

April 19, 2022

To The Regional Chair and Members of Regional Council,

My name is Rima Dornfeld, I have been a resident of the Town of Caledon for 22 years and the City of Toronto for another 43 years.

The reasons for submitting this letter of delegation is to present my opposition to the Council's haste in approving the Official Plan as it is being presented today, which expands the urban boundaries that currently exist. I believe the Council possesses incomplete information on which to base their decisions for future speculative applications for development of farmlands.

I am deeply concerned about urban sprawl and strongly oppose the frequent attempts to expand the urban boundaries of the cities and towns into the Greentbelt and agricultural lands. 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. However, the Planning and Growth Committee had already decided to endorse the staff report without concern for the impact it would have on Peel Region's long-term financial and environmental sustainability.

I understand the need for affordable housing, but an Urban Boundary expansion only encourages excessive building of expensive, huge and unaffordable houses, chipping away at our food base and destroying sensitive habitat. We need more gentle density and walkable communities where there are near places to buy food, visit friends and family and enjoy nature. Having grown up in the west end of Toronto, as part of an immigrant family, near High Park and the lake, I grew to know what a jewel this neighbourhood is. This is due not only to the vision and discipline of the city fathers in balancing growth with services, but also to the generous donation of generations that came before such as John Howard, owner of the lands that became High Park. The two neighbourhoods in which I lived and grew up, had a mix of single family homes, semi-detached homes, two and four and six-plexes, and low rise (4-6 storey) apartment buildings. Single family homes were allowed to legally add one apartment, or build onto houses so that several apartments could be partitioned. And all over Toronto, there were built small apartment buildings so that all communities had a mix and diversity to suit all residents of Toronto.

What we seem to be doing is continuing decades of costly sprawl, developing large swaths of residential land at the edge of our communities and turning food producing fields into isolated housing and warehouses with little to no service by public transit. Instead, we build highways to connect these places and bring even more traffic to the Region. Much of this is truck traffic, as well as commuters driving to their minimal wage jobs, which services low employment distribution centres that support excessive consumption demands. These demands, as we have recently seen, can evaporate leaving the communities that service them with unusable and often unmanageable empty structures.

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

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When the industrial lands of the 19th century were built outside of Toronto, they housed manufacturing factories, where goods were produced and sold or exported - real value was created. The neighbourhoods that grew up around them were sized for different types and sizes of families and individuals in different parts of their life cycles so they could grow and prosper together. The current plans not only destroy any chance of this happening, by allowing exclusionary zoning, they actually encourage families and single parents to take on more debt than they can ever repay and so are doomed to a life of continuous poverty, struggle and despair that they will ever get ahead. Surely our residents deserve a chance to build lives of dignity and some prosperity and security, that is not totally dependent on the continuous use of the car for all parts of their lives.

I am requesting Council to direct planning and tax staff to extract the data from the tax rolls, on how many acres in Caledon, Mississauga, and Brampton are zoned A1 A2 and A3 - Agricultural, and how many have that zoning but the land use has become Rural Residential or is primarily one of the non-residential uses allowed on A lands, such as home occupations or professions that are not farming; horticultural nursery or a woodlot or a wayside pit that are not food producing or farmland. I would also like to ask Council to request staff to extract the data for how many acres of farmland have already been zoned Commercial, Industrial and Residential according to the tax rolls. Without tying the zoning to actual use through taxes paid, it is not possible to truly see the bigger picture of how much useable Agricultural acreage is left as of today in 2022.

In 2002, there were 21 tax rate designations involving classes of land, of which two (2) were designated residential and farmland of some type, and two (2) were farmland awaiting development. In 2020, there were 48 tax classes. Of these, eight (8) involve farmland of some type awaiting development and only three (3) which involve actual farming activities (C7, FT, I7):

C1 + C4 - commercial farmland awaiting development
C7 - Commercial small scale farm
FT - Farmland
I1 + I4 - Industrial farmland awaiting development
I7 - Industrial small scale farm
M1 + M4 - Multi Residential farmland awaiting development
R1 + R4 - Residential farmland awaiting development

(Exhibit A, attached for reference)

There are also several designations of vacant and excess land, both commercial and industrial, which also represent future uses that have already taken land out of production.

There is no correlation that I have seen in any of the presentation material made by the Region or Town of Caledon between the actual farming use of zoned Agricultural lands

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and the agricultural acreage represented by the taxes paid in each of the above farmland tax classes. We don't know how much actual agricultural land is left.

Furthermore, it is my understanding that many speculators who have bought farmland for development actually are refusing farmers access to that land for farming activities, because they do not wish to be restricted by crop growing and harvesting activities, in the event that they put their lands into development. This means that there is even less actual farming taking place than is officially designated through zoning. Again, the big picture is misleading.

I believe you will find that the 80% claimed Agricultural acreage in the Town of Caledon's public meetings and presentations that is being "preserved" is overstated by the planning department, and that much of it is already out of use and cut up in such smaller acreages that can no longer be profitably farmed. Personally, I live on such a parcel of 10 acres still zoned Agricultural, but its topography is such that even if we wanted to farm it more intensely, our options would be limited so as not to meet the income thresholds demanded by MPAC to be assessed through taxes as Agricultural. It is zoned A1 but because its use is Rural Residential, and we pay taxes at the Rural Residential rate, our land can no longer be considered as actual farmland. This is true of virtually all the plots of land between 5 and 20 acres, that are on Mount Pleasant Road. How many more roads in Caledon will have the same disparity between what is zoned and what is its land use? I don't think anyone has ever looked at this factually.

I respectfully ask all members to see the broader picture in making decisions at the Council and Regional level. We are in a climate crisis, and soon will be in a food crisis as countries around the world struggle to feed their populations in the face of changing weather patterns and depleted soils. Continuing to destroy and rezone valuable arable land and bulldozing for aggregate for housing and highways will severely limit our opportunities to build viable, connected housing, create meaningful employment, and feed our populations in the future.

On April 28th do not approve the Region of Peel Draft Official Plan nor allow its submission to Minister Clark. Please delay submitting the Official Plan until the public has had more time to have their say, the planning staff to assemble the correct data on useable agricultural land, and for everyone to take a hard look at the current uses that every zoned parcel is actually under. Please think on the consequences of continued sprawl over the next 30 years.

Sincerely yours,

Rima Dornfeld




Exhibit A (Two Pages)



2002 TAX RATE SCHEDULE

PROPERTY CLASS	TAX CLASS	LOWER TIER TAX RATES	UPPER TIER TAX RATES	EDUCATION TAX RATES	TOTAL TAX RATE
Residential & Farm	RT	0.316409%	0.493109%	0.373000%	1.182518%
Residential Farmland Awaiting Dev. PH1	R1	0.094923%	0.147933%	0.111900%	0.354756%
Farmland	FT	0.079102%	0.123277%	0.093250%	0.295629%
Managed Forest	TT	0.079102%	0.123277%	0.093250%	0.295629%
Multi-Residential	MT	0.548526%	0.854853%	0.373000%	1.776379%
Commercial (occupied)	CT	0.410414%	0.639611%	2.075397%	3.125422%
Commercial (shared PIL)	CH	0.410414%	0.639611%	2.075397%	3.125422%
Commercial (vacant units Excess Land)	CU	0.287290%	0.447728%	1.452778%	2.187796%
Commercial Office	DT	0.410414%	0.639611%	2.075397%	3.125422%
Commercial Office (vacant)	DU	0.287290%	0.447728%	1.452778%	2.187796%
Shopping Centres	ST	0.410414%	0.639611%	2.075397%	3.125422%
Parking Lot	GT	0.410414%	0.639611%	2.075397%	3.125422%
Parking Lot (vacant)	CX	0.287290%	0.447728%	1.452778%	2.187796%
Industrial (occupied)	IT	0.505811%	0.788283%	2.668928%	3.963022%
Industrial (shared PIL)	IH	0.505811%	0.788283%	2.668928%	3.963022%
Industrial Farmland (awaiting Dev. PH1)	I1	0.094923%	0.147933%	0.111900%	0.354756%
Industrial Vacant Units Excess Land	IU	0.354068%	0.551798%	1.868250%	2.774116%
Industrial Vacant Land	IX	0.354068%	0.551798%	1.868250%	2.774116%
Large Industrial	LT	0.505811%	0.788283%	2.668928%	3.963022%
Large Industrial (vacant)	LU	0.505811%	0.788283%	2.668928%	3.963022%
Pipelines	PT	0.292330%	0.455583%	1.679101%	2.427014%

Town of Caledon – Contacts

905-584-2272

1-800-303-2546

Contact for inquiries regarding municipal services and taxes, parks and recreation, fire protection, libraries, by-law enforcement, buildings, heritage and municipal roads.

MAYOR: Carol Seglins

COUNCILLORS:

Ward 1	Regional Councillor:	Ian Sinclair	Area Councillor Richard Paterak
Ward 2	Regional Councillor:	Marolyn Morrison	Area Councillor: Dave Lyons
Ward 3 & 4	Regional Councillor:	Richard Whitehead	Area Councillor: Nancy Stewart
Ward 5	Regional Councillor:	Chris Harker	Area Councillor: Annette Groves

Schedule A to By-law 2021-88
2022 Town of Caledon Interim Property Tax Rates

RTC / RTQ	Tax Class Description	Interim Tax Rate
C1	Commercial Farmland Awaiting Development Phase I	0.120782%
C4	Commercial Farmland Awaiting Development Phase II	0.879447%
C7	Commercial Small Scale Farm	0.219860%
CH	Commercial Taxable (full rate, shared PIL)	0.911810%
CJ	Commercial Taxable (vacant land, shared PIL)	0.911810%
CM	Commercial Taxable - (no education)	0.439447%
CT	Commercial Taxable Full Rate	0.879447%
CU	Commercial Excess Land	0.879447%
CX	Commercial Vacant Land	0.879447%
DT	Office Building	0.879447%
DH	Office Building Taxable (full rate, shared PIL)	0.911810%
DU	Office Building Excess Land	0.879447%
E	Exempt	0.000000%
FT	Farmland	0.074824%
GT	Parking Lot	0.879447%
HT	Landfill	0.818131%
I1	Industrial Farmland Awaiting Development Phase I	0.120782%
I4	Industrial Farmland Awaiting Development Phase II	0.958855%
I7	Industrial Small Scale Farm	0.239713%
IH	Industrial Taxable (full rate, shared PIL)	1.051871%
IJ	Industrial Vacant Land, Shared PIL	1.051871%
IK	Industrial Excess Land, Shared PIL	1.051871%
IT	Industrial Taxable Full Rate	0.958855%
IU	Industrial Excess Land	0.958855%
IX	Industrial Vacant Land	0.958855%
JT	Industrial New Construction - Full	0.958855%
JX	Industrial New Construction Vacant Land	0.958855%
LT	Large Industrial Taxable	0.958855%
LU	Large Industrial Excess Land	0.958855%
MT	Multi-Residential	0.638176%
M1	MR Farmland Awaiting Dev. Ph. 1	0.120782%
M4	MR Farmland Awaiting Dev. Ph. 2	0.638176%
NT	New Multi-Residential	0.402612%
PT	Pipelines	0.769136%
R1	Residential Farmland Awaiting Development Phase I	0.120782%
R4	Residential Farmland Awaiting Development Phase II	0.402612%
RH	Residential Taxable (full rate, shared PIL)	0.402612%
RT	Residential	0.402612%
ST	Shopping Centres	0.879447%
SU	Shopping Centres Excess Land	0.879447%
TT	Managed Forests	0.100653%
XH	Commercial New Construction, Shared PIL	0.911810%
XT	Commercial New Construction: Full	0.879447%
XU	Commercial New Construction: Excess Land	0.879447%
YT	Office New Construction: Full	0.879447%
ZT	Shopping Centre New Construction: Full	0.879447%
ZU	Shopping Centre New Construction: Excess Land	0.879447%