

Ministry of
Municipal Affairs
and Housing

Ministère des
Affaires municipales
et du Logement



Municipal Services Office
North (Sudbury)

159 Cedar Street, 4th Floor
Sudbury ON P3E 6A5
Tel.: 705 564-0120
Toll-free: 1 800 461-1193

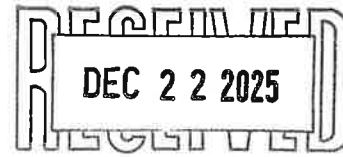
Bureau des services aux
municipalités du Nord (Sudbury)

159, rue Cedar, 4^e étage
Sudbury ON P3E 6A5
Tél.: 705 564-0120
Sans frais: 1 800 461-1193

December 22, 2025

Via email only

Theresa Carlisle
Manitoulin Planning Board - Secretary-Treasurer
40 Water Street Unit 1
PO Box 240, Gore Bay
Ontario, P0P 1H0
mpbcarlisle@manitoulinplanning.ca



**Subject: Requirement to Adopt a Natural Heritage System Strategy
Official Plan Amendment**

Dear Theresa Carlisle,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the failure of the Manitoulin Planning Board and the majority of its member municipalities to adopt an amendment incorporating a Natural Heritage System Strategy (NHSS) into the Manitoulin Planning Area Official Plan, as required under Modification No. 21 to the Official Plan approved by the Ministry on October 29, 2018:

“Within three years after the approval of the Official Plan, the Manitoulin Planning Board shall prepare an Area-Wide Natural Heritage System Strategy.”

The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS), policy 4.1.1 requires that natural features and areas be protected for the long term and policy 4.1.3, requires municipalities to identify natural heritage systems. Any decision made by the Planning Board or a member municipality on a matter under the Planning Act must be consistent with the PPS.

The protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features and functions is a provincial interest articulated in the Planning Act, which municipal councils and planning boards must have regard to in carrying out their responsibilities under the act.

Please advise the ministry of the planning board’s next steps, including timing, towards the adoption of a PPS-consistent official plan amendment and subsequent submission to the ministry for a decision. Please share these next steps with the ministry by February 2, 2026.

If the planning board and its member municipalities are unable to soon resolve the impasse and adopt a PPS-consistent NHSS amendment, the ministry will consider what other steps may be necessary to ensure that provincial requirements are met.

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Anna Little, Manager, Community Planning and Development with MSO-North (Sudbury) at anna.little@ontario.ca. We would also be pleased to arrange a staff-level meeting with the planning board, any member municipalities, and our partner ministries to discuss further.

Sincerely,



Bridget Schulte-Hostedde
Regional Director
Municipal Services Office - North

cc:

Township of Assiginack -Alton Hobbs, CAO- ahobbs@assignack.ca
Township of Billings - Veronique Dion, CAO/Clerk- cao@billingstwp.ca
Township of Burpee-Mills -Jaimie Farquhar-Kay, Clerk/Treasurer-
clerktreasurer@burpeemills.com
Municipality of Central Manitoulin - Denise Deforge, CAO/Clerk -
ddeforge@centralmanitoulin.ca
Township of Cockburn Island- Brent St. Denis, Clerk-
Treasurer- cockburnisland1@gmail.com
Municipality of Gordon/Barrie Island-Carrie Lewis, CAO/Clerk-
Treasurer- clerk@gordonbarrieisland.ca
Township of Tehkummah- Barbara Grigg, Acting Clerk/Administrator-
clerk.administrator@tehkummah.ca
Town of Gore Bay- Jason Quinlan as town manager/clerk - admin@gorebay.ca