

Good morning:

11.2 Notice of Motion - Impacts of the Release and Development of Greenbelt Lands

I urge you to support this motion and request a report to provide you with the information that council requires so that your residents and taxpayers can be confident you have the tools and the means to manage the Region in a financially, socially and environmentally sustainable manner.

Lower tier municipalities who will also face DC reductions.

In Durham, "growth" did pay for growth and Durham's DCs were lower than their comparators. Going forward it will be more challenging and expensive than ever to service development and to process planning applications.

When the majority of regional councillors last term voted for the BILD 2A scenario to open an additional 9071 acres for development, they may not have known that the province would unleash Bill 23 and gut the Greenbelt, with Durham the most impacted by the Greenbelt take-outs, amounting to approximately additional 5000 acres. There is no shortage of already designated urban land in Durham.

Chair Henry wrote in an opinion piece that appeared in last week's Whitby this Week and stated that *"A partial estimate of the total (development charge) loss for the Region of Durham, because of this legislation, is \$281 million over five years, referring to Bill 23.*

*"There will still be DC funding from new units. But new rules for discounts, exemptions and phase-ins don't guarantee new homes being built, at a faster rate, or reduced purchase prices. **This means more money will need to be found elsewhere to pay for growth. But where? Higher water/sewer rates and higher property taxes — at both the local and regional levels — are now likely.**"*

<https://www.thepeterboroughexaminer.com/local-oshawa/opinion/2023/02/11/durham-regional-chair-john-henry-says-higher-water-sewer-rates-tax-hikes-now-likely.html>

Here's what Niagara Region Chair Jim Bradley was reported to have said recently:

*Niagara Region Chair Jim Bradley recently said with development charge revenue being taken away, **regional council "will be forced to either make up this significant shortfall through substantial property tax increases or decide to abandon projects that are no longer affordable."***

https://www.niagarafallsreview.ca/news/council/2023/02/25/niagara-falls-mpp-environmental-activist-to-address-city-council-about-bill-23-concerns.html?source=newsletter&utm_content=a03&utm_source=ml_nl&utm_medium

[=email&utm_email=9E34F70FE89ABC49BD7BBAB74498518F&utm_campaign=nrhp147336](mailto:9E34F70FE89ABC49BD7BBAB74498518F&utm_campaign=nrhp147336)

When circumstances change we expect our decision makers to inform themselves, update assumptions and make evidence based decisions so as to act prudently, especially for something with consequences as far reaching as an official plan, which will impact our Region for generations to come.

How will the Region and lower tier municipalities pay for servicing of these additional greenfield lands? Durham residents already pay high taxes while getting lower levels of service than many comparator regions.

You should consider that in the not too distant future we may need to rely more on locally grown foods, and on our precious water resources and natural heritage features that sustains all lifeforms and help us mitigate climate change.

A bad official plan that does not fully consider the changes wrought by the Province last fall, while having the opportunity to do so now, will doom Durham for decades to come.

As you wear your regional councillor hats, I ask you to consider how you could best position and prepare the Region (and the lower tier municipalities) to meet the current and future needs of residents of all income levels and demographics.

I urge Chair Henry, my Whitby Regional representatives Mayor Roy, Councillors Yamada, Leahy, Mulcahy and Shahid and all Durham councillors to support the motion in Item 11.2.

Please get the information you and we need - support the motion and ask for the report that will help inform next steps in Durham's official plan process. Please take the time to get it right.

Thank you for your attention.

Linda Gasser

Whitby