



# **Draft 2023 Provincial Policy Statement and Bill 97 Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee Report PDR-PEDAC-19-23**

This presentation contains a summary of Report PDR-PEDAC-19-23. For more details on this application, please see the Staff Report.

# Background

- All planning decisions in Ontario shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS).
- The PPS was last updated in 2020.
- Bill 97 and a new draft PPS was released on April 6, 2023 for comment.
- This report focuses on Bill 97 and a series of proposed changes to the PPS, while a separate report is being presented to the Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting on agricultural components of the draft 2023 PPS.
- One of the stated goals of the 2023 PPS review is to enable municipalities to accelerate the development of housing and increase housing supply (including rural housing).
- County staff support some of the proposed PPS changes, but there are other proposed changes which we believe may have negative impacts on the County.

# Background

- The 2023 PPS review will have the effect of merging the PPS with the '*A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*' (known as the Growth Plan).
- Grey County is not currently in the Growth Plan, but Dufferin, Simcoe, and Wellington counties are in the Growth Plan.
- As a result, Grey County is not impacted to the same degree by these changes as some of the former Growth Plan municipalities would be.
- The PPS is to be read as a whole, as the policies reflect and respect the complex inter-relationships among environmental, economic, and social factors in land use planning.

# Bill 97 Changes

- The *Planning Act* changes proposed through Bill 97 are not as extensive as the changes approved in 2022 through Bills 109 and 23. Some of the Bill 97 changes correct or update changes made through those earlier Bills.
- Some of the changes include:
  - Updates on timelines for when municipalities need to refund planning fees,
  - Clarification on the parking requirements for additional residential units (ARUs),
  - New powers being granted to the Minister, and
  - Appointing up to four Deputy Facilitators under the Provincial Land and Development Facilitator.
- Staff do not have any significant concerns with the proposed Bill 97 changes.

# PPS 2023 Proposed Changes – Growth Targets, Allocations and Planning Horizon

The most noteworthy changes in this area include:

1. Changes to the population and employment projections for former Growth Plan municipalities, including planning for minimum densities.
2. The 2020 PPS permitted a planning horizon of up to 25 years. The new PPS proposes to change this to “at least 25 years”.
3. Approved Minister’s Zoning Orders (MZOs) are now outside of the projected needs established in an official plan.
4. Several changes to the intensification policies including permitting and facilitating all types of intensification by allowing for the conversion of existing commercial and institutional buildings.

# PPS 2023 Proposed Changes – Affordable Housing and Coordination

The most noteworthy changes in this area include:

1. The 2023 PPS has removed the definition for “affordable” as it pertains to both rental and home ownership.
2. The definitions for “housing options” has been expanded to include a wider range of housing choices and living models across the province.
3. Land use planning and planning for housing is required to be coordinated with Service Managers and school boards.

# PPS 2023 Proposed Changes – Employment Land and Major Transit Station Areas

The most noteworthy changes in these areas include:

1. Scopes employment areas to industrial and warehousing uses, including ancillary retail and office uses.
2. Lessens the restrictions regarding the separation between employment areas and sensitive land uses.
3. Removal the need for a ‘comprehensive review’ when considering a conversion of a designated employment area to a non-employment use.
4. Several policies and concepts regarding major transit station areas (MTSAs) have been carried over from the Growth Plan, including having minimum density targets in MTSAs.

# PPS 2023 Proposed Changes – Climate Change and Servicing

The most noteworthy changes in these areas include:

1. Rewrites the climate change policies and deletes several section references which used to reference “impacts of a changing climate”.
2. Provides a new definition for “low impact development” in the PPS, as it pertains to stormwater management.
3. Changes to the servicing policies, some of which are unclear in their interpretation.
4. There have also been changes to the partial servicing provisions.



# PPS 2023 Proposed Changes

## Missing Natural Heritage Policies

- One of the tenants of the PPS, is that the document is to be read as a whole, and that no one policy is to be read in isolation.
- The province has yet to release the natural heritage policies for the draft 2023 PPS.
- It's difficult to understand the full scope of the province's proposed changes with these missing policies.
- Staff encourage the province to consider putting this PPS review 'on hold' or delaying the final comment deadline until such time as those draft policies have been released and stakeholders such as municipalities have had the opportunity to review and bring reports to their respective councils, boards, or clients.

# PPS 2023 Proposed Changes – Updated Definitions, Implementation & Other Policies

The most noteworthy changes in these areas include:

1. Contains several new, updated, and deleted definitions.
2. Encourages meaningful early engagement and knowledge sharing with Indigenous communities.
3. Encourages planning authorities to engage the public and stakeholders early in local efforts to implement the PPS. This includes providing the necessary information and informed involvement of local citizens, including equity-deserving groups.
4. Refines the relationship of official plans in implementing provincial policy.
5. Implements a ‘housing first’ approach.

# PPS 2023 Proposed Changes – Staff Comments

- There are several policy changes in the draft PPS that appear to be positive which staff support.
- Staff have concerns with some of the other changes, including the;
  - Lack of a defined planning horizon and the impacts on infrastructure planning,
  - MZOs being ‘on top of’ growth projections,
  - Deletion of the affordable housing definition which ties affordability to income levels,
  - Reduced protection for employment areas,
  - Lack of leadership on climate change,
  - Missing natural heritage policies, and
  - The primacy placed on housing, which appears to ‘trump’ many other areas of provincial interest.

# Recommendation

1. That report PDR-PEDAC-19-23 regarding proposed Bill 97, the '*Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act, 2023*' and the proposed update to the Provincial Policy Statement 2023, be received; and
2. That report PDR-PEDAC-19-23 be forwarded on to County Council for their consideration for inclusion in the County of Grey's comments on the 'Review of proposed policies adapted from A Place to Grow and Provincial Policy Statement to form a new provincial planning policy instrument' posted on the Environmental Registry through posting #019-6813; and
3. That the report be shared with member municipalities having jurisdiction within Grey County; and,
4. That should the revised natural heritage policies be released with a limited commenting timeline, with no ability to prepare a further report for the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee, or County Council, that Council consider directing staff to submit comments directly to the province on those updated policies.