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# Greenbelt legislative hearings begin this month

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greenbelt planning," Mr. Donnelly said.

Ontario's draft greenbelt plan proposes to protect some of the Humber River system in Vaughan and some, though not most, of the city's remaining farms and rural land.

But the region heard from landowners who want an area between Teston and Kirby roads removed from the greenbelt, then adopted the city's even tougher position that only lands already in public hands or Vaughan's

natural heritage system should be protected.

Most of the Vaughan land designated "protected countryside" in the greenbelt plan has access to significant infrastructure for development, York planning commissioner Bryan Tuckey said last week.

**'LIMIT GROWTH NEEDS'**

Vaughan Mayor Michael Di Biase has said the greenbelt, as written, "would limit the city's future growth needs".

In July, the region seemed willing to accept the province's position that the long-planned Bradford

Bypass and extensions of Hwy. 427 to Barrie and Hwy. 404 to Lake Simcoe "are not immediate priorities", provided 404 was built to Ravenshoe Road in Georgina and 427 to the CN intermodal hub at Rutherford Road in Vaughan.

The region is now saying the proposed highways and sewers should be in the greenbelt plan so people will know what infrastructure may be required for growth, Mr. Tuckey said.

"If it's not a priority for 30 years, that's the province's prerogative."

The province will hold four days of legislative hear-

ings on the greenbelt plan, the first scheduled for Jan. 31 in Markham. It hopes to pass a greenbelt law by March 9, when a moratorium on development approvals expires.

The province may also release a draft growth plan early in 2005 but, as of last week, had no scheduled date for completing growth legislation.

The region has consistently argued the growth plan is needed before the greenbelt, Mr. Tuckey said.

"All we're saying is they should come out at the same time."

# CHATS wants meeting with MPPs

From page 1.

or not. I was one of the few that will remain employed with CHATS due to seniority, but for how long?" she wrote.

Gloria Smith of Aurora wrote to Mr. Smitherman protesting the move.

"I, for one, have grave concerns with a system that is resulting in the elimination of not-for-profit home care providers and for a process that is based on price, rather than on the establishment of benchmarks for quality of care," Ms Smith wrote.

but as far as we're concerned, we want to work with the government. If we're not on the political radar screen, it will be even more difficult."

**'We keep getting calls from clients and families expressing how concerned they are with the government's policies'**

Deborah Egan  
CHATS executive director

health networks."

Staff have developed a wait-and-see attitude.

"Those with layoff notices are employer shopping" Ms Egan said. "There have been very few resignations. That's an indication that people are taking their time. They want to make sure they're making the right move."

Morale remains solid, she said. "I think people were distracted by other things before the holidays," Ms Egan said. "Things will probably begin to get more difficult in the new year when reality sets in."

Each of (the MPPs) have told us they are trying to talk to the health minister. Other than that, we've received little feedback," Ms Egan said.

She has requested meetings with the MPPs to develop a survival strategy prior to March 31, when the current contract expires.

"We hope to meet soon," she said. "We know it's going to be difficult to change the contract,

With the prospect of losing most of its staff and having to wait up to four years until the next tender, Ms Egan is investigating avenues to remain solvent and viable.

"We're looking at every option to stay connected with the community," she said.

"We're developing an integrated service model that would continue to allow us to offer home care services on a subsidized basis through the local integrated

She said her organization is buoyed by the support of constituents.

"We keep getting calls from clients and families expressing how concerned they are with the government's policies," she said.

"We are trying to stay optimistic that someone, somewhere will recognize the value of a local, not-for-profit home care organization and what we have to offer the community."

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