



January 21, 2009

Mr. Bill Lautenbach, MCIP, RPP
Acting General Manager
Growth and Development Department
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Dear Mr. Lautenbach:

RE: DRAFT TOPSOIL REMOVAL BY-LAW

On behalf of the City of Greater Sudbury's Agriculture and Topsoil Advisory Panel, I am pleased to provide you with this letter of general support for the draft Topsoil By-law, which will be presented to the City's Priorities Committee on January 21, 2009.

The regulation of topsoil removal activities is a longstanding issue in Greater Sudbury. For many years, members of the Agriculture and Topsoil Advisory Panel have advocated for the creation of a Topsoil Removal By-law that would balance market demand for topsoil with the need to better protect our agricultural land resources. This matter was considered by previous Regional and Local Councils. Unfortunately, most past Councils did not approve a Topsoil Removal By-law. The Panel appreciates Council's decision to provide funding as part of last year's budget to move this important matter further.

In November 2008 and January 2009, the Agriculture and Topsoil Advisory Panel met with City Staff to discuss the key elements of the draft Topsoil By-law. At these meetings, the Panel indicated to City Staff that they support the proposal to prohibit any further topsoil removal activities in the Agricultural Reserve lands. The Panel also indicated that they support the proposal to continue to allow topsoil removal activities in the Rural Area, subject to a permitting process that minimizes the impacts of topsoil removal activities (both on neighbours and the natural environment) and ensures that stripped lands are rehabilitated. The Panel understands that the draft Topsoil By-law proposed by City Staff would have a very small effect on the price of topsoil (e.g. 2 percent cost increase per cubic metre of topsoil).

We thank you for this opportunity to comment on some of the key elements of the draft Topsoil By-law and look forward to participating in the upcoming public consultation process.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Soenens'.

Mike Soenens, Chair
Agriculture and Topsoil Advisory Panel

MS/jl

cc. Panel members