

**Ministry of
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**Ministère des
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et du Logement**

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May 16, 2016

Samantha Hastings
Commissioner, Planning and Economic Development
District of Muskoka
70 Pine Street
Bracebridge, ON
P1L 1N3

Dear Ms. Hastings:

Subject: Township of Lake of Bays
Official Plan Amendment (OPA #16) - 5 Year Official Plan Review

We understand that the District of Muskoka has prepared proposed modifications to the Township of Lake of Bays adopted Official Plan Amendment (OPA 16), which were shared with Township Council on May 10th. It is also our understanding that Township Council passed a resolution supporting the District's proposed modifications with the exception of modification No.31 which speaks to the minimum lot area requirement for new residential back lots within the waterfront designation.

With the adoption of OPA 16, the minimum lot area for new residential back lots within the waterfront designation in the Township Official Plan (OP) was reduced from the current 4 hectare (10 acre) minimum to a 3 hectare (7 acres) minimum. We understand that as part of the Township's Official Plan Review a background discussion paper was prepared which looked at the correlation between lot sizes and housing affordability for back lots as well as lots within the rural designation. The paper concluded that the size of lots has little bearing on the real-estate cost of a particular property and recommended no change from the status quo as it relates to the size of back lots.

It is also our understanding that District staff has completed an analysis of the proposed new policy framework and it's affect, and they concluded that the new policies could result in a significant increase in rural and back lot creation. We understand that District planning staff are recommending a modification to section H.51 of the OP that will increase the minimum lot area requirement for new residential back lots within the waterfront designation back to the 4 hectare (10 acre) minimum.

As you know, land use planning decisions must be consistent with the policies set out in the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS). The PPS directs growth to settlement areas and discourages development patterns which may have a negative effect on servicing and

infrastructure costs, land consumption, and the proper expansion of settlement areas.

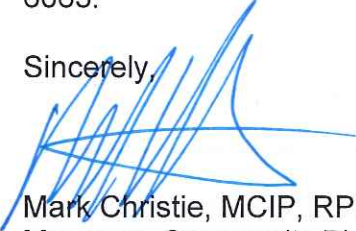
Specifically, policy 1.1.2 states that a municipality shall only make available sufficient land to accommodate the range and mix of land uses to meet the projected needs for a time frame of 20 years. This assessment and determination is done as a component of a comprehensive review, which is done at the District level. The District has commenced an Official Plan update which will include the growth management policies.

Based on the provincial policy framework, the background work completed by the Township as well as the analysis conducted by the District, there appears to be no policy support or justification for the reduction in the minimum lot area requirement for back lots proposed through OPA 16.

Therefore the Ministry is supportive of the proposed modification No.31 to the Township of Lake of Bays OPA 16. Should District Council decide to approve OPA 16 without this modification, the Ministry may be put in a position to appeal Council's decision to the Ontario Municipal Board.

Should you wish to discuss the above matters, do not hesitate to contact me at (416) 585-6063.

Sincerely,



Mark Christie, MCIP, RPP
Manager, Community Planning and Development

cc. Stefan Szczerbak - Township of Lake of Bays