

**EXTRACT**  
**AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**APRIL 7, 2016**

**1. Flood Control Program Presentation**

Robert Muir, Manager of Stormwater Management presented on Markham's Flood Control Program.

Markham's Flood Control Program has been initiated to provide a 100 year level of service for storm sewer systems across the City to improve storm drainage capacity. Markham is currently updating its sewer system in older areas of the City that currently cannot handle large storms. In 2013, Markham Council approved a 30 year program to improve sewer infrastructure in older areas of the City. By doing the work, Markham is protecting its waste water system and roads in these areas. The program includes a City wide stormwater management fee, a \$47 dollar flat fee for residential properties, and \$29/\$100,000 Current Value Assessment for non-residential properties. Farmers would pay the residential rate for their residential property, as well as, the non-residential rate for their farmland. Work to improve the sewer system is already underway. The program is projected to cost between \$234 and \$288 million dollars over 30 years.

The Committee expressed concerns that the non-residential rate fee has not been calculated adequately to consider the unique nature of the farm community and how farmland has low impervious (hard) surfaces and has minimal impacts to Markham's stormwater management system. Also, that the non-residential rate fee has been calculated the same way as other non-residential properties such as industrial/commercial areas. Some of the Committee's concerns included:

- Lack of consultation with the farming community with respect to the fee
- Inability for farmers to pay the fee, due to high costs
- Landowners will pass on the fee to tenant farmers leasing their land
- Imposing such a high levy on farmers is unfair, as farmland contributes very little to Markham's stormwater management system

The Committee suggested that farmland should be calculated differently than other non-residential properties in Markham due to their lack of runoff contribution and impact on the stormwater management system, the uniqueness of the farming community, and to ensure fairness and the farmers' ability to pay.

Moved by Kim Empringham

Seconded by Ruth Brock

That the Agricultural Advisory Committee request that Council direct staff to review how the stormwater fee for non-residential lands are calculated for farmland, as soon as possible, and consider the uniqueness of the farming community when determining the appropriate fee amount, in order to ensure fairness and the farmers ability to pay.

CARRIED