

## Frequently Asked Questions

### SDG Official Plan Designation Changes

#### **Why did I receive a letter?**

The County met with landowners to finalize the changes to the rural and agricultural designations within SDG as part of the new Official Plan. The Ministry recently approved these designations but made many significant changes. If you received a letter, then your property was changed from what the County originally submitted to the Ministry. The County felt it was important to notify those who were affected as there is a limited timeframe to appeal the Ministry's changes.

#### **What is a designation?**

The designation of your land does not set your tax rate and does not change the assessed value of your property. Land-use designations broadly describe the types of uses you are allowed within your property (e.g. Commercial, Rural, Agricultural). Specific uses are further detailed in zoning by-laws, which you may be more familiar with. Each designation within the County Official Plan has uses that are permitted and prohibited.

#### **What is the difference between Rural and Agricultural designations?**

In general, agricultural designation only allows agricultural-type uses. This designation ensures that agricultural land is protected from excessive residential or commercial development which could limit future agricultural activity and expansion. For example, you cannot use an agriculturally designated property for something like a landscaping or contractor's yard. The Agricultural designation also limits how your property can be severed; there are very few scenarios where severance is permitted in the agricultural designation.

The rural designation allows more general uses including limited severances for new homes, rural commercial business, and public service or institutional uses (i.e. an ambulance station, church, or school).

#### **What can I do if I do not agree with the Ministry's decision?**

If you provided a letter to the County or the Ministry **OR** attended an open house during the Official Plan consultation you have the right to appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board. You can do this by completing the form and submitting payment to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. **The deadline for appeals is February 27<sup>th</sup>.**

If you did not submit a letter or speak at a public meeting and you are concerned with your designation, we advise you to send a letter to the Ontario Municipal Board outlining these concerns. Please review the Ontario Municipal Board website or contact them for more information on the appeal process.

#### **What are the next steps?**

The County and local Municipalities are preparing information potential appeals. The County will continue to provide updated information on our website throughout the appeal process.