

Consultation on simplifying and standardizing official plans

ERO (Environmental Registry of Ontario) number	025-1099
Notice type	Policy
Act	Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990
Posted by	Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Notice stage	Decision
Decision posted	March 30, 2026
Comment period	October 23, 2025 - November 22, 2025 (30 days) Closed
Last updated	March 30, 2026

This consultation was open from:

**October 23, 2025
to November 22, 2025**

Decision summary

The government has proposed legislative changes to the *Planning Act* through the proposed *Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026* to simplify, standardize and make more permissive municipal official plans so they are shorter, easier to understand, and more consistent across Ontario.

Decision details

Under the *Planning Act*, the foundational activity for most municipalities is making an official plan, a document which guides future development of an area in the best interest of the community as a whole.

Municipalities develop their own official plans, in accordance with provincial policies and plans, that set out goals and rules to govern how they grow and develop. These plans are approved by either an upper-tier municipality or the province. Official plans are implemented locally through tools like zoning by-laws, site plans, plans of subdivision, and community planning permit systems.

The government sought public feedback on simplifying and standardizing official plans so that they are simpler and easier to understand; more standardized and consistent across municipalities; more permissive and development-positive; shorter; and machine readable.

The government is proposing specific changes to the *Planning Act* under the *Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026* to standardize and streamline municipal official plans: **ERO #026-0300** (<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/026-0300>)

Schedule 7 of *Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026* proposes amendments to the *Planning Act* that if passed, would help simplify official plans and make them easier to understand, improve consistency across municipalities, make them more permissive and encourage development by:

Streamlining and Standardizing Official Plans

- Changes are proposed to the *Planning Act* to streamline and standardize municipal official plans by:
 - Including the details of a standardized structure for local (lower- and single-tier municipality and planning board) official plans through a table of contents and schedules as follows:
 - Introduction and How to Use this Plan
 - Strategic Planning Framework
 - Indigenous Engagement
 - Settlement Area Structure and Growth Needs and Management
 - Residential and Mixed Uses
 - Economy and Employment Areas
 - Rural Areas and Agricultural System
 - Infrastructure, Facilities and Community Services
 - Local Landscape and Resource Management
 - Implementation and Interpretation
 - Schedules;
 - A1 Settlement Boundaries, Urban/Rural Structure and Provincial Plans
 - A2 Strategic Growth Areas and Intensification Areas
 - A3 Land Use Designations
 - B1 Transportation and Corridors
 - B2 Infrastructure

- B3 Public Service Facilities, Parks and Open Space
 - C1 Natural Environment
 - C2 Water Resources
 - C3 Resource Potential
 - C4 Natural and Human-made Hazards
- Including the details of a standardized set of land use designations to be used in local official plans (lower- and single-tier municipality and planning board) as follows:
- **Neighbourhoods**, permitting residential uses, small-scale commercial uses, institutional uses (including cemeteries), and other uses as prescribed.
 - **Mixed-Use Areas**, permitting residential uses, commercial uses, institutional uses (including cemeteries), industrial, manufacturing and small-scale warehousing uses that could be located adjacent to sensitive land uses without adverse effects, and other uses as prescribed.
 - **Mixed-Use Commercial Areas**, permitting industrial, manufacturing and small-scale warehousing uses and other uses as prescribed. Commercial and institutional uses are permitted only if they are not sensitive land uses.
 - **Employment Areas**, permitting the uses permitted in areas of employment, as defined in the Planning Act.
 - **Major Facilities**, permitting manufacturing uses, industrial uses, infrastructure uses, and other uses as prescribed.
 - **Parks and Open Spaces**, permitting recreational uses, cemetery uses, and other uses as prescribed.
 - **Natural Environment and Water Resource Areas**, permitting conservation uses and other uses as prescribed.
 - **Resource Areas**, permitting resource extraction uses.
 - **Rural Lands**, permitting residential uses, small-scale commercial uses, small-scale industrial uses, agricultural and agriculture-related uses, on-farm diversified uses, resource management uses, resource-based recreational uses, cemetery uses, and other uses as prescribed.
 - **Prime Agricultural Areas**, permitting agricultural and agriculture-related uses, on-farm diversified uses and other uses as prescribed.

- **Specialty Crop Areas**, permitting agricultural and agriculture-related uses, on-farm diversified uses and other uses as prescribed.
- **Shoreline Areas**, permitting marina uses, recreational uses, residential uses, and other uses as prescribed.
- The Minister may also set out further direction on implementing any of these designations, including using two or more sub-designations.
- Providing for proposed changes coming into force January 1, 2028 for the 29 large and fast-growing municipalities, and January 1, 2029 for all other municipalities.
- The government intends to bring these changes into force once additional consultation on secondary plans and upper-tier official plan content is complete, and any final refinements are made to the framework.

Complementary Changes to Support Implementation of Streamlining and Standardizing Official Plans

- Changes are proposed to the Planning Act to support implementation of the proposed new official plan framework, including:
 - Removing redundant requirement for municipalities to include climate change policies in their official plans,
 - Providing that for an already approved protected major transit station area (PMTSA), only official plan amendments changing the boundaries of the PMTSA or the planned population and jobs for the area would require the Minister’s approval, and
 - Providing the Minister with authority to exempt lower-tier municipalities from requirement to conform with upper-tier official plan to facilitate implementation of testing for the proposed official plan framework.

Comments received

Through the registry
83

By email
19

By mail
0

Consultation on Minimum Lot Sizes

ERO (Environmental Registry of Ontario) number	025-1100
Notice type	Policy
Act	Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990
Posted by	Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
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**October 23, 2025
to November 22, 2025**

Decision summary

The government has proposed *Planning Act* and *City of Toronto Act, 2006* changes to create a regulation-making authority to establish a minimum residential lot size in urban areas. The government is consulting on a proposed regulation that would set a minimum residential lot size of 175 square metres.

Decision details

The *Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025* was introduced in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario on October 23, 2025 and received Royal Assent on November 27, 2025.

In connection with this Act, the government consulted to better understand the linkages between minimum lot size requirements on urban residential lands and increased housing options, improved affordability, and expanded access to homeownership across Ontario.

In response to the results of this public consultation, as part of the Spring Bill (name xxxxx), the government has proposed an amendment to the *Planning Act* to create a regulation-making authority to allow the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to set a minimum residential lot size in urban areas that are fully serviced by public sewage and water (insert ERO link to Spring Bill Planning Act Changes). A consequential amendment has also been proposed to the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*.

In addition, the government is consulting on a proposed regulatory approach to, if Spring Bill (name xxxxx) is passed, establish a minimum residential lot size of 175 square metres on parcels of urban residential land [ERO #026-0311](https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/026-0311) (<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/026-0300>)

Comments
received

Through the
registry
52

By email
10

By mail
0

[View comments submitted through the registry \(/notice/025-1100/comments\)](/notice/025-1100/comments)

Effects of
consultation

In connection with the *Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025*, the government consulted to better understand the linkage between setting minimum lot size requirements on urban residential lands and increased housing options, improved affordability, and expanded access to homeownership across Ontario. The posting was open for a 30-day public consultation period from October 23 to November 22, 2025.

62 comments were received during the consultation period, including 52 comments submitted directly through the ERO and 10 comments submitted by email. No comments were received by mail. The majority of submissions came from the municipal sector and individuals with some submissions from the development sector and other groups.

Consultation on Enhanced Development Standards – Lot Level (outside of buildings)

ERO (Environmental Registry of Ontario) number	025-1101
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**October 23, 2025
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Decision summary

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing consulted from October 23 to November 22, 2025, on municipal use of Enhanced Development Standards at the lot level. The Ministry received 134 submissions and reviewed this input to help inform future policy direction.

Decision details

As part of the *Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025*, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) sought input on the municipal use of enhanced development standards (EDS) at the lot level, outside of buildings. These standards may include requirements for features such as permeable surfaces, vegetative landscaping, infiltration measures, tree planting standards, and EV-charging readiness.

The proposal was posted on the Environmental Registry of Ontario for a 30-day consultation period. During this time, the Ministry invited feedback on municipal use of enhanced development standards, their consistency of

application, associated costs, and any additional considerations related to site level planning.

Participants provided a wide range of perspectives, including views on clarity of requirements, implementation challenges, long and short-term cost implications, alignment with stormwater management and climate adaptation goals, and the need for clearer provincial guidance and technical resources.

The Ministry received 134 comments on the proposal, including 129 submissions through the Environmental Registry and 5 received by email, along with additional input gathered through outreach discussions. All comments referencing ERO 025-1101 were reviewed and considered in developing proposed legislative and regulatory amendments. These proposed changes are now available for public input under the following postings on the Environmental Registry of Ontario:

- [ERO #026-0300 \(https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/026-0300\)](https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/026-0300)
- [ERO #026-0311 \(https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/026-0311\)](https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/026-0311)

Copies of all comments submitted through the Registry are available for public viewing by contacting the Ministry through the information provided in this notice.

**Comments
received**

**Through the
registry**

125

By email

8

By mail

0

[View comments submitted through the registry \(/notice/025-1101/comments\)](/notice/025-1101/comments)

**Effects of
consultation**

All comments submitted through the Environmental Registry of Ontario or received by email were reviewed and helped inform the Ministry's assessment. Feedback raised several overarching themes related to how enhanced