

Deposition: Angus Glen Ratepayers Association  
Markham's Growth Management Strategy  
February 16, 2010

Your worship Mayor Scarpitti, Deputy Mayor, Councillors, Town Staff, Markham residents and guests.

My name is Ron Meiers representing the Angus Glen Ratepayers Association and our 1000 households in Markham. We are extremely proud of our community and feel it is a great example of a mixed density neighbourhood of semi detached, town homes, single family dwellings: and soon two multi level condominium buildings with 120 units. We truly hope the Town can continue to produce residential projects of similar quality to both Cornell and Angus Glen and applaud them for their foresight.

After several years of study the Town of Markham's professional Staff has produced a Growth Management Study. For the past two years countless public hearings have been held to incorporate Markham resident feedback in producing the Town Plan. It is somewhat disconcerting to watch this whole issue become politicized by Thornhill Councillors and special interest groups located outside of Markham Community proper. They seem to ignore the alternatives and consequences if we freeze the White Belt Lands. Having authorized hundreds of surveys during my career you can manipulate surveys to garner almost any result. The key is to balance questions to show cause and effect and unless properly posed the results become meaningless, but it is a great publicity stunt and the press eat it up. I find some of their press comments sad in that they appear to not have consulted or made presentations with any of the true stakeholders; not the Markham residents, ratepayers associations or farmers they claim to represent and wish to help (and we all know how farmers feel, it's a resounding sense of alarm). It's just full steam ahead without regard to those of us who have concerns about paving over our existing neighbourhoods and the traffic and parking congestion that high rise buildings bring not to mention obliterating our skyline.

Reality has to enter into the question of developable land within our boundaries for both Residential and Employment lands. All responsible citizens embrace green initiatives, but smart planning has already set aside appropriate non-developable land banks for the future. Here are the facts on current green space:

<u>Green Space</u>	<u>% of Markham Landmass</u>
The Greenbelt	24% of Markham
Greenway system town wide	11% of Markham
<u>White Belt – green space allocation</u>	<u>6.5% of Markham</u>
Green Space	40.5% of Markham

These discussions have very much to do with our legacy to our children and grandchildren: in fact most of us moved to Markham here for the quality of life and many enjoy our existing green space and recreational facilities. As it stands in the current

Town's Growth Strategy, 200 Apartment buildings are needed to house 54% of the anticipated 120,000-population growth. It will be a real challenge to accommodate 200 apartment blocks and maintain quality of life and employment nodes without utilizing the planned growth lands within the White Belt lands.

If we acquiesce to freeze development of the White Belt Lands, the 200 anticipated apartment blocks will become 300 apartment buildings required within our existing footprint. It has taken 60 years to develop the 89 high rise buildings in our community; do we believe that 300 more can be absorbed over the next 20 years without a drastic change to our lifestyle? In the meantime you have a roadmap for growth and you have paid your planning staff to produce a thoughtful balanced plan and they deserve our support.

We feel that changes to the Town's Plan should and will evolve over the coming months and years, we look forward to working with the Town Planning Staff to continue Markham's reputation as a great community to live, work and play!

The Board of Angus Glen Ratepayers strongly supports the Town Plan. Let's adopt the balanced Growth Management Plan referred to in the Markham Development Services documents as "Preferred Growth Alternative to 2031" to get on with task planning a world class community in Markham together.