

Policy Advisory Council (PAC) Survey on Land Use Planning

About the Survey



- Survey to PAC
 - Dates: May through early June of 2025
 - Solicited Group: Policy Advisory Council (PAC)
 - Subject: OFA land use planning positions
 - 6 selected topics were considered by respondents
 - Plus the option to submit any land use planning comments
- 30 of the 90 PAC representatives completed the survey
 - 33.3% response rate
 - Strong enough for general interpretations of PAC positioning

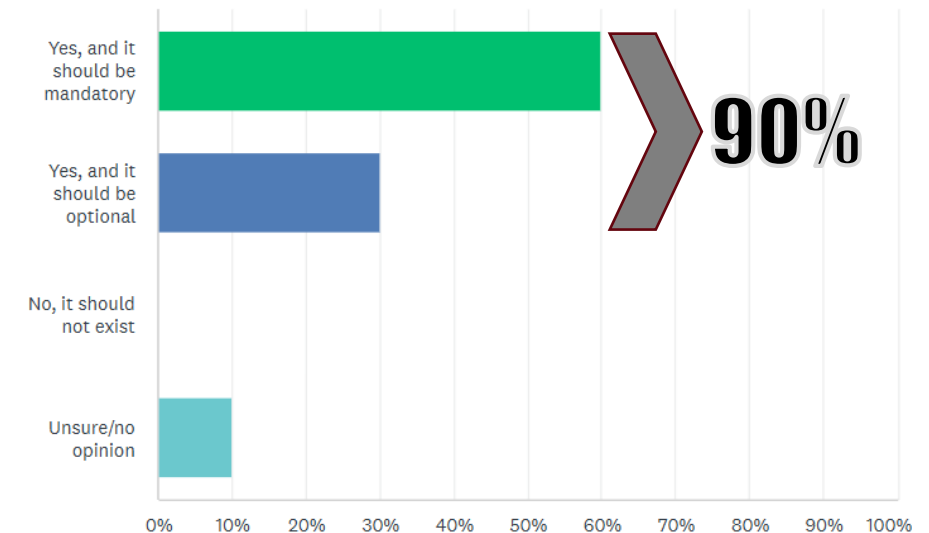
OFA has proposed the creation of ***locally prime agricultural areas***, a policy that would protect ***rural lands*** where ***prime agricultural lands*** are not available in a municipal jurisdiction.

A new ***locally prime agricultural area*** policy for Ontario is supported

- 9/10 respondents supported this policy
 - 60% support that policy being mandatory
 - 30% support that policy being optional

Should the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), or another planning instrument, include locally prime agricultural areas as a municipal planning tool, and should it be a mandatory or optional policy?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 0



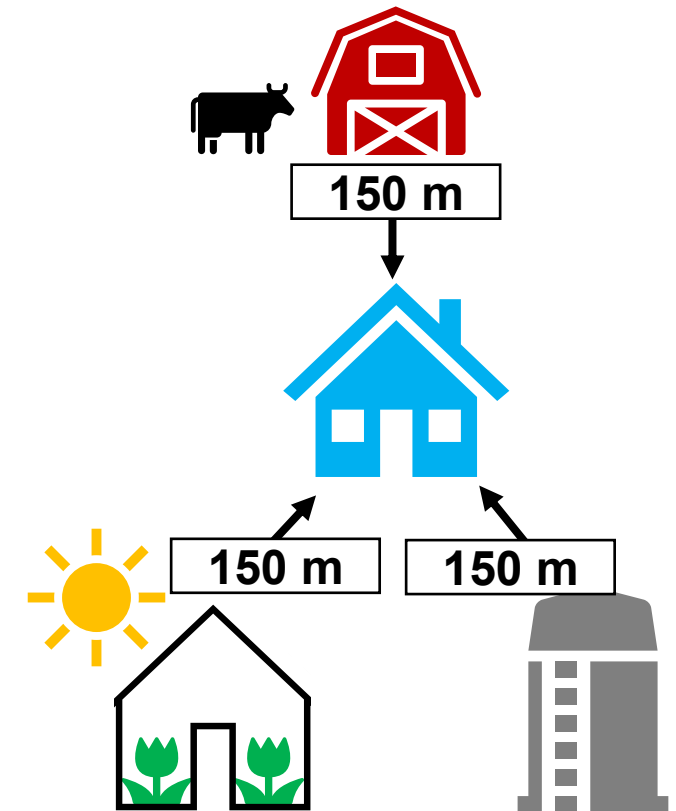
OFA has proposed the creation of new separation distance formulae that would spatially setback greenhouses and grain dryers from *sensitive land uses* (e.g. dwellings, churches, etc.)

New spatial separation formulae

- More than half of respondents in favour of greenhouse separation
- Just shy of 7/10 supported separation distance for grain dryers

Some concerns from respondents

- Just under 1/2 concerned that greenhouses, grain dryers, and livestock facilities would compete for separated land
- About half of respondents want more setbacks and controls placed on cannabis



Topic 3/7 The Greenbelt

OFA has an explicit policy to review all *Greenbelt Plan* amendments and a general policy to review all proposed legislative changes;

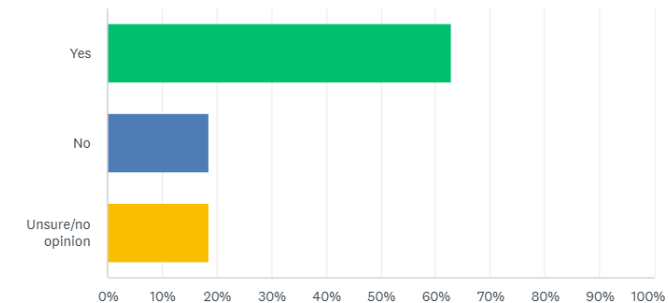
OFA must also prepare for the upcoming coordinated review of Ontario's land use plans

Support witnessed for the *Greenbelt Plan* and a new provincial plan

- About 2/3 of respondents supported maintaining the explicit policy to review *Greenbelt Plan* amendments
- Almost 4/5 of respondents supported a new *Farmbelt Plan* to protect agriculture outside the *Greenbelt Plan*

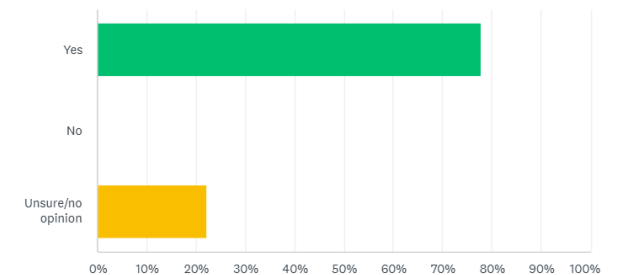
Does OFA require an explicit commitment to review potential proposed changes to the Greenbelt Plan?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 3



Is a new provincial plan needed to protect agriculture outside of the Greenbelt Plan area?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 3



Topic 4/7 The Niagara Escarpment

OFA has proposed the dissolution of the Niagara Escarpment Commission;

OFA must also prepare for the upcoming coordinated review of Ontario's land use plans

Respondents signaled lack of consensus on the *Niagara Escarpment Commission*

- Majority of respondents unsure about support for existing OFA positions regarding the *Niagara Escarpment Commission*

Broadly, there is a desire among respondents for a simpler land use planning system in Ontario—the NEP being one of many layers.



OFA has proposed that *natural heritage* and *prime agricultural areas* should be mutually exclusive designations; OFA proposes that the government should compensate farmers for environmental services provided by farmland

Respondents unsure of mutual exclusivity of NHFA and *prime ag*

- Even split between those in favour, opposed, and unsure
- But most respondents support permitting more *agricultural uses* in NHFAs

Environmental services compensation popular

- Only 15% unsure or opposed



OFA has stated that residential *lot creation* should not occur in *prime agricultural areas*, with an exception for *surplus farm dwellings*

General support for the existing lot creation policies in Ontario's *rural* and *prime areas*

- Almost 4/5 respondents support only 1 lot severance per parcel in *prime ag*
- General support for 2-4, or more, severances within non-prime *rural lands*
- About 1/2 support “lot severance sterilization”
 - Remainder support lengthy cooldown

Respondents generally see lot creation as either problematic or neutral.

The survey asked what kind of net outcomes would happen if more severances were allowed:

- 1/2 stated the outcome would be mostly negative
- 1/3 stated the outcome would be net neutral
- Remaining 16% stated the outcome would be positive

OFA solicited for general comments on land use planning

- **Lack of trust** in planning authorities, municipal and provincial
- Controversial land uses such as ***cannabis*** and ***landfills*** continue to be a concern
- Respondents were also **concerned about *farm worker housing* policies** and how consistently they are interpreted or applied
- **Called for stronger farmland protection policies and more transparency** regarding how development proposals are drafted and considered at the local or provincial level



End

Questions & Discussion