



Information and Privacy  
Commissioner of Ontario

Commissaire à l'information et à la  
protection de la vie privée de l'Ontario

May 21, 2024

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

Marit Stiles  
Leader of the Official Opposition  
Room 381, Queen's Park,  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A5

Dear MPP Stiles,

Thank you for your letter expressing concerns about records relating to changes to the Greenbelt Plan and potential non-compliance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA).

Currently, my office has nineteen (19) active appeal files concerning requests for records related to the Greenbelt, many of which deal with the issues raised in your letter and the observations made in the [Auditor General's Special Report on Changes to the Greenbelt](#).

The access to information appeal processes under FIPPA provide my office with a broad range of powers to examine the underlying evidence and make factual findings addressing these issues. During the inquiry stage of an appeal, my office has the authority to examine any record under appeal and may order institutions to conduct additional searches of records, as well as other relevant documents. If required during an inquiry, the IPC may also summon witnesses to provide testimony under oath to ensure that we gather complete and accurate information. At the end of the inquiry process, my office may issue binding orders to institutions to disclose requested information and any decisions, findings, and orders we issue as part of these appeals will be made publicly available in due course.

By contrast, we do not have a similar breadth of powers or authorities when it comes to conducting investigations under the current FIPPA. Initiating a parallel investigation into these same matters, when we are already examining them through these nineteen ongoing appeal files, would be a less effective means of addressing these issues and a redundant use of our limited resources.

Upon conclusion of the appeals process, my office plans to publish a special report consolidating our findings and providing a comprehensive summary of our conclusions and insights into the access to information and record keeping issues relating to changes to the Greenbelt.



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Transparency in government actions and decisions is a fundamental principle that underpins the public's trust in government. Ensuring such actions are open to external scrutiny is essential to maintaining this trust and upholding the values that guide our work at the IPC.

We appreciate your commitment to ensuring that government actions are conducted in a manner consistent with FIPPA and related legislation. My office takes these matters seriously and is committed to a thorough, fair, and impartial examination of the issues arising from these various appeals, your letter and the Auditor General's Report.

In the interests of transparency, this letter will be publicly posted on my office's website.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patricia Kosseim". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end.

Patricia Kosseim  
Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario