

RESOLUTION OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK

Subject: Future Land Needs for Whitchurch-Stouffville

Date: September 16, 2021

Moved by: Mayor Lovatt

Seconded by: Mayor Hackson

WHEREAS Highway 404 is one of the most significant pieces of infrastructure for people and major goods movement in York Region, and the lands along the Highway 404 corridor are strategic areas for future employment growth; and

WHEREAS Policy 1.3.2.6 of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020, requires Planning authorities to protect employment areas in proximity to major goods movement facilities and corridors for employment uses that require those locations; and

WHEREAS Policies 1.1.2 and 1.3.2.7 of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020, encourages Planning authorities to plan beyond 25 years for the long-term protection of employment areas provided lands are not designated beyond the planning horizon; and

WHEREAS the Town's proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area, abutting the Highway 404 corridor and the City of Markham's designated Future Employment Area, comprising 140ha, represents the most logical and viable location for future employment growth within the Town, on lands designated as Countryside Area in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan; and

WHEREAS the lands bound by Bethesda Road, Ninth Line, and abutting the current settlement area of the Community of Stouffville (i.e., Bethesda Lands), comprising 62ha, represents the most logical expansion to the Town's settlement area to accommodate future Community Area growth on lands designated as Countryside Area in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, and provides easy access to existing municipal services and community infrastructure, including the new Lincolnville GO Station and planned Major Transit Station Area (MTSA), which will provide more efficient use of higher order transit and infrastructure, and provide opportunities for creating a complete community; and

WHEREAS the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (Implementation Section) permits the Region of York to consider the need to change or refine the boundaries of settlement areas as part of a Municipal Comprehensive Review undertaken in accordance with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, provided settlement area boundaries are not permitted to expand into Natural Core Areas or Natural Linkage Areas; and

WHEREAS Policy 2.2.8 j) of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020, permits settlement area boundary expansions through the Region of York Municipal Comprehensive Review, provided the proposed expansion would meet any applicable requirements of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation (as per the Implementation Section of the ORMCP) and any applicable source protection plan; and

WHEREAS Regional Council on March 21, 2019, unanimously passed a motion requesting the province to designate certain lands on the east side of Highway 404 (including the South Gormley Employment Expansion Area) in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, as a Provincially Significant Employment Zone under the Growth Plan; and

WHEREAS Regional Council on October 22, 2020, adopted staff recommendations as outlined in the Report: Potential for Employment Lands Along 400 Series Highways, October 8, 2020, requesting the province to develop a process allowing municipalities to access site-specific strategically located employment lands for employment uses within the Protected Countryside Area of the Greenbelt Plan, through a Municipal Comprehensive Review;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Regional Council direct staff, through the on-going Municipal Comprehensive Review, to:

Implement a settlement area boundary expansion to include the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area; and

Implement a settlement area boundary expansion to the Community of Stouffville to include the proposed Bethesda Lands.