

Draft letter to Mayor and Councillors on Growth Management Strategy, February 2021

Dear Mayor,

(your name) is very concerned about a recent decision by Ottawa City Councillors on amendments to the draft Growth Management Strategy.

The Councillors voted in favour of allowing for future develop on prime agricultural lands, in direct contravention of a decision by full Council last May, to protect prime agricultural land when considering what land would be included in a future expansion of the urban boundary.

The Councillors, members of the joint Planning Committee and Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee, approved an amendment to swap a parcel of land for prime agricultural land adjacent to the Riverside South community. The original parcel scored high in a number of factors such as access to infrastructure, location near transit hubs, not designated prime agricultural land and others. Therefore it was a surprise to see a proposed amendment to replace that proposed parcel of land with one located on prime agricultural land. Since the amendment was tabled after the public consultation portion of the meeting, residents had no opportunity to comment on the proposal.

This decision is contrary to the Province of Ontario directive to only approve prime agricultural land for development if there are no other options. Obviously, in this case, there was another option.

And I have grave concerns about the precedent this sets for future discussions of the expansion of urban boundaries.

I strongly urge you and Council to reverse this decision and fulfill its commitment to protecting prime agricultural land within the City of Ottawa boundaries.

Regards,