



March 29, 2022

**The Honorable Doug Ford**

Premier of Ontario

Room 281, Legislative Building, Queen's Park

Toronto, ON, M7A 1A1

**RE: IMPROVING THE TRANSIT ORIENTED COMMUNITIES PROPOSALS IN THE RICHMOND HILL / LANGSTAFF GATEWAY URBAN GROWTH CENTRE (10.0)**

Dear Mr. Premier;

This will confirm that at its March 29, 2022 meeting, Markham City Council adopted the following resolution:

1. **WHEREAS** rapid population growth will continue in the Greater Toronto Area; and,
2. **WHEREAS** sprawl must be contained as much as possible, to reduce traffic congestion, maintain farmland, improve housing affordability, mitigate climate change, achieve carbon reduction, and keep property taxes low; and,
3. **WHEREAS** the optimum growth solution includes Transit Oriented Communities (TOCs), designed as dense complete communities (diversity of homes, jobs, retail, leisure) connected to each other with rapid transit; and
4. **WHEREAS** the draft Secondary Plan for Richmond Hill Centre and the existing Secondary Plan for Markham Langstaff Gateway already meet and exceed TOC population density criteria & meet the goal of complete communities; and,
5. **WHEREAS** the recent Infrastructure Ontario proposals for TOCs at Bridge and High Tech Stations on the planned Yonge North Subway Extension have numerous concerns as outlined in Markham staff report of January 24, 2022, including:
  - a) Excessive population density that would over-burden surrounding hard and soft infrastructure; and,
  - b) Lack of sufficient jobs, meaning the Centre would not be a destination for in-bound commuters; and,
  - c) Lack of sufficient parkland, leisure facilities and community amenities; and,
  - d) Potential safety hazards by locating residences too close to high voltage transmission lines; and,

6. **WHEREAS** 82 ha of land in this area are undevelopable due to the presence of high-voltage hydro transmission lines. This land is largely owned by the province and has approximate real estate value of \$5B-7B and economic development potential of \$50B-100B; and,
7. **WHEREAS** Gas Insulated Lines (GIL) technology exists to safely bury 3,750m of 407 hydro transmission lines, at an estimate cost of \$220M; and,
8. **WHEREAS** utilizing these hydro lands as part of a unified Urban Growth Centre development plan would:
  - a) Provide significant financial return to the landowner (i.e., Province); and,
  - b) Provide more land for appropriate development, allowing complete communities to be developed; and,
  - c) Reduce safety concerns from above ground high voltage hydro transmission lines; and,
9. **WHEREAS** this urban growth centre has the potential to be one of the top three centres in the GTA; and,
10. **WHEREAS** the City of Markham on January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in a letter to the Premier of the Province stated that it anticipated forwarding further comments.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

1. That Markham Council urges the Province of Ontario to revisit the plans by Infrastructure Ontario for TOCs at High Tech and Bridge Stations and align more closely to the existing Richmond Hill and Langstaff Secondary Plans; and,
2. That Markham Council urges the Province of Ontario to promptly meet with York Region, Markham, and Richmond Hill representatives to understand the economic value that can be untapped from the high-voltage transmission lands; and,
3. That Markham Council urges the Province of Ontario to promptly commission a Blue-Sky Planning Exercise for the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Urban Growth Centre, including burial of the high-voltage hydro transmission lines and relocating the stormwater management pond; and,
4. That Markham Council urges the Province of Ontario to explore a solution with the City of Markham, the City of Richmond Hill and affected land owners to comprehensively plan the remainder of the lands in and around the Langstaff Gateway Secondary Plan and the Richmond Hill Secondary Plan areas in conjunction with the Province's proposed Bridge Station Transit Oriented Community and High Tech Transit Oriented Community, and to address inter-dependencies and related issues such as cost sharing arrangements for parks, civic uses and infrastructure; and,

5. That this motion be circulated to the following:
  - Hon. Doug Ford, Premier
  - Hon. Kinga Surma, Minister of Infrastructure Ontario
  - Hon. Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation
  - Hon. Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
  - Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance
  - Hon. Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
  - Andre Horwath, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Ontario
  - Steven Del Duca, Leader of the Liberal Party of Ontario
  - Mike Schreiner, Leader of the Green Party of Ontario
  - Phil Verster, CEO, Metrolinx
  - Michael Lindsay, President and CEO, Infrastructure Ontario
  - York Region Councillors
  - Mayor and Councillors, Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan
  - CEOs and Commissioners of Planning, York Region, Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan
  - City Clerks – Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Durham, Brampton, Mississauga, Toronto
  - Local MPPs and MPs; and,
6. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Should you or your staff have any questions, please contact Arvin Prasad, Commissioner, Development Services at [APrasad@markham.ca](mailto:APrasad@markham.ca).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kimberley Kitteringham', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kimberley Kitteringham  
City Clerk