

From: Marsha Lomis
Sent: Wednesday, November 24, 2021 10:08 AM
To: Regional Clerk <ClerkGeneralLine@york.ca>
Cc: KARA <kara@kara-inc.ca>
Subject: November 25 meeting, Item F.2, Updated Draft Regional OP

Mayor Bevilacqua, Regional Councilors, Council, Todd Coles, Development Planning, Policy Planning, Judy Jeffers.

This letter registers KARA's opposition to the development of Class 1 and 2 Farmland, our Provincially Identified Agricultural Lands (whitebelt) for the following reasons:

Data shows that York Region does not need any of it to meet our growth targets of +250k people/jobs by 2051. Prime agricultural lands, Classes 1, 2, and 3 and specialty croplands, are a very limited resource in Canada.

- Only 5% of the Canadian land mass is made up of prime land. Only 0.5% of it is Class 1.
- The Central Ontario Zone is fortunate to contain a significant portion of this very limited resource. Unfortunately, it occurs in one of the fastest-growing regions of the country and it is rapidly disappearing (<https://neptis.org/publications/chapters/where-are-significant-agricultural-lands-located>).
- With the disappearance of our prime agricultural farmland, we lose the capacity to feed our own population, thus having to resort to importing more food from other countries, and limiting the amount of food that we have available to export in trade. This will increase Canada's financial deficit even more, and following the pandemic is not the time to do it. It has implications for our national security, in terms of being able to provide a secure and nutritious food supply to feed ourselves.

In its study on agriculture in the Central Zone of Ontario, it is stated:

- "Ontario Smart Growth includes the goal of "Protecting and Enhancing the Environment." This goal will be achieved through "protecting the quality of air, water and land across Ontario by steering growth pressures away from significant agricultural land and natural areas." www.mah.gov.ca/inthenews/backgrnd/20020425-5e.asp

Is having the ability to feed our own population a government priority? Or will we need to be increasingly dependent on other countries to feed us?

This Updated Draft of the Official Plan is not a healthy vision for the future. We urge Council to consider the preservation of our Provincially Identified Agricultural Lands.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of KARA,

Marsha Lomis, Director
Kleinburg and Area Ratepayers' Association