

# More York farmland expected to be lost to development

BY JOAN RANSBERRY  
Staff Writer

The view remains the same from the front porch of any farmhouse in York Region — the next few years will look much like the last few.

More farmland will be lost to urban sprawl, most farmers will struggle to make a buck and the local agricultural community will await news of a new regional airport in the Pickering-Markham area.

Jay Reesor of Markham calls himself a realist. While the 46-year-old farmer recognizes that people deserve a nice place to live, he wonders why prime agricultural land has to be sacrificed in the process.

Mr. Reesor and his wife Miriam grow strawberries and sweet corn to sell at their roadside market on the Ninth Line just south of Stouffville.

He also grows 75 acres of soy beans and wheat. While Mr. Reesor's from a farm family, it's doubtful daughters Leah, 17, and Jessica, 14, will pursue a career in agriculture.

Agricultural land in York Region is, indeed, shrinking. Today, York Region has more than 1,000 farms covering just shy of 176,000 acres. In the past eight years, the number of farms in the region has decreased by 16 per cent, while the total area of farm properties has dropped by almost 10 per cent.

On the brighter side, farmers produce more on less land. Total farm revenue, now at \$178.6 million, is up by 5 per cent over the



STAFF PHOTOS/JOERD WITTEVEEN

Jay Reesor of Ninth Line in Markham sits atop a mound of topsoil just north of 16th Avenue. The topsoil was removed to facilitate development of the area.

past eight years.

"Farmers are more efficient," said Don Stevenson, York Region's service representative for the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. "Today's farmer is producing more on less land. There's more efficiency," said Mr. Stevenson.

Still, urbanization is viewed as a critical issue. Urban sprawl is especially evident in the southern part of York Region: Farmland in Markham is evaporating much faster than agricultural lands in such northern municipalities as East Gwillimbury.

Mr. Reesor has been tracking the urban takeover for most of his adult life. A product of a pioneer farm family, Mr. Reesor's roots matter. "From where I grew up (on the Ninth Line), the city has encroached on farm lands at

the rate of 1.5 kilometres every five years," said Mr. Reesor. "It won't take long before it's all gone."

In Markham, an all too familiar scene often plays itself out: A farmer sells out and buys a big house on a two-acre estate lot, near Vandonf. The farmer is 60 years old. A developer paid him a visit and waved a bundle of cash under his nose.

The farmer took stock of the situation: He's land rich and cash poor. The kids are long gone. They made it clear 10 years ago they were not interested in working seven-days-a-week for nothing. It's time to quit; time to sell. It's hard to sell. But, it's harder not to.

After a time, Markham council agreed to rezone the farm from agriculture to a residential in order to accommodate a

three-phase subdivision. The 175-acre farm made way for 725 houses. A few Markham councillors ranted and raved about the dire need to protect Markham's prime agricultural land.

Meanwhile, a standing-room-only crowd will turn up at the council chambers and tell council residents can't live beside semis and town houses. In the end, democracy prevailed and the farm gave way to a brand new subdivision. Life went on. There's was only one change — the farm disappeared.

"It's disappointing. I recognize the need for people to have a good place to live, but to build on good farmland is very sad," said Mr. Reesor. "It's just disappointing to see it happen and it is happening."

King Township Mayor Margaret Black tells yet another familiar story. Her father was forced to sell the century-old family farm in King Township when he was 69 years old.

Her father sold the mixed farming operation and the land to another farmer in 1969. Mrs. Black's father kept a 10-acre parcel of land, located directly across from his main farm. The small piece of land had been in the family since the mid 1800s.

Urban sprawl is viewed as a major issue here. The York Region agricultural advisory liaison group, made up of farm organizations and individual farmers, recently asked Ontario Agriculture and Food Minister Helen Johns to have the province establish and fund a

land trust. It wants the province to acquire lands for agriculture and other rural uses.

Mrs. Johns, along with Oak Ridges MPP and Tourism Frank Klees, told the farmers and area mayors, including Mayor Black, that they'd take the farmers' appeal to Queen's Park and work on their behalf.

While farmers stress the need for changes in planning at the provincial level, they notice re-

kindled interest in the Pickering airport lands.

It's been 30 years since the federal and provincial governments started to slowly erase farmsteads and small crossroad communities in eastern Markham and north Pickering in the name of an airport.

Plans for a regional airport and two massive greenspaces on federal lands north of Hwy. 7 are now being discussed.

## The Regional Municipality of York EXPROPRIATIONS ACT NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL TO EXPROPRIATE LAND

IN THE MATTER OF an application by The Regional Municipality of York for approval to expropriate lands and interest in lands described in Schedules "A", "B" and "C" hereto, in the Towns of Aurora and Whitchurch-Stouffville in The Regional Municipality of York, for the purposes of:

- the widening and reconstruction of St. John's Sideroad (YR 26) from Yonge Street (YR 1) to Bayview Avenue (YR 34) in the Town of Aurora, to a basic right-of-way width of 36.0 metres with additional widenings at cuts, fills, water course crossings and intersections, to provide a basic four lane road with left-turn and right-turn lanes at key intersections;
- the widening and reconstruction of St. John's Sideroad (YR 26) from Bayview Avenue (YR 34) to Woodbine Avenue (YR 8) in the Towns of Aurora and Whitchurch-Stouffville to a basic right-of-way width of 36.0 metres to provide a basic two-lane road to Regional standards with left-turn and right-turn lanes at key intersections;
- adjustments to existing traffic control signals and associated illumination to accommodate the proposed revisions to the road layout at the intersections of St. John's Sideroad (YR 26) with Yonge Street (YR 1), Industrial Parkway, Bayview Avenue (YR 34) and Leslie Street (YR 12); and
- the provision of an underground conduit system and illumination at the intersections of St. John's Sideroad (YR 26) with Pinnacle Trail/John West Way, Trent Street/Earl Stewart Drive and Woodbine Avenue (YR 8).

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that application has been made for approval to expropriate lands and interest in lands described in Schedules "A", "B" and "C" hereto. Any owner of lands in respect of which notice is given who desires an inquiry into whether the taking of such land is fair, sound and reasonably necessary in the achievement of the objectives of the expropriating authority shall so notify the authority in writing.

- in the case of a registered owner, served personally or by registered mail within thirty days after the registered owner is served with the notice, or, when the registered owner is served by publication, within thirty days after the first publication of the notice;
- in the case of an owner who is not a registered owner, within thirty days after the first publication of the notice.

The approving authority is:

The Council of The Regional Municipality of York  
17250 Yonge Street  
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

The Regional Municipality of York  
Denis Kelly  
Regional Clerk  
17250 Yonge Street  
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

This notice first published on the 12th day of December, 2002.

### SCHEDULE "A"

An estate in fee simple in the land described as follows:  
Part of Lot 86, Concession 1, in the Town of Aurora in The Regional Municipality of York, designated as Part 2 on a Plan deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Land Titles Division of York Region as No. 65R-25217.

### SCHEDULE "B"

An estate in fee simple in the land described as follows:  
Lands in the Town of Aurora in The Regional Municipality of York, being composed of those lands designated as Parts on Plans deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of York Region more particularly described as follows:

Part of Lot	Concession	Part(s)	Plan
86	1	3	65R-14410
86	1	3 and 4	65R-25218

### SCHEDULE "C"

TEMPORARY EASEMENT  
A temporary easement or rights in the nature of a temporary easement expiring on December 31, 2005, in, under, over, along and upon the following lands for the purpose of entering upon and occupying the lands with all necessary machinery, equipment and material required for or in connection with grading:

Part of Lot 85, Concession 1, in the Town of Aurora in The Regional Municipality of York, designated as Part 1 on a Plan deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Land Titles Division of York Region as No. 65R-25397.



## Kids Are Expensive

Just ask an Easter Seals family.

Forget the latest clothes, the best video games, and pricey dance lessons.

Imagine if your everyday need included expensive equipment and support. The Easter Seal Society, Ontario, is all about helping kids with physical disabilities.

Motorized chairs reach their highest level of personal independence.

But we need crutches, your help to \$220 make this happen. In 2001, we helped families by Van Lift funding over \$1.5 million for highly specialized equipment alone.

For kids with physical disabilities, freedom doesn't come cheap, but you can't really put a price on that.

**easter seal society**  
SUCCEED

Please call 1-800-668-6252 or visit [www.easterseals.org](http://www.easterseals.org) to make a donation today.

This message brought to you as a community service of the Economist & Sun/Tribune

**STARTS 10:00 A.M. DEC. 26/02**

**QUAN BOXING WEEK BLOWOUT QUAN**

Since 1969 Since 1969

WE WILL NOT BE UNDERSOLD "YOU FIND ANY ADVERTISED ITEM AT A LOWER PRICE, QUAN'S WILL BEAT IT!"

TV APPLIANCES MANY IN-STORE SPECIALS! TV APPLIANCES

**ELECTRONICS**

<p><b>TOSHIBA 27" T.V.</b></p> <p>• Backstrip II Picture Tube • Double Baffle Cabinet Design • 42 Key Glow Universal Remote • 3 Line Digital Comb Filter • 500 Lines Horizontal Resolution • 2 Video Inputs</p> <p><b>\$419<sup>00</sup></b></p>	<p><b>TOSHIBA 32" T.V.</b></p> <p>• FST Black Picture Tube • Front Surround Sound • MTS/SAP • 10 Watt Audio Output • 3 Line Digital Comb Filter • Vertical Colour Correction • 750 Lines Horizontal Resolution • 12 Audio Video Inputs • 11 Audio Video Output</p> <p><b>\$785<sup>00</sup></b></p>	<p><b>TOSHIBA 13" T.V.</b></p> <p>with remote</p> <p><b>\$139<sup>00</sup></b></p> <p><b>HITACHI DVD</b></p> <p>DVD/CD/VCD • Dolby AC-3/DTS Compatible</p> <p><b>\$149<sup>00</sup></b></p>
<p><b>TOSHIBA CINEMA SERIES HD 53" PROJECTION T.V.</b></p> <p>• Dual Tuner P.I.P. • MultiWindow (9) P.I.P. • ISDCpro 1080i/540p HD Compatible Display • Vertical Compression Scanning (HDTV/DVD) • Letterbox Mode Raster Shift • 3.2 PullDown Detection &amp; Compensation • WDTM™ By SPS™ • Surround Sound</p> <p><b>\$2695<sup>00</sup></b></p>	<p><b>HITACHI 43" Dual Tuner PIP Projection TV</b></p> <p>• 650 Lines Resolution • 5 Element Lens System • 9 Point Digital Conversion • Theatre Modes (Movies/Sports/News/Music) • Perfect Picture™ • AV Input 3 Rear, 1 Front • AV Output 11 rear</p> <p><b>\$1495<sup>00</sup></b></p>	<p><b>TOSHIBA 16:9 THEATERWIDE HD 43" T.V.</b></p> <p>• Short/Wing Advanced Lens Technology • 3.2 PullDown Detection and Compensation • TheatreWide Modes (480i/480p/1080i input) • SPS™ 3D Surround Sound • P.I.P. Audio Input • 30 Watt Audio Output • 3D V.C. Digital Comb Filter • CableClear™ Digital Video Noise Reduction • 1600 Lines Horizontal Resolution</p> <p><b>\$2645<sup>00</sup></b></p>
<p><b>TOSHIBA 27" T.V.</b></p> <p>• FST Pure™ Flat Picture Tube (Made in Japan) • Front Surround Sound • MTS/SAP • Sub-Bass Sound System • 10 Watt Audio Output • 700 Lines Horizontal Resolution • 12 S Video Inputs</p> <p><b>\$680<sup>00</sup></b></p>	<p><b>TOSHIBA 36" TV</b></p> <p>• FST Black Picture Tube • 32 Key Glow Universal Remote Control • Front Surround Sound • MTS/SAP • 3 Line Digital Comb Filter 800 Lines Horizontal Resolution • Front Terminals • 5 Video Input • 12-11 Audio Video Inputs • 11 Audio Video Output • Colorstream™ Component Video Inputs</p> <p><b>\$1175<sup>00</sup></b></p>	<p><b>TOSHIBA COLORSTREAM™ HD 43" T.V.</b></p> <p>• Dual Tuner Double/MultiWindow (9) P.I.P. • ISDC Pro 1081i/540p HD Compatible Display • Vertical Compression H.V Scanning Letterbox • Letterbox Mode Raster Shift • 3.2 PullDown Detection • Wide Band Video Amplifier • SPS™ 3D Sound • 3 Watt Audio Output</p> <p><b>\$1999<sup>00</sup></b></p>

**APPLIANCES**

<p><b>LG Stainless Steel Over The Range Microwave oven</b></p> <p>• 1.9 Cu. Ft. 1050W • 300 CFM • 7 Digit VFD Scrolling Display • Sensor Touch Cook &amp; Reheat</p> <p><b>\$559<sup>00</sup></b></p>	<p><b>WASHER</b></p> <p>• Extra Large Capacity • 2 Wash/Spin Speeds • 3 Wash/Rinse Temperatures • Water Level Control</p> <p><b>\$441<sup>00</sup></b></p>	<p><b>LG Frost Free Fridge</b></p> <p>• 18 Cu. Ft. • Adjustable Glass Shelves • Spill Proof Shelves • Adjustable Door Shelves</p> <p><b>\$635<sup>00</sup></b></p>	<p><b>LG COMPACT FRIDGE</b></p> <p>• 3.3 Cu. Ft. • 32.8" H x 18.5" W • Reversible Door • 2 Wire Shelves</p> <p><b>\$149<sup>00</sup></b></p>
<p><b>Range Self Clean Convection</b></p> <p>• Convection Oven • Class Top • Warm Zone</p> <p><b>\$1025.00</b> Manufacturers Rebate <b>\$71.75</b></p> <p><b>\$953<sup>25</sup></b></p>	<p><b>Frost Free Fridge</b></p> <p>• 12 Cu. Ft. • Adjustable Shelves • Almond Only</p> <p><b>\$475<sup>00</sup></b></p>	<p><b>LG Full Size Over The Range Microwave Oven</b></p> <p>• 1.5 Cu. Ft. • 1000W • Stoppable Turntable System • Auto Cook &amp; auto Defrost</p> <p><b>\$299<sup>00</sup></b> (Stack On)</p>	<p><b>Super Capacity Washer</b></p> <p>• 3.2 Cu. Ft. • Gentle power Agitator • 10 Cycles • Wash/Rinse Temperature Option</p> <p><b>\$485<sup>00</sup></b></p>
<p><b>Frigidaire Tumble Action Washer</b></p> <p>• Stainless Steel Wash • 12 Cycles • Short Wash Cycle • Extra Rinse/Spin Speed</p> <p><b>\$875<sup>00</sup></b></p>	<p><b>Super Capacity Dryer</b></p> <p>• 7.0 Cu. Ft. • 4 temperatures • End Of Cycle Signal • Auto Wrinkle Free Cycle</p> <p><b>\$410.00</b> Manufacturers Rebate <b>\$28.70</b></p> <p><b>\$381<sup>30</sup></b></p>	<p><b>Whirlpool DUAL WASHER</b></p> <p>• Largest Front Load Washer In The Industry • 68% Less Water Use</p> <p><b>\$1295<sup>00</sup></b></p>	<p><b>ALL STAINLESS APPLIANCES PRICED TO SELL!!</b></p>

**QUAN TV APPLIANCES LTD.**

4421 HWY. 7 E. UNIONVILLE (905) 477-3737    191 KING ST. W. OSHAWA (905) 725-3600    2104 HWY. 7 CONCORD (416) 226-1001    1837 LANSDOWNE ST. W. PETERBOROUGH (705) 743-3883    800 DUNDAS ST. E. MISSISSAUGUA (905) 272-6778

If we only had a dime for every time someone with a disability has been told they can't do something. We'd have to help live independently.

**York Region 853-0111**

**Because what you really wanted was to get away.**

BOOK BY JANUARY 2, 2003 TO GET THESE GREAT DEALS

SERVICE FROM THE TORONTO PEARSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

<b>\$169</b> ONE WAY TO... FROM CALGARY/EDMONTON	<b>\$199</b> ONE WAY TO... FROM ABBOTSFORD/KELOWNA	<b>\$199</b> ONE WAY TO... FROM VANCOUVER
<b>\$219</b> ONE WAY TO... FROM COMOX/PRINCE GEORGE	<b>\$219</b> ONE WAY TO... FROM FORT McMURRAY/GRANDE PRAIRIE	<b>\$219</b> ONE WAY TO... FROM VICTORIA

\*Seats at these fares are limited and may not be available on all flights. New bookings only. Fares slightly higher on other days. Taxes, fees and surcharges are extra where applicable. 100% non-refundable. Offer combinable with other fares. 7 day advance booking required.

**Budget** \$19.95 First Day Rate on All Sub-Compact through Full Size car rentals.

Reservations must be confirmed between December 24, 2002 and need to be held between January 1 and March 31, 2003. Current market booking rates need to be provided at time of rental. 18 normal rental agreement with early cancellation charges, taxes, fees and including charges are extra. Phone 1 800 238-2828 and visit the Budget Group Inc. website [www.budget.com](http://www.budget.com)

**westjet.com**

CALL YOUR TRAVEL AGENT, BOOK ONLINE OR CALL WESTJET AT 1.800.538.5666

**WESTJET**  
Just fly.

No fuel surcharge.

Free snacks and drinks.

The lowest price is always at westjet.com

Boeing 737 all-jet service.