



OAK RIDGES MORaine
LAND TRUST

Regional Clerk
Regional Municipality of York

Re Agenda – Committee of the Whole- June 16, 2022
Council Meeting H.2.1 York Official Plan Adoption

June 15, 2022

Thank you for the opportunity to offer a response, on behalf of the Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust, to the most recent ROP.

The Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust is a charity created in 2001 as a result of a groundswell of public concern about the protection of sensitive lands on the Oak Ridges Moraine for both people and nature. We are committed to protecting and stewarding properties on the Moraine for the collective benefit of the public. The provincial government also recognized the negative impacts of growth on these sensitive lands that protect water for residents north and south of the Moraine.

I am writing to express our deep concerns surrounding the proposed changes to the York Region Official Plan which are expected to remove and redesignate critically important land from the Greenbelt and the Oak Ridges Moraine. Due to the ecological and social benefits currently provided by these lands, we strongly believe that any removal of lands from the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine is a decision that would negatively impact the public and the environment.

As champions of the long-term viability of the Oak Ridges Moraine, we are extremely concerned about the impact of additional homes on hydraulic conductivity, soil permeability and the recharge of the aquifers under the Moraine. Ironically, as water collection is negatively impacted, there will be a tremendous increase in water-taking demands. This will either require costly projects to bring water from another municipality, or untenable demands on local aquifers.

The Greenbelt and the Oak Ridges Moraine, our farmland, our source and storm water protection and habitat for endangered species unique to Ontario are all critically important for the Greater Golden Horseshoe to be able to mitigate and adapt to climate change. It is our opinion that removing these critically protected lands is irresponsible and short-sighted.

This proposal to redesignate lands from employment to residential and expand settlements areas on the Oak Ridges Moraine is not, in our opinion, in the best interests of residents of Ontario



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As part of many environmental groups protecting the features and functions of the Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt, we will be communicating with the Minister of Municipal Affairs to not amend the O.Reg. 140/02 and not permit this urban expansion in the Town of Whitechurch-Stouffville.

In your report, you indicate that this ROP will provide “Direction and certainty for the building industry, Region and local municipalities in planning for growth over the next thirty years.” We would propose that the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan is the guiding document that must be followed to protect water and land for future generations of York Region and Ontario residents. This proposal to allow development in the Greenbelt and break existing provincial laws is not, in our opinion, in the best interest of all Ontarians.

The Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust strongly rejects any plan to develop lands protected by the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plans. These critical lands are protected for the benefit of all Ontarians and should remain designated with such protections in perpetuity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Walmer".

Susan Walmer, CMA, CPA
Chief Executive Officer
Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust