



August 4, 2023

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Via email to: growthplanning@ontario.ca

Re: Review of proposed policies adapted from A Place to Grow and Provincial Policy Statement to form a new provincial planning policy instrument.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Provincial Planning Statement. The role of the Source Protection Committee is to protect the long-term supply of safe drinking water for residents and businesses in our region. While our mandate under the *Clean Water Act* is to protect sources of municipal drinking water through the Source Protection Plan, we are also concerned with the quality and quantity of water for areas serviced by private wells and septic systems.

We are concerned about the potential impacts of rural development on the long-term supply of drinking water for rural homes and farms. Increased development in rural and agricultural areas will generate increased demand on the aquifers that supply drinking water. Rural residents in certain communities have already shared water supply concerns for existing private wells.

It is well understood that septic systems can pose a threat to the quality of drinking water from private wells. Private sewage treatment requires ongoing maintenance which individual homeowners are not always aware of or financially able to perform. This can pose a risk to the quality of water in wells, especially for communities with greater density of development. Increased development on private sewage treatment systems should only be encouraged where it is clear that there is no risk to existing sources of drinking water.

It is of vital importance that we ensure that any increase in development on private services is supported by evidence that there will be no long-term negative impacts on water quality and quantity for existing rural land uses.

Research on groundwater recharge is required to determine if more housing is in fact possible in communities serviced by well water, without compromising the long-term viability of the water supply. Hydrogeological studies and water budget analyses should be completed prior to implementing policies that increase rural development on private services.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. We hope that you take our concerns into consideration in drafting the new proposed policy instrument.

Sincerely,

Chair Ray Beauregard,
Raisin-South Nation Source Protection Committee