
From: Rahul Mehta [REDACTED]
Sent: April 13, 2022 3:14 PM
To: ZZG-COUNCIL
Cc: Iannicca, Nando; mayor@caledon.ca; Ian Sinclair; Groves, Annette; Downey, Johanna; Innis, Jennifer; Deboer, Nick; christina.early@caledon.ca; lynn.kiernan@caledon.ca; tony.rosa@caledon.ca; mayorbrown@brampton.ca; Rowena Santos; Paul Vicente; doug.whillans@brampton.ca; Palleschi, Michael; jeff.bowman@brampton.ca; Medeiros, Martin; charmaine.williams@brampton.ca; Pat Fortini; harkirat.singh@brampton.ca; Gurpreet Dhillon; Crombie, Bonnie; Stephen Dasko; Pat Mullin; Fonseca, Chris; Kovac, John; Parrish, Carolyn; Starr, Ron; Dipika Damerla; Mahoney, Matt; Saito, Pat; McFadden, Sue; Carlson, George
Subject: Request to add communications to Council agenda regarding OP
Attachments: Concerns and recommendations to Council regarding OP for April 14th.pdf
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

RECEIVED
April 13, 2022
REGION OF PEEL
OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL CLERK

Hello to the Regional Clerk and Members of Council,

Please find my correspondence below, addressed to Council. I request for Council to consider this letter of concerns and recommendations regarding the Official Plan to be included within the Council agenda for April 14th, at their discretion. This letter and recommendations is concerning Agenda item 8.1, 9.1 and 9.2.

--

Sincerely,

--

Rahul Mehta

REFERRAL TO _____
RECOMMENDED _____
DIRECTION REQUIRED _____
RECEIPT RECOMMENDED ☒ _____

Dear Members of Regional Council,

My name is Rahul Mehta, I have been a resident of Mississauga all my life, ■ years.

The vote coming to Regional Council is a crucial one. It is a decision on land-use, transportation, infrastructure and services planning within the over-arching framework that governs municipalities within the Region of Peel – the Official Plan. The timing of this plan is both unusual (currently scheduled to be approved just weeks before a Provincial election) and critical (at the intersections of the housing, climate and congestion crisis).

I join hundreds of residents, planning experts, provincial politicians and organizations who share a deep concern regarding this Official Plan and the sprawl perpetuated within the document. This is most notable with the proposed Urban Boundary expansion, erasing prime agricultural land and high-quality natural areas in South Caledon that effectively accelerate sprawl in North Brampton, as well. I strongly oppose this latest Draft, which appears to ignore an additional 6 months of public comment and protest since consultations concluded in November, 2021. The Draft plan continues to present a growth pattern in the Region which *guarantees more sprawl and therefore more debt for local government*, leading to greater costs and declining infrastructure quality for present and future taxpayers in the region.

On Thursday April 7th 2022, The Planning and Growth Committee heard from over 25 delegates and received over 750 petitions and letters from residents in Peel and beyond emphasizing concern with the current Official Plan and the direction Council is choosing to take. However, the Planning and Growth Committee appeared to have already decided, in addition to the unusually defensive staff report, to endorse the Draft without consideration of public comments – not a single question and no deliberation or debate. The rapid approval of the Draft suggests that the real and well-documented impact of sprawl on Peel Region's short and long-term financial and environmental sustainability is not of concern to this Council. Yet, past votes on related policy suggest many elected officials are very concerned, but perhaps also unheard or unspoken.

I understand the need for affordable housing, but an Urban Boundary expansion does not deliver. It facilitates construction in the same pattern seen today, building expensive and large houses or warehouses with little to no transit or active modes connections, chipping away at our food base and destroying sensitive habitat. We know that we need more gentle density and walkable communities where places to buy food, visit friends and family and enjoy nature are nearby. I urge Council to see the broader picture in making decisions at the Regional and local level. Destroying valuable arable land and bulldozing for aggregate for housing and expanded roads or highways will severely limit our opportunities to build viable, connected housing and employment in the future.

The current Official Plan will short-change present generations and those we expect to live here in the future. Supply is not lowering the cost of housing – paired with a lack of choice and complete community planning in our cities, we are seeing a rising infrastructure deficit as well as an exodus in total population, starting with Mississauga.

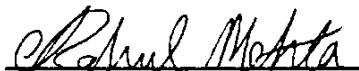
The net population decline in Mississauga (noted, but never discussed by Council), in the latest census, is a harsh wake-up call to the failure of current land-use, infrastructure and transportation planning in our Region. The bill is coming due, and residents are moving elsewhere – this trend will only continue to accelerate in the coming years, impacting Brampton and eventually Caledon as well.

In light of these concerns, challenges, and impending election, I offer the following two recommendations to Regional Council for the meeting of Council on April 14th:

1. **Do not submit the Region of Peel Draft Official Plan to Minister Clark. Bring forward a motion to delay submitting the Official Plan until after the June 2nd Provincial election results.** If there is no change in government, there will still be a full month available to submit within the current government deadline. This request aligns with other municipalities choosing to submit later this spring, as well as consideration of the evolving position of the provincial opposition parties, all of which have expressed concern with the current MCR process and requirements – as has this Council. Predictability and conformity for the Official Plan necessitates such a delay, with no cost impact to this Region but potentially significant cost and time savings if amendments are required due to a new or modified government.
2. **Incorporate new public feedback and comment meaningfully into the Draft Official Plan, including presenting options on no Urban Boundary expansion with alternatives showing higher density targets within the existing Urban Boundary, including current and pre-approved development sites.** These options are in light of hundreds of additional comments provided to the Region and directly to Committees and Council since consultations ended in November. Urban Boundary expansion has already been rejected by Halton Region and Hamilton, with modifications requested by Ottawa and a review of no boundary expansion underway in Orillia. Most municipalities have also provided public deliberation on multiple density and boundary modification options, including a zero boundary expansion. This was not provided to residents of Peel and it is a crucial gap in what is the foundational document for the next 30 years in Peel Region.

Thank you for your consideration of these recommendations. I look forward to their implementation, consistent with the local and regional position on a climate emergency, housing crisis, congestion crisis due to car dependency and opposition to Highway 413.

Sincerely Yours,



Rahul Mehta

Resident, Mississauga
Founder, Sustainable Mississauga
Community Organizer, Stop Sprawl Peel