



MINISTRY OF PUBLIC
INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL

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A Message from the Minister



In the last issue of PIR NetNews, I reflected on how the final weeks of 2006 offered a great opportunity to look back at the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal's many excellent achievements in the year that was coming to a close.

These included the early accomplishments of the \$30 billion-plus, five-year [ReNew Ontario Plan](#), the passage of the [Places to Grow Act](#) and the release of the [Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe](#), and our participation in three international events – the [Building the Future: Leader's Forum on Infrastructure](#) event, which we hosted here in Toronto; the Infrastructure Journal Transport Forum in Scotland; the World Urban Forum in Vancouver – just to name a few.

As well, the last few weeks of 2006 saw our Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe become the first plan from outside the United States to win the American Planning Association's (APA's) Daniel Burnham Award. [[Click here for details about this accomplishment.](#)]

But the beginning of a new year has the opposite effect on me, as I begin looking ahead to the many exciting opportunities that await our Ministry in 2007.

In fact, I'd like to highlight a few upcoming events with you.

Last month, I kicked off what we're calling the "Rebuilding Ontario Tour." I'll be visiting several cities and towns across the province bringing Ontarians up to date on how our government is working on the side of Ontario families to ensure we all enjoy a quality of life that is second to none. I started the tour in Sudbury on Jan 25, North Bay on Jan 26, and Kingston and Belleville on Feb 2. Stops in Niagara Falls, West Lincoln, Ottawa, Hamilton, London, Sarnia and Windsor are planned in the coming weeks.

I am truly enjoying this opportunity to travel across Ontario to provide details about our ReNew Ontario

initiative and our work in rebuilding our province's hospitals, our schools, our public transportation and clean water systems, our court houses – and a host of other valuable public infrastructure assets.

On Feb 5 we launched “Bag it back”– our government’s new program for recycling wine, beer and spirit containers. This deposit return program will help encourage Ontarians to recycle better, and, through the efforts of our ministry, along with the Ministry of the Environment, the LCBO and Ontario’s winery stores and The Beer Store, we will have more containers recycled into high-end uses, including new glass bottles, fiberglass and polar fleece. Look for a full report on “Bag it back” in the next issue of PIR NetNews.

Also in early-February, I’ve been invited to give the opening keynote speech at an event called the Ontario Innovation Infrastructure Finance Forum, to be held in Toronto on Feb 6. At this event, which will draw participants active in finance, construction and contracting, law and government in Ontario and other jurisdictions, I will be speaking about the role our government is playing – through Infrastructure Ontario and many other initiatives – in infrastructure development and renewal. This forum will provide a great opportunity to exchange ideas with leaders from the public and private sectors, and I’m looking forward to it.

February will also be an exciting time at the [Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation](#) (TWRC), our agency responsible for creating waterfront parks, public spaces, cultural institutions and diverse and sustainable commercial and residential communities along the city’s waterfront. The TWRC has a number of exciting projects in the work that will be moving ahead in early-2007, including a competition to develop bold new concepts for the Lower Don Lands area, including the mouth of the Don River. I’m looking forward to the many exciting developments that will take place on the waterfront this year.

I’d like to wish all of you a very happy new year for 2007 – a year I know will be our most productive yet!

David Caplan
Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal

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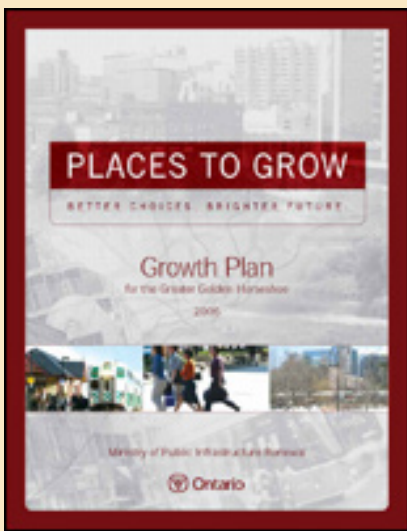
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Ontario gains international recognition as Growth Plan wins prestigious U.S. award



In 1909, Daniel Burnham published the famous Chicago Plan, hailed by many as one of the most important documents in North American planning history, and became famous for his remark: "Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men's blood and probably will not themselves be realized."

Now, the Ontario government has won a prominent award from the American Planning Association (APA) bearing Burnham's name, gaining worldwide recognition in the process.

In mid-December, the APA announced that the Ontario government's Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe was awarded the Daniel Burnham Award for 2007. This prestigious award is given to the plan that best illustrates progress, community benefit and contribution to the advancement of the planning profession. The Growth Plan's win is all the more impressive in light of the fact that it is the first plan from outside the United States to capture the award, considered the most prestigious planning award in the United States.

"This plan is a landmark comprehensive plan that is both visionary and pragmatic," said Carol Rhea, AICP, chair of the 2007 APA Awards Committee. "It provides a strategic, innovative and coordinated approach to sustainable growth and development for 110 different municipalities."

Public Infrastructure Renewal Minister David Caplan said that the award was significant for Ontario for several reasons. "The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe is the cornerstone of an ambitious package of related new government initiatives including the Greenbelt and the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority," said Caplan. "Long-term growth planning is key to Ontario's future and will ensure Ontarians have the communities they want and deserve."

Caplan stressed that while the award was a significant one for the government and the people of

Ontario, it was one that could never have been won without the participation of many engaged participants from all walks of life in the province. "I would like to congratulate everyone involved in creating this award-winning plan," said Caplan. "The Ontario government could not have done this without the help of thousands of citizens, stakeholders and experts."

The Growth Plan focuses on long-term prosperity and quality of life in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. It is the first growth plan to be released under the Places to Grow Act, 2005, and outlines an innovative long-term vision for Canada's most populous region.

The focus of the plan is to create complete and vibrant communities, with the right mix of housing, jobs and services. The Growth Plan sets clear standards for growth and development across one of the fastest growing regions in North America, while at the same time giving local governments the flexibility they need to maintain their unique identities.

Prominent public figures from across the Greater Golden Horseshoe have congratulated the Ontario government on the Plan's Burnham Award win.

"I commend Minister David Caplan for taking leadership on the Growth Plan and congratulate him for winning this well-deserved award," said Oshawa Mayor John Gray. "It's a plan that recognizes the importance of revitalizing downtowns and urban areas. The Growth Plan complements our vision for Oshawa as a place with a vibrant centre where people can live, work and play."

David Crombie, former Mayor of Toronto and President of the Canadian Urban Institute, also recognized the importance of the award.

"The Province's Growth Plan represents the kind of leadership that Ontario has been needing for a long while," said Crombie. "This award highlights that this Toronto region can be a real leader in North America. Let's keep up the momentum."

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While the sheer scope of renewing Ontario's infrastructure necessitates building partnerships, border infrastructure depends on even more government partners – including Canada's most important trading partner, the U.S.

One third of all Canada-U.S. trade by truck flows through Windsor, and every day, 42,100 commuters, tourists and truck drivers carrying \$316 million worth of goods cross the Windsor-Detroit border. Consequently, additional border capacity in

Windsor is a national priority for both countries. Canada, the U.S., Ontario and Michigan are working on increasing the long-term capacity of this crossing.

Recent discussions with the federal government have been encouraging. Lawrence Cannon, federal minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, said: "Our bi-national team is currently working to determine the optimum location of a new crossing, taking into account the impact on the environment and local communities on both sides of the Detroit River."

To accelerate improvements along the gateway to the Windsor-Detroit border, Premier Dalton McGuinty enlisted former Canadian Ambassador to the U.S. Michael Kergin. As the Premier's Special Advisor on border issues, Kergin is working with provincial officials, the federal government and the City of Windsor to complete important projects that are now underway and to deliver a new Detroit River crossing no later than 2013.

Cannon indicated the federal government intends to explore the opportunity to partner with the private sector to design, build, finance and operate the new Windsor crossing.

Ontario has the expertise in managing complex projects through Infrastructure Ontario, an arm's length Crown Corporation that leverages private financing to strategically rebuild major infrastructure

projects, on time and on budget, while ensuring appropriate public control and ownership.

As well, December saw an important announcement from Ontario Transportation Minister Donna Cansfield and Michigan's Director of Transportation Kirk Steudle that confirms both jurisdictions' commitment to improving safety and keeping traffic moving at the border.

Ontario and Michigan have agreed to share information through Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technology that monitors traffic, weather, road and border conditions, allowing officials to respond more quickly and provide real-time information on border conditions to help travelers plan their trips.

The ITS projects were announced under the Let's Get Windsor-Essex Moving strategy , a joint federal-provincial government commitment to invest \$300 million on the Windsor Gateway. This year, the Ontario government is investing more than \$1.4 billion in highway improvements in the five-year, \$30 billion-plus ReNew Ontario infrastructure investment plan.

Ontario is leading the Canadian portion of the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) study. The Border Transportation Partnership is focused on working with the community to reach a solution that protects the environment, provides safer and more efficient flow of cross-border traffic, and improves the overall quality of life in the host communities. The DRIC study team is continuing comprehensive technical studies during the current phase of the Environmental Assessment.

The DRIC study team is also reviewing the results of a Value Engineering (VE) study that concluded in Windsor on September 15. While a VE study normally analyzes the requirements of a project to achieve the same essential functions at the best value, this study focused on ways to improve the practical access road alternatives.

The VE team included experts in various aspects of transportation and environmental planning, highway design, geotechnical engineering, roadside safety and tunnelling, from private companies and provincial, state, and municipal governments. The VE team worked to identify potential improvements to the practical alternatives currently under consideration including: interchange modifications; ways to reduce traffic impacts; improvements to ramps; areas for at-grade, depressed and tunneled roadways; reductions in construction risk; and ways to minimize right-of-way requirements.

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Rebuilding Public Infrastructure a Key Component of Government's Economic Stimulus Package



The Ontario government's announcement last October that it would be providing a \$191.6 million economic stimulus package contained a strong commitment to rebuilding and revitalizing the province's public infrastructure.

The package focuses on enhancing existing infrastructure programs and fast-tracking planned initiatives and is a key component of the government's broader agenda to encourage a stronger workforce and a stronger economy.

Infrastructure projects make up one of the four key components of the package, designed to assist Ontario families and communities affected by the province's moderate economic growth, along with skills, tourism promotion and interprovincial trade. Investments in infrastructure projects will account for nearly \$150 million of the package.

"While the economy is fundamentally strong, the current situation demands proactive steps to boost jobs and growth," said Finance Minister Greg Sorbara. "These investments will continue to strengthen Ontario's foundation for long-term prosperity and build on the overall economic plan."

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Hôpital Montfort's project scope includes building two new wings and renovating existing facilities, including intensive care, maternal/newborn, mental health, ambulatory care and emergency services. The redeveloped facility will have a capacity of 417 beds, and will double the size of the hospital to 750,000 square feet.

Hôpital Montfort is Ontario's only specialized community hospital offering clinical training in French in a Franco-Ontarian environment. The hospital employs 1,100 staff.

The project will not only bring improved health care to the community but it will create economic value in Ottawa as skilled trades people, subcontractors and suppliers benefit from the capital investment. Over Hôpital Montfort's 3-year construction period, there will be an average of 250 workers on site daily.

The construction is expected to be completed by Fall 2009.

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Province's heritage land contribution preserves greenspace in Hamilton



Mid-December was a time for some early holiday-season celebrating in the City of Hamilton among residents who cherish the area's natural resources.

That's because on the 15th of the month, the McGuinty government announced that it would be contributing more than 28 acres of provincially significant natural heritage land to the City of Hamilton, to preserve open space in the community of Ancaster.

The 28-acre woodlands parcel extends north from Highway 403 and east from Shaver Road, and lies within an area known as the Jerseyville Road Woodlot on the urban fringe of the community of Ancaster. The lands link to the Niagara Escarpment and the Greater Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt, and will protect significant wetlands, a mature forest and hundreds of species of plants and wildlife – including some that are rare.

“By preserving this environmentally sensitive area, we are expanding Hamilton's greenspace and creating a legacy for future generations to enjoy,” said Ted McMeekin, MPP for Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot, who made the announcement on behalf of Public Infrastructure Renewal Minister David Caplan. “It is just another example of the McGuinty government contributing to a higher quality of life for residents and visitors.”

“This important contribution supports our government's plan to increase parkland and protected areas across the province,” said David Caplan, Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal. “By building a clean, green and healthy Ontario for families, we're ensuring our province is the place to be for years to come.”

Hamilton Mayor Fred Eisenberger also emphasized the importance of protecting natural resources in

the city. "I am pleased that the Province of Ontario has entrusted us with conserving this environmentally sensitive area for this and future generations to enjoy and appreciate," said Eisenberger.

Hamilton was also the site of a major environmental announcement in October, when the McGuinty government announced that it would be protecting 180 acres of provincially significant natural heritage lands to create Hamilton's newest conservation area, the Eramosa Karst.

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The Ontario government recognizes that rural and small communities face a host of unique challenges, particularly with regard to infrastructure. As part of on-going efforts to help rural and small municipalities provide safe and reliable local infrastructure, PIR and its Crown agency Infrastructure Ontario recently launched the \$70 million Rural Infrastructure Investment Initiative municipal grant program.

This one-time initiative compliments other provincial investments that support economic development, prosperity and quality of life in these municipalities and is part of the \$185 million investment, announced by Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty in September of last year, to build opportunity for farmers and strengthen vital infrastructure in rural communities.

Eligible municipalities can apply for funding online. The online application will remain open until noon on Monday, February 5, 2007, and can be accessed by clicking the “Apply Online” button at:

<http://www.infrastructureontario.ca/en/rural/index.asp>

An official at one small municipality commented that the program is particularly effective because it is “tailored to the unique needs of rural and smaller communities” like his, adding that the program is further enhanced by Infrastructure Ontario’s easy-to-use online application.

The Rural Infrastructure Investment Initiative is just one element of the government’s efforts to address Ontario’s municipal infrastructure deficit. Other aspects include the Canada-Ontario Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (COMRIF) Intake 3 and Asset Management program, as well as Infrastructure Ontario’s affordable loan program which is an attractive, cost-efficient alternative to traditional project financing.

Questions regarding the application process should be directed to Debbie Chen-Yin, Director of Loan Operations, by email at debbie.chen-yin@infrastructureontario.ca

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