



The New Provincial Policy Statement in Draft

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The Province of Ontario has released the draft policies of the proposed new Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). The existing PPS policies remain intact and are supplemented with policies that emphasize compact, inter-connected and environmentally responsible growth.

Briefly: under the new PPS, compact, inter-connected development would require:

- greater economic coordination between municipalities;
- urban development that is transit supportive; and,
- protecting the efficient movement of goods and services by:
 - strengthening protection for major facilities (including transportation and municipal services) and industries against incompatible development;
 - encouraging the adaptive reuse of existing infrastructure and/or the use of green infrastructure; and
 - protecting transit corridors and the employment areas in close proximity to them.

Environmentally responsible growth will mean that:

- development and land use patterns “maintain biodiversity and resilience to climate change;”
- public parks and conservation areas are protected from negative impacts;
- development that may impact on the habitat of endangered and threatened species cannot proceed without first meeting applicable provincial and federal standards;
- stormwater management measures represent an environmental benefit; and
- lot creation in prime agricultural areas will be further discouraged by limiting the size of such lots to the minimum area required to accommodate the use and appropriate sewage and water services.

While these policies do not necessarily represent new principles in our planning lexicon, they are becoming, literally, ever more entrenched as they transform the type of development this Province is experiencing.

The Province is presently seeking feedback on the draft policies. Given that the PPS sits atop the hierarchy of planning instruments, it is important that municipalities, developers and builders, most of whom are now in the throes of the Growth Plan conformity exercises, understand all of the implications of the proposed new policies. We would be pleased to discuss these draft policies and their significance with you in further detail. ■