Excerpts from the Greenbelt Plan:

The Greenbelt Plan's section 1. Introduction, and sub-section 1.1 Context.

The Greater Golden Horseshoe area is located in the heart of the Great Lakes region. It contains many of Canada’s most ecologically and hydrologically significant natural environments and scenic landscapes, including the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Niagara Escarpment. These natural areas clean the air, provide drinking water, provide diverse flora and fauna habitats, including pollinators, and they provide opportunities for recreational activities that benefit public health and overall quality of life.

The region also has some of Canada’s most important and productive farmland. Its fertile soil, moderate climate and abundant water resources support agricultural production that cannot be duplicated elsewhere in the province and the country.

The Greenbelt was introduced in 2005 to help shape the future of this region. The Greenbelt is the cornerstone of Ontario's Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Plan (Growth Plan) which is an overarching strategy that provides clarity and certainty about urban structure, where and how future growth should be accommodated and what must be protected for current and future generations.

The Greenbelt Plan, together with the ORMCP and the NEP, identifies where urbanization should not occur in order to provide permanent protection to the agricultural land base and the ecological and hydrological features, areas and functions occurring on this landscape.

The Greenbelt Plan includes lands within, and builds upon the ecological protections provided by, the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP).