



### **What is the Vision 2050 Project?**

Vision 2050 is an initiative dedicated to preserving and protecting the natural environment and ecosystems of Georgian Bay's eastern and northern coasts. This project addresses growing development pressures, progressing environmental degradation, and the lack of a regional conservation and planning framework. We aim to do this by developing a comprehensive roadmap for sustainable development and environmental protection.

Our plan involves collaboration with governments, Indigenous communities, conservation groups and other local stakeholders. We aim to establish a long-term, evidence based strategy to ensure the conservation of Georgian Bay's ecosystems.

### **What is Vision 2050's Purpose?**

The purpose of our project is to retain a highly reputable conservation and coastal regional planning agency that will prepare a Position Paper to

- a. Analyze the increasing threats of irreversible harm to the natural environment of the coastal region posed by expansive growth in Southern Ontario.
- b. Propose a vision for the future of the region that prioritizes conservation of the natural environment.
- c. Identify proposed regional conservation policy frameworks to ensure the protection of this unique area for future generations in perpetuity.
- d. To include proposals for specific policy approaches and actions based on broad-based consultations with stakeholders and research into recognized regional and international conservation principles and best practices.

### **Isn't Georgian Bay well protected now?**

Georgian Bay has several conservation initiatives such as the Georgian Bay Biosphere, national and provincial parks, and Indigenous land stewardship programs; however, these efforts are fragmented. There is no single comprehensive plan or strategy to protect the Bay. Currently, Ontario has not adopted a conservation plan for Georgian Bay, but precedents exist. The Niagara Escarpment and the Greenbelt have protected status.. Georgian Bay does not, despite being home to a World Biosphere

Region and both national and provincial parks recognize its unique natural features and environment. This policy gap leaves it vulnerable to development, climate threats and biodiversity.

#### **What are some of the key threats to Georgian Bay?**

- Population Growth and Urbanization
  - The GTA is projected to grow by 50% by 2050, increasing development pressures throughout Ontario, including the Bay
- Intensified Development Policies
  - Ontario's push for housing expansion, economic growth, and tourism development will impact the region
- Habitat Loss and Biodiversity Decline
  - Georgian Bay's wetlands, forests, and wildlife corridors are threatened by land conversion and increased human activity
- Climate Change and Pollution
  - Rising temperatures, invasive species, water pollution, and increased recreational use threaten water quality and ecosystems.

#### **What are the main objectives of this project?**

1. To develop a policy framework for the region's conservation planning and environmental protection into the future.
2. In phase 1, we are retaining a reputable, highly credible planning and environmental team to write a position paper to identify best practice approaches and promote the need for a regional vision and plan for the coast.
3. Build a coalition of stakeholders to support this objective. Consult widely with those stakeholders on proposed approaches.
4. Share our findings with governments, regional municipalities, Indigenous communities and other NGOs.
5. Expand the conservation of natural and environmentally valuable areas and improve the protection of these areas with stronger and more consistent policies.
6. Preserve the natural and cultural heritage of the region.

#### **What will be the outcome of phase 1 of the project?**

The outcome of phase 1 should be the development of a regional policy framework that promotes conservation and environmental protection on a regional scale based on shared values and principles. The creation of a regional policy framework may lead to recognition in Ontario's official conservation and planning policies and in conservation principles tailored to the Bay's unique environment. This does not mean a new regional planning authority or Niagara Escarpment Commission-like body.

#### **What will happen in phase 2?**

The goal of phase 2 is to develop a comprehensive, highly professional scientific and environmental report that sets out a detailed vision and conservation plan for the Georgian Bay coastal region for

implementation of governments, communities, and stakeholders. This report will contain a roadmap to guide implementation.

#### **Who are the main stakeholders in this project?**

- Local communities and seasonal and permanent residents rely on the Georgian Bay's ecosystem and economy.
- Indigenous communities are key partners in environmental stewardship and land management as they offer valuable insights and knowledge into this project.
- Georgian Bay NGOs including Georgian Bay Biosphere (GBB), Georgian Bay Land Trust (GBLT), Georgian Bay Forever (GBF), and Georgian Bay Great Lakes Foundation (GBGLF).
- Municipalities and governments responsible for land-use planning, environmental regulations and other infrastructures.
- The business and tourism industry- local economic groups, including sustainable tourism initiatives.

#### **Has GBA talked to Georgian Bay Organizations about the project?**

We meet regularly and share information with our Georgian Bay partners. We need the whole Georgian Bay community to help better protect this incredible natural asset recognized on international, national and provincial levels. As it stands today, GBB, GBF, and GBLT, have all agreed to participate in the project and to sit on the project's Advisory Council. (Participation does not connote support for any specific policy proposals).

#### **Has GBA talked to Municipalities and the Province?**

Yes, we have initiated official delegations (presentations) to coastal municipalities. We will continue to engage with municipalities, the province, the federal government, and relevant departments (such as park authorities). Planning for these meetings is underway.

#### **Why do we need to raise funds for the project?**

We need to raise more than \$150,000 to retain the environmental planning consultants with the profile, professional reputation and high level of credibility required to make this project successful. The fundraising goal is \$150,000 and we are already 75% of the way there! We need this funding as the GBA's annual dues only cover operational costs. External funding is needed for major initiatives such as Vision 2050, so we have launched the *Vision 2050 Fund in memory of Wally King*.

#### **Why not partner with another GB organization so you can issue charitable donation receipts?**

GBA talked to two organizations about partnering in this manner in the past. However, we could not work out all the arrangements in a mutually beneficial way, mainly due to new, stricter Canada Revenue Agency regulations and requirements for charities and the use of donations. This being said, partnering is an option we would consider again in the future.

### **What happens if you can't raise all the funds?**

We are confident we can raise the funds, but contributors will get their money back if we do not.

### **Are Vision 2050's finances audited?**

Yes, Vision 2050 Fund in Memory of Wally King contributions and expenses paid from the Fund are a part of the annual audit of GBA's financials and will appear in the financial statements.

### **Sounds like a great initiative. How can I help?**

- Help to spread awareness and knowledge of this project to your local member associations and the Georgian Bay community.
- Contribute ideas to your local member association on better protecting our coastal region- while meeting the needs of local communities, residents and visitors.
- Consider donating to the *Vision 2050 Fund in Memory of Wally King*. We are targeting fundraising from individuals and families who might consider a significant contribution rather than pursuing a general fundraising campaign. If you might be such a family or individual, please contact Rolfe Jones at [rolfescottjones@georgianbay.ca](mailto:rolfescottjones@georgianbay.ca) or call (416)-898-3295

### **How can I find out more?**

- See the Vision 2050 web page on the GBA website: [georgianbay.ca/georgian-bay-vision-2050-project/](http://georgianbay.ca/georgian-bay-vision-2050-project/)
- Look for upcoming articles in the GBA e-Update and printed Update newsletter.

### **Contact one of our Vision 2050 team members:**

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