

Enhanced Minister's Zoning Orders (MZOs)

Comments to the Province

January 27, 2021



Background

- The Minister can directly zone lands through an MZO, but in recent decades this power was rarely used.
- The Government has used MZOs more frequently and expanded these powers in July 2020 as part of Bill 197.
- The Minister now has the authority to address site plan matters and require Inclusionary Zoning (IZ).
- The Province is seeking feedback on how to use these enhanced MZO powers.

Key Comments

1) MZOs should not be used routinely

- MZOs can circumvent the Province's planning framework, municipal autonomy and community engagement.
- Staff are receiving an increased number of inquiries about site specific MZOs.

2) MZOs may not provide a more timely response to zoning changes than the regular statutory process

- Mississauga is proud of its service record in issuing permits.
- Staff question if MZOs always provide a more timely response than the regular statutory process.

Key Comments

3) Regional growth amendments benefit from a comprehensive review process

- Staff consider regional planning matters benefit from undergoing a comprehensive review process, as piecemeal decisions can lead to fragmented communities that are more costly to service.
- MZOs should not be used when they impact major municipal infrastructure investments.

4) MZOs require province to be involved in highly localized planning matters

- Two MZOs have been issued in Mississauga.
- MZOs do not align with Zoning By-law or meet some of City engineering requirements. Province should consult with local municipalities prior to issuing an MZO.
- Province should have a lead role in communicating the contents of an MZOs to the local community.

Key Comments

5) If the Government decides to frequently use of MZOs, it could use tool where it provides direct public benefits

- The Province could establish clear criteria to guide use of MZOs.
 - Projects that support affordable housing, public health and/or significant job creation
 - Projects that have support from both lower and upper tiers of Council
 - Projects that will not require a municipality to make major infrastructure investment.
 - All MZOs should be reviewed by the local municipal Planning Department, prior to being issued.

Key Comments (Cont)

- Other steps could be taken by the Province to support affordable housing.
 - Use MZOs to mandate IZ on government owned lands before they are sold or developed.
 - Expand IZ powers so they can be applied city-wide and enable conditional zoning for municipalities.
 - Streamline or reduce the role of LPAT in municipal decision making.
- More long-term care beds are clearly needed in Mississauga and the Province could consider locating future facilities on land it owns where conversions are not required.

Next Steps

- Staff are seeking General Committee endorsement of these comments.
- Staff have suggested that the Mayor also be authorized to provide comments in writing to the Province on this matter.
- All comments are due to the Province by January 30, 2021.