

July 22, 2020

**Delivered by email**  
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Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
17th Floor  
777 Bay St.  
Toronto, ON M5G 2E5

**RE: Town of WS Resolution - Report No. DS-027-20 South Gormley Employment Area Expansion and Greenbelt Enhancement Options**

Please be advised the above-noted matter was placed before Council at its meeting held on July 21, 2020, and the following resolution was passed:

- 1) That Council endorse Staff Report DS-027-20 and direct Staff to continue discussions with the Province and York Region to pursue the designation of additional employment area lands in the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area, in accordance with the following Options, as outlined in Section 4.2 of this Report:
  - Option A: Settlement Area Boundary Expansion through Region's MCR, as requested through Town's Council Resolution on January 21, 2020;
  - Option B: Request Province to Amend ORMCP (No Land Swap);
  - Option D: Joint Study with Richmond Hill – Highway 404 Economic Corridor Study;
  - Option E: Facilitate the Formation of a South Gormley Landowners Group;
  - Option F: Provincially "Stranded" Highway 400 Series Lands; and
- 2) That Council abandon Option C, identified in Staff Report DS-027-20, to pursue the expansion of the Greenbelt Area into "Whitebelt" Areas as previously presented at the February 18, 2020 Public Meeting; and
- 3) That Council direct staff to forward Staff Report DS-027-20 to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Region of York, the City of Richmond Hill, and the City of Markham for their information.

In accordance with Council's directive, please find attached a copy of Staff Report No. DS-027-20 regarding the South Gormley Employment Area Expansion and Greenbelt Enhancement Options.

If you have any questions, please contact Haiqing Xu, Director, Development Services at [haiqing.xu@townofws.ca](mailto:haiqing.xu@townofws.ca) or 905-640-1910 x 2431.



TOWN OF  
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Yours truly,

Kristina Soolepp, Council Coordinator  
(905) 642-4130

Attachments

cc. Regional Municipality of York  
City of Richmond Hill  
City of Markham



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**Subject:** South Gormley Employment Area Expansion and Greenbelt Enhancement Options (D08)

**Staff Report No.** DS-027-20

**Department:** Development Services

**Date:** July 21, 2020

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**Recommendation:**

- 1) That Council endorse Staff Report DS-027-20 and direct Staff to continue discussions with the Province and York Region to pursue the designation of additional employment area lands in the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area, in accordance with the following Options, as outlined in Section 4.2 this Report:
  - Option A: Settlement Area Boundary Expansion through Region’s MCR;
  - Option B: Request Province to Amend ORMCP (No Land Swap);
  - Option D: Joint Study with Richmond Hill – Highway 404 Economic Corridor Study;
  - Option E: Facilitate the Formation of a South Gormley Landowners Group;
  - Option F: Provincially “Stranded” Highway 400 Series Lands; and
- 2) That Council eliminate Option C.1, identified in Staff Report DS-027-20, to pursue the expansion of the Greenbelt Area into “Whitebelt” Areas as previously presented at the February 18, 2020 Public Meeting; and
- 3) That Council direct staff to forward Staff Report DS-027-20 be forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Region of York, the City of Richmond Hill, and the City of Markham for their information.

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Report is to seek Council direction to pursue potential options for advancing the Town's objectives to designate an additional employment area within the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area. This report also seeks to request the Province to consider amendments to the applicable Provincial Plans to implement the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area through the Region's ongoing Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR).

A Public Meeting was held on February 18, 2020 to consult on the preliminary assessment of the Whitebelt Areas recommended for potential inclusion in the Greenbelt Area, to facilitate an expansion to the South Gormley Employment Area. As outlined in [Staff Report DS-006-20](#), Council directed Staff to report back with a recommendation report once public and agency comments had been received. Staff have now considered all of the public input and are reporting back to Council with a range of possible options for consideration for pursuing an expansion to the South Gormley Employment Expansion Area. It is recognized that further approvals would still be required by the Province and the Region.

## 2. Executive Summary:

The Highway 404 corridor provides a valuable strategic economic resource, which has not been utilized to its full potential. The current Provincial planning framework does not provide sufficient flexibility for the Town to designate additional strategic employment lands. Town Council have made numerous requests to the Province and Region to consider the designation and municipal servicing of additional employment lands along the Highway 404 corridor in order to promote the Town's economic development objectives and ensure a more sustainable and balanced model for growth. The Town's requests have been supported by York Region Council, which unanimously requested the Province to designate three areas along the Highway 404 corridor as Provincially Significant Employment Zones (PSEZs), under the new Growth Plan.

On October 22, 2019, Council directed Staff to continue discussions with the Province and York Region and seek the required approvals to adjust the Greenbelt Area boundary to facilitate a settlement area expansion to include the lands south of the existing Gormley Industrial Area for future employment development, and to study the Town's Whitebelt areas that could be considered to be added to the Greenbelt Area. A Public Meeting was held on February 18, 2020 to consult on the preliminary assessment of the Whitebelt Areas recommended for potential inclusion in the Greenbelt Area. Council directed Staff to report back with a recommendation report once public and agency comments had been received. Staff have now considered all of the public input and are reporting back to Council with a range of possible options for pursuing a settlement area expansion to include the South Gormley Employment Expansion Area. It is recognized that further approvals would still be required by the Province and the Region.

The purpose of this Report is to seek Council direction to pursue potential options for advancing the Town's objectives to designate an additional employment area within the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area. This Report also requests the Province to consider amendments to the applicable Provincial Plans to implement the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area through the Region's ongoing Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR).

Based on the public comments received and initiatives that have evolved since the February 18, 2020 Public Meeting, Town Staff have identified various options for consideration by Council to pursue the designation of additional employment area lands. These options set up a strategic framework that will allow multiple scenarios to be pursued by the Town. As described in Section 4.3 of this Report, it is recommended that the following Options be pursued concurrently:

- Option A: Settlement Area Boundary Expansion through Region's MCR
- Option B: Request Province to Amend ORMCP (No Land Swap)
- Option D: Joint Study with Richmond Hill – Highway 404 Economic Corridor Study
- Option E: Facilitate the Formation of a South Gormley Landowners Group
- Option F: Provincially "Stranded" Highway 400 Series Lands

Furthermore, it is recommended that Council eliminate Option C.1 (Identify Suitable Whitebelt Areas), as identified in this Report, thereby directing Staff to **not pursue** the expansion of the Greenbelt Area into the "Whitebelt" Areas as previously presented at the February 18, 2020 Public Meeting. In Staff's view, the consideration of a potential land swap Option (Option C scenarios) should not be considered, until such time as the above recommended options have been fully explored.

Subject to Council's recommendation, Town Staff will continue to pursue the designation of additional employment area lands within the South Gormley Employment Expansion Area. Staff will continue to report back to Council on these matters, as required.

### **3. Background:**

The Highway 404 corridor provides a valuable strategic economic resource to the Province, the Region of York, and the Town, which to date has not been utilized to its full potential. The current Provincial planning framework does not provide sufficient flexibility for the Town to designate additional strategic employment lands, and Provincial intervention is required to realize these economic development opportunities.

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville has been proactively working to promote its economic development objectives and competitiveness by pursuing the provision of full municipal services to the Town's existing employment areas, and the designation of additional employment areas along the Highway 404 corridor.

On December 11, 2018, Town Council passed a resolution requesting the Province to consider designating appropriate lands abutting the Highway 404 corridor as "Provincially

Significant Employment Areas” within the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. It is a strategic priority of Council to advance the servicing and development of the Town’s proposed Provincially Significant Employment Zones (PSEZs) and identify potential expansion areas for employment area development.

In January 2019, the Province released Proposed Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan and introduced a framework to identify and protect “Provincially Significant Employment Zones” across the Greater Golden Horseshoe. On February 19, 2019, Town Council endorsed [Staff Report DS-006-019](#) regarding the Town’s comments on Proposed Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan which recommended that:

*“Council request the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to extend the proposed Provincially Significant Employment Zone along the Highway 404 corridor to include the Gormley Industrial Area, Vandorf Preston Lake Employment Area, and the proposed Davis Drive Employment Area...”*

[Staff Report DS-006-019](#) also provided comments to the Province which reiterated the need for greater flexibility in contemplating settlement area boundary expansions within the Greenbelt Area, provided the lands were not identified as Natural Core Area or Natural Linkage Area within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP), or the Natural Heritage System identified in the Greenbelt Plan. Countryside Areas typically do not comprise significant environmental features or linkage areas. It was Staff’s recommendation that settlement area boundary expansions should be contemplated within the Countryside Areas of the ORMCP, particularly within lands adjacent to the Highway 404 corridor which are ideally suited for future employment development and would support Provincial policies to designate and preserve lands adjacent to major transportation corridors for employment uses and promote economic development and competitiveness.

Furthermore, these comments are consistent with [Staff Report #5](#) which Council endorsed on May 19, 2015, as the Town’s comments on the Province’s 2015 Coordinated Review of the Provincial Plans. The Town’s comments emphasized the need for permitting logical settlement area boundary expansions that are arbitrarily constrained by the restrictive policies of the ORMCP and the Greenbelt Plan. The Report also contemplated a framework for “growing the Greenbelt” by recommending that a process be established for swapping “Whitebelt” areas within the Town to facilitate opportunities for adjusting the Countryside or Protected Countryside Area boundaries in order to accommodate logical settlement area boundary expansions.

On March 21, 2019, York Region Council supported the Town’s request and unanimously passed a similar resolution requesting the Province to designate the three areas along the Highway 404 corridor as PSEZs in the Town, under the new Growth Plan.

In addition, on August 27, 2019, Town Council passed a motion to request the Region to *“aggressively plan, design and construct infrastructure to support employment growth along the Highway 404 corridor in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.”*

To date, the Province has not identified any PSEZs within the Town. The Province is currently undertaking the next phase of work on PSEZs, which will examine how PSEZs can support post-COVID economic recovery to support the retention and expansion of existing industrial and manufacturing operations and attract investment. The Province views PSEZs as an important tool and will continue engaging with stakeholders and municipalities to maximize opportunities within PSEZs.

On October 22, 2019, Council endorsed [Staff Report DS-052-19](#), which directed Staff to continue discussions with the Province and York Region and seek the required approvals to adjust the Greenbelt Area boundary for employment growth along the Highway 404 corridor. The Report recommended that the Town pursue a settlement boundary expansion to include the lands south of the existing Gormley Industrial Area for future employment development, and to study the Town's Whitebelt areas that could be considered to be added to the Greenbelt Area. The proposed south Gormley Employment Expansion Area comprises approximately 153 ha of lands located within the Protected Countryside Area of the ORMCP. The proposed expansion area does not include environmentally sensitive lands which are protected within the Natural Linkage Area of the ORMCP or the Natural Heritage System of the Greenbelt Plan. A Concept Plan for the Proposed South Gormley Employment Area Expansion is included in **Attachment 1**. It is forecasted that the Proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area may accommodate in the order of 7,700 to 9,200 new jobs based on a 50 to 60 jobs per hectare on municipal services.

The Town subsequently retained WSP Group Canada (WSP) to undertake a planning and natural heritage assessment to provide recommendations on which Whitebelt areas may be most appropriate to add to the Greenbelt Area, to facilitate the proposed south Gormley Employment Expansion Area. WSP prepared a Draft Greenbelt Enhancement Assessment Report, January 17, 2020, which is included in [Staff Report DS-006-20](#). The proposed south Gormley Employment Expansion Area and candidate Whitebelt Areas which were considered as part of this study included the Whitebelt Areas identified as #2 through #7, as shown on **Attachment 2**. The Whitebelt areas generally include agricultural lands within the Town which are located outside of the Province's Greenbelt Area. Within the Town, the Province's ORMCP and Greenbelt Plan comprise the Province's Greenbelt Area. In accordance with provincial policy, settlement area boundary expansions on lands located within the Greenbelt Area are generally considered to be more restrictive than settlement area boundary expansions on lands located outside the Greenbelt Area (i.e., Whitebelt areas).

The candidate Whitebelt areas which were considered for inclusion in the Greenbelt Area comprise approximately 266 ha. As such, the extent of Whitebelt areas proposed for Greenbelt enhancement was approximately 153 ha, in order to provide for an equivalent amount of land to be maintained within the Greenbelt Area. The Report and preliminary findings were intended to aid in facilitating landowner and public consultation to inform future recommendations to Council. Any adjustments to the Greenbelt Area would require Provincial and Regional approval, and would require further consultation. At that

time, the preliminary recommended Whitebelt areas for inclusion within the Greenbelt Area, comprise portions of land within Whitebelt areas 4, 3, 2A and 5.

An initial Public Open House was held on January 23, 2020 for directly affected landowners to present the study purpose, an overview of the planning and natural heritage assessment of each Whitebelt Area and WSP's draft recommendations, and receive comments. A Public Meeting before Council was held on February 18, 2020 to present the preliminary assessment and receive further public and agency comments.

The purpose of this Report is to provide Council with an update on the public comments received and seek Council direction on pursuing potential options for advancing the Town's objectives to designate additional employment areas within the South Gormley Employment Expansion Area.

## **4. Analysis**

### **4.1 Summary of Comments**

The following section summarizes the comments received through the Public Open House which was held on January 23, 2020, and the Public Meeting held on February 18, 2020, to present the study and WSP's preliminary assessment and recommendations for expanding the Greenbelt Area in exchange for designating an equivalent amount of employment area lands within the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area.

#### ***Proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area***

- Support for the expansion plans to accommodate employment development in the south Gormley Employment Expansion Area.
- Support for the Town's work in studying swapping the Whitebelt areas to remove lands from the Greenbelt Plan in the south Gormley Employment Expansion Area.
- Support for the extension of municipal water and wastewater services to the Gormley area to happen as soon as possible.
- Decline in agriculture in this area make farming in the community difficult (increased traffic and safety issues on Woodbine, soil fertility is average, would have minimal impact on the agricultural base).

#### ***Greenbelt Area Enhancement (Whitebelt Area Land Swap)***

- Negative impact on the property value of lands within the Whitebelt areas that are proposed for Greenbelt Area expansion, by removing future development opportunities.
- Unjust for Whitebelt area landowners to bear the expense for the south Gormley Employment Expansion Area.



- The south Gormley Employment Expansion Area should be done in another manner which does not reduce the value of lands within the Whitebelt areas.
- Intention to preserve the Whitebelt area designation on the lands.
- Lack of consideration for other options for achieving the Town's objectives.
- Whitebelt landowners feel economic harm would be inflicted on them to make the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area appear more palatable from an environmental point of view.
- Limited opportunity to review the environmental work completed by the Town's consultant.
- Expressed the opinion that the Town's exercise is premature as the next Greenbelt Plan review would not start until 2025-2027.
- Several landowners expressed that they would use all legal means to object to any expansions of the Greenbelt on their lands.
- One landowner expressed that opportunity exists for future development on their property as a future service connection will be right across Warden Ave. and they are adjacent to the municipal boundary (City of Markham Future Urban Area).
- Objections to the process and substance of the Town's consideration of the expansion of the Greenbelt on the Subject Properties.
- Numerous comments from members of the Meadowbrook Golf Club, which are strongly opposed. Meadowbrook is designated as a "Commercial Recreation Area" in the Official Plan, and would unfairly restrict potential future development options.
- The Whitebelt Area lands to the east of McCowan have been identified as a Greenlands linkage area in the York Region Official Plan, and, as such should also be considered for evaluation in expanding the Greenbelt Area.

#### **4.2 Options for Consideration**

Based on the comments received and initiatives that have evolved since the February 18, 2020 Public Meeting, Town Staff have identified various options for consideration by Council to advance the Town's objectives for designating additional employment area lands within the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area. These options set up a strategic framework that will allow multiple scenarios to be pursued concurrently by the Town.

##### **Option A: Settlement Area Boundary Expansion through Region's MCR (Recommended)**

Town Staff and Council have requested that the Region consider an expansion to the Gormley Settlement Area through the Region's on-going Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR). Town Council Resolution on January 21, 2020, requested 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".*

To date, the Region has indicated that Provincial amendments to the ORMCP would be required before the Region could consider a settlement area expansion into lands located within the ORMCP, and furthermore, that there are other lands within the Region (i.e., Whitebelt Areas) which are located outside of the Province's Greenbelt Area to accommodate future settlement area expansions, if required. It should be noted, that as part of the Region's comments on the 2015 Coordinated Provincial Plan Review, Regional Council's recommendations included that: *"The Province develop a process to allow municipalities to access strategically located employment lands, if deemed necessary through a municipal comprehensive review."*

Notwithstanding, in Town Staff's opinion, settlement area expansions onto lands within the ORMCP, may, and should be considered through the Region's MCR based on the current Provincial planning framework. In accordance with the ORMCP, an upper-tier municipality may consider the need to change or refine the boundaries of Settlement Areas as part of a MCR. The ORMCP states that:

*"An upper-tier or single-tier municipality may consider the need to change or refine the boundaries of Settlement Areas as part of a municipal comprehensive review undertaken in accordance with policy 2.2.8 of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Settlement Area boundaries are not permitted to expand into Natural Core Areas or Natural Linkage Areas." (Implementation – Settlement Area Expansions, ORMCP, 2017)*

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019 (Growth Plan) includes policies for evaluating the feasibility of a proposed settlement area boundary expansion. A settlement area boundary expansion may only occur through a MCR, which is an official plan amendment initiated by the upper-tier municipality to comprehensively apply the policies of the Growth Plan. York Region is currently undertaking a MCR to update its Official Plan to implement the Growth Plan, as such, now is the appropriate time to consider a settlement area expansion within the ORMCP.

In doing so, the Growth Plan requirements of Policy 2.2.8 (Settlement Area Boundary Expansions) must be addressed. The Growth Plan requires that:

*"Settlement area boundary expansion may only occur through a MCR where it is demonstrated that:*

*a) based on the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan and a land needs assessment undertaken in accordance with policy 2.2.5, sufficient opportunities to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of the Plan are not available through intensification and in the designated greenfield area:*

- i) within the upper- or single-tier municipality, **and***
- ii) within the **applicable lower-tier municipality.**"*

The Growth Plan requires that the land needs assessment must take into consideration not only the overall land need requirements of the Region, but also the applicable lower-

tier municipality (i.e., the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville). As outlined in [Staff Report DS-052-19](#), the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville has identified a deficiency in the amount of designated employment land. As part of the Town's on-going Official Plan Review, the Town has retained Watson and Associates Economists Ltd. to undertake a Growth Management Assessment to identify population and employment forecasts and updated land needs for the Town. The updated preliminary employment land needs for the Town are forecasted to be in the order of an additional **167 gross hectares** of serviced employment land that is required to the 2041 planning horizon. In light of the proposed amendment to the Growth Plan to extend the planning horizon to the year 2051, the Town's employment area land needs will be further exacerbated.

Furthermore, the policies of Section 2.2.8.3 of the Growth Plan outline the requirements for determining the most appropriate locations for the proposed expansion, which include:

- Sufficient capacity in existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities, informed by applicable water and wastewater master plans or equivalent;
- Avoiding prime agricultural lands where possible; and,
- Meeting any requirements of the Greenbelt and ORMCP.

Town Staff is actively pursuing opportunities to extend full municipal services to Gormley, which may be considered through an extension of the North Markham Employment Area, and Future Urban Area which currently abuts the Town's municipal boundary and the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area. Discussions with the City and further analysis are ongoing to assess the feasibility of extending municipal services.

While the Growth Plan provides further restrictions on lands within the Protected Countryside Area of the Greenbelt Area (S. 2.2.8.3 k), these policies are not applicable to the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area, as these lands are located within the Countryside Area of the ORMCP, furthermore, the proposed expansion would not extend into any designated Natural Core or Natural Linkage Areas of the ORMCP.

Although to date, the Region has not identified a need for any settlement area expansions, it is recognized that the Region's ongoing MCR will need to conform to Proposed Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan which extends the planning horizon to the year 2051 (currently 2041), and establishes **minimum** population and employment growth forecasts for the Region (which may be exceeded based on the outcome of the Region's land needs assessment). Proposed Amendment 1 forecasts an additional 230,000 persons and 90,000 jobs to be accommodated from 2041 to 2051 (Reference Scenario).

Furthermore, the Province is proposing an updated Land Needs Methodology which provides a more simplified and flexible approach to determining land needs that is intended to be more forward-looking and account for demographics, employment trends, market demand, and concerns related to housing affordability in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Additionally, the Region's land needs assessment will need to take into consideration the numerous employment area land conversions that have been recommended by Staff, which will result in an increased need for designated employment

area lands. It is anticipated that the Region's updated land needs assessment will be available in late 2020 / early 2021 for consultation.

The *Oak Ridges Moraine Act* authorizes the Minister to propose an amendment to the ORMCP (S. 12(1)). It is recognized that a review and amendment to the ORMCP shall not consider removing lands from the Natural Core or Natural Linkage Area designations. Unlike the *Greenbelt Act*, there is no requirement in the *Oak Ridges Moraine Act* that would limit the ability of the Minister to approve an amendment that has the effect of reducing the total area of land within the ORMCP. Furthermore, the proposed expansion area would still be considered a designated settlement area within the ORMCP. In Staff's view, the requirement to not reduce the amount of land, only applies to lands within the Greenbelt Plan Area, as per S. 12(2) of the *Greenbelt Act*, and should not be a requirement for considering an expansion of the existing Gormley settlement area into the Countryside Area of the ORMCP.

### **Option B: Request Province to Amend ORMCP (No Land Swap) (Recommended)**

The *Oak Ridges Moraine Act* authorizes the Minister to propose an amendment to the ORMCP (S. 12(1)) that conforms to the Plans objectives, which provides for the continued development within existing urban settlement areas and recognizes existing rural settlements. As previously stated, unlike the *Greenbelt Act*, there is no requirement in the *Oak Ridges Moraine Act* that would limit the ability of the Minister to approve an amendment that has the effect of reducing the total area of land within the ORMCP, as such, there is no legislative basis for requiring a Whitebelt land swap.

Although Gormley is considered a rural settlement and a component of the Countryside Area, the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area would directly abut the Urban Settlement Area in the City of Markham, and represents a logical extension of urban development along the Highway 404 Corridor. Subject to provision of appropriate municipal or communal water and wastewater services, Gormley could be considered and designated a Settlement Area within the ORMCP, which provides for continued urban development within the ORMCP Settlement Area designation.

The ORMCP Countryside Area designation is intended to encourage agricultural and other rural uses by protecting prime agricultural areas, promoting normal farm practices, and maintaining the character of rural settlements. It may be argued that normal farm practices and the rural character of the proposed employment expansion area has already been eroded, as the surrounding areas continue to urbanize. Furthermore, the majority of the proposed expansion lands are not designated prime agricultural area in the Region's Official Plan and the viability of farming has greatly diminished as outlined in [Staff Report DS-052-19](#).

The Town may request the Minister to amend the ORMCP to identify Gormley and the Proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area as a Settlement Area within the ORMCP to provide for continued growth. As further discussed in Option D, this approach is consistent with the Town of Richmond Hill Council Resolution of February 26, 2020 and

the landowners initiative to expand the Urban Settlement Area of Richmond Hill, in the absence of any potential Whitebelt Area land swap. The designation of the proposed expansion areas would be contingent upon the preparation of a comprehensive Secondary Plan process and framework that may be established in the Region's updated Official Plan, and contingent upon addressing the Growth Plan requirements of Policy 2.2.8 as summarized above.

It remains uncertain as to whether the Province would entertain an amendment to the Provincial Plans at this time, or defer to the next 10-year Provincial review of the Plans (i.e., 2025-2027). However, given the Provincial interests in enhancing the economic competitiveness of the Province and Region, it is Staff's expectation and understanding that employment development along the Highway 404 corridor should be a Provincial priority.

### **Option C: Request Province to Amend ORMCP and Greenbelt Plan (With Land Swap) (Not Recommended at this Time)**

Option C would involve requesting the Province to amend the ORMCP to expand the Gormley employment area while expanding the Greenbelt Area within other areas of the Town, with the underlying intent to maintain an equivalent amount of Protected Countryside or Countryside Area within the Greenbelt Area (i.e., 153ha). Notwithstanding, and as previously stated, unlike the *Greenbelt Act*, there is no requirement in the *Oak Ridges Moraine Act* that would limit the ability of the Minister to approve an amendment that has the effect of redesignating Countryside Area to Settlement Area in the ORMCP. While a proposed land swap may be viewed as more favourable by the Province, in Staff's view this does not appear to be an explicit requirement of the *Oak Ridges Moraine Act*, and the ORMCP makes provisions for Settlement Area expansions into the Countryside Area.

This may be achieved through various alternative scenarios that include a "land swap" which are outlined below, and include:

- Option C.1: Identify Suitable Whitebelt Areas
- Option C.2: Identify Only Non-Developable Lands within the Whitebelt Areas
- Option C.3: Identify Other Environmental Areas within the Town
- Option C.4: Identify a Hybrid of Option C.2 and C.3 Scenarios

The *Oak Ridges Moraine Act* authorizes the Minister to propose an amendment to the ORMCP (S. 12(1)) that conforms to the Plans objectives, which provides for the continued development within existing urban settlement areas and recognizes existing rural settlements. Furthermore, the Greenbelt Plan provides opportunity for the Minister to propose amendments outside the Province's 10 year review, subject to satisfying certain criteria as outlined in S. 5.6 (i.e., for the purpose of extending the Greenbelt Plan policy coverage to lands which may be added to the Greenbelt, including Protected Countryside or Urban River Valley).

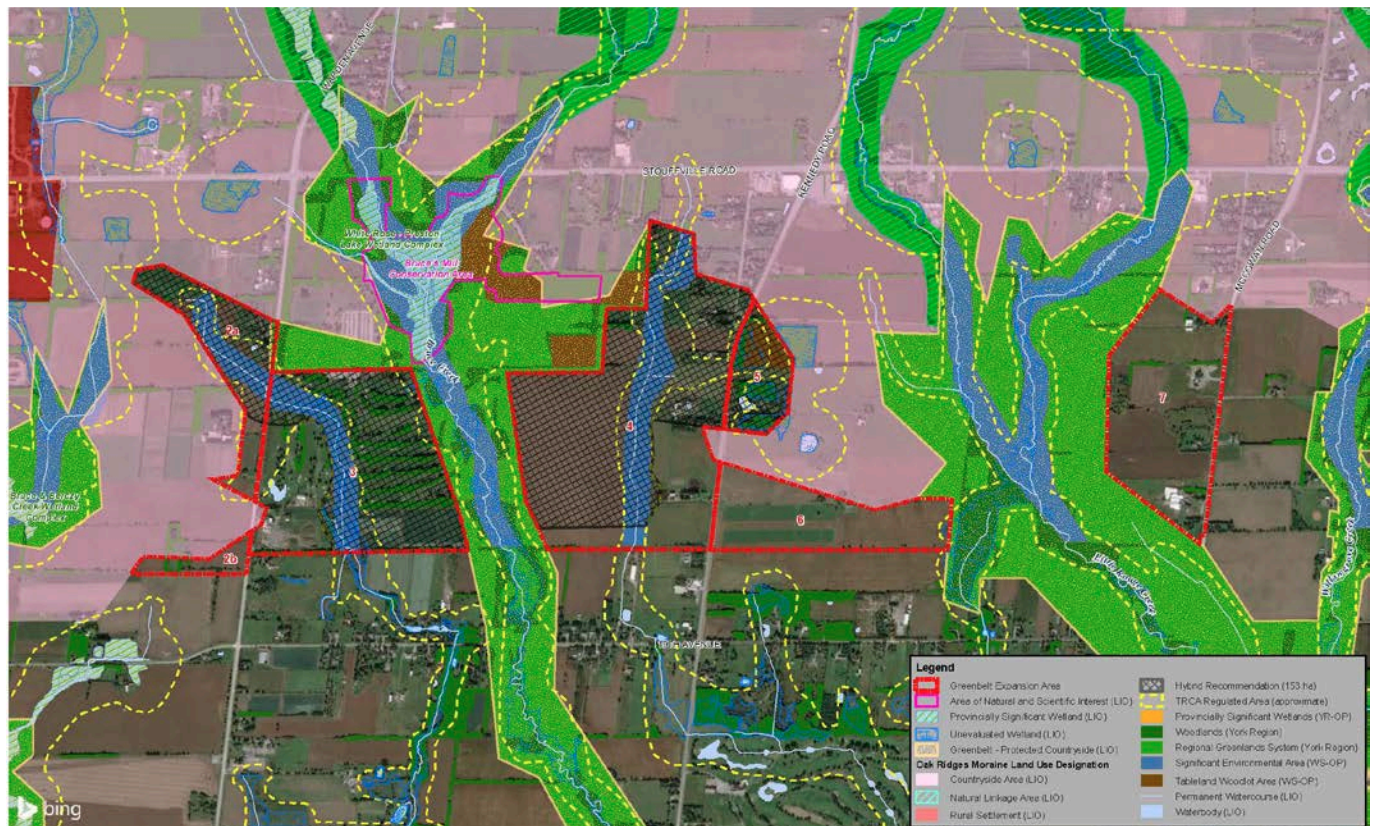
As summarized in Section 4.1, and based on the landowner comments received to date, strong opposition to any proposed Greenbelt Area expansion into Whitebelt Area lands has been expressed, and particularly into agricultural lands and existing non-agricultural uses which landowners perceive to have future potential development opportunities.

In addition to the above, benefitting landowners with the South Gormley Employment Expansion Area could be requested to consider identifying and acquiring lands located elsewhere on the periphery of the Greenbelt Area, for potential inclusion within the Greenbelt Area, to “offset” an employment area expansion into the Countryside Area of the ORMCP.

In contemplating any land swap involving Whitebelt Areas or other environmentally significant areas, the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area would still be contingent on addressing the Growth Plan requirements of Policy 2.2.8 as summarized above.

### **Option C.1: Identify Suitable Whitebelt Areas**

As outlined in [Staff Report DS-006-20](#), and presented at the February 18, 2020, Public Meeting, WSP presented their Draft Greenbelt Enhancement Assessment Report, which provided a planning and natural heritage assessment of the Town’s candidate Whitebelt areas (Areas 2 – 7) to determine which areas may be most appropriate and compatible for inclusion within the Greenbelt Area. The recommended Whitebelt Areas for potential inclusion within the Greenbelt Area as provided in the Report are illustrated in **Figure 1** (shown in the black hatch).



**Figure 1 – Preliminary Recommendation Areas for Inclusion in the Greenbelt (Option C.1)**

The recommended areas for potential inclusion within the Greenbelt included both environmentally significant areas and higher priority agricultural lands within the Whitebelt Areas which were evaluated to be most suitable for inclusion in the Greenbelt Area to enhance connectivity of the natural heritage features.

As discussed, the Town received strong opposition from affected landowners regarding any proposed land swap which would include their lands within the Greenbelt Area. The majority of affected landowners expressed concern regarding the additional development restrictions which may impact their lands, and their perceived negative impact on any future development opportunity, particularly on agricultural lands which could also be candidate areas for potential long-term future settlement area expansions. Landowners expressed concerns that by seeking to achieve a 1:1 land swap ratio, that lands which could be potentially developed in the future, were arbitrarily identified for inclusion in the Greenbelt Area in order to achieve a total of 153ha.

Town Staff do not recommend pursuing a Whitebelt Area land swap as outlined in the WSP Draft Greenbelt Enhancement Assessment Report, January 17, 2020. As outlined in this Report, in Staff's view there are other options available for the Town to pursue at this time, in order to advance the Town's objectives for designating additional employment area land.

**Option C.2: Identify Only Non-Developable Lands within the Whitebelt Areas**

Based on the landowner comments received in relation to Option C.1, Council could consider identifying only those lands within all of the Whitebelt Areas that include existing environmental features (i.e., key natural heritage features and hydrologic features and their associated minimum vegetation protection zones and designated Environmentally Significant Areas), for potential inclusion within an expanded Greenbelt Area. Through the identification of only existing environmental features there would be no loss of future development potential, as these areas already receive environmental protection under the current planning policy framework.

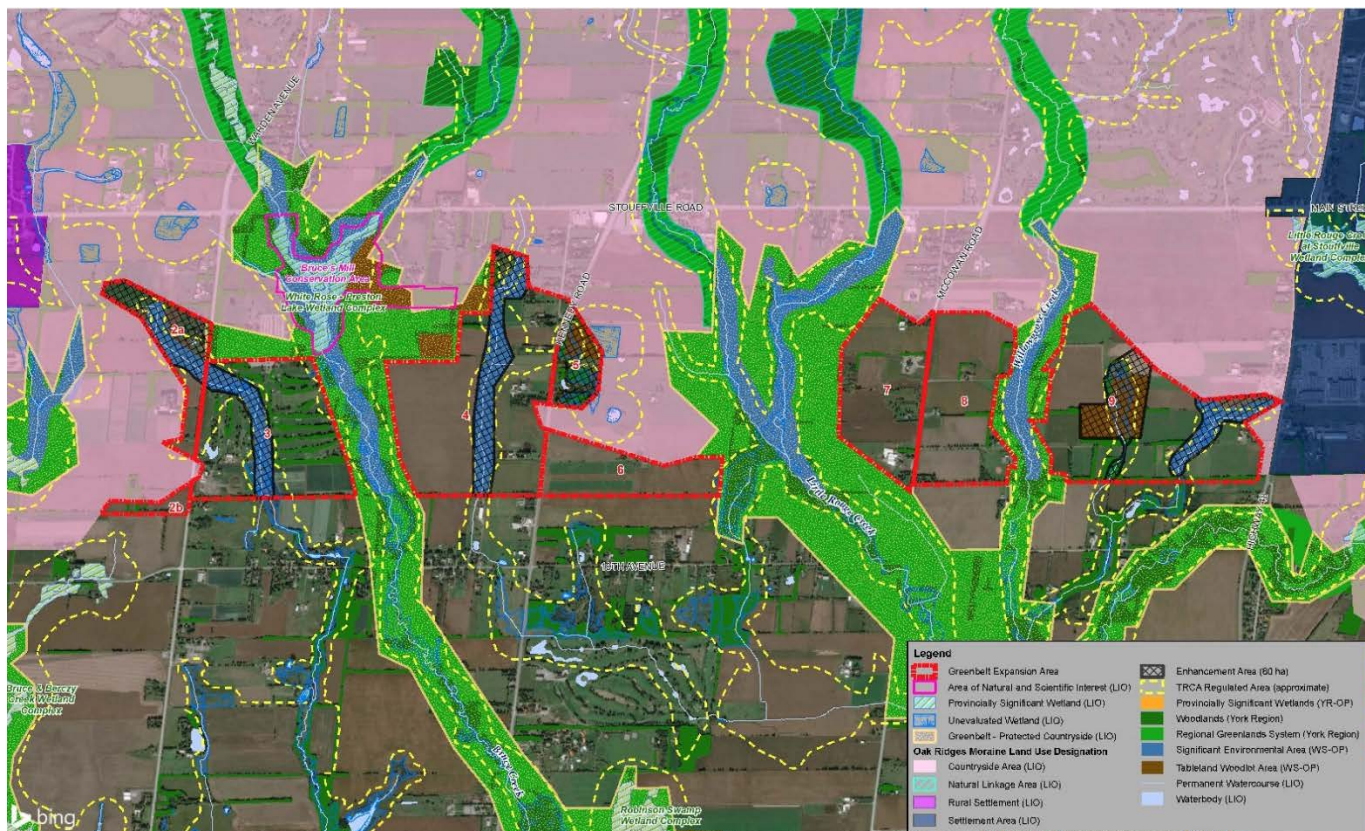
WSP has undertaken additional environmental investigations to identify which lands within the Town's Whitebelt Areas would be considered non-developable based on existing natural heritage protection policies, in addition to small isolated parcels of land which would be created as a result. These areas are conceptually illustrated in **Figure 2** (shown with a black hatch) and amount to approximately 80 hectares.

The environmental features which could comprise a revised Greenbelt enhancement area include:

- watercourses;
- wetlands;
- significant environmental areas; and,
- tableland woodlots.

It should be noted that the Whitebelt Areas for consideration have been extended to the lands east of McCowan Road, which are subject to the Town's ongoing Highway 48 Visioning Study.





**Figure 2 – Illustration of Potential Non-Developable Lands within the Whitebelt Areas for Inclusion in the Greenbelt (Option C.2)**

The amount of non-developable lands amount to approximately 80 hectares, which does not achieve the 153ha identified in order to achieve a 1:1 ratio land swap. This may result in a reduced employment expansion area, or could be considered in addition to other Options outlined in this Report. It should be noted that by identifying only the non-developable lands within the Whitebelt Areas, this may result in a less contiguous natural heritage system and may reduce the ability to enhance existing natural features and areas in the future. In pursuing this option, further detailed analysis of potential non-developable lands would be required. This detailed analysis would require ground-truthing of the features and may result in more or fewer non-developable lands being identified. This will also require additional resources to complete.

**Option C.3: Identify Other Environmental Areas within the Town**

Option C.3 may include identifying other environmental areas that are in public ownership and are already protected within the Town’s existing Settlement Areas for inclusion in the Greenbelt Area. The Urban River Valley designation within the Greenbelt Plan provides a foundation for municipalities to have additional public lands added to the Greenbelt through future amendments. The Urban River Valley reinforces important linkages between the Greenbelt and Lake Ontario and broader natural heritage systems.

**Figure 3** provides an illustration of such areas which could be considered for inclusion within the Gormley and Community of Stouffville settlement areas which are currently designated for environmental protection.



**Figure 3 – Illustration of Other Non-Developable Lands within the Town for Inclusion in the Greenbelt (Option C.3)**

Although the Settlement Areas are already located within the Greenbelt Area (ORMCP), designating them as part of the Provincial Natural Heritage System may assist in offsetting the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area. By designating these lands as part of the Urban River Valley system, this would elevate their Provincial status and environmental significance as part of the Provincial Natural Heritage System. Furthermore, this would provide a renewed focus on protecting and enhancing these existing features and would assist in facilitating linkages within the Greenbelt Area. Further analysis would be required to determine the overall amount of lands which could be identified for inclusion in the Greenbelt Area and would require additional resources to complete.

**Option C.4: Identify a Hybrid of Option C.2 and C.3 Scenarios**

Option C.4 may include a hybrid of Option C.2 and C.3 Scenarios to identify an equivalent amount of land for potential inclusion within an enhanced Greenbelt Area. Alternatively, this could also include a net increase in the amount of land proposed to be included within the Natural Heritage System of the Greenbelt Area.

**Option D: Joint Study with Richmond Hill – Highway 404 Economic Corridor Study (Recommended)**

On February 26, 2020, Richmond Hill Council passed a motion that the City and Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville formally work together to approach the Region and the Province to develop a Highway 404 economic corridor to facilitate housing and economic development aspiration held by the province in 2020, and that the lands currently designated Countryside Area along the corridor be redesignated Settlement Area. Furthermore, it was resolved that the Region of York and the City of Richmond Hill, through their respective MCRs provide direction for the preparation of a Secondary Plan for the area north of 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue, north of the North Leslie Secondary Plan up to Bethesda Road, east and south of the West Gormley Secondary Plan.

A submission was also made by MPlan Inc. on behalf of the Leslie Stouffville Landowners Association (LSLA), to support a recommendation that the City pursue an expansion to the Urban Settlement Area boundary and possible designation of an MTSA in the vicinity of the Gormley GO Station. The LSLA has initiated planning work and have prepared a draft Proposed Community Development Plan, which includes the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville proposed employment area lands.

Included in **Attachment 3** is Richmond Hill Council motion of February 26, 2020 and the submission by MPlan Inc. on behalf of the LSLA.

The motion by the City of Richmond Hill essentially seeks to redesignate ORMCP Countryside Area lands to a Settlement Area designation, with no change to the ORMCP Natural Core Area of Linkage Area designations. Furthermore, the submission does not contemplate any Whitebelt Area land swap.

Town Staff recommend supporting the City of Richmond Hill's efforts in this regard, and it is recommended that the Town work closely with the City, the Region and the Province to further advance the respective municipal objectives for development along the Highway 404 Corridor. This provides an opportunity for the Town to work collaboratively with Richmond Hill and the Region, furthermore, there is now an even greater impetus to assess the employment development opportunities along the Highway 404 Corridor in light of Regional Council's motion, as discussed in Option F. Resource requirements for pursuing this option are not known at this time.

Through the Region's ongoing MCR there is an opportunity, both at the Provincial and Regional level to amend the Provincial Plans and establish a framework in the Region's

new Official Plan for expanding the settlement area boundaries and establishing a comprehensive framework to prepare Secondary Plans for lands within the City of Richmond Hill and the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

**Option E: Facilitate the Formation of a South Gormley Landowners Group (Recommended)**

It is recommended that Town Staff assist in facilitating the formation of a South Gormley Landowners Group to proactively advance the required planning approvals for the South Gormley Employment Expansion Area. To date, no formal landowners group has been established, although through discussions with Town Staff, various landowners have expressed interest in assisting the Town in the planning process to redesignate the lands for a future employment area and facilitating the extension of municipal services to Gormley.

The South Gormley Landowners Group may cooperatively work with the LSLA to achieve mutual objectives. It is anticipated that various planning and supporting technical studies will be required to address the settlement area expansion policies of Section 2.2.8 of the Growth Plan, which would be beyond the fiscal means of the Town to undertake, whereas a partnership with the benefiting landowners would assist the Town in achieving its employment area development objectives and extending municipal services to Gormley. The Town may assist in supporting and coordinating the efforts of the South Gormley Landowners Group as required. Furthermore, with the planning and technical support of the landowners, and clear development intentions, a stronger justification would be established for advancing employment development within the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area and amendments to the Provincial Plans.

It is recommended that Town Staff assist in facilitating a meeting with the affected landowners in the short term, with the intent to formally establish a South Gormley Landowners Group. It should be noted that the Town only has the ability to facilitate an initial meeting of the landowners. Establishment of a South Gormley Landowners Group would be dependent on the landowners themselves.

**Option F: Provincially “Stranded” Highway 400 Series Lands (Recommended)**

The municipal Councils of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, King Township, and Richmond Hill and the Region of York have all publicly noted their support for attracting additional employment development along the Highway 400 series highways within the Region, particularly on lands that are currently within the Greenbelt Area.

At the York Region Council meeting of April 30, 2020, it was resolved that:

*“York Region Staff be directed to report back to Council on the competitive benefits to the Region if employment uses were to be permitted along 400 series Highways; and*

*York Region Council request the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to permit, through modifications to the applicable Provincial Plans and Policies, the designation of employment lands adjacent to 400 series Highways.”*

Included in **Attachment 4** is York Region Council Resolution of April 30, 2020, directing Staff to report back on the competitive benefits of 400 series Highway employment development and request the Minister to permit the designation of additional employment lands through modifications to the applicable Provincial Plans.

This provides the Town with an exciting opportunity to jointly work with our municipal partners and the Region to bring forward further justification and rationale to support Provincial modifications to the ORMCP to advance the economic development interests and competitiveness of the Province, Region, and local municipalities, while ensuring the protection of significant natural features within the Greenbelt Area. It is recommended that the Town work closely with the Region and local municipalities in expeditiously advancing this work.

In addition to designating additional employment areas along the Highway 400 series Highways, Town Staff recommends that the Region, through their MCR should also identify strategic employment lands which may be required and planned for development, beyond the planning horizon, in accordance with Policy 1.3.2.7 of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020. While these strategic employment areas would not be designated for employment within local municipal Official Plans, their identification would provide clear policy direction for the long-term protection of future strategic employment areas.

### **4.3 Recommendations and Next Steps**

#### **Recommended Options**

Based Town Staff’s evaluation of the above noted options, and in consideration of the public comments received to date, it is recommend that the following Options as outlined in Section 4.3 be pursued concurrently, in order to advance the Town’s objectives for designating additional employment areas in South Gormley:

- Option A: Settlement Area Boundary Expansion through Region’s MCR
- Option B: Request Province to Amend ORMCP (No Land Swap)
- Option D: Joint Study with Richmond Hill – Highway 404 Economic Corridor Study
- Option E: Facilitate the Formation of a South Gormley Landowners Group
- Option F: Provincially “Stranded” Highway 400 Series Lands

In Staff’s view, the consideration of potential land swap Option (Option C scenarios) should not be considered, until such time as the above Recommended Options have been fully explored. Furthermore, the land swap options presented in this Report should be further prioritized, as summarized below.

## Alternative Options

Should the Town's efforts to establish a planning framework for the designation of an additional employment area within South Gormley not be supported by the Province (in the absence of a potential land swap), it is recommended that the Town may pursue the following Alternative Options which include a land swap (excluding Option C.1), **in order of priority**:

- Option C.3: Identify Other Environmental Areas within the Town
- Option C.4: Identify a Hybrid of Option C.2 and C.3 Scenarios
- Option C.2: Identify Only Non-Developable Lands within the Whitebelt Areas

Prior to pursuing an Alternative Option, Town Staff will report back to Council to provide an update on the work, consultations with the Province and Region, and seek Council direction on next steps.

## Next Steps

Subject to Council's recommendation, Town Staff will continue to pursue the designation of additional employment area lands within the South Gormley Employment Expansion Area. Staff will continue to report back to Council on these matters, as required.

## 5. Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications at this time. However, pursuant to Council direction, further analysis or study may require additional resources. Staff will continue to keep Council apprised of any financial implications, as needed.

## 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

## 7. Attachments:

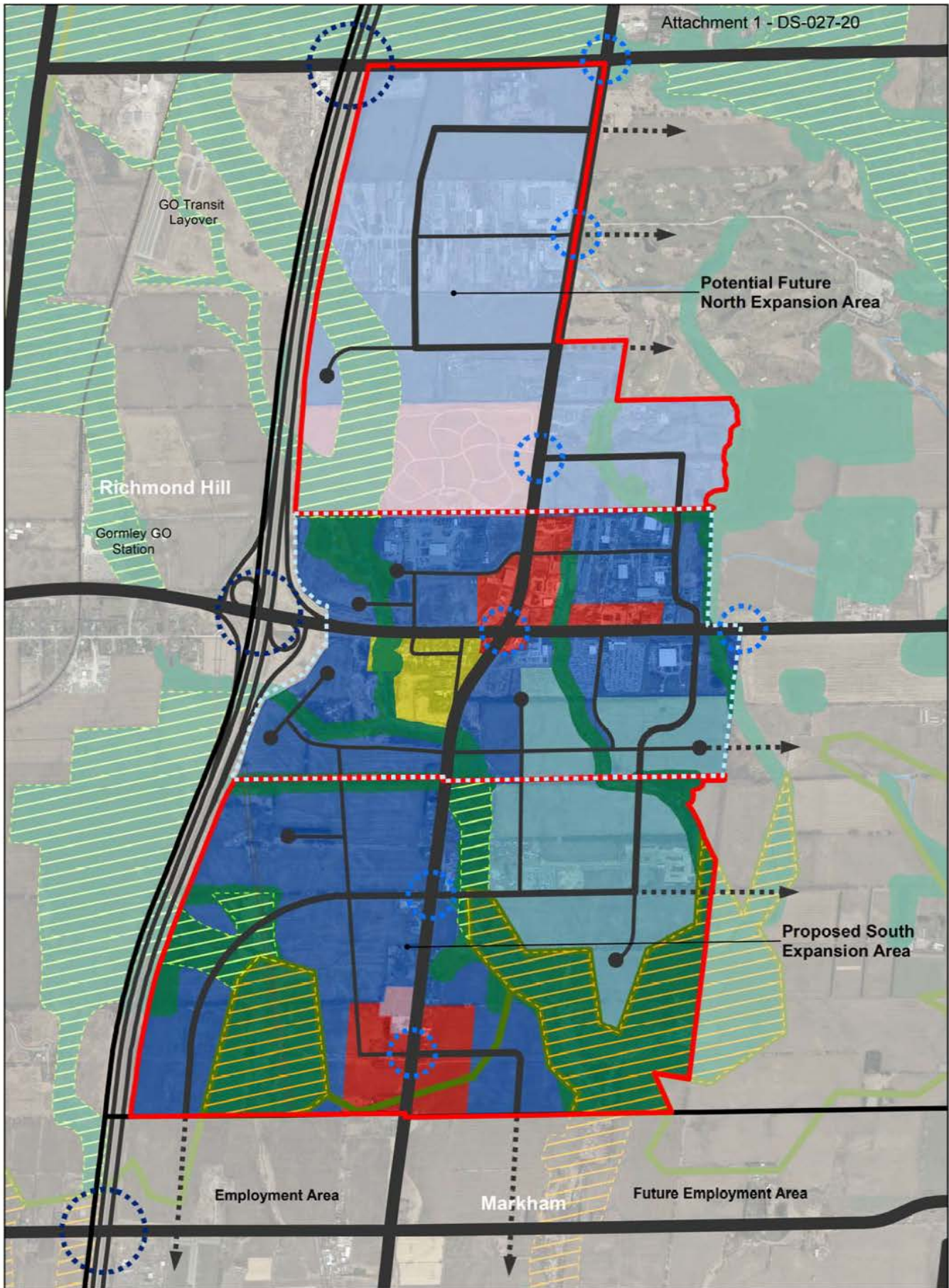
1. Proposed South Gormley Employment Area Expansion Concept Plan
2. Provincial Plan Designations and Whitebelt Areas
3. Richmond Hill Council Motion, February 26, 2020 and submission by MPlan Inc. on behalf of the Leslie Stouffville Landowners Association
4. York Region Council Motion, April 30, 2020

## 8. Related Reports:

- [Report #5: Coordinated Review of Provincial Land Use Plans \(D24\), May 19, 2015](#)
- [DS-006-19: Proposed Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017 \(L11\), February 19, 2019](#)
- [DS-033-19: Official Plan Review – Introductory Report, June 18, 2019](#)
- [DS-052-19: Gormley Urban Settlement Area Boundary Expansion for Employment Growth and Greenbelt Enhancement \(D08\), October 22, 2019](#)
- [DS-006-20: Potential Adjustments to the Greenbelt Area Boundary and Proposed Expansion to the Gormley Employment Area \(D08\), February 18, 2020](#)

**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](mailto:haiqing.xu@townofws.ca)



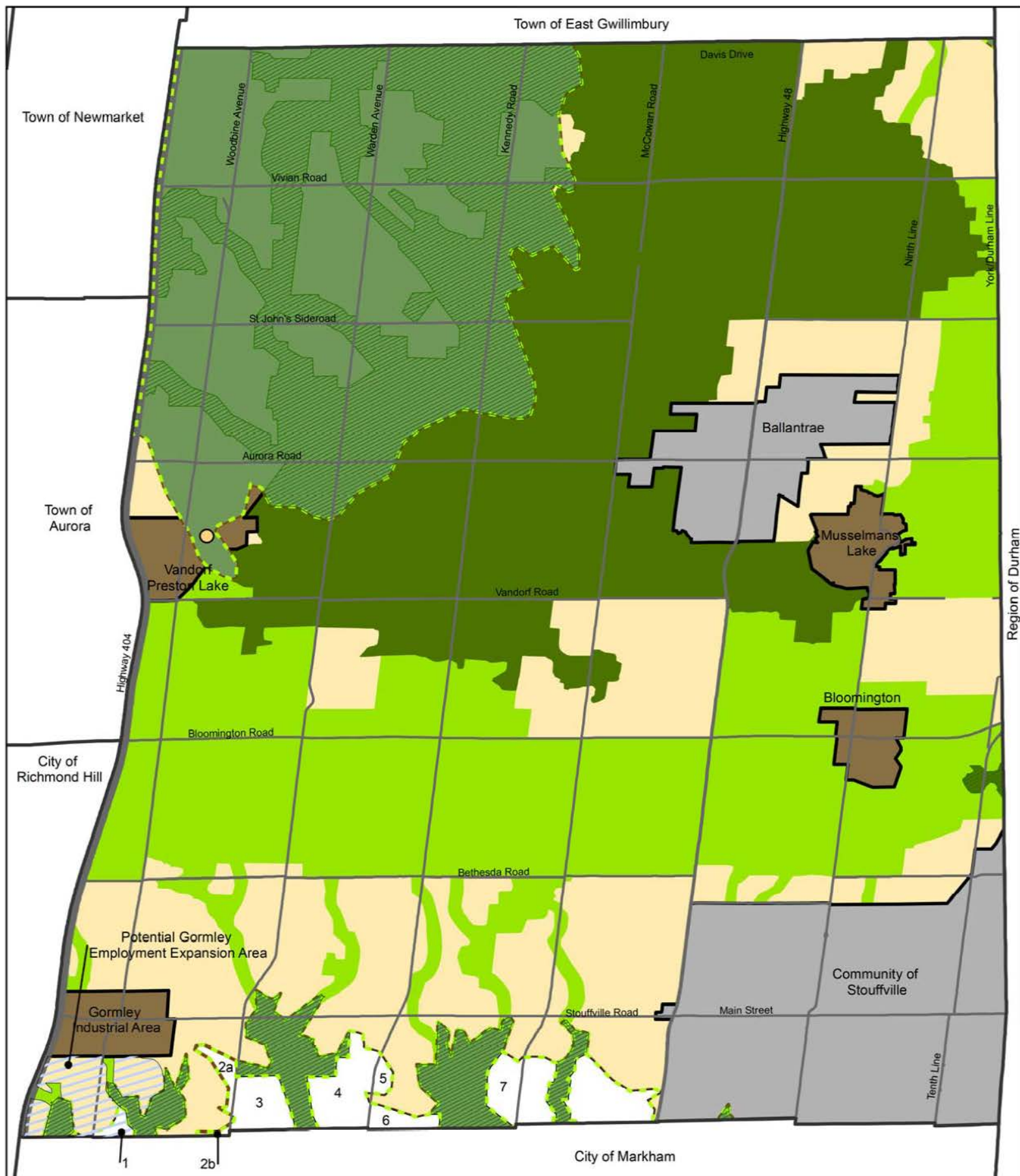
# Gormley Employment Expansion Area Concept Plan - Proposed South Expansion Area

Legend

- Gormley Employment Expansion Area
- Local Road
- Greenbelt Area
- Gormley Industrial Secondary Plan Area
- Greenlands System
- Greenbelt NHS
- Community Residential
- Institutional
- ORM Natural Linkage Area
- Oak Ridges Moraine
- Arterial Road
- Collector Road







### Provincial Plan Designations and Whitebelt Areas

- Legend**
- ORM Plan Boundary
  - ORM Natural Linkage Area
  - Greenbelt Boundary
  - Greenbelt Hamlet
  - ORM Countryside Area
  - Settlement Area
  - Greenbelt Protected Countryside
  - Whitebelt Areas
  - Rural Settlement
  - Natural Heritage System



**Richmond Hill Council Motion February 26, 2020**

Moved by:Councillor Muench

Seconded by:Regional and Local Councillor DiPaola

Whereas, the COUNTRYSIDE AREA designation of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP) is intended to protect prime agricultural areas, promote and protect agricultural and other rural land uses and normal farm practices and maintain the rural character of a Rural Settlement; and

Whereas, the agricultural industry along the Leslie Street and Hwy. 404 Corridor is no longer economically viable, practical or safe and this intent can no longer be met; and

Whereas, the 2001 ORMCP direction for the designated COUNTRYSIDE AREA for this part of the City of Richmond Hill conflicts with the 2020 direction by the province to produce more housing faster (more homes and more choice) and provide for land use intensification within urban areas; and

Whereas, the ongoing protection and enhancement of the NATURAL CORE and NATURAL LINKAGE areas of the ORMCP can fulfill the core mandate of the ORMCP; and

Whereas, the province and Metrolinx have developed two new GO stations on the Oak Ridges Moraine in Richmond Hill; and

Whereas, Metrolinx has announced its desire to see urban intensification related to its Go Station lands and in the vicinity of its stations; and

Whereas, the Town of Whitchurch - Stouffville has no substantial marketable employment lands upon which to foster economic development; and

Whereas, the province has announced it will entertain 40 hectare urban SETTLEMENT area land expansions to provide for comprehensive planning; and

Whereas, discussions have taken place with the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) staff confirming their support with the direction proposed in this motion;

Therefore, be it resolved that;

1. The City of Richmond Hill and the Town of Whitchurch - Stouffville formally work together to approach the Region of York and the Province of Ontario to develop a Highway 404 economic corridor to facilitate the housing and economic development aspirations held by the province in 2020;
2. That the lands currently designated COUNTRYSIDE AREA along this corridor be re-designated SETTLEMENT AREA with NO change to the designated LINKAGE AREA or CORE AREA lands;
3. The Region of York and the City of Richmond Hill, through their ongoing respective Municipal Comprehensive Reviews (MCR), provide direction for the preparation of a Secondary Plan for the area north of 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue, north of the North Leslie Secondary Plan up to Bethesda Road, east and south of the West Gormley Secondary Plan.

In favour: Mayor Barrow, Regional and Local Councillor DiPaola, Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli, Councillor Beros, Councillor Muench, Councillor Liu, and Councillor Chan  
(7)

Opposed: Councillor West, and Councillor Cilevitz  
(2)

**Carried (7 to 2)**



February 25, 2020

Mayor Barrow and Members of Council  
225 East Beaver Creek Road  
Richmond Hill, Ontario L4B 3P4

Re: SRPRS.20.003 and SRPRS.20.004

Dear Mayor Barrow and Councilors,

I act on behalf of the Leslie Stouffville Landowners Association (LSLA), landowners in the Leslie Street/Stouffville Road area, encompassing approximately 500 acres/200 hectares of land (outlined on the attached map), impacted by the above noted reports and the recommendations contained therein.

The purpose of the two referenced Staff Reports is to provide recommendations to City Council, on input to be provided to the Region of York, with respect to the Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review, which will lead to a new/updated Region of York Official Plan.

In this regard, at the outset, we wish to **support Recommendation d) i) in SRPRS.20.004** which supports "pursuing an expansion to the Urban Settlement Boundary and possible designation of an MTSA" in the vicinity of the Gormley GO Station.

The Gormley GO Station is within the area encompassed by the LSLA and is the core of an area that we have been studying on behalf of this landowner's group for the past year and a half.

We also support the **Recommendation e)** which indicates that the lands south of Bethesda Road (as indicated on Map 5), are not to be considered within a Prime Agricultural Area.

Further to our support for these recommendations, and as part of the City of Richmond Hill input to the Region of York to the Municipal Comprehensive Review for the new Region of York Official Plan, and as input to the City's ongoing review and update of its own Official Plan, we want to provide additional input from the LSLA. This input specifically addresses the fact that the COUNTRYSIDE lands within the area north of the

North Leslie Secondary Plan Area and east and south of the West Gormley Secondary Plan Area, along the Hwy.404/Leslie Street corridor, are no longer appropriate or economically feasible to continue as agricultural and rural lands within the city of Richmond Hill.

The development and urbanization of lands within the City of Richmond Hill, through the implementation of the West Gormley Secondary Plan and the North Leslie Secondary Plan, as well as development in surrounding municipalities has created an unfavourable impact on the agricultural use of the lands within this area. This has rendering them impractical to continue as a functioning agricultural community and they no longer fulfill the purpose of the ORM COUNTRYSIDE designation as described in Section 4.10.3 of the Richmond Hill Official Plan and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (excerpt below).

The Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan provides a clear definition for purpose of the COUNTRYSIDE designation which is:

**13. (1) The purpose of Countryside Areas is to encourage agricultural and other rural uses that support the Plan's objectives by,**

- a. protecting prime agricultural areas;**
- b. promoting and protecting agricultural and other rural land uses and normal farm practices;**
- c. maintaining the rural character of the Rural Settlement**

Within the area encompassed by the LSLA “normal farm practices” can no longer be carried out and the “rural character” continues to be eroded. The area, which is in the City of Richmond Hill, is no longer a “Rural Settlement” but part of the changing fabric of the City as it urbanizes into the future.

This important factor has not been considered in the “Long Term Planning for the North Richmond Hill Highway 404 Corridor” section of the SRPRS.20.004 (p.17). John Doner Limited, the major family farm company that has operated their agricultural business in this area of York Region and Richmond Hill since 1802, will also be commenting on the Staff Report and has prepared a more detailed Powerpoint Presentation that we would like to present to City staff and members of Council at another time to be scheduled separately from this Council meeting. This presentation will help to educate and explain why “normal farm practices” can no longer be carried out and the “rural character” continues to be eroded as part of the changing fabric of the City of Richmond Hill.

It is important to recognize that **the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan also provides for urban development through its SETTLEMENT AREA designation.** The purpose of this designation is:

**18. (1) The purpose of Settlement Areas is to focus and contain urban growth by, (O).a) encouraging the development of communities that provide their residents with convenient access to an appropriate mix of employment, transportation options and local services and a full range of housing and public service facilities;**

**(b) promoting the efficient use of land with transit-supportive densities, through Intensification and redevelopment within existing urban areas.**

Therefore, we (LSLA) request, and recommend to Council that the COUNTRYSIDE designated area within this part of Richmond Hill, through the Municipal Comprehensive Reviews being undertaken as part of the Region of York Official Plan and the City of Richmond Hill Official Plan review and update processes, be redesignated to SETTLEMENT AREA and that a comprehensive Secondary Plan process be initiated for these lands.

In this regard we have been carrying out discussions and meetings with a number of provincial and related agencies including Municipal Affairs and Housing; Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; Ministry of Transportation; TRCA; Metrolinx; the Mayor of Whitchurch-Stouffville and several MPP's and MP's and local area representatives and landowners to address these matters.

We have initiated the planning work and created a first draft Proposed Community Development Plan, centred around the Gormley GO Station and including the Whitchurch-Stouffville lands identified by that municipality in their request to the Province for redesignation as an Employment Area, also referenced on p.18 of SRPRS.20.004. We are providing a copy of this initial Proposed Community Development Plan, as an attachment to this submission, along with the existing Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan land use designations map and a map indicating the recommended changes from COUNTRYSIDE AREA to SETTLEMENT AREA. We request that this information be utilized by the City as our input to the Municipal Comprehensive Reviews being undertaken as part of the Region of York Official Plan and the City of Richmond Hill Official Plan. We therefore request that our submission be provided to the Region of York by the City for that purpose.

We have also initiated discussions with City staff and look forward to pursuing this input as part of the larger City building process that we believe is important to the long- term future planning and economic growth of the City of Richmond Hill within the Region of York.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our input to Council and we look forward, on behalf of the LSLA, to the opportunity of presenting the Doner Powerpoint Presentation

to members of Council and City staff in the very near future.

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Yours truly,

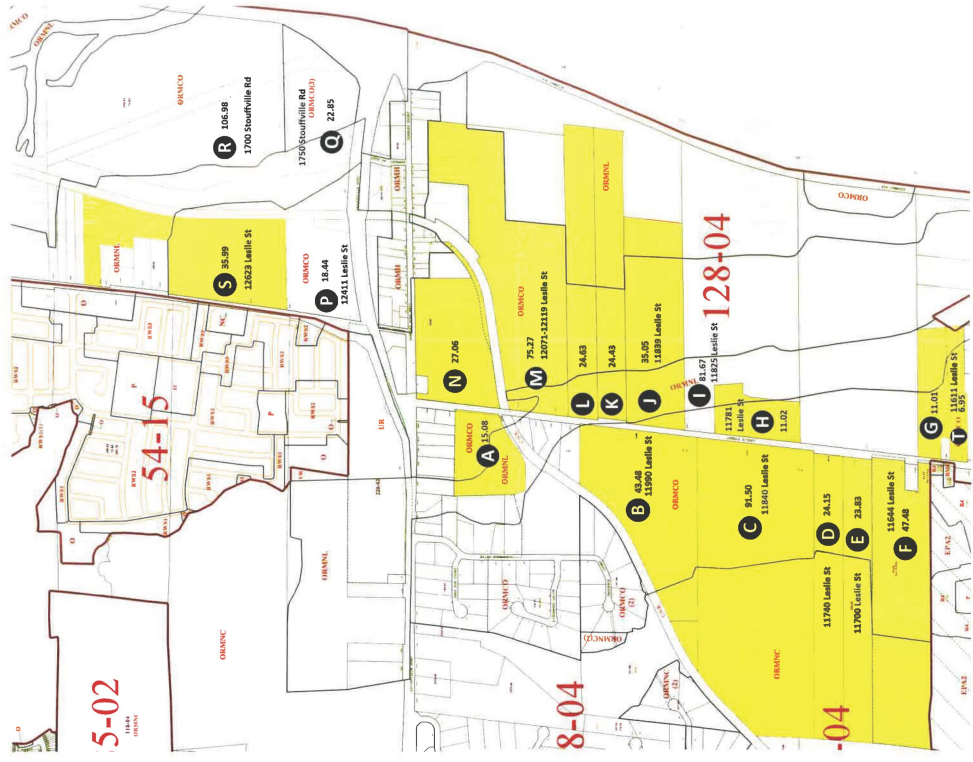
MPLAN Inc.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael S. Manett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right from the end of the name.

Per: Michael S. Manett, MCIP, RPP.

Encl.

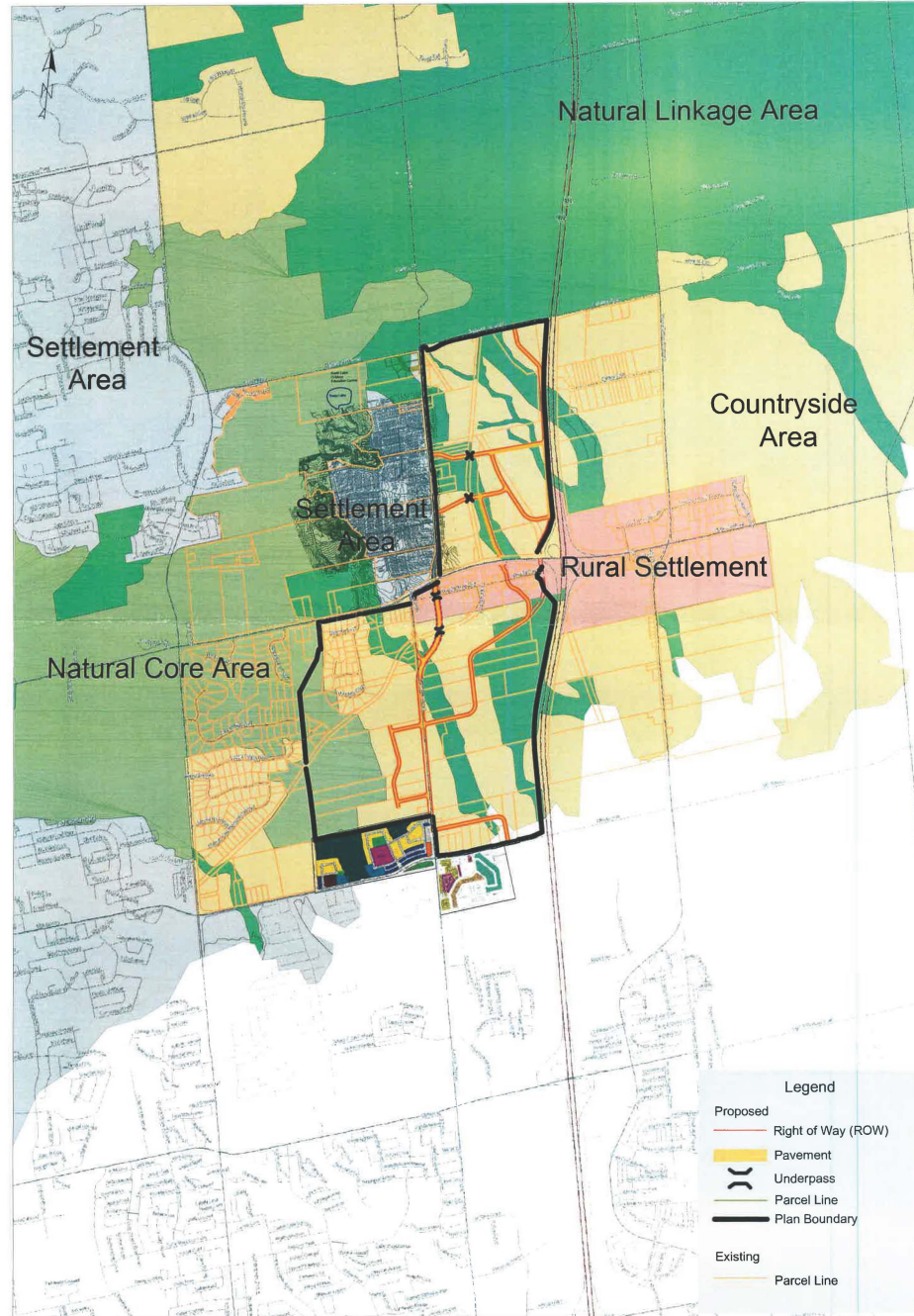
LESLIE STOUFFVILLE LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION OWNERSHIP MAP NOV. 1/19





DRAFT

Community Development Plan  
ORMCP (2017) Land Use Designations with Proposed Street Network  
Gormley GO Station/Leslie Street and Stouffville Road Area



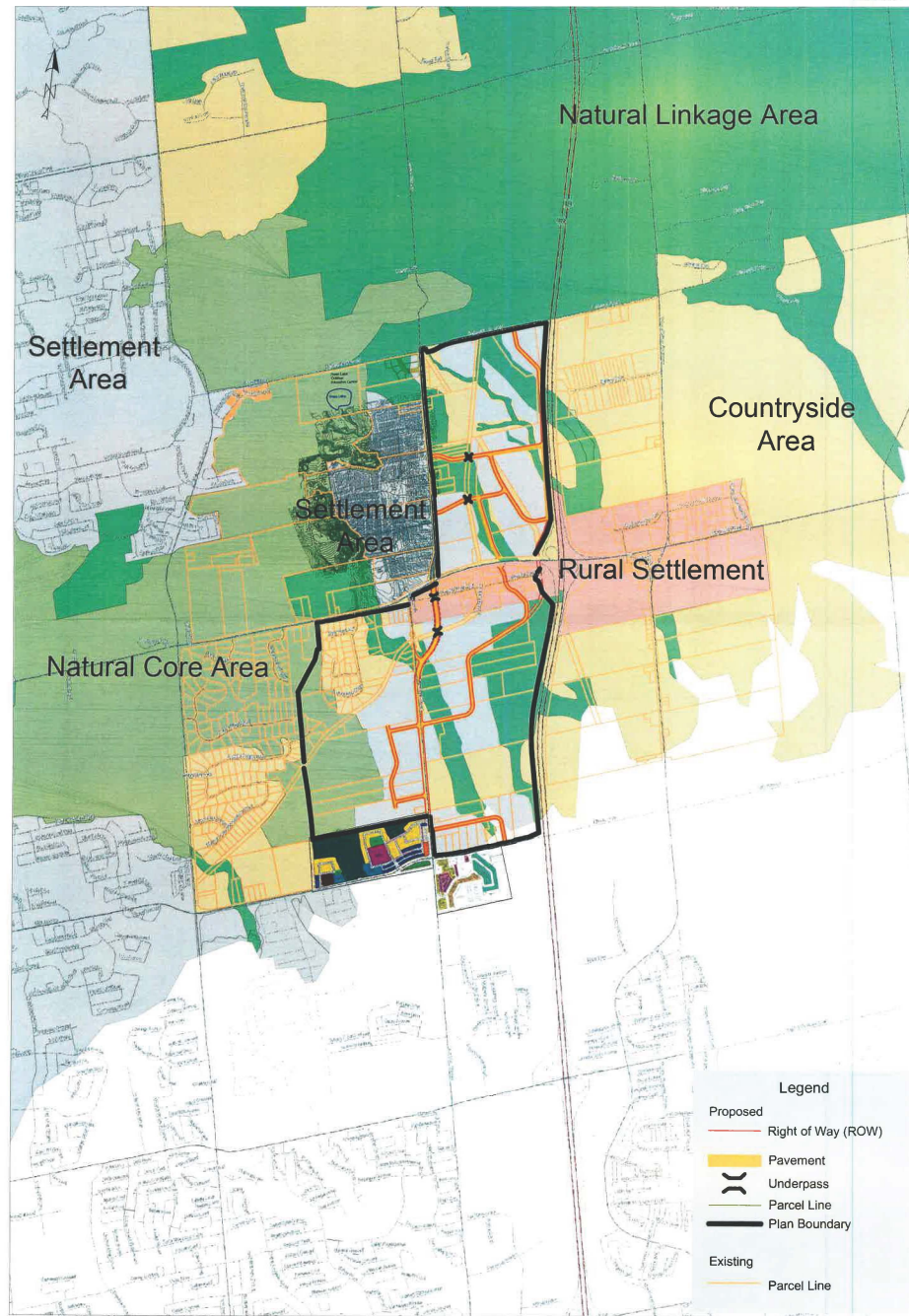
Plan Source: Draft Plan of Subdivision Part of Lot 1-4, con 2 (DG Group) Township of Richmond Hill, Regional Municipality of York, Aug 21, 2015  
19th Avenue & Leslie Street Richmond Hill, Approved Residential Development Opportunity, CBRE Ltd., Feb 1, 2017 & Apr 11, 2019  
Parcel Source: Town of Richmond Hill Zoning Map, Block 5 (2004), 6 (2016), 11 (2016) and 12 (2005)  
Plot Scale: 1:30,000 @ 11x17"  
Print Date: November 4, 2019

Property of  
**HUNTER and ASSOCIATES**  
INCORPORATED  
Professional Engineering Consultants  
Website: www.hunter-gy.com



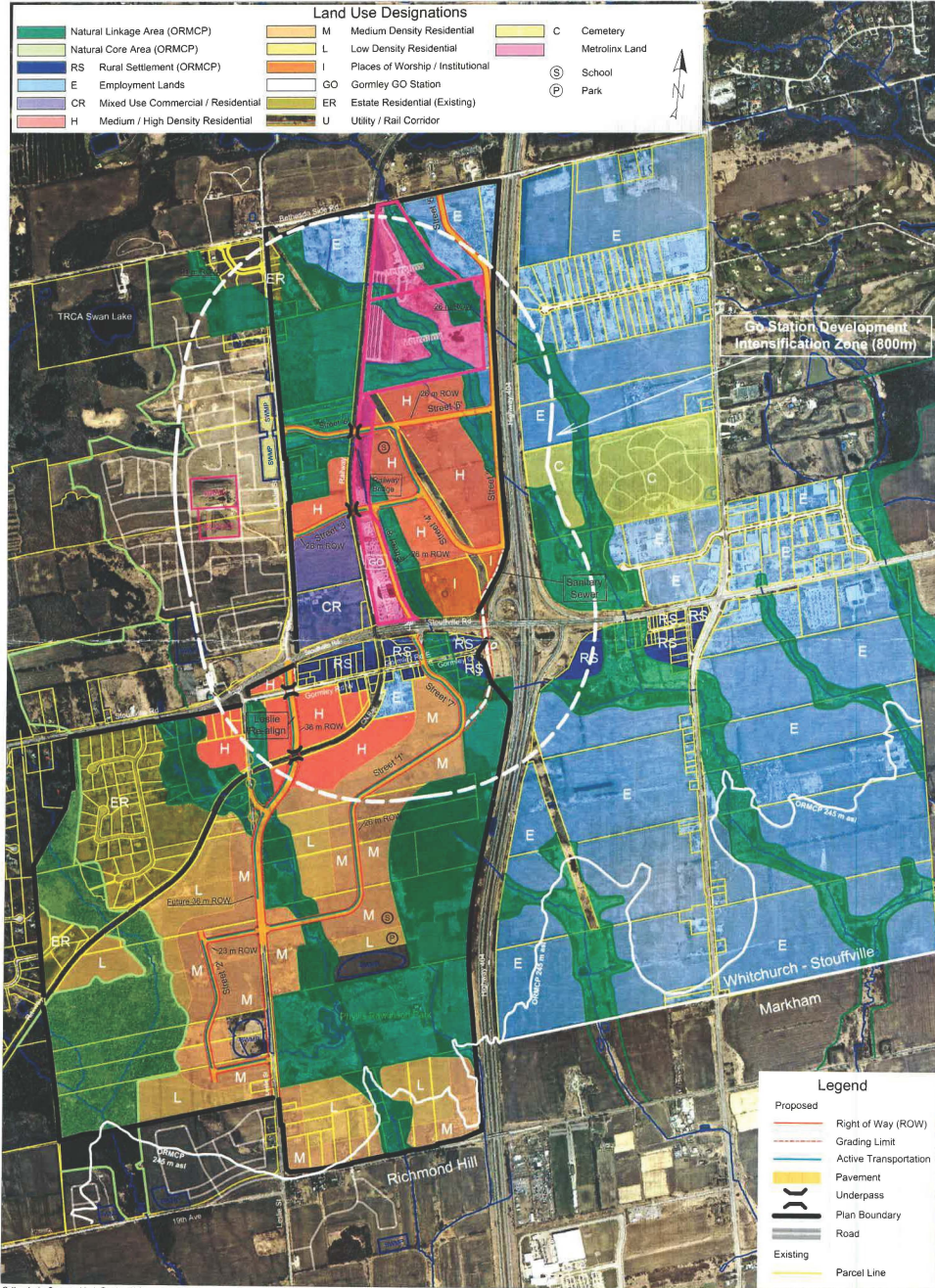
DRAFT

Community Development Plan  
Revised ORMCP Land Use Designations with Proposed Street Network  
Gormley GO Station/Leslie Street and Stouffville Road Area



Plan Source: Draft Plan of Subdivision Part of Lot 1-4, con 2 (DG Group) Township of Richmond Hill, Regional Municipality of York, Aug 21, 2015  
19th Avenue & Leslie Street Richmond Hill, Approved Residential Development Opportunity, CBRE Ltd., Feb 1, 2017 & Apr 11, 2019  
Parcel Source: Town of Richmond Hill Zoning Map, Block 5 (2004), 6 (2018), 11 (2018) and 12 (2005)  
Plot Scale: 1: 30,000 @ 11x17"  
Print Date: November 4, 2019





Orthophoto Source: York Region WMS (Year 2018)  
 Plan Source: Draft Plan of Subdivision Part of Lot 1-4, Con. 2 (DG Group) Town of Richmond Hill, Regional Municipality of York, Aug 21, 2015  
 19th Avenue & Leslie Street, Richmond Hill, Approved Residential Development Opportunity, CBRE Ltd., Feb 1, 2017 & Apr 11, 2019  
 Proposed Provincially Significant Employment Zone, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, Feb 2019  
 Parcel Source: Town of Richmond Hill Zoning Map, Block 5 (2004), 6 (2018), 11 (2018) and 12 (2005)  
 Plot Scale: 1:16,000 @ 11x17"  
 Print Date: September 27, 2019 @ 12:45 pm

**Minutes**  
**The Council of The Regional Municipality of York**  
April 30, 2020  
Electronic Meeting

**H.1.2 Provincially Stranded Assets**

**Moved by** Mayor Pellegrini

**Seconded by** Mayor Lovatt

That Council refer the following motion and the correspondence from Kristina Soolepp, Council Coordinator, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville dated March 24, 2020 (April 16, 2020 Committee of the Whole Minutes, Item H.1.2) to staff:

WHEREAS the Township of King advised the Region of York in October, 2009 of the Township's interest and intent to explore the possibility of designating additional employment lands in the area of Highway 400 and King Road prior to the 2014 Review of the Greenbelt Plan;

WHEREAS the Council for the Township of King supported the conclusions of the Greater Toronto Mayors Alliance Phase Two Report (March, 2013), including the identification of strategic employment lands that should be protected, particularly along the 400 series highway network, and where these lands adjacent to this infrastructure is otherwise protected, that protection be considered in light of the opportunity it presents to stimulate economic growth;

WHEREAS the Township's Economic Development Strategy (2015) identified the need to pursue opportunities to designate lands at Highway 400 and King Road as a Strategic Employment Area;

WHEREAS the Township requested in September, 2016 that the Province of Ontario include provisions in both the Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan to remove strategic employment lands adjacent to 400-series highways from the Greenbelt Plan should the need be demonstrated beyond 2031;

WHEREAS the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville passed a resolution on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020, that among other things, has the general purpose of requesting the Region of York and Province of Ontario to consider the appropriateness, including the competitive benefits to the Region and local municipalities, of re-designating lands in proximity to the Gormley and Bloomington GO Stations, on both sides of the Highway 404 corridor, from "countryside" to "urban settlement area";

WHEREAS the Township of King would also be interested in having the Region of York and Province of Ontario consider the appropriateness and competitive benefits of utilizing lands adjacent to Highway 400 for employment use purposes, given that the potential un-locking of employment opportunities along Highway 400 aligns with the

Township's directions contained Economic Development Strategy and the new Draft Official Plan;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that:

- York Region Staff be directed to report back to Council on the competitive benefits to the Region if employment uses were to be permitted along 400 series Highways; and
- York Region Council request the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to permit, through modifications to the applicable Provincial Plans and Policies, the designation of employment lands adjacent to 400 series Highways

**Carried**