

# **SCHEDULE 4**

**Excerpts from  
Places to Grow Plan**

# PLACES TO GROW

BETTER CHOICES. BRIGHTER FUTURE.

## Growth Plan

for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

2006



Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal



# 1

## Introduction

### 1

#### 1.1 Context

The *Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH)* is one of the fastest growing regions in North America. It is also the destination of choice for many people and businesses relocating from other parts of Canada and around the world. They settle here because of the high quality of life and the economic opportunities. This is a place of prosperity where, through their skills and talents, people are building a great future for themselves.

Over the next quarter century, communities within the *GGH* will continue to experience the benefits that come with growth, including: vibrant, diversified communities and economies; new and expanded community services; and arts, culture and recreation facilities. However, without properly managing growth, communities will continue to experience the negative aspects associated with rapid growth, such as increased traffic congestion, deteriorating air and water quality, and the disappearance of agricultural lands and natural resources.

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (this Plan) has been prepared under the Places to Grow Act, 2005. It is a framework for implementing the Government of Ontario's vision for building stronger, prosperous communities by better managing growth in this region to 2031. This is a plan that recognizes the realities facing our cities and smaller communities, and that acknowledges what governments can and cannot influence. It demonstrates leadership for improving the ways in which our cities, suburbs, towns, and villages will grow over the long-term.

This Plan will guide decisions on a wide range of issues – transportation, infrastructure planning, land-use planning, urban form, housing, natural heritage and resource protection – in the interest of promoting economic prosperity. It will create a clearer environment for investment decisions and will help secure the future prosperity of the *GGH*.

This Plan builds on other key government initiatives including: the Greenbelt Plan, Planning Act reform and the Provincial Policy Statement, 2005 (PPS, 2005). This Plan does not replace municipal official plans, but works within the existing planning framework to provide growth management policy direction for the *GGH*.

This Plan reflects a shared vision amongst the Government of Ontario, the municipalities of the *GGH* and its residents. Successful implementation of this Plan's vision will be dependent upon collaborative decision-making.

In preparing for the future, it is essential that planning for the *GGH* take into account the importance, and the unique characteristics and strengths of its economy. These include:

- A diverse economy supported by a wide array of manufacturing industries of which the largest is the automotive sector, and other key industry clusters such as financial and business services, hospitality and tourism, education and research, life sciences, information services, and agriculture;
- An economy in transition, with economic activity and wealth increasingly generated by service and knowledge industries;
- Trade that accounts for over half of Ontario's GDP, over 90 per cent of which is with the United States;<sup>1</sup>
- A highly educated workforce, whose social and economic diversity are critical factors for success in the growing knowledge economy;
- Abundant natural heritage features and areas, and prime agricultural areas, and the government's commitment to protecting them, as demonstrated through initiatives such as the Greenbelt Plan, which make our communities more attractive and healthier places to live and work;
- Cultural amenities that offer the kinds of creative and recreational activities that attract knowledge workers.

The *GGH* must remain competitive with other city-regions. However, urban sprawl can affect its competitiveness. Despite its many assets, Ontario and the *GGH* face a number of challenges in sustaining and growing its economy:

- Increasing numbers of automobiles are travelling over longer distances resulting in clogged transportation corridors, including those that provide access to our critical border crossings. Traffic congestion and the delay in movement of goods costs Ontario upwards of \$5 billion in lost GDP each year;<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> TD Economics. *Ontario: The Land of Opportunity*. September 2004, pg. 2

<sup>2</sup> Ontario Chamber of Commerce. *Cost of Border Delays to Ontario*. May 2004, pg. 8

- Attractive and efficient public transit is difficult to introduce into sprawling communities, and this limits our ability to respond effectively to growing traffic congestion issues;
- Employment lands are being converted from their intended uses, thereby limiting future economic opportunities;
- New infrastructure is being built to service lower-density areas, while existing infrastructure in the older parts of our communities remains underutilized;
- Urban sprawl contributes to the degradation of our natural environment, air quality and water resources, as well as the consumption of agricultural lands and other natural resources so critical to the future economy.

Decades of neglect and lack of sufficient investment have resulted in the current infrastructure deficit. Tens of billions of dollars beyond current levels of investment will be required before the situation is back in balance. All levels of government are under pressure to meet public infrastructure needs. Additional support from federal partners; innovative, alternative partnership arrangements that protect the public interest; and the strategic staging of infrastructure investments are all required to respond to these challenges. Ultimately, better investment in our cities will help to mitigate sprawl. Enhancing infrastructure, integrating and improving transit systems, protecting valuable natural resources and strengthening local government will all go far towards the implementation of this Plan.

This Plan addresses these challenges through policy directions that –

- direct growth to *built-up areas* where the capacity exists to best accommodate the expected population and employment growth, while providing strict criteria for *settlement area* boundary expansions
- promote *transit-supportive* densities and a healthy mix of residential and employment land uses
- preserve employment areas for future economic opportunities
- identify and support a transportation network that links *urban growth centres* through an extensive multi-modal system anchored by efficient public transit, together with highway systems for moving people and goods
- plan for *community infrastructure* to support growth
- ensure sustainable water and wastewater services are available to support future growth
- identify natural systems and *prime agricultural areas*, and enhance the conservation of these valuable resources
- support the protection and conservation of water, energy, air and cultural heritage, as well as integrated approaches to waste management.

### 1.2.2 Guiding Principles

The vision for the *GGH* is grounded in the following principles that provide the basis for guiding decisions on how land is developed, resources are managed and public dollars invested:

- Build compact, vibrant and *complete communities*.
- Plan and manage growth to support a strong and competitive economy.
- Protect, conserve, enhance and wisely use the valuable natural resources of land, air and water for current and future generations.
- Optimize the use of existing and new infrastructure to support growth in a compact, efficient form.
- Provide for different approaches to managing growth that recognize the diversity of communities in the *GGH*.
- Promote collaboration among all sectors – government, private and non-profit – and residents to achieve the vision.

### 1.3 General Authority

This Plan for the *GGH* derives its authority from the Places to Grow Act, 2005. This Plan is approved through an Order-in-Council made by the Lieutenant Governor in Council under that Act.

This Plan applies to the *GGH* lands designated by Ontario Regulation 416/05.

### 1.4 How to Read this Plan

This Plan consists of policies, schedules, definitions and appendices. It also includes non-policy contextual commentary to provide background and describe the intent of the policies. Terms in italics are defined in the Definitions section of this Plan.

This Plan informs decision-making regarding growth management in the *GGH*. It contains a set of policies for managing growth and development to the year 2031. While certain policies have specific target dates, the goals and policies of this Plan are intended to be achieved within the life of this Plan.

The land-use planning process within the *GGH* is governed primarily by the Planning Act and the Government of Ontario's existing planning system.

# 2

## Where and How to Grow

### 2

#### 2.1 Context

The *GGH* is one of the fastest growing regions in North America. By 2031, the population of this area is forecast to grow by an additional 3.7 million (from 2001) to 11.5 million people, accounting for over 80 per cent of Ontario's population growth. The magnitude and pace of this growth necessitates a plan for building healthy and balanced communities and maintaining and improving our quality of life.

To ensure the development of healthy, safe and balanced communities, choices about where and how growth occurs in the *GGH* need to be carefully made. Better use of land and infrastructure can be made by directing growth to existing urban areas. This Plan envisages increasing *intensification* of the existing *built-up area*, with a focus on *urban growth centres*, *intensification corridors*, *major transit station areas*, *brownfield sites* and *greyfields*. Concentrating new development in these areas also provides a focus for transit and infrastructure investments to support future growth.

The revitalization of *urban growth centres* is particularly important, not only because they can accommodate additional people and jobs, but because they will increasingly be regional focal points. They are meeting places, locations for cultural facilities, public institutions, major services, and transit hubs. These centres are not all at the same stage of development: some are the downtowns of older cities, while others are newly planned suburban centres. They all have potential to become more vibrant, mixed-use, transit-supportive communities.

Better use of land and infrastructure can also be achieved by building more compact greenfield communities that reduce the rate at which land is consumed. Communities will need to grow at *transit-supportive* densities, with transit-oriented street configurations.

*Compact urban form* and *intensification* efforts go hand-in-hand with more transit: not only

do they support each other, they are all necessary. This correlation is fundamental to where and how we grow. Communities will also need to provide a mix of jobs and housing to create opportunities for people to work close to where they live.

Providing opportunities for businesses to locate in the *GGH* is fundamental to using land wisely and ensuring a prosperous economic future. Therefore, it is important to ensure an adequate supply of land for *employment areas* and other employment uses.

There is a large supply of land already designated for future urban development in the *GGH*. In most communities there is enough land to accommodate projected growth based on the growth forecasts and *intensification target* and *density targets* of this Plan. It is important to optimize the use of the existing land supply to avoid over-designating new land for future urban development. This Plan's emphasis on *intensification* and optimizing the use of the existing land supply represents a new approach to city-building in the *GGH*, one which concentrates more on making better use of our existing infrastructure, and less on continuously expanding the urban area.

Strong, healthy and prosperous rural communities are also vital to the economic success of the *GGH* and contribute to our quality of life. This Plan recognizes and promotes the traditional role of rural towns and villages as a focus of economic, cultural and social activities that support surrounding rural and agricultural areas across the *GGH*. Healthy rural communities are key to the vitality and well-being of the whole area.

This Plan is about building *complete communities*, whether urban or rural. These are communities that are well-designed, offer transportation choices, accommodate people at all stages of life and have the right mix of housing, a good range of jobs, and easy access to stores and services to meet daily needs.

## 2.2 Policies for Where and How to Grow

### 2.2.1 Growth Forecasts

1. Population and employment forecasts contained in Schedule 3 for all upper- and single-tier municipalities will be used for planning and managing growth in the *GGH*.
2. The Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal will review the forecasts contained in Schedule 3 at least every five years in consultation with municipalities, and may revise the forecasts.



## 2.2.2 Managing Growth

1. Population and employment growth will be accommodated by –
  - a) directing a significant portion of new growth to the *built-up areas* of the community through *intensification*
  - b) focusing *intensification* in *intensification areas*
  - c) building compact, *transit-supportive* communities in *designated greenfield areas*
  - d) reducing dependence on the automobile through the development of mixed-use, *transit-supportive*, pedestrian-friendly urban environments
  - e) providing convenient access to intra- and inter-city transit
  - f) ensuring the availability of sufficient land for employment to accommodate forecasted growth to support the *GGHs* economic competitiveness
  - g) planning and investing for a balance of jobs and housing in communities across the *GGH* to reduce the need for long distance commuting and to increase the *modal share* for transit, walking and cycling
  - h) encouraging cities and towns to develop as *complete communities* with a diverse mix of land uses, a range and mix of employment and housing types, high quality public open space and easy access to local stores and services
  - i) directing development to *settlement areas*, except where necessary for development related to the management or use of resources, resource-based recreational activities, and rural land uses that cannot be located in *settlement areas*
  - j) directing major growth to *settlement areas* that offer *municipal water and wastewater systems* and limiting growth in *settlement areas* that are serviced by other forms of water and wastewater services
  - k) prohibiting the establishment of new *settlement areas*.

## 2.2.3 General Intensification

1. By the year 2015 and for each year thereafter, a minimum of 40 per cent of all residential development occurring annually within each upper- and single-tier municipality will be within the *built-up area*.
2. If at the time this Plan comes into effect, an upper- or single-tier municipality is achieving a percentage higher than the minimum *intensification target* identified in policy 2.2.3.1, this higher percentage will be considered the minimum *intensification target* for that municipality.

- c) provide high quality public open spaces with site design and urban design standards that create attractive and vibrant places
  - d) support transit, walking and cycling for everyday activities
  - e) generally achieve higher densities than the surrounding areas
  - f) achieve an appropriate transition of built form to adjacent areas.
8. Ministers of the Crown and municipalities will use infrastructure investment and other implementation tools and mechanisms to facilitate *intensification*.

#### 2.2.4 Urban Growth Centres

1. *Urban growth centres* for the *GGH* are identified in Schedule 4.
2. The Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, in consultation with municipalities that have *urban growth centres*, will determine the approximate size and location of the *urban growth centres*.
3. Municipalities will delineate the boundaries of *urban growth centres* in their official plans.
4. *Urban growth centres* will be planned –
  - a) as focal areas for investment in institutional and region-wide public services, as well as commercial, recreational, cultural and entertainment uses
  - b) to accommodate and support major transit infrastructure
  - c) to serve as high density major employment centres that will attract provincially, nationally or internationally significant employment uses
  - d) to accommodate a significant share of population and employment growth.
5. *Urban growth centres* will be planned to achieve, by 2031 or earlier, a minimum gross *density target* of –
  - a) 400 residents and jobs combined per hectare for each of the *urban growth centres* in the City of Toronto
  - b) 200 residents and jobs combined per hectare for each of the Downtown Brampton, Downtown Burlington, Downtown Hamilton, Downtown Milton, Markham Centre, Mississauga City Centre, Newmarket Centre, Midtown Oakville, Downtown Oshawa, Downtown Pickering, Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway, Vaughan Corporate Centre, Downtown Kitchener and Uptown Waterloo *urban growth centres*

- c) 150 residents and jobs combined per hectare for each of the Downtown Barrie, Downtown Brantford, Downtown Cambridge, Downtown Guelph, Downtown Peterborough and Downtown St. Catharines *urban growth centres*.
6. If at the time this Plan comes into effect, an *urban growth centre* is already planned to achieve, or has already achieved, a gross density that exceeds the minimum *density target* established in Policy 2.2.4.5, this higher density will be considered the minimum *density target* for that *urban growth centre*.

### 2.2.5 Major Transit Station Areas and Intensification Corridors

1. *Major transit station areas* and *intensification corridors* will be designated in official plans and planned to achieve –
  - a) increased residential and employment densities that support and ensure the viability of existing and planned transit service levels
  - b) a mix of residential, office, institutional, and commercial development wherever appropriate.
2. *Major transit station areas* will be planned and designed to provide access from various transportation modes to the transit facility, including consideration of pedestrians, bicycle parking and commuter pick-up/drop-off areas.
3. *Intensification corridors* will generally be planned to accommodate local services, including recreational, cultural and entertainment uses.

### 2.2.6 Employment Lands

1. An adequate supply of lands providing locations for a variety of appropriate employment uses will be maintained to accommodate the growth forecasts in Schedule 3.
2. Municipalities will promote economic development and competitiveness by –
  - a) providing for an appropriate mix of employment uses including industrial, commercial and institutional uses to meet long-term needs
  - b) providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses
  - c) planning for, protecting and preserving *employment areas* for current and future uses
  - d) ensuring the necessary infrastructure is provided to support current and forecasted employment needs.

**Inter-modal Facility**

A location where transfers between modes can be made as part of a single journey. For example, a typical freight inter-modal facility is a rail yard where containers are transferred between trucks and trains.

**Major Office**

Major office is generally defined as freestanding office buildings of 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> or greater, or with 500 jobs or more.

**Major Transit Station Area**

The area including and around any existing or planned *higher order transit* station within a *settlement area*; or the area including and around a major bus depot in an urban core. Station areas generally are defined as the area within an approximate 500m radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk.

**Mineral Aggregate Resources**

Gravel, sand, clay, earth, shale, stone, limestone, dolostone, sandstone, marble, granite, rock or other material prescribed under the Aggregate Resources Act suitable for construction, industrial, manufacturing and maintenance purposes but not including metallic ores, asbestos, graphite, kyanite, mica, nepheline syenite, salt, talc, wollastonite, mine tailings or other material prescribed under the Mining Act. (Provincial Policy Statement, 2005)

**Modal Share**

The percentage of person-trips or of freight movements made by one travel mode, relative to the total number of such trips made by all modes.

**Multi-modal**

The availability or use of more than one form of transportation, such as automobiles, walking, cycling, buses, rapid transit, rail (such as commuter and freight), trucks, air and marine.

**Municipal Comprehensive Review**

An official plan review, or an official plan amendment, initiated by a municipality that comprehensively applies the policies and schedules of this Plan.