contacts below for assistance.

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