

## Disappointed in York's growth option

We are disappointed by York Region Council's decision to take the growth option of no urban boundary expansion off the table. Allowing an expansion of urban boundaries as part of their growth management plan contradicts the region's own planning report that clearly indicates that there is more than enough land already allocated for future growth to 2041.

The region's decision to expand urban boundaries for low density development will require additional new infrastructure including roads and pipes and will only worsen the burden on York Region's taxpayers, who already carry the highest per capita debt load in the GTA.

Of the three scenarios put forward by planning staff, one required no boundary expansion and would have led to smarter, more compact growth to support needed investments in public transit. Instead, the region chose to take a step backwards by moving to study 40 per cent and 45 per cent intensification targets ? even though the region is currently achieving 47 per cent intensification. There should be thorough and meaningful public consultation with York Region residents as the decision will affect their future taxes, the health of their communities and the congestion on their roads. The council decision to drop the most efficient growth scenario and instead pave over farmland to continue 1950s-style development patterns shows why we need continued provincial leadership in land-use planning.

**Susan Swail**

Environmental Defence