

Administration Centre
10 Wellington St. E.
Alliston, ON L9R 1A1

Web Address: www.newtecumseth.ca
Phone: 705-435-3900 or 905-729-0057

June 9, 2023

Via ERO Number: 019-6813

Steve Clark
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing of Ontario
Government of Ontario

RE: Review of proposed policies adapted from A Place to Grow and Provincial Policy Statement
ERO Number: 019-6813
Town of New Tecumseth Submission

Dear Minister Clark:

Town of New Tecumseth Council received a report and presentation from staff on May 15, 2023, at its Committee of the Whole meeting. The report in addition to providing comments that represent the Town's position on the proposed changes to the Provincial Policy Statement was ratified at its June 5, 2023 Council meeting. As directed from Council, staff is submitting the attached staff report [#PD-2023-19](#) and a summary of Council comments on the Provincial Policy Statement:

- Do not support the change in direction to lesson municipal control over local planning issues with the proposed legislative changes to provide local context into decision making for growth of the Town
- Although the Province has indicated that they will re-examine the proposed severance policies on agricultural properties, it is still of an important concern to the Town. The Province should be aware of the significant implications where the Province has considered that up to three severances can be permitted on existing farm parcels on prime agricultural lands as outlined in the staff report. Of particular concern is the fact that the Town's wastewater treatment plant does not have the future capacity to handle an increase in the number of residences requiring septage haulage as a result of proper private septic system maintenance. The wastewater treatment plant was constructed based upon minimal rural growth and with the proposed changes in policy, it puts the Town at risk of exceeding capacity and not having the funds for future upgrades of the wastewater
- There is a concern with the natural heritage system policies being removed at this time with the understanding that they could be weakened in a future version of the Provincial Policy Statement when the natural environment is under threat. Council members do not support the reduction in any protection of the natural heritage system policies

- The proposed changes do not support the protection of agricultural land as every day 319 acres of farmland is lost to urban development and aggregate removal. This is not sustainable for the residents of Ontario to endure. The proposed settlement area boundary expansion policies will result in the continued loss of farmland due to urban sprawl because of the proposed changes to the Provincial Policy Statement. Further, any proposed severances will exacerbate the situation with residential development overtaking farmland in Ontario. This is a shortsighted approach to achieve the 1.5 million housing units in 10 years
- The proposed severance policies and weakened settlement area boundary expansion policies will result in loss of farmland putting the Town's and Province's residents in a vulnerable position for future food supply thereby relying upon imported food
- The Town recognizes that with the proposed changes, it puts the County of Simcoe's Official Plan Amendment #7 in jeopardy of receiving Provincial approval as submitted. The growth targets and forecast provide New Tecumseth with the ability to properly plan for future growth as both the Town and County worked collaboratively and supported these targets. There are tremendous growth pressures on the Town with the receipt of 49 landowner requests for boundary expansions totaling 4,100 hectares to date. It is essential that the Town receives clear direction from the Province on planning for future growth. The Town recognizes the Province's goal of 1.5 million housing units and is willing to do its part, however without the guidance of the County's pending update to its Official Plan and with the proposed changes in the Provincial Policy Statement, New Tecumseth is set up for substantial urban sprawl and loss of agricultural land. The dramatic shift in Provincial approach is concerning to go from prescriptive growth targets to municipally limited ability to control development to have the desired complete communities is careless

In conclusion, Council does not support some of the proposed changes to the Provincial Policy Statement as voiced at its May 15, 2023 meeting that it results in promoting unregulated and irresponsible development just to achieve a housing supply target. The Town would like to work with the Province on the protection of agricultural and environmental lands and have the ability to design their own communities with the support of the Province.

Please contact Jennifer Best directly for any questions or if any additional information is required on the comments in this letter or the staff report. I can be reached at Jbest@newtecumseth.ca or at 705-415-3112.

Regards,



Jennifer Best, MCIP, RPP
Director of Planning & Building