

Appendix 1 to PD-2021-0020

ERO 019-3136 Discussion Questions for Provincial Review on Growing the Greenbelt

1. What are your thoughts on the initial focus area of the Study Area of the Paris Galt Moraine?

Based on past Provincial mapping of the Paris Galt Moraine, the initial focus area appears to provide adequate coverage, particularly to the north which is currently unprotected by the Greenbelt.

2. What are the considerations in moving from a Study Area to a more defined boundary of the Paris Galt Moraine?

Any expansion to the Greenbelt based on the Paris Galt Moraine should more accurately reflect its true physical boundaries where possible. It is unclear, for example, what the basis is for including portions of the initial focus area such as Glen Williams and north Georgetown in the Study Area.

3. What are your thoughts on the initial focus area of adding, expanding and further protecting Urban River Valleys?

The Town of Halton Hills contains one of the 21 Urban River Valleys in the Greenbelt Plan. This URV consists of portions of Black Creek, Silver Creek, and Credit River, and adjacent publicly-owned lands. Surrounding this is an Environmentally Significant Area (locally known as Hungry Hollow) as identified by Credit Valley Conservation. As such, lands in and around this URV are well protected and preserved for passive conservation uses.

The Urban River Valley system in Halton Hills also includes a separate section of the Credit River through Glen Williams. This does not extend down through the portion of the Credit on the west side of Georgetown. There may be opportunity through this review to better highlight the Credit River along the Georgetown urban boundary (west side).

4. Do you have suggestions for other potential areas to grow the Greenbelt?

Any consideration of additional lands within the Halton Hills Rural and Agricultural Area being added to the Greenbelt Plan Area should await the completion of the Municipal Comprehensive Review, which is currently underway in Halton.

5. How should we balance or prioritize any potential Greenbelt expansion with the other provincial priorities mentioned above?

The impacts on current agricultural operations and perceived future agricultural needs should be carefully considered. This will require extensive consultation with the farming community to establish whether Greenbelt expansion will truly benefit operations that would ultimately be brought into the Plan area. The needs and concerns of rural property owners on small lots in agricultural areas should also be addressed through consultation, given the tendency to

overlook such properties. These property owners should be properly consulted and educated on the impacts of their properties being added to the Plan area.

Policies for Natural Heritage and Water Resource Systems should be consistent in and out of the Greenbelt Plan Area. This will help ensure connections to other Provincial and Regional systems are strengthened, while maintaining clarity and consistency among the different Plan policies.

6. Are there other priorities that should be considered?

Parkland needs should also be considered as a priority. The Greenbelt strives to protect open spaces in rural areas from urban development, providing opportunities to increase the supply of parkland, whether it is for more active uses such as sports parks, or passive recreational uses such as hiking trails. As municipalities often struggle to maintain adequate parkland within urban areas, open space in rural areas provides an opportunity for increased access to outdoor recreation.

Preserved open space in rural areas acting as a carbon sink that will help mitigate impacts of climate change should also be a stated priority when it comes to Greenbelt expansion. Greenbelt lands that are being farmed or protected for natural heritage both serve as open space land uses which are critical in climate change mitigation.