

A photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, a large, leafy tree is on the right, and a Canadian flag is partially visible. In the middle ground, there is a green field and a wooden barn. The background shows a line of trees with autumn foliage in shades of red, orange, and yellow. The sky is overcast.

# Anti-Sprawl Toolkit

*Prepared by GASP - Grand(m)others Act to Save the Planet*

**April 13 2021 Update - Version 2.0**

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GRANDMOTHERS ACT  
TO SAVE THE PLANET

GASP is a grassroots, non-partisan group of grandmothers and grand 'others' who care deeply about the world our descendants will inherit.

### We have an emergency!

Despite 30 years of warnings from scientists, it is our grandchildren, who have finally forced us to act on the Climate Crisis. Greta Thunberg, student activist, challenges our generation to "Act like your house (the earth) is on fire because it is!"

Global heating will jeopardize the essentials of life — air, food, water and housing. It will disproportionately impact the poor and marginalized. GASP cares about climate justice for everyone, from the Inuit in the north to poorly-housed seniors in urban areas.

GASP members make personal commitments and take political action to ensure the climate crisis is front and center on everyone's Action Plan! We join with young people and our grandchildren to amplify their voices in the fight for their lives.

## Introduction to GASP

GASP has a group of 80 members based mostly in Oakville but from many towns in the GTA including Erin, Collingwood and Hamilton.

For more information please contact;

[info@gasp4change.org](mailto:info@gasp4change.org)

We have compiled this toolkit from a variety of sources. We are grateful to all the environmentalists and organizations who are committed to slowing the rate of GHG emissions and contributed to this toolkit.

Every tonne of carbon that we don't put into the atmosphere will save lives. Promoting highways and urban sprawl is a costly, wasteful and dinosaur way to grow the economy. We need smart growth - see links on page 8.

Website [GASP4change.org](https://GASP4change.org)  
Email [info@gasp4change.org](mailto:info@gasp4change.org)

Instagram [GASP4Change](#)  
Facebook [GASP Grandmothers Act to Save the Planet](#)  
Twitter [Gasp4Change](#)



Letter GASP sent to all the mayors and regional councillors in  
in the Golden Horseshoe by GASP Co-founders (Feb-2021)

**“Land use planning is the key lever in locking in or locking out  
greenhouse emissions”**

(Yuill Herbert, energy consultant for Canadian municipalities)

Tackling climate change starts on the ground, at the municipal level.

Municipalities have been working hard at reducing their greenhouse gas emissions by holding the line on sprawl, creating complete healthier communities, reducing car dependence and protecting precious farmland.

We fear that Ontario is moving in the opposite direction. Premier Ford's "market driven" policy changes would lock in Sprawl until 2051. Please stand up against the plethora of changes from the Province, which allow low density development and lessen our existing intensification plans, thus increasing our Carbon footprint. The priorities of the present government have resulted in fundamental changes to how Ontario grows. People deserve an opportunity to understand what is being proposed and have an opportunity to say how their communities will grow.

We along with many citizen groups ask that all Councils in the Golden Horseshoe stand in solidarity and pass similar motions. It is completely reasonable to delay the final submission of plans where so much is at stake until the public can fully understand the options and the consequences. Furthermore, considering that the planning period does not come on line until 2031, there would seem to be ample time to get this right.

The CLIMATE EMERGENCY worsens by the day and it must not be ignored by any level of government. We believe that land use planning is a critical lever for greenhouse gas emissions especially when it reaches 30 years into the future. We can either lock it in or lock it out.

We need a serious rethink so that we can best plan for the future.  
Let's plan better... together! Your children and grandchildren will thank you!

Lorraine Green & Carole Holmes  
Co- Chairs GASP Grand(m)others Act to Save the Planet

**Resolution No.:**

**Title: Resolution to Extend the Consultation Period for the Regional Official Plan Review**

**Date:** February 17, 2021

**Moved by:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Councillor J. Fogal

**Seconded by:** \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS Halton Region is currently conducting a municipal comprehensive review (MCR) of its Official plan whereby decisions must be made as to how all of the population and employment growth is to be accommodated in the local municipalities for the next 30 years;

AND WHEREAS since June 2019 the Province has amended a number of Provincial Statutes and policies that impact how municipalities plan for growth including the following:

- The Provincial Policy Statement,
- A Place to Grow: The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe,
- The Development Charges Act,
- The Planning Act,
- The Environmental Assessment Act, and
- The Conservation Authorities Act;

AND WHEREAS these significant changes include:

- reduced density targets in new greenfield development from 80 persons and jobs per hectare to 50 persons and jobs per hectare,
- reduced intensification targets from 60% beyond 2031 to 50%,
- setting minimum population and employment growth forecasts that can be exceeded subject to Provincial approval,
- extended the planning horizon from 2041 to the year 2051,
- introduced market demand as a consideration in determining the housing mix, and
- revisions to how municipalities fund growth

AND WHEREAS these and other changes signal an abrupt shift from the emphasis on creating compact and complete communities to a planning regime that facilitates lower density and car dependent communities;

AND WHEREAS Halton Hills, Burlington, Oakville, Milton and Halton Region have all declared climate change emergencies and must consider the role of land use planning in their strategies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions;

AND WHEREAS these changes create pressure to convert more class 1, 2 and 3 farmland in Halton to urban uses than would otherwise be necessary which is contrary to Halton's Official Plan and its 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, which both have as a goal to protect a permanent agricultural system in Halton;

And whereas in 2016 Halton Regional Council directed the Regional Chair to write to the Premier of Ontario expressing support for creating a provincial permanent agricultural system

AND WHEREAS the change of the planning horizon to 2051 means that future municipal councils and the public will have little power to change decisions about how they will grow for the next 30 years;

AND WHEREAS in the rural areas internet service is often poor, making it difficult for rural residents to participate in zoom calls.

And whereas ensuring that Ontarians have access to healthy safe food in the future requires thoughtful consideration of the long term impact of converting thousands of acres of prime agricultural lands in the Greater Golden Horseshoe to urban uses

And whereas in 2016 Halton Regional Council directed the Regional Chair to write to the Premier of Ontario expressing support for creating a provincial permanent agricultural system

AND WHEREAS the change of the planning horizon to 2051 means that future municipal councils and the public will have little power to change decisions about how they will grow for the next 30 years;

AND WHEREAS in the rural areas internet service is often poor, making it difficult for rural residents to participate in zoom calls.

AND WHEREAS Halton Region has adopted a public engagement charter that is based on transparency, notification and participation;

AND WHEREAS the current pandemic is making effective, in person public consultation impossible at a time when robust, informed public consultation is needed more than ever.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Regional Council direct Halton staff to delay its final report on its Official Plan Review until proper, in person, informed consultation with the public has been conducted on the growth concepts and the preferred growth concept;

AND FURTHER THAT ROPA 48, being the scoped Regional Official Plan Amendment which identifies non-discretionary components of a Regional Urban Structure that support local plans and priorities inside the current urban boundaries, be exempt from the requirement for in-person consultation with the public;

AND FURTHER THAT the Province be requested to suspend the timetable for municipal conformity to the Growth Plan and the Provincial Policy Statement to ensure that the public can fully participate in the process of planning their communities for the next 30 years of growth;

AND FURTHER THAT this resolution be circulated to Premier Doug Ford, Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Halton Region, local Halton municipalities, AMO, leader of the Provincial opposition parties, Halton MPP's , and the Greater Golden Horseshoe municipalities.

On February 17, 2021, Halton Regional Council passed the above motion unanimously, directing chair Gary Carr to write the Ford government and request permission to delay Halton's final report on its Official Plan review until "proper, in-person, informed consultation with the public has been conducted" on the growth concepts.

Once approved, the updated Official Plan will be used to guide population and employment growth in the local communities between 2031 and 2051 — a planning horizon that was extended by the province from the previous date of 2041.

- Councillor Fogal had a great local council with 8 years of focus on climate issues.
- She had her Chief Planner on board. Staff buy-in is essential
- She designed the motion in way that it didn't offend anyone. She lobbied each councillor to remove stumbling blocks
- The Pandemic has created uncertainty - remote jobs, Zoom. We need to slow things down

**To view Councillor Fogal presenting her motion at Halton Regional Council:**

- visit <https://edmweb.halton.ca/OnBaseAgendaOnline/Meetings/ViewMeeting?id=4196&doctype=2>
- drag the cursor on the bottom of the screen to find the 3 hour, 36 min. 15 second mark.

### GASP mobilized our membership to support Councillor Fogal's motion

In one week GASP members responded to the urgent “Call to Action” to support Councillor Fogal’s motion to delay the Regional Official Plan Review.

This provides an ‘opportunity’ to gain a better understanding of the many detrimental **impacts of sprawl on climate mitigation**. This success could not have happened without the” Nimble & Quick” responses by the many GASPs who made phone calls, wrote letters and emails to dozens of municipal councillors. Three GASP delegates, Lorraine, Daisy & Dorothy, made excellent compelling presentations to Halton Regional Council.

Actions that worked				
1	2	3	4	5
Building deep education amongst members first  Zoom Meetings  Mailchimp  Sharing articles	Letter from Co-Chairs on Letterhead to Mayor and Council	Individual letters from each member (spouses too)  Calls to Councillors especially by those with ties.	Zoom with other local Climate groups-urging them to inform membership (privately) and asking them to delegate.  Webinar with experts from Farming Community and Planners	Lobbied by phone and zoom to get a Variety of Delegates including high profile people including Farmers.



## **The High Cost of Sprawl**

***Environmental Defence has prepared an amazing website (link at bottom of page) to help communities fight sprawl. They outline the cost of sprawl:***

Sprawl is costly for our wallets, our health and our environment. We all pay for the cost either through our health, taxes or both.

Our governments subsidize sprawl by building infrastructure that supports low density development such as highways. But, studies show that low density development doesn't pay its way. Municipal councils often think that development charges cover the cost of growth, but they only cover the capital costs. Ongoing maintenance, operations and replacement are left out of the equation.

We all subsidize sprawl when costs for energy systems, water, sewage, road building and maintenance are evenly distributed to taxpayers.

There is a better way. Compact communities have lower infrastructure and servicing costs. If pipes don't need to be extended, we save the cost of the lengthening pipes and building roads, and fewer pumps are needed to move water and sewage. Municipal water pumping is between 30 and 40% of municipal energy costs, so a reduction here makes a big difference. Encouraging redevelopment in our existing urban areas renews old, failing infrastructure and allows for economic renewal in underused parts of our communities.

When we build housing far away from where we work it affects our health. Commuting increases air pollution, a leading cause of premature death. Air pollution from cars has been linked to asthma, heart disease and lung cancer. When we sit for hours in traffic, we spend less time walking, going to the gym or spending time with our family. In essence, commuting shortens our lives.

### **Smart Growth is another way of saying healthy, livable communities.**

It provides an alternative vision to sprawling low density living and recognizes that we need to make smart choices as our cities grow. As our population increases and more people move to cities, we need to grow smarter. Smart growth is a way of planning our communities that addresses challenges such as where to live, how to move around, and how to protect the resources that sustains us.

**Smart, complete communities have services and shops nearby to reduce gridlock. Check out the Environmental Defence website on Smart Growth:**

<https://environmentaldefence.ca/who-pays-for-sprawl/>  
<https://environmentaldefence.ca/what-is-smart-growth/>

## Myth of Developer's Fees Paying for Infrastructure

Senior Planner and chief architect of Ontario's farmland-protecting Greenbelt, Victor Doyle, points to the co-benefits of a compact city and the **multiplier effects of sprawl**. The key takeaway for our delegations is how he talks about the **myths of developer fees paying for infrastructure**:

*"We are driven by the myth that development charges provide an endless source of infrastructure funding. One need look no further than Mississauga to see living proof of the fallacy of this myth – for once development charges from greenfield development dried up as the city was built out - it is now looking at property tax increases, user fees and/or decreased services to be able to afford to maintain, operate and replace that infrastructure...."*

*To that end, there is extensive research from Ontario and across Canada and the U.S. showing how **compact urban form can save from 30-50%** compared to low density development patterns. This includes a 2009 Study from Calgary which concluded that **a development pattern 25% more compact could save \$11.2 billion (33%) in capital, operation and replacement of infrastructure costs over a 25 year period.**"*

### The Growth Plan and the Greenbelt Plan - Setting the Record Straight

Victor Doyle

For the last 5 years, elements of the development sector have invested significantly and intensively in mounting a multi-faceted communications campaign to undermine the Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan.

The claims that the plans are constraining the supply of land and ground-related housing are ill-founded. The available facts and evidence, including the vast inputs to the Crombie Commission, are clear:

- The Plans are absolutely the right direction to follow
- The evidence is irrefutable that the Plans do not go far enough to address the impacts of urban sprawl and provide for a truly sustainable future
- There is more than sufficient approved land and planned and existing ground related housing supplies to accommodate projected growth to 2031 - and likely 2041 - and any claims to the contrary are not borne out

Following is a two-part brief entitled: **The Growth Plan and the Greenbelt Plan - Setting the Record Straight**. It cites the key evidence as to why we need to strengthen the Plans - the "Case for Action" - along with the key facts on the supply of land and ground related housing - which provides the "Room to Act" in moving forward to strengthen the Plans.

<https://urbanneighbourhoods.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/victor-doyle-settingtherecordstraightmay82017-1.pdf>

## Most American cities find themselves caught in the Growth Ponzi Scheme.

Excerpt below is from the non profit organization Strongtowns.org led by Chuck Marohn  
<https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=chuck+marohn+-+strongtowns.org&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>

With increasing urban sprawl, we experience a modest, short term illusion of wealth in exchange for enormous, long term liabilities. We deprive our communities of prosperity, overload our families with debt and become trapped in a spiral of decline. This cannot continue.

What we have found is that the underlying financing mechanisms of the suburban era — our post-World War II pattern of development — operates like a classic Ponzi scheme, with ever-increasing rates of growth necessary to sustain long-term liabilities.

The local unit of government benefits from the enhanced revenues associated with new growth. But it also typically assumes the long-term liability for maintaining the new infrastructure. ***This exchange — a near-term cash advantage for a long-term financial obligation — is one element of a Ponzi scheme.*** The other is the realization that the revenue collected does not come near to covering the costs of maintaining the infrastructure. In America, we have a ***ticking time bomb of unfunded liability for infrastructure maintenance.*** The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) estimates the cost at \$5 trillion — but that's just for major infrastructure, not the minor streets, curbs, walks, and pipes that serve our homes.

The reason we have this gap is because the public yield from the suburban development pattern — the amount of tax revenue obtained per increment of liability assumed — is ridiculously low. Over a life cycle, a city frequently receives just a dime or two of revenue for each dollar of liability. The engineering profession will argue, as ASCE does, that we're simply not making the investments necessary to maintain this infrastructure. This is nonsense. We've simply built in a way that is not financially productive.

We've done this because, as with any Ponzi scheme, new growth provides the illusion of prosperity. In the near term, revenue grows, while the corresponding maintenance obligations — which are not counted on the public balance sheet — are a generation away.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, we completed one life cycle of the suburban experiment, and at the same time, growth in America slowed. There were many reasons involved, but one significant factor was that our suburban cities were now starting to experience cash outflows for infrastructure maintenance. We'd reached the "long term," and the end of easy money.

That is now our greatest immediate challenge. We've actually embedded this experiment of suburbanization into our collective psyche as the "American dream," a non-negotiable way of life that must be maintained at all costs. What will we throw away trying to sustain the unsustainable? How much of our dwindling wealth will be poured into propping up this experiment gone awry?

We need to end our investments in the suburban pattern of development, along with the multitude of direct and indirect subsidies that make it all possible. Further, we need to intentionally return to our traditional pattern of development, one based on creating neighborhoods of value, scaled to actual people. When we do this, we will inevitably rediscover our traditional values of prudence and thrift as well as the value of community and place. See video - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lalpm\\_7Y00k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lalpm_7Y00k)

## Anti-Sprawl Arguments

City councillors have a duty to ensure their town's growth plan adheres to **fiscal responsibility**. Councillors endeavour to be good stewards of taxpayers dollars.

Sprawl is wasteful and expensive.

Sprawl necessitates than then locks in private vehicle usage

Sprawl undermines existing ongoing public transit investments.

Sprawl is a one-time decision by a city to permanently make efforts to address the Climate Emergency more difficult.

Sprawl means more impervious surface area. This means more stormwater going into our management system instead of into the soil to hydrate plants and crops! We know that climate change is increasing the amount of precipitation in storm events. So why would we knowingly make our ability to address the problem worse?

Urban sprawl refers to the expansion of poorly planned, low-density, auto-dependent development, which spreads out over large amounts of land, putting long distances between homes, stores, and work and creating a high segregation between residential and commercial uses with harmful impacts on the people living in these areas and the ecosystems and wildlife that have been displaced.

Although some would argue that urban sprawl has its benefits, such as creating local economic growth, urban sprawl has many negative consequences for residents and the environment, such as:

- higher water and air pollution,
- increased traffic fatalities and jams,
- loss of agricultural capacity,
- increased car dependency,
- higher taxes,
- increased runoff into rivers and lakes,
- harmful effects on human health, including higher rates of obesity, high blood pressure, hypertension and chronic diseases,
- increased flooding,
- decrease in social capital and
- loss of natural habitats, wildlife and open space.

Source: <https://www.everythingconnects.org/urban-sprawl.html>

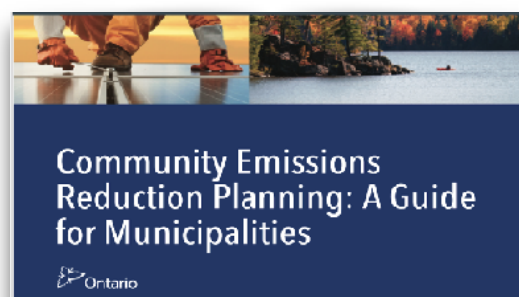


## How Communities and Municipalities can reduce their GHG Emissions

Local government as...	Authority	Sample actions	Community energy and emissions planning techniques	Potential impact on GHG emissions reductions
Investors	Indirect control	Renewable natural gas from a landfill, zero emissions transit system, cycling infrastructure, electric vehicle charging stations, recycling programs, public/private partnerships	Situational analysis [review of capital budgets]	Medium-High
Influencers	Indirect control	Official Plan policies, Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs	Modelling and scenario-planning	High

The above chart is found on page 32 of **Community Emissions Reduction Planning: A Guide for Municipalities**  
[http://www.downloads.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env\\_reg/er/documents/2018/013-2083.pdf](http://www.downloads.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env_reg/er/documents/2018/013-2083.pdf)

Local governments have a **high impact** on GHG emissions reductions through their **Official Plan policies** and Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs



Strengthen climate change policies in the municipal land-use planning process	Support municipal and other stakeholder climate action	Reduce congestion and improve economic productivity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Require electric vehicle charging in surface lots.</li> <li>» Set green development standards.</li> <li>» Make climate change planning a priority.</li> <li>» Put climate change in Official Plans.</li> <li>» Eliminate minimum parking requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Establish a Challenge Fund.</li> <li>» Support community energy planning.</li> <li>» Support community energy mapping and platforms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Help manage congestion.</li> <li>» Reduce single-passenger vehicle trips through Transportation Demand Management Plans.</li> </ul> 

## Excerpts of a Presentation on Low Carbon Communities and Municipal Planning by Yuill Herbert

<https://climateactionnetwork.ca/pathways-to-zero-video-library/>

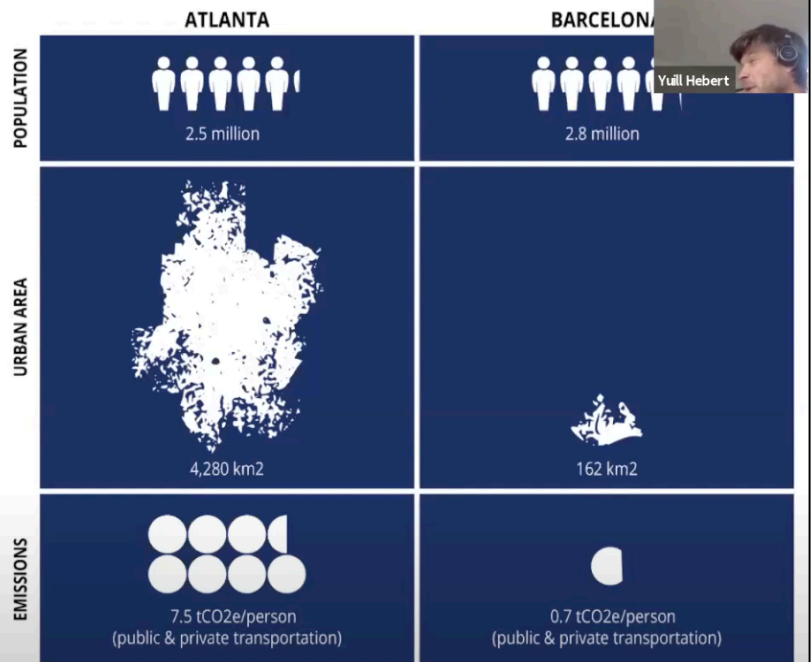
Click on Chapter One - Yuill's talk starts around 1:13:01 into the webinar

**Yuill Herbert** has been an SSG Principal for over 17 years. He pioneered land-use and GHG emission planning in Canada, helped introduce the LEED for Homes rating system in Canada and co-developed the Integrated Design Process course used throughout Canada and the US. Yuill has worked on and led more than forty community energy and GHG plans and models across Canada. <http://www.ssg.coop/about/>

It's difficult to quantify Climate Change - Creating community climate plans is complex. SSG provides a detailed roadmap on how to decarbonize communities. It's a technical and capacity-building exercise. There is no one-size-fits-all solution.

The **spatial configuration** of a community determines its current and future GHG emissions.

The durability of the patterns of built environment and the associated infrastructure results in a phenomenon called **lock-in or path dependence**



Source: Transit Density: Atlanta, the United States and Western Europe. Bertaud and Richardson, 2004.

There is no effective response to climate change that does not involve local governments. The most powerful mechanism is **land use planning** because it can lock in a lot of emissions or very little emissions. The importance of spatial configuration is shown in the above visual. Barcelona's GHG emissions are 1/10th of Atlanta's emissions - both cities have roughly the same population. Land use planning is a key lever as shown above.

## Co-benefits of a Low Carbon Community



Communities that are tackling climate change find that it helps with other goals and aspirations.

- Health is major co-benefit of tackling climate change.
- A climate action plan also stimulates jobs and innovation.
- Social capital benefits.

### A low carbon plan results in a healthier community.



#### **Less smog.**

Traffic-related air pollution at relatively low concentrations in Ontario is associated with increased mortality from cardiovascular disease.

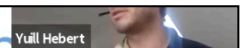
#### **People walk & cycle more.**

A 19% reduction in all-cause mortality risk has been shown to occur with 30 minutes of daily moderate-intensity activity, 5 days per week.

#### **The elderly are less isolated.**

Isolation and weakened community networks resulting from sprawl can result in negative mental health and social capital impacts.

### A low carbon plan is an effective economic development strategy.



#### **There are more jobs.**

Building retrofits alone will result in significant new opportunities.

#### **There are new business opportunities.**

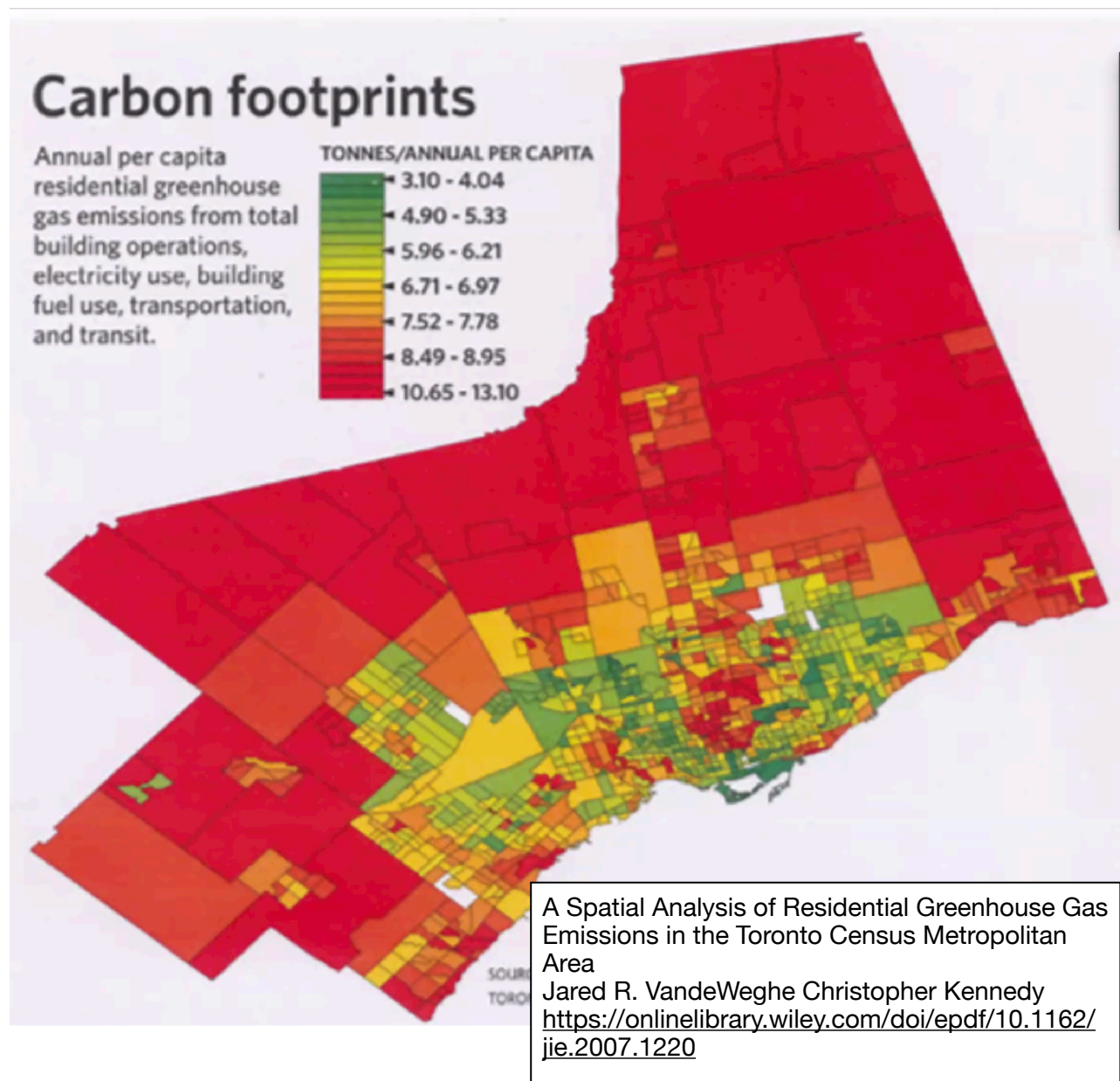
Heat pumps, district energy, electric vehicles, renewable energy systems, energy storage.

#### **The community's reputation is enhanced.**

People want to live and work in green municipalities. Vancouver's green brand is valued at \$31 billion, outperforming San Francisco, Singapore, Sydney and others.

Climate action planning is also whole city planning - local waste water systems, transportation, social implications. Local communities have levers to influence 50-60% of GHG emissions. Local information is key to a good climate action plan.

Edmonton has adopted a cumulative carbon budget to align their targets with 1.5°C. They have a carbon accounting framework that enables them to align all their decisions with carbon budgets. Global carbon budgets are cumulative, not annual. There is no limit to what a community can do on climate action.



This is a 2007 analysis but the principles haven't changed. The further you live from work and the downtown core - the more greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions you generate on a per capita basis. The Ford government's growth plans will result in a legacy of greater GHG emissions for generations.

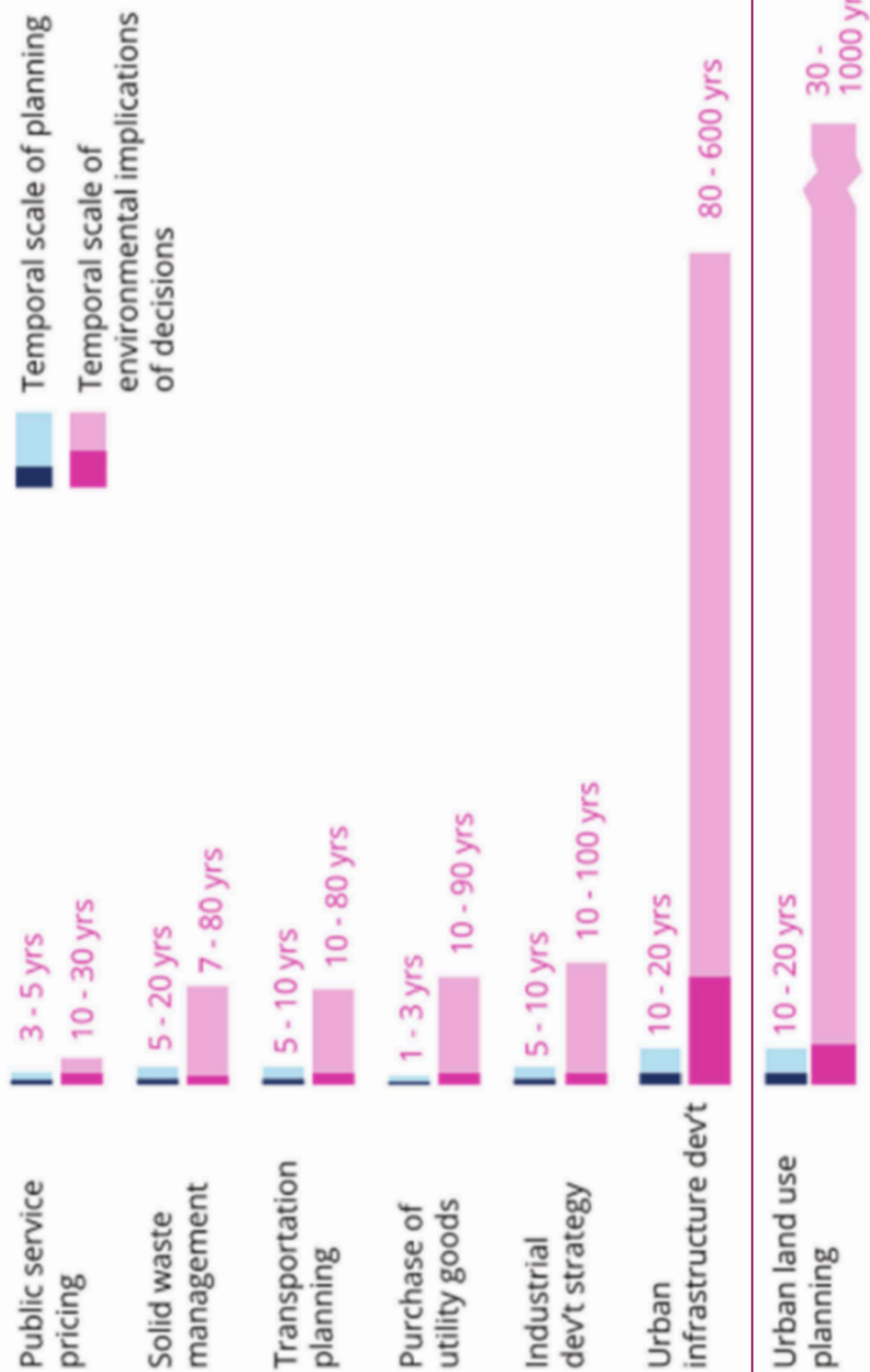
According to the World Meteorological Organization, we are on a path to warming the world by 3 to 5 degrees Celsius by the end of the century. Turning our economic ship around in time to keep the warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius would require, the IPCC authors found, **cutting global emissions approximately in half by 2030 and getting to net-zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2050. Canada has pledged to achieve this reduction. The Ontario government's new planning rules take us in the opposite direction.**



Land Use Planning have implications that can last for centuries. Sprawl is a one-time decision by a city that can permanently make efforts to address the Climate Emergency more difficult.

Implications of Land Use planning can last up to 1000 years

TEMPORAL SCALES OF MUNICIPAL PLANNING DECISIONS VERSUS IMPLICATIONS

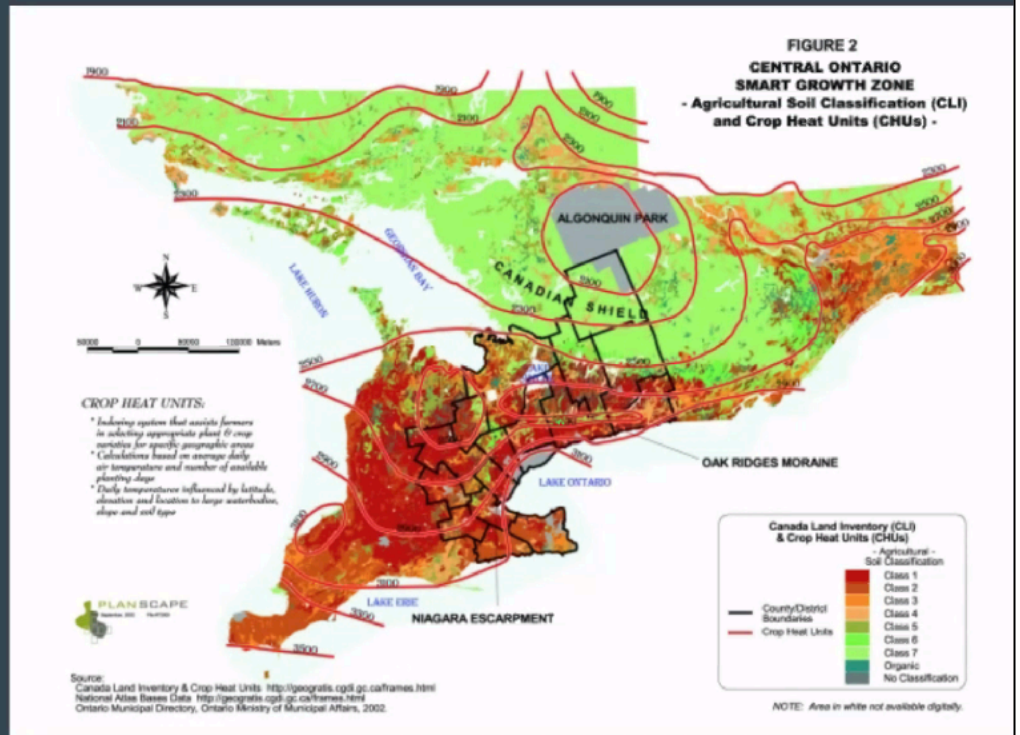


Source: Bai et al 2010 as represented by Sustainable Solutions Group in City of Edmonton's GHG Emissions & Energy Analysis for the City Plan - Feb 2020

**RED is prime  
agricultural  
land**

**Only 0.5% is  
Class 1 and most  
of it is in  
Southern Ontario**

**#SaveTheFarmOnt**



## **What is the value of farmland?**

Environmental benefits like carbon sequestration, climate change mitigation, nutrient cycling, pollination services, soil erosion control, water cycling (purification, retention, flood attenuation, groundwater recharge) and wildlife and endangered species habitat are possible

## **What do ecosystems do for us?**

Far from being a luxury that cash-strapped economies can ill afford, spending money on restoring and preserving ecosystems is a sound investment. On average, every \$1 spent on ecosystem restoration gives a return of around \$10 in ecosystem goods and services.

Some of that is direct monetary returns, such as from sustainable wood, improved agricultural yields and ecotourism revenues. But the greater part is freebies that society would otherwise have to shell out for, such as clean air and water, pollination, pest control, nutrient recycling, carbon sequestration, fewer animal-transmitted diseases and greater resilience to extreme weather and natural disasters.

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg24933223-300-rescue-plan-for-nature-how-to-fix-the-biodiversity-crisis/#ixzz6msP8luSP>

## Ford Changed the Rule Book:

The province is forcing cities to build a “market driven” plan 30 years out with lower density targets.

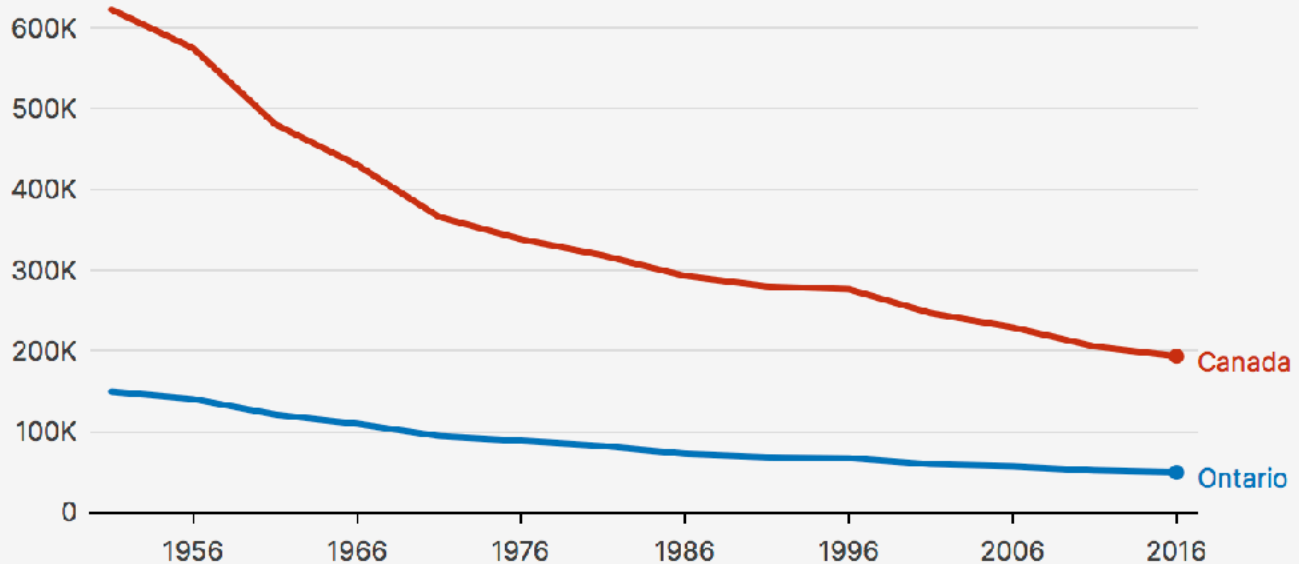
With the Climate Emergency, food supply may well become unstable due to droughts south of the border. Paving over farmland is not a good strategy for many reasons. It will increase GHG emissions significantly and weaken Ontario's ability to adapt to Climate Change. As Peter Victor, Chair of the Greenbelt, said: “You can't eat real estate.”

'Yet, as in so many other things, the Ford government offers no vision for a path forward other than to respond to the immediate wishes of the development industry and its shrinking group municipal allies.'

[#StopTheLandGrab](#) [#SaveTheFarmOnt](#)  
[thespec.com/opinion/contributors/peter-victor/](https://thespec.com/opinion/contributors/peter-victor/) via [@thespec](#)

## Number of farms in Ontario and Canada declining

Ontario is home to more than a quarter of Canada's farms. Between 2011 and 2016, the number of farms in the province dropped 4.5%.



SOURCE: [STATISTICS CANADA](#)

TORONTO STAR

## Canada's net-zero emissions goal by 2050

Canada is committed to implementing the *Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change*; while strengthening existing and introducing new GHG reducing measures to exceed Canada's 2030 emissions reduction goal, and beginning work so that Canada can achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

### Councillor Fogal's New Resolution:

#### Incorporate a Climate Lens into the Regional Official Plan

Integrate the 2051 growth plan into Canada's 2050 Net Zero Emissions Goal

Starting with the town, then the region, Councillor Fogal is drafting a new resolution:

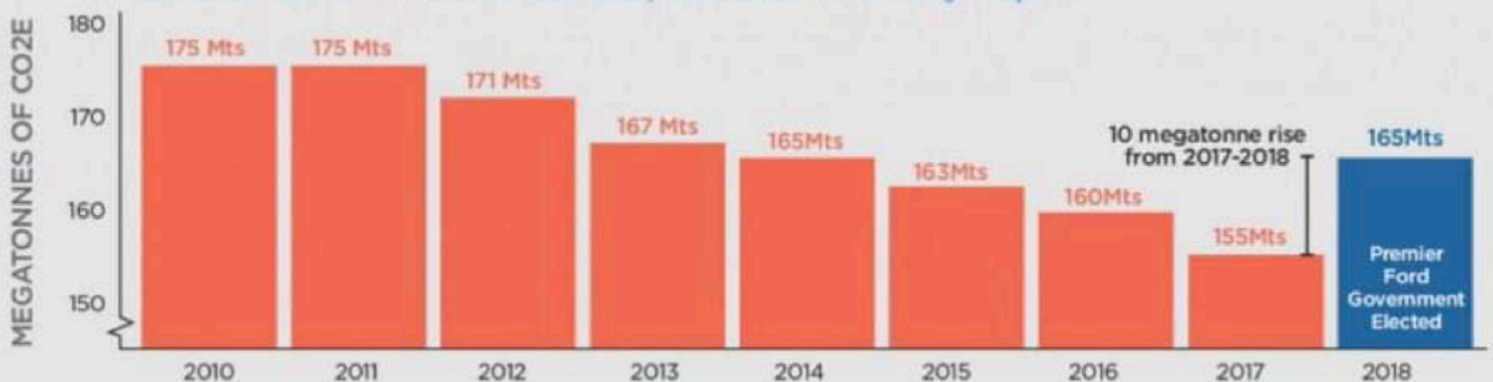
- To instruct planning staff to put into our regional official plan *interim* or *staged goals* for GHG emission reductions and;
- To include in the plan measures to achieve that goal.

People will understand that the two dates (2050 and 2051) are the same. If we are ever going to achieve the 2050 GHG Emissions goal, we need to embed GHG reductions strategies into all our official plans for 2051.

### Ford government policy has been against environmental protection from the start :

- Cancelling cap-and-trade, which capped greenhouse gas emissions while allowing polluters to buy and trade exemptions.
- Fighting the federal carbon tax in court, through a gas pump sticker campaign and advertisements.
- Eliminating the office of the environmental commissioner of Ontario, which is now under the purview of the auditor general.
- Reducing funding to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, including emergency forest firefighting.
- Reducing funding to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.
- Cutting flood management funding to conservation authorities.
- Making changes to the Endangered Species Act and much more!

Figure 1: Historical Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Ontario  
Source: Government of Canada, National Inventory Report





Since June 2019 the Province has amended a number of Provincial Statutes and policies that impact how municipalities plan for growth including the following:

- The Planning Act
- The Provincial Policy Statement
- A Place to Grow: The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe
- The Environmental Assessment Act
- The Conservation Authorities Act
- The Development Charges Act

## Consultant Yuill Herbert for 60 Canadian Municipalities:

“The most powerful mechanism municipalities have to reduce CO2 emissions is

### LAND USE PLANNING

“Land-use Planning is the key lever to locking in or locking out greenhouse gas emissions at the municipal level.”

### *So much is at stake -Councillor Jane Fogal, Halton Hill*

#### **Ford’s plan to lock in development plans before next election**

The Ford government has weakened Conservation Authorities, abused the MZO process and altered the land use planning process to lock in development until 2051 before the next provincial election on June 2, 2022. Ford’s growth policies will enrich already rich people. **So much is at stake.**

The Ford government plans to lock in urban sprawl, leave Ontario with a legacy of increased GHG emissions and rich developer pals.

We are up against a well planned attack on environmental protection and climate action in Ontario. Ever since the Ford government was elected, they have been effective at shutting down opposition in favour of developers:

- getting rid of the Environmental Commissioner’s office
- weakening Conservation Authorities,
- issuing MZO’s,
- changing the planning act

They keep changing the rules by incrementalism. They bring in new rules and we let it go.

We need to fight for the healthy future of Ontario.

## **A Sprawling Disaster - Doug Ford's Plan for Ontario**

*by Jane Fogal, Halton Hills Councillor*

The Ford Government, through a rapid-fire series of decisions and legislation has successfully rewritten the rules for municipal planning in a manner that is very favourable to developers and very unfavorable to municipalities trying to build healthy, complete communities and address climate change.

Since 2005 municipalities in Ontario have been obliged to conform to the Places to Grow Act. This Act sought to reign in sprawl by requiring municipalities to meet intensification goals when planning to accommodate growth. Also development on new urban areas, generally farmland, was required to meet higher density targets as well.

The Greenbelt Act was also approved to ensure greenspace and natural areas remain intact to protect the ecological function of the land.

Over the past 15 years, Ontarians also saw enormous investments by Metrolinx in GO Transit and additional funding for municipal transit systems which benefitted from intensification.

The Green Energy Act and Cap and Trade provided incentives for green energy production and funding for transit and energy efficiencies.

The Province shifted funding away from new higher order highways. In the case of the GTA West highway, the cancellation came after an expert panel found that transportation goals could be reached from other interventions such as creating subsidized truck lanes on highway 407 or introducing congestion pricing. These alternatives could be achieved in a much shorter timeframe, would cost less and be more effective, all without the environmental damage or increased greenhouse gas emissions.

### **AND THEN EVERYTHING CHANGED**

The Conservatives, led by Doug Ford, won the provincial election in June 2018. Although changes to municipal planning and weakening of environmental protections The Conservatives, led by Doug Ford, won the provincial election in June 2018. Although changes to municipal planning and weakening of environmental protections were not part of the Ford election platform they have become a major focus both before and during the pandemic.

The Cap-and-Trade system and Green Energy Act were cancelled and green projects under construction were ordered to be dismantled. Incentives for Electric Vehicles and energy retrofits were cancelled.

### **REVIVING THE GTA WEST/ HIGHWAY 413**

Shortly after taking power, Premier Ford announced the revival of the GTA West 400 series highway (413) with the launch of a fast-tracked Environmental Assessment.

Reviving the 413 was not included in Ford's platform and was a surprise to most people. There was no consideration given to the alternative solutions recommended in the expert panel report.

However, there is no doubt that major landowners along the GTA West corridor will reap benefits as it is normal for land along a 400 series highway to be rezoned for development. Although the construction of the highway alone will have significant negative impacts due to destruction of sensitive environmental areas and farmland, the anticipated adjacent development will do far more harm in the long run. This will result in sprawl along the length of the new highway.

## AMENDMENT #1 TO THE PLACES TO GROW ACT AND THE PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT

The Places to Grow Act and the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) work together to help municipalities build complete healthy communities. The Ford government has changed a number of important regulations through introduction of Amendment #1 and amendments to the PPS.

Changes that will promote sprawl include

- The Amendment stipulates minimum population growth goals but removed maximums meaning that developers can push for greater population increases.
- **Density goals have been reduced** meaning there can be more single family dwellings ie sprawl.
- ‘Market Demand’ was explicitly added as justification for planning the housing mix. Since we know there is a demand for single family dwellings, the developers will argue for it based on the market. Expect more sprawl.
- The planning horizon has been moved out to 2051. This means that today’s municipal councils must approve plans to accommodate population growth to 2051. It pushes designating rural land now to provide housing up to 30 years into the future. The net result is that developers who have speculated on future development lands don’t have to wait 20 years to get permission to build. They get permission for all of the land required for 30 years of housing development now.
- The deadline for municipalities to approve their 30-year plan is summer 2022, conveniently before the next provincial election. Should Ford lose the election, it doesn’t matter. The land will have been approved for development and cancelling approved land has never been done before.
- Public input into planning into the next 30 years is scheduled to happen during the pandemic when it is impossible to hold in-person meetings or workshops

### CONSEQUENCES

We are living in a time when Climate Change is causing weather related events such as massive destructive hurricanes, frightening wildfires, famine, property damage, floods, massive loss of species, etc. etc.

Due to this emergency cities around the world are working hard at reducing their greenhouse gas emissions by holding the line on sprawl, creating complete healthier communities, reducing car dependence and protecting farmland.

Ontario is moving in the opposite direction, purposely encouraging sprawl, making people more dependent on cars and commuting for hours each day, making transit less effective, building new highways that will encourage more driving, devoting more space to parked cars and less to greenspace for people, paving over ecological areas that support our water resources.

There is only one logical explanation for this massive failure to lead Ontario in a positive healthy direction – greed. Just follow the money. The developers want to make more money and Doug Ford has made it much easier for them to do that.

### WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

#1 Municipalities should refuse to meet the timetable set out to be compliant with the Places to Grow Act. There is no reason to rush to identify lands that won’t be available for 10 more years at a minimum. Planning anything this big should wait until after the pandemic and should be after the next provincial

election. The people of Ontario deserve an opportunity to understand what is being proposed and an opportunity to say how their communities will grow

#2 Municipalities should refuse to open up their urban boundaries at this time. Although making the boundaries permanently fixed is the best solution, they are always open to review by future councils. Developers won't like that so they will appeal the decision. The appeal process will take months to sort out by which time the election will have taken place and perhaps sanity will return with a new government.

#3 People can lobby their MPP's and tell them that this is not what they voted for. Protests such as we saw regarding the 413 highway actually work. The uproar over Ford telling developers he would open up the Greenbelt for development blew up and he walked that idea back.

#4 To address the problem of affordability which Ford said was the impetus for the planning act changes, municipalities should demand that all subdivision plans include 10% affordable units that will be available for the municipality to purchase. The municipality can then require that these units be built to the highest energy efficiency level. Upon purchase the municipality would rent the affordable units at rates to pay for the carrying cost. Cost of the added energy upgrades would be offset by the reduced energy cost. The net result would be a guaranteed increase in rental properties and increased energy efficiency in the housing stock. It would also contribute to achieving a complete community with a mix of housing types and affordability.

## **CONCLUSION**

The priorities of the current government have resulted in fundamental changes to how Ontario evolves. Unfortunately, this is out of step with the circumstances and challenges we are facing today. The Climate Change emergency gets worse by the day and cannot be ignored by any level of government.

The solutions to our problems exist but to use those solutions there must be a will to act in the best interests of all the people. We need the government to change course and do the right things. Incentivizing sprawl and car culture is no longer acceptable.

Now is the time to push back and call for the government to stop enriching developers and start tackling affordable housing, greenhouse gas emissions, the loss of significant wetlands and habitats and the loss of some of the best agricultural lands in Canada.

**Response to Minister Steve Clark's Rebuttal to the article A Sprawling Disaster**  
*Councillor Jane Fogal Town of Halton Hills & Region of Halton*  
February 27 2021

In an article published in the Oakville News on February 21 2021, 'A Sprawling Disaster' I laid out the policy and regulatory changes made by the Ford Government with respect to Ontario's municipal planning regime. Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Hon. Steve Clark in his rebuttal began by pointing to the Greenbelt. Although the Greenbelt is of great value it does not relate to the subject which was incentivizing sprawl.

Minister Clark asserts that the new market-based land needs assessment will support "the right housing mix". Although left unsaid, **The Market** referenced is the single family dwelling market. The new planning regime demands that municipalities plan to meet the theoretical single family dwelling market demand and project that demand 30 years into the future. It locks in planning for sprawl during the entire timeframe we have to get our world to net -zero greenhouse gas emissions. To be clear, the Province's introduction of Amendment #1 does not protect what matters most. **It is designed to convert greater swaths of farmland into urban uses; not less.**

Minister Clark states that there has been a housing crisis in Ontario for 10 years and implied that this crisis can be solved by zoning more land for housing. It would be useful to know exactly which crisis is being addressed by the planning regulatory changes.

If the housing crisis is the soaring cost of new single family dwellings, it is hard to see exactly how zoning more land for single family dwellings will reduce the selling price especially when these houses can't be built until 2031 at the soonest.

Developers in Halton are not experiencing a lack of shovel ready land. In fact in Halton some developers have underperformed when it comes to building on approved lands. Builders will build when it suits their circumstance and when the market is favourable.

On the other hand, if the crisis is the **lack of Affordable Housing**, focusing on **The Market** will not incentivize building the type of housing that is less costly, namely townhouses and apartments. What gets built depends entirely on how much land is zoned for each building type.

Prior to the introduction of **The Market** into the Land Needs Assessment framework, municipalities were using zoning to achieve a healthy mix of housing types. The goal of introducing **The Market** is to skew the proportion of land towards single family dwellings which will produce sprawl.

The provision of a healthy mix of housing types cannot be accomplished by using "The Market" as the rationale for planning decisions. But it is an effective tool to lock in development permission and profits to the year 2051 for large land speculators.

The theme of A Sprawling Disaster was not to hinder growth but rather to **build smarter, to preserve as much agricultural land as possible and to take climate change into account**. The recent changes introduced by the Ford government go in the opposite direction, will grossly over-estimate land requirements and will greatly reduce our ability to meet our greenhouse gas commitment of net-zero by 2050. We simply cannot afford to have development interests supersede the public good.

## **Democracy vs. the Market**

### **Should voters or dollars decide how Ontario should be developed?**

*Opinion Piece, Oakville News - March 12, 2021*

Oakville News readers have recently been treated to an informative back and forth between Halton Hills councillor Jane Fogal and Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing MPP Steve Clark on the issue of how our province will accommodate its population growth.

It's an incredibly important issue that will shape the future of our community and our province. And we're heartened by the readership stats that tell us that the Oakville News community cares deeply about this issue.

Ontario has about 15 million residents today and will grow by five million by 2050. Successive provincial governments have been trying to limit the impact that growth will have on our farmland, greenspace and natural environment.

**Planning rules have been put in place to build housing that uses less land per person, cuts down on paved roads and adds density in the right places. The aim, in other words, is to limit the sprawl that has bloated much of the GTA over the last 50 years.**

Until recently, voters have consistently elected governments committed to **preserving greenspace and reducing car-dependent sprawl**. At the ballot box we've appeared to endorse a plan for more compact growth and increased intensification.

But the truth is, single-family homes in lower density neighbourhoods are still the easiest and most profitable for developers to build and sell. It is what many people want to buy. Even just the promise of that type of development can reward speculators with soaring land values.

We have a mismatch between market demand – which would bring more single-family housing at the cost of paving over farmland and greenspace – and what the population has voted for until now. In other words, between individual home buyers' desires and the collective desires of Ontario society.

This kind of mismatch has happened before. The Toronto condominium market was driven not by the desire of buyers to become cliff-dwellers but by the absence of other kinds of housing stock giving affordable access to an urban lifestyle for millennials.

If we require higher density construction and transit-friendly intensification, eventually that is what developers will build and what people will buy. But should they have to? This is what the Ford government is challenging.

So far, developers have not been meeting market demand by building on the shovel-ready approved land that is available, because it's not zoned for what they can sell most profitably. The result has been a supply shortage that has contributed to an "affordability crisis" and to buyer frustration used to pressure government to release more land for "market-based" housing stock. Those opposed to this counter that if supply of new single family homes is restricted, those wanting it will drive up the price of resale homes. As we can't afford to keep paving over

greenspace, single family homes will, as elsewhere in the world, become more and more a luxury, with a higher percentage of the population choosing less sprawl-inducing housing forms.

The Ford government has instead responded to this by **requiring municipalities to open up land on a 30-year planning basis. They argue this will increase housing supply and improve affordability.**

But the problem is that builders will develop the most profitable land first – the single-family, greenfield sprawl that covers farmland with concrete, requires new roads and highways, and leaves buyers dependent on their cars.

This may satisfy short-term market demand, and undoubtedly will improve developers' profits. But the idea was nowhere in Ford's 2018 election platform, and flies directly in the face of what voters appear to have asked for over the last two decades.

Worst of all, it would have a permanent impact on Ontario's future.

Once municipalities have designated land for development – something the Ford government wants done before the next provincial election – it would be impossible to reverse, even if a new government wanting to return to the longstanding policy of fighting sprawl were elected.

**We believe the consequences of these decisions are too far-reaching, consequential and irreversible to be made without the input of the voters.**

The Ford government should delay changes and **make this issue part of its platform in the next election. A vote will allow the public a chance to understand the implications and weigh in on the idea.**



**Peter Calthorpe, author of *Urbanism in the Age of Climate Change*, is principal of Calthorpe Associates and was named one of the 25 “innovators on the cutting edge” by Newsweek magazine for his work redefining models of growth in America.**

***Message from Michelle Tom, Political Action Chair, GASP***

Peter Calthorpe's work dovetails with that of Kevin Eby's and Councillor Fogal's. Peter's message below is positive. Councillor Fogal has been influenced by this movement from the annual conferences "Making Cities Liveable." We can't underestimate the power of city planning. Onward to Caledon and Peel. As Peter Calthorpe writes:

"The problem with the environmentalists that are advocating for action on climate change now is they tend to create a checklist of technologies as a solution. If you look at Al Gore's new book, it is just a compendium of different technologies that can be stacked up one on the other to solve the problem. It doesn't really change the kinds of cities we live in, the kinds of communities we inhabit. It doesn't address our lifestyle; it basically says we can solve it all with a new piece of technology. It's the thinking that the electric car is the single solution, rather than reducing the amount of travel that we need to live our lives in a healthy and robust way. In the end it will take both.

The problem with the technological approach is that it's single-minded and it misses out ***on all the co-benefits that come from good urbanism. The reason urbanism is such a cost effective solution is that it solves more than the carbon problem.*** It creates a broader range of housing, which is really needed now in America; with the real estate crash we all understand that a big part of that was driven by the fact that we overbuilt one market segment (large lot, single family) to the point where it lost value in a dramatic way."

**Interview with Peter Calthorpe, *Author of Urbanism in the Age of Climate Change***

<https://dirt.asla.org/2011/02/08/interview-with-peter-calthorpe-author-of-urbanism-in-the-age-of-climate-change/>

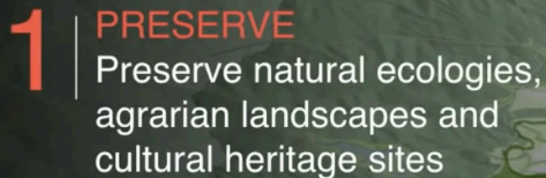
## Peter Calthrope's TED Talk

### Seven Principles for building better cities - as demonstrated in video

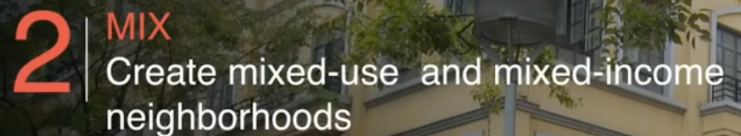
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFjD3NMv6Kw&t=162s>

#### Principles start at 9:55 of TED Talk

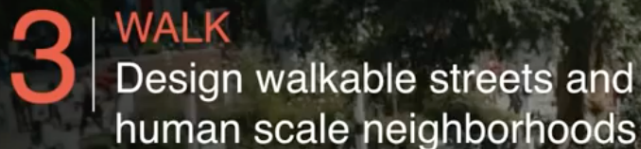
More than half of the world's population already lives in cities, and another 2.5 billion people are projected to move to urban areas by 2050. The way we build new cities will be at the heart of so much that matters, from climate change to economic vitality to our very well-being and sense of connectedness. Peter Calthrope is already at work planning the cities of the future and advocating for community design that's focused on human interaction. He shares seven universal principles for solving sprawl and building smarter, more sustainable cities.



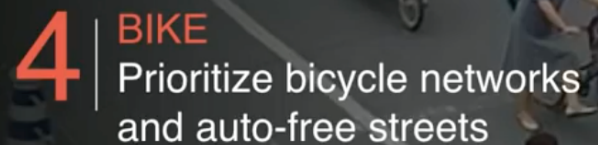
**1** | **PRESERVE**  
Preserve natural ecologies,  
agrarian landscapes and  
cultural heritage sites



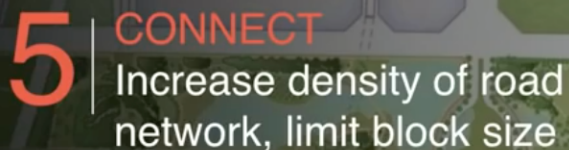
**2** | **MIX**  
Create mixed-use and mixed-income  
neighborhoods



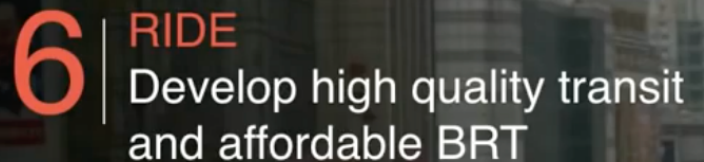
**3** | **WALK**  
Design walkable streets and  
human scale neighborhoods



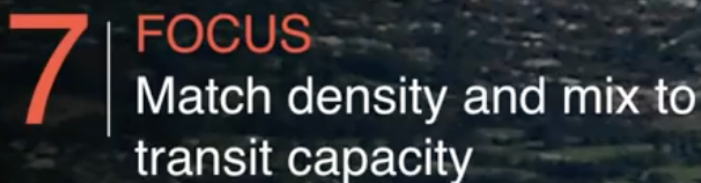
**4** | **BIKE**  
Prioritize bicycle networks  
and auto-free streets



**5** | **CONNECT**  
Increase density of road  
network, limit block size



**6** | **RIDE**  
Develop high quality transit  
and affordable BRT



**7** | **FOCUS**  
Match density and mix to  
transit capacity

## A Presentation in Support of

### ITEM 12.1 Request to delay Submission of Growth Plan Conformity Official Plan Amendment, Suspension of TimeTable of Municipal Conformity of Growth Plan and Extension to the Deadline for Growth Plan Conformity

Mr Mayor and Honourable Councilors, my name is Mervyn Russell. I am a retired clergy person with over 50 years experience. I live in Oakville and am a member of the Halton Action for Climate Emergency Now [HACEN] I thank you for the opportunity to present to you,

I am writing in support of the Resolution moved by Councillor Clark. I understand this resolution to be for the Council to unite around in support of principles of planning that need to be followed in a time of climate emergency.

What are these principles? I believe there are four: The first is the principle of **responsibility**-- responsibility to care for the environment, and for the health and safety of the residents of this Region in a time of climate change. Council has passed a Climate Emergency Resolution recognizing that carbon emissions are heating the atmosphere in a manner that is adversely changing the interactions of the global systems that support all life on this planet. Council also clearly recognizes the need to maintain the sustainability of both the variety and vitality of living creatures and preserving the essential quality of the planet's air, water and soil.

The care of the environment is not an important concern of this Provincial Government. From almost the first day when they dismissed the Environmental Commissioner to their recent disempowering of the Conservation Authorities, we have seen their dismissive attitudes and actions towards responsibility for the environment. In this instance, less density of housing means less agricultural land, which is often a carbon sink and, instead, more urban sprawl with more carbon car travel, which results in more car fumes, which results in more heating of the atmosphere, which results in more climate made disasters

The second principle is **security**. The extension of the urban boundary into the area of so called 'White Land' will result in a significant loss of agricultural land. The Ontario Federation of Agriculture states Ontario loses 175 acres of farmland each day and has already lost 42 % of its farmland since 1945. Only 2.5% of Canada's landmass is suitable for farming, and SW Ontario has some of the best of that land. This land produces a source of energy that is more important than oil or electricity - food. A country that cannot feed itself is not a fully sovereign country and a country that is not fully sovereign is not secure. The rate of urban expansion must be curtailed.

Provincial Governments have not had an appreciation for the importance of agriculture. They have considered agricultural land as vacant, undeveloped, The business of agriculture is undervalued and agriculture is seen as not quite part of the modern business world, even though I doubt if there is an industry that has improved its productivity in the last 50 years more than agriculture. It contributes \$13.7 billion to the economy of Ontario, which is more than another other industry. What is more is that there are two very good reasons for not encroaching further on agricultural land. First, there is still land available from the Provincial 2012 designated land for urbanisation, and, second, with all the changes in social relations both as regards family life and working life, who can possibly say what the demand for urban development will be in 2051?

The third principle is **creativity**. Council seems to recognize that what has taken place as urban and industrial development, is boring, inconvenient, wasteful and unhealthy. It is open to developing new kinds of urban areas in which the majority of everyday needs of food, recreation, education, health, are within walking distance and within an environment with trees, grass, flowers, birds and small animals. Urban hubs where life is more stimulating and satisfying. Where people can meet and mix, have a sense of being part of a vital and varied community and so decrease isolation, separation, fear, prejudice and crime.

On the basis of the Provincial Government's commitment to low intensity building expansion, it would seem it is still supporting extensive areas of sprawling, monotonous dullness. Where homes are where you sleep, eat and watch Netflix when you are not commuting, working or shopping.

The fourth principle is **democracy**. True, the public will not be asked to vote on the contents of the City's Official Plan in order to decide what should be done; however, voting is not all there is to democracy. Full democracy means encouraging and enabling the public to be aware of what can and should be done in society and to provide opportunities for discussion and evaluation of different opinions and then voting for representatives and parties that they think will make the best decisions, Public consultation is expressly mentioned in The Provincial Policy Statement as an essential part of the process of planning land use.

The Provincial Government usually acts in very different manner. It seems to assume that having won an election they have the right and the power to impose whatever they want, without consulting or, often, even respecting, either those who may have valuable expertise and experience, or those who are going to be most impacted by their decisions. It is "Do it our way or we'll do it for you." 'Our way or the highway', or in this case: 'Our way and the highway. This has been their modus operandus as regards, not only the environment, but health, education, transportation, local government. It is particularly wrong in the middle of a pandemic when public consultation is especially difficult. The present Provincial Government is highly authoritarian.

This resolution is an act of resistance. I am glad you are going to share it widely. The Provincial Government has pulled back when challenged by ample and determined opposition. If enough municipalities support this motion, the Provincial government may retreat. To further help this to happen I urge you to trust your constituents. Let each one of you send a communication to each household, explaining what you are doing and why. I believe the people of Halton respect responsibility, security, community and democracy.

You are not just resisting urban sprawl, or even disregard for the environment, important as they are. You are also resisting bad government.

Thank you Mr. Mayor Respectfully  
Mervyn Russell -[Rev. Dr.]

## **Kevin Eby shares the top three misconceptions regarding urbanization**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RP9f7VR7PHU>

This is part one of seven short clips in which Kevin Eby answers questions regarding some of the challenges of planning in Ontario.

Kevin Eby is the former Director of Community Planning with the Region of Waterloo.

Over the past several decades, Kevin's career has been focused on the development and implementation of growth management related policies, including responsibility for the development and implementation of the Region of Waterloo's Growth Management Strategy.

Between 2004 and 2006, Kevin was seconded part time to the Ontario Growth Secretariat to assist in the preparation of the ***Places to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.***

In addition to growth management, Kevin brings with him extensive experience in environmental, natural resource and cultural heritage planning as well as water resource protection and the preparation of development charge by-laws.

### **Kevin Eby: What is sustainable?**

"We need to educate the population about the costs associated with suburban development and the way we've been doing things in the past."

The second in our series of seven short clips features Kevin Eby speaking on what is sustainable in the context of urbanization and land-use planning.

## **Halton Environmental Network - Webinar on Hard Urban Boundaries**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3at6m\\_8HHss](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3at6m_8HHss)

- What does it mean to establish hard urban boundaries?
- How does it affect agricultural lands and green spaces?
- What does this mean in the context of a changing climate?

Watch the webinar with Kevin Eby, Peter Lambrick and Ann Joyner

Kevin Eby is a Professional Planner and Former Director of Community Planning for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, where he supervised the Region's Growth Management Strategy. Kevin also participated in the Province's Places to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe from 2004-2006. Since 2015, Kevin has been providing consulting services through EBY GMPS.

Peter Lambrick has been a farmer in Halton Region since the mid-1970s. He has been active in the Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee and more recently has become a member of the Halton Natural Heritage Advisory Committee.

Ann Joyner is a Professional Planner with more than 25 years of experience managing multi-disciplinary projects that combine environmental assessment, urban design, planning and sustainability. Ann has worked on a number of growth management projects throughout the GTA. She is currently a senior advisor for Dillon Consulting and was the Planner in Residence at the University of Waterloo in 2020.



**Hamilton residents are asking for a third growth option to consider - hard urban boundaries with six co-benefits . A similar request is being made in Halton.**

## **Required: More consultation and full integration with emissions planning**

Avoid a decision based on

- Insufficient regard for the emissions growth it will create
- Lack of integration with energy and emissions plans
- Uncertain population growth forecasts
- Market-based assessments that depend on consumer preferences that are outdated and that we cannot sustain.

**You cannot have infinite growth on a finite planet**

## **We need a 3rd Option on the Table**

### **No Boundary Expansion Scenario**

#### **Co-benefits:**

1. Food Security
2. Farmland
3. Walkable Neighbourhoods
4. Fiscal Benefits to City
5. Better Transit
6. Better Services

Hamilton had 80 persons and jobs per hectare target for new growth.

The Staff Recommendation of 60 persons and jobs per hectare is not an ambitious target

Do we really want to bulldoze 3,300 acres of farmland?

Who profits?

## **Regional Official Plan Review( ROPR) - Concerns with the process and direction**

Since 2005 Ontario municipal planning for growth was governed by the Place to Grow Act that was written with the goals of to reduce sprawl, protect agricultural land and create more compact mixed-use communities that were transit supportive and walkable. All of these measures were also consistent with reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2019 things started to change with a series of announcements from Queen's Park that collectively are forcing municipalities to reverse course and make planning for single family dwellings a priority. The actual mechanism introduced was a requirement to plan for "The Market" for single family dwellings. The Market was then defined as a direct extrapolation from what was built during the past 30 years. Unfortunately the past 30 years of growth have been characterized by a significant amount of sprawl. One only has to look at Georgetown south to see this emphasis on single family dwellings.

Another significant change is the requirement to plan for growth to the year 2051, thirty years into the future, using the past 30 years as a guide.

All municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe are required to rewrite their Official Plans to show how they will accommodate their assigned population. The assigned population targets for each municipality are also inflated and, unlike the single family market calculation, do not reflect the past 30 years. An Official Plan has a map of the whole municipality, in this case, Halton Region, which shows how many people will be accommodated by each housing type, ie houses, towns, apartments and where those housing types will be built.

Consultation for this enormously significant OP Review has been occurring during a pandemic when most people are distracted.

Halton Region asked the province for an extension to the deadline for compliance but was told that the deadline is the deadline.

You can see the process and the growth concepts that are under consideration at [www.halton.ca/ROPR](http://www.halton.ca/ROPR) From a Halton Hills perspective growth is being contemplated south of 10<sup>th</sup> Side Road between Trafalgar Rd and Winston Churchill Blvd., and West of Trafalgar from 15<sup>th</sup> side road to south to south of 10<sup>th</sup> Side road. And west of Winston Churchill from Norval to Steeles for employment uses. As well as north of Steeles from Milton to Winston Churchill.

On Wednesday April 21<sup>st</sup> at Regional Council , there is a motion to direct staff to expand on one of the concepts to include a firm urban boundary option for both residential and employment land needs.

On Monday April 12 Halton Hills council will consider a motion in support of the motion at Halton.

### **Why are these motions important to support?**

1. There is strong pressure from developers to convert the largest amount of farmland as possible to urban uses. Virtually all of the land under consideration is Class 1, 2 and 3 farmland. Farmland is a finite resource that should not be considered as merely

vacant land ripe for development but as an essential resource for food security in the future.

1. The agricultural system is built first on the land supply but includes other variables. It would be wise to halt the conversion of farmland to urban uses until we have a better understanding of the impact to the entire agricultural system.
2. Creating a concept with zero urban boundary expansions in Halton gives us time to consider the consequences to the agricultural system and could identify which, if any, lands could be taken out of agricultural uses and base our future growth on that knowledge. Zero expansion at this time gives the greatest flexibility to make rational decisions.
3. Consultation on the Halton Official Plan to accommodate growth to the year 2051 is being conducted during a pandemic and has thus far failed to engage the public. Given the province's refusal to extend the deadline until the public can be properly consulted, it would be wise to resist opening up the urban boundaries at this time. Once urban boundaries have been opened up to expand the urban area, it cannot be reversed. However, holding the line on expansion can and will be revisited 5 years from now.
4. The Regional motion also calls for modeling of all the concepts to determine the greenhouse gas emissions that could be expected from each concept which will provide another way of evaluating the options.
5. Land use planning is the single most important process in determining future greenhouse gas emissions. Building large tracts of single family dwellings or sprawl, is expensive for the municipality to service, does not support public transportation, is a major contributor to congestion, and is car-dependent for access to most services.
6. Planning 30 years into the future is not useful as there are far too many variables and unknowns for this to be reasonably accurate. Locking in land use planning for the next 30 years only benefits land speculators who want certainty that their land will be developed. Unfortunately the other certainty is that the agricultural land will not be protected and will therefore see no investment by farmers.

### **What can you do?**

Write a letter and/or email to your councillors. It can be sent to the Halton Hills Clerk Valerie Patryniak [valeriep@haltonhills.ca](mailto:valeriep@haltonhills.ca), And the Halton Clerk Graham Milne [Graham.Milne@Halton.ca](mailto:Graham.Milne@Halton.ca).

Use your own words. You can use any of the points as the basis for your support and of course add anything else that you are thinking about. In the end, simply ask that council support the resolution to create a growth option that includes a firm urban boundary.

Join the Facebook group StopSprawlHalton and click on the button, INVITE FRIENDS. You can then choose from your own friends those you would like to join up too. The rest is automatic from there. For more information or clarification email Jane Fogal [janefogal@haltonhills.ca](mailto:janefogal@haltonhills.ca) or 905 877 5806

**Motion to Request Halton create a Growth Option for the years 2031 to 2051 that accommodates growth within the 2031 urban boundary**

Moved by: Mayor Rob Burton

Seconded by: Councillor Jane Fogal

WHEREAS Phase 2 of Halton's Regional Official Plan Review is underway and involves research, technical analysis and community engagement around key themes; and

WHEREAS the key theme of growth management is focused on directing required population and employment growth to achieve conformity with the province's 2019, Growth Plan, as amended; and

WHEREAS population and employment growth in Halton Region already is planned to 2031 as a result of the last Regional Official Plan Review from 2009; and

WHEREAS the 2019 Growth Plan, as amended, now requires Halton to plan for an additional 20 years from 2031 to 2051 to accommodate a total population of 1.1 million and total jobs of 500,000; and

WHEREAS Halton is exploring issues and opportunities related to growth management through the Integrated Growth Management Strategy; and

WHEREAS as part of the Integrated Growth Management Strategy Halton has released a series of reports, the latest of which is the Growth Concepts Discussion Paper; and

WHEREAS the Growth Concepts Discussion Paper profiles four Growth Concepts based on 'Local Plans and Priorities' as well as an evaluation of the four Growth Concepts and their supporting technical analysis work; and

WHEREAS Halton Regional Council has expressed strong concern about loss of agriculture land and negative impacts that growth beyond the existing settlement area boundary will have on future food security; and

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic has increased awareness of the loss of security our society suffers when we allow ourselves to become dependent on other countries for essentials; and

WHEREAS the technical analysis associated with Concept 3 of the Growth Concepts Discussion Paper has demonstrated that all population growth and a considerable proportion of employment growth to 2051 could be accommodated within the existing settlement area boundary; and

WHEREAS a greater proportion of employment growth can be accommodated in the existing settlement area boundary if Mixed Use is used to model land use for employment; and

WHEREAS a Climate Emergency was declared in 2019 by all local municipalities in Halton (Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton, and Oakville) and the Region of Halton; and

WHEREAS a Climate Emergency was declared in 2019 by all local municipalities in Halton (Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton, and Oakville) and the Region of Halton; and  
WHEREAS accommodating growth through 2051 within the existing settlement area boundary is a positive way to respond to the Climate Emergency;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT Halton Region be requested to develop and add to the public consultation work an analysis that builds on Concept 3 and proposes to accommodate growth to 2051 based on no expansion at all of the existing Halton settlement area boundary and creation of a new permanent Food Belt/Agriculture Preserve; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Halton Region be requested to provide an assessment of the relative impact on greenhouse gas emissions that would reasonably be expected to be associated with each of the Growth Concepts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Halton Region communicate this Resolution to the public, City of Burlington, Town of Halton Hills, Town of Milton, Town of Oakville, Conservation Halton, Credit Valley Conservation, Grand River Conservation Authority, Halton MPPs and MPs, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.



## **Ontario is set to unleash sprawl on huge swathes of countryside unless we fight back**

*Phil Pothen, Ontario Environment Program Manager, Environmental Defence*

Unless we push back hard and fast, large swathes of Ontario's best farmland, most vital natural heritage, and most beautiful rural landscapes, will be swallowed up by car-dependent sprawl. Between now and July 1, 2022, the provincial government will be forcing Greater Golden Horseshoe municipalities to engage in Official Plan amendment processes that it has rigged to rapidly expand the territory available to developers, and lock in 30 more years of outdated and environmentally damaging residential and commercial sprawl.

Compared with the government's attacks on Conservation Authorities and its aggressive misuse of Minister's Zoning Orders to authorize individual developments, the province's high-speed push to expand settlement areas has gone largely unnoticed. However, this "Big Sprawl" is poised to lock in environmental harms that are exponentially more severe.

Follow this link for more information - <https://environmentaldefence.ca/2021/03/03/>

From the hobbling of Conservation Authorities and the reckless abuse of MZOs to mandate sprawl, to running an unneeded suburban highway through the Holland Marsh and even the Greenbelt, the onslaught of recent attacks on Ontario's countryside, has united Ontario's leading environmental organizations and grassroots groups to push back, as the Yours to Protect coalition. While each attack on the environment has been devastating in its own right, they are also laying the ground work for the mass suburbanization of the rural and natural areas that surround Toronto and its suburbs – and one whopping giveaway to developers.

Municipalities can't be forced to finalize the Big Sprawl until July 1st, 2022 – after the next provincial election. Between now and next July, there will be multiple opportunities for Ontarians to both resist the push for sprawl at regional councils, and force provincial politicians to reverse course. Action plan on page 18

**Phil Pothen Environmental Defence: Resist the push for sprawl at regional councils.  
Here's what you can do:**

- If you live in York, Peel, Halton, Hamilton, and Durham Regions or Simcoe County, organize your friends to participate in the public consultations associated with Land Needs Assessments, Municipal Comprehensive Reviews, and Official Plan Amendments in your region. These are the mandatory processes by which the government intends municipalities to make their laws conform with the new Growth Plan population targets and Land Needs Assessment Methodology, thus implementing the big sprawl. Tell local planners and councillors not to expand settlement areas, and instead to support accommodating newcomers within existing neighborhoods, or land that is already allocated to development. Tell them that you want our rural and natural areas to remain that way.
- Phone, email or zoom your Regional, City, and Town Councillors and ask them to vote against expanding settlement areas, and to vote for accommodating population growth through improvements in existing neighborhoods and more efficient use of undeveloped green field lands that have already been released for development. This is entirely workable – and desirable – because the vast majority of the GTHA was developed at densities much too low to support the quality public transit, cycling and pedestrian access to education, services and shopping enjoyed by residents of pre-WWII neighborhoods. While it isn't what the government had in mind, this is technically compatible with the new Growth Plan and Land Needs Assessment Methodology because innovations like garden suites and laneway suites allow for large amounts of ground-related housing (as well as flats) to be accommodated through “soft intensification”.
- Organize your neighbors to “depute” (i.e. speak) in opposition at upcoming regional council meetings where settlement area expansions are being considered. Also, ask your Regional, City, and Town councillors to delay any final Council decisions on expanding settlement areas until late June or early July 2022 – after Ontario's fixed election date. Municipalities are not required to finalize the big sprawl (i.e., bring their boundaries and official plans into conformance with the new Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and Land Needs Assessment Methodology) until July 1st, 2022.
- Demand that your MPP and candidates in the next provincial election commit to revoking both the new population targets in the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, and the flawed Land Needs Assessment Methodology, immediately upon taking office, and before the deadline to extend municipal boundaries has passed. Demand that they replace them with new population targets that direct most growth to existing neighbourhoods in Toronto and the immediately adjoining areas of Peel, York, and Durham, so that settlement areas don't need to expand. Make it clear to them that they won't get your vote unless you get their commitment.

Photos from the "Stop 413" Rally on March 20, 2021  
and our favourite anti-sprawl slogans

