

June 16, 2014

Peter Milczyn, Chair,
And Members of the Planning and Growth Management Committee
10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Re: Item PG34.24 - Greenbelt Urban River Valley Designation in Toronto

Dear Councillor Milczyn and Members of the Planning and Growth Management Committee,

I applaud Toronto City Council's pursuit in growing the Greenbelt into our urban river valleys.

This action to protect in perpetuity our ravine lands ensures Toronto will continue to be defined by its greatest natural features for generations to come. As the Greenbelt is Ontario's boldest commitment to sustainability, extending its designation further into Toronto will capture the hearts and minds of Torontonians old, new and yet to arrive.

Such a move would add the same protection to all our major rivers and valley lands as bestowed on the Rouge River, which is already protected by the Greenbelt. It also falls in line with the leadership this city has shown to protect its ravines over the decades.

At a disadvantage being downstream, but always refusing to be ignored, Toronto has stood up for its ravines. In the late 1990s, the City pushed its way into the debate over the future of the Oak Ridges Moraine and strongly advocated to protect its supply of clean water and the wildlife habitats of the Humber, Don and Rouge Rivers. Later, the City again demanded that impacts on its watersheds be studied and considered in decisions being made on the siting and construction of York's Region's *Big Pipe* project.

Now, through an Urban River Valley Amendment to the Greenbelt Plan, the Province has finally given Toronto its own protection tools. Mr. Chair, and fellow Committee members, I urge you to use this tool, to complete the vision of a fully protected watershed – from its headwaters to the Great Lakes.

Ecologically and socially, Toronto's ravines and valley lands are growing in importance to this City. Ensuring its environmental features are healthy and public access is inclusive, the ravines are our "National Park" to protect and cherish.

This is no time for half measures. I support the recommendations in the report, but they need to go further. I ask Committee and Council to join Mississauga and Oakville in designating public valley lands as Greenbelt and set an example for our neighbours above Toronto to do the same.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Crombie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

David Crombie