

# *The Role of Greenbelts in Community Sustainability*



*National Visioning Workshop  
Greenbelt 2060: The Future  
of the National Capital  
Greenbelt*

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# Plan

## Objectives

- A. Sustainability - local through national
- B. Some realities of urban form & growth
- C. Greenbelts & multi-functionality of open space
- D. Multiple functions of Greenbelts & their contribution to community sustainability
- E. The challenges
- F. Innovation & creativity
- G. Conclusions

# *Objectives*

- *To place the Ottawa Greenbelt in the context of community sustainability & quality of life*
- *To explore the challenges facing the Ottawa Greenbelt from perspectives at various scales*
- *To explore the strategic issues involved in adding value to the Ottawa Greenbelt from these perspectives*

# *A. Sustainability - local through national & ...*

## *The imperatives of sustainable development*

*Socio-economic needs, diversity, environmental integrity & citizen & actor involvement in the political process*

*Responding to local & regional needs are critical to success, but the needs must be placed in the broader context*

## *B. Some realities of urban form & growth*

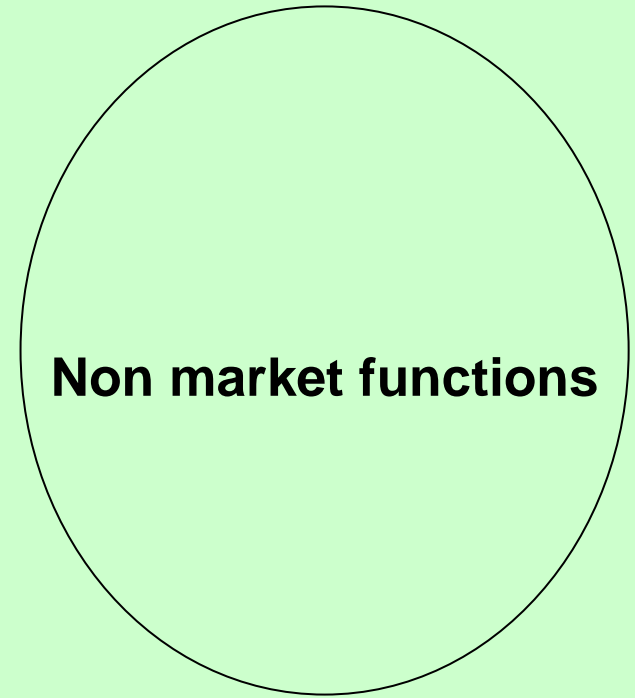
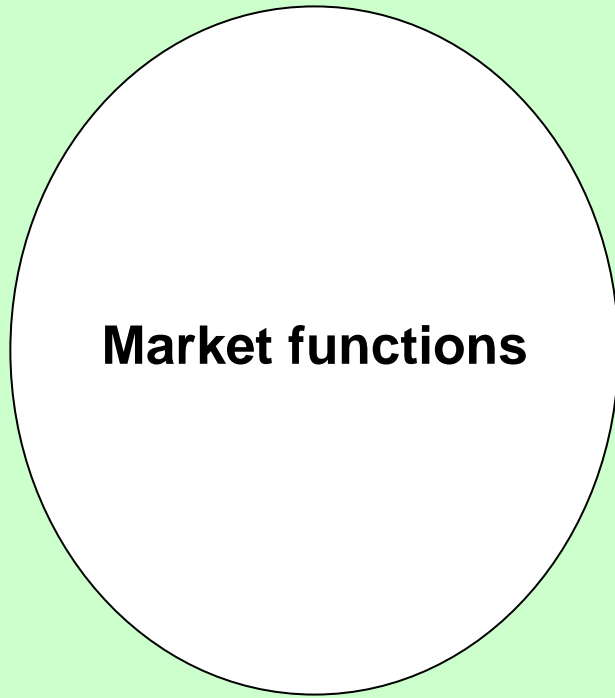
- 1. The larger the urban area, the more difficult it is for public transport to effectively link all places in the regional city together*
- 2. The regional city - the strategic roles that open space around large urban agglomerations plays for the urban & rural populations*
- 3. Greenbelts don't contain urban growth but can help redirect it (contrast London & Paris)*

# C. Greenbelts & multi-functionality of open space

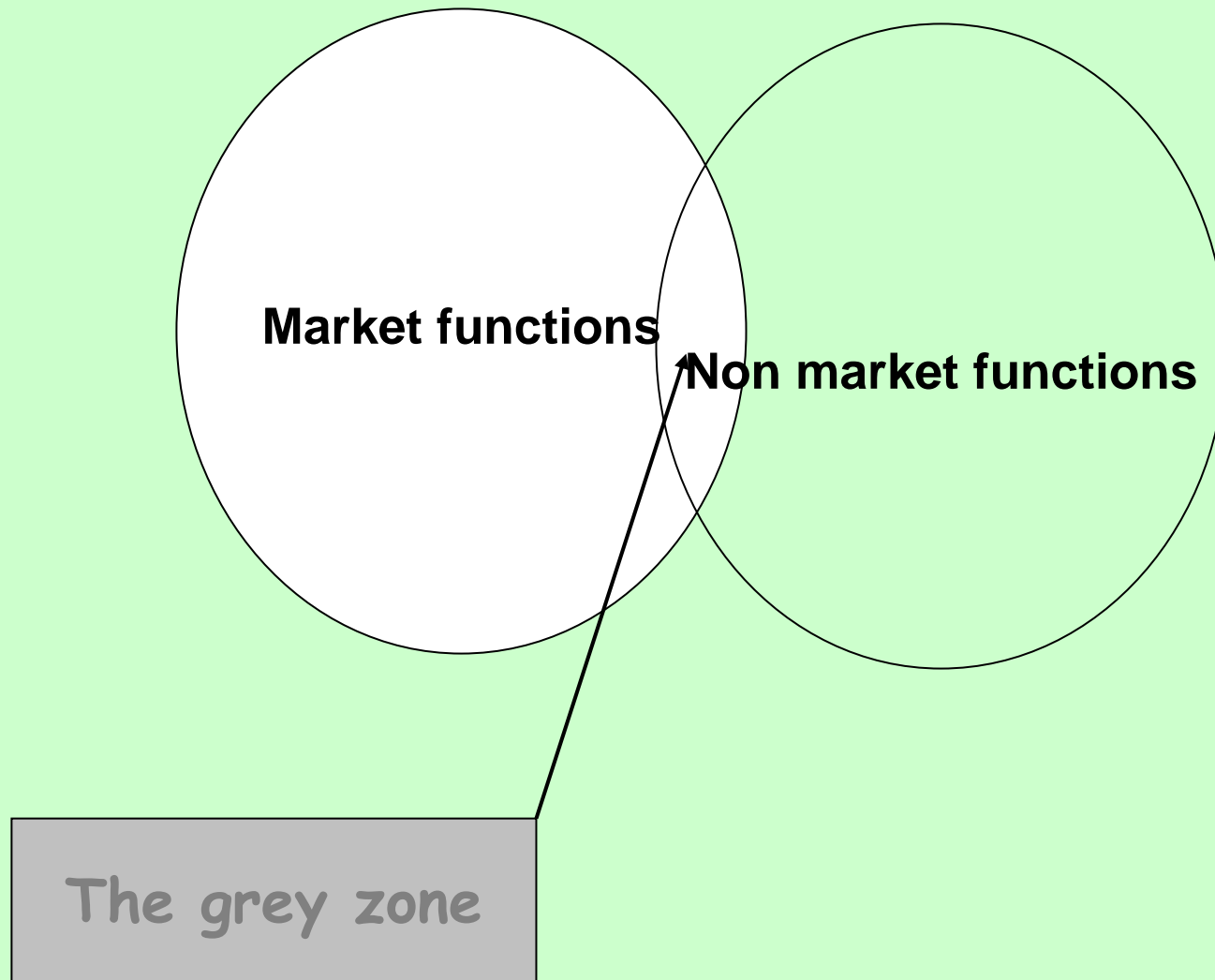
*Multi-functionality - its antecedents, & current widespread use in Western Europe (cf. the PURPLE network)*

- *Hierarchies of functions*
- *Revenue generating functions (for farmers) & non revenue generating functions for landowners (including public landowners & farmers)*
- *The grey zone*
- *The functions, including environmental services*
- *Resolving conflicts (compatibilities vs. incompatibilities)*

# *Figure 1 Market & non market functions*



# *Figure 2 The grey zone between market & non market functions*



## *D. Multiple functions of Greenbelts & their contribution to community sustainability*

### *Table 1 Main functions of open space in Greenbelt-type areas*

*Four broad categories of collective functions*

*Functions dependent on a periurban location (or urban) (MARKET)*

*Functions of leisure & recreation (MARKET & NON MARKET)*

*Functions based on resources located in these rural areas (mainly MARKET)*

*Functions of protection (farmland, landscape, water resources ... (mainly NON MARKET))*

## *What communities?*

- *Within Greenbelts*
- *Adjacent to Greenbelts*
- *The urban citizenry*
- *The regional community*
- *And ... ? (related to value of activities & resources in the Greenbelt to a broader population)*

# *Market vs non market functions*

*E.g. a landscape function becoming a market service function for a farm that specializes in hosting urban citizens (e.g. discussions about projects N.E. of Montreal)*

*E.g. environmental or social value becoming part of the product (e.g. local production, organic production ...)*

*E.g. North America & the '100 mile radius' movement  
Québec: Équiterre & its network of organic farm producers*

*See: Conseil des appellations réservées et des termes valorisants ([produitsbioquebec.info](http://produitsbioquebec.info)) ; Union biologique paysanne ([quebecbio.com/producteurs/listFarm.php](http://quebecbio.com/producteurs/listFarm.php))*



*Non market functions becoming a support to market functions*

*E.g. countryside access + landscape attracting an urban clientele*

*e.g. Longueuil, on Montreal's south bank - the city-countryside project*

*e.g. Senneville & a small agricultural area giving rise to a major multi-functional territory involving many different actors*

*e.g. the potential for humanized landscapes ('paysages humanisés') in periurban areas*



## *E. The challenges*

- *Responding to needs & opportunities for 'community' at different scales*
- *Adding value to the Greenbelt to contribute more effectively to sustainability provincially & nationally*
- *Ensuring that land for farming activity generates adequate income for farmers & their families*
- *Ensuring compatibility with the other imperatives of sustainable development*
- *Making realistic assessments of major environmental changes, e.g. climate change*
- *Ensure adequate public & actor participation in the strategic reflection process*

## *F. Innovation & creativity*

- *Building upon participation*
- *Building upon significant trends in sustainable agricultural production, markets & creative forms of organisation of agricultural production*
- *Learning from other experiences (e.g. the potential 'humanised landscape' territorial projects, Quebec)*
- *The appropriate support for farmers in the Greenbelt - accompanying, counselling, facilitating, informing*

*The Greenbelt as a show case for sustainable communities, & for sustainable development nationally & internationally*

## *G. Conclusions*

- *The uncertainties of the future*
- *Need appropriate processes of governance, even for land in the public domain*
- *The potential to use the Greenbelt to contribute to sustainability - locally, regionally, nationally & internationally*

*A SHOW CASE FOR SUSTAINABILITY FOR  
OUR REGIONAL CITIES*