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Richmond Hill Council



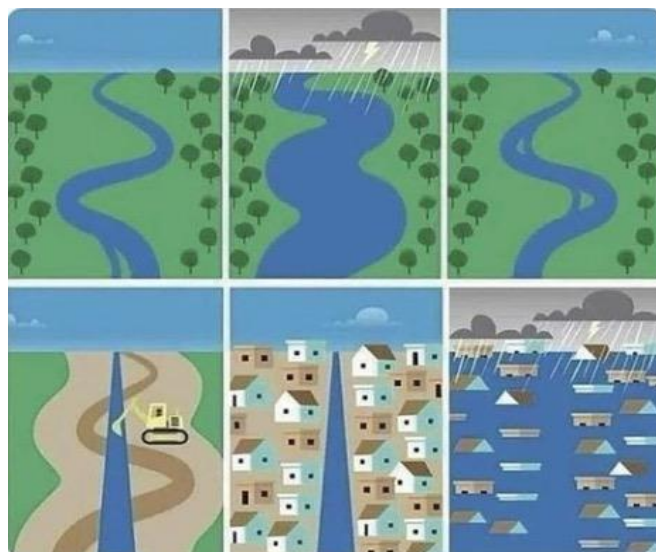
RE: YROP, RHOP, BAIF REGIONAL CORRIDOR REQUEST, REVISED DEVELOPMENT YONGE/BLOOMINGTON

The content of most of this letter was originally submitted to Richmond Hill Council and Paul Freeman on October 7, 2021. Adding to the concerns mentioned below, York Region Environmental Alliance (YREA) is in support of reasonable intensification in existing urban areas, but is concerned about development in environmentally sensitive areas on the Oak Ridges Moraine. We submitted [comments to the province](#) on this issue and can further add that the sewer smell in Oak Ridges has been there since the late 1980s when our population was under 10,000. Poor engineering, or inappropriate infrastructure in a vulnerable area?

YREA does not support the Baif revised development submission. Building in this flood plain by increasing the sprawl from 370 to 455 townhouses, thereby encroaching even further into ecologically sensitive areas does not align with the city's 'building a more sustainable Richmond Hill' environmental strategy.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

There are two provincially significant kettle wetlands surrounded by woodlands that are part of the Wilcox-St. George Wetland Complex on the northeastern portion of the subject property. They occur in a larger depression that extends all the way west to Yonge Street. These kettle wetlands are isolated with no outflows and are dependent on their surrounding catchment for overland surface water flows. Paving over much of this depression and filling it in as proposed with this development would seriously impact the water balance in these kettle wetlands. This is contrary to the PPS. Do we really want to risk replicating the scenario in this illustration? →



Abutting the subject property on its east side there is a larger provincially significant kettle pond wetland in the complex which again could be impacted by alterations to their catchment which extends onto the subject property. Further east from this wetland there is a highly sensitive provincially rare kettle peatland. How will stormwater outflows from this development be dealt with in regards to these wetlands? Stormwater outflows from earlier developments to the northeast along Bloomington Road have already altered other provincially significant wetlands in the complex. (YREA previously [submitted comments](#) regarding negative development impacts on the Bayview site to this wetland complex).

How will salt contamination be dealt with? Salt is water soluble. Salt laid down on roads and sidewalks in this new development would get into stormwater ponds and into these kettle wetlands that support many sensitive amphibians. These frogs, toads and salamanders breed in these wetlands and could be negatively impacted by higher salt levels. How will the woodlot around the two kettle wetlands in the northeast be

protected. Substantial buffers of 30m are required to ensure that their tree root zones are not damaged by development. Yet extensive grading encroachment is being proposed in only a 10m buffer area. Absolutely unacceptable! There are also several sizable regenerating areas in the central portion of the subject property that support numerous young trees, saplings and shrubs and would be considered woodlands. Will they be protected?

INFRASTRUCTURE & GREEN BUILDING FEATURES

Building in an area with such a potential for negative impact, it would make sense to have as little paving as possible by **significantly reducing the number of townhouse units**. Allowing instead, the initially proposed 4 rental apartment blocks along Yonge to align with current Oak Ridges heights of **6 stories** would not alienate the community & would fill a much more important need for affordable rental housing while addressing Provincial & York Region’s intensification targets. However, unless a shuttle bus from Bloomington GO station to Yonge St. is put into service, this area will still remain largely car dependant.

Also mentioned in a previous YREA submission, [permeable paving](#) would help deter some of the flooding but we still need storm water ponds and as much green infrastructure as possible. Where green roofs are not feasible such as on townhouses, [white roofs](#) are one way of keeping our communities cooler by reducing the UHI effect. Dark surfaces such as asphalt roofs and paving absorb heat, only reflecting back 4%, while green spaces reflect 25%, white roofs and snow reflect up to 90%. See what [Montreal](#) has done.

If Richmond Hill is truly committed to a Community Energy and Emissions Plan then new construction needs to incorporate not only dual flush toilets but also geothermal, solar water heaters, low UV or photovoltaic windows, gray water recycling as well as permeable paving and white roofs. YREA has previously mentioned the need for 4m rather than 3m boulevards so that huge SUVs do not hang over sidewalks and roads impeding snow removal. This extra space would also accommodate a variety of our majestic native trees instead of the monocultures of lollipop trees so prevalent in developments such as Little Leaf Linden and Ivory Silk trees that provide little shade or benefit.

Richmond Hill has the lowest development charges of YR municipalities. How will there be enough money for parks, green space and green infrastructure? This does not seem to benefit home buyers but only the developers as townhouses are much more costly in Richmond Hill than in other YR municipalities.

	Singles/Semis		Multiples		Apartments			
					<2Bdrm/<750sf	2+Bdrm/>750sf		
York Region								
Aurora	\$	96,686	\$	77,731	\$	45,245	\$	60,143
Richmond Hill	\$	91,403	\$	75,168	\$	42,464	\$	58,002
Markham	\$	109,827	\$	88,318	\$	51,696	\$	67,885
Vaughan	\$	126,268	\$	104,184	\$	58,893	\$	78,332
Newmarket	\$	101,193	\$	82,300	\$	47,410	\$	62,558
Stouffville	\$	94,835	\$	77,582	\$	45,230	\$	60,120

Because so many landowners quickly submitted development applications before the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan came into effect so they could be exempt shouldn’t mean they are entitled to destroy our natural heritage and have so little regard for environmental protection. What will we have left when it is all paved over?

Sincerely

Gloria Marsh, Executive Director
York Region Environmental Alliance

Partnering for a greener planet