

Review of proposed policies adapted from A Place to Grow and Provincial Policy Statement to form a new provincial planning policy instrument.

ERO.(Environmental Registry.of.Ontario) number	019-6813
Notice type	Policy
Act	Places to Grow Act, 2005
Posted by	Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Notice stage	Proposal
Proposal posted	April 6, 2023
Comment period	April 6, 2023 - June 5, 2023 (60 days) Open
Last updated	April 6, 2023

This consultation closes at 11:59 p.m.

on:

June 5, 2023

Proposal summary

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) is consulting on proposed policies for an integrated province-wide land use planning policy document. MMAH is seeking input on a proposed Provincial Planning Statement that takes policies from A Place to Grow and the Provincial Policy Statement to support the achievement of housing objectives.

Proposal details

Context

The Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS) and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (A Place to Grow) 2019 both provide comprehensive, integrated, whole-of-government policy direction on land use planning matters including:

- Growth management, housing and economic development;
- Infrastructure planning, including sewage, water and stormwater management services, transportation, transit, energy supply and corridor protection;
- Protection and management of resources, including prime agricultural areas, aggregates, natural heritage, water, and cultural heritage; and
- Protection of public health and safety, such as mitigating potential risks due to natural and human-made hazards.

Both policy documents aim to support the achievement of liveable communities, a thriving economy, a clean and healthy environment and social equity, improving the quality of life for all Ontarians.

The PPS 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. The Provincial plans build upon the policy foundation of the PPS, providing additional land use policy direction to address issues facing specific geographic areas of Ontario. All provincial plans are to be read in conjunction with the PPS.

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

Given the importance of the PPS and A Place to Grow in guiding land use planning decisions in Ontario, ensuring that the policy framework is housing-supportive is integral to the implementation of the Housing Supply Action Plan and meeting the target to construct 1.5 million new homes by 2031.

In 2022, the government initiated a review on approaches for leveraging the housing supportive policies of both documents, removing barriers and continuing to protect the environment through a streamlined province-wide land use planning policy framework.

The government received feedback on the following six themes:

- Residential land supply.
- Attainable housing supply and mix

- Growth management
- Environment and natural resources
- Community infrastructure
- Streamlined planning framework

The input and recommendations received from Indigenous communities, the public, municipalities and stakeholders helped shaped the development of streamlined and housing-focused, land use planning policies. ERO #019-6177 provides an overview of issues raised.

The Province is now seeking input on a proposed Provincial Planning Statement, that would replace the existing Provincial Policy Statement and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Proposal

Based on what the government has heard, the Province has combined the elements of A Place to Grow and the PPS into a new land use policy document that the Province is proposing for public feedback. Through this proposed new Provincial Planning Statement, the government is proposing policies grouped under five pillars:

- Generate an appropriate housing supply
- Make land available for development
- Provide infrastructure to support development
- Balance housing with resources
- Implementation

1. Generate an appropriate housing supply

The proposed policies would:

- Identify large/fast-growing municipalities, with specific directions to plan strategically for growth:
 - Establish and meet minimum density targets for: major transit station areas, other strategic growth area (e.g., nodes and corridors), urban growth centres (transitioned from A Place to Grow)
 - Encourage to plan for transit-supportive greenfield density targets
- 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 (multi-generational, student)

- Require all municipalities to implement intensification policies
- Provide flexibility for municipalities to allow for more residential development in rural settlements and multi-lot residential development on rural lands, including more servicing flexibility (e.g., leveraging capacity in the private sector servicing)
- Require municipalities to permit more housing on farms, including residential lot creation subject to criteria, additional residential units and housing for farm workers
- Require municipalities to align land use planning policies with housing policies, including addressing homelessness and facilitating development of a full range of housing options and affordability levels to meet local needs

2. Make land available for development

The proposed policies would:

- Provide flexibility for municipalities to use government or municipally established forecasts (at minimum), with a transition phase for municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe
- Require municipalities to plan for a minimum 25-year horizon, 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 expansions. Municipalities would be allowed to create new Settlement Areas and would not be required to demonstrate the need for expansion
- Require municipalities to plan for and protect industrial and manufacturing uses that are unsuitable for mixed use areas, using a more narrowly scoped definition of “area of employment” limited to these uses and preserving large, contiguous areas of land
- Encourage municipalities to preserve employment areas close to goods movement corridors, coordinating across administrative boundaries and consider opportunities to densify
- Provide municipalities with greater control over employment area conversions to support the forms of development and job creation that suit the local context

3. Provide infrastructure to support development

The proposed policies would:

- Require municipalities to plan for stormwater management, water and wastewater infrastructure, and waste management systems to accommodate growth
- Require municipalities to protect corridors for major infrastructure, such as highways, transit, transmission systems and encourage municipalities to provide opportunities for the development of energy supply to accommodate current and projected needs
- Require the integration of land use planning and transportation with encouragement for freight-supportive and transit-supportive development to move goods and people
- Require municipalities and school boards to integrate planning for schools and growth

4. Balance housing with resources

The proposed policies would:

- Require municipalities to designate specialty crop areas and prime agricultural areas, eliminating the requirement to use the provincially-mapped Agricultural System
- Require municipalities to protect specialty crop areas and maintain minimum separation distances between livestock operations and houses, and promote an agricultural systems approach to support the agri-food network
- Require municipalities to facilitate access to aggregate resources close to market and to protect minerals, petroleum and mineral aggregate resources
- Require municipalities to protect water resources and features and encourage watershed planning
- Update the cultural heritage policies to align with Ontario Heritage Act (OHA) amendments through Bill 108 and Bill 23, with a focus on conserving protected heritage properties
- Require municipalities to prepare for the impacts of a changing climate and develop approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality
- Require municipalities to direct development outside of hazardous lands and sites
- As of April 6, 2023, natural heritage policies and related definitions remain under consideration by the government. Once proposed policies and definitions are ready for review and input, they will be made

available through a separate posting on the Environmental Registry of Ontario. This posting (ERO# 019-6813) will be updated with a link to the relevant posting once it is available.

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, employment, parks 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

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

- Effective date and transition
- Timing for official plan updates
- Various matters specific to the Greater Golden Horseshoe

Should the government adopt the policies, the government would consequentially revoke the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and A Place to Grow, as well as amend regulations (O. Reg. 416/05 and O. Reg. 311/06) under the Places to Grow Act, 2005.

The government 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 thoughts on the policies that have been included from the PPS and A Place to Grow in the proposed policy document, including the proposed approach to implementation?
2. What are your thoughts on the proposed policy direction for large and fast-growing municipalities and other municipalities?

3. What are your thoughts regarding the proposed policies to generate housing supply, including an appropriate range and mix of housing options?
4. What are your thoughts on the proposed policies regarding the conservation of agriculture, aggregates, natural and cultural heritage resources?
5. What are your thoughts on the proposed policies regarding planning for employment?
6. Are there any other barriers to, or opportunities for, accelerating development and construction (e.g., federal regulations, infrastructure planning and approvals, private/public partnerships for servicing, provincial permitting, urban design guidelines, technical standards, zoning, etc.)?

Relationship to Greenbelt Plan (2017)

The government is proposing an administrative and housing keeping amendment to the Greenbelt Plan so that that policies in the current Greenbelt Plan are maintained should the PPS, 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 (2017) to the PPS, 2020 and A Place to Grow remain in effect.

Supporting materials

Related files

[Proposed Provincial Planning Statement, April 6 \(https://prod-environmental-registry.s3.amazonaws.com/2023-04/Proposed Provincial Planning Statement, April 6, 2023 - EN.pdf\)](https://prod-environmental-registry.s3.amazonaws.com/2023-04/Proposed Provincial Planning Statement, April 6, 2023 - EN.pdf)
pdf.(Portable Document Format file) 672.14 KB

[Proposed Approach to Implementation of the proposed Provincial Planning Statement \(https://prod-environmental-registry.s3.amazonaws.com/2023-04/Proposed Approach to Implementation, April 6, 2023 - EN.pdf\)](https://prod-environmental-registry.s3.amazonaws.com/2023-04/Proposed Approach to Implementation, April 6, 2023 - EN.pdf)
pdf.(Portable Document Format file) 175.92 KB

Related links

[More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan \(2019\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/more-homes-more-choice-ontarios-housing-supply-action-plan)
(<https://www.ontario.ca/page/more-homes-more-choice-ontarios-housing-supply-action-plan>)

[More Homes, Built Faster: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan 2022-2023](https://www.ontario.ca/page/more-homes-built-faster) (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/more-homes-built-faster>)

[Planning Act](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13) (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13>)

[Provincial Policy Statement, 2020](https://www.ontario.ca/page/provincial-policy-statement-2020)
(<https://www.ontario.ca/page/provincial-policy-statement-2020>)

[Places to Grow Act, 2005](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05p13) (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05p13>)

[A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019](https://www.ontario.ca/document/place-grow-growth-plan-greater-golden-horseshoe)
(<https://www.ontario.ca/document/place-grow-growth-plan-greater-golden-horseshoe>)

[Greenbelt Plan \(2017\)](https://www.ontario.ca/document/greenbelt-plan-2017) (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/greenbelt-plan-2017>)

View materials in person

Some supporting materials may not be available online. If this is the case, you can request to view the materials in person.

Get in touch with the office listed below to find out if materials are available.

Let us know what you think of our proposal.

Have questions? Get in touch with the contact person below. Please include the [ERO \(Environmental Registry of Ontario\)](#) number for this notice in your email or letter to the contact.

[Read our commenting and privacy policies.](/page/commenting-privacy) (</page/commenting-privacy>)

Comment

Submit by mail

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