

We asked our Niagara Escarpment-area MPPs this question: Because this is the year for the review of four provincial land use plans, particularly the Greenbelt Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan, how, if at all, would you like these plans changed?

As Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Premier has given me a mandate to lead the co-ordinated review of the Growth Plan and the Greenbelt Plans, and to partner with municipalities to grow the Greenbelt and ensure there is a clear, simple process in place to address requests for further expansion. Each of the four land use plans serves an overlapping but unique purpose. Together, they provide an integrated regional framework. That framework encourages development of compact and vibrant urban and rural communities that make good use of our infrastructure and transit investments. The framework also protects agricultural lands, water, natural resources, the environment and natural features, such as the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges Moraine. Since the plans are closely related it makes sense to have a co-ordinated review that considers how they support one another. We have heard that the plans are generally working well. It is critical to hear opinions on how to make the plans even stronger and work better together, and what people think is working well now. The co-ordinated review that is currently underway is to get public input on how to make a good system better. We are looking at targeted, possibly significant, changes. During the review we will be exploring how the plans can better:

- Protect agricultural land, water and natural areas, including opportunities to grow the Greenbelt
- Keep people and goods moving, and build cost-effective infrastructure
- Foster healthy, livable and inclusive communities
- Build communities that attract workers and create jobs
- Address climate change and build resilient communities
- Improve implementation and alignment between the plans

Hon. Ted McMeekin, MPP, Ontario Liberal Party

The NDP supports strong protections for the Niagara Escarpment and the Greenbelt. We were shocked last year when a PC MPP introduced a bill to completely repeal the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act. It is hard to believe that something so obviously vital as the Niagara Escarpment still needs constant defence almost 40 years after that Act was first proclaimed. But as we saw with the Melancthon megaquarry, the Escarpment is still vulnerable. And even after hearing from citizens about how that megaquarry put farmland and the watershed at risk, the government has continued to approve giant aggregate quarries within the Escarpment. The province has also refused the NDP's request that it conduct a provincial Environmental Assessment of the Line 9

pipeline. Nor will it designate pipelines as a prescribed threat to drinking water under the Clean Water Act, or bind Enbridge to the pipeline provisions of the Credit Valley Toronto and Region Central Lake Ontario source protection plan (which the government has still not approved, almost three years after it was first submitted). We need to do better. We need stronger policies to protect prime farmland, drinking water and the natural environment of the Niagara Escarpment and the Greenbelt.

NDP response provided by Peter Tabuns, MPP Toronto-Danforth and the NDP critic for Energy, Environment and Climate Change

A review of the Greenbelt, Niagara Escarpment, the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe has begun. The review is an opportunity for individuals to share their comments about the four plans in the hope the government will improve the four plans. I believe that any expansion of boundaries must allow land owners and municipalities to comment, and that those recommendations be reflected in the final results. There also needs to be coordination between the four land use plans to ensure rules are consistently applied. I encourage you to participate in the review at www.ontario.ca/landuseplanningreview.
Sylvia Jones MPP, MPP Dufferin-Caledon, Ontario Progressive Conservative Party

POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVES

Listed by riding