

January 28, 2020

Christopher Raynor, Regional Clerk
The Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

Subject: Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Council Resolution

Dear Mr. Raynor,

At its meeting on January 21, 2020, Council of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville passed a resolution, as attached, directing staff to request York Region to include the areas tentatively identified in Gormley and along Highway 48 in its Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR), so that full municipal services can be extended to these areas if the studies are endorsed by both Town and Regional Councils.

Pursuant to the following policies of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and directed by Council, Town staff have been undertaking studies and consultations for the land along the Highway 48 corridor (in conjunction with the City of Markham) and the land between Gormley and the municipal boundary with the City of Markham, including the existing Gormley Secondary Plan Area:

- Section 2.2.8.4 permitting settlement area boundary adjustments without an MCR if there would be no net increase in land within the settlement areas; and
- Section 2.2.8.6 permitting multiple settlement area boundary expansions in advance of an MCR if the amount to be added to the settlement area is no larger than 40 hectares each time.

We understand the Region's MCR intends to achieve a balanced land budget and may not be able to address the permitted settlement area boundary adjustment and/or expansions. We therefore respectfully request that York Region consider including a policy and servicing "margin" in its MCR to accommodate possible requests from the lower-tier municipalities for settlement area boundary adjustments and/or expansions as permitted by the Growth Plan.

Yours sincerely,



Haiqing Xu, PhD, RPP
Director, Development Services

cc: Paul Freeman, Chief Planner, York Region

Report No. DS-001-20 York Region Municipal Comprehensive Review Update and Major Transit Station Area Delineation (D08)

Moved by Councillor Kroon

Seconded by Councillor Ferdinands

- 1) That Council endorse the recommended Stouffville GO Major Transit Station Area and Lincolnville GO Major Transit Station Area delineations and minimum density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare, for consideration through York Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review; and
- 2) That Council request York Region to change its proposed refinements to the Agricultural System Mapping, as per staff's comments in Attachment 4 to this Report, and as below:
 - a) To not designate lands in Area 16 (Vandorf) as Prime Agricultural Area;
 - b) To not designate lands in Area 24 (Gormley) as Prime Agricultural Area; and
 - c) To identify all lands in Gormley, Vandorf-Preston Lake, Musselman's Lake and Bloomington as Settlements Areas (Town and Villages/Hamlet) as per Map 8 of the York Region Official Plan; and
- 3) That Council direct the Director of Development Services to forward Report No. DS-001-20 to the Clerk, the Chief Planner, and the Council at York Region for their information; and
- 4) That Council recommend to York Regional Council that the Town's other growth initiatives, such as Highway 48 Visioning Study and proposed employment growth along the Highway 404 Corridor be considered in the forthcoming Region growth forecasts and lands needs assessment to 2041.

Carried



Subject: York Region Municipal Comprehensive Review Update and Major Transit Station Area Delineation (D08)

Staff Report No. DS-001-20

Department: Development Services

Date: January 21, 2020

Recommendation:

- 1) That Council endorse the recommended Stouffville GO Major Transit Station Area and Lincolnville GO Major Transit Station Area delineations and minimum density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare, for consideration through York Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review; and
- 2) That Council request York Region to change its proposed refinements to the Agricultural System Mapping, as per staff's comments in Attachment 4 to this Report, and as below:
 - a) To not designate lands in Area 16 (Vandorf) as Prime Agricultural Area;
 - b) To not designate lands in Area 24 (Gormley) as Prime Agricultural Area; and
 - c) To identify all lands in Gormley, Vandorf-Preston Lake, Musselman's Lake and Bloomington as Settlements Areas (Town and Villages/Hamlet) as per Map 8 of the York Region Official Plan; and
- 3) That Council direct Staff to forward Report No. DS-001-20 to the Clerk and the Chief Planner at York Region for their information.

1. Purpose:

The purpose of this Report is to provide Council with an update on York Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) process and work program, and seek Council endorsement of the recommended Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) delineations for

the Stouffville GO MTSA and Lincolnville GO MTSA, for consideration through the Region's MCR.

2. Executive Summary:

York Region is undertaking a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) to update its Official Plan to conform to the Province's Growth Plan. This Report provides an update on the background work undertaken to date, and work that will be forthcoming in early 2020. It is anticipated that the new York Region Official Plan will be considered for Regional Council adoption by the end of 2020, at which time it would be submitted to the Province for approval. The Town's ongoing Official Plan Review (OPR) is being undertaken concurrently with the Region's MCR to inform Regional policy directions and ensure consistency. The Town's Official Plan is required to be updated within one year following the approval of the Region's new Official Plan.

At this time, the Region is seeking local Council endorsement of the recommended Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) delineations for the Stouffville GO MTSA and the Lincolnville GO MTSA to inform work on the Region's Intensification Strategy and Planning for Growth Directions Report (Q2 2020). The Growth Plan requires that MTSA's be delineated in the Region's Official Plan and minimum density targets be identified, in order to support growth and intensification around transit stations. The recommended MTSA delineations are identified in Attachments 1 and 2 to this Report. Town staff will be bringing forward a Report to Council on the Lincolnville GO MTSA Land Use Study in March 2020, which will include a Preferred Land Use Plan and a draft Official Plan Amendment for consideration.

This Report also provides an update to Council on the status of other Regional MCR studies and related Town initiatives, including:

- Agricultural System Mapping – The Region has proposed refinements to the Province's agricultural land base which designates prime agricultural area and rural areas. Town staff have provided comments to the Region, which do not support the redesignation of certain lands from rural area to prime agricultural area.
- Employment Area Mapping – The Region is required to designate employment areas in its Official Plan, and have been working with Town staff to delineate the employment areas and develop an appropriate policy framework.
- Employment Area Conversion Requests – The Region is evaluating the Council endorsed employment area conversion requests within the Town as part of its Phase 2 assessment (i.e., broader analysis of employment land conversion requests). It is anticipated that Regional staff recommendations will be available in February 2020, with a Report to Regional Council in March 2020.

- Preliminary Growth Forecasts and Land Needs to 2041 – Regional staff will be bringing forward the Planning for Growth Directions Report to Regional Council in March 2020, which will present the Region’s draft 2041 population and employment forecasts and land needs assessment, and growth allocations to the local municipalities. The Town is undertaking a Growth Management Assessment, which is being used to inform the Region’s work.
- Highway 404 Corridor Provincially Significant Employment Zones (PSEZs) – The Province is currently evaluating requests for identifying PSEZs under the Growth Plan. At this time, the Province has not identified any PSEZs in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. Town staff are continuing investigations and discussions with the Province and York Region to facilitate a settlement area boundary adjustment to include the proposed south Gormley Employment Expansion Area, and evaluate the most appropriate Whitebelt areas in the Town for expanding and enhancing the Greenbelt Area.

Town staff will continue working with the Region through their MCR and will report back to Council with an update following the release of the Region’s Reports, which are anticipated in March 2020.

3. Background:

3.1 Municipal Comprehensive Review Process

The Region is currently undertaking a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) to update its Official Plan to implement the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019 (Growth Plan). The Region’s new Official Plan is anticipated to be adopted by the end of 2020.

To date the Region has prepared a number of Background Reports to inform the MCR, which are further discussed in Section 4.0 of this Report, and include the following:

- [Planning for Intensification, April 2019](#) (includes Draft MTSA’s)
- [Planning for Employment, May 2019](#)
- [Planning for Agriculture Background Report, June 2019](#)
- [Growth and Infrastructure Alignment September, 2019](#)
- [Growth and Infrastructure Alignment Memo September, 2019](#)
- [Employment Area Conversion Process Update, October 2019](#)
- [Update on Public Consultations for the Municipal Comprehensive Review, October 2019](#)

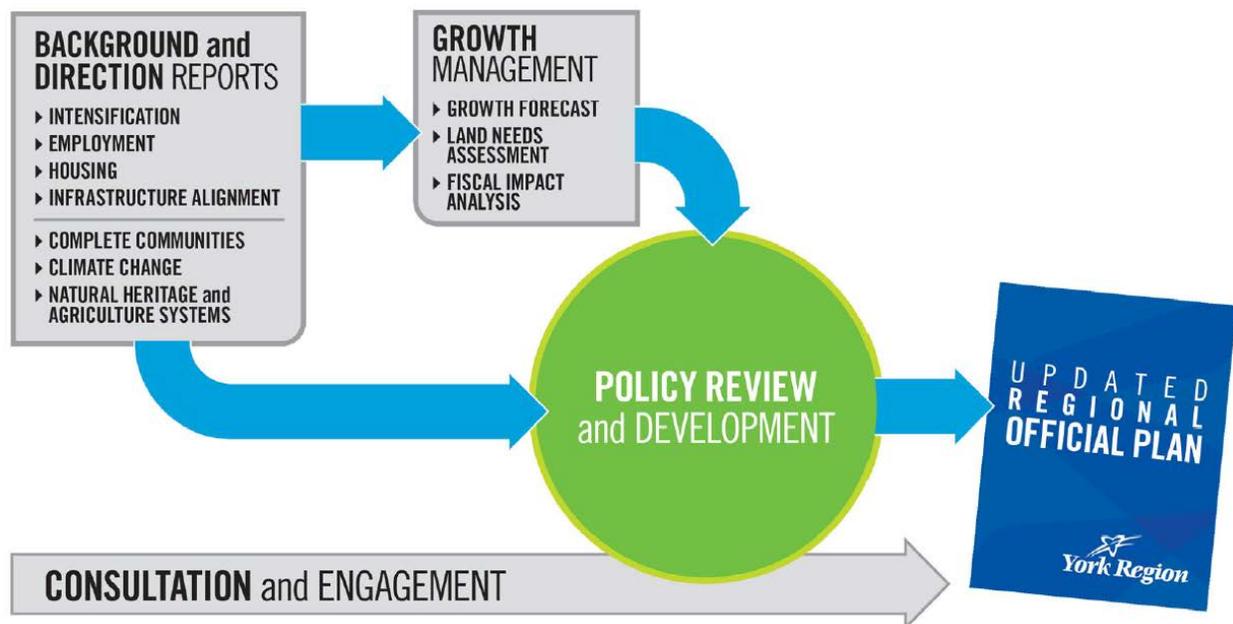
Additional Reports will be forthcoming in early 2020, which will include:

- Planning for Growth Directions Report (Draft Forecast and Land Budget), Q1 2020
- Natural Heritage Planning Report, Q1 2020
- Climate Change Action Plan Report, Q1 2020
- Intensification Strategy (includes MTSA Update Report), Q2 2020

- Planning for Employment, Q2 2020
- Policy Directions Report, Q2 2020

Staff will provide comments on these Reports as they become available and provide updates to Council as required. It is anticipated that a Draft of the Region’s updated Official Plan will be available for consultation by the end of 2020. Figure 1 provides a high level summary of the Region’s MCR work program to update the Regional Official Plan.

Figure 1: York Region Municipal Comprehensive Review



The Town’s Official Plan is required to conform to the Region’s new Official Plan, and is required to be updated within one year of the approval of the Region’s Official Plan update. As such, a large portion of the Town’s ongoing Official Plan Review (OPR) will be undertaken iteratively with the Region’s MCR, to ensure consistency in policy directions. The Region’s updated Official Plan will implement the policies of the Growth Plan and identify population and employment forecasts, growth allocations, and intensification targets for the local municipalities to the 2041 planning horizon.

4. Analysis and Options

4.1 Major Transit Station Areas

On April 18, 2019, Regional Council adopted the recommendations of the Committee of the Whole, which directed Regional Staff to proceed with consultation on the draft Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) delineations and minimum density targets, as outlined in the [Planning for Intensification Background Report, April 2019](#), as part of the Region’s MCR.

MTSAs refer to the area including and around existing and planned higher order transit stations and generally comprise the area within a 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station. MTSAs represent suitable intensification areas which are supported by higher order transit and infrastructure investments, and are appropriate locations for accommodating more intensive transit-oriented development. Under the Growth Plan, York Region in consultation with local municipalities, is required to delineate MTSA boundaries and set minimum density targets for MTSAs located on “priority” transit corridors. Priority transit corridors in York Region are identified in the Growth Plan and generally consist of portions of the Highway 7, Yonge Street and Davis Drive corridors; portions of the GO rail system and all subway stations. There are 57 MTSAs in York Region that are located within priority transit corridors.

Furthermore, the Region in consultation with local municipal staff have identified 13 “additional” MTSAs that are recommended to be identified, beyond those required in priority transit corridors. These additional MTSAs are recommended to be identified based on their location on a Regional corridor, the level of anticipated intensification, and their potential to become a required MTSA as part of a potential future priority transit corridor. The Region’s MTSAs have been delineated based on guidelines and procedures established by the Region. For additional MTSAs, it must be demonstrated that a minimum planned density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare can be achieved.

Within the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, two “additional” MTSAs are recommended to be identified, as outlined in the Region’s Planning for Intensification Background Report, and include the following:

- **Stouffville GO MTSA** – which identified a draft MTSA boundary and a minimum planned density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare; and the
- **Lincolnvile GO MTSA** – which identified a “conceptual” MTSA boundary and a minimum planned density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare, recognizing that the draft MTSA boundary and minimum density target will be established through the Town’s ongoing Lincolnvile GO MTSA Land Use Planning Study, as further discussed below.

The Region’s Planning for Intensification Background Report, provides background work which will inform the Region’s Intensification Strategy, which is anticipated to be brought forward to Regional Council in March 2020. The Intensification Strategy will include the local municipal intensification targets, proposed final MTSA delineations and minimum density targets, policy direction for updating the Region’s Official Plan based on the Growth Plan policies, as well as an implementation strategy for the Region and local municipalities.

On June 18, 2019, Town Council endorsed the Official Plan Review Planning Priorities ([Staff Report DS-033-19: Official Plan Review – Introductory Report](#)) which outlined the preliminary planning priorities and directions for guiding the Town’s OPR process. The

planning priorities are intended to guide decisions on growth and land use planning in the Town to the year 2041, and are categorized under three key themes related to: Growth Management, the Natural Environment, and planning for a Healthy Community. In relation to Growth Management, the Report identified that a nodes and corridors planning framework will be established to direct growth and intensification to strategic growth areas that are suitable to accommodate more intensive development and redevelopment based on the availability of servicing infrastructure and access to transit and major transportation corridors. The Downtown GO MTSA and Lincolnvile GO MTSA were identified as major nodes to accommodate a large portion of growth. The purpose of this Report is to seek Council endorsement of the recommended Stouffville GO MTSA and Lincolnvile GO MTSA delineations for inclusion as intensification areas through the Region's MCR.

Stouffville GO MTSA

The recommended Stouffville GO MTSA delineation has been identified by the Region in consultation with Town Staff. The recommended MTSA boundary is shown on Attachment 1, and generally represents the extent of the existing "Community Core Area" within the Community of Stouffville Secondary Plan. The Community Core Area represents the "downtown" area of Stouffville and the primary focal point for the Community. The Community Core Area is a mixed use centre located on lands in the vicinity of Main Street which generally extends from Albert Street in the west to the lands between Park Drive and Baker Street in the east. The Secondary Plan envisions a range of unique commercial uses, as well as employment and residential development. This includes new development which is in keeping with the scale of the existing development, and encourages medium and high density residential uses which support the function of the Community Core Area and the GO Station (S. 12.3.6).

Based on a preliminary analysis of the potential intensification and redevelopment opportunities within the Stouffville GO MTSA, there are sufficient intensification opportunities to achieve the minimum density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare. This may result in a planned build-out of the MTSA to accommodate in the order of 4,800 persons and jobs, which represents an increase of an additional 2,500 persons and jobs, which may be accommodated beyond the 2041 planning horizon.

Town staff is supportive of the recommended delineation of the Stouffville GO MTSA and minimum density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare to support intensification and redevelopment surrounding the GO station. Intensification and redevelopment within the Community Core Area is integral to the vitality of the downtown businesses, Main Street, and the community as a whole.

Town Staff and York Region are seeking Council endorsement of the recommended Stouffville GO MTSA delineation as shown on Attachment 1 and the minimum density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare, in order to identify the Stouffville GO MTSA as an intensification area in the Region's Official Plan. Through the Town's OPR, more detailed land use policies and built form guidelines will be developed to manage and direct development within the Stouffville GO MTSA and be planned to achieve the minimum

density target. Furthermore, the Town's on-going Growth Management Strategy will consider the intensification potential within the Stouffville GO MTSA and inform the Town's growth forecasts.

Lincolnville GO MTSA

The recommended Lincolnville GO MTSA delineation has been identified based on the Lincolnville GO Land Use Study. In early 2019, the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville retained WSP, in association with urbanMetrics, to undertake a Land Use Study for the Lincolnville GO Station Area. Through the study, consultation was conducted with the Region, relevant agencies, landowners and the public. The recommended MTSA boundary is shown on Attachment 2, and generally falls within the 500m radius, or approximately a 5-minute walk from the new Lincolnville GO Station. A portion of the 500m radius to the west of the railway line is not included in the MTSA boundary as those lands are located outside the settlement area boundary of the Community of Stouffville.

The Lincolnville GO MTSA is located within the Phase 3 lands in the Community of Stouffville which are intended to accommodate a large portion of new development. This represents an opportunity to comprehensively plan for the full build-out of the MTSA as a transit-oriented complete community. The potential MTSA would provide for a range of medium and high density residential uses and offer retail and commercial uses to meet the needs of the local residents.

Based on a scoped market analysis of the development potential conducted by WSP and urbanMetrics, there are sufficient development opportunities to achieve a minimum density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare within the MTSA. This may result in a planned build-out of the MTSA to accommodate in the order of 7,100 persons and jobs, which may be accommodated beyond the 2041 planning horizon.

Town staff is supportive of the recommended delineation of the Lincolnville GO MTSA and minimum density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare to support a higher level of density surrounding the GO station, which is vital for a more efficient form of development in the area and the community as a whole.

Town Staff and York Region are seeking Council endorsement of the recommended Lincolnville GO MTSA delineation as shown on Attachment 2 and the minimum density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare. Through the Lincolnville GO Land Use Study, and associated Official Plan Amendment, more detailed land use policies and Urban Design Guidelines will be developed to manage and direct development within the Lincolnville GO MTSA in order to achieve the minimum density target. The draft OPA and Urban Design Guidelines are anticipated to be brought forward to Council in March 2020, and will be ready for Council adoption in parallel with the completion of the Region's MCR. Furthermore, the Town's on-going Growth Management Strategy will consider the development potential within the Lincolnville GO MTSA and inform the Town's growth forecasts.

4.2 Agricultural System Mapping

Pursuant to the Growth Plan, the Province issued agricultural system mapping on February 9, 2018, which resulted in changes to the prime agricultural area and rural area designation mapping. York Region is able to refine the agricultural land base mapping at the time of initial implementation in their Official Plan, based on implementation procedures issued by the Province. The Region's [Planning for Agriculture Background Report, June 2019](#), includes background analysis and proposed refinements to implement the agricultural system as part of the Region's MCR to update the Region's Official Plan.

Attachment 3 to this Report illustrates the current York Region Official Plan Agricultural Area and Rural Area designations in relation to the Province's agricultural system mapping and the Region's proposed refinements to the agricultural system mapping. Staff level comments were provided to the Region on the proposed refinements in a letter dated November 28, 2019, which is included in Attachment 4 to this Report.

Town staff are not supportive of some of the proposed changes which would redesignate certain lands from Rural Area to Prime Agricultural Area, which include:

- lands located within the existing Vandorf settlement area and designated "Potential Employment Area" in the Town's Official Plan (Area 16); and
- the lands south of the Community of Gormley which are being considered for future employment area development (Area 24).

Furthermore, the lands located within existing settlement areas (i.e., Gormley, Bloomington and Vandorf) should be designated as a settlement area, as opposed to a Prime Agricultural Area or Rural Area designation.

It is staff's understanding that the Region will be notifying affected landowners of any changes being recommended that would result in a change of designation from Rural Area to Prime Agricultural Area. A Report on the Region's Agricultural and Natural Heritage System is anticipated in March 2020. Final agricultural mapping and policy directions and updates will be included in the draft Regional Official Plan anticipated by the end of 2020. The Town's Official Plan will need to be updated to conform with the agricultural system mapping in the Region's updated Official Plan.

4.3 Employment Planning and Employment Area Conversions

Employment Area Mapping

The Growth Plan requires that York Region, in consultation with the local municipalities, designate employment areas in the Region's Official Plan to protect these areas for employment uses over the long-term. The Region is undertaking background work to identify employment areas and establish a policy framework for designating them in the Region's Official Plan. Employment areas are defined as "*areas designated in an official*

plan for clusters of business and economic activities including, but not limited to, manufacturing, warehousing, offices, and associated retail and ancillary facilities.”

The employment areas within the Town generally include the Community of Stouffville’s Industrial Area and Business Park Area designations, the Vandorf Employment Areas, the Cardico Drive Employment Area, and the Gormley Industrial Area. Employment areas typically do not include major commercial and retail uses which are intended to directly serve the population, which includes the Town’s Regional Retail Area, the Western Approach Mixed Use Area, the Core Area, and Neighbourhood Retail Areas.

Town staff have been working with the Region to delineate the Town’s employment areas and establish an appropriate policy framework in the Region’s Official Plan that would protect employment areas while maintaining sufficient flexibility to accommodate ancillary uses that are currently permitted in the Town’s employment areas. It is anticipated that the employment area mapping will be completed in Q1 2020.

Employment Area Conversion Requests

The Growth Plan generally requires that the conversion of employment areas to non-employment uses (i.e., residential and commercial uses) may only be permitted through the Region’s MCR, subject to satisfying certain criteria. The Region’s deadline for assessing employment area conversion requests through the current MCR was November 29, 2019. As of this date, York Region received a total of 72 employment area conversion requests.

Within the Town, there were two requests for employment area conversions which were supported in principle by Council, these include:

- **12049 Highway 48** (Zhawd Corporation) – Staff Report: [DS-012-19, March 19, 2019](#); and
- **SmartCentres Lands** (South east quadrant of Hoover Park Drive and Highway 48) – Staff Report: [DS-022-19, May 7, 2019](#).

In supporting the employment area conversion requests, Council recommended that: *“should the employment land conversion be approved by the Region of York, Council direct staff to require approximately 400 square feet of non-residential space to be built for the approval of each dwelling unit proposed within this area, and amend both the Official Plan and Zoning By-law accordingly.”*

In November 2019, the Region circulated notification letters to neighbouring landowners within 120 metres of an employment area conversion request for information and comment. Both employment area conversion requests within the Town were not supported by Regional staff as part of their preliminary Phase 1 assessment (i.e., site specific level); however, the Region is currently reviewing these requests as part of their Phase 2 assessment (i.e., broader analysis of employment lands). Town staff and the proponents have met with Regional staff to review these requests as part of their Phase 2 assessment.

Regional staff recommendations on the employment area conversion requests are anticipated by early February 2020, which will then be brought forward to Regional Council in March 2020. During the first round of conversion assessments, the Region committed to notifying landowners of any recommendation changes prior to the March 2020 Report. The Region is aiming to notify landowners of any changes from their preliminary recommendation in February 2020. Town staff continues to advocate in support of the Council endorsed employment area conversion requests through the Region's Phase 2 assessment.

4.4 Preliminary Growth Forecasts and Land Needs Assessment to 2041

In March 2020, Regional staff will be bringing forward the Planning for Growth Directions Report, to Regional Council, which will present the draft 2041 population and employment forecasts and land needs assessment, and growth allocations to the local municipalities. While the two MTSAs as well as the requested employment land conversions, if approved, will generate substantial growth to 2041, it is understood that the Town's other growth initiatives, such as Highway 48 Visioning Study and proposed employment growth along the Highway 404 Corridor, will not be considered in the forthcoming Regional growth forecasts and land needs assessment to 2041. The Town will have to pursue Regional approvals outside the MCR process, as permitted by the Growth Plan. Staff thus has encouraged the York Region to consider a "margin" in its growth forecasts and servicing plans to accommodate possible local initiatives.

The Town has retained Watson and Associates Economists Limited to prepare a Preliminary Growth Management Assessment for the Town, to inform the Region's work. Town staff will report back to Council at such time when the Region's draft 2041 population and employment forecasts and land needs assessment is available.

4.5 Highway 404 Corridor Provincially Significant Employment Zones

In November 2019, Town staff met with representatives of the Province and Region to present the Town's request for identifying Provincially Significant Employment Zones (PSEZs) under the Growth Plan. The Town's proposed PSEZs include both existing and potential future employment areas along the Highway 404 corridor, which include the Gormley Industrial Area and surrounding lands, the Vandorf Employment Area and lands between Vandorf Road and Davis Drive.

The Town's submission to the Province requesting the identification of PSEZs along the Highway 404 corridor is available on the Town's Official Plan Review webpage: www.cometogetherws.ca/opr. On December 20, 2019, the Province issued updated PSEZ mapping which included the addition of one new PSEZ in Brantford. It is uncertain as to whether the Province is contemplating any further updates to the PSEZ mapping, at this time no PSEZs have been identified in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. As part of the Province's third phase, they will be consulting with stakeholders on the longer-term

vision for PSEZs and how they can be used as tools for investment, infrastructure planning and economic activity.

As endorsed by Council on October 22, 2019, and outlined in Staff Report [DS-052-19: Gormley Urban Settlement Area Boundary Expansion for Employment Growth and Greenbelt Enhancement](#), Town staff are continuing investigations and discussions with the Province and York Region to facilitate a settlement area boundary adjustment to include the proposed south Gormley Employment Expansion Area, and evaluate the most appropriate Whitebelt areas in the Town for expanding and enhancing the Greenbelt Area. Any potential refinements to the Provincial Plans would ensure that an equivalent amount of land will be maintained within the Greenbelt Area. Furthermore, Council directed staff to undertake a joint Municipal Class Environmental Assessment to determine the most preferred solution for extending full municipal services to support employment growth in the Gormley area.

Staff will continue to investigate and pursue all available options as provided by the *Planning Act* for designating additional employment areas and expanding the Greenbelt Area through the Region's ongoing MCR, and/or through a Provincial Minister's Zoning Order (MZO). Based on discussions with the Region to date, it is staff's understanding that the Region is not considering settlement area expansions into the Protected Countryside Area of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, and changes to the Plan at a Provincial level would first be required in order to be considered through the Region's MCR.

As part of the Town's OPR, the Town is undertaking a Growth Management Assessment to identify population and employment forecasts and updated land needs for the Town to the 2041 planning horizon. The updated preliminary employment land needs for the Town are forecasted to be approximately 167 gross hectares of serviced employment land that is required to the 2041 planning horizon. In staff's view, the Region's MCR should also give consideration to the needs of the local municipalities when considering employment land needs, as opposed to solely a Region-wide assessment.

Town staff anticipate bringing forward a Report to Council in February 2020 to provide recommendations on which Whitebelt areas may be most appropriate for consideration in an expanded and enhanced Greenbelt Area, and outline the next steps in advancing the Town's employment development objectives for the area.

4.6 Recommendations and Next Steps

The purpose of this Report is to provide Council with an update on York Region's MCR process and work program to update the Region's Official Plan to conform to the Growth Plan.

It is recommended that Council endorse the MTSA delineations for the Stouffville GO MTSA and Lincolnville GO MTSA, and the minimum density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare, for consideration through the Region's MCR, as shown on Attachment

1 and 2 respectively. The minimum density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare may be achieved beyond the 2041 planning horizon.

Town staff will continue working with the Region through its MCR and will report back to Council with an update following the release of the Region's Reports which are anticipated in March 2020, and include: Planning for Growth; Agricultural and Natural Heritage Planning; Intensification Strategy (including MTSA Update Report); and Planning for Employment. It is anticipated that the new York Region Official Plan will be considered for Regional Council adoption by the end of 2020, at which time it would be submitted to the Province for approval. The Town's Official Plan is required to be updated within one year following the approval of the Region's new Official Plan.

5. Financial Implications:

None

6. Alignment with Strategic Plan:

2. Expanding the tax base through a growing, diversified economy
Building and maintaining a tax base that supports the highest quality program and service delivery.
 - Focus on servicing and development of Provincially Significant Employment Zones
 - Identify expansion areas for Industrial / Commercial growth

4. Asset Planning, Maintenance and Development
Successful stewardship of the infrastructure and facilities required to support a growing community and vibrant economy.
 - Address / plan for maintenance of existing assets & infrastructure; Create new infrastructure

7. Attachments:

1. Recommended Stouffville GO MTSA Boundary (Region of York Planning for Intensification Background Report, Attachment 2)
2. Recommended Lincolnton GO MTSA Boundary
3. Region's Proposed Refinements to the Province's Agricultural System Mapping (Region of York Planning for Agriculture Background Report, Attachment 2)
4. Town Comments on the Region's Proposed Agricultural System Mapping Refinements, November 28, 2019

8. Related Reports:

[DS-033-19: Official Plan Review – Introductory Report, June 18, 2019](#)

[DS-012-19: Employment Area Conversion Request – 12049 Highway 48, March 19, 2019](#)

[DS-022-19: Employment Area Conversion Request – SmartCentres Lands, May 7, 2019](#)

[DS-027-19: Lincolnville GO Station Area Land Use Study, June 4, 2019](#)

[DS-052-19: Gormley Urban Settlement Area Boundary Expansion for Employment Growth and Greenbelt Enhancement, October 22, 2019](#)

[DS-027-19: Lincolnville GO Station Area Land Use Study, June 4, 2019](#)

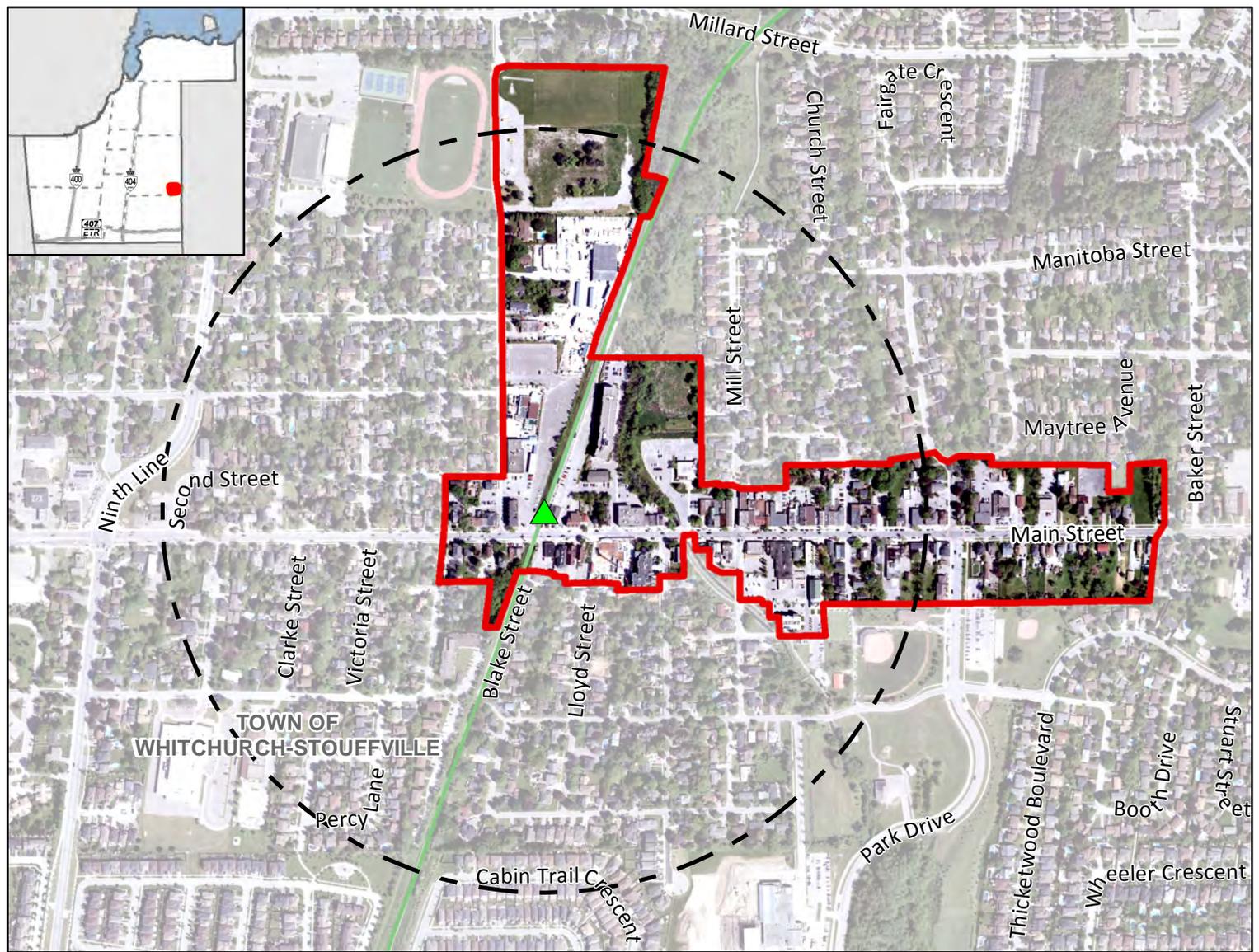
Authors: Randall Roth, Senior Policy Planner
Meaghan Craven, Manager Policy Planning

For further information on this report, please contact the Department Head: Haiqing Xu, Director of Development Services at 905-640-1910 or 1-855-642-8697 ext. 2431 or via email at haiqing.xu@townofws.ca

Stouffville GO Station

On Stouffville GO Line Corridor

Near Main Street at Edward Street, Whitchurch-Stouffville



Legend

- Major Transit Station**
- Additional GO Rail
- 500m Radius
- Draft MTSA Boundary

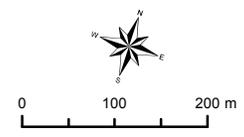
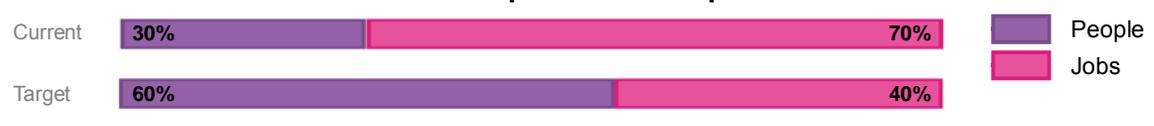
- Other Transit Lines**
- GO Rail

Stouffville GO Station
Gross Area:
 26.09 ha

Density (People & Jobs per Hectare) ¹



Population/Job Split ²



The Regional Municipality of York
 Corporate Services,
 Planning and Economic Development
 March 2019
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 Ontario 2003-2019
 See York.ca for disclaimer information.

¹ Values are rounded to the nearest 5 People & Jobs per Hectare

² Values are rounded to the nearest 5%



Lincolville Draft MTSA Boundary

Near Tenth Line and Bethesda Road

LEGEND

 Draft MTSA Boundary

 500m Radius

 GO Station

Lincolville MTSA Gross Area:
34.26 ha



**TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFILLE
CITY OF MARKHAM**

Proposed Agriculture System by the
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and
Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) within
York Region

May 17, 2019

YORK OFFICIAL PLAN - Map 8

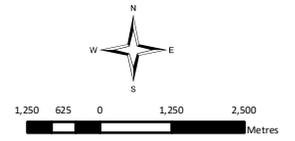
- Rural Area
- Agriculture Area
- Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area

**AGRICULTURAL LAND BASE
PROPOSED**

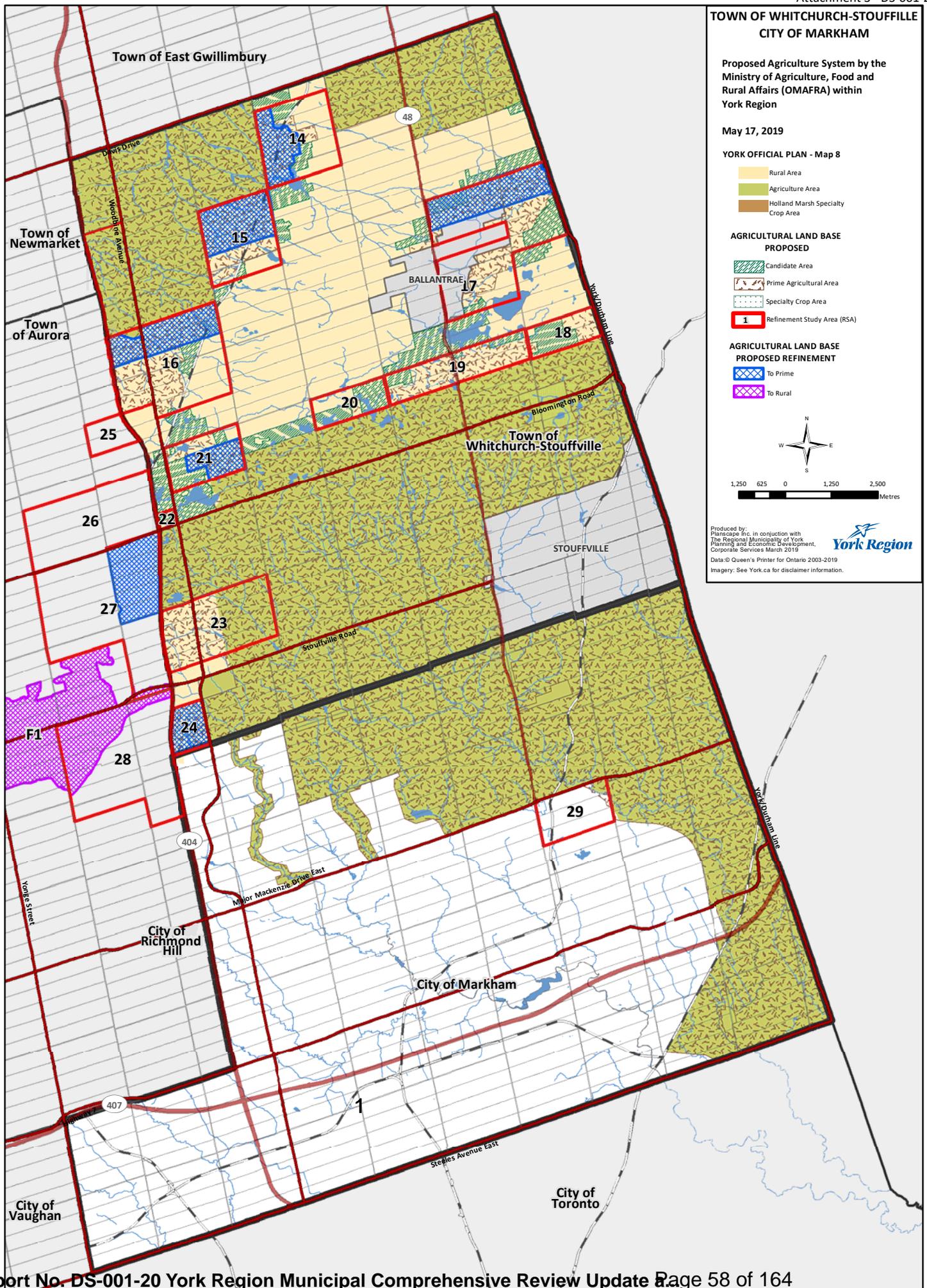
- Candidate Area
- Prime Agricultural Area
- Specialty Crop Area
- Refinement Study Area (RSA)

**AGRICULTURAL LAND BASE
PROPOSED REFINEMENT**

- To Prime
- To Rural



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November 28, 2019

Danielle De Fields, Manager, Policy and Environment
 York Region Administrative Centre
 17250 Yonge Street
 Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

RE: Agricultural System Mapping – York Region Proposed Modifications

Dear Ms. De Fields,

In advance of the upcoming Local Municipal MCR Working Group meeting on November 29, 2019 to discuss Natural Heritage System and Agriculture Planning, planning staff would like to offer the following comments, which are consistent with the comments provided to Jennifer Best on January 11, 2019.

1. **Area 16 (Vandorf)** – Staff does not support the designation of Prime Agricultural Area on lands within the existing Vandorf Settlement Area, which are identified as “Rural Area” in the YROP. This is consistent with our previous comments, as these lands are located within the existing Settlement Area and are designated “Potential Employment Area” in the Vandorf Preston Lake Secondary Plan (located on the west side of the watercourse). Further, the existing Settlement Area should be identified as a Hamlet, as per Map 8 of the YROP. The lands should not be identified as Prime Agricultural Area and Rural Area. In addition to this, the lands on the west side of the watercourse are isolated from other agricultural areas. The lands east of the watercourse, located outside the Settlement Area could be designated Prime Agricultural Area.
2. **Area 24 (Gormley)** – Consistent with the Town’s current work regarding the Highway 404 corridor, staff does not support the identification of these lands as Prime Agricultural Area. These lands are currently being considered for future employment area development, and should therefore remain designated as Rural Area, until further direction is received from the Province.

In addition to the comments above, the lands in Area 24 should not be designated as Prime Agricultural Area as the lands to the north are within the Gormley Settlement Area, lands to the west are Rural Area and lands to the south about the Markham Urban Settlement Area. The Area 24 lands will not

serve to create a continuous agricultural land base. Rather, they are isolated agricultural lands. Furthermore, the Town has received correspondence from John Doner Limited regarding the limited agricultural viability of the lands, citing issues such as conflicting land uses, soil fertility, and soil conditions. Having approval from Mr. Paul Doner, this letter is attached for your information and review.

3. **Existing Gormley Settlement Area** – Lands within the southeast quadrant of the existing Gormley Settlement Area are not designated as Prime Agricultural Area by the Province. These lands are designated for Industrial uses in the Gormley Secondary Plan and should be identified as a Settlement Area in the Region's Official Plan, not Agricultural Area or Rural Area.
4. **Settlement Areas** – Staff recommends that all lands within existing Settlement Areas not be designated Prime Agricultural Area or Rural Area, but rather identified as Settlement Areas (Town and Villages/Hamlet) as per Map 8 of the YROP. This should include Gormley, Vandorf-Preston Lake, Musselman's Lake and Bloomington.
5. **Recommendations for Areas 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23** – Staff concur with the Region's recommendations. Staff also concur that the "Candidate Areas" also be retained as Rural Area.

Should you wish to discuss these comments further, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Meaghan Craven MCIP RPP
Manager, Planning Policy | Development Services
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

cc: Paul Freeman, Chief Planner, York Region
Haiqing Xu, Director, Development Services, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville
Randall Roth, Senior Policy Planner, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

Attachment

John Doner Limited

PO Box 72 Gormley, Ontario, L0H 1G0

Tel: 905-887-5027 Fax: 905-887-3636 e-mail: johndoner@johndonerlimited.ca

November 6, 2019

Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville
Attention: Haiqing Xu
111 Sandiford Drive
Stouffville, Ontario
L4A 0Z8

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Paul Doner and am writing this letter on behalf of my family and our business John Doner Limited. John Doner Limited is a multi-faceted, agricultural corporation, that is both vertically and horizontally integrated. In addition to farming for ourselves, we also operate a grain elevator and a truck & machinery repair facility to service the needs of other local farmers. We are aware that the Town has applied to have lands, currently designated as "countryside," re-designated for future employment lands. We want it to be known that John Doner Limited fully supports the Town in this endeavour and are more than willing to cooperate in any way we can to accomplish this task. We believe that not only is it critical for future growth of the town, but a required change for agriculture in this community.

In 1806, my family set out by covered wagon from Pennsylvania. Lured to Canada by the promise of an abundance of cheap, fertile, land and religious freedom they settled on lot 35, Concession 3, in what was then known as Upper Canada's, Markham Township, now 12119 Leslie Street, Richmond Hill, Ontario. Although we are based out of Richmond Hill, we farm a great deal of land along the 404 corridor through the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. Historically agriculture has provided for my family and my ancestors, but as we look towards the future, agriculture in this area is just about finished.

In this area of York Region, we have seen first-hand how the rural community has evolved into a urbanized area. Our family, at our peak was farming over 4,000 acres across 7 different municipalities, now we are farming less than 2,000 acres. Our grain elevator once received wheat from 125 different customers, this year we received from 12. The agricultural infrastructure (feed mills, machinery dealers, grain elevators, etc.) in York Region is in a state of decline. These factors make farming in this community incredibly difficult.

Perhaps the greatest factor affecting agriculture in our area today is traffic and the safety threat it poses to both farmers and commuters that share the roads. The GO station located at Stouffville Road and 404 has increased traffic in this community to unprecedented levels. I fear for what traffic will look like when the new Bloomington GO station opens as it will only serve to add further pressure and congestion to an already problematic region. Standard lane width of Ontario roads is 10' to 12'. Our largest piece of machinery is over 18' wide. Obviously, this means that our machinery is often over the centreline of the road. Obstacles, such as: curbs, guardrails, signs, mailboxes, railway crossings, garbage cans, hydro poles and trees, all of which are located along the shoulders of the road, force us to veer into oncoming lanes in order to avoid hitting them. This is not a problem in rural communities such as Elmira where traffic is minimal, but in the GTA with the amount of traffic we face it is extremely dangerous. For this reason, the province should look to urbanize the area to promote agricultural ventures in areas more conducive for ongoing sustainability.

As for the specific proposed employment lands in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, we farm all of the farmland, except for two farms along, the 404 between 19th Avenue and Bethesda Sideroad. Our primary crops are corn, soybeans and wheat. This land is decent farmland, but certainly not our best. The majority of this land is lower and takes longer in the spring to dry enough to plant. In fact, this year, as we had a particularly wet spring some of this land never dried enough to be planted. The fertility of the soil is average for this area, which is certainly not near as good as many other areas of the province. If this land was to be developed it would have minimal impact on the agricultural base of the province.

Sincerely,

Paul Doner
John Doner Limited
Business Manager