

From Queen's Park by Sylvia Jones MPP ? Share your opinion on the co-ordinated review

I want to make you aware of a public consultation that is underway called the Co-ordinated Land Use Planning Review. The review includes revisions to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the Greenbelt, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan. These plans define how our communities and landowners are able to use impacted land. Portions of these plans impact many communities within Dufferin-Caledon.

One of the proposed changes calls for a substantial increase to the boundary of the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area in Mono, Mulmur and Melancthon. The Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) is proposing an expansion of about 2,500 acres in Mono, 14,000 acres in Mulmur and 2,200 acres in Melancthon. The Co-ordinated Review is also hoping to grow the Greenbelt, particularly in areas where important water resources are under pressure from urban growth.

The Co-ordinated Review proposes to increase intensity of development with more residential growth in areas that are already built-up and increase density of development by increasing the target for jobs and residents per hectare. This means that development in our community would increase within existing communities and new development would be more compact when it is new lands.

The Co-ordinated Review is not only about increasing the size of the four plans or the nature of development. It also includes discussion and feedback about the function of the plans and the services they provide. If you are interested in learning more about the proposed changes, the discussion paper titled *Our Region, Our Community, Our Home* is available on my website at www.sylviajonesmpp.ca

There was an open house on the Co-ordinated Review in Caledon East June 9. I have written to the Minister of Natural Resources calling on the government to organize an open house in Dufferin County to allow residents to review the recommendations and have staff available to answer questions. While we wait for the government to decide on whether to have an open house in Dufferin County, or if you missed the open house in Caledon, there is an online webform where you can submit your comments:

<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page14851.aspx>

I know that many municipal types of council are submitting their recommendations, and individuals have an opportunity to provide feedback as well. Your opinion is important. The outcome of the review and the changes accepted by the government will shape the character of our communities for years to come.

If you need assistance finding information on the review, or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office at 1-800-265-1603 or sylvia.jonesco@pc.ola.org

It's time to improve access to hepatitis C treatment in Ontario

Every year we recognize July 28 as World Hepatitis Day.

Hepatitis comes in many forms, including hepatitis C. Currently there are approximately 110,000 Ontarians living with hepatitis C and nearly half of those individuals are unaware they have this disease. Individuals can live with hepatitis C for many years without experiencing any symptoms, even though the disease slowly damages their liver. If left untreated, hepatitis C can lead to cirrhosis, liver cancer and ultimately death.

There is a cure for hepatitis C, with new treatments showing a 95 per cent effectiveness rate in curing individuals with the disease. While new treatments have shown great promise in curing individuals with hepatitis C, many cannot access these highly effective treatments until they meet restrictive clinical criteria that demand an individual's liver be halfway to cirrhosis. Ontario is lagging behind in helping bring an end to this viral disease. Provinces, including Quebec, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, have begun the process of removing or loosening eligibility requirements for individuals to access publicly-funded treatment.

The cost of inaction is far greater than the cost of treatment. Without these highly effective treatments that cost approximately \$55,000, an individual with hepatitis C can cost the health care system up to \$330,000 in health costs. We have an opportunity to help eliminate the single most burdensome infectious disease in Canada. That is why I introduced my private member's bill, Bill 216 the Greater Access to Hepatitis C Treatment Act, 2016. My private member's bill will ensure every individual in Ontario with hepatitis C will receive treatment upon the recommendation from their physician, no matter what stage their disease is in. If Bill 216 is passed or adopted, an individual will no longer have to wait and let their liver further deteriorate before receiving life-saving treatment.

This important initiative has received recognition from organizations including Action Hepatitis Canada and the Canadian Liver Foundation. Adam Cook of Action Hepatitis Canada wrote, 'in the absence of a coherent national plan to fight hepatitis C, Canada cannot fight this epidemic, let alone make good on our commitments to the WHO to eliminate this disease by 2030. Bill 216 is the

first instance of a province attempting to take leadership on this issue and stop the needless suffering of hundreds of thousands of Canadians who are not sick enough to be eligible for a cure.?

In addition, Dr. Morris Sherman, Chairman of the Canadian Liver Foundation wrote, "today we have drug therapies that can cure hepatitis C, but if we limit access based on restrictive criteria, we will continue to have low numbers of people treated and ever increasing cases of liver cancer and avoidable deaths. Removing the criteria on treatment access can help save lives and over the long-term save the health care system millions in acute care costs associated with end stage liver disease and transplants. The Canadian Liver Foundation is therefore in full support of the Greater Access to Hepatitis C Treatment Act.?"

If you are interested in reading the Greater Access to Hepatitis C Treatment Act, 2016, please visit www.sylviajonesmpp.ca

To learn more about hepatitis C in Ontario or receive a copy of my private member's bill the Greater Access to Hepatitis C Treatment Act, 2016, please call my office at 416-325-1898 or sylvia.jonesla@pc.ola.org

