

# Peel Region Official Plan Review

## Provincial Conformity



### Message from the Regional Chair

The Peel Region Official Plan Review (PROPR) process, which was initiated early in 2007, is well underway. With input from stakeholders, community partners and residents, we have identified the focus areas for the Review and have begun work on the research that will inform discussion papers on the focus areas.

Since the last review of the Peel Region Official Plan, which began in 2002, the Government of Ontario released three documents that the Official Plan must now conform to : Places to Grow Growth Plan, 2006; the Greenbelt Plan, 2005; and the Provincial Policy Statement, 2005.

We place great value on our partnerships in the community, and I'd like to personally thank you for your feedback and input to-date. I also encourage you to continue providing input as we move forward, as feedback from the community is critical in helping us plan for the future of Peel.

Although there is much work to be done to ensure we meet provincial requirements, we are confident that the workplan that has been developed and approved by Regional Council will guide our process and help us meet this goal.

Close collaboration with our area municipalities is also important to help us conduct a comprehensive PROPR process, and we are fortunate to be working closely with area municipalities throughout this process.

This newsletter provides an update on some of the focus areas within the PROPR process. We will be providing regular updates to you as we move ahead and welcome your feedback throughout the process. Please take the time to participate in the PROPR and help us plan a liveable and sustainable future for Peel.

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### Editorial + Design Committee

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# Planning - Moving Ahead

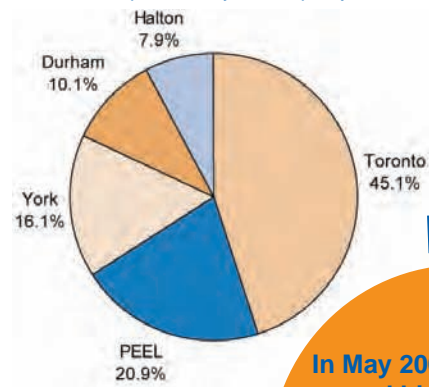


Peel Region has experienced a surge in growth over the last decade, and the population is expected to grow by over 400,000 people between now and 2031. In light of this rapid growth and the changes it brings, long-term planning is crucial to ensure sustainability so that current and future generations are able to live, work and travel in an inclusive and prosperous community.

The rapid population growth in Peel has produced many benefits including more vibrant and diversified communities and economies, with expansion and developments in housing, infrastructure, employment and community services. Managing this growth will benefit from long-term planning that is systematic, orderly, integrated and that encourages communities, to be resilient and sustainable.

While growth produces benefits, it also results in challenges and has planning implications for the next 25 years and beyond. Long-term planning, therefore, becomes essential to determine where to encourage development and where to ensure protection and conservation so today's generation will use resources, including land, wisely and efficiently minimizing negative impacts for future generations.

Share of GTA Population by Municipality, 2006 Census



Did you know?

In May 2006, Peel had the second highest population in the GTA next to Toronto.  
Total GTA Population: 5,555,912  
Total Peel Population: 1,159,405

Long-term planning also offers the opportunity to balance competing demands by considering economic, environmental, social and cultural impacts of socio-economic and demographic changes and how these changes influence projects, programs, policies and services geared towards improving quality of life.

The Region of Peel is currently reviewing its Official Plan, which is a long term-plan, and will be considering broad strategic policies to manage growth and contribute towards a sustainable and liveable Peel Region now and in the future.

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The Region Official Plan (ROP) is a long-term plan used to assist the Region in managing growth and development. The main purpose of the Plan is to:

- provide Regional Council with the long-term regional strategic policy framework for guiding growth and development in Peel, while having regard for protecting the environment, managing renewable and non-renewable resources and outlining a regional structure that manages this growth within Peel in the most effective and efficient manner;
- interpret and apply the intent of Provincial legislation policies and plans within a Regional context using the authority delegated or assigned to the Region from the Province; and
- provide Regional Council with a strategic framework for the delivery of regional infrastructure and services.

The ROP was adopted by Peel Regional Council on July 11, 1996 and approved with modifications by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on October 22, 1996. Updates to this document were last done through the Regional Official Plan Strategic Update (ROPSU) process, which was initiated in March 2002.

The ROP is a comprehensive document that sets a long-term policy framework for decision making in Peel Region and is required by the Planning Act. The Act requires municipalities to review their Official Plan every five years to ensure that it conforms to provincial plans, takes into account matters of provincial interest, and is consistent with policy statements issued under the Act. In addition to this requirement, major provincial policies and legislation were recently introduced and updated and the PROPR will largely be a review to conform to these provincial updates, new legislation, policies and plans, which includes:

- the protection of the Greenbelt under the Greenbelt Plan, 2005;
- promotion of sustainability through the Provincial Policy Statement, 2005;
- better articulation of provincial policy in planning through the *Planning and Conservation Land Statute Law Amendment Act*, 2006, which was passed to amend the *Planning Act*, and,
- a stronger role in ensuring intensification and the creation of complete communities in Ontario, as directed by the *Places to Grow Act* and by extension, the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH), 2006. The province requires municipalities, such as Peel, to bring their official plans into conformity with the GGH Plan.

In order to achieve Official Plan conformity, the PROPR will consider the 15 focus areas shown below. The duration of the PROPR process is aligned to the conformity deadline for the Growth Plan for the GGH, which is June 2009.



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**Did you know?**  
 Older working age adults (age 45 to 64 years) and seniors (age 65 years and older) were the fastest growing age groups in the GTA  
 Source: 2001, 2006 Census Canada

Over 50 years ago, Peel was a largely agricultural area with many farms and with few built up areas (such as Streetsville in Mississauga, central Brampton and Bolton in Caledon). Our transportation system included few railway lines and limited highway access, and English was the predominant home language.

Today, Peel has experienced tremendous changes spanning all facets of life, such as technological advances, exponential growth in population, more growth and diversity in employment ranging from the service industry to manufacturing, and much more. Peel has also experienced increased immigration and, as a result, more diversified communities and expansion of human services such as schools and health centres. This growth is supported by an expansion in infrastructure and transportation systems.

In order to sustain and improve the quality of life for the present generation without compromising or reducing the capacity of future generations to meet their own needs, Peel will need to ensure that sustainability is the central theme in any long-term planning initiative. Sustainability aims to balance environmental, social, cultural and economic considerations.



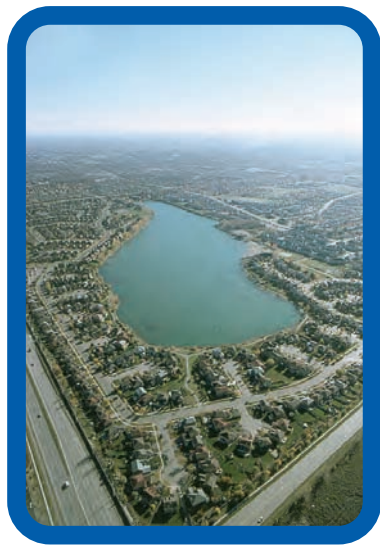
The Growth Plan for the GGH provides the Province's vision and guiding principles to build stronger, more prosperous, vibrant and complete communities by better managing growth to 2031. The initiative also promotes a culture of conservation. As built-up areas are intensified, municipalities will embrace the conservation of key resources, such as energy and water and build on processes to reduce waste. The *Planning and Conservation Land Statute Law Amendment Act* expands the list of matters of provincial interest under the *Planning Act* to include: the promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable; to support public transit and to be oriented to pedestrians. Municipalities are required to ensure their official plans are in conformity with these provincial initiatives.

Through the PROPR process, the Region intends to continue displaying leadership in the area of sustainability. The PROPR will consider and incorporate additional sustainability principles, policies, key indicators and targets to strengthen the Peel Region Official Plan. Supporting research will be gathered on air quality, climate change, energy supply and demand, complete communities and sustainability indicators.

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# Managing Growth



As Peel continues to grow, quality of life will depend on how well communities are planned to ensure a wide variety of choices for living, working and moving of goods and people, with minimal impacts to the natural environment. Managing growth in Peel must build and improve upon creating complete communities with supporting infrastructure and an integrated transportation system. Peel will have to protect sensitive environmental areas, such as the Greenbelt, and develop more compact, vibrant urban centres that offer diverse opportunities to live, work and play.

Statistics Canada data show that Peel's population increased by more than 17 per cent between 2001 and 2006. This indicates an average annual growth rate of 3.4 percent between 2001 and 2006. Peel Region continues to experience tremendous growth which is largely driven by immigrants choosing to settle in Peel. The current estimated population for Peel Region is 1.23 million people and this figure is forecasted to grow to 1.64 million people by 2031, adding more than 400,000 people to Peel Region according to the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (June 2006). This is equivalent to adding the population of a city the size of Brampton to Peel over a 25 - year period.

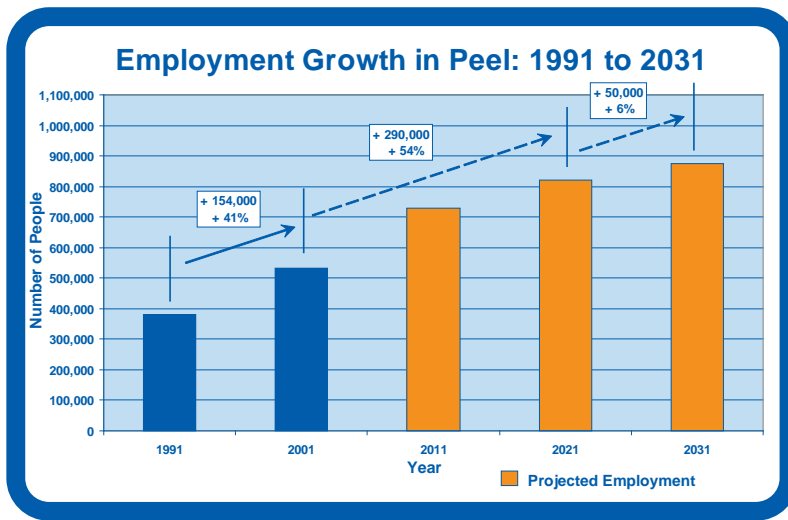
The Growth Plan for the GGH aims to optimize the use of existing urban land supply to make the best use of existing infrastructure. In order to achieve this goal of optimizing the use of land, infrastructure and services in built-up urban areas, the Growth Plan for the GGH has identified that municipalities such as Peel will have to accommodate 40 per cent of new residential development within the existing built-up area by 2015 and sustain this level of intensification for the duration of the planning period between 2015 – 2031. Development outside of the existing built up area will require the Region to plan future development to achieve a minimum density target of not less than 50 residents and jobs combined per hectare, which is considered to be supportive of transit. Urban growth centres (Downtown Brampton and Mississauga City Centre) will also be a major focus of future development and the Province requires that urban growth centres will be planned to achieve a minimum gross density of 200 residents and jobs combined per hectare by 2031.

Managing growth to achieve the Provincial growth targets and the required intensification and greenfield density targets will require close collaboration with municipal staff from the cities of Brampton and Mississauga and the Town of Caledon. Regional and area municipal staff will work together to implement the built boundary, define urban growth centres, and identify areas for future urban development to meet the target densities in accordance with the GGH Growth Plan.

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To accommodate future population and employment growth and remain competitive within the GTAH, Peel's current supply of employment land is neither sufficient nor sustainable.

Vibrant, healthy communities provide opportunities for people to live and work close to home. Historically, the Region of Peel has supplied a range and choice of employment land designated for activities, such as manufacturing, warehousing and office use, maintaining a strong and diverse economy.

Substantial depletion of current employment land supply in Peel will most likely occur within the next 15 years – beginning with Mississauga, followed by Brampton and Caledon. In order to achieve continued employment growth, existing and additional employment land will need to be identified and designated within Peel Region.

Within the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton (GTAH), the Region of Peel is one of the most attractive and competitive locations for employment land. This is primarily due to existing employment areas located around the 400-series highway corridors, which are close to Pearson International Airport and other forms of transportation. The employment areas around the Lester B. Pearson Airport are the second largest in number of jobs in the GTAH, with Downtown Toronto being the largest.

Additionally, there are ongoing market pressures to convert employment lands to non-employment land uses, such as residential. Therefore, it is necessary to protect the vacant, occupied, and planned employment land supply in Peel from those market pressures. These protected employment lands will need to accommodate the emerging trends in built form: increase in ceiling height; higher lot coverage; growing integration of office employment in buildings; and larger, more automated facilities combined with storage and other functions.

According to the Growth Plan for the GGH, 2006, it is anticipated that over 1.8 million jobs will be added to the GGH by 2031, with Peel accommodating 340,000 of these additional jobs. These figures indicate that employment land demand will remain strong in Peel Region. The graph above highlights the trend in employment in Peel and illustrates projections for a significant increase in the future.

Providing sufficient employment land will not only sustain Peel's economic performance, but will also have a positive effect on the surrounding environment through reducing commuting and vehicle kilometres travelled, and reducing related energy consumption and air pollution.

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The 2006 Census of Canada provided a statistical portrait and valuable insight into the socio-economic and demographic make-up of Peel's residents. Census data are important to the PROPR. Regional staff will use the data to inform population growth and development patterns, and to provide baseline information so that policies can be developed accordingly through the Official Plan. Population and dwelling counts were released in March 2007 and age and sex data were released in July 2007 from the 2006 Census. There will be six more 2006 Census releases highlighting various characteristics up until May 2008.

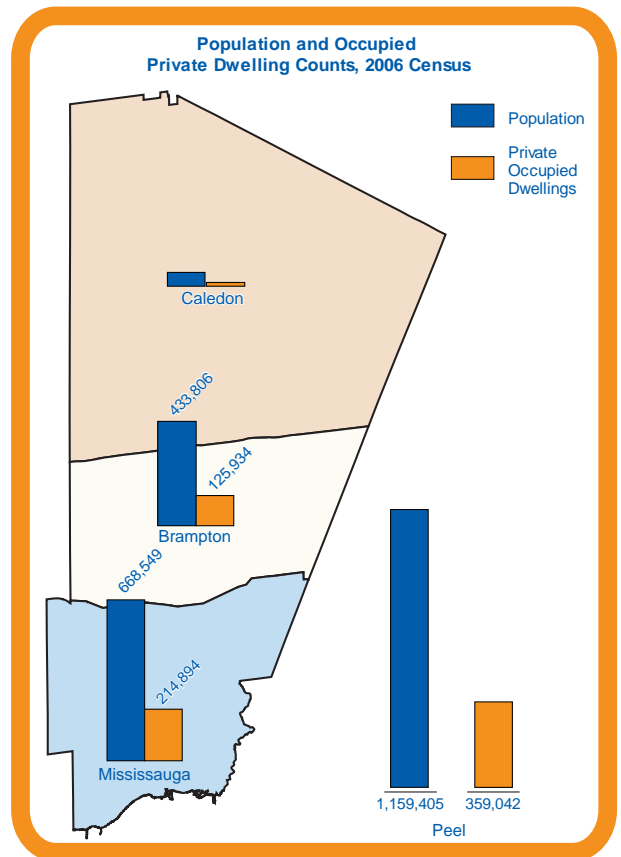
According to the 2006 Census within Peel, Brampton's population grew by 33 per cent since 2001 to 433,806, while Mississauga had the largest population with 668,549 people. Within Peel, the fastest areas of population growth are located in the east and west ends of Brampton, southwest Caledon (near Bolton) and northwest Mississauga.

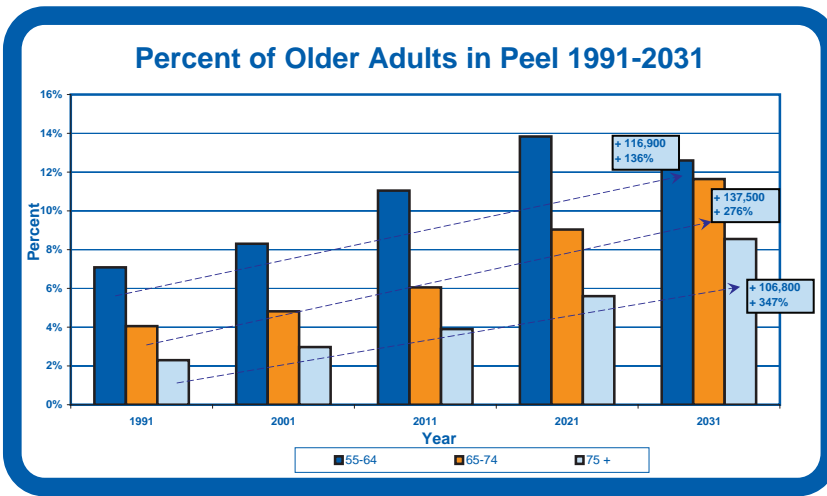
Brampton had the highest population growth rate out of all Peel area municipalities for each age group. Adults aged 65 and older increased the most by 49 per cent. In Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon, the two oldest age groups grew the fastest from 2001 to 2006. Each of these categories increased by 21 per cent or more for every municipality.

Results from the 2006 census will provide input for the PROPR focus areas, such as managing growth, transportation and the regional housing strategy. 2006 census data will be used to identify population and development patterns within the existing built up area for the GGH Growth Plan requirements. For more information visit the Peel Data Centre at [www.peeldatacentre.ca](http://www.peeldatacentre.ca).

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It is estimated that by 2031, 33 per cent of Peel's population will be older adults and more than a quarter of them will be 75 years or older. The growth in the older adult population will result in an increased demand for safe and accessible housing and health services.

The Region of Peel needs to develop a housing strategy to fulfill the requirement of the Growth Plan and to accommodate rapid population growth, an increase in the number of immigrants settling in Peel, and changing socio-economic and demographic conditions.

One of the objectives of the regional housing strategy is to address these changing housing needs and issues for Peel's current and future residents.

Immigration has contributed enormously to the 17 per cent increase in Peel's population over the last five years (2001-2006). Data from Citizenship and Immigration Canada suggest that Peel's share of immigrants in the Greater Toronto Area Municipalities and Hamilton (GTAH) (as a destination place) has increased from 10 per cent to 25 per cent between 2001 and 2005.

In addition, the regional housing strategy will be developed to identify current, affordable, special-needs and social housing needs, issues and supply-demand gaps in Peel; identify and recommend opportunities for a full range of safe, affordable, accessible and appropriate housing for Peel's current and future residents; identify a range of housing types and densities to support the intensification and density targets set out in the Growth Plan; and develop ROP policies related to housing.

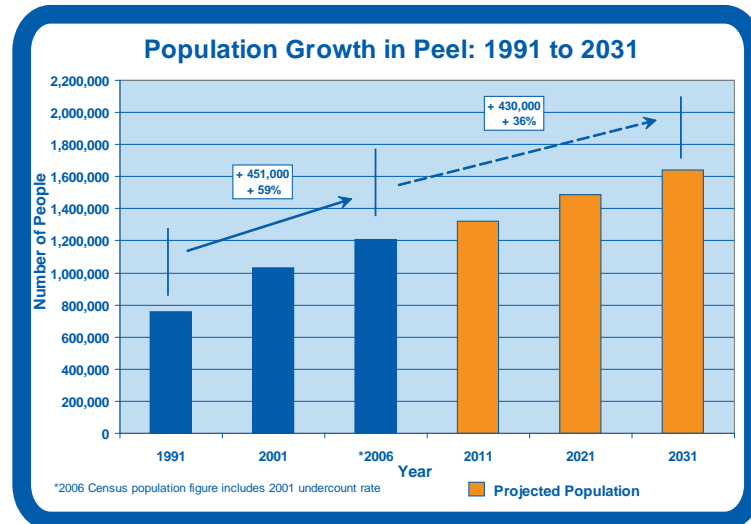
The demographic data according to the 2006 Census of Canada reveals that Peel, like many other municipalities in the GTAH is experiencing an increase in older adult population.

## Did you know?

The number of people per dwelling has decreased in every GTA regional municipality except Peel, where the number of people per dwelling increased from 3.20 to 3.23.

While this appears to be a subtle change, trends in persons per unit have significant implications for housing supply, population density and planning Regional services.

Source: 2006 Census Canada



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# Transportation

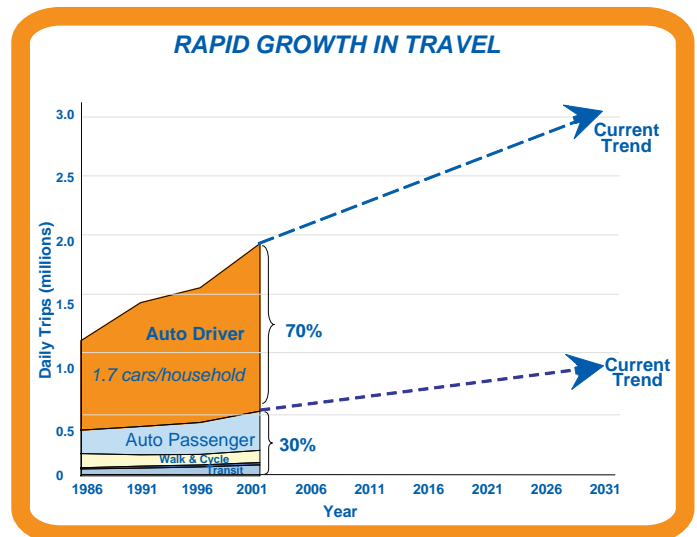


The Region's phenomenal growth in transportation over the past 30 years is attributed to its vibrant economy and high quality of life, supported by an excellent multi-modal transportation system. With the expectation of continued rapid growth in the future, in which Peel's population as mentioned before will grow by another 50 per cent over the next 30 years, planning for this level of growth over and above an already strained transportation system poses major challenges. Some of these challenges include:

- addressing rapid growth in travel demand with limited new roads and road widening opportunities;
- reversing the recent trend of growing auto dependence;
- providing a variety of travel choices, including transit, carpooling, and transportation services for persons with disabilities;
- accommodating rapidly growing goods movement needs; and,
- adequate, sustainable and predictable funding resources to implement all necessary transportation and transit improvements.

The Region's transportation strategic plans and policies will be updated to address the above challenges, as well as to support the GGH Growth Plan vision of intensification.

The Region will also evaluate options to mitigate congestion. Building more roads, while necessary, will not be sufficient to meet the future growth. To achieve a more sustainable transportation system, a series of measures, including road and transit improvements and a range of Transportation Demand Management initiatives will be needed to address concerns related to traffic congestion, the environment, air quality, health, the community and the economy. All of these measures will need to be supported by appropriate growth management strategies, including intensification at city centres and along corridors; population and employment balance; and land use planning that is compatible with transit and goods movement.



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Attractive, liveable communities depend on healthy watersheds and abundant natural areas, and having these conditions in Peel is important to the future sustainability of the Region. Without them, we risk not having the water resources and natural habitat that are necessary to support a healthy quality of life for future generations. Peel Region demonstrated policy leadership and provided a systems approach to water resource and natural heritage planning in the ROP that was forward-thinking at the time (1996). It is now time to review these policies in light of recent provincial initiatives, and the current pressures of urbanization, growth, habitat loss and fragmentation, and identify where there may be policy gaps in the ROP.

Water resources and natural heritage are two environment-related components that will be addressed during the PROPR process. Because the ROP already contains policies for watershed planning, surface water and groundwater along with comprehensive policies outlining a Regional Greenlands System, the policies will not be comprehensively updated. Instead, the focus will be on identifying policy gaps in specific areas:

- significant woodlands
- significant wildlife habitat
- Greenbelt Plan conformity
- greenlands securement
- watershed planning
- water quality and quantity
- wellhead protection

#### Contact

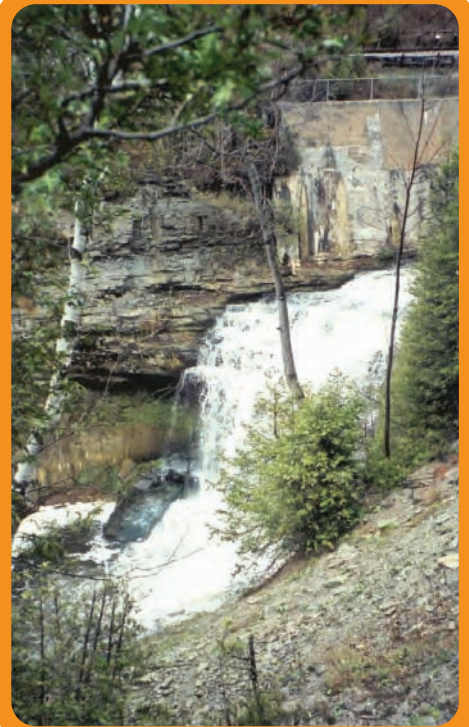
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#### Are there goals or targets that need to be identified?

Peel Region's headwater areas contain the highest concentration of natural areas in Peel, but outside of these areas, natural habitat is less abundant and more fragmented.

Environment Canada asks, "How much habitat is enough?" It recommends watersheds should have 30 per cent forest cover and 6 per cent wetlands. Of Peel's total area, woodlands cover 18 per cent and wetlands only 3 per cent.



# Environment

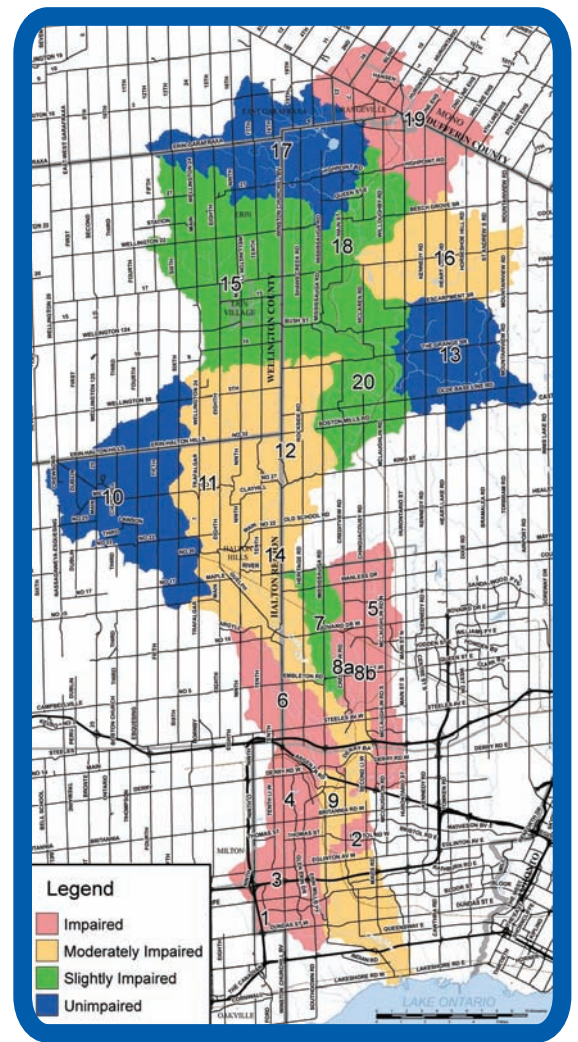
## What are our sustainability challenges?

Urbanization and growth will continue to pressure Peel's resources and watersheds.

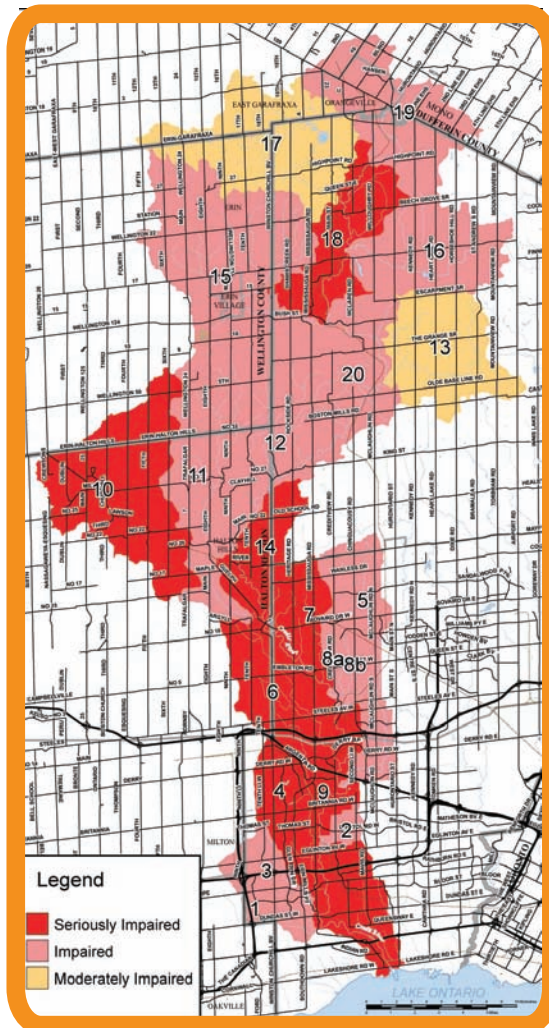
Recent studies indicate that current planning and development practices are not sustainable in the long term.

Many of Peel's subwatersheds are highly urbanized and have greater than 10 per cent impervious surface (e.g., paved areas). Recent studies show that degradation of watershed health requires new measures including:

- higher density and more compact development patterns;
- improved neighbourhood and site-scale development practices; and
- alternative stormwater management.



WATERSHED CONDITIONS WITH EXISTING GROWTH



WATERSHED CONDITIONS WITH FUTURE GROWTH IF DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES ARE NOT CHANGED



## Get Involved

**D**o you live, work or play in Peel? Do you operate a business or have a particular interest in Peel? Do you consider yourself or your organization a stakeholder? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then Peel Region encourages you to get involved in the planning process. We would like to hear about any thoughts, concerns or issues you have about planning in Peel.

Stakeholder and public input into PROPR are vital to the success of the ROP; therefore, we want to keep you informed and engaged in the PROPR process and ensure we receive your input and feedback on an ongoing basis.

There are many ways to get involved in the process:

- Participating in various consultations on each focus area that will be held in 2008 – 2009;
- Providing input and share your ideas on discussion papers and draft policies in workshops (Discussion papers on various focus areas of the PROP Review are scheduled to be released throughout 2008);
- Visiting our website at [www.peelregion.ca/officialplan](http://www.peelregion.ca/officialplan);
- Participating at open houses and public meetings on draft policies/amendments to the Region Official Plan, which are scheduled to occur during fall 2008 through to early spring 2009.



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