



Hamilton

May 10, 2024

Province of Ontario
Environment Registry of Ontario

Sent VIA ERO POSTING

Re: ERO Posting 019- 8462 – Review of Proposed Policies for a New Provincial Planning Instrument

Attached, please find City of Hamilton comments regarding ERO 019-862 in response to the proposed policies for a new Provincial Planning Instrument (Provincial Planning Statement, 2024). Hamilton Planning Committee and City Council will be reviewing these comments later this month through staff Report PED24145(a), a link to which is included at:

<https://pub-hamilton.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx?Id=415cb9c3-6f99-4432-852b-3fdb82a802cf&Agenda=Agenda&lang=English&Item=20&Tab=attachments>

The Comments provided are in addition to the City's submission to the Province on ERO Posting 019-6813 (proposed policies adapted from A Place to Grow and Provincial Policy Statement to form a new provincial planning policy instrument).

The City acknowledges and appreciates that the proposed Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 includes some changes to reflect concerns raised from earlier consultation; however, overall, it will move land use planning away from a coordinated and balanced approach for planning for population and employment growth.

Most importantly, the City has concerns with the removal of the requirement for a Municipal Comprehensive Review before a municipality can expand its urban boundary more than 40 hectares or convert employment lands to other uses, particularly combined with changes in Bill 185, that would allow landowners to appeal urban boundary expansion applications to the Ontario Land Tribunal. The proposed changes create uncertainty around the required infrastructure and community services necessary to create complete communities. Additionally, considerable resources may need to be dedicated to responding to any potential applications and appeals.

The removal of a municipal comprehensive review to determine boundary expansions combined with applicants being able to appeal expansions will result in increased uncertainty where growth will occur and will provide less provincial policy support for defending expansion applications.

The efficient use of land through intensification is vital for accommodating growth while also promoting other provincial interests including the protection of the natural environment, economic viability, and sustainability. The proposed weakening of policies requiring certain provincial levels of intensification would decelerate rather than accelerate new housing construction, impacting both the City's and Province's goal to increase housing supply.

The proposed changes create uncertainty respecting provincial growth projections. The Ministry of Finance population projections do not take into account planning for growth, infrastructure capacity, housing affordability, land supply or other matters that influence the pattern of growth in southern Ontario. Staff support the continued use of Growth Plan Schedule 3 projections which appear to be better suited to reflect land use planning conditions at the municipal level.

The revisions to remove the proposed added permissions within Prime Agricultural Areas and permissions for multi-lot residential subdivisions on rural lands indicate the Province understands the importance of the protection of prime agricultural areas in Ontario and the City is supportive of these changes.

Additionally, as stated in the City's comments on the first draft of the Provincial Planning Statement, 2023:

- The City has concerns with the removal of reference to planning for the impacts of a changing climate which will undermine the City's ability to incorporate and implement various initiatives to support healthy, resilient communities;
- The proposed changes to the definition of Employment Areas could impact the City's ability to plan for and protect sufficient employment land to meet the City's needs. The proposed definition does not reflect modern integrated economic activities that are occurring in employment areas, such as clustering of different employment uses that provide synergies;
- The City does not support any policy changes that would encourage communal servicing systems (water and / or wastewater) due to the financial risk to the City in the event of a system failure and subsequent Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks orders for the City to assume the system;
- The City has significant concerns with the policy revisions which allow sensitive land uses to encroach into Major Facilities without considering whether they "should" or "need to", or the associated implications for existing and planned uses on adjacent lands. This would threaten the ability for Major Facilities to expand or redevelop in the future. The added requirement for providing transition areas between employment areas and sensitive land uses partially addresses these concerns;

The City requests the Province provide a minimum of six months, between approval of the new Provincial Planning Statement and it coming into force and effect, to allow municipalities to undertake in-depth analysis of the implications of the proposed

Provincial Planning Statement, including undertaking any updates to its Official Plan necessary to reflect the new provincial policy regime together with the various legislative changes proposed through Bill 185.

Should there be any additional comments from City of Hamilton Council, we will forward them to you accordingly.

If you have any questions, please contact Dave Heyworth, Manager of Sustainable Communities at (905) 5462424 X 1279 or Charlie Toman Team Lead-Planning Policy, Sustainable Communities at (905) 546-2424 x 5863.

Regards,



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Planning Division
City of Hamilton

Attachment (1)

cc: Dave Heyworth, Manager, Sustainable Communities