

Pilon, Janet

Subject: More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan

From: Minister Steve Clark <mah@ontario.ca>

Sent: May 2, 2019 4:13 PM

To: clerk@hamilton.ca

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La version française suit.

**Ministry of
Municipal Affairs
and Housing**

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Dear Head of Council:

Ontario's Government for the People is committed to building more housing and bringing down costs for the people of Ontario. To help fulfill this commitment, we have developed a broad-based action plan to address the barriers getting in the way of new ownership and rental housing.

More Homes, More Choice (the action plan) outlines our government's plan to tackle Ontario's housing crisis, while encouraging our partners to do their part. We are taking steps to make it faster and easier for municipalities, non-profits and private firms to build the right types of housing in the right places, to meet the needs of people in every part of Ontario.

As part of the action plan, we are proposing changes that would streamline the complex development approvals process to remove unnecessary duplication and barriers, while making costs and timelines more predictable. We are also proposing changes that would make it easier to build certain types of priority housing such as second units.

On May 2, 2019, the government introduced Bill 108 (the bill), the proposed More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019, in the Ontario Legislature. While the bill contains initiatives from various ministries, I would like to share some details regarding initiatives led by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Planning Act

Schedule 12 of the bill proposes changes to the Planning Act that would help make the planning system more efficient and effective, increase housing supply in Ontario, and streamline planning approvals.

If passed, the proposed changes would:

- Streamline development approvals processes and facilitate faster decisions,
- Increase the certainty and predictability of the planning system,
- Support a range and mix of housing options, and boost housing supply,
- Make charges for community benefits more predictable, and
- Make other complementary amendments to implement the proposed reforms, including how the proposed changes would affect planning matters that are in-process.

Amendments to the Planning Act are also proposed to address concerns about the land use planning appeal system. Proposed changes would broaden the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal's jurisdiction over major land use planning matters (e.g., official plan amendments and zoning by-law amendments) and give the Tribunal the authority to make a final determination on appeals of these matters. The Ministry of the Attorney General is also proposing changes to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal Act, 2017 to complement these changes (see Schedule 9 of the bill).

Development Charges Act

Schedule 3 of the bill proposes changes to the Development Charges Act that would make housing more attainable by reducing costs to build certain types of housing and would

increase the certainty of costs to improve the likelihood of developers proceeding with cost sensitive projects, such as rental housing.

If passed, the proposed changes would:

- Make it easier for municipalities to recover costs for waste diversion,
- Increase the certainty of development costs in specific circumstances and for certain types of developments,
- Make housing more attainable by reducing costs to build certain types of homes, and
- Make other complementary amendments to implement the proposed reforms.

Further consultation on the Planning Act and Development Charges Act

We are interested in receiving any comments you may have on the proposed changes to the Planning Act and the Development Charges Act. Comments on these proposed measures can be made through the [Environmental Registry of Ontario](#) as follows:

- Planning Act: posting number 019-0016
- Development Charges Act: posting number 019-0017

The Environmental Registry postings provide additional details regarding the proposed changes.

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

As an important part of **More Homes, More Choice**, I am also pleased to provide you with [A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe](#), which addresses the needs of the region's growing population, its diversity, its people and its local priorities. A Place to Grow will come into effect on May 16, 2019.

As you know we recently consulted on proposed policy changes to make it faster and easier for municipalities in the region to plan for growth, increase housing supply, attract investment, and create and protect jobs. I would like to thank those who participated in the consultation process, and who contributed through their feedback to the development of the Plan.

It is anticipated that A Place to Grow will:

- Provide more flexibility for municipalities to respond to local needs,
- Increase housing supply at a faster rate,
- Attract new investments and jobs,
- Make the most of transit investments, and
- Protect important environmental and agricultural assets.

A Place to Grow reflects our trust in the ability of local governments to make decisions about how their communities grow, while the province maintains protections for the Greenbelt, agriculture, and natural heritage systems. One size doesn't fit all. We're supporting municipalities so they can respond to local needs and regional priorities.

In addition to sharing the new Plan with you today, I am also informing you that we are asking for further feedback on the transition regulation. Specifically, we are seeking feedback on specific planning matters that were submitted as part of the recent consultations and for which we would provide transitional rules. These matters were deemed to be far along in their process and as such are being considered for transition so as to not unduly disrupt ongoing planning matters that may be impacted by the policies in A Place to Grow. Changes to the transition regulation can be found on Ontario's Environmental Registry and Regulatory Registry for the next 30 days.

Provincially Significant Employment Zones (PSEZs)

The economy in the Greater Golden Horseshoe is not only a critical factor provincially but also across Canada in achieving economic success and viability. As such, ensuring that lands are available to support the creation of jobs and the attraction of investments is paramount to providing homes that people can afford near stable and reliable employment.

To achieve this, we have formally identified the 29 provincially significant employment zones that we consulted on for the purposes of providing enhanced protections to existing employment areas. While no zones were removed or added to the 29 provincially significant employment zones at this time, they have been revised to address any factual errors in the mapping based on municipal official plans already in effect. These zones can be viewed on our web portal.

With the technical adjustments made, we will now begin the process of reviewing Requests for Reconsideration. Through this process, my ministry will consider requests to reconsider lands within and outside of existing zones as well as requests to add new zones. We will assess requests based on a number of factors that include, but are not limited to, the local planning context, municipal support and provincial interest.

If you have questions about the zones, the Requests for Reconsideration process, or accessing mapping files you may contact ministry staff at growthplanning@ontario.ca.

Finally, we heard loud and clear throughout the recent consultation period that there was a desire for further discussions on the longer term vision for the provincially significant employment zones that would look at opportunities to support current and emerging industries. Notably, many expressed interest in utilizing zones to leverage economic development investments, programs and strategies both inside and outside of the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Working with our partner ministries, we will be embarking on further public engagement in the coming months to explore the longer-term vision for provincially significant employment zones, along with potential opportunities to maximize the use of the zones as tools in investments, infrastructure planning and economic activity. Through these targeted engagement discussions, we will look to clearly articulate a framework for provincially significant employment zones that will position Ontario for more homes and better jobs.

If you have any questions and/or need further information on the upcoming engagement, or on any of the growth related matters, please feel free to contact Cordelia Clarke Julien, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ontario Growth Secretariat at cordelia.clarkejulien@ontario.ca or at (416) 325-5803.

Taken together, the actions outlined in **More Homes, More Choice** - including the proposed changes detailed above - will make it easier to build the right types of housing in the right places, make housing more affordable and help taxpayers keep more of their hard-earned dollars. Building more housing will make the province more attractive for employers and investors, proving that Ontario is truly Open for Business.

This action plan is complemented by our recently announced **Community Housing Renewal Strategy**, which will help sustain, repair and grow our community housing system. Together these two plans will ensure that all Ontarians can find a home that meets their needs.

At the same time, **More Homes, More Choice** underscores our commitment to maintain Ontario's vibrant agricultural sector and employment lands, protect sensitive areas like the Greenbelt, and preserve cultural heritage. Our plan will ensure that every community can build in response to local interests and demand while accommodating diverse needs.

Our government recognizes the key role that municipalities will play in implementing the action plan, and we know that you share our desire to bring more housing to the people of Ontario. I look forward to working with you as we implement **More Homes, More Choice**.

Sincerely,



Steve Clark

Minister

c:

Head of Planning

Chief Administrative Officer

Clerk