

# Concerned Citizens of King Township

Box 875, King City, Ontario, L7B 1A9

[www.cckt.ca](http://www.cckt.ca)

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**BY E-MAIL** [growthplanning@ontario.ca](mailto:growthplanning@ontario.ca)

Ontario Growth Secretariat  
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
777 Bay St., 23rd Floor  
Toronto, ON M5G 2E5

**RE: ERO #013-4504: Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019**

## **Introduction**

Concerned Citizens of King Township (CCKT) is a well-established citizens' group which has been active in King Township for 48 years. CCKT represents approximately 150 households. CCKT advocates for sound progressive planning, well-planned thriving communities, preservation and enhancement of natural heritage systems, protection of waterways and prime farmland, and engagement of citizens in public consultation.

CCKT endorses the submission of Ontario Greenbelt Alliance of which we are a member group, and submits the following additional comments.

## **Roundtable Session. Northern Region. February 21, 2019**

CCKT commends the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for organizing these sessions for the purpose of gathering insightful comments from a great variety of groups, municipalities and other stakeholders. We appreciated the organization of the session for the Northern Region and the opportunities to address specific key aspects of the proposed changes to the Growth Plan. Our comments are organized following the topic format of the roundtable session.

### Intensification and Density

- CCKT is supportive of the proposed grouping of municipalities "A", "B", "C" recognizing that higher densities are generally more appropriate in the regions immediately adjacent to Toronto. However, in the regions and local municipalities more distant from Toronto which are mainly rural and have relatively small settlement areas and/or include sensitive natural heritage systems, there may be challenges in achieving the higher density targets. At the same time, there needs to be planning direction in these more rural municipalities that will lead to more intensification and reasonably higher densities than what currently exists.

- While stating the above, we recognize that density reductions can undermine the process of achieving complete communities and lead to continued suburban sprawl on viable farmland. Sprawl is expensive and inefficient and results in the loss of farmland and negative impacts on natural heritage systems. Where infrastructure, including public transit, and an expanding employment base is already in place, higher density targets need to be maintained.
- All new development needs to conform to a long term planning vision that will stand the test of time and meet long term society needs. The vision should not be market or development driven, as markets can change quickly. We need planning for the long term future with sustainability in view (environmentally, financially and socially). A planning vision that makes efficient use of infrastructure, protects and enhances healthy natural heritage systems, nurtures healthy complete communities and fosters healthy social interaction is needed. Here we also mention the vitally important need of planning that recognizes the increasing impacts of climate change. Natural heritage systems with increased tree cover need to be incorporated into all municipal planning, especially in settlement areas. In addition the protection of wetlands and water courses is essential.
- In many settlement areas in the Greater Golden Horseshoe there is extensive low density housing. King City, Alliston and Barrie are examples of this. There needs to be incentives to create more density with a greater variety of forms of housing that are more affordable. One way of doing this is through changes in development charges (ie: reduce the charges for higher density development, especially infilling where services and infrastructure are already in place).
- Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan needs to provide strategic direction in how municipalities will achieve having a greater variety of forms of more affordable housing being built in settlement areas?

### Major Transit Station Areas

- CCKT supports the expansion of the MTS Areas to an 800 m radius. This provides opportunities for appropriate intensification within a walkable distance. We also support the flexibility provided to municipalities that allows for density targets to be reduced and tailored to specific factors. For example in King City there are limiting factors within the MTS Area surrounding the King City GO Station – extensive wetland and natural heritage systems present, and relatively new existing low density residential subdivisions. However, there are opportunities to intensify and increase the overall density on major road corridors.

- CCKT also recognizes opportunities to expand on existing transit infrastructure. Additional GO train stations on the Barrie to Union Station line for example at (Bloomington and Bathurst) would accommodate forecast population growth. We support consideration of a transit rail link (including light rail) to Bolton/Nobleton area, Schomberg area and Alliston to increase use of transit and move people quickly and effectively.
- To achieve the higher densities and housing/mixed uses, there needs to be clear provisions for meaningful public consultation in the process, if the expansion is done outside of the MCR process.

### Agricultural and Natural Heritage Systems

- Updated mapping for both agricultural and natural heritage systems is an essential goal. Creation of the accurate mapping has to come mainly from local municipalities and Conservation Authorities. MNR “on-ground studies” should also contribute to updated mapping. The maps need to be detailed and organic, subject to new information, with the objective of protecting natural heritage, agricultural lands and water resources.
- The provincially established 30 m buffers should be maintained. This is important for protecting and enhancing the health of watercourses, wetlands and other natural heritage features.

### Settlement Area Boundary Adjustments

- First of all it is important to confirm that CCKT is highly supportive of the clearly stated intention of protecting the established Greenbelt Plan area in the recently revised Greenbelt Plan. In the Northern Region roundtable session, the facilitator emphasized, “Proposed changes in Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan do not impact the protections in the Greenbelt Plan.”
- CCKT believes that any expansion to the settlement area boundary should happen within the framework of an MCR. There needs to be meaningful public consultation and a comprehensive review done to ensure efficient and cost-effective use of infrastructure. As expressed above, great care must be taken to prevent continued suburban sprawl on agricultural lands. Sprawl is expensive and generally makes inefficient use of infrastructure and results in the loss of farmland and natural heritage systems.
- We note that a 40 ha limit is proposed for a boundary expansion. However, can more than one expansion take place for a settlement area in one year or in a four year period? This needs to be defined.

### Rural Settlements

- No new lands should be allowed to develop in rural settlements outside of the MCR process except if for minor new development (e.g. A horse arena or outbuilding) on lands that are already partially inside the rural settlement.
- When would the “rounding out” begin or end? For example if a 10% increase is allowed and completed then could there be another 10% increase? Parameters and limits are needed in order to protect agricultural land and natural heritage systems.

### Employment Planning

- There should not be any conversion allowed outside of the MCR process. The focus needs to be on intensification of housing and protection of designated employment lands. An exception may be if a municipality is proposing to swap housing designation that is adjacent to a good transportation network with employment lands.

### Provincially Significant Employment Lands

- The concept and overall goals of Provincially Significant Employment Zones are positive where there is extensive transportation infrastructure including transit for employees and established corridors for movement of goods.
- Areas that should be excluded include significant natural heritage features such as the Oak Ridges Moraine, agricultural system areas throughout the Greenbelt and agricultural lands throughout the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

### Proposed Approach to Implementation

- How do we ensure good and effective public consultation outside of the regular planning process and throughout all aspects of implementation?

Thank you for your consideration of our submission.

Sincerely, J. Bruce Craig  
Chair, Concerned Citizens of King Township