

DATE: MAY 19, 2015
TO: MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL
FROM: JOHN MACKENZIE, COMMISSIONER OF PLANNING
SUBJECT: COMMUNICATION - COUNCIL - MAY 19, 2015

C	<u>13</u>
Item #	<u>5</u>
Report No.	<u>20 (cw)</u>
Council -	<u>May 19/15</u>

ITEM #5 REPORT #20 – COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – MAY 5, 2015

**OAK RIDGES MORAINÉ CONSERVATION PLAN REVIEW
UPDATE ON PROVINCIAL PLAN REVIEW - IN RESPONSE
TO THE MEMBERS RESOLUTION OF MARCH 24, 2015**

**THE PROVINCIAL PLAN COORDINATED REVIEW – 2015:
THE GROWTH PLAN FOR THE GREATER GOLDEN HORSESHOE; THE
GREENBELT PLAN; AND OAK RIDGES MORAINÉ CONSERVATION PLAN
COMMENTS TO THE MINISTRY OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS AND HOUSING
STAGE 1 CONSULTATION**

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning and the Acting Director of Policy Planning recommend:

1. THAT the following landowners' correspondence be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry for their consideration as part of the Provincial Plan Review Process.
 - Malone Given Parsons Inc. (Joan McIntyre), May 11, 2015
Copper Creek Golf Course, City of Vaughan (Attachment 1)
 - Malone Given Parsons Inc. (Ali Ikram), May 12, 2015
Block 41 Landowners' Group (Attachment 2)
 - Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) (Paula Tenuta), May 15, 2015
On behalf of BILD (Attachment 3)

Purpose

To recommend that Council add the above note correspondence to the package of information that will be sent to the Province as part of the City's comments on the Provincial Plan Coordinated Review.

Background - Analysis and Options

The attached letters were received last week and were not part of the original tranche of correspondence received by the Region and the City on Provincial Plan Review. As such, they were not included into the review of landowners' request that was undertaken for those that were submitted earlier. However, they repeat a number of themes that were touched upon in the other submissions. On this basis, the above noted correspondence should be forwarded to the Province for consideration as part of the Provincial Plan Coordinated Review.

Regional Implications

This material will also be forwarded to York Region for its information and consideration.

Conclusion

In order to ensure that the Province is informed of the issues affecting the City of Vaughan it is recommended that the correspondence cited above be forwarded to the Province for its consideration as part of the Provincial Plan Coordinated Review.

Attachments

1. Malone Given Parsons Inc. (Joan McIntyre), May 11, 2015
Copper Creek Golf Course, City of Vaughan
2. Malone Given Parsons Inc. (Ali Ikram), May 12, 2015
Block 41 Landowners' Group
3. Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) (Paula Tenuta), May 15, 2015
On behalf of BILD

Respectfully submitted,



JOHN MACKENZIE
Commissioner of Planning

/lm

Copy To: Steve Kanellakos, City Manager
Jeffrey A. Abrams, City Clerk
Roy McQuillin, Acting Director of Policy Planning

140 Renfrew Drive, Suite 201
Markham, Ontario L3R 6B3
Tel: 905-513-0170
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May 11, 2015

Ms. Valerie Shuttleworth, MCIP, RPP
Chief Planner,
Planning & Economic Development, Corporate Services
The Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

MGP File: 11-2003

Via email: valerie.shuttleworth@york.ca

Dear Ms. Shuttleworth,

**RE: Coordinated Land Use Planning Review – Greenbelt Plan Boundary
Copper Creek Golf Course, City of Vaughan**

This letter is submitted on behalf of the Copper Creek Golf Club in the context of the Coordinated Provincial Policy Review of the Growth Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan.

The Copper Creek Golf Course was built in 2002 and is situated between the East Humber River and Highway 27, north of the Village of Kleinburg within the City of Vaughan. The western half of the property is within the City's urban area. Copper Creek has a pending development application to amend Vaughan's Official Plan and is expected to be developed as a residential community with a density of 50 residents and jobs per hectare. Figure 1 shows that there are approximately 10.6 acres (4.3 hectares) of lands designated as Greenbelt above the valley feature and also that approximately two-thirds of the 40,000 square foot clubhouse building is within the Greenbelt. Copper Creek is seeking to have the highlighted lands shown on Figure 1 removed from the Greenbelt Area with final development limits to be determined through the planning process.

The purpose of this letter is to provide comments for the Region of York and the City of Vaughan's consideration on the various provincial plans.

We are asking the Region support the following requests when providing their comments to the Province:

- 1. The Province should establish a defined process to permit adjustments to the Greenbelt Plan boundaries through OPA's adopted by local/regional councils; and**
- 2. The Province should expand the uses permitted within the Greenbelt Plan to include uses such as active public parks and public stormwater management facilities.**

Revisions to the Greenbelt Plan Policies:

Approximately 396,000 hectares of lands are identified by the Province as Protected Countryside within the Greenbelt Plan. It is logical to assume that in areas subject to future development, further analysis of the lands through site visits and detailed studies will provide more accurate limits than those determined through the Greenbelt Plan which is a high level policy document covering a very large area.

Before any development is approved in 'Greenfield' or designated growth areas, site-specific, and comprehensive science-based studies, such as Master Environmental Servicing Plans (MESPs) or Functional Servicing Studies (FSRs) are required. These studies include Conservation Authority and MNR staking of natural features, determination of appropriate environmental buffers or setbacks, hydrogeological, water balance and engineering reports, endangered species and vegetation surveys, environmental site assessments and studies, cultural and archaeological assessments. This work is then reviewed and commented on by the authorities responsible for implementing the goals and objectives of the provincial policies prior to their recommendation for development approval by council.

These studies generally take a minimum of one year to conduct and in many circumstances it is several years more before they are reviewed, revised and ultimately approved. With all this being said, there is insufficient time for these detailed studies to be done within the timeline of the Province's Coordinated Review process and to provide input into a municipal comprehensive justification or growth management study. As such, it is requested that local and upper tier municipalities be tasked with making adjustments to the boundaries based on set criteria.

It is our experience that environmental features and their buffers often exceed the Greenbelt or the official plan boundary. These lands, although they are within existing urban areas designated for growth, are protected from development and reduce the size of developable areas. Conversely, should there be lands adjacent to designated development areas within the Greenbelt Boundary that are not deemed to be environmental features or associated buffers, or that can no longer continue as an agricultural use, there should be a mechanism to allow for these lands to be added to the adjacent urban area land use.

These 'remnant' pieces are small in scale, but with development areas in the GTA planned for 50 or 70 jobs and persons per hectare, on a cumulative basis, these small pieces of land within an urban area represent the ability to accommodate growth in a more cost effective manner, as existing infrastructure such as transit, roads, social services and municipal services currently exist or are planned for within the area. The addition of these 'remnant' pieces to accommodate planned growth, will help to locate more strategic infrastructure investments leading to cost-effective growth within the GTA. However, if the Province and Regions do not address these 'remnant' pieces within the Greenbelt designation urban sprawl will ultimately continue outwards.

If the Province supports adjustments to the Greenbelt boundaries through detailed studies and approvals by the local and upper tier municipalities, it will be necessary to implement a consistent set of criteria.

The removal of the approximately 4 hectares on the Copper Creek lands from the Greenbelt lands:

- Would be a logical addition to development within an existing community and would utilize existing and pending municipal services, utilities and infrastructure;
- Would not have any adverse effects on the surrounding natural features, the limits of which would be established through study and the approval process;
- Will not compromise continued agricultural practices in the area; and,
- Will continue to locate growth south of the Greenbelt within the Settlement Area Boundary and contribute to reducing sprawl.

We ask that the Region support our request to permit adjustments to the Greenbelt Area in their report to the Province.

Expansion of Uses within the Greenbelt:

The Greenbelt Plan does not permit uses such as active parkland within the Greenbelt and it is unclear on where and when stormwater management ponds are permitted. Both uses support complete communities and are compatible with natural areas. Their location within the Greenbelt area in lands abutting urban areas will support the goals of Smart Growth and building complete communities and more efficient use of the developable urban lands.

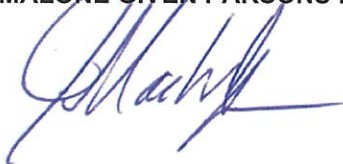
In summary, we respectfully request that the Region and the City of Vaughan recommend that the Province consider making changes to the Greenbelt Plan to allow for modifications to the Greenbelt boundaries adjacent to designated development areas to be made based on a set of criteria and the approval of the local and upper tier municipality.

In addition, we ask that the Region and the City also recommend the Province's consideration of broadening the permitted uses within the Greenbelt to include uses such as active parks and stormwater management ponds.

We appreciate this opportunity to provide our comments to the Region for consideration in their review of the provincial plans.

Yours very truly,

MALONE GIVEN PARSONS LTD.



Joan MacIntyre, MCIP, RPP
Principal
jmacintyre@mgp.ca

att/1




cc:

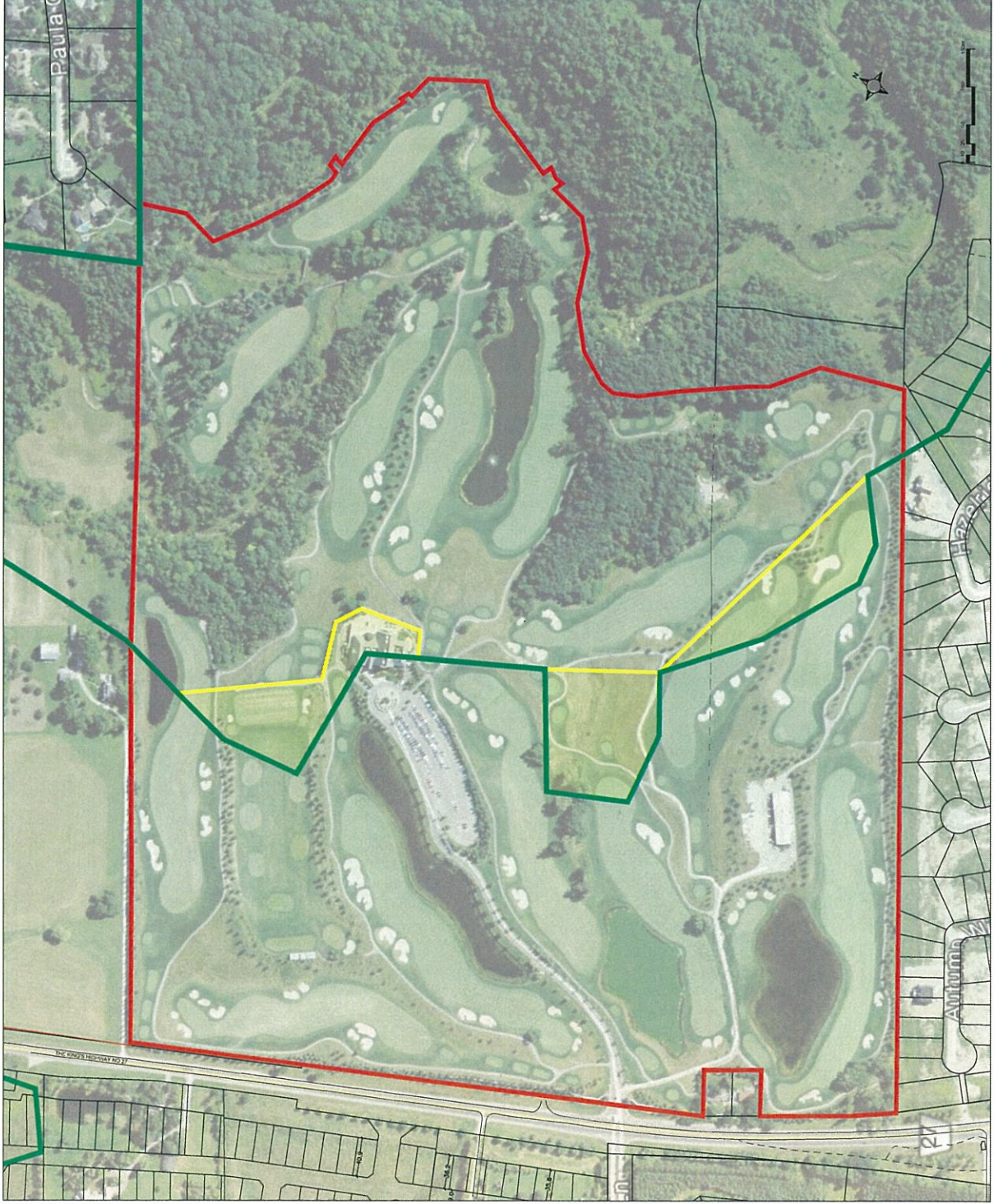
Wayne Emmerson, Chairman York Region
Lina Bigioni, Director of Gov't Relations & Assistant to the Chairman, York Region
Sandra Malcic, Manager, Policy and Environment, York Region
Marisa Talarico, Planner, Long Range Planning, York Region
John Mackenzie, Commissioner of Planning, City of Vaughan
Maurizio Bevilacqua, City of Vaughan Mayor

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**PROVINCIAL PLANNING
REVIEW, 2015**
Copper Creek
City of Vaughan

Legend

-  Copper Creek Lands
-  Greenbelt Boundary
-  Lands proposed to be removed from the
Greenbelt - 4.3 ha.



May 12, 2015

Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua and Members of Council
Vaughan City Hall
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, ON
L6A 1T1

MGP File: 11-2003

Via email to City Clerks Clerks@vaughan.ca

Dear Mayor Bevilacqua and Members of Council,

Re: Council Meeting – May 19, 2015
Item #3 - Report No. 20 of the Committee of the Whole
Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Review Update on Provincial Plan Review - In
Response to the Members Resolution of March 24, 2015
2015 Coordinated Review of Ontario's Land Use Plans
Lands located within the Greenbelt Plan Area
Block 41, City of Vaughan

Malone Given Parsons Ltd. is the land use planner for the Block 41 Landowners Group. We are writing in response to the Province's coordinated policy review of the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (Growth Plan), the *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan*, the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Niagara Escarpment Plan*. This coordinated review is an opportunity to provide valuable input to the Province and to evaluate how well the plans collectively support and align with the goals and objectives of each plan, as well as with York Region's and the City of Vaughan's Official Plans and their growth management initiatives.

Block 41 is one of two New Community Areas identified in the City of Vaughan's Official Plan 2010, which are to accommodate growth up to the 2031 planning horizon. These lands are currently the subject of a study and planning process to support preparation and approval of Secondary Plans that will enable development for a range of urban uses at a density of 70 people and jobs per hectare. Lands located within the *Greenbelt Plan* area in Block 41 are shown on the attached figure. Highlighted in yellow are lands within the *Greenbelt Plan* area which do not comprise natural heritage features and should be removed from the Greenbelt.

It is our recommendation that the City of Vaughan recommend that the Province:

- 1. Establish a process to permit adjustments to the *Greenbelt Plan* areas; and,**
- 2. Permit additional uses within the *Greenbelt Plan* area.**

A Mechanism to Refine the *Greenbelt Plan* Area Boundary:

It remains unclear as to what exact measures the Province used to establish the original *Greenbelt Plan* area boundary in 2006. The approach used in the past to demarcate the original boundary lines should be enhanced by a more detailed scientific analysis of environmental and economic criteria. As such, it is our request that the City request the Province to define a process to refine the boundary of the *Greenbelt Plan* area based on a set of criteria. These criteria should be based on the outcomes of environmental studies, utilizing sound scientific principles, which would then be implemented through municipal Official Plan amendments.

The development of Block 41 as currently anticipated, without any potential boundary adjustment to the *Greenbelt Plan* area, would result in fragmented parcels of agricultural land, economically unsuitable for the purposes of growing crops. These lands have been identified in yellow on the attached figure.

The provincial plans currently under review have set a clear course for containing growth. One of the guiding principles of the *Growth Plan* is to optimize the use of existing and new infrastructure to support growth in a compact and efficient form. Block 41 has approximately 78 hectares of lands within the *Greenbelt Plan* area not currently identified as natural heritage features and which will be unsuitable for agricultural purposes once development occurs. If these 78 hectares are reviewed and confirmed for removal from the *Greenbelt Plan* area and developed at the required density of 70 people and jobs per hectare, approximately 5,500 additional people and jobs would be accommodated within Block 41. This is a substantial amount of jobs and population that would otherwise require additional lands be brought into the settlement area as part of future urban expansions, which in turn would require further expansion of infrastructure at significant costs and would be an inefficient use of existing infrastructure. As such, we request that the City request that the Province consider a review process to allow for lands improperly designated within the *Greenbelt Plan* area to be removed.

Expansion of Uses within the *Greenbelt Plan* Area:

We also request clarity on the *Greenbelt Plan* policies regarding the location of stormwater management ponds within the *Greenbelt Plan* area in New Community Areas. The policies of the *Greenbelt Plan* are unclear on where and when stormwater management ponds are permitted. It is our opinion that stormwater management ponds are compatible with natural areas and should be permitted within the *Greenbelt Plan* area.

The *Greenbelt Plan* also precludes active parkland from locating within the *Greenbelt Plan* area. Active parkland is necessary to support sound development and complete communities, and can complement natural areas by enlarging their footprints and offering access and visual windows into them. As such, we would like clarification of the *Greenbelt Plan* policies regarding stormwater management ponds in the *Greenbelt Plan* area and would request the flexibility to locate both stormwater management ponds and parkland within the *Greenbelt Plan* area.

May 15, 2015

We appreciate this opportunity to provide our comments to the City of Vaughan for consideration in their review of the provincial plans.

We respectfully request that the City include these comments in its submission to the Province.

If you wish to further discuss any matter raised here please do give me a call at 905-513-0170 ext. 127, or at the email address below.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ali Ikram', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Ali Ikram
Planner

MALONE GIVEN PARSONS LTD.

Email: aikram@mgp.ca

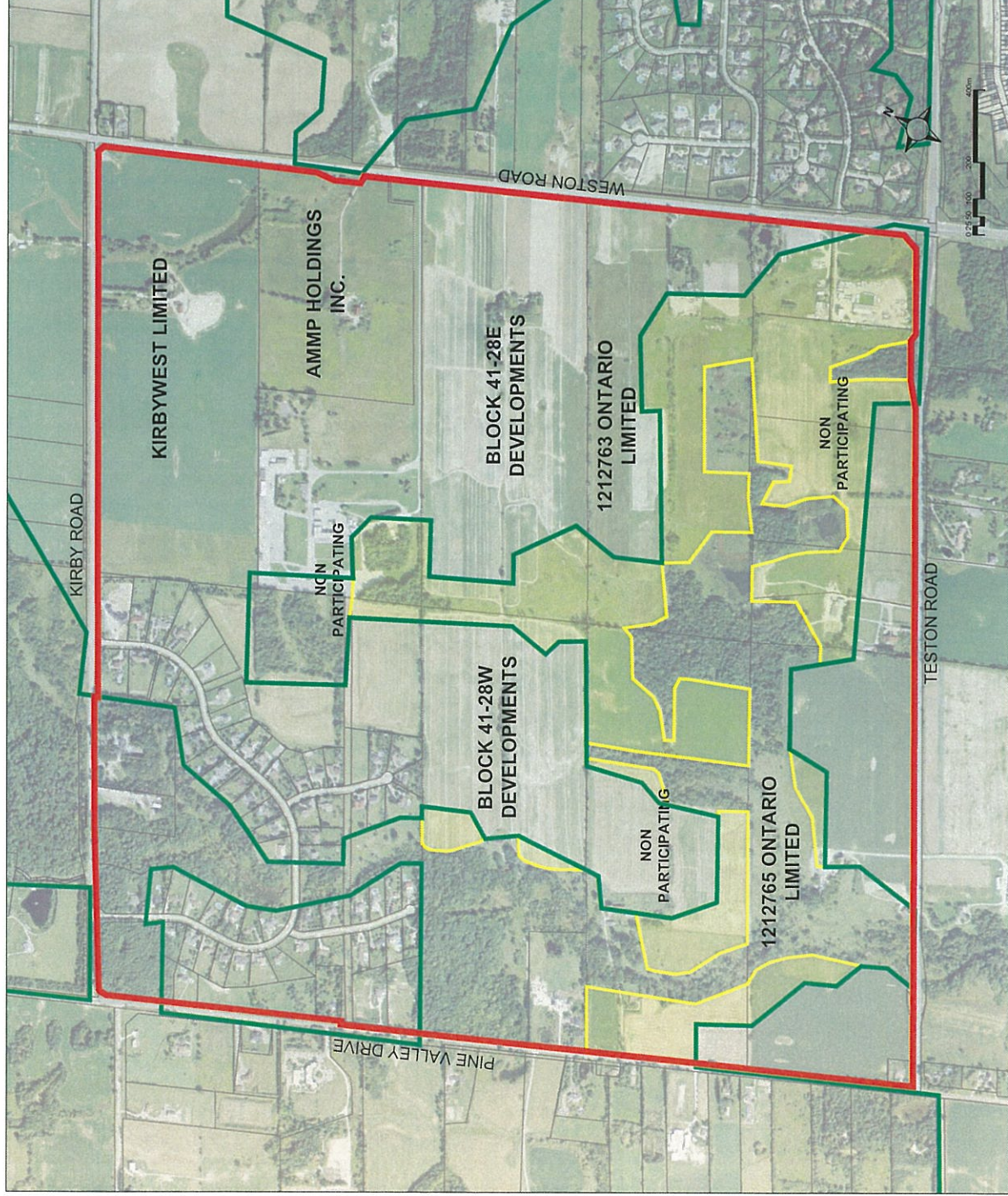
cc John Mackenzie, Commissioner of Planning, City of Vaughan
Steve Kanellakos, City Manager, City of Vaughan
Roy McQuillin, Acting Director of Policy Planning, City of Vaughan
Block 41 Landowners Group

PROVINCIAL PLANNING REVIEW, 2015

Block 41 Landowner's Group City of Vaughan

Legend

- Block 41 Lands
- Greenbelt Boundary
- Lands proposed to be removed from the Greenbelt - 78.0 ha.



Date: May 8, 2015
Prepared by:

MALONE GIVEN PARSONS LTD.

May 15, 2015

Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua and Members of Council
City of Vaughan
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, Ontario
L6A 1T1

Dear Mayor Bevilacqua,

RE: BILD Comments – 2015 Co-ordinated Review of Provincial Plans
May 19th Council Meeting

The Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) would like to acknowledge and thank the City of Vaughan for the opportunity to provide comments to your municipality as we embark on the 2015 co-ordinated review of provincial plans, including the Greenbelt and Growth Plan.

Together with the Ontario Home Builders' Association and members of the other impacted local home building associations, BILD's members have been significantly impacted by the Greenbelt and have expressed interest since the enactment of this legislation, going back to 2005 conversations with municipal and provincial levels of government.

We trust that the City will continue with public consultation and engagement, in an effort to discuss the current impacts and potential changes to the Greenbelt Plan. We also hope that the City will provide specific recommendations, similar to those put forward last year by Durham and Niagara Regions, that will be included as part of the formal provincial review. These Regions recommended the establishment of a set of quantifiable criteria for landowners and municipal governments by which existing and proposed Greenbelt designations can be assessed and measured to determine its appropriateness.

From the industry's perspective, in terms of the resulting Greenbelt boundaries, a transparent, accountable, fair and evidence-based criteria was never clearly established or articulated to stakeholders. The process for creating the Greenbelt Plan maps still remains unclear today. Particularly, the Province has not disclosed to the public, how the boundaries were established and against what measures – whether they were scientific, politically motivated, based on expert opinion, and/or community request based.

In addition, the industry believes that the final Schedule 1 of the Greenbelt Plan was unfairly adjusted, when comparing it to the Draft Greenbelt Plan mapping originally posted on the

Environmental Bill of Rights Registry. From the Draft to the Final Plan, there was a significant increase of Greenbelt designation, without a clear rationale or criteria to justify these lands being included in the Plan. Considering the significant amount of changes without clear criteria or evidence, added consultation should have been provided for the municipalities and affected landowners. This would have created more confidence in the Final Plan.

A review of the Greenbelt Plan must be carefully considered in conjunction with the reviews of other provincial policies such as the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. A coordinated effort of these reviews will be important for the GTA Region's critical and required long-term infrastructure planning and investments. It is in the City of Vaughan's own best interests for its long-term Official Plan, transportation and infrastructure goals and objectives that reassessment and re-designation criteria be created.

Also, as reiterated by our colleagues at the Ontario Home Builders' Association, the home building and land development industry has no intention of fighting the Greenbelt. On the contrary, we are of the view that now is the opportunity to look at potential ways to improve the Greenbelt – its character and overall integrity, in areas where it makes sense to do so. With a view to improving our current Greenbelt, we are also looking forward to a creative, collaborative and progressive conversation about potential additional land use options to expand public access and public use on greenbelt and related lands.

With our colleagues at the OHBA, the industry will be pleased to offer insight into the successes and challenges that have arisen over the past decade through the implementation of the Growth Plan, which is also being reviewed at the same time, and is equally important to this conversation. As we move through the review process, the industry looks forward to being able to present evidence-based recommendations to support new housing supply and employment opportunities while protecting significant environmental features.

In the five-year anniversary update of the Growth Plan, the province noted that, ***"because of the magnitude of growth that is forecast, it will be necessary to bring new lands in to the urban envelope. The Growth Plan outlines a series of tests and criteria to ensure that expansions occur when necessary and where most appropriate, and in a way that ensures that infrastructure is in place and the natural environment is protected."*** The province has established how critically important the "white-belt" lands in the GTA are in supporting the long-term future demographic and economic growth when rational planning requires and permits urban expansion to occur. We hope that the City of Vaughan will echo our sentiment that any reductions to the "white-belt" to accommodate future growth will have an impact on population/employment allocations, and the associated and necessary designated housing supply needed to support it, which will ultimately challenge housing affordability and the GTA's economic competitiveness.

BILD supports balanced growth initiatives for new communities that do not compromise affordability and competitiveness while utilizing Growth Plan principles to create complete, liveable and sustainable neighbourhoods where we all live, work and play. We look forward to working with our municipal and provincial colleagues during the review to improve the quality of life and affordability for families living in the GTA.

BILD RECOMMENDATIONS:

BILD recommends that the City of Vaughan request that the Province consult with all stakeholders and establish a process and a set of quantifiable criteria by which municipal governments and landowners have the opportunity to have existing and proposed designations in the land area of the Greenbelt Plan assessed and measured to determine its appropriateness.

This mirrors a recommendation that has been issued to the Province by The Regional Municipality of Durham in the September 2, 2014 Report titled *Durham Greenbelt Plan Review Final Report – Directions and Recommendations, File D07-69-03*. Recommendation 18 states:

“Create a clearly defined process to allow municipalities to request minor revisions or rounding out of the Plan areas as part of each Plan review. These revisions should not be permitted to result in a net loss of protected area; should clearly demonstrate that they achieve efficient use of land that advances municipal and Plan objectives; should comply with natural heritage and agricultural protection policies; and should require Regional and area municipal council support.”

A similar recommendation was issued in the Urban Strategies Inc. report for the Niagara Region in August 2013 titled *Niagara Region’s Greenbelt Plan Review – Summary Report*. Recommendation 7 and 20 states:

“The 2015 Provincial Greenbelt Plan review needs to be transparent, informed, diligent and genuinely open to exploring way the Plan can be improved to better meet its objectives. Ensure clarity in the process by which Greenbelt boundaries will be refined in the 2015 Provincial Greenbelt Plan review.”

With a view to improving the Greenbelt, BILD also recommends that the City of Vaughan engage all stakeholders in a creative, collaborative and progressive conversation about broadening the permitted land uses within the Greenbelt and related lands. For example, in order to expand public access and public use, active parkland dedication could be permitted, or where Greenbelt lands are abutting urban development, the opportunity may exist to use such land for storm water management ponds, while still maintaining the Greenbelt’s integrity and significance.

Equally as important to the greenbelt discussion, is one of accommodating for future growth and preserving the whitebelt.

BILD recommends that the City echo our sentiments that the whitebelt is necessary to bring new lands in to the urban envelope and that any reductions to the "white-belt" to accommodate future growth will have an impact on population/employment allocations, and the associated and necessary designated housing supply needed to support it. This will ultimately challenge housing affordability and the GTA's economic competitiveness.

We are confident that now is the time to bring all of the conversations together that we have been having over the years on transportation, infrastructure, ecological preservation, and the so many related land use planning and development pieces in an effort to preserve our significant

environmental features, and to accommodate growth and employment in the appropriate places. We look forward to our continued conversations about being your partner in community building in Vaughan.

Once again, BILD thanks the City of Vaughan for the opportunity to provide preliminary comments related to the 2015 Provincial Greenbelt Review. The industry will be fully engaged with municipal and provincial colleagues now that the formal review is launched and we look forward to providing more extensive comments as we move together through this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paula J. Tenuta', with a stylized, cursive script.

Paula J. Tenuta. MCIP, RPP
Vice President, Policy & Government Relations

cc: *John Mackenzie, Commissioner, Planning, City of Vaughan*
Michael Pozzebon, BILD York Chapter Chair