



greenbelt



PLAN 2005

Presentation to the Great Lakes Commission
May 3, 2006



Ontario

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Presentation Highlights

- Greenbelt Location and Context
- Background on the Greater Golden Horseshoe - Ontario
- The Greenbelt Process
- The Greenbelt Plan Highlights
- Related Initiatives
- Conclusion

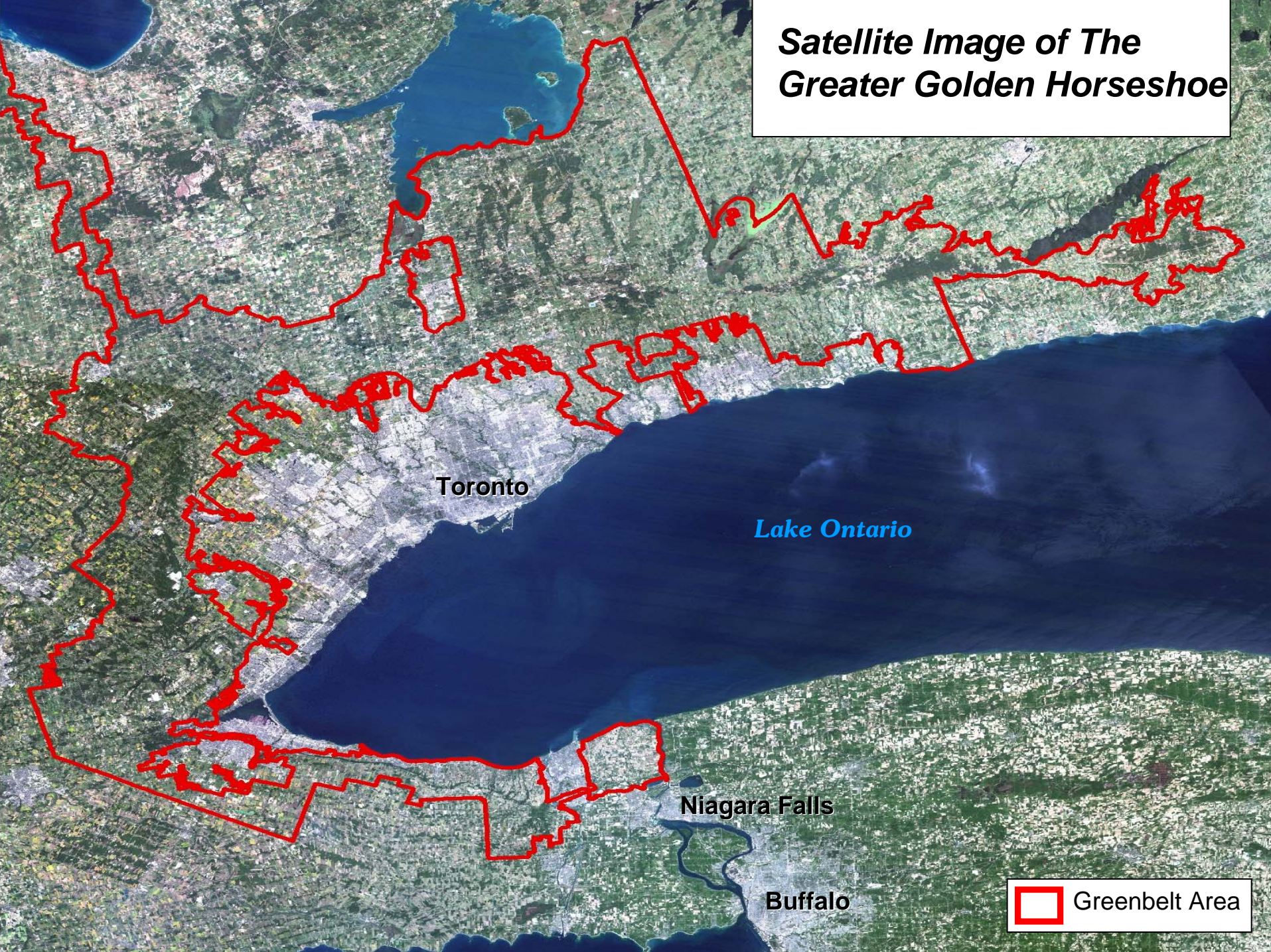


Greenbelt Context

- Formed in October, 2003, the current Provincial Government committed to the creation of a greenbelt in the Greater Golden Horseshoe in response to:
 - Urban sprawl;
 - Loss and fragmentation of agricultural lands; and
 - Loss and fragmentation of important ecological features (almost two-thirds of southern Ontario wetlands have been lost or severely degraded).



Satellite Image of The Greater Golden Horseshoe




Toronto

Lake Ontario

Niagara Falls

Buffalo

 Greenbelt Area

The Greater Golden Horseshoe

- 2001 population was approximately 7.8 million people (24% of Canada's population of 32 million, and 62% of Ontario's population of 12.5 million).
- This region is one of the fastest growing areas in Canada with 3.7 million additional people expected to settle here by 2031. Toronto is the major centre.
- That would be the same as having the population of the City of Los Angeles move into this area.
- Major challenge is balancing the need to protect land in this area while accommodating expected growth.

The Greenbelt Process

- December 16, 2003 – Greenbelt Protection Act (Bill 27) introduced to establish a greenbelt study area and place a one-year moratorium on new urban development in rural and agricultural areas. Act passed June 24, 2004.
- February, 2004 – Provincial Government appointed a multi-stakeholder Greenbelt Task Force to develop recommendations and consult on permanent greenbelt protection.
- August, 2004 - the Greenbelt Task Force provided the Government with its advice and recommendations based on the public consultation process.

The Greenbelt Process cont'd

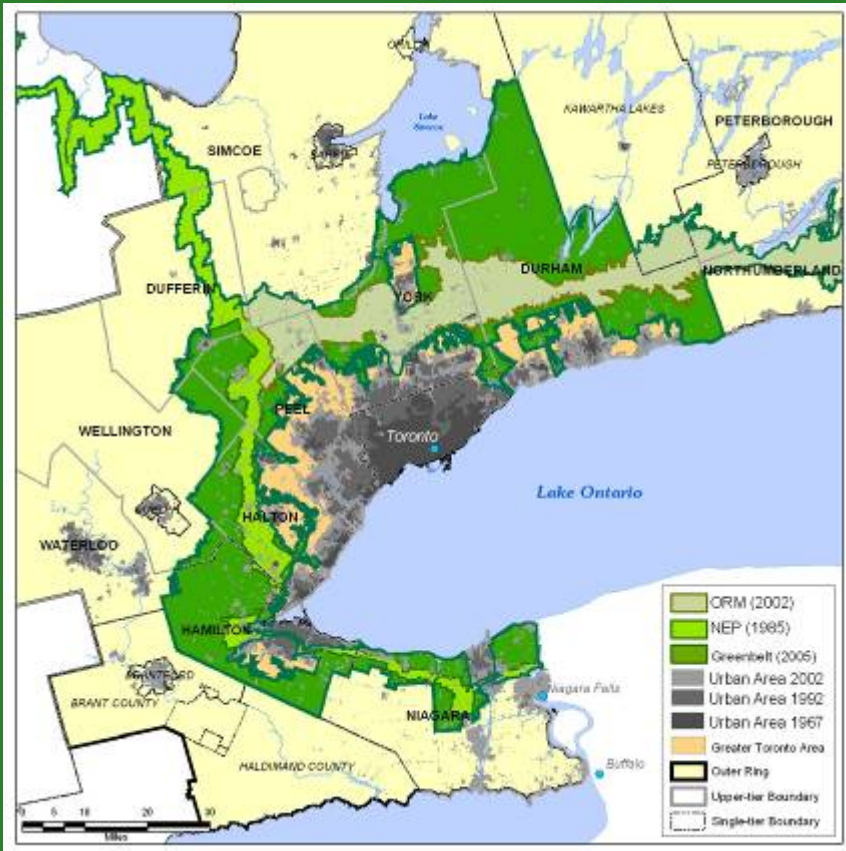
- October, 2004 – Proposed Greenbelt Act (Bill 135) introduced and draft Greenbelt Plan released for consultation.
- December, 2004 – Moratorium extended to March 2005 to allow more consultation.
- February, 2005 - The *Greenbelt Act, 2005* became law. Cabinet designated a Greenbelt Area, and the final Greenbelt Plan released.



Greenbelt Components

Greenbelt Area protects 1.8 million acres of land, and includes:

- Existing Niagara Escarpment Plan Area (UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve, and approx. 400,000 acres);
- Existing Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Area (environmentally sensitive landform, and approx. 400,000 acres); and
- New Protected Countryside Areas.



Greenbelt Vision

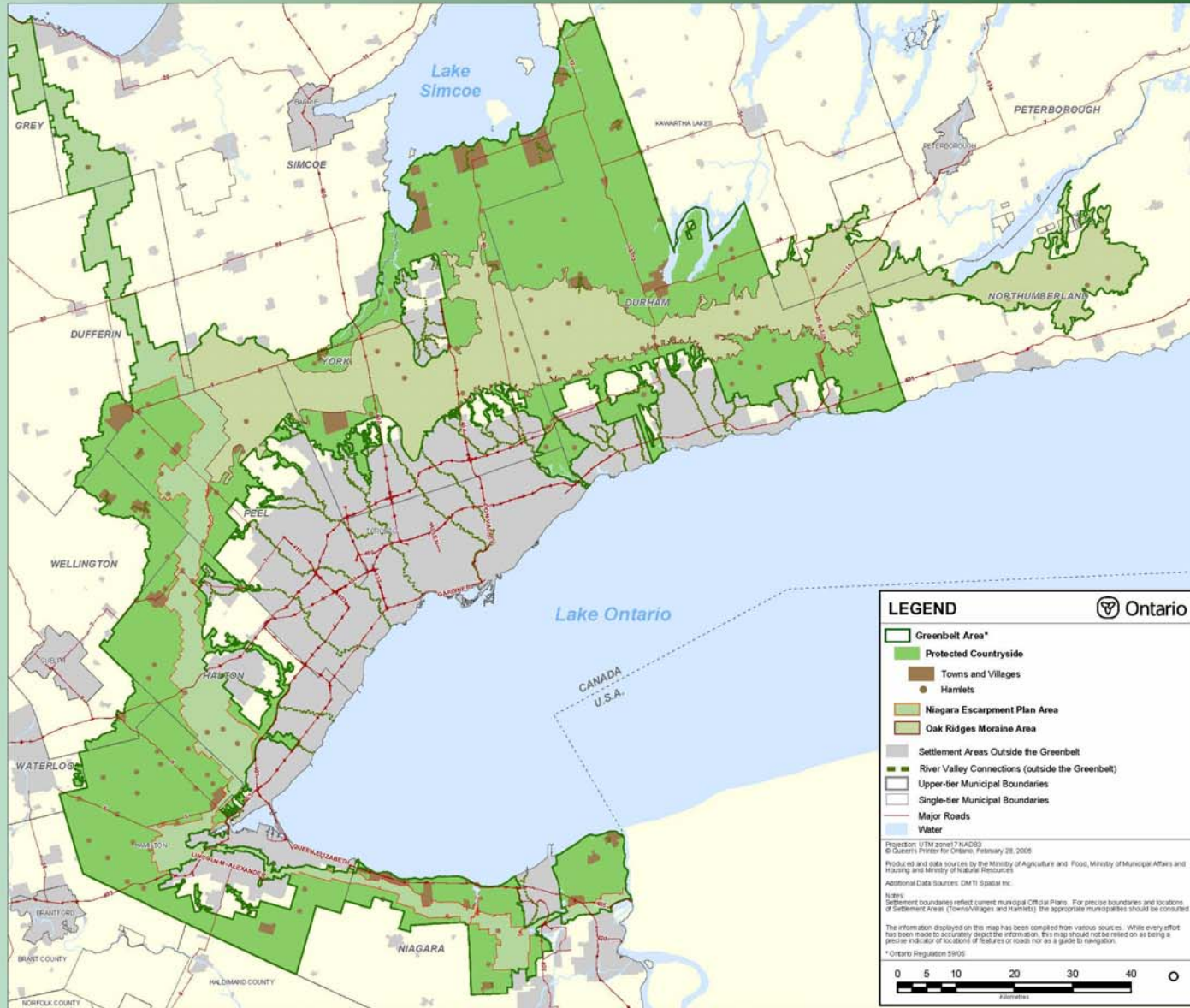
- Provides a broad band of permanently Protected Countryside.
- Provides for a diverse range of economic and social activities associated with rural communities, agriculture, tourism, recreation and resource uses.
















The Greenbelt Plan

Protected Countryside


- Geographic Specific Policy Areas
 - Agricultural System – Comprised of prime agricultural lands, including specialty crops (Niagara tender fruit and grape lands, Holland Marsh).
 - Natural System - Connects Oak Ridges Moraine, Niagara Escarpment, water and natural features, and major river valleys to Lake Ontario and Lake Simcoe.
 - Settlement Areas – Recognizes existing towns/villages. No new extension of Great Lakes servicing.
 - Parkland, Open Space, and Trails Policies
- General Policies
 - Include Infrastructure, Natural Resources and Lot Creation.



LEGEND 

-  Greenbelt Area*
-  Protected Countryside
-  Towns and Villages
-  Hamlets
-  Niagara Escarpment Plan Area
-  Oak Ridges Moraine Area
-  Settlement Areas Outside the Greenbelt
-  River Valley Connections (outside the Greenbelt)
-  Upper-tier Municipal Boundaries
-  Single-tier Municipal Boundaries
-  Major Roads
-  Water

Projection: UTM zone 17 NAD83
 © Queen's Printer for Ontario, February 28, 2005
 Produced and data sources by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Ministry of Natural Resources.
 Additional Data Sources: DM TI Spatial Inc.
 Notes:
 Settlement boundaries reflect current municipal Official Plans. For precise boundaries and locations of Settlement Areas (Towns, Villages and Hamlets), the appropriate Municipalities should be consulted.
 The information displayed on this map has been compiled from various sources. While every effort has been made to accurately depict the information, this map should not be relied on as being a precise indicator of locations of features or roads nor as a guide to navigation.
 * Ontario Regulation 31/05

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Municipal Implementation

- All land use decisions (e.g. official plans, zoning by-laws and decisions on development applications) are required to conform to the Greenbelt Plan.
- Municipalities are required to amend their official plans to conform to the Greenbelt Plan at their regular 5-year review.



Implementation

- Greenbelt Plan Review every 10 years, coordinated with the Niagara Escarpment Plan and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.
- Greenbelt Plan Amendments
 - Can only be proposed by the Minister and are subject to Cabinet approval.
 - Cannot have the effect of reducing the total land area of the Greenbelt Plan.
- Greenbelt Council
 - Advice on implementation issues, performance measures of the Plan, and input into 10 year review.



Implementation, cont'd

Greenbelt Foundation

- Independent from government.
- Coordinate and fund activities such as the promotion of agriculture and viniculture, research, public education, land stewardship, and land acquisition.
- Given a one-time \$25-million provincial grant to help cover start-up and on-going costs.



Related Initiatives

- Other provincial initiatives aim to complement the Greenbelt Plan by addressing growth management, urban intensification, and brownfields redevelopment.
- The Greenbelt is one part of Ontario's comprehensive approach to land use planning, which includes:
 - *Strong Communities Act, 2004;*
 - Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2005;
 - *Places to Grow Act, 2005* & Proposed Growth Plan;
 - Greater Toronto Transit Authority and ReNew Ontario;
 - Brownfields Ontario; and
 - Planning Reforms.

Strong Communities Act, 2004

- Requires that land use planning decisions “shall be consistent with” the Provincial Policy Statement.
- Removes the right to appeal an application that proposes to alter an “area of settlement” boundary or establish a new one.
- Increases the amount of time an application can be scrutinized before an appeal can be launched.



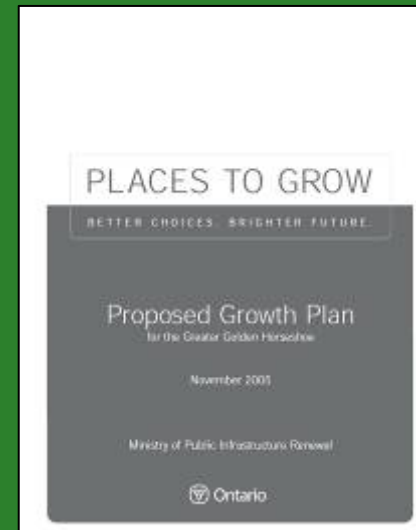
Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2005

- Provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development, and promotes the provincial “policy-led” planning system.
- Has policies concerning:
 - The efficient use and management of land and infrastructure;
 - Protection of the environment and resources; and
 - Ensuring appropriate opportunities for employment and residential development, including support for a mix of uses.



Places to Grow Act & Proposed Growth Plan

- Provides a legal framework for the government to designate any geographic area of the province as a growth area and develop a growth plan.
- Enables the government to plan for population growth, economic expansion and the protection of the environment, agricultural lands and other valuable resources.
- On November 24, 2005, a Proposed Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe was released for comment.
- Final Growth Plan expected to be released soon.



Greater Toronto Transit Authority & ReNew Ontario

Greater Toronto Transit Authority

- Will coordinate transit and transportation, and implement the transportation initiatives identified in the proposed Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

ReNew Ontario

- A five-year, \$30 billion public infrastructure investment plan.
- About \$11.4 billion to improve public transit, highways, border crossings and other transportation systems.
- Approximately \$5 billion for health care projects, including 105 hospital projects.
- More than \$10 billion to improve elementary and secondary schools and renew postsecondary facilities.

Brownfields Ontario

- An emphasis on brownfields redevelopment is supported by:
 - Policies promoting brownfields redevelopment (PPS);
 - Legislative changes removing barriers (*Brownfield Statute Law Amendment Act, 2001*);
 - Creation of Brownfields Coordinator role. Coordinator acts as a one-window access point to the government and coordinates government action;
 - Tax incentive program allowing municipalities to cancel or reduce property taxes; and
 - Access to tax assistance through Community Improvement Plans.
- Ongoing work to facilitate brownfields redevelopment remains a priority for the government.



Planning Reforms

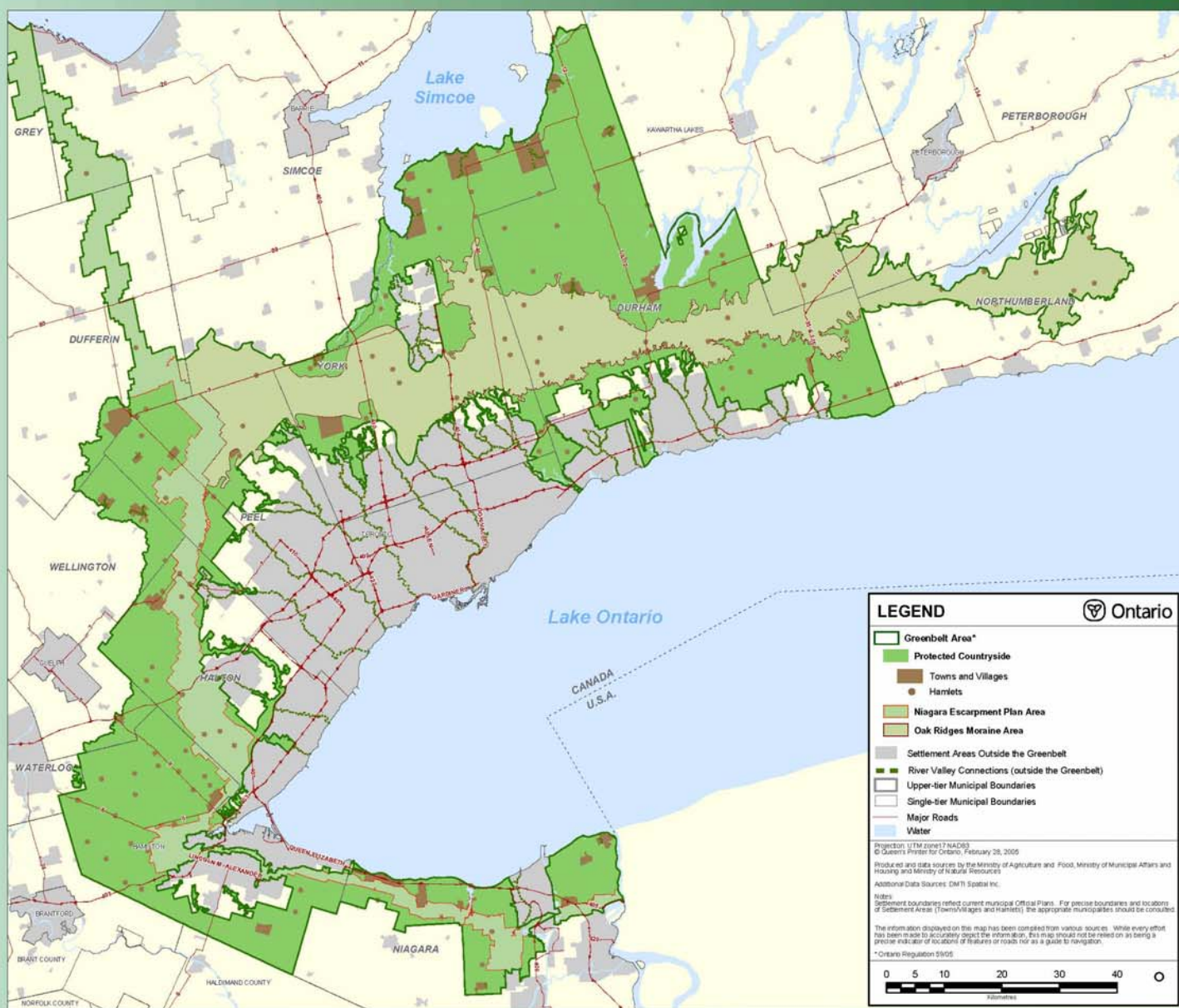
- Bill 51 introduced in December, 2005.
- Currently in the legislative process.
- Proposed amendments to the *Planning Act* include:
 - Shifting information, participation, consultation and decision-making to the front end of the process.
 - Requiring up-to-date municipal planning documents (official plans and zoning by-laws).
 - Providing implementation tools to deal with intensification, brownfields, community revitalization and other challenges and issues.



Conclusion

- Greenbelt initiative on its own is not sufficient.
- A comprehensive approach is needed, including:
 - Land use planning reform;
 - Growth management; and
 - Infrastructure investment.
- Ongoing education and training.
- Implementation challenges in the short-term need to be weighed against long-term public benefit.





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 Kilometres

For More Information

- Visit www.mah.gov.on.ca and click on the “Greenbelt” link.

