



TOM MRAKAS
MAYOR

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STATEMENT FROM MAYOR MRAKAS ON PROVINCE'S MORE HOMES, BUILT FASTER ACT

"The Province has announced drastic changes to planning legislation that effectively wipes out the power of the municipality to manage growth and development within our communities.

The proposed changes outlined in the legislation being tabled are simply huge:

- The legislation will remove planning responsibilities in Simcoe, Halton, Peel, York, Durham Niagara and Waterloo. Local Official Plans to be updated and will be approved by the provincial Minister of Municipal affairs and Housing, not Region
- Limits the role of conservation authorities, in particular as it speaks to commenting on pollution and land conservation
- Significantly reduces development charges and parkland requirements which will severely impact a municipality's ability to provide future services, amenities and infrastructure and will negatively impact residential tax rates
- Heritage Act changes
- Eliminates site plan control for residential development plans up to 10 units
- Limits scope of site-plan control by removing ability to regulate architectural control and landscape design. This will mean that in Aurora we will no longer be able to impose site plan control on infill housing in our stable neighbourhoods
- Eliminates the need for public hearings for every development draft plan
- Limits third-party appeals on any planning applications, including minor variances and consents. Community groups and even neighbours will no longer be able to appeal applications. They can only appeal to their local municipal council which will now have limited to no authority to deny an application.
- OLT can dismiss cases without a hearing and may award costs
- Additional residential units will be permitted as a right, up to three units in primary building or two units in primary building and one in ancillary building.

While I applaud the Province for taking bold steps forward to address the housing crisis affecting communities across the province, I don't agree that a one-size-fits all approach is the way to achieve it. Aurora is NOT Toronto, or Mississauga or Brampton. We are a small community where these type of "as of right" decisions will have a devastating impact on our community. Instead of giving municipalities the tools necessary to incentivize the building of attainable housing, we have instead found ourselves being bludgeoned with Toronto centric planning legislation, yet again.

For the past four years, we have been working hard to achieve the right mix of housing in our community. Aurora already has inclusionary zoning. Aurora already has provisions in our Official Plan to afford the construction of the missing middle. What we don't have is the power to enforce our Official Plan.

And now, with these new changes, local planners and municipal leaders – those who understand the needs of their communities the best – will have even less authority to affect meaningful change in local land-use planning.

Will this legislation lead to more housing being built? Perhaps. But I think a better question is to ask what type of housing will be built and at what cost?"