



**Office of the Assistant Deputy Minister
Natural Resource Management Division**

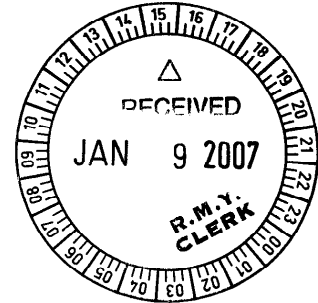
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Ministry of
Natural Resources

Ministère des
Richesses naturelles

December 20, 2006

Mr. Dick O'Brien, Chair
Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
5 Shoreham Drive
Downsview, ON, M3N 1S4



Dear Mr. O'Brien,

Further to our correspondence prior to the November TRCA Board meeting, the Province has had a chance to undertake a very preliminary review of the final Terrestrial Natural Heritage System Strategy (2006) prepared by the TRCA. We appreciate the work and time the TRCA's staff has dedicated to the development of this Strategy. We also appreciate the briefing and discussion about the Strategy with senior TRCA staff on December 18th, 2006.

We do, however, still have some very serious concerns. The Strategy does not provide direction on the impacts and implications for municipalities on integrating it with provincial initiatives, in particular conformity to the Growth Plan. We feel that additional analysis and clarification in the Strategy is required before your Board considers it for adoption.

More specifically:

- Additional analysis and fulsome discussion with both the Province and TRCA's member municipalities is required on how the Strategy will impact achievement of the Growth Plan policies. In particular, discussion with TRCA's upper- and single-tier municipal partners is required to clarify the implications for achievement of the Growth Plan growth projections, intensification and density targets, and transit-supportive land use policies;
- The implementation section of the Strategy needs greater explanation and clarity on the status and effect of the Strategy, the tools and mechanisms that TRCA proposes to use to implement it, and TRCA's expectations of how impacted municipalities, landowners, the general public, and the Province will implement it; and

- TRCA staff should take this opportunity to work with member municipalities to verify and complete the refinement of mapping and information prior to the final adoption of the Strategy.

It is important that these revisions be reflected in the Strategy document itself, in addition to any changes that are made to the staff report being submitted to your Board.

We appreciate that the Board deferred a decision from the November 24, 2006 meeting to January 5, 2007. However, given the significance of the issues, the Province and all the parties need to take more time to review the Strategy and address these issues. Further dialogue is needed; our ministries and TRCA need to take the necessary time to make sure the Strategy properly reflects provincial policies and that it can be effectively integrated with the municipal implementation of the Growth Plan.

Considering these factors, we are requesting that the TRCA defer this item to the spring to enable the Province and the TRCA to address these issues and review the Strategy accordingly.

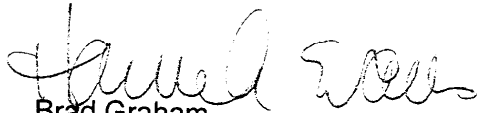
It is imperative that all parties have a clear understanding of the implications and the implementation methods of the strategy before it is finalized. We trust that you will appreciate our concerns and will defer this consideration until we can all work together to address these matters.

We look forward to working with your staff in resolving these issues in the coming months.

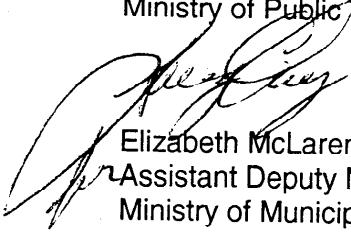
Sincerely,



Kevin Wilson,
Assistant Deputy Minister
Ministry of Natural Resources



Brad Graham,
Assistant Deputy Minister
Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal



Elizabeth McLaren,
Assistant Deputy Minister
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

cc: Brian Denney, CAO, TRCA
Ted Tyndorf, Chief Planner, City of Toronto
Bryan Tuckey, Commissioner of Planning & Development Services, York Region
Alexander L. Georgieff, Commissioner of Planning, Durham Region
Nick Tunacliffe, Commissioner of Planning, Peel Region