

The supporting materials for ERO-019-6217 Proposed Amendments to the Greenbelt Area boundary plan and ERO-019-6218 Proposed Redesignation of land under the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan are the same, and I cannot easily determine which maps go with each proposals. I believe all the maps which show lands being removed from protection, titled Greenbelt Plan Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Proposed Modification Maps 1-11 may relate to ERO-019-6218 and that the single map entitled Greenbelt Plan Proposed Addition Map A may related to ERO-019-6217.

But I'm really not sure.

So I am submitting my identical comments to both consultations.

I apologize for any confusion I cause the readers of my comments.

The Greenbelt Act was passed only after lengthy discussion, much debate and much study. According to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing website <https://www.ontario.ca/page/oak-ridges-moraine> the Oak Ridges Moraine is part of the Greenbelt: "As part of the Greenbelt, the Oak Ridges Moraine is an environmentally sensitive, geological landform in south central Ontario."

Premier Ford promised he would never touch the Greenbelt.

To break this promise, there must be compelling reasons that the benefits outweigh the costs. And/or there must be compelling arguments to show the costs can be totally mitigated. Neither case is supported, in my opinion.

I am particularly appalled at the proposals depicted in Map 6, an area bordering Duffins Creek in or near Pickering, and Map 9, an area of Hamilton bounded by Shaver, Garner, Fiddler Green Roads and transected by Book Road. A similar analysis could be undertaken for the other maps, but these are especially shocking.

The government contends that the designated lands are ones on which housing can be built very quickly, and suggests they will need little servicing "are serviced or adjacent to services and will be used to build housing in the near term."

### **Are these areas indeed shovel ready?**

A quick glance at the terrain (satellite view on Google maps) suggests otherwise. One can see in satellite maps of both areas that there are substantial creek systems in these areas. One can see green shrub and tree lined waterways in forested sections, as well as the darker brown outlines of underground or seasonal watercourses in the plowed fields. These underground or seasonal creeks will create hazards for builders.

To provide housing on these lands, developers will need to build underground canals to permanently divert these watercourses.

Not what most people would consider "little servicing" or almost shovel ready.

True, developers could take shortcuts -- much easier to do now that conservation authorities are not allowed to be consulted -- and the hapless folks who buy there can look forward to permanently running sump pumps and/or living without water damage insurance.



Map 9 Google map satellite view - note the many streams and seasonal watercourses (brown lines in plowed fields) crossing the area.

### Can the negative impacts on Greenbelt Plan goals be mitigated?

Let's consider two of the four goals of the Greenbelt Plan, as stated in section 1.2 Greenbelt Plan 2017 <https://www.ontario.ca/document/greenbelt-plan-2017>

- gives permanent protection to the natural heritage and water resource systems that sustain ecological and human health and that form the environmental framework around which major urbanization in south-central Ontario will be organized
- provides for a diverse range of economic and social activities associated with rural communities, agriculture, tourism, recreation and resource uses

Each Greenbelt Plan area which the province proposes to modify forms part of a complex ecosystem. Though one may imagine cutting down a single tree and replanting the same species elsewhere, one can't pick up and move entire forests, nor can one pick up and move creeks and whole water systems.

Many ecologists and scientists have written of the negative impacts of fragmenting ecosystems, e.g. Mitchell Snyder, What Is Forest Fragmentation and Why Is It A Problem?, Northern

Woodlands, 13 October 2014, online: <https://northernwoodlands.org/articles/article/forest-fragmentation#:~:text=The%20effects%20of%20fragmentation%20are,and%20reduction%20in%20water%20quality>

The "natural heritage and water resource systems that sustain ecological and human health", the ones the Greenbelt Plan promised to permanently protect, will be permanently destroyed by removing these areas from the Oak Ridges Moraine Plan/ Greenbelt Plan.

Another goal of the Greenbelt Plan was to provide a diverse range of economic and social activities.

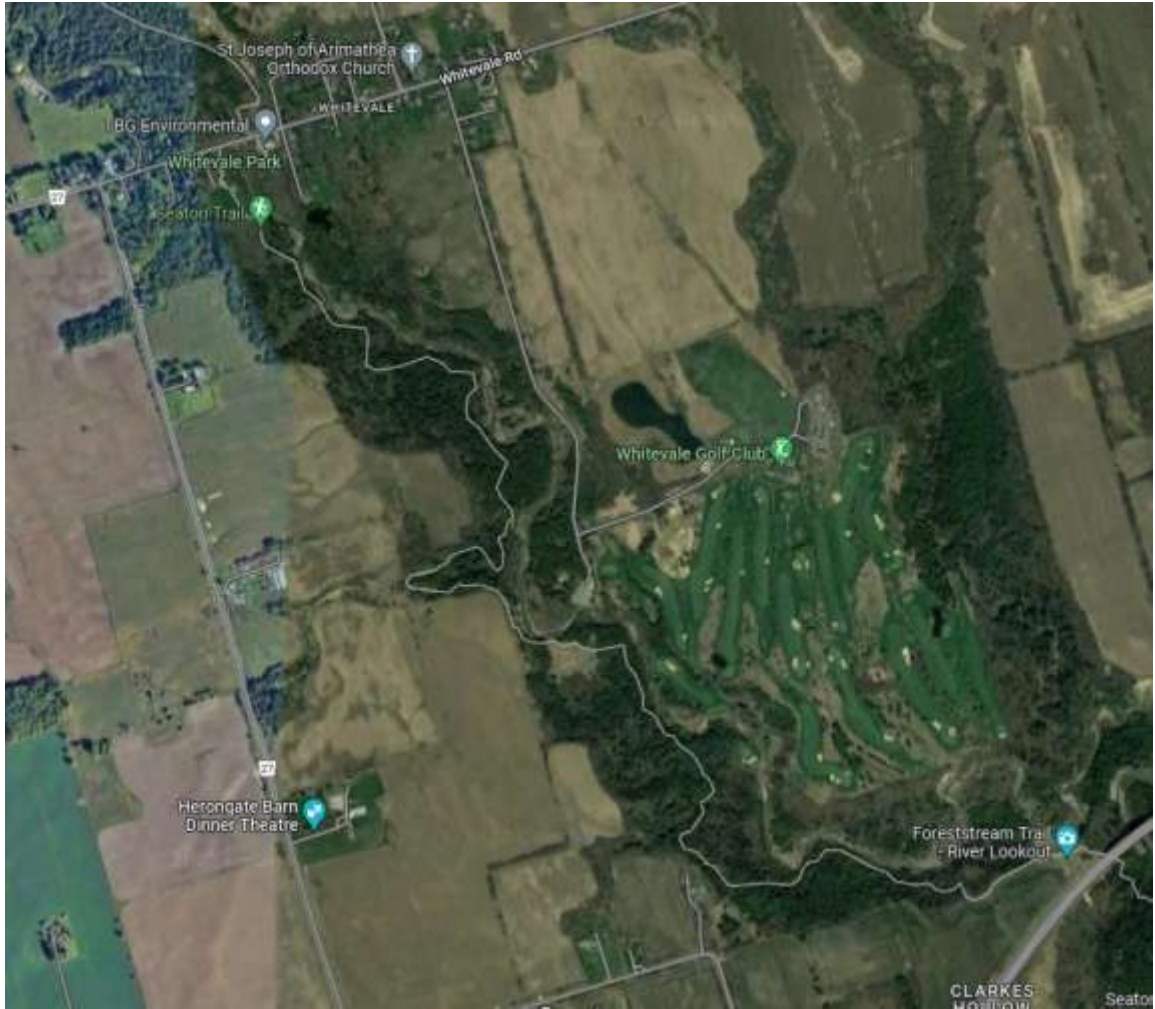
The Google map view of the Map 6 area to be modified shows that it is crossed by the Seaton Hiking Trail, "one of the best-known and most-used trails for recreation in the Pickering region" according to the popular and widely referenced All Trails online hiking guide.

The proposed modification would wipe out this trail and the economic benefit which hiking day visitors (like me) provide to neighbouring municipalities.

One may counter that the government is not contemplating building many houses on these Greenbelt areas, that it's thinking of just nestling in one or two rural mansions into these parts of the Greenbelt/Oak Ridges Moraine.

Whose personal pleasure is so important that we should risk sacrificing our water quality or bird and animal species' existence -- all the things the Greenbelt Plan was designed to protect?

The government's proposals to modify the Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan should be totally rejected.



Map 6 Google map satellite view - note the many stream and watercourse remnanets in the cleared land areas, as well as the Seaton Hiking Trail (white line)