

October 16, 2023

Honourable Paul Calandra
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
777 Bay Street, 17th Floor
Toronto, Ontario, M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Calandra,

I trust this letter finds you well and I hope you are enjoying the challenges of your new role. As Mayor of the Town of Orangeville, I am writing to first articulate to you that our Council and Town Staff teams are working diligently to deliver on our growth targets and are eager to work with our provincial partners to address the many growth related challenges and to ensure we are able to implement smart development strategies that aim to build not just homes, but also thriving, connected communities.

Additionally, I am writing to convey the Town of Orangeville's priority recommendations from the Housing Affordability Task Force Report. After careful review, we feel that these recommendations are critical to addressing the housing challenges faced by our community and to enhance the provincial process:

- ***13. Limit municipalities from requesting or hosting additional public meetings beyond those that are required under the Planning Act.***
- ***14. Require that public consultations provide digital participation options.***
- ***15. Require mandatory delegation of site plan approvals and minor variances to staff or pre-approved qualified third-party technical consultants through a simplified review and approval process, without the ability to withdraw Council's delegation.***
- ***42. Provide provincial and federal loan guarantees for purpose-built rental, affordable rental, and affordable ownership projects.***
- ***43. Enable municipalities, subject to adverse external economic events, to withdraw infrastructure allocations from any permitted projects where construction has not been initiated within three years of build permits being issued.***
- ***50. Fund the adoption of consistent municipal e-permitting systems and encourage the federal government to match funding. Fund the development of common data architecture standards across municipalities and provincial agencies and require municipalities to provide their zoning bylaws open data standards. Set an implementation goal of 2025 and make funding conditional on established targets.***
- ***65. Develop and legislate a clear, province-wide definition of 'affordable housing' to create certainty and predictability.***

I was in attendance at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference in August 2023 for the announcement of the Building Faster Fund that came with a commitment of \$1.2 billion to support municipalities in meeting their growth targets. At the Ministers Forum, I rose to share my concerns with the former Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on where a small urban municipality like Orangeville fits into this plan, and I would like to use this opportunity to share these concerns with you.

Orangeville, located just outside the GTA, is deeply affected by the housing crisis, particularly concerning affordability and a lack of rental options. However, the announcement of support is geared to municipalities with capacity for growth to 50,000 or more and to small rural municipalities, and Orangeville does not fit into either of these categories. With a population of approx. 31,000, we are far too large to be considered small and rural, but our growth opportunity is limited both by a lack of available land within our boundaries (our geographic and settlement boundaries are one in the same) as well as a lack of available infrastructure, water and wastewater capacity in particular.

We are however surrounded by neighbouring communities, like Caledon, with aggressive growth targets that will significantly impact our community infrastructure. Our fear is that Orangeville may be overlooked or forgotten in the larger provincial planning context, and we too need a strong community with investments made in critical infrastructure to support the overall wellbeing of our residents.

We sincerely appreciate your attention to these matters and look forward to discussing these recommendations further to create a prosperous future for Orangeville together.

Sincerely,



Lisa Post
Mayor