



PLACES TO GROW

BETTER CHOICES. BRIGHTER FUTURE.

Planning for Growth

Understanding the Draft Growth Plan
for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

Did You Know?



▶ Almost **90%** of Ontario's growth is occurring in the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

▶ Clogged and inefficient border crossings cost the economy more than **\$5 billion** a year.



▶ Each kilometre walked per day reduces the likelihood of becoming obese by **5%**.

▶ Rush hour is now **13 hours** long.



▶ More than **154,000 acres*** in this area have been developed since 1993. That's almost the same size as the City of Toronto.

If We Don't Plan for Growth:



▶ Another **247,000 acres*** of greenfields and farmlands would be paved over – that's an area about twice the size of Toronto.

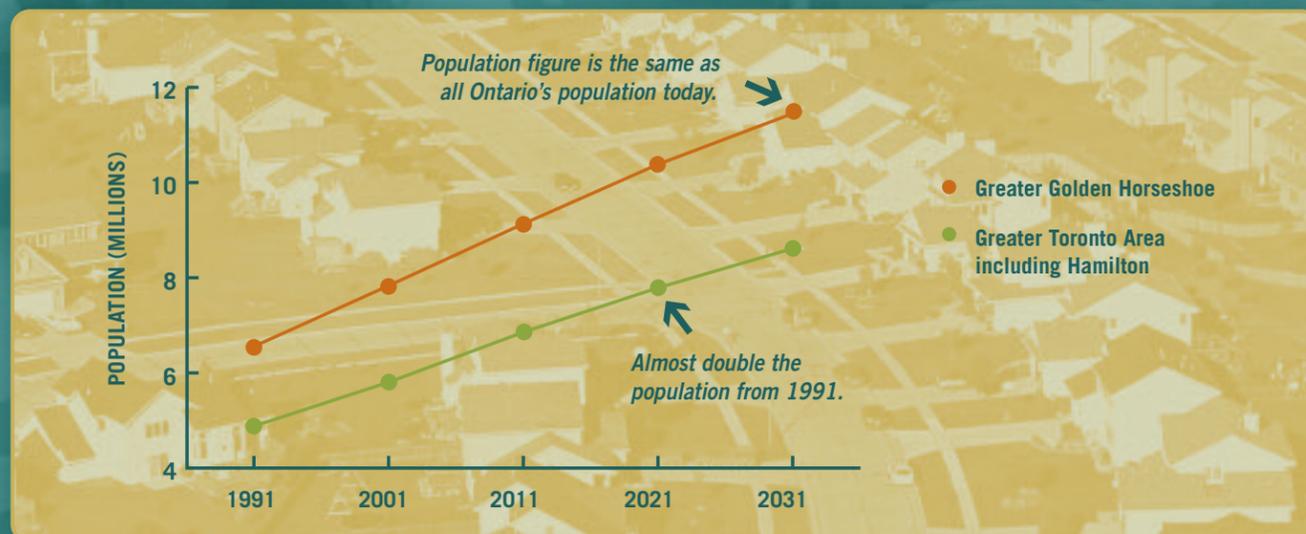
▶ Gridlock will worsen; commute times may increase by as much as **45 per cent**. For example – getting from Hamilton to Toronto today takes 60-90 minutes. In 30 years the same trip could take more than 2 hours.



▶ Emissions from vehicles may increase by up to **42 per cent**.

* 1 acre = 0.405 hectare

Population Growth



SPRAWL & GRIDLOCK:

Why we Need to Plan for Growth

The Greater Golden Horseshoe is the fastest growing metropolitan area in Canada and one of the fastest in all of North America.

People from other parts of Canada and the world are drawn here because of our enviable quality of life. Within the next 30 years, it is expected that 3.7 million more people will call this region home.

This growth is a positive thing for the region. It can improve the quality of life in our communities and contribute to their prosperity and diversity. It can help maintain our standard of living. It can ensure we have the range of skilled workers necessary to continue to attract new investments and provide new opportunities.

Growth, however, comes with its challenges. For the past decade, the previous provincial role in long-term planning has been limited. Development has been allowed to happen in a haphazard way. And now the infrastructure put in place during the 1960s, 70s and 80s has been outgrown.

Transit throughout the region is disconnected and underdeveloped. Our highways are clogged. Jobs have gotten farther away from where people live, increasing commute times.

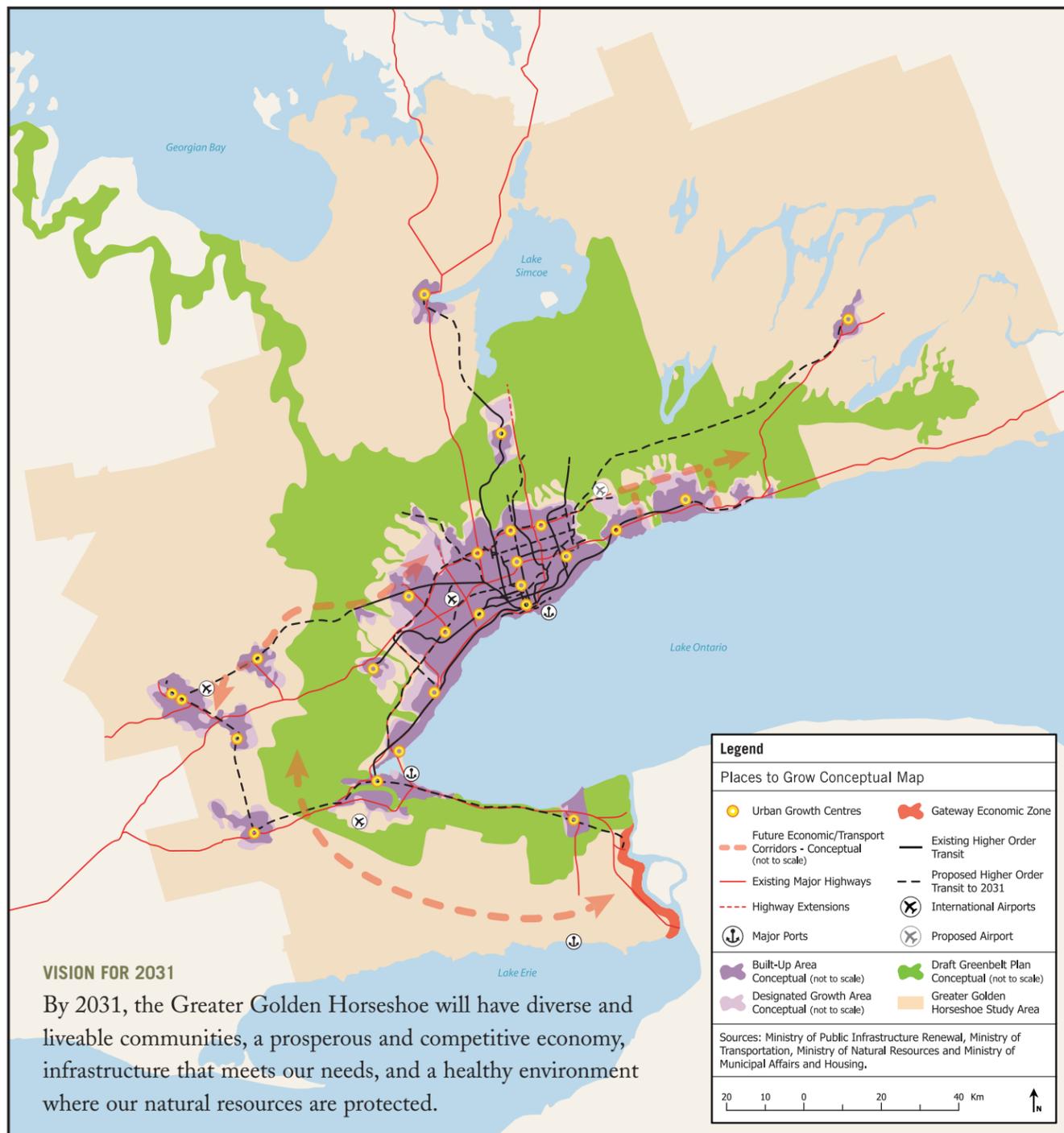
Effective planning for growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe will create stronger, more liveable communities, enhance our economy and protect our natural environment. By planning strategically today, and working together, we can ensure a better future for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.





PROSPERITY & HEALTH:

How We are Planning for Growth



VISION FOR 2031

By 2031, the Greater Golden Horseshoe will have diverse and liveable communities, a prosperous and competitive economy, infrastructure that meets our needs, and a healthy environment where our natural resources are protected.



We want communities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe to be prosperous, healthy and complete. We want them to be places where people can live, work and play. Places where there is easy access to transit, a broad range of housing and jobs and access to health, education and recreational facilities.

To achieve this vision, the Ontario government is developing a growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe to identify where and how the region should grow and what features should be protected over the next 30 years.

THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE DRAFT GROWTH PLAN PROMOTES STRATEGIES THAT:

- Encourage better use of our lands by directing growth to where it can be best accommodated and away from the lands that provide our food, water and recreation
- Promote a broad range of housing choices and employment opportunities
- Maximize the value of public investments in infrastructure, to provide better transit services, quicker movement of our goods, and clean, safe water

How it Works



- Provincial growth plan sets broad policies and specific targets.
- Region, county and municipal official plans meet the specific needs of their area but must conform to the provincial growth plan.

The growth plan will provide clear direction on future development in the entire Greater Golden Horseshoe. It will also allow for local priorities and needs to be addressed. This will be achieved through the further development of sub-area growth strategies.

The Simcoe Example

The communities in the sub-area north of the proposed Greenbelt, including Simcoe County and the City of Barrie, are experiencing rapid growth pressures. Yet many of their inland water systems are already strained. The province and municipalities have begun working together to develop long-term, balanced solutions to ensure that these communities can grow sustainably. This approach of partnership and cooperation will be applied to ensure that sub-area growth strategies address local and regional needs.



GETTING IT RIGHT:

Where and How to Grow

INFORMING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAFT GROWTH PLAN

In order to adequately plan for growth, we need to understand the population and employment trends, the availability of our land base and the impact that growth policies can have on how our communities grow.

The Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal released three technical papers to provide key information on:

- 1 Growth Outlook for the Greater Golden Horseshoe
- 2 Application of a Land-Use Intensification Target for the Greater Golden Horseshoe
- 3 A Current Assessment of Gross Land Supply in the Greater Golden Horseshoe

All three technical papers are available on the Ministry website at www.pir.gov.on.ca

Creating Complete and Compact Communities

Complete, compact communities provide people with more opportunities to work, shop and access services close to where they live. More efficient and financially sustainable public transit systems can be created. Dependency on the automobile is reduced.

The Greater Golden Horseshoe has enough land to support future growth for a generation – more than 350,000 acres are designated for future growth. But we need to build in a smarter, more efficient way. More efficient and financially sustainable public transit systems can be created. Dependency on the automobile is reduced.

Here are some of the ways we can build more compact communities:

Greyfields are former and under-used retail developments. They are often located along key transportation routes and are good targets for intensification.

Brownfields may include vacant, underused or abandoned industrial buildings. They can be targets for industrial, commercial or residential re-use.

Use corridors to encourage higher densities that will support public transit and create a “main street” feel.



Former industrial building converted to office use, central Toronto.

Regenerate areas with under-used infrastructure. It makes sense to get more use from existing infrastructure to maximize the value of the investments we have already made.

Promote cultural, institutional, recreational and entertainment opportunities in urban centres to attract new jobs.

“Land-use and transportation policies have a direct bearing on public health in Ontario.” Ontario College of Family Physicians, 2005.



INTENSIFICATION AND COMPACT DEVELOPMENT

Promoting intensification and compact development is key to curbing urban sprawl in the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

This means making more efficient use of land by accommodating new growth within existing built-up areas.

More intense forms of development can be achieved without dramatic change to the character and scale of the community. Intensification can be achieved in a variety of ways including:

- Modest increases to building heights, with three to five stories along main streets
- Transit-friendly industrial parks and employment zones

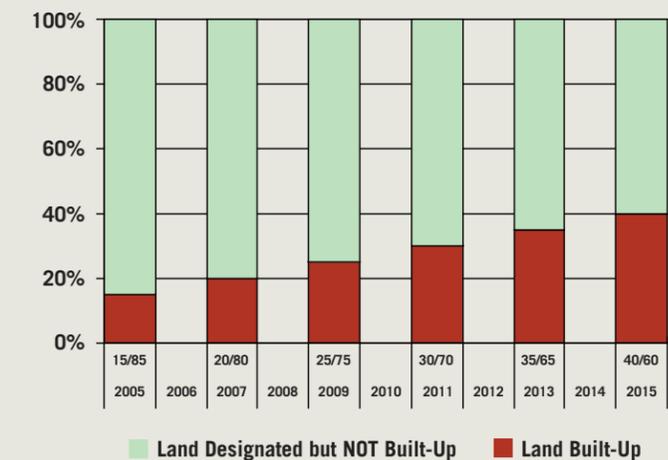
- A greater variety of multi-unit housing types, such as townhouses, stacked townhouses, duplexes and apartments
- Rehabilitation of abandoned buildings
- Less expansive surface parking lots

Optimizing the use of existing infrastructure helps maximize the value of public investments and supports more compact, vibrant communities.

In the Greater Toronto Area, for example, it has been estimated that more than 20 per cent of infrastructure capital costs could be saved over the next 25 years by moving from lower density development to a more compact and efficient form.

More Intensive Land Use
Regional governments will be asked to have 40 out of every 100 of their new residential units built in an existing urban area.
Regional governments will work with local municipalities to gradually achieve the 40% target by 2015.

Example of How to Apply the 40% Intensification Target





Urban Growth Centres and Intensification Corridors

Urban Growth Centres are typically main commercial downtown areas in cities. They draw people and businesses because of their variety, housing choice, walkability and employment opportunities. These cities may be different sizes and at different stages of development, but they can all accommodate more growth without impacting the community's sense of place.

URBAN GROWTH CENTRES AND INTENSIFICATION CORRIDORS

The importance of vital downtown cores is not a new concept. Most of the cities and towns in the Greater Golden Horseshoe were built in a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly manner. Historically, a number of communities have developed along corridors of intensification, which evolved into the main streets of the growth centres that exist today. These main streets provide a sense of place and history and add to the uniqueness and diversity of communities in the region.

Building on that history, certain areas of the Greater Golden Horseshoe have been identified as suitable for more intensive development. These are called urban growth centres and intensification corridors. They are concentrated around and between existing downtown areas and will serve as key sites for promoting new growth.



SMALL CITIES AND TOWNS

Small settlements make a valuable contribution to the diversity and attraction of the Greater Golden Horseshoe. They are an important link to our small-town past and a great alternative to “big-city” life.

These small cities and towns have a unique advantage due to their close proximity to many urban centres. For example, small settlements have natural limitations on growth such as the availability of water.



GREENFIELDS

Municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe have identified greenfields where future growth should go. Greenfields are undeveloped lands, usually

located in suburban or countryside areas that may or may not be currently used for farming or recreational purposes. Planning for sustainable growth means that these areas need to be used as efficiently as possible.

There are also lands that are outside municipal boundaries but *not* designated for future urban development. If existing

urban boundaries are extended into these lands pre-maturely, the relentless sprawl that is choking the Greater Golden Horseshoe will be accelerated. Urban boundaries in these areas should remain unchanged, at least for the present.

Some areas face immense pressures due to the high rate of people and jobs moving in. Even with aggressive intensification measures, there may still be the need to expand the urban boundary in these areas.

This pressure to expand urban boundaries can be managed by setting criteria that must be met before expansion is permitted.



INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE:

Supporting Growth

Having the infrastructure such as transit, transportation and water systems in place to meet growth will help to determine development patterns.

GETTING TRANSPORTATION RIGHT: MOVING PEOPLE AND MOVING GOODS

A key goal of the growth plan is to reduce dependency on automobiles and provide a broader range of options for people and goods to move more quickly and easily throughout the region.

Making it easier for people to take transit, cycle or walk to their destinations is critical for our air quality and our personal health. Building our communities with the densities necessary is important to support more convenient, affordable and faster transit choices.

Similarly, making it easier to get our goods to their destinations is critical for our economy. Connecting the region to the international borders and our trade markets is a priority, as is linking communities within the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Integrating these priorities will form the basis of our transportation network.

Did You Know?

- The number of trips by car over the last 30 years has increased by 300% but the population has only grown by 170%.
- Getting an extra 20 minutes of movement a week into your routine **prevents** a pound of weight gain per year.
- Higher transit ridership correlates to greater overall economic success and a higher standard of living.

WATER AND WASTEWATER SYSTEMS

The capacity of water and wastewater systems helps to determine where growth is possible. Investments in these systems have lagged behind growth. Many municipalities are not recovering the full cost of supplying water.

Maintaining and upgrading existing water and wastewater facilities will help ensure the delivery of clean and safe water and efficient wastewater services. As well, planning and implementing comprehensive local water conservation strategies – including metering, pricing, and more efficient technologies – supports the objectives of the growth plan.

PROTECTING WHAT IS VALUABLE:

A Green Legacy for the Future



The Greater Golden Horseshoe is blessed with unique natural heritage sites, valuable natural resources and high quality agricultural lands that are critical to Ontario's long-term prosperity and quality of life.

By encouraging development in those areas that can best accommodate it, development would be steered away from the places and systems we need to protect.

OUR NATURAL SYSTEM

A natural system includes natural heritage and water features like rivers and valleys with significant ecological value. They collectively perform important ecological functions such as providing habitat and improving air and water quality.

The Greater Golden Horseshoe natural system has a major element – the proposed 1.8 million acre Greenbelt, laid out in the Greenbelt Plan. This plan builds on the Niagara Escarpment Plan and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and includes additional protected countryside. Under the proposed Greenbelt Act, the Province will permanently protect this unique and important area.

There are also other areas outside the Greenbelt area that should be studied and protected from development. The Growth Plan will identify these key natural systems and ensure that growth supports this important legacy.



Overall direction on land use planning and development in

Ontario is provided by the Provincial Policy Statement. It contains policies that deal with the use and protection of our resources.

Other government initiatives related to protecting our resources include: the Greenbelt Plan, watershed-based source protection planning, the Strong Rural Communities Plan, and the Ontario Heritage Act. The growth plan helps to integrate these activities.

To get a copy of the PPS and the Greenbelt Plan, visit the website, www.mah.gov.on.ca.



The Greenbelt Plan

The purpose of this 1.8 million acre Greenbelt is to protect environmentally sensitive and agricultural lands in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. It will:

- Make sure the environment, including its water systems, remains healthy and able to support people and wildlife now and into the future.
- Support vibrant rural communities within the Greenbelt.
- Support agriculture as a source of commerce, jobs and food production.
- Provide outdoor recreational and other leisure opportunities to support the needs of our rapidly expanding population.



WATER RESOURCES

Safe, clean drinking water is fundamental to human health. Having an adequate supply is essential for strong, lasting and prosperous communities.

Reports from the Walkerton Inquiry called for protecting our water sources as the first step to achieving a healthy public water supply. The government is considering legislation that would require protection plans to be in place for Ontario's watersheds.

OUR FARMLANDS

The agricultural lands of the Greater Golden Horseshoe are considered some of the best in the world. The farms in this region generate approximately \$3.5 billion in total gross farm receipts each year.

Less than 12 per cent of the province is suitable for agricultural production and only five per cent of Canada's total land base is considered prime agricultural land. Protecting these agricultural lands is an important part of sustaining Ontario's agriculture and agri-food industry and ensuring the vitality of the agricultural sector.

MINERAL AGGREGATE

Mineral aggregate – in other words – limestone, sand, gravel and clay and other resources – is required for the development and maintenance of Ontario's infrastructure. One of the challenges for the Greater Golden Horseshoe is to balance the ongoing need for these resources with the need to minimize the impact that mining these resources has on our environment.



RURAL ONTARIO

Rural areas make a significant contribution to the diversity and attraction of the Greater Golden Horseshoe. They create unique opportunities for economic development that complement the agricultural industry.

Rural areas in the Greater Golden Horseshoe face particular challenges. The draft growth plan includes strategies that would help ensure that rural areas are able to fulfill their potential.

A CULTURE OF CONSERVATION

Electricity use, transportation and garbage produce greenhouse gases that alter the composition of the atmosphere and increase global warming. Since 1990 Ontario's greenhouse gas emissions have risen 20 per cent. With urbanization these effects will become more acute in the future and impact our environment, our health and our economy.

If we are to protect what is valuable while accommodating growth, we will need to become a conservator society.

What you can do

- Get Involved. Reduce waste.
- Conserve energy and water.
- Take transit. Do your part to protect and conserve precious resources for future generations.



IMPLEMENTATION:

Getting it Done

FIRST COMES THE PLAN. THEN WE MUST PUT IT INTO ACTION.

The Province is committed to action. It is developing a new way of managing its own capital investments in infrastructure, to ensure they are aligned with the government's priorities for economic growth, the establishment of strong, compact communities, and protection of the natural environment.

The creation of the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal, which is responsible for linking capital planning with growth planning, is a cornerstone of the provincial strategy for creating the future envisioned in the growth plan, and an indication of the government's commitment to delivering real, positive change.

Effective implementation requires that we have the appropriate regulatory and fiscal tools to allow the growth plan's policies to take shape.

The Places to Grow Act, introduced in October 2004, would, if passed, provide the legal framework necessary to develop a growth plan for any area of the province. The proposed legislation would also include processes for making and amending growth plans.

Monitoring and performance measures are an important part of any successful venture. Growth planning is no different. The government will develop a set of indicators that measure urban sprawl and will make it possible to evaluate the growth plan's progress.

Successful implementation will also require the participation of all levels of government, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and individuals.

Get Involved



We are all responsible for the choices we make in our daily lives, choices like the type of housing we live in and how we travel from one point to another. These choices have a direct impact on the quality of our environment, our commute times and our health.

Our individual choices affect the quality of life we share. The better informed we are, the better equipped we are to make informed decisions. Planning for growth means carefully looking ahead and informing our actions better.

It's a partnership among all of us – different levels of government, residents, decision-makers, planners, and those who are building our communities.

For more information about growth planning:

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Toronto, ON M5G 2E5

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FAX: 416-585-7639

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What's happened so far

Summer 2004

The Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal released a discussion paper called *Places to Grow: Better Choices Brighter Future*. It proposed ways to regenerate communities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe in three key areas:

- 1 Where and how we should grow
- 2 The critical infrastructure needed to support that growth
- 3 The valuable lands and resources we need to protect

More than 1600 people attended eight public meetings held across the Greater Golden Horseshoe and the ministry received approximately 500 written submissions.

Fall 2004

The government introduced legislation, the proposed Places to Grow Act 2004 (Bill 136), which would ensure the development of growth plans for specific areas in the province.

February 2005

The ministry released a draft growth plan to get further input.

What happens next

If the proposed Places to Grow legislation (Bill 136) is passed, the legal framework would be in place to proceed further with a growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

The ministry will continue to consult on the development of a growth plan.

ISBN 0-0000-0000-0
Paid for by the Government of Ontario
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