

**From:** Valerie Burke

**Sent:** December 5, 2021 1:59 PM

**To:** Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>; Mayor & Councillors  
<MayorAndCouncillors@markham.ca>; Gold, Laura <lgold@markham.ca>

**Subject:** Development Services Committee, Monday, December 6 - Item 8.1 - Regional Council Preferred Growth Scenario to 2051

**CAUTION:** This email originated from a source outside the City of Markham. DO NOT CLICK on any links or attachments, or reply unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To the Members of Development Services Committee

Re: Item 8.1. INFORMATION REPORT - IMPLICATIONS OF THE OCTOBER 21, 2021 REGIONAL COUNCIL DECISION REGARDING A PREFERRED GROWTH SCENARIO TO 2051 AND OPPORTUNITY FOR FURTHER INPUT

Please protect our remaining farmland and natural heritage in the whitebelts lands! Urban sprawl is costly to the taxpayer in the long term because of the increased amount of infrastructure which needs to be constantly repaired and replaced. Intensification within the identified growth areas of Markham will support the building of better public transit and ensure sustainable, walkable communities.

We need to protect our food security, mitigate climate change and zoonotic diseases. Please be caretakers of the land.

Valerie Burke  
Thornhill Resident

**From:** Jim Robb

**Subject:** Re: Costly and Premature York Region 2051 Population Growth and Urban Expansion Proposals

**CAUTION:** This email originated from a source outside the City of Markham. **DO NOT CLICK** on any links or attachments, or reply unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

**Re: York Region 2051 Population Growth and Urban Expansion Proposals**  
**Premature and Full of Costly Liabilities**

**Dear Mayor Scarpitti and Markham Council (c/o Laura Gold):**

Attached please find a Friends of the Rouge Watershed (FRW) letter to Markham's Development Services Committee.

**To avoid serious economic, environmental, social and political liabilities, FRW respectfully asks Markham Council to:**

- 1)** Request a deferral of the proposed 2051 York Region urban expansion decision until after the 2022 Provincial and Municipal Elections and after a Meaningful Public Involvement Process has better assessed urban intensification and demand management options.
- 2)** Accelerate the implementation of forest and wetland protection and restoration in the Rouge River Watershed and Park by formally asking for Federal, Provincial and Municipal support for the creation of a \$1 Billion GTA Upstream Land Acquisition and Watershed Restoration Fund similar to the attached FRW proposal to the Federal Minister of Finance.
- 3)** Formally request a Federal/ Provincial/ Municipal Task Force to develop demand management tools and incentives for shifting population growth and development pressures away from Canada's biggest cities (e.g., Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal) and towards other cities, towns and regions which can accommodate growth without exceeding their environmental, social or economic carrying capacities.

We look forward to your positive response to these reasonable recommendations.

Sincerely,

Jim Robb, (647-891-9550)  
for Friends of the Rouge Watershed (FRW)

## Attachments

FRW Letter to Markham Council

GTA Upstream Land Acquisition and Watershed Restoration Fund Proposal

**Patrons of Friends of the Rouge Watershed:** Lois James, "Save the Rouge" founding member and Order of Canada Recipient; Hon. David Peterson, former Ontario Premier; Derek Lee, former MP Scarborough Rouge River; Hon. Gerry Phillips, former MPP Scarborough Agincourt; Hon. Alvin Curling, former MPP Scarborough Rouge River; Hon. Raymond Cho, MPP Scarborough North; Rathika Sitsabaiesan, former MP Scarborough Rouge River; Joyce Trimmer, former Mayor of Scarborough, posthumous; Paul Harpley, "Save the Rouge" founding member; Bobbi Hunter, founding member of Greenpeace Executive.

**Friends of the Rouge Watershed (FRW):** Over the last three decades, Friends of the Rouge Watershed (FRW) have been leaders in the community-based campaigns which have led to the creation of a 40 Km<sup>2</sup> Ontario Rouge Park, its subsequent evolution into a 79 Km<sup>2</sup> National Rouge Park, and the amendment of its legislation to prioritize ecological integrity. In 2016, FRW received the J.R. Dymond Award from Ontario Nature for our: *"tireless and inspirational role in the creation of Rouge National Park" and "exceptional work on the ground with stewardship and restoration projects."*

December 5, 2021

City of Markham  
101 Town Centre Blvd.  
Markham, ON , L3R 9W3

**Re: Premature York Region 2051 Urban Expansion Proposal  
Four Remedial Recommendations by FRW**

**Dear Mayor Scarpitti and Markham Council:**

The review of York Region's Urban Expansion Scenarios, during a global pandemic, is short-changing the legal, economic, environmental and democratic requirements of good planning, Natural Justice, Public Notice and Public Consultation.

In the book "Collapse", Pulitzer-prize winning author Jared Diamond notes that our modern civilization suffers from the unbridled growth trait which collapsed many past civilizations. **Unbridled growth is the motto of cancer cells and viruses which often kill their host.** If urban expansion in York Region is ratcheted further forward before the 2022 elections, this will be seen as a Machiavellian land grab by land speculators / developers with the support of provincial and municipal politicians.

Friends of the Rouge Watershed (FRW) would like to thank the Markham Councillors and planners who supported the 60% target for urban intensification which would minimize the need for additional urban sprawl. We also thank Markham Council for the motion opposing Hwy 413 and requesting a comprehensive Federal Environmental Assessment.

This letter is informed by FRW's 35 years of participation in Rouge Watershed, Land-use and Environmental Assessment processes; and the professional experience of FRW's GM, Jim Robb, a former Vice Chair with Ontario's Environmental Assessment Board and a former adjudicator with three other Ontario Land and Water Tribunals.

Urban expansion has gone too far in the GTA and it is leading to costly and inefficient use of land, infrastructure and resources. Urban expansion is leading to:

- more taxes, traffic jams and stress for urban dwellers.
- more paving of irreplaceable farmland and green space.
- costlier pollution, flooding, erosion and climate change liabilities.
- greater financial, environmental, legal and managerial liabilities.

Instead of focussing on out-dated population growth and land supply economics, GTA municipalities should shift to: a) modern land demand management solutions; b) creative intensification along transit routes like Yonge Street and Hwy 7; and c) environmentally sustainable population goals.

**FRW Patrons**

Lois James, "Save the Rouge" founding member and Order of Canada Recipient

Hon. David Peterson, former Ontario Premier

Hon. Gerry Phillips, former MPP  
Scarborough Agincourt

Hon. Alvin Curling, former MPP  
Scarborough Rouge River

Derek Lee, former MP  
Scarborough Rouge River

Rathika Sitsabaiesan, former MP Scarborough  
Rouge River

Joyce Trimmer, former Mayor of Scarborough, posthumous

Paul Harpley, "Save the Rouge" founding member

Bobbi Hunter, founding member of Greenpeace Executive

## Negligently Slow Forest and Wetland Protection and Restoration

Climate change and urban expansion are greatly increasing flooding, erosion and pollution liabilities. Markham has many flood vulnerable communities like Unionville and Markham Centre and it is upstream from many inter-regional highways, roads, sewers and railways, and Rouge National Park.

York Region and Markham are greatly increasing the risk of serious flooding, erosion and pollution damage by repeatedly expanding upstream urban areas while delaying the implementation of "due diligence" plans for forest and wetland restoration.

A science-based Environment Canada Report notes that more than 30% forest and wetland cover are necessary to protect water quality and biodiversity. Markham has only 5% forest and wetland cover and the overall Rouge Watershed has only 14% - far below the minimum amount required by "due diligence" Rouge Watershed and Park Plans.

When the GTA experiences the intense rainfall events which have plagued other parts of Canada, the failure to implement forest and wetland protection and restoration plans will contribute to \$Billions in damages to critical public infrastructure and private properties. In a 2018 report entitled "Combating Canada's Rising Flood Costs" the Insurance Bureau of Canada noted that:

- flooding and extreme weather costs quadrupled in Canada between 2009 and 2018.
- climate change and flooding risks will weigh increasingly on municipal credit ratings.
- forest & wetland protection and restoration are among the most cost effective ways to reduce climate change, flooding and pollution.
- **forest and wetland restoration is "not being made at the scale and rate necessary"** contrary to commitments under the Paris Climate Change Agreement and the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change.

After record-breaking flooding damages in 2019, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change publicly stated: *"one-in-100-year floods are now happening every five years"*. As this statement suggests, floodplain modelling and mapping are dangerously out-dated because they do not prudently account for:

- Increasing flooding frequency and severity due to climate change and urbanization.
- Breaching of stormwater pipes, ponds and management facilities which are designed for past floods, not the larger and more frequent floods of our changing climate.
- Combined rainfall and snowmelt events such as the January 12, 2020 flood.
- Elevation of flood levels due to woody debris, slush or ice flow jams.

## **Conclusion:**

Today, past decision-makers are harshly criticized for their racist and inhumane treatment of Black and Indigenous people and other people of colour and diversity. Just imagine the criticism you will receive, if you condone the cancerous consumption of more irreplaceable green space and farmland by urban sprawl. Just Imagine the economic and political repercussions when another rainfall event like Hurricane Hazel (1954) hits the GTA.

**To avoid serious economic, environmental, social and political liabilities, FRW respectfully asks Markham Council to:**

- 1) Request a deferral of the proposed 2051 urban expansion decision until after the 2022 Provincial and Municipal Elections and after a Meaningful Public Involvement Process has better assessed urban intensification and demand management options.
- 2) Accelerate the implementation of forest and wetland protection and restoration in the Rouge River Watershed and Park by formally asking for Federal, Provincial and Municipal support for the creation of a \$1 Billion GTA Upstream Land Acquisition and Watershed Restoration Fund similar to the attached FRW proposal to the Federal Minister of Finance.
- 3) Formally request a Federal/ Provincial/ Municipal Task Force to develop demand management tools and incentives for shifting population growth and development pressures away from Canada's biggest cities (e.g., Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal) and towards other cities, towns and regions which can accommodate growth without exceeding their environmental, social or economic carrying capacities.

We look forward to your positive response to these reasonable recommendations.

Sincerely,



General Manager (647-891-9550)  
Friends of the Rouge Watershed (FRW)

## **Attachments**

GTA Upstream Land Acquisition and Watershed Restoration Fund Proposal

## Background:

Liabilities grow as climate change gathers steam and urban sprawl leads to more greenhouse gas emissions, pollution and runoff. In 2013, flooding and ice storms cost the GTA more than \$1 billion and Alberta suffered \$5+ Billion in flood damages. Scientists and insurance companies are predicting, and already observing, significant increases in the frequency and intensity of storms and damages.

Provincial Policy Statement 1.1.1h states: "*promote development and land use patterns that conserve biodiversity and consider the impacts of a changing climate*". A 2014 Report for the Credit Valley Conservation Authority entitled "Stormwater Management in Ontario: Legal Issues in a Changing Climate", states:

*".. since all orders of government can be sued for negligence .....  
each order of government has a strong incentive to consider its existing procedures and systems in light of new information, including information about climate change".*

The 2007 Rouge Watershed Plan relies on the restoration of forest and wetland cover as a top priority "due diligence" action to control runoff, protect water quality, conserve biodiversity and offset the impacts of urban growth and climate change. Unfortunately, York Region and other levels of government are delaying the implementation of priority actions within approved Rouge Watershed and Great Lakes Water Quality Improvement Plans. These delays increase the risk of serious liabilities.

**Urban Expansion** - Contrary to the Ecological Integrity Provision of the *Rouge National Urban Park Act*, Greenbelt Plan section 3.2.7 and Provincial Policy Statement 2.2.1

The proposed urban expansion areas in Markham are upstream from existing flood-prone Markham communities, Rouge National Urban Park and the City of Toronto. Climate change and urban growth are greatly increasing the potential for costly pollution, flooding and erosion damages these downstream areas.

Provincial Policy Statement 2.2.1 states: *Planning authorities shall protect, improve or restore the quality and quantity of water by:*

*a) using the watershed as the ecologically meaningful scale for integrated and long-term planning, which can be a foundation for considering **cumulative impacts**... ;*

*b) minimizing potential negative impacts, including **cross-jurisdictional and cross-watershed impacts**; ...*

The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) analyzed development scenarios during the creation of the 2007 Rouge Watershed Plan and found that **as the urban envelope expands:**

*“meeting water quality targets will become an increasingly distant goal”*

*“ E. Coli bacteria levels significantly exceed provincial standards”*

*“middle tributaries would be subject to major hydrological impacts”*

*“ the maximum impervious cover that a watershed can withstand before experiencing severe hydrologic changes & geomorphic & ecological impacts is approximately 10%. The Main Rouge Watershed.... impervious cover was 18% as of 2002.”*

### **Urban Expansion – Contrary to the Protection of Public Health and Safety**

Scientific research and monitoring clearly shows that urban expansion would lead to increased E. coli bacteria and pollution in our water and increased flooding, erosion and pollution damage in vulnerable downstream communities, lakes and water sources. For example, the TRCA’s 2007 Rouge Watershed Report Card and Rouge Watershed Strategy Scenario Modeling and Analysis Report, state:

*“middle tributaries would be subject to major hydrological impacts under OP build-out and full build-out conditions” ... Page 4.1.49*

*.... “future urbanization will increase the magnitude and duration of erosive flows in receiving watercourses despite the use of current extended detention criteria to control runoff from more frequent events”. Page 4.1-43*

*“Over 500 flood vulnerable areas within Markham would be expected to be inundated during the Regional Storm (Hurricane Hazel) and a number of roads and homes are predicted to flood in flows as low as the 2-year flood event.” Page 5-25*

These reports predict adverse water quality and quantity impacts with urban expansion, even with the best foreseeable mitigation. Experience demonstrates that "best foreseeable mitigation" promises are unrealistic. Once their land is designated and zoned, developers go to great lengths to minimize or avoid environmental mitigation costs.



January 21, 2020

To: Hon. Christyia Freeland, Minister of Finance, MP University Rosedale  
MP Gary Anandasangaree, MP Scarborough Rouge Park

Re: **Funding the Acquisition and Restoration of Lands Upstream from Urban Areas**  
to combat climate change, flooding and pollution costs, and improve water and  
air quality, biodiversity and public health

**Honourary  
Friends**

Lois James, "Save the  
Rouge" founding  
member and Order of  
Canada Recipient,  
posthumous

Hon. David Peterson,  
former Ontario Premier

Gerry Phillips, former  
MPP Scarborough  
Agincourt

Alvin Curling, former  
MPP Scarborough  
Rouge River

Derek Lee, former MP  
Scarborough Rouge  
River

Rathika Sitsabaiesan,  
former MP Scarborough  
Rouge River

Joyce Trimmer, former  
Mayor of Scarborough,  
posthumous

Bobbi Hunter, founding  
member of Greenpeace  
Executive

Hon. Raymond Cho  
MPP Scarborough North

Paul Harpley, "Save the  
Rouge" founding  
member

**Dear Scarborough MPs and Minister of Finance:**

Every day Canadians see more human suffering and economic losses from record-breaking storms, floods, droughts and fires due to climate change and delayed actions.

Scientific research and the Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) report "Combating Canada's Rising Flood Costs" confirm that wetland and forest restoration is a cost-effective way to reduce economic losses from climate change and flooding, while improving water and air quality, biodiversity, and public health. This IBC Report notes that flooding & extreme weather losses have quadrupled between 2009 and 2018 and states:

**Forest and wetland restoration projects**  
***"are not being made at the scale and rate necessary"***  
***"a significant omission" ...***  
***"when Canada has committed to combating climate change" (p. 43)***

TD Bank and Government studies estimate these public dividends for these land uses:

Urban Wetlands:	\$ 161,420 per year per hectare (1 ha = 1.7 soccer fields)
Urban Forests:	\$ 25,853 per year per hectare
Cash Crop Lands:	\$ 291 per year per hectare

As these figures reveal, increasing forest and wetland cover upstream from urban areas will save \$Billions by reducing runoff, pollution, flooding, erosion and species loss, and better protecting human health and well being.

In the GTA and near other large urban areas, private land ownership is slowing the implementation of plans for increasing forest and wetland cover. **Therefore, we ask the Federal Government to:**

- 1) **Provide additional Federal Budget funding for acquiring land and restoring forests and wetlands upstream from the GTA and other urban areas in Canada;**
- 2) **Allocate \$50 Million of the Rouge National Park federal funding to a Rouge Land Trust Fund and utilize the annual interest from the investment of this fund to acquire and restore additional parklands with the help of all government levels;**

- 3) **Update Canada's Ecological Gifts Program to further encourage land donations from private land owners, including developers, to help protect and restore watershed, ecosystem and community health;**
- 4) **Add additional Transport Canada Lands in North Pickering to the Rouge National Park, particularly Ontario Greenbelt Natural System lands.**

### **An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure**

Federal Government programs appear to be spending too much on mitigation and too little on prevention. Below please find three examples of inefficient (wasteful?) use of federal funding (e.g. Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund).

#### **1. Federal Bail-out for Poor Municipal Land-use and Storm-water Planning**

Nearly \$50 million federal dollars were spent to purchase a few hectares of urban land in Markham and partially fix storm-water problems caused by poor planning. This \$50 million could have purchased and restored forests and wetlands on 100X as much land in areas upstream from Markham, to yield public dividends of 100 times greater.

#### **2. Reesor Road Culvert Replacement in Scarborough**

More than \$20 Million Federal dollars were spent to replace a serviceable Reesor Road culvert in Rouge Park with almost no benefits in terms of reducing flooding and climate change impacts. This funding could have purchased and restored forests and wetlands on 200 hectares of upstream land, to yield 100X greater benefits in terms of flood prevention, water quality, biodiversity and public health.

#### **3. Rouge National Urban Park (RNUP)**

Reforestation has fallen by 75% since the creation of Rouge National Urban Park, contrary to the requirements of pre-existing Rouge Park, Watershed and Greenbelt Plans for combating climate change, flooding, pollution and biodiversity loss. Despite a 2,000% increase in the park budget, Parks Canada and TRCA cut reforestation by 75%. This represents a shocking failure to implement the "due diligence" scientific and legal requirements of pre-existing Toronto Region Remedial Action plans. To make matters worse, capable NGOs, with their own funding and volunteer partners, have been excluded from planting in RNUP over the last seven years.

### **Conclusion:**

We trust that your 2021 Budget will respond positively to the requests above. All levels of government need to increase their investments in strategic land acquisition and forest and wetland protection and restoration, particularly upstream of growing urban areas.

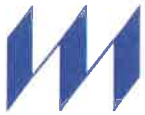
Sincerely,



General Manager (647-891-9550)  
Friends of the Rouge Watershed (FRW)

Giving Nature a voice and a helping hand.  
2259 Meadowvale Road  
Scarborough, Ontario  
M1X 1R2

Web site: [www.frw.ca](http://www.frw.ca)  
Telephone: (416) 208-0252



# WESTON CONSULTING

planning + urban design

City of Markham  
101 Town Centre Boulevard  
Markham, Ontario  
L3R 9W3

December 3, 2021  
File 9797-1

**Attn: Development Services Committee Members**

**Re: Item 8.1 Information Report: Implications of the October 21, 2021 Regional Council Decision regarding a Preferred Growth Scenario to 2051 and Opportunity for Further Input  
10701 Highway 48, City of Markham**

Weston Consulting is the planning consultant for the owner of the lands municipally known as 10701 Highway 48 in the City of Markham (herein referred to as the “subject lands”). We have been actively engaged in the Region’s MCR process and have also participated actively in the City of Markham’s input to the Region’s MCR process.

## **Description of the Subject Lands**

The subject lands are located on the southeast corner of Elgin Mills Road East and Highway 48 with an irregular shape (Figure 1). The subject lands have an approximate area of 36 hectares (89 acres), an approximate frontage of 340 metres (11,119 feet) along Highway 48 and approximately 696 (2,287 feet) of frontage along Elgin Mills Road East. Surrounding uses to the north, south and east are agricultural, while rural commercial uses are located to the west.

Figure 1



We have reviewed the recently released *Information Report: Implications of the October 21, 2021 Regional Council Decision regarding a Preferred Growth Scenario to 2051 and Opportunity for Further Input*, prepared by City Staff.

Further to our previous correspondence dated May 10, 2021 to Markham Council, our August 18, 2021 correspondence and more specifically, our October 20, 2021 letter to the Region of York, we reiterate our client's position supporting the depiction of the subject lands as *Future Urban Area*, should the lands not be identified as Community Area to accommodate growth to 2051.

It is recognized based on Regional Council's decision in October concerning a phased region wide intensification target that the subject lands are not presently considered to accommodate community area growth to 2051; however, in our opinion the lands are well suited to accommodate future growth and we recommend that the lands be recognized by the City for future urban area opportunities even if the lands are not designated within the forecasted horizon.

In our opinion, it is important to identify "whitebelt" lands, which the subject lands are considered, as *Future Urban Area* to acknowledge their status and their ability to accommodate future urban growth. This position is consistent with the Region's approach, which identifies the subject lands as being within the "Future Urban Area" according to Map 1B – Urban System Overlays. Accordingly, we support the Region's approach to this depiction and suggest that the City support the same.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment and we reserve the right to provide future input as the City considers its future planning of these areas.

If you have any questions regarding the above comments, please contact the undersigned at extension 241 or Paul Tobia at extension 290.

Yours truly,  
**Weston Consulting**  
 Per:



Ryan Guetter, BES, MCIP, RPP  
 Executive Vice President

c. Clients

Marg Wouters, Senior Manager, Policy & Research, Planning and Urban Design Department  
 City Clerks, City of Markham  
 Paul Freeman, Chief Planner, Planning and Economic Development, Region of York