

**Ministry of  
Municipal Affairs  
and Housing**

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19-4059

September 17, 2019

The Honourable Michael Tibollo, MPP  
Vaughan – Woodbridge  
[michael.tibollo@pc.ola.org](mailto:michael.tibollo@pc.ola.org)

Dear MPP Tibollo:

Thank you for your letter regarding the authority of local councils in making planning decisions. I am pleased to provide you with information regarding the work our government has done with respect to supporting local land-use planning decisions.

As you are aware, our government is committed to building more housing and bringing down costs for the people of Ontario. To help fulfill this commitment, we have developed a broad-based action plan to address the barriers getting in the way of new ownership and rental housing. [More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan](#) outlines our plan to tackle Ontario's housing crisis, while encouraging our partners to do their part.

I would like to share some details regarding initiatives led by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing which include amendments to the *Planning Act* in the *More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019*; proposed changes to the **Provincial Policy Statement**; and a new provincial plan for the region, **A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe**.

The *More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019*, which received Royal Assent on June 6, 2019, is central to the **Housing Supply Action Plan** and is intended to eliminate unnecessary steps, duplication and barriers to creating the housing Ontarians need.

As a part of this work, we've made changes to the *Planning Act*, most of which took effect on September 3, 2019, that would:

- Streamline development approvals processes and facilitate faster decisions,
- Increase the certainty and predictability of the planning system,
- Support a range and mix of housing options, and boost housing supply,
- Make charges for community benefits more predictable, and
- Make other complementary amendments to implement the proposed reforms.

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On July 22, the Ministry launched a 90-day consultation on proposed policy changes to the **Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)**, as part of the **Housing Supply Action Plan**. The PPS sets out the province-wide direction on land use planning matters of provincial interest and municipalities are key implementers.

The proposed policy changes to the PPS focus on five key themes:

- Increasing housing supply and mix;
- Protecting the environment (including the Greenbelt) and public safety;
- Reducing barriers and costs;
- Supporting rural, northern and Indigenous communities; and,
- Supporting certainty and economic growth.

The ministry is holding meetings with key stakeholders, as well as regional technical sessions with municipal staff, and we look forward to receiving their input on the proposed policies. Vaughan has been invited to participate in this process. Additionally, the ministry is undertaking ongoing engagement on the PPS with Indigenous communities.

As you know, **A Place to Grow** supports the government's commitment to growth and prosperity. Through our priorities of increasing housing supply, creating more jobs, generating economic opportunities, attracting new investments, and better aligning infrastructure investments, we will ensure that people can live and work locally, all while maintaining protections for our environmentally sensitive areas, notably the Greenbelt, cultural heritage assets, employment areas and agricultural lands. A Place to Grow not only allows for greater autonomy for local decision-making that is responsive to local needs and opportunities, but also recognizes that one size does not fit all and as such provides for greater flexibility at the local level.

**A Place to Grow**, which came into effect in May 2019, introduces new policies that:

- Make it faster and easier for local governments to make modest changes to settlement area boundaries when they need them, helping them to be more responsive to market demands for new housing or economic development opportunities;
- Streamlines development near major transit station areas, like subway and GO stations, so that municipalities can begin their planning sooner;
- Promotes economic development and job creation by ensuring that provincially significant employment zones are identified;
- Cuts red tape, where it makes sense, to foster mixed-use development and increase housing supply, while ensuring that jobs are maintained; and
- Protects important environmental and agricultural assets.

We heard loud and clear from our planning partners that local decision-makers know their communities best and as such they would like greater flexibility to address the unique circumstances that they face.

It is the **Vaughan Official Plan of 2010**, not the Province, that provides direction for new development under the **Housing Supply Action Plan**. The Vaughan Official Plan maintains that in Community Areas with established development, new development must “be designed to respect and reinforce the existing physical character and uses of the surrounding area.”

Our planning changes in the **Housing Supply Action Plan** reflect our trust in the ability of local governments to make decisions about how their communities grow, while achieving the government’s commitment and priority to create the housing that Ontarians need. We remain committed to supporting our municipal partners in meeting this commitment as they are the frontline in responding to local needs and priorities.

Once again, thank you for your letter and for all the work you do on behalf of your constituents in your riding of Vaughan – Woodbridge. Please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,



Steve Clark  
Minister