

## PRESS RELEASE

### **For Immediate Release: Fight for Farmland Calls for Immediate Halt to Wilmot Land Assembly Amid Shifting Economic Landscape Following the U.S. Election**



**Wilmot, Ontario** — With recent developments in the U.S. following Donald Trump's presidential election win, significant questions are emerging about the future of the controversial Wilmot Land Assembly project. Trump's intentions to roll back subsidies for electric vehicle (EV) battery plants have cast serious doubt over the need for any large-scale industrial project in Wilmot. Economic development leaders who once endorsed the project with certainty, such as Tony La Mantia, President & CEO of the Waterloo Region Economic Development Corporation are now voicing uncertainties about its future.

Tony La Mantia's recent comments to the media reflect an unexpected shift, suggesting the entire project could "dry up and blow away." However, just weeks ago, La Mantia was adamant about the necessity of this mega-industrial site for the Region of Waterloo. "For a mega-fiasco like this that has so disrupted our community and so many lives, vague promises of it 'blowing over' are not enough for the public or the residents of the proposed 770 acre site," stated Kevin Thomason, Vice-Chair of the Grand River Environmental Network. "We need it abandoned immediately with the transparent communication and accountability we have been seeking since the onset almost a year ago - not more secrecy and speculation."

This wavering stance from government, combined with Trump's opposition to EV subsidies, only heightens public concern. Canada's EV projects were already facing reduced growth projections, with companies like Ford Motor Company, Umicore, and Northvolt halting investments in multi-billion-dollar EV and battery facilities. Trump's potential rollback of the U.S. Inflation Reduction Act threatens to further deter the need for large battery production sites in North America, leaving the future of EV-related industrial developments in question.

The Fight for Farmland Group sees the Wilmot Land Assembly as another potential financial disaster waiting to happen, similar to the Pickering Airport Lands or Waterloo's RIM Park financing scandal. Each of these poorly planned projects left taxpayers on the hook for tens of millions of dollars. They underscore the risks of poorly conceived and secretive projects with little public consultation or proper processes, and the lasting financial impacts they can have on our communities.

"It's astonishing that, even now, officials continue to move forward without publicly available studies, cost analyses, or transparent justifications," said Alfred Lowrick, spokesperson for the Fight for Farmland Group. "This is a massive amount of prime farmland and an entire agricultural community at risk, and our citizens deserve an end to this misguided project - not years of uncertainty and rapidly mounting costs."

The Fight for Farmland Group is calling for an immediate end to the Wilmot Land Assembly project and seeks a return to responsible, visionary planning for the region's future. "We already have the needed sustainable plans to massively grow our communities by 40% to 50% over the next 30 years that respect our farmland, communities, and natural resources," Thomason emphasized. "This absurd mega-industrial site, contrary to all previous planning was designed to take advantage of

local farmers and still hasn't had a single public meeting. Every single action taken by Wilmot Township, the Region of Waterloo, and the province has been bungled. This simply needs to be abandoned – particularly now in light of Trump's election, the ensuing fallout across the EV industry, and every manufacturing plant dependent on trade potentially facing massive tariffs.

The Fight For Farmland group vows to expand its advocacy, planning more community events, rallies, council delegations, and broader media outreach to bring this issue to an even wider audience. "With upcoming elections, we intend to make this a key issue, ensuring voters are aware of all the negative impacts of this Wilmot Land Assembly project on the community, our thriving agricultural sector, and the environment." States Lowrick.

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