

Review of proposed policies for a new provincial planning policy instrument.

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Posted by	Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
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This proposal was originally published on April 10, 2024 with the comment period ending on May 10, 2024. On April 12, 2024 the comment period was extended to May 12, 2024. This proposal notice was updated on April 12, 2024 to attach the French version of the proposed Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 that is available under “Supporting Materials” below.

This consultation closes at
11:59 p.m. on:
May 12, 2024

Proposal summary

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) is seeking feedback on an updated proposed Provincial Planning Statement that

incorporates feedback received through the previous consultation on the proposed Provincial Planning Statement ([ERO #019-6813](https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-6813) (<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-6813>)).

Proposal details

Context

The Provincial Policy Statement is issued under the Planning Act and is the primary provincial land use planning policy document, applying across Ontario. A Place to Grow is a growth plan issued under the Places to Grow Act, 2005. It provides a more detailed framework for where and how growth should be accommodated in the Greater Golden Horseshoe and it works with the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, and the Niagara Escarpment Plan. All provincial plans are to be read in conjunction with the Provincial Policy Statement.

Under the Planning Act, planning decisions shall be consistent with policy statements such as the Provincial Policy Statement and shall conform with provincial plans like A Place to Grow.

In 2022, the province initiated a review on approaches for leveraging the housing supportive policies of the Provincial Policy Statement and A Place to Grow, removing barriers and continuing to protect the environment through a streamlined province-wide land use planning policy framework. ([ERO #019-6177](https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-6177) (<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-6177>))

The feedback received from this review contributed to the development of a proposed Provincial Planning Statement. From April 6 to August 4, 2023, the province undertook consultation on a draft of the proposed Provincial Planning Statement ([ERO #019-6813](https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-6813) (<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-6813>)) seeking input on

a streamlined province-wide land use planning policy framework that incorporated the housing-focused policies of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (Provincial Policy Statement) and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019 (A Place to Grow). Through consultation, the province elicited feedback on policies grouped under five themes:

1. Generate an appropriate housing supply
2. Make land available for development
3. Provide infrastructure to support development
4. Balance housing with resources
5. Implementation

ERO #019-6813 (<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-6813>)

provides an overview of issues raised through the 2023 consultation.

After seeking input, the province has developed an updated proposed Provincial Planning Statement, with new and updated policies supporting increased intensification (e.g., around transit and redevelopment of low-density commercial plazas and strip malls), scoping protections for employment areas, and promoting a range and mix of housing options, including housing for students and seniors.

Proposal

Based on feedback received during the previous consultation on the proposed Provincial Planning Statement (**ERO #019-6813 (<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-6813>)**), the province is proposing new and updated policies for feedback. The updated proposed Provincial Planning Statement consists of policies grouped under five pillars:

1. Generate increased housing supply

The proposed policies would:

- Require municipalities to provide a range and mix of housing options with an expanded definition to include multi-unit types (laneway, garden suites, low and mid-rise apartments) and typologies (affordable, multi-generational, seniors, student housing) (updated)
- Require municipalities to support general intensification (e.g., through the redevelopment of plazas and shopping malls for mixed-use residential development) (updated), and encourage municipalities to establish and implement minimum targets for intensification in built-up areas (new)
- Identify large and fast-growing municipalities and encourage them to plan for 50 people and jobs per hectare in designated growth areas (updated)
- Encourage municipalities to establish phasing strategies to align growth with infrastructure needs in designated growth areas (new)
- Direct municipalities to meet minimum density targets for all major transit station areas with encouragement to promote supportive land uses and built forms, including affordable, accessible, and equitable housing (updated)
- Require municipalities to plan for intensification on lands that are adjacent to existing and planned frequent transit corridors (new)
- Encourage all municipalities to focus growth and development in strategic growth areas to achieve higher density outcomes (updated)
 - Remove the requirement for large and fast-growing municipalities to identify and set out density targets (updated)
 - Remove direction for planning for urban growth centres, with simplified direction to plan for downtowns as strategic growth areas (updated)
 - Require municipalities to collaborate with housing service managers to ensure land use policies and

housing policies are aligned, including addressing homelessness and facilitating development of a full range of housing options and affordability levels to meet local needs

- Require municipalities to establish local targets for affordable housing (updated) based on reinstated definitions for affordable housing and low and moderate income households (updated)

Require municipalities to collaborate with publicly-supported post-secondary institutions on early and integrated planning for student housing, and encourage collaboration on the development of student housing strategies (new)

During the 2023 consultations on the proposed Provincial Planning Statement, the government heard concerns from agricultural stakeholders regarding the proposed policies that would allow severances on farmland, and have proposed the following to protect agricultural viability:

- Not carry forward proposed policies permitting lot creation in prime agricultural areas (updated)
- Require municipalities to direct development to rural settlement areas, and provide more flexibility for municipalities to service residential development in rural settlement areas (updated)
- Permit more housing on farms to support farmers, farm families and farm workers without creating new lots, through enhanced policy and criteria supporting additional residential units (updated)

2. Make land available for development

The proposed policies would:

- Require municipalities to base growth forecasts on Ministry of Finance population projections (new), with transition for municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe to continue to use forecasts issued by the province through Schedule 3 of A Place to Grow until more current forecasts are available to 2051, as informed by guidance provided by the province (updated)
 - Guidance for projecting population and related land requirements may be updated after finalization of the proposed Provincial Planning Statement to reflect final policy direction and considering feedback received.
- Require municipalities to plan for a minimum 20-year horizon but not more than 30 years (updated), maintain a 15-year residential land supply and maintain land with servicing capacity for a 3-year supply of residential units
- Provide a simplified and flexible approach for municipalities to undertake settlement area boundary changes at any time, with requirements for municipalities to consider additional criteria related to need for the expansion to accommodate growth, infrastructure capacity, phasing of growth, achievement of housing objectives, consideration of alternative locations to prime agricultural areas, and impacts on agricultural systems (updated)
- Permit municipalities to identify a new settlement area only where it has been demonstrated that the infrastructure and public service facilities needed to support development are planned or available (new)
- Require municipalities to plan for and protect employment areas based on a definition of employment areas that would align with the Planning Act definition of “area of employment” amended through Bill 97 but not yet proclaimed

- Require municipalities to address transition and land use compatibility between employment areas and sensitive land uses (updated)
- Discontinue provincially significant employment zones issued under A Place to Grow and require municipalities to use the policies in the proposed Provincial Planning Statement to provide protection for employment areas
- Require municipalities to protect airports from land uses that may cause a potential aviation safety hazard (updated)
- Encourage municipalities to preserve employment areas close to goods movement corridors, coordinating across administrative boundaries
- Allow municipalities to consider employment area conversions at any time to support the forms of development and job creation that suit the local context, under the condition that sufficient employment land is available to accommodate employment growth (updated)

3. Provide infrastructure to support development

The proposed policies would:

- Require municipalities to plan for water and wastewater infrastructure, and waste management systems, and require large and fast-growing municipalities, and encourage others, to undertake watershed planning (updated)
- Require all municipalities and to consider allocation or potentially reallocation of unused servicing capacity to accommodate projected needs for housing (updated)
- Require municipalities to protect corridors for major infrastructure, such as highways, transit and transmission systems and encourage municipalities to provide opportunities for the development of energy supply and

storage to accommodate current and projected needs (updated)

- Require municipalities to integrate land use planning and transportation planning and encourage freight-supportive and transit-supportive development to move goods and people
- Require municipalities and school boards to integrate planning for schools with planning for growth, and promote opportunities to locate schools near parks and open space (updated)

4. Balance housing with resources

The proposed policies would:

- Require municipalities to use an agricultural systems approach (updated) and to designate specialty crop areas and prime agricultural areas
- Require municipalities to maintain minimum separation distances between livestock operations and houses
- Require municipalities in central and southern Ontario to identify natural heritage systems and require municipalities across the province to protect provincially-significant natural heritage features and areas
- Require municipalities to protect water resources and features and require large and fast-growing municipalities (updated) and encourage others, to undertake watershed planning in collaboration with conservation authorities (updated)
- Require municipalities to conserve cultural and archaeological resources, and promote proactive strategies for conserving built heritage resources
- Require municipalities to direct development outside of hazardous lands and sites in collaboration with conservation authorities (updated)

- Require municipalities to prepare for the impacts of a changing climate through land use planning, develop approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality
- Require municipalities to facilitate access to aggregate resources close to market and to protect minerals, petroleum and mineral aggregate resources

5. Implementation

The proposed policies would:

- Align with recent legislative amendments
- Require municipalities to undertake early engagement with Indigenous communities and coordinate with them on land use planning matters to facilitate knowledge-sharing, support consideration of Indigenous interests in land use decision-making and support the identification of potential impacts of decisions on the exercise of Aboriginal or treaty rights
- Affirm that efficient land-use patterns contribute to increased equitable access to housing in strategic growth areas (updated), employment, and transportation, and encourage municipalities to apply an equity lens on planning matters and engage stakeholders early in the process
- Encourage coordination, particularly on intermunicipal topics (updated)

The Province is also proposing an approach to implementation of the new document, if approved. These include the proposed approach to the following:

- The effective date would be the date specified under the Planning Act. To provide municipalities and other planning authorities an opportunity to understand and adapt to the

policy changes, the ministry is proposing to release the final policies for a short period of time before they take effect. The Planning Act requires official plans to be revised every five years (or every ten years after a new official plan). The intention is that official plans would be updated as necessary to implement these new policies at the time of their ordinary review cycle.

- However, should the Provincial Planning Statement come into effect, decisions on land use planning matters made by planning authorities are required to be consistent.

Should the province adopt the policies, the province would consequentially revoke the Provincial Policy Statement and A Place to Grow, as well as amend regulations under the Places to Grow Act, 2005. The province is considering amending O.Reg. 311/06 (Transitional Matters – Growth Plans) to revoke sections 2.0.1, 2.1, 3, 3.1, 4. and 5.1 and O.Reg. 416/05 (Growth Plan Areas) to revoke section 2. Transition could potentially be provided for pertinent matters using a new transition regulation created under the Planning Act. A future consultation would be conducted to identify any pertinent matters.

The province welcomes your feedback on the proposed policy concepts and proposed wording in the land use policy document. When reviewing the document, some questions for consideration may include:

1. What are your overall thoughts on the updated proposed Provincial Planning Statement?
2. What are your thoughts on the ability of updated proposed policies to generate appropriate housing supply, such as: intensification policies, including the redevelopment of underutilized, low density shopping malls and plazas; major transit station area policies; housing options, rural

housing and affordable housing policies; and student housing policies?

3. What are your thoughts on the ability of the updated proposed policies to make land available for development, such as: forecasting, land supply, and planning horizon policies; settlement area boundary expansions policies; and employment area planning policies?
4. What are your thoughts on updated proposed policies to provide infrastructure to support development?
5. What are your thoughts on updated proposed policies regarding the conservation and management of resources, such as requirements to use an agricultural systems approach?
6. What are your thoughts on any implementation challenges with the updated proposed Provincial Planning Statement? What are your thoughts on the proposed revocations in O.Reg. 311/06 (Transitional Matters - Growth Plans) and O.Reg. 416/05 (Growth Plan Areas)?

Relationship to Greenbelt Plan

The province is proposing a consequential administrative amendment to the Greenbelt Plan so that that policies in the current Greenbelt Plan are maintained should the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and A Place to Grow be revoked.

This scoped policy change would maintain the existing Greenbelt Plan standards and clarifies that the existing policy connections in the Greenbelt Plan to the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and A Place to Grow remain in effect.
