

ONTARIO Planning

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A person wearing a yellow hard hat, an orange long-sleeved shirt, and a red safety vest is kneeling in a forest. They are using a mallet to work on a large, weathered log. The person has a red bag slung over their shoulder. The forest floor is covered with green and yellow leaves, and there are many thin, bare branches around. The background shows more trees and foliage.

Collaboration in the Sault

The story of ULERN—The Upper Lakes Environmental Research Network—is both instructive and inspirational

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The True Spirit of the North: Collaboration in the Sault

Steven Nichols

The Canadian Urban Institute recently took a hard look at how universities and colleges in Ontario connect with their communities. Starting with the premise that cities that work collaboratively with their postsecondary institutions are more likely to be successful economically than places where each institution takes an independent stance, we interviewed senior staff from more than 40 institutions. Although there are exceptions, we found that in general the spirit of cooperation and collaboration tends to be much stronger in Northern Ontario than in the south.

The conditions that motivate researchers and other academics to work constructively with local partners are complex and variable. But the story of ULERN—The Upper Lakes Environmental Research Network—is both instructive and inspirational.

ULERN is based in Sault Ste. Marie. The network was established as a non-profit organization in the late 1990s. The current members come from government (Natural Resources Canada, Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources), academia (Algoma University College and Georgian College), industry (Great Lakes Power Ltd., St. Mary's Paper Ltd., and Tembec Inc.), as well as the non-profit sector (Forest Genetics Ontario and the Chippewas First Nations of Nawash).

The network came into being when the City of Sault Ste. Marie withdrew its support for the local fish hatchery. Vic Gillman (subsequently ULERN board chair) convened a meeting of individuals to explore the opportunity to create a cutting-edge fish research facility. From the outset, the challenge of cobbling together resources for a common cause struck a chord with the people around the table. Ironically, it was an individual from St Catharines, Dr John Carey, Director with the Canada Centre for Inland Waters, who provided seed funding to organize a conference at a local hotel in the Sault.

A key factor in stimulating interest in what turned out to be the founding conference for ULERN was recognition that the Sault has the highest per capita number of natural resources PhDs in Canada. These individuals are employed in six research institutes located in the area, all of which are linked to the local postsecondary institutions.

Participants at the conference pursued two complementary lines of thinking: one group identified a long list of local resources that had the potential to be shared. The other worked on a list of criteria and conditions necessary to facilitate collaboration. Motivated to take concrete steps to take advantage of the positive climate of cooperation, the group nominated a “brains trust”

comprising researchers, graduate students and educators. To ensure meaningful participation, it was agreed that each organization had to contribute \$10,000 to “earn” a seat at the table. Looking back on this critical start-up point, the partners agree that getting this pool of money together before there were any tangible benefits to the network was the single greatest challenge of the initiative. But at the same time, the cash contribution proved to be a strong motivator for every participant to make the project work.

In less than seven years, ULERN has tapped more than \$13 million in direct research and development funding, providing job opportunities and critical experience for more than 250 students and interns. The network has also facilitated the development of numerous collaborative research projects. As well, the network convenes workshops and conferences. In the past six years, ULERN has organized 15 major events, generating an esti-



Project workers in Chapleau

mated \$6.2 million for the local economy by attracting participation from approximately 2,000 scientists and other professionals. This estimate does not include the value of enhancements to the area's reputation as a hub for natural resources research.

A tagline that speaks the truth

The mission of ULERN is “to facilitate and promote collaborative environmental and natural resources research, development and communication relevant to the Upper Great Lakes Basin.” Its trademarked tagline is “Synergy in Science Works.”

The ULERN offices are housed in the Great Lakes Forestry Centre in Sault Ste. Marie. In addition to a full-time director and five other full-time employees, the organization employs students and graduates, whose links with postsecondary institutions such as Algoma University College and Georgian College pro-

vide a unique experienced-based environment for on-the-job training of future researchers and scientists.

Prospective partners span the North, both geographically and across sectors. Local postsecondary students participate in advanced research projects, while secondary school students attend Science North Discovery Camps. Various knowledge network projects that share analytical databases and information libraries bring together academic researchers and private-sector partners in collaborative research projects across the spectrum of forestry, biotechnology, soils and watershed research. ULERN also works with complementary service providers in Southern Ontario who can partner with them to help ULERN members advance their research agendas and Northern towns source environmentally-friendly technologies and services adapted to their needs.

Activities are diverse and innovative

The many conferences convened by ULERN range in scope from a "Celebration of Science in Northern Ontario," to symposia focused on the control of the sea lamprey, the future of old-growth forests and the quality of drinking water.

Examples of projects currently under development are:

Development of a new value-added crop for Northern Ontario. This collaborative project involves the Thessalon First Nations, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the Canadian Forest Service, and two private firms (Whelan Resources and Bioxel-Pharma Inc.) Funding for this project is valued at more than \$300,000.

A Northern Ontario Biotechnology Initiative. This joint project involves cities and communities (North Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Thunder Bay, Timmins and Sudbury), the Northern Centre for Biotechnology and Clinical Research, and Neureka Research Corporation. Funding is valued at \$850,000.

The automation of the Sault College Water Treatment Plant. This involves the Sault College of Applied Arts and Technology, numerous private firms (Dell, Fluke Synergy Controls, Westbourne, Ruddy & Rockwell, and PUC Services Inc.). The value of this project is approximately \$300,000.

Timber production with minimal environmental impact. Collaborators include the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Natural Resources Canada, local universities and colleges, and the Living Legacy Trust. This is one of the larger projects under way and is valued at \$4 million.

Resources and project development

Last year, ULERN re-oriented its focus and core activities toward opportunities relating to the health and well-being of environmental and socioeconomic systems. The focus is on application of the land and water resource as a source of bio-based products of value to key fast-growing sectors: energy, health and environment. New projects in each of these sectors are already under way; at the

same time, increased emphasis has been put on tech transfer and extension activities to help fill the gap between knowledge generation and its application and greater emphasis is being placed on keeping decision-makers and the public informed about emerging issues and opportunities that relate to all these core areas of interest.

What makes ULERN such a success? The participants all point to the importance of leadership. Leadership is an essential but poorly understood quality that deserves to be studied in more detail. In the current environment, which places a premium on the need for effective collaboration, a leader must be able to work with other organizations to advance the cause of a project that has objectives broader than those of the individual organization. It is also important to understand the geographical imperatives. A U.K.-based researcher, Colin Crouch, describes the importance of local government as the entity with responsibility "for looking after the local 'place' as a collective, public thing." The key players involved in ULERN tacitly acknowledge this element of the puzzle.

Another important quality is to demonstrate patience. After the initial start-up, it proved difficult to attract new members. It took two and a half years to get the first non-founding institutional member. People are leery of new organizations, and want to see results and concrete value before spending money on memberships. The success of ULERN has largely been a test of time. The staying power and performance of the organiza-

tion over nearly eight years has been critical to winning trust in the community and building productive working relations with the membership.

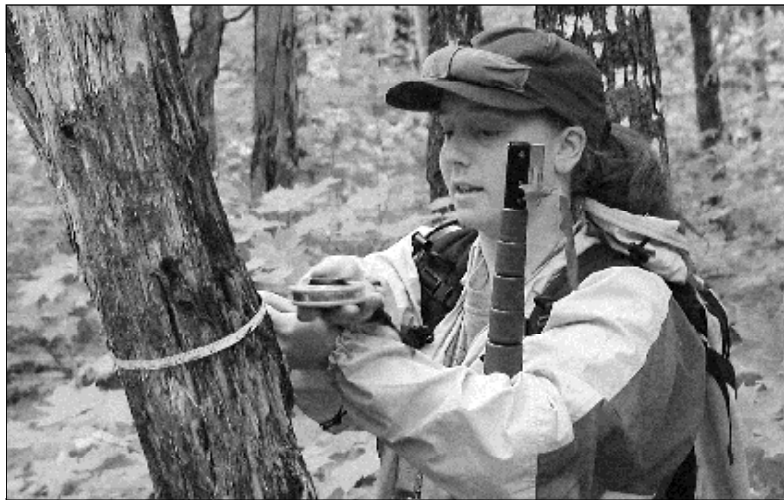
Future projects and next steps

ULERN is committed to continuing its role as a convener and stimulus for networking and collaboration, branching out to include research in health, energy and sustainable development, always with the objective of more efficiently leveraging the area's resources and collective research capabilities.

Over time, the group wishes to spread its influence beyond the Upper Great Lakes, both from the scientific point of view and in terms of creating jobs and investment. The partners have also agreed to explore opportunities to work with other institutions to replicate the ULERN community collaboration process to support growth and economic development in communities elsewhere.

And that fish hatchery? It never did get off the ground.

Steven Nichols is a Senior Associate with the Canadian Urban Institute. This article is based on an unpublished report prepared for the Ontario Competitive City Regions Partnership, a coalition of federal, provincial and postsecondary stakeholders. For more information on this and similar case studies, contact Steve at snichols@canurb.com.



Guelph student in Wawa

Well Attended, Well Done— Conference Enthusiastically Received by Participants

Connections like no other

Philippa Campsie

What stands out in *your* mind from Connections 2005, the annual conference held in Hamilton and organized by planners in Burlington and Hamilton? I've talked to quite a few of the participants, all of whom praised the conference enthusiastically. But I can only tell you what I remember.

I don't play golf and I missed the intensive workshops, so my first experience was the reception at the Canada Marine Discovery Centre. I was one of those who walked out towards the water to be rewarded with a view back towards the magnificent lighted building as well as a view over the harbour. I was not one of those who went on to the harbour tour or Hess Village, but some energetic types managed both, it seems, and had a memorable time of it.

The following day there was a change of program. Jennifer Welsh had come down with flu (no, not that kind) and was forbidden by her doctor to travel. Enter Evan Solomon, a CBC broadcaster (who had a bit

of extra time on his hands at that point), who rose to the occasion with his insights on technology.

What impressed me was his assertion that information is so cheap and plentiful that it now has no value. What has value is perspective. Similarly, computer skills are now as common as skills with a pencil and paper in the past; what has value now are skills in building relationships in the work

those relationships to keep our heads.

After his session, I wanted to sit in on "Does Density Matter?" but apparently it matters so much to so many people that the room was full and people were being turned away. I went next door to learn more about new policy directions in Ontario, another crowded session.

At lunch, Larry Beasley provided an overview of developments in downtown

Vancouver, along with a very effective PowerPoint presentation (I mention this, since really good PowerPoint presentations are rare). I particularly loved the two parallel panoramas of Vancouver, separated by about 20 years, showing the extent of the changes, and the shot of the happy fellow in his underground garage/workroom. Apparently one of the features that lures people to the suburbs is the ability to have a workroom for hobbies, and Larry and his gang have found a way to provide this amenity downtown, in underground carparks. I also enjoyed his comment about "Congestion is our friend," since it drives people to walk, take bikes, or use transit.

The afternoon offered options ranging from greenspace to storytelling. If I hadn't been giving a session myself, I would have found it hard to choose. I understand that



Planners Action Team winners for the Renaissance in London's Old East Village project

world. He also noted that we've been oversold on change and adaptation and are in danger of adapting ourselves right out of existence. We need that perspective and



Regent Park Revitalization winners with Don May and Peter Smith



Design charrette popular as ever

the student networking event was well attended and Larry Beasley was there to offer his perspective on a career in planning.

The evening awards ceremony was emceed by Bob Bratina, a Hamilton councillor and radio broadcaster known as “Mr. Hamilton.” The Oakville Jazz Ensemble enlivened the evening—and yes, that was a planner on percussion, John Canham.

On Friday morning after the Annual General Meeting, the Honourable David Caplan and the Honourable John Gerretsen gave us their take on the changes affecting planning today and answered questions from the audience about municipal financing, transit, and the role of sub-area plans. The rest of the morning was devoted to concurrent sessions ranging from cultural capitals to the habits of highly effective planners (I sat in on part of that and was glad to see that the speakers emphasized communication skills).

After lunch, Edward Burtynsky captivated a ballroom full of planners with his images and his stories about photographing unimaginably huge mines, quarries, ship-breaking sites, and Chinese cities and factories. Another really effective use of PowerPoint (so it is possible). As he said, “We are dwarfed by the theatre of our own making.” After watching the astonishing real-time film clip of the man assembling circuit breakers, I felt that I should never again complain about my work. I have it easy. Burtynsky’s presentation was riveting, but sobering. (For those who want to follow up on his invitation to “join a global conversation about sustainability,” check out www.worldchanging.com).

The sessions continued with talks on e-consultation and the OMB. By the time I left, I was suffering seriously from intellectual overload. There was so much to take in.

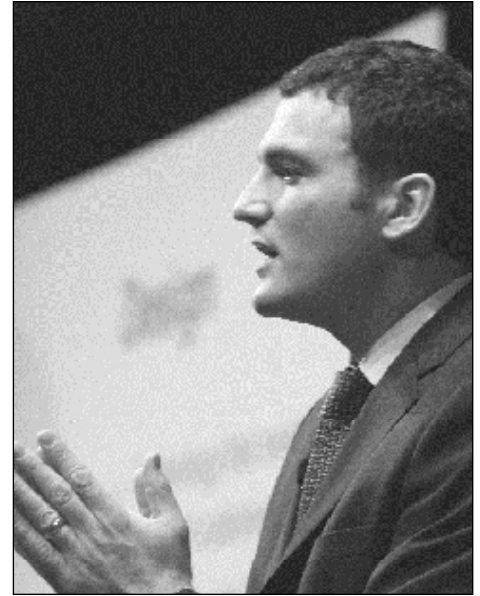
From now on, OPPI conferences will take place every second year, with a smaller-scale symposium in the other years. This makes sense. The enormous effort required of a conference committee to mount something on this scale needs to be spaced out. I hope all the organizers took a well-deserved break after Connections 2005. And the enormous amount of content needs a least a couple of years to digest.

It was an excellent conference. I don’t envy the 2007 team who will have to match it.

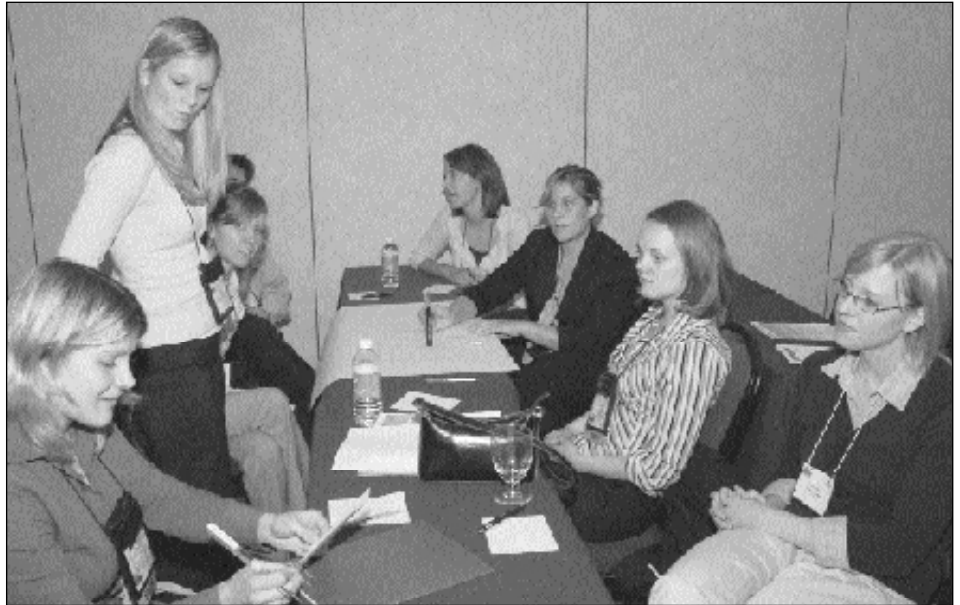
Philippa Campsie is deputy editor of the Ontario Planning Journal and an occasional conference-goer.



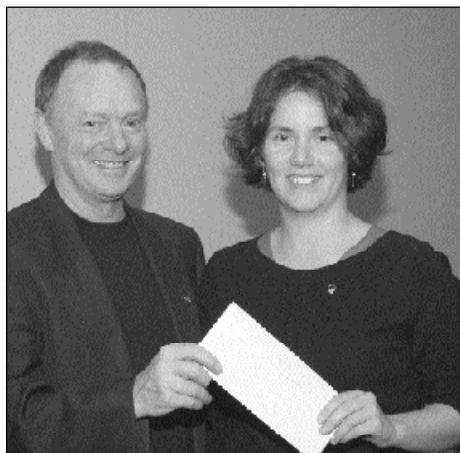
Larry Beasley



Evan Solomon



Students and planners bridging the gap



Gary Davidson and Jessica Paterson, the Gerald Carrothers Graduate Scholarship winner



Anne McIlroy leads a design tour

Planners, Please Adjust Your Sets: *The World is Changing Faster than You Think*

Definitely Not Business As Usual

Dan Leeming, Deana Warman & Diane Riley

A convergence of significant events in the areas of energy, demographics, public health and climate is about to take place. The changes to our urban lifestyles will be immense. Planners have historically studied change to try to determine the best ways to react and plan. But these major issues are so imminent, there will be little time for study.

The habits we have developed in the past 50 years have created a false sense of security. What we learned about these issues will prove to be inadequate unless there is a reordering of priorities, a significant change in society's attitude, and strong political leadership to implement a plan of action.

City regions have begun to implement some measures to deal with future demands, but in a haphazard, way. In order to be bet-

ter prepared for the level of change that we are facing, planners need to address the "big picture" analysis of the convergence of significant issues and determine how change can be accommodated in a relatively short time.

Planning for the next 25 years will be nothing like planning for the last 25. The following facts need to be considered to place the next 25 years in context:

- Until 1850, 7 percent of the earth's population lived in cities. Today, 75 percent live in cities, with an increase to 80 percent expected in the next few years.
- In 1800, the world's population was 1 billion; in 2000 it was 6 billion and rising.
- Urbanization and population growth occurred during a period of massive reli-

ance on cheap oil. The earth's supply of known oil is estimated to last only 30 to 40 years, with dramatic increases in the cost of accessing supply.

- Over the past 20 years, the incidence of depression, obesity, heart disease and asthma has double or tripled.
- In 25 years' time, the percentage of people in Canada over the age of 65 will increase from 13 percent to 24 percent.
- In the next 25 years, a flu pandemic will take a heavy toll on the aged and the unhealthy, taxing health care and emergency resources to the fullest.
- In the next 25 years, global climate change will bring warmer summers and an increasing reliance on air conditioning.
- In the next 25 years, coal and nuclear

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use will increase significantly to compensate for loss of oil resources. Without any significant breakthroughs in technology, this will increase air pollution, nuclear waste storage and operating costs.

The rapid convergence of these factors—massive aging populations with serious health problems in urban regions, climate change and the rapid deflation of the cheap energy bubble—means trouble for urban regions. The implications of the above facts spread like ripples through our current thinking about physical, economic and social planning.

These issues are global and Canada must seek solutions both at home and abroad. Each of these issues has a very different dimension when seen from the perspective of one of the world's most affluent countries. The level of prosperity in Canada, which has been sustained for over 50 years, has

produced complacency and denial of both the fact that these events will occur and that they will affect us directly. More alarming still is the attitude of many people that problems such as energy shortages and increasing chronic and infectious disease will be solved with some imaginary "silver bullet." These attitudes do not take account of the fact that the experience of the past 150 years of cheap energy will not be repeated. Cheap energy is coming to an end, yet most of the systems of our urban societies rely on this energy.

In this series of three articles these main factors—energy, aging and health—will be examined and some of the literature will be reviewed. The pertinence of this information for our daily needs will be discussed and recommendations made regarding actions that we as planners can take to help ameliorate the effects of significant global change.

What he means is there should be more refineries to process oil from "Somewhere Else." Limited new oil and gas finds will occur, but on a small scale; there has not been a major oil find since the 1960s. U.S. production peaked in 1970 and has been declining ever since. The world has been carefully mapped and explored for fossil fuel for some time. Canada has already passed its peak natural gas supply point, while the United States passed its back in 1973. Supplies are being depleted and costs are steadily rising. Under Free Trade, Canada exports two thirds of its gas stocks to the U.S. annually. To make matters worse, 95 percent of nitrogenous fertilizer is made from natural gas. The effects of declining fossil fuel supplies mean that the cost of food will rise due to increased production, transportation and plastic packaging costs.

4. Why not just increase production and open the taps? Oil pumping facilities worldwide are already working at maximum capacity to keep up with demand. Saudi Arabia, the world's largest producer, is working flat out to pump as much oil out of the ground as it can in order to meet its U.S. commitments and the increasing demands of emerging economies. In addition, increased use of fossil fuels will generate more climate-altering carbon dioxide. As energy scientist Dan Kammen states, "We're running out of atmosphere faster than we're running out of fossil fuels. The more we diversify the better" (*National Geographic*, August 2005, p. 19).

5. Why can't alternative energy sources replace current oil supplies? Fossil fuels have met the growing demand for energy because they concentrate millions of years of the sun's energy in the growing of plants that became fossilized into a compact form. We will not find this type of source again on this planet. The replacement of fossil fuels by alternatives such as solar, wind, geothermal, biomass (wood, corn, alcohol), hydrogen and nuclear fission is not yet a viable alternative. Even if we were to use all of these sources combined, with present-day technologies they do not even come close to providing the energy we derive from oil. To vastly expand solar, wind, and nuclear sources, not counting planning and political delays, it would take at least 40 years to match our present-day consumption of oil. We must also anticipate that there are days when the sun does not shine and the wind does not blow. And with nuclear waste already a serious storage problem, this problem will only get worse. Estimated current supplies of uranium will

Energy: The End of Cheap Oil

Definitely Not Business as Usual

Daniel Leeming

The issue of energy has been looming like a storm cloud on the horizon for over 30 years. North American society's understanding of energy supply and demand has been distorted, because we have had a virtually uninterrupted supply of cheap energy for several generations. Cheap energy has powered the manufacturing, automotive, home heating, agricultural and construction industries. In fact, North American prosperity has been fuelled by an abundant supply of cheap energy.

The facts about oil supply, our primary energy source, have been known for some time. The body of literature on oil supply is very compelling, but seldom makes the best-seller list. What is really surprising is the silence from the mainstream media and our elected officials about this enormous issue that has been bearing down on us for decades. The amount of oil in the earth has been estimated by international bodies to be 2 trillion barrels. In the past 140 years since initial oil production in 1860, we have used half of the world's supply, leaving approximately 1 trillion barrels. The current rate of oil consumption is 27 billion barrels a year which, when you do the calculations, leaves just 37 years of supply.

In addition to running out of our prime energy source by 2041, there are other commonly asked questions to con-

sider when planning for the future:

1. Isn't there still lots of oil left? The "low hanging fruit" has already been picked: the remaining oil will be harder and more dangerous to extract. When it costs a litre of oil to retrieve a litre of oil, the economics of the situation will shut production down, leaving the most difficult sources untapped. In the meantime, extraction costs will continue to drive up prices.

2. Isn't this just another blip—remember the 1970s? The estimate of 27 billion barrels per year is based on current demand; this does not include the rising demands of the emerging industrial giants, China and India, or the ever-increasing demands of developed nations. Their initial demands have already sent prices higher and they are only starting to develop. China's oil imports doubled from 1999 to 2004 and surged a further 40 percent in 2004 alone. Both China and India already have frequent brownouts because of short supply and priorities given to industrial use. The irony in China is that workers can afford air-conditioners for the first time, but power is often not available to run them.

3. Why doesn't the U.S. increase its energy production? When President Bush says that the United States must increase its energy production, he does not mean that more should be pumped out of U.S. soil, since this oil source has been dwindling for years.

only last for another 50 years, so nuclear fission is far from renewable. It should also be noted that free and clean energy from hydrogen is a misconception. Hydrogen is not a source of energy; it has to be freed through the use of electricity and at present it takes more energy than it gives back to do this. While BMW is planning to launch a top-of-the-line 7 Series dual-fuel vehicle (gasoline/hydrogen) in 2008, hydrogen filling stations have yet to appear. The efficient hydrogen-powered car is still to be produced, although some fuel cell buses are running in Europe on hydrogen from renewable sources. We must also keep in mind that the electricity to create hydrogen must be produced by hydroelectric, coal-burning or nuclear plants and that significant safety issues regarding the explosive nature of hydrogen storage need to be addressed—remember the *Hindenburg*?

It has been projected that if we were to implement radical change tomorrow with energy-efficient vehicles, buildings and systems oil dependency in the U.S. could drop to zero by 2050. The catch here is that current oil supplies are forecast to last only 30 to 40 more years and this is at today's current consumption rates without factoring in rapidly increasing demand from China and India.

Do we really get it? Energy is topical now because of increased oil prices due to hurricanes: supply-side economics has made the front pages. The cost of oil has been news before and then gone away—remember the 1970s? Sport utility vehicles are still a dominant factor in the automotive industry in spite of rising costs; and the list of conveniences such as wine fridges and power-wash systems in the weekend flyers testifies to our complete, mistaken, belief that cheap energy will be there to run them. Let's not kid ourselves; when Chevron, one of the world's largest oil refiners, runs a two-page advertisement at the beginning of the September 2005 issue of *Scientific American* saying, "It took us 125 years to use the first trillion barrels of oil. We'll use the next trillion in 30 years," we know the word is definitely out.

Why, when given all of the facts, do we react only when the problem is upon us? One answer would be that the problem is so enormous. Without clear solutions, there is a form of mass denial. No politician will risk being the doomsayer. A second answer is that until people actually experience the cost of energy increase in their wallet, they won't take it seriously. Witness the the significant downward sales drop post-Katrina and Rita. And yet the cost of oil was already rising steadily with these facts on the table long before these two hurricanes struck.



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While this may sound like the harbinger of a new Dark Age, there are things we can and must do to ameliorate the coming problems. We need to understand that the next 25 years for planning will be very different from the last. Planners are in a unique position to help mobilize ideas and resources to start addressing the scope of such enormous change. Planners are supposed to see the big picture and understand ways of protecting the “public good.” It is not enough to simply defer to other specialists in the hope that they will find the solution. No one has a solution at present. For example, planners in the past were often focused on policy documents and the creation of land-use diagrams to guide future development. Newly built communities frequently fell well short of everybody’s expectations. The details of built form were left to other specialists who had other interests and lacked the broader context of societal needs. More recently, where planners play key roles in the design and development of new communities by direct participation and through the organization of multidisciplinary teams which transfer essential design ideas into enforcement policies, we have seen a marked improvement.

As planners we have already heard about the importance and need for designing our living areas in compact and diverse ways so that we can reduce energy demand, support transit and provide employment opportunities close to mixed-use communities. While much of the energy issue is tied to international dynamics, many of the solutions lie in changing our habits at home. Some municipalities have tentatively started to implement these ideas while many others are still debating the very need to make changes. City areas are going to have their share of problems, but it is lower-density, postwar suburbs that are going to shoulder the burden of these changes. If municipalities have not already started to address these basic steps, it means that the chances of success are diminished and a reactive response can only try to catch up to the problem. The implications of running out of cheap energy, coinciding with major public health issues and an aging population go well beyond our previous expectations of responding to soci-

etal change and needs. Planners must start thinking and planning for new imperatives.

The Urban Land Institute in conjunction with Pricewaterhouse Coopers has just published its 2006 *Emerging Trends in Real Estate* for the U.S. market. This annual publication is the gold standard in real estate predictions. It is written primarily for bankers, investors and financiers as well as developers and builders. Seven key trends for the next four years are:

Focus on Infill: sprawl and traffic reach a crisis stage; places without mass transit

mercial owners, reinforcing move-back-in and town centre trends; developers will need to stress more “green” development and rehab as tenants resist higher electricity and heating tabs.

These items are all new to the top seven list.

The depletion of cheap energy is giving rise to ideas of how to reduce demand, encourage alternative energy sources, rank the success of innovative approaches and educate the public so that they can make more informed choices and ask for appropriate action. Planners are probably aware of the recent initiative in energy conservation through “Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design” (LEED) as a ranking system of efficiencies for buildings. While this is an important step, it should go beyond the building and be applied to entire community areas. Performance is rated in terms of smart growth, urbanism and green building. The energy savings in a well-designed community can promote efficiencies in the following:

- **Energy:** reducing need and improving alternatives. Use the full range of alternatives and reintroduce smaller power generators such as the hydro facilities that used to operate throughout Ontario.
- **Building Design:** go beyond R-2000 to incorporate new efficiencies through orientation, solar gain and landscape design.
- **Water:** conservation measures, greywater reuse, building and landscaping options, including zeriscaping.
- **Transportation:** improve live/work relationships, reduce distance demand, support transit, pedestrian networks, compact multi-use streets and reduce impervious pavement areas.

- **Storm Water Management:** capture roof runoff, maximize on-site infiltration, increase parkland natural elements, create storm water corridors, preserve natural topography and integrate storm water facilities in open space areas.
- **Urban Design:** build upon smart growth initiatives, integrate mixed uses through higher density with greater urban character, better utilize natural systems, improve live-work relationships, improve and support transit as alternatives to auto use, increase community uses within a 5-minute walk,

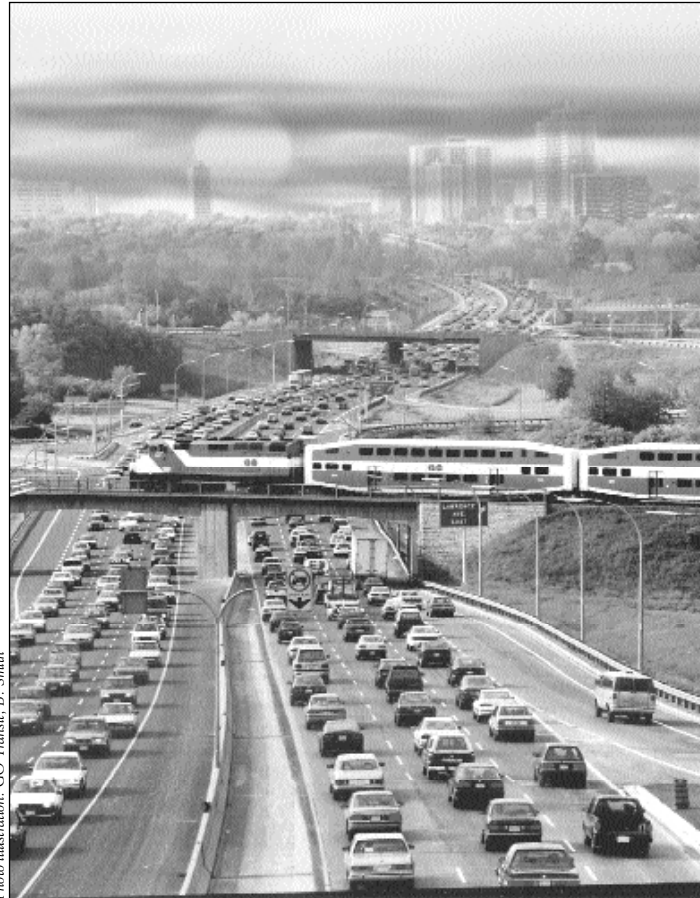


Photo illustration: GO Transit; B. Smith

Dependence on cars boosts consumption of fossil fuel

struggle; transit-oriented development gains momentum to expand light rail and reduce car dependence; boomers and echo boomers will continue to dictate trends toward more infill.

More Suburban Mixed Use: urban town centres will be the rage; big-lot housing becomes a thing of the past; people want to live in places where they can shop, work and play.

Greater Energy Efficiency: an extended period of sticker shock at the pump and jaw-dropping utility bills would change behaviours and demand for both home and com-

provide options and packages in buildings and landscaping that promote energy conservation and biodiversity, enhance natural traffic calming and define neighbourhoods with clear centres and edges.

Only through a holistic approach of sustainable practices can longer-term savings be realized while at the same time creating livable and environmentally responsible places that are cherished and cared for by their residents.

A community-based LEED review would be judged on four categories:

1. Location efficiency
2. Environmental preservation
3. Compact, complete and connected neighbourhoods (urban design)
4. Resource efficiency.

The broader approach of testing the efficiencies of energy-smart communities gives planners and community builders the information they need to make wise choices and set the new standards and policies that will become more necessary as the increasing cost of energy continues to change the needs of society. With education about the facts, homeowners may one day opt for the \$5,000 upgrade to install solar panels instead of granite counter tops.

Some would say that the solutions to energy shortages lie in today's proven technologies such as "clean coal" and nuclear sources. While these technologies may help to address the needs, significant challenges remain.

It may be that smaller steps using alternative sources such as solar, wind, geothermal and biomass are necessary; each has significant planning impacts. For example, passive solar collection will require specific alignment of all new street and block configurations, as well as a return to more traditional forms of energy saving designs. Wind generators in Europe produce 35,000 megawatts of power, but those in North America produce only 7,000 megawatts. Locations for wind turbines are already hotly contested in Ontario, even though it is one of the cheapest alternative energy sources. Geothermal can add up to \$10,000 per unit on a multi-storey building. Biomass production, such as wood and corn, means increasing farm production well beyond today's current levels. It has been estimated that if ethanol from biomass were used instead of oil to power the vehicles in the world today, it would require doubling the amount of land for farming.

Reducing the demand for energy is one of the best means of saving fossil fuels. It is a fact that 5 percent of electrical power is wasted just on keeping electrical devices like computers on standby. It is also a fact that



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only 10 percent of original fuel energy (coal) consumed by a power plant reaches the end-user because of mechanical and electrical delivery loss. The savings which could be generated by shutting off unnecessary equipment when not in use actually means a significant reduction in fuel consumption back at the production source.

It has taken 150 years of cheap energy to fuel the world's economy to its present level. In that time the world's population has multiplied to 6 billion with 75 percent of its population living in urban areas. Our dependence on cheap energy from oil is four times greater than all alternative sources put

together and we only have 30 or so years of it left. There is no question that we need to start seeking new solutions now. There is no silver bullet and miracles are rare. We need to accept the facts as they are and think long and hard now about our choices in the, very near, future.

Dan Leeming, MCIP, RPP, is a partner with the Planning Partnership. Dan is a frequent contributor to the Ontario Planning Journal. This is the first of three articles.

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The Loss of Farmland Through Retirement Lot Severances: A Final Word?

Why statistics need deeper investigation

Robert Dykstra, Wayne Caldwell, and Stewart Hiltz

Farmland in Ontario is a finite resource. Recent provincial actions, including the revised Provincial Policy Statement (2005), recognize the importance of protecting farmland for future generations. One of the more controversial provincial policy changes has been to remove policies allowing for farm retirement lot severances. There continues, however, to be a debate in some rural communities concerning the merits of this policy change. This article provides further insight into this controversial issue.

The importance of maintaining farmland in Ontario is reflected in the amount of Class 1 soils across the nation. Only 0.5 percent of Canada's land mass consists of Class 1 soils, of which 52 percent are found in Ontario (Hoffmann, 2001). In having some of the best growing conditions within Canada, Ontario has been a leader in gross

farm receipts. In 2001, Ontario's \$9.1 billion in gross farm receipts was second only to Alberta's \$9.9 billion industry (Statistics Canada, 2001). However, Ontario has 5.5 million hectares of farmland, compared to Alberta's 21 million hectares. Ontario's farmers benefit from a combination of soils and climate that is simply not matched elsewhere in the country.

The increasing loss of farmland is usually seen as a direct result of growing urbanization, but an often-overlooked and significant contributing factor is the growing number of non-farm residential lots throughout the countryside (Caldwell and Weir, 2002). These take valuable agricultural lands out of production, while at the same time placing additional constraints on surrounding farms.

Retirement lot severances are one exam-

ple of how a non-farm residential lot may be created in an agricultural area. The 1997 Provincial Policy Statement defined a farm retirement lot as "one lot from a farm operation for a full time farmer of retirement age who is retiring from active working life . . . and has owned and operated the farm operation for a substantial number of years."

According to a recent University of Guelph research study (that looked at retirement lot severances in Lambton County, Peterborough County and the Regional Municipality of Niagara, nearly 50 percent of all retirement lot severances were sold to another party within five years of being granted. This research examined retirement lot severances approved between 1990 and 1997. Each retirement lot that was granted during this time was tracked for the five years following its creation in order to deter-

Number of Farms Compared with Number of Retirement Lot Severances (RLS)

Study Area	Area (sq.km)	Number of Farms		Change in Farms	No. of RLS (1990-1997*)	RLS as a percent of farms in 1996
		1996	2001			
Niagara	1,863	2,672	2,266	-15%	343	13%
Lambton	3,001	2,622	2,427	-7%	54	2%
Peterborough	3,806	1,369	1,202	-12%	50	4%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001

* In order to track retirement lot severances for at least 5 years, only those created before 1998 were considered



Residential severances can cause problems

mine if and when the lot was sold to another party. Taking the three case studies together, 27 percent of severances were sold to a second party within one year of their creation. Within three years, an additional 15 percent of the severances were sold and after five years, 49 percent of these lots had been sold.

Out of the three study areas, Lambton had the lowest proportion of retirement lot severances in comparison to the total number of farms within the county. Despite this, however, they were the only one of the case studies that had moved to prevent the creation of these lots prior to the revised Provincial Policy Statement in 2005. The table provides a brief description of this relationship in all three case studies.

Lambton County's decision to discontinue retirement lot severances put the total number of counties in Ontario with a similar policy to 10. These counties have

placed a premium on the long-term societal benefits of protecting farmland.

The results of this research suggest the need to carefully examine severances and their long-term impact. The effects on the agricultural community include farmland loss, compatibility with non-farm residents who purchase many of these lots, and restrictions related to minimum distance separations between residential uses and livestock production.

The revised Provincial Policy Statement (2005) does not allow for retirement lot severances. Our research strongly suggests that the land use rationale for retirement lot severances is flawed and from this perspective the new provincial policy is justified. As practitioners of rural planning will attest, however, policies for retirement lot severances are politically charged. The findings of this research bring some facts to what is likely to be a point of discussion for a number of years.

Robert Dykstra is a planner with the County of Bruce. He is a graduate of the Rural Planning Program at the University of Guelph. Wayne Caldwell, MCIP, RPP, and Stew Hilts are Professors in Rural Planning and Land Resource Science respectively and co-direct the Farmland Preservation Research Project (www.farmland.uoguelph.ca).

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(The full report is available at www.wayne-caldwell.ca.)

Wayne Caldwell, MCIP, RPP, is a frequent contributor to the *Ontario Planning Journal*.

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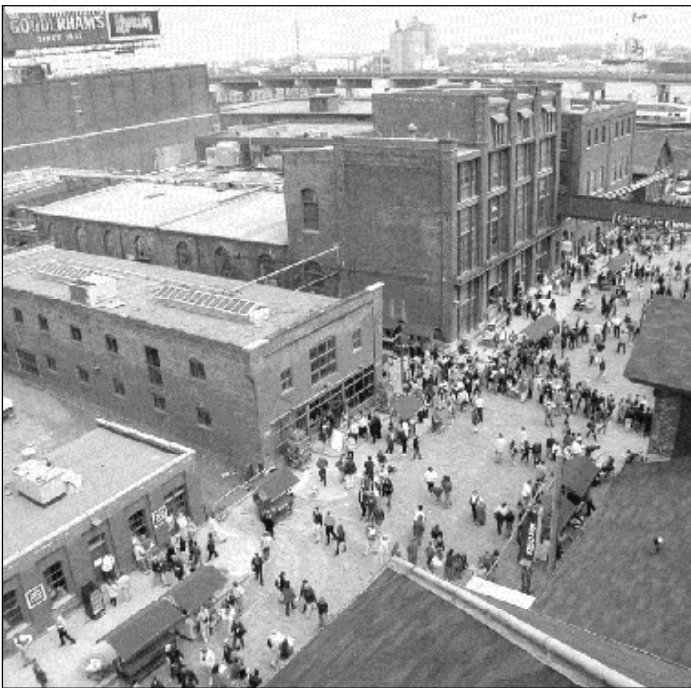
Central

Toronto Creates New Heritage Tax Program

Cathy Nasmith

In late October 28, the City of Toronto adopted a Heritage Tax Rebate Plan, which has been hailed by the provincial government as the most important incentive for built heritage since the introduction of the Ontario Heritage Act in 1974. The adoption of the Plan by the City is the culmination of a nine-year effort, dating back to the days before amalgamation and before Current Value Assessment was adopted. A series of resolutions by City Council dating back to 1996 asked the province for separate treatment of designated heritage properties: first in the form of a separate tax class under the Assessment Act, then as a request for exemption of heritage buildings from clawbacks, and, finally, as a tax rebate. The provincial legislation now in the Municipal Act was actually passed at the request of the City of Toronto.

The Heritage Tax Rebate Plan, contained in section 442.8 of the *Municipal Act*, was passed by the Province in 2002, giving incentives to owners of



Tax program would boost investor interest in heritage



Don Morse, Chair, Eastern District, Elizabeth Rock, Pres., Habitat for Humanity, National Capital Region, Donna Hicks, Exec. Dir., Habitat National Capital Region, Mary Ann Rangam, Exec. Dir., OPPI, Kurt Stoodley, A-Channel

heritage buildings that are both designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* and have heritage easement agreements or other agreements with the municipality to maintain their buildings. The Plan gives a realty tax rebate of up to 40 percent to the owners of eligible properties.

The Plan will not only provide relief for heritage building owners who maintain their properties to proper standards, but will also be an incentive for owners to have their properties designated and be eligible for the rebate. There will be virtually no rebate for keeping only the façade of a building if the rest is demolished. This may be particularly significant in the case of large commercial buildings.

In passing its resolution on October 28, the City agreed that, for bud-

get purposes, it should adopt the Program at the highest rebate of 40 percent in 2006 and 2007. The Program will apply to eligible buildings that are National Historic Sites in 2006 and will be joined by all other eligible designated heritage buildings in 2007 and beyond.

Credit should be given to a large number of individuals from the private sector and the community who have supported the efforts to have this Program introduced. In particular, Sheldon Godfrey and Dr. Peter Tomlinson, former Director of Economic Development with the old City of Toronto, have given freely of their time and expertise. Many past and present councillors, and David Miller, Mayor of Toronto, also deserve credit.

Reproduced from Heritage News, published by former OPPI member, Cathy Nasmith.

Eastern

OPPI House Gala and Silent Auction

On November 10, 2005 a successful Gala Dinner and Silent Auction was hosted by the Eastern District Chapter of OPPI in



Nadia De Santi and Ann Tremblay, co-chairs of the OPPI fundraising committee for OPPI house

collaboration with Habitat for Humanity, in the LeBreton Gallery of the new Canadian War Museum in Ottawa. The War Museum is a centrepiece in a revitalization plan for LeBreton Flats that has been decades in the making; its doors opened on May 8 of this year. The Gala was also a World Town Planning Day recognition event.

In Canada, Habitat for Humanity has dedicated more than 940 homes from coast to coast since its inception. The aim of the ED chapter is to “build a door,” for \$75,000 we can assist a family to move into a home to be built on Pinecrest Road in Ottawa. To date, \$50,000 has been raised and donations are being accepted by Habitat, National Capital Region, at 1-613-749-9950. The Habitat program is about providing community assistance for homeownership and the provision of a long-term solution designed to break the poverty cycle. Habitat dedicates a new home worldwide every 24 minutes.

Local TV personality Kurt Stoodley was Master of Ceremonies. Shirley Westeinde, the first female Chair of the Canadian Construction Association, was patron of the event. The Gala evening, attended by over 325, featured interesting speakers, including our own Gary Davidson, who took the opportunity to present a Member Service Award to Ms. Daphne Wretham. Entertainment was provided by The Stevens and Kennedy Band. Many interesting items were the subject of a “Silent” Auction.

Don Maciver, MCIP, RPP, is district coordinator for the Eastern District.

Southwest

High School Students Roll Up Sleeves in Planning Workshop at Waterloo

High school students in the Region of Waterloo now have a better understanding of urban planning today.

To raise awareness and celebrate this year's World Town Planning Day, the University of Waterloo's School of Planning and Planning Students Association and the City of Kitchener organized a planning workshop. For two hours on Tuesday afternoon, about 40 students from Waterloo Collegiate Institute, Resurrection Catholic Secondary School and the University gathered in small groups led by planners from the Region of Waterloo and the Cities of Kitchener and Waterloo to propose how a site should be redeveloped.

The site for this workshop was the former head office of the *K-W Record* in south Kitchener. It is adjacent to a shopping centre and other commercial retail development. The workshop not only helped Kitchener planning staff determine how the site should be redeveloped, but introduced the students to some of the pertinent planning issues in the Region of Waterloo.

“It's great to have high school students involved,” said Brandon Sloan, Senior Planner for the City of Kitchener and chief facilitator of the workshop. “They bring a fresh perspective to this exercise.”

High school and undergraduate planning students exchanged ideas on how best to redevelop the site. Many of the students who attended the workshop enjoyed it and appreciated the learning experience. “We wanted to introduce and challenge our students in a field where they are less familiar



World Town Planning Day increases in popularity

in high school,” said Mark Menhennet, a teacher from Waterloo Collegiate Institute.

“I believe this workshop is beneficial to the high-school students, as there is not enough exposure to planning at that level of education yet,” added Justin Mamone, Communications Director of the Planning Students Association. Alexandra Balint, a Grade 10 student from Resurrection Catholic Secondary School, agreed. “This workshop broadened my knowledge and gave me a better idea what planning is all about.”

Andrew Mok is Treasurer of the Environmental Studies Society. He can be reached at amok@fes.uwaterloo.ca.

People

Sue Practices the New Mobility—Heads South

Sue Zielinski, Director of Moving the Economy, has taken a position at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor to begin in January. She will be the first managing director of a new interdisciplinary program called SMART (Sustainable



High school and undergraduate planning students exchanged ideas

Mobility and Access Research and Transformation). SMART combines an academic program with an action-oriented research agenda to explore and apply sustainable mobility from a complex systems perspective. It brings together the Alfred A. Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, the Erb Institute for

Sustainable Development (an institute of the Ross Business School) and the School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences. SMART is linked with CARRS, the Centre for Advancing Research and Solutions for Society at the University of Michigan. Readers may recall that Sue contributed to the *Ontario Planning Journal* on several occasions and has promised to correspond from her new location. Since its formation in the 1990s, MTE has helped changed industry’s perception of goods

(Cont. on page 21)

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President's Message

Don May

Note: The full text of the speech is on the OPPI website. This is an abridged version.

Annual General Meetings are a time to look backward and forward. I want to look back, not just at my last couple of years as President, but back to OPPI's early years and to the enormous distance we have travelled together since then.

Back in 1986, we had fewer than 2,000 members. Almost 20 years later, that has swelled to more than 3,000. Our budget has increased, too. This is not just an increase in members and an increase in fees. Today about 40 percent of our funding comes from sources other than fees—partnerships, fundraising, and the conference.

We've changed the way we do things. The very first issue of the *Ontario Planning Journal* was produced with the technology of the time: typewriters and photocopiers. Now the Journal has a professional magazine format and an enviable reputation. We also invested considerable time and thought setting up our website, which continues to add new content and features.

Probably the biggest change occurred in 1995, when the Province of Ontario passed legislation allowing us to use the designation Registered Professional Planners. At this time, we also introduced professional liability insurance.

In 1999-2000, Council developed a strategic plan to guide our continued development. The plan was based on three principles:

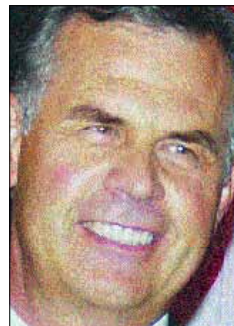
I. OPPI is a visionary organization, being a leader

in public policy, and promoting innovation in the practice of planning.

- OPPI is an influential organization, being the recognized voice of planners in the province.
- OPPI is an effective organization, providing services valued by its members.

How have we done so far in delivering on that vision?

Our policy research work began in response to members' requests. We have produced three policy papers that have contributed to the debate on important planning topics, and enhanced the Institute's reputation. We have also developed position statements on government initiatives. These statements often need to be prepared quickly to meet government deadlines. The fact that we can convene knowledgeable members to hammer out a position and get it finalized and distributed promptly is no small achievement. Altogether, about 120 members participate in this policy work. As a result, we are being listened to. Today, mem-



Don May

bers of OPPI meet regularly with provincial cabinet ministers and ministry staff.

We are also working to attract the attention of tomorrow's potential planners, through our efforts on World Town Planning Day in November. Every year, more and more planners set aside time to talk to students or arrange activities for young people that introduce them to the field of planning, and show them what a career in planning has to offer.

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We celebrate excellence by our members with the Excellence in Planning awards, membership service awards, and scholarships. We use these awards to publicize our members' work and our commitment to vision, leadership, and great communities.

We have also created meaningful partnerships with related organizations. The joint OPPI/OALA conference was well received by both organizations. In our recent membership survey, over 88 percent of you told us that the focus on professional partnerships should continue to be a priority for OPPI.

Our membership processes are improving. We attract 100 to 150 applicants for Provisional Membership every year. Log-on-Line has helped us streamline the membership process. Our Executive Practitioners Course brought in about 150 new members. Our current outreach focuses on students. We are also working to provide and encourage Continuous Professional Learning among all members.

We have produced four standards of practice and posted them on the website. These standards are intended to guide planners who are faced with difficult decisions and grey areas. We have also overhauled the discipline process, to ensure that it is both fair and effective.

All in all, we have accomplished an amazing amount in the past few years. I have never been so proud to be a planner and a member of OPPI as I am today. It is an honour to have been president during a period of such achievement.

We are beginning to see the results, not only in public recognition, but in recognition by our members. The recent survey we conducted shows a high level of support and appreciation for our accomplishments and services. Of those who responded to the survey, 73 percent were satisfied with the services they received and 88 percent would recommend that planners who are non-members join OPPI.

One of the interesting findings of the survey is that not all members are aware of all the services we provide. For example, not everyone knew about the media spokesperson training program, and some members were unaware of the policy papers and position statements. Clearly we have some work to do just letting members know about all the things we've achieved.

What do the next 10 years hold? One thing I would like to see is that our reputation grows, through improved membership processes, continuous professional learning, and active work in policy, so that the provincial legislature will recognize our exclusive ability to deliver certain services. In other words, to do certain kinds of planning work in Ontario, it will become mandatory

to be an OPPI member. I think we can achieve that in 10 years or less. After all, it is through the collective efforts of all our members that we establish and maintain our reputation.

Don May, MCIP, RPP, has just completed his term as President of OPPI and is the principal of his own consulting firm. He can be reached at don@almostthere.ca.



Gary Davidson presents Don May with Certificate of Appreciation



Making a conference work is stressful, but rewarding. Robert Fraser (centre) enjoys a laugh during "Making Connections"

OPPI Treasurer's Report for 2004

Ann Tremblay

Note: Summary financial information (Dec. 31, 2004) is available on the OPPI website.

During the course of the 2004 annual audit, Kreins-LaRose LLP, Chartered Accountants, found no material internal control or accounting issues to bring to Council's attention.

Council's actions in 2004 were guided by its business plan for the year, which is based on OPPI's Strategic Plan and is used to establish the budget for the year. With the help of OPPI staff, Council projected the Institute's expected revenues for the year, and set aside funds for its core functions and Strategic Plan initiatives.

Revenues and Expenses

The excess of revenues over expenses of \$94,451 was primarily due to an increase in the membership base from 3,057 in 2003 to 3,300 in 2004 and the council, approved reallocation of the conference budget, which was not to be included in the operating budget.

It is Council policy to operate within a balanced budget. With the help of staff, council reviews its financial situation quarterly and adjusts spending priorities accordingly.

Approximately 56 percent of OPPI's revenues come from membership fees, a revenue source that is considered to be relatively reliable. The other 44 percent is generated from non-membership fee sources such as job ad mailings and advertising in the Ontario Planning Journal. This source is more likely to fluctuate with the economy. Industry standards set by non-profit associations reflect that 60 percent of association revenues should come from membership fees and 40 percent from non-membership fee sources. OPPI is almost at this level.

Approximately 53 percent of the expenses incurred by the Institute fund direct or indirect Membership Services. The remaining

47 percent is spent on administration and governance.

Direct services include the Ontario Planning Journal and professional development initiatives. Indirect services include:

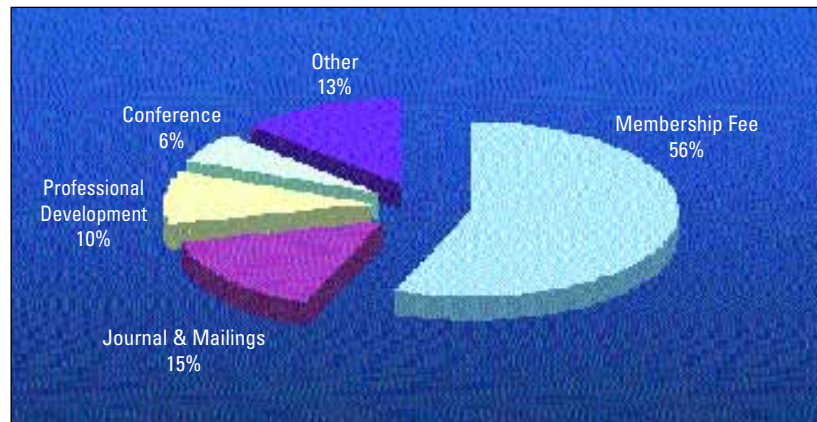
- policy development initiatives (for example, policy papers and watching briefs);
- efforts to build general recognition for the profession (such as the OPPI branding statement and media training for staff and members);

ning. In 2004 Council approved a plan for the development of three financial funds.

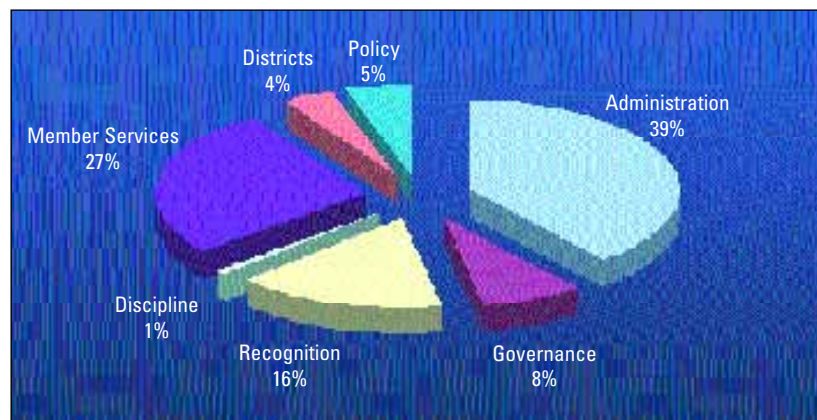
1. Capital Fund—This fund would allow OPPI to buy new equipment and furniture as needed.
2. Reserve Fund—To build the Institute's reserve level for any unforeseen emergency.
3. Strategic Plan Fund—To fund the Institute's strategic initiatives.

The start-up of these funds would receive funding from the 2004 excess revenues as follows:

1. \$30,000 to offset the 2005 Strategic Budget of \$27,500. Funding for future Strategic Budgets will come from excess revenue from the annual conference.
2. \$10,000 to begin the Capital Fund. Funding for future years will come from excess revenue from OPPI's mailing service.
3. \$49,493 to aid in the replenishment of the reserves from past deficits. Future funding from this program will come from excess revenue from the on-line consultants directory and any miscellaneous revenue.



Revenue



Expenses

- the work of the Discipline Committee in upholding the Institute's Code of Conduct;
- support to the Districts for local and strategic programming.

2004 Excess Revenue

OPPI has matured as an organization. Given our continued growth, we have explored how other associations manage their growth and their strategic and financial plan-

OPPI will be launching the on-line version of the membership course soon. The face-to-face course will still be offered in Toronto.

A full set of audited financial statements is available for review at the OPPI office. Contact Robert Fraser at 416-483-1873, ext.24 or finance@ontarioplanners.on.ca.

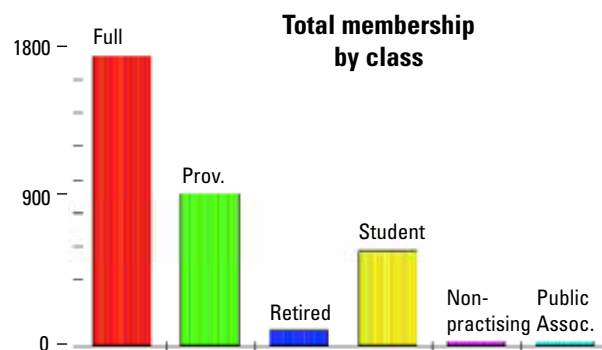
Ann Tremblay, MCIP, RPP. Ann is OPPI's Treasurer and Eastern District representative.

Facts and Figures on OPPI

OPPI MEMBERSHIP BY DISTRICT, AS OF OCTOBER 31, 2005

TABLE 1

District	Full	Prov.	Retired	Student	Non-Practising	Public Assoc.	TOTAL
Northern District	47	19	3	5	3	1	77
Southwest District	293	126	10	110	5	4	548
Central District	1180	668	65	403	18	19	2353
Eastern District	214	104	13	57	3	2	393
Out of Province	8	0	2	0	0	0	10
TOTAL	1741	917	93	575	29	26	3381
Total (2004)	1668	914	101	540	0	24	3247

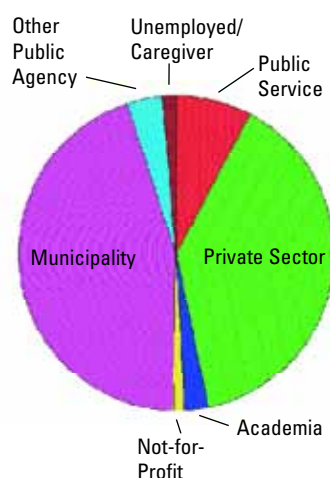


MEMBERSHIP BY CLASS AND SEX

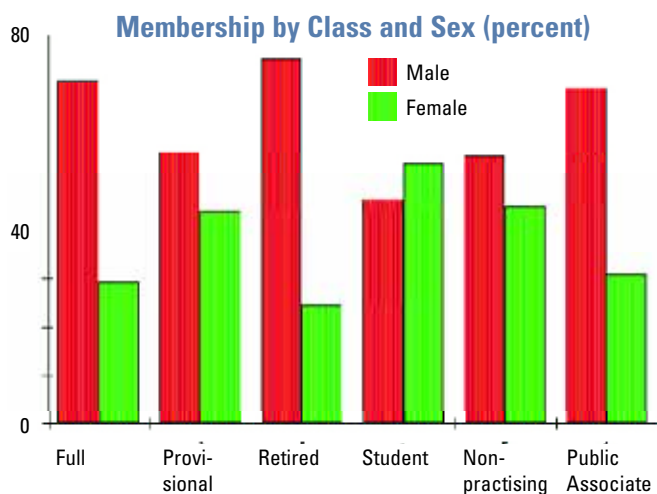
TABLE 2

	Male		Female		TOTAL
	No.	%	No.	%	
Full	1229	70.6	512	29.4	1741
Provisional	515	56.2	402	43.8	917
Retired	70	75.3	23	24.7	93
Student	266	46.3	309	53.7	575
Non-Practising	16	55.2	13	44.8	29
Public Assoc.	18	69.2	8	30.8	26
TOTAL	2114	65.2	1267	37.5	3381
Total (2004)	2117	65.5	1130	34.8	3247

EMPLOYMENT CATEGORY



VOLUNTEER INTERESTS



Employment Category

Category	Members
Ont./Can. Public Service	196
Private Sector	954
Academia	63
Not-for-Profit	30
Municipality	1095
Other Public Agency	94
Unemployed/Caregiver	28
TOTAL	2,460

Volunteer Interests

Interest	Members
Discipline	59
Districts	271
Examiner/Interviewer	172
Awards/Scholarships	73
Media Spokesperson	37
Membership	56
Membership Outreach	62
Mentoring	202
Policy Development	215
Professional Practice and Development	168
Recognition	47
Sponsoring a Provisional Member	141
TOTAL	1503

(Cont. from page 16)

movement, smart cards and other elements of "the new mobility." Sue recently completed a year at Harvard on a Loeb Fellowship. Moving the Economy is currently seeking a new Executive Director.

Jason Ferrigan, an associate with Urban Strategies, has relocated to Sudbury to work as a municipal planning advisor in the local office of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Jason was also contributing editor for the Legislative News column in this magazine. He plans to continue writing regularly for the Journal but because of his new responsibilities with the province, will not be able to do his current column. **Cyndi Rotenburg-Walker** is expected to take up the mantle.

Moving in the other direction is **Carlos Salazar**, who has been a key figure in the planning department and city manager's office in Sudbury for many years. Carlos has been lured south by a new challenge in Clarington, where one of his first projects will be to coordinate development of a proposed energy park.

Eudora Pendergrast was appointed to

the Ontario Municipal Board in November, 2004. After a long career with Toronto's planning department, Eudora was a consultant in private practice. Only a small percentage of Board Members are planners.

Brian Bridgeman, who has been the



Sue Zielinski



Jason Ferrigan

General Manager of Planning at the Town of Ajax for the past six years, moved to the Region of Durham Planning Department at the beginning of October as the Director of Current Planning. Brian is taking over from **Jim Blair**, who retired earlier this year.

Hardy Stevenson and Associates

Limited (HSAL) recently launched a new website (www.hardystevenson.com). According to HSAL president, **Dave Hardy** the site, "unleashes a dynamic and sophisticated functionality." The new site, designed by AR Web Design, profiles the company's work for the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic and Paralympic Bid, and numerous other projects and initiatives.

Although this column usually focuses on members, exceptions are sometimes warranted. Toronto chief planner **Ted Tyndorf** recently announced that **Rod McPhail**, Director of Transportation Planning (a division of Toronto's planning department) has been elected as a Fellow of the Institute of Transportation Engineers. Rod is one of only two non-engineers elected to this level.

Lorelei Jones, MCIP, RPP, and Thomas Hardacre, MCIP, RPP, are the Ontario Planning Journal's contributing editors for People. They can be reached at ljones@rogers.com and thardacre@peil.net, respectively.

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Editorial

What will 2006 bring to the world of planning?

Glenn Miller

2005 has been a blur of legislative activity on planning reform and related matters from the province, spiced with announcements and promises on infrastructure spending from the federal government.

What were the highlights? A bold new Provincial Policy Statement, with stronger language and the right “spin” but with some puzzling gaps. The PPS bravely states that natural heritage systems are to be protected against “development,” but the definition of “development” specifically excludes “infrastructure,” which suggests that natural heritage systems as not as “protected” as they might be when it comes to transportation corridors. Even more puzzling is the disappearance of wording from the final draft PPS requiring major employment projects to be served by—or capable of being served by—public transit. And we are still waiting for announcements on the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority although we now have the final draft growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe to consider.

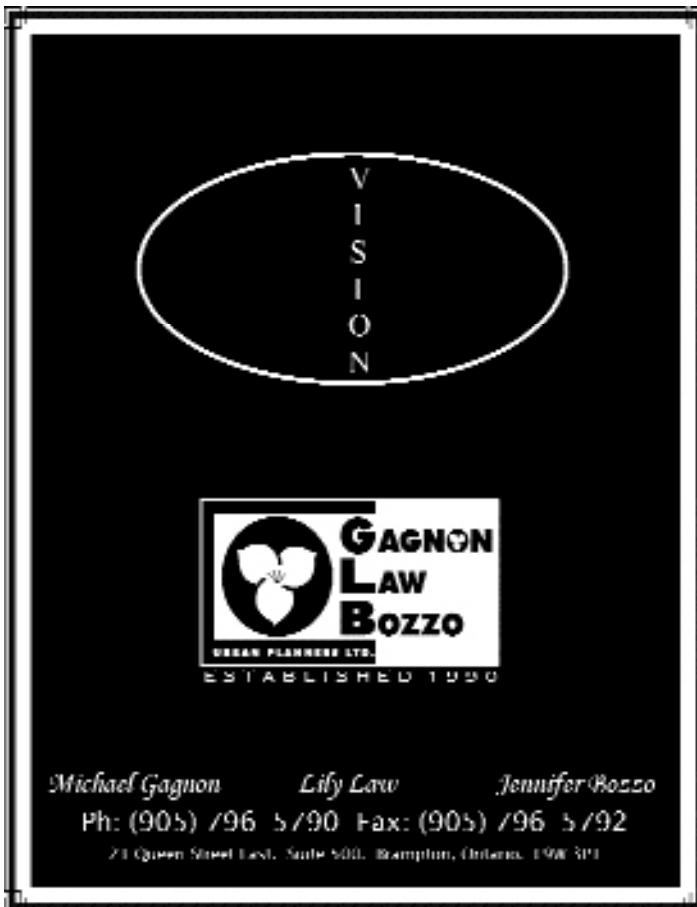
On the good news side of the ledger, brownfields is taking on an important new dimension with the announcement by Minister Gerretsen that a special cabinet committee has been formed to ensure that major planning initiatives are viewed through a “brown-

field lens.” Watch for news of a high level appointment within MMAH to coordinate this. Heritage buffs were delighted with the new Heritage Act, and the City of Toronto stunned observers by moving ahead with a heritage tax rebate program.

The new Building Code Act opens up a Pandora’s Box by changing the way that municipalities fund their planning and development activities. It will soon be illegal to channel building permit revenues to cover any costs other than the issuance of building permits. Many municipalities currently “subsidize” activities such as development control with such revenues. Look for fall out at budget time. Another “sleeper” still “pending” is EA reform. As detailed in a comprehensive article on that subject in this magazine earlier this year, few pieces of legislation need help more than EA. Finally, the prize for the worst abuse of the English language in a planning document in 2005 goes to a City of Toronto planning report, which dismissed the destruction of 10 single family homes to allow for the expansion of an institutional use as “house form buildings”—clearly no people affected!

This issue also acknowledges the “retirement” of Don May as president of the Institute. To borrow from the language of sustain-

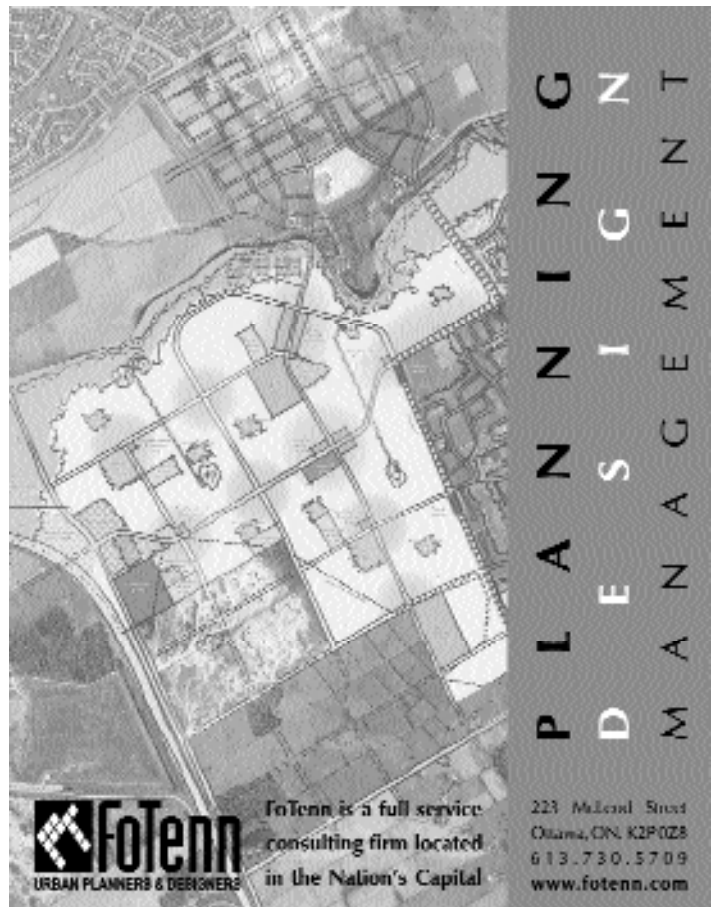
(Cont. on page 23)



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ability, Don clearly leaves OPPI better than he found it; Don has always been an active supporter of good communications, which includes a strong belief in the value of this magazine. We also welcome Gary Davidson as he steps into the presidency. The blur of activity is not likely to slow any time soon.

What will 2006 bring to the world of planning?

Glenn Miller, FCIP, RPP, is editor of the Ontario Planning Journal and vice president of Education and Research with the Canadian Urban Institute in Toronto. He can be reached at editor@ontarioplanning.com.

Opinion

The Fused Grid model—what it is and why it may be useful

Douglas Pollard and Fanis Grammenos

The recent published critique of the Fused Grid (Volume 20, No. 4) is flattering, surprising, and very useful to our continuing exploration and refinement of the concept.

It is indeed flattering that a group of professionals have found this model of sufficient interest to analyze and comment upon; it is a good sign of its potential intrinsic value.

The critique is surprising in that, as was noted, the concept is very new as a planning idea (two years) and has only been pub-

lished in its purest “academic” form. Although there are about five Canadian communities currently poised to employ it in the next few years, it has not yet been applied in the field. Critique at the point of implementation (such as the interest surrounding New Urbanism after Seaside was built and written about) is to be expected of course, but not at this abstract, formative stage. It is also surprising because the Fused Grid model is juxtaposed with New Urbanism; it could, in fact, have been seen as entirely complementary—nothing in the diagram is inherently anti-urban or precludes the application of N U features (see diagram).

These comments are very useful to our ongoing efforts to explore the concept further and to explain it to others. We would like to continue the dialogue by responding to some of the points raised and to expand on certain general ideas.

The development context for the Fused Grid

It is important to understand that the CMHC research into street patterns is being conducted under the broader umbrella of CMHC sustainable community planning research. As such, it provides a basis for implementation of other sustainable community features and attributes as well as a means of dealing with key issues of transpor-

tation such as access, mobility, modal choice and quality of life impacts.

It was never the expectation or intention that the Fused Grid would be applied insensitively and interminably across the landscape without modification and adaptation. An example of such adaptation of the concept is its interpretation in Stratford, Ontario, where the City explored it thoroughly, compared it with alternatives and adopted it as the basis for a 300-acre land annexation.

In this instance, the Fused Grid readily embraced and capitalized upon the positive site attributes, improving the sustainability/ livability of this new neighbourhood by allowing the preservation of streams and woodlots while creating additional neighbourhood green connectors/parks and a major school site without the loss of housing units and without capital cost increments. In fact, more high-value lots and desirable neighbourhood attributes such as shorter pedestrian distances to commercial and transit, increased views and connectivity to green space, etc., were identified with this approach.

Parks—No Hierarchy?

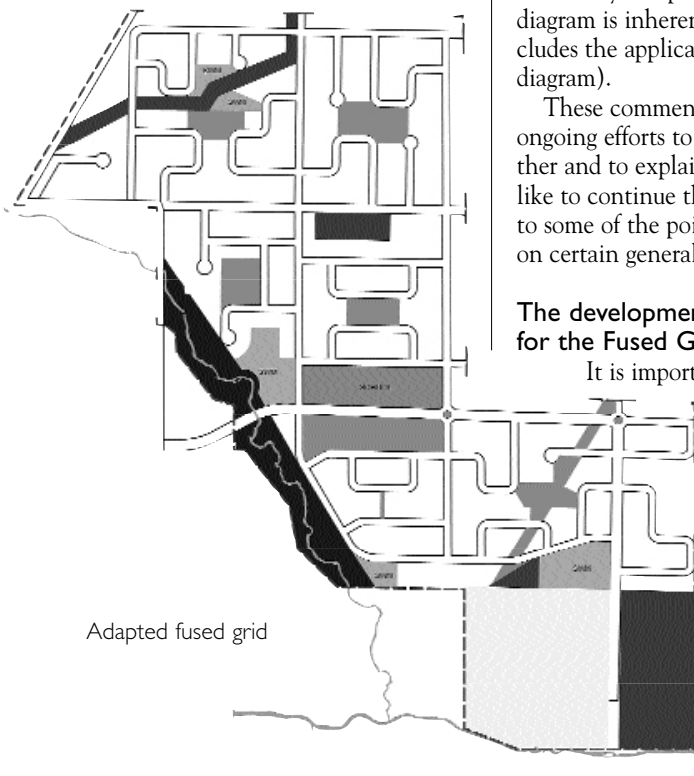
The critique noted that the Fused Grid did not provide a hierarchy of parks, but its application in the Stratford plan suggests that this is not the case. In addition, as with any conventional grid (such as Manhattan’s) the correct balance of major green spaces could be created by eliminating certain blocks and streets.

In the Stratford plan, about 12.5 percent of the site is “natural features”; another 3.7 percent is dedicated to parks and another 3 percent to stormwater management areas. Taken together, these uses add up to 19 percent of the site and offer a good range of open space choices for recreational use. This percentage is similar to that of other notable developments such as Kentlands, (28 percent) and Laguna West (20 percent), to name only two.

Density, its acceptance and benefits

The representation of the Fused Grid to date has been mostly illustrated with single family homes and this has obscured another line of thinking behind its evolution. Single family homes were used for comparison to other similar suburban developments, but it was never intended that this would be the only housing type.

Density and form is not dependent on the grid itself and in fact the Fused Grid facilitates a number of options for a greater variety of housing forms and increased



Adapted fused grid

density. These additional development options, while not yet published, have been presented to planners and developers and have been enthusiastically received.

Research has verified that increased density (one of the key ingredients of sustainable planning) is far more palatable and much easier to implement when immediately adjacent to green space (that is, primarily in the centre of the neighbourhood). Density increases in turn raise the viability of using buildings as energy centres, an arrangement where buildings or building groups can generate sufficient power efficiently or treat sufficient wastewater for both themselves and their neighbours. Distributed or neighbourhood-scaled energy and heating systems, especially in combination with efficient, well-oriented buildings, promise lower capital and operating costs, easier adaptability from one fuel to another over time, some redundancy and therefore greater security in case of crisis.

Green infrastructure

The same green spaces which facilitate intensification also acquire additional roles as green infrastructure (stormwater management, heat island reduction, air quality



Connections make the fused grid work

improvement, habitat preservation, pedestrian connectivity, walkability, recreation). Once again, this lowers lifecycle costs by reducing reliance on mechanical systems and improving the livability of the neighbourhoods by giving greater access to community green space over both the short and long term.

Twinned Roads

Some of the other concerns in the critique were centred on the nature and usage of the twinned arterials. Evidence on the theoretical and practical levels may alleviate at least some of these concerns.

On the theoretical level, it may be reassuring to know that twinned roads under various guises have previously been proposed by Kevin Lynch, Christopher Alexander (parallel roads) and C.N.U. co-founder Peter Calthorpe (couplets). Andres Duany found a special version of them, triplets, to be generally satisfactory. As a concept, they seem workable to many planners.

On the practical level, it may be comforting to note that they are a recurring part of the urban movement system. Either in their pure form of one-way streets a block apart or as a de facto condition of boulevards or arterial roads with an extended raised median, they appear in every city often in many locations. As a practical traffic management tool, they have been applied extensively in existing areas of cities. In relation to the application of the Fused Grid model, these concerns provide a stimulus for refining the concept and for explaining it better.

The placement of the parallel roads at 1-km intervals provides flexibility for their immediate and future treatment: not all have to be twinned; coupling can happen over time as the need arises. The parallel roads offer built-in capacity for adaptation to future traffic volumes by enabling better flow through twinning and the removal of the left turn impediment. It should also be noted that there is a finer grid within the quadrants of local, permanently two-way streets and

pedestrian connections. These allow a driver a choice of direction approximately every minute of driving time, so usage of the arterials is not the only option. The same frequency of choice (by time) available to the driver is also available to the pedestrian. It takes about the same time to drive around one neighbourhood block as it does to walk across it.

The manner in which the arterials would develop is no different from most high streets. They will not necessarily be lined with single family homes, as in the diagrammatic representations, but building use and form would be determined by the normal market forces. The adjacent uses could be a combination higher-density, mixed residential, office, commercial and institutional uses at appropriate scales depending on the adjacent neighbourhood characteristics. Development would proceed from and focus upon the intersections in classical style.

The inclusion of multiple uses along the arterials would be encouraged in every situation to enhance other aspects of sustainable neighbourhood development by providing opportunities for eco-industrial networks, options for energy production and sharing, transit-supporting development and other efficiencies.

In summary, the Fused Grid has, in its first few steps, taken a direction towards more readily achievable sustainable neighbourhoods. It has an unusual built-in flexibility for adapting to site features and to future growth. It will be most interesting to see how its planned field applications and ongoing research will influence the concept's evolution. Such evolution will also be influenced by the creative dialogue among professionals who share the goals of sustainable development.

Douglas Pollard and Fanis Grammenos are Senior Researchers in the Policy and Research Division of CMHC.

They specialize in sustainable community development issues.

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DELSCAN

Reconsidering the Ward System of Governance

Paul J. Bedford



Vancouver's at-large system has helped "professionalize" planning decisions

The willingness of the province to develop a new *City of Toronto Act* by the end of this year has also launched a re-examination of governance. It is most timely and long overdue. Among the numerous questions being asked is, What is the best method of electing members of council? Last year, Vancouver residents were asked a similar set of questions as they voted in a special referendum whether or not to adopt a ward system of political representation to replace the existing at-large method of electing their 10-member city council. Despite a strong campaign to embrace a ward system, Vancouverites surprised many by voting in favour of retaining the at-large system.

What was behind this decision? Is there something for Toronto and Ontario's municipalities to learn? Is there a connection to planning?

While no system of political representation is perfect, there is merit in exploring various alternatives. The three basic options include the election of councillors by ward, at large across the whole city or a portion of it, or a combination of both systems. Most

Ontario municipalities including Toronto have used the ward system. However, it is my understanding that other cities such as Sarnia, London, Niagara Falls and Thunder Bay use either an at-large system or a combination of at-large and ward system. There may be other examples in the province. Obviously, the current *Municipal Act* already gives Ontario's municipalities the ability to decide which method is best suited to their needs.

It is also interesting to discover that other U.S. cities like Seattle and Portland, Oregon, have councils elected at-large, while Boston has a mix of ward and at-large representation. (And far fewer councillors—*Editor's Note.*)

Common Questions

How does the present system of political representation address the priorities facing our cities? To what degree does the council govern versus manage its business? Do citizens have the ability to shape and influence the future of their cities? Is there a preoccupation with local ward issues at the expense of a city-wide perspective? Does the gover-

nance model have an impact on the planners, ability to get things done?

Fundamental Principles

There are some basic principles that need to be respected if a city council is to maximize its effectiveness and tap the energy of its citizens.

First, decision-making must be transparent. Municipal government is closest to the people. Unlike the federal and provincial governments, it generally conducts its business in full public view without closed-door cabinet meetings.

Second, professional civic staff advice must remain independent of political interference. There should be a well-defined role for the council to govern and the staff to manage. Council should seek the best professional advice available from its staff and make clear policy decisions.

Implementation of those decisions should be delegated to staff, who in turn should be held accountable for the results.

Third, the governance model adopted must maximize opportunities for the improvement of local democracy. Accountability, responsiveness, fairness and efficient service delivery are all critical ingredients.

City-Wide Versus Local Perspective

A vibrant downtown, stable residential neighbourhoods, a diversity of housing choice for all incomes, prosperous community shopping streets, viable public transit and walkable communities are all essential components of healthy cities. In the case of Toronto, I would add that the waterfront should be perceived to belong to all the people. Creating places with these qualities that emphasize the unique characteristics and authenticity of our cities is hard work, but this is why planning matters.

City building is a continuous process that requires the adoption of policy initiatives to advance equity, opportunity and quality of life for all citizens. Controversial city-wide policies related to group homes, emergency shelters, affordable housing, transit and road pricing can easily become captive to special interests with professional advice being diluted or substituted in



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favour of local ward politics. These types of issues often test the values of all stakeholders.

My observation is that with an exclusive ward system of representation, the predominant focus generally is devoted to local neighbourhoods. Attention paid to communities of interest, which can often span an entire city, tends to be secondary given vote trading and political brokering that can be associated with controversial issues.

Given the profile of local councillors in their ward, it is also not uncommon to have councillors remain in office for 15 to 20 years and longer. This makes it very difficult to attract new blood and fresh ideas that are essential to constantly renew government. Over time, they can assume the role of a ward boss regarding development decisions, infrastructure spending and ward versus city-wide priorities. What is interesting is that this behaviour seems to evolve over the years, often without the councillor's knowledge. Perhaps there is a natural two- or three-year maximum term of office associated with the achievement of new political ideas.

Governing Versus Managing

My sense is that all too often councils tend to manage first and govern second. This behaviour is especially noticeable in larger cities like Toronto. With 44 ward councillors plus the mayor, many councillors feel compelled to speak on the smallest of matters, especially when the issue is local. Council often micro-manages issues like speed bumps, stop signs, front yard parking and leaf blowing to name just some. Routine matters do not seem to be delegated to staff for implementation to the degree they could.

In sharp contrast, the Vancouver council focuses on governing, not managing. Vancouver has a population of approximately 550,000 and is represented by 10 councillors elected at large across the city. The entire council meets as a Committee of the Whole in various capacities. Its small size enables it to work closely together and to see the big picture with exposure to all city issues, not just a small piece of local geography. As a result, the council focuses on governing and making the policy decisions to advance the interests of the whole city first. This system of representation, coupled with an independent city charter and final decision making authority on all development matters (there is no equivalent of the Ontario Municipal Board), makes Vancouver unique in Canada. In addition, strong emphasis on delegating city planning approvals and urban design to professional

staff through a development permit board and an urban design review panel are characteristics that are distinct from Ontario practices.

The resulting ability of Vancouver's council to embrace a city-wide perspective to shape the city has produced a place that has consistently received United Nations recognition for exceptional quality of life. It is hard to argue with success. Past municipal community infrastructure spending in the city's east end and the targeting of new housing and community facilities for the 2010 Winter Olympics in the east side will go a long way to ensuring this part of the city shares in the benefits of rising prosperity. Perhaps this track record of achievement was on the minds of voters last fall when they decided to keep the at-large system of political representation. There also seems to be a strong connection between the ability of Vancouver's at-large council to make tough decisions in managing its own future without a provincial appeal body. There may be an important message here for Toronto and other Ontario municipalities in their frustration with the Ontario Municipal Board. If municipal councils want final decision-making power on development matters, they need to step up to the plate and take the heat in advancing city-wide priorities.

Civic Engagement and Governance

A common theme among all planners is the desire to successfully engage citizens in both local and big picture priorities. Every council wants to improve the quality of life for its residents, respond to diverse needs and shape a prosperous economy. Developing solutions to current problems and providing ideas for the future are the bread-and-butter roles of city planners. How people feel about their ability to influence change and have their voices heard by council makes a huge difference in successful city building. It is important for people to know that their hopes and needs for both their neighbourhood and their city really matter. There is an enormous reservoir of pride of place among the people of any city that is waiting to be tapped. Attitudes, values and the adoption of an open style of local government are all part of this equation.

Since amalgamation in 1998, I believe that Torontonians have lost the direct connection they used to have with their local government. There is a feeling that the present system of governance is out of tune with the present and future needs of a big city. As smaller governmental units are more attuned to communities and neighbourhoods, I believe that a strong case can be made to establish local community advisory boards representing about 100,000 to 150,000 people

based on natural, historic and geographic communities of interest across the city. This would help break the city down into bite-sized pieces and provide a new vehicle for more equitable civic engagement. The advisory boards would comprise representatives from all stakeholders within each community, would provide advice on local matters to the District Councils and would provide input into the annual budget cycle. This model has been used successfully in New York City since the mid-1970s and is now enshrined in the city charter with 59 community advisory boards serving a population of over eight million. It is also interesting to note that the Borough of Brooklyn has a total of 18 community advisory boards serving 2.5 million people, which is exactly the same population as Toronto. A recent trip to New York has confirmed the effectiveness of this model in achieving planning goals and in advancing broader community objectives. Simply put, it works.


The ability of people to connect their daily life cycle to alternative big picture choices about the future of their city is also very important. That connection can be made through a governance model based on wards, an at-large system or a mix of both

systems. My observation in working with an exclusive ward system for over 30 years is that the priorities of the whole city tend to receive less attention than they should. This is especially true today, given the massive backlog of city-building infrastructure projects that need urgent attention. While the mayor clearly embraces a city-wide perspective, ward councillors naturally focus first on their own wards. It is a useful exercise to explore alternatives that can achieve a better balance. As such, I believe there is merit for Toronto to consider abolishing all ward boundaries, and create five new District Councils in the central, midtown, uptown, east and west representing about 500,000 people each, based entirely on natural and geographic communities that bear no relationship to former municipal boundaries. The full council could be slightly increased by one from 44 to 45 with 9 councillors running at large within each of the five new Districts. Each District Council would be given decision-making authority on purely local matters such as rezonings that conform to the city-wide Official Plan. The full council could concentrate more on city-wide policy matters and devote its valuable time and energy to advancing long-overdue city building initia-

tives. It also might help the council focus more on governing rather than managing.

The people of Vancouver have already decided which system of political representation best suits their needs. The people of Toronto are just starting to explore what possible changes to governance may be desirable. Last summer the mayor and council appointed a three-person panel to study the options and obtain citizen input on a preferred new model of governance that can be incorporated into a new *City of Toronto Act*. A report is to be issued this fall along with recommended provincial changes to the OMB, *Planning Act* and revenue-generating powers. Together these reports will have an impact on both the Toronto and other Ontario municipalities. The coming months should be fascinating. It is clearly time for people to speak up and time for planners to pay close attention to the outcome.

Paul J. Bedford, FCIP, RPP, is contributing editor for the Planning Futures column. Paul is the former chief planner for Toronto. He is active as an urban mentor, speaking and providing advice on planning issues across North America.



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Reurbanization

Community Improvement Planning for Brownfield Redevelopment

(First of two articles)

Luciano P. Piccioni

Community improvement plans (CIPs) were used by many Ontario municipalities in the late 1970s and the 1980s to satisfy the requirements of obtaining provincial funding under old provincial programs such as the Commercial Area Improvement Program (CAIP), the Program for Renewal, Improvement and Development (PRIDE), and its predecessor, the Neighbourhood Improvement Program (NIP). These provincial programs provided funding to municipalities primarily for improvements to municipal services, streetscaping, parkland and parking areas, usually in downtowns and business improvement areas. Activities such as the municipal provision of grants and loans were not explicitly contemplated or included in these CIPs. The provincial programs were phased out by the early 1990s, and regrettably, the CIP all but disappeared from the planning landscape in Ontario.

In the mid-1990s, however, a number of municipalities in Ontario again began preparing CIPs to promote downtown and commercial area revitalization. Many contained provisions allowing the municipality to provide grants and loans to owners of lands and buildings in the designated community improvement project area for rehabilitating and improving those lands and buildings. But it was only a few years ago that municipalities began using CIPs to promote the remediation and redevelopment of brownfields.

In 2001, the City of Hamilton became the first municipality in Ontario to adopt a comprehensive CIP containing financial incentives to promote brownfield redevelopment in its older industrial area. Other municipalities, including Brantford, Guelph, Kitchener, London and Kingston followed suit, preparing CIPs to promote redevelopment in the areas of their municipalities containing brownfields. Then, in October of this year, the Municipality of Chatham-Kent's Brownfields and Bluefields CIP became the first brownfield CIP approved by the Province to cover an entire municipali-

ty. (Coincidentally, approval was received on October 14, the day after the project received a CUI Brownie at the Canadian Brownfields 2005 conference in Ottawa—Editor.)

More and more municipalities in Ontario, including Ottawa, Niagara Falls and Welland are now preparing and adopting CIPs to promote the redevelopment of brownfields. This article examines some of the key issues around the preparation and implementation of CIPs to promote brownfield redevelopment. Most of the comments made in this article are also applicable to the preparation of CIPs for other purposes such as downtown and commercial area redevelopment.

Legislative Authority

Section 106 (1) and (2) of the Municipal Act prohibits municipalities from directly or indirectly assisting any manufacturing business or other industrial or commercial enterprise through the granting of bonuses. This is commonly known as the "prohibition against bonusing rule." Prohibited actions include:

- giving or lending money or municipal property;
- guaranteeing borrowing;
- leasing or selling any municipal property at below fair market value;
- giving a total or partial exemption from any levy, charge or fee.

Section 106 (3) of the Municipal Act provides an exception to this rule for municipalities that prepare a CIP under



Chatham-Kent was the first to designate the entire Community Improvement

Section 28 of the Planning Act (Community Improvement). The CIP must be for a designated community improvement project area and the CIP must be approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

A community improvement project area must be designated by passing a by-law. The area to be covered by the CIP is at the discretion of the council. This allows municipalities to address community improvement issues that are pervasive and may occur across entire municipalities, such as the existence of brownfields, deterioration of commercial areas, deterioration of heritage buildings and properties, the lack of a range of housing opportunities (types) and the lack of affordable housing. There are a variety of reasons that an area can be designated as an area in need of community improvement, including age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings and any other environmental, social or community economic development reason.

Brownfields often meet the test of several of these criteria.

Once a community improvement plan has been adopted by a municipal council and approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the municipality may:

- make grants and loans to owners and tenants of land and buildings within the community improvement project area, and their assignees, to pay for the whole or any part of the cost of rehabilitating such lands and buildings in conformity with the CIP;
- provide tax assistance on eligible properties for remediation purposes by freezing or cancelling the municipal and education portion of property taxes (with approval from

the Ministry of Finance)

- acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement;
- construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by the municipality in conformity with the CIP;

- sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by it in conformity with the CIP.

Incentives and Municipal Strategies

CIPs provide municipalities with a framework for comprehensive planning to promote brownfield redevelopment through the provision of planning and financial incentives and the use of public-sector investment to leverage private-sector investment. So far, planning and financial incentives to promote brownfield redevelopment have included:

- environmental assessment grants;
- project feasibility study grants;
- property tax assistance in the form of a freeze or cancellation of municipal and education property taxes to pay for remediation costs;
- tax-increment based rehabilitation grants for the costs of environmental remediation/risk management, demolition, building retrofitting, infrastructure upgrading and other brownfield-related costs;
- development charge waivers (approval and implementation does not fall within the legal parameters of the CIP, but under the municipality's development charges by-law);
- planning and development and building permit fee rebates/waivers;
- parking requirements waiver;
- parkland dedication fee waivers.

A few Ontario municipalities have also used CIPs to pursue municipal strategies and actions designed to encourage brownfield redevelopment, including:

- municipal acquisition and remediation of brownfield sites;
- issuance of requests for proposal on municipally owned brownfield sites;
- involvement in public-private partnerships and pilot projects to redevelop brownfield sites.

While more municipalities in Ontario are using financial incentives to promote brownfield redevelopment, more direct and proactive municipal involvement has been much less prevalent. This is likely the result of lack of funding for these activities from upper levels of government and a lack of experience with these activities on the part of Ontario municipalities. Experience in the U.S. and other countries has shown that most municipalities that have been successful in redeveloping their brownfield areas have been active participants in the redevel-

opment process through land acquisition, rehabilitation, development and sale, including the use and administration of requests for proposals (RFPs) and pilot projects.

In just a few years, several Ontario municipalities have gone from not having plans or strategies in place to address brownfields, to preparing comprehensive brownfield CIPs and using incentives and municipal strategies in innovative ways to spur brownfield redevelopment. Several of the municipalities that have had a few years' experience with their brownfield CIPs, such as Hamilton and Kitchener, report that these incentive and public investment strategies are proving successful in encouraging the private sector to remediate and redevelop brownfield sites that have been dormant for many years. While it takes a well-crafted brownfield CIP, a strong long-term commitment to CIP implementation in terms of both staff and financial resources, and a good deal of patience, the CIP can be a powerful tool for promoting brownfield redevelopment in any community.

Laying the Foundation

While CIPs hold significant potential for providing significant public funds toward the investigation, remediation/risk management, and rehabilitation of brownfield properties, a municipality must lay an appropriate foundation for the preparation of a CIP. First, the municipality must ensure that the community improvement policies in its official plan provide the proper legislative authority under Section 28 of the *Planning Act* to designate community improvement project areas and prepare community improvement plans. As a guide, the municipality should ensure ensure that its official plan:

- provides clear guidance with respect to the criteria or conditions needed to designate community improvement project areas;
- enables the municipality to designate the entire municipality as a community improvement project area for certain types of community improvement such as brownfield redevelopment;
- provides a clear rationale for community improvement including guidance with respect to the goals of community improvement in the municipality;
- specifies the types of community improvement that will be promoted by the municipality;
- specifies the types of activities that can be undertaken by the municipality to encourage community improvement,



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including the full range of municipal actions permitted under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*;

Community improvement policies in the official plan should be flexible enough to permit the municipality to offer a range of planning and financial incentives and undertake a range of municipal actions, yet detailed and consistent enough to provide council, staff, developers and the public with clear direction regarding the purpose and implementation of CIPs.

Next, in order to minimize the liability involved in approving development applications on contaminated sites that have been remediated, a municipality should ensure that it has comprehensive environmental policies in its official plan and a standardized planning application review procedure to ensure that contaminated and potentially contaminated sites are properly identified, assessed and remediated or risk managed prior to development.

When properly structured, the official plan policies and planning application review procedures described above can then act as a consistent and standardized foundation for the preparation of a CIP to promote the redevelopment of brownfields.

Thirteen Basic Steps in the CIP Process

The basic steps in preparing and implementing a CIP are:

1. Identify need for community improvement.
2. Develop work program.
3. Conduct background analysis.
4. Conduct a critical needs analysis.
5. Identify CIP goals.
6. Recommend designated community improvement project area.
7. Develop planning and financial incentive programs and municipal actions.
8. Prepare and circulate Draft CIP to MMAH and commenting agencies.
9. Finalize Draft CIP as per comments received.
10. Hold formal public meeting under Section 17 of the *Planning Act*.
11. Council adopts the CIP.
12. Forward adopted CIP to MMAH for approval.
13. Implement the CIP (including application forms, legal agreements, administrative procedures, monitoring and marketing of the CIP programs).

Several of these steps take on added significance when preparing a brownfield CIP.

First, because "brownfields" is still a relatively new concept, and because the remediation of contaminated sites is not necessarily easily understood by the general public, it is important to formally introduce the concept of brownfields and brownfield redevelopment to the public and stakeholders. This is usually accomplished through a public meeting held early in the process where the concept of "brownfields" and the benefits of brownfield redevelopment are introduced. It is very important to build political, staff and community support for the CIP at this stage.

When preparing a CIP, it is also important that the municipality provides a clear justification of the need for community improvement in the designated community improvement project area. That is why the critical needs analysis, as its name implies, is truly "critical" to the success of a brownfields CIP. The purpose of the critical needs analysis is to determine the key impediments to and opportunities for brownfield redevelopment in a municipality, and to generate strategies to overcome these impediments and take advantage of the opportunities. While it is important to review available background studies and reports and visit brownfield areas within the municipality, the accurate identification of the critical needs for a brownfield CIP depends largely on getting valuable input from key local stakeholders engaged in the local process of brownfield redevelopment. This includes property owners, developers, financial lending institutions, real estate, legal, environmental, and planning support professionals. This is usually accomplished through a combination of interviews and workshops. Finally, it is important to obtain stakeholder, staff, political and public input on the strategies and actions proposed to promote brownfield redevelopment. This can be accomplished through public open houses and workshops.

Part two of this article addressing common mistakes and advice on how to choose a consultant to prepare brownfield CIPs will appear in the next issue.

Luciano P. Piccioni, MCIP, RPP, Ec.D., is President of RCI Consulting, a firm specializing in comprehensive strategies and community improvement plans for brownfield, downtown and commercial area revitalization and redevelopment. RCI Consulting has prepared community improvement plans for numerous Ontario municipalities and is currently preparing brownfield CIPs for Ottawa, Welland and Niagara Falls. Luciano can be reached at 905-545-1899 or at bfguy@cogeco.ca.

Advice for Real Estate and Development Professionals: Why Urban Design is All the Rage

Moiz Behar

The following is based on a presentation to the Toronto Real Estate Board.

Our growing awareness of the importance of the quality of our built environment and our streetscapes has led to an increased interest in urban design. This interest has been significantly heightened in the GTA and elsewhere in Southern Ontario, as the emphasis shifts from greenfields development to redevelopment and intensification. Furthermore, the planning profession is becoming increasingly aware of the importance of public transit in reducing our dependence on the automobile and reducing sprawl.

As a result, planners and urban designers are using tools and processes that help us deal with the following themes:

- the quality of the public realm;
- transit-supportive design and densities;
- sustainable, livable communities;

- impacts of infill developments;
- the architectural quality of buildings and their contribution to the public realm;



Design guidelines provide developers with a basis for consistency

- the quality and configuration of open spaces;

- the quality and configuration of the landscape and the streetscape;
- pedestrian scale and amenities;
- linkages and connectivity.

Because urban design provides a useful framework for dealing with any or all of these themes, the practice of urban design is playing an increasingly important role in how we plan our cities and towns. Interest in urban design ranges from public agencies such as municipal planning departments and the province's crown corporations, to developers and other players in the private sector who need to respond to urban design-related requirements.

Municipalities use urban design tools to establish guidelines for plans and projects of many different scales. This approach can be used to create a framework within which developers and designers can work, or the reverse, where the emphasis is on providing an attractive context for an individual development project. Urban design is also the platform for addressing issues such as accessibility.

The Ontario *Planning Act* currently includes little direct reference to urban design and its importance in the planning process. As such, the Act in many respects trails contemporary practice. For example, the one section in the Act that is most traditionally associ-

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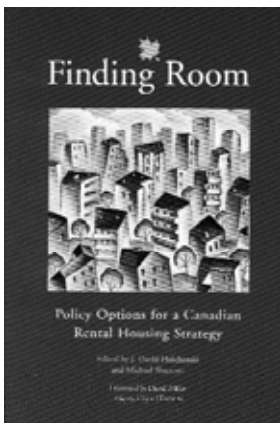
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ated with urban design, Section 41—Site Plan Control, gives limited powers to municipalities to deal with design. *Planning Act* reform in Ontario is under way and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is currently drafting changes to the Act. Recognition of urban design and its many tools in the *Planning Act* would be a welcome step.

Understanding urban design documents and working with the urban design staff of municipalities requires development applicants to be familiar with and appreciate a wide range of urban design concepts. The underlying theme is an assumed mandate to optimize the quality of private developments and consequently create better urban environments. Therefore, as part of the municipal urban design review process for development applications, detailed scrutiny is given to the qualities of building and landscape design, impacts on adjacent properties, the quality of the streetscape, as well as fit with any official plan design policies, urban design studies and guidelines.

Recommendations by urban design staff that ask an applicant to reconsider the design of a proposed development are typically made with the best intentions, as a way to help meet design goals set by the municipality. Although there may be budget and marketing issues raised by alternatives suggested by staff, keeping an open mind allows for better communication—and, in most cases, a more successful project.

There is also a debate about when to put in an application. Pre-consultation with



An attractive streetscape is good for business

municipal staff can save money in the long run because this is how applicants gather crucial information that, ideally, reduce the need to make costly design changes later in the process.


I also recommend to colleagues in the real estate and development sector that they familiarize themselves with recently issued documents such as *Places to Grow* and the Revised Provincial Policy Statement. In addition to providing the

context for practices such as intensification, they also help development professionals understand that urban design-driven planning is here to stay.

Moiz Behar, OAA, MRAIC, MCIP, RPP, is the principal of his own consulting practice. This article is based on a presentation to the Toronto Real Estate Board earlier this fall. Moiz is a long-standing member of the Urban Design Working Group.

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Civics

Renewal starts with a belief in community

David Crombie and Glenn Miller

The quality of urban life in Canada is rooted deeply in the diversity and strength of its public realm.

Education, health care, social services, public transit, arts and culture, energy resources, public safety and security, justice, libraries, environmental stewardship, roads, streets and public places and spaces have been, and will continue to be, the connecting tissues linking our individual private worlds and fusing one generation to another.

At the Canadian Urban Institute, we believe that, for a variety of reasons, society's collective commitment to sustaining the public realm has been diminished in recent years in subtle but significant ways. We seem to have lost our understanding of how much we depend on a high quality public realm. Some of this may be attributable to ideals and public policy promoted in the 1990s, which created artificial rifts between what is public and what is private. We argue that that there should be no such distinction, which helps explain in part why much of our work at the CUI—and our newly established subsidiary, the Centre for the Development of Community Assets—is devoted to seeding the rebirth and revitalization of the public realm.

The public realm is the glue that holds our cities together and the bedrock upon

which we have built our prosperity, our communities and our social peace. If ever we needed to be reminded of that, the current plight of New Orleans puts this fact into sharp focus. It is our view that responsibility for the interests of protecting and enhancing the public realm should be shared among all sectors of society.

Another important rationale for broadening people's understanding of the public realm is to protect the competitiveness of

our cities. As cities age, their ability to compete for new investment is often put to the test. Although some argue that it is businesses that compete—not cities—we suggest that such a distinction is not helpful.

The truth is that a city's competitiveness is defined, not just by the unique collection of businesses, entrepreneurs and other investors responsible for wealth creation, but also by the pool of

artists, performers and civic activists whose innovations and energy contribute so much to a city's character. The collectivity of all these creative minds is combined with, and indistinguishable from, the diverse set of physical urban resources that constitute a city's public realm.

The founder of the Washington-based Revitalization Institute, Storm Cunningham, notes that few of the build-

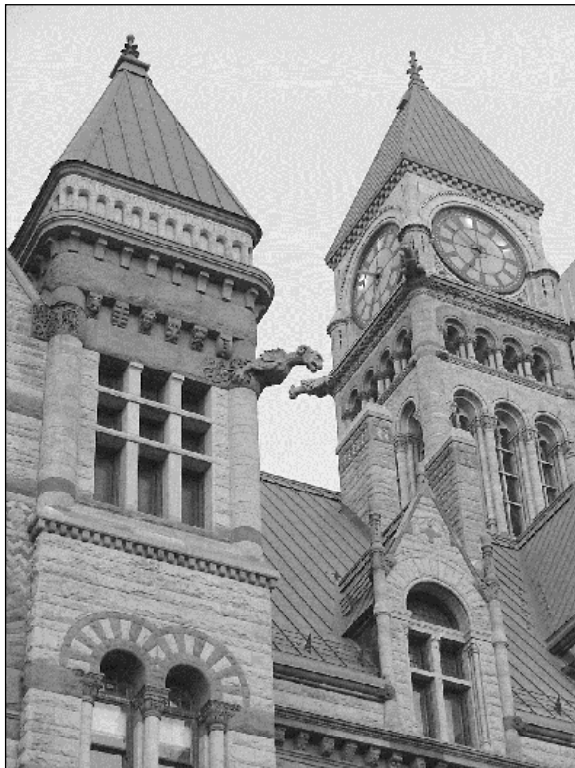


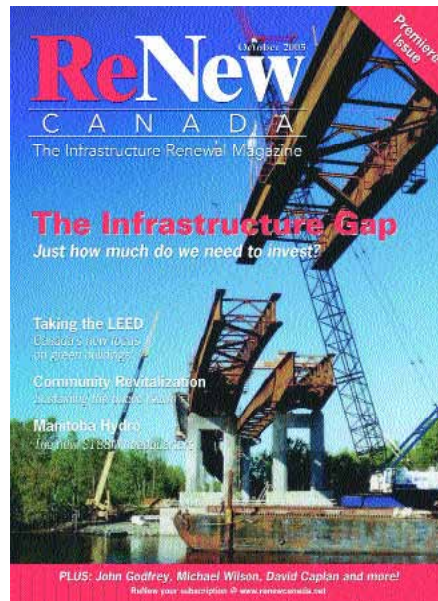
Photo: Brent Gilmour

Many of today's community leaders cut their teeth working to protect heritage buildings

ings being built today are likely to inspire future generations to want to restore them. We should all work to change this approach, not just because it is wasteful to construct throwaway buildings, but because these new buildings represent the heritage buildings of tomorrow. Few would argue that Toronto would have been much diminished if Old City Hall had fallen to the wrecker's ball in the 1970s when Eaton Centre was being developed. Many of today's civic leaders—people who are now prominent business people, lawyers, politicians, writers, who every day contribute to what makes Toronto a great place to live—first became engaged with their city as young activists in the cause of preserving that redoubtable piece of our heritage.

The annals of “investors’ folklore” offer many examples of “what tipped the balance” in persuading a particular company to relocate to a new jurisdiction or shift its resources from one city to another. When Chicago successfully lured Boeing from Seattle, for example, what role did Chicago’s reputation as a city that nurtures its built heritage and which fosters high levels of civic engagement play in Boeing’s

decision? The fact that Chicago is investing billions of dollars to enhance its public realm—in the form of new public parks in the downtown and adjacent waterfront, a burgeoning theatre scene,



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massive improvements to commuter rail—clearly had a cumulative impact on investors from “away” but also sent a strong positive message to the local population that their city is a place that values its human, physical and natural assets. To borrow from a popular consumer product ad, these investments state, “We’re worth it.”

A potential problem with the current pre-occupation with the “infrastructure deficit”—estimates put the price tag of replacing municipal infrastructure alone at something like \$60 billion—is that this approach singles out one aspect, albeit a really important component, of the public realm. A successful city maintains a balance between all the many pressing priorities to be addressed.

David Crombie is President and CEO of the Canadian Urban Institute (dcrombie@canurb.com). Glenn Miller, FCIP, RPP, is Vice President, Education and Research, with the CUI (gmler@canurb.com).

This is excerpted from a longer article that appeared in the inaugural issue of Renew Canada, published by We Communications of Winnipeg.

35 / IN PRINT

The Next Sustainability Wave About to Hit

The NEXT Sustainability Wave: Building Boardroom Buy-In

Bob Willard
300pp, plus endnotes
New Society Press, 2005
\$29.95 Cdn.

Bruce Mau, Canadian design icon, ends his book *Massive Change* by saying, “If we are to survive as a life form on the planet, at more or less the scale of our present occupation, there is no other way. Collectively, we must come to the realization that there is no exterior to our ecology. There is only one environment and everything is entered on the balance sheet. Every positive. Every negative. Everything counts.”

Critics assert that designers are change’s actors, not its agents; that business and government need also to reframe themselves. Willard addresses these agents with a business case aligned to their goals. To Mau’s vision, Willard adds boardroom motivation, while global warming and Third World debt spur from both sides.

He focuses on financial results, through corporate realization of a changing world. It is our mission to disseminate change; from “creating shareholder value while shouldering the burden of the evils necessary to achieve that” to an operating system where they no longer need carry this ethical load. “We need not outreach the paradigm of bottom-line vigilance; by collecting ‘low-hanging fruit’ effectively and efficiently in our pursuit of sustainability, enough companies absorbing enough principles will achieve our goal.”

NEXT is presented in a unique style. Each right-hand page reveals a topic,

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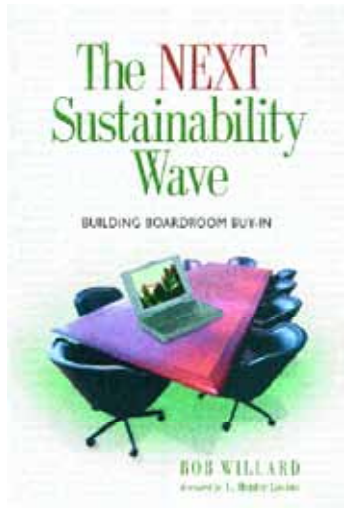
while each left-hand page provides human encounters with it, both comic and serious.

Beyond the book's scope, Ecological Economics asks: is there the atmospheric or the biodiversity budget for growth, regardless its greenness?

"Sideways growth," meaning one eco-efficient company taking market from its competitors, differs from "sector growth," opening new markets, therefore increasing the global economy's scale. Growth is also problematic; Canada is approximately 30 percent above our Kyoto target. Will monies saved through efficiency simply induce higher consumption? "Doing-more-with-less" percolated through the performance-caffinated Detroit mindset; engineers turned efficiency advances toward increasing SUV horsepower and gasoline savings evaporated.

Just as electricity analyst Ralph Torrie claims that efficiency and conservation have

kept Ontario lit through challenging times, Willard addresses corporations. Lowering cost and risk reductions—the result of a sustainability approach—are an often overlooked financial strategy. By adopting sustainability principles, finances and all other forms of capital improve; this also affects manufactured, natural, human, intellectual, reputation and stakeholder relationships.



The author provides impressive evidence, such as 95 investors representing \$10 trillion in assets asking the 500 largest companies in the world what they are doing about climate change, while a 2004 survey found "74 percent of adult Americans say their view of a company's ethical behaviour and practices has a direct influence on their willingness to purchase the firm's stocks." As well, "A 2004 survey of MBA students found that 97 percent said they were willing to forgo 14 per-

cent of their expected income to work for an organization with a better reputation for corporate social responsibility and ethics."

Through sustainability, a word that doesn't seem to exist for many corporate executives, these potentials are neatly summarized in Willard's book. Willard should be commended for charting a direct course based on so elusive a word.

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