

REGION OF PEEL & TOWN OF CALEDON

BACKGROUND (LEAR) CONTIGUOUS AREAS ANALYSIS AND REFINEMENT of PRIME AGRICULTURE AREA BOUNDARIES

Public Information Open House – April 7, 2015

Why Undertake a Contiguous Areas Analysis (CAA)?

During consultation on the LEAR study it was requested that further analysis and refinement of the recommended Prime Agricultural Area mapping be completed before the Region and Town finalize the LEAR study and initiate an Official Plan Amendment process under the Planning Act.

A contiguous area analysis is the method used to refine areas recommended to be identified as Prime Agricultural Area through a LEAR study.

What is the Purpose of a CAA?

A contiguous area analysis confirms if areas identified as “LEAR Recommended Prime Agricultural Area” based on the LEAR evaluation are sufficiently large and contiguous to warrant the recommendation to be identified as Prime Agricultural Area.

Based on the province’s LEAR study guidelines, a Prime Agricultural Area should generally be comprised of a group of lands having a minimum combined area of 250 hectares (618 acres). Generally, these 250 hectare areas are used to delineate the Prime Agricultural Area in order to allow buffering from non-agricultural land uses to protect against conflicting land uses, increase the quality of the agricultural area and to allow for future expansions and flexibility to agricultural operations.

What are the steps to complete a CAA map refinement?

The first step in completing a CAA is to exclude lands that have been previously designated to permit a non-farm land use and natural heritage features such as woodlands and wetlands that may pose constraints to farming operations.

The CAA is completed by overlaying the previously approved non-farm land uses and natural heritage features onto the “LEAR Recommended Prime Agricultural Area” map to remove these areas for the purpose of establishing contiguous areas of remaining Prime Agricultural Area. Boundaries are then drawn around contiguous adjacent or abutting lands that have LEAR scores above the recommended threshold for identification as Prime Agricultural Area. The recommended Prime Agricultural Area map is then refined by excluding areas that do not meet the provincial size threshold for identification as Prime Agricultural Area.

Using this analysis, a technical recommendation will be put forward, as part of the final LEAR Report, on potential recommended changes to the Prime Agricultural Area as identified in the Region of Peel and Town of Caledon Official Plans.

Changes to the Prime Agricultural Area mapping in the Region of Peel and Town of Caledon Official Plans will then require a separate and formal amendment process under the Planning Act.

Further refinement of the Prime Agriculture Area may be considered by the Town and/or Region through that process.

Results

The current Region of Peel Official Plan Schedule B identifies approximately 22,400 hectares (55,350 acres) as Prime Agricultural Area. The refinement of the “LEAR Recommended Prime Agricultural Area” results in an increase of the current Prime Agricultural Area from approximately 22,400 hectares (55,350 acres) to 24,350 hectares (60,170 acres).

The analysis identified the following potential land use designation changes as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Potential recommended land use designation changes

Land Use Designation	Number of Properties	Area (ha)	Average LEAR Score
Change from General Agriculture or Rural to Prime Agriculture	552	6,328	620.0
Change from Prime Agriculture to General Agriculture or Rural	514	3,873	501.6
No change in Prime Agriculture Area designation	1,949	17,610	625.8

What Comes Next?

- Public comment on the draft LEAR study report and mapping refinement is being collected until **May 8, 2015**.
- The Region of Peel’s Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group will provide final recommendations to the Region and Town staff.
- Staff reports on the LEAR study to the Region of Peel and Town of Caledon Councils.

To provide comments and/ or request information, please contact either of the following project managers:

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