
MEDI-TERRA PROPERTIES CORP.

7681 HIGHWAY 27, UNIT 16, WOODBRIDGE, ON L4L 4M5

TEL: (905) 265-1976 X2200 FAX: (905) 265-1979

October 18, 2019

Via Online Comment Submission

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
777 Bay Street, 14th Floor
Toronto, ON M5G 2E5

Attention: Planning Consultation

Dear Sir/Madam:

**RE: Proposed Changes to the Provincial Policy Statement Consultation Submission
ERO #019-0279
Policy 1.6.6.3 – Communal Services**

This letter is a submission on behalf of Medi-Terra Properties Corporation, an established real estate development firm building communities for over twenty years in the Greater Toronto Area and southern Ontario at large.

In reviewing the proposed changes to the PPS, we are supportive of the Province's commitment to reducing barriers to sewage and water servicing for development. Our comments provided below are with regards to Policy 1.6.6.3 and provide additional justification for communal services.

Municipal Responsibility for Communal Services

Technology for communal systems has significantly improved over the past 20 years and entire communities are being planned on such a basis. In Guelph, Springwater, Puslinch and many other regions across Ontario, residential subdivisions with as many as 200 units are to be serviced by communal systems. In the United States, decentralized systems are planned for 33% of all new development.

It is impossible to have full municipal services for smaller rural settlements. Communal services allow people to live where they want to live and not necessarily in large cities.

Municipalities are generally refusing to embrace technological advances that have been proven to be workable and effective under the guise of potential liabilities that may result if failure should arise in the future.

For instance, the Region of Peel does not support new communal systems. In their comments submission for this consultation (dated October 21, 2019), the Region requests that the existing policy in the PPS be maintained to allow municipalities the discretionary ability to approve servicing with the consideration of financial and operational risks.

Durham Region shares a similar view. In their comments submission (Report #2019-P-42, October 1, 2019), the Region requests that ownership and maintenance of communal systems should be the responsibility of the condo corporation or private owner in perpetuity.

Having read carefully the comments from the regional municipalities that oppose the change, it seems to us that they are afraid for no valid reason; everything has the potential to fail, even full municipal services. Risk is inherent in all we do; the emphasis must be on regulation to reduce and control risk but not in outright prohibition.

With respect to the financial and operational risks identified by the regional municipalities, we refer the Ministry to provincial guide D-5-2 prepared by MECP, which supports communal systems and directs municipalities to own, maintain and operate them. Sections 1.0 and 4.1 of D-5-2 establish that municipal ownership, maintenance and operation of communal systems is in the public interest to ensure their long-term viability and thereby protect public health and the environment. Section 5.0 also provides that, where municipal ownership of communal services cannot be achieved, a Responsibility Agreement between the developer and the municipality shall be requested by the planning authority. Such agreements will include provision for municipal assumption in the event of default and the provision of up-front secured funds (Section 5.0).

Further, the development charges generated by communal systems should be more than sufficient to defray their initial costs and maintenance and a surcharge could be added, if necessary. A monitoring strategy would ensure that the plants are properly maintained and would not adversely affect the environment.

It is the legal responsibility of the regional municipalities to provide timely services within settlement boundaries. If full municipal services are not feasible or economically viable, the public is entitled to alternatives; Ontarians should not be forced to live where the Regions decide.

The proposed policy will not only allow for survival of smaller rural communities which are such an important part of the fabric of Ontario's history, but, by decentralizing where growth can take place, it will also take pressure away from the main urban centres where the availability of serviceable and approved land is scarce. Growth is important to all municipalities and thus it should take place throughout Ontario and not in select areas.

We urge the Ministry in keeping with its recent policies aimed at creating housing affordability and diversity that the option of communal services be retained as in the draft PPS statement.

Ontarians have the right to choose where they want to live!

Respectfully submitted,

MEDI-TERRA PROPERTIES CORP.



John Spina
Solicitor



Nicole Yang
Planner