

November 21, 2025

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

777 Bay Street, 17th

Toronto, Ontario M7A 2J3

November 21, 2025

Sent via email: mmahofficialplans@ontario.ca;
minister.mah@ontario.ca
laurie.miller@ontario.ca;
maya.harris@ontario.ca

Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

I am writing to submit to your attention the current Town of East Gwillimbury Official Plan. In accordance with the *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, Part III Official Plans 17 (1)* the Minister is the approval authority in respect of the approval of a plan as an official plan.

About this Plan

The Official Plan review commenced in 2020. It was informed by extensive consultation since its commencement, including a public meeting on May 11, 2022 and a public open house on March 3, 2022. On June 21, 2022, staff of the Town of East Gwillimbury presented an updated Official Plan for Council adoption. The Plan presented to you today was, for the most part, adopted by Council in 2022.

The Official Plan review included multiple special meetings of Council to receive feedback, as well as non-statutory engagement. Town Advisory Committee's had been consulted, as well as our Library Board and Chamber of Commerce. The review also included workshops, one on one sessions, in-person community booths and more, which allowed the Official Plan to be developed collaboratively with the community.

Leading up to the drafting of the updated Official Plan, there has also been extensive background research, analysis, consultation, and visioning work undertaken. A comprehensive Land Needs Assessment report was also prepared as part of the project in order to evaluate the Town's capacity to manage growth.

Since adoption of the Town's Official Plan in 2022, staff submitted the Official Plan to the Regional Municipality of York for approval. The Region provided the Town with numerous amendments to address conformity with the Region of York Official Plan as well as Provincial Plans and Policies.

Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024

The passing of Bill 185, also known as the Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024 removed the planning responsibilities from upper-tier regional municipalities, including the Regional Municipality of York. These responsibilities were removed on July 1, 2024. As such, the Regional Municipality of York no longer has planning policy responsibilities and is no longer an approval authority for applications for draft plans of subdivision, Official Plan Amendments, Zoning Bylaw Amendments, consents, or minor variances.

Since this time, more effort has been spent by the Town to reduce policy overlap with Regional and Provincial plans and policies to improve the clarity and readability of the Draft Official Plan, to reduce the need for future amendments, and to allow Provincial plans and policies to stand on their own merits.

Consistency with the Provincial Planning Statement

More recently, a new Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS, 2024) was released under section 3 of the Planning Act which requires that all decisions affecting planning matters shall be consistent with the minimum standards set in the Provincial Planning Statement. It came into effect October 20, 2024.

Ministry staff communicated a preference to Town staff that we take the necessary actions to refine the Town of East Gwillimbury Official Plan to be consistent with the PPS, 2024. Town staff have now made the necessary adjustment to the Official Plan in response to this direction, and our requirements under *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, Part III Official Plans* 26 (1).

This Plan has been reviewed and modified to ensure consistency with the new Provincial Planning Statement. Attachment 3 is a matrix that identifies all the relevant elements of the Provincial Planning Statement and provides an assessment and the location within this Plan where each element has been considered. Attachment 3 is intended to assist the Ministry in their review of this Plan for consistency.

Maintain Settlement Area Boundaries

In the Town's existing Official Plan, there are substantial lands that are within the Main Central Growth Area (the Settlement Area), that are not provided with a land use designation. These lands have typically been known as "whitebelt lands". On December 3, 2019, Council of the Town of East Gwillimbury directed that 100% of East Gwillimbury's "whitebelt lands" be included within the existing Settlement Area identified for future urban growth.

In the Council adopted 2022 Official Plan much of the former "whitebelt lands" were identified as the Complete Communities Plan Area. However, 4 areas remained within the Settlement Area Boundary and were identified as either Future Urban Employment Area or Future Urban Area. These identifiers recognized the potential of these lands to accommodate future urban development, in recognition of their existing status as lands within the Settlement Area Boundary.

In their comments on the Council adopted 2022 Official Plan, York Region REDUCED the Settlement Area Boundary, removing the 4 "whitebelt" areas from the Settlement Area Boundary. The Town does not agree with the Region's approach to remove lands from the Town's longstanding Settlement Area Boundary.

Consequently, the Town asks the Province to leave the Settlement Area Boundary as it is currently depicted in the Draft Official Plan, and to recognize those 4 "whitebelt" areas as Future Employment Areas and Future Community Areas, as identified on Schedule 2 to the DRAFT Official Plan, dated November 21, 2025. The rationale for this request is as follows:

- > The Town is requesting that the Settlement Area Boundary remain as it is currently depicted within the existing Official Plan. It is not a Settlement Area Boundary Expansion and is therefore not subject to Section 2.3.2 of the Provincial Planning Statement. It is noted that the Provincial Planning Statement does not provide a planning framework for the consideration of Settlement Area Boundary Reductions;
- > The Settlement Area Boundary as it is identified in the existing Official Plan has established the expectation that these lands will be developed for urban development forms at some point in the future. These expectations have been in place for some time, and it is understood that some landowners have recognized this potential, and some have made investment decisions on that basis. Removing these lands from the Settlement Area Boundary would have a detrimental effect on those landowners; and
- > With respect to the Future Employment Areas identified, it is noted that Section 2.1.3 of the Provincial Planning Statement does not constrain the designation of lands for employment generating land uses on the basis of the planning horizon identified in the DRAFT Official Plan dated November 21, 2025. It is in the interest of the Town of East Gwillimbury to have a substantial supply of lands available for employment generating lands uses within the Settlement Area Boundary, particularly where they are strategically located in proximity to the future Bradford By-pass and Highway 404.

Provincial Review

Due to our legislative obligations under *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, Part III Official Plans 17 (17.1)*, we are submitting to the Ministry our Draft Town of East Gwillimbury Official Plan at least 90 days before the municipality gives notice under subsection (17), as the Minister is the approval

authority in respect of the plan and the plan is not exempt from approval. The Draft Official Plan also conforms with provincial plans or does not conflict with them, has regard to the matters of provincial interest listed in section 2, and is consistent with policy statements issued under subsection 3 (1).

Streamlining Opportunities

Over the next ninety days, staff intend to continue consultation on the Draft Official Plan. Consultation will include ongoing engagement with First Nations, staff, agencies, councillors, the community and others are necessary. Future consultation beyond the next ninety days will also include an open house and public meeting, prior to returning to municipal Council for re-adoption. Should the province request modifications to the Draft Official Plan, additional revisions to the Draft Official Plan may be forthcoming.

East Gwillimbury looks forward to working together with staff at the Ministry to find opportunities to further streamline the Draft Official Plan, with a particular emphasis on ways to avoid duplication with existing Provincial legislation, policies and plans. With this submission we move our Official Plan one step closer towards approval. We look forward to receiving your review and feedback and welcome the opportunity to meet with Ministry staff in person or virtually at your earliest convenience. Feel free to reach out to me directly with communication.

Please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jack Krubnik', is written in a cursive style.

Jack Krubnik, RPP, MCIP, OALA, CSLA, PLE

Acting General Manager, Development Services

Town of East Gwillimbury

19000 Leslie Street, Sharon, Ontario L0G 1V0

Office: 905-478-4282 Ext. 1287

Cell: 289-264-3857

jkrubnik@eastgwillimbury.ca

Attachment 1 – Town of East Gwillimbury Draft Official Plan

Attachment 2 – Town of East Gwillimbury Draft Official Plan Schedules

Attachment 3 – Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 Consistency Table

- c. Hon. Robert J. Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Martha Greenberg, Deputy Minister, Municipal Affairs and Housing
Sean Fraser, Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal Affairs and Housing
Caspar Hall, Assistant Deputy Minister, Local Government Division
David McLean, Assistant Deputy Minister, Housing Policy and Planning Division
Amanda Lui, CAO/Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal Affairs and Housing
Hon. Graydon Smith, Associate Minister, Municipal Affairs and Housing
Laurie Miller, Director, Municipal Services Office – Central Region (MMAH)
Tanzeel Merchant, Regional Director, Municipal Services Office (MMAH)
Maya Harris, Manager of Community Planning and Development (MMAH)
Aldo Ingraldi, Manager, (Acting) Municipal Affairs and Housing
Julianna Zhuo, Manager (Acting), Community Planning & Development (MMAH)
Camilia Changizi, Team Lead, Municipal Affairs and Housing
Andrew Doersam, Senior Planner, Municipal Affairs and Housing
Mark Valcic, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of East Gwillimbury
Tara Lajevardi, Municipal Clerk, Town of East Gwillimbury