



For Immediate Release

May 18, 2023

BROAD COALITION CALLS ON PROVINCE TO STOP PLANS THAT WILL FATALLY HARM AGRICULTURE AND BUILD HOUSING IN THE WRONG PLACES

Toronto: A broad coalition of civil society organisations and individuals are calling on the Province to stop proposed changes to Ontario's planning laws that will fatally harm Ontario's agricultural sector and waste limited construction and development resources building housing in the wrong places.

This is the key takeaway in the 5-page report released by the Alliance for a Liveable Ontario that details what will happen if the Provincial government proceeds with its proposed changes, first announced just before the Easter weekend. The report is endorsed by over 250 individuals and 73 organisations from the agriculture, land use planning, housing, tenants, environment, neighbourhood associations, labour, healthcare, academia and business sectors.

"If the Province proceeds with its proposal to gut Ontario's planning laws, they will deliver a fatal blow to Ontario's agricultural community," said Mark Reusser, a turkey farmer in Waterloo Region. "They will open up prime agricultural land to development and forever remove it from growing the food Ontarians need. This will be the end of agriculture in Ontario."

"This is completely unnecessary," said David Crombie, former Mayor of Toronto and former Chair of the Provincial Greenbelt Council. "Report after report shows there is more than enough land already set aside within existing towns and cities to build all the housing we need. There is no reason to build on the Greenbelt and natural areas. There is no reason to build on prime agricultural lands."

"This is the absolutely wrong way to deal with the serious housing shortages we face," said Anne Golden, former Chair, Task Force on the Future of the GTA. "We have a limited number of investment dollars, construction workers and building supplies. The Province should be working with developers to make sure they succeed in building the housing we need where we already live, not on valuable farmland and the Greenbelt."

The report also notes that more than enough land has already been designated for development in existing towns and cities to build all the housing we need through to 2051.

"Opening up farmland to development will only get us expensive, big houses outside of our towns and cities where there is no bus service," said Alejandra Ruiz Vargas -Toronto ACORN Leader and Board Member. "It will not help existing tenants nor get us the desperately needed affordable housing units built where people live."

The Province has given the public until June 6th to comment on its proposed changes through the Environmental Registry of Ontario website.

“We hope Ontarians will use our report when they contact their MPPs,” said Tim Gray, Executive Director of Environmental Defence Canada. “Premier Ford needs to listen to Ontarians and stop giving away our future to the few, well-connected land speculators who will benefit from these destructive policies while the rest of us pay the price.”

-30-

For more information contact: Franz Hartmann, 416-606-8881; info@liveableontario.ca

BONUS:

Reports and video that show there is more than enough land designated for development within existing towns and cities to build the housing we need

[“Review of Existing Housing Unit Capacity Identified in Municipal Land Needs Assessments Prepared for Upper-and-Lower Tier Municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe,”](#) Kevin Eby, RPP, PLE, February 27, 2023.

[Youtube video clip](#) of Kevin Eby explaining that there is enough land already available.

[Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario issue inventory of Ontario’s unbuilt housing supply](#)
Media Release, March 7, 2023.

The Alliance for a Liveable Ontario (ALO)

We are an Alliance of people and groups representing hundreds of thousands of Ontarians from many different sectors. We want to build a liveable Ontario and stop the Provincial Government policies that falsely claim they will solve the housing issues facing us, while harming our communities and undermining the protection of our farmland, natural areas and democratic institutions.

Learn more at: www.liveableontario.ca