

Dec. 4, 2022

Re: Proposed Amendments to the Greenbelt Plan  
ERO number 019-6216  
<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-6216>

*Proposal summary*

*The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is seeking feedback on proposed changes to the Greenbelt Plan that would remove or redesignate 15 areas of land and add lands in the Paris Galt Moraine area.*

Via: [greenbeltconsultation@ontario.ca](mailto:greenbeltconsultation@ontario.ca)

To the: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 Act's intent to increase housing in Ontario for low-income, young Canadians, and new Canadians is admirable – Premier Ford is a man of action and understands the need. However, after reading extensively on Bill 23 and the concerns raised by various authorities on the environmental impact of these changes to our greenbelt, I am imploring you to not proceed with the proposed amendments.

Our elected politicians and support staff are **custodians of Ontario** – oaths were taken to protect the interest of the public and Ontario as a whole. It is your moral obligation as an elected official to do just that, and not accept short-term solutions. Have you ever seen such a backlash from organizations across Ontario on Bill 23 and the devastating effects? I don't recall a more controversial bill other than Free Trade and HST enacted by Prime Minister Mulroney.

The housing crisis faced in Ontario must be planned by all our elected officials working collectively on innovative solutions to increase housing availability that is sustainable to our food security and the environment. Europeans have been doing this for decades as they do not have the land Ontario and Canada has. Let's not take the easy approach and absorb our farmlands or virgin lands for housing and the supporting infrastructures such as roads.

Why not work with the housing developers on innovative solutions to work within the city borders vs farmland absorption? Give them huge bonuses or tax credits for developing a net-zero building on existing property – renovating an existing building, adding thermal heating, being near public transport. **Housing is needed where the work is**, especially for trades, service industry, not in rural areas.

The cost of building homes by re-evaluating 7400 acres of farmlands in the Greater Golden Horseshoe area, and a further 1600 acres in the Ottawa region to expand housing developments is not sustainable for the future of Ontario and Canada for these main reasons:

- Farmlands in Ontario are reduced by 321 acres a day in Ontario<sup>1</sup>, food security is at risk both for Ontario and Canada. Farmlands are a much higher value on what they provide as food security vs the commercial land value or housing value. Once developed, the prime fertile land is lost. CBC calculates an average farmland is lost every day in Ontario – **that is 365 farms a year, 3650 farms in 10 years – flat out this is unsustainable.** This fact alone should put all of Bill 23 on hold.
- By reducing available farmlands, increasing the value of existing farmlands. This is not sustainable, leaving land open to more development unless agriculture zoning is strictly enforced.
- With the info published by IPCC and Cop27 Paris Climate Change agreement, our world has 10 years to reduce our carbon emissions to minimize a 1.5-degree Celsius rise in global temperature.<sup>2</sup>
- The financial cost of 2 deg Celsius is estimated at 2.8 trillion in Canada<sup>3</sup>; not including the cost of damage to homes, businesses, infrastructure.
- Canada has promised to reduce carbon emissions by 40% by 2030 and be net zero by 2040.<sup>4</sup>
- A climate lawsuit by a group of high-school students and Ecojustice, Mathur et. al. v. Her Majesty in Right of Ontario<sup>5</sup> had a full hearing in the Ontario Supreme Court in September 2022. They argued that Premier Ford's policies has weakened steps made to reduce climate change and their constitutional rights for life, liberty and security have been violated.

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<sup>1</sup> CBC article June 18, 2022. Data from the 2021 Census of Agriculture shows Ontario is losing 319 acres of farmland daily, equal to the loss of one average family farm  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ont-farmland-loss-1.6493833>

<sup>2</sup> IPCC report on Climate change and 1.5 C <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

<sup>3</sup> Queen's University May 2022 article <https://www.queensu.ca/gazette/stories/canada-faces-huge-physical-costs-climate-change-making-net-zero-great-investment>

<sup>4</sup> Canada's commitment to reduce carbon emissions  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather/climatechange/climate-plan/climate-plan-overview/emissions-reduction-2030.html>

<sup>5</sup> Ontario Supreme Court case <https://ecojustice.ca/case/genclimateaction-mathur-et-al-v-her-majesty-in-right-of-ontario/>

In grade 8 at the age of 12, I made a speech for the PTA on the threat of the Cold War and atomic bombs to the world. To prevent this mass destruction, my last sentence was "the answer lies in the hearts of man". I am asking you as a 67-year-old grandmother who is deeply concerned on the climate change crisis and future of our grandchildren, grandnephews and grandnieces -- all the young people whose future will be deeply affected by proposed changes listed on Bill 23. **Please look into your hearts and do the right thing.**

Sincerely,

Personal names removed for the submission online.