

Jim Robb

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Protect Markham's Farmland and Quality of Life Stop Sprawl, Grow the Greenbelt



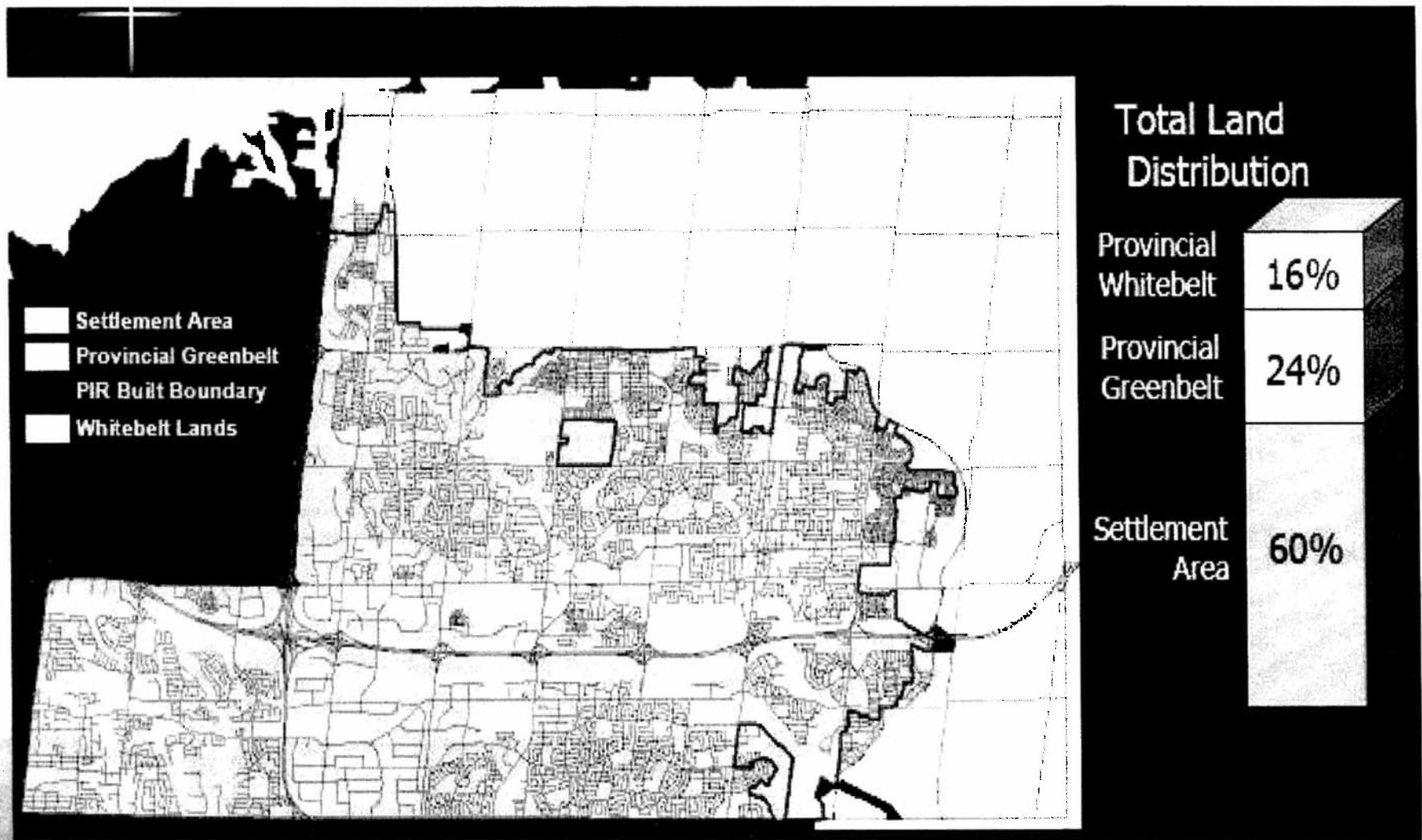
Canada's Finest Foodland Soils Piled for Disposal in Markham



Markham Trees in Wood-chip Piles only 5% forest cover remains



Sixty percent (127 km²) of Canada's Finest Farmland has already been Urbanized in Markham

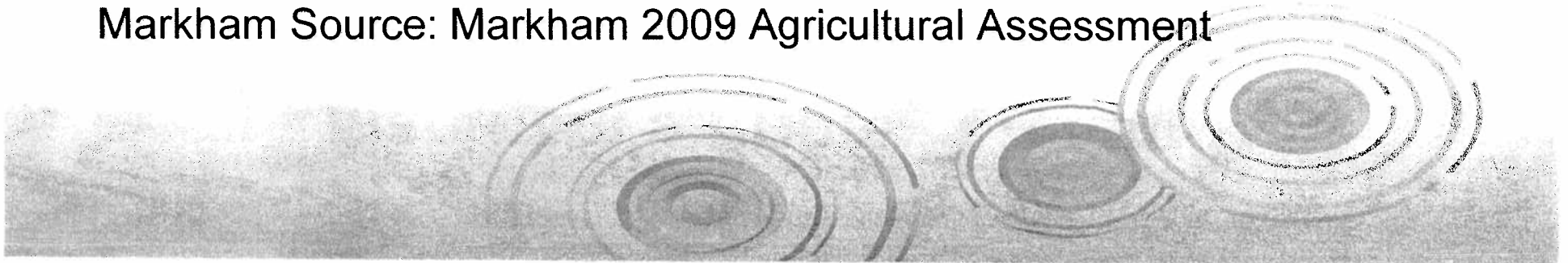


Markham

Some of Canada's Finest Farmland

- Markham's rural area is dominated by the top category of Class 1 farmland according to the Canada Land Inventory
- Less than 0.5% of Canada is Class 1 farmland
- Markham's moderate climate, fertile soils and good rainfall and water sources support high foodland productivity
- Markham enjoys a flexible and diverse food production profile which includes cash crops, fruit and vegetables

Markham Source: Markham 2009 Agricultural Assessment



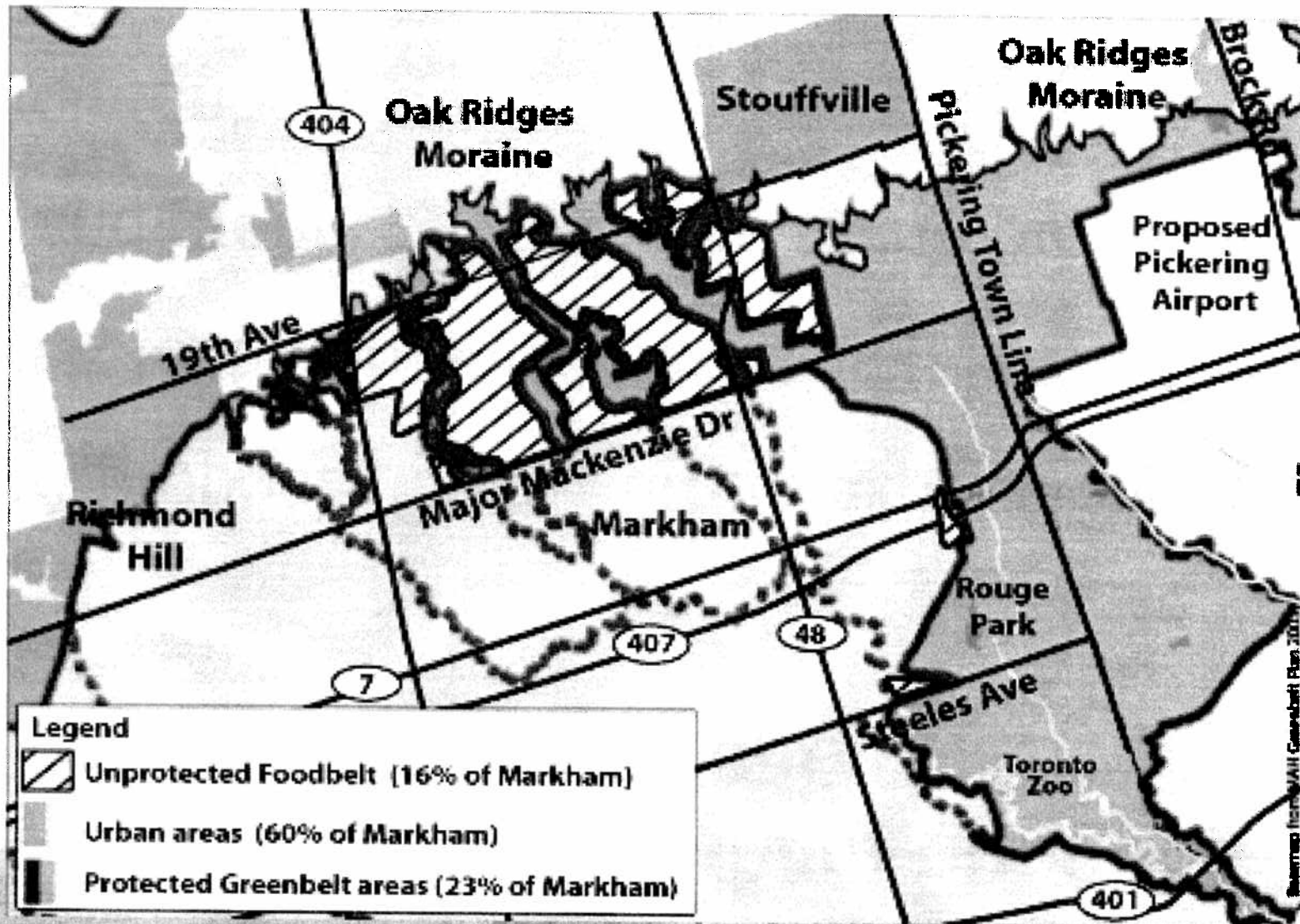
Markham's Prime Farmland Going, Going ...

Markham Farmland Loss	12,085 acres (2001 - 06)
Markham Farmland Loss	43% between (2001 - 06)
York Region Farmland Loss	5% between 2001 and 2006
Ontario Farmland Loss	1.5% between 2001 and 2006

Source: Markham 2009 Agricultural Assessment

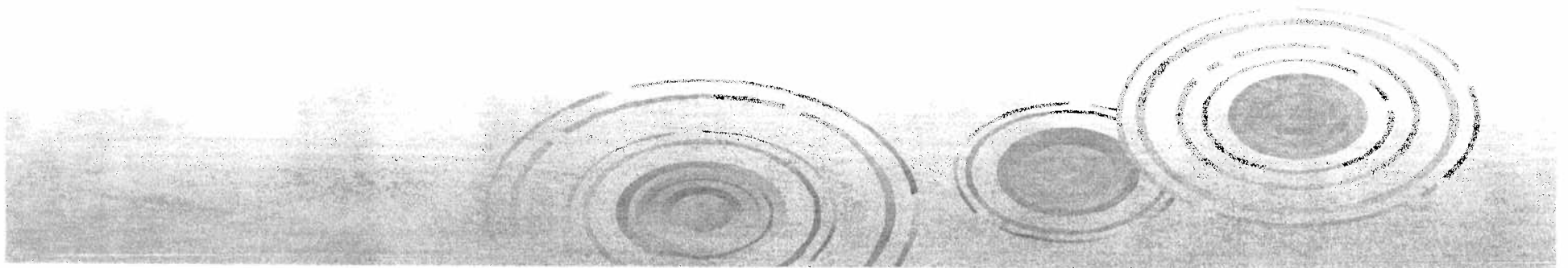


Protect Markham's Foodbelt



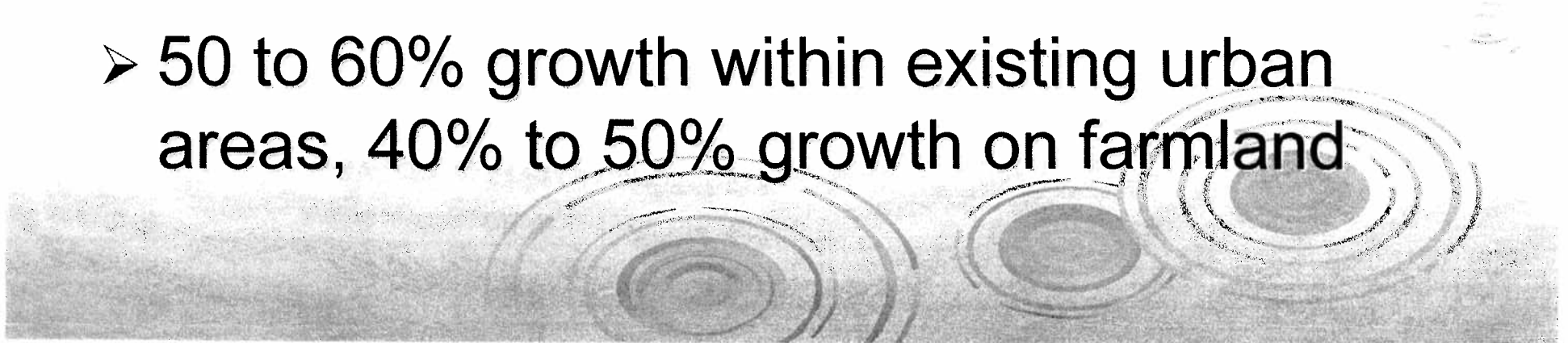
What is the Markham Foodbelt Proposal?

A proposal to stop urban expansion and protect Markham's remaining farmland and greenspace as part of the provincial Greenbelt.



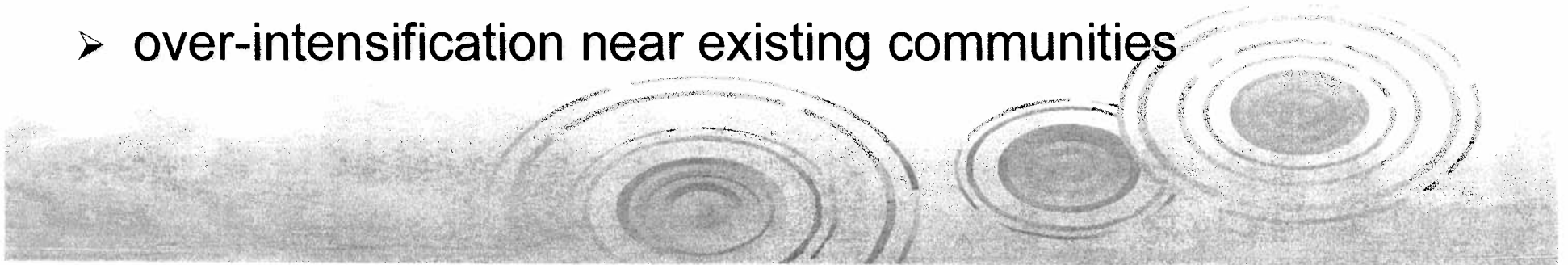
What are York Region and Markham Planning Staff proposing?

- Development of 7.3 square kilometers of Markham's irreplaceable farmland
- Population growth of 151,000 people by 2032
- 50 to 60% growth within existing urban areas, 40% to 50% growth on farmland



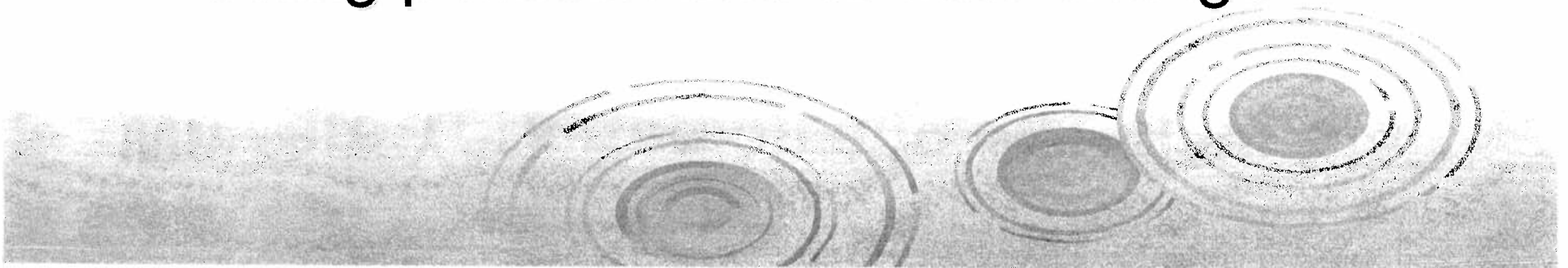
Markham Ratepayer Concerns about York and Markham Staff Growth Plans

- increased traffic, crowding of schools and hospitals
- permanent loss of the finest foodland in Canada
- increased pollution, flooding and property damage from upstream development
- damage to community values and property values
- over-intensification near existing communities



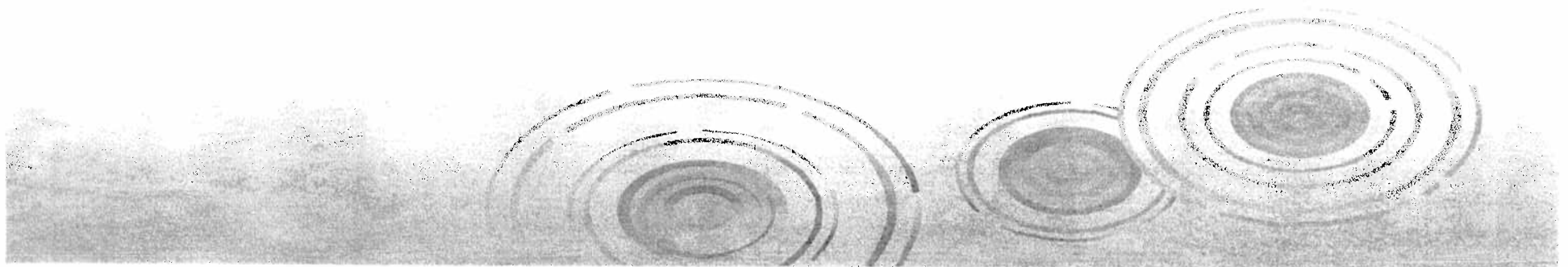
Urban Expansion Increases Traffic Jams

- Costing billions of dollars (OECD, 2009) in lost time and reduced productivity
- Harming our quality of life and health
- Fueling pollution and climate change



Why are York Region and Markham Staff proposing this unsustainable Growth?

- The Province enacted a Growth Plan which allocated growth targets for each Region and required that at least 40% of this growth occur within the existing urban envelope.



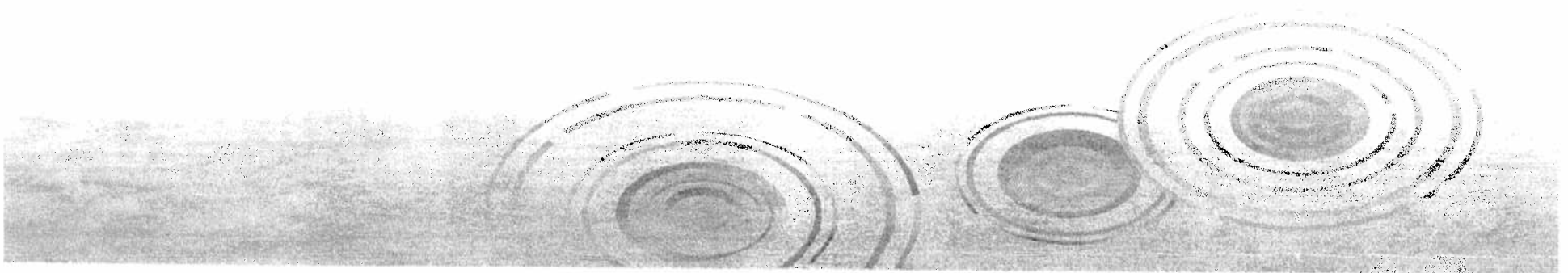
Markham Can and Should Challenge this Unsustainable Growth allocation

- The growth targets were allocated before the scientific findings of the 2007 Rouge Watershed Plan and 2009 Markham Agricultural Assessment.
- According to Ontario's Environmental Commissioner, the Province **“put the cart before the horse”**.



Urban Expansion Pollutes our Streams & Drinking Water Sources

- **“meeting water quality targets will become an increasingly distant goal as the footprint of development expands”**
- **Source: Rouge River Watershed Strategy and Implementation Plan
Water Quality Section 4.2-30 Summary and Conclusions**



Polluted Urban Runoff entering Robinson Creek Trout Stream, Markham



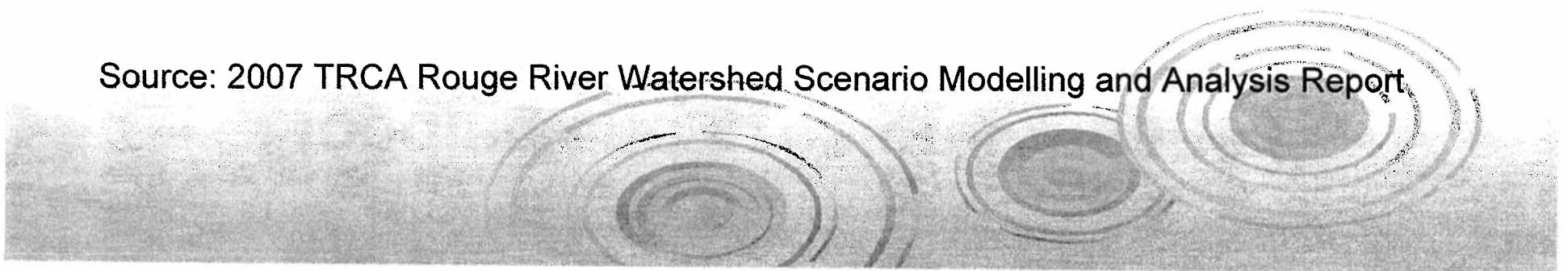
Lake Ontario, Markham's Water Source Already Polluted from too much Human Waste



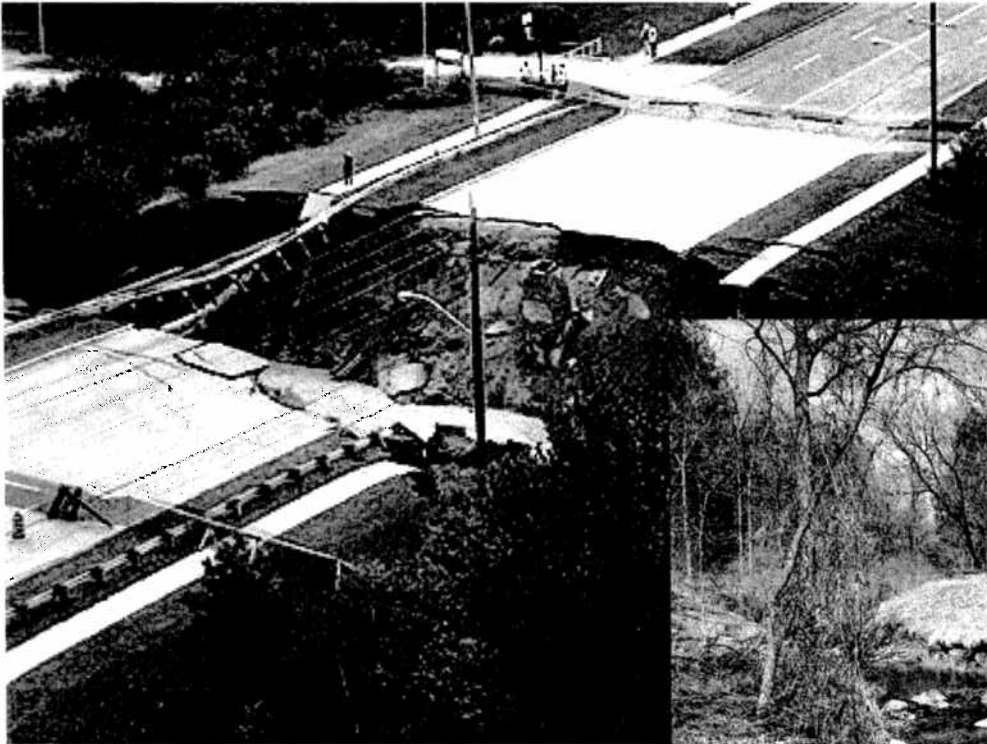
Urban Expansion Increases Damage to Existing Downstream Properties

- Urban expansion *increases the magnitude and duration of erosive flows in receiving watercourses*
- ***middle tributaries (Markham communities) would be subject to major hydrological impacts*** if the urban envelope is expanded
- ... development-induced changes to the flow regime cause uncontrolled erosion, enlargement, and habitat degradation

Source: 2007 TRCA Rouge River Watershed Scenario Modelling and Analysis Report



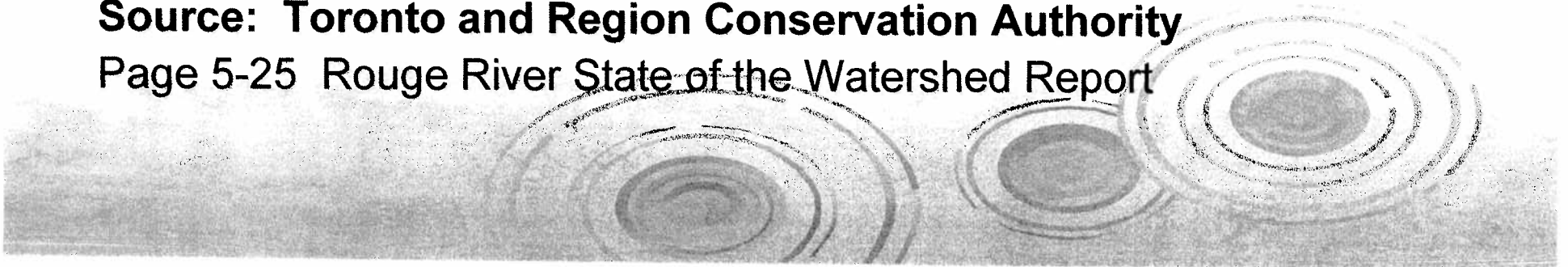
Flooding and Erosion Damage is Increasing with Climate Change



Urban Expansion and Development Increases Flooding and Erosion

- **Markham has 533 areas (including homes and businesses) and 129 roads which would be flooded during the Regional Storm and a number of roads and homes which would flood in flows as low as the 2-year flood event.**

Source: Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
Page 5-25 Rouge River State of the Watershed Report



Terrestrial Ecosystem Health

“The best results for the terrestrial ecosystem would be achieved if the expanded natural vegetation cover plan (TRCA) was implemented and new urbanization only occurred within current official plan boundaries.”

➤ **Source: Rouge River Watershed Plan 2007 P. 94**



Planning Act and Provincial Policy Statements

- The planning Act stipulates: Decisions of planning authorities “**shall be consistent**” with provincial policy statements
- *Provincial Policy Statement 2.2.1 states:*
“**Planning authorities shall protect, improve or restore the quality and quantity of water**”
- Provincial Policy Statement 2.3.1 states:
“**Prime agricultural areas shall be protected for long-term use for agriculture.**”



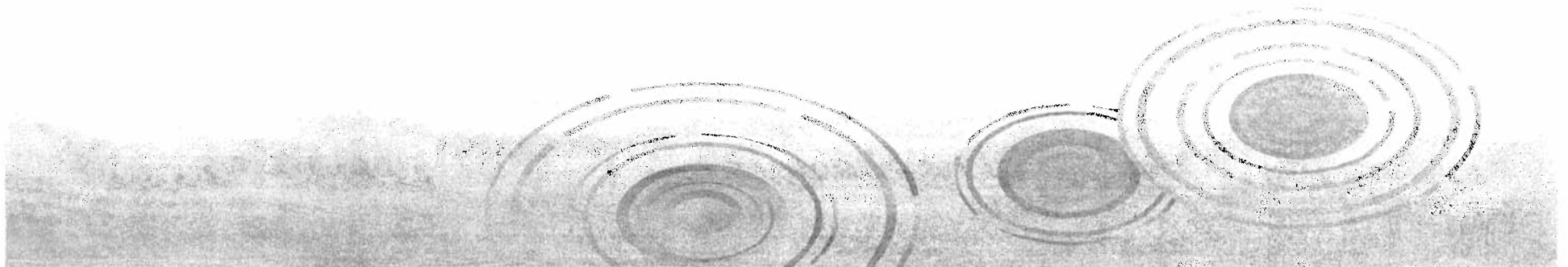
Backward Planning & Rapid Growth

Threaten our Food Security, Health & Quality of Life

- The province established population projections for some communities subject to the Growth Plan, *before* assessing the related water and wastewater infrastructure needs, their associated costs and **environmental impacts**.

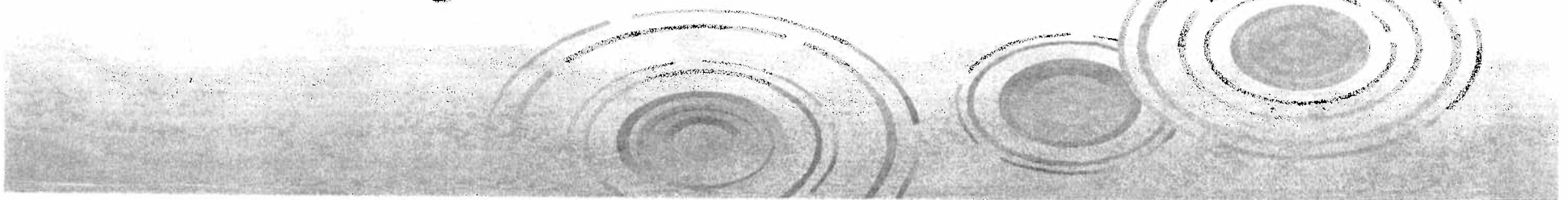
This puts the cart before the horse.

- Ontario Environmental Commissioner 2006/07 Report

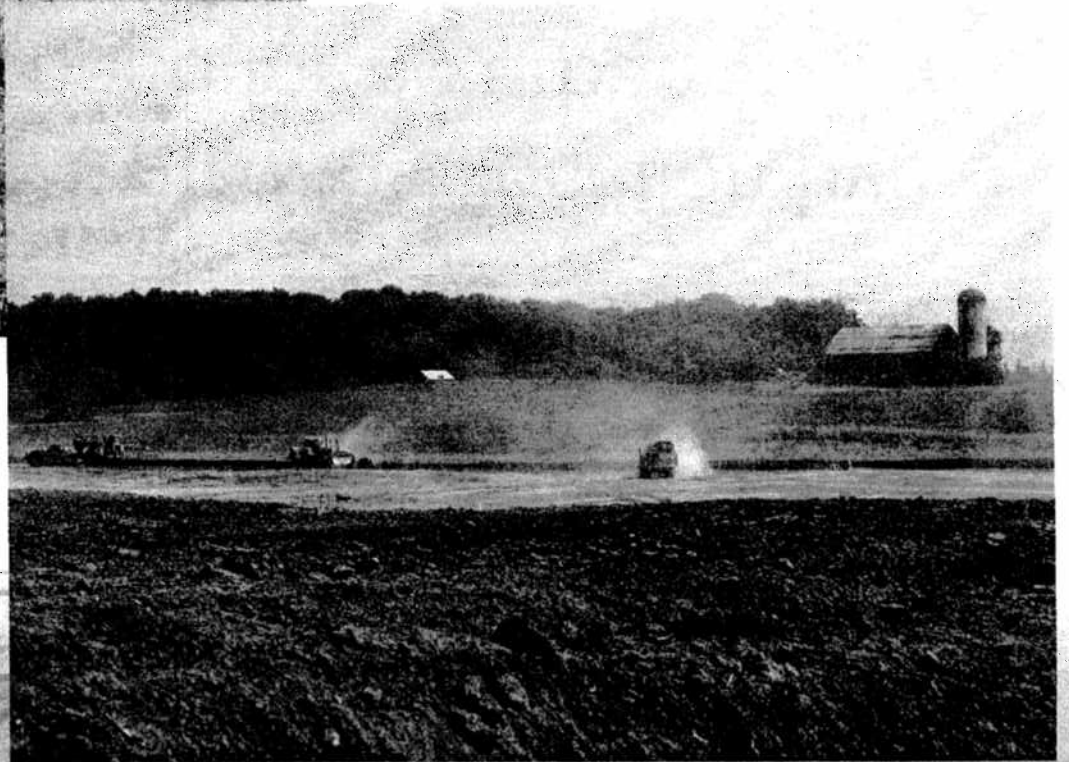
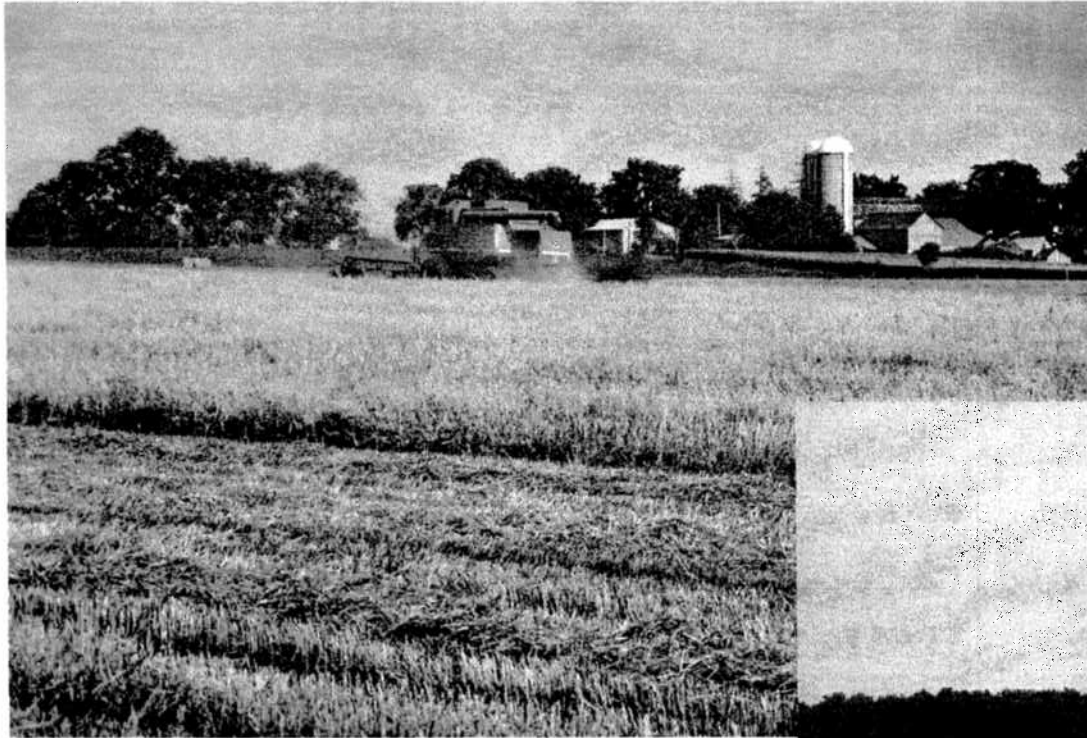


**Markham has a Good Case
(Science, Policy, Law and Public Interest)
for asking the
Region and Province to:**

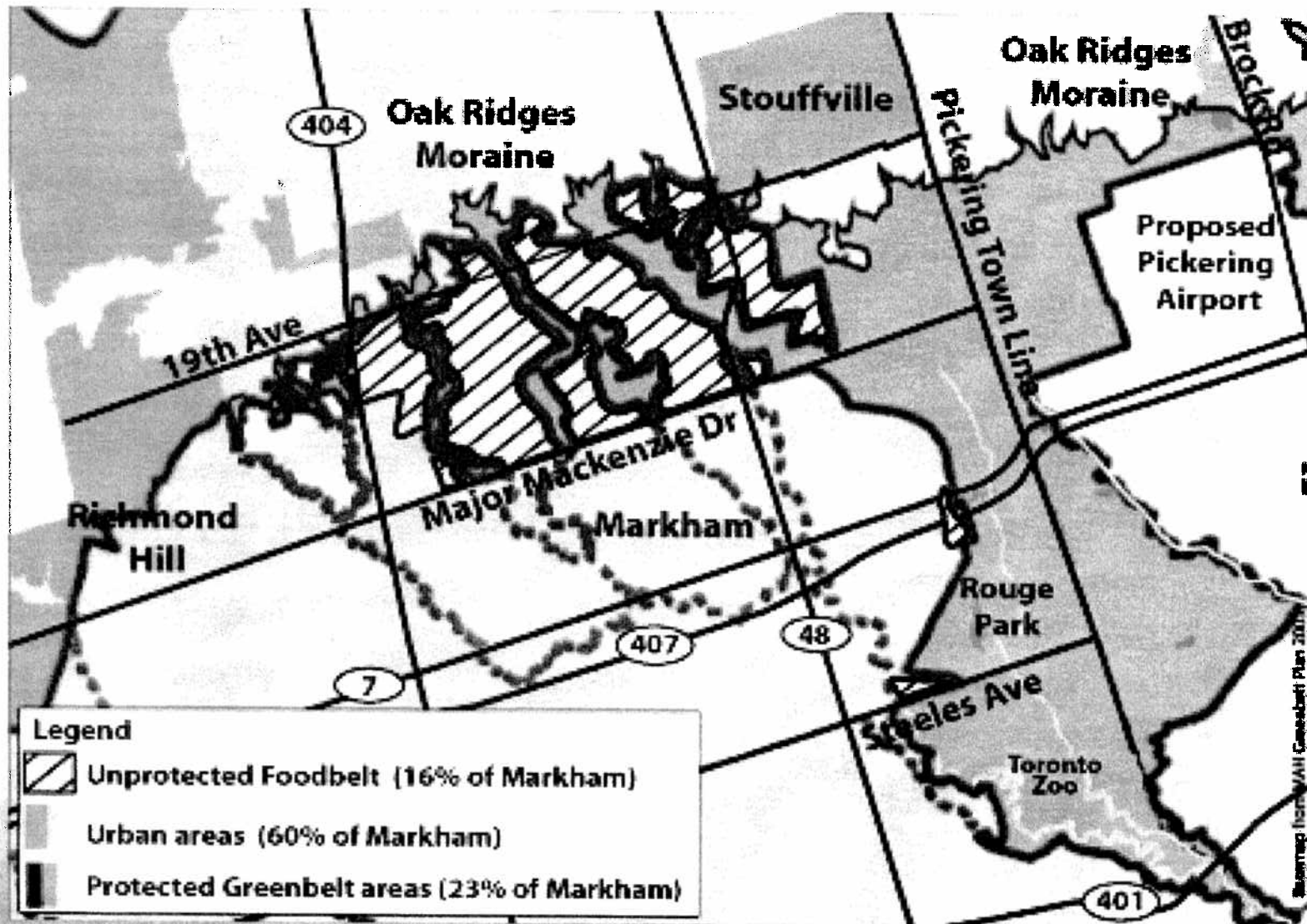
1. Reduce Markham's growth allocation by 40% to avoid any need for an urban boundary expansion
2. Support the protection of Markham's remaining rural lands within the Greenbelt.



What will your Markham Legacy be?



Protect Markham's Foodbelt and Quality of Life



Additional Information

- Website: protectmarkham.wordpress.com
- Email: markhamfoodbelt@gmail.com

