

Please add my comments and concerns re Bill 23 and 109 to the addendum for the Tuesday Nov. 22 council meeting.

Mayor Guthrie and Guelph City Council Members:

I believe that it is so unfortunate that as a new Council one of the first major items you have to deal with is the major implications to the City's and our province's environment, quality of life and finances if Bill 109 and Bill 23 are implemented in their current iterations.

This attempt by Premier Rob Ford to attempt to approve so quickly such substantial changes to legislation that has evolved over many years, thru thousands of hours of public and scientific input is an affront and violation of our democratic process. Furthermore it erodes the true spirit of public involvement in planning a healthy sustainable city and province for ours and future generations.

Bill 23 appears to eliminate planning on a watershed basis. Water is the basis of all life. The protection of our natural heritage and the quality and quantity of water has been a keystone in our city planning starting in 1994 with the approval of the Hanlon Creek Watershed Plan. Therefore, Council and staff should request that all amendments in the act that weaken the protection our natural environment and that erode the ability of our Ministry of Natural Resources and Forests, our conservation authorities and the public to advise and comment on environmental protection and flooding should be removed.

Professor Dawn Baker, University of Waterloo believes that the bill "will not create new livable communities - instead it will create a race to the bottom for developers, disadvantaging those who prioritize environmental quality and affordability " She recommends that the act should instead "ensure that new higher density builds should have sufficient open space and parks to be attractive alternatives to single family residences " (from Nov. 1, 2022 Q and A with the experts More Homes Built Faster Act or Bill 23 by Media Relations University of Waterloo)

I agree with City Staff's analysis of the terrible potential financial impacts of these bills on the City and it's taxpayers. Existing residents should not have to pay higher taxes to cover growth related costs while watching their quality of life deteriorate because of reductions of parkland, more traffic, heat island effects, flooding and pollution.

I have no problem with intensification thru infill and accessory units but I am concerned about the potential large loss of mature tree canopy in the city. Many of our largest and oldest trees live on private property. Unlike Toronto and other cities, we currently have no private tree by law that protects trees in existing residential areas on smaller lots. This needs to be remedied.

Please consider the long term future of Guelph and the province. Please show a strong pushback to this legislation thru passing a motion to reject Bill 23 and 109 until there is more time to review all the implications of these bills on the financial and environmental on our municipality and the province at large.

In conclusion, I believe that Bill 23 violates the belief of protecting our city, our farmland and our natural heritage for ours and the next seven generations. I would like to finish with a quote once shared with me by a 1st Nations Elder " when you walk , walk softly on our Mother Earth because you are walking on the faces of the coming children. You will see their tears in the the rain that falls. "

Respectfully
Laura Murr

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Guelph ON

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