

December 17, 2018

Mayor & Council



85 DARIOLE DRIVE
RICHMOND HILL, ON L4E 0Z4

RE: York Region Environmental Alliance (YREA) response to Bill 66: Keeping Georgina open for business without jeopardizing the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine & other environmental protections.

The Government of Ontario has introduced Bill 66, supposedly, to restore Ontario's competitiveness through Schedule 10 that would amend the Planning Act to allow municipalities to pass "open-for-business planning by-laws". Of serious concern to us:

- Bill would allow open-for-business planning by-laws to override important water, agricultural and environmental protections contained in the Clean Water Act, 2006, and the Greenbelt Act, 2005; the Places to Grow Act, and other provincial legislation.
- No notice or hearing is required prior to the passing of an open-for-business planning by-law.

The Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine are integral components of land use planning that complements the Growth Plan to encourage smart planning, the reduction of sprawl, protection of natural and hydrological features and agricultural lands. The Greenbelt has protected 1.8 million acres of farmland, local food supplies, the headwaters of our rivers and important forests and wildlife habitat for over 12 years. It generates 9.1 billion dollars in revenue each year, creating 161,000 local jobs across 28 municipalities. It ensures our food security by providing us with local food, encouraging young farmers to step in. Existing agriculture, tourism and recreation provide enormous economic impact and are an important part of planning for sustainable communities - which cannot be said for more urban sprawl.

There is a tremendous amount of land, including employment lands, already planned and available in excess of the development needs of the GTA without weakening the protections provided by the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine plans and Clean Water Act - critical to the health of our communities.

YREA asks that the Town of Georgina, upon review of Schedule 10 of Bill 66, stand with other enlightened municipalities by opposing this Act. Why? Because our communities are not red tape, our rivers and streams are not red tape, our local food security is not red tape and the future health and well-being of our children is not red tape.

Sincerely

Gloria Marsh, Executive Director
York Region Environmental Alliance

Partnering for a greener planet

<http://www.yrea.org>

gloria@yrea.org