ONTARIO’S LAND USE PLANNING SYSTEM

WHAT IS THE PPS?

- The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) is the primary provincial land use policy document that sets out minimum requirements that apply across Ontario.
- The Planning Act requires that all land use planning decisions “shall be consistent with” the PPS.
- Municipalities are the primary decision-makers for local communities and implement provincial policies, including the PPS, through official plans and other planning decisions.
- Municipalities may build on, but not conflict with, PPS policies to reflect local context.
- PPS policies are intended to help protect what matters most by providing policy direction related to growth and development, the use and management of resources, and the protection of the environment and public health and safety.

GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT TO REVIEW THE PPS

- In early 2019, engagement on the PPS was undertaken as part of the Increasing Housing Supply Consultations.
- Through the Action Plan, the government signaled its intention to review the PPS.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE & PROVIDE FEEDBACK?

For details on specific policy changes, the draft PPS is available online at: ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-0279

If you are interested in providing written feedback during the 90-day consultation period (July 22, 2019 – Oct 21, 2019), you may do so by either:

- Submitting comments through the Environmental Registry of Ontario at: ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-0279
- Emailing planningconsultation@ontario.ca

PROPOSED PPS POLICY AREAS

The government is proposing PPS changes to reflect Ontario’s changing needs across 5 key areas:

A) Increasing Housing Supply & Mix
B) Protecting the Environment & Public Safety
C) Reducing Barriers & Costs
D) Supporting Rural, Northern & Indigenous Communities
E) Supporting Certainty & Economic Growth

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

The government wants your feedback on the PPS draft policies and would like your views on the following questions:

- 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?
- Do the proposed policies strike the right balance? Why or why not?
- How do these policies take into consideration the views of Ontario communities?
- Are there any other policy changes that are needed to support key priorities for housing, job creation, and streamlining of development approvals?
- Are there other tools that are needed to help implement the proposed policies?
Increasing Housing Supply & Mix

A stable housing market with sufficient supply will help make housing more attainable and affordable for the people of Ontario. It will also attract new investment and create investment-ready communities that are attractive to employers and provide workers with places to live.

The PPS draft policies would:
- Increase land supply requirements that municipalities must meet:
  - Increase planning horizon from 20 to 25 years (1.1.3)
  - Increase housing land supply from 10 to 12 years (1.4.1(a))
  - Allow higher minimum requirement for serviced residential land (5 years) for upper- and single-tier municipalities (1.4.1)
- Update provincial guidance to support land budgeting (i.e. Projection Methodology) (1.1.2, 1.2.4(a))
- Increase flexibility for municipalities related to the phasing of development (1.1.3.7) and compact form (1.1.6)
- Add flexibility to the process for settlement area boundary expansions (e.g. allow minor adjustments subject to specific tests, highlight that study requirements should be proportionate to the size/scale of development) (1.1.3.8.1, 1.3.9)
- Support the development of housing to meet current and future housing needs, and add reference to housing options and market-based needs (Vision, 1.4.1, 1.4.3. Definitions: “Housing options”)
- Require transit-supportive development and prioritize intensification, including potential air rights for lot creation and development in rural settlement areas (1.4.3(a))
- Support municipalities in achieving affordable housing targets by requiring alignment with Housing and Homelessness Plans (1.4.3(a))
- Broaden PPS policies to enhance support for development of long-term care homes (1.4.3(b)(1), Definitions: “Special needs” & “Public service facilities”)

Supporting Rural, Northern & Indigenous Communities

Rural, northern, and Indigenous communities are vital to Ontario’s continued prosperity and overall well-being.

The PPS draft policies would:
- Allow flexibility for communities by clarifying perceived barriers to sewage and water servicing policies for lot creation and development in rural settlement areas (1.6.6)
- Enhance municipal engagement with Indigenous communities on land use planning to help inform decision-making, build relationships and address issues upfront in the approvals process (1.2.2, 2.6.5, Vision)
- Promote an agricultural systems approach to enhance agricultural protections to support critical food production and the agricultural sector as a significant economic driver (1.7.1(i), 2.3.2, 2.3.6.2, Definitions: “Agricultural system”, “Agri-food network”)

Reducing Barriers & Costs

A streamlined land use planning and development process which protects what is important – while reducing barriers and costs – supports economic growth and investment and the continued prosperity of Ontarians.

The PPS draft policies would:
- Require municipalities to take action to fast-track development applications for certain proposals (e.g. housing) (4.7)
- Allow mineral aggregate operations to use rehabilitation site local reuse of excess soil (3.2.3)
- Maintain current policies related to natural and human made hazards which directs development away from hazardous areas including flood-prone areas in order to protect public health and safety, while work by the Special Advisor on flooding is underway (3.1)
- Maintain current policies that require municipalities in southern Ontario to identify natural heritage systems, and provide flexibility as to how to achieve this outcome (2.1.3)
- Provide a new, voluntary management approach for managing local or regionally-significant wetlands (2.1.10)
- Maintain protections for the Greenbelt

Supporting the Environment & Public Safety

The Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan includes a commitment to review land use policies that are critical to managing the impacts of a changing climate. Planning for extreme weather events helps protect people and property and makes financial sense.

The PPS draft policies would:
- Enhance direction to prepare for impacts of a changing climate (Vision, 1.1.1(i), 1.3.2(d), 1.6.1, 1.6.6.1(b)(2), 1.6.6.7(c), 1.8.1, 2.2.1(c), Definitions: “Impacts of a changing climate”, “Agricultural system”, “Agri-food network”)
- Enhance stormwater management policies to protect water and support climate resiliency (1.6.6.7(a), 1.6.6.7(c), 1.6.6.7(d))
- Promote the on-site local reuse of excess soil (3.2.3)
- Maintain current policies related to natural and human made hazards which directs development away from hazardous areas including flood-prone areas in order to protect public health and safety, while work by the Special Advisor on flooding is underway (3.1)

Supporting Certainty & Economic Growth

Economic opportunities and continued investment are vital to supporting jobs and the continued economic well-being of all Ontarians. Supporting jobs is a key priority of Ontario’s Open for Business agenda.

The PPS draft policies would:
- Encourage municipalities to facilitate conditions for economic investment (1.3.1(c))
- At the time of official plan review or update, encourage municipalities to assess locally-identified employment areas to ensure designsations are appropriate (1.3.2.2)
- Provide municipalities with greater control over employment area conversions to support the forms of development and job creation that suit the local context (current and future) (1.3.2.5)
- Provide enhanced direction for land use compatibility and stronger protection for major facilities such as manufacturing and industrial uses where non-employment uses are planned nearby (i.e. buffering uses from new sensitive uses) (1.2.6.1, 1.2.6.2, 1.3.2.3, Definitions: “Major facilities”)