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Select Annual Report by Year



THE GREENBELT FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2020–2021

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR



Ontario's Greenbelt—the world's largest—has a long and rich history of serving Ontarians.

We have had another challenging year given the global pandemic, but the Greenbelt continued to serve Ontarians by providing clean air, fresh water, varied opportunities for recreation, important natural solutions to climate change, and a reliable local food source. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Greenbelt Foundation has shifted how we engage with our partners, stakeholders, and audiences, but our vision has remained the same.

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO



It goes without saying that the past year has been challenging for communities across Ontario.

One silver lining has been the opportunity to spend more time exploring nature. In southern Ontario, we are incredibly fortunate to have the Greenbelt that surrounds the Greater Golden

Horseshoe—Canada's most rapidly urbanizing region. The Greenbelt contains some of the province's most important natural areas, like the Oak Ridges Moraine, Niagara Escarpment, and 21 urban river valleys.

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THE GREENBELT FOUNDATION

The Greenbelt Foundation is a charitable organization, and the only organization solely dedicated to ensuring Ontario's Greenbelt remains permanent, protected, and prosperous. We make the right investments in its interconnected natural, agricultural, and economic systems, to ensure a working, thriving Greenbelt for all. Ontario's Greenbelt is the world's largest, with over two million acres of farmland, forests, wetlands, and rivers, working together to provide clean air, fresh water, and a reliable local food source.

At its core, Greenbelt Foundation is a research and grant-making organization

that supports and collaborates with other organizations and actors to further the mission of Ontario's *Greenbelt Plan*. Our work centres on protecting and investing in near-urban nature, natural infrastructure, and climate resilience; supporting local Greenbelt farmers and the rural agricultural sector and economy; promoting the vast and varied tourism and recreation opportunities that the Greenbelt offers; and engaging Ontarians in enjoying and helping to keep the Greenbelt thriving.

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KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

\$12 million in renewed funding secured, ensuring Foundation activities continue

10 natural asset inventory programs

Improvements made to municipal-Indigenous relations around land-use issues

Growing the Greenbelt grant stream opened, supporting public consultation

Near-Urban Nature Network launched, increasing protection of nature in the region

THE GREENBELT FOUNDATION

\$100+ million	300+	13 published
in strategic	organizations	reports
projects and	awarded	stemming
partnerships	grants	from strategic
		research
		projects

THE GREENBELT

\$9.6 billion	\$3.2 billion	177,700 jobs	9 out of 10
contributed	contributed	supported	Ontarians in
annually in	annually in	(full-time or	favour of the
economic	ecosystem	equivalent)	Greenbelt
activity	services		

SPOTLIGHT: UPDATE ON OAK RIDGES MORaine

Since February 2020, the Greenbelt Foundation and Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation have been integrated, working collectively to preserve, protect, and restore the environmental and agricultural integrity of the Oak Ridges Moraine.



The Oak Ridges Moraine Act and Plan focus on the protection of the hydrologic and natural heritage systems that the ORM supports. The Moraine is an iconic and critically important natural feature of southern Ontario, and a unique ecological and geographical feature of the Greenbelt. It is known as "the rain barrel of southern Ontario" due to its crucial contribution to regional groundwater that provides drinking water to about 250,000 Ontarians. In fact, more than 80 watersheds originate on the Moraine and over six million people live in the watersheds flowing off the moraine.

In addition to its critical role as a hydrologic feature, it is also a vital natural heritage system with about 30 per cent forest cover, some of which is unique interior forest, such as found at the Fleetwood Creek conservation area. Home to 78 species at risk, it is an area of exceptional biodiversity. As for recreational facilities, the ORM offers a trail along its length to provide residents with access to nature and physical and mental well-being.

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ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS

NEAR-URBAN NATURE, NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE



Near-urban nature is comprised of the forests, river valleys,

wetlands, farmland, and other ecological features that surround and intersect urban communities. In the Greenbelt, near-urban nature contains some of the highest levels of biodiversity in Canada, with more species-at-risk than anywhere else in Ontario.

These areas also perform an under-recognized function as *natural infrastructure*. Healthy forests, wetlands, and rivers provide local governments with core infrastructure services, such as stormwater management, that contribute to *climate resilience* by preventing flooding, protecting freshwater, and offsetting the urban heat-island effect.

The Greenbelt Foundation is Canada's largest third-party investor in municipal natural asset management programs. Our vision is to mainstream the protection and use of natural assets, and to make near-urban nature an integral part of key government environmental conservation programs.

MUNICIPAL NATURAL ASSET INVENTORY PROGRAM

Municipal Natural Assets Initiative (MNAI) and the Greenbelt Foundation have worked together since 2018 to enable Ontario municipalities to invest in nature as a way of creating better climate resilience, strengthening infrastructure at reduced cost, and protecting near-urban natural systems.

READ MORE

NEAR-URBAN NATURE NETWORK: A SOLUTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY LOSS

In May 2021, the Greenbelt Foundation led the Southern Ontario Nature Coalition (SONC) in releasing *Near-Urban Nature Network: A*

Solution to Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss, a short summary report of solutions for protecting near-urban nature in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, with lessons that can be applied across Canada.

READ MORE

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR ECOHEALTH IN ONTARIO

In May 2021, Greenbelt Foundation and EcoHealth Ontario released two new case studies and one survey design that showcase the economic, public health, and community well-being benefits of urban greenspace.

READ MORE

COOLING CORRIDORS AND URBAN FORESTS IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

Over the past year, the Greenbelt Foundation released two reports that look at the role urban forests play in making Canadian communities more resilient to climate change.

READ MORE

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE SECTOR

Released by the Foundation in June 2020, the new *Economic Impact Assessment of the Green Infrastructure Sector in Ontario* is the first report to assess the full scope of the sector's contribution to Ontario's economy.

READ MORE

**LOCAL FOOD, AGRICULTURE, AND
RURAL COMMUNITIES**



Farmland has been disappearing in the Greater Golden Horseshoe at an alarming rate—more than 450,000 acres of farmland has been lost since 1991. The good news is, the Greenbelt has changed the course within its boundaries.

Ontario's Greenbelt preserves **750,000 acres** of some of Canada's most fertile farmland within one of its most favourable growing climates. The Greenbelt's agricultural system is the cornerstone of the rural economy. It includes Ontario's only two specialty crop areas—the **Holland Marsh** and the **Niagara Tender Fruit and Grape Area**—whose fertile soils and unique climate conditions allow Greenbelt farmers to grow over 50 per cent of the province's fruit acreage and 10 per cent of its vegetable acreage.

The Greenbelt is home to 4,783 farms, earning 68 per cent more revenue per acre than the average Ontario farm.

THE POWER OF SOIL

In March 2021, the Greenbelt Foundation and Équiterre released *The Power of Soil - An Agenda for Change to Benefit Farmers and Climate Resilience*, a report that illustrates how healthy soils will help Canada's farmers adapt to climate change and play an important role in mitigation.

READ MORE

PLANT THE SEEDS UPDATE AND FARMER PROFILES

Building on a report released in 2020, the Greenbelt Foundation released an updated *Plant the Seeds - Opportunities to Grow Ontario's Fruit and Vegetable Sector* report in June 2021 that

uncovers even greater opportunity to expand Ontario's fruit and vegetable sector, including production of local apples, snap beans, and two kinds of cabbage.

READ MORE

Photo Credit: Bill Lishman

FARMING IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

Farming in a Changing Climate, another edition of the *In a Changing Climate* series of reports, released in October 2020, provides a field-level view of what a rapidly changing climate means for farming in Ontario's Greenbelt.

READ MORE

COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

Growing Close to Home: Creating Complete Rural Communities is a report released by the Greenbelt Foundation in June 2020 that describes how rural communities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe are taking strides to become more 'complete' and attract diverse residents and businesses. As Ontario communities recover from COVID-19, there is an opportunity to build back better.

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OUTCOMES OF GREENBELT FARMERS MARKET NETWORK GOING ONLINE

In Spring 2020, the Greenbelt Foundation supported the Greenbelt Farmers' Market Network in pivoting their operations to bring *30 key markets online*, recovering income for farmers and providing a reliable source of local food for consumers during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

READ MORE

Ontario's Greenbelt includes vibrant agricultural communities, lush hiking trails, prolific cycling routes, dramatic shorelines, and accessible river valleys that can be enjoyed on foot or by bicycle, canoe, or kayak. Beyond its natural attractions, the Greenbelt is a thriving, working landscape, with a diversity of small towns and businesses that provide unique opportunities for locals and travelers alike looking to shop, dine, and support the rural economy.

Over 76 million people visit the Greenbelt each year, contributing \$8.3 billion in GDP and supporting 161,500 local jobs in the sector.

The Greenbelt Foundation helps drive tourism and recreation in the Greenbelt.

We help Ontarians understand the variety of opportunities the Greenbelt offers for enjoying a low-carbon, healthy active lifestyle, particularly during COVID-19.

MOCCASIN IDENTIFIER

The Greenbelt Foundation continues to support the Moccasin Identifier as it works to raise awareness for the current and historical presence of diverse Indigenous Communities in the Greenbelt region.

READ MORE

From L–R: Councillor Johanna Downey; Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) CAO, Deb Martin-Downs; Sr. Mgr. PARCs, CVC, Terri LeRoux; Councillor Karen Ras; Program Mgr, Governance Relations, 407 ETR, Conan O'Brien; Greenbelt Foundation CEO, Edward McDonnell; and MCFN Elder, Carolyn King.

CREDIT VALLEY TRAIL

Throughout 2020 and into 2021, the Greenbelt Foundation supported the development of the Credit Valley Trail Experience Plan. This process worked toward implementation of a 100 kilometre Credit Valley Trail in order to promote tourism and integrate cultural, Indigenous, heritage, and ecological experiences along the banks of the Credit River—one of 21 Greenbelt-protected urban river valleys.

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BRUCE PENINSULA ECOADVENTURES

In September 2020, the Greenbelt Foundation announced a grant to Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association (BPBA) for their *EcoAdventures* program. This program takes visitors in the Biosphere Reserve on eye-opening nature-based adventures, while learning about this uniquely beautiful area of global ecological and geological significance.

READ MORE

RIVERS FOR RESILIENCE CAMPAIGN LAUNCH AND VIDEOS

Stemming from the Greenbelt River Valley Connector Program, the Rivers for Resilience campaign launched with Park People in March

2021 and used three high-quality, consumer-facing videos to promote the unique recreational, cultural, and ecological benefits of the 21 Greenbelt-protected urban river valleys.

READ MORE

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



Through Public Outreach and Engagement, the Greenbelt Foundation deepens public understanding of the Greenbelt, as well as how it contributes to a prosperous and sustainable future. The Greenbelt Foundation has continued to execute a robust public engagement program that inspires Ontarians to learn more, get involved in helping to steward the Greenbelt, and fully enjoy all the recreation, culture, and tourism opportunities it offers.

2020–2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

MEDIA:

35 MILLION

READERS REACHED

900+

GREENBELT MENTIONS

100+

EARNED MEDIA STORIES

COVERAGE

IN TORONTO STAR, NATIONAL
OBSERVER, AND HILL TIMES

500+ TIMES

TWO TV PSAS AIRED

SOCIAL:

20K+

MENTIONS

1.4 MILLION

IMPRESSIONS

2K

NEW FOLLOWERS

65K

ENGAGEMENTS

36,000

READERS OF NEW BLOG SERIES
REACHED

SHARED PATH'S MUNICIPAL-INDIGENOUS EDUCATION TOOLKIT

In March 2021, the Greenbelt Foundation renewed its funding to the Shared Path Consultation Initiative to support increased communications between Indigenous Communities and Greenbelt-area municipalities around land-use planning.

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2020 FRIEND OF THE GREENBELT AWARD

In November of 2020, the Greenbelt Foundation held its annual Friend of the Greenbelt Award as an online campaign and recognized

eight important recipients who have championed the Greenbelt and helped build its legacy over its first 15 years.

Engagement spotlight:

- Over 24K video views
- Close to 3000 engagements

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EARTH RANGERS—5 MISSIONS

Engaging Kids and Families in Protecting the Greenbelt is a youth-focused program that ran 2020–2021 as a way of engaging Earth Rangers members and families in learning about the Province of Ontario's first-ever Provincial Day of Action on Litter, as well as about Ontario's Greenbelt.

READ MORE

GROWING THE GREENBELT

In February 2021, the Government of Ontario announced its commitment to grow the Greenbelt with a focus on adding critical water systems, including the Paris-Galt Moraine and more of the region's urban river valleys. The Greenbelt Foundation welcomed this important step forward.

READ MORE

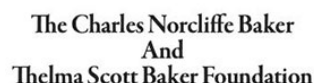
OUR PARTNERS

The Greenbelt Foundation's achievements would be impossible without the

ongoing support of its partners, donors, and the dedicated governance of its Board of Directors. Our partners include a range of organizations with whom we collaborate to fund key projects and support important research initiatives. Our work is also made possible by our dedicated individual donors and supporters.

We thank all of you for your support and commitment.

The Greenbelt Foundation would like to pay special thanks to the Government of Ontario for their ongoing, committed support of our work. We would also like to thank Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Consecon Foundation for helping us to drive forward the protection of more near-urban natural spaces.





THE GEORGE KOSTIUK FAMILY
PRIVATE FOUNDATION

The Willowool Foundation

THE KLEIN-PANNETON
FOUNDATION

CHARLES FREDERICK FELL
CHARITABLE FUND



neptis



*McLean Smits Family
Foundation*

GRANTEES

Alderville Black Oak Savanna	Culinary Tourism Alliance
Ancient Forest Exploration & Research	Ducks Unlimited Canada
Bowmanville Valleys 2000 Inc.	Durham Region Farm Fresh Marketing Association
Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association	Earth Rangers
Carolinian Canada Coalition (CCC)	Environment Hamilton
Credit Valley Conservation Authority (CVCA)	Everdale Farm
Credit Valley Conservation Foundation	Greenbelt Farmers Market Network
Conservation Halton Foundation	Greenbelt Fund

Hamilton Conservation Foundation

Kawartha Conservation

Lake Simcoe Region Conservation
Authority

Mississauga of the Credit First Nations

Municipal Natural Assets Initiative
Society

Municipal Natural Asset Initiative

National Farmers Union Ontario

Neptis Foundation

Niagara Region

Nottawasaga Valley Conservation
Authority

Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust

Ontario Farmland Trust

Ontario Headwaters Institute

Ontario Nature

Ontario Parks Association (OPA)

Ontario Land Trust Alliance (OLTA)

Ontario Farmland Trust (OFT)

Ontario Soil and Crop Associations
(OSCIA)

Park People

Rescue Lake Simcoe

Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG)

Ryerson City Building Institute (CBI)

Saugeen Ojibway nation (SON)
Environment Office

Save the Oak Ridges Moraine Coalition
(STORM)

The Shared Path Consultation
Initiative

Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition

Town of Erin

Trout Unlimited Niagara Chapter

Waterfront Regeneration Trust (WRT)

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
Canada

Wildlands League

RESEARCH PARTNERS

City of Peterborough

Credit Valley Conservation
Équiterre

Green Infrastructure Ontario

Hamilton Conservation

Headlands Ag-Enviro-Solutions

Kawartha Conservation

Science Colla Lab

University of Guelph - School of
Environmental Design and Rural
Development

University of Toronto Mississauga -
Geography, Geomatics, and
Environment

University of Toronto

University of Toronto Mississauga
York Region

York University

FINANCIALS

In 2020–2021, the Greenbelt Foundation invested in a range of key partnerships, educational initiatives, research and policy work, and community programs.

Year ended March 31, 2021 / Our charitable ratio: 85%



EXPENDITURES



PROGRAM ACTIVITIES



GRANTS
\$1,278,522

AWARENESS & EDUCATION
\$1,017,257

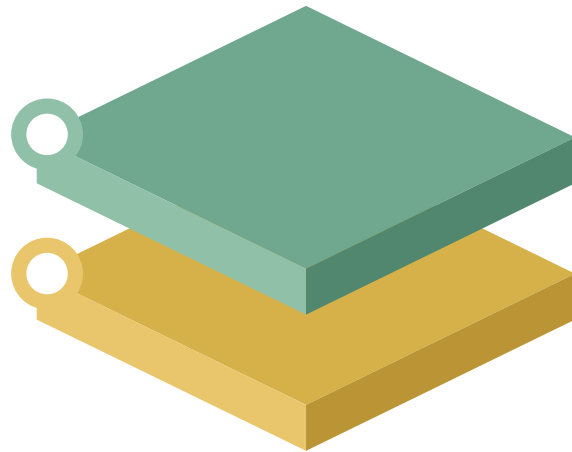
RESEARCH & POLICY
\$975,151

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS
\$736,467

SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

MANAGEMENT & GENERAL
\$567,939

**FUNDRAISING,
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**
\$135,090



*Each year, KPMG audits our financial records. Our full financial audit can be found online at [greenbelt.ca/accountability](https://www.greenbelt.ca/accountability)



THANK YOU!

The Greenbelt Foundation is made up of a vibrant team of program leaders, research and policy experts, development and communications advisors, and much more. We come together with varied expertise to support a unified vision of keeping the Greenbelt a healthy, resilient, and productive working landscape for Ontario—and one of Canada’s best resources in addressing climate change. We would not be able to achieve any of our work without the dedicated support of our funders, partners, and community members like you.

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