

## Majority of Ontarians want Greenbelt to grow

After nine years, support for Ontario's Greenbelt remains strong, according to the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation. Ontarians want to see more land included in the land protection policy according to a recent poll conducted by Environics Research Group, the Foundation reported in a release issued last week.

According to the survey, three-quarters of Ontarians (74 per cent) think it is very important to continue to grow Ontario's Greenbelt. Polling results align with Mississauga, Oakville, and Toronto taking the necessary steps to grow the Greenbelt. These cities have begun work to include areas along Fourteen Mile Creek, Credit River and Etobicoke Creek river valleys, and the Don, Humber and Etobicoke Creeks as part of Ontario's Greenbelt. This is in addition to the recent inclusion of Glenora Conservation Area to Greenbelt protected land.

"Growing the Greenbelt ranks up there with developing public transit and increasing access to local food," Foundation CEO Burkhard Mausberg said. "This overwhelming response is a most encouraging sign."

Support for the Greenbelt is at an all-time high, according to the release, with 93 per cent of Ontarians supporting the 1.8 million acres of protected land.

"Knowing that we are going into the review of Ontario's Greenbelt Plan in 2015, we are delighted that the Greenbelt remains an important contribution to the quality of life in Ontario," Mausberg added.

Other findings of note that were cited include nearly all respondents (99 per cent) said protecting the natural water system is an important benefit of the Greenbelt and 97 per cent said preserving agricultural lands and green spaces that support clean air are important benefits to them.

The Greenbelt Foundation survey was conducted by Environics Research Group from Sept. 12 to Oct. 20, 2013 among a sample of 825 residents of the Greater Golden Horseshoe. A sample of this size has a margin of error of 3.4 percentage points either way, 19 times out of 20. A disproportionate sample was employed, with Toronto being under sampled and other regions over sampled.