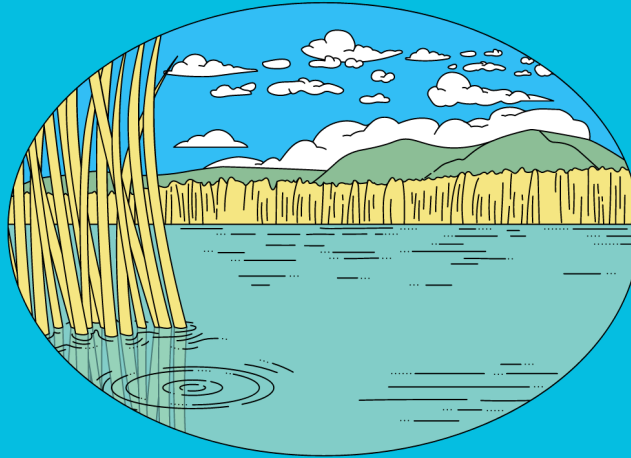




environmental  
defence

# Protect Port Perry's Wetland



## Say No to the MZO

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# Your Voice Matters

Thank you for your interest in protecting Lake Scugog and Port Perry's wetlands. When it comes to keeping our waterways healthy, the more of us that speak up, the better!

So, what can we do?

One of the most powerful actions we can take is to share our concerns with our councillors, letting them know we want them to prioritize the health of our environment and community.

Your voice as a constituent matters. So, feel free to adapt and use the points in this kit to communicate why taking action to protect Lake Scugog and Port Perry's wetlands is critical to you, what makes *you* care, and why.

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## Background

### Avenu Properties Development

Avenu Properties is proposing to develop on a site located east of Simcoe Street, south of Castle Harbour Drive, and abutting Cawkers Creek.<sup>1</sup>

- On top of a significant wetland
- On the shores of Lake Scugog, including potentially into the lake itself
- Including:
  - A roadway right through the wetland
  - Up to 660 paved parking spots
  - A private communal wastewater facility

Avenu asked the Township of Scugog to request a \*Minister's Zoning Order (MZO) from the provincial Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

- The request includes land use, density, height and how far the development is required to be from structures or environmental features that need protection.
- In June, Council referred the MZO request to staff for review<sup>2</sup>
- Staff is now reviewing:
  - The MZO process
  - What the Township's role and authority would be within it
  - Merits of keeping the planning process at the municipal and regional level, thus saying "no" to Avenu's MZO request (non-MZO planning process).

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## \*What's an MZO?

The non-MZO planning process includes an important compliance check with other land use plans, like policies that protect natural features. Also, the public gets to weigh in before their municipal council makes a final decision.

The MZO overrides the typical planning process by allowing the provincial Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to rezone the land the developer wants to build on, bypassing things like local zoning and environmental policies and by-laws, to speed up development projects.

Proper consultation and information sharing with First Nations treaty and rights holders is less likely to take place. Public consultation is also not required before an MZO is applied.

**An MZO is intended for use in cases of extraordinary urgency. When it's invoked, it overrides local planning authority, doesn't require expert analysis or public input, and includes no chance of appeal.**

That means decision-making power would rest with the Ontario government—a government that has repeatedly eroded environmental protections, like dismantling the wetland evaluation system and removing the Conservation Authorities ability to veto an MZO, prioritizing the interests of wealthy developers over healthy, sustainable communities.<sup>3, 4, 5, 6</sup>

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## What's at risk for Lake Scugog and the Wetland?

The wetland provides essential natural services, like cleaning the water, helping prevent flooding in the community and providing critical habitat for wildlife - plants, bugs, fish, birds, people, and more!

This development threatens to destroy the sensitive wetland and add to the burdens that Lake Scugog carries. These include: increased polluted runoff, shoreline erosion and increased risk of flooding. This development will make all of these issues worse.

With an MZO, there is no criteria for technical competency. More study is needed on the impacts to the health of the lake and the feasibility of the project, including the private communal wastewater facility. For example, what infrastructure and water volumes the site can bear, how long repairs would take if/when the facility malfunctions, and what would happen to wastewater during periods of shutdown, and who will pay infrastructure costs.<sup>7</sup>

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## Happening Soon

**What:** Planning and Community Affairs Committee meeting

**When:** Monday, 16 September 2024 @ 6:30 PM, doors open 6:00 PM (first come, first served seating)

**Where:** Scugog Community Recreation Centre, Community Hall, 1655 Reach Street, Port Perry ON

At this meeting, planning and development staff, who were asked to study the proposal, will report back to council. Any comments and questions from the public will be considered and included in the report.

On September 12th, the Township will post a link to the report in the committee agenda. Go to this link: <https://www.scugog.ca/.../council-committee-calendar.aspx>, click on the September 16 "Planning and Community Affairs" meeting and download the pdf agenda.

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## Action Opportunity

### Apply to Speak

The deadline is Tuesday September 10th, before 4:30 pm. First-come, first-serve sign-ups.

To address the Committee on September 16th, submit a delegation request to the Office of the Township Clerk at [clerks@scugog.ca](mailto:clerks@scugog.ca) with your full name and address. Include the agenda item you will be speaking on [CR-2024-153]. Clerk's department: 905-985-7346.

Or, go to

<https://www.scugog.ca/council-and-administration/mayor-and-council/speaking-before-council/> and fill in the [Delegation Request Form](#).

You will be asked for the general nature of your deputation and whether you will be attending virtually or in person and will receive a confirmation in writing.

**Note:** If you are representing a group, your group gets only one delegation spot. Also, if you've addressed Council on the same topic within 6 months, you may not be permitted to speak again.

## Send a Written Submission

Address your submission letter to the Mayor and Members of Council. It will be included in the Council agenda and reviewed.

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## Deputation Guide

- You have a short time to speak to Council - 3- 5 minutes at the beginning of the committee meeting.
- Do some research on the topic. What are other community members saying? Where do committee members stand on the issue?
- Consider the main points you'd like to make - 1 to 3 perhaps. What is your experience? Do you have any expertise? Do you have a compelling point, example or an anecdote to share?
- Make sure what you have to say is clear and understandable. Write it down. Practice with a friend or family member.
- Send a copy to your councillor beforehand and consider following-up afterwards!
- Be sure to check for any meeting changes the night before, just in case.
- Arrive in good time and check for your name in the speaking order on the deputation list. Give a written copy of your deputation and any supporting materials to the clerk if you wish.
- As you deliver your deputation try to pace yourself, speak clearly and respectfully. Consider smiling and making eye contact!
- Be prepared for questions and to answer as best and as succinctly as you can. If you do not know, offer to follow-up afterwards.
- You can stay for the whole meeting if you'd like or leave once you've given your deputation.

Outline:

- Thank the chair and council.
  - Introduce yourself or your group. Include what ward you're in if you'd like.
  - Share your concerns and how this affects you and your community.
  - Make a clear ask.
  - Say thank you again and that you'll be following the outcome.
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## Talking Points

Feel free to adapt and make these your own. It's your words as a constituent that count!

**Ask Council to say “no” to Avenu’s request for a Minister’s Zoning Order (MZO) from the provincial Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.** Because:

1. Southern Ontario has already lost 72 per cent of its original wetlands. We can't afford to lose Port Perry's too. **A sensitive wetland is simply the wrong place to build the homes Port Perry needs.**
2. **Lake Scugog, its shoreline, and the outlet of Cawkers Creek are vulnerable to impacts from the development.** They are already overburdened by phosphorus, nitrogen, chlorides and other contaminants. Paving over any part of this significant wetland will increase this contaminated runoff.
3. **Keeping the lake healthy is important for all the life that depends on it, and for the community.** The lake, watershed and wetland provide essential benefits like water filtration and flood control. These services will be damaged by the development, including by the proposed roadway and parking, which will increase pavement and polluted runoff.
4. **We need completed, science-based environmental studies before requesting an MZO.** For example, to establish the extent of Environmental Protection Zones, wetland boundaries, understand soil stability and the sites carrying capacity for waste and stormwater management infrastructure.<sup>7,8</sup>
5. **If Council retains control of the planning process, they have opportunities to ensure sound development decisions.** Council can require that Avenu file the proper Official Plan Amendment applications with the Region and Township.

6. **Extensive and meaningful consultation as well as information sharing with Williams Treaties First Nations**, as stewards of the land, treaty and rights holders, is needed before requesting an MZO.<sup>6</sup>
  
  7. For the first time, the Township and Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation have been asked to consider a municipal development without the expertise and input of Kawartha Conservation. **Without the conservation areas technical reviews, the level of due diligence is even more important.**<sup>6</sup>
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## List of Contacts

Title	Name	Email	Phone
Mayor	Wilma Wotten	wwotten@scugog.ca	905-809-1049
Regional Councillor	Ian McDougall	imcdougall@scugog.ca	905-809-7347
Ward 1 Councillor	David Le Roy	dleroy@scugog.ca	905-809-6683
Ward 2 Councillor	Janna Guido	jguido@scugog.ca	905-809-7345
Ward 3 Councillor	Robert Rock	rrock@scugog.ca	905-260-4725
Ward 4 Councillor	Harold Wright	hwright@scugog.ca	905-213-6226
Ward 5 Councillor	Terry Coyne	tcoyne@scugog.ca	905-213-0311
Director of Development Services	Kevin Heritage	<a href="mailto:Kheritage@scugog.ca">Kheritage@scugog.ca</a>	
Manager of Planning	Valerie Hendry	<a href="mailto:Vhendry@scugog.ca">Vhendry@scugog.ca</a>	

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## Have Questions? Need Support?

Reach out to [engagement@environmentaldefence.ca](mailto:engagement@environmentaldefence.ca)

Sign-up for Environmental Defence's newsletter and water updates at the bottom of the page here: [Safeguarding Canada's Freshwater - Environmental Defence](#)

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## References and Resources

1. Avenu proposal, project overview and public documents:  
<https://my.scugog.ca/avenudevelopment>.
2. June Council Meeting notes:  
<https://pub-scugog.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=14464>
3. [We Can't Afford to Lose Any More Wetlands to Sprawl - Environmental Defence](#)
4. [What's an MZO? Ontario's zoning power move, explained | The Narwhal](#)
5. [The Path of Least Resistance - Picton Gazette](#)
6. Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation posts:  
<https://www.facebook.com/share/eRzqx3d7vjMetESy/>
7. [Scugog Lake Stewards](#)
8. [Letter: No MZO for the shoreline of Lake Scugog](#)
9. [Wetlands | Ontario Nature | Conservation](#)
10. [Investing in the Future: The Economic Case for Natural Infrastructure in Ontario](#)