

PROVINCIAL PLANNING STATEMENT, 2024

Approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, Order in Council No. 1099/2024

The Provincial Planning Statement was issued under section 3 of the *Planning Act* and came into effect October 20, 2024. It replaces the Provincial Policy Statement that came into effect on May 1, 2020.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Vision

Ontario is a vast, fast-growing province that is home to many urban, rural and northern communities distinguished by different populations, economic activity, pace of growth, and physical and natural conditions. More than anything, a prosperous Ontario will see the building of more homes for all Ontarians. This is why the province has set a goal of getting at least 1.5 million homes built by 2031.

Ontario will increase the supply and mix of *housing options*, addressing the full range of housing affordability needs. Every community will build homes that respond to changing market needs and local demand. Providing a sufficient supply with the necessary mix of *housing options* will support a diverse and growing population and workforce, now and for many years to come.

A prosperous and successful Ontario will also support a strong and competitive economy that is investment-ready and recognized for its influence, innovation and diversity. Ontario's economy will continue to mature into a centre of industry and commerce of global significance. Central to this success will be the people who live and work in this province.

Ontario's land use planning framework, and the decisions that are made, shape how our communities grow and prosper. Prioritizing compact and *transit-supportive* design, where locally appropriate, and optimizing investments in *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* will support convenient access to housing, quality employment, services and recreation for all Ontarians. Cultural heritage and archaeology in Ontario will provide people with a sense of place. And while many Ontarians still face a complex range of challenges, municipalities will work with the Province to support the long term prosperity and well-being of residents through the design of communities responsive to the needs of all Ontarians.

Ontario's vibrant agricultural sector and sensitive areas will continue to form part of the province's economic prosperity and overall identity. Growth and development will be prioritized within urban and rural settlements that will, in turn, support and protect the long-term viability of *rural areas*, local food production, and the *agri-food network*. In addition, resources, including natural areas, water, aggregates and agricultural lands will be protected. Potential risks to public health or safety or of property damage from natural hazards and human-made hazards, including the risks associated with the impacts of climate change will be mitigated.

Ontario will continue to recognize the unique role Indigenous communities have in land use planning and development, and the contribution of Indigenous communities' perspectives and traditional knowledge to land use planning decisions. Meaningful early engagement and constructive, cooperative relationship-building between planning authorities and Indigenous communities will facilitate knowledge-sharing and inform decision-making in land use planning.

Above all, Ontario will continue to be a great place to live, work and visit where all Ontarians enjoy a high standard of living and an exceptional quality of life.

Chapter 2: Building Homes, Sustaining Strong and Competitive Communities

2.1 Planning for People and Homes

1. As informed by provincial guidance, planning authorities shall base population and employment growth forecasts on Ontario Population Projections published by the Ministry of Finance and may modify, as appropriate.
2. Notwithstanding policy 2.1.1, municipalities may continue to forecast growth using population and employment forecasts previously issued by the Province for the purposes of land use planning.

3. At the time of creating a new official plan and each official plan update, sufficient land shall be made available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of at least 20 years, but not more than 30 years, informed by provincial guidance. Planning for *infrastructure, public service facilities, strategic growth areas* and *employment areas* may extend beyond this time horizon.

Where the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has made a zoning order, the resulting development potential shall be in addition to projected needs over the planning horizon established in the official plan. At the time of the municipality's next official plan update, this additional growth shall be incorporated into the official plan and related infrastructure plans.

4. To provide for an appropriate range and mix of *housing options* and densities required to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the *regional market area*, planning authorities shall:
 - a) maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through lands which are *designated and available* for residential development; and
 - b) maintain at all times where new development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned, including units in draft approved or registered plans.
5. Where planning is conducted by an upper-tier municipality, the land and unit supply maintained by the lower-tier municipality identified in policy 2.1.4 shall be based on and reflect the allocation of population and units by the upper-tier municipality.
6. Planning authorities should support the achievement of *complete communities* by:
 - a) accommodating an appropriate range and mix of land uses, *housing options*, transportation options with *multimodal* access, employment, *public service facilities* and other institutional uses (including schools and associated child care facilities, long-term care facilities, places of worship and cemeteries), recreation, parks and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs;
 - b) improving accessibility for people of all ages and abilities by addressing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society; and
 - c) improving social equity and overall quality of life for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes, including equity-deserving groups.

2.4 Strategic Growth Areas

2.4.1 General Policies for Strategic Growth Areas

1. Planning authorities are encouraged to identify and focus growth and development in *strategic growth areas*.

2. To support the achievement of *complete communities*, a range and mix of *housing options*, *intensification* and more mixed-use development, *strategic growth areas* should be planned:
 - a) to accommodate significant population and employment growth;
 - b) as focal areas for education, commercial, recreational, and cultural uses;
 - c) to accommodate and support the transit network and provide connection points for inter- and intra-regional transit; and
 - d) to support *affordable*, accessible, and equitable housing.
3. Planning authorities should:
 - a) prioritize planning and investment for *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* in *strategic growth areas*;
 - b) identify the appropriate type and scale of development in *strategic growth areas* and the transition of built form to adjacent areas;
 - c) permit *development* and *intensification* in *strategic growth areas* to support the achievement of *complete communities* and a *compact built form*;
 - d) consider a student housing strategy when planning for *strategic growth areas*; and
 - e) support *redevelopment* of commercially-designated retail lands (e.g., underutilized shopping malls and plazas), to support mixed-use residential.

2.4.3 Frequent Transit Corridors

1. Planning authorities shall plan for *intensification* on lands that are adjacent to existing and planned *frequent transit* corridors, where appropriate.

2.8 Employment

2.8.1 Supporting a Modern Economy

1. Planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by:
 - a) providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment, institutional, and broader mixed uses to meet long-term needs;
 - b) providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses;
 - c) identifying strategic sites for investment, monitoring the availability and suitability of employment sites, including market-ready sites, and seeking to address potential barriers to investment;
 - d) encouraging *intensification* of employment uses and compatible, compact, mixed-use development to support the achievement of *complete communities*; and
 - e) addressing land use compatibility adjacent to *employment areas* by providing an appropriate transition to *sensitive land uses*.

2. Industrial, manufacturing and small-scale warehousing uses that could be located adjacent to *sensitive land uses* without *adverse effects* are encouraged in *strategic growth areas* and other mixed-use areas where *frequent transit* service is available, outside of *employment areas*.
3. In addition to policy 3.5, on lands within 300 metres of *employment areas*, *development* shall avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate potential impacts on the long-term economic viability of employment uses within existing or planned *employment areas*, in accordance with provincial guidelines.
4. Major office and major institutional development should be directed to *major transit station areas* or other *strategic growth areas* where *frequent transit* service is available.

2.8.2 Employment Areas

1. Planning authorities shall plan for, protect and preserve *employment areas* for current and future uses, and ensure that the necessary *infrastructure* is provided to support current and projected needs.
2. Planning authorities shall protect *employment areas* that are located in proximity to *major goods movement facilities and corridors*, including facilities and corridors identified in provincial transportation plans, for the *employment area* uses that require those locations.
3. Planning authorities shall designate, protect and plan for all *employment areas* in *settlement areas* by:
 - a) planning for *employment area* uses over the long-term that require those locations including manufacturing, research and development in connection with manufacturing, warehousing and goods movement, and associated retail and office uses and ancillary facilities;
 - b) prohibiting residential uses, commercial uses, *public service facilities* and other institutional uses;
 - c) prohibiting retail and office uses that are not associated with the primary employment use;
 - d) prohibiting other *sensitive land uses* that are not ancillary to uses permitted in the *employment area*; and
 - e) including an appropriate transition to adjacent non-*employment areas* to ensure land use compatibility and economic viability.
4. Planning authorities shall assess and update *employment areas* identified in official plans to ensure that this designation is appropriate to the planned function of *employment areas*. In planning for *employment areas*, planning authorities shall maintain land use compatibility between *sensitive land uses* and *employment areas* in accordance with policy 3.5 to maintain the long-term operational and economic viability of the planned uses and function of these areas.

5. Planning authorities may remove lands from *employment areas* only where it has been demonstrated that:
 - a) there is an identified need for the removal and the land is not required for *employment area* uses over the long term;
 - b) the proposed uses would not negatively impact the overall viability of the *employment area* by:
 1. avoiding, or where avoidance is not possible, minimizing and mitigating potential impacts to existing or planned *employment area* uses in accordance with policy 3.5;
 2. maintaining access to *major goods movement facilities and corridors*;
 - c) existing or planned *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* are available to accommodate the proposed uses; and
 - d) the municipality has sufficient employment lands to accommodate projected employment growth to the horizon of the approved official plan.

2.9 Energy Conservation, Air Quality and Climate Change

1. Planning authorities shall plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the *impacts of a changing climate* through approaches that:
 - a) support the achievement of compact, *transit-supportive*, and *complete communities*;
 - b) incorporate climate change considerations in planning for and the development of *infrastructure*, including stormwater management systems, and *public service facilities*;
 - c) support energy conservation and efficiency;
 - d) promote *green infrastructure*, *low impact development*, and *active transportation*, protect the environment and improve air quality; and
 - e) take into consideration any additional approaches that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build community resilience to the *impacts of a changing climate*.

3.2 Transportation Systems

1. *Transportation systems* should be provided which are safe, energy efficient, facilitate the movement of people and goods, are appropriate to address projected needs, and support the use of zero- and low- emission vehicles.
2. Efficient use should be made of existing and planned *infrastructure*, including through the use of *transportation demand management* strategies, where feasible.
3. As part of a *multimodal transportation system*, connectivity within and among *transportation systems* and modes should be planned for, maintained and, where possible, improved, including connections which cross jurisdictional boundaries.

3.3 Transportation and Infrastructure Corridors

1. Planning authorities shall plan for and protect corridors and rights-of-way for *infrastructure*, including transportation, transit, and electricity generation facilities and transmission systems to meet current and projected needs.
2. *Major goods movement facilities and corridors* shall be protected for the long term.
3. Planning authorities shall not permit *development in planned corridors* that could preclude or negatively affect the use of the corridor for the purpose(s) for which it was identified.

New *development* proposed on *adjacent lands* to existing or *planned corridors* and transportation facilities should be compatible with, and supportive of, the long-term purposes of the corridor and should be designed to avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate *negative impacts* on and *adverse effects* from the corridor and transportation facilities.

4. The preservation and reuse of abandoned corridors for purposes that maintain the corridor's integrity and continuous linear characteristics should be encouraged, wherever feasible.
5. The co-location of linear *infrastructure* should be promoted, where appropriate.

3.5 Land Use Compatibility

1. *Major facilities* and *sensitive land uses* shall be planned and developed to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate any potential *adverse effects* from odour, noise and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety, and to ensure the long-term operational and economic viability of *major facilities* in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.
2. Where avoidance is not possible in accordance with policy 3.5.1, planning authorities shall protect the long-term viability of existing or planned industrial, manufacturing or other *major facilities* that are vulnerable to encroachment by ensuring that the planning and *development* of proposed adjacent *sensitive land uses* is only permitted if potential *adverse effects* to the proposed *sensitive land use* are minimized and mitigated, and potential impacts to industrial, manufacturing or other *major facilities* are minimized and mitigated in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.

3.9 Public Spaces, Recreation, Parks, Trails and Open Space

1. Healthy, active, and inclusive communities should be promoted by:
 - a) planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of persons of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate *active transportation* and community connectivity;
 - b) planning and providing for the needs of persons of all ages and abilities in the distribution of a full range of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, public spaces, open space areas, trails and linkages, and, where practical, water-based resources;
 - c) providing opportunities for public access to shorelines; and
 - d) recognizing provincial parks, conservation reserves, and other protected areas, and minimizing negative impacts on these areas.

8: Definitions

Active transportation: means human-powered travel, including but not limited to, walking, cycling, inline skating and travel with the use of mobility aids, including motorized wheelchairs and other power-assisted devices moving at a comparable speed.

Compact built form: means a land use pattern that encourages the efficient use of land, walkable neighbourhoods, mixed land uses (residential, retail, workplace, and institutional) all within one neighbourhood, proximity to transit and reduced need for *infrastructure*. *Compact built form* can include detached and semi-detached houses on small lots as well as townhouses, duplexes, triplexes and walk-up apartments, multi-storey commercial developments, and apartments or offices above retail. Walkable neighbourhoods can be characterized by roads laid out in a well-connected network, destinations that are easily accessible by transit and *active transportation*, sidewalks with minimal interruptions for vehicle access, and a pedestrian-friendly environment along roads.

Complete communities: means places such as mixed-use neighbourhoods or other areas within cities, towns, and *settlement areas* that offer and support opportunities for equitable access to many necessities for daily living for people of all ages and abilities, including an appropriate mix of jobs, a full range of housing, transportation options, *public service facilities*, local stores and services. *Complete communities* are inclusive and may take different shapes and forms appropriate to their contexts to meet the diverse needs of their populations.

Employment area: means those areas designated in an official plan for clusters of business and economic activities including manufacturing, research and development in connection with manufacturing, warehousing, goods movement, associated retail and office, and ancillary facilities. An *employment area* also includes areas of land described by subsection 1(1.1) of the *Planning Act*. Uses that are excluded from *employment areas* are institutional and commercial, including retail and office not associated with the primary employment use listed above.

Impacts of a changing climate: means the present and future consequences from changes in weather patterns at local and regional levels including extreme weather events and increased climate variability.

Designated growth areas: means lands within *settlement areas* designated for growth or lands added to *settlement areas* that have not yet been fully developed. *Designated growth areas* include lands which are *designated and available* for residential growth in accordance with policy 2.1.4.a), as well as lands required for employment and other uses.

Higher order transit: means transit that generally operates in partially or completely dedicated rights-of-way, outside of mixed traffic, and therefore can achieve levels of speed and reliability greater than mixed-traffic transit. *Higher order transit* can include heavy rail (such as subways, elevated or surface rail, and commuter rail), light rail, and buses in dedicated rights-of-way.

Low impact development: means an approach to stormwater management that seeks to manage rain and other precipitation as close as possible to where it falls to mitigate the impacts of increased runoff and stormwater pollution. It typically includes a set of site design strategies and distributed, small-scale structural practices to mimic the natural hydrology to the greatest extent possible through infiltration, evapotranspiration, harvesting, filtration, and detention of stormwater. *Low impact development* can include, for example: bio-swales, vegetated areas at the edge of paved surfaces, permeable pavement, rain gardens, green roofs, and exfiltration systems.

Intensification: means the development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists through:

- a) *redevelopment*, including the reuse of *brownfield sites* and underutilized shopping malls and plazas;
- b) the development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;

Sensitive land uses: means buildings, amenity areas, or outdoor spaces where routine or normal activities occurring at reasonably expected times would experience one or more *adverse effects* from contaminant discharges generated by a nearby *major facility*. *Sensitive land uses* may be a part of the natural or built environment. Examples may include, but are not limited to: residences, day care centres, and educational and health facilities.

Transit-supportive: in regard to land use patterns, means development that makes transit viable, optimizes investments in transit infrastructure, and improves the quality of the experience of using transit. It often refers to compact, mixed-use development that has a high level of employment and residential densities, including air rights development, in proximity to transit stations, corridors and associated elements within the *transportation system*.

Approaches may be recommended in guidelines developed by the Province or based on municipal approaches that achieve the same objectives.

Major facilities: means facilities which may require separation from *sensitive land uses*, including but not limited to airports, manufacturing uses, transportation *infrastructure* and corridors, *rail facilities*, *marine facilities*, sewage treatment facilities, *waste management systems*, oil and gas pipelines, industries, energy generation facilities and transmission systems, and resource extraction activities.

Strategic growth areas: means within *settlement areas*, nodes, corridors, and other areas that have been identified by municipalities to be the focus for accommodating *intensification* and higher-density mixed uses in a more *compact built form*.

Strategic growth areas include *major transit station areas*, existing and emerging downtowns, lands in close proximity to publicly-assisted post-secondary institutions and other areas where growth or development will be focused, that may include infill, *redevelopment* (e.g., underutilized shopping malls and plazas), *brownfield sites*, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings, or greyfields. Lands along major roads, arterials, or other areas with existing or planned *frequent transit service* or *higher order transit corridors* may also be identified as *strategic growth areas*.

Transportation demand management: means a set of strategies that result in more efficient use of the *transportation system* by influencing travel behaviour by mode, time of day, frequency, trip length, regulation, route, or cost.