York Region Chair and York Region Council c/o Regional Corporate Services Department Administrative Centre Regional Municipality of York 17250 Yonge Street Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

Attn: Regional Clerk

Re: York Region Committee of the Whole Meeting, February 21, 2019, Item J (J.1 to J.3), Planning and Economic Development

I am writing as part of family that has lived and worked in and throughout York Region for more than 50 years.

Due to late notice of this issue, my comments here are necessarily brief. I will reserve further comments to be provided in the next week prior to the next meeting of York Region Council.

The message I would like to convey is how terribly short-sighted and ill-conceived is the position of the York Region Planning Department now before Committee of the Whole on the intensification aspect of the Proposed Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan.

As evidenced by the current and past reports of the Commissioner of Finance, York Region is falling short of its key revenues targets as set out in its 2018 and previous budgets. This has had and will continue to have significant consequences for the future, including the funding of capital projects that are vital for the sustained growth of York Region, such as important transportation improvements and water and wastewater infrastructure.

Fortunately, York Region has more than one tool in its residential and employment growth toolkit to help address these issues. In particular, York Region is blessed with excellent opportunities to (1) intensify significantly in certain areas and (2) build-out in relatively high density managed growth in others areas.

We should all recognize ramping up to a proposed mandatory level of intensification at 60% (which is a 50% increase over the past 40% and a 33% increase over more recently considered 45%) effectively cuts off Council from using that second tool of carefully managed high-density growth in new areas for the foreseeable future.

Council has previously determined (2015) that a 60% intensification level is not immediately supportable when all of the principles of good planning and the needs of the municipalities in the Region are taken into account. Indeed, the previous provincial government, which was certainly pro-intensification, agreed that a 50% intensification to 2031 is a better option as a transitional step.

The Commissioner of Planning, with all due respect, has provided no evidence that anything has changed to make 60% all of a sudden sensible. The Commissioner of Finance has provided evidence that an immediate change to 60% may be dangerous, to the extent it limits options to pay for all of that good infrastructure.

I look forward to providing more detailed submissions at a later date.

Sincerely,
Kim D.G. Alexander-Cook
King City ON