

## 4.2 Infrastructure

*Infrastructure* is important to economic well-being, human health and quality of life in southern Ontario and the Greenbelt.

There is already extensive local and regional *infrastructure* within the Greenbelt to serve its *settlement areas*, agricultural and resource sectors and the rural economy. Existing *infrastructure* must be maintained and new *infrastructure* will be needed to continue serving existing and permitted land uses within the Greenbelt.

In addition, major *infrastructure* serving national, provincial and inter-regional needs traverses the Greenbelt. It is also anticipated that new and/or expanded facilities will be needed in the future to serve the substantial growth projected for the *GGH*. The Growth Plan provides the policy framework to guide *infrastructure* planning and investments to support and accommodate forecasted growth in a manner that is integrated with land use planning and environmental protection.

Climate change also poses a challenge for maintaining existing *infrastructure* and planning for new *infrastructure*. By increasing resiliency of *infrastructure* and encouraging the use of *green infrastructure*, municipalities can reduce the risk of harm to life and property and decrease the need for costly repairs or replacement resulting from extreme weather events. Identifying *infrastructure* risks and vulnerabilities and undertaking climate change adaptation strategies can help mitigate the impacts of climate change.

### 4.2.1 General Infrastructure Policies

For lands falling within the Protected Countryside, the following policies shall apply:

1. All existing, expanded or new *infrastructure* subject to and approved under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, the *Environmental Assessment Act*, the *Planning Act*, the *Aggregate Resources Act* or the *Telecommunications Act* or by the National or Ontario Energy Boards, or which receives a similar environmental approval, is permitted within the Protected Countryside, subject to the policies of this section and provided it meets one of the following two objectives:
  - a) It supports agriculture, recreation and tourism, Towns/Villages and Hamlets, resource use or the rural economic activity that exists and is permitted within the Greenbelt; or
  - b) It serves the significant growth and economic development expected in southern Ontario beyond the Greenbelt by providing for the

appropriate *infrastructure* connections among urban centres and between these centres and Ontario's borders.

2. The location and construction of *infrastructure* and expansions, extensions, operations and maintenance of *infrastructure* in the Protected Countryside are subject to the following:
  - a) Planning, design and construction practices shall minimize, wherever possible, the amount of the Greenbelt, and particularly the Natural Heritage System and Water Resource System, traversed and/or occupied by such *infrastructure*;
  - b) Planning, design and construction practices shall minimize, wherever possible, the *negative impacts* on and disturbance of the existing landscape, including, but not limited to, impacts caused by light intrusion, noise and road salt;
  - c) Where practicable, existing capacity and co-ordination with different *infrastructure* services shall be optimized so that the rural and existing character of the Protected Countryside and the overall hierarchy of areas where growth will be accommodated in the *GGH* established by the Greenbelt Plan and the Growth Plan are supported and reinforced;
  - d) New or expanding *infrastructure* shall avoid *key natural heritage features*, *key hydrologic features* or *key hydrologic areas* unless need has been demonstrated and it has been established that there is no reasonable alternative;
  - e) Where *infrastructure* does cross the Natural Heritage System or intrude into or result in the loss of a *key natural heritage feature*, *key hydrologic feature* or *key hydrologic areas*, including related *landform features*, planning, design and construction practices shall minimize *negative impacts* on and disturbance of the features or their related functions and, where reasonable, maintain or improve *connectivity*;
  - f) New or expanding *infrastructure* shall avoid *specialty crop areas* and other *prime agricultural areas* in that order of priority, unless need has been demonstrated and it has been established that there is no reasonable alternative;
  - g) Where *infrastructure* crosses *prime agricultural areas*, including *specialty crop areas*, an *agricultural impact assessment* or equivalent analysis as part of an environmental assessment shall be undertaken; and

- h) New waste disposal sites and facilities, and organic soil conditioning sites are prohibited in *key natural heritage features, key hydrologic features* and their associated *vegetation protection zones*.
3. *Infrastructure* serving the agricultural sector, such as agricultural irrigation systems, may need certain elements to be located within the *vegetation protection zone* of a *key natural heritage feature* or *key hydrologic feature*. In such instances, these elements of the *infrastructure* may be established within the feature itself or its associated *vegetation protection zone*, but all reasonable efforts shall be made to keep such *infrastructure* out of *key natural heritage features, key hydrologic features* and their associated *vegetation protection zones*.

## 4.2.2 Sewage and Water Infrastructure Policies

In addition to the policies of section 4.2.1, for sewage and water *infrastructure* in the Protected Countryside the following policies shall apply:

1. Planning, design and construction of sewage and water *infrastructure* shall be carried out in accordance with the policies in subsection 3.2.6 of the Growth Plan.
2. The extension of *municipal or private communal sewage or water services* outside of a *settlement area* boundary shall only be permitted in the case of health issues or to service *existing uses* and the expansion thereof adjacent to the *settlement area*. Notwithstanding the above, where *municipal water services* exist outside of *settlement areas, existing uses* within the service area boundary as defined by the environmental assessment may be connected to such a service.

## 4.2.3 Stormwater Management and Resilient Infrastructure Policies

In addition to the policies of section 4.2.1, for stormwater management *infrastructure* in the Protected Countryside the following policies shall apply:

1. Planning, design and construction of stormwater management *infrastructure* shall be carried out in accordance with the policies in subsection 3.2.7 of the Growth Plan.
2. Municipalities shall assess *infrastructure* vulnerability within Towns/ Villages in accordance with policy 3.2.1.4 of the Growth Plan.
3. Stormwater management systems are prohibited in *key natural heritage features, key hydrologic features* and their associated *vegetation protection zones*. The determination of appropriate *vegetation protection*