

SIMCOE COUNTY: THE NEW GROWTH FRONTIER

MAY 2004

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Neptis is an independent Canadian foundation that conducts and publishes nonpartisan research on the past, present and futures of urban regions. By contributing reliable information, expert analysis and fresh policy ideas, Neptis seeks to inform and catalyze debate and decision-making on regional urban development.

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Preface

This is the second printing of this *Simcoe County: The New Growth Frontier*. Its original publication in May 2004 sparked a great deal of interest. It played, I believe, an important role in focusing debate and the attention of the provincial government on the area north of the Oak Ridges Moraine. An Inter-Governmental Action Plan has been established, a partnership between the provincial government, all upper, single and lower tier governments in Simcoe County, and the conservation authorities to conduct a comprehensive analysis of growth and infrastructure issues in Simcoe County.

In the months since the report's release, there have been many significant changes in Simcoe County's regional growth management context. The Greenbelt Plan is now in force, a new Provincial Policy Statement has come into effect, and a Growth Plan for the entire Toronto metropolitan region, including Simcoe County, has been introduced by the provincial government. Despite these events, the Neptis Foundation has elected to reprint the report without substantive changes. We hope that it will continue to inform the initiatives that are being taken with regard to growth in the County and in the region.

Anthony Coombes
Executive Director
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Executive Summary

Simcoe County is experiencing unprecedented population and development growth. In the last two years, several large-scale, comprehensively planned developments have been proposed for the southern part of the county.

A proposal to build a town of 50,000 south of Alliston was refused by the Town of New Tecumseth's Council in January 2004. In Bradford West Gwillimbury, an earlier proposal to build a town of 50,000 that has been revised to accommodate 114,000 people is now under consideration. These developments, which amount to the establishment of new towns, would attract a larger-than-projected share of regional population growth to Simcoe County.

This report was commissioned to examine:

- the factors driving development north of the Oak Ridges Moraine;
- the reasons why developers are proposing such large-scale projects on greenfield sites;
- what these proposals mean for Simcoe County and for the province.

Factors driving development north of the Oak Ridges Moraine.

(1) Population and employment growth. Many out-migrants from the GTA, including a large number of “empty-nesters,” settle in Simcoe County every year. The county has also posted strong employment growth, especially in the automotive sector. South Simcoe County is close to population and employment centres in the GTA and is therefore seen as a site for exurban development.

(2) Proposed highway expansions. South Simcoe County is within the commuting distance of the GTA. The Province has plans to extend Highways 404 and 427, expand Highway 400, and connect Highway 400 to Highway 404 with the Bradford Bypass. Although these proposals have not been finalized, they are encouraging development in the area.

(3) The perception of limited land supply south of the Oak Ridges Moraine. Developers argue that there is little developable land left south of the Oak Ridges Moraine and that what is available is constrained by environmental protection measures. The argument that the GTA is “full” assumes that no new land will be designated for urban development south of the Moraine. Research has shown, however, that there is more than enough land south of the Moraine to accommodate future development to 2031 and beyond. If the land were developed at even marginally higher densities, the supply of land would last longer.

(4) Lower cost of land acquisition. The low cost of acquiring or optioning rural land in Simcoe relative to areas within the GTA has attracted developers.

Reasons why developers are proposing such large-scale developments on greenfield sites.

(1) The cost of front-ending servicing infrastructure pushes developers to build bigger. Since municipalities are reluctant to go into debt to provide infrastructure such as water and wastewater services, developers pay up front for new services and infrastructure. They are proposing large-scale developments on greenfield sites in Simcoe County in order to cover the cost of front-ending infrastructure.

(2) This type of development has been accepted elsewhere. The approval by the Ontario Municipal Board of a similar large-scale development in Queensville, York Region, has sent the message to developers that such large-scale proposals can be justified and accepted.

(3) Developers claim that large-scale development is more efficient than incremental development and that infrastructure and community facilities can be laid out more effectively in areas that are comprehensively planned from the start.

What these proposals mean for Simcoe County and the province as a whole.

(1) They hijack debate about how Simcoe might grow. The attention of public officials, planners, and citizens has been focused on responding to development applications rather than on the big picture — how the county and the Toronto region can or should grow. The need to respond to particular features of particular proposals pre-empts debate on alternative urban forms for the region as a whole.

(2) They highlight the weak capacity of local administration. While developers have marshalled more and more sophisticated arguments to justify their strategies, many local planning departments lack the capacity to respond to them. Fragmentation of authority militates against the development of effective county-wide infrastructure and growth management strategies.

(3) They demonstrate the need for an integrated growth and infrastructure strategy in South Simcoe. No public body has set out a detailed and enforceable plan for how Simcoe County is to grow in the context of the Toronto-related region. The Province is the only body that covers the region, yet planning authority has been delegated to the local level. The

Province has the power to make choices at a regional scale, but its role in the system is reactive rather than proactive.

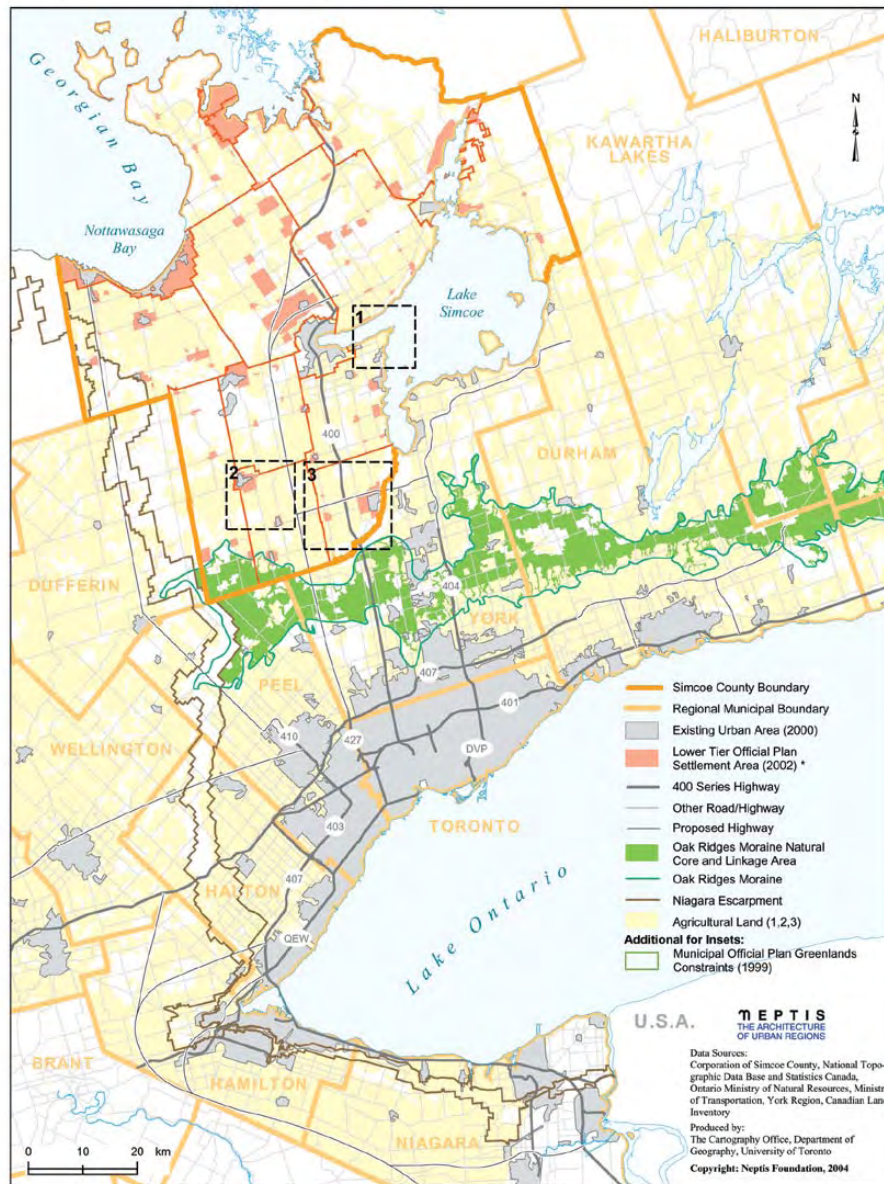
(4) They indicate that the public sector is not in the driver's seat. Weighed down by downloaded responsibilities, municipalities have not behaved entrepreneurially with respect to the financing of the capital investment required for expansion. Moreover, cross-boundary problems such as investment in water and wastewater treatment and regional transit need attention that the Province has not been inclined to provide and that other jurisdictions, such as Simcoe County, are not empowered to undertake.

(5) They show how the private sector is taking on roles traditionally held by the public sector. Developers make their decisions at the regional scale in a way that public bodies do not. The result has been a shift of public functions to the private sector. In the absence of a region-scaled growth strategy for how the Toronto-related region should grow, developers have established the dominant development pattern by continuing to exploit market opportunities and build according to industry norms.

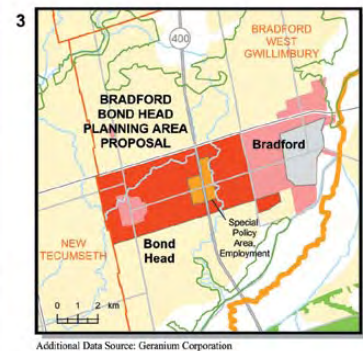
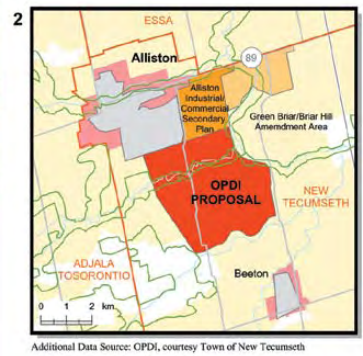
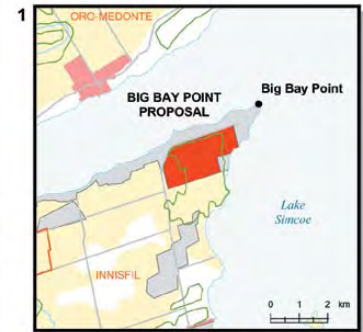
(6) They indicate that “auto pilot planning” is no substitute for political decision-making. The situation in Simcoe County illustrates that planning regulations cannot in themselves manage a rapidly growing region. The challenge in Simcoe is fundamentally political, and political challenges require political solutions. The pattern of development in Simcoe and across the Toronto region will be the product of the ability of governments — local and provincial — to make decisions and to establish an effective regulatory environment to achieve them.

Simcoe County is an important test case for the region and the province as a whole. If the smart growth policies promoted by the Province fail to be implemented here, it will signal that the existing planning regime is unable to meet the challenges posed by rapid growth.

Map E1 Summary Map



* Individual Municipalities used different criteria to identify areas of settlement. Barrie and Orillia excluded.



1. Why Simcoe Matters

On November 4, 2002, former Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Chris Hodgson gave a speech to the Ontario branch of the Urban Development Institute. South-Central Ontario will accept 2.5 million people in the next 15 years, he said, and one million of them will go north of the Oak Ridges Moraine.¹ Given its proximity to the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Simcoe County stands to attract a large proportion of this growth. Hodgson also painted for his audience a picture of a new transportation and economic corridor along the north edge of the Moraine. This corridor, which he referred to as the “next 407,” would run through the southern part of Simcoe County.

Simcoe County's present population is 376,000, including Barrie and Orillia. For one million people to settle north of the Oak Ridges Moraine, as the former Minister of Municipal Affairs suggested in 2002, would be both a radical increase over consensus projections and unprecedented in light of historical growth in the area.

Many observers were shocked by the one million person figure. Together, York and Peel Regions have increased by only 1.1 million over 25 years. Simcoe County's present population is approximately 376,000, including Barrie and Orillia. The population projections on which its Official Plan is based posit an increase to 487,800 in 2016.² The Neptis Foundation's *Toronto-Related Region Futures Study* assumes growth to 476,970 in 2011 and 681,300 in 2031 — a less than doubling in 30 years.³ For one million people to settle north of the Oak Ridges Moraine, even in the medium term, would be both a radical increase over consensus projections and unprecedented in light of historical growth in the area.

Simcoe County is already growing rapidly. The population of Simcoe County south of Barrie grew by 42.9% between 1991 and 2001 — faster than the rest of the GTA as a whole. At 44.4%, only York Region's growth rate was higher. Almost a quarter of all dwelling units in Simcoe were built in the 1991-2001 period, an amount comparable to Peel Region, and considerably higher than the GTA as a whole, at 15.9%. Again, only York Region was higher, at 33%. By comparison, only 6.1% of Toronto's dwelling unit stock was constructed in the same period.

Hodgson's speech appears to have sent a signal to developers that the Province was willing to permit massive development in Simcoe County.

In early 2003, rumours and media accounts began circulating of proposals for very large developments outside designated settlement areas in Simcoe

Hodgson's speech sent a signal to developers that the Province was willing to permit massive development in Simcoe County.

1. “Hodgson to developers: Move growth north of Moraine,” *Novæ Res Urbis*. November 6, 2002 (5:44) 1, 3.

2. *County of Simcoe Official Plan*. 2000. 11.

3. Neptis Foundation. *Toronto-Related Region Futures Study Interim Report: Implications of Business-As-Usual Development*. 2002. Appendix B. 1.

County. These have now reached the stage where official plan amendment applications have been prepared and are being reviewed.

The future urban structure of the Toronto region is being defined now. Simcoe County's rapidly evolving development pattern is the product of policy-driven, market-driven, and demographic factors. Each factor operates according to its own logic and at its own scale. Their cumulative effect, however, is to profoundly reshape the urban form of the county.

As the Toronto region's emerging development hot spot, Simcoe County is an important test case for the region and the province as a whole. Rather than being determined by policy, the structure of the Toronto region is the sum of countless interactions between developers, landowners, and local authorities.

If the smart growth policies promoted by the Province — cost-effective, mixed-use, higher-density and transit-supportive development — fail to be implemented here, it will signal that the existing planning regime is unable to meet the challenges posed by rapid growth.

This study was commissioned by the Neptis Foundation to determine the current status of large-scale development applications in Simcoe County and to explore the factors that are driving growth north of the Oak Ridges Moraine into Simcoe County.

Simcoe County is an important test case for the region and the province as a whole. If the smart growth policies promoted by the Province fail to be implemented here, it will signal that the existing planning regime is unable to meet the challenges posed by rapid growth.

2. Simcoe County in the Toronto-Related Region

This section describes the ecological, demographic, and economic features of Simcoe County in the context of the Toronto-related region. For the purpose of this section, Simcoe County includes Barrie and Orillia although those cities are administratively separate from the county.

2.1 Natural Environment

Simcoe County includes several important physiographic features — the Canadian Shield to the north, the Oak Ridges Moraine to the south, the Niagara Escarpment to the west, and Lake Simcoe to the east. The Oak Ridges Moraine spans 160 km from the Trent River in the east to the Niagara Escarpment in the west. It is a dividing line for watersheds draining south into Lake Ontario and north towards Georgian Bay, Lake Simcoe and the Trent River, and is critical for the region's fresh water supply. The moraine covers a small area of South Simcoe County in the Townships of Adjala-Tosorontio and the Town of New Tecumseth. (See Map 1.)

The Township of Ramara, to the north of Lake Simcoe east of Lake Couchiching, sits on Canadian Shield granite bedrock. Severn and Tay contain undisturbed forests. The interior and south of the County is made up of farmland and provincially and locally designated wetlands.

There are three watersheds in Simcoe County (see Map 2):

- the Nottawasaga, which drains north into Georgian Bay;
- the Humber, which drains south to Lake Ontario;
- the Simcoe Basin, which drains into Lake Simcoe from all sides.

While most of the land area of Simcoe County lies in the Nottawasaga watershed, approximately half of the county's population lives within the Simcoe Basin. The County's largest population centres are located on the shores of Georgian Bay, Severn Sound, Lake Simcoe, and Lake Couchiching.

While most of the land area of Simcoe County lies in the Nottawasaga watershed, approximately half of the county's population lives within the Simcoe Basin. The County's largest population centres are located on the shores of Georgian Bay, Severn Sound, Lake Simcoe, and Lake Couchiching.

2.2 Population Growth

The Neptis Foundation's *Toronto-Related Region Futures Study* defined "Toronto-related region," which includes the Greater Toronto Area, the City of Hamilton, the Regional Municipalities of Waterloo and Niagara, parts of Wellington and Peterborough Counties, Dufferin, Simcoe and Northumberland Counties, and the City of Kawartha Lakes. This definition will be used in this report (see Map 3).

2.2.1 Regional Growth Trends

The population of the Toronto-related region grew from 4.8 million people to 7.3 million between 1976 and 2001, an increase of 52%. While the GTA plus Simcoe County (GTA+S) accepted an average of 50,000 people a year between 1976 and 1981, it accepted more than 100,000 a year between 1996 and 2001.

Figure 1: Population Increase and Share of Population Growth, Toronto-Related Region, 1976-2001

		1976	2001	Increase (pop.)	Increase (%)	Share of TRR Pop. Growth
GTA	Halton	228,497	375,229	146,732	64.2%	5.8%
	Peel	375,910	988,948	613,038	163.1%	24.4%
	York	203,915	729,254	525,339	257.6%	20.9%
	Durham	247,473	506,901	259,428	104.8%	10.3%
	Toronto	2,124,291	2,481,494	357,203	16.8%	14.2%
	Total	3,180,086	5,081,826	1,901,740	59.8%	75.6%
Outer Ring (selected)	Simcoe	210,691	375,906	165,215	78.4%	6.6%
	Dufferin	28,528	51,013	22,485	78.8%	0.9%
	Hamilton ⁴	409,490	490,268	80,778	19.7%	3.2%
	Waterloo	289,192	459,500	170,371	59.8%	6.8%
	Wellington	123,736	187,313	63,577	51.4%	2.5%
TRR Total ⁵		4,815,012	7,328,932	2,513,920	52.2%	100.0%

When the four regional municipalities surrounding Metro Toronto were created in the mid-1970s, they all had populations smaller than that of Simcoe today (see Figure 1). Indeed, the population of Peel Region in 1976 was identical to that of Simcoe in 2001. At that time, Simcoe had a population larger than York Region's and comparable to Halton's. In the subsequent 25 years, Simcoe has grown more rapidly than Halton, though not nearly as fast as Peel and York, which have more than doubled and tripled their respective populations.

Although Simcoe's share of the Toronto-related region population has grown only slightly — from 4.4% in 1976 to 5.6% in 2001 — its share of population growth almost doubled between the 1976-1981 and 1996-2001 periods. Overall, Simcoe's share of growth over the 1976-2001

When the four regional municipalities surrounding Metro Toronto were created in the mid-1970s, they all had populations smaller than that of Simcoe today. The population of Peel Region in 1976 was identical to that of Simcoe in 2001.

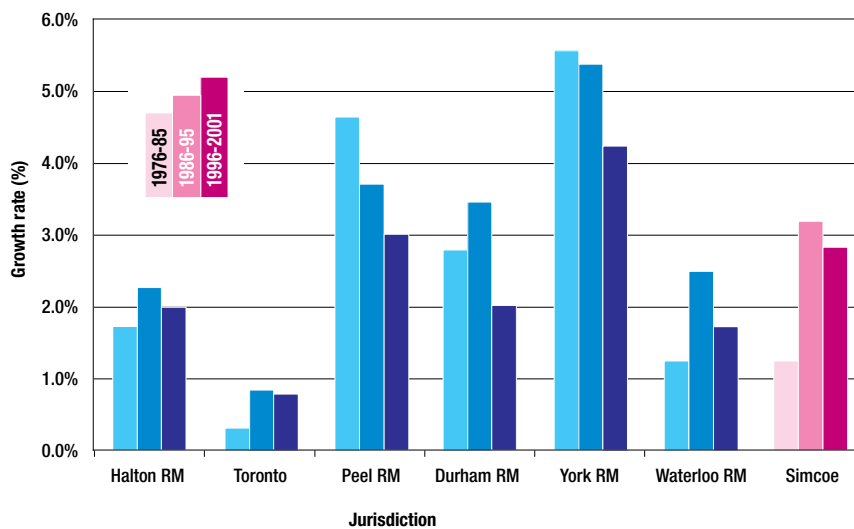
⁴. The present City of Hamilton is compared to earlier numbers for the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth.

⁵. The Toronto-related region truncates parts of Wellington and Peterborough Counties. The population totals shown here include the full populations of those counties.

period is about the same as Waterloo Region's, at 6.6%. Nowhere else in the "outer ring" (the non-GTA part of the Toronto-related region) comes close to this performance. Between 1996 and 2001, Simcoe was the leader in the outer ring, attracting 34.3% of all population growth. Waterloo Region was in distant second place, at 25.4%.

Although Simcoe County's average annual population growth rate is not the largest in the Toronto-related region, at 2.8% its rate now vies with Peel Region (3.0%) for the second-place spot.

Figure 2: Average Annual Population Growth Rates, 1976-2001



Simcoe's strong growth is also reflected in the proportion of dwelling units built in each decade since the Second World War. Simcoe County is the only jurisdiction in the GTA+S in which more units were built between 1991 and 2001 than between 1981 and 1991.

Simcoe County is the only jurisdiction in the GTA+S in which more housing units were built between 1991 and 2001 than between 1981 and 1991.

Affordability may also be attracting people to Simcoe. Approximately 60% of units sold in Ontario over the last 10 years were in the \$260,000 to \$310,000 range.⁶ According to the 2001 census, the average value of a dwelling was \$199,884 province-wide. In Simcoe County, the average house price was \$177,070.

⁶ Kates, K. "Rural lifestyle projects gaining popularity." *Globe and Mail*. December 6, 2003.

2.2.2 Settlement and Growth Patterns within Simcoe County

There are four major urban areas within the boundaries of Simcoe County: Midland and Penetanguishene in the north, Orillia in the east, Barrie in the south, and Collingwood and Wasaga Beach in the west. Together these municipalities account for about half of the area's population. Scattered between these are about 100 smaller settlement areas: towns, villages and hamlets (see Map 4).⁷

It is useful to distinguish between North and South Simcoe, which for the purposes of this report will be defined as the municipalities to the north and south of county road 90, which extends west from Barrie.⁸ Most of the growth in the County has occurred in South Simcoe. North Simcoe attracted only 28.9% of the increase in population in the 1996-2001 period.

Barrie accounted for half of all population growth in South Simcoe between 1996 and 2001, increasing its population by 31% to 103,710. Innisfil, Bradford West Gwillimbury, and New Tecumseth each posted growth of between 10% and 16% between 1996 and 2001.

Even though Simcoe County's — and especially South Simcoe's — growth rate is rapid, the population increase is in absolute terms quite small. The Toronto-Related Region Futures Study's "business-as-usual" population projections to 2031 show a region-wide increase from 7.36 million to 10.53 million people. Of that increase, Simcoe County accounts for approximately 300,000 people or 9.5%. In 2031, under "business-as-usual" assumptions, Simcoe's population is projected to be just 6.5% of the Toronto-related region, up from 5.1% today.⁹

2.3 Economic Base

In 1991, Census data showed that the distribution of employment was evenly split between North and South Simcoe. By 2001, the total number of jobs had almost doubled to just under 200,000 — 57% of which are located in the five southern towns and the City of Barrie.

There is a perception that Barrie is a dormitory community for the GTA. This is not the case: a 2001 survey shows that 10% of Barrie residents commute to Toronto and 10% commute to York and Peel Regions.

Most of the growth in the County has occurred in South Simcoe (the area south of county road 90). Barrie accounted for half of all population growth in South Simcoe between 1996 and 2001.

Simcoe County's major employment-generating activities are in the manufacturing and retail sectors. Tourism is the fifth most significant economic sector, with a wide range of tourist-related development centred on Collingwood, Wasaga Beach, and the Lake Simcoe and Lake Couchiching shores.

7. *County of Simcoe Official Plan 2000*. s. 5.1.

8. For the purposes of this report, North Simcoe comprises Clearview, Collingwood, Midland, Orillia, Oro-Medonte, Penetanguishene, Ramara, Severn, Springwater, Tay, Tiny, and Wasaga Beach. South Simcoe comprises Adjala-Tosorontio, Barrie, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, and New Tecumseth.

9. Neptis Foundation. *Toronto-Related Region Futures Study Interim Report: Implications of Business-As-Usual Development*. 2002. Appendix B.1.

Fully 63% of Barrie residents work in Barrie and another 9% work elsewhere in Simcoe County. Within Barrie, 73% of all jobs are held by city residents, with most of the rest coming from elsewhere in Simcoe county.¹⁰

Simcoe County's economy is commonly understood to be based on tourism, agriculture, and natural resource extraction. However, recent growth in employment occurred in five other sectors: manufacturing, retail, health care, construction, and accommodation and food services related to tourism. Although tourism is the fifth most significant economic sector (and even more important in lakeshore areas such as Collingwood and Wasaga Beach), Simcoe County's major employment-generating activities are in the manufacturing and retail sectors. Manufacturing has consistently accounted for at least 17% of total jobs, retail for 12% and tourism for 6%.¹¹

Growth in the manufacturing sector, particularly in South Simcoe, was strong between 1991 and 2001.¹² This growth is driven primarily by the large plants that began operating during the period. Operating since 1987, the Honda plant in Alliston is a significant employer in the region, employing 4,200 people and turning out 390,000 vehicles per year.¹³ In 1998, Honda opened a second assembly plant in Alliston employing approximately 4,000 people. In 2002, Honda injected \$32 million into its Alliston plant in order to boost production capacity.¹⁴ Magna is building a new plant in Bradford and the planner there sees strong growth in the auto-parts industrial sector.

A number of smaller automobile-related operations also opened in Bradford West Gwillimbury in the late 1990s. Major economic generators also include Casino Rama and the Lake Simcoe Regional Airport.

Major economic generators include the Honda plant in Alliston, Casino Rama, and the Lake Simcoe Regional Airport.

10. Meridian Planning Consultants. *Greater Barrie Area Local Government Review: The Challenge of Managing Growth*. Prepared for the City of Barrie. January 2002. 3. Commuter figures cited are from the University of Toronto's Transportation Tomorrow Survey. By comparison, the proportion of the population that both lives and works in Guelph is 65%. For Milton and Burlington, the proportions are 46% and 45%, respectively (C.N. Watson and Associates, *City of Guelph Household and Population Projections 2001-2027 Final Report*. April 29, 2003. 4-8).

11. Statistics Canada and Human Resources Development Canada, *Labour Market Information*. 2001, 1996, 1991. Employment in the following sectors make up the remaining 63% of employment in the County: agricultural and related services; fishing and trapping; accommodation, food and beverage services; logging and forestry; mining and milling; quarrying and oil well; manufacturing; construction; transportation and storage; communication and other utilities; wholesale trade industries; retail trade; finance, insurance and real estate; business services; government services; education; health and social services.

12. In that period the number of manufacturing jobs more than doubled from 8,900 to 20,500. By comparison, manufacturing in North Simcoe grew by less than half that rate, at 63%.

13. Town of New Tecumseth. Website. <www.new-tecumseth.com/Honda.html>.

14. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Website. <www.cbc.ca/stories/2002/07/09/honda_020709>.

Lake Simcoe, Georgian Bay, and Lake Couchiching are anchors for year-round tourist activity for the GTA. A wide range of tourist-related development is centred on Collingwood, Wasaga Beach, and the Lake Simcoe and Lake Couchiching shores. The *Simcoe Area Transportation Needs Assessment* suggests that the popularity of tourism among the GTA's aging population and greater disposable income to spend on vacationing will result in travel increases of approximately 60% over the next 30 years, to Simcoe County and Muskoka.¹⁵

2.4 Transportation Infrastructure

A network of provincial highways connects Simcoe County with neighbouring regions. A series of provincial, county, and local roads accommodates regional and local travel in Simcoe County. Highway 400 connects Simcoe County to the rest of the GTA. A Canadian Pacific Rail freight line runs through Simcoe County and plays an important role for the Honda plant in Alliston.

GO Transit provides bus service to Barrie and rail service to Bradford. These services connect to Toronto with stops in York region. Several Simcoe communities also offer local public transit. Barrie and Orillia have the most extensive public transit systems; New Tecumseth and Bradford also operate local bus service on weekdays.

In 2001, the Province announced a series of proposals to expand the Toronto-related region's highway system (see Map 5). Simcoe would be affected by the proposals to:

- extend Highway 404 to the south edge of Lake Simcoe;
- link York Region and Simcoe County with a Bradford Bypass;
- create a new Economic Corridor across south Simcoe County on the same alignment as the Bradford Bypass, north of the Oak Ridges Moraine;
- widen Highway 400;
- extend Highway 427.

Also, in June 2002, the *Barrie Passenger Rail Transportation Committee* released a study that proposed extending peak period GO rail service from Bradford to Barrie. Reintroducing the rail service that existed from 1990 to 1993 has the potential to reduce commuter traffic along Highway 400.¹⁶

The Province has announced plans that would significantly expand the 400-series highways in Simcoe County.

¹⁵. URS Cole Sherman, *Simcoe County Transportation Network Needs Assessment*, prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Transportation June 2002. 9.

¹⁶. URS Cole Sherman, *Simcoe County Transportation Network Needs Assessment*, prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Transportation June 2002. 13.

2.5 Water Services

Most Simcoe County residents, including those in Barrie, rely on groundwater for their water supply. Collingwood is the only municipality that draws most of its water from Georgian Bay. As the population has grown, groundwater sources have become heavily burdened. This has led to proposals to pipe lake water to landlocked settlement areas. At present, the Collingwood-to-Alliston pipeline is the only intermunicipal water pipeline in Simcoe County, although an agreement has been signed for another from Alcona on Lake Simcoe to Bradford (see Map 2).

Most Simcoe County residents, including those in Barrie, rely on groundwater for their water supply. As the population has grown, groundwater sources have become heavily burdened.

2.5.1 Collingwood to Alliston Pipeline

In 1995, Honda decided to expand its Alliston plant. To service the new plant, Alliston needed a new source of water. At the same time, Collingwood determined that it needed to sell the excess capacity of its proposed water treatment plant if the plant was to be affordable. This congruence of interests led to an arrangement to construct a water pipeline between Collingwood and New Tecumseth.

Given the small populations of both municipalities, coming up with the \$28.3 million to fund the pipeline proved difficult. The capital financing arrangement included a \$5 million grant from the Province and a deferral of payment by New Tecumseth to Collingwood for the water as well as loans from the Province's Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA), the construction firm, SNC-Lavalin/ConDrain, and the Town of New Tecumseth. To ease the financial burden in the short term, New Tecumseth's payments increase over time. New Tecumseth must therefore add users to the system over time to break even.¹⁷ Negotiations are also underway to sell water to Essa.¹⁸

Planners originally intended to extend the Collingwood-Alliston pipeline eastward to Bradford West Gwillimbury. However, a deal to extend the pipeline failed in the summer of 2003 after Collingwood refused to approve it and the Province refused to become involved.

A major water pipe connects Collingwood on Georgian Bay with Alliston and a new pipe is planned to connect Alcona on Lake Simcoe with Bradford.

2.5.2 Alcona to Bradford Pipeline

Bradford's 255-hectare Community Plan Area 2 will add an additional 7,500 people over the next 5 to 15 years.¹⁹ Bradford West Gwillimbury officials state that water supply is the principal limitation on growth. Following the collapse of the Alliston-Bradford water supply scheme,

¹⁷. Town of New Tecumseth, "Collingwood to Alliston Water Pipeline," <www.town.newtecumseth.on.ca/pipeline.cfm>.

¹⁸. Mike McEachern, Mayor, New Tecumseth. Interview. December 5, 2003.

¹⁹. "Planning for the future ... Council approves Community Plan Area 2 secondary plan." *Bradford West Gwillimbury Times* (12:38). September 20-27, 2003.

Bradford West Gwillimbury studied other options. In September 2003, Bradford West Gwillimbury and Innisfil agreed to construct a pipeline from the Alcona water treatment plant on Lake Simcoe to the Bradford urban area by mid-2006. Construction of the pipeline will be phased, with the pipeline being installed before the Alcona plant completes its three-phase expansion. The environmental assessment (EA) process is ongoing.²⁰

The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury has agreed to front the \$28-\$31 million cost of the pipeline. It anticipates recovering that cost through development charges.²¹ Innisfil has agreed to the project because it will allow the Town to expand lake water service to the settlements along the path of the pipeline (Lefroy, Gilford and eventually Cookstown) long before it would otherwise be viable. The Innisfil Principal Planner expects settlements close to the pipeline to grow considerably once lake water is supplied.

2.6 Wastewater

There are wastewater treatment facilities in Barrie, Alcona, Alliston, Angus, Collingwood, Wasaga Beach, Midland, Penetanguishene, and Orillia. Septic and community wastewater services are the norm outside of urban areas. By attempting to direct new development to established settlement areas and restricting the use of septic and community services, the County seeks to reinforce the use of urban wastewater systems.

Proponents of the proposed large-scale developments plan to accommodate growth by upgrading and extending the wastewater treatment facilities in Alliston and Alcona. However, the construction of the water pipelines does not necessarily mean that centralized wastewater treatment will be provided. There is no plan to install a piped sewer system along the Alcona-Bradford water pipeline. Associated development would be serviced using septic systems.²²

The construction of the new water pipelines does not necessarily mean that centralized wastewater treatment will be provided.

2.7 The County system

Counties are federations of single-tier municipalities with council membership delegated from lower-tier municipal councils. There is no legislated division of authority that applies to all counties: the package of services delivered by counties varies from one county to the next.

Unlike regional municipalities such as Halton, Peel, or York, counties do not control water, sewer, or stormwater servicing and require Provincial approval for any County Official Plan Amendment.

²⁰. "Historic agreement between neighbours." *Bradford West Gwillimbury Times* (12:39) October 25 – November 1, 2003; "Innisfil, Bradford West Gwillimbury agree on water deal." *Bradford West Gwillimbury Times* (12:36) September 5-12, 2003.

²¹. "Frank Jonkman." *Bradford West Gwillimbury Times*. Website. <www.times.net/Jonkman.htm>.

²². Jim Hosick, Principal Planner. Innisfil. Interview. December 5, 2003.

Cities and towns are administratively and politically separated from the counties that surround them. Orillia and Barrie are separated from Simcoe County (similarly, Guelph is separated from Wellington County). Unlike regional municipalities such as Halton, Peel, or York, counties do not control water, sewer, or stormwater servicing and require Provincial approval for any County Official Plan Amendment.

In Simcoe County, the upper-tier council is composed of the mayors and deputy mayors of the lower-tier municipalities, with the warden elected by the council from its own membership. Although representatives from the separated cities of Orillia and Barrie do not sit on the county council, they are represented on county committees that deliver services to their residents.²³

The current division of responsibilities between Simcoe County and the lower-tier municipalities is shown in Figure 3.²⁴

Figure 3: Division of Responsibilities between the County and Lower-Tier Municipalities

County of Simcoe	Lower-Tier Municipalities
- Ontario Works	- water and sewer services
- social housing	- local roads
- children's services	- public libraries
- homes for the aged	- recreation services
- land ambulance and emergency planning	- fire and police services
- solid waste management	- land use development (zoning by-laws)
- county roads	- licensing
- museum and archives	- building inspection fees and permits
- forest management	
- tourism	
- Geographic Information Systems	
- subdivision approval authority	
- condominium approval authority	

2.7.1 Restructuring in Simcoe

The adoption of the Simcoe County Official Plan in 1998 resulted from a decade-long municipal reform process.²⁵ Population growth and associ-

²³. County of Simcoe. Website. <www.county.simcoe.on.ca/government.cfm>.

²⁴. County of Simcoe. Website. <www.county.simcoe.on.ca/government.cfm>.

²⁵. The Simcoe County Council adopted the new Official Plan on October 28, 1997. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing approved it on April 1, 1998. The publication date of the most recent consolidated version is June 2000.

ated servicing requirements was putting pressure on the relatively unsophisticated administrative authorities of many Ontario counties. Reviews of the county government system in the late 1980s found that many services delivered at the local or provincial level could be better delivered at the county level, that differentials in tax rates and political representation had become unfair, and that competition between municipalities had led to poor development outcomes.²⁶

The Consultation Committee to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (1989) recommended that responsibility for land use planning be shared between the county and the municipalities. Each county would be required to adopt an official plan by 1994 to which all local official plans would conform.²⁷ These reviews led to 10 Ontario counties undertaking studies to assess their long-term needs and propose restructuring plans.

Simcoe was the first county to implement a restructuring plan.²⁸ After drafting a strategic plan in 1992, the County decided to prepare an Official Plan that would define county-wide objectives, including “environmental protection, resource management, economic and community development, transportation, and cultural and visible heritage.”²⁹ Between 1990 and 1994, amalgamations and annexations reduced the number of lower-tier municipalities from 32 to the present 16.³⁰

These changes took place before the election of the Progressive Conservatives in 1995. The Province’s Who Does What Panel (1996-1998) favoured consolidating lower-tier municipalities into stronger, more viable units, rolling the separated cities into the counties’ political and administrative structures and making county councils directly elected. None of these changes were instituted in Simcoe.

A critical unresolved issue is that representation on county councils does not reflect population. Despite the recommendation of the 1989 Consultation Committee to adopt representation by population, lower-tier municipalities are still equally represented on county councils.³¹ In the past, several municipalities have sought city status in order to separate

The Province’s Who Does What Panel (1996-1998) favoured consolidating lower-tier municipalities into stronger, more viable units, rolling the separated cities into the counties’ political and administrative structures and making county councils directly elected. None of these changes were instituted in Simcoe.

²⁶. Government of Ontario. *Patterns for the Future: Report and Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on County Government to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs*, 1987, and Government of Ontario. *County Government in Ontario*. January 1989.

²⁷. Government of Ontario. *County Government in Ontario*. January 1989. 32-33.

²⁸. Government of Ontario. Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. “Who Does What Panel Recommendations on Local Governance,” website <www.mah.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts_1_1789_1.html> December 6, 1996. Similar two-tier restructuring processes took place elsewhere, notably in Wellington County (approved 1999) and Peterborough County (still in draft form).

²⁹. *County of Simcoe Official Plan* 2000. s. 1.3.

³⁰. See the Appendix for a chart detailing municipal boundary changes since 1990.

³¹. Government of Ontario. *County Government in Ontario: Report of the Consultation Committee to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs*. January 1989. 25.

from counties in which they were underrepresented.³² In Simcoe County, the largest of all Ontario counties by population, town and township populations range from 8,316 for Penetanguishene to 28,666 for Innisfil, a ratio of almost 1 to 3.5. Eight of the 16 municipalities in Simcoe County have populations over 15,000 and could therefore apply to separate from the County.

As Simcoe's population grows and the County provides more "urban" services, it behaves more and more like its regional municipality neighbours. Should a regional municipality structure be proposed, however, Orillia and especially Barrie would no doubt resist integration with the County.

Representation on county councils does not reflect population. Lower-tier municipalities, which range from Penetanguishene (pop. 8,316) to Innisfil (pop. 28,666), delegate council members to serve on the county council.

2.7.2 The Challenge Posed by Barrie's Growth

Barrie's population has grown at a rate of 65% over the past decade, with no sign of slowing. It is estimated that Barrie's urbanized land area will accommodate seven more years of growth at current densities.³³ Hemson Consulting estimates that within its present boundaries, Barrie will be 42,450 units short of projected demand by 2026.³⁴

Historically, Barrie has annexed land when needed from neighbouring municipalities. Since 1954, the City's borders have changed nine times through annexation of lands from neighbouring townships.³⁵ In 1996, the Province changed the rules by which an annexation can occur. Today, boundaries can be adjusted within all counties using a triple-majority system. For Simcoe, this means the proposal must be supported by a majority of the municipalities involved, having a majority of the electors, plus a majority vote in County Council.

Barrie has traditionally grown by annexing land outside its borders. This approach is no longer as feasible as it once was, and Barrie has begun to encourage more compact forms of development.

In 2002, Barrie commissioned the *Greater Barrie Local Government Review*,³⁶ which, among other recommendations, called for Barrie and Innisfil to form a single city, separated from the County. Innisfil strongly objected to a merger with Barrie.³⁷ Although the annexation issue has been

³². Government of Ontario. *County Government in Ontario: Report of the Consultation Committee to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs*. January 1989. 11. The report cites Pembroke and Barrie as examples of towns that have separated from their counties on this pretext. Any town or township with a population of 15,000 or over may apply to the Ontario Municipal Board for city status and separation from their county. The OMB's decision requires approval from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (17).

³³. Eric Hodgins, Planner, City of Barrie. Interview. September 26, 2003.

³⁴. Hemson 2004b. 6-7.

³⁵. Meridian Planning Consultants. *Greater Barrie Area Local Government Review: The Challenge of Managing Growth*, prepared for the City of Barrie January 2002. 10.

³⁶. Meridian Planning Consultants. *Greater Barrie Area Local Government Review: The Challenge of Managing Growth*, prepared for the City of Barrie January 2002.

³⁷. Its own report, *Managing Growth and Protecting Innisfil's Communities*, argued that increasing densities and releasing unneeded industrial lands for residential or other development within Barrie's borders would lengthen the timeline within which Barrie could grow within its existing boundaries.

contentious, the November 2003 election brought a new mayor to Barrie and an apparent new spirit of cooperation between the two municipalities.

In March 2004 Barrie launched a new downtown plan which uses financial incentives to attract developers to the City's vacant downtown lots.³⁸ This plan may signal a shift toward encouraging more compact forms of development to manage growth.

Whether they are addressed through annexation of parts of the County to Barrie, integration of Barrie into the County, or through cooperative arrangements, the growth management challenges posed by Barrie cannot be ignored.

2.7.3 Simcoe's Official Plan

In 1998, with the adoption of the County Official Plan, the County became the approval authority for subdivisions, condominiums and local official plans. County approvals can be overturned or halted by the Province, but the County and its staff operate the approvals process in the first instance. The 16 municipalities in the County have their own official plans,³⁹ each of which must conform to the County Official Plan. The County Council approves all amendments to local official plans passed by local councils.

The County has delegated subdivision and condominium approval authority to Clearview, Oro-Medonte, New Tecumseth, and Midland. In these cases, the County retains a commenting role on conformity with the County Official Plan. Other municipalities have not sought these powers because they do not want them or they lack the human resources to implement them.⁴⁰

In addition to the Simcoe County Official Plan, parts of the Township of Clearview are governed by the *Niagara Escarpment Plan* and small sections of Adjala-Tosorontio and New Tecumseth fall under the *Oak Ridges Moraine Act*. The separated cities of Barrie and Orillia are not governed by the Simcoe County Official Plan.

The 16 municipalities in the County have their own official plans, each of which must conform to the County Official Plan. Clearview, Oro-Medonte, New Tecumseth, and Midland handle their own subdivision and condominium approvals; otherwise this is the role of the County Council.

2.7.4 The Development Approval Process

Since all municipal institutions are creatures of the Province, the Province has the power in principle to overturn any municipal decision. In practice,

38. "New Downtown Plan for Barrie" *Novæ Res Urbis*, Greater Toronto Area Edition. (7:14) March 31, 2004. 1, 5.

39. See Appendix for a list of Official Plan adoption dates. The Township of Severn has not yet adopted a post-amalgamation Official Plan and operates under five OPs and five zoning by-laws.

40. Nathan Westendorp, Planner II, Simcoe County. Interview. September 26, 2003.

however, the Province’s role is reactive. The County and local municipalities process all development applications, while provincial ministries merely exercise a commenting role. The County has many opportunities to intervene or refuse a proposal. If a proposal is clearly incompatible with the stated planning policies, the County or municipality can turn it down even before a formal application is submitted, at the pre-consultation stage.

Developers apply directly to the County only if an amendment to the County Official Plan is required for the development to proceed. The approval of “ordinary” development takes place entirely at the local municipality level. If both the local and the county official plans require amendments, then applications must be made at both levels.

Once an application is made, it is circulated to affected agencies for comment. Extraordinary applications are circulated to the provincial Ministries of the Environment, Municipal Affairs, and Transportation. The application may also be sent to school boards, neighbouring municipalities, utilities, conservation authorities, and County roads officials. Developments are approved only if they meet the conditions set by the commenting agencies.

2.7.5 The County's vision for growth

The Simcoe County Official Plan articulates a long-term vision for growth and sets out four land use designations:

- Rural and Agricultural Areas;
- Greenlands;
- Special Development Areas;
- Settlement Areas.

Lands designated Rural and Agricultural are not to be the focus of development, although small-scale residential development is permitted in some circumstances. Some municipalities permit recreational, seasonal, or limited-service “lifestyle” communities in Rural and Agricultural areas. The County has indicated that the Rural and Agricultural designations will be separated in the next revision of the Official Plan to better protect farmland from development.

Greenlands are considered vital to the natural heritage of the county. Stringent environmental impact standards are applied to development on Greenlands.

The Special Development Areas designation covers major economic generators such as Casino Rama and the Lake Simcoe Regional Airport.

The Official Plan directs new development to existing designated settlement areas in order to promote compact development and to protect

The County's Official Plan directs most growth to existing Settlement Areas. Some limited forms of development are permitted in Rural and Agricultural areas. Development is very restricted in areas designated as Greenlands.

farmland and natural areas. The County Official Plan lists all existing Settlement Areas, but does not specify their boundaries (section 5.1). Existing Settlement Areas can be expanded only by amendment to municipal official plans.⁴¹ Some municipalities have created settlement area sub-classes.⁴²

The County Official Plan also requires that local municipalities undertake growth management strategies and designate a 10- to 20-year supply of land for urban development.⁴³

The County retains control because municipal OPAs must be approved by the County. The County can refuse an OPA if the project is not justified by growth projections, if servicing is inadequate, or if adjacent uses are incompatible (section 4.1.1).

The Official Plan allows small-scale subdivisions and recreational developments outside settlement areas, on certain conditions.

In section 3.6, the County Official Plan permits development outside settlement areas in two cases:

- **Country Residential Development:** Small-scale subdivisions are permitted outside Settlement Areas if the development does not cause the municipality's projected proportion of rural growth to be exceeded and the development is justified within the context of the local and County Official Plans. Country residential developments are not permitted adjacent to existing settlement areas or other country residential developments.
- **Recreation Districts:** local municipalities may designate Recreational Districts containing commercial and residential activity in the rural portion of the Rural and Agricultural and Greenland areas. Development in Greenland areas is "discouraged" and either full or communal water and sewage servicing is preferred.

To date, country residential development has consisted typically of small-scale projects and has had little effect on the big picture of servicing or population location. There is some concern, however, that Recreation

41. Section 4.10.11 of the County Official Plan states that: "Local official plans shall require official plan amendments for the following developments: settlement expansions, country residential subdivisions, country recreation facilities which include significant building developments and/or alteration or are greater than 160 hectares in size, business parks, shoreline developments, airports, new waste disposal sites, and aggregate developments, except where existing approved local municipal official plans do not require an official plan amendment for new or expanded aggregate developments."

42. Wasaga Beach, for example, has a Country Club Community class, which permits developments based on communal water supply and individual sewage disposal systems containing single detached dwelling units and recreational land uses. (*Town of Wasaga Beach Official Plan*, Draft Dec. 2002), s. 5.2.7.) Innisfil has a Shoreline designation intended for recreational and small-scale cottage development.

43. As a part of the regular updates to their population projections, Hemson Consulting has been hired by the County to assess the land supply in designated Settlement Areas with respect to servicing capacity and ability to contain the County's future growth.

Districts could become a back door to large-scale development outside settlement areas.

2.7.6 Servicing

Servicing capacity is a major constraint on new development. Through the PPS, the Province recommends providing full sewage and water service in both urban and rural areas and only where plant capacity is available to accommodate it. If full servicing is impossible and site conditions are suitable, communal services or on-site individual services are permitted (section 1.3.1.1).

The PPS also requires “at least a 3-year supply of residential units with servicing capacity in draft approved or registered plans.” The County Official Plan amplifies the PPS by stating that: “Limitations respecting the availability of municipal water and sanitary sewage treatment capacity to service up to the 20 year growth projection shall not restrict planning and designating sufficient lands for such growth. Where such limitations exist at the time that the plans are being prepared, policies shall be included in the plan or secondary plan that require phasing of the development in accordance with service availability” (section 4.1.4).

For proposals to create or expand a Settlement Area, the County Official Plan requires that the local municipality secure an “analysis of servicing feasibility, transportation facilities, agricultural land quality, natural heritage features and functions, hazard lands, resource development and its potential and cultural heritage and archaeological resources” (section 4.1.2). It also states that “the secondary plan or official plan amendment for settlement expansion or establishment shall indicate proposed land uses, major streets, road, storm water and utility services, population density and staging of development over a period of 10-20 years” (section 4.1.3). Since the local municipalities are in charge of servicing, the County does not directly review or approve servicing plans.

Servicing capacity is a major constraint on new development. The Simcoe County Official Plan requires municipalities to prepare servicing plans for proposed new developments. However, since the local municipalities are in charge of servicing, the County does not directly review or approve servicing plans.

2.8 A provincial planning system in flux

Development in Simcoe, as it is throughout the Toronto-related Region, is shaped by provincial planning policy. At present, however, the key provincial policies are under review, and the final outcome is unknown.

2.8.1 Smart Growth Panel

In 2002, the Province established a series of regional Smart Growth Panels, each of which was asked to define the actions required to best manage growth over the next 30 years. The Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel, centred on Toronto, was asked to recommend short-, medium- and long-term actions required to accommodate an additional three million people in the Central Zone. The final report, issued in April 2003, recommended the Province’s return to direct involvement in regional coordination

through substantial investment in water, sewer, and transit infrastructure. The method of implementation is unclear, however: recommendation 1a asks that “The province establish an accountable stakeholder body, advisory to the province, with the authority and resources to co-ordinate implementation of elements of a Provincial Smart Growth strategy that cross municipal boundaries.”⁴⁴ The change in government following the general election of November 2003 places the future of the Smart Growth Panels in doubt. It remains to be seen whether the Smart Growth process will be expanded, re-branded, or dropped.

After the election of the Liberal government in November 2003, the future of the Central Region Smart Growth initiative is in doubt.

2.8.2 Review of the Provincial Policy Statement

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) came into effect in 1996 and is currently undergoing a five-year review. The PPS paints the Province’s land use goals in broad strokes; directing growth to existing settlement areas and away from environmentally sensitive lands or resources to enhance economic growth and public health and safety. The review, which began in May of 2001 and has no set conclusion date, included a series of workshops and consultations from which key issues were summarized.

The Provincial Policy Statement is currently under review. No date has been set for the conclusion of this process.

These include setting a clear growth management strategy for the Province and strengthening the implementation requirements of provincial policies.⁴⁵

2.8.3 Bill 26: Strong Communities Act

The *Strong Communities (Planning Amendment) Act*, if passed, will strengthen the PPS by requiring that Official Plans be “consistent with,” rather than “have regard to,” its policies. Since a key provincial policy is to direct growth to existing settlement areas and away from agricultural lands, this stronger wording could have considerable impact for those municipalities in Simcoe considering large-scale development proposals outside existing settlement areas.

Bill 26 would strengthen the Provincial Policy Statement and prevent appeals to the OMB by developers of urban expansions that are opposed by elected municipal governments.

Currently, any application to amend an Official Plan must be reviewed within 90 days or the applicant has grounds to appeal it to the OMB. Bill 26 would give municipalities more time to respond to OPA applications by changing the time period to 180 days. Further measures in Bill 26 would prevent appeals to the OMB by developers of urban expansions that are opposed by elected municipal governments.⁴⁶

⁴⁴. Government of Ontario, *Shape the Future: Report of the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel*. April 2003.

⁴⁵. Government of Ontario, *Shape the Future: Report of the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel*. April 2003.

⁴⁶. Government of Ontario. Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. “Proposed Planning” Website. <www.mah.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts_1_16239_1.html>.

2.8.4 Bill 27: Greenbelt Protection Act

The Province's *Greenbelt Protection Act* passed its second reading in April 2004. It will establish a greenbelt study area that includes lands under the jurisdiction of the Greater Toronto Area regions of Durham, York, Halton and Peel; the cities of Toronto and Hamilton; the tender fruit and grape lands as designated in the Region of Niagara's official Plan; the Niagara Escarpment Plan and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. A Greenbelt Task Force has been appointed to lead public consultations on the scope, content and implementation of the greenbelt.

Until the Act is passed, the Minister of Municipal Affairs has passed a zoning order to "temporarily prevent new urban uses outside existing urban boundaries on rural and agricultural lands within key portions of the study area."⁴⁷ Lands in Peel and York Regions are most affected by the zoning order.

Bill 27 has established a study area that includes lands under the jurisdiction of the Greater Toronto Area regions of Durham, York, Halton and Peel; the cities of Toronto and Hamilton; the tender fruit and grape lands as designated in the Region of Niagara's official Plan; the Niagara Escarpment Plan and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

⁴⁷. Government of Ontario. Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. "Greenbelt Protection." Website. <www.mah.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts_1_16289_1.html>.

3. Proposed Large-Scale Developments in Simcoe County

The developments described below are at various stages in the approval process. The final outcome of each proposal will not be known for months or years.

The development proposal by Ontario Potato Distributors Inc., covers 1,416 hectares and would eventually have 15,000 dwellings and 50,000 people.

3.1 Ontario Potato Distributors Inc., New Tecumseth

3.1.1 Location and Description

The proposal calls for a 50,000-person development just south of Alliston in New Tecumseth. The lands on which the 1,416-hectare OPDI development would be built are now occupied by potato and sod farms. If fully developed, the development would feature 15,000 dwellings and a range of commercial, industrial, and institutional land uses.

Phase One includes a large central Commons with green space, stormwater ponds and public buildings. Neighbourhoods would be added as the community grew. The first phase would bring 1,200 units on-line — enough to support an elementary school. The overall development plan includes a hospital and a future campus of Georgian College (see Map 6).

3.1.2 Development Strategy

OPDI project manager Allan Duffy justifies the choice of the site near Alliston by noting:

- employment prospects in the area are strong due to the presence of a large employer, Honda, and the addition of 405 hectares of new industrial and commercial lands in the recently adopted Alliston Industrial/Commercial Secondary Plan;
- the fact that a significant proportion of the Honda plant's workforce live outside the township because local housing options in the township are limited; Duffy argues that Honda's employees can afford better housing than is currently available in Alliston, Beeton or Tottenham;
- the presence of substantial existing and proposed highway infrastructure; OPDI would be built at the junction of the proposed Highway 427 extension and a proposed new Economic Transportation Corridor.

The developer is aiming to appeal to workers at the Honda plant, and has predicated the plan on the expansion of the highway system.

It is, however, difficult to argue that the OPDI site “lies in the path of growth and is in keeping with the long-term objectives of the Region to manage growth,”⁴⁸ a justification that Duffy used in getting approval for a similar proposal near Queensville in York Region.

⁴⁸. Ontario Municipal Board. Decision delivered by S.W. Lee and Order of the Board. OMB File No. 0970190. Issued April 7, 1998. 4.

3.1.3 Infrastructure

Planner Eric Taylor of New Tecumseth believes that surplus water capacity in the Collingwood-Alliston pipeline and the expectation of an increase in the capacity of the wastewater treatment plant encouraged the large-scale development proposals: “I think that the expectation of being able to service a much larger population created a flurry of activity.”⁴⁹

In spring 2003, the Town of New Tecumseth completed an EA for the expansion of its regional wastewater treatment plant. The Town sought to have the plant assessed for a capacity of 40,000 m³ per day. The EA has not yet been completed, but the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs expect to set the maximum assimilative capacity of the Nottawasaga river at between 23,000 and 28,600 m³ per day. That assessment level allows New Tecumseth to accommodate planned growth, excluding parts of the Alliston Industrial/Commercial Secondary Plan Area. It does not, however, accommodate the OPDI proposal. Duffy believes that better sewage treatment technology, perhaps in conjunction with piping treated sewage, would allow the development to be serviced without overloading the assimilative capacity of the Nottawasaga River. He argues that the government should let the developer spend the money to find a solution that can grow in step with the new development’s phasing.⁵⁰

The assimilative capacity of the Nottawasaga River would accommodate planned growth, but not the large development in New Tecumseth.

3.1.4 Current Status

The Town of New Tecumseth received an Official Plan Amendment application from OPDI in October 2003. Initial debates in Council focused on whether to proceed with the application. Several councillors felt that the application was premature and that allowing the application to go through the pre-consultation stage would make it more difficult to refuse. Council asked staff to review the application and present recommendations on how to proceed. Staff drew up a memo outlining the pros and cons of refusing the OPA application outright and recommended that Council allow the OPDI application to “take its proper course through the process in accordance with the Planning Act.”⁵¹

In the November 2003 municipal elections a new mayor, Mike MacEachern, and six of the Town’s nine councillors were elected on a campaign to stop the development. On January 5, 2004, the Town passed a motion to ask the Province to include the town in the Bill 27 Greenbelt Study Area, so

49. Eric Taylor, Manager of Planning, New Tecumseth, Interview. October 21, 2003.

50. Allan Duffy. Interview. November 14, 2003.

51. Feehely, James J. and Theresa A. Caron. Memorandum to Mayor and Members of Council Re: Ontario Potato Distributors Inc Application for Official Plan Amendment. October 27, 2003. Town of New Tecumseth.

that they might take advantage of the moratorium on urban area expansions.⁵²

At the January 19, 2004, Council meeting, Mayor MacEachern passed a resolution to refuse OPDI's official plan amendment application.⁵³ The resolution was based on peer review reports of OPDI's proposal, which had identified shortcomings and discrepancies in the OPDI proposal.

First, OPDI's population growth projection was deemed to be unrealistic. OPDI's proposal represents a doubling of the County's and New Tecumseth's 25-year population projections. The Town's existing Growth Management Study projects that Alliston will grow from 9,700 today to 21,100 in 2031. If the OPDI development were to proceed, Alliston's total population in 2031 would be approximately 71,000 people — more than three times the original projection.⁵⁴ According to Hemson Consulting's review, the proponent "does not make the case as to why there is a need to accommodate additional growth in the Town of New Tecumseth" instead of elsewhere in the Toronto-related region.⁵⁵

Second, the reviewers noted several unresolved technical issues relating to servicing infrastructure, including sanitary sewer capacity, management of the floodplain, groundwater vulnerability, phosphorous balancing, and the assimilative capacity of the Nottawasaga River.

Third, the reviewers did not consider the proposed development to be a logical expansion of existing residential areas in Alliston. They viewed OPDI's proposal, with its own town centre, as completely separate from Alliston.

Finally, an assessment of existing arterial road infrastructure determined that the trip generation model used by OPDI had underestimated both the total traffic that would be generated by the development and the necessary improvements to the road network that would be required. The reviewers cautioned against relying on unplanned and unbuilt transportation initiatives as solutions to the traffic generated by large-scale development.

At the January 19, 2004, Council meeting, Mayor MacEachern passed a resolution to refuse OPDI's official plan amendment application. Nevertheless, the developer is planning to pursue the proposal.

Peer reviews of the plan for New Tecumseth noted several shortcomings. The growth projections were considered unrealistic; servicing issues were unresolved; the development was separate from Alliston; and the developers had underestimated the amount of traffic that would be generated.

⁵². "Town Moves to Stop Wave of Development." *New Tecumseth Free Press*. January 2004. <www.madhunt.com/greenbeltstudyoptin.html>; Town of New Tecumseth. Council Minutes. January 5, 2004.

⁵³. Resolution 2004-034 re: OP Amendment File DEV 198, by Ontario Potato Distributing Inc.

⁵⁴. J.H. Stevens Planning & Development Consultants, Peer Review, Application for Official Plan Amendment, Ontario Potato Distributors Inc. Town of New Tecumseth, Town file: DEV 198. January 2004. 5.

⁵⁵. Hemson Consulting, OPDI Peer Review of the IBI Growth Management/Residential Land Needs Assessment. January 2004a. 6.

In response, Duffy says that this kind of setback is not unusual for a large-scale development proposal. He has no plans to abandon the proposal. Although he says he would have liked to work cooperatively with the Town, he is considering several options, including an appeal to the OMB and a direct application to the County to permit the development.⁵⁶ One of the measures in Bill 26 would prevent any appeals to the OMB for urban area expansions that are opposed by elected municipal governments. Therefore, the ability of the developer to appeal the rejection may depend on whether the OPDI proposal is viewed as an expansion of Alliston or as a new settlement area.

3.2 Bradford Bond Head Planning Area, Bradford West Gwillimbury

3.2.1 Location and Description

Geranium Corporation is proposing a large-scale development that would urbanize the lands between the existing town of Bradford, designated employment lands flanking Highway 400 and the existing small community of Bond Head in Bradford West Gwillimbury. The proposal aims to knit together the existing towns with the employment area to form a “cohesive, comprehensively planned community” of 114,000 people.⁵⁷ The Planning Area covers 2,500 hectares and at full build-out is projected to house 55,000 jobs (see Map 7).

The Bradford Bond Head proposal covers 2,500 hectares and would eventually accommodate 114,000 residents and 55,000 jobs.

3.2.2 Development Strategy

Initially, Geranium Corporation proposed a development that would expand the settlement area of Bond Head to accommodate 50,000 people. This original proposal spanned the land between the existing Bond Head settlement area and the Highway 400/88 Special Policy Area. That application was submitted in August 2003.

In response, the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury asked the proponent to account for the small area, only two concessions wide, that lies between the proposed Bond Head expansion and the existing Bradford urban area. The Town sought to clarify whether the proponent envisioned this land becoming urbanized or taking on another use such as a permanent agricultural buffer.

Geranium Corporation returned in December 2003 with a proposal to urbanize the lands between Bond Head and Bradford to accommodate approximately 114,000 people. Geranium Corporation notes that it took

⁵⁶. Allan Duffy. Interview, January 26, 2004.

⁵⁷. Sorensen Gravely Lowes Planning Associates Inc. Letter to Clerk-Administrator of Bradford West Gwillimbury Re: Request to Revise Official Plan Amendment OP-03-05. on behalf of Bond Head Development Corporation. December 2003.

on this new planning role reluctantly and only in response to the Town's request for a revision of the initial application.⁵⁸ Specific land uses within this Bradford Bond Head Planning Area would be determined through secondary plans, which the developer hoped to initiate in early 2004.⁵⁹

Geranium's development strategy for the Bradford Bond Head Planning Area claims to follow provincial land use planning goals, including compact urban form and the efficient use of infrastructure. The developer argues that the planning area is ideally located to accept some of the Toronto region's population growth, as it lies just outside the protected areas of the Oak Ridges Moraine and Holland Marsh and close to proposed extensions of 400-series highways. Although the Official Plan Amendment application stresses the site's proximity to proposed highway extensions, the proponent insists that the project would be viable even if these extensions were not approved, because it is close to Highway 400.

The developer argues that the planning area is ideally located to accept some of the Toronto region's future population growth, as it lies just outside the protected areas of the Oak Ridges Moraine and Holland Marsh and close to proposed extensions of 400-series highways.

The proponent describes the site configuration as ideal for supporting intra-city bus transit and for attracting jobs. The developer proposes a "jobs-led" growth strategy that would see the community expand in step with local employment growth to ensure a mix of uses and minimize commuting.

3.2.3 Infrastructure

The original Bond Head expansion proposal called for a Servicing Master Plan in collaboration with the Town to "explore water and sewer servicing solutions for both the Bradford and Bond Head areas."⁶⁰ The revised submission to the Town notes that this study — and others — are under way and will now account for the expanded area of proposed development.

The proposed water pipeline from Alcona to Bradford will not be sufficiently large to service the new development.

The Towns of Innisfil and Bradford West Gwillimbury have signed an agreement to construct a new water pipeline from the Alcona treatment plant to Bradford via Lefroy and Gilford to service lands identified in Bradford West Gwillimbury's Official Plan.⁶¹ The volume will not, however, be sufficient to service the Bradford Bond Head Planning Area.

The proposed development area drains into both the Lake Simcoe and the Nottawasaga watersheds. The sewer servicing scheme is not yet laid

⁵⁸. Mario Giampietri, Geranium Corporation. Interview. January 6, 2004.

⁵⁹. Sorensen Gravely Lowes Planning Associates Inc. Letter to Clerk-Administrator of Bradford West Gwillimbury Re: Request to Revise Official Plan Amendment OP-03-05, on behalf of Bond Head Development Corporation. December 22, 2003.

⁶⁰. Stantec Consulting Ltd. and Sorensen Graveley Lowes Planning Association Inc. Official Plan Amendment Application for Bond Head Expansion: Development Overview August 2003. 2.

⁶¹. "Historic agreement between neighbours." *Bradford West Gwillimbury Times*. (12:39) 27 September – 4 October 2003. <www.times.net/TS20030927.htm>

out in detail but depends on the incremental expansion of the Bradford Wastewater Treatment Plant to accommodate the growing population. Studies are proposed that would address the issue of phosphorous loading in Lake Simcoe and the Nottawasaga River.⁶² The proponent is confident that improved wastewater treatment technologies will allow the area to accommodate the proposed development.⁶³

3.2.4 Current Status

In February 2004, consultants for the developer produced a “Regional Context Overview” report.⁶⁴ This report makes the case for the development of the Bradford Bond Head Planning Area on the grounds of existing and potential water and highway infrastructure capacity, compatibility with provincial and local policy, and the inability of the GTA to accommodate projected population growth. The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury is reviewing the revised Official Plan Amendment application.

As of spring 2004, the Bradford West Gwillimbury Planning Department was reviewing the revised Official Plan Amendment application.

3.3 Seasonal and Adult-Lifestyle Communities

In addition to these two large-scale development proposals, Simcoe County is also the focus of several large-scale adult lifestyle and seasonal development proposals.

Province-wide, the market for adult lifestyle units has grown from 300 sales in 1986 to 10,000 sales today.⁶⁵ Catering to a small but rapidly growing market, they do not in principle require a full range of services. Seniors and empty-nesters do not, for example, require schools, though they may require other infrastructure such as accessible community buildings, roadways, and sidewalks.

3.3.1 Big Bay Point, Innisfil

The proposed Big Bay Point Resort is on the shores of Lake Simcoe in Innisfil. Geranium Corporation, which is working with Florida-based Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, describes the proposal as a “world-

The Big Bay Point Resort would have up to 3,500 residential units, an 18-hole golf course, three theatres, and a marina. At full build-out, the 234-hectare development will house 7,500 residents.

⁶². The Nottawasaga is identified by the Ministry of Environment and Energy as a river that exceeds phosphorus load capacity and that therefore no new phosphorus loads should occur. See also NVCA Watershed Management Plan – Water Resources. <www.nvca.on.ca/watershed/pages/page13.htm>.

⁶³. Mario Giampietri, Geranium Corporation. Interview. January 6, 2004.

⁶⁴. Bond Head Development Corporation. *Bradford Bond Head Planning Area: Regional Context Overview*. Prepared by Sorensen Gravely Lowes Planning Associates Inc. in association with BA Consulting Group Ltd., Bousfields Inc., Clayton Research Associates Ltd., Daniel Burns & Associates, Gartner Lee Limited, Michalski Nielson Associates Limited, and Stantec Consulting Ltd. February 2004.

⁶⁵. Kates, K. “Rural lifestyle projects gaining popularity.” *Globe and Mail*. December 6, 2003.

class adult-lifestyle resort.”⁶⁶ The development would have between 3,200 and 3,500 residential units, an 18-hole golf course, three theatres, and a Venice-inspired marina. At full build-out, the 234-hectare development will house approximately 7,500 residents⁶⁷ (see Map 8). Geranium Corporation has previously developed similar projects in Niagara Region. The rationale for the Big Bay Point Resort is contained in 18 technical and needs assessment reports that analyse market needs and review alternative sites.

The Town of Innisfil and Simcoe County are concerned about the long-term implications of approving large-scale recreational developments. The Innisfil Official Plan states that “it is the intention of the Plan that the Shoreline Policy Area shall maintain its residential and recreational character. Commercial and community services beyond those in existence shall generally not be permitted unless a demand is proven to the satisfaction of the Town” (s. 5.11.2).

Residents and municipal staff have expressed concern that future Big Bay Point residents may begin to demand more commercial and community services as the resort grows and becomes, in effect, a complete town. The same issue arises with the Rural and Agricultural designation sought by the proponent under the Simcoe County Official Plan. In response, Geranium has proposed to limit residents’ demands for services such as schools by designing housing that deliberately does not meet family needs. The target resident for the development is the empty-nester or retired person who would buy a unit as a second or seasonal home. Units in the resort will be small, with little individual outdoor space. Many will be high-priced apartment units. Geranium argues that, for a comparable price, families can purchase single detached multi-bedroom homes in nearby areas with generous outdoor space. In addition, the condominium ownership structure of the entire resort area locks out any unplanned commercial activity.

Residents and municipal staff have expressed concern that future Big Bay Point residents may begin to demand more commercial and community services as the resort grows and becomes, in effect, a complete town.

The preliminary servicing plan submitted with the application for Official Plan Amendment proposes to link the Big Bay Point Resort to Innisfil’s water and sewer system in Alcona through trunk lines. The expansion of existing systems would supply the required capacity. The report concludes that “the connection to the water distribution system and installation of a pump station and sanitary trunk sewer will adequately service the Big Bay

⁶⁶. Big Bay Point Resort, website, <www.bigbaypointresort.ca>.

⁶⁷. As a seasonal resort, the population will fluctuate throughout the year. The developer expects to accommodate 2 to 2.5 people per unit for a final population of between 6,400 and 8,750.

Point Resort Community. Detailed analysis to determine upgrade requirements to the existing Water Treatment and Water Pollution Control Plant will be performed.”⁶⁸

If water and sewer lines are brought to the development site, surrounding properties and those that lie along the path of the lines will also be brought onto full services. Geranium Corporation proposes to pay for the cost of integrating 39 properties along the trunk line route.

An Official Plan Amendment application was submitted to the Town of Innisfil in July 2002 to re-designate 100 hectares of land from Agricultural to Shoreline. Simcoe County received an Official Plan Amendment application in September 2002 for a Rural and Agricultural designation, which permits seasonal dwellings.⁶⁹ Geranium and Duany Plater-Zyberk engaged in several community consultations, including design charrettes in late 2002 and early 2003. The corporation maintains a detailed website on the development through which they are seeking letters of support for the development from the community.

A ratepayers’ group has mobilized in opposition to the proposal. InnisfilAction, part of the Innisfil District Association, has retained the advice of a planner and an environmental specialist to evaluate the Geranium proposal. InnisfilAction’s concerns include management of population growth, the manner in which planning is carried out, and the impacts of growth on the quality of life and the natural environment.

A ratepayers group has organized opposition to the Big Bay Point Resort, and the Town is reviewing the proposal cautiously.

The Town of Innisfil has retained consultants to review the application. As of January 2004, no decision on the Official Plan Amendment had been taken. Deputy Mayor Barb Baguley is clear that Innisfil Council intends to approach the development proposal cautiously. She insists that they will not be pressed into a quick decision and that it will serve the community well to have Council fully explore all options before proceeding.⁷⁰

3.3.2 Briar Hill Area, New Tecumseth

Along Highway 89, between Alliston and Highway 400, four developments are proceeding or proposed:

- Green Briar, which is fully built out;
- Briar Hill, which is about half built;
- Briar Hill West, the most recent expansion;
- Belterra Estates, a pending development.

⁶⁸. Jones Consulting Group. *Functional Servicing Report: Big Bay Point Marina Resort Community Project*. Town of Innisfil — County of Simcoe. December 2002. 18.

⁶⁹. Green, Marshal. Report to the Council of the Town of Innisfil. Re: Kimvar/Geranium Proposal for Big Bay Point, August 8, 2003, Schedule A; Town of Innisfil and Simcoe County. Joint Public Meeting Minutes. May, 2003. <www.innisfil.ca/services/tech/planning/bbp/BigBayPointProposal.PDF>.

⁷⁰. Barb Baguley, Deputy Mayor of Innisfil. Interview. January 9, 2004.

Together they represent a total of about 4,000 units. The Briar Hill developments are an adult lifestyle community catering primarily to retirees and empty-nesters. Briar Hill includes a golf course and ground-related housing and is considered by the Town to be “an urban area on its own.”⁷¹ Asked if the Town’s acceptance of Briar Hill conflicts with his opposition to OPDI, Mayor Mike McEachern said no. He believes that, while the OPDI proposal represents a profound deviation from the town’s character, Briar Hill, with its focused demographic, neither helps nor hurts the integrity of Alliston’s main street core.⁷²

Four developments that would total 4,000 dwellings are proceeding or proposed in the Briar Hill area of New Tecumseth.

Nevertheless, growth in the Briar Hill area has taken place faster than the rate anticipated by New Tecumseth’s 2002 Growth Management Study. This report projected that at full build-out, all Briar Hill area developments would include 2,400 units.⁷³ The most recent information indicates that build-out will most likely be in the range of 4,000 units.

The Alliston Industrial/Commercial Secondary Plan has played a role in the development of Briar Hill. Covering an area on the east flank of Alliston, this 405-hectare secondary plan connects Briar Hill and Alliston, creating a continuous urbanized area.⁷⁴ The Briar Hill developments therefore represent an expansion of the Alliston settlement area.

The Briar Hill developments represent an expansion of the Alliston settlement area.

The developments of Green Briar, Briar Hill, and Briar Hill West have received approval and are either completed or under construction. An amendment to approve the Belterra Estates Secondary Plan, which calls for 1,950 units, was passed by New Tecumseth Council in June 2003 and is awaiting County approval. Until the servicing scheme for Belterra Estates can be finalized, which depends on the assimilative capacity of the Nottawasaga River, the development will not receive County approval.⁷⁵

3.3.3 Springwater Township

The Township of Springwater, as part of its Growth Management Strategy, identifies adult lifestyle communities as a fourth category of development, after growth within settlement areas, expansion of settlement areas, and rural infill. For Springwater, adult lifestyle communities “comprise a unique component of the residential growth envisioned over the next 20 years.”⁷⁶

Springwater Council has approved an 800-unit adult lifestyle development outside Craighurst.

⁷¹ Eric Taylor, Manager of Planning, New Tecumseth. Interview. October 21, 2003.

⁷² Mike McEachern, Mayor of New Tecumseth. Interview. December 5, 2003.

⁷³ Town of New Tecumseth. *New Tecumseth Growth Management Study, Final Report*. 2002. 8-6.

⁷⁴ Eric Taylor, Manager of Planning, New Tecumseth. Interview. October 21, 2003.

⁷⁵ Nathan Westendorp, Planner II, Simcoe County. Interview. March 30, 2004.

⁷⁶ *Town of Springwater Official Plan*, November 2002. 5.2.

In 2002, Springwater Council approved the development of an 800-unit adult lifestyle development outside Craighurst.⁷⁷ This development, which is not located within an existing settlement area, required a local and County OPA. The scale and staging of the development requires few community infrastructure investments from Springwater.⁷⁸

As in the case of Big Bay Point, there is a concern that these adult-lifestyle developments, while designed for a specialized clientele, may evolve into normal communities, at which point retrofitting the full range of educational, social and other services may prove expensive and difficult.

3.4 Putting the development proposals in context

3.4.1 *The County context*

We have identified four categories of development in Simcoe County, including Barrie and Orillia.

Type A consists of infill and as-of-right developments within existing settlement areas. Type A developments do not alter the existing boundaries of settlement areas. All current developments in the cities of Barrie and Orillia are defined as Type A.

Type B developments represent contiguous expansion of an existing Settlement Area. These require a local official plan amendment. Secondary Plan Areas that expand Settlement Areas fall into this category.

Type C projects are permitted developments outside Settlement Areas and are generally small-scale country residential pockets of development. They also include adult lifestyle communities or recreation communities which are permitted outside Settlement Areas in land designated as Rural and Agricultural in the County Official Plan.

Local and County official plans provide for developments of Types A, B and C. We categorize the large-scale proposed developments described in this report as Type D. Unlike Type C developments, which are small-scale or Type B developments, which incrementally expand existing settlement areas, Type D development proposals aim to create large comprehensively planned communities.

At present, 72% of all pending and draft approved developments in the study area are taking place within existing Settlement Areas (see Figure 4).

At present, 72% of development in Simcoe County takes place within existing settlement areas; 25% represents contiguous expansions of settlement areas; and 3% consists of small-scale developments in rural or agricultural areas.

⁷⁷. Town of Springwater, website <www.springwater.ca/articles/Planning/development_chart_oct3_2002.pdf>.

⁷⁸. Darren Vella, Manager of Planning, Township of Springwater. Interview. November 12, 2003.

Although municipalities are required to designate a 20-year supply of land for settlement, a quarter of all developments are taking the form of settlement expansions (Type B). The percentage of developments taking place outside settlement areas (Type C) is minimal.

Figure 4: Profile of Pending Type A, B, and C Developments⁷⁹

Type	Number of units	Percentage of total
A	32,245	72%
B	11,319	25%
C	1,395	3%
TOTAL	44,959	100%

When the three largest proposals (Ontario Potato Distributors Inc. in the Town of New Tecumseth; the Bradford Bond Head Planning Area; and the Big Bay Point Resort in the Town of Innisfil) are included in Simcoe developments, they dwarf other types of development. For example, Type A projects — those within designated settlement areas — would drop from 72% to 31% of all pending and draft approved developments (see Figure 5.)

The massive development proposals in the Town of New Tecumseth, the Bradford Bond Head Planning Area, and the Town of Innisfil dwarf existing types of development.

Figure 5: Profile of Type A, B, C, and D Developments

Type	Number of units	Percentage of total
A	32,245	31%
B	11,319	11%
C	1,395	1%
D ⁸⁰	59,200	57%
TOTAL	100,659	100%

Of course, these unit proportions are not strictly comparable, due to the

⁷⁹. These include all pending and draft approved developments as of October 29, 2003, in Simcoe County, Barrie, and Orillia.

⁸⁰. OPDI: 18,500 units (ENTRA Consultants, Master Environmental Servicing Plan New Tecumseth Community: Transportation Peer Review, December 2003. 6); Bradford Bond Head Planning Area: 37,200 units (Sorensen Gravely Lowes Planning Associates Inc. Official Plan Amendment No. ___ [sic], Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury [Draft], n.d. p.2) Big Bay Point Resort, 3,500 units. (Cheryl Shindruk, Vice President, Land Development, Geranium Corporation. Interview. January 6, 2004.)

differing time horizons of each development. The developer of OPDI, for example, notes that phasing will depend on market forces. Commitments by the province to transportation infrastructure expansion will also affect the timeline of development. More applications of Types A, B, and C will be proposed, approved, and built during the time horizon of the Type D applications. The order-of-magnitude numbers shown in the table are simply included to illustrate the scale of Type D intervention in relation to “normal” Type A, B, and C development.

3.4.2 The regional context

The *Toronto-Related Region Futures Study* projected land consumption for the Toronto-related region using four different development concepts: “business-as-usual,” consolidated, multi-centred and dispersed.⁸¹ Each one applied different assumptions regarding density of population plus jobs, transportation investment, water and wastewater infrastructure investment, and direction of population to established versus new areas. All but the consolidated concept assume extension of Highways 404 and 427, widening of the 400 and the construction of the Bradford Bypass.

Within Simcoe County, the amount of land needed varies depending on the development concept used. County-wide, the urbanized land area is projected to increase by between 38% and 49%. In South Simcoe, the area is greater — between 42% and 54%. In South Simcoe municipalities, the business-as-usual, multi-centred and dispersed concepts yield similar results. Only the consolidated concept results in significantly less land consumption, as shown in Figure 6.

The three large-scale development proposals would attract growth that would otherwise locate in designated settlement areas elsewhere in the Toronto-related region with the result of dispersing rather than concentrating growth.

Figure 6: Projected Increase in Urbanized Land, 2003⁸²

	Urbanized Land Area, 2000 (ha)	Projected Increase in Urbanized Land Area, 2000-2031 (ha)			
		Business- as-usual	Consoli- dated	Multi- centred	Dispersed
Simcoe County + Barrie, Orillia	15,851	13,270	9,539	15,267	14,053
South Simcoe	8,101	8,351	5,978	9,348	9,016
Barrie	4,116	2,864	2,895	3,013	2,756
Bradford West Gwillimbury	515	853	490	877	853
Innisfil	1,413	2,682	1,060	3,202	3,455
New Tecumseth	592	920	678	1,012	920

⁸¹. Neptis Foundation, *Toronto-Related Region Futures Study: Sketch Modeling of Four Alternative Development Concepts*. 2003.

⁸². Neptis Foundation. *Toronto-Related Region Futures Study: Sketch Modeling of Four Alternative Development Concepts*. Unpublished sub-county-level data. 2003.

At the lower-tier municipal level, the projections illustrate the possible options when Barrie becomes fully built-out within its boundaries. In the business-as-usual concept — and even more so in the multi-centred and dispersed concepts — Barrie would expand into Innisfil. In the consolidated scenario, however, Barrie contains much of its growth within its own boundaries. For this reason, land consumption in the consolidated concept is considerably less in Bradford West Gwillimbury, Innisfil and New Tecumseth.

The proposed 1,416-hectare OPDI development in New Tecumseth and the proposed 2,500-hectare Bradford Bond Head Planning Area would result in higher than projected land consumption in Bradford West Gwillimbury and New Tecumseth, respectively. As shown in Figure 7, the area of the Bradford Bond Head Planning Area nearly triples the estimated business-as-usual additional land requirement for the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury. Similarly, the OPDI proposal exceeds the estimated land requirement for New Tecumseth by 496 hectares.

The proposed 1,416-hectare OPDI development in New Tecumseth and the proposed 2,500-hectare Bradford Bond Head Planning Area would result in higher than projected land consumption in Bradford West Gwillimbury and New Tecumseth, respectively.

Figure 7: Land Consumption of Type D Development Proposals

	Bradford West Gwillimbury	New Tecumseth
(A) Estimate of additional land requirement 2000-2031 (hectares) ⁸³	853	920
(B) Type D land area (hectares) ⁸⁴	2,500 Bradford Bond Head Planning Area	1,416 OPDI
Ratio of (B) to (A)	293%	154%

As the three large-scale development proposals would urbanize land ahead of population projections, it can be argued that they:

- contravene the spirit of the PPS and local and County official plans;
- are of unprecedented population size for Simcoe County;
- would attract growth that would otherwise locate in designated settlement areas elsewhere in the Toronto-related region with the result of dispersing rather than concentrating growth.

83. Neptis Foundation. *Toronto-Related Region Futures Study: Sketch Modeling of Four Alternative Development Concepts*. Unpublished sub-county-level data 2003.

84. Land areas from developer proposals.

3.4.3 The provincial context

At present, PPS is under review, and future provincial policy could either strengthen compact urban form or move toward permitting a more dispersed urban form. Today, and for the foreseeable future, however, the PPS clearly directs growth toward established settlement areas in order to preserve rural and agricultural land where possible.⁸⁵

The proponents claim that their large-scale development proposals conform to the spirit of provincial land use policies by directing growth to established settlement areas. Further, by attaching the new developments to existing settlements, the proponents frame their proposals as expansions of existing communities, driven by growth pressure.

The character of the OPDI proposal, however, does not suggest a settlement area expansion:

- The plan specifies a “town centre” functionally unrelated to the existing centre of Alliston. The development is to be phased so that the town centre is built first and its neighbourhoods spread outward to eventually connect to Alliston.⁸⁶
- At full build-out, the population of the expansion will be far larger than the population of Alliston.
- The population of the development is far in excess of projections, meaning that growth must be attracted from elsewhere in the Toronto-related region.
- The developers refer to OPDI as a new community.⁸⁷ The submission began as a stand-alone town, but was later expanded to attach to Alliston by incorporating the Nottawasaga River lands. J.H. Stevens’ peer review report found that the description of the development as an extension of Alliston is “contrived.”⁸⁸

The Provincial Policy Statement requires that settlement areas be incrementally expanded in step with projected growth. The Bradford Bond Head Planning Area goes beyond this. It seeks to designate urban land far in excess of projected population growth for the area. It also defies the notion of expanding a defined settlement area. The development expands Bradford and Bond Head to meet in the middle. Instead of a single community with a well-defined core (either Bradford or Bond Head), the result

The OPDI proposal does not suggest a settlement area expansion, and even the developers themselves refer to it as a “new community.” At full build-out, the population of the new community would be far larger than the population of Alliston.

Instead of a single community with a well-defined core (either Bradford or Bond Head), the Bradford Bond Head proposal would create a de-concentrated corridor of development centred on Highways 88 and 400 and a new “mixed node” between Bradford and Bond Head.

⁸⁵. Government of Ontario. Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing “Provincial Policy Statement.” s. 1.1.1c.

⁸⁶. Allan Duffy Interview. November 14, 2003.

⁸⁷. J.H. Stevens Planning & Development Consultants, Peer Review, Application for Official Plan Amendment, Ontario Potato Distributors Inc. Town of New Tecumseth, Town file: DEV 198. January 2004. 3 (3); Allan Duffy. Interview. November 14, 2003.

⁸⁸. J.H. Stevens Planning & Development Consultants, Peer Review, Application for Official Plan Amendment, Ontario Potato Distributors Inc. Town of New Tecumseth, Town file: DEV 198. January 2004. 3 (7).

is a de-concentrated corridor of development centred on Highways 88 and 400 and a new “mixed node” between Bradford and Bond Head. It is hard enough to keep one downtown economically and culturally vibrant, and yet this proposal would require a corridor linking three.

In addition, the PPS specifies that prime agricultural land will be protected for agriculture and related uses unless there is no other place for growth to take place. Both the OPDI and the Bradford Bond Head Planning Area proposals are located on prime agricultural land. Many “reasonable alternative locations” (to use the language of the PPS) exist south of the Moraine.

The extent to which new large-scale developments conform to existing plans and policies is limited. While their internal form and mix of uses is compatible with stated provincial planning goals, their scale, locations and the timing of their implementation put them at odds with the spirit of public planning policies. Where the developments do not conform to land use policies, the proposals themselves demand the attention of public officials and may serve to influence revisions of public land use plans and strategies.

Understanding what is happening in Simcoe County means answering three main questions: (1) Why is growth on such a large scale being directed north of the GTA and the Oak Ridges Moraine? (2) Why are the proposals taking the form of such large-scale developments in Simcoe County? (3) What do these proposals tell us about planning in Simcoe County and in Ontario as a whole?

4. Why is Growth Going North of the Oak Ridges Moraine?

The main justifications for developing north of the Moraine are the explosive population and employment growth in the Toronto-related region, proposed improvements to the transportation system in the area, and a perception that land supply is limited south of the Moraine.

The Toronto-related region must produce enough additional housing to accommodate the equivalent of another Barrie every year. Some of this growth is attracted to Simcoe County.

4.1 Rapid growth in the Toronto-related Region

In 2002, 111,580 people, or 48.7% of the 229,091 immigrants who came to Canada settled in the Toronto CMA.⁸⁹ When interprovincial migrants are included, Ontario as a whole received a net increase of 145,573 people in 2001, most of whom settled in the Toronto CMA.⁹⁰ Short of a major change in federal immigration policy or other parts of Canada attracting a greater share of immigrants (both of which are unlikely in the short to medium term), the Toronto-related region must produce enough additional housing to accommodate the equivalent of another Barrie every year.

Within the Toronto-related region, Simcoe County is the beneficiary of substantial amounts of within-province migration. In the past five years, Simcoe County has attracted between 7,000 and 9,000 intra-provincial migrants.⁹¹ In particular, Census data show that the Toronto CMA is experiencing a net out-migration of people aged 65 and over.⁹² These people are attracted to the recreational areas of Simcoe County. For example, 22.2% of Wasaga Beach residents are 65 years of age or older, versus 13.2% for the County and 12.9% for Ontario.

Many of those moving to Simcoe County are seniors, attracted by the many lakeside recreational areas.

At the same time, employment opportunities are driving growth in Simcoe. One of the strong selling points of Alliston, notes OPDI project manager Allan Duffy, is its proximity to strong and growing employment areas, including the recently-adopted 405 hectare industrial and commercial area.

Barrie in particular is experiencing rapid employment growth. Between 1996 and 2001, the number of jobs in Barrie grew by 38%, even as its population grew by 31%. Manufacturing sector employment has grown

⁸⁹. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Facts and Figures 2002: Immigration Overview*. 2002. 7.

⁹⁰. CMHC. *CMHC Housing Outlook, National Edition*. Third Quarter 2003. 24.

⁹¹. Hemson 2003b; Hemson 2004b. 3. The outflow of intra-provincial migrants from the GTA is more than offset by in-migration from elsewhere in Canada and other countries.

⁹². Bourne, L., *Social Change in the Central Ontario Region*, Neptis Issue Paper No. 8. 2003. 19.

by half, and the transportation, professional/scientific and health care sectors have doubled.⁹³

Many developers and planners promote South Simcoe as the most obvious location for urban expansion. The labeling of South Simcoe municipalities as “GTA North” in real estate listings and the inclusion of Bradford West Gwillimbury and New Tecumseth in Statistics Canada’s definition of the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area underscore this reality.

Given the rate of growth in the Toronto-related Region, many developers and planners promote South Simcoe as an obvious location for urban expansion.

4.2 Proposed transportation corridor expansions

Another driver of development is the proposed expansion of, and improvements to, the province’s transportation infrastructure. In 2001, the Province announced a series of proposals to expand the Toronto-related region’s highway system (see Maps 5 and 9), including:

- the Highway 404 extension;
- the Highway 404 extension link (the Bradford Bypass);
- the Smart Growth Panel Economic Corridor;
- the Highway 400 widening; and
- the Highway 427 extension.

The highway expansion plans — some of which will be built in the near term while others are purely conceptual — play an important role in justifying development proposals. A multi-billion dollar highway extension that would take decades to construct, if it is built at all, may be described in a development application as if it is a concrete reality, contributing to the perception that growth along its path is inevitable.

The 404 extension is awaiting approval from Transportation Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada and construction could begin in spring 2006.

Highway 404 currently terminates in the Town of Newmarket. The proposed northerly extension adds 45 km extending the highway east along the south edge of Lake Simcoe to terminate at the intersection of Durham Road 23 and Highway 12.⁹⁴ The Ministry of Transportation’s EA was approved in August 2002. The 404 extension is currently awaiting approval from Transportation Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada to confirm the configuration of railway overpasses and watercourse crossings. Subject to these approvals, the Ministry of Transportation expects to begin construction in spring 2006.

Both of the proposed large-scale developments in Simcoe are situated close to the proposed Bradford Bypass.

The proposed 16-km **Bradford Bypass** links York Region and Simcoe County. The road will travel west from the proposed northerly extension of Highway 404 in the Town of East Gwillimbury through Bradford to Highway 400. The Bypass was approved through the same EA process

⁹³. Statistics Canada. *Census Community Profiles* 2001.

⁹⁴. Government of Ontario, Environmental Assessment Activities. Website. <www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env_reg/ea/english/EAs/hwy404.htm>.

as the 404 extension (though without a construction timeframe). Both of the proposed large-scale developments in Simcoe are close to the proposed extensions of the approved sections of this highway.

The Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel recommended a region-wide transportation network in south-central Ontario,⁹⁵ including “economic corridors” that provide inter-regional connections to 2035 and beyond. The most significant of these corridors would cross central Simcoe County to the north of the Oak Ridges Moraine, on the same alignment as the Bradford Bypass. Proximity to this future corridor is highlighted as a key feature of both the OPDI and the Bradford Bond Head Planning Area proposals.

Highway 400 is the key provincial highway link between southern and northern Ontario. It connects the urbanized areas in the south to tourist and recreational activities throughout Simcoe County and Muskoka and is a key artery for the movement of goods.⁹⁶ The *Simcoe Area Transportation Network Needs Assessment* indicates that there is an “immediate need to widen Highway 400 to 8 lanes.”⁹⁷ A wider 400 is a key feature of the Bradford Bond Head Planning Area, which would urbanize lands on both sides of the highway.

A wider 400 is a key feature of the Bradford Bond Head Planning Area, which would urbanize lands on both sides of the highway.

Highway 427 originates near the Toronto lakeshore and ends at Highway 7 in York Region, parallel to Highway 400. The *Highway 427 Extension Transportation Needs Assessment Study* proposes extending the 427 to connect to the Bradford Bypass at Highway 400.⁹⁸ The *Simcoe Area Transportation Network Needs Assessment*, however, calls for Highway 427 to be extended further north to connect with Highway 11 north of Barrie.⁹⁹ A major issue facing the 427 extension is that it would cross the Oak Ridges Moraine. At this time, the terms of reference for an individual environmental assessment for the highway have yet to be established. Development proposals in New Tecumseth in particular point to the potential extension of Highway 427 as a catalyst for growth.

The development proposal in New Tecumseth in particular is based on the assumption that Highway 427 will be extended.

^{95.} *Shape the Future, Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel Final Report*. April 2003. 23-24.

^{96.} Today, truck traffic accounts for 12-15% of the total traffic volume on Highway 400 between Barrie and the GTA, a 40% increase since 1995. URS Cole Sherman, *Simcoe County Transportation Network Needs Assessment*, prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Transportation. June 2002. 2.

^{97.} URS Cole Sherman, *Simcoe County Transportation Network Needs Assessment*, prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Transportation. June 2002. 15.

^{98.} McCormick Rankin Corporation, *Highway 427 Extension Transportation Needs Assessment Study – Executive Summary*, prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, November 2001. 7.

^{99.} URS Cole Sherman, *Simcoe County Transportation Network Needs Assessment*, prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Transportation. June 2002. 12.

Both the Highway 427 Extension Transportation Needs Assessment Study and the Simcoe Area Transportation Network Needs Assessment also recommend expanding **GO train and bus service**. The reports indicate that commuter rail service will relieve some congestion, but will not eliminate the need for substantial 400-series highway improvements.¹⁰⁰

Funding commitments and further study of economic feasibility are outstanding.

The OPDI proposal relies on the 427 extension and the westward extension of the Bradford Bypass. The Bradford Bond Head Planning Area relies most on the widening of the 400. Although it would benefit from the construction of the Bradford Bypass and 404 extension, its proponents maintain that it is possible without other highway extensions.

The construction of the highway extensions is by no means certain. The new provincial Liberal government has yet to take a position on when or whether these plans will proceed. Should the extensions be built, Simcoe County will be served by more 400-series highways than any other jurisdiction outside the GTA in the Toronto-related region. South Simcoe, with a population of 207,635 in 2001, would be serviced by the 427, the 400, the Bradford Bypass, and York Region's 404 extension. (By comparison, the Kitchener CMA, which includes Waterloo and Cambridge and supports a population of 414,284, is served by one 400-series highway: the 401.)

The construction of the proposed highway extensions is by no means certain. Yet a multi-billion dollar highway extension that would take decades to construct, if it is built at all, may be described in a development application as if it is a concrete reality, contributing to the perception that growth along its path is inevitable.

4.3 The perception of limited land south of the Moraine

Developers paint a dire picture of the GTA's prospects for accommodating growth. They argue that the supply of developable land south of the Oak Ridges Moraine is now dangerously low and the remainder is constrained by environmental protection measures. This situation, they argue, drives up housing costs and limits freedom of choice for homebuyers. Faced with the prospect of the GTA becoming full, population growth "will jump the moraine and Simcoe County is the landing point."¹⁰¹

Developers argue that the supply of developable land south of the Oak Ridges Moraine is now dangerously low and the remainder is constrained by environmental protection measures.

Examples of this argument include:

- "They [will] need to buy houses. Where are these people going to go? ... We need to accept the reality that the city growing and [housing]

¹⁰⁰. McCormick Rankin Corporation, *Highway 427 Extension Transportation Needs Assessment Study – Executive Summary*, prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Transportation November 2001 6, and URS Cole Sherman, *Simcoe County Transportation Network Needs Assessment*, prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Transportation. June 2002. 13.

¹⁰¹. Neil Rodgers. President, UDI-Ontario. Interview. October 31, 2003.

supply is getting tighter and tighter” (Joe Valela, Greater Toronto Homebuilders’ Association).¹⁰²

- “We’ve got all these people coming to the region and it’s arguable as to where we will put these people. I think what our industry is saying is: over time, it may not be in two years from now, it may be 50 years from now, where we’re effectively going to run out of land in the areas that we know today. Let’s call it south of the moraine” (Neil Rodgers, Urban Development Institute–Ontario).¹⁰³
- “The supply of greenfield land for ground-related housing in the GTA will likely be exhausted by 2017” (IBI Group).¹⁰⁴
- “Long-range plans must be made now to identify new areas capable of accommodating 1.6 million of [the] 3.5 million people not currently accounted for in local and regional Official Plans” (Sorensen Gravely Lowes for Bond Head Development Corporation).¹⁰⁵
- “The greenfield land supply in the GTA is adequate to meet needs to about 2017, even with considerable intensification of ground-related units” (Hemson Consulting).¹⁰⁶

Each of these quotes is factually correct. What is missing is the underlying set of assumptions about land supply.

In a report for the Greater Toronto Homebuilders’ Association, Hemson Consulting stresses that if built at prevailing densities a 14-year supply of land designated for urban use remains in the GTA.

4.3.1 Assumptions about the designation of urban land

The developers’ comments implicitly assume that no new land will be designated for urban development south of the Oak Ridges Moraine and that building will continue at prevailing densities. As noted, this is usually made clear in the fine print. For example, in a report for the Greater Toronto Homebuilders’ Association, Hemson Consulting stresses that *if built at prevailing densities* a 14-year supply of land *designated for urban use* remains in the GTA.¹⁰⁷

All data show that there is more than enough land south of the Oak Ridges Moraine to accommodate future development to 2031 and beyond. The debate should not be around whether there is land available, but whether the existing rural and agricultural uses should be changed to urban.

^{102.} Quoted in S. Avery, “Growth Confronts Moraine,” *Globe and Mail*. November 14, 2003.

^{103.} Neil Rodgers. President, UDI-Ontario. Interview. October 31, 2003.

^{104.} IBI Group, *Town of New Tecumseth Growth Management/Residential Land Needs Assessment*. May 2003. 2.

^{105.} Sorensen Gravely Lowes Planning Associates Inc. *Bradford Bond Head Planning Area: Regional Context Overview*. February 2004.

^{106.} Hemson Consulting, *Growth and Urban Land Need in Central Ontario*, prepared for the Greater Toronto Homebuilders’ Association 2003a. Executive Summary.

^{107.} Hemson Consulting, *Growth and Urban Land Need in Central Ontario*, prepared for the Greater Toronto Homebuilders’ Association 2003a. 8.

The *Toronto-Related Region Futures Study* found that at *present densities*, most municipalities can accommodate anticipated growth through to 2021 within land already designated as urban in official plans, and that “the region has enough additional land for many years of urban expansion ... even with most of the Oak Ridges Moraine protected from development.”¹⁰⁸ Hemson Consulting agrees, finding that the consensus population projection to 2031 for the GTA can be accommodated at current densities south of the Oak Ridges Moraine if additional lands are designated.¹⁰⁹

The conclusion is clear: there is nothing inevitable about Simcoe County having to accommodate growth beyond that projected.

4.3.2 Assumptions about development densities

The argument about limited land supply assumes that development will occur at prevailing densities. If the land were developed at higher densities, however, the supply of land would last longer.

The development industry maintains that housing in southern Ontario is already built at relatively high densities and with a higher proportion of multi-unit buildings than anywhere else in North America. They believe that the market cannot absorb housing at higher densities. In addition, developer market studies indicate an overwhelming preference for ground-related housing.¹¹⁰

However, critics like David Donnelly, legal director of Environmental Defense Canada, claim that with mixed-type construction, the average density can be increased from 24.7 to 86.5 units per hectare, increasing the land supply horizon by many years.¹¹¹ Even small amounts of infill and incremental intensification throughout already-built-out areas would have an impact on land consumption.

4.3.3 Assumptions about environmental protection measures

The development industry asserts that the supply of developable land is constrained by environmental protection measures. Although environmen-

The Toronto-Related Region Futures Study found that at present densities, most GTA municipalities can accommodate anticipated growth through to 2021 within land already designated as urban in official plans.

David Donnelly, legal director of Environmental Defense Canada, claims that with mixed-type construction, the average density can be increased from 24.7 to 86.5 units per hectare, increasing the land supply horizon by many years.

¹⁰⁸. Neptis Foundation. *Toronto-Related Region Futures Study Interim Report: Implications of Business-As-Usual Development*. 2002. 50.

¹⁰⁹. Hemson Consulting, “OPDI Peer Review of the IBI Growth Management/ Residential Land Needs Assessment.” Prepared for the Town of New Tecumseth. January 2004a. 2.

¹¹⁰. Neil Rodgers. President, UDI-Ontario. Interview. October 31, 2003.

¹¹¹. Avery, Simon, “Growth Confront Moraine,” *Globe and Mail*. November 14, 2003. G1. Densities were originally cited as 10 and 35 units per acre. Note that employment densities are not as flexible as residential densities. For this reason, the Neptis Toronto-Related Region sketch models (2003) show that varying density and location assumptions for residential development do not produce substantial variation in overall land consumption.

tal protections may be justified, they result in higher prices and less convenient locations for homebuyers, they argue.¹¹² Insofar as these exclude land from development or impose costs on the developer or builder, these policies and standards affect the price of new construction and where development will take place in the region.

In response to 10 years of debate over development encroaching on the Moraine, especially in York and Peel Regions, the Province enacted the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP) in late 2001. The Plan prohibits development on 92% of the Oak Ridges Moraine and imposes strict development restrictions on the remainder. The ORMCP focuses on protecting headwater areas, watersheds and groundwater sources and protects forests, woodlots, wetlands and agricultural land. The ORMCP sets firm urban boundaries around Settlement Areas (8% of the moraine planning area); identifies and protects Natural Core Areas (38% of the moraine) and Natural Linkage Areas (24% of the moraine); and sets aside agricultural land and other rural land uses in Countryside Areas (30% of the moraine).¹¹³

While the *Greenbelt Protection Act* is being prepared, a zoning order has been passed that prohibits the expansion of urban settlement boundaries south of the Oak Ridges Moraine for one year.¹¹⁴ While it does not apply to lands already designated as urban, the zoning order supports the development industry's argument that developable lands south of the ORM are running out. There is consensus that the land supply south of the Moraine is limited if no new lands are designated. The zoning order then, can be seen to encourage developers to look north of the GTA in Simcoe County, at least in the short term.

Developers also point to the Walkerton Inquiry Report, which focuses on the supply of clean drinking water and the protection of Ontario's groundwater. The Inquiry asserts that the proper management and protection of water resources is best achieved at the scale of the watershed.¹¹⁵ Provincial legislation governing implementation of watershed-based source protection plans is not yet in place. The development industry has indicated that legislation implementing watershed-based source protection plans "will play a very significant role in how the growth of this province is directed"¹¹⁶ and "may pose further challenges to accommodate population and

The Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act, the Greenbelt Protection Act, and the recommendations of the Walkerton Inquiry are aimed at protecting the environment and water resources in central Ontario. Developers claim that these measures constrain the land supply.

¹¹². Neil Rodgers. President, UDI-Ontario. Interview. October 31, 2003; Joe Valela, "Planning Reforms will hurt affordability," *Toronto Star*. November 29, 2003.

¹¹³. Government of Ontario. *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan*. 2001. 4.

¹¹⁴. Government of Ontario. Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. "Greenbelt Protection," <ma.h.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts_1_16289_1.html>.

¹¹⁵. Government of Ontario, Ministry of the Attorney General, *Part Two Report of the Walkerton Inquiry: A Strategy for Safe Drinking Water*. 2002. 94.

¹¹⁶. Neil Rodgers. President, UDI-Ontario. Interview. October 31, 2003.

employment uses in the future.”¹¹⁷ Members of the development industry have stated that source protection measures south of the Oak Ridges Moraine will drive development north where, by virtue of Georgian Bay and Lake Simcoe, they argue that piped water and technological advancements in wastewater treatment can increase servicing capacity. Under strict watershed protection guidelines, developers and municipalities will likely be required to make costly investments in sophisticated infrastructure for drawing water and treating effluents in order to avoid impacts on ground water sources. In addition to limiting the amount of available land, then, watershed protection plans will also make it more expensive to develop.

Both the OPDI and the Bradford Bond Head Planning Area proposals rely on better wastewater treatment technology becoming available in the future. While the cost of service provision has driven them to propose large-scale, clean-slate developments, there is no guarantee that the technology required to adequately protect sensitive lands and service the developments will be available and applicable.

Environmental protection measures will have two impacts. First, it follows that whenever land previously designated for urban use is taken out of supply for reasons of environmental protection, the supply of land designated for urban use is reduced. Second, since higher standards resulting from new watershed protection measures will apply everywhere in the province, there will be no location-specific disadvantages to development.¹¹⁸ To the extent that new regulations impose higher standards for water provision and wastewater treatment, the developer will assume additional costs, if any, where they supply infrastructure. These costs will be factored into final house prices, which will be passed on to the consumer. It is possible that such costs may make some developments unfeasible.

In both cases, no data exist to indicate the magnitude of the impact on the supply of designated land and costs to the development industry. The Greenbelt Task Force’s recommendations next year will have an affect around the margins, but now that the boundaries of the Oak Ridges Moraine and Niagara Escarpment are defined, it is highly unlikely that additional large-scale exclusions of land from development will occur.

The development industry’s land supply argument is answerable with an obvious solution: more land must be designated in environmentally appropriate areas south of the Moraine. While the new provincial government’s PPS review and Greenbelt Act will likely change the policies and standards

Since higher standards resulting from new watershed protection measures will apply everywhere in the province, there will be no location-specific disadvantages to development.

No data exist to indicate the magnitude of the impact on the supply of designated land and costs to the development industry.

¹¹⁷. Hemson Consulting, *Investing for Tomorrow: Moving Forward With Smart Growth in Central Ontario*. 2003c. 26-27.

¹¹⁸. Individual parcels of land may of course become undevelopable at reasonable cost, but on average it may be assumed that every municipality will be equally affected.

governing land designation when they are complete, there is no credible evidence that the incremental designation of urban land that has occurred throughout the 1980s and 1990s will cease completely. There is nothing inevitable about higher-than-projected growth in Simcoe County.

For the moment, however, the Zoning Order has set up a perverse incentive. By fuelling the perception that land development is *frozen* (even as most municipalities in the GTA have designated land available to 2021), the justification for development outside the GTA is strengthened. The Province must clearly state that the orderly and environmentally responsible designation of urban land south of the Moraine will continue as soon as the review of the regulatory regime is complete.

The Minister's Zoning Order has set up a perverse incentive. By fuelling the perception that land development is frozen (even as most municipalities in the GTA have designated land available to 2021), the justification for development outside the GTA is strengthened.

4.4 Lower cost of land acquisition

Although no comprehensive data are available, it is clear that land prices and the pattern of land ownership in the Toronto-related region affect developers' locational decision-making. Interviewees emphasized that the low cost of acquiring or optioning rural land in Simcoe relative to elsewhere is attractive to developers. The lower the cost of land acquisition, the higher the profit when units are sold to homebuyers. When developers option land, they sign an agreement with the owner agreeing to buy the land at a set price should the land be re-designated for development. It is widely known that land not designated as urban in York and Durham is largely already controlled by a handful of players. Other developers seeking to get into the game must look farther afield.

Land not designated as urban in York and Durham is largely controlled by a handful of players. Other developers seeking to get into the game must look farther afield.

5. Why Are Developers Proposing Such Large Developments in Simcoe County?

The scale of the development proposals in Simcoe County relate to the requirements that developers build infrastructure up front. Developers also point to the precedent of a similar nearby development in Queensville to justify the large-scale master planning approach, and argue that large-scale development on greenfield sites is more efficient than incremental development at the urban fringe.

5.1 The costs of front-ending servicing infrastructure

Today, local governments in Ontario do not service lands for development themselves. Indeed, they rarely take full advantage of their ability to fund works through debt. Instead, they transfer the risk to the private sector. In the absence of public investment in infrastructure, much infrastructure is “front-ended” by developers. Developers assume the initial cost of servicing land and recover their investment through the development process. In order to profitably service and develop the land, developers must build large-scale projects that cannot be accommodated within designated settlement areas.

In an interview, Geranium representatives noted that since public bodies are reluctant to provide infrastructure, private developers must operate at a larger scale to cover the cost of infrastructure themselves. This position has been echoed by other members of the development industry. In an opinion piece in the *Toronto Star*, real estate advertising agent Bryan Levman writes that small independent builders can’t compete with large developers who have their own integrated building arms.¹¹⁹

Historically, Metro Toronto, the regional municipalities, and the Province undertook long-term comprehensive programs of infrastructure investment for several reasons. First, they sought to influence the location of population growth on a region-wide basis for reasons of efficiency — the regional balance of employment centres, transportation systems efficiency, and protection of rural and agricultural lands. Second, it was understood that by virtue of their size, governments could raise capital more cheaply on equity markets.¹²⁰ Finally, there was a general understanding that the government would establish the large-scale water, sewer and highway infrastructure network on which private development would grow.

Local governments in Ontario rarely take full advantage of their ability to fund works through debt. Instead, they transfer the risk to the private sector. In order to profitably service and develop the land, developers must build large-scale projects that cannot be accommodated within designated settlement areas.

In the past, municipalities and the Province undertook long-term programs of infrastructure investment to influence the location of population growth and ensure efficient land development patterns, and because governments could raise capital more cheaply on equity markets.

¹¹⁹. Levman, Bryan. “Why we have a shortage of lots: Smaller builders getting shut out,” *Toronto Star*. February 21, 2004, on-line edition.

¹²⁰. White, Richard, *Urban Infrastructure and Urban Growth in the Toronto Region 1950s to the 1990s*. Neptis Foundation. 2003.

Today, governments have to a large degree backed away from these roles. The transfer of the expense of infrastructure investment, and thus risk, to the private sector changes the incentives at work. The developer's drive to recover up-front investment compresses the expected time horizon of growth. When private developers pay for infrastructure, the incentive is to minimize capital costs, not to invest in quality. A cheaper solution today may mean higher operating costs in the future; costs that will be carried by local governments and their taxpayers.

When private developers pay for infrastructure, the incentive is to minimize capital costs, not to invest in quality.

5.2 Precedent: Queensville, East Gwillimbury

The Bradford Bond Head Planning Area and OPDI proposals are not without precedent. Queensville, in neighbouring East Gwillimbury, York Region, is an approved large-scale development.

At present, Queensville is a small hamlet of 620 people (see Map 5). In the 1980s, with support from the Province, the Town of East Gwillimbury undertook community plans for each of its settlement areas. Queensville landowners approached the Town with a proposal to develop Queensville as the new centre for the Town and the Queensville Secondary Plan was developed. In 1989, the Town of East Gwillimbury adopted an Official Plan Amendment directing growth to the settlement of Queensville. Both York Region and the Province rejected the proposed amendments at that time, finding the project incompatible with established development policies. In 1995, East Gwillimbury adopted another version of the amendment that was approved by York Region. Landowner Queensville Properties Inc. played a key role promoting the Queensville Community Plan to the Town and the Region.¹²¹

Queensville Properties obtained approval in 1998 to expand Queensville to a town of 30,000 people, with 12,000 jobs, covering 1,187 hectares by 2021. At present, Queensville is a small hamlet of 620 people in York Region.

Queensville Properties, the proponent of the plan, obtained approval in 1998 to expand Queensville to a town of 30,000 people, with 12,000 jobs, covering 1,187 hectares by 2021. The Queensville Community Master Plan features a Town Centre, pedestrian-oriented streets, university lands, industrial lands, and a linked school, park, and open space system.¹²²

The Queensville Community Plan was appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board in 1998 by residents concerned about the impact on their lands. At the time of the OMB hearing, the Town and the Region supported the development proposal, as did the local school boards and various provincial authorities.

¹²¹. Ontario Municipal Board. Decision delivered by S.W. Lee and Order of the Board. OMB File No. 0970190. Issued April 7, 1998. 2.

¹²². Town of East Gwillimbury, Regional Municipality of York. *Queensville Community Master Plan Summary Report*. June 2000. 2-3.

The OMB sided with the Town and the Region and approved the development. In its decision, the OMB found that the plan for Queensville was appropriate both in terms of its internal form and feasibility and its location within the broader region. It pronounced the development to be good planning, noting that it “allows planning to march well ahead of development or other impersonal forces such as the market or conglomeration of population.” The Board stressed that a “well-crafted plan” includes concerns for the “environment, relative location to other settlement areas, the Regional context for growth, the feasibility of the infrastructure and a sense of new urbanism.” It noted that the success of large-scale development depends on the way in which transportation, water and sewage infrastructure are provided and on creating developments with higher than normal densities. The Board found that the urban form, mix of land uses and density of the Queensville Plan met this test. It especially applauded the controls on development contained in the plan, including phasing mechanisms and the designation of an urban boundary. Finally, the Board found that the development’s location within the greater region was defensible, stating that it “lies in the path of growth and is in keeping with the long-term objectives of the Region to manage growth.”¹²³

As in much of Simcoe County, provision of services in East Gwillimbury is a challenge. Development in the existing village of Queensville is primarily serviced by private septic tanks. However, given the scale of the Queensville new town, the proponent has extensive plans for stormwater management and sewage disposal. York Region has committed to assist in providing the necessary infrastructure by connecting a trunk sewer to the York-Durham Servicing Scheme.

Phasing of the Queensville Plan also depends on construction of the Highway 404 extension. Without adequate transportation capacity from Queensville south to parts of York Region and Toronto, the viability of a full build-out by 2021 is unlikely.

Queensville was approved for several reasons:

- the Town of East Gwillimbury was seeking to define a node to which growth could be directed;
- the developer successfully brought the Town and the Region on side, resulting in its plan becoming integrated into the Town’s own planning process;
- the OMB ruled the development justified and well-conceived.

The Queensville case is a useful comparison to the development proposals for Simcoe County, both in terms of its development form and the process

The Ontario Municipal Board approved the Queensville plan, finding that the development’s location within the greater region was defensible, and stating that it “lies in the path of growth and is in keeping with the long-term objectives of the Region to manage growth.”

The Queensville case is a useful comparison to the development proposals for Simcoe County. Also, Allan Duffy, the Queensville developer, is now project manager for the proposed Ontario Potato Distributors development in New Tecumseth.

¹²³. Ontario Municipal Board. Decision delivered by S.W. Lee and Order of the Board. OMB File No. 0970190. Issued April 7, 1998.

through which it was approved. Allan Duffy, the Queensville developer, is also project manager for the proposed Ontario Potato Distributors development in New Tecumseth.

5.3 The efficiency argument

Allan Duffy argues that the development proposed for New Tecumseth makes sense because:

- schools, employment areas and community facilities can be better situated in areas that are comprehensively planned from the start, rather than evolving incrementally;
- comprehensive planning for larger future populations permits sufficient provision of hard and soft infrastructure capacity, avoiding the need to retrofit later on;
- greenfield development permits a more efficient response to large-scale immigration-fuelled demand for housing and employment, because existing settlements are underbuilt and possess decaying infrastructure.

At the regional scale, Duffy's logic leaves aside the fact that a focus on the efficiencies of greenfield development ignores the efficiency gains of in-fill development and does nothing to solve the problem of disinvestment in existing urban infrastructure; in fact, it exacerbates it.

Developers argue that large-scale development is more efficient because existing settlements are underbuilt and possess decaying infrastructure. However, greenfield development does nothing to solve the problem of disinvestment in existing urban areas; in fact, it exacerbates it.

6. What Do These Large-scale Proposals Mean for Simcoe County?

6.1 They hijack debate about how Simcoe might grow

Since the large-scale developments were first proposed, the attention of public officials, planners, and citizens has been focused on responding to the details of the development applications rather than on the big picture — how the county and the Toronto region can or should grow. The sense of inevitability surrounding these proposals centres the discussion on particular features of the proposals instead of debating alternative urban forms for the region as a whole.

Large-scale nodal development is only one option for the growth of the Toronto-related region. Other options include a Barrie-centred model for Simcoe County, building at significantly higher densities or accommodating growth south of the Oak Ridges Moraine. Another alternative is simply to follow existing plans. Innisfil, New Tecumseth and Bradford West Gwillimbury have all designated sufficient land to accommodate projected growth.

Decisions about such crucial growth-related issues should not be made in response to one or two development proposals that would radically alter the character of Simcoe County. They should be matters of public debate, and public bodies should be charged with their implementation.

The sense of inevitability surrounding these proposals centres the discussion on particular features of the proposals instead of debating alternative urban forms for the region as a whole.

6.2 They highlight the weak capacity of local administration

While developers marshal more and more sophisticated arguments to justify their strategies, local planning departments lack the capacity to respond to them. Many Simcoe County planning departments are currently understaffed. Several planners noted that they are often unable to meet the 90-day response time required for development proposals, which results in many proposals being appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board. As this is a province-wide concern, the Liberal government proposes to extend this time limit to 180 days through an amendment to the *Planning Act*, giving municipalities more time to respond.

Local politicians are not always clear on whether they have the capacity to refuse development that is incompatible with their vision of their communities. One respondent noted that developers always have more information about possible implications of a proposed development than the local municipalities do. The same issue arose in New Tecumseth when Council asked planning staff to weigh the pros and cons of refusing the OPDI proposal outright. One of the arguments against dismissing the proposal was that allowing it to move through the pre-consultation stage was the only

Many Simcoe County planning departments are currently understaffed. Several planners noted that they are often unable to meet the 90-day response time required for development proposals.

way for the municipality to gather information about possible implications or alternatives. By the same token, local politicians feared that by allowing the development application to proceed, the developers would have more time to gather supporting research to justify the development and make it more difficult to refuse should it go to the OMB.

Simcoe County has no authority over water and wastewater services. In interviews, lower-tier municipal officials in Simcoe County said that they do not have the resources to undertake extensive servicing, environmental and planning studies by their own staff. Typically, in response to a large-scale development application, municipalities enter into agreements with developers such that the developer pays for outside consultants (of the municipality's choosing) to review studies submitted by the developer's consultants. Because it is a reactive process, this reliance on outside consultants further undermines the capacity of local authorities to generate their own creative solutions in concert with politicians.

Lower-tier municipal officials in Simcoe County do not have the resources to undertake extensive servicing, environmental and planning studies by their own staff and rely on consultants paid for by developers.

6.3 They demonstrate the need for an integrated growth and infrastructure strategy in South Simcoe

No public body has set out a detailed and enforceable plan for how Simcoe County — or any other jurisdiction — is to grow in the context of the Toronto-related region. While the Province is too large, local authorities are too small. Richard White of the Neptis Foundation notes that “Politically, the region [is] as fragmented as the original metropolitan area [was] before Metro’s creation.”¹²⁴

Although the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel described a region of nodes knit together by a coherent system of transportation corridors, the process by which this high-level sketch can be implemented over a long timeframe is undefined. This is especially true, given the election of a provincial government that has yet to articulate a vision of the desirable future form of the Toronto region.

The current three-level, multi-jurisdiction structure is ill-equipped to manage growth at the scale of the Toronto-related region. The Province is the only body that oversees the entire region, yet planning authority has been delegated to local authorities. The Province has the power to make choices at a regional scale, but its role in the system is reactive rather than proactive. Although ministries can, for example, deny approvals to specific projects as they come forward, the Province engages in policy development at a regional scale only in exceptional circumstances. It remains to be

The current three-level, multi-jurisdiction structure is ill-equipped to manage growth at the scale of the Toronto-related region. The Province is the only body that oversees the entire region, yet planning authority has been delegated to local authorities.

¹²⁴. White, Richard. *Urban Infrastructure and Urban Growth in the Toronto Region: 1950s to the 1990s*. Neptis Foundation. 2003.

seen whether the large-scale developments in Simcoe County will spark a broader regional policy process on the part of the Province.

While provincial lending made possible the Collingwood-Alliston water pipeline, leading to a substantial increase in Alliston's industrial and residential growth capacity, the investment was clearly not part of a broader growth management strategy for South Simcoe and Barrie within the context of growth in the Toronto-related region.

Further research is required to determine whether growth in Simcoe County is rapid enough for local governments to finance infrastructure the way Metro Toronto did in the 1950s and 1960s, and whether doing so would alter the pattern of development or increase political control over the process.

A fundamental first step, however, is for servicing plans to be approved at the County level. This would require the Province to transfer authority over water and wastewater services from lower-tier municipalities to the County level.

In order for the decision-making process to be meaningful, the issue of unequal representation on the County council must also be addressed. Representation on council in proportion to population is necessary if the County is to develop a political voice of its own in setting county-wide priorities. Everyone agrees that Barrie's explosive growth has effects far beyond its borders. Whether through informal collaboration or institutional change, Barrie and the County must come together to develop an integrated and rational growth strategy for South Simcoe as a whole.

Servicing plans should be approved at the County level. This would require the Province to transfer authority over water and wastewater services from lower-tier municipalities to the County level.

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7. What Do These Proposals Mean for the Province as a Whole?

7.1 The public sector is not in the driver's seat

It is clear that the public sector is not leading the development process. For all the talk of a policy-driven regulatory environment, the policy process remains fragmented among many competing jurisdictions. Former Premier Mike Harris's "Common Sense Revolution" devolved powers and responsibilities to local governments and then withdrew direct provincial involvement in the coordination of cross-boundary issues. By letting the market allocate population and employment growth based on municipal competitiveness, it was expected that both municipal governments and the province's economy as a whole would become more efficient.

The system has not worked entirely as the Conservatives intended. First, weighed down by their new responsibilities, municipalities have not behaved entrepreneurially with respect to the financing of the capital investment required for expansion. In particular, they are reluctant to borrow to finance large-scale works.

Second, competition for growth to increase tax assessment has resulted in self-destructive growth patterns. Residential units are often built at a pricepoint that will generate less property tax revenue than the amount needed to cover the cost of servicing them.¹²⁵

Third, emphasis on greenfield development discourages intensification and infrastructure reinvestment in existing areas.

Finally, cross-boundary problems such as investment in water and wastewater treatment and regional transit need attention that the Province has not been inclined to provide and that other jurisdictions, such as Simcoe County, are not empowered to undertake.

Weighed down by their new responsibilities, municipalities have not behaved entrepreneurially with respect to the financing of the capital investment required for expansion.

Cross-boundary problems such as investment in water and wastewater treatment and regional transit need attention that the Province has not been inclined to provide and that other jurisdictions are not empowered to undertake.

7.2 The private sector is acting like the public sector

By definition, business operates at the size of its market. The housing market of South-Central Ontario operates at a regional scale that transcends any one jurisdiction. Developers, therefore, make their decisions at the regional scale in a way that public bodies do not. The result has been a shift of public functions to the private sector.

¹²⁵. Peter Tomlinson, former Director of Economic Development, City of Toronto. Interview. December 2003.

In the absence of a region-scaled growth strategy defined by the Province for how the Toronto-related region should grow, developers have established the dominant development pattern by exploiting market opportunities and building according to industry norms.

In the Bond Head case, the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury refused the initial plan, but invited the developer to incorporate additional lands into a revised proposal. The result is a comprehensive land use framework covering the width of the entire Town. The Bradford Bond Head Planning Area is more than a simple development application. It is, in essence, a new growth management strategy for the Town. The terminology shift is important: the project has become a “planning area” coordinated by a “development corporation.” The image presented is now akin to, for example, Toronto’s waterfront redevelopment, but with the private sector in charge. As a result, the private sector is filling the comprehensive planning role traditionally played by government. The final plan will have as its base motivation profitability for the developer, not the creation of the most rational growth pattern for the area in the context of the Toronto-related region.

The development industry is conscious of the role it is playing. Responding to a question about the quality of the development pattern region-wide, Neil Rodgers of the Urban Development Institute said: “Let me spin it another way for you. How good is the County’s vision? Because maybe what is happening there is the development industry is more visionary than the County is. ... I could say maybe the development industry is leading what should be a vision done by the County.”¹²⁶

Interestingly, the large scale and comprehensive nature of the development projects has led the developers in Simcoe County to hire former public officials as advisers. Geranium Corporation has never undertaken a development as large and comprehensive as the Bradford Bond Head Planning Area. To assist in its planning, Geranium hired former Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Daniel Burns to consult on the revised Bradford Bond Head Planning Area proposal. The developers of OPDI retained former mayor of Richmond Hill and developer of Queensville, Allan Duffy, as project manager.

While the use of outside consultants is normal, the hiring of people with substantial public-sector experience represents an attempt to frame development proposals as comprehensive growth strategies or planning policy reviews.

The housing market of South-Central Ontario operates at a regional scale that transcends any one jurisdiction. Developers, therefore, make their decisions at the regional scale in a way that public bodies do not. The result has been a shift of public functions to the private sector.

Because of their scale and deviation from established plans, the large-scale proposals were an impetus for the towns to re-examine their projections, plans and growth strategies.

¹²⁶. Neil Rodgers. President, UDI-Ontario. Interview. October 31, 2003.

7.3 “Auto-pilot planning” is no substitute for political decision-making

Planning regulations are not administered in a vacuum; they are the product of and subject to policy agendas set by elected officials. The situation in Simcoe County illustrates that planning regulations cannot in themselves make the decisions and judgments for how to manage a rapidly growing region. The challenge in Simcoe is not merely of a technical nature. It is fundamentally political, and political challenges require political solutions. Right now the planning regime is running on auto-pilot. In day-to-day business, it mostly does what it is supposed to do. But without political direction from the Province, the system can be manipulated to produce outcomes counter to the spirit of the policy.

The situation in Simcoe County illustrates that planning regulations cannot in themselves make the decisions and judgments for how to manage a rapidly growing region.

The provincial government’s moves toward reforming the Planning Act and the PPS show promise. The difficult cross-jurisdictional growth management challenges cannot, however, be solved by regulatory change alone. Institutional structures and the division of powers among jurisdictions must be revisited. The pattern of development in Simcoe and across the Toronto region will be the product of the ability of governments — local and provincial — to make decisions and to establish an effective regulatory environment to achieve them.

Appendix

Municipal Restructuring since 1990 and Official Plan Adoption in Simcoe County

Present Municipality	Type	Year	Restructured Components	Official Plan adopted
Simcoe County	County			1997
Adjala-Tosorontio	Twp		No change	1998
Barrie (Separated)	City		No change	1994
Bradford-West Gwillimbury	Town	1992	Town of Bradford, Township of West Gwillimbury	2002
Clearview	Twp	1994	Town of Stayner, Village of Creemore, Townships of Nottawasaga and Sunnidale	2002
Collingwood	Town		No change	2004
Essa	Twp	1994	Part transferred to Town of Innisfil.	2000
Innisfil	Town	1991	Township of Innisfil, Township of West Gwillimbury (partial), Village of Cookstown	1993
		1994	Township of Essa (partial)	
Midland	Town	1997-1998	Annexation involving Township of Tay, Town of Penetanguishene	2002
New Tecumseth	Town	1992	Towns of Alliston, Beeton, Tottenham, Tecumseth	1995
Orillia (Separated)			No change	1999
Oro-Medonte	Twp	1994	Township of Oro, Township of Medonte	1997 (new OP under County review)
Penetanguishene	Town	1997-1998	Annexation involving Township of Tay, Town of Midland	2000
Ramara	Twp	1994	Town of Rama, Town of Mara	2003
Severn	Twp	1994	Towns of Coldwater, Washago, Severn Falls, Marchmont, Maclean Lake, Hawkins Corners, Ardtrea	Post-amalgamation OP not yet adopted
Springwater	Twp		No change	1998
Tay	Twp	1997-1998	Annexation involving Towns of Midland and Penetanguishene	1998
Tiny	Twp		No change	2001
Wasaga Beach	Town		No change	2003

Interview Subjects

Elected Officials

Barbara Bagueley, Deputy Mayor, Town of Innisfil

Mike McEachern, Mayor, Town of New Tecumseth

Municipal Planners

Ian Bender, Director of Planning, Simcoe County

Mark Bryan, Planner, Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury

Mara Burton, Director of Planning and Development, Township of Tay

Ruth Coursey, Director of Planning, Town of East Gwillimbury

Andrew Fyfe, Senior Planner, City of Orillia

Eric Hodgins, Planner, City of Barrie

Jim Hosick, Principal Planner, Town of Innisfil

Ray Kelso, Planner, Wasaga Beach

June Little, Senior Planner, Simcoe County

John Livey, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Markham

Deb McCabe, Planner, Ramara Township

John Skorobohacz, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Innisfil

Eric Taylor, Manager of Planning, Town of New Tecumseth

Darren Vella, Manager of Planning, Township of Springwater

Nathan Westendorp, Planner II, Simcoe County

Province of Ontario

Gemma Connolly, Project Officer, Environmental Assessment and Approvals Branch, Ministry of the Environment

Victor Doyle, Manager, Community Planning and Development, Municipal Services Office — Central Ontario, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Tim Haldenby, Municipal Planning Advisor, Municipal Services Office — Central Ontario, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

John Klowak, Senior Engineer in charge of the 404 Extension and Bradford Bypass, Ministry of Transportation

Private Sector

Daniel Burns, consultant to Geranium Corporation

Allan Duffy, Queensville Properties

Mario Giampietri, Geranium Corporation

Rick Hunter, Planscape

Robert Lehman, Partner, Meridian Planning Consultants

Neil Rodgers, President, Urban Development Institute Ontario

Cheryl Shindruk, Vice President, Land Development, Geranium Corporation

Laura Taylor, planning consultant

Peter Tomlinson, former Director of Economic Development, City of Toronto

Karen Wirsig, Reporter, NRU Publishing

University of Toronto

Larry Bourne, Department of Geography, Program in Planning

Paul Hess, Department of Geography, Program in Planning

André Sorensen, Department of Geography, Program in Planning

Conservation Authorities

Charles Burgess, Director of Planning, Nottawasaga River Conservation Authority

Reinie Vos, Manager of Policy and Planning, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority

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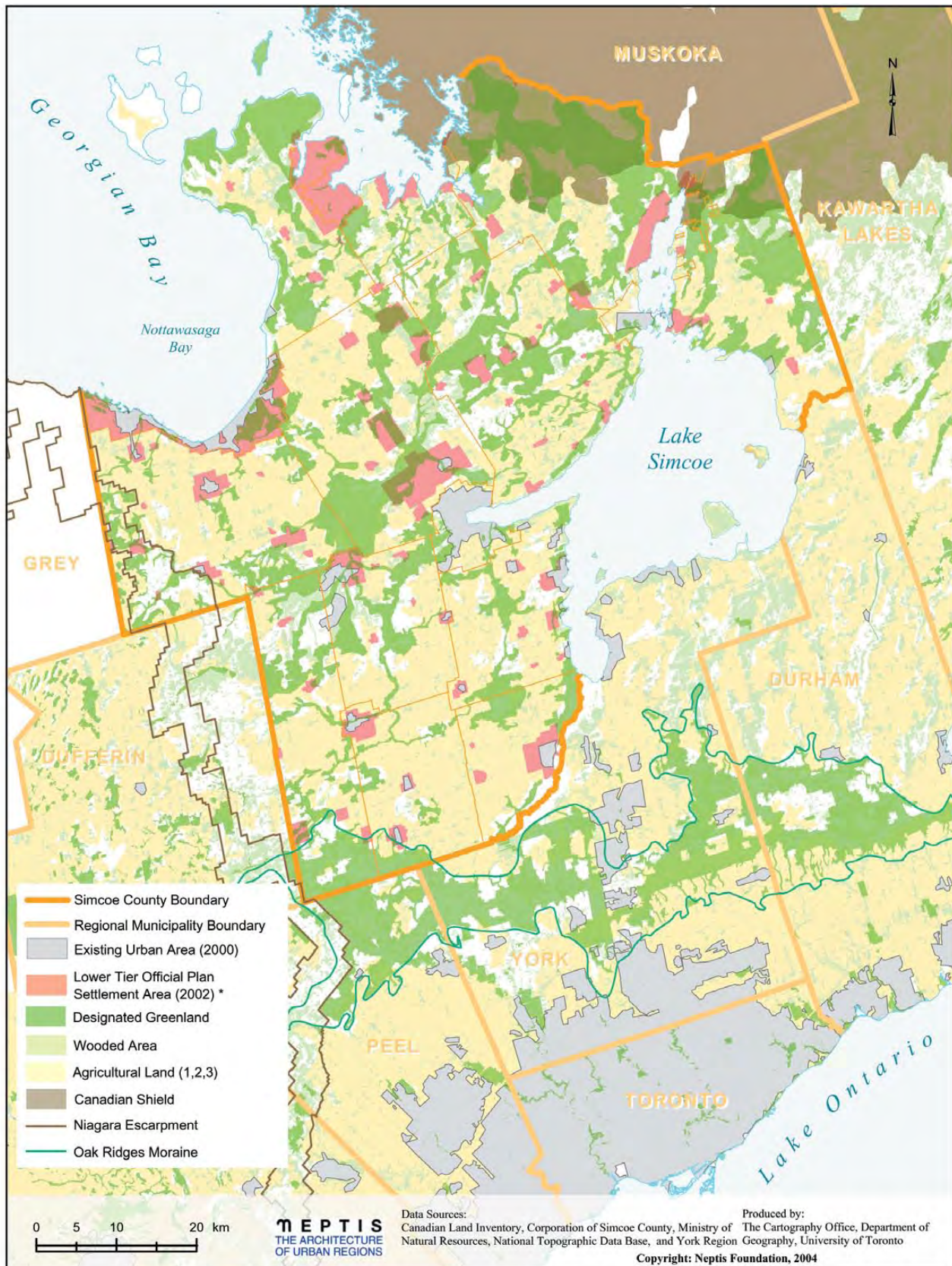
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Maps

Map 1: Simcoe County – Natural Features

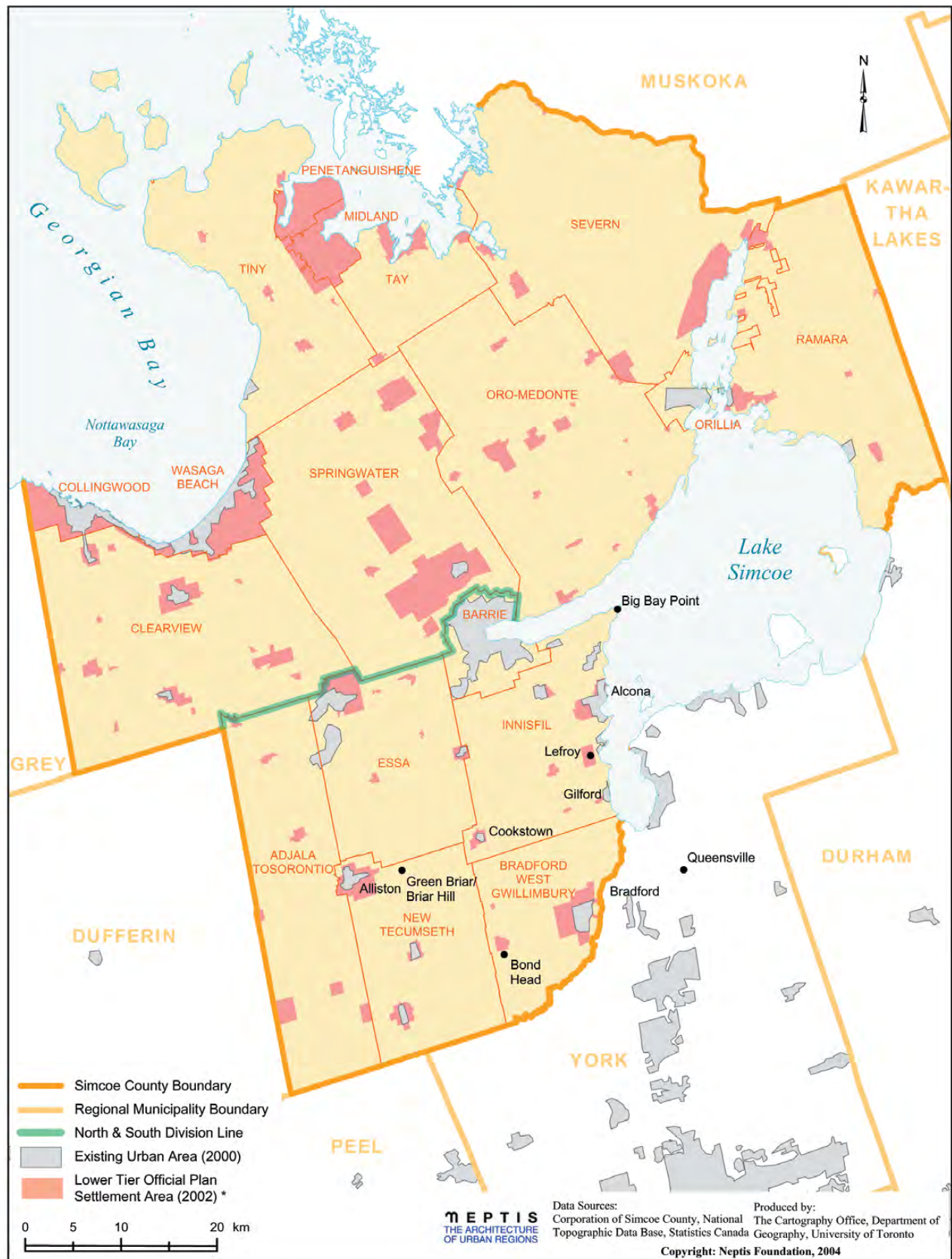
* Individual municipalities used different criteria to identify areas of settlement. Barrie and Orillia excluded.

Map 2: Simcoe County – Watersheds



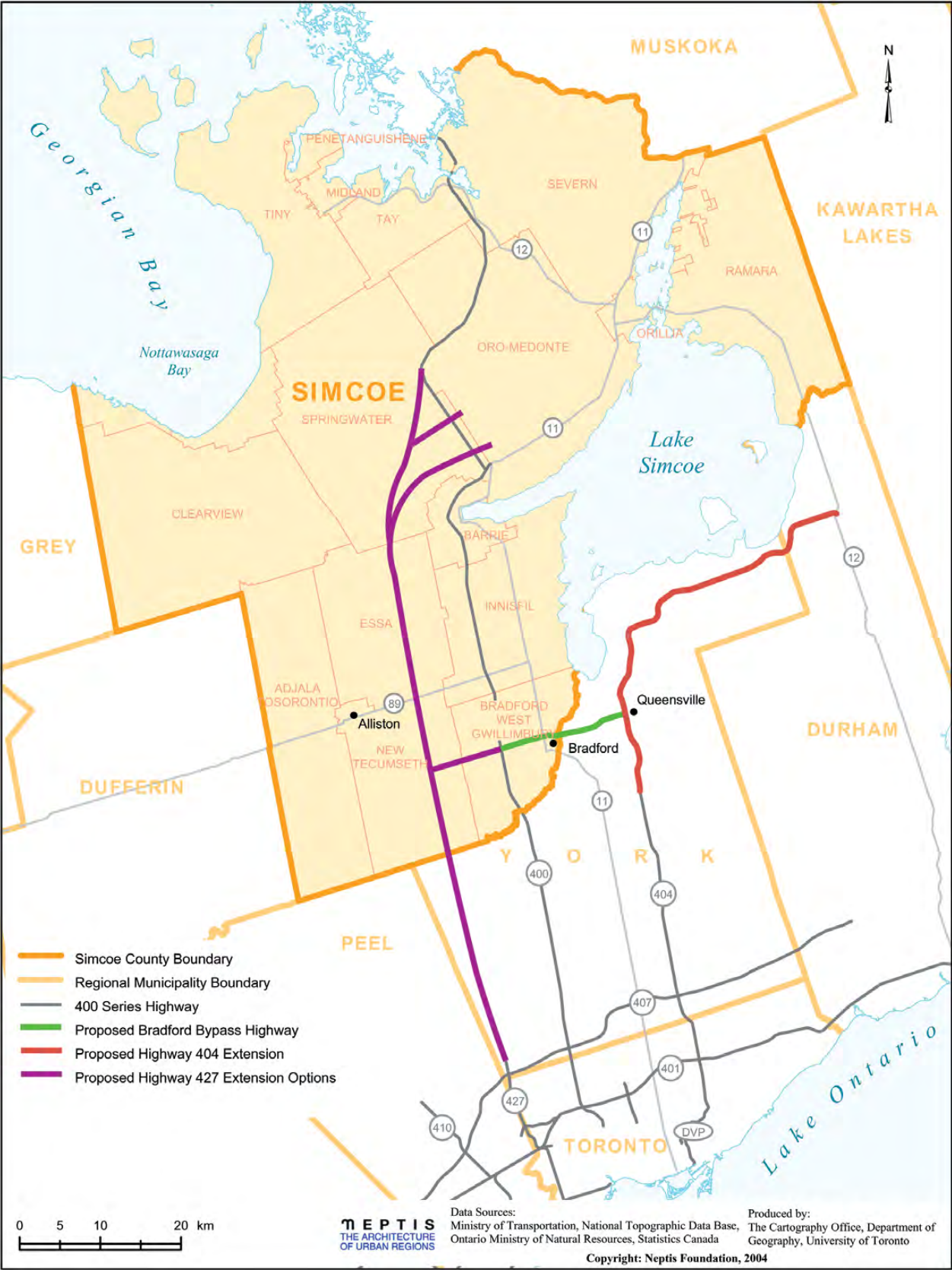
Map 3: Political Boundaries

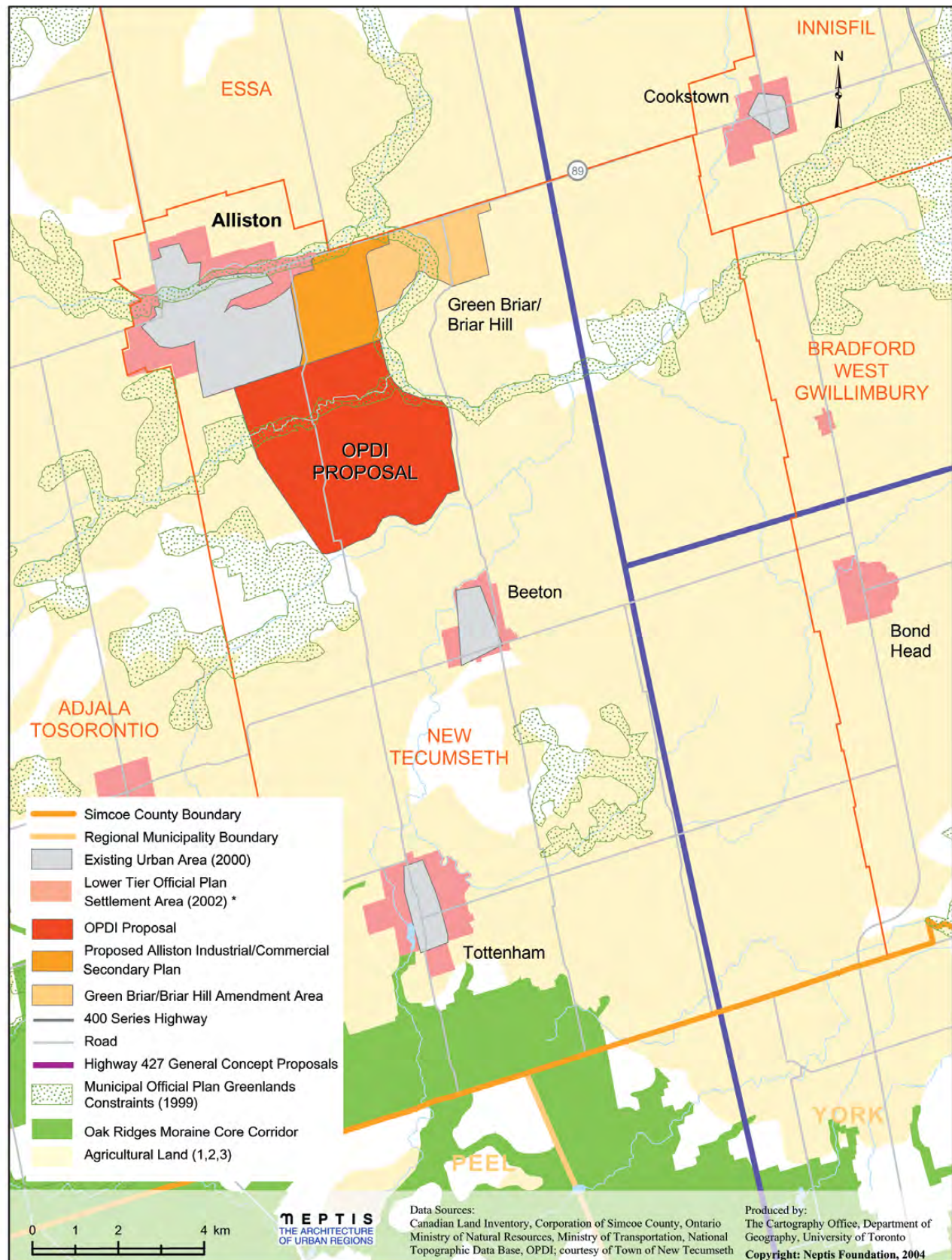


Map 4: Simcoe County – Settlement Areas

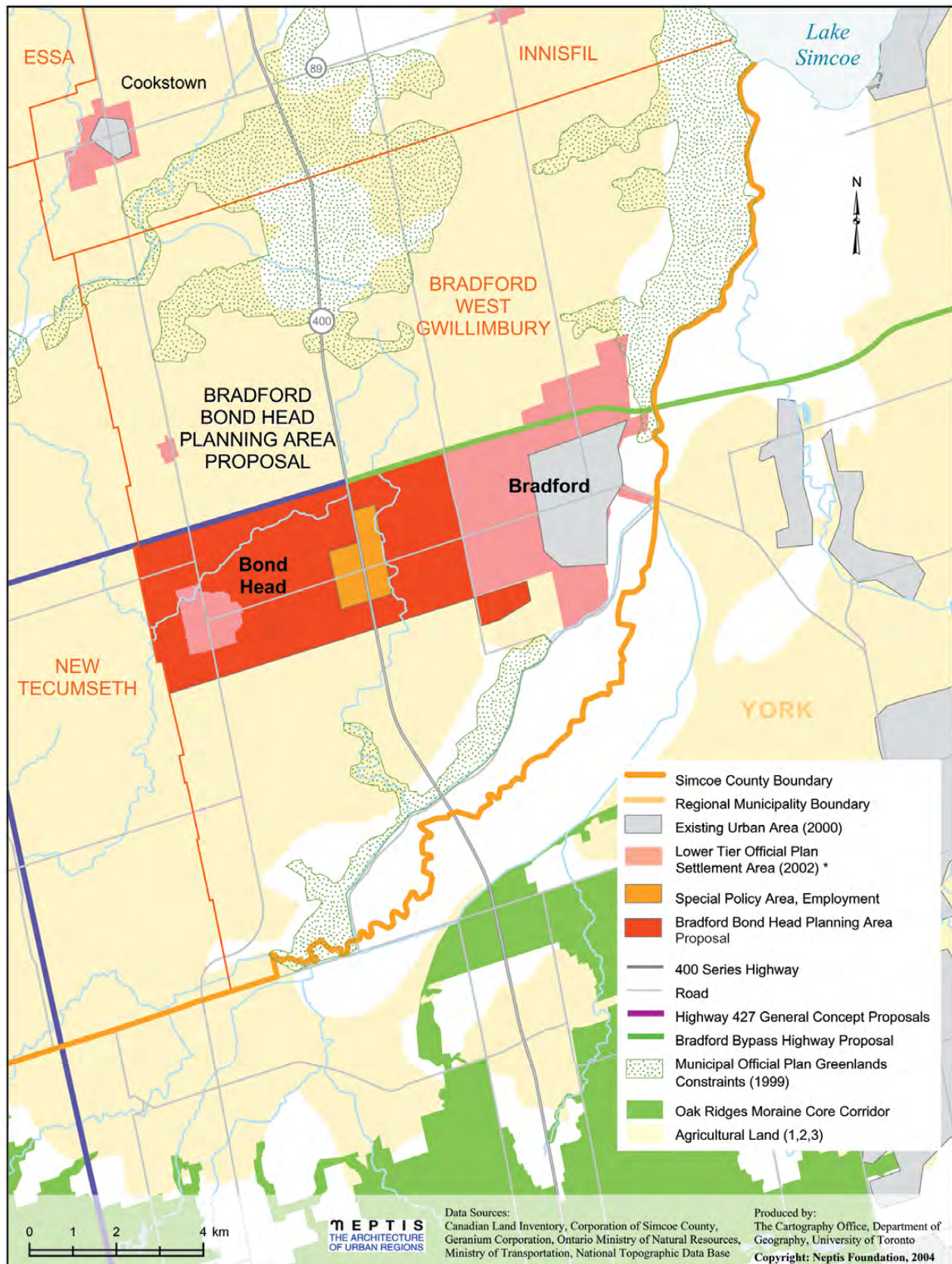
* Individual municipalities used different criteria to identify areas of settlement. Barrie and Orillia excluded.

Map 5: Proposed Highway Network

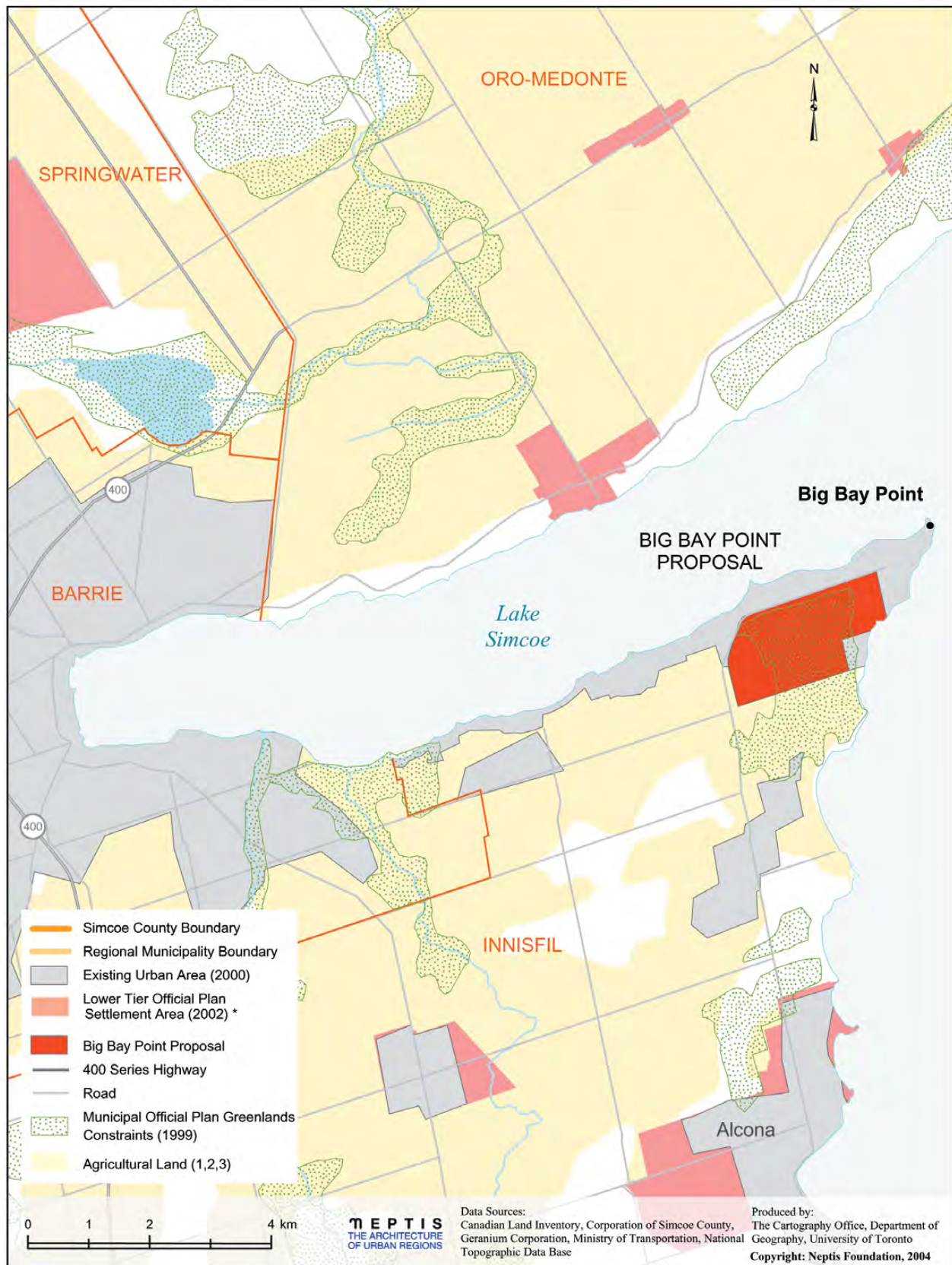


Map 6: Development in New Tecumseth

* Individual municipalities used different criteria to identify areas of settlement. Barrie and Orillia excluded.

Map 7: Bradford Bond Head Planning Area

* Individual municipalities used different criteria to identify areas of settlement. Barrie and Orillia excluded.

Map 8: Big Bay Point

* Individual municipalities used different criteria to identify areas of settlement. Barrie and Orillia excluded.

Map 9: Toronto Region – Commutershed

