



## Sandy Shaw

MPP, HAMILTON WEST-ANCASTER-DUNDAS

Premier Doug Ford  
Main Legislative Building, Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON  
M7A 1A1

August 12, 2021

Dear Premier Ford,

This week, Ontarians learned of yet another Minister's Zoning Order (MZO) issued by your government, giving the Cortel Group special treatment that allows its Orbit development in Innisfil to bypass critical environment protections, public consultations and professional planning studies that are otherwise required for such a large project.

As the Official Opposition critic for Environment, Conservation and Parks, I am deeply concerned about the environmental impact of this MZO, and the many MZOs issued by your government.

The Orbit proposal is massive. It entails building a community of 150,000 residents on farmland within Innisfil, effectively dropping a new city into a rural community of fewer than 40,000 people.

There is no justification for pushing through a development of this size on the environmentally sensitive Lake Simcoe Watershed without trying to determine and reduce the environmental impact. The people who live in these communities will pay the price if wetlands and farmlands are paved over and infrastructure costs skyrocket.

To push this project ahead, your government is using a new power to compel approvals from Conservation Authorities, even on environmentally destructive proposals that they would normally deny. The Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) was among many Conservation Authorities expressing extreme concern over this. Now with this MZO, the LSRCA's fears are being realized.

Further, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) has urged your government to prioritize the protection and preservation of Ontario's viable farmland. Sustainable land use planning is key to supporting Ontario's farmers and taking action on the climate emergency. Yet MZO after MZO, Ontarians are being shown clearly that yours is not a government for the people but for the rich and well connected.

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It is clear this MZO has been issued to bypass critical environmental protections, stifle opposition before it can start, and ultimately allow your political ally and campaign contributor Mario Cortellucci, who owns the Cortel Group, to pursue his lucrative development proposal.

I implore you to stop overriding environmental protections with these MZOs. I have already written to your Minister of Municipal Affairs demanding the same. We need a government that takes this climate emergency seriously and not one whose actions are actively making this crisis worse.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'sshaw'.

Sandy Shaw

MPP Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas

Critic, Environment, Conservation and Parks