

I write this letter in support of the motion on this matter coming before Regional Council on March 1,2023.

A great deal has happened since the last Regional Council directed that approximately 9000 acres be added to the settlement boundary in Durham by resolution of May 25,2022. Primarily Bill 23 with dramatic implications for planning and infrastructure financing and the carve out of 5000 acres of Greenbelt land in Durham for housing.

Despite numerous reports and studies showing the Greenbelt carve out is totally unnecessary to attain housing goals the provincial government seems determined to continue down this path. But Durham Council is still responsible for long range planning and provision of infrastructure and it is your communities and taxpayers who will pay the price for bad planning. Will the government require that the Greenbelt lands be given priority given the tight time lines for approval ? Realistically how much land can the Region service through 2051 with reduced development charges without putting unwarranted burdens on taxpayers and ratepayers ? And what are the environmental and financial impacts of losing 9000 plus 5000 acres of prime farmland and important natural heritage lands ? And these are just a few of the questions that need to be asked.

Final approval of the new Durham OP will have profound implications for a generation and more. The livability and financial sustainability of the Region are at stake. Please support this motion and take the time so that the right decisions can be made.