

**WITNESS STATEMENT
Of**

Ronald Blake

**On behalf of the Intervenor
The Corporation of the City of Markham**

***In the matter of an application by
Enbridge Gas Distribution Inc. – GTA Project –
Leave to Construct Application – Pipeline Segment B
(Yonge Street to CN Rail Corridor)***

June 28, 2013

Curriculum Vitae of Ronald Blake

I am a member of the Canadian Institute of Planners and have been employed with The Corporation of the City of Markham (“City of Markham”) since April 2000, serving as Manager of the West District since November 2001. My responsibilities include the management and coordination of a diverse variety of development files including infill and intensification projects in the Thornhill community, prestige industrial and office development along the Highway 404 corridor and the planning and review of development applications in several new communities in the northern portion of Markham.

I hold degrees in Economics and Landscape Architecture and have been working as a professional planner since 1986. Prior to working at the City of Markham, I was employed in both the public and private sectors and worked on planning projects in Ontario, the United States and the Caribbean. I am a Registered Professional Planner and a Member of the Canadian Institute of Planners.

Statement in Support of The City of Markham

The City of Markham undertook the Langstaff Gateway Secondary Plan, to guide and coordinate the development of this important urban growth centre that will have ramifications far beyond the Greater Toronto Area, by private landowners, the City of Markham and regional and provincial agencies. .

Langstaff Gateway will be a compact, complete, integrated, sustainable, vibrant and well-designed high density urban centre located within the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Urban Growth Centre. At full build-out, it will accommodate as many as 32,000 residents in 15,000 dwelling units and 15,000 jobs. It will accommodate a variety of densities in sustainable building forms connected to a central green spine linking existing open space areas, transit, retail, employment, civic and residential uses. Langstaff Gateway is intended to be a complete and integrated community with a mix of office, retail, cultural, institutional, residential, open space and recreational uses, in a transit and pedestrian-supportive built form that encourages non-auto modes of transportation.

The introduction of the proposed EGDI gas pipeline through the Langstaff area would have a major and detrimental impact on the entire project plan. As the following indicates, each aspect of the plan is integrated and inter-connected and any fundamental changes would negatively affect, possibly even terminate, the entire plan.

The Planning Context for the Langstaff Gateway

Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (the “GGH”)

The GGH favours compact development and intensification in existing urban areas at transit supportive densities with transit-oriented street configurations over peripheral development of greenfield land. It establishes broad intensification and density targets for Regional and Area Municipalities, and:

- Promotes efficient use of existing supply of land designated for urban development;
- Promotes new growth in designated intensification areas; and

- Promotes the highest densities and development levels in designated Urban Growth Centres, intensification corridors and major transit area. These designated areas are intended to provide the most intensive existing and future transit and other infrastructure.

The GGH identifies Urban Growth Centres throughout the GTA. Langstaff Gateway is a designated Urban Growth Centre. The Urban Growth Centres will be planned:

- As focal areas for major institutional, commercial, recreational, cultural and entertainment uses;
- To accommodate and support major transit infrastructure;
- To serve as high density major employment centres; and
- To accommodate a significant share of population and employment growth.

The Urban Growth Centres will be planned to achieve, by 2031 a minimum of 200 residents and jobs per hectare.

The Langstaff Gateway Urban Growth Centre will attract a significant portion of new population and employment growth, as well as provide a diverse and compatible mix of land uses including residential and employment uses to support vibrant communities.

Regional Official Plan (2010)

The York Region Official Plan (2010) (YROP) designates Langstaff Gateway as a Regional Centre (to implement the GGH designation of Langstaff Gateway as an Urban Growth Centre). The intent is to create communities that are compact, well designed, served by subways and other high-order transit, and promote building “up not out”.

Regional Centres are the primary locations for the most intensive and greatest mix of development within the Region – the most important and intense concentrations of development; the future “downtowns” for the Region. Regional Centres are also the focal points for the highest densities and mix of uses and greatest choice of transportation infrastructure and travel modes. Furthermore, Regional Centres together with Regional Corridors (a related designation in the YROP) are part of a designated regional system of growth centres and intensification corridors, which will serve as the locations for the

majority of high density, compact, mixed use, street-oriented, pedestrian and cyclist friendly, transit-supportive development in the Region.

The secondary plans for Regional Centres and corridors shall:

- Accommodate minimum density requirements and targets established by the Region and the province;
- Provide a fine-grained grid network of streets with ground floor retail and service uses;
- Concentrate the most intensive development and greatest mix of uses within reasonable walking distance of rapid transit/subway stations;
- Reduce parking requirements;
- Include site design policies that orient main building entrances to the street;
- Provide that all new buildings shall front the street; and
- Promote transit-oriented development.

The minimum density requirements are 2.5 FSI on all development blocks and 3.5 FSI minimum on blocks at and adjacent to existing and future subway stations.

From a servicing standpoint, the YROP promotes a “conservation-first” approach to servicing which aims to maximize the use of existing infrastructure while strategically leveraging future infrastructure investments. The YROP establishes land use and development patterns that will promote conservation, thereby reducing the relative demand for services across the Region. Key elements of this strategy include:

- Trip reduction including the efficient use of existing and future transportation infrastructure through the use of Transportation Demand Management Strategies; active transportation strategies; transit-supportive development patterns that focus the highest densities and greatest mix of uses in compact intensification areas (like Langstaff Centre) that are or will be served by the highest order and range of transit infrastructure (subway, GO Transit, 407 Transit Way) and require buildings to be pedestrian-oriented and directly address the street;
- Promoting water conservation strategies such as the use of water efficiency innovations (water reuse, rainwater harvesting, stormwater management systems, grey water reuse etc);
- Designing streetscapes and building forms that encourage walking, cycling, and transit use and vibrant street activity;

- Promoting shared rights of way for utility infrastructure to minimize land requirements and increase the efficiency of utility construction and maintenance; and
- To co-ordinate the provision of services and to encourage the integration of utilities.

Markham Official Plan and Langstaff Secondary Plan

The City of Markham Council approved the Langstaff Gateway Secondary Plan in 2010, which:

- Provides for compact, complete, integrated, sustainable, vibrant and well-designed high-density urban centre to serve as a portion of the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Urban Growth Centre;
- Provides for a variety of densities and uses focused on a central open space spine; and
- Is intended to be a complete and integrated community with a mix of land uses, including commercial, cultural, institutional, office, open space, recreational, residential and retail.
- Establishes a highly integrated, comprehensive planning process for the area that promotes a comprehensive community planning approach that integrates urban design, planning for services and utilities, transportation planning and environmental planning and strongly discourages a fragmented planning approach;
- Promotes active transportation and development that is transit dependent;
- Locate all utilities and telecommunications lines within the Secondary Plan area underground in joint use utility trenches;
- Provides for public and private utilities for development to be planned and constructed in a coordinated manner, to the greatest extent possible;
- Provides for utility and telecommunication services for development to be located underground and grouped together wherever possible within public road allowances or appropriate easements and designed in conformity with Town policies and consistent with the Langstaff Gateway Streetscape and Urban Design Guidelines;
- Permits utility and services in all land use designations, with the exception of the Environmental Protection Area and Parks and Open Space designations.

The vision for Langstaff Gateway involves a complete transit and pedestrian/oriented mixed use community with a fine-grained network of streets, including a mix of high densities and uses throughout the community, and a linked open space system. The Secondary Plan also designates all development blocks (excluding open space system and natural features) at densities ranging between 3.7 FSI and a maximum of **15 FSI**.

A key feature is that all development blocks are designated for high density development, specifically:

- Building heights on development blocks range from a minimum of 3 to 4 storeys to a maximum of 50 storeys; and
- The majority of this Urban Growth Centre is intended to be street-oriented with specific areas designated for mandatory at-grade retail and commercial uses.

Population and Employment

The Langstaff Gateway is planned to accommodate an ultimate population of 32,000 residents and 15,000 jobs. By 2031, Langstaff Gateway is anticipated to accommodate 11,000 residents and 5,400 jobs.

Between 2006 and 2031, the City of Markham is anticipated to grow from 273,000 to 421,600 residents (net increase of 148,000) and approximately 7.5% of Markham's population growth over the forecast period will be accommodated in Langstaff Gateway.

Finally, between 2006 and 2031, employment in Markham is anticipated to increase from 144,800 to 240,000 jobs (net increase 95,200 jobs). Approximately 5.7% of Markham's anticipated employment growth to 2031 will occur in Langstaff Gateway.

Conclusion:

The introduction of the proposed EGD I gas pipeline through the Langstaff Gateway area would have a major and detrimental impact on the planned development project. As presented above, the Provincial, Regional and Area Municipal planning intent for the Langstaff Gateway is to promote a high density community characterized by highly integrated, land-intensive development patterns, very high ratios of building coverage to lot areas, street-oriented development with minimal front, side and rear yard setbacks, Furthermore, both the YROP and Langstaff Gateway Secondary Plan require a highly coordinated approach to transportation, utility and infrastructure planning, environmental planning and land use and urban design, which strongly discourages fragmented

approaches to utility planning and focuses on shared utility trenches, comprehensive utility plans and a strong integration between the planning for services and utilities and the planning of the overall community.

Ronald Blake, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.