



## Government Relations Issues Update

### Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Plan

#### TREB Key Message

*Expected population growth of the GTA in coming decades and current concerns with infrastructure capacity means that a growth management plan to achieve efficient growth in the GTA is necessary. However, an incentive-based approach to implementing the plan is the best way to achieve smart growth objectives while still protecting consumers' property rights.*

#### Background

On June 16, 2006, the Hon. David Caplan, Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, released a Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe area, which includes the Niagara, Waterloo, Simcoe, and Peterborough areas in addition to the GTA. The Growth Plan was previously released in draft form in early 2005 and consultations were held with interested parties, including **TREB**.

The Growth Plan outlines government policy on a range of issues, including urban planning, land use, economic development, and investment in public infrastructure. The key intention of the Growth Plan is to set out where and how growth occurs within the Greater Golden Horseshoe area over the next 30 years. In this respect, the Growth Plan is being coordinated with the Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt Plan. While the Greenbelt protects significant environmental and agricultural areas, the Growth Plan identifies priority growth centres and the types of growth that will be allowed.

The Growth Plan sets out specific objectives and policies to guide growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe over the next 30 years:

- Requires more efficient use of land by promoting compact, mixed-use development through intensification. By 2015, 40% of all residential development occurring annually within each GTA municipality will have to be within already built-up areas.

- Identifies “urban growth centres”, which will be the primary areas for growth over the next 30 years. Urban growth centres will be a key focus of transit and infrastructure investment. Urban growth centres will be particularly targeted for intensification.
- Provides criteria for new growth on “greenfields” (currently undeveloped land). Greenfield developments will have to be at higher densities than current standards and will have to be zoned and designed in a manner that encourages street configurations that support early integration of transit services, and encourages easy access to local stores and services by alternative transportation modes including cycling and walking.
- Protects the zoning of industrial lands. As such, conversion of these lands to non-employment uses is discouraged.

During consultations, **TREB** provided detailed input on the Growth Plan to the provincial government in written submissions and in meetings with the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal. Specifically, **TREB** told the government that

- property rights must be respected;
- the Growth Plan should be coordinated with other provincial initiatives, including the new City of Toronto Act; new taxing powers (e.g. land transfer tax) for the City of Toronto should not encourage urban sprawl;
- new development should not be unreasonably restricted;
- adequate infrastructure must be provided to accommodate growth; and
- the Growth Plan should optimize the use of incentives to encourage smart growth including,
  - o extension of the Land Transfer Tax rebate to resale housing;
  - o property tax and development charge incentives to encourage smart growth; and
  - o Incentives for brownfield redevelopment.