



March 31, 2022

Email: [regionalclerk@york.ca](mailto:regionalclerk@york.ca)

Mr. Christopher Raynor, Regional Clerk  
Regional Municipality of York  
17250 Yonge Street  
Newmarket, Ontario L3Y 6Z1

Dear Mr. Raynor,

**Re: Member Motion - Councillor Muench - Expanding Walkable Trails and Supporting Agriculture in the Greenbelt**

Richmond Hill City Council, at its meeting held on March 23, 2022, adopted the following resolution:

**Whereas**, the protection of the Oak Ridges Moraine buffer areas & the Greenbelt are very important long term priorities for the people and Council of Richmond Hill requiring action;

**Whereas**, Richmond Hill Council passed a motion on April 14, 2021 to review the opportunity to expand walking trails in Richmond Hill, while supporting expanding farming and Agriculture as part of the York Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) process; and

**Whereas**, Richmond Hill Council's approved April 14 2021 motion was intended to achieve more walkable trails for Richmond Hill and was approved in a pandemic period which had residents utilizing walking and trails more; and

**Whereas**, York Region has a deadline for comments to its 30 year draft MCR by March 31, 2022, (plan until 2051) making this a time sensitive motion; and

**Whereas**, the City of Richmond Hill strives in its official and working plans to create walkable, complete, connected, culturally vibrant neighbourhoods, and have directed staff on its March 9, 2022 parks key direction plan to expand active and passive recreation; and

**Whereas**, unofficial digital apps have been created directing people on their cell phones to the Jefferson Forest Trail without qualified trail validation, which has led to injuries requiring emergency services support on the Jefferson trail over the past year; and

**Whereas**, the Town of Whitchurch – Stouffville has passed motions for reclassification of lands to allow for urban municipal planning along the 404 corridor which is adjacent to the City of Richmond Hill, and;

**Whereas**, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food on August 22, 1994 advised in a letter to York Region noting

“York Region has a diverse agriculture character that putting all the lands that are shown as agriculture into the same designation could water down the strength of the policies’; and

**Whereas**, the Resources Management Branch – Agricultural Land Use unit of the Provincial Governments, Ministry of Agriculture and Food on July 24, 2002 advised in a letter to York Region

“No provincially significant agricultural areas were identified within the Town Richmond Hill, Newmarket and Aurora”; and

**Whereas**, large production / “traditional” farming of the area is no longer viable due to the decline of the rural character of the area, the closing of the CASE dealer in Whitchurch - Stouffville, the excessive cost to transport the agricultural products to silos in communities like Guelph due to the silo discontinuation in Bradford, and the higher water table makes the yield of production farming low, and impossible to support; and

**Whereas**, Richmond Hill Staff did not execute, provide any information or engage local stakeholder farmers directly and exclusively on this topic as directed by the April 14, 2021 motion; and

**Whereas**, submissions received to both York Region and the City of Richmond Hill MCR processes, it has been stated that land fragmentation has broken down the intended transition, buffer areas and the land no longer supports the Countryside designation; and

**THEREFORE BE RESOLVED** that the City of Richmond Hill;

- 1. Requests** York Region provide a wholesome approach in its 30 year MCR to provide a passive and active recreation and parks plan which should include the allowance of an **expansion of walkable and integrated trails**, where feasible within the lands in the Gormley Go Station area. This would include amending where appropriate Oak Ridges Moraine (ORM) designations prior to adoption of the York Region Official Plan (City Plan 2041); and
- 2. Requests** York Region during its 30 year MCR plan provide for parks, transit and growth needs of the Gormley Go Station area and where possible enhance Natural Linkage and Natural Core of the environment; and
- 3. Requests**, the Province of Ontario to assist wherever possible to link designations and **consider collaborative approaches** including creating a provincial park and all assistance to create a linear park system within the Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt using all Provincial Assets where feasible and appropriate which could include;

- i. Metrolinx lands
- ii. York Region lands
- iii. Toronto Regional Conservation Lands (TRCA)
- iv. York Region School Boards (YRDSB and YRCDSB); and
- v. City of Richmond Hill lands; and

**4. Requests**, the Province of Ontario to take the input from the City of Richmond Hill and York Region MCR's and carry out an evaluation of the Greenbelt, and Oak Ridges Moraine policies to ensure strong, consistent and updated approaches assuring the long term commitment in its plans to enhance and protect Natural Linkage and Natural Core classifications in the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine policies going forward consistent with all Provincial policies; and

**5. Send** a copy of this resolution to

- a. York Regional Council,
- b. Members of Provincial Parliament (M.P.P.s),
- c. Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing,
- d. Ministry of Agriculture,
- e. Ministry of the Environment,
- f. Ministry of Finance, and
- g. the Ministry of Transportation.

Please find attached a copy of the Council endorsed resolution to be sent to members of York Region Council.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (905) 771-9996, ext. 2529.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Huycke".

Stephen M.A. Huycke  
Director of Legislative Services/City Clerk

Attachment

**14. Other Business**

**14.1 Member Motion - Councillor Muench - Expanding Walkable Trails and Supporting Agriculture in the Greenbelt**

Moved by: Councillor Muench  
Seconded by: Councillor Sheppard

**Whereas**, the protection of the Oak Ridges Moraine buffer areas & the Greenbelt are very important long term priorities for the people and Council of Richmond Hill requiring action;

**Whereas**, Richmond Hill Council passed a motion on April 14, 2021 to review the opportunity to expand walking trails in Richmond Hill, while supporting expanding farming and Agriculture as part of the York Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) process; and

**Whereas**, Richmond Hill Council's approved April 14 2021 motion was intended to achieve more walkable trails for Richmond Hill and was approved in a pandemic period which had residents utilizing walking and trails more; and

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**Whereas**, unofficial digital apps have been created directing people on their cell phones to the Jefferson Forest Trail without qualified trail validation, which has led to injuries requiring emergency services support on the Jefferson trail over the past year; and

**Whereas**, the Town of Whitchurch – Stouffville has passed motions for reclassification of lands to allow for urban municipal planning along the 404 corridor which is adjacent to the City of Richmond Hill, and;

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For Your Information and Any Action Deemed Necessary

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“York Region has a diverse agriculture character that putting all the lands that are shown as agriculture into the same designation could water down the strength of the policies’; and

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“No provincially significant agricultural areas were identified within the Town Richmond Hill, Newmarket and Aurora”; and

**Whereas**, large production / “traditional” farming of the area is no longer viable due to the decline of the rural character of the area, the closing of the CASE dealer in Whitchurch - Stouffville, the excessive cost to transport the agricultural products to silos in communities like Guelph due to the silo discontinuation in Bradford, and the higher water table makes the yield of production farming low, and impossible to support; and

**Whereas**, Richmond Hill Staff did not execute, provide any information or engage local stakeholder farmers directly and exclusively on this topic as directed by the April 14, 2021 motion; and

**Whereas**, submissions received to both York Region and the City of Richmond Hill MCR processes, it has been stated that land fragmentation has broken down the intended transition, buffer areas and the land no longer supports the Countryside designation; and

**THEREFORE BE RESOLVED** that the City of Richmond Hill;

**1. Reinstates** on its City Plan 2041 Proposed Urban Structure Figure 2. 1-2 the area previously identified as “Request expansion of the City’s urban boundary to include lands designated ORM Countryside south of Bethesda Road” as originally proposed in 2020; and

**2. Requests** York Region provide a wholesome approach in its 30 year MCR to provide a passive and active recreation and parks plan which should include the allowance of an **expansion of walkable and**

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**integrated trails**, where feasible within the lands in the Gormley Go Station area. This would include amending where appropriate Oak Ridges Moraine (ORM) designations prior to adoption of the York Region Official Plan (City Plan 2041); and

**3. Requests** York Region during its 30 year MCR plan provide for parks, transit and growth needs of the Gormley Go Station area and where possible enhance Natural Linkage and Natural Core of the environment; and

**4. Requests**, the Province of Ontario to assist wherever possible to link designations and **consider collaborative approaches** including creating a provincial park and all assistance to create a linear park system within the Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt using all Provincial Assets where feasible and appropriate which could include;

- i. Metrolinx lands
- ii. York Region lands
- iii. Toronto Regional Conservation Lands (TRCA)
- iv. York Region School Boards (YRDSB and YRCDSB); and
- v. City of Richmond Hill lands; and

**5. Requests**, the Province of Ontario to take the input from the City of Richmond Hill and York Region MCR's and carry out an evaluation of the Greenbelt, and Oak Ridges Moraine policies to ensure strong, consistent and updated approaches assuring the long term commitment in its plans to enhance and protect Natural Linkage and Natural Core classifications in the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine policies going forward consistent with all Provincial policies; and

**6. Submit** a request to the Minister of Municipal Affairs to re-designate the subject lands through an amendment to the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan from "Countryside" to "Settlement" in order to provide for the applicable Official Plan Amendments to occur at the local municipal (City of Richmond Hill) and Region of York level through their respective Municipal Comprehensive Reviews (MCR's).



- 7. Send** a copy of this resolution to
- a. York Regional Council,
  - b. Members of Provincial Parliament (M.P.P.s),
  - c. Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing,
  - d. Ministry of Agriculture,
  - e. Ministry of the Environment,
  - f. Ministry of Finance, and
  - g. the Ministry of Transportation

A recorded vote was taken on clause 1 of the Member Motion:

In favour: (2): Councillor Muench, Councillor Liu

Opposed: (6): Councillor Cilevitz, Councillor Beros, Regional and Local Councillor DiPaola, Mayor West, Councillor Sheppard, Councillor Chan

Abstain: (1): Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli

Clause 1 of the Member Motion Failed to Carry (2 to 7)

A recorded vote was taken on clause 2 of the Member Motion:

In favour: (8): Councillor Cilevitz, Councillor Muench, Regional and Local Councillor DiPaola, Councillor Beros, Mayor West, Councillor Sheppard, Councillor Liu, Councillor Chan

Opposed: (0): None

Abstain: (1): Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli

Clause 2 of the Member Motion Carried (8 to 1)

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A recorded vote was taken on clauses 3, 4, 5 and 7 of the Member Motion:

In favour: (8): Councillor Cilevitz, Councillor Muench, Councillor Chan, Councillor Sheppard, Councillor Beros, Mayor West, Regional and Local Councillor DiPaola, Councillor Liu

Opposed: (0): None

Abstain: (1): Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli

Clauses 3, 4, 5 and 7 of the Member Motion Carried (8 to 1)

A recorded vote was taken on clause 6 of the Member Motion:

In favour: (2): Councillor Muench, Councillor Liu

Opposed: (6): Councillor Cilevitz, Regional and Local Councillor DiPaola, Councillor Chan, Mayor West, Councillor Beros, Councillor Sheppard

Abstain: (1): Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli

Clause 6 of the Member Motion Failed to Carry (2 to 7)

**The complete motion to read as follows:**

Moved by: Councillor Muench

Seconded by: Councillor Sheppard

**Whereas**, the protection of the Oak Ridges Moraine buffer areas & the Greenbelt are very important long term priorities for the people and Council of Richmond Hill requiring action;

**Whereas**, Richmond Hill Council passed a motion on April 14, 2021 to review the opportunity to expand walking trails in Richmond Hill, while supporting expanding farming and Agriculture as part of the York Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) process; and

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**4. Requests**, the Province of Ontario to take the input from the City of Richmond Hill and York Region MCR's and carry out an evaluation of the Greenbelt, and Oak Ridges Moraine policies to ensure strong, consistent and updated approaches assuring the long term commitment in its plans to enhance and protect Natural Linkage and Natural Core classifications in the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine policies going forward consistent with all Provincial policies; and

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Carried