

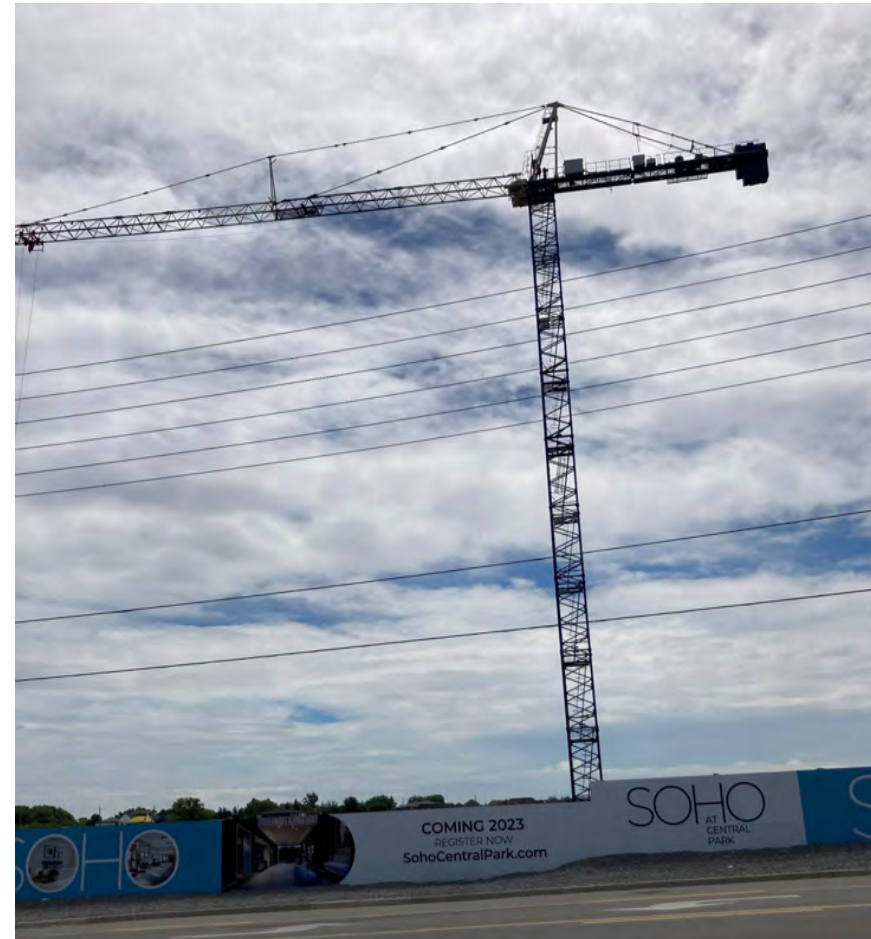
Canadian Institute of Planners
Plan Canada FALL 2023

FROM SMART GROWTH TO FAST GROWTH

Friday October 13, 2023

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THEN: Problem defined as sprawl

Suburban dream lives on: Harris

But Premier claims 905 government is just not working

BY CAROLINE MALLAN
QUEEN'S PARK BUREAU CHIEF

Any move by the Ontario government to deal with urban sprawl in the GTA will not interfere with the suburban dream that families who moved to the 905 areas were seeking, Premier Mike Harris said yesterday.

Harris made his remarks during a luncheon speech to the Toronto Real Estate Board about the challenges facing Greater Toronto in the years ahead.

The Premier said that despite his stated intent to try to ease the gridlock that is affecting the region on a daily basis, families will always have the choice of a large suburban home.

"Visionary growth also includes choices, this is very important, the choice that every citizen, I believe, and every family is entitled to have, about raising children with a large backyard, and room in a neighbourhood and a park at the end of the street," Harris said.

He said others may choose the convenience of downtown condominium living and a short walk instead of a long commute to work.

In a speech that emphasized the need for sound planning when it comes to growth, Harris said his Conservative government is capable of making the unpopular decisions about how best to manage growth.

The speech was the second this week on the topic of tough choices, but once again the Premier did not give any specifics about his plans to ease congestion and the pollution that comes with too much traffic.

Speaking to reporters afterward,

Harris said his speech was part of a consultation process to find solutions to the problems associated with unplanned urban sprawl. He borrowed heavily from the American notion of "smart growth," which prepares a city or region for the growth to come and eases the strains of daily commuter life.

The province is expecting a report from the GTSB this spring with recommendations for better governance.

Harris said his speech was part of a consultation process to find solutions to the problems associated with unplanned urban sprawl.

He borrowed heavily from the

trations of commuters.

"I already spend way too much time stuck in traffic and I know you do, too," he told the audience.

Harris also hinted at incentives for developers who reclaim abandoned industrial sites, so-called "brown-fields," for housing projects.

"I already spend way too much time stuck in traffic and I know you do too"



Mike Harris

THEN: Problem defined as sprawl (but also, suburbs as viable, improved choice)

THEN: Solution became "smart growth"

Blue-ribbon panel wants a future without traffic jams

Leave the car, take the bus

Drivers urged to use transit

By RICHARD BRENNAN
OTTAWA/STARBURO

The key to easing gridlock in the Greater Toronto Area is to make public transit a better option and driving an expensive car, a report for the provincial government says.

The report by a panel led by Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion, released yesterday, calls for improved funding, new bus lanes, expanding GO Transit service, an integrated transit system in the Greater Toronto area, discount fares and increased parking costs.

In essence, the message from the blue-ribbon panel of politicians, urban planners, unionists, business people and academics is that the bus is the new way to go, not cars.

"You've got to make transit acceptable to those who now drive cars," McCallion said, noting that municipalities are just now realizing their mistakes by not concentrating on public transit.

Municipal Affairs Minister Chris Hodgson said gridlock has a negative impact on the environment, the economy and quality of life "and as Ontario continues to grow it is clearly important to get it under control."

A key recommendation in terms of offering fairly immediate relief, he said yesterday, was the one calling for bus lanes along major highways.

"My vision is that people would choose ... transit and that will allow people to get off the roads," said Hodgson, adding.

★ Please see Boffer, A6

The Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel is recommending major changes to ease traffic congestion in the Greater Toronto Area.

War on gridlock



Panel recommendations

- Move buses or right-left systems with dedicated rights-of-way in high traffic corridors.
- Queue jump lanes, yield-to-traffic regulations, signal priorities, bus lanes on existing highway shoulders and peak period turn and parking restrictions to make it easier for transit vehicles to move on existing roads.
- Complete planned improvements to Union Station.
- Target congested areas with new transit services, such as more express routes to major employers.
- Expand commuter parking lots and car pool lots and more local bus routes to transit stations.
- Build more loading/unloading transit stations.
- Increase or establish parking fees at workplaces that are accessible by transit.

Proposed transit improvements

- Express bus service
- New bus lanes
- Shoulder lanes for buses
- Bus Rapid Transit Service
- GO Rail Service
- Subway
- ⊙ Expanded park and ride lots



New money from Queen's Park

- \$15 million for Toronto and the 403-407 corridor will go toward:
- More park and ride facilities at end-of-line TTC stations and along 403-407 corridor.
- Service and station improvements at Kennedy, Finch and Dundas West TTC stations.
- Study rapid transit service from Downsview to York University, and on Yonge St. between Finch and Steeles.



GO Transit, Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel, 2002, Ottawa, Ont. Press

Province to spend \$25M in GTA

By RICHARD BRENNAN
OTTAWA/STARBURO

About \$25 million has already been earmarked by the Ontario government to help ease gridlock in the Greater Toronto Area. The Star has learned.

The announcement is to be made today by Transportation Minister Norm Sterling and Municipal Affairs Minister Chris Hodgson.

They will give details on \$14 million for several projects in Toronto, \$6.7 million for York

Inside

- Roads for buses only, A6
- City politicians react, A7
- The Star's view, A24
- How it works in Ottawa, B1

Region, and \$4.1 million for expanded park-and-ride lots and other improvements along Highways 403 and 407. There is also \$5.4 million for Waterloo Region.

The \$14 million for Toronto will go toward offsetting the cost of the following projects:

- Expansion of park-and-ride facilities and operational improvements at the Finch, Downsview, Kennedy and Spadina TTC stations.
- Improvements to the system used for keeping track of transit vehicles.
- A study to evaluate roadway improvements and service for the Rapid Transit (BRT) from the Spadina subway to York

★ Please see Ontario, A7

Ontario Smart Growth

Ontario Smart Growth Public Consultations

The central Ontario Smart Growth panel wants your views.

Led by Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion, the panel was appointed by the Ontario government. It was asked to build consensus on ways to manage future growth. Before presenting its ideas to the government, the panel wants to hear your thoughts on its ideas for dealing with traffic gridlock, managing waste and curbing urban sprawl. This is your chance to learn more and have a say.



TORONTO

Thursday, February 27

3 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (panel presentation at 7 p.m.)

Memorial Hall, Burgundy Room

North York Civic Centre

5100 Yonge Street, Lower Level

The panel's draft recommendations are summarized in a discussion paper entitled *Shape the Future*. This document will be posted online and available at the consultations.

For more information, call us toll free at 1-866-478-9781 or visit

www.smartgrowth.gov.on.ca



With Smart Growth report, Hazel takes a strong stand on the region's future



Hazel McCallion

DICKLOEK/TORONTO STAR

Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion takes questions during a news conference after the **Smart Growth panel** she chaired delivered its final report to the province, which was represented by Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister David Young. The 90-page report urged dramatic changes over the next 30 years.

Urban Sprawl

Ontario drives wrong way

The strategy is to achieve 'smart growth' but its plan for highways delivers more of the same problem

MARK WINFIELD

The Ontario government has said a lot about its "smart growth" plans in the last few months, but what the province continues to actually implement is a strategy guaranteed to produce nothing but more smog and urban sprawl.

Smart growth is a widely accepted antidote to the urban sprawl that is consuming farmland and green space, and causing growing traffic congestion and smog throughout southern Ontario. Smart growth strategies emphasize the protection of farmland and ecologically significant areas by concentrating growth in places that are already urbanized, and designing communities that alternatives to the car, like walking, bicycling and taking transit, are attractive and viable transportation choices for work, shopping, child care and recreation.

Earlier this year, the Pembina Institute published a study outlining what a real provincial smart growth strategy for Ontario might look like. Drawing on sources ranging from the Federation of Ontario Naturalists to the TD Bank and C.D. Howe Institute, the report laid out an action plan for smart growth in Ontario, covering land-use planning, fiscal and taxation policies, infrastructure funding, sustainable energy and structures for local and regional governance.

This week, the institute issued a second report assessing the province's progress against that strategy. The report found that 2½ years after the first announcement of the province's commitment to "smart growth" principles, there had been progress in a few areas, such as the adoption of legislation to deal with some liability issues related to the redevelopment of former industrial sites, and the adoption of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act.

For the most part, however, the institute found that provincial land-use and fiscal policies that encouraged, facilitated and subsidized urban sprawl throughout southern Ontario remained in place.

Although the province has been moving back into providing capital support for transit services — after terminating all of its transit expenditures in 1997 — the centerpiece of the province's "smart growth" infrastructure investments remains the SuperBuild Corporation's \$1-billion-per-year highway expansion program, concentrated in the Toronto and Niagara regions.

Highways proposed under this program include:

- The extension east of Highway 407 to Highway 95/115.
- The relocation of Highway 404 around the



Ontario to give Toronto \$14M

By Richard Ives At
 ■ Roadway expansion needs a \$14M for a road network around Yonge & Don Parkway in Toronto area.
 ■ Improvements at the Queen St. East and Dundas West TTC stations to encourage car-pooling and transit use.
 ■ The road cost of Toronto's plan to increase its transit network to match that of other major cities in the province, announced last week, includes \$14 million to improve the road network along the Highway 404 corridor.



CONGESTED CITY: Leading east toward Toronto's downtown, the flow of mixed-vehicle traffic on the long Gardiner Expressway.

'It won't change the car culture'

Councillors say drivers unlikely to abandon vehicles

By Alan Lee
 ■ The province's plan to increase its transit network to match that of other major cities in the province, announced last week, includes \$14 million to improve the road network along the Highway 404 corridor.

Proposals for the "smart growth" plan to increase the province's transit network to match that of other major cities in the province, announced last week, includes \$14 million to improve the road network along the Highway 404 corridor.

But some councillors say the plan will not change the car culture in Ontario. They say that while the province is investing in transit, it is also investing in roads and highways, which will continue to encourage car use.

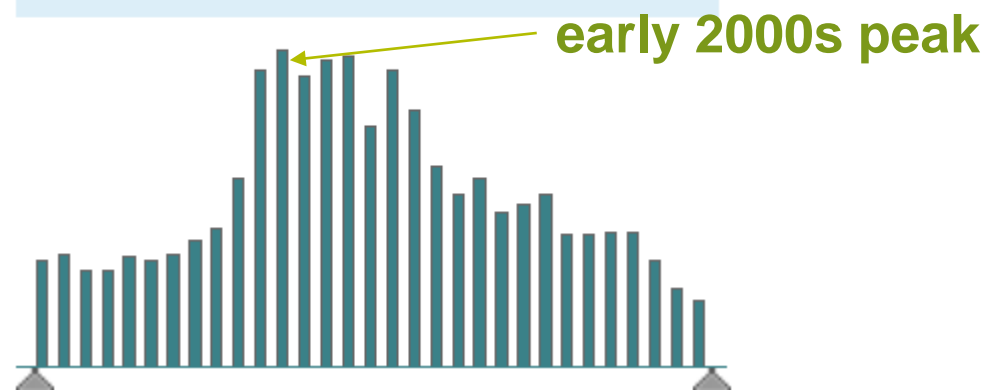
"I don't see how that will change the car culture in Ontario," said Councillor Fred Thompson. "The province is investing in roads and highways, which will continue to encourage car use."

Other councillors, however, say the plan will encourage more people to use transit. They say that by investing in transit, the province is making it more attractive and convenient to use.

"We are investing in transit because we know that it is the most sustainable way to get around," said Councillor David St. George. "We are investing in roads and highways because we know that it is the most convenient way to get around."

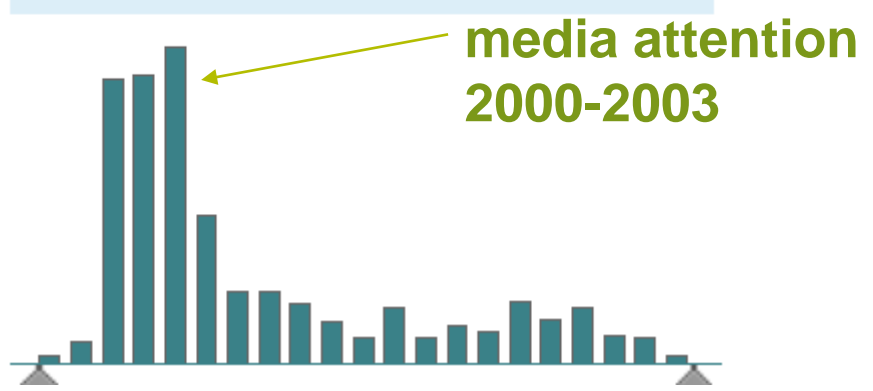
Toronto Star sprawl coverage

1990 - 2020 (years)



smart growth coverage

1999 - 2019 (years)



Toronto Star, Aug 13, 2003, A19

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Toronto Star 15 Aug 2002: A7.

A VISION FOR TORONTO

Greenbelt 'key' to healthy regional growth

Continued from B3

creasing 128th bush, the Experience of Place begins with the line of "contour-lines".

"By inadvertently zoning communities," he writes, "and thus shifting some of our own resources, we can begin systematically ignoring our surroundings without even realizing that we're doing it. Instead, we can lump natural systems we care for and our own safety and health to pass by cutting ourselves off from settings that could be so fine to our health and well-being."

Which brings us back to Greater Toronto, where Mackay's ideas of comprehensive zoning are the only ones that have been adopted in Ontario.

That phrase, and of humanity, comes from another planning book, *The New Urbanism*, a critique of Regional Planning, written by U.S. planner and journalist, Charles芒福乐 in 1980.

"The 'New Urbanism,'"芒福乐 writes, "has layered failed again and again, in almost countless forms, about the effects that building or breaking city landscapes can have on people."

ably has in the form of large populations. To paraphrase Mackay's underlying formula — people's lives are immediately diminished whenever their connections with any one elemental environment are severed or broken — because, he said, the "youthfulness of the place represents a developmental opportunity that cannot be lost to us. It is the only time that the land is available to us. It is the only time that the land is available to us. It is the only time that the land is available to us."

Which brings us back to Greater Toronto, where Mackay's ideas of comprehensive zoning are the only ones that have been adopted in Ontario.

The late Fred "Big Daddy" Darwent, the founding chairman of Metro Toronto and not a man known for his sense of humour, referred to it as "suburbia by substitution."

City years later, however, there's not much to laugh about.

"Clearly, we have not done what we should have done to prevent this from happening. We have not done what we should have done to prevent this from happening. We have not done what we should have done to prevent this from happening."

There's a question in the eyes of New South Wales doesn't just stand alone as a regional government. It is a regional government. It is a regional government. It is a regional government.

But, however you agree, however, the growth in Toronto is not being controlled by public transit, which is subsidised by higher levels of government. The Ontario government is subsidising the growth in Toronto by higher levels of government. The Ontario government is subsidising the growth in Toronto by higher levels of government.

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As the government has been building

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As the government has been building

Both the enclosure and the enclosure are almost perfectly located. They form a green strip right across the top of the city. But we have not yet been able to form development north of the corridor. The whole question of developing the corridor must be rethought — and quickly, if we want to save it as green space, it's a fabulous opportunity."

With a national, provincial and municipal government, we are looking for a new paradigm of development. We need a new paradigm of development. We need a new paradigm of development.

That's why you're looking at us as a key opportunity."



Time for politicians to get 'smart'

Continued from B1

Smart growth is a concept for cities that means:

- Slowing urban sprawl
- Redefining and reorganizing the city
- Transit
- No new freeways
- More green space
- Reducing parking requirements
- Finding economic solutions to sustain urban communities such as:
 - Higher density housing
 - Development of brown industrial lands for housing

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but groundwork for Greenbelt & Growth Plan laid by earlier conservative government



Doug Ford

Article: Toronto Star, Sat. Jan. 6, 2001, B4-B5;

Image (background edited); https://smartcdn.gprod.postmedia.digital/financialpost/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/doug-ford-0602-ph.jpg

A VISION FOR TORONTO

Greenbelt 'key' to healthy regional growth

By Colin Leung

breating 1990 book, The Experience of Growth, begins with the loss of communities.

"By inadvertently severing connections," he writes, "and thus dulling some of our own awareness, we are systematically ignoring our surroundings without any realising that our ailments have followed, we can damage natural systems; we can put our own safety and health in peril by cutting ourselves off from settings that could be so low as over bank of humanity with the next two or three generations after our own time."

This phrase, out of Philosophy comes from another planning book, The New Urbanism, a Philosophy of Regional Planning, written by U.S. planner and forester, Benton MacKaye, in 1933.

"In The New Urbanism," his writes, "MacKaye talked again and again, in almost quotable terms, about the effect that making or breaking daily landscape connections has."

ably has in the past of large populations. To paraphrase MacKaye's underlying formula — people's lives are immediately diminished whenever their connections with any one natural environment are severed or broken — because, he said, the "permanence" of the place requires whenever "unbuilding" development covers an area with structures whose individual houses and collective landscapes present that unmitigable environment we call the slum, not the slum of poverty, but the slum of conscience."

Which brings us back to Greater Toronto, where MacKaye's slum of conscience stood as far as the eye can see. The late Fred "Big Daddy" Conder, the founding chairman of Metro Toronto, set a main lesson for the sense of honour, referred to it as "mitigation by substitution."

Fifty years later, however, there's not much to laugh about. "Everybody knows that sprawl means more car use and that that leads to more congestion and more

pollution," says Toronto architect and planner Michael Kirkland. "The question is whether you're going to continue to allow unbridled and unregulated development and push the country to the farther and farther away."

A committed regionalist, Kirkland opposes sprawling downtown and the burbs, and leaving what's left over alone.

"Somebody has to be in the face of decision of development based on the North American ideal for single-family housing and respect automobile dependency. Developers have many ways of inducing municipalities to agree to their demands. Indeed, local authorities compete for builders' investment."

The issue, however, isn't development, it's the nature of development. Housing can be built, factories and stores constructed, without resorting to sprawl.

Some cities, Portland, Ore., being the most advanced, have opted for regionalist approach that concentrates development into certain areas, thus

protecting others. In Portland, the intention was to encourage building within a region of 600 acres kilometres, but to keep it from flooding into the green belt that surrounds the city.

According to Oregon historian Carl Olson: "The recent history of Portland shows that care city revitalization, neighbourhood conservation and suburban growth management are not separable operations."

In their book, Changing Places: Rebuilding Community in the Age of Sprawl, American Robert Slobin and Carter Willis also laud the Portland experiment.

"Conceived initially to preserve Oregon's natural environment from sprawl, the state's growth-management system also enjoys support from urban interests because it prevents investments from leaking beyond urban edges. In Portland, the measure has helped to direct growth inward, preserving the city's traditional downtown as the hub of the metropolitan region."

But any Toronto executive director of the Foundation, a Toronto nonprofit dedicated to regionalist planning, says that the green belt that surrounds the city.

"Everybody knows that sprawl means more car use and that that leads to more congestion and more pollution," says Toronto architect and planner Michael Kirkland.

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Tax cuts led to smaller government

► Revolution From B1

When that is done, the results are surprising. In 1984, the last year of the William Davis Tory government, Queen's Park took 13 cents from every dollar produced in the province. That figure rose to 15 cents in 1989, the last year of the Peterson Liberal government and dropped again to 13 cents in 1993 and 1994, the final two years of the Rae NDP government.

During Harris' time as premier, the overall tax burden didn't fall at all — in spite of his income tax cuts. In 1996, it rose to 14 cents per dollar of GDP, falling back to 13 cents only during Eves' brief stewardship last year.

Yet in relative terms, Ontarians were well off. From 1984 to 2002 — through four consecutive governments — Ontario's provincial tax burden remained well below the Canadian average.

Save for three years in the Harris-Eves period, Ontarians were taxed less by their provincial government than citizens of any other province — including Alberta.

In short, the Harris-Eves cut was a fraud. It was instituted to solve a problem that did not exist.

More important, when all provincial taxes and levies are taken into account, it never really happened.

If some Ontarians won in the great tax cut roulette, clearly others lost.

Still, in terms of the logic of the Common Sense Revolution, the reality of the tax cut didn't matter. What did was the political pressure it exerted.

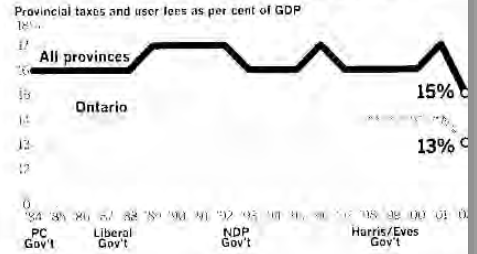
Indeed, the primary goal of the tax cut was not to lower taxes but to diminish government. If voters thought revenues were squeezed, they would accept



The original Common Sense Revolution document, drafted in 1994, formed the platform of Mike Harris' 1995 election campaign, which resulted in a Tory majority government.

Did the Common Sense Revolution bring taxes down?

Figures show that Ontarians' overall tax burden did not go down during the eight years the Tories have been in power. The figures also suggest that Ontario was never a high-tax province.



"common sense revolution" Time for politicians to get smart'

By Colin Leung

since the continent since World War II, when the single-family-home suburb began emerging as the dominant feature of our landscapes.

Region in appearance, these sprawling suburbs have created an expensive and disruptive blight on the outer reaches of almost every major Canadian and American city. They have become obstacles to the free flow of people, goods and services around our urban areas. With their long, low and wide, curving roadways, sprawl suburbs provide too few people, living in too large a space and resulting in too many idleness directions to support effective public transit systems.

Toronto typically needs a minimum of 10 living units an acre to run an effective bus service," says Steven Bodzin, a professor with the planning department at the University of Toronto.

Suburban densities usually run to about three units per acre where lawns and roads are taken into account, Bodzin says.

With no decent transit, the suburbs become congestion machines. Providing good transit and recreational amenities, sprawl neighbourhoods offer few places to even walk to, forcing people to use cars almost exclusively.

Smart growth

A concept for modern urban planning that includes:

- Stopping urban sprawl
- Redeveloping and reintegrating the land city
- Transit
- No new freeways
- More green spaces
- Pedestrian-friendly developments
- Finding economic solutions to sustain urban communities such as higher density housing and reusing former industrial lands for housing

developers dedicated to smart growth reform. "Creative use of cars is the major cause of congestion in cities,"

in conjunction with the major cause of pollution."

"Smart growth" means land, and lots of it. The property it sets up in almost always found in the countryside and green spaces that surround metropolitan areas and provide their populations with food and respite from the greyness of city life.

"Smart growth, also known as the new urbanism, relies on thousands of years of human city-building experience to change these growth industries," Bodzin says.

city health and that include everything from having streets that are walkable, having sidewalks and street lights on the buildings, up to having a right-of-way that is wider than the road and that has trees and clear boundaries between the city and country."

"Among smart growth's most crucial initiatives is intensifying densities in existing urban cores to meet off demand for new sprawl in the countryside."

"We have to make sure that all of our opportunities that already exist in the built-up areas are taken advantage of," says Toronto urban planning consultant Pamela Blum. "You try and direct enough growth away from the greenfields and as possible as a first line of defence."

Utilizing abandoned or underused industrial "brownfields," filling strip plazas, warehouses and available brownfields, she argues, now suburbs are reintegrating many old city cores with residential, business and retail developments.

"Opportunities exist in the downtown Toronto's Beaches area to build on the old gas station and parking lots as a good example of smart growth development."

"What clearly opened the door to us with condominiums, however, is a classic example of smart growth, he says."

"Old city developments on any scale work best when they are integrated with existing transit systems, says Graychuk, who saw a prime example of this during a recent smart growth

affordable housing download

conference in Atlanta. "Bill South has got 18,000 employees in the greater Atlanta area and they just took 10,000 of them from over 100 locations and they're moving them to three new buildings over two subway stations, for no parking decision at all. If you go to the area, you'll see that it's not a lot of effort and it's a great result."

While building up cities and suburbs is important growth strategy for the future, it's not the only one. "If you go to the area, you'll see that it's not a lot of effort and it's a great result."

Sal Lake City officials determined that growth strategies would save the community \$12 million over two decades.

"Some 75 to 80 per cent of trips people take are not work-related and that's about 100,000 trips per day. That's a huge number."

It means doing "a lot of human scale" walkways and pedestrian-friendly streets, a good example of smart growth development.

Graychuk points to the downtown Toronto's Beaches area to build on the old gas station and parking lots as a good example of smart growth development.

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PLACES TO GROW

A Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

Have your say...

Ontario's Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal will be holding public information sessions on a plan for building strong and vibrant communities. Discussions will centre on:

- Accommodating population growth while preserving green spaces and promoting economic expansion, and
- Ensuring the appropriate resources are available to support this growth.

Attend the Public Information Session in your area.

The sessions will include an open house from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., with a presentation on the discussion paper at 7:00 p.m., followed by a question and answer session.

Kitchener
Victoria Park Pavilion
80 Schneider Avenue
Tuesday, July 20

St. Catharines
Pond Inlet Room
Mackenzie Chown Complex
Brock University
500 Glenridge Avenue
Wednesday, July 21

Oshawa
Northview Community Centre
150 Beatrice Street East
Thursday, July 22

Barrie
Victoria Village Activity Centre
Multi-Purpose Room
146 Toronto Street
Monday, July 26

Hamilton
Liuna Station Banquet &
Convention Centre
360 James Street North
Tuesday, July 27

Toronto
J.J.R. Macleod Auditorium
Medical Sciences Building
University of Toronto
1 King's College Circle
Wednesday, July 28

Markham
Scandia Ballroom, Radisson Hotel Toronto-Markham
50 East Valhalla Drive
Thursday, July 29

Tell us what you think.

Get a copy of the discussion paper at www.places togrow.pir.gov.on.ca or call toll-free 1-866-479-9781 - In Toronto call 416-585-6746. Copies will also be available at the public information sessions.

Submit your written comments to:

Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe
Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal
Smart Growth Secretariat
777 Bay Street, 16th Floor
Toronto, ON M5G 2E5
places togrow@pir.gov.on.ca

Submissions must be received by September 24, 2004.

Places to Grow
Better Choices. Brighter Future.

Paid for by the Government of Ontario.

PLACES TO GROW

BETTER CHOICES. BRIGHTER FUTURE.

Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

2006



Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal

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.²

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

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

Sprawl defined the challenge for the Growth Plan

Places to Grow - Better Choices. Brighter Future.

- 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 -

1

ONE

THEN: Problem defined as sprawl
THEN: Solution: smart / "better" growth

NOW: Problem no longer “sprawl” Not enough places to grow / supply.

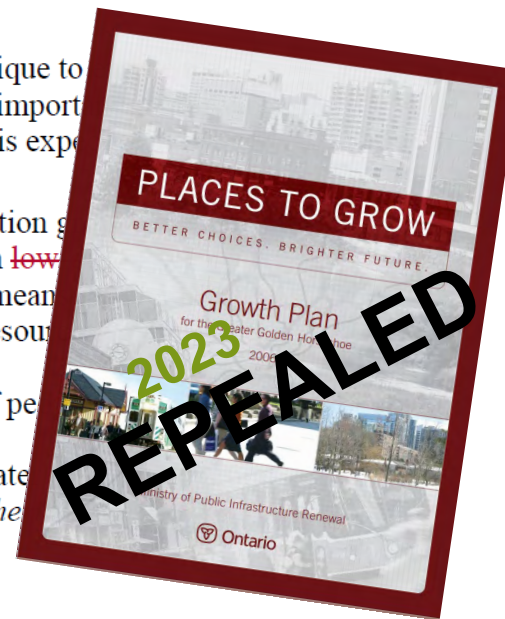
2019 changes: Places to Grow to “A Place to Grow”

1.2 The ~~G~~rowth ~~P~~lan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

Places A Place to Grow is the Ontario government's initiative to plan for growth and development in a way that supports economic prosperity, protects the environment, and helps communities achieve a high quality of life. The Places to Grow Act, 2005 enables the development of regional growth plans that guide government investments and land use planning policies.

As the *GGH* grows and changes, we must continue to value what makes this region unique to sustained prosperity of Ontario, its people, and future generations. While growth is an important diversified urban and rural communities and economies, the magnitude of growth that is expected coming decades for the *GGH* presents several challenges:

- ~~Increased~~ demand for major *infrastructure* investments driven by population growth, renew aging *infrastructure* and continuing *infrastructure* deficits associated with ~~low~~ sprawl unmanaged growth, combined with relatively scarce financial resources, means it is imperative to plan to optimize existing assets and make the best use of limited resources to reduce full life cycle costs.
- ~~Increased~~ traffic congestion, and the resulting delays in the movement of people in the *GGH*, is costing billions of dollars in lost GDP every year.
- ~~Urban sprawl~~ Unmanaged growth can degrade the region's air quality; water resources; heritage resources, such as rivers, lakes, *woodlands*, and *wetlands*; and *cultural heritage*.



“We believe as a government that
all of Ontario is a place to grow””



NOW: Problem is supply; Problem is planning.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/more-homes-built-faster>

A¹¹

Minister's message

...

This is not just a big-city crisis. The housing supply shortage affects all Ontarians: rural, urban and suburban, north and south, young and old.

The problem is clear. **There simply aren't enough homes** being built.

And the solution is equally clear. We need to get more homes built faster.

Our government has committed to getting 1.5 million homes built over the next 10 years, and **More Homes, Built Faster: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan 2022-2023** is the next step to getting there.

Our policies will provide the groundwork for growth by:

- reducing the bureaucratic costs and red tape that are delaying construction and pushing home prices even higher

...

A complicated system of overlapping policies guide land use in Ontario.

NOW: Solution is Fast Growth

Housing supply: Ontario's five-point plan

1 Speed:

Red tape and paperwork can add years to a construction project. We will maintain Ontario's strong environmental protections, while making the development approvals process faster.

2 Cost:

Layers of permits, government approvals and charges by municipalities add to the cost of building new homes. We will make costs more predictable, to encourage developers to build more housing.

3 Mix:

We'll make it easier to build different types of housing – from detached houses and townhomes to mid-rise rental apartments, second units and family-sized condos. We need a variety.

4 Rent:

There are more people looking for homes than there are places to rent. We will protect tenants and make it easier to build rental housing.

5 Innovation:

This means everything from new housing designs and materials to creative approaches to home-ownership and more. We'll encourage more innovation and creativity in Ontario's housing sector and make sure government isn't standing in the way.

TAKE-AWAYS

Fast growth accelerates a market-based approach that has deepened the housing crisis.

Planning processes and regulations – comparatively easy to change by political actors who need to be seen as intervening in a crisis – have become scapegoats to blame for delays and housing shortfalls.

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Author photo

TAKE-AWAY QUESTIONS

Trading core planning values for fast growth?

Will these changes deliver speed, high-quality developments, or affordability?

How else would *you* define contemporary planning problems & solutions?

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TOWNS &
SINGLES

COMING SOON REGI



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Photo source: @author photo-dall-e