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MINISTRY OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL

PIR NET NEWS

Building and growing for a better tomorrow

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Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

Ontario took a major step towards shaping the future of the province on June 16 with the launch of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Called *Places to Grow*, this historic initiative is the first time ever that Ontario has taken a long-term approach to regional growth and development. It will improve the way growth is managed and protect natural areas in the fastest-growing region in Ontario, and the third fastest-growing urban region in North America. [For the full story, click here.]

Modernized health infrastructure well underway

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Great strides have recently been taken in the revitalization of Toronto's waterfront – the largest urban development project currently underway in North America. This revitalization is important to the continued success of the city and reflects the vision outlined in the province's Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe Region to create complete communities, with more options for living, working, shopping, and playing (see Growth Plan story for details on the Plan). [For the full story, click here.]

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Environmental assessment puts Ottawa on a rapid transit track to cleaner air

On June 19, Ottawa got a step closer to a new light rapid transit (LRT) project – and cleaner air – when the Ontario government approved an environmental assessment for a 29.4-kilometre, electric-powered light rail transit system. The route will extend from the University of Ottawa, run through the downtown core to Carleton University and into Riverside South ending at Barrhaven Town Centre. [For the full story, click here.]

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Ontario's commitment to strengthening rural communities and renewing public infrastructure is continuing through Intake Three of the Canada-Ontario Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (COMRIF). Municipalities with fewer than 250,000 people have until September 13, 2006 to apply to COMRIF for funding to improve their local infrastructure. [For the full story, click here.]

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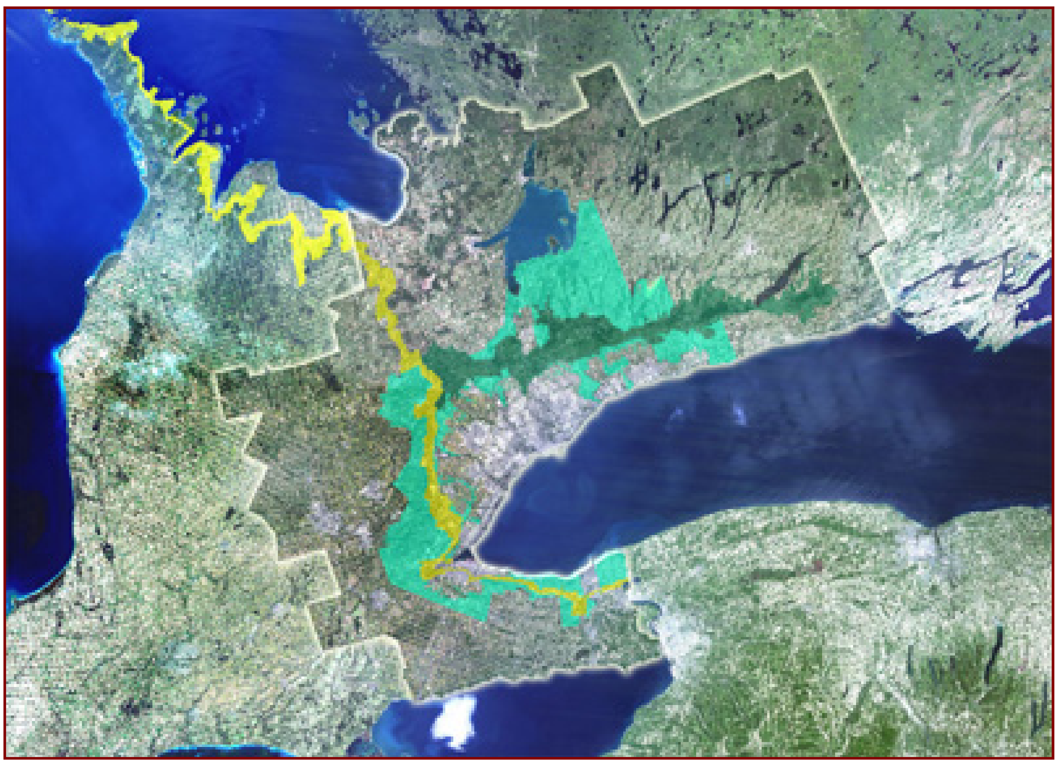

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> *The Places to Grow initiative will lay the foundation for economic opportunity, strong communities and environmental health for this region.*
>
> David Crombie, President and CEO of the Canadian Urban Institute

Acting as the master of ceremonies for the Growth Plan launch held in Mississauga, David Crombie echoed the support for the plan heard throughout the region. That support came as no surprise since the plan was the result of two years of consultation – including 40 public and stakeholder meetings and one thousand submissions.

Over 100 people attended the launch, including business, municipal and environmental leaders. Minister Caplan thanked everyone for their contributions and support, commended Mayor McCallion as an outstanding civic leader instrumental to the Growth Plan, and presented her with a framed copy of the cover of *Places to Grow*.

During the launch, Mississauga's long-time mayor Hazel McCallion said, "I commend the government for taking this bold step to make our communities strong, livable and healthy, now and in the future." She went on to say: "I only wish that the plan had been in effect 25 years ago when Mississauga started to develop."

Mayor McCallion pointed to a development in Port Credit – a short walk from the launch event – as a model of the type of vibrant, attractive redevelopment that Mississauga is now implementing, and that will be supported by the Growth Plan.

In the days following the launch, Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal David Caplan toured Hamilton, Kitchener-Waterloo, Niagara and Oshawa to commend local leaders on their leadership and thank them for the support for the province's vision. Each of these regions has started to plan locally to make *Places to Grow* a reality in their communities. While *Places to Grow* sets standards for municipal planning, it gives local governments the flexibility they need to address local circumstances.

The Niagara Economic Development Corporation hosted an event in Welland. Niagara Region Chair Peter Partington noted the plan would help the revitalization of downtown St. Catharines and stimulate redevelopment of brownfields. He went on to say: "The Growth Plan recognizes the important role of Niagara Region as a gateway between Ontario and the United States, and provides an excellent opportunity for the Niagara region and the province economically."

Hamilton's Mayor Larry Di Ianni reinforced the importance of the plan in helping revitalize the downtown in his city, which is already starting to see renewed development interest, including a series of new condominiums. "This approach to planning for the region's growth is what is needed to ensure that our communities are strong and prosperous in the future," commented Mayor Di Ianni.

Downtown revitalization continued to be a major topic when the Minister visited Oshawa. His meeting took place next door to where the future Durham Consolidated Courthouse will be built. It is a major new institutional use of a brownfield site chosen by the province for its potential to stimulate economic activity. Oshawa Mayor John Gray said: "We are pleased that the Growth Plan recognizes the importance of revitalizing downtowns and urban areas. The Growth Plan complements our vision for downtown Oshawa as a vibrant centre where people can live, work and play."

Waterloo Region Chair Ken Seiling joined the chorus of supporters at a luncheon he hosted in Kitchener for Minister Caplan and dozens of local leaders. "We have long recognized that growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe will impact all of us," said Seiling. "The Growth Plan is long overdue but is necessary and will complement the Growth Management Plan we have adopted for the Region of Waterloo. There will be challenges for all of us but the support of the province is one of the keys to success."

Praise for the plan continued beyond Ontario's borders. U.S. organizations such as the Congress for New Urbanism, the Urban Land Institute and the Smart Growth Leadership Institute said that what Ontario is doing is a model for North America.

And the wide-ranging benefits of *Places to Grow* are even recognized by the health sector. "The release of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe is a major step forward in urban planning to support the health of the patients we serve," said Jan Kasperski, Executive Director and CEO of the Ontario College of Family Physicians.

The Growth Plan will:

- stimulate economic prosperity
- revitalize downtowns
- encourage more compact communities, with services, shops and businesses close to home
- preserve greenspace and agricultural lands that are under pressure in the GGH
- curb urban sprawl
- cut down on car dependency
- contribute to better air quality
- spur transit investment and create conditions favourable to public transit use
- promote a culture of conservation

Studies by this organization, the Heart & Stroke Foundation and the Ontario Medical Association link car-dependent communities to decreasing levels of physical activity and a subsequent increase in obesity rates, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, childhood asthma and other health conditions.

How effective will the plan be? Consider the alternative. Research shows that business-as-usual development in the Greater Golden Horseshoe would result in a 42 per cent increase in auto emissions; a 45 per cent increase in average commuting times arising from increased traffic congestion; about 20 per cent higher infrastructure costs, adding some $12.2 billion to infrastructure costs in the Greater Toronto Area alone; and the loss of more than 1,000 square kilometres of farmland.

The Growth Plan will steer away from this course and enable Ontario to reap the benefits of the 3.7 million people and 1.8 million jobs expected to come to this region by 2031: new investment, new jobs, revitalized urban areas, new services for residents, greater choices in housing and transportation, and a quality of life that is second to none.

Redevelopment of a hypothetical, underused employment area to a revitalized, mixed use residential, employment and commercial district.

... More Before & After Renderings

The principles of growth planning are already in action. Here is what the future looks like today.

A major objective of the plan is to create complete communities where it is easier for people to walk, bike or take transit to get around.

... More Photos

To learn more about *Places to Grow*, visit Ontario.ca/placestogrow.

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Renderings:

Redevelopment of a hypothetical, underused employment area to a revitalized, mixed use residential, employment and commercial district

Hypothetical infrastructure in a mid-size downtown

Conversion of a hypothetical strip mall to a mid-rise, medium density development with a mix of uses including office, retail and residential

High density, mixed use redevelopment around a hypothetical major transit station

Photos:

The plan encourages greater choice of housing types to meet the needs of people at all stages of life. For example, a former industrial site on a main street has been renovated to include a mix of residential and business uses, while modern townhouses have been constructed on the street behind.

Higher density development close to a major transit hub supports a more integrated transit and transportation network that offers people more choices for getting from place to place.

A major objective of the plan is to create complete communities where it is easier for people to walk, bike or take transit to get around.

The plan identifies 25 downtown locations as urban growth centres that will be revitalized as community focal points, centres of culture and recreation and as economic generators for the surrounding area.

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Modernized health infrastructure well underway

Premier Dalton McGuinty joined health care professionals and local officials for the groundbreaking ceremony at Hôpital Montfort on June 5, 2006.

"For more than 50 years, Hôpital Montfort has been an essential part of the Ottawa community, especially for Francophones," said Premier McGuinty. "Once the redevelopment is done, Ottawa-area families will not only benefit from expanded health services, they'll also have better access to care."

With the release of requests for proposals in June to pre-qualified companies for three hospital sites, the residents of Sudbury, Mississauga and West Toronto are joining the ranks of thousands of Ontarians who are getting closer to realizing their dream of new and expanded health care facilities in their communities. Shovels are expected to be in ground at the Hôpital Régional de Sudbury Regional Hospital and the two Trillium Health Centre sites (Mississauga and Queensway) by January 2007.

These hospital expansions are just a small part of the significant progress made in the first year of the government's cohesive plan to build hospitals, modernize Ontario's health infrastructure and improve access to health care for Ontario families. Since the May 2005 release of *ReNew Ontario*, the government's five-year infrastructure plan, the government has given the green light to more than 100 hospital projects across the province. Among these are nine new state-of-the art hospitals from Sioux Lookout to St. Catharines, and five regional cancer care centres including one for children.

New cost-share brings an additional $1 billion investment to better hospital care

The government is also making it easier for these communities to raise their share of the funds for the hospital renewal projects by increasing its share of eligible construction costs for hospital projects to 90 per cent. Under the new cost share formula, an additional $1 billion investment will ensure more affordable hospital projects for Ontario communities.

“This is great news for Ontario’s hospitals,” said Hilary Short, president and chief executive office of the Ontario Hospital Association. “Investments in renewing Ontario’s hospitals are investments to better patient care.”

Profiles of Trillium Health Care Centre and Hôpital Régional de Sudbury Regional Hospital projects

Trillium Health Care Centre

For the Trillium Health Care Centre’s Mississauga site, plans include expansion of the cardiac program, renovations to the fracture clinic, diagnostic imaging, emergency support space, and mental health facilities. As well, a new seven-storey tower will be built to house orthopaedics, cardiac surgery, coronary care, rehabilitation and medicine units, and a learning centre.

The Queensway site expansion will include a complete renovation of the urgent care centre with renovations at the south entrance to create a drop-off area to serve the centre; construction of a new ancillary space associated with the adjacent ambulatory surgical centre; renovation and new construction of the oncology program; and renovation and new construction of the east entrance which will include a healing garden.

“Our physicians, staff and volunteers do incredible work to provide the best care to our patients,” said Ken White, Trillium Health Care president and chief executive officer. “It’s exciting to see us take another step toward modernizing and expanding our sites so we can provide even better health care to our communities.”

Hôpital Régional de Sudbury Regional Hospital (HRSRH)

The more than 500,000 residents of Sudbury and surrounding area are also one step closer to improved health care access in their region.

The regional hospital project will consolidate acute and rehabilitation services from three sites to one. Once finished, the hospital will accommodate up to 429 acute and rehabilitation beds.

“I’m delighted that we are moving forward quickly to get our one-site hospital built so that we can provide the best facility and the best health care services possible to people in the north,” said Vickie Kaminski, HRSRH president and chief executive officer.

“I’m proud of the way we are helping families and individuals get better health care,” said David Caplan, Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal. “We’ve invested in more than 100 hospital projects across Ontario that will improve, expand and modernize facilities and increase access to quality health care."

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But, some of the most exciting strides on the waterfront this summer will be taken by pedestrians along the stretch of Queen's Quay closed to traffic as an "avant gout" of what the transformed central waterfront will be like.

For up to two weeks this August, two lanes will be closed and grass or a boardwalk will cover the bottom half from Spadina Avenue to Bay Street. This avant gout was announced when the winning design for the central waterfront was unveiled on June 2.

A team led by Rotterdam's West 8 urban design & landscape architecture beat out four other internationally recognized competitors to win the Central Waterfront Innovative Design Competition to provide the public with continuous access across Toronto's central waterfront between Bathurst and Parliament streets.

"The design is bold, beautiful and buildable," said Brigitte Shim, a member of the jury that unanimously selected West 8.

The design creates a continuous water's edge public promenade for the length of the central waterfront, transforming Queens Quay into a grand boulevard. Traffic is shifted to the north side of the streetcar tracks, which remain in place. The water's edge is envisioned as an 18-metre promenade that includes a wooden boardwalk, the completion of the Martin Goodman Trail, floating finger piers and a double row of large, native trees just north of the lakeside promenade. A series of bridges rising out of the wooden boardwalk and spanning the ends of the slips provides continuous public access right along the edge of the lake.

The other members of the West 8 team are: Toronto-based du Toit Allsopp Hiller, Schollen & Company, Diamond and Schmitt Architects, Halsall Associates and David Dennis Designs, as well as New York-based Arup.

"That vision is to reclaim the water's edge in the central waterfront area for the people of Toronto and the Province of Ontario as a magnificent public asset," said David Caplan, Ontario Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal. When fully implemented, this design will give the City of Toronto an iconic waterfront gateway that will showcase the city, the province and indeed Canada internationally."

The West 8 design will be implemented in phases over several years. The first phase will be the transformation of Queens Quay between Spadina and York Street including the completion of the Martin Goodman Trail. $20 million for the first phase of construction is included in the 10-year waterfront funding plan approved by the three levels of government in the fall of 2005.

West Don Lands moving ahead

Since Ontario Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal David Caplan joined other dignitaries to officially launch the work on the West Don Lands in March, progress has been steady on the first major, sustainable community to be built on the Toronto waterfront.

The work is being led by the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation in collaboration with the Ontario Realty Corporation and other partners.

Hoarding has gone up, and almost all of the buildings targeted for de-construction have been brought down. Foundation investigation is complete throughout the site of the flood protection landform and all building foundations have been removed.

The Risk Assessment and Risk Management plan will be submitted to the Ministry of the Environment in July.

Part of the movement at the West Don Lands is personnel. Brad Searchfield left his position as Executive Vice-President, Portfolio Strategy and Asset Management at the Ontario Realty Corporation to become the Vice-President, Development of the West Don Lands at the Toronto Waterfront Development Corporation.

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LCBO hits new heights.and thinks inside the box

Left to right: LanPak, Inc. President Dino Ricci, Ontario Public Infrastructure Renewal Minister David Caplan, LCBO Acting Chair and CEO Philip J. Olsson and Tetra Pak Canada President Evelyn Watson enjoy a glass of French Cross, the first Ontario wine available in Tetra Prisma cartons. (CNW Group/LCBO for LanPak Inc.)

The Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) reached new heights of success during 2005-2006, and with a recently announced innovation in packaging, it is aiming even higher.

Net sales topped $3.6 billion in 2005-06, and the LCBO delivered an all-time high $1.2 billion dividend, not including taxes, to the Ontario government. Compared to fiscal year 2004-05, net sales increased 4.4 per cent ($154 million), net income rose 4.4 per cent ($50 million) and the dividend increased 7.6 per cent ($85 million). Expenses as a percentage of sales dropped to 16.1 per cent, compared to 16.4 per cent the previous year.

At its awards dinner, the prestigious Retail Council of Canada recognized the LCBO's achievements, giving the LCBO's Supply Chain Team the Excellence in Retail Training and Retail Supply Chain awards.

Innovation in retailing and social responsibility are both coming together with wine sold in environmentally friendly Tetra Pak containers. These containers are a worldwide trend with over two billion litres of wine packaged in Tetra Paks last year. In Ontario, consumers have purchased nearly one million litres of wine in Tetra Pak cartons in the past 10 months.

Ontario wineries will be able to take advantage of this trend thanks to the recent opening of the LanPak Tetra Pak facility in Richmond Hill. Andres Wines were the first packaged at the LanPak plant. Diamond Estates Wines & Spirits Ltd., Pelee Island Winery and Colio Estate Wines are among the wineries also working with LanPak and LCBO.

While offering wider packaging choices and convenience to Ontario wineries and consumers, Tetra Pak packaging is also part of the LCBO's environmental goal of eliminating 10 million kilograms of waste per year. According to Tetra Pak President Evelyn Watson, these containers "reduce packaging waste by 90 per cent in comparison to conventional wine bottles."

The LanPak plant is the first facility built specifically to package wine in Tetra. Its location here in Ontario means that Ontario wineries have the options to explore new export opportunities, new economic activity and new sources of revenue.

Minister Caplan, the minister responsible for the LCBO, at the map unveiling of wine sub-appellations in the Niagara Peninsula. An initiative of the Wine Council of Ontario and the Vintners Quality Alliance of Ontario, the map was beautifully rendered by artist Heather Cooper. Norm Beal, Chair of the Wine Council of Ontario, looks on.

In the meantime, the Government of Ontario continues to support Ontario wineries and help their VQA products become more competitive. On June 15, the province announced a $10 million investment over three years that will directly support the long-term economic growth of Ontario's domestic wine industry.

This complements such programs as the $10 million over five years to support Wine Council of Ontario marketing initiatives that are part of the Ontario Wine Strategy, and the $1 million in 2005-06 to further support Ontario wine marketing efforts.

VQA wines are also being championed through a map of wine sub-appellations in the Niagara Peninsula. Wine labelled by sub-appellation will help Ontario compete in international markets while also showcasing the diversity and excellence of Ontario wineries. The map was unveiled on June 13 during the second annual Wine Week – an initiative of the Ontario government to celebrate and promote Ontario's wines.

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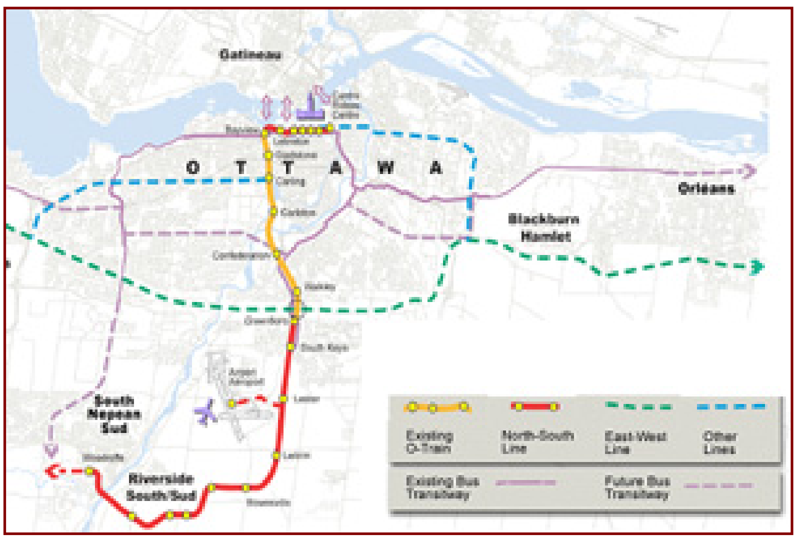

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The proposed project also includes 23 stations, three new park-and-ride facilities, and a maintenance centre.

By encouraging commuters to take transit, the new system will help get cars off the road, improve air quality, and reduce emissions. Some 43,500 projected passengers will use this LRT each day when it is fully operational.

Transit is a key priority of the McGuinty government. The 2006 Budget announced the $1.2 billion *Move Ontario* investment in public transit, and municipal roads and bridges.

“Ottawa’s plan to meet its long term transportation needs through a new public transit system is good news for the environment and local residents,” Environment Minister Laurel Broten said. “Our government will continue to take positive action towards a cleaner, healthier, more livable Ontario.”

“Light rail is a key part of our comprehensive plan to improve the quality of life for all Ottawa residents over the next 50 years,” said Mayor Bob Chiarelli. “We welcome this approval from the Ontario government as it takes us one step closer to our vision of a better future.”

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Municipalities with fewer than 250,000 people have until September 13, 2006 to apply to COMRIF for funding to improve their local infrastructure. Projects must be supportive of federal and provincial policy directions such as investing in regional water and sewage systems, sustainable water and sewage systems (i.e., full-cost recovery), reducing greenhouse gases, economic development and increased waste diversion. The criteria for project selection are health and safety, public policy priorities and value for money.

Under the five-year, $900-million COMRIF, the governments of Canada and Ontario are working together with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and local partners in small urban and rural communities by supporting sustainable infrastructure. Green infrastructure is COMRIF's top priority, with 55 per cent of funding for projects involving water quality, sustainable communities, climate change and innovation.

The McGuinty government is on the side of families in rural Ontario.

- Reducing the pressure on property taxes by picking up more of the tab for land ambulances and public health.
- Investing over $22 million in rural communities through the Rural Economic Development Program.
- Investing over $6 million in agricultural drainage infrastructure.

Information, including the application, guidebook and technical schedules, is now available at www.comrif.ca.