

Via email to: [Clerks@Durham.ca](mailto:Clerks@Durham.ca)

March 6, 2023 / to be presented March 7, 2023

Chair and Members of Durham Region Planning Committee

**Re: Delegation comments to March 7 Public Meeting on draft Durham Official Plan and Envision Durham process**

Good morning Chair Chapman, Ladies & Gentlemen:

After almost four years of work by staff and their consulting team, five Land Needs Scenario options were presented to Planning Committee in staff Report 2022-P-11 on May 3<sup>rd</sup> last year, which scenarios had been made available to all stakeholders for review and comment.

Whitby councillor Steve Yamada moved, seconded by Oshawa's Rick Kerr, that Planning Committee instead recommend the BILD 2A scenario, crafted by the development industry lobby group, that neither staff nor the public had had the opportunity to review and comment on. (See vote below)

In his May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022 memo to Council, Planning Commissioner Bridgeman described in plain language how and why the BILD scenario was inconsistent with multiple Council positions and how it would undermine the achievement of multiple regional goals which had been supported by Council. (See extracted chart from May 24, 22 Bridgeman memo to Council below).

Multiple delegations and submissions made it clear that Durham council was completely at odds with the priorities of stakeholders (see extract from Report 2022-P-11 below).

Notwithstanding the concerns, May 25<sup>th</sup> Regional Council voted 16-11 to adopt the Planning Committee's BILD 2A Scenario. This reinforced the message to the development industry and the Province that Chair Henry and the majority of Durham Councillors were prepared to facilitate landowners' plans to maximize their profits at the expense of current and future Durham residents. (See vote below).

Six months later, the Province, to whom many of these same developers made numerous entreaties to open up the Greenbelt and make the costs of development cheaper for *them*, announced Bill 23 and the carving out 5000 acres of Greenbelt lands in Durham -this coming on top of the 9071 acres approved by Durham Council.

Any illusions Durham Councillors may have had about wanting to be the masters of their OP and planning went out the window long ago. Bill 23 was enacted to benefit developers and now makes it more costly for municipalities and property tax payers to

service these lands, while also paving over valuable farmland and natural heritage features that are the real jewels that make Durham livable and desirable.

On March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, in a 17-12 vote, Durham Council voted **against** a motion that requested an information report around the impacts of the additional 5000 Greenbelt acres on top of the already extreme amount (9071 acres) that had been approved by Council on May 25th. (See vote below)

At that meeting, and I paraphrase because the meeting webcast has not posted as I write this, Whitby Councillor and Planning Committee member Ms. Shahid, appeared to object to the use of the word “illegal” by a delegation to describe Durham Council’s position. I ask Councillor Shahid and Planning Committee to consider that legal opinions can differ. Council made no move to go in camera to get specifics of their solicitor’s position.

I ask Planning Committee to consider that many would find it immoral that Council is prepared to squander and designate far more land for urbanization than is required for both housing and employment. What BILD 2A seeks to cement is that the industry will continue to build mostly low density car dependent housing for those who can afford to spend around \$800,000 plus, based on 2021 building permit data (Report 2022 P-20).

Bill 23 and lower development charges and the high cost of servicing sprawl development patterns will cause property taxes to rise for all property owners including businesses. The more Durham sprawls out, the more expensive and inefficient it will to provide ALL infrastructure and services. Businesses can choose to seek out well managed municipalities that are prepared to accommodate the housing and transportation needs of their employees.

A February 13, 2023 Metroland article described that of the top ten employers in Durham, only 3 were private sector i.e. GM, Walmart and McDonalds. That indicates that Durham is already challenged to attract private sector employers. Retail and food service employees aren’t likely to be able to afford the McMansions that BILD members will supply and will be challenged to get to work with limited transit service.

I ask Planning Committee to consider that some would find it both immoral and reckless to pave over much of the valuable farmland south of the Oak Ridges Moraine. These are mainly Class 1 soils with water resources and located where heat units (growing degree days) allow a variety of crops to be grown.

I submit that it is beyond foolish for Durham Council to support the consumption so much of the white-belt in Durham, at a time when we are urged to preserve ecologically valuable lands that are important carbon sinks on top of providing options to grow more of our own food in the future, which may be necessary for many reasons. Paving over these lands is akin to clear cutting a forest-i.e. crazy when we know the potential harms.

According to 2021 Statistics Canada data, Ontario is losing 319 acres of farmland a DAY. Unless you consider the piles of evidence that demonstrate you are on the wrong track, Durham Council will be responsible for accelerating that loss to the detriment of Durham and Ontario residents.

Appendices 2 – 5 of Staff report 2022 INFO 91 describes concerns about potential for downstream flooding. Bill 23 may limit the involvement of the relevant Conservation Authorities to help municipalities identify and mitigate risks.

In closing, I ask that Planning Committee recommend that the final draft OP comment deadline be extended to shortly past the April COW meeting so that the public and all stakeholders could consider related reports, including a report mentioned by the CAO relating to the closed February council meeting and transit.

As well, a final draft of the DROP should be brought to a Committee of the Whole so that ALL Durham Councillors, not just Planning Committee members, have the opportunity to hear delegations and review staff recommendations prior to a final vote at Council.

Thank you for your attention.

Linda Gasser

Whitby Email: [gasserlinda@gmail.com](mailto:gasserlinda@gmail.com)

**Attachment:** Extract May 3, 2022 Planning Cttee minutes pages 34-37

See Supporting Data in following pages, below

## **Supporting data**

**Report 2022 P-11** See page 12 **Stakeholder Responses and priorities:**  
[https://icreate7.esolutionsgroup.ca/11111068\\_DurhamRegion/en/regional-government/resources/Documents/Council/Reports/2022-Committee-Reports/Planning-and-Economic-Development/2022-P-11.pdf](https://icreate7.esolutionsgroup.ca/11111068_DurhamRegion/en/regional-government/resources/Documents/Council/Reports/2022-Committee-Reports/Planning-and-Economic-Development/2022-P-11.pdf)

6.10 Survey question 5 sought input on the key principles being used to assess the alternative scenarios by asking respondents to rank the principles in order of importance. The scoring results ranked the principles in the following order:

- Protecting Agricultural and Rural Systems, Preparing for Climate Change, and Achieving Sustainable Development (Score 4.01).
- Setting up Strategic Growth Areas for Success (Score 3.21).
- Housing Market Choice (Score 2.87)
- Achieving Targets (Score 2.6)
- Competitive Economic and Employment Conditions (Score 2.4).

6.11 Similar to poll question 2 from the PIC, survey question 12 asked respondents to rank the five Community Area scenarios in order of preference. The scenarios were ranked in the following order:

- Scenario 5
  - Scenario 4
  - Scenario 3
  - Scenario 2
  - Scenario 1
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**May 3, 2022 Planning Committee vote in support for BILD 2A:**

<https://calendar.durham.ca/meetings/Detail/2022-05-03-0930-Planning-and-Economic-Development-Committee-Meetin/a08412f6-f5b1-497d-aedd-ae9801034b5c>

Pages 34-37 included as separate attachment to show the entire voting record for that item.

Extract of vote:

The amending motion (94) of Councillors Yamada and Kerr was then put to a vote and CARRIED ON THE FOLLOWING RECORDED VOTE:

YES: Councillor Grant Regional Chair Henry Councillor Kerr Councillor Yamada Chair Ryan

NO: Councillor Hightet, Councillor Lee, Councillor Joe Neal

The main motion (93) of Councillors Yamada and Kerr was then put to a vote and CARRIED AS AMENDED, ON THE FOLLOWING RECORDED VOTE: - Same vote as above

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## May 25, 2022 Council agenda addendum – May 24 Memo Starts page

26: <https://calendar.durham.ca/meetings/Detail/2022-05-25-0930-Regional-Council-Meeting/e2dfbaaf-1233-42e2-b4ba-ae9f014f8b10>

Commissioner's Report #2022-P-11 and Staff's Response to  
Recommendations from Planning and Economic Development Committee  
May 24, 2022  
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Goal	Objective	Description	Commentary
Goal 1 – Environmental Sustainability	1.3	Protect, preserve, and restore the natural environment, including greenspaces, waterways, parks, trails, and farmlands (intensification targets, preservation of natural green space)	The BILD Scenario would include additional farmland within the urban area beyond what is required to achieve the provincial forecasts.
	1.4	Demonstrate leadership in sustainability and addressing climate change (net-zero targets)	The BILD Scenario moves further away from achieving net-zero.
	1.5	Expand sustainable and active transportation (prioritizing active transportation and pedestrian oriented public realms)	By providing for less compact communities, the BILD Scenario places higher priority on automobile travel.
Goal 2 – Community Vitality	2.1	Revitalize existing neighbourhoods and build complete communities that are walkable, well-connected, and have a mix of attainable housing (compact, walkable/bikeable development in proximity to transit infrastructure)	The BILD Scenario assumes future communities will be: spread further afield, less compact, where proximity to transit and cycling facilities are likely to be more remote and less economical.
Goal 3 – Economic Development	3.3	Enhance communication and transportation networks to better connect people and move goods more effectively (transit-oriented development planning)	The BILD Scenario would require transportation networks to connect at greater distances, moving people less effectively while making transit use less efficient.
	3.5	Provide a supportive environment for agriculture and agri-food industries (preservation of farmland in Durham)	The BILD Scenario would place more farmland under pressure for urbanization than is necessary to achieve the Region's population forecast to 2051.

## May 25, 2022 Durham Council Vote-Supporting BILD 2A Scenario

<https://calendar.durham.ca/meetings/Detail/2022-05-25-0930-Regional-Council-Meeting/fa916d2e-eae4-4d27-a977-aead01432eaa>

The main motion (92) of Councillors Ryan and Marimpietri to adopt the recommendations contained in Item #1 of Report #5 of the Planning and Economic Development Committee was then put to a vote and CARRIED ON THE FOLLOWING RECORDED VOTE:

Yes

Councillor Ashe  
Councillor Carter  
Councillor Chapman  
Councillor Foster  
Councillor Grant  
Councillor Kerr  
Councillor Leahy  
Councillor Marimpietri

No

Councillor Brenner  
Councillor Collier  
Councillor Crawford  
Councillor Dies  
Councillor Drew  
Councillor Highet  
Councillor Lee  
Councillor John Neal

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Councillor Mulcahy  
Councillor Newman  
Councillor Nicholson  
Councillor Pickles  
Councillor Roy  
Councillor Ryan  
Councillor Yamada  
Regional Chair Henry

Councillor Joe Neal  
Councillor Smith  
Councillor Wotten

Members Absent: Councillor Anderson  
Councillor Barton

Declarations of Interest: None



**March 1, 2023 motion** – Neither Council minutes nor the archived webcast are posted yet, so below I include pictures of the vote.

Three members of Planning Committee, i.e. John Neal, W. Wotten and S. Collier supported motion requesting information report, which I believe your Planning Commissioner indicated could be delivered to an April COW meeting.

2023-03-01 **Voting Results** 3:05 PM

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**11.2 Impacts of the Release and Development of Greenbelt Lands**  
Individual Voting Results

Granville Anderson	Council	YES	John Henry	Council	NO
Kevin Ashe	Council	NO	Michael Jubb	Council	YES
Dave Barton	Council	NO	Rick Kerr	Council	NO
Maurice Brenner	Council	YES	Chris Leahy	Council	NO
Dan Carter	Council	NO	Sterling Lee	Council	YES
Bob Chapman	Council	NO	Tito-Dante Marimpietri	Council	NO
Shaun Collier	Council	YES	Ian McDougall	Council	NO
Linda Cook	Council	YES	Rhonda Mulcahy	Council	NO
Marilyn Crawford	Council	YES	John Neal	Council	YES
Joanne Dies	Council	YES	Brian Nicholson	Council	NO
Adrian Foster	Council	NO	David Pickles	Council	NO
Bruce Garrod	Council	NO	Elizabeth Roy	Council	NO

John Henry  
Regional Chair - Durham Region

0:00

2023-03-01 **Voting Results** 3:05 PM

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**11.2 Impacts of the Release and Development of Greenbelt Lands**  
Individual Voting Results

Walter Schummer	Council	YES
Maleeha Shahid	Council	NO
Willie Woo	Council	YES
Wilma Wotten	Council	YES
Steve Yamada	Council	NO



3.10 **Building Permit Activity** – The Planning Division reports annually on building permit activity in Durham’s area municipalities. The Division also compares of the Region’s activity with that of other Regions in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. A snapshot of some of the indicators is highlighted below:

<b>Durham wide Indicators</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Total Building Permit Value (\$ billion)	\$2.06	\$1.97	\$2.87	\$2.98
Permits for New Residential Units	4,729	3,130	5,380	6,290
New non-residential floor space (thousand sq. ft.)	4,235.5	2,541.4	5,904.1	8,062.6
Average price of a new single detached dwelling (\$)	\$739,821	\$810,424	\$848,088	\$891,557

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<https://www.durhamregion.com/news-story/10849995-who-are-durham-s-largest-employers-/>

### Who are Durham’s largest employers?

FUTURE OF WORK SERIES: Lakeridge Health set to surpass Ontario Power Generation as Durham's largest employer

[Reka Szekely](#)

Oshawa This Week

Monday, February 13, 2023

The Region of Durham is currently working on a business count, but preliminary figures show familiar names on the list of the region’s largest employers.

[A business count was last released by the region for 2019](#) with Ontario Power Generation, the Durham District School Board, Lakeridge Health, the Regional Municipality of Durham and General Motors among the region’s largest employers.

However, due to pandemic-related data collection challenges a 2021 business count report was not issued.

Data for the 2022 Durham business count is expected to be released in the coming months, but preliminary figures show similar names to the 2019 count.

The preliminary data shows Lakeridge Health has surpassed Ontario Power Generation as the region's largest employer.

Healthcare, education and government continue to be large drivers of employment in Durham.

### **TOP 10 EMPLOYERS IN DURHAM REGION IN 2022 (PRELIMINARY RESULTS)**

Lakeridge Health: 8,000-8,499 jobs

Ontario Power Generation: 7,000-7,499 jobs

Durham District School Board: 6,000-6,499 jobs

The Regional Municipality of Durham: 4,750-4,999 jobs

General Motors Canada: 3,750-3,999 jobs

Durham Catholic District School Board: 3,500-3,749 jobs

Walmart: 1,750-1,999 jobs

Durham College: 1,750-1,999 jobs

Ontario Tech University: 1,250-1,499 jobs

McDonalds: 1,250-1,499 jobs

*Source: Region of Durham*

7.2 Reports

A) Envision Durham – Growth Management Study Land Need Assessment – Staff Recommendation on Land Need Scenarios (2022-P-11)

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Report #2022-P-11 from B. Bridgeman, Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development, was received.

Staff and consultants responded to questions with respect to modified Scenario 2a; the time required to prepare population and employment forecasts, intensification targets, and designated greenfield area density targets for each municipality; the anticipated timeframe for completion of the Municipal Comprehensive Review; the amount of weight given to input from area municipal councils and the public; the consideration of written submissions; Scenario 5 and possible housing forms; current Regional Official Plan policies related to Northeast Pickering; settlement area boundary expansion policies of the Growth Plan; potential impacts on secondary plans; and potential impact on employment lands.

Discussion ensued with respect to the proposed amendment to endorse modified Scenario 2a; types of medium density development; public input received; planning for transit; and the staff recommendation to endorse Community Area Land Need Scenario 4.

Moved by Councillor Yamada, Seconded by Councillor Kerr,  
(93) That we recommend to Council:

- A) That Community Area Land Need Scenario 4 be endorsed, as follows:
- i) an intensification rate of 50%;
  - ii) an overall Designated Greenfield Area density target of 60 people and jobs per hectare by 2051;
  - iii) a unit mix consisting of 28% low density units, 28% medium density units, 41% high density units, and 3% secondary units;
  - iv) an additional Community Area urban land need of **950 hectares (2,348 acres)**;
- B) That Employment Area Land Need Scenario 2 be endorsed, as follows:
- i) a vacant Employment Area density target of 27 jobs per hectare;
  - ii) an employment intensification rate of 20%;
  - iii) an additional Employment Area urban land need of **1,171 hectares (2,894 acres)**;

- C) That future Regional Official Plan policies for the required settlement area boundary expansion area address sustainability practices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, energy and water consumption, and waste generation through measures including;
- i) the phasing of new growth in any settlement area boundary expansion area be undertaken in an orderly and sequential manner;
  - ii) the establishment of multi-modal transportation opportunities, and active transportation facilities to encourage healthy and active living, and smart transportation technologies;
  - iii) implementation of measures to ensure communities are resilient to our changing climate through infrastructure, building, housing unit and community design and construction practices;
  - iv) the use of low-carbon and smart energy systems and technologies at the district scale or building-scale in these new areas;
  - v) protection and enhancement of the Regional Natural Heritage System; and
  - vi) providing strong connections between employment areas and community areas to contribute to economic sustainability;
- D) That staff be directed to proceed to Phase 2 of the Growth Management Study to identify, assess and consult on candidate locations for settlement area boundary expansion and report back following the completion of the consultation process; and
- E) That a copy of Report #2022-P-11 of the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development be forwarded to Durham's area municipalities, Indigenous communities, conservation authorities, the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD), Durham Region Homebuilders Association, agencies and service providers that may have an interest in where and how long term growth in the region is being planned for (school boards, hospitals, utility providers, as specified in Appendix 2), the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Envision Durham Interested Parties List, and any persons that have made a submission for a settlement area boundary expansion request.

CARRIED AS AMENDED LATER IN THE  
MEETING

(See Following Motions)

Moved by Councillor Yamada, Seconded by Councillor Kerr,  
(94) That the foregoing main motion (93) of Councillors Yamada and Kerr be amended by deleting Part A) in its entirety and replacing it with the following new Part A):

- A) That a Community Area Land Need Scenario 2a with the greatest percentage of new residential growth through medium density units be prepared by staff as the basis for Phase 2 of the Growth Management Study and is endorsed as follows:
- i) an intensification rate of 50%;
  - ii) an overall designated Greenfield Area density target of 57 people and jobs per hectare by 2051;
  - iii) a unit mix generally consisting of 33% low density units, 38% medium density units, and 29% high density units;
  - iv) an additional Community Area urban land need generally consistent with the requirements of Scenario 2.
- CARRIED LATER IN THE MEETING  
(See Following Motion)

Moved by Councillor Joe Neal, Seconded by Councillor Lee,  
(95) That the foregoing main motion (93) and amending motion (94) of Councillors Yamada and Kerr be referred back to staff; and

That the Region of Durham be requested to release the population and employment forecasts, intensification targets, and designated greenfield area density targets allocated to each municipality prior to Regional Council selecting a Land Need Scenarios.

DEFEATED ON THE FOLLOWING  
RECORDED VOTE:

Yes  
Councillor Lee  
Councillor Joe Neal

No  
Councillor Grant  
Regional Chair Henry  
Councillor Highet  
Councillor Kerr  
Councillor Yamada  
Chair Ryan

Members Absent: None

Declarations of Interest: None

The amending motion (94) of Councillors Yamada and Kerr was then put to a vote and CARRIED ON THE FOLLOWING RECORDED VOTE:

Yes

Councillor Grant  
Regional Chair Henry  
Councillor Kerr  
Councillor Yamada  
Chair Ryan

No

Councillor Hight  
Councillor Lee  
Councillor Joe Neal

Members Absent: None

Declarations of Interest: None

The main motion (93) of Councillors Yamada and Kerr was then put to a vote and CARRIED AS AMENDED, ON THE FOLLOWING RECORDED VOTE:

Yes

Councillor Grant  
Regional Chair Henry  
Councillor Kerr  
Councillor Yamada  
Chair Ryan

No

Councillor Hight  
Councillor Lee  
Councillor Joe Neal

Members Absent: None

Declarations of Interest: None

B) Durham Environmental Advisory Committee (DEAC) Membership Appointments (2022-P-12)

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Report #2022-P-12 from B. Bridgeman, Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development, was received.

Moved by Councillor Lee, Seconded by Councillor Grant,  
(96) That we recommend to Council:

- A) That Muaz Nasir be appointed as the Town of Ajax's Area Municipal Representative to the Durham Environmental Advisory Committee;
- B) That the above-named citizen volunteer be advised of their appointment to the Durham Environmental Advisory Committee; and
- C) That a copy of Report #2022-P-12 of the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development be forwarded to the area municipalities.

CARRIED