



November 15, 2020

**RE: Item 7.2 – Application to Amend the Rural Hamilton Official Plan for Lands Located at 2121 and 2187 Regional Road 56, Glanbrook (PED20027) (Ward 11)**

To the Chairperson & Members of the City of Hamilton’s Planning Committee,

I am writing to you on behalf of Environment Hamilton to express strong support for the recommendation from city planning staff to **DENY** the application to amend the Rural Hamilton Official Plan for lands located at 2121 and 2187 Regional Road 56 in Glanbrook.

We share staff concerns that this application **does not uphold** the policies set out in the city’s own Rural Hamilton Official Plan, and that it does not comply with important policies set out in Ontario’s Greenbelt Plan and in the Provincial Policy Statement.

This proposal represents an attempt to secure ‘leapfrog servicing’ given that it is seeking to extend municipal water/wastewater servicing beyond the Binbrook settlement area to rural locations well outside of that area. Our fear is that if this application receives approval from the city, **it will simply pave the way for the northward expansion of Binbrook into the protected Greenbelt in the future.** If provided, expanded servicing will be used by other landowners to justify their requests for future settlement area expansion. The Binbrook settlement area is one of the worst examples of ‘leapfrog development in Ontario’; it is not good planning to create new, expansive areas of mostly residential development so far outside of an urban area. When considered through a climate lens, development in this outlying area is harmful because it has created a community that is completely auto-dependent (no transit service and no active transportation links to urban Hamilton), and it has resulted in the loss of agricultural land and rural natural areas.

This form of development is also fiscally irresponsible and to continue to extend municipal services - as planning staff point out in their report - only creates additional costs for the city. We note, too, that the commercial development that is seeking servicing already received a conditional site plan approval from this committee on September 27, 2019 – **on the ‘premise that the lands would be developed on private services’.** It seems rather disingenuous that this proponent is now back before you just over a year later asking for you to approve the extension of city services to this property. The municipality must not make more bad decisions where this area and the rural lands around it are concerned; it is essential that the city uphold the policies put in place to protect the rural lands surrounding the Binbrook settlement area.

Finally, we view this application to extend city services as a very direct attack on the provincial Greenbelt particularly when city planning staff confirm that there is no justification, from a human health point of view, to extend these services to the proposed locations. Environment Hamilton is a proud member of the Ontario Greenbelt Alliance. We serve on the organization's Steering Committee and as a Regional Lead in the Niagara/Hamilton/Halton area. Along with the growing number of organizational members of the OGA, we believe it is essential that Ontario's Greenbelt is protected and, ideally, expanded over time.

In conclusion, we urge you to support the recommendation from city planning staff that this application be **DENIED**. Even when viewed at a very high level through a climate lens, this application cannot be justified and must not be supported.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. M. Lukasik". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

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