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The Agricultural System is an important part of the fabric of York Region, supporting a vibrant agricultural community and contributing to the economy, quality of life and natural heritage legacy. With almost half of York Region’s land protected for agricultural uses, York Region has some of the most productive agricultural lands in Canada. From the rich organic soils of the Holland Marsh to a diverse mix of food and beverage manufacturers, the agriculture and agri-food sector plays an important role in York Region’s economy. The diverse landscape makes York Region attractive to citizens and business.

Protecting the agricultural land base comprised of agricultural areas as well as specialty crop areas and rural areas creates a robust productive land base for agriculture supporting a sustainable agri-food network. This, along with enabling infrastructure, services and assets, is important to the viability of the sector, ensuring access to a safe and secure food supply. It is important to recognize the relationship and mutual benefits that exist between the Agricultural and Natural Systems. Agricultural best management practices support protection and long-term viability of both.

The policies in this Chapter are intended to protect and enhance the Agricultural System and provide guidance for long-term agricultural production and jobs. The Chapter also provides policy direction to protect Aggregate Resources and recognizes the rural character of Hamlets and the role they play in supporting the vitality of the Agricultural Area.

➤ *Supporting the Agricultural System Goal: To protect and support the viability of the Agricultural System and agri-food sector in York Region.*

5.1 THE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM



The Agricultural System supports a productive agricultural and rural land base and agri-food network that together contribute to ensure a viable agri-food sector. The agri-food network is comprised of infrastructure as well as services and assets important to the viability of the agri-food sector including input suppliers, farms, food processors, retailers, distributors, food service companies etc. located throughout York Region and beyond. The Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan outline this Agricultural System in order to support the viability of the agricultural sector in York Region. The Plan provides policy direction for the Agriculture System through three land use designations shown as Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area, Agricultural Area, and the Rural Area on [Map 1A – Land Use Designations](#).

The local agri-food value chain

The local agri-food value chain includes farmers, processors, distributors, input suppliers, retailers, restaurants and other food service organizations working to provide quality products to residents and businesses.

Eating locally grown and produced food supports the Agri-Food sector.



The York Farm Fresh map can be used to find local farm fresh products on farms and in farmers markets within York Region. York Region’s Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy guides long-term growth with policy and programming for the agricultural sector, ensuring food sources and agricultural production are accessible and continue to be made available locally. It ensures that farmland, clusters of agri-food infrastructure and services and opportunities for urban agriculture co-exist alongside and within our growing communities.

Eating Locally:

- › Sustains small farms
- › Reduces greenhouse gas emissions
- › Supports the local economy
- › Improves air quality and pollution
- › Keeps us in touch with the seasons
- › Provides fresher food choices

5.1 THE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM

➤ **Objective:** To protect the Agricultural System by supporting a productive and sustainable agricultural and rural land base, and the agri-food network.

AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

5.1.1 That the policies of Section 5.1 apply to the *Agricultural System* and the following land use designations as identified on *Map 1A*:

- › *Agricultural Area* designation
- › Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area designation
- › *Rural Area* designation

5.1.2 That the geographic continuity of the agricultural land base and the functional and economic connections to the *agri-food network* shall be maintained and enhanced.

5.1.3 That lands deemed to constitute prime *agricultural areas* and *specialty crop areas* within the Greenbelt Plan in York Region are designated as *Agricultural Area* and Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area respectively on *Map 1A*.

5.1.4 That within the *Agricultural Area*, Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area and *Rural Area*, *normal farm practices* and a full range of *agricultural uses*, *agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses* are supported and permitted.

5.1.5 That *agricultural uses*, *agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses* shall be permitted in accordance with Provincial guidelines, as further defined through local official plan policies. Proposed *agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses* shall be compatible with, and shall not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations.

5.1.6 To promote sustainable agricultural practices and implement best management practices, which minimize impacts on the environment, such as:

- a. Integrated pest management;
- b. Phosphorus reduction;
- c. Nutrient management;
- d. Soil and water conservation; and,
- e. Tree planting along hedgerows and marginal farmland.

5.1.7 That limited new non-agricultural uses may be permitted in the *Agricultural System* subject to the following criteria:

- a. Complies with applicable Provincial plans and policies;
- b. Submission of an *Agricultural Impact Assessment* addressing the following elements to the satisfaction of the municipality in consultation with York Region:
 - i. Proposed use is appropriate in size and scale to the area, including to the existing and/or planned *infrastructure*;
 - ii. Proposed use shall not adversely affect the ecological integrity of the Regional Greenlands System;
 - iii. Complies with Province's *Minimum Distance Separation Formulae*;
- c. If within the *Agricultural Area* designation:
 - i. Demonstrates a need within the planning horizon for additional land to accommodate the proposed use;
 - ii. Alternative locations be evaluated, with confirmation that no reasonable alternative locations are available;
 - iii. Lands will remain in the *Agricultural Area* designation;
- d. If within the *Future Urban Area*, demonstrates compatibility with the area in a future urban context.

5.1 THE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM

The Agricultural System

The Agricultural System in York Region geographically is covered by three specific Provincial plans: Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and Growth Plan as identified on Map 1.



It is the policy of Council:

5.1.8 To require local municipalities to include policies within local official plans and *secondary plans* which address edge planning measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts of non-agricultural *development* on agricultural operations and the *Agricultural System*.

5.1.9 That redevelopment of existing non-agricultural uses in the *Agricultural System*, excluding the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area, is permitted subject to the following criteria:

- a. Demonstrate that the use on site is a legally existing use;
- b. Proposed redevelopment will be more in conformity with applicable Provincial plans;
- c. There is no change to the Regional Designation outlined on *Map 1A*;
- d. No new parcels will be created;
- e. Redevelopment does not hinder surrounding agricultural operations, complies with the *Minimum Distance Separation Formulae* and;
- f. An *Agricultural Impact Assessment* is submitted to the satisfaction of the local municipality in consultation with York Region, in accordance with Provincial and municipal guidelines, demonstrating:
 - i. Adverse impacts on agricultural operations are avoided, minimized or mitigated. Where mitigation is required, the mitigation measures should be incorporated as part of the non-agricultural uses, as appropriate, within the area being developed;
 - ii. The proposed use would be of the appropriate size and scale to the area, including to the existing and/or planned *infrastructure*;
 - iii. There is a need for the proposed use in terms of demand for the product or service; and
 - iv. The proposed use shall not adversely affect the ecological integrity of the Regional Greenlands System.

5.1.10 That an application for the *development* of new or expanding *infrastructure* in the *Agricultural System* shall:

- a. Demonstrate the need for the project;
- b. Demonstrate that there is no reasonable alternative that could avoid or minimize impact on lands designated Agriculture; and
- c. Undertake an *Agricultural Impact Assessment* or equivalent analysis as part of an *Environmental Assessment*.

5.1.11 That, within the Oak Ridges Moraine Plan area, existing institutional uses and expansions are permitted subject to the Existing Use provisions of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and local official plans and zoning bylaws. When expansion of such uses is applied for, the applicant shall demonstrate that the expansion will not adversely affect the ecological integrity of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Area. Additional studies as identified in Parts III and IV of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan may be required.

5.1 THE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM

5.1.12 That consents will only be permitted in accordance with Provincial plans, local official plans and zoning by-laws in the following instances:

- a. Acquisition of land for *infrastructure* projects;
- b. Conveyances to public bodies or non-profit agencies for natural heritage or conservation purposes, providing no separate residential lot is created;
- c. Minor lot adjustments or boundary additions, provided they do not create a separate lot for a residential dwelling in specialty crop or prime *agricultural areas* and there is no increased fragmentation of a *key natural heritage feature* or *key hydrologic feature*;
- d. *Agricultural uses* where both the subject and retained lands are a minimum size of 16 hectares (40 acres) in the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area and 40 hectares (100 acres) in the *Agricultural Area*;
- e. Existing or new *agriculture-related uses*, such as farm-related commercial and farm-related industrial uses that are small in scale and directly related to the farm operation and required to be located in close proximity to the farm operation. In these cases, the new lot will be limited to the minimum size required for the use and appropriate individual private on-site water and wastewater systems will be required; or,
- f. Severance of an existing residence that is surplus to a farming operation as a result of a farm consolidation, providing no additional residence can be constructed on the retained farmland.

5.1.13 That new multiple lots or units for residential *development* (e.g. estate residential subdivisions and adult lifestyle or retirement communities), whether by plan of subdivision, condominium or severance, shall not be permitted, except in the Serviced Lakeshore Residential Area in the Town of Georgina existing at the date of approval of this Plan or otherwise permitted by applicable Provincial plans and the local official plan.

5.1.14 That any proposed expansions or alterations to existing buildings and structures for *agricultural uses*, *agriculture-related uses* or *on-farm diversified uses* within *key natural heritage features* and/or *key hydrologic features* and their associated *vegetation protection zones* are required to meet the policies in Section 3.4.

5.1.15 That new land uses, consents, and new and expanding livestock operations shall comply with the Province's *Minimum Distance Separation Formulae*.

5.1.16 That within *Wellhead Protection Areas*, *Intake Protection Zones* and Areas of High Aquifer Vulnerability some land use activities have restrictions related to *agricultural uses*, *agriculture-related uses* or *on-farm diversified uses* and are required to meet the policies in Section 6.4 of the Plan.

5.1.17 To permit a single dwelling unit on existing lots of record, provided they were zoned for such as of the date the Plan came into force.

5.1.18 That refinements to either the *Agricultural Area* or the *Rural Area*, shown on *Map 1A*, are not permitted unless undertaken through a Regional *municipal comprehensive review*.

5.1 THE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM

5.1.19 To work with local municipalities to support implementation of York Region's Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy, by:

- a. Promoting the flow of goods and services in the value chain to drive growth and productivity and support job creation in the agri-food sector;
- b. Encouraging the provision of community driven local food programs and initiatives such as community gardens and other *urban agriculture* practices as appropriate;
- c. Fostering collaboration between York Region, the Province, the industry and other stakeholders to sustain and develop local markets for locally grown food; and
- d. Providing support for food and farming organizations including local farm groups, *agri-tourism*, start-up businesses, farm-gate sales, food incubators and accelerator hubs to strengthen the agriculture and agri-food cluster in the Greater Toronto Area.

5.1.20 To encourage local municipalities to support and promote the long-term economic prosperity and viability of the agri-food sector, including the maintenance and improvement of the *agri-food network* by developing policies in their official plans, strategies and programs which may include:

- a. Implementing the York Region Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy;
- b. Improving access to healthy, local and affordable food;
- c. Promoting urban and near *urban agriculture*;
- d. Implementing food systems planning;
- e. Fostering the sustainability of agriculture, agri-food, agri-food processing and agri-product businesses;
- f. Protecting agricultural resources while minimizing land use conflicts;
- g. Reducing food waste and promoting circular food economy;
- h. Advocating for *agri-tourism*, *on-farm diversified uses* and value-added operations; and
- i. Supporting the *development* of agri-food innovation network and hubs.

5.2 AGRICULTURAL and HOLLAND MARSH SPECIALTY CROP AREAS



Harvesting onions in the Holland Marsh

York Region has some of the most productive agricultural lands in Canada that provide jobs and significant economic benefits. The highly favourable soil conditions throughout York Region, particularly in the Holland Marsh Special Crop Area result in a broad range of agricultural production opportunities for the sector.

The Holland Marsh is one of two highly productive specialty crop areas in the Province and stands out as a key agricultural asset for York Region. Greater than half of the Holland Marsh is located within York Region. As the largest area of organic (muck) soil developed for agriculture in the Province, the Holland Marsh is one of the most intensive areas of agricultural production in the country. The Holland Marsh, dominant in King Township, Town of East Gwillimbury and Town of Georgina, is a significant driver of agricultural production in York Region.

The policies of this section provide policies for the long-term protection and enhancement of Agricultural and Specialty Crop Areas.

On-farm diversified uses:

On-farm diversified uses are defined as uses that are secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property, and are limited in area. On-farm diversified uses include, but are not limited to, home occupations, home industries, *agri-tourism uses*, and uses that produce value-added agricultural products. To find out more about these uses, go to the provincial Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas.

Objective: To protect, support and enhance the Agricultural System including the Agricultural Area and the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area to ensure a sustainable agriculture sector in York Region.

AGRICULTURAL AND HOLLAND MARSH SPECIALTY CROP AREAS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

5.2.1 To recognize and protect the *Agricultural Area* and the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area, designated on *Map 1A*, for long-term use as natural resources of major importance to the economic and social viability of York Region.

5.2.2 That in addition to the policies of this section, the policies of Section 5.1 also apply to the *Agricultural Area* and the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area.

5.2.3 That the *Agricultural Area* and Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area shall be designated and protected in local municipal official plans and zoning by-laws.

5.2.4 To discourage the use of the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area for uses that do not require its muck soils for food production.

5.2 AGRICULTURAL and HOLLAND MARSH SPECIALTY CROP AREAS

5.2.5 That in the *Agricultural* and *Rural Areas*, one accessory residential unit within the primary dwelling is permitted.

5.2.6 That additional residential structures for farm help required for *agricultural uses* on the farm, may be permitted, subject to local municipal requirements and if grouped with existing farm structures. A consent to sever these structures from the main *agricultural use* is prohibited.

5.2.7 That notwithstanding policy 5.1.12.e of the Plan, a consent for an *agriculture-related use* is not permitted within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan area.

5.3 RURAL AREA



The Rural Area is comprised of lands located outside of urban areas and agricultural/specialty crop areas, which have unique social, economic and geographic characteristics. Rural lands used for agricultural uses help to create the continuous land base for agriculture, linking the Agricultural Areas and supporting elements of the agri-food network. The Rural Area includes viable farms, businesses, and land uses such as equestrian facilities, farm markets, Hamlets, existing rural residential and estate residential development and golf courses supporting the rural economy in York Region. A number of factors, including soil capability, topography, land use fragmentation by non-agricultural uses, as well as natural features have combined to make these lands more rural in character than lands in the Agricultural Area designation. Agriculture and agriculture-related activities within the Rural Area are encouraged for the long-term contribution to the Agricultural System.

The Rural Area contains areas of environmental significance, including large portions of Natural Core Area and Natural Linkage Area of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. Within the Rural Area, development will be limited in order to retain the rural character of the landscape and ensure viable agricultural uses remain.

The policies of this section provide direction for land uses within the Rural Area in order to protect the existing character and support the agricultural base.

Objective: *To retain the character of lands in the Rural Area and to protect the viability of agriculture, agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses.*

RURAL AREA POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

5.3.1 To recognize and protect the *Rural Area* on *Map 1A* as an integral component of the *Agricultural System*.

5.3.2 That, in addition to permissions in Section 5.1, the following land uses within the *Rural Area* designation on *Map 1A* are permitted:

- a. Recreational, tourism, institutional (including cemetery), and resource-based commercial/industrial uses, outside of the Regional Greenlands System;
- b. Management or use of resources, resource-based recreational uses, other rural land uses that are not appropriate in settlement areas;
- c. Fish, wildlife and forest management, conservation project and flood and erosion control projects, home businesses, home industries, bed and breakfast establishments, low-intensity recreational uses, unserviced parks, small-scale commercial, industrial and institutional uses, *major recreational uses* and *accessory uses*, within the Countryside Areas designation for lands within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan; and
- d. Additional uses, as permitted in accordance with applicable Provincial plans.

5.3 RURAL AREA

5.3.3 That *major recreational uses*, such as golf courses and outdoor playing fields, or expansion to these uses, may be permitted in the *Rural Area* subject to an amendment to the local official plan and/or zoning by-law as required, where the following provisions are met to the satisfaction of York Region and local municipality:

- a. The size of the use is appropriate for the area and will not further fragment the *Rural Area*;
- b. The proposed use will not introduce a conflicting use that adversely impacts ongoing agricultural activities or related uses in the immediate and surrounding areas subject to an *Agricultural Impact Assessment*;
- c. To maintain, restore or enhance the amount of natural self-sustaining vegetation on the site and improve connections between *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* through submission of an *environmental impact study*;
- d. There is an integrated pesticide and fertilizer management plan that minimizes or excludes applications;
- e. Ensure adequate water quality and quantity through submission of water conservation, wastewater and stormwater management plans;
- f. The provisions of the Provincial plans are met, where applicable; and
- g. Notwithstanding Policy 5.3.2 a), small-scale structures for recreational uses (such as boardwalks, footbridges, fences, and docks) may be permitted within *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* subject to the provisions of the Regional Greenlands System in Chapter 3 and shall be limited in number to minimize *negative impacts* on these features.

5.3.4 Special Provisions for the lands municipally known as 11333 Dufferin Street. Notwithstanding the policies of this section, the lands described as PIN 03342-0266, PT LT 29 Con 2 Vaughan; PL LT 30 Con 2 Vaughan PTS 1-8 64R6003 Except PT 3 Expropriation PL R602558; S/T VA41581 Partially Released by R283556; S/T VA82915, Vaughan are intended to be developed for urban uses. The lands shall only be developed on the basis of full municipal services, an approved and registered draft plan of subdivision, and an approved implementing zoning by-law.

5.3.5 That rural lands within the linear river valleys of the Greenbelt Protected Countryside shown on *Map 1C*, that are surrounded by the urbanizing *Designated Greenfield Areas* of Vaughan and Markham, per *Map 1B*, shall be identified in local official plans and protected for natural heritage restoration and *urban agriculture*.

5.3.6 That, notwithstanding policy 5.3.2, permitted uses within the rural lands identified in policy 5.3.5 are limited to the following:

- a. *Passive recreation*;
- b. Environmental management, restoration, and enhancement;
- c. Compatible urban *agricultural uses*; and
- d. Recreational and parklands uses in accordance with the Greenbelt Plan and local municipal *secondary plans* on the basis of appropriate technical studies and natural systems planning.

5.4 HAMLETS



Historic Locust Hill Train Station

A Hamlet is a small, rural settlement of existing residential and limited commercial, industrial or institutional uses. York Region’s Hamlets exist within the Protected Countryside Area designation of the Greenbelt Plan and within the Countryside Area designation of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. These communities are traditionally serviced by individual private on-site wastewater systems and drilled wells. Hamlets were often the first settlements in York Region and are valued for their part in retaining the rural character and cultural heritage resources of the past.

The policies in this section provide for the retention of Hamlets while permitting limited growth through infilling.

➤ *Objective: To retain the rural character and cultural heritage of Hamlets while permitting limited growth through infilling.*

HAMLETS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

5.4.1 To protect long-established *Hamlets* as designated on *Map 1A*, subject to applicable Provincial plans.

5.4.2 That local official plans and zoning by-laws shall designate the boundaries of *Hamlets* as identified on *Map 1A* of the Plan.

5.4.3 That local official plans shall provide policies that limit future growth to minor infilling in *Hamlets*, subject to the ability to service growth by individual private on-site water and wastewater systems.

5.4.4 That minor infilling is limited to small-scale residential, industrial, commercial, institutional, and recreational uses and may be permitted within *Hamlets*, as detailed in local official plans and subject to the ability to service the use by individual private on-site water and wastewater systems.

5.4.5 That *development* in *Hamlets* shall be of an appropriate size and scope to ensure compatibility with the surrounding community in the context of use of land, buildings and structure size, area, density, and height, in accordance with local official plan policies.

5.4.6 That consents may be permitted in *Hamlets*, subject to applicable Provincial plans and local official plan consent policies and the ability to service the *development* by individual private on-site water and wastewater systems.

5.4.7 That any increase in the number of residents through infilling must not change the rural nature of the *Hamlet*.

5.4.8 That notwithstanding policy 5.4.3, additional growth and *development* in *Hamlets* may be permitted in existing *secondary plans* with an appropriate water and wastewater solution in conformity with Provincial plans, approved and in effect the date this Plan came into effect.



5.5 MINERAL AGGREGATE RESOURCE AREAS

Within York Region, these resources may also be subject to the applicable provisions of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, Greenbelt Plan, and Growth Plan. York Region has limited sand and gravel resources, with no primary resources remaining and only secondary resources available, as identified in [Map 8 – Mineral Aggregate Resources](#). The majority of these resources are subject to the applicable provisions of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. It is important that remaining aggregate resource areas be protected from incompatible uses or uses that would limit the extraction of the resource in the future, as they provide locally sourced building materials for communities and infrastructure.

The availability of aggregates close to market is important for economic and environmental reasons. It is equally important that these resources are extracted in an environmentally sensitive way and that exhausted pits and quarries be rehabilitated to uses compatible with agriculture, rural or open spaces. The [Aggregate Resources Act](#) and Provincial plans require the rehabilitation or restoration of pits and quarries to be used for other compatible uses, recognizing the interim nature of extraction.

In addition to aggregates, York Region has limited petroleum resources, which are considered in the policies of this section.

➤ **Objective:** *To protect mineral resources for possible future extraction close to markets and to ensure rehabilitation of extraction areas.*

MINERAL AGGREGATE RESOURCE AREA POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

5.5.1 To protect *Mineral Aggregate Resource* Areas as shown on [Map 8](#).

5.5.2 To recognize and provide for the continued operation of currently licensed *pits and quarries* and to encourage the extraction of mineral aggregate from locations within *Mineral Aggregate Resource* Areas, subject to the [Aggregate Resources Act](#), the policies of the Plan and local official plans and by-laws.

5.5.3 That existing *mineral aggregate operations* shall be permitted to continue without the requirement of an official plan amendment, zoning by-law amendment or *development* permit under the [Planning Act](#).

5.5.4 That *mineral aggregate operations* shall be protected from *development* and activities that would preclude or hinder their expansion or continued use or which would be incompatible for reasons of public health, public safety or environmental impact.

5.5.5 That only processes under the [Aggregate Resources Act](#) shall address the depth of extraction of new or existing *mineral aggregate operations*.

5.5 MINERAL AGGREGATE RESOURCE AREAS

5.5.6 To protect *Mineral Aggregate Resource* Areas from land uses and activities incompatible with extractive operations. New uses, other than extractive uses may be considered within these areas only if it can be demonstrated through detailed studies that:

- a. The proposed land use would not significantly preclude future extraction of *mineral aggregate resources* or resource use would not be feasible;
- b. The proposed land use would serve the long-term interest of the public better than aggregate extraction;
- c. Aggregate extraction would not be economically, socially or environmentally feasible; and
- d. Issues of public health, public safety and environmental impact are addressed.

5.5.7 That an application for a new operation will be required to demonstrate how:

- a. The connectivity between *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* will be maintained before, during, and after the extraction of *mineral aggregate resources*;
- b. The operator can replace *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* that would be lost from the site with equivalent and/or enhanced features on another part of the site or on *adjacent lands*;
- c. The *water resource system* will be protected and/or enhanced; and
- d. Any *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* and their associated *vegetation protection zones* will be addressed.

5.5.8 That local official plans shall identify and protect *Mineral Aggregate Resource* Areas and existing licensed aggregate extraction uses and provide policies for the location, expansion, operation and rehabilitation of pits and quarries.

5.5.9 To encourage local municipalities to enact by-laws that:

- a. regulate truck traffic to minimize adverse impacts on surrounding residents and *infrastructure*; and
- b. regulate the removal of topsoil.

5.5.10 To permit *portable asphalt plants*, wayside pits and quarries used on public authority contracts, in consultation with local municipalities, without requiring an official plan amendment or zoning by-law amendment, except within the Regional Greenlands System as identified in policy 5.5.20 of the Plan. A zoning by-law amendment shall be required to permit such facilities in areas of existing *development*.

5.5.11 That extraction and processing activities be conducted in a manner that minimizes negative environmental, economic and social impacts, in accordance with all government legislation, standards and policies.

5.5.12 To minimize the adverse effects of *wayside pits and quarries* in accordance with all government legislation, standards and policies, and support the use of alternative materials to sand and gravel and the reuse of construction materials, where possible, for the conservation of existing aggregate supplies.

5.5.13 That *mineral aggregate resource conservation* shall be undertaken, including through the use of accessory aggregate recycling facilities within operations, wherever feasible.

5.5.14 That local municipalities shall develop and implement official plan policies and other strategies to conserve *mineral aggregate resources* including the recovery and recycling of manufactured materials derived from *mineral aggregate resources* and utilization or extraction of on-site *mineral aggregate resources* prior to *development*.

5.5.15 To require the rehabilitation of abandoned *pits and quarries* and the progressive rehabilitation of operating pits and quarries in a manner that is in conformity with other policies of the Plan.

5.5 MINERAL AGGREGATE RESOURCE AREAS

5.5.16 That mineral aggregate extraction may occur in *Agricultural Areas* as an interim use provided it is supported by an *Agricultural Impact Assessment* and that the site will be rehabilitated back to an agricultural condition so that substantially the same areas and same average soil quality is restored. In the following cases, complete agricultural rehabilitation is not required:

- a. Outside of a speciality crop area, where there is a substantial quantity of aggregate below the water table warranting extraction, or the depth of planned extraction in a quarry makes restoration to pre-extraction levels unfeasible; or,
- b. Where other alternatives have been considered by the applicant and found unfeasible in accordance with the Provincial Policy Statement.

5.5.17 That policies and provisions in the Provincial Policy Statement, the Growth Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan shall be complied with in regard to new and existing *mineral aggregate operations* and *wayside pits* for the proper extraction and rehabilitation of sites.

5.5.18 That *mineral aggregate operations* are permitted in Natural Linkage Areas designation for lands within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

5.5.19 That *mineral aggregate operations* are exempt from certain landform conservation requirements in accordance with the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

5.5.20 That within the Regional Greenlands System, as identified on *Map 1*, *mineral aggregate operations*, *wayside pits and/or quarries* are subject to applicable policies of the Plan and the applicable Provincial plans, including the following:

- a. In those portions of the Regional Greenlands System as part of the Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan and Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, no new *mineral aggregate operations*, *wayside pits and/or quarries*, or any ancillary or *accessory uses* thereto, will be permitted in the following *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features*:
 - i. *significant wetlands*;
 - ii. *habitat of endangered or threatened species*; and,
 - iii. *significant woodlands*, unless as specified in the applicable Provincial plan.

5.5.21 To protect *petroleum resources* for long-term use and any proposed exploration and production of *petroleum resources*, and/or the rehabilitation of petroleum wells, shall be in accordance with the applicable Provincial plan, regulations and standards of the Province.

5.5.22 *Development* on, abutting, or adjacent to lands affected by oil, gas and salt hazards or petroleum resource operations, may be permitted only if rehabilitation measures to address and mitigate known or suspected hazards are underway or have been completed.