

The Corporation of the Town of Ajax

GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

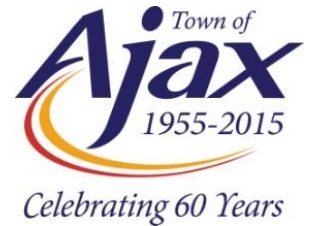
Thursday, April 9, 2015

Open Meeting at 2:00 p.m.

In-Camera to follow immediately after open meeting

River Plate Room, Town Hall

65 Harwood Avenue South



PRESENTATIONS

*Alternative formats available upon request by contacting:
accessibility@ajax.ca or 905-619-2529 ext. 3347*

Anything in **blue** denotes an attachment/link. By clicking the links on the agenda page, you can jump directly to that section of the agenda. To manoeuver back to the agenda page use the **Ctrl + Home** keys simultaneously.

4. Presentations / Discussion

- 4.1 [Urban Forestry Management Plan Five Year Update](#)
~ T. Field, Manager Environmental Services
- 4.2 [Comments on the Proposed Great Lakes Protection Act \(Bill 66\)](#)
~ B. Hodgins, Senior Policy Planner



Town of Ajax

Urban Forestry Management Plan

Progress Update

Thursday, April 9, 2015

Tim Field Manager, Environmental Services,
Operations & Environmental Services,
Town of Ajax.

Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) Background

The UFMP was adopted by Council in 2011, this 20 year plan ensures strategic management of Ajax's forest cover taking into account:

- Arboricultural standards and practices,
- Urban forest enhancement,
- Pest/ invasive species management,
- A private tree By-Law,
- Protection & enhancement of woodlots,
- Awareness, engagement and partnerships



We currently have 23% canopy cover on our streets and town owned parkland in comparison to hard surfaces.

Completed Action Items

Action	Status			Will Not Complete
	Complete	Ongoing	Long Term	
Monitoring The Status Of The Plan		X		
Undertaking A Municipal Tree Inventory		X		
Improving The Pruning Cycle			X	
Additional Staffing Resources: Seasonal Plant Health Care Worker(S)	X			
Developing A Risk Management Policy		x		
Internal Coordination: Urban Forest Working Group				X
Improved Tree Protection Standards And Specification	X			
Improved Urban Forest Diversity And Species Selection		X		
Improved Tree Planting Lists	X	X		
Improved Tree Habitat Standards	X	X		
Development Of A Tree Technical Manual	X			
Identification Of Plantable Spots In The Urban Matrix	X	X		
Maximizing Tree Replacement In The Urban Areas On Municipal Lands		X		
Increasing Tree Planting On Private And Institutional Lands		X		
Research New Approaches And Technologies		X		
Improved Pest Vulnerability Analysis		X		
New Emerald Ash Borer Strategy	X			
Wood Waste Management	X			
Progressive Engineering Guidelines		x		
Improved Site Plan Manual		x		
Improved Tree Compensation	x			
Additional Staffing Resources: Full Time Arborist/ Site Inspector	X			
New Private Tree By Law (Cost Benefit Analysis)			X	
Heritage Tree Identification And Protection	X			
Urban Woodland Inventory And Assessment		X		
Continued Parks And Open Space Restoration		X		
Urban Forest Communications Program		X		
Targeted Social Marketing Campaign				X
Awareness And Stewardship Support		X		
Expanded Partnerships For Urban Forest Stewardship	x	X		
Pursuit Of Funding And Resource Staffing For Urban Forest Initiatives		X		
External Co-Ordination: Urban Forest Steering Committee (UFSC)				X

Street Tree Inventory

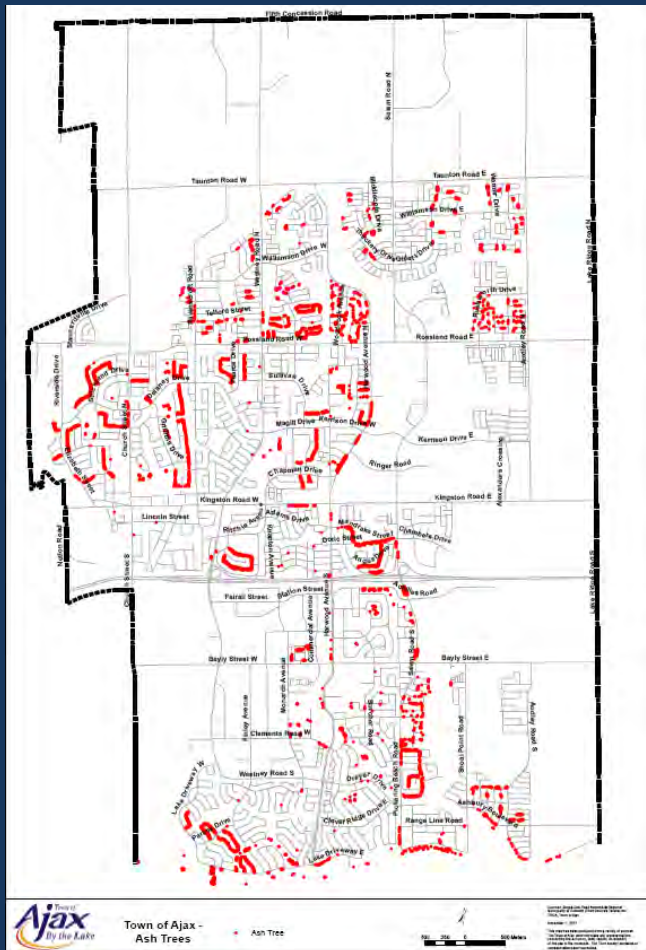
2012 - 36,912 trees
2015 - 42,542 trees



Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Management Plan



UGA2106098



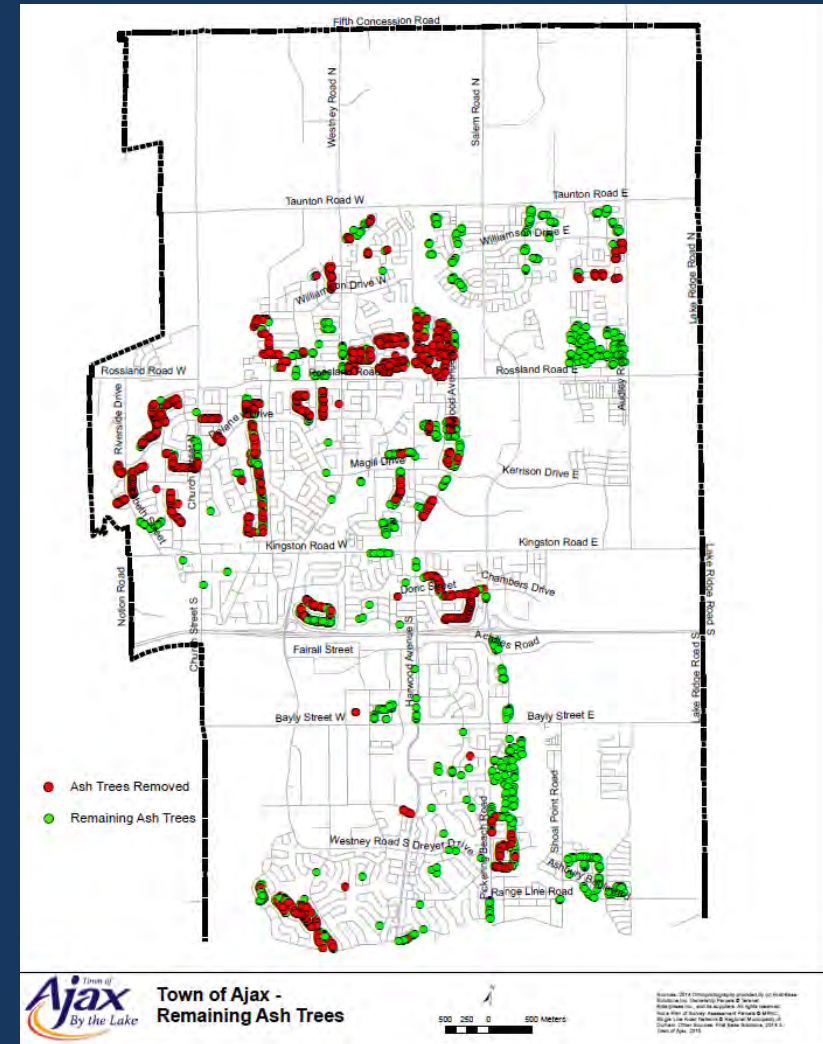
- Municipal ash trees identified in the inventory (streets & parks) per year
 - 2012 (8%)
 - 2015 (5%)
- 736 trees removed in 2013/14
- 750 trees scheduled for removal in 2015
- Treatment:
 - 2012- 115 Trees
 - 2013- 822 Trees
 - 2014- 299 Trees
 - 2015- 650 Trees (Proposed)

Future Impact of EAB

- Removing trees less than 20cm (dbh), as required
- Inspecting ash trees for health, prior to injections
- Proactively identifying hazardous trees in woodlots vs. reactive

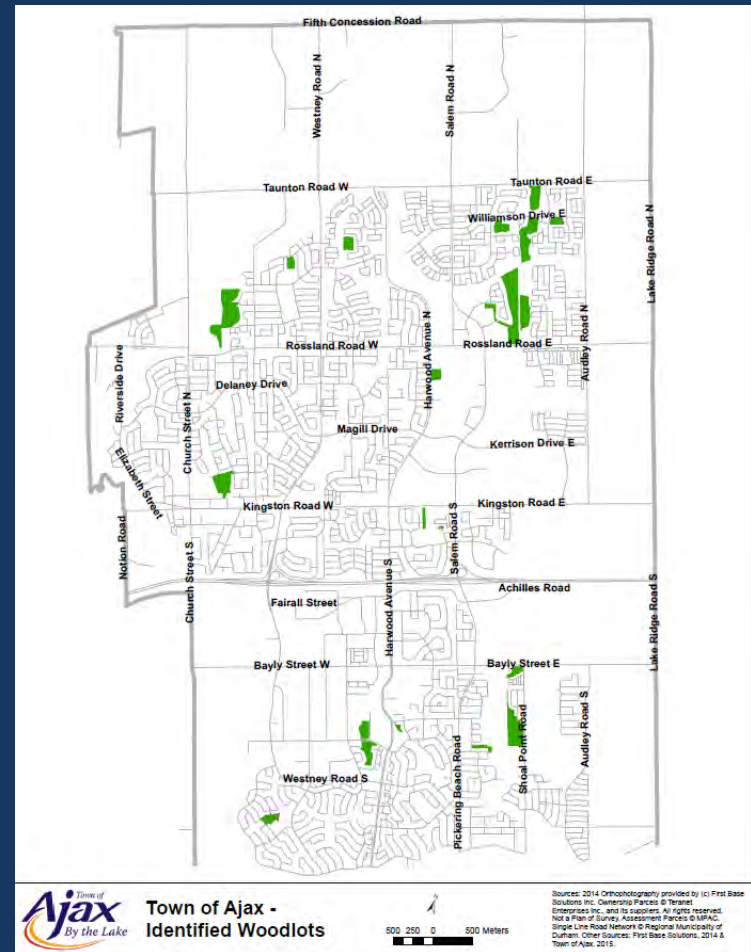
Positive Outcome:

- Increased awareness of trees, how important they are and the roles they play in the urban environment.
- Increasing the species diversity throughout town



Woodlot Inventory (2015)

- Town owned properties
- High concentration of ash species
- Focusing on potential hazards (trails, private property)
- Tree Density



December 2013 Ice Storm

- 460 trees removed
- \$93,000 replacement tree cost
- Ash trees primary species impacted
- \$511,000 claimed for recovery

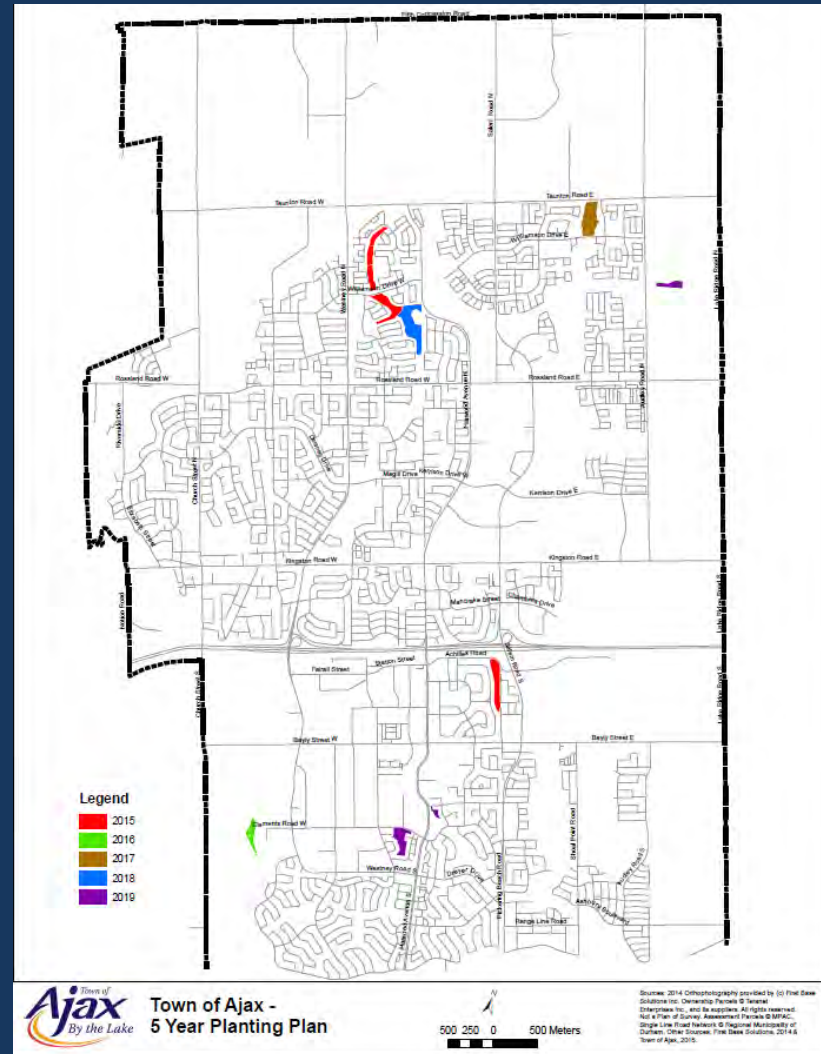
(not including, replacement cost or regular staff working hours).



5 Year Restoration Plan (2015-2020)

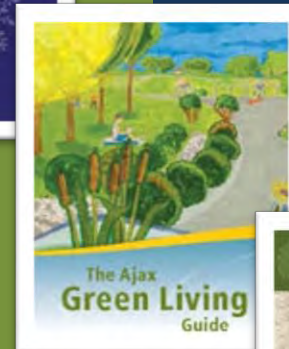
Objective:

- Replanting native species in Ajax owned parklands to prevent invasive from being established
- Incorporating community plantings, with 5 Year Restoration Plant where possible
- Approx. 1,500 pieces per year, 50mm trees, whips and shrubs
- Planting funded through development funds and operating budget



Current Education & Engagement

- Tree Care Kit
- Ajax Green Living Guide
- Emerald Ash Borer Information
- Two annual community planting events (Approximately 1,500 trees & shrubs planted annually)
- One school planting event (Approx 400 trees & shrubs planted annually)
- Presence at community events
- Increased partnerships (TRCA, Sierra Club Canada, Trees Ontario, Region of Durham).



Future Community Engagement

Urban Forestry Website

- User friendly
- Tree atlas
- Online dedication tree application

Stewardship Events

- Community Planting events
- School planting events

Resident Correspondence

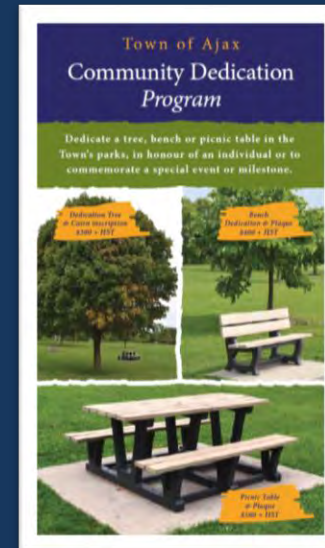
- Notification process
- High level of customer service

Ongoing Education

- Presence at community events
- Workshops (green living days)

Private Property Planting Programs

- LEAF Backyard Planting Program
- Forests Ontario Durham 5 Million Trees program



Long Term Initiatives

General Recommendation for Future Management Plans	Projected Timing	Comments
MONITORING		
Monitoring the status of the Plan using the established Criteria and Indicators	once in 2016, 2021, 2026	
Monitoring the Status of the Urban Forest (i.e., a full i-Tree Eco study)	once in 2018	Est. \$35,000 one time cost
MUNICIPAL PRACTICES		
Municipal Tree Inventory	2016 - 2030	Ongoing updates and maintenance required
Improving the Pruning Cycle	2016 - 2025	Target of reducing the grid pruning interval from eight to five years by 2025
TREE ESTABLISHMENT		
Improved Urban Forest Species Diversity	2016 - 2030	Target of overall diversity of municipal street and park trees to meet "30-20-10" rule over time.
Maximizing Tree Replacement	2016 - 2030	Ongoing underplanting in areas of mature trees, planting in available spaces on municipal lands throughout the Town, and providing support for tree plantings on private lands
PEST MANAGEMENT		
Development of Pest-Specific Management Strategies	2016 - 2030	As needed
PRIVATE TREE BY-LAW		
Development of a diameter based private tree by-law for the urban areas	2017	Pending the results of the cost:benefit analysis, and consultations with key stakeholders.
By-law Education and Enforcement Resources	2017 - 2019	If an additional private tree by-law is approved, additional staffing resources will also be required
WOODLAND RESOURCES		
Urban Woodland Management Plan	2016	Building on the results of the urban woodland assessment study to be completed by 2015
Continued Parks and Open Space Restoration	2016 - 2020	Development of a new restoration plan that monitors works done and identifies new areas
COMMUNICATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS		
Communications Program	2016 - 2030	Ongoing updates and initiatives required. Influenced by successes and failures of previous efforts, and available resources and staff time
Awareness and Stewardship Support	2016 - 2030	Continued support provided for tree care and planting on private and institutional lands
Expanded Partnerships for Urban Forest Stewardship	2016 - 2030	Continued development of public and private sector partnerships
Pursuit of Funding and Resource Sharing	2016 - 2030	Continued pursuit of funding and need for new research into new or different opportunities once every five years or so

Financial & Communication

- Funding identified through operating budget and developer funding
- Continued pursuit of external funding opportunities
- Ongoing communication updates and initiatives, as required



Proposed Great Lakes Protection Act (Bill 66)



Photo by Paul Weallans, Ajax Resident, Late Fall 2014

Staff Presentation to General Government Committee
April 9, 2015

Bill 66 was Posted on EBR after First Reading

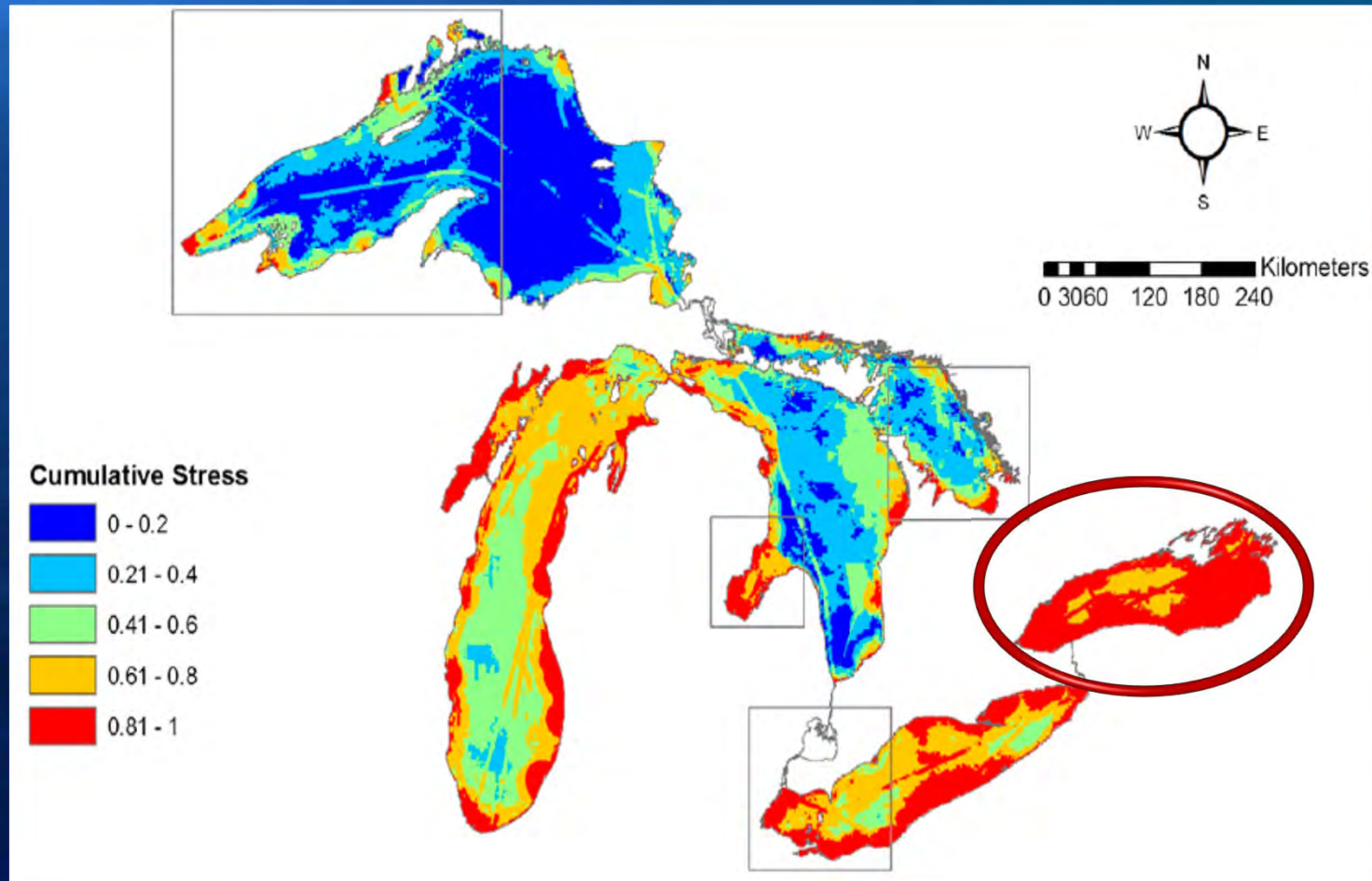
60-day Comment Period ends April 19th, now in Second Reading

Led by MOECC, the Province intends to keep the Great Lakes “drinkable, fishable and swimmable”, by:

- fighting climate change, reducing harmful algal blooms and protecting wetlands and other coastal areas
- monitoring and reporting on the health of the Great Lakes
- encouraging local action on priority issues
- meeting commitments made in the 2014 Canada-Ontario Agreement (COA) on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health, pursuant to the 2012 Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement

Cumulative Stress in the Great Lakes Basin

Lake Ontario is highly stressed, especially nearshore water



Source: www.pnas.org/cgi/doi/10.1073/pnas.1213841110:

<file:///C:/Users/bhodgins/Desktop/GLEAM%20%20%20Great%20Lakes%20Environmental%20Assessment%20and%20Mapping%20Project.html>

Key Observations, Gaps & Recommendations

To strengthen the Proposed Act, the Minister should:

- Make it easier to interpret, by replacing numerous references to the *Lake Simcoe Protection Act, 2008* with the actual clauses
- Add provisions for identifying, measuring and addressing individual and cumulative stresses, such as from provincially-planned growth and infrastructure, and regarding reducing vulnerability to climate change
- Strengthen its first principle and vague performance measures from 2012 Great Lakes Strategy, to include restoring aquatic health and focusing on water quality in the nearshore, where cumulative impacts tend to concentrate (e.g. excessive algae growth)

Key Observations, Gaps & Recommendations

Continued

- A proposed Great Lakes Guardians' Council would identify “priority” actions, potential funding and partnerships, share information and gather input on:
 - Establishing targets
 - Criteria for selecting and prioritizing geographic areas for which Proposed Initiatives would be developed
 - Developing and implementing Approved Initiatives and inter-jurisdictional agreements (GLWQA, COA 2014)

Recommendation - Council request a seat on Guardians' Council

Key Observations, Gaps & Recommendations

Continued

- There seem to be 3 scenarios for preparing a Proposed Geographically-Focused Initiative (GFI):
 1. Public body(ies) volunteers
 2. Minister directs public body(ies) to develop GFI
 3. A person asks Minister to direct public body(ies) to do so
- All scenarios have financial and staffing implications, possibly offset by sufficient, sustained funding from the Province

Recommendation - the Province should support this work by establishing reliable, sustained funding, and requiring rigorous, quantitative performance standards based on best available science

Key Observations, Gaps & Recommendations

Continued

- Within the area of an Approved GFI, Council and OMB decisions under *Planning Act* and *Condominium Act* **must conform with** GFI's designated policy and **have regard for** any not designated policy, but PPS and Ministerial Zoning Orders would be exempt
- In a conflict, Approved GFI policy would prevail over Official Plan policy and/or Zoning By-law - Minister may direct the Town to resolve non-conformity and, if not addressed, Minister could issue final, unappealable Order amending the documents
- Within area of Approved GFI, a municipality would not be able to undertake any public work or structural improvement or pass a By-law that conflicts with Approved GFI policy

Key Observations, Gaps & Recommendations

Continued

- Proposed GFI not required to contain supporting resolutions from all affected municipalities before sent to Minister
- A potential barrier to success (“hold-out” municipality)
- Policy focus on key (provincially-significant) natural heritage features and functions

Recommendations – Require Proposed GFI to contain supporting resolutions from all affected municipalities. Remove “key” from principles and policies to allow inclusion of regionally and locally significant features and functions. Add complete explanation of policy hierarchy.

Key Observations, Gaps & Recommendations

Continued

- Any person could ask Minister to establish a Target, subject to providing rationale and information requested by the Minister to assist in assessing the request
- An Approved GFI would not itself be assessed under the *Environmental Assessment Act*
- Related Great Lakes Agreements to be considered include GLWQA 2012 and COA 2014, led by the GLEC

Recommendation – That Federal and Provincial governments, through the GLEC and MOECC, work with Town to establish priority actions for Lake Ontario to effectively curtail nutrient and chemical discharges to nearshore water at Ajax

Conclusions

- Strengthen performance measures in 2012 Strategy
- Has implications to planning & development in the Town, in watersheds draining through Ajax to Lake Ontario, and on nearshore water quality and the aquatic environment
- Participation in developing and implementing GFI appears costly, could require outside legal and consulting support
- Could lead to different standards along shoreline/nearshore
- Not avenue to resolve problem of excessive algae in near future
- Council should request seat on Guardians' Council due to valuable experience from Town-sponsored study of nearshore