

DEPUTATION REQUEST

REGIONAL COUNCIL
SEPTEMBER 16, 2021

Subject: Forecasted Growth

Spokesperson: Irene Ford

Name of Group or person(s) being represented (if applicable):

Brief summary of issue or purpose of deputation:

Requesting that York Region Council pass a motion to support the Auditor General's value for money audit on the Province's land use planning policies and to defer any approvals relating to the Municipal Comprehensive Review until the results of this audit have been released. Councillor Iafrate in Vaughan has already submitted a letter to the Auditor General in support, please see attached.



July 19, 2021



Marilyn Iafrate
Councillor, Ward 1

Ms. Bonnie Lysyk
Auditor General of Ontario
Box 105, 15th Floor
20 Dundas St. West
Toronto, ON M5G 2C2

RE: ONTARIO'S GROWTH PLANNING PROCESS

Dear Ms. Lysyk:

I am a local Councillor for the City of Vaughan and represent an area that is expected to take the bulk of the future growth for York Region.

I have serious concerns about the Province's new lands needs assessment by Hemson Consulting and its effect on the entire Greater Golden Horseshoe municipalities.

Regional governments were told how much they must plan for with little else in terms of justification, which in turn, they have downloaded to individual municipalities.

A presentation was made by York Region to Vaughan Councillors on May 12, 2021 and it was clear that the Region had no choice but to accept the excessive population growth numbers and were allowed nominal consultation. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has already sent two letters to the Region reminding them of their deadline which in turn is pressuring the Region to move forward without providing appropriate opportunities for public engagement/consultation prior to Regional Council approving staff recommendations. In the video, Regional staff admits that financially, they are unable to fund the necessary infrastructure for this unprecedented growth. York Region has an extremely large debt load and this situation would only exacerbate the situation.

I have provided a copy of the meeting video wherein Regional staff speak to needing funding from other levels of government in order to support the growth numbers. In fact, Region staff speaks to the lack of affordability of ground-related housing for young families. If the purpose of this 30-year plan is to provide more housing, then the growth numbers mandated by the Province may fail to support its own objectives. Region staff have already raised concerns that with the lack of affordability, the pace of growth will slow and therefore affect the recovery of infrastructure investment laid out by the Region. The Region also mentions that the pace of growth has slowed down over the last few year therefore I do not understand the need to pressure local governments with a 30-year plan that is unmanageable and most likely unattainable.

The consequences of such growth without having first consulted with municipalities will be long-lasting. In Vaughan's case, it is expected that we consume all our remaining farmland to accommodate the growth. Yet other Regions within the GGH were mandated far less growth than York Region.

There simply doesn't appear to be any logic or equity in the Province's approach to future growth. I understand that southern York Region has a subway and a future one coming along Yonge St., however, all the white belt lands are nowhere near this transit infrastructure.

Interesting enough is that consuming all the whitebelt lands in Vaughan and parts of York Region is premised on the construction of the GTA West Corridor also known as Highway 413. Should this not materialize, then what? Once the development community has been given the green light with approvals to develop on their lands, the lack of #413 will not change their right to proceed.

Most of what has been mentioned in my letter is derived from the video of the May 12, 2021 York Region presentation. I have also included the slide deck from their presentation. The video begins at 4:45:05 and ends at 6:06:23.

I have heard that you are undertaking a value-for money audit of land-use planning and reviewing the Province's growth planning process.

I am simply adding my voice in support of this review as it is crucial that future planning is done in an open, appropriate, and fair manner and protecting what little is left of our more vulnerable land such as farmlands.

Sincerely,



Marilyn Lafrate
Councillor, Ward 1
Maple & Kleinburg

cc: Nick Spensieri, City Manager, City of Vaughan
Paul Freeman, Chief Planner, Planning & Economic Development, Region of York

Attachments: DVD Committee Meeting May 12, 2021
Proposed 2051 Forecast & Land Needs Assessment Presentation, Region of York

