

Rural Densification

Rural Densification is defined as:

maximizing the amount of housing on rural non-agricultural lands, while relying on existing public service facilities and acceptable forms of water and waste management.

It is intended to

- ✓ speed up the provision of affordable housing; while it also
- ✓ aligns with the 2024 Ontario Provincial Planning Statement (PPS).

Its details and benefits are outlined in Table A.

Specific linkages to the 2024 PPS are outlined in Table B.

Table A

RURAL DENSIFICATION: <i>development on non-agricultural rural lands that seeks to maximize the amount of housing on those lands while relying on existing public service facilities and acceptable forms of water and waste management</i>	
Responds to housing needs in rural communities and supports rural development that is right sized for the rural setting and sustainable community growth	✓
Provides a rural equivalent to urban intensification to respond to housing gaps quickly and efficiently, while countering rural sprawl	✓
Prioritizes housing development of non-agricultural rural lands, optimizing the number of dwellings on these lands.	✓
Prioritizes developments that promote right size higher density new housing, such as small/micro/tiny homes, that require less energy to operate and build, while reducing construction and operating waste	✓
Smaller homes lend themselves to factory-built options which can: 1. lower costs, 2. provide high quality new homes built to CSA/Ontario Building Code standards, 3. speed up deployment of new homes via smaller size and standardized manufacturing processes, while 4. reducing inspection burden on rural municipalities by having preapproved dwellings that do not require municipal oversight through the building process of each home added to their community	✓
Provides a more affordable path to a home through a smaller home footprint that can be delivered in the form of home ownership or rental housing.	✓
Smaller in situ local footprint is environmentally oriented by removing the distance associated with delivering public waste and water services. This in turn lowers costs of developments and speeds up deployment of housing. This approach reflects an eco-system management approach by using and keeping (treated) water on site.	✓
Is a more efficient and effective way of servicing new homes outside existing public services in the municipality. Specifically, communal servicing has its costs borne by the private sector and uses mature technology that can be deployed quickly and scaled up, as necessary.	✓
Relies on existing public service facilities (including roads) and extends their use by growing the rural community, without the need to expand public infrastructure (particularly water and sewage).	✓
Housing can be deployed quickly and efficiently so rural municipalities can respond to economic opportunities and social pressures in real time.	✓
Allows for phased development that reduces risks to builders and municipalities	✓
Protects agricultural lands while providing a means for rural communities to thrive and contribute to Ontario's growth	✓
In line with, and builds on, the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement.	✓

Table B

Page	Citation from 2024 PPS	Linkages to proposed Development
Open	<p>Among its objectives, the PPS 2024 enables municipalities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>foster the long-term viability of rural areas</i> • <i>protect agricultural lands, the environment, public health and safety</i> 	<p>Two of the four main objectives of the PPS are directly addressed by the development, fostering long-term rural viability and protecting agricultural lands and the environment.</p>
2	<p>Zoning and development permit by-laws should be forward-looking and facilitate opportunities for an appropriate range and mix of housing options for all Ontarians.</p>	<p>The development fills gap at the affordable end of the new housing spectrum.</p> <p>The smaller sized new homes will be a new housing option, which targets seniors, single parents with children, individuals/couples who are unable to afford entry into offerings typical of the new home market.</p>
7	<p>Planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet projected needs of current and future residents...by:</p> <p>a) establishing and implementing minimum targets for the provision of housing that is affordable to low and moderate income households,</p> <p>b) permitting and facilitating:</p> <p>(2) all types of residential intensification</p>	<p>As noted, this small home development will add to the mix of housing options with a focus on density and efficient land use.</p> <p>It will also allow municipalities to meet affordable housing targets with confidence and a plan.</p> <p>This approach also supports planning authorities in their efforts to facilitate all types of residential intensification, which can include areas of a rural municipality that goes beyond its urban serviced footprint.</p>

	<p>c) promoting densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, and support the use of active transportation</p>	
12	<p>2.6 Rural Lands in Municipalities</p> <p>1. On rural lands located in municipalities, permitted uses are:</p> <p>c) residential development, including lot creation, where site conditions are suitable for the provision of appropriate sewage and water services;</p> <p>2. Development that can be sustained by rural service levels should be promoted.</p> <p>3. Development shall be appropriate to the infrastructure which is planned or available, and avoid the need for the uneconomical expansion of this infrastructure.</p> <p>4. Planning authorities should support a diversified rural economy by protecting agricultural and other resource-related uses and directing non-related development to areas where it will minimize constraints on these uses.</p>	<p>The proposed development flows directly from this part of the PPS.</p> <p>The PPS defines rural lands as lands which are located outside settlement areas and which are outside prime agricultural areas. Paragraph 2.6(1)(c) provides that municipal rural lands can be used for residential development where appropriate water and waste management can be provided. Moreover, development that does not burden rural service levels is to be favoured, which aligns with efforts to avoid uneconomical expansion of infrastructure.</p> <p>The approach being taken in the proposed development seeks to meet all these elements.</p>
15	<p>2.9 Energy Conservation, Air Quality and Climate Change</p> <p>1. Planning authorities shall plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate through approaches that:</p> <p>c) support energy conservation and efficiency;</p> <p>d) promote green infrastructure, low impact development,</p>	<p>The small homes proposed for the development are fully electrified, use the highest standards for insulation, as appropriate, take advantage of passive solar, use heat pump technology, and maximize the efficient use of their small size and associated energy usage. All of this supports energy conservation and efficiency.</p>

		The sites themselves are intended to be low impact , largely driven by their small size and avoiding requirements for larger public infrastructure.
18	<p>3.6 Sewage, Water and Stormwater</p> <p>1. Planning for sewage and water services shall:</p> <p>a) accommodate forecasted growth in a timely manner that promotes the efficient use and optimization of existing municipal sewage services and municipal water services and existing private communal sewage services and private communal water services;</p> <p>c) promote water and energy conservation and efficiency;</p>	The proposed development allows for the expansion of residential housing in rural communities that is not predicated on access of or expansion to municipal water and waste services . Effectively this allows those resources to focus on even higher density housing (e.g. multi-story) with the municipal core area.
19	<p>3. Where municipal sewage services and municipal water services are not available, planned or feasible, private communal sewage services and private communal water services are the preferred form of servicing for multi-unit/lot development to support protection of the environment and minimize potential risks to human health and safety.</p>	Private communal water and sewage services are envisaged for the proposed development which occurs on rural unserviced lands.
20	<p>3.9 Public Spaces, Recreation, Parks, Trails and Open Space</p> <p>1. Healthy, active, and inclusive communities should be promoted by:</p> <p>a) planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of persons of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity;</p>	The proposed development is based on the idea of pocket communities where people of various demographic and socio-economic backgrounds are encouraged to interact through village-like amenities and community-based facilities (central gazebo, shared garden areas, etc.).