



Office of the Chief Planner  
Corporate Services Department

## MEMORANDUM

To: Regional Chair Emmerson and Members of Regional Council

From: Paul Freeman  
Chief Planner

Date: November 8, 2022

Re: Regional Official Plan 2022  
Minister of Municipal Affairs Approval

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### **November 4, 2022 the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing modified and approved the York Region Official Plan 2022**

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has issued notice of approval of the 2022 York Region Official Plan, which includes 80 modifications (Attachment 1). Official Plans for the Region's of Halton, Peel and Niagara, as well as the Cities of Ottawa and Hamilton were also approved on November 4, 2022 along with proposed changes to urban expansion and/or lands included in the Greenbelt Plan.

### **A number of modifications are minor in nature and preserve the integrity of the Plan as adopted by Council**

A significant number of modifications made by the Minister do not fundamentally change the intent of the policies as adopted. In general, these modifications improve clarify and/or align more directly with Provincial policy and guidelines. The policy approach adopted by Council is largely intact.

### **Several modifications relate to urban expansion, including more whitebelt and removal of adopted Oak Ridges Moraine urban expansion in Whitchurch-Stouffville, and policies regarding future urban uses with the ORM Plan area**

Ministerial modifications include adding the remaining Whitchurch-Stouffville whitebelt lands (268 hectares), and approximately 59 hectares and 37 hectares of the remaining Markham and King whitebelt lands respectively (Attachment 2) as Community Area, from agricultural area in the adopted ROP.

Adopted urban expansion on the Oak Ridges Moraine in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville north of the Community of Stouffville, and for employment south of the Hamlet of Gormley, has been removed through Provincial modifications. Expanded urban permissions on the ORM adopted by Council through policy 5.3.4 (regarding Rizmi lands) have also been removed. Through the modifications, the Minister has reinstated the policy in place in the 2010 ROP regarding the original 40.5 hectares (100 acres).

Other modifications signal further urban use designations on the ORM that the province intends to implement. The first being around the Gormley GO station. This modification indicates a future Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) with a minimum density of 150 people and jobs per hectare will be delineated around the Gormley GO station in Richmond Hill, subject to an amendment by the Minister to Ontario Regulation 140/02, in a manner maximizing the size of the station area and the number of transit users within walking distance of the station (generally within 800m).

The second is on an approximately 46 hectare parcel at the north-east corner of Teston Road and Dufferin Street. Through this modification, the minister adds a policy indicating lands outside of the Natural Linkage Area are intended to be added to the Urban Area, also subject to a future amendment by the Minister of Ontario Regulation 140/02.

The Province is proposing ORM/Greenbelt changes, announcing intentions through the [Environmental Registry of Ontario posting 019-6217](#) or [Environmental Registry of Ontario posting 019-6218](#) – both of which were also issued on November 4, 2022.

### **Other significant modifications include the treatment of ‘future’ MTSA’s, potential servicing options for Nobleton, and the removal of post 2051 future urban and future employment mapping**

MTSA’s requiring further planning and consultation to finalize location and delineation (Mulock GO, Kirby GO, Gormley GO, and the Jane Street BRT stations) have been removed from Appendix 2 but are proposed to be identified on Map 1B as ‘future major transit station areas’. The adopted ROP included greater protection for these lands by identifying preliminary boundaries and making them subject to policies that would ensure transit-supportive development. While a different approach, the intent remains relatively equal, other than the potential future treatment of the Gormley GO MTSA as described above.

The Minister, through a policy modification, has made communal servicing a valid consideration for future growth in Nobleton, by expressly permitting its consideration through an Environmental Assessment Act process.

The adopted ROP signaled the need for the remaining, undesignated whitebelt land for urban growth post 2051 by identifying them as “Future Urban Area” on Map 1B. This identification as well as the Future Strategic Employment Area identification along the 404 through ROP Appendix 4 were removed by the Minister through approval.

Other modifications include the following:

- Minor changes to a Greenbelt Plan area finger in Vaughan from agriculture to rural would make those strips of rural land subject to the permissions sought through ROPA 7 to the 2010 ROP, which are approved and in effect through the 2022 ROP
- Policy revisions removing the requirement to set maximum heights and densities in intensification areas (requested by local municipalities to protect the Intensification Hierarchy)
- Two employment areas converted to community areas in Vaughan
- Reinstatement of the 2010 agricultural designation of rural lands in the Town of Georgina south of Baseline Road, and redesignation of rural lands to agriculture south of the Hamlet of Kettleby in the Township of King
- Introduction of site-specific “Special Provisions” in several locations, primarily related to permitting additional density and height and allowing uses sought by landowners. Some locations are subject to active planning applications, some of which are before the Ontario Land Tribunal.

**Staff will work collaboratively with local municipalities to implement the ROP, including assessing implications of changes on infrastructure planning**

Bill 23 proposes that the ROP once approved, becomes the jurisdiction of the Local Municipalities to implement. Staff will work collaboratively with local municipal staff in this regard. Additionally, the approved ROP 2022 includes growth beyond assumptions made through the MCR process, examples being additional urban expansion, higher densities and conversions of employment areas to community areas. The implications of these changes will need to be assessed from a servicing perspective.



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Paul Freeman, MCIP, RPP  
Chief Planner



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Bruce Macgregor  
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments (2)  
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