



REPORT TO COUNCIL

Addendum to Report Number: PD 47-04

Date: February 1, 2005

From: Neil Carroll
Director, Planning & Development

Subject: Additional Comments on the Draft Greenbelt Plan: October 2004
City of Pickering

Recommendation:

1. That Pickering Council **RECEIVE** Addendum to Report PD 47-04 relating to the draft Greenbelt Plan for the northeast sector of Pickering;
2. That Pickering Council **REQUEST** the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to:
 - (a) include in the Greenbelt Plan, revisions proposed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing staff clarifying that property owners within the hamlets will be governed by the traditional planning controls of the provincial policy statement, local and regional official plans and zoning, rather than the restrictive policies of the draft Greenbelt Plan;
 - (b) expand the boundary of the Greenbelt around the Hamlet of Greenwood to include a small section of Carruther's Creek valley south of Highway 7 that is part of the Lake Iroquois Shoreline, and to also include lands north to Highway 7 and east to Salem Road that form the countryside context for Greenwood, as set out on Appendix I to Addendum to Report PD 47-04;
 - (c) within the boundary expansion recommended in 2.(b), identify the Carruther's Creek valley as part of the "natural heritage system", and the remaining lands outside the Hamlet as part of the "agricultural system" in the Greenbelt Plan;
 - (d) circulate any new revisions to the boundaries for the Greenbelt Plan to municipalities prior to approving the Greenbelt Plan; and
 - (e) provide financial programs to support the ongoing viability of agriculture in the Greenbelt Area; and
3. That the City Clerk **FORWARD** a copy of Addendum to Report PD 47-04 to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; the Region of Durham; and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

Executive Summary: On December 6, 2004, Pickering Council received Report PD 47-04 on the draft Greenbelt Plan and passed Resolution #157/04 (see text of Report PD 47-04 and Resolution #157/04, Attachments #1 and #2).

Council supported the concept of a permanent greenbelt in the Golden Horseshoe, provided specific comments on the draft Greenbelt Plan, and directed staff to consult with all affected communities respecting two matters: the boundary and rationale for inclusion of hamlets and other rural settlements in the Greenbelt; and the boundaries, extent and rationale of the proposed greenbelt and non-greenbelt lands in the northeast sector of Pickering.

After consulting with the Province, TRCA, and biologists, staff is satisfied that the Greenbelt Plan boundary as shown in the northeast sector of Pickering generally reflects the terrestrial natural heritage system and hydrologic features and functions associated with the former Lake Iroquois Shoreline/Beach – with one exception. Staff recommends that the Carruther's Creek valley, south of Highway 7 and west of Salem Road, be included within the draft Greenbelt Plan (see Technical Revision, cross-hatched area on Recommended Boundary Expansion, Appendix I).

In mid January 2005, two open houses were held in Greenwood to discuss the draft Greenbelt Plan. Approximately 200 people attended the open house sessions. Staff provided information about the Greenbelt Plan and concepts for the expansion of the Greenbelt boundary. From a review of the comments and submissions, the opinions respecting expansion differ between the residents of Greenwood who are generally in favour of an expansion of the Greenbelt in order to maintain the hamlet's countryside context, and the rural residents to the east and north of Greenwood who are generally opposed to a boundary expansion. There were some opposing views in both instances.

After careful review, it has been concluded that an expansion of the Greenbelt boundary to include the Hamlet of Greenwood and lands around the Hamlet north to Highway 7 and east to Salem Road, as shown on Appendix I is appropriate. The expansion would sustain Greenwood as a rural settlement in a vibrant countryside, providing opportunities for tourism, recreation and rural uses. Within the hamlet, typical planning controls would apply.

The effect of the boundary expansion would be to enrich the function of the Greenbelt in this sector, in a manner consistent with the prevailing Greenwood resident opinions on maintaining a rural quality of life in a near-urban setting, while not prejudicing long-term municipal growth opportunities.

Financial Implications: Not Applicable.

Background:

1.0 A Consultation Process Report outlining the activities undertaken by staff and summarizing the findings of those activities is attached.

Attachment #3 to this Addendum Report is a Consultation Process Report outlining the steps staff undertook, the results, and a copy of all comments received.

2.0 Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) staff advises that the draft Greenbelt Plan is to be revised to rely on traditional planning controls, such as zoning and local and regional official plans, on lands within the hamlets.

The first issue Council asked staff to consult on was the boundary and rationale for inclusion of the hamlets and other rural settlements in the Greenbelt. City staff had expressed concern that the Hamlet of Greenwood should not be split by the Greenbelt Plan, and that proposed policies for lands within the Hamlet would be too restrictive. Accordingly, in Report PD 47-04, staff recommended that the west part of Greenwood be eliminated from the Greenbelt.

During a meeting between City and MMAH staff about this matter, MMAH staff advised that they were clarifying the Greenbelt policies for lands within the hamlets. The intent of the MMAH revision is to have typical planning controls (such as the provincial policy statement, local and regional official plans and zoning) apply to lands within the hamlets. Planning & Development staff concur with this proposed revision.

3.0 City staff recommends an expansion to the Greenbelt boundary to include the Hamlet of Greenwood and lands north of the Hamlet to Highway 7, east to Salem Road and south to the draft Greenbelt boundary, so as to maintain Greenwood in its countryside context.

The second issue Council asked staff to consult on was the boundaries, extent and rationale of the proposed greenbelt and non-greenbelt lands in the northeast sector of Pickering. A number of views had been expressed on this, including:

- City staff had questioned the basis for the irregular boundaries of, and extensive lands included, along the East Duffins Creek and through the Fifth Concession of land (the Lake Iroquois Shoreline/Beach), in Report PD 47-04;
- A representative from the Greenwood and Area Ratepayers Association (GARA) recommended that the lands in Pickering between Sideline 16 and Salem Road, south of Highway 7, be included in the Greenbelt, at Pickering's December 6, 2004 Council meeting; and
- Regional Council recommended that the Province include in the Greenbelt, the lands within the Greenwood hamlet boundary as defined in the Pickering Official Plan, at their mid December 2004 meeting;

3.1 Staff recommends a boundary expansion for environmental protection.

According to MMAH staff, the rationale for the boundary of the Greenbelt in the northeast sector of Pickering was based on a combination of the terrestrial natural heritage system and the underlying hydrologic features and functions associated with the former Lake Iroquois Shoreline/Beach. MMAH staff advised that the Ministry of Natural Resources is reviewing further the Greenbelt boundary for accuracy in this area.

MMAH staff clarified that the goal for the Greenbelt in this part of Pickering is for sustainable environmental protection in existing or future urban areas, as opposed to other possible goals of agricultural land protection, providing culture, recreation and tourism opportunities, or sustaining rural communities.

Considering the Province's stated goal of environmental protection, staff is generally satisfied with the extent and boundaries of the Greenbelt along the East Duffins Creek and through the Fifth Concession – with one exception. Lands south of Highway 7, on either side of Carruther's Creek just west of Salem Road, also exhibit shoreline/beach hydrology, and should be included in the Greenbelt (see Technical Revision, cross-hatched on Recommended Boundary Expansion, Appendix I).

3.2 Staff recommends a boundary expansion for rural settlement character protection.

In Report PD 47-04, staff noted that a possible future vision for the Hamlet of Greenwood is to remain as a rural settlement within its countryside context (as was recommended for the Hamlet of Whitevale in the Growth Management Study), rather than being assimilated into future urban development. However, in forming our recommendation at that time (to exclude the Hamlet from the Greenbelt), staff did not have the benefit of the GARA comments on the Greenbelt Plan, the January 2005 consultation and review, and MMAH comments clarifying the hamlet policies in the Greenbelt Plan.

From the Comment Forms/Submissions received, there is an obvious split in views respecting possible expansion of the Greenbelt boundary, between the residents of Greenwood who are generally in favour of expansion of the Greenbelt in order to maintain the countryside context around the Hamlet, and rural residents to the east and north of Greenwood who are almost all opposed to an expansion of the Greenbelt primarily for future development opportunities.

The historically significant settlement of Greenwood together with its surroundings have a number of unique attributes that merit special consideration over the long term. These characteristics include: the historical buildings; Greenwood's setting on a drumlin; the rich cultural landscapes; the Pickering Museum Village; the Greenwood Conservation Area; and Duffins Creek and valley.

An expanded Greenbelt boundary would provide opportunities for minor rounding of the Hamlet outside of the former Lake Iroquois Shoreline, to other lands north, east or south of Greenwood. Minor rounding out would be consistent with the Pleasant Growth Workshop (of April 2003), GARA's community survey on growth (October 2004), and the Region's recommended direction for limited hamlet growth to 25% increase (October 2004).

However, minor rounding out may not be sufficient to generate a population to sustain the local school or library branch (although there are many other factors influencing a decision to close such facilities). Also piped water and sanitary sewer services would not be permitted in the Greenbelt. Further, any additional residential (or other uses sensitive to noise) in the Greenwood area would be subject to local and regional planning, and new controls to protect for a potential future airport (including the Greater Toronto Airport Authority's Interim Airport Protection Area and proposed use of the more restrictive 25 (instead of 30) noise exposure forecasts).

The countryside area around the Hamlet (including any minor rounding out) would form an appropriate interface between Greenwood and an area for potential future urban growth. The size and location of the lands to be added to the Greenbelt would not prejudice strategic future growth opportunities, such as development along the future Highway 407. A protected countryside area could provide opportunities for establishing tourism and recreational developments, such as driving ranges and golf courses, consistent with the objectives of the Greenbelt Plan. Also, the countryside could support agri-tourism activities, such as culinary tourism, organic farming, cottage industry greenhouses, nurseries, tree farms and retail agricultural markets on the rural-urban fringe. Greenwood residents supported these types of active and diversified countryside uses.

This vision is consistent with another goal of the Greenbelt Plan -- to sustain the character of the countryside and rural settlements. The countryside uses would reflect the *Agricultural System: Rural Area* policies of the Greenbelt Plan, the *Countryside Area* designation in Amendment 13 to the Pickering Official Plan, and the new *countryside* designation the City recommended be established by the Region through its official plan review.

4.0 During the City's consultation, the agricultural community requested the Province provide further support for agriculture as protection of the land is not enough.

At the public open sessions, farmers spoke about the financial hardships facing the agricultural sector and their concern with not being able to secure loans from financial institutions for next year's crops as a result of the Greenbelt Plan. As farmers use their properties as collateral for loans, any loss in property values would make it more difficult for banks to provide financing at the same level. The issues of agricultural viability in the proposed greenbelt area and the potential loss of equity need to be addressed.

It is recommended that Council request the Province to address the issues raised by the agricultural community prior to approving the Greenbelt Plan. In addition, the Province should modify existing funding programs to enable the viability of farming in the greenbelt area.

5.0 Staff will continue to monitor the Greenbelt Plan and advise Council of significant events or information.

Staff will follow-up with the Province respecting Council's comments on the Plan, and will advise Council of significant matters about the final Greenbelt Plan.

Also, staff will be identifying required changes to the City's Official Plan to implement the final Greenbelt Plan (for example, an amendment that would be considered to implement the recommendations of this Addendum Report would be redesignating lands south of Highway 7 to *Open Space – Active Recreational Areas*, to ensure an appropriate range of countryside uses are permissible).

Appendix

I Recommended Boundary Expansion

Attachments

1. Text of Report PD 47-04
 2. Council Resolution #157/04, of December 6, 2004
 3. Consultation Process Report, dated February 1, 2005
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Prepared By:

Approved / Endorsed By:

Original signed

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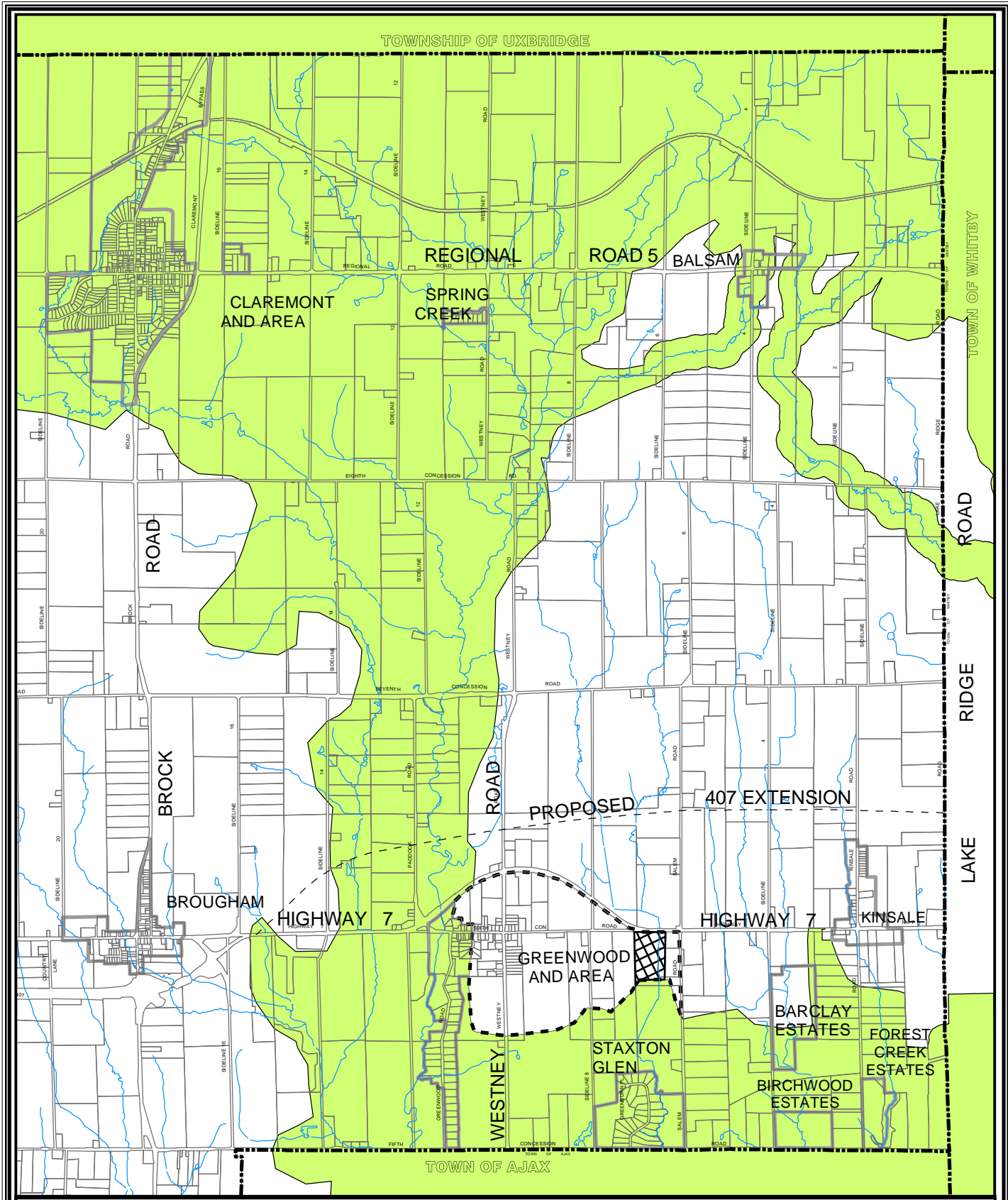
Copy: Chief Administrative Officer
(Acting) Chief Administrative Officer

**Recommended for the consideration of
Pickering City Council**

Original signed

Thomas J. Quinn, Chief Administrative Officer

**DRAFT GREENBELT PLAN:
RECOMMENDED BOUNDARY EXPANSION**



Draft Greenbelt Plan: Recommended Boundary Expansion

Legend

- Watercourses
- Greenbelt Boundary
- Proposed 407 Extension
- Add to Greenbelt Boundary
- Technical Revision

