

**From:** TAMMY ATKINSON

**Subject:** Durham Region Official Plan

Hi, my name is Tammy Atkinson. I am a resident of Oshawa and have been since the late 80s. I moved away from Scarborough to offer my family a better life here. Many changes have been happening to the Region recently, which concerns me.

I want you to realize the importance of the decision you will make regarding the Official Plan as this will considerably impact existing residents and future ones.

Concentrated in our Region south of the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine, there is some of the best farmland in the country. To build over these areas would be an atrocity not only for the farmers, people who depend on local agriculture, but also for wildlife that rely on these landscapes for shelter and food. Do you remember learning about the food chain in school? There is a purpose for everything in life. As you can tell, nature is important to me, and while it may not motivate your decision, please think of our overall health and well-being and the relationship with the natural world.

Fresh-grown food from our region and backyards influences our immune systems and contributes to the health of our local economy. I remember growing up in a house with fresh food, not processed foods. I don't recall anyone having obesity issues back then or other, and I feel that growing up that way taught me healthy eating habits and contributed to my good health even today. This generation seems to have more health issues because of the cost of groceries, as people can't always afford what is healthy and buy what is cheap. Access to healthy fresh food should be an important priority for this Region.

Another thing I want to point out is the importance of our trees. So many trees are being cut down to make way for development, but we need to keep them. We need more trees, not fewer, to absorb carbon, produce oxygen, and clean the air. Other benefits, of course, are that they provide us with cooling shade and provide homes, security and food for wildlife. We should be working to protect our mature trees because they do more for us than newly planted trees.

I understand you are under pressure to build homes for new people coming into the country and future generations. However, several groups have extensively researched and confirmed that there is enough land to build homes and communities within our existing growth areas. No Greenbelt land is needed, either.

Please listen not only to scientific fact, but also to the concerns of your constituents. Do the right thing by protecting our farmland and natural areas, including the Greenbelt. You may currently be a parent or a grandparent, so please consider our children and the negative implications this Official Plan will have on future generations.

Sincerely,

Tammy Atkinson