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December 1, 2022

The Honourable Steve Clark
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
College Park, 17th Floor
777 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M5G 2E5

Subject: Bill 23 – *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*
Proposed Amendments to the Greenbelt Plan
Comments from City of Pickering – ERO Postings 019-6216, 019-6238 & 019-6304
File: L-1100-058

Please find attached comments from the City of Pickering with respect to Environmental Registry Ontario Posting 019-6216 (Proposed Amendments to the Greenbelt Plan), ERO Posting 019-6238 (Proposed Revocation of the Minister's Zoning Order – Ontario Regulation 154/03) and ERO 019-6304 (Repeal of the *Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve Act, 2005*). Thank you for your consideration.

These comments are also being forwarded to Council of the Corporation of Pickering for their receipt and endorsement.

Yours truly



Marisa Carpino, M.A.
Chief Administrative Officer

MC
Attachment

City of Pickering Comments

**ERO Postings 019-6216, 019-6238 and 019-6304
(Closing December 4, 2022)**

Proposed Amendments to the Greenbelt Plan (Removing the Duffins-Rouge Agricultural Preserve), Proposed Revocation of the Minister's Zoning Order – Ontario Regulation 154/03, and the Repeal of the *Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve Act, 2005*

The removal of the Duffins-Rouge Agricultural Preserve lands from the Greenbelt is supported. This will allow the implementation of an urban area boundary expansion on these lands. This is consistent with Pickering Council's adoption of Amendment 13 to the Pickering Official Plan in 2004, which implemented the results of the City's Growth Management Study. It is also consistent with subsequent requests from Pickering Council in 2016, the former Mayor in 2019 and 2022, and the current Mayor on November 16, 2022 (see Background section below)

However, should the lands be removed from the Greenbelt, the City's objective is not just to see houses built, but a 'community' built. Accordingly, it is recommended that an appropriate land use and policy framework be put in place that (a) establishes a robust open space and natural heritage system that protects significant and sensitive natural features and functions, including required corridors, linkages, and buffers; (b) establishes generous active recreational areas; (c) requires the implementation of the results of appropriate subwatershed/master environmental studies; (d) requires front funding agreements for municipal soft and hard services, for other community infrastructure such as schools, and for regional infrastructure; and (e) requires the construction of an agreed to percentage of housing that is affordable to low and moderate income households.

Background

Between 2002 and 2004, the City of Pickering undertook a Growth Management Study to determine if, and where, urban settlement boundaries should be expanded. On December 13, 2004, Pickering Council adopted Amendment 13 to the Pickering Official Plan. This amendment incorporated the results of the City's Growth Management Study. The Study concluded that the urban area boundary for Pickering should be expanded to include the southern half of the Duffins-Rouge Agricultural Preserve. Additionally, the Study concluded development in the Seaton Urban Area should generally be restricted to the central and north part of the lands.

On February 28, 2005, the Provincial Greenbelt Plan (2005) was approved. This plan permitted municipalities who had initiated settlement area expansions studies prior to the effective date of the Greenbelt Plan, (December 16, 2004), to complete and implement their studies (policy 3.4.4.1), but expressly prohibited Pickering from implementing the results of its municipally initiated settlement area expansion study (policy 3.4.4.2a).

Despite Pickering Council having completed its Growth Management Study prior to the Greenbelt Plan coming into effect, the City was prohibited from implementing its results, and the Province used four other legislative tools to prevent any uses other than agriculture, conservation and detached residential on the lands.

In 2015, the Province undertook a review of its Plans in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. On September 19, 2016, Pickering Council endorsed Planning Report PLN 15-16, which as part of the first recommendation, requested the removal of clause 3.4.4.2a in the former Greenbelt Plan (renumbered as 3.4.5.2a in the Greenbelt Plan 2016). There was no response from the Province.

During a further review of the Provincial Growth Plan, former Mayor Ryan wrote to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing in correspondence dated February 7, 2019. The letter reiterated the request from Report to Council PLN 15-16 to eliminate the policy the Greenbelt Plan preventing Pickering from implementing the results of its settlement area expansion study.

Former Mayor Ryan also wrote the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on November 14, 2022, identifying support for the repeal of the *Duffins-Rouge Agricultural Preserve Act, 2005*, which had re-established, by statute, agricultural easements on the Preserve lands. On November 16, 2022, Mayor Ashe wrote the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, indicating support for the removal of the Duffins-Rouge Agricultural Preserve from the Greenbelt Lands and the repeal of the *Duffins-Rouge Agricultural Preserve Act, 2005*.