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Greenbelt Foundation Environmental Defence Public Opinion on Ontario's Growth Plan

Prepared by:

ENVIRONICS
RESEARCH

Summary of Findings

The Growth Plan receives a high level of support from Ontarians (79%), who value all of the benefits of the plan, especially its goals to protect farmland and sensitive natural areas and to maximize the use of existing infrastructure before building new ones. As such, a majority of respondents believe that local governments should direct new growth to already developed areas and provide incentives to attract redevelopment along main streets, older commercial areas and existing built-up areas.

Overall:

- Ontario's Growth Plan has the support of eight in ten Ontarians surveyed (79%), including half (49%) who completely and 29% who somewhat support the plan.
- 74% and over consider the benefits of the Province's Growth plan as important or very important. The top 2 benefits of the plan to Ontarians are protecting farmland and sensitive natural areas (93% say is important, including 81% who say very important) and maximizing the use of existing infrastructure before building new ones (90% say is important, including 67% very important).
- Nine in ten (88%) agree that local government should direct new growth to developed areas and 84% believe government should offer incentives to attract redevelopment.

Methodology

A total of 813 interviews were conducted by interactive voice response (IVR) on November 10, 2016.

A sample of this size can be considered accurate to within +/-3.44 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

The breakdown of the sample plan appears below:

Region:	Census Subdivisions	Sample size (n=)
Peel	Brampton, Caledon, Mississauga	122
Halton	Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton, Oakville	76
York	Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Scugog, Vaughan, Whitchurch-Stouffville	111
Toronto	Toronto	171
Durham	Ajax, Brock, Oshawa, Pickering, Uxbridge, Whitby	86
Hamilton	Hamilton	79
Waterloo	Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo, Guelph	84
Simcoe	Barrie, Innisfill, Springwater	84
TOTAL		813

Screening: All respondents are screened to be 18 years of age or older.

Weighting: Results are weighed by region to be proportionately representative of population in the region as well as by gender and age.

Length of Interview: 7 minutes

Incidence rate: 80%



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Support/Opposition to Ontario's Growth Plan



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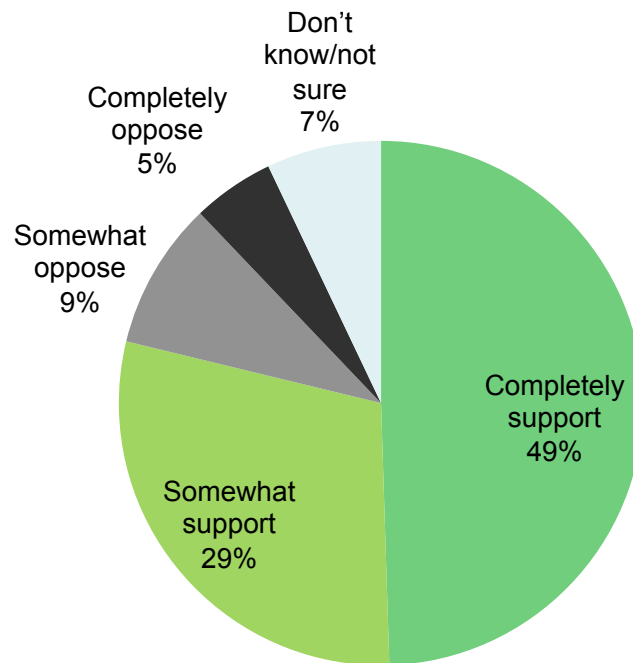
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The following pre-ambles were read to respondents prior to the next question (Q1):

In 2006, the Province of Ontario created the Growth Plan to direct cities and towns in your region to grow ‘smarter’ by using less land, creating communities with densities that support transit, offering a range and mix of housing, attracting jobs, and saving money by making better use of existing infrastructure.

Do you support the Growth Plan?

Support for the Ontario Growth Plan is very high. Based on the preamble, eight in ten Ontarians surveyed (79%) support the Ontario Growth Plan, including half (49%) who *completely* support the initiative.



NET support: 79%

NET oppose: 14%

Key Findings:

- Eight in ten support the Province's Growth Plan 49% who completely and 29% who somewhat support the initiative.
- Fourteen percent oppose the initiative, including one in ten (9%) who somewhat and one in twenty (5%) who completely oppose the initiative.
- Seven percent are not sure where they stand on this initiative (7%).

Do you support the Growth Plan?

Directionally, those in Waterloo and Simcoe appear to be the most supportive of the Province's Growth Plan, while Ontarians in Halton and Durham are the most opposed to it.

Key Differences:

- Six in ten in Waterloo (60%) and more than half in Simcoe (55%) *completely support* the initiative.
- Those in Peel (13%) and York (12%) are more likely to *somewhat oppose* the initiative. Those in Halton (11%) and Durham (11%) are the most likely to be *completely opposed*.
- Residents in Toronto are more likely to be unsure (12%).
- College graduates are more likely to somewhat support the plan (36% vs. 29%); university graduates are slightly more likely to completely support the plan (53% vs. 49%).
- Higher household income groups with \$70k-\$100k (20%) and \$100k+ (20%) are more likely to oppose the plan.
- Lower household income groups, those with \$40k-\$70k (12%) and <\$40k (14%) are more likely to say they don't know.

	TOTAL	Peel	Halton	York	Toronto	Durham	Hamilton	Waterloo	Simcoe
n=	813	122	76	111	171	86	79	84	84
TOP 2 BOX	79%	80%	73%	80%	75%	80%	82%	85%	87%
Completely support	49%	46%	46%	46%	51%	44%	52%	60%	55%
Somewhat support	29%	34%	27%	34%	24%	36%	29%	25%	32%
Somewhat oppose	9%	13%	14%	12%	8%	6%	10%	2%	6%
Completely oppose	5%	3%	11%	4%	5%	11%	4%	7%	5%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	14%	15%	25%	16%	13%	16%	13%	9%	10%
Don't know/not sure	7%	5%	2%	4%	12%	4%	5%	6%	3%

Significantly higher than Total

Significantly lower than Total

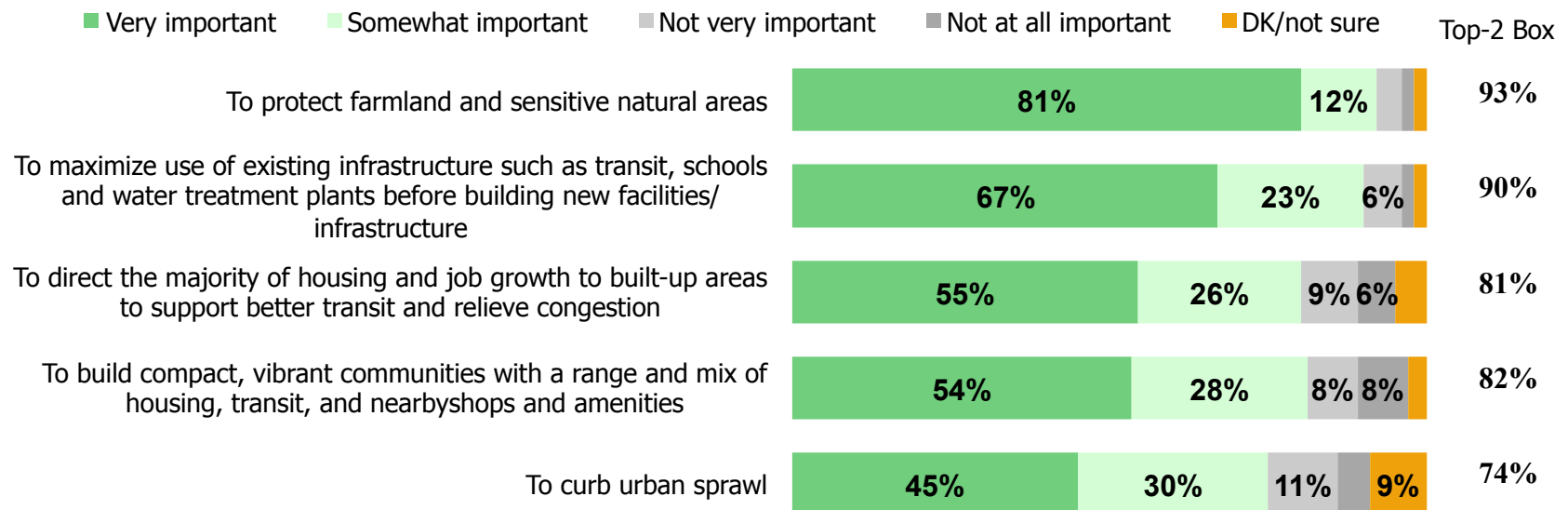
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How important are the following goals or benefits of the Province's Growth Plan to you?

According to Ontarians surveyed, the most important goal of the Province's Growth Plan is the protection of farmland and sensitive natural areas (93%) and to maximize the use of existing infrastructure before building new ones (90%).

Key Findings:

- 93% say that protecting farmland and sensitive natural areas is important, including an overwhelming 81% who say it is very important.
- 90% say that maximizing use of existing infrastructure is important, including two-thirds (67%) who say it is very important.
- Eight in ten consider building mixed-range communities (82%) and directing residential/employment to built-up areas (81%) as important, including more than half (54% and 55%, respectively) who consider these goals very important.
- Curbing urban sprawl is relatively less of a priority to Ontarians, but a strong majority of 74% still consider this important.



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How important are the following goals or benefits of the Province's Growth Plan to you?

Those in Simcoe are the most likely to value the protection of farmland and sensitive natural areas (94%) while those in Toronto are relatively less likely to (74%)

Key Differences:

- Those in Simcoe are more likely to consider maximizing the use of existing infrastructure as very important (82%).
- Those in Toronto (63%) and directionally, those in Hamilton (67%) are more likely to consider directing housing and jobs growth to developed areas as very important.
- Those in Toronto are more likely consider compact, vibrant communities with a range and mix of housing, transit and amenities as very important (63%).
- Halton (36%) and Durham (38%) residents are relatively less likely to say that building compact communities with a range and mix of housing, transit and amenities is very important.
- Women are more likely to highly value protecting farmland and neural areas (87%) and as directing growth to developed areas (59%).

<u>Top box score (Very important)</u>	TOTAL	Peel	Halton	York	Toronto	Durham	Hamilton	Waterloo	Simcoe
<i>n=</i>	813	122	76	111	171	86	79	84	84
To protect farmland and sensitive natural areas	81%	81%	80%	84%	74%	88%	84%	93%	94%
To maximize use of existing infrastructure such as transit, schools and water treatment plants before building new facilities/infrastructure	67%	66%	69%	63%	66%	71%	66%	67%	82%
To direct the majority of housing and job growth to built-up areas to support better transit and relieve congestion	55%	53%	53%	51%	57%	54%	61%	53%	48%
To build compact, vibrant communities with a range and mix of housing, transit, and nearby shops and amenities	54%	47%	36%	48%	63%	38%	67%	54%	60%
To curb urban sprawl	45%	44%	32%	46%	48%	33%	44%	48%	53%

Significantly higher than Total

Significantly lower than Total