

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **County ready to move forward with made-in-Simcoe Growth Plan**

**Midhurst/January 19, 2012** – The County of Simcoe is ready to move forward with a made-in-Simcoe growth plan that will ensure the region continues to attract good jobs and investment, while curbing urban sprawl and protecting green spaces and farmland.

Minister of Infrastructure Bob Chiarelli announced today the Province of Ontario supports the amended Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe which now allows the County of Simcoe and the cities of Barrie and Orillia to approve development projects that make sense for their communities.

“Today is a significant day for the County of Simcoe,” said Warden Cal Patterson. “The Province has given the County the framework, flexibility and opportunity to move forward with a Growth Plan for our 16 member municipalities.”

The County of Simcoe has been looking for resolution to the on-going uncertainty created by a lack of decision on the County Official Plan and the proposed Growth Plan Amendment and was very encouraged with the Province’s decision to engage the Provincial Development Facilitator in the review of growth-related issues in the Simcoe area. The County worked closely with Facilitator Paula Dill to identify issues and seek solutions.

“During that process, the County achieved a level of co-operation and understanding that has helped create a foundation of Simcoe-wide thinking,” said Warden Patterson. “Both Paula Dill and the Ministry have been responsive to our input.”

That input has resulted in removing the Interim Settlement Area Boundary, recognition of the seven primary settlement areas and four employment areas, providing flexibility to the County to consider development applications in settlement areas in keeping with sound planning principles which may be in excess of the population of Schedule 7.

“The County can now move forward with more certainty in the land use planning realm,” said Warden Patterson. “This will unquestionably stimulate the economy and demonstrate a commitment to the long-term success of the Simcoe area.”

The County will continue to work closely with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to resolve its Official Plan.

The County of Simcoe is composed of sixteen member municipalities and provides crucial public services to County residents in addition to providing paramedic and social services to the separated cities of Barrie and Orillia. Visit our website at [simcoe.ca](http://simcoe.ca).

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