

Regional Council Special Meeting

October 21, 2021

Item E.2

**Submissions Received in Opposition to
Expanding Existing Urban Boundaries**

Sent: Thursday, September 23, 2021 5:41 PM
To: Regional Clerk <ClerkGeneralLine@york.ca>

Council / Committee meeting and date: **10/21/2021**

Meeting type: **Council**

Subject: **York Region Urban Sprawl**

Name of spokesperson: **Cindy Gertsakis via written submission**

Brief summary of issue or purpose of deputation:

Stop the proposal to bulldoze/develop a further 25,000 additional acres of precious fertile lands by 2050. I moved to York Region in 2000 and to date there has been no serious effort made to effectively and meaningfully improve public transportation (eg. something that is a 10 minute drive would take a person 1 1/2 hours and 3 different buses to get to the same destination... REALLY????). Focus on improving what currently exists; invest HEAVILY in public transit and keep fertile lands for FARMERS/CONSERVATION areas; not further insane profit margins for developers and those on the take!

Contact Name: **CINDY GERTSAKIS**

Hello,

I am a parent to 3 children, residing in the city of Vaughan.

I am writing to you on my own behalf and on behalf of my family of 5 to ask the council to vote "No" to any settlement boundary expansion at the Special Council Meeting on October 21st. We want to protect our last remaining farmland and natural areas for future generations. You should be using the next 30 years of new homes and workplaces in York region to complete the region's existing neighborhoods - by giving them the density, mix of uses, and physical retrofits they need in order for it to make people less dependent on cars. York Region has roughly 20,000 acres of greenfield land sitting unused but already open to development.

Sprawl is a major driver of climate change in Ontario. It destroys green lands and makes even more car-dependent communities, increasing emissions from transport and construction.

Building within existing urban areas isn't just possible - it's desirable. People want livable, walkable communities and vibrant neighbourhoods with public transit options that work for them - not cookie-cutter sprawl.

Thank you. Vote "No" please.

Regards,
Marina Polak

Dear York Region Mayors,

I am a York Region resident and parent who also works in York Region. I am writing you today to ask you to vote “No” to any settlement boundary expansion at the Special Council Meeting on October 21. We need to do all that we can to protect the last of our remaining farmland and natural areas for our children and their children. Please use the next 30 years of new homes and workplaces in York Region to complete the Region’s existing neighbourhood by giving them the density, mixture of uses and other amenities to make people less dependent on cars. This will have the added benefit of fighting climate change and creating liveable, walkable communities. York Region has about 20,000 acres of greenfield land that is unused and already open to development – let’s start there.

Regards,

Joe Wigglesworth

I have been a Markham resident for over 30 years and am writing to you today to ask you and all your colleagues to vote "no" to any settlement boundary expansion at the Special Council Meeting on October 21st.

I want our last remaining farmland and natural areas protected for future generations including my children and their children.

I want you to use the next 30 years of new homes and workplaces in York region to complete the region's existing neighborhoods - by giving them the density, mix of uses, and physical retrofits they need in order for it to make people less dependent on cars.

York Region has roughly 20,000 acres of greenfield land sitting unused but already open to development.

Sprawl is a major driver of climate change in Ontario. It destroys green lands and makes even more car-dependent communities, increasing emissions from transport and construction.

Building within existing urban areas isn't just possible - it's desirable. People want livable, walkable communities and vibrant neighbourhoods with public transit options that work for them - not cookie-cutter sprawl.

Please do the right thing and put our environment and quality of life before profits and greed

Thank you

Tina Fyall

Hi,

I am a parent from York region to three young boys aged 3, 8, and 10. I love my children dearly but I worry that I have brought them into a world where their future is uncertain due to climate change. With the climate calamity hanging over our heads, I wish to do all I can to ensure that my children have a future of clean air and clean water, and the ability to enjoy the natural world which is so important to our well-being. I'm sure if you have children in your life, you wish the same for them too.

For the aforementioned reasons, I ask the council to vote "No" to any settlement boundary expansion at the special council meeting on Oct. 21, 2021. For our children, our future, we must preserve our last remaining farmland and natural areas. We've already paved over what is some of the most fertile and beautiful land in Canada. Let's save what we have left. Instead, I ask that you complete existing neighbourhoods by increasing density, mixed uses and physical retrofits that reduce dependence on cars. York region has about 20 000 acres of Greenfield land sitting unused but already open to development. There are reasonable alternatives to grow York region while preserving our green space.

I know that many developers and land owners will relish this opening when it comes to profit, and it would create jobs and wealth in the short term; however, we must look further into the future. We must anticipate the long term implications of our actions when it comes to the preservation of our water resources and to the need for arable land to feed our population. To open this area to be modified and paved, gives short term gains but for what I believe is long term pain, the burden of which will fall on my children and yours.

Again I strongly urge the council to "zoom out" and evaluate the long term implications of our actions when it comes to climate change and preserving our region's rich natural resources. I ask that you vote "no".

Thank you,

Dr. Roop Kaur Sandhu

Hello, Mayor and Councillor.

I am a senior resident of Stouffville astounded by the rapid pace of development in this town. However, I see lots of room for more housing within the town boundaries and would like you to push for it here in town rather than allowing more greenspace to be paved over.

I am very concerned about climate change and the role that green areas play in preventing flooding, cleaning our drinking water and keeping the planet cool. We must preserve what we can.

Therefore, I would like to see you concentrate on improving mass transportation within Stouffville. For example, I would need to walk too far to catch a bus at Millard and 9th Line. New housing is coming north of my home, so a bus running along 9th line will become more feasible. We also need stores in this area, if only a corner store, to make us less dependent on cars. It is so nice to be able to just walk over to the golf course for an ice cream, but this is the only walkable spot.

I understand that York Region already has land sitting unused and designated for development. Let's use that first, in addition to in-town expansion, before giving away greenspace which is valuable for our children's future in so many ways.

Please do not vote to extend more land to developers, on Oct. 21 or any future date.

Thank you for considering my opinions. They are close to my heart.

Nancy Zalman

To the York Regional Councillors,

I am writing to you as a long-time resident of York region, with my family having lived in Thornhill for over 30 years. My parents still live here. My children are now staying in the region for post-secondary education. I continue to work as a physician in Thornhill and Richmond Hill. I am concerned about the urban sprawl I see happening around our region, extending out into our remaining natural green spaces and farms.

This concerns me from an environmental perspective as it destroys limited remaining green space and farmland, even though our region already has 20 000 acres of greenfield land sitting unused. This type of sprawl makes these new communities more car dependent instead of capitalizing on urban infrastructure with mass transit and more walkable distances. I am a member of CAPE (Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment), and I am advocating for a healthier alternative to more sprawl!

I am asking you to vote NO to any settlement boundary expansion at the special council meeting on October 21st. Please protect our remaining natural areas and farms for future generations. Over the next 30 years, finish building housing and workplaces within our existing urban communities with better access to mass transit and safer options for cycling and walking. We need to build healthy, sustainable communities, and lead by example about what is possible with thoughtful development. York region could be a leader in the GTA and inspire surrounding regions to progress while protecting the environment. I would ask the council to reflect on the environmental impact this decision will have on the future of our region for the next generation.

Thank you for your attention,
Deborah McCloskey, MD, FRCPC

Dear York Region Council,

I am a resident of Markham and have lived here for many years. I have relatives who have lived here for longer, and recall when Hwy 7 was mostly farmland with few stop lights. When I moved here, there was still much more farmland along Hwy 7 and not too far north of Markham, than there is today. So I have witnessed first hand the many changes as the urban sprawl has continued north of Toronto and taken away much of the farmland.

I am writing therefore to ask you **to please vote "NO" any settlement boundary expansion at the Special Council Meeting on October 21st.** We need to keep some of this precious land for the future generations, and put an end to continuous development of these lands, as if it does not matter or make any difference.

We have all witnessed the effect that climate change is having on the planet. Yet on one hand government officials talk about how important it is to do something to prevent further climate change and on the other hand then put their stamp of approval on further development and removal of precious green spaces. These actions are inconsistent with what officials express is important. If governments are really serious about preventing climate change then they will put their words into actions and vote "NO" to any suggestions of removing more green spaces for the sake of creating more concrete and urban sprawl.

It might be argued that just a bit more is not going to make that much of a difference. The fact is that can always be used as an argument but just a bit more results in there being more, and when this attitude is prevalent all over the world, then that "just a bit more" becomes massive removals of trees, and farmlands from the earth's surface. Then of course, people will say we will plant more trees to make up for what we cut down. Sure, as if a tree grows overnight and instantly replaces those processes which a full grown tree brought to the earth's atmosphere, not to mention hundreds or thousands of them. Of course, it takes years for a tree to grow, so it is not simply a matter of planting a new young tree to replace that which was removed. It will take years for that tree, or those thousands of trees to grow, and in the meantime the loss will affect the earth and the environment adversely. My question then is like that old song said, "When will we ever learn?" Are there not been enough tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, droughts resulting in forest fires, each year now, to convince leaders to stop and think about what they are doing before proceeding down the same paved road again. For sure it might not stop the tornadoes or

hurricanes, etc. since there is damage that has already been done. But how can the earth begin to heal and take a turn towards being better, unless there is a change from leaders and them making different choices than they did in the past.

There are still green spaces which have been slated for development but which remain unused. Instead of expanding the boundaries then consider either using what is already been slated, or better yet, consider developing neighbourhoods and building within the boundaries of urban areas which are already developed and create more cohesive neighbourhoods with access to public transportation to reduce the use of cars.

This planet is the only one we all have. Unless leaders, such as yourselves, start acting in ways consistent with preventing climate change, which they say is important, then they will only be paying lip service to it, and nothing more. While it might be thought that their constituents won't really be able to tell, and will think their leaders really care about climate change due to what they say, unless their actions begin to reflect their words, then their constituents will see through them eventually because actions always speak louder than words. For those constituents who really care about the planet then they will eventually demonstrate how important it is to them, and express their opinion when it comes time for re-election.

Thank you very much for your time and attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,
M. Donovan-Wiesen

I moved to Thornhill when i was 2 months old, in a bit more than a year i will be a senior citizen. The size of the city has multiplied as has pollution and the cost of housing.

My concern is that building new highways and developments outside the already developed areas will bring us even more climate damage, pollution and both will reduce our chances to give our offspring the chance at a good future.

Instead, please increase density as mayor John Sewell has suggested by allowing anyone and everyone to build six stories along bus routes on main streets. Bring in a vacant homes tax because in Vancouver it has meant a lot of inventory coming to the residential real estate market. From 2017 to 2019 they charged 1%, 1.25% in 2020 and in 2021 3%. Where 6 cities in Canada are classified as being in the "red zone" ie. overheated, Vancouver isnt one of them!! They also charge a speculation tax of 1% on the first \$200,000.00 then 2% til \$2 million then 3% over that. Way to go!

Maybe we could charge commercial properties the empty building charge and the speculation charge as well and then convert some to use for drug rehab, or homeless shelters, or domestic abuse shelters and maybe daycare or skills training.

We will love your ideas too!! Bring them on. As long as our priority is to reduce greenhouse gases for now and the future by being as efficient as possible (which means avoiding sprawl) in our efforts to house, serve and protect more people.

Natalie Telfer

Dear council members

I have lived and enjoyed the areas and forests in York Region for many years. I rode through the wonderful forest trails, walked my dogs along the pathways, boarded my horses on various farms throughout this region.

I am asking to to vote NO to any settlement boundary expansion at the Special Council Meeting on October 21st to protect our precious lands and forests that still remain both farmland and natural areas for future generations. It is your duty and responsibility to preserve centuries of our legacy and history, our wildlife and ecosystems.

Please use the next 30 years of new homes and workplaces in York region to complete the region's existing neighborhoods - by giving them the density, mix of uses, and physical retrofits they need in order for it to make people less dependent on cars.

York Region has roughly 20,000 acres of greenfield land sitting unused but already open to development.

Sprawl is a major driver of climate change in Ontario. It destroys green lands and makes even more car-dependent communities, increasing emissions from transport and construction.

Building within existing urban areas isn't just possible - it's desirable. People want livable, walkable communities and vibrant neighbourhoods with public transit options that work for them - not cookie-cutter sprawl.

I KNOW THAT MANY TAXPAYERS AND VOTERS WILL BE WATCHING VERY CLOSELY THAT THE COUNCIL PROTECTS THE AREAS THEY LIVE IN AND LOVE.

Sincerely

Anne Kaufmann

I am a parent and grandparent living in Georgina. I chose this place because of the beautiful natural spaces and farmlands.

I am asking the council to vote NO to any settlement boundary expansion at the Special Council Meeting on Oct 21st.

I feel that is important to protect the natural areas and farmland in our area for future generations to come. Once consumed we will never get it back. I would like to see the next 30 years complete the region's existing neighborhoods - by giving them the density, mix of uses, and physical retrofits they need in order for it to make people less dependent on cars. York Region has roughly 20,000 acres of greenfield land sitting unused but already open to development.

Sprawl is a major driver of climate change in Ontario. It destroys green lands and makes even more car-dependent communities, increasing emissions from transport and construction. Building within existing urban areas isn't just possible - it's desirable. We want livable, walkable communities and vibrant neighbourhoods with public transit options that work - not cookie-cutter sprawl.

Thank You

Adrienne Dwyer

I am a resident of Woodbridge and have been since 1970. Growing up here I have seen the transformation from small town with farmland to sprawling city with unbearable traffic congestion. Please vote "No" to any settlement boundary expansion at the Special Council Meeting on October 21st. Please protect our last remaining green space for future generations and use existing neighbourhoods and land already open to development for expansion over the next 30 years. These green lands should be protected and with the climate change catastrophe at our doorstep, our children and grandchildren will have to live with the consequences. Thank you.

Regards:

Jill Worton

Hello, I am a parent and home owner in North York. We have very little natural area around us at Bathurst and Clark, and development keeps encroaching on the remainder.

vote "No" to any settlement boundary expansion at the Special Council Meeting on October 21st.

Please protect the all remaining farmland and natural areas.

Use the next 30 years of new homes and workplaces in York region to complete the region's existing neighborhoods - by giving them the density, mix of uses, and physical retrofits they need in order for it to make people less dependent on cars.

- Sprawl is a major driver of climate change in Ontario. It destroys green lands and makes even more car-dependent communities, increasing emissions from transport and construction.
- Building within existing urban areas isn't just possible - it's desirable. People want livable, walkable communities and vibrant neighbourhoods with public transit options that work for them - not cookie-cutter sprawl.

--

Have a wonderful day!

Gary Wein and Mina Korman

Dear York Region Councillors,

My name is Catherine Flear and I have been a long-time resident of King City. I care very deeply about the environment and the undeniable fact that we are in a climate emergency.

I am not asking, I'm begging you to take the brave step and vote **NO** to any boundary expansion at the Special Council Meeting on October 21st.

There is plenty of room available in the existing municipal boundaries to accommodate housing for the predicted population growth in York Region. To start, York Region already has roughly 20,000 acres of greenfield land allocated for development. We also need to intensify in existing municipalities by building smaller energy efficient houses that include solar panel, heat pumps, and increased insulation. We need to build higher - I know this isn't necessarily a popular option but it is a good way to build more affordable housing that is so needed for young as well as older people. The demand for this type of housing is great.

We must protect our valuable farmland and natural areas. They are required so that we can be self-sufficient in our food production and natural areas are so important for habitat and sequestering of CO2. Once they are gone THEY ARE GONE- and that would be a tragedy!

We cannot keep doing the same old things thinking they will solve our problems. Solutions for solving climate change are already available and doable. We must think outside of the same old box and start building communities that are not dependent on cars that emit green house gases. Instead we must build communities which are walkable and close to public transit.

Your decision will greatly affect the quality of life for future populations. You were elected to make the tough but right decisions. So please, vote **NO** for expansion into the Whitebelt.

Thank you for reading this submission.

Catherine Flear

Good day everyone,
Please do not build on any good farm land in York Region.
Lesley Everest

TO: York Region Council

My name is Sharon Willan, a Senior and retired Educator living in Aurora, ON. I have lived in York Region since 1975 and have watched the progress in small communities. Some of this progress has been wonderful. But some progress has resulted in the destruction of old growth forests, farmlands, and wetlands, I have wept driving north on Bayview from Stouffville Sideroad, watching forests being ravaged. I agree some of this was needed -- but not all.

I was relieved that the parkland around Lakes Wilcox and Bond were saved and preserved.

Surely as leaders in our community you are aware of the climate crisis we are facing. We NEED to protect all the green space we have. We CANNOT keep paving over farmland where our food is grown and wetlands that protect from flooding

We cannot afford urban sprawl that is a major driver of climate change in Ontario and detrimental to our health. Urban sprawl creates more vehicular travel, less green space for walking, fewer trees for oxygen and healing. We must look at mixed use in existing communities, by retrofitting our buildings, and creating closer knit communities with walking spaces and less dependence on cars. We don't need more carbon emissions.

Let's save the environment for our children and grandchildren.

I am asking - maybe even demanding in this climate crisis that you vote against any settlement boundary expansion at the Special Council Meeting on October 21st.

Sincerely,
Sharon Willan

The York Region Forest provides invaluable services that protect our water and air quality at no cost to us.

Please do not disrupt its integrity!

Sincerely,

Jane McCulloch
and many more!

I am a retired professional living in Aurora. One of the things I love most about where I live is that I am within walking distance of wonderful green space and also in a mixed use neighbourhood where I can walk to all the retail stores I need. I believe strongly that York Region needs to continue to build higher density into the existing municipalities and protect our remaining farmland and natural areas for future generations.

I watch with dismay and frustration as more large single family homes are built, and I see no apartment buildings being built. As a taxpayer, I want to see York Region Council use the next 30 years to complete the region's existing neighborhoods - by giving them the density, mix of uses, and physical retrofits they need in order for it to make people less dependent on cars. Building within existing urban areas isn't just possible - it's desirable. People want livable, walkable communities and vibrant neighbourhoods with public transit options that work for them - not cookie-cutter sprawl.

I am further disappointed at my fellow citizens who object to high density proposals. There is far too much NIMBYism in York Region, and I want you to know that many citizens are not in favour of this behaviour. Protecting existing trees, wetlands and other sensitive environments is crucial yet so are higher density walkable communities, especially along transit corridors. Sprawl is a major driver of climate change in Ontario. It destroys green lands and makes even more car-dependent communities, increasing emissions from transport and construction.

I am asking that you vote "No" to any settlement boundary expansion at the Special Council Meeting on October 21st.

Jane St Germain

Dear Sirs/Madams

My name is Andrew Hampton and I am a resident of Richmond Hill in York Region and a parent of two kids.

I understand that there is a Special Council Meeting on October 21st, to consider Settlement Boundary Expansion for York Region and I am writing to you today to urge you to **Vote "No"** to this expansion.

It is extremely important to me that we protect our last remaining farmland and natural areas for future generations. It is well known that time spent in nature is very beneficial for mental health and the observed increase in use of our trail systems during the pandemic has shown us just how important this is. These lands are also home to many species at risk such as Monarch Butterflies, Barn Swallows and Snapping Turtles.

The loss of farmland continues to be a major concern to me, not only because we are losing some of the most valuable agricultural land in Canada, but also because that land itself provides enormous environmental benefits such as aquifers for our water supply, sediment retention, nutrient recycling and more.

Finally, urban sprawl is a disaster in terms of climate change, creating disconnected communities which are ever more dependent on cars.

Furthermore, this expansion is not even necessary. York region already has 20,000 acres of unused greenfield land that is already open for development, and there is plenty of scope for intensification within our current urban boundaries. In fact, intensification is both desirable and necessary in order to create the liveable, vibrant, walkable communities that multiple surveys within York Region have shown that our people desire (such as for the surveys regarding Richmond Hill's Official Plan or the York Region Climate Change Action Plan).

So, in my opinion the pressure to open up even more lands for urban expansion is not due to an inevitable need to forever keep expanding, but is driven more by the economic benefits to the developers and land speculators who are misleading us into thinking this is a necessity.

For the sake of all of us, and especially our children and grandchildren, **please, vote "No to the expansion."**

Thank you
Andrew Hampton

Gentlemen I am asking you to vote no to this expansion.

My name is Carl Emmerson, I am a parent and grandparent and I am asking you to vote no to any settlement boundary expansion

It is your duty to protect the remaining farmland and to reject the self interest of developers whose prime and only interest is making money at any cost.

Respectfully

Carl Emmerson

Good Afternoon,

My name is James Counter, I am a lifelong resident of Oak Ridges, Richmond Hill, York Region.

I write you today to express my hope that council will vote AGAINST the continuation of sprawl development in this municipality.

I understand that this area is a desirable place to live, and so the development of property seems beneficial as a short-term strategy for generating tax revenue for the municipality. However, the reason this area is a desirable place to live is not simply the proximity to Toronto and the ease of commuter transportation. This land was settled many years ago and considered desirable because it is ecologically rich, particularly the moraine. The moraine is more than a geographic or ecological feature: it is essentially a giant water filter, feeding the river estuaries to the north and south which give this region its distinct beauty and plentiful flora and fauna. All the water that flows North of Bloomington Road finds its way to the Holland River estuary; all the water flowing south finds its way to Humber River estuary.

Allowing the continuation of urban sprawl atop the Moraine will most certainly have considerable negative long term effects. We already have seen in recent years an increase in the damage caused by high volumes of rain. Though you may consider the tax advantage of continued sprawl beneficial, consider the cost when hundreds possibly thousands of residents are claiming damages to their personal property by mismanagement of municipal systems due to the inability to deal with flooding or other natural phenomena which are a result of the lands inability to absorb and redirect water through the natural watersheds. This will not be a hypothetical. Every subdivision and smartcenter that local government authorizes reduces the land area for absorption of rainwater, putting significant pressure on the existing water and sewer systems. These systems are likely decades old, possibly much older, and they were never designed to carry the water run off that will be present when every inch of arable land has been paved for "development". Consider also that water that filters through soil and natural systems is cleansed in this process, where water that runs off pavement will have the opposite effect: it will collect debris and pollution and concentrate those contaminants back into our water systems. That is only rainwater.... Do you think this area will remain desirable for residents who commute when the existing road grid system, designed initially to serve 100 acre parcels for individual farmers, is so backlogged with traffic that they cannot commute in a reasonable timeframe to their employment. Again, this is not a hypothetical. I suggest you try driving north from Toronto down Bathurst on a week day afternoon. This is not a functional system for the movement of people, and adding more homes and more developments inside fixed street systems is a strategy designed to benefit a few rich individuals and ultimately destined to fail.

If you want to protect this community, its future, its livelihood, its desirability, I URGE YOU please vote against the continuation of short-term profits being prioritized for economic gain. Not only will this strategy not yield economic benefits shared by the community, (for the most part these developers do not live in these communities, and they generally do not care about the impact developments have on the ecology of the area or the health and well being of the area's residents) It will actually jeopardize the viability of the land for future generations. What do you think your progeny will think when they discover it was their parents, grandparents, elders, who greenlit the felling of forest and field for a few dollars more. What attracts people to this area is not the endless availability of overpriced, monotonous semi detached townhouses. It is the sense of home and community which is born in our shared community spaces, natural ecology first and foremost. You, our elected officials, are ultimately

responsible for the state of these spaces. Please consider this when you are asked to decide whether to support the continuation of urban sprawl. I hope and pray you will possess the strength of character to know, and to do, what is right. If you do not, we will remember.

Yours Truly,

James R. Counter, Barrister, Solicitor, Notary Public
Counter & Mitchell

My name is Karolyn Keir and I am resident of York Region. I am submitting this deputation express my support of the York Regional Council considering options for future development that don't involve expanding into rural lands (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/yorkregion-development-environment-groups-resident-concerns-1.6178642>).

I would like to reiterate points made by Phil Pothen from Environmental Defence:

- York Region has failed to consult properly. Unlike peer regions, (e.g., Hamilton, Halton) it has not consulted on a fleshed-out fixed Settlement Area Boundary option. The formal discussions it claims to have held were so poorly publicized that they went unnoticed by many of the most engaged council-watchers in York Region.
- While York Region paved roughly 6,400 acres between 2001 and 2019 – that's 357 acres per year – the new plan would see the region burn through a further 25,000 acres by 2051 – that's 791.5 acres per year – more than double the past rate.
- There is absolutely no land supply shortage in York Region. The proposed Settlement Area Boundary expansion would add 5,000 more acres to the roughly 20,000 of countryside York Region opened up years ago, but which has never been used.
- In addition to paving some of the last unbuilt headwaters of the Rouge and Don rivers, this plan would see a huge number of people and a huge area of sprawl forced into the sensitive Lake Simcoe watershed, which simply doesn't have the capacity for more sewage or runoff. Environmental NGOs warned York and the province in a joint letter of January 19th, that there is presently no sustainable way to increase sewage capacity in Upper York Region, and that no further settlement expansion should be directed to that part of York Region. A provincial regulation actually prohibits approval of the "Upper York Sewage Solutions" proposal.
- This plan betrays existing York Region residents by squandering the next 30 years of growth on more low-density sprawl. That growth is desperately needed to complete existing neighbourhoods, which have not yet developed the densities and mix of uses that are required for people to rely on active transportation. While a strong majority of York Region residents say they "simply can't get by without a car" as things stand, 80 per cent of those with an opinion (64 per cent , vs. 16 per cent who disagree) say they'd "much prefer" to live in a neighbourhood where they "didn't need to use a car to do [their] shopping, recreation, entertainment, or commutes to work or school." This plan is likely to prevent that from happening within the next three decades.

- York Region is not legally obligated to extend its urban boundary, even though the province and land speculators are trying to strongarm the region into doing so. On the contrary, this plan contravenes the Provincial Policy Statement, which requires York Region to direct all of its future growth to places where it can support public transit and can minimize land consumption and servicing costs. It will be extraordinarily difficult to achieve this in the fragmented chunks of land which this plan would see added to the Settlement Area Boundary. Right now, the land which is next to the proposed new settlement areas has low rates of public and active transportation. Building more sprawl will make the situation worse. Instead, York Region should build in the existing settlement area, especially in areas close to existing public transit.

Our collective future requires bold leadership and constructive disruption of the status quo. I commend Hamilton and Halton regions for recognizing this imperative need, and I sincerely hope that you and the rest of the York Regional council recognize this as well.

Karolyn Keir

Good Morning,

I'm writing to plea that you all come to your senses and vote "NO" at the upcoming meeting on settlement boundary expansion.

I'm a father of 3 young boys. I grew up in Richmond Hill and I watched as developers ripped up and destroyed Richmond Hill and Vaughan. I live in East Gwillimbury now and I see the same development patterns happening here. I don't want to have my children witness what I did. I don't want East Gwillimbury to look like Richmond Hill/Vaughan when they are my age.

PLEASE IM BEGGING YOU. VOTE NO!!!!!!

James Stott (Concerned Resident)

Dear concerned leaders,

We have been living in York Region for over 20 years and thoroughly enjoy being surrounded by farmland and protected green space. It makes driving more pleasant, helps emotionally and spiritually, and provides us with access to fresh foods and a quality of life that is the envy of the planet.

Please vote "No" to any settlement boundary expansion at the Special Council Meeting on October 21st.

It is crucial that we protect our last remaining farmland for our own use and for future generations.

We already have 20,000 acres of Greenfield land sitting unused and waiting for development. Please use the next 30 years of new homes and workplaces in York region to complete the region's existing neighborhoods - by giving them the density, mix of uses, and physical retrofits they need in order for it to make people less dependent on cars. We know that sprawl is a major driver of climate change in Ontario. It destroys green lands and makes even more car-dependent communities, increasing emissions from transport and construction.

Sincerely,

Brian and Deborah O'Sullivan

I am a resident of Laskay, as well as a business owner with significant expansion hopes for King. My customer would indirectly be our Federal Government.

If I get the work I expect, I would be hiring a number of new engineering grads. King City GO station would be such a lovely location for them to access. That GO line connects well to U of T, York, Ryerson aerospace programs. It offers them a quick way to get to work, without needing a car. And then it offers them access to more affordable homes in Barrie area, without having to worry about winter driving conditions. All without needing any more parking at our GO station.

I believe we are an ideal business candidate; small footprint, high wages, no pollution – no retail customers needing parking.

Please do not make major long term planning changes at a time when the world is in so much flux: COVID-19 and climate change are making our views into the future even more murky than normal.

Sherry Draisey

Hello

I want government to work: not just for profit, not for personal gain, not just for us, not just for now!

We are getting up in years and haven't suffered the full force of pollution and Climate Change.

In the last fifteen or twenty years I have definitely noticed significant changes.

When I first moved to York Region, it was countryside, tree lined roads, farmers fields, swimming and fishing Lake Simcoe.

Those days are gone!

I worked for a Builder for many years and am fully aware of population growth, however it is time for a change.

The same old- same old is destroying our planet and to my knowledge we only have one.

I mentioned change, but these changes are significant and I have noticed:

* didn't need Air Conditioning - when you left the city to return home: there was a significant drop in temperature, humidity and air quality. All Gone!

* (Note: I have always been an avid gardener)- rainfall periods- not reliable- many of my crops failed this year because of an extended heat wave/ drought.

* In recent years I have seen numerous insects that I have never seen in my 50 plus years of gardening. Many not good! Used to be many of these insects could not survive/thrive in our Climate.

*Another indicator of significant change is: for the first time in my life I saw a Giant Swallowtail Butterfly- they don't come this far up into Ontario also, I have seen numerous birds that are not normally in this area.

* I have lived in my existing property- close to Fairy Lake for (17) seventeen years- in that time I have LOST-(9)Nine trees.

- A mature Ash- suspect borer
- A mature Crabapple tree
- 4- Emerald Cedars
- PG Hydrangea
- Nine Bark
- Weeping Pea

This list does not include several: Swamp Cedars in an older Hedge row.

We need to improve/rethink/redesign construction.

We need to preserve and protect our environmentally sensitive areas- *Wetlands -(by the way where have all the Bull Rushes gone?) *Lakes *Streams

* Parks

*Trails

*Wild Animal Corridors

Every neighbourhood and child needs an area to take a breath, to relax, to decompress, to enjoy Nature and to have fun family/ community time.

These spaces don't have to be elaborate like Mulock Farm, they just need accessible green spaces.

I won't even get into:The Oak Ridges Moraine and the effects of development. We need to protect water and not take it for granted.

We have Grandchildren, I want them to be able to enjoy life.

We need to move away from consolidating all Business and Industry in one area.
We need to bring sustainability to smaller towns- so people can live, work and play in that area.
Commuting hours a day for work destroys simple family life and destroys our environment.

Think outside of the box- destroying the only remaining farmlands in Southern Ontario is insane. One day we may need it to grow Food.
You can't always get back the things you have lost or destroyed.
Save our planet for my grandchildren!

Thank- you,
Pauline Wheeler

Dear York Region Council members,

I am urging you to vote “No” to any settlement boundary expansion at the Special Council Meeting on October 21st.

The fact that 20,000 acres of York Region's greenfield space are already open to development is disturbing enough. Do we really need to pave over an additional 5,000 acres?

Here are some things we all know:

- we have to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions;
- urban sprawl creates car-dependency;
- green spaces soak up carbon and pavement doesn't;
- some of Canada's key food-producing areas are facing crop-destroying weather conditions.

Given all of this knowledge, why would we even consider paving over our last remaining farmlands and natural areas? Why would we choose to destroy that land's potential to produce food, sustain biodiversity, soak up carbon and perhaps generate green energy, while at the same time forcing future generations into a car-based lifestyle that only exacerbates climate change?

Yes, a growing population needs to be accommodated, but urban sprawl is not the way to do it. Instead, we should be looking at ways to increase density in areas that have already been developed, while also finding ways to make these neighbourhoods more multi-faceted so that residents are not forced to drive in order to meet their needs.

Here, in a nutshell, is the choice you will be making on October 21st: We can give future generations *another* 5,000 acres of urban sprawl that exacerbates existing problems, or we can give them 5,000 acres of land that offers solutions to those problems. I do hope you'll choose the latter.

Sincerely,

William Shore

Dear York Region Council members,

As one who has enjoyed the great privilege of living and teaching in Georgina for 25 years, I would first like to thank and congratulate all who voted in favour of an up-to-date environmental assessment of the proposed Bradford Bypass.

Now I am urging you to vote "No" to any settlement boundary expansion at the Special Council Meeting on October 21st.

The fact that 20,000 acres of York Region's greenfield space is already open to development is disturbing enough. Do we really need to pave over an additional 5,000 acres?

If it's true that making the same mistake over and over again is the definition of insanity, then choosing to create more urban sprawl can only be described as insane. Here are some things we all know:

- we have to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions;
- urban sprawl creates car-dependency;
- green spaces soak up carbon and pavement doesn't;
- some of Canada's key food-producing areas are facing crop-destroying weather conditions.

Given all of this knowledge, why would we even consider paving over our last remaining farmlands and natural areas? Why would we choose to destroy that land's potential to produce food, sustain biodiversity, soak up carbon and perhaps generate green energy, while at the same time forcing future generations into a car-based lifestyle that only exacerbates climate change?

Yes, a growing population needs to be accommodated, but urban sprawl is not the way to do it. Instead, we should be looking at ways to increase density in areas that have already been developed, while also finding ways to make these neighbourhoods more multi-faceted so that residents are not forced to drive in order to meet their needs.

Here, in a nutshell, is the choice you will be making on October 21st: We can give future generations *another* 5,000 acres of urban sprawl that exacerbates existing problems, or we can give them 5,000 acres of land that offers solutions to those problems. I hope you'll choose the latter.

Sincerely,

Susan Sheard

We are writing as a York Region citizens, long concerned about environmental issues, especially climate change. We have children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and grandnephews and grandnieces living in York Region. In this case we are writing to you about urban and suburban sprawl developments.

When we turn farmland and other green space into housing, we lose much that is irreplaceable, and gain nothing that cannot be had in other ways.

If York Region approves more sprawl development, we will lose farms that are close to where people live at a time when local food is increasingly necessary. Climate change is making food production in many parts of the world more difficult, even in Canada, so relying on imported food makes our well-being more precarious. Farmland and green spaces in York Region are also our main carbon sink, our main way of fighting climate change. And we cannot simply build more farmland, fields and forests later.

At the same time, there are many alternatives to sprawl development. Developers like building on farmlands because it's cheap and easy – the land has been largely cleared and levelled for them. But that doesn't make it good for the rest of us. It is much better to build a bit higher and a bit closer, and build for mixed uses – live, work and play. I'm not talking about highrise tower blocks – I dislike them as much as anyone does. The so-called "missing middle", buildings three to five storeys high, can provide affordable, attractive housing with a much lower environmental footprint than sprawl tract houses. At the same time, the denser housing will allow more people to live closer to work, entertainment and friends; and to walk, cycle and use transit to get there.

We need housing and business places, but we need our green spaces and farms much more. There are no reasonable compromises.

On October 21, please vote to preserve our forests, fields, wetlands and farms, and vote "NO" to expanding our settlement boundary.

Sincerely,

David Kempton and Peggy Stevens, Newmarket

Dear Councillors;

I have resided in York Region (King Township) for 70 years and my family for much longer. I am writing to ask that you not vote to expand the settlement boundaries to create additional development lands. Those lands are not needed for development and the resulting loss of farmland and natural areas will be a serious loss for future generations. These areas are needed to help in the battle to arrest climate change. Future population growth must come from intensification in existing settlements and the use of the 20,000 greenfield acres already planned for development.

Thank you for considering the environment and our future.

Sincerely

Rolph and Joan Davis

I am writing to you because I live in York Region and I want future generations to enjoy the vibrant community life I had growing up in Woodbridge. I raised my children in York Region and my children are raising their children here too.

Allowing more sprawl is not the way to grow York Region. Please vote no to any settlement boundary expansion on October 21st. A no vote is not a vote against growth. There are approximately 20,000 acres of greenfield available for development and building up existing neighbourhoods will result in much more desirable communities. Sprawl encourages car dependency. It doesn't build communities. People want to live in walkable, cyclable communities with good public transportation. Intensification will create more affordable housing allowing more people to enjoy all that York Region has to offer.

We must protect farmland and natural areas for future generations. We must tackle the climate crisis. Saying no to the expansion of settlement boundaries will help us do these things.

Vote no on October 21st.

Peggy Stevens

Dear Councillors;

I am writing to ask that you vote NO to expanding the settlement boundaries to create additional development lands. I have resided in York Region (King Township) for 36 years and my family for much longer. I am deeply concerned with the increase of urban sprawl. Those lands are not needed for development and the resulting loss of farmland and natural areas will be a serious loss for future generations. These areas are needed to help in the battle to stop climate change. Future population growth must come from intensification in existing settlements and the use of the 20,000 greenfield acres already planned for development.

Thank you for considering the environment and our future.

Sincerely

Cameron Davis

October 12, 2021

York Region Council
regionalclerk@york.ca
paul.freeman@york.ca
bruce.macgregor@york.ca



85 DARIOLE DRIVE
RICHMOND HILL, ON L4E 0Z4

RE: COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING OCT.21, 2021
SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY EXPANSION **NOT NECESSARY**

Eleven years ago farmers were bussed in from out of the Region to speak against Councillors Shapero's and Burke's visionary advocacy for a Markham Foodbelt, which was defeated, according to Ms Shapero due to developer influence. Nothing has changed as an alarming [Toronto Star investigation](#) recently found regarding the push for Hwy 413. Developers who make huge contributions to election campaigns and civic infrastructure projects such as hospitals, community centres and libraries expect paybacks. How can that be considered philanthropy? True philanthropy would see developers donating some of their agricultural holdings to the Ontario Farmland Trust for a tax receipt and permanent protection.

Recently, one of those farmers who spoke against the Foodbelt pleaded with York Region to save farmland yet there are still those who persist in demands to rezone their properties to settlement so they can get the big bucks & seed houses. Retaining rural zoning keeps land values affordable for the next generation of people who still wish to farm.

Looking at settlement boundary expansions into our whitebelts is a terrible, blinkered way of perpetuating sprawl while at the same time still allowing bleak single story NOT very SMART centres of concrete and asphalt. A better way forward would be to implement instead, one story of retail with condos and apartments above, parking underground and replace all that paving with a core of living green space comprised of community gardens, well treed parks and playgrounds. We need mixed use, compact communities in our present settlement areas. These



would then access existing amenities, transit and infrastructure (thereby keeping costs down) while protecting enough green space to support human and environmental health without encroaching on our precious farmland.

Please keep development to our existing settlement areas. For the sake of the environment and our future food security, do not support sprawl expansion into environmentally sensitive, rural, agricultural and whitebelt areas.

We also ask for a recorded vote.

Sincerely
Gloria Marsh, Executive Director
York Region Environmental Alliance
Partnering for a greener planet

My name is Donald Strathroy and I am a resident of York Region. I am submitting this deputation (to be read out loud at the meeting) to express my support of the York Regional Council considering options for future development that don't involve expanding into rural lands

(<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/york-region-development-environment-groups-resident-concerns-1.6178642>).

I would like to reiterate points made by Phil Pothén from Environmental Defence:

- York Region has failed to consult properly. Unlike peer regions, (e.g., Hamilton, Halton) it has not consulted on a fleshed-out fixed Settlement Area Boundary option. The formal discussions it claims to have held were so poorly publicized that they went unnoticed by many of the most engaged council-watchers in York Region.
- While York Region paved roughly 6,400 acres between 2001 and 2019 – that's 357 acres per year – the new plan would see the region burn through a further 25,000 acres by 2051 – that's 791.5 acres per year – more than double the past rate.
- There is absolutely no land supply shortage in York Region. The proposed Settlement Area Boundary expansion would add 5,000 more acres to the roughly 20,000 of countryside York Region opened up years ago, but which has never been used.
- In addition to paving some of the last unbuilt headwaters of the Rouge and Don rivers, this plan would see a huge number of people and a huge area of sprawl forced into the sensitive Lake Simcoe watershed, which simply doesn't have the capacity for more sewage or runoff. Environmental NGOs warned York and the province in a joint letter of January 19th, that there is presently no sustainable way to increase sewage capacity in Upper York Region, and that no further settlement expansion should be directed to that part of York Region. A provincial regulation actually prohibits approval of the "Upper York Sewage Solutions" proposal.
- This plan betrays existing York Region residents by squandering the next 30 years of growth on more low-density sprawl. That growth is desperately needed to complete existing neighbourhoods, which have not yet developed the densities and mix of uses that are required for people to rely on active transportation. While a strong majority of York Region residents say they "simply can't get by without a car" as things stand, 80 per cent of those with an opinion (64 per cent, vs. 16 per cent who disagree) say they'd "much prefer" to live in a neighbourhood where they "didn't need to use a car to do [their] shopping, recreation, entertainment, or commutes to work or school." This plan is likely to prevent that from happening within the next three decades.
- York Region is not legally obligated to extend its urban boundary, even though the province and land speculators are trying to strongarm the region into doing so. On the contrary, this plan contravenes the Provincial Policy Statement, which requires York Region to direct all of its future growth to places where it can support public transit and can minimize land consumption and servicing costs. It will be extraordinarily difficult to achieve this in the fragmented chunks of land which this plan would see added to the Settlement Area Boundary. Right now, the land which is next to the proposed new settlement areas has low rates of public and active transportation. Building more sprawl

will make the situation worse. Instead, York Region should build in the existing settlement area, especially in areas close to existing public transit.

As a resident of Stouffville I have been participating in my community's Official Plan Review, which has indicated a strong preference for the preservation of farmland and naturalized spaces as well as an investment in walkable communities. The current proposed expansion of municipal boundaries will be in direct conflict with the preferences of Stouffville as indicated in its' ongoing OPR.

I strongly encourage York Region Council to follow actions taken by other engaged municipalities (Hamilton / Halton) by increasing public consultation on this matter, and to fully investigate a zero sprawl option before moving forward.