



## **EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR A GREENER ONTARIO** **Investing in a Sustainable, Healthy Environment for Long-Term Prosperity**

The McGuinty government is committed to addressing Ontario's environmental priorities, including air quality and climate change, as well as ensuring a sustainable, healthy environment for our future well-being and prosperity.

This spring, the government will present a plan to establish a greener economy in Ontario – for now and decades to come. The 2007 Budget announces close to \$125 million in immediate environmental initiatives, including:

- Providing homeowners with rebates of up to \$150 for home energy audits that assess energy consumption, for a total of up to \$24 million over four years;
- Providing \$2 million to the Trees Ontario Foundation; accelerated tree planting helps clean Ontario's air and remove carbon dioxide; and
- Allocating \$1.5 million for Project Porchlight to enable local volunteers to deliver energy-efficient light bulbs to over 500,000 Ontario homes this summer.

The government will also allocate more than \$200 million over the next three years to fund further climate change initiatives.

The nearly \$125 million in immediate initiatives and the \$200 million for further climate change initiatives come from Ontario's \$586 million share of a federal trust for clean air and climate change, and build on existing and ongoing provincial initiatives.

### **Growing a Greener Economy**

The government is investing in the research and innovation needed to help Ontario's automotive sector become a global leader in alternative fuels and clean car technology. The 2007 Budget announces support for the development of new environmental technologies, through:

- \$21 million to Queen's University, which is working in partnership with the private sector to establish a convergence centre for bio-products and bio-materials;
- \$15 million to the Ontario Centres of Excellence, which promote linkages between academia and businesses to bring to market energy innovations, such as low-carbon technologies;
- \$6 million to the Ontario BioAuto Council; this multi-industry initiative will help position the province as a global leader in manufacturing auto parts and other materials from agricultural and forestry feedstocks;
- \$6 million to Lakehead University, which is building capacity to support competitive and sustainable development of Ontario's boreal forest;
- \$3 million to the University of Ontario Institute of Technology, which is developing its capacity in hydrogen technology research; and

- \$400,000 to the Durham Strategic Energy Alliance, which is an organization of industry, academia, local and regional Durham governments committed to developing sustainable energy solutions for Ontario.

## **Building Green Communities**

### *Sustainable Transportation*

New investments in transit across the province through the government's Move Ontario program will help reduce gridlock, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions by providing alternatives to driving. Potentially, these transit projects will enable 42 million more transit rides in the GTA, resulting in 35 million fewer car trips on Ontario roads and highways each year. Ontario will provide \$352 million to municipalities immediately, based on transit ridership.

Ontario is also committing \$85 million toward Phase II of York Region's VIVA transit express bus service, and investing one-third toward the Kitchener-Waterloo Light Rail Transit system along with federal and municipal partners.

### *Brownfields Reform*

Brownfields are under-developed or abandoned properties, often contaminated from past industrial or waste disposal activities. The government is announcing a comprehensive package of legislative and other reforms to address barriers to brownfield redevelopment and help ensure that the public interest remains protected.

Several Ontario communities have a high number of brownfield properties that may act as a barrier to development and could be returned to productive use. The government is providing \$11 million to Hamilton, Cornwall, Brantford, St. Catharines and the University of Ottawa.

### *Energy and Climate Change*

The government remains committed to improving Ontario's air quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by:

- Setting targets to double the installed capacity of renewable electricity generation by 2025;
- Working with neighbouring U.S. jurisdictions to reduce transboundary air pollution;
- Proposing to extend the retail sales tax rebate for residential purchases of solar, wind, micro hydro-electric and geothermal energy systems to purchases made before January 1, 2010; and
- Supporting the production of ethanol fuel in Ontario through the \$520 million Ontario Ethanol Growth Fund.

The government also remains committed to phase out coal-fired electricity generation in favour of cleaner sources of energy. Over the past three years, generation from coal plants has fallen by about 30 per cent, representing a large reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. The phase-out of coal-fired electricity plants will represent, when complete, a reduction of up to 30 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions, the single largest reduction of emissions in Canada.

### *Waste Diversion*

To encourage diversion of materials from Ontario's landfill sites, the government is streamlining the approval process for pilot projects that encourage innovative waste technologies and for converting certain types of waste into alternative fuels. In addition, the government is:

- Directing Waste Diversion Ontario to develop and fund diversion programs for household hazardous and special materials;
- Providing \$305,000 to six municipalities – Toronto, Windsor, Hamilton, Peel Region, London and Quinte – that are undertaking apartment recycling pilot projects; and
- Providing \$325,000 to the Recycling Council of Ontario, which is developing a zero waste toolkit for upcoming community information events and working to encourage the use of reusable plastic bags.

#### *Greenbelt and Places to Grow*

The Greenbelt Plan and Places to Grow initiative are central to the government's commitment to environmental protection and growth planning. Together, these initiatives will promote sustainable prosperity by helping manage urban growth and development, while protecting about 1.8 million acres of environmentally sensitive land.

The government is providing \$2 million to the Rouge Park Alliance, which works to protect, restore and enhance the natural, scenic and cultural values of the park.

The government has provided \$25 million to the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation, which co-ordinates and funds activities – such as the promotion of agriculture and viticulture, research, public education, land stewardship and land acquisition – across the Greenbelt.

#### **Protecting Ontario's Water**

The McGuinty government recognizes that clean, safe, affordable water is critical to public health, economic growth and quality of life. This year, the government will invest \$7 million in the new Drinking Water Stewardship Program under the Clean Water Act, and will invest another \$21 million over the next three years to allow for outreach, education and early action to protect drinking water sources across the province.

To further ensure the safety of Ontario's drinking water supply, and protect ground and surface waters, the government is:

- Fulfilling all 121 recommendations arising from the Walkerton Inquiry; to date, 87 have been implemented and all others are underway; and
- Continuing its \$120 million commitment to fund source water protection planning from 2004 to 2008 to protect drinking water sources across the province.

Additionally, Ontario would invest more than \$30 million to help restore and sustain the Great Lakes as part of a proposal to renew the Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem with the federal government.

Contact:  
Scott Blodgett  
Ministry of Finance  
416-325-0324