

New Tools to Combat Illegal Land Use and Trucking

by MAYOR ANNETTE GROVES

The Town of Caledon showed its strong leadership in addressing illegal land uses and trucking, following the Province of Ontario's announcement of new enforcement tools for municipalities at Town Hall on May 20.

The Ontario government will soon propose amendments to the Planning Act aimed at helping municipalities better prevent illegal land uses, including unauthorized truck yards and commercial trucking operations on lands not zoned for industrial use. These proposed changes would give municipalities the authority to impose administrative monetary penalties for illegal land uses, including illegal truck yards that are often established on rural, agricultural, and residential properties.

This important announcement reflects years of advocacy and collaboration to secure stronger enforcement measures and greater provincial support for municipalities facing these challenges.

In August 2024, Town of Caledon representatives appeared before the Provincial Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy to advocate for stronger provincial action on illegal truck yards and unlawful land uses. Together, we called for enhanced enforcement tools and stronger collaboration across all levels of government to help address long-standing gaps in land use controls that have impacted residents, rural communities, and valuable agricultural lands.

This progress would not have been possible without strong partnerships and collective advocacy. We worked with the Small Urban GTHA Mayors, neighbouring municipalities, and members of the Big City Mayors caucus, including Patrick Brown, Gordon Krantz, and Steven Del Duca. We would also like to sincerely thank the members of the Town of Caledon's Illegal Land Use and Illegal Trucking Task Force, as well as the Caledon Community Road Safety Advocacy Group, for their continued dedication and advocacy.

This is a meaningful win for our community and an important step toward addressing the spread of illegal truck yards across Caledon and within our natural areas. We thank the Province, Minister Flack, Minister Sarkaria and Deputy Premier Jones for recognizing the seriousness of this issue and for providing municipalities with the tools needed to take meaningful action. Today's announcement highlights the impact of sustained advocacy, strong partnerships, and a shared commitment to protecting our communities.

Since 2024, the Town of Caledon has prosecuted more than 40 illegal truck yard operations and event centres as part of its ongoing efforts to protect public safety, preserve agricultural lands, and uphold community standards.

Caledon remains committed to working collaboratively with provincial partners, neighbouring municipalities, and enforcement agencies to ensure these new tools are implemented effectively and that communities have the support and resources needed to protect residents and promote responsible land use planning.