



March 2022

Goldie Ghamari, MPP Carleton
30-6179 Perth St.,
Richmond, Ontario K0A 2Z0

Dear Ms. Ghamari,

The Board of the Manotick Village and Community Association is writing to express concerns about the recommendations of the Report on Affordable Housing released by the Ontario Affordable Housing Task Force in February.

While the creation of 1.5 million more homes is laudable, the recommendations on how to achieve this will severely impede a municipality's ability to grow and meet the needs of its residents in a sustainable, positive way.

There is obviously a need to streamline the approval process and dispense with some unnecessary hurdles that impact on the cost of housing. However, establishing province wide standards on density and enabling the province to override Official Plans developed with much input from residents is not a positive step. The proposal to exclude communities from providing input on developments prevents residents from working with builders and developers on concepts that will fit within the existing neighbourhood. The MVCA has been successful at working with local developers to improve on their original proposal without hindering their process and enabling a positive outcome that is welcomed by village residents.

The Task Force also recommends that the province "Repeal or override municipal policies, zoning or plans that prioritize the preservation of physical character of neighbourhood". This could potentially result in housing that would not fit within the neighbourhood, such as high rise residential in a single-family home neighbourhood that is not located near transit. In Manotick, this could lead to a high rise being built near Watson's Mill – a move that would destroy the beauty of our village, and diminish the historic draw that attracts tourist trade.

Another concern is to allow for development "on undeveloped land, including outside existing municipal boundaries, by building necessary infrastructure to support higher density housing and complete communities and applying the recommendations of this report to all undeveloped land".

If adopted, this would ignore the City's growth management strategy which includes a 1 km buffer zone around Villages and the protection of agricultural land – two very important criteria for rural villages such as Manotick.

Unfortunately, the Report's focus is on market housing, not the construction of housing that would be affordable for lower income Canadians. Ottawa has already identified a need to build more affordable housing and is looking to adopt inclusionary zoning that would require certain types of new developments to include affordable housing. A Task Force recommendation to include this type of zoning province-wide would have been a positive step to creating more affordable housing.

The report also suggests that more developments be exempted from development charges or cash in lieu for parkland. This would severely limit the City's ability to meet its targets for parkland and also increase the cost of infrastructure, such as traffic lights and roundabouts, that would be required for new developments.

Currently, developers are not permitted to appeal an Official Plan once approved by a municipal council. The Task Force proposes that the right to appeal be reinstated. The impact would be delays in moving forward with some sections of the Official Plan while waiting for appeals to be heard. Plus, the \$10,000 price tag to file an appeal is not achievable for community associations who rely on memberships and fundraising to survive.

We are also concerned about the opportunity to override heritage designations. While the process can be costly in some situations, municipalities need to have the flexibility to assess when heritage buildings can be protected without hindering progress on future integration into communities.

We sincerely hope the Government of Ontario will consider the voices of municipalities and community associations when moving forward with the recommendations of the Task Force.

Sincerely,

Grace Thrasher
President