
Subject: Proposed Changes to the Provincial Policy Statement

Report to: Planning and Economic Development Committee

Report date: Wednesday, October 9, 2019

Recommendations

1. That Report PDS 31-2019 **BE RECEIVED** for information;
2. That staff **BE DIRECTED** to continue to provide detailed comments on the Provincial initiatives under the “*More Homes, More Choice: Ontario’s Housing Supply Action Plan*”, and any associated matters, as warranted; and
3. That a copy of Report PDS 31-2019 **BE CIRCULATED** to local area municipal Planning Directors.

Key Facts

- This report provides an overview of proposed changes to the Provincial Policy Statement (“PPS”).
- On May 2, 2019, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (“MMAH”) announced the Housing Supply Action Plan (“Housing Plan”) concurrently with *Bill 108: More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019* (“Bill 108”).
- Earlier reports, PDS 26-2019 and PDS 28-2019, provide an overview and comments on legislative changes to planning-related matters through Bill 108. At the time of those reports, a revised draft PPS had not been released.
- On July 22, 2019, MMAH released the draft PPS and set October 21, 2019 as the consultation deadline.
- Staff prepared comments on the draft PPS for submission to the Environmental Registry of Ontario (“ERO”). A copy is attached as Appendix 1.

Financial Considerations

There are no financial considerations directly linked to this report.

The PPS changes may have a financial impact for the Region. The full cost and administrative burden cannot be determined without further details from the province on

additional consultation requirements and efforts to streamline planning application processes.

Analysis

The Province's Housing Plan

On May 2, 2019, the MMAH announced its Housing Plan:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/more-homes-more-choice-ontarios-housing-supply-action-plan>.

The stated intent of the Housing Plan is to cut red tape, increase supply and choice to ultimately make housing more affordable. The Housing Plan includes amendments to 13 Acts – through Bill 108 – as well as changes to the Building Code and the introduction of the 2019 *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (in effect May 16, 2019).

The amendments and regulations enacted through Bill 108, and the changes to the Building Code and *Growth Plan*, were outlined in earlier reports (see Other Pertinent Reports).

On July 22, 2019, MMAH announced proposed changes to the PPS as part of its initiatives under the Housing Plan. The ERO proposal, including a copy of the draft PPS, can be found at the following link: <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-0279>.

The proposed PPS changes are set out in five themes:

- Increasing housing supply and mix.
- Protecting the environment and public safety.
- Reducing barriers and cost.
- Supporting rural, northern, and Indigenous Communities.
- Supporting certainty and economic growth.

MMAH published five questions to collect feedback:

1. *Do the proposed policies effectively support goals related to increasing housing supply, creating and maintaining jobs, and red tape reduction while continuing to protect the environment, farmland, and public health and safety?*
2. *Do the proposed policies strike the right balance? Why or why not?*
3. *How do these policies take into consideration the views of Ontario communities?*

4. *Are there any other policy changes that are needed to support key priorities for housing, job creation, and streamlining of development approvals?*
5. *Are there other tools that are needed to help implement the proposed policies?*

Staff will submit comments to the ERO in response to these questions. A copy of Staff's comments are attached as Appendix 1.

Draft PPS Changes

The following section highlights key proposed changes to the PPS.

Alignment with Provincial Housing and Homelessness Action Plans

Proposed changes reference Provincial Housing and Homelessness Action Plans.

Changes to housing-related policy require municipalities to establish and implement minimum targets for housing which is affordable to low and moderate income households and which aligns provincial housing and homelessness plans.

New “market-based” approach to development

A new “market-based need” approach to development has been introduced in an effort to encourage development and redevelopment that fill gaps in existing housing supply.

This approach is not clearly defined in the PPS, nor has any guidance been provided for its implementation.

“Housing types” replaced by “housing options”; with a new definition

Proposed changes replace the former term “housing types” with “housing options”. A new definition for Housing Options is provided.

This change is intended to support municipalities in meeting housing supply needs through encouraging a mix of development types and ownership scenarios. Staff note that the term “rental” is absent from the proposed definition.

New term and definition: “impacts of a changing climate”

The phrase “impacts of a changing climate” is proposed in several policies.

The phrase provides direction for municipalities to encourage best practices in new development and redevelopment to prepare for and adapt to more extreme weather events caused by a changing climate.

Added language emphasises the importance of protecting water quality through enhanced stormwater management practices.

New policy emphasizes “priority applications”

The draft PPS contains a new policy requiring municipalities to streamline development processes for planning applications that support housing and job-related growth and development.

Shifted Duty to Consult from the Province to Planning Authorities

Proposed changes shift the Duty to Consult with Indigenous Communities from the Province to applicable Planning Authorities (which are municipalities, generally).

Shifting the Duty to Consult to Niagara’s municipalities will be significant, particularly since they may lack funding, resources, knowledge, and legal authority to carry out the Duty.

Extended municipal planning horizons

Proposed changes adjust planning horizons that municipalities are required to use.

The long-term planning horizon is extended from 20 years to 25 years. The housing land supply horizon is extended from 10 years to 12 years.

Failed rural private servicing are permitted to connect to existing partial systems

Proposed changes would permit existing lots of record that experience failed private servicing to connect to existing partial municipal systems.

The connection must be logical and financially viable, feasibility, and be absent of negative impacts.

Detailed criteria to evaluate feasibility, and responsibility to determine negative impacts, has not been provided.

New policies for employment and sensitive land uses

Proposed changes adjust rules for employment uses, including major facilities such as industrial and manufacturing uses.

New policies are proposed for sensitive land uses where non-employment uses are planned nearby.

Strengthened policy language on transit-supportive practices

Proposed policies direct municipalities to optimize investments in transit-related infrastructure through planning for greater density and intensification around existing or planned transit facilities.

Further, changes promote the integration of land use planning, growth management, municipal infrastructure, and transit-supportive development around transit facilities.

Alternatives Reviewed

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of proposed changes to the PPS as well as provide Staff's comments to be submitted prior to October 21, 2019.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

Doing Business Differently

Proposed changes to the PPS will impact the way Niagara Region conducts its core planning function. Proposed policy changes will change how the Region and its Local Area Municipalities conduct consultation and process planning matters.

Other Pertinent Reports

- CWCD 176-2019
- CWCD 215-2019
- CWCD 289-2019
- CWCD 320-2019
- PDS 26-2019
- PDS 28-2019

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Appendices

Appendix 1	Niagara Region's submission: proposed changes to the Provincial Policy Statement (ERO #019-0279)	Pages 7 - 48
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