

Report #2 of the Planning & Economic Development Committee

For consideration by Regional Council

March 1, 2023

The Planning & Economic Development Committee recommends approval of the following:

1. Correspondence from the Town of Ajax, re: Resolution passed at their Council meeting held on January 23, 2023, regarding Accelerating Development of Thousands of New Housing Units

That the following motion passed by the Ajax Town Council on January 23, 2023, be endorsed:

Whereas the Ontario government has recognized that there is a housing crisis and has established a goal to have 1.5 million homes built in the next ten (10) years, and has additionally set a specific target of 17,000 new homes for the Town of Ajax by 2031;

And whereas on February 22, 2021, Ajax Council supported five (5) Employment Area Conversion Requests to advance residential growth in the Town;

And whereas these requests were endorsed by Durham Region Council on December 22, 2021 for inclusion within a new Regional Official Plan;

And whereas up to 4,100 housing units and 50 job per hectare could be created through developments proposed in the following Employment Area Conversion Requests:

- a) CNR-07 – 8.8 hectares – located at the southeast corner of Salem Road North and Kerrison Drive East,
- b) CNR-15 – 2.99 hectares – located at 1401 Harwood Avenue North,
- c) CNR-19 – 3.8 hectares – located at 250 Rossland Road East,
- d) CNR-20 – 0.69 hectares – located at 650 Beck Crescent, and
- e) CNR-33 – 1.11 hectares – located at 1541 Harwood Avenue North;

And whereas these lands are located within an existing Settlement Area Boundary;

And whereas the development of these urgently needed housing units could be delayed for years while approvals are sought;

And whereas Durham Region's Official Plan process is in question due to changes to the regional planning framework implemented by the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022;

And whereas by accelerating the timeline, landowners can take advantage of developing at today's costs and interest rates, while conversely, further delaying the process could put development at risk due to the unknown future rate of inflation;

And whereas through inclusion in the Durham Region Official Plan process, these parcels have been subject to review and public consultation;

Now therefore be it resolved that:

1. Council requests the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing enact Minister's Zoning Orders (MZOs) as follows:
 - a. CNR-07 to permit a mixed-use development with approximately 2,873 apartment dwelling units and a minimum of 40,000 m² non-residential gross floor area within multiple buildings up to a maximum height of 25 storeys;
 - b. CNR-15 to permit a residential development with approximately 150 townhouse dwelling units with a minimum height of 3-storeys;
 - c. CNR-19 to permit a mixed-use development with approximately 800 apartment dwelling units and a minimum of 9,300 m² non-residential gross floor area within buildings up to a maximum building height of 25 storeys;
 - d. CNR-20 to permit a mixed-use development with approximately 200 apartment dwelling units and a maximum height of 25 storeys; and
 - e. CNR-33 to permit a residential development of between 33 and 77 townhouse dwelling units;
2. Affordable and below market rent options shall be included in the housing mix where feasible;
3. Council requests the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing engage Town of Ajax planning staff to establish site specific development standards incorporating Town of Ajax Official Plan policies and other technical elements to ensure land use compatibility, good urban design, and appropriate project phasing;
4. Should the negotiation between all parties not achieve the outcomes in clause 1 and 2, that specific MZO request not move forward;
5. Council be empowered to request the revocation of any MZO approved in response to this motion if a site plan application or plan of subdivision application is not submitted within one year of the issuance of the MZO;

6. Staff be directed to deliver a presentation to Council detailing the contents of MZO's issued by the Minister in response to this motion; and
 7. This motion be circulated to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Steve Clark, Ajax MPP Patrice Barnes, and Durham Region Chair, John Henry.
2. Growing North Durham: Rural Economic Development Action Plan (2023-EDT-2)

That the Growing North Durham: Rural Economic Development Action Plan, be endorsed.

3. Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee re: Impacts on Food Prices and Opportunities for Advocacy to Improve Financial Viability for the Agri-food Sector

Whereas the agri-food industry is one of the top economic drivers in Durham Region supporting a workforce of over 27,105 people through 3,360 agri-food businesses, more than 1,200 farms and farm families, contributing upwards of \$354 million to Ontario's total farm production and supporting \$775 million in GDP;

And Whereas food prices have seen their steepest increase since 1981 with a year over year increase of 11% as of October 2022;

And Whereas inputs for farmers and primary producers have increased significantly in the last year, including fertilizer prices increasing 95.8% compared to July 2020, fuel prices have seen a historic year-over-year increase, while chemical/herbicide markets have experienced shortages and increased prices. Despite these changes, farmers have not seen a significant increase in their primary product price to compensate for the rising cost of inputs;

And Whereas the profit margin for farmers was adversely impacted by a 35% tariff placed on fertilizer imports, including fertilizer purchased prior to economic sanctions being placed on Russia and Belarus that farmers in Canada rely on to support food production.

Now therefore be it resolved that the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee requests that Regional Council recognize the importance of agriculture in Durham Region by encouraging the federal government to compensate farmers for tariffs paid on fertilizer, one of the contributing factors to increased food costs.

Respectfully submitted,

B. Chapman, Chair, Planning & Economic Development Committee