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Dear Mayor Coughlin and Members of Council,

The Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture strongly supports the Springwater Agricultural Advisory Committee in their rejection of the City of Barrie's annexation proposal.

We understand the need for land to accommodate development, but it must be a balance. Growth cannot come at the expense of losing productive farmland that is essential for food security, environmental sustainability, and the rural economy.

This proposed annexation threatens to convert acres upon acres of highly productive farmland and natural areas into "employment lands," covering commercial, and industrial uses. This is prime agricultural land that should remain in food production—not be repurposed for warehouses, subdivisions, and sprawl. The permanent loss of this land would be a direct blow to Ontario's food security, environmental sustainability, and rural economy.

Before any discussion of annexation is even considered, the City of Barrie must first demonstrate that it has fully and efficiently utilized the lands already available within its existing settlement boundary. Expanding outward into neighbouring municipalities while underutilized land remains within the city is unjustifiable and inconsistent with good planning principles.

We are aware that despite our opposition, the Province of Ontario may choose to intervene in support of Barrie's proposal. This potential override of local decision-making is deeply



concerning. Local councils are best positioned to understand and protect their communities' long-term interests. Decisions about land use must reflect local priorities—not just provincial growth mandates.

Ontario is already losing over 300 acres of farmland every day. If municipalities like yours are not empowered to stop this trend, the consequences will be irreversible.

We urge this council to:

- Publicly reject the City of Barrie's annexation proposal;
- Call on the Province to respect local planning decisions and the agricultural value of the land in question, and to prioritize intensification, redevelopment, and the use of existing serviced lands within current municipal boundaries before supporting any expansion into productive farmland;
- Demand a transparent and accountable provincial review process should intervention be considered.

The farming community is watching closely, and we are ready to support the efforts to ensure Simcoe County's farmland is protected—for today, and for future generations.

Warm Regards,



Dave Ritchie
SCFA president

