

Clause 23 in Report No. 12 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on September 21, 2017.

23

Draft Provincial Guidance on Natural Heritage System and  
Agricultural System

Committee of the Whole recommends:

1. Receipt of the presentation by Sandra Malcic, Manager, Policy and Environment, Planning and Economic Development.
2. Receipt of the communication from Maria Gatzios, Gatzios Planning + Development Consultants Inc., dated September 6, 2017.
3. Receipt of the communication from John P. Genest, Principal, Malone Given Parsons Ltd. dated September 6, 2017.
4. Receipt of the communication from Don Given, Malone Given Parsons Ltd. dated September 6, 2017.
5. Adoption of the following recommendations, as amended, contained in the report dated August 24, 2017 from the Commissioner of Corporate Services and the Chief Planner:
  1. Council endorse this report for submission to the Province in response to Environmental Registry Posting Numbers 013-1014 and 013-0968 regarding Draft Provincial Guidance on Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System mapping, including the following key comments:
    - The Province is commended for their flexible approach to finalizing the agricultural system through the municipal comprehensive review process
    - Proposed Natural Heritage mapping should remain draft until finalized through municipal comprehensive reviews
    - All existing settlement designations are accurately mapped and protected through municipal comprehensive reviews
    - Local municipalities should have the opportunity to complete environmental studies before the Natural Heritage mapping is finalized

## Draft Provincial Guidance on Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System

2. This report be circulated by the Regional Clerk to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group, and the clerks of the local municipalities.

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Report dated August 24, 2017 from the Commissioner of Corporate Services  
And Chief Planner now follows:

### 1. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Council endorse this report for submission to the Province in response to Environmental Registry Posting Numbers 013-1014 and 013-0968 regarding Draft Provincial Guidance on Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System mapping, including the following key comments:
  - The Province is commended for their flexible approach to finalizing the agricultural system through the municipal comprehensive review process
  - Proposed Natural Heritage mapping should remain draft until finalized through municipal comprehensive reviews
  - Local municipalities should have the opportunity to complete environmental studies before the Natural Heritage mapping is finalized
2. This report be circulated by the Regional Clerk to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group, and the clerks of the local municipalities.

### 2. Purpose

This report summarizes, and proposes a response to the Province on draft Provincial Guidance on Natural Heritage System mapping (EBR #013-1014) and Agricultural System mapping (EBR #013-0968), released by the Province on July 6, 2017 with the commenting deadline of October 4, 2017.

### 3. Background and Previous Council Direction

York Region provided extensive input to the Province on the coordinated review of the Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan

In February 2015, the Minister of Municipal Affairs (and Housing at the time) announced the coordinated review of the Growth Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP) and the Niagara Escarpment Plan. In response to the formal announcement of the coordinated review, on [May 28, 2015](#) at a Special Meeting of Council, 37 recommendations to the Province were endorsed.

Following consideration of all input received, including York Region's comprehensive response to the draft amendments through [September 2016](#) and [October 2016](#) reports. Updated Provincial Plans were released by the Province on May 18, 2017 and are now in effect.

Province released final plans in May 2017 with the commitment to provide supplementary direction on Natural Heritage and Agricultural System mapping

In [June 2017](#), staff presented to Council the highlights of the primary changes to the final plans. The final Growth Plan references additional direction to be provided on the natural heritage and agricultural systems (policy 5.2.2). This guidance will assist municipalities in undertaking official plan conformity exercises. On July 6, 2017 the Province released, for a 90-day consultation period, draft materials on the Natural Heritage System (NHS) and Agricultural System for public comment.

### 4. Analysis and Implications

Province should use the same approach for both Systems with mapping to remain draft until finalized through the Municipal Comprehensive Review process

The guidance materials on the NHS and Agricultural System referred to in the Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan and ORMCP were developed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) respectively. Each Ministry has taken a different approach to the development of this guidance.

## Draft Provincial Guidance on Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System

The MNRF has indicated that the NHS mapping will be finalized by the end of 2017. Municipalities must identify and protect what the Province has defined in their official plans. The only opportunity to make changes is through the municipal comprehensive review (MCR) process which only allows for more precise mapping.

OMAFRA is currently requesting comments on major discrepancies in the Agricultural System mapping and will produce a more refined draft map at the end of 2017. The Agricultural System mapping will remain draft until municipalities have undertaken final mapping through the MCR process.

The Region requests that MNRF adopt a similar approach to OMAFRA and allow the NHS mapping to remain draft until municipalities can effectively evaluate and assess the proposed additions through the MCR process. Regional staff supports a flexible and collaborative approach to finalizing the mapping as it will result in achieving the Province's criteria, reflect current environmental and agricultural studies and take into account local circumstances and stakeholder input.

### Natural Heritage System

Provincial Natural Heritage System draft mapping encompasses the Growth Plan area, excluding existing settlement areas

The Province is consulting on the development and mapping of a NHS for the entire Growth Plan area, excluding settlement areas. Within York Region, this means the new NHS applies to "whitebelt" lands only, or the lands located between the Greenbelt/ORMCP boundary and the existing urban area. The purpose of the proposed NHS is to maintain and enhance biological and geological diversity, natural functions, indigenous species and ecosystems in the Growth Plan Area. The proposed NHS may include lands without natural features which have been identified as potential restoration areas to enhance habitat and connectivity.

### Regional and Local Municipalities already protect for Natural Heritage Systems through Official Plans

The majority of the Region is protected by the Greenbelt Plan and ORMCP area including the recent addition of the urban river valleys. There are limited candidate lands with natural heritage features outside of the settlement, Greenbelt Plan and ORMCP areas to be included in the Provincial NHS in York Region. Municipalities have already or are currently in the process of completing detailed natural heritage environmental work to identify areas to be protected, enhanced or restored. Local municipal NHS criteria were developed to reflect local geography and conditions compared to Provincial NHS criteria suited to a regional scale. In some instances, additional areas, not already identified in the

## Draft Provincial Guidance on Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System

proposed Provincial mapping may be included within the local NHS. The Region would like to confirm with the Province that these more precise local studies can be used to delineate the NHS and protect for it within Regional and local official plans.

### Proposed Natural Heritage System extends into portions of York Region

Based upon a review of the proposed Growth Plan NHS, portions of the NHS are proposed in five York Region municipalities including Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Markham, Newmarket and Vaughan. The proposed areas for inclusion into the NHS are adjacent to the Greenbelt Plan boundary and presently form part of the “whitebelt” lands of the Growth Plan. The Province has provided criteria for the proposed mapping such as core areas consisting of 50% natural cover or public lands with a minimum size of 100 hectares in size. To ensure consistency, criteria used by the Province to define the Growth Plan NHS were based on the criteria used to define the Greenbelt and ORMCP systems.

### Natural Heritage System proposed areas align with principles of York Region Official Plan

Once the mapping is finalized by the Province, the Region must protect the system through both policy and mapping. The Region’s Official Plan and local official plans already include comprehensive NHS policies to protect, enhance or restore natural features and linkages. The principles behind these NHS policies align with the intent of the Province’s NHS policies within the Growth Plan. Since the NHS policies align with the Region’s Official Plan, the Region should have the opportunity to assess these proposed areas through the MCR process.

The proposed areas for inclusion into the Growth Plan NHS are not extensive in York Region

Although not extensive, staff have concerns with some of the proposed areas for inclusion as mapped in Attachment 1 as follows:

- In East Gwillimbury, small portions of the NHS are extended into the northwest corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession and Doane Road covering the Region’s sewage treatment lagoons. While the Region supports renaturalization of these lands if no longer required for sewage treatment, existing major infrastructure of this nature should not be within the NHS (Attachment 1a)

## Draft Provincial Guidance on Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System

- At the Aurora and Newmarket municipal border, the area consists of an existing golf course, institutional and residential uses intermittently dispersed with some natural features. Some of the proposed NHS falls within an urban designation (ie. Settlement) in local municipal official plans. Local municipal official plan designations and NHS policies should be used to define and protect these natural heritage features (Attachment 1b)

There are a number of small areas proposed for addition in both Markham (Attachment 1c) and Vaughan (Attachment 1d) with several of them currently in active agricultural use. Staff assumes that these areas were added to meet minimum corridor width criteria. Without additional rationale from the Province, staff are recommending the local municipalities be permitted to use the local municipal NHS mapping where it meets the intent of the Provincial NHS policies in the Growth Plan. Staff also request the Province provide specific guidance and criteria for refining NHS mapping with greater precision through an MCR as permitted by the Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan.

### Agricultural System

Provincial tools will assist municipal implementation of Agricultural System policies

The Province has introduced an Agricultural System approach to support the protection of farmland, while promoting economic development of the agri-food sector. The systems approach to agricultural used by the Province is not just the traditional land based method for agricultural protection; the approach now also includes policies to support the entire agricultural network.

From a land use perspective, the Agricultural System includes:

- Specialty crop areas, providing the highest priority of protection (only the Holland Marsh in York Region)
- Prime agricultural areas, including areas already designated in municipal official plans and additional prime agricultural areas identified by the Province, and
- Rural lands, representing areas where active agriculture and related uses are ongoing, link prime agricultural areas and support elements of the agri-food network.

## Draft Provincial Guidance on Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System

The agri-food network consists of a broad range of elements including farm buildings, agricultural services, farm markets, distributors as well as the infrastructure that connects them. This systems approach for agriculture is new in Ontario. To support municipalities in the implementation of the Agricultural System policies, the Province has provided the following draft tools:

- Implementation procedures – guidance on policies
- Agricultural land base map – specialty crop, prime agricultural areas and candidate areas
- Agricultural System Portal – mapping of existing agri-food assets & clusters

A draft document entitled “[Implementation Procedures for the Agricultural System in Ontario’s Greater Golden Horseshoe](#)” is intended to serve as the Provincial guidelines on designated prime agricultural areas in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Guidance is provided to municipalities on how to carry out official plan conformity with the Agricultural System and how it interacts with the NHS and water resource systems.

Agricultural System mapping will remain draft until assessed and implemented through Municipal Comprehensive Reviews

Staff supports the collaborative and flexible approach the Province is taking to Agricultural System identification and protection. Following input received through the EBR posting, the Province is proposing to incorporate comments as appropriate, but will continue to keep the map in draft form. Municipalities, through the MCR, will have the opportunity to work in collaboration with OMAFRA to finalize the agricultural land base map. Staff is aware of existing and proposed agricultural areas impacted by adjacent urban land uses. Analysis through the MCR process will allow for a comprehensive assessment of agricultural and rural lands to determine if any changes are required to Map 8 (Agricultural and Rural Area) of the York Region Official Plan.

The Province and York Region used different criteria to identify prime agricultural lands, which results in the Province proposing additional prime agricultural lands

The draft agricultural land base map covers the Growth Plan area. The Province developed the draft mapping using a consistent Land Evaluation Area Review (LEAR) methodology across the entire study area. A LEAR is an assessment tool used to score the importance of lands for agriculture based on soil characteristics and other area factors, including fragmentation and lands under production.

## Draft Provincial Guidance on Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System

Proposed prime agricultural areas include land already designated by municipalities as well as additional lands identified by the Province through its LEAR.

Regional LEAR includes criterion of 'conflicting land uses' which is a major contributing factor to the difference between the Province's and the Region's LEAR

In 2009, York Region completed a LEAR for the purposes of designating agricultural and rural lands in the York Region Official Plan. This analysis followed OMAFRA's recommended assessment procedure at the time. The Province's LEAR uses different criteria than the Region which results in the Province proposing additional prime agricultural lands.

The Province used three criteria:

- Soil Capability
- Fragmentation
- Lands in Production

York Region used the Province's three criteria plus two additional criteria:

- Climate
- Conflicting Land Uses

Staff have concluded that not accounting for conflicting land uses is the major contributing factor for differences between the Provincially proposed prime agricultural lands and the Region's currently designated Agricultural lands.

Draft Provincial Agricultural mapping identifies additional lands in York Region as prime agriculture

Maps (Attachment 2) were prepared using the Province's Agricultural System Portal website. For each municipality, the maps illustrate the existing York Region Official Plan agricultural designation, the Provincially proposed prime agricultural areas, and Candidate Areas.

When the draft agricultural land base map is compared to Map 8 of the York Region Official Plan, there are a number of areas where prime agricultural areas extend into the Region's current rural designation. Municipalities, through the MCR, will have the opportunity to work in collaboration with OMAFRA to define the agricultural land base using the draft agricultural land base map as the foundation. The Province has also introduced "Candidate Areas for the

## Draft Provincial Guidance on Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System

Agricultural Land Base” for municipal consideration as part of the agricultural land base. Municipalities have the option, also through the MCR process, to consider these lands as either prime agriculture or rural.

The Province-wide agricultural land base map will not be finalized until municipalities have confirmed the Agricultural System through an adopted Official Plan or Official Plan Amendment.

Staff are cautious about expanding the agricultural designation within York Region without a comprehensive and detailed analysis

Having completed a LEAR in 2009 for the Region in consultation with OMAFRA, staff are cautious about the need to expand the current agricultural designation in York Region for the following reasons:

- Conflicting land uses within the Region’s rural designated areas significantly impact agricultural viability of some lands as reflected in the Region’s LEAR
- There are already limited rural lands within the Region to sustain rural uses not permitted within agricultural lands
- Large portions of the lands proposed as prime agriculture by the Province already support existing non-agricultural uses

Highly fragmented areas, existing non-agricultural uses (residential, institutional, commercial and industrial uses) and areas surrounded by a highly urbanized area are some examples of where it may not be appropriate to redesignate rural lands to prime agriculture. As part of the MCR process staff will assess, in conjunction with local municipalities and stakeholders, the Region’s existing mapping and the proposed Provincial mapping to determine if modifications to the YROP-2010 Map 8 are required.

Agricultural Land Base Map needs to be amended to reflect existing plans for some areas proposed as prime agricultural

In Richmond Hill, the Oak Ridges Corridor Nature Reserve (also known as Oak Ridges Moraine Corridor Park) is dominated by natural features and is identified as an ecological preserve. This area is not appropriate for prime agriculture as proposed by the Province. These lands are designated as Rural in the Region’s Official Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Core and Natural Linkage in the Richmond Hill Official Plan. As the Rural designation does not preclude agricultural uses, staff recommends that the current rural designation be maintained as it better aligns with the objectives of the Nature Reserve. A number of partners have invested in the restoration of these lands for ecological

## Draft Provincial Guidance on Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System

preservation. Further, the lands have significant protection through the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan policies and are identified as a conceptual corridor as part of Richmond Hill's Greenway System within its Official Plan.

Increased scrutiny is required for proposals on Rural lands adjacent to Prime Agricultural Areas

The Province is proposing that rural lands located adjacent to prime agriculture and specialty crop areas will be subject to the requirement of an Agricultural Impact Assessment. This adds another level of scrutiny for development proposals on rural lands. Provincial staff have indicated they will be providing guidance on Agricultural Impact Assessment requirements, where they are necessary. Municipalities will be required to include policies in their official plans for Agricultural Impact Assessments. Staff have assessed the guidance document and conclude that this will likely result in a "buffer" area being added to the York Region Official Plan mapping supported by policy for abutting rural areas to the prime and speciality crop agricultural areas.

Province's Agricultural System Portal to be used to promote agriculture economic development

The Province has set up an [Agricultural System Portal](#) on the OMAFRA website that maps existing agri-food assets and clusters and includes grain elevators, livestock operations, crop production, wineries and farm markets. This Portal is a tool to be used to inform Agricultural Impact Assessments and municipal decision making for agri-food impacts when a development proposal or land use change is being considered. York Region Official Plan policies will be required to address these components of the system, and to require Agricultural Impact Assessments.

Protecting Natural Heritage and Agricultural Systems furthers the objectives and goals of Vision 2051, Regional Official Plan and the 2015 to 2019 Strategic Plan

Protection of the NHS and Agricultural System is essential to ensure a connected and enhanced Regional Greenlands System and to support a thriving agricultural community as articulated in Vision 2051. This is achieved by having strong natural environment and agricultural policies in the Official Plan protecting 'A Resilient Natural Environment and Agricultural System'.

## 5. Financial Considerations

Staff time associated with the development of a Regional response to the consultation on the proposed Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System guidance material has been undertaken within the existing Planning and Economic Development staff complement and budget.

## 6. Local Municipal Impact

Regional staff contacted local municipalities for comment and hosted a meeting on August 11, 2017 to discuss implications of the draft NHS and Agricultural System materials. Local municipal staff were able to provide further insight into the existing and future land uses proposed in both systems and those comments have informed this report.

Given the limited commenting period, the local municipalities are encouraged to submit comments directly to the Province by October 4, 2017.

## 7. Conclusion

The Province has proposed changes to the NHS and Agricultural System. Staff supports the Province's consultation initiative and the fact the final guidance documents and mapping will be provided in a timely manner to assist municipalities to carry out conformity through a MCR. Staff recommend that the Province use a consistent approach with both the NHS and Agricultural System mapping remaining in draft form allowing municipalities to work collaboratively to finalize both systems through the MCR process. Municipalities which have completed detailed natural heritage system analysis are able to protect the NHS and may include additional lands not currently identified by the Province.

There is still opportunity for the Region to refine the Agricultural System through the MCR and will continue to work with the Province in this regard. Staff support the agricultural system approach and how the Province has utilized the Region's LEAR as a foundation.

Draft Provincial Guidance on Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System

For more information on this report, please contact Sandra Malcic, Manager, Policy and Environment at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75274 or Jennifer Best, Senior Planner at ext. 76118.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

August 24, 2017

Attachments (2)

7852633

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request

# Proposed Growth Plan Natural Heritage System within York Region

## East Gwillimbury Attachment 1a



Proposed Provincial Mapping of the NHS



Aerial Photograph of the Proposed Additions of the NHS



# Aurora/Newmarket

## Attachment 1b

Proposed Provincial Mapping of the NHS

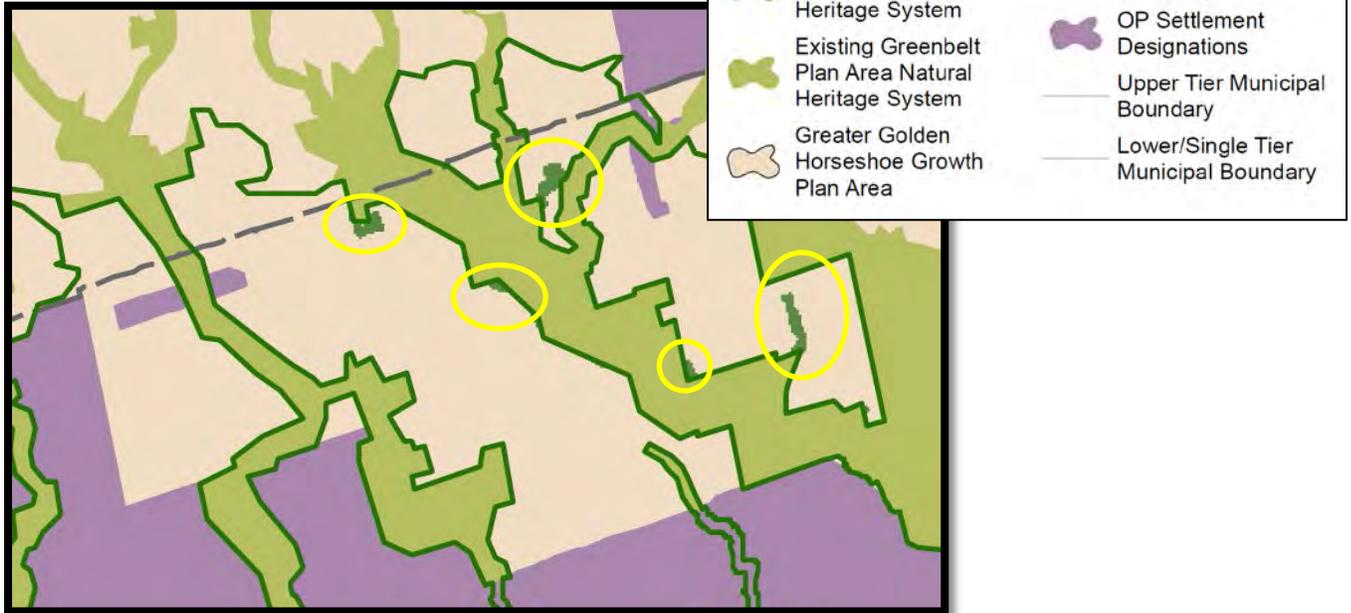


Aerial Photograph of the Proposed Additions of the NHS



Markham  
Attachment 1c

Proposed Provincial Mapping of the NHS

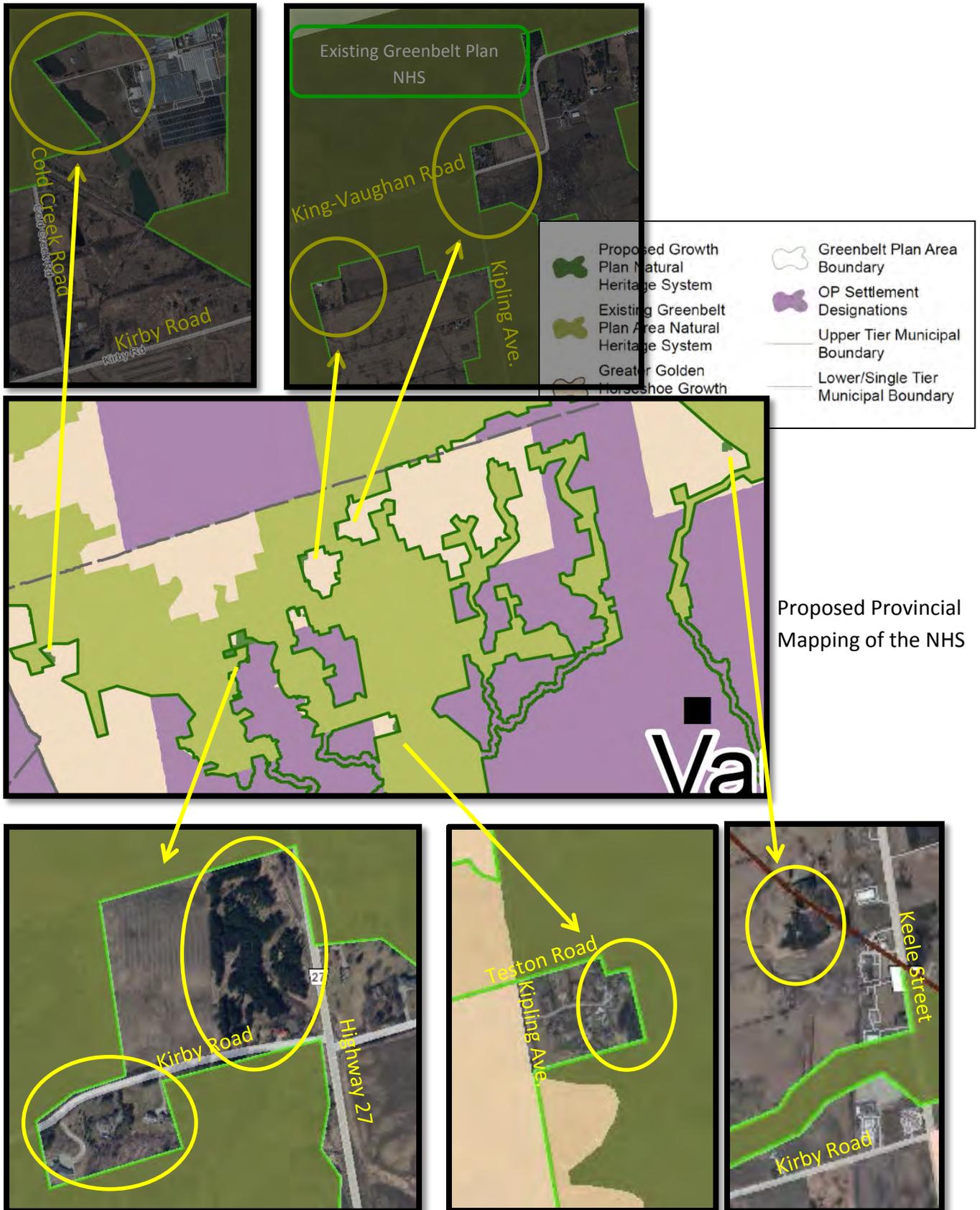


Aerial Photograph of the Proposed Additions of the NHS



Vaughan  
Attachment 1d

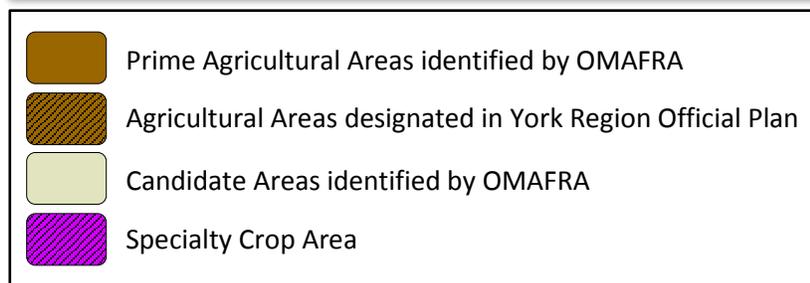
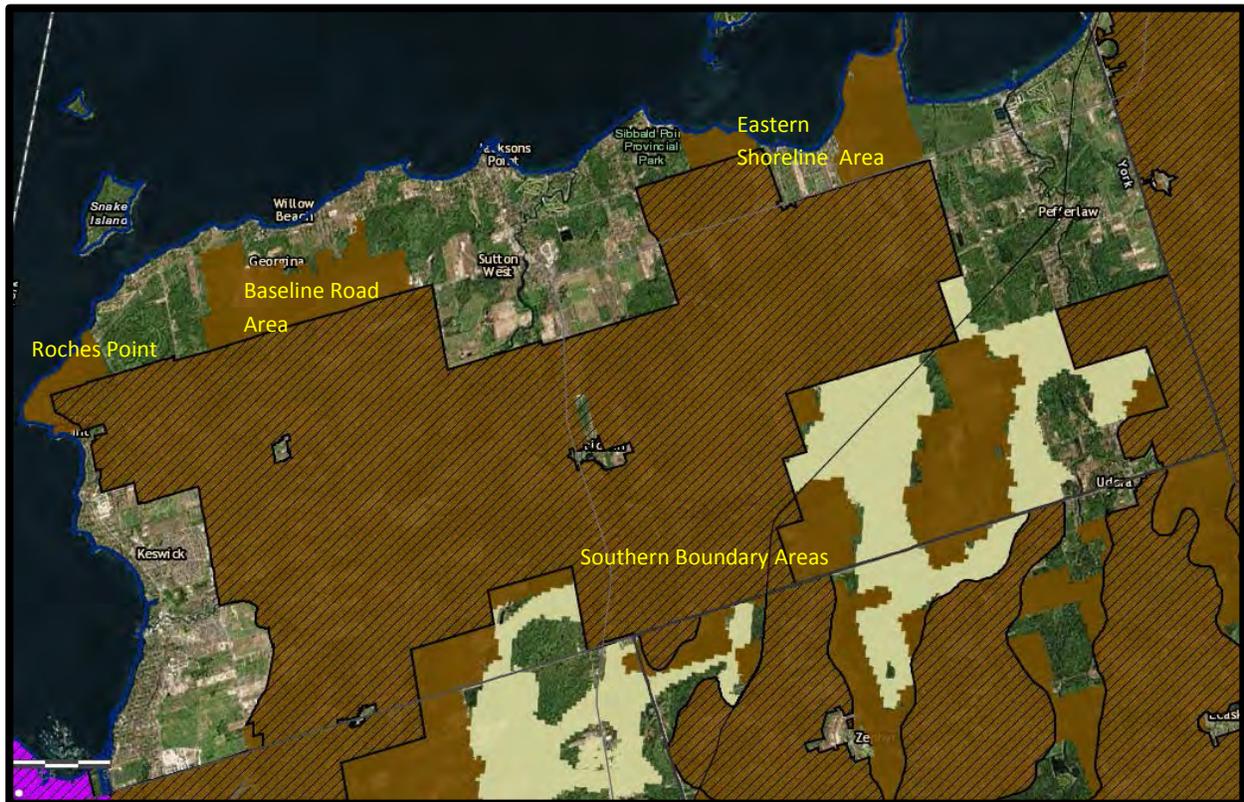
Aerial Photographs of the Proposed Additions of the NHS



## Proposed Agricultural System within York Region

The following in-house produced maps are snapshots of layers derived from OMAFRA's Draft Agricultural System Portal and as a result have limited map quality.

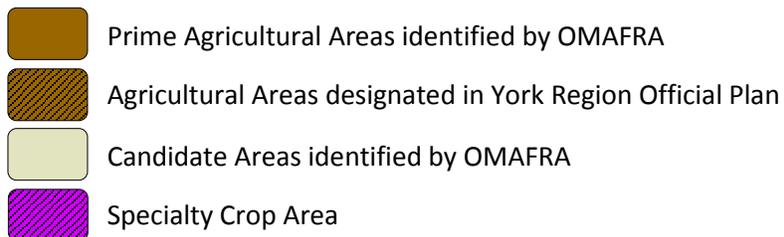
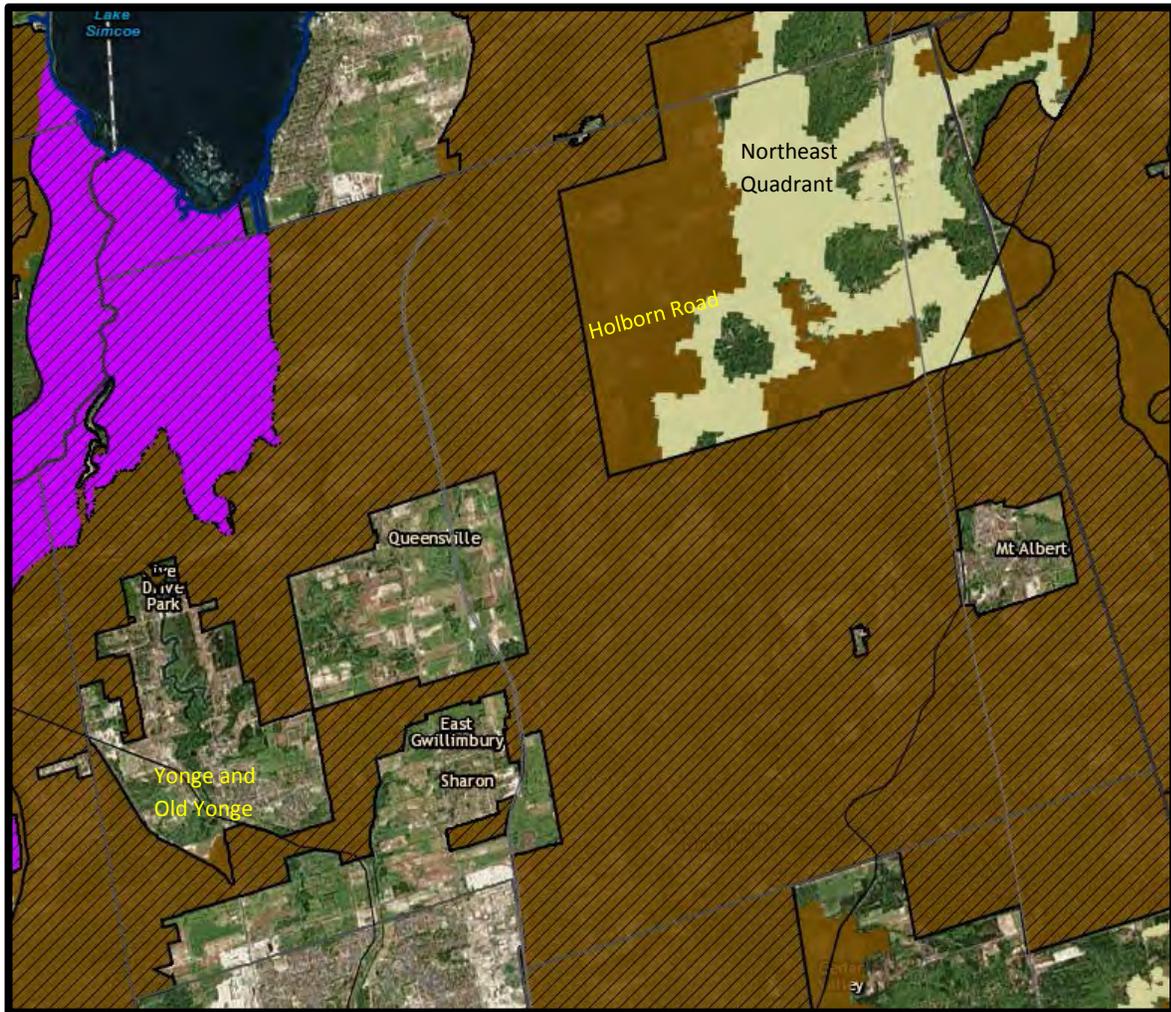
### Georgina



#### Notes:

- Roches Point - some highly fragmented lands; predominantly residential – Require Provincial rationale
- North of Baseline Road – various non-agriculture existing uses such as Town's civic centre & recreational lands, rural uses proposed and existing, highly fragmented – Require Provincial rationale
- Eastern shoreline – fragmented, all lands not compatible with agriculture uses, existing limited rural lands, recreational cottages – Require Provincial rationale
- Southern boundaries – agricultural and rural uses and significant Natural Heritage System features – Region will evaluate these lands through MCR process

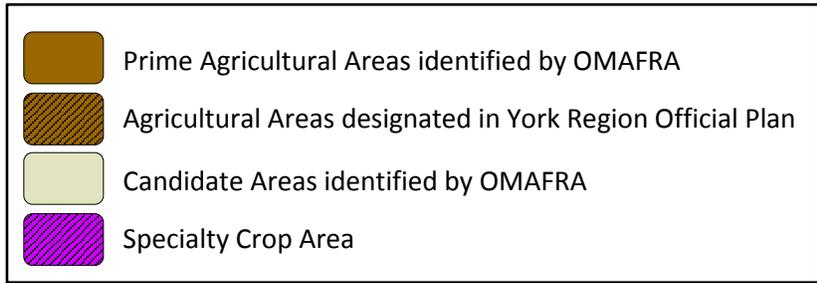
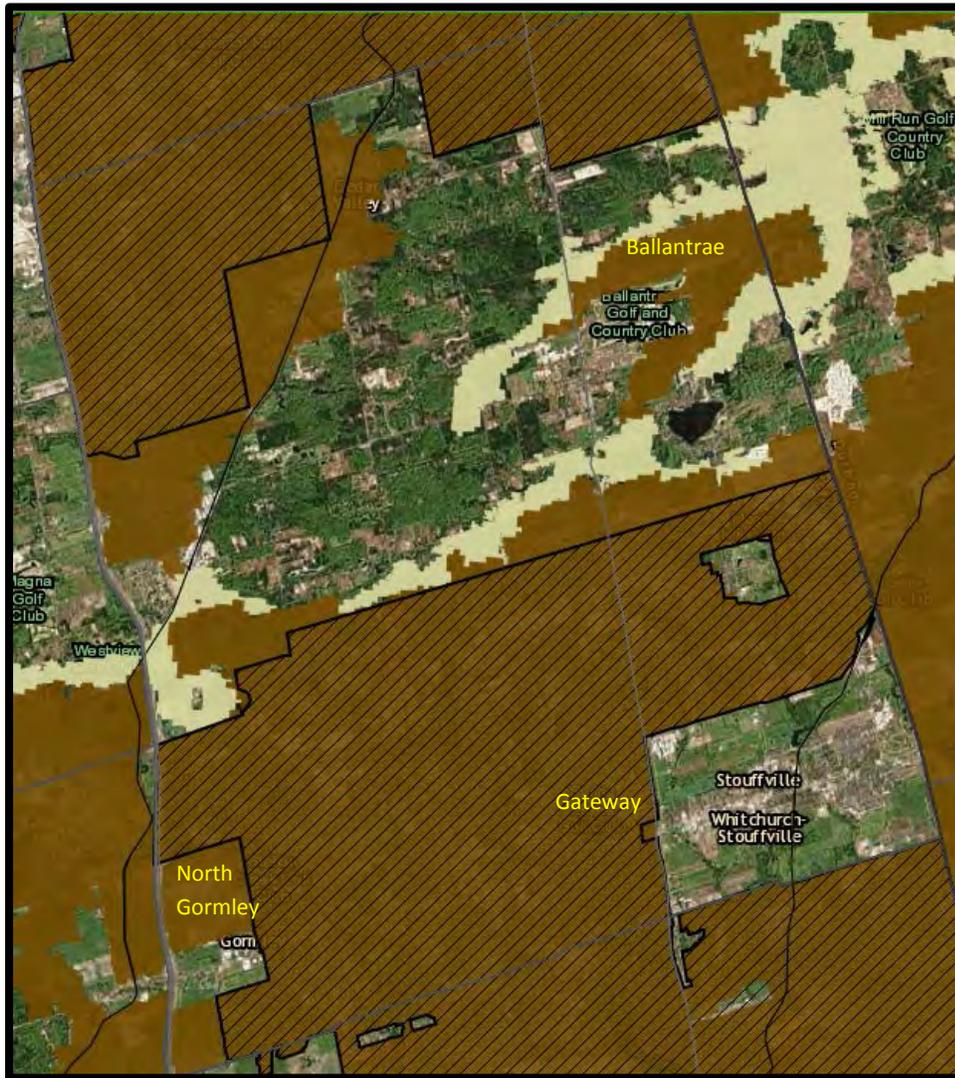
## East Gwillimbury



### Notes:

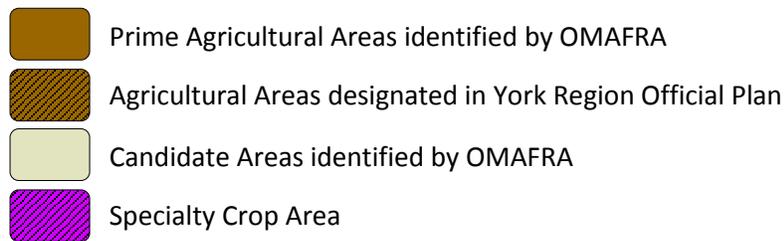
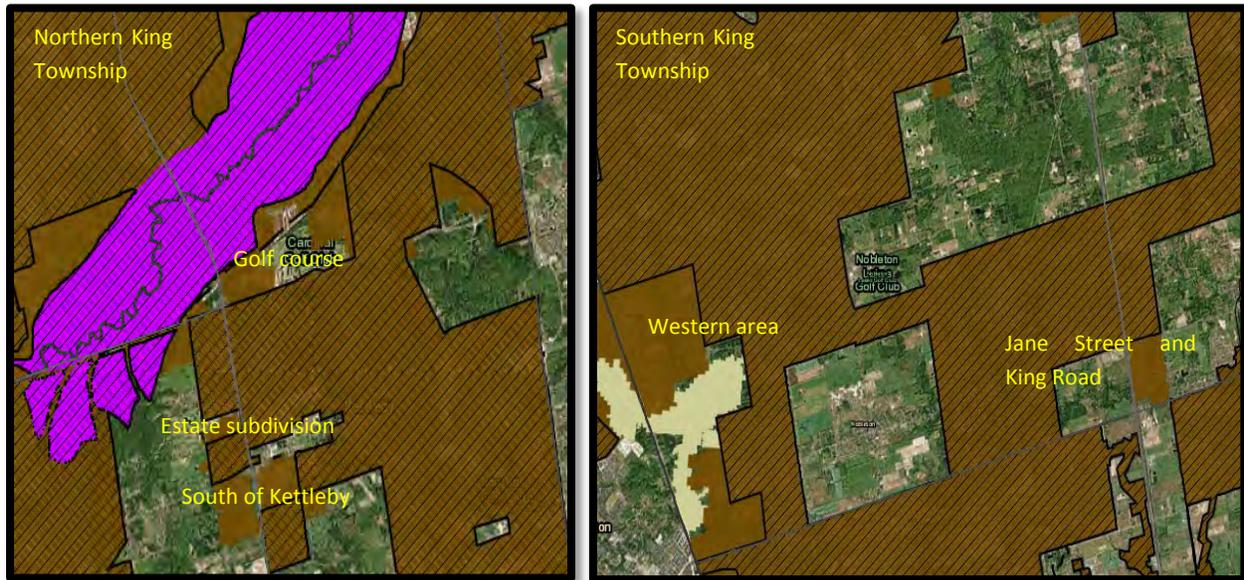
- Holborn Road area consists of residential strip development and estate residential – Require Provincial rationale
- Northeast Quadrant consists of agricultural/rural uses, Natural Heritage System features and fragmentation – Region will evaluate these lands through MCR process
- Intersection of Yonge Street and Old Yonge Street has an existing non-agricultural institutional with Natural Heritage System features and is disconnected from other agricultural lands – Require Provincial rationale

# Whitchurch-Stouffville



- Notes:
- North Gormley – consists of institutional, golf, rural uses, cemetery uses – Require Provincial rationale
  - Gateway into Stouffville – urban designation for mixed uses – Region does not support prime agricultural designation
  - Ballantrae – in between urban uses, fragmented, significant Natural Heritage System features, estate residential – Require Provincial rationale

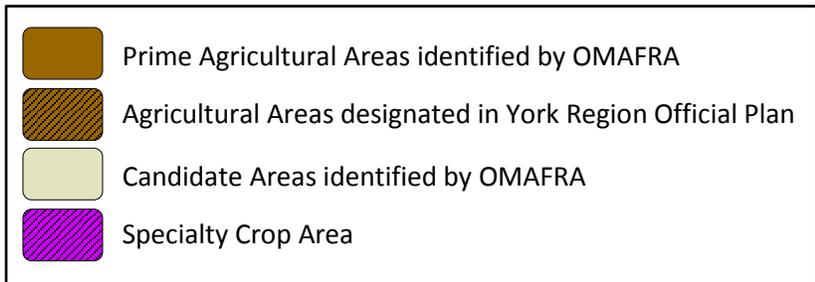
# King



## Notes:

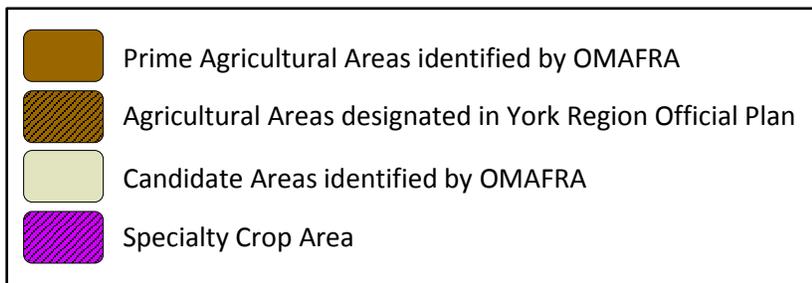
- Northern Portion:
  - Davis Drive West - Cardinal Golf course and Natural Heritage System features – Require Provincial rationale
  - Existing estate subdivision – Require Provincial rationale
  - South of Kettleby - existing rural uses – Region will evaluate these lands through MCR process
- Southern Portion:
  - Jane Street and King Road - Commercial use of Kingbridge Centre – Region does not support prime agricultural designation
  - Western Area – mix of agricultural uses, rural residential strip development, commercial uses – Region will evaluate these lands through MCR process

# Aurora



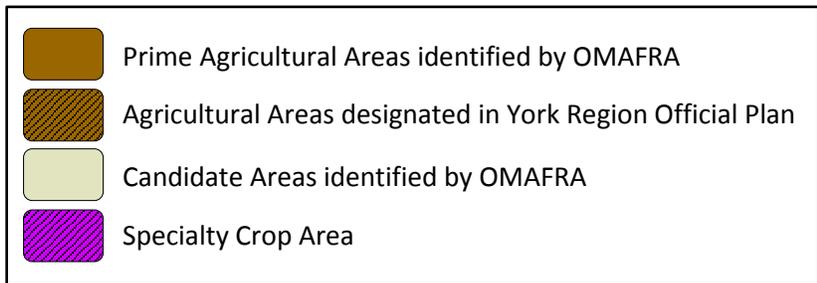
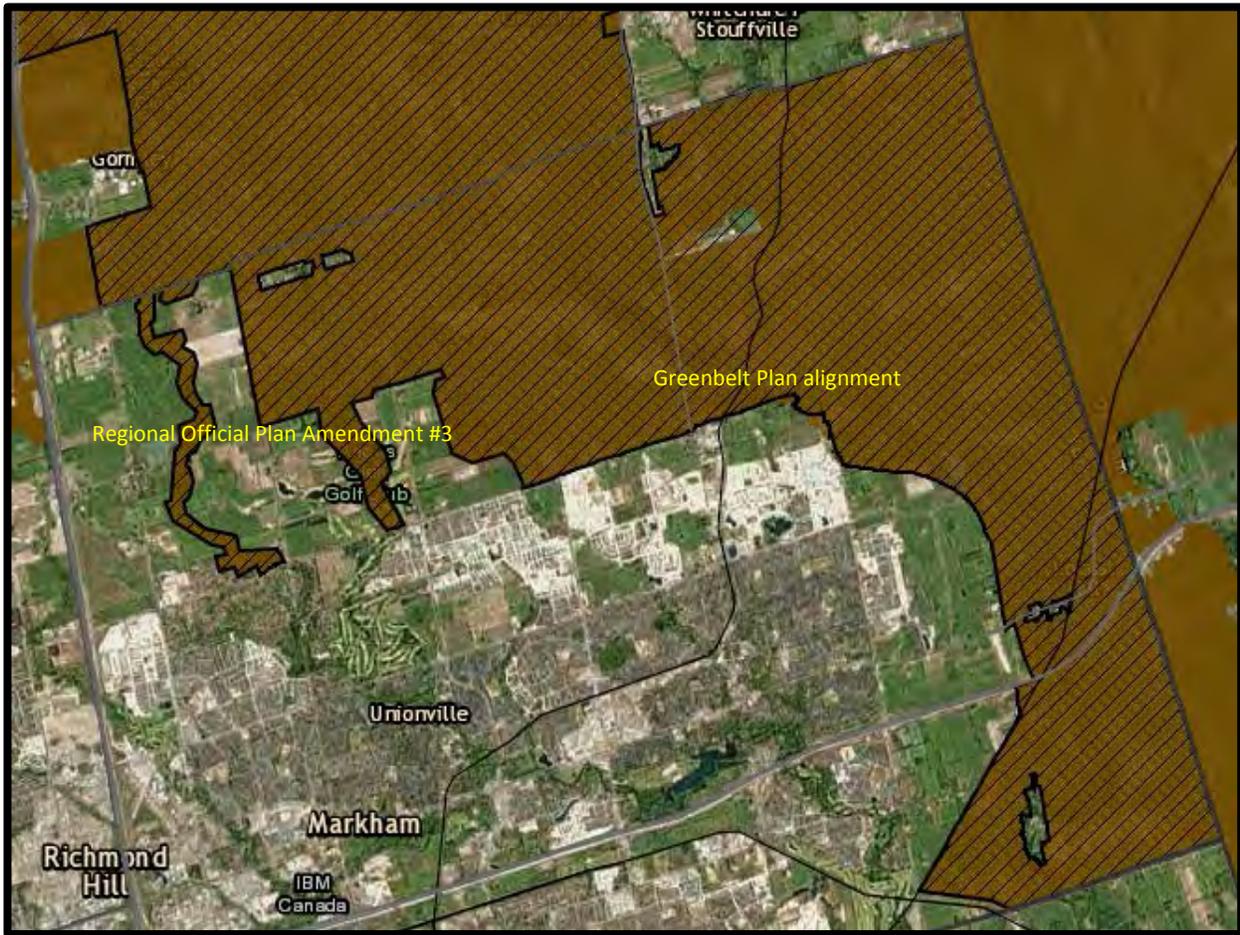
- Notes:
- Consists of golf courses, estate residential, abutting urban uses and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Countryside and Natural Linkage designations – Require Provincial rationale

# Richmond Hill



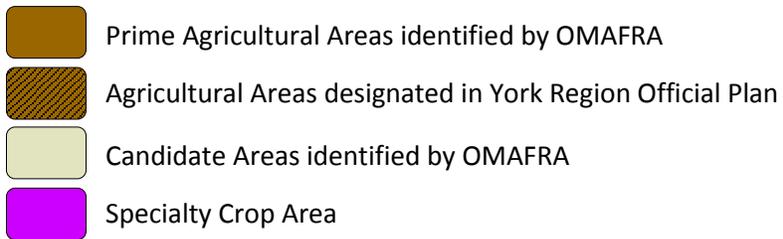
- Notes:
- Oak Ridges Corridor Nature Reserve – dominated by Natural Heritage System features and is intended for these lands to be an ecological preserve – Region does not support prime agricultural designation
  - Golf courses, public lands for existing & future recreational uses, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan land use designations and abutting urban uses in northeast quadrant – Require Provincial rationale

# Markham



- Notes:
- Region supports Greenbelt Plan alignment and existing Regional 'Agricultural' designation to remain for ROPA #3 lands

# Vaughan



## Notes:

- Western Area is identified as a portion of whitebelt for future urban uses including the GTA West future highway corridor and potential for future recreation on public lands – Require Provincial rationale
- Region supports the existing Regional 'Agricultural' designation to remain for ROPA #2 lands
- Eastern Area – Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Area – Region will evaluate these lands through MCR process



# Draft Natural Heritage System & Agricultural System

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Presentation to  
**Committee of the Whole**

**Sandra Malcic, Manager Policy and Environment**  
September 7, 2017



# Provincial Guidance Documents

- Referenced in New Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (IN EFFECT JULY 1, 2017)
- Draft Natural Heritage and Agricultural System mapping and guidance materials released July 6
- 90 day commenting period (JULY 6-OCT. 4)



# Natural Heritage System

- Extends Greenbelt Natural Heritage System into Growth Plan Area (EXCLUSIVE OF SETTLEMENT AREAS)
- Policies require identification and protection through Official Plans
- Applies to 'whitebelt' areas only
- Consultation on criteria, methods and draft map

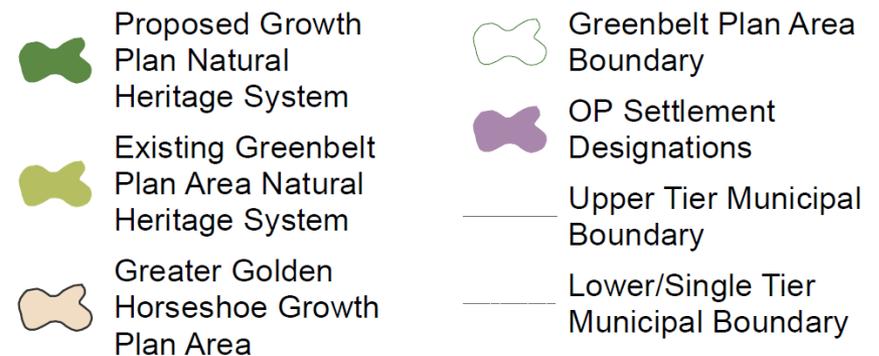


NHS mapping to be finalized by province in 2017

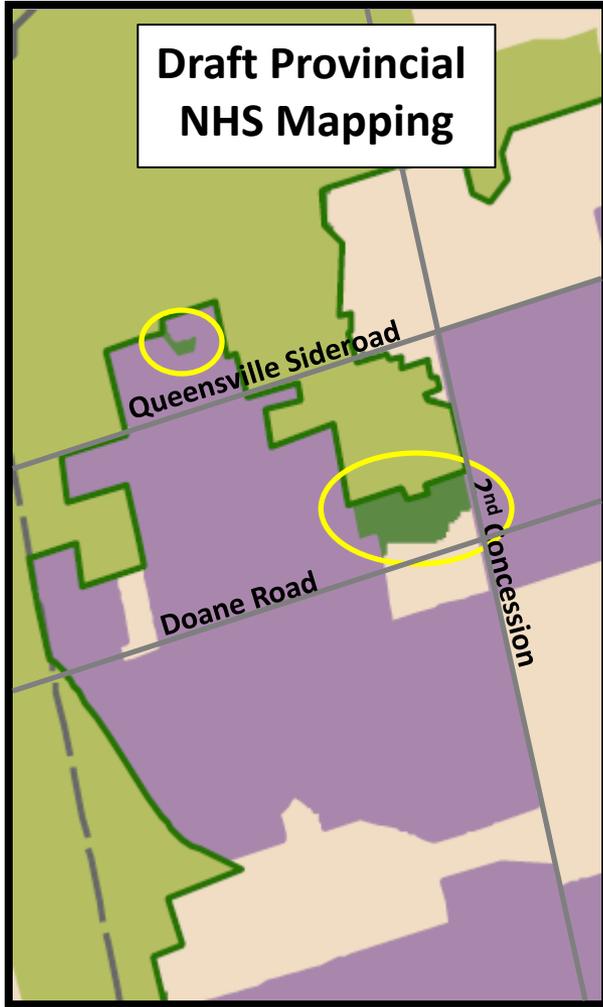
# Proposed NHS within York Region



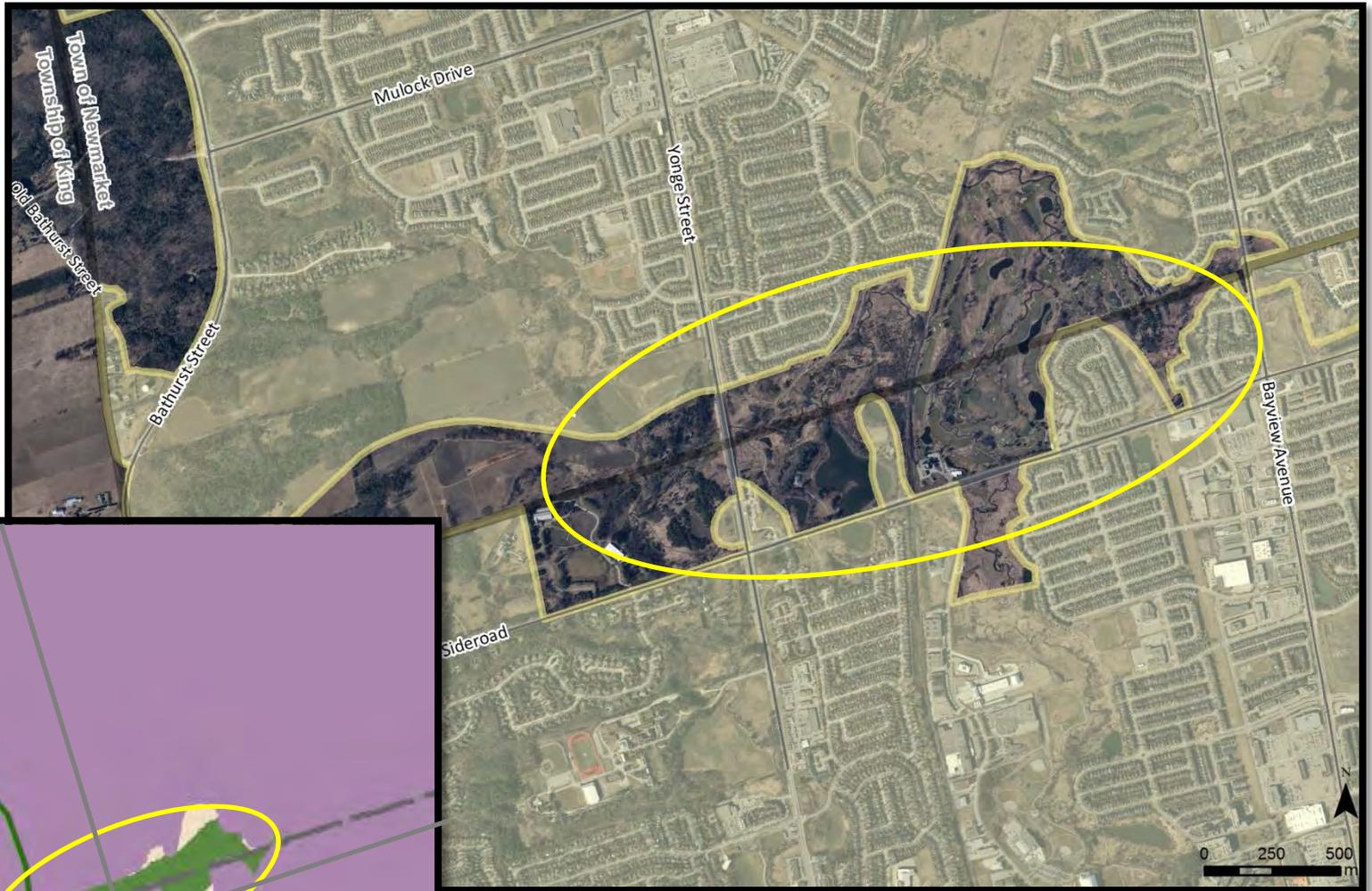
- East Gwillimbury
- Aurora
- Newmarket
- Markham
- Vaughan



# East Gwillimbury



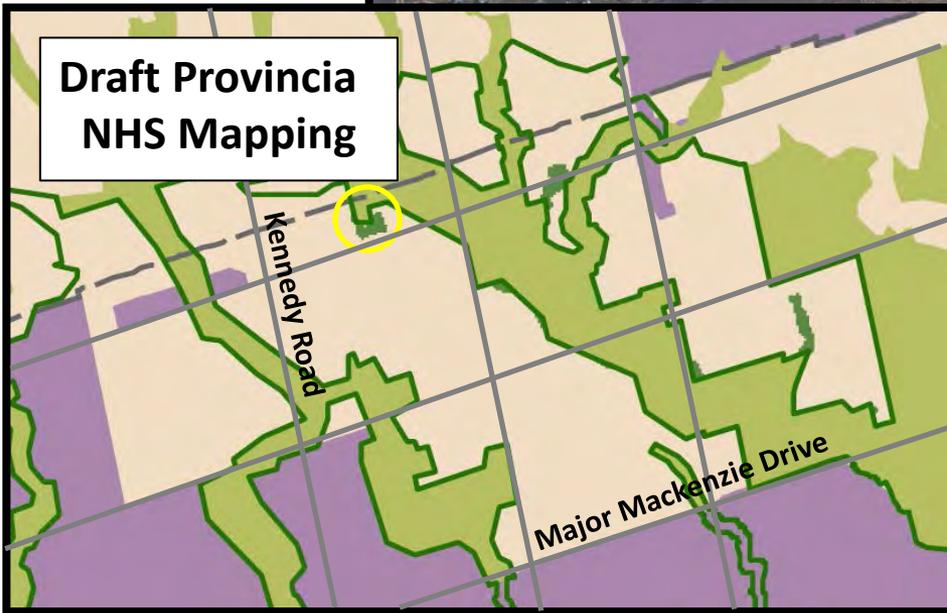
# Aurora/Newmarket



# Markham

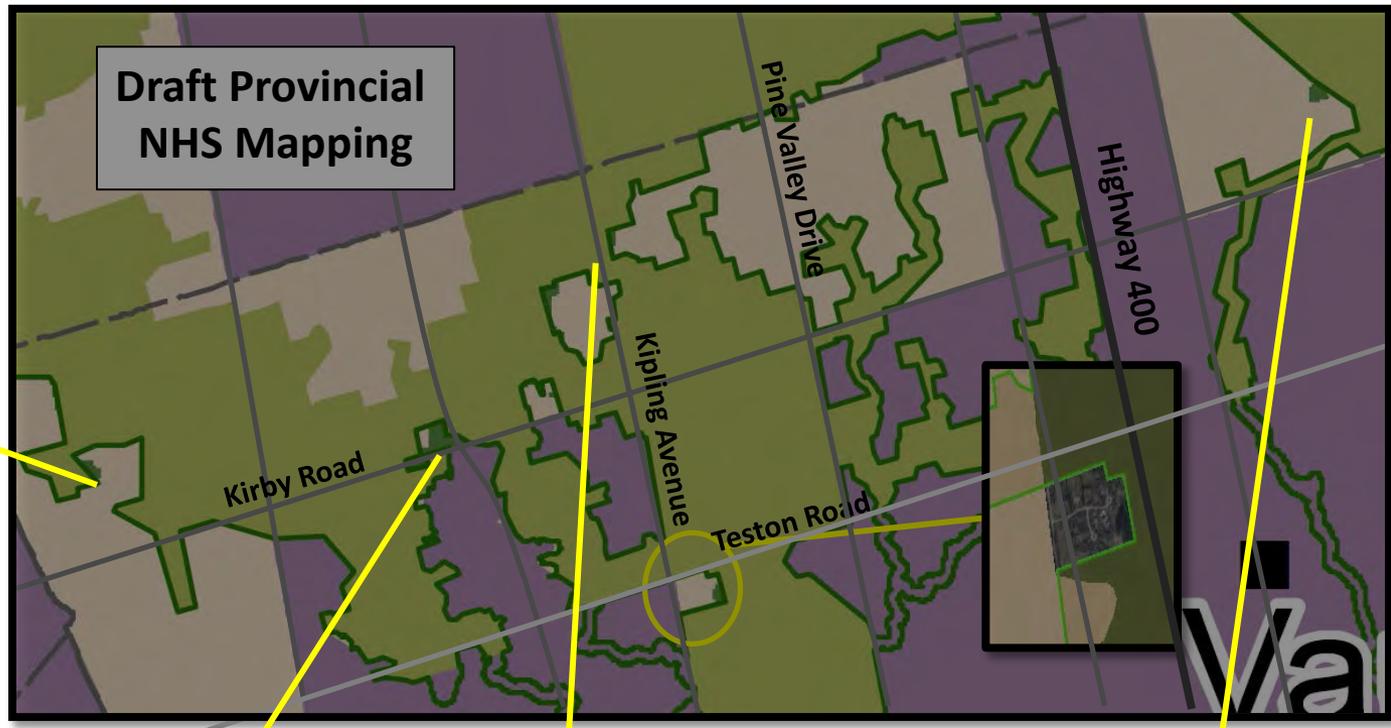


**Draft Provincia  
NHS Mapping**



# Vaughan

Draft Provincial  
NHS Mapping



# NHS Analysis and Conclusions

- Air photo analysis doesn't always substantiate NHS additions
- Subwatershed and other environmental studies underway to confirm NHS
- Natural Heritage mapping should remain draft until local municipal studies are complete



# Agricultural System

- Protection of farmland and the agri-food network
- Consultation on:
  - Implementation procedures for conformity
  - Draft agricultural land base map
- Specialty crop, prime agriculture and candidate areas identified and mapped

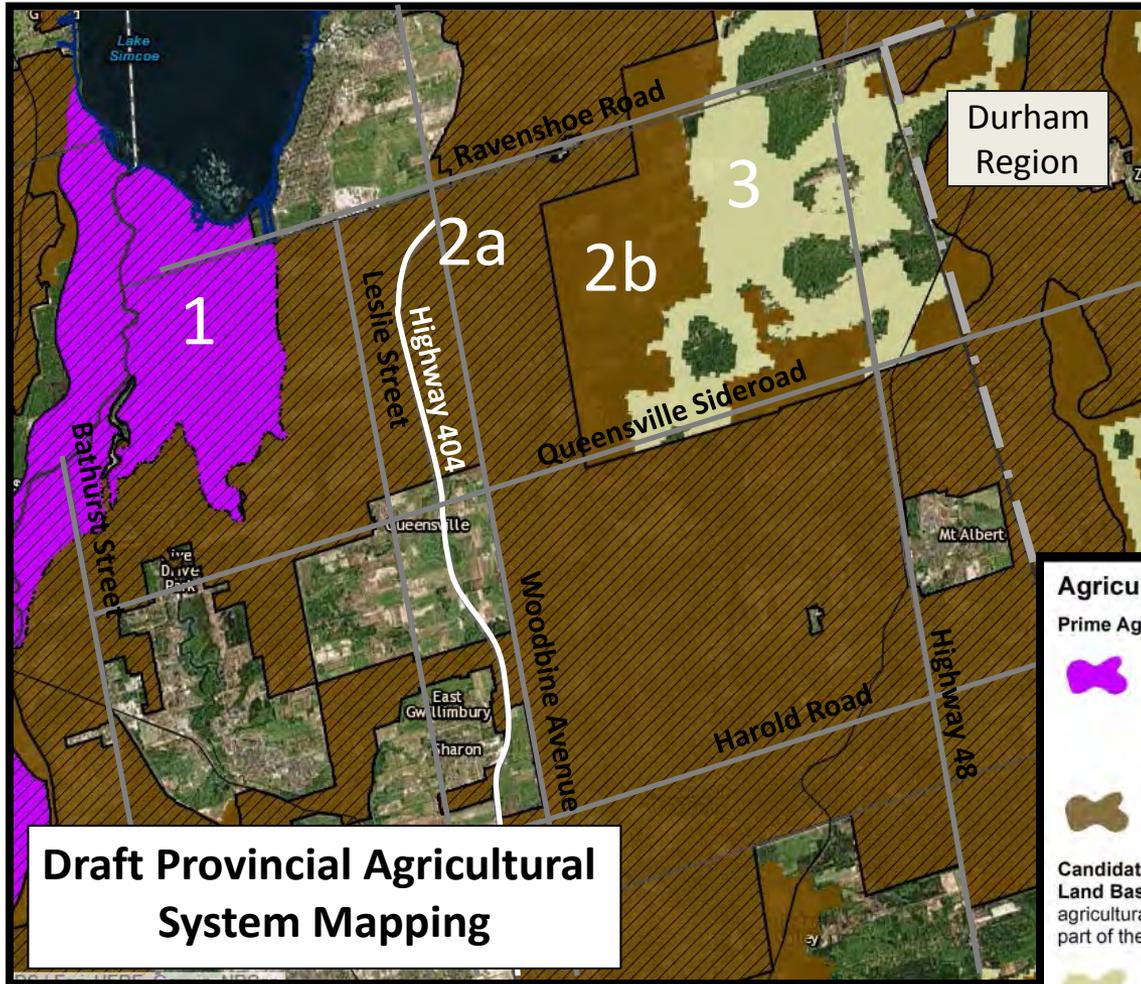


# Implementing the Agricultural System

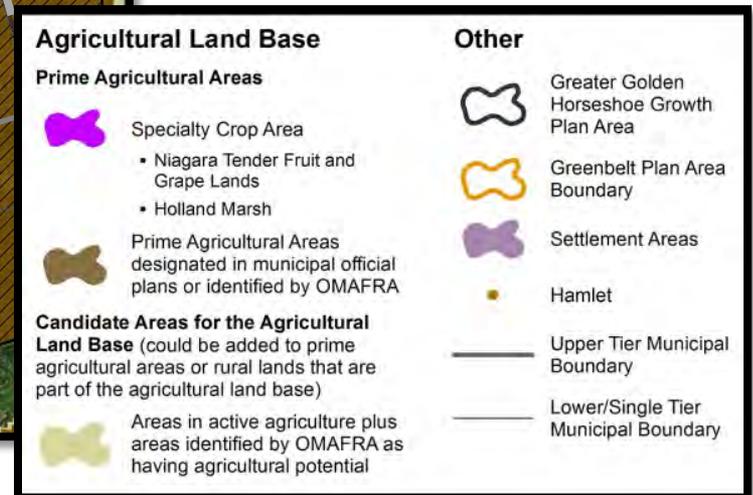
- Official Plan designations will continue to include specialty crop, Ag (or Prime Ag) and rural lands
- A mapped “Ag System”, could include Ag lands and supporting rural areas
- OP Policies to also address unmapped components of the Agricultural system

**LEAR = Land Evaluation and Area Review**

# Proposed Agricultural System: York Region



1. Specialty Crop Area
2. Prime Agriculture
  - a) per YROP-2010
  - b) per OMAFRA LEAR
3. Candidate Agricultural lands

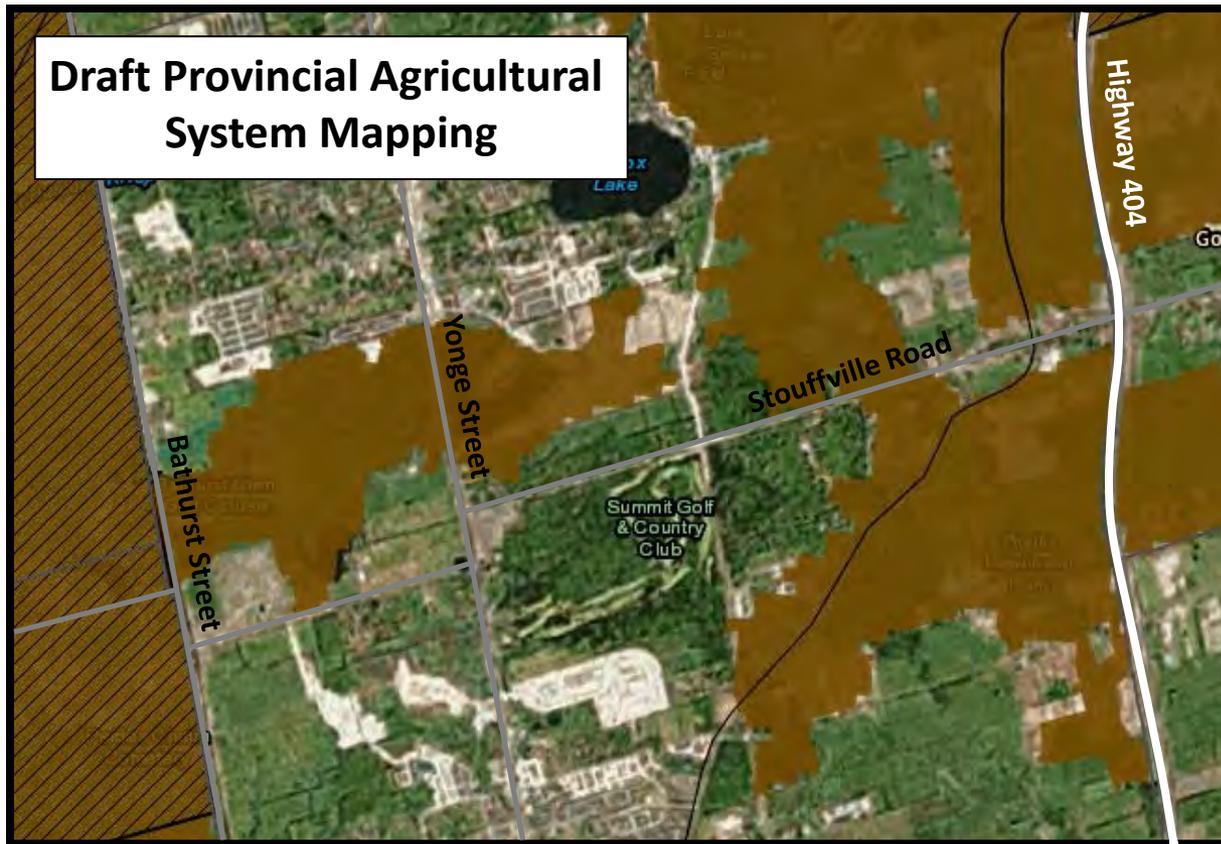


# Flexible Implementation Proposed

- Comments being sought on draft guideline and draft mapping
- Only considering major areas of discrepancy through EBR posting
- Final delineation to be determined in consultation with OMAFRA through MCR

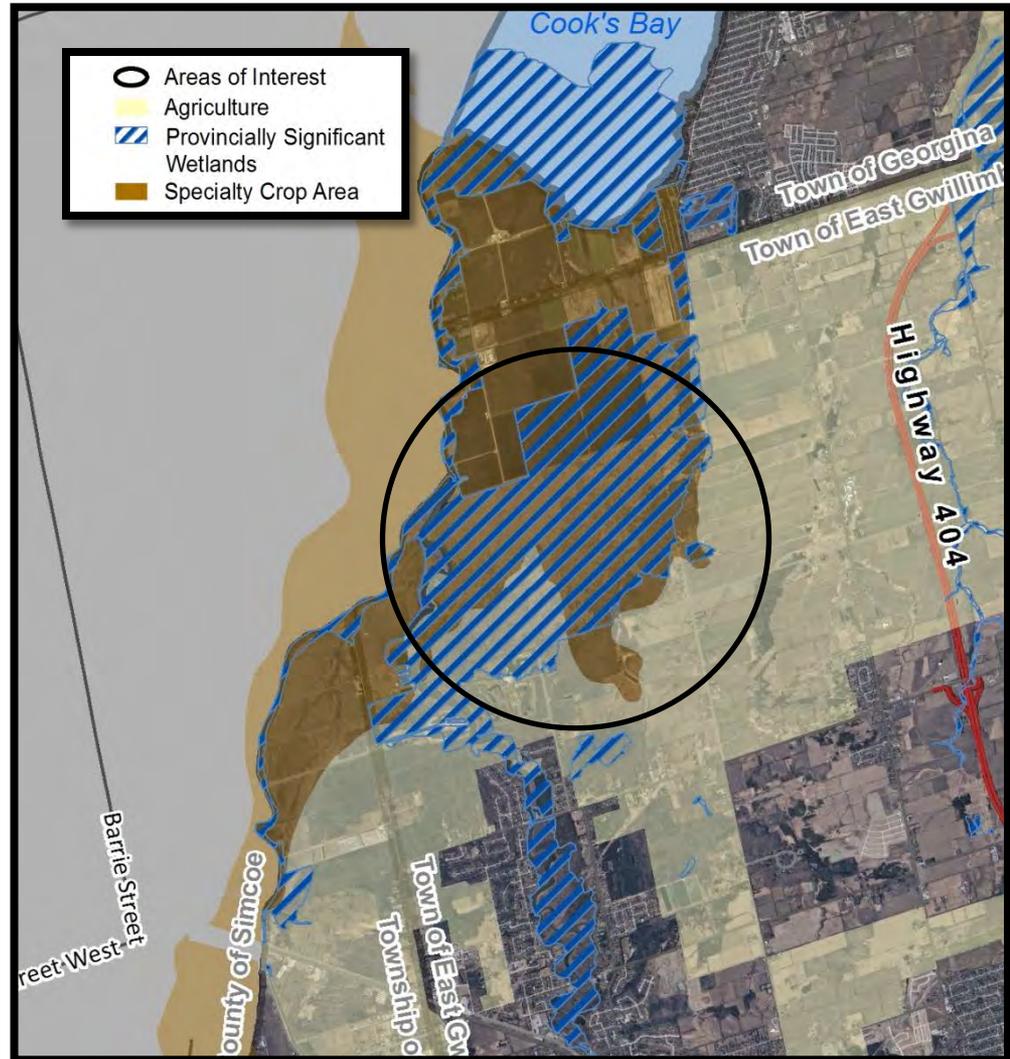
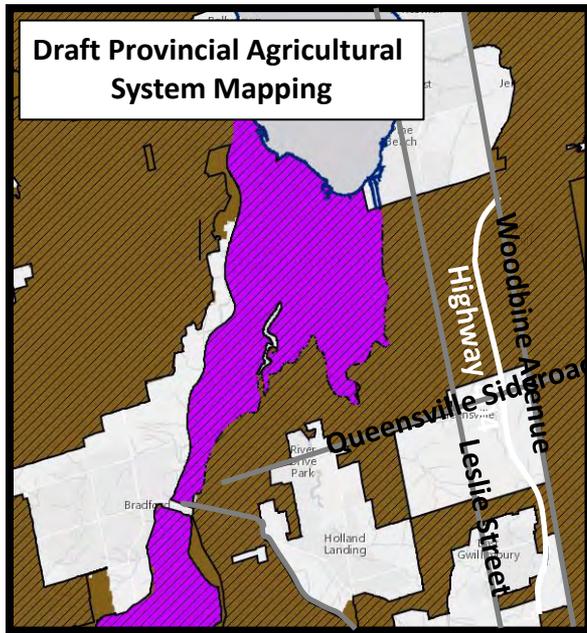
Agricultural mapping proposed to remain Draft until finalized through MCRs

# Richmond Hill



An agricultural designation is proposed for the Oak Ridges Corridor Nature Reserve

# Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area and Provincially Significant Wetland



# Agricultural System Analysis and Conclusions

- Province is commended for their flexible approach to finalizing the agricultural system
- Rural lands within the Oak Ridges Corridor Nature Reserve may not be appropriate for an agricultural designation
- The viability of agricultural lands completely surrounding by urbanizing areas should be assessed through the MCR

# Recommendations

1. Council endorse report, including following key comments:
  - The province be commended on their approach to agricultural mapping
  - Proposed NHS mapping should remain draft
  - Municipal environmental studies guide final mapping
2. Report be circulated to relevant Provincial Ministries, the York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group, and the clerks of the local municipalities.