Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Office of the Minister

777 Bay Street, 17th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 2J3
Tel. 416 585-7000

Ministère des Affaires municipales et du Logement

Bureau du ministre

777, rue Bay, 17e étage
Toronto ON M7A 2J3
Tél. 416 585-7000

Ontario

234-2026-2688

Mayor Yvonne Hamlin
Town of Collingwood
yhamlin@collingwood.ca
officeofthemayor@collingwood.ca

Warden Basil Clarke
County of Simcoe
warden@simcoe.ca

Dear Mayor Hamlin and Warden Clarke:

RE: Town of Collingwood Black Ash Creek Special Policy Area Removal Request

I am pleased to advise that the Honourable Mike Harris, Minister of Natural Resources (MNR), and I support the Town of Collingwood's request to remove the Black Ash Creek Special Policy Area (SPA) from its official plan.

The Town requested joint ministerial approval under the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), 2024, with the understanding that floodplain management will continue through the Town's official plan and zoning by-law policies.

The request reflects the significant reduction of the floodplain following channelization works along Black Ash Creek between 2002 and 2007. Updated floodplain mapping shows that most of the SPA is no longer within the floodplain and that the SPA designation is no longer required.

Both ministries have reviewed the Town's submission, including updated floodplain mapping, watercourse information, and other technical analysis. We are satisfied that the materials support the removal of the SPA and application of the one-zone concept to the remaining floodplain.

The submission also included endorsements from the Town, the County of Simcoe, and the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority for the official plan modifications identified by the MNR to ensure the continued identification and management of the remaining flood hazards (see **Appendix A**). We also acknowledged that, during the County's 2024 comprehensive review of the Town's official plan, a decision on the SPA policies and mapping was deferred pending the Province's determination of this request.

The submission and supporting endorsements demonstrate consistency with Policy 5.2.5(a) of the PPS, 2024, and the Procedures for Approval of New Special Policy Areas and Modifications to Existing SPAs under the Provincial Policy Statement (January 2009). Both ministries are satisfied that the applicable requirements have been met and that risks to human health, safety, and property have been significantly reduced.

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We also understand that the Town's Comprehensive Zoning By-law No. 2010-040 does not currently include provisions addressing the SPA or floodplain hazards. The Town has acknowledged this gap and is undertaking a comprehensive zoning by-law update, expected to be completed by early 2027. Incorporating updated floodplain mapping into the zoning by-law schedules will help ensure that flood hazards associated with Black Ash Creek and the Oak Street Canal are appropriately managed in the future.

Accordingly, pursuant to Policy 5.2.5(a) of the PPS, 2024, the Minister of MNR and I, as Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, approve the removal of the Black Ash Creek Special Policy Area, subject to the official plan being modified in accordance with **Appendix A**.

Following this approval, the County of Simcoe, as the approval authority, may proceed with its statutory decision to implement these changes, including resolving the outstanding official plan matter by removing of all references to the SPA and updating the Town's official plan policies as outlined in **Appendix A**.

I would like to sincerely thank you, Council, and staff for your collaboration with the Province on this matter.

Please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,

Hon. Robert J. Flack
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

c. Hon. Mike Harris, Minister of Natural Resources (MNR)
Robert Dodd, Chief of Staff, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH)
Jacob Evershed, Deputy Chief of Staff (Policy), MNR
Martha Greenberg, Deputy Minister, MMAH
Drew Vanderduim, Deputy Minister, MNR
Mark Aitken, Chief Administrative Officer, County of Simcoe (Mark.Aitken@simcoe.ca)
Sonya Skinner, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Collingwood (sskinner@collingwood.ca)

Appendix A – Town Official Plan Policy Modifications

1. Section 5.6.3.4(b) is to be modified so it reads as follows (strikethrough text indicates a deletion, ***bold italics*** indicate additions):

   'The One-Zone Concept is a planning approach whereby the entire floodplain, as defined by the regulatory flood standard, is treated as one unit and all development within the floodplain is prohibited or ~~controlled~~ ***restricted***. ~~With the exception of the Black Ash Creek Special Policy Area, t~~***T***he One-Zone Concept as defined by the regulatory flood shall regulate the Silver Creek, Black Ash Creek, Townline Creek and Batteaux River and Oak Street Canal floodplain.'

2. The Special Policy Area boundary is to be removed from Schedule 3.1, Natural Hazards in its entirety.

3. Section 5.6.3.5 is to be modified to remove reference to "Special Policy Area" in the section title.