ONTARIO PLANNING JOURNAL

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COVER STORY

REGENERATION

by Roger Hubbard

Watershed, the second interim report of the Crombie Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront, began with the quote; "Everything is connected to everything else." The Commission's final report, *Regeneration* released this spring, is the embodiment of that ecological maxim. There is virtually no significant planning issue that the report leaves untouched. The document will have great impact on the practice of planning and will challenge the exercise of political will throughout the province.

The cornerstone of the Commission's recommendations is the ecosystem-based planning philosophy, founded on an appreciation of the mutual interdependence of the environment, economy and social community. This approach is particularly critical in the Greater Toronto Area which accounts for 40% of Ontario's population, is expected to continue to grow and whose environment is already under considerable stress. Further growth cannot not be sustained at the expense of the natural environment.

Ecosystem Planning

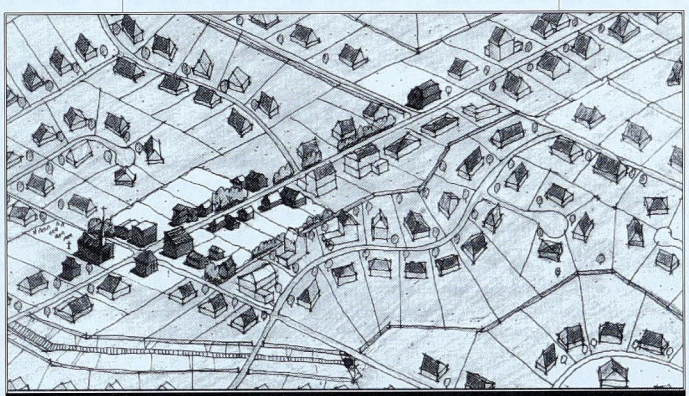
The ecosystem-based approach to planning presumes that the environment is the primary consideration. The environment should not be seen as what is left over after the "real planning" is completed.

A fundamental difficulty is that existing jurisdictional boundaries and planning areas do not reflect natural boundaries of individual watersheds or the Toronto Bioregion, which the report determines as appropriate scales in order to understand the linkages in the ecosystem.

There are some planning initiatives which transcend municipal and regional boundaries such as the Niagara Escarpment Plan, provincial guidelines for the Oak Ridges Moraine and the mandates of conservation authorities. The Commission's recommendations emphasize the role of the province in developing policy statements under Section 3 of the Planning Act to set clear direction and expectations for areas beyond existing political boundaries.

The report recommends that the province develop policies for such issues as waterfront planning, greenway concepts, watershed management, rural land and agriculture, and compact forms of development. Policy statements have traditionally been difficult to develop due to the broad range of interests, many of them conflicting, which must be addressed. In addition, there is an expectation that municipalities have the resources and willingness to implement provincial policy. This has not always been demonstrated in the past.

There is also the question of the interpretation of the Crombie principles. The recent case of the Motel Strip Secondary Plan in Etobicoke provided an example of the difficulties of dealing with waterfront development issues. Although there was complete agreement between the City of Etobicoke and the province in matters of the environment, the question of built form resulted in some fundamental differences.



From Regeneration: Village and farmland obliterated by conventional development.

The Etobicoke Council clearly favoured high rise condominium development, while the Province supported a lower scale, street oriented development. The City felt that the province was taking over planning from its jurisdiction and the OMB, while not taking that position, felt that the province had failed to clearly articulate its interests on the waterfront as regards built form.

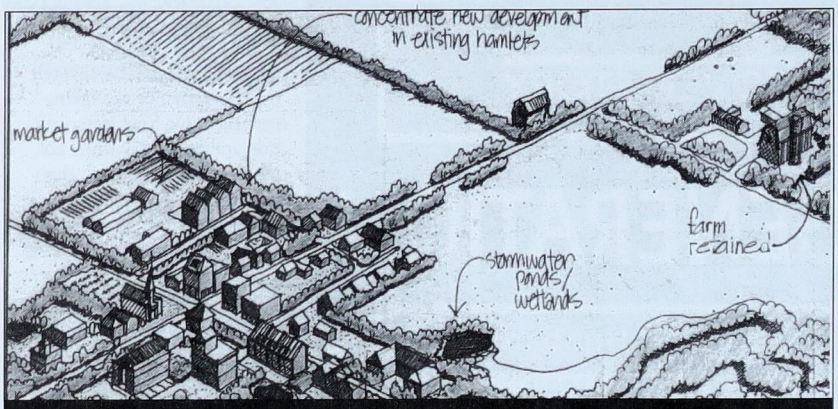
The nine principles of waterfront development, first espoused in the Commission's *Watershed* report were endorsed by both the City and the Province but they came into being in the middle of a long process.

The principles are open to interpretation and the argument was made that they may be contradictory. For example, in order to comply with the principle of "affordable," it was claimed that increased densities and thus large scale buildings might be necessary, which may in turn conflict with the principle of an "open" waterfront.

In the end, the parties were able to arrive at a mutually acceptable position on most of the issues through negotiation. Although the Municipal Board "heartily endorsed" the resolution of the environmental concerns without recourse to the Environmental Assessment Act, dealing with many of the other issues was a difficult process involving great amounts of staff resources and time.

Clearly a new approach to dealing with waterfront and other environmental issues is needed. A series of waterfront partnership agreements has been recommended by the Crombie Commission. Such partnerships would need to be based on mutually shared principles and values so that issues do not get snagged on discussion of fundamental principles.

A broad acceptance of Mr. Crombie's basic principles by decision-makers throughout the Greater Toronto Area might provide a framework for moving this process forward. However the difficulties should not be underestimated. An ecosystem approach may mean, for example, that residential development in some rural townships may be severely restricted because of few public services, ground water contamination or wetland preservation policies. The Commission's report illustrates a higher density, nodal development for suburban areas, main-



Clustering new development around existing hamlet.

taining natural areas and building on only the least sensitive land. Would such principles be generally accepted in these municipalities?

Conclusions

The roadblocks to implementing the recommendations of the Crombie Commission are legion. Can the Byzantine bureaucratic maze be overcome? Will the disparate interests in land use planning set aside their individual priorities to accept an ecological approach? Are there the financial resources available to provide public water and sewer services to allow intensely developed rural clusters and villages? Is the expertise and technology available to accurately predict cumulative environmental impacts?

On the positive side, many of the issues raised by *Regeneration* are presently being addressed. These include the implementation of the proposed Waterfront Trail, recently approved Provincial Wetlands Policy Statement, research on development patterns on a wide geographical scale by the Office of the Greater Toronto Area and others, and the work of the Sewell Commission on Planning and Development Reform. Not the least important is the proposed creation of the provincial Waterfront Regeneration Trust headed by Mr. Crombie.

The widespread political and public support for Mr. Crombie's work to date demonstrates that he has struck a responsive chord in the community. The real test for everyone involved in planning is to achieve some consensus on the basic values presented in the report and to forge the partnerships necessary to meet the challenges ahead.

Roger Hubbard is a Planner with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, C & SW.

Editors Note: Some OPPI members have complained Regeneration is repetitive, contains highly subjective sections and is less useful than Watershed. What are your views?

PLANNING

DEVELOPING A COASTAL RECREATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE GREAT LAKES

PART II

By S. Robert Hazra

There are some realistic measures that could be employed to address some of the problems affecting the true recreational potential of the Great Lakes. (See Part One in previous issue.)

Public agencies can rarely afford to purchase the large amounts of land needed to improve coastal area access. However, there are many methods available to increase access using only limited sums of money, or by forsaking tax revenues.

Easements could be employed to transfer limited property rights to the public without actually purchasing the land for public use. An easement to provide public access to the shoreline could be obtained by purchasing lands, placing certain restrictions on the use of the property to guarantee that the public's access to the shore will not be impeded, and then reselling the land *(Dittons/Stephens, 1976)*. Such a tool could be used for large agricultural holdings along the lakefront.

Alternatively, public or private agencies could purchase large blocks of land along the shoreline and sever these into several individual lots for resale, with one of these lots being maintained in public ownership for public access to the lake.

Tax incentives may be used to discourage landowners from overdeveloping a shoreline. Low density development with provisions for public access to the lakefront, for example, could be rewarded with substantial property tax reductions *(Dittons/Stephens, 1976)*.

Zoning measures could also be employed to ensure public access to the shoreline. Developers of lakefront subdivisions could be required to provide open areas on the lakefront *(Great Lakes Basin Framework Study, 1975)*. In fact, many municipalities have already adopted this approach; however, the public access space is often too small to be meaningful. Design of shorefront subdivisions should incorporate open space linkages between the shorefront and other greenways/trails within the community.

Zoning by-laws could also require shorefront homes to be built closer together (to reduce the amount of shorefront given over to private development) and a certain distance away from the shore. Furthermore, such zoning measures could be used to encourage future cottage developments along the lakes to be in the form of subdivision clusters, rather than in the form of strip developments along the coastline *(Great Lakes Basin Framework Study, 1975)*. Obviously, such a measure would limit the amount of waterfront lands that would be consumed by cottage development in the future. However, present land ownership patterns may impede efforts to so control cottage development.

Shoreline property may be obtained for public use by encouraging land owners to bequeath their land to the public. For example, existing property owners could be exempted from property taxes if they enter into an agreement with the government, whereby ownership of the property is transferred to the government upon the death of the owners. Alternatively, shorefront property owners may be encouraged to sell their lands to a government agency for a nominal fee, in return for a life-long lease. To enter into such an agreement, the property owner could be offered tax incentives in addition to property tax rebates.

Admittedly, the measures listed here are of little consequence to shorefronts that have

already been over-developed. These are generally planning measures that may be used to control future growth in areas that have yet to be developed. Obviously, such measures must be implemented soon if they are to have any affect on the rapidly developing Great Lakes shoreline.

Combining Uses

Recreational opportunities could be increased by combining recreational with other uses along the shoreline. Land owners and farmers could allow recreationalists on their land in return for tax concessions, a percentage of user fees or other forms of compensation (*Great Lakes Basin Framework Study, 1976*).

It may prove feasible to combine recreational with other shoreline activities, that were considered incompatible. Utility companies have noted that the small sections of water are warmed by the thermal discharges of power plants, thereby providing some recreational value to these waters for swimmers in the Great Lakes Basin (*Framework Study, 1976*).

Impermeable membranes (i.e., vinyl curtains) could surround the warm water outtakes of generating stations to create a special water bathing area (needless to say, numerous safety precautions would have to be incorporated into such a plan). Impermeable membranes have already been used in Ontario in reservoirs to separate the chlorinated waters of a bathing area from the rest of the waterbody.

Peak Usage

Peak recreational use leading to overcrowding afflicts many coastal areas during the summer especially in urban areas. In lieu of these additional facilities, admission prices could be lowered during the off-peak periods to encourage more visitation.

A reservation system could be implemented at some lakeside parks to regulate the number of visitors during peak periods.

One of the main constraints at many recreational areas is the shortage of parking spaces. To minimize the problem, cars containing more than a set number of people should be allowed into the areas at reduced rates.

Convenient public transit service would also alleviate parking congestion.

Admittedly, there are few real solutions to peak usage in a nation where most people have weekends off, and where the summer season is so short. As the proportion of school age children decreases, and the number of elderly increases, the opportunities for off-peak usage of recreational areas become more promising.

User Conflicts

A particular problem is that many beaches are youth-oriented. With the population aging, and simply as a matter of commonsense, it should be recognized that people from all walks of life should feel welcome to visit a shorefront recreational area (or any other recreational area for that matter). To this end, facilities should be provided that cater to a variety of users (i.e., picnic pavilions for families, wading areas for children, etc.).

There may also be conflicts in the way people want to use the shoreline. Perhaps the most viable solution for reducing conflicts is the application of zoning techniques to shoreline activities.

One expert on water-based recreation, R. Jaakson, has suggested that three zones be developed for waterbodies: a shoreline activity zone, an open water zone, and a wilderness zone.

The Shoreline Activity Zone would apply to the near-shore waters where conflicts between various recreational activities are most likely to occur. Jaakson has identified three factors that would constitute the main elements of a shoreline activity zone:
(1) First, motorboat activity in this zone would be limited to a maximum of five miles per hour.
(2) Second, boat movement within this zone should be limited to travel at right angles to the shore.
(3) A distance of 250 feet from shore has been recommended as a functional width for this zone. At marinas, boat launching sites, swimming beaches, and other water activity concentrations, a wider zone, perhaps of a minimum width of 500 feet seems appropriate.

(*Jaakson, 1979*)

Lake area beyond the Shoreline Activity Zone constitutes the Open Water Zone; boaters and water skiers may participate in their activities relatively freely in this zone.

Finally, the Wilderness Zone is intended to preserve some of the natural areas around a lake. Only passive activities such as canoeing and nature observation would be permitted in this zone.

In addition to spatial zoning, "time zoning" could be instituted to reduce conflicts in heavily used areas (Jaakson, 1984). For example, motorized boats could be restricted from an area during a certain time of day, to minimize conflicts with swimmers.

Environmental Protection

To protect the ecology of shoreline areas, intensive public use (including recreation) should be discouraged in or near environmentally sensitive areas. Ideally, public access to these areas should be minimized by providing no direct road access. Furthermore, areas that are managed for the preservation of flora and fauna should be officially termed "reserves," not "parks," because the perception is that parks are open and accessible for the public to enjoy.

The protection of the natural environment of shoreline recreational sites may be gained by a specific policy of recreational resource management and planning. The basic components of such a site specific approaches include:

1. Site Manipulation	Manipulation of the developed site to maintain the quality of the resource setting: rehabilitate it where necessary.
2. Vegetation Management	Silvicultural practices related to the management of intensive use areas, such as roads, trails, site developments and around waterbodies.
3. Landscape Management	Designing with emphasis on the visual impact of developments on the aesthetic appeal of the landscape.
4. Ecosystems Management	Defining ecosystems with their boundaries and determining possible effects of human use.
5. Hazard Management	Inventory and reduction of potential natural and manmade hazards associated with recreational use.

(*Pigram, 1983*)

Ensuring equitable access for the shoreline a challenge.

Particularly important is ecosystems management because much of the natural vegetation along the Lakes has been disturbed or destroyed by man. Preserving the existing ecosystems is a priority and unless these natural areas are identified and protected through restrictive zoning, many of the remaining natural areas along the lakes will be destroyed.

As most planners know, a site specific approach to planning is too restricted in scale. The destruction of a wood lot or a marsh may not appear to be of consequence; but from a larger perspective, the cumulative impact of small-scale activities may result in a reduction in the diversity of flora and fauna in the Great Lakes Basin. It is for this reason that the preservation of Natural areas cannot be undertaken on a site by site basis—there has to be an overall strategy to the preservation of shorefront land.

Implementation

An overall strategy for the use of the Great Lakes shoreline would certainly be ideal. Who would develop this strategy? Who would implement it?

The development of a separate coastal zone agency is out of the question; land use management in Ontario is already fragmented among too many agencies.

It could be argued that the Conservation Authorities be given the role of managing recreation along the Great Lakes. Upon further examination though, it becomes obvious that this would not be feasible. The Conservation Authorities are generally small-scale regional agencies whose direct land use management is restricted to Conservation Areas. Furthermore, the Conservation Authorities vary significantly in size and capability. Thus, it is doubtful that a shoreline policy could be implemented and enforced evenly by such a heterogeneous group. Shoreline management for recreational purposes also seems to be far beyond the original mandate of the Conservation Authorities; which is, of course, water management for flood control. Admittedly, Conservation Authorities may play a major role in implementing a shoreline policy on a regional basis—but they must be guided by an overall strategy.

The overall strategy should be co-ordinated by the Ministry of Natural Resources, not fragmented among too many agencies. Some of which, most notably the Toronto Harbour Commission, have not managed their land base in manner that represents good planning.

An overall recreational and open space strategy for the Great Lakes could be designed along the same lines as the Niagara Escarpment Plan—except that local authorities would be responsible for the actual implementation. The development of the waterfront plan would have to involve public consultation. The final result would be a plan identifying areas to be preserved in their natural state, and areas where development would be permitted—subject to conditions outlined in the Plan. Municipal governments would be required to bring their Official Plans and Zoning By-laws into conformity with the Shorefront strategy.

As with the Niagara Escarpment Plan, certain areas, would be targeted for acquisition by public agencies. The intent would be to ensure that all regions of the Province have adequate public access to the shorefront, and to protect areas of natural or scientific interest.

Conclusion

Given the importance of the Great Lakes shoreline to the recreational climate of Ontario, and from an environmental perspective, there is a need to adopt a more co-ordinated approach to the management of the Great Lakes shorefront. The current piecemeal approach to the management of this coastline does not reflect the true significance of this resource to the Province. Although many of the Province's natural resources have already been lost or degraded, it is not too late to prepare a viable strategy that would save much of the Great Lakes coastline from a similar fate.

S. Robert Hazra is a Consulting Planner with Miller O'Dell Planning Consultants, St. Catharines office.
(See previous issue for bibliography.)

ONTARIO MUNICIPAL BOARD

INTERPRETATION OF SECT.52(7) RE APPEAL PERIOD IN KEPPEL CONSENT DECISION

by Pierre Beeckmans

On February 21, 1991, the municipal board declined to hear an appeal against two severances because the appeal was lodged more than 30 days after the Grey County Planning Approval Committee's decision. The Board was asked to review its decision, pursuant to Section 42 of the OMB Act.

The committee's decision is dated February 9, 1990. Should that day be counted as one of the 30 days set out in the statute? The Board was not persuaded that the use of the word "within" means that the day of the making of the decision should be counted as the first day of the appeal period. It found that it was not necessary to add the word "after" in order to clarify the matter. The first day of the 30-day period was February 10, 1990. The thirtieth day was March 11, 1990, a Sunday. An appeal filed March 12 was deemed to be within the appeal period.

The Board proceeded to hear arguments from planners for and against the two severances in the Township of Keppel. They disagreed on whether the severances conformed to the official plan. The applicant's planner emphasized the lack of objection from any provincial ministry but the Board nevertheless agreed with the appellant's planner that the applications conflicted with key policies respecting the goals, objectives and principles of the official plan.

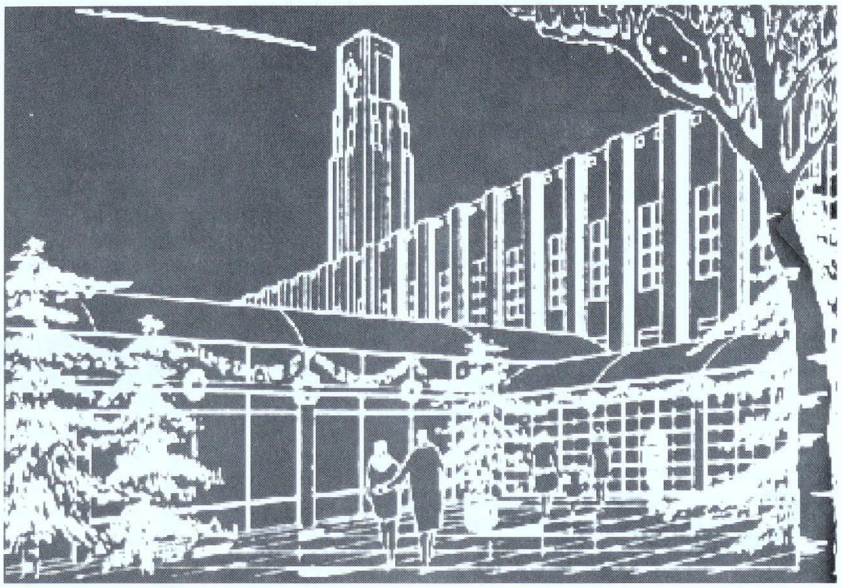
The appeals were allowed in a decision dated April 4, 1991.

Source: Decision of the Ontario Municipal Board Lennox application, Fidler appeal. Files: C 900330, C 900331.

Pierre Beeckmans is a senior planner with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

A PUBLIC MARKET IN WINTER

Five students of the School of Urban Planning, McGill University, won first place in an international contest on urban planning. Peter Aterman, Brigitte Aussant, Marlene Derovin, Jean Mercille and Xiaozhong Wu won the $5,000 award at the fifth International Winter Cities conference held in Montreal in winter.



This project proposes using public markets all year round. The aim is to forge closer ties with the neighbourhood, by designing a marketplace adapted to the northern climate, combined with a program of seasonal activities.

The key element of the proposal is the addition of glass arcades to the existing building, a portion of which could be closed off in winter to shelter the market's activities. The arrangement would create a series of outdoor courtyards inside the market for seasonal activities such as skating, concerts, exhibitions or simply an extension of the market's commercial activities.

Combined with a program of activities outside the market, such as skating on the canal nearby, snow sculpture contests, or ice castles, the project would allow the public market to recover its prime vocation, i.e., that of a neighbourhood gathering place.

FLEXIBILITY THE GOAL

As you have read in previous issues of the Journal, we are currently doing a Business Plan to help determine the future of the Journal. One of the goals of the process is to introduce more certainty into the design and production process in a way that does not sacrifice the flexibility that has been a hallmark of the publication's modis operandi.

One element of this flexibility has been a reluctance to keep prospective authors waiting too long—hence the regular increases in size to 28 pages. Unfortunately, our budget simply will not stretch to cover the wealth of material accumulating in our files. First, we must cut remaining issues this year to 20 pages. Second, we are adjusting our publication schedule to coincide with the calendar year. This will help administration of billings and advertising contracts. Thus, volume 8, Number 1 (January-February) will be published at the end of January 1993. This volume, 7, will wrap up with No. 5, with adjustments to be accorded to our advertisers.

Although the Business Plan will address this matter in detail, we will clearly be more concerned with the length of articles in future and may have to be a bit more brutal with the blue pencil.

In the meantime, all of us involved with the Journal continue to congratulate the membership as a whole for generating and sustaining such a substantial flow of excellent material for your fellow members.

Glenn Miller
Editor

I cannot allow Professor Barry Wellar's remarks "New Planning for Ontario: Déja vu all over again?", Ontario Planning Journal, Volume 7, No. 2, to go unchallenged.

He is upset with the Commission because "not only was this area i.e., Ottawa Carleton put on hold for 4 months before the Commission introduced itself, and its task, but Ottawa-Carleton was ignominiously omitted from the Commission's list of locations for scheduled meetings and speeches."

Nothing could be further from the truth. From the beginning of the Commission's work in defining planning goals for the Province, Ottawa-Carleton was represented on the urban working group through myself. The Commission has visited Ottawa Carleton on many occasions:

- in October 1991 to talk to professionals and interested people at three different meetings
- in January 1992 for a public forum
- in January 1992 to meet Regional Council
- in June 1992 to meet Regional Council

In addition, people from many sides of planning and development who live and work in Ottawa-Carleton have been invited to contribute through the Commission's working groups.

Professor Wellar complains that the Ottawa-Carleton meeting was "weak in content, disorganized and short on confidence-building." Furthermore, "there was no evidence of anyone recording the proceeding for future reference by the Commissioners or staff."

My experience in working with the Commission is very different. Meetings have agenda (to the point of being so focused sometimes it is difficult to cover all things participants would like). All three Commissioners take notes. Notes of meetings are prepared. Follow-up letters are sent. Is Professor Wellar on the same planet, never mind talking about the same Commission?

Developing a new planning system for Ontario is no easy task. The Commission has shown itself to be open to new ideas and discussions on them. It deserves the support of the planning profession, so,will Barry Wellar stop whining and join in on what I believe to be an interesting and constructive process.

N. Tunnacliffe, MCIP
Planning Commissioner
Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton

As a result of publishing the two-part article entitled "The Teleport and its Application to City and Regional Planning" in your March/April and May/June editions, I have had a tremendous response for the paper delivered in Japan in 1991 entitled "Planning for the new interface between advances in Technology and the human experience." Subscribers of ICURR, who may be interested in the paper, would indeed go through ICURR (416) 973-8754 to arrange for a copy. Otherwise I would still be happy to arrange a copy for non-subscribers (416) 863-2023.

John Jung, Director of Planning and Development, Toronto Harbour Commission.

VISION 2020: THE SUSTAINABLE REGION

Hamilton-Wentworth's goals for itself for 2020

Sustainable Development is positive change that does not undermine the environment or social systems on which we depend. It requires a coordinated approach to planning and policy making that involves public participation. Its success depends upon widespread understanding of the critical relationship between people and their environment and the will to make necessary changes. Principles of sustainable development encompass the following:

- fulfillment of human needs for peace, clean air and water, food, shelter, education, and useful and satisfying employment;
- maintenance of ecological integrity through careful stewardship, rehabilitation, reduction in wastes and protection of diverse and important natural species and systems;
- provision for self-determination through public involvement in the definition and development of local solutions to environmental and development problems; and,
- achievement of equity with the fairest possible sharing of limited resources among contemporaries and between our generation and that of our descendants.

These basic values underlie Vision 2020. The vision expresses ideas contributed by citizens through several phases of community participation. It is the beginning of an ongoing process leading to a sustainable region.

An Overview

In the year 2020, Hamilton-Wentworth supports a population consistent with the carrying capacity of the region. People live in a region made up of compact urban core areas, surrounded by a rural landscape that includes productive family farms, hamlets and a continuous network of natural areas.

We are an environmentally conscious community where the existence of all living things is cherished and where all can breathe fresh air, swim in clean streams and lakes and have ample opportunity to observe and experience the wonders of the natural world.

We are an economically, socially and culturally diverse community that encourages opportunities for individuals, reduces inequities and ensures full participation for all in community life.

We are a caring community that gives opportunity and support to all its members, including children, the aged, people with disabilities, immigrants and refugees. People live longer in good health.

Finally, we are a vibrant, vigorous community which builds on existing strengths and attracts wealth producing businesses that work in partnership with government and the community to create a diverse, sustainable economy. Economic growth incorporates non-polluting, energy efficient and environmentally friendly businesses, including traditional manufacturing industries that have been supported and helped to become environmentally sustainable. Business, government, labour and the community have great capacity for innovation in response to global change.

The Landscape

The health and beauty of the countryside and townscapes are a source of great civic pride. A protected system of natural areas threads throughout the region, preserving and improving our natural heritage. This system of natural areas and connecting corridors allows wildlife to migrate, enhancing their chances of reproducing and finding food and shelter. A recreational greenway gives residents access to this system of natural areas, in ways that do not threaten ecological processes. Recreation and the needs of wildlife for a protected habitat co-exist.

As a community, we cherish a clean, healthy environment and work to prevent ecological degradation. Waste-reduction, energy-efficiency and respect for ecological systems characterize all aspects of community life and decision making, including government, business and industry. Citizens abide by environmental laws and regulations and help educate each other on ways of living in harmony with the natural world. We are a model for other communities in the way in which we integrate short-term economic benefits, long-term environmental and social costs, and indirect economic costs in our evaluation of public and private initiatives.

Our Communities

Urban areas are laid out, and individual buildings designed and located, in ways that maintain community character, respect our cultural and natural heritage, and satisfy people's needs and desires. Urban development occurs within firm boundaries. Green corridors bring nature into the city, giving people easy and convenient access to the open countryside, natural areas and continuous public open space along the bayshore and lakeshore. Our neighbourhoods are models of energy-efficiency, waste-reduction and respect for nature. Human needs for space, privacy, safety, and aesthetic appeal are fulfilled.

In the year 2020, we know our neighbours. We live in communities and neighbourhoods together with people of all ages and walks of life. Different kinds of activities and land uses are mixed closely together, so that we can walk to meet our daily needs for work, recreation and other services. Each neighbourhood has a central gathering place where essential services such as shopping, health care, education and recreation are clustered around an attractive, car-free common open space. This gives everyone an opportunity to participate in all aspects of community life. Each neighbourhood has a full range of housing types and prices allowing people to live in their communities throughout their lives. This is true also for former suburban industrial-business parks, which have been re-developed with homes and other activities mixed in with workplaces.

Hamilton-Wentworth is a warm and friendly place where people actively care for their community and are concerned for one another's welfare. The streets and public areas are safe at all times. Neighbourhoods have strong local identity. Residents actively participate in community life, to a large extent, controlling the pace and design of change. The decision-making process is easily understood and open to involvement by all. Politicians and public employees take the actions needed to achieve long-term community plans.

Getting Around

An integrated public transportation system serves the entire region in an affordable, efficient, and accessible way. Clean forms of transportation predominate. Public streets are designed and managed (including signals and regulations) to accommodate comfortably and safely, public transit, cyclists, pedestrians and automobiles as complementary forms of transportation. The integrated transportation system gives access to all basic needs. Public transit provides all citizens with easy access to activity areas, as well as to neighbouring communities and cities through convenient and frequent inter-urban transit. Most people can walk or cycle to work because jobs and housing are near one another. Major roads have minimal noise and pollution impacts on adjacent lands, and follow routes that cause little damage to the natural and human environment.

Quality of Life

In the year 2020, disease and disability are being progressively reduced. All of us achieve our full potential in a safe, non-violent environment. Everyone has adequate food, shelter, income and education. Everyone has a valued role to play in family, work and community. We have access to affordable and appropriate health care, regardless of geography, income, age, gender, or cultural background. Cultural institutions and activities are recognized and supported for their contribution to community life and economic health. Cultural institutions reflect our historical development and the contributions of our diverse population.

All of us take responsibility for our health, citizenship and public decision-making. As citizens, we are active participants in cooperative, region-wide community planning. Government is coordinated, efficient and easily accessible. A well-educated, literate population is seen as a total community responsibility. Schools are leaders in effective learning and excellence in teaching. Lifelong learning is valued and supported across the community. All citizens are knowledgeable about sustainable development and quality of life issues. Our cultural institutions and groups advocate values consistent with environmental sustainability. Educational institutions instill sustainable values and citizens pursue sustainable lifestyles.

Livelihood

A stable, flexible economy is achieved through the effective use and development of all community resources. This means not only land, capital equipment, and community services, but the continued improvement and retention of a skilled workforce. Economic strategies, set through a cooperative process involving citizens, business, government, education and labour, include effective job-training and re-training programs. All people can find employment opportunities in the region.

The region is home to numerous firms that carry out research and development and manufacture in sustainable economic sectors. Successful companies are characterized by high production quality and worker productivity, and innovative employment practices such as on-site daycare, job sharing, work-at-home arrangements, and cooperative, community-based job creation. These companies provide a solid tax base for the region. Business and industry actively participate with government in advanced skill training programs, including programs designed to enhance employment accessibility for people with disabilities. Firms are at the forefront of energy efficiency; and pollution control and prevention; and material re-use and recycling.

Hamilton-Wentworth is now home to a whole new economic sector based on the natural resources of the region. Hamilton Harbour is a base for nature-oriented tourism and recreation, that includes the Niagara Escarpment, waterfalls and Carolinian forest areas of the region. The harbour is a vibrant centrepiece for the community and is accessible, clean, and humming with diversity. Recreation co-exists with use of the harbour as an essential marine transportation link.

Agriculture, now considered a strategic community resource, is a vibrant part of the regional economy, which makes a valued contribution to our overall quality of life. The farming community is economically viable and environmentally sensitive, capable of supporting family farming operations that are competitive internationally. The farming community is in harmony with neighbouring urban areas using clean, organic urban waste to enhance the soil. Prime agricultural land is recognized by all citizens as irreplaceable and strong policies and programs ensure its continued use for food production. Moreover, agricultural soils are continuously improved through the widespread use of sustainable farm practices. Vacation farming ensures an enhanced profile for local agriculture.

"Vision 2020: The Sustainable Region" was prepared by Hamilton-Wentworth's Regional Chair's Task Force on Sustainable Development. For information, contact Mark Bekkering, Task Force Co-ordinator (416) 546-2150.

TRANSIT AND LAND USE: EXPERIENCES IN ONTARIO

by Neal A. Irwin

This paper draws on recent trends and initiatives in Ontario as a basis for discussing interactions between transit and land use. The paper was also presented to the 1992 Ontario Urban Transit Association Annual Conference in Toronto, April 1992. The focus is on ways in which land use and urban design can become more transit-supportive.

Because automobiles require a great deal of land for roads and parking, auto-oriented urban areas tend to have relatively widely separated land uses and are often laid out in a way which creates circuitous and sometimes dangerous routes for those who would rather walk than drive. Conversely, because urban transit uses space efficiently and supports more compact, mixed use communities, it is compatible with policy to create more people-oriented urban areas which are less costly to build and maintain, require less energy for transportation purposes and are more compatible with clean air and other environmental goals.

Land Use, Service Levels and Ridership

It is also well known that, while urban transit helps create and support compact, mixed-use urban development, the reverse is also true. There is a strong relationship between annual per capita ridership and the level of service provided (vehicle-hours per capita) in Ontario's 59 municipal transit properties. The level of service which can be economically provided depends, in turn, on having a relatively compact, mixed use urban form which creates enough ridership to support the service.

The good news: compact, mixed use urban development supports good transit service which, in turn, serves and makes possible the compact urban form: a true symbiotic relationship. The bad news: low density, homogeneous land use cannot be served economically by transit and creates auto-dependency which, in turn, tends to destroy the cohesiveness of central and suburban areas, making them harder to serve by transit: a good example of a vicious cycle.

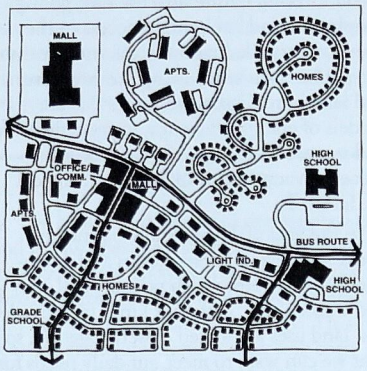
Guidelines and Principles

During the past six months, our firm has been examining these interactions on behalf of the Government of Ontario, with the intent of developing guidelines and principles to assist urban land use and transportation planners—and many others involved in the urban development process—to create transit-supportive land use and urban design.

Scale Factors

Such guidelines are applicable at a number of scales: most broadly at the regional scale and more specifically at the site scale, with intermediate scales at the municipality, district and neighbourhood levels. In terms of land use, "macro" land use distributions and densities are relevant at the regional scale, while site land uses related to pedestrian, transit and auto access apply at the other, "micro" end of the scale. In terms of urban design, the broad layouts of road and transit networks are basic factors affecting transit viability at the regional, municipal and district scales, while the design and lay-

AUTO-ORIENTED SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT



TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE DEVELOPMENT

ADAPTED FROM: "THE TRADITIONAL NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT: HOW WILL TRAFFIC ENGINEERS RESPOND?" BY FRANK SPIELBERG, ITE JOURNAL, SEPT. 1989

Road system and related transit routes can be served effectively by continuous, evenly spaced transit routes. Major traffic generators and higher density land uses are located at the intersections of arterial and collector roads where they can be served by two transit routes. Residential, employment, institutional and mixed use areas are organized by a legible set of city blocks allowing compact development served by a convenient street network.

In contrast, the urban structure is designed as a typically auto-dependent suburban area, with major traffic generators set well back from arterial roads capable of providing transit service and with no direct pedestrian access between the low density residential area, the higher density residential area, the school and the shopping mall. Faced with such circuitous and unattractive routes, pedestrian and transit riders will be few and virtually everyone will travel by automobile.

out of city blocks and streets, building frontages and entrances, etc. are critically important to transit use and supportiveness at the district, neighbourhood and site scales. The guidelines being developed will apply at the different scales to varying degrees.

TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE LAND USE

Urban Structure

Urban structure—the degree to which an urban area contains corridors and nodes of more intense development and the manner in which these relate to each other—is important, since such structure helps support transit routes and is, in turn, well served by them. In larger urban areas, major nodes and corridors may be served and linked by various types of rapid transit, while bus routes play a similar role within such nodes/corridors and in smaller areas. Transfer nodes—also referred to as "gateways" in Greater Toronto—should be strategically located to intercept auto trips at the edges of major nodes and to provide convenient multi-modal transfers at the intersection points of trunk transit routes.

Development Densities

Compact urban areas are more transit supportive than low density areas, as noted earlier. As development densities increase they create greater numbers of potential passengers, generating higher revenues which in turn allow more frequent service to be provided, thereby attracting even more ridership. Typically, viable bus service requires a residential density of at least 10 units/hectare (4 units per acre), or higher if possible. Rapid transit generally requires considerably higher densities, e.g., 30-80+ units/hectare (12-30+ units per acre) and larger catchment areas.

Land Use Mix

Successful transit routes often serve mixed use corridors and nodes in which there is a relatively intimate mix of residential, commercial, retail, institutional, industrial and recreational uses. These tend to generate a variety of relatively short trips, in both directions along the routes and throughout the day and evening. In contrast, a transit route joining a large homogeneous residential area to a relatively distant node devoted exclusively to employment, even if the latter is relatively high in density—experiences high peak demand in terms of both direction and

Ministry of Municipal Affairs

Dave Cooke, Minister

777 Bay Street

Toronto, Ontario,

M5G 2E5

THE PLANNING ACT

POLICY STATEMENT

Wetlands

A Statement of Ontario Government policy Issued under the Authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act 1983

Approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council
Order in Council No. 1448/92
May 14, 1992

time of day, and relatively long trips which fill up the bus but do not produce as much revenue as many, shorter, on-off trips.

TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE URBAN DESIGN

Arterial Road Network

At the regional scale, a well-spaced and continuous road grid is essential to support bus transit. In general, arterial roads should be at 1,000-2,000 metre spacing and collector roads at 500-1,000 metre spacing. If bus routes are between 500 and 1,000 metres apart, most people living and working in the intervening areas will be within a 400 metre walk of the nearest bus stop, generally considered to be a maximum desirable walking distance.

There are other good reasons, as well, for having a network of arterial and collector roads with relatively close spacing. Such a network disperses traffic over a larger number of roads, rather than concentrating it on a few large arterial roads. This, in turn, means that the roads do not have to be as wide as would otherwise be the case: they can be four lanes rather than six lanes, for example. The narrower roads are more pedestrian-friendly in terms of crossings, other pedestrian amenities and transit-supportive built form as discussed further below. More dispersed traffic and lower volumes on a given arterial road can also contribute to smoother traffic flow and less delay for transit vehicles as well as other traffic.

Regional Road and Transit

In larger urban areas with expressways, these will generally be much more widely spaced, as indicated. Larger urban areas may also have commuter rail and/or rapid transit lines (express bus, busway, light rapid transit, heavy rapid transit) generally in a radial orientation to serve the central business district and link it to subregional centres.

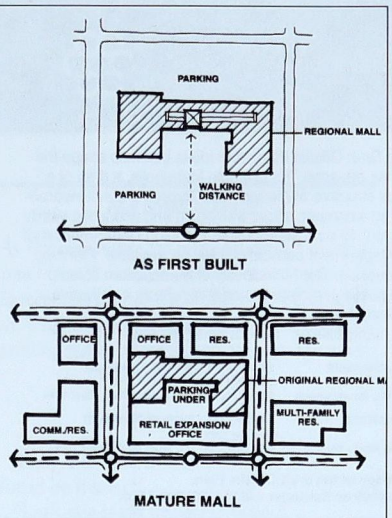
Streetscape and Built Form

At the smaller scale of districts, neighbourhoods and sites, street amenities should be provided on transit routes for transit users and pedestrians, such as continuous sidewalks, trees, benches and other street furniture, bus shelters and waiting areas, and canopies or arcades along building fronts. Easy pedestrian access should be provided between residential areas and transit stops, using separate, well-lit pedestrian pathways if necessary. Continuous, people-oriented building frontages are desirable in mixed use nodes, avoiding major gaps except for public squares or parks. Building entrances should be oriented to the street and buildings should be close to the streetline, to reduce walking distances and improve pedestrian access. This means that parking, where required, should be provided *behind* the building rather than between it and the street on streets providing transit service. Uses which are oriented toward pedestrian traffic, such as stores, restaurants and services, should be located mainly at-grade. The design and layout of arterial and collector roads should be suitable for accommodating transit routes and vehicles, not only in terms of spacing and continuity but also in terms of pavement strength and geometric characteristics such as turning radii.

Transfer nodes, either between auto and transit and/or between different transit routes, should be located not only to take advantage of major roads and transit routes and their intersection points but also to encourage the intensification of mixed land uses around the transfer node. These uses will generate transit trips to help support the transit routes and the resulting higher service frequency will, in turn, serve and help to support more intensive land uses.

Evolution: Thinking Ahead

The range of sizes, structures, densities and land use mixes represented by urban centres throughout Ontario—and the relative success of transit systems in these



MALL EVOLUTION

The top half of the illustration shows a shopping mall as it might first be built in a relatively low density, auto-oriented community, with parking in front of and behind the mall building. Pedestrians approaching the mall from the single bus stop serving it must walk across the parking lot.

The street layout and urban built forms are such that the initial mall can evolve into a more intense, mixed use area as illustrated in the bottom half of the slide. The mall continues to exist but becomes part of an extended retail and office complex with some residential development in the same block. Adjoining blocks contain additional residential development at varying densities, office and mixed commercial/residential uses. Additional bus routes are added on the grid network of arterial roads as required to serve and support the intensifying land use.

areas—provide useful examples for those concerned with future urban development and transportation.

Urban Areas Evolve

One factor that comes through strongly is that most urban areas are in a continuing state of change. Existing built-up areas evolve as a result of industrial relocation, employment changes, immigration, redevelopment, infilling, park system improvements and other activities which, over time, can profoundly affect the density, mix and built form of urban areas, even those which are apparently stable.

Within the influence area of large metropolitan areas, such as the Greater Toronto Area and the Ottawa-Carleton region, smaller villages and towns may evolve primarily into dormitory communities, largely residential in nature with heavy commuting volumes to central parts of the region. Other suburban communities may be able to maintain a better balance between residential and employment growth, developing in the process a regional sub-centre which may serve both as a local downtown and also as a transfer node for travel to and from other parts of the region. More isolated cities and towns, beyond the orbit of major metropolitan centres, may also experience continuous employment and residential growth or possibly a boom-and-bust cycle of employment levels such as many Canadian communities have experienced twice in the past ten years. Even those towns and cities which are relatively stable in size are probably experiencing changes in the mix of employment types and the nature and extent of residential neighbourhoods.

It is useful to draw on this range of experience so that those concerned with planning urban development and transportation can look at the experience of larger urban areas, consider the strengths and weaknesses demonstrated by them, and plan their own future accordingly. By having in mind a future urban structure and transportation system towards which the urban centre could or should evolve, it is possible to establish the basic framework now while leaving open sufficient flexibility so that the area can and will be encouraged to evolve as desired.

Another problem with the "typical suburban development" pattern is the fact that it tends to concentrate vehicular traffic onto a relatively small number of major arterial roads owing to the lack of a continuous grid system. This means that arterial roads which do exist (such as that shown dividing the two types of development) must be wide (e.g., six or eight lanes) and, because of all traffic must funnel onto them, they will be subject to severe congestion and traffic delays, because of the lack of suitable alternative routes for traffic. These delays will, of course, affect buses as well as private automobile and truck traffic. Comparison of the two street patterns shows also that it would be quite difficult for an urban structure such as that illustrated at the top of the sketch plan to evolve into the more transit-supportive and pedestrian-oriented type of development shown in the bottom half. It is obviously much more economical to start with the type of road network and urban block pattern desired at the time when the initial subdivisions and major institutional/employment areas are being laid out and, in doing so, to think ahead recognizing that land uses along the major arterial roads and possibly some of the collector roads will tend to intensify over time, allowing sufficient flexibility for this to happen.

Conclusions

In common with governments in other parts of Canada and the world, the provincial and many municipal governments in Ontario are developing and applying policies to favour greater use of transit. These policies, which are motivated by environmental and economic imperatives as well as community concerns, require that a more integrated approach be taken between land use and transportation in our urban areas.

Ontario experience strongly supports the observation that land use/urban design and transit can be mutually supportive or, conversely, that certain types of land use and urban design can render transit ineffective and uneconomical. The emerging policies therefore seek to build on the positive aspects of this relationship, creating urban structures, street networks and urban design which will support transit services and related pedestrian movements and encouraging transit services which will both serve and support the resulting land uses.

This article is taken from papers presented by Neal Irwin to the Canadian and Ontario Urban Transit Association.

Neal Irwin is a Managing Director of the IBI Group

OBITUARY

A.L.S. NASH

COLONEL A.L. STANLEY NASH, OBE, MM, BASc, OLS, a former President of the Town Planning Institute of Canada, died in Toronto on May 11, 1992, in his ninety-eighth year. He also served as a member of the Board of Directors of the International American Society of Planning Officials.

A man of warmth and understanding, he brought a great sense of dedication to the planning profession. He was always ready to listen and regarded his role in planning administration as a great mission.

Colonel Nash came to the Ontario Department of Planning and Development in 1945. The Ontario Government had mandated that town planning would be of utmost importance in post-war development. Colonel Nash brought to the Community Planning Branch a wealth of experience as an Ontario Land Surveyor and as a Professional Engineer.

In his leadership role in planning, Colonel Nash recommended legislative changes in The Planning Act and instituted modifications in procedures to accommodate the ever increasing urban development which was sweeping Ontario. He understood the problems facing municipalities and sought greater appreciation and knowledge for those with professional planning responsibilities. Colonel Stanley Nash—a man of greatness, beloved and revered. Long may our memory of him remain.

Bill Dempsey, Mary Lou Johnston and Bill Stretton

EXAM B: "WILL I EVER BE READY?"

By Barry Peyton

MEMBERSHIP

As you may have read in recent correspondence from Council, several alternatives are underway to meet concerns about membership issues head on. Beginning with this issue, the Journal will be printing stories offering a variety of perspectives on membership matters.

EXAM "B"

They Tell You the Questions...What Could be Easier??

"Let's put it off until I'm ready"

"Will I ever be ready to write?"

"So and so failed it and he was an experienced Planner. "

"I don't understand the questions."

"Maybe OPPI/CIP will change the rules."

These are put-off questions and statements that most candidates have considered at one time or another.

Exam B has a high failure rate and for this reason alone, should not be underestimated.

Yes, they tell you the questions before the exam! What could be easier? Well, this does little to prepare you for organizational skills, interactive skills, interactive skills, the knowledge that comes from experience and the wealth of written material that exists about planning. After all, can you commit four hours of written material to memory?

After a session on "How to Prepare for Exam 'B'" held at Deerhurst Resort at the October 1991 OPPI Conference, it was obvious that "frustration" was prolific among past Exam B candidates and many people felt a need to change the membership requirements. Others felt a need to tackle this exam head on and this resulted in some candidates forming a study group with sessions being held at a central location once a month for eight months.

Seven interested planners chose to form an organized study group to meet with OPPI examiners to discuss the various questions, share ideas, share articles pertinent to the questions, talk to people who have passed Exam B and above all, to build confidence in all present.

In was evident after the first meeting that the confidence and enthusiasm level increased significantly. Each question was analyzed twice so that they knew what was being asked and the different ways that the questions could be answered.

Attendance at these sessions varied from two to eight persons. Even if some missed this did not matter with information being passed on to those who could not attend.

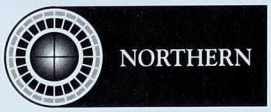
One word of advice, if you are planning a study group such as this, be sure to assign a Chair to control the sessions. This kind of session must be controlled or all relevant topics maybe sidetracked since you know what it is like when planners get together.

When it was felt people were prepared to write, a date was chosen about four months in advance and a request was made to the Institute to allow the group to write on the same date and same place. An invigilator was assigned to the group and everyone was ready to write on the appointed day.

The exam has now been written but the results are not yet out.

I thought I had better write this article first just in case my enthusiasm drops after learning the results. Pass or fail, this study method does work and I highly recommend it.

Barry Peyton is a Land Planner with the consulting firm of Reid and Associates Limited in Barrie, Ontario.



SUDBURY WINS AWARDS FOR LAND REHABILITATION

In recognition of its contribution to environmental enhancement through a massive land reclamation project, the Regional Municipality of Sudbury received two awards in 1992, the 1992 United Nations Local Government Honours Award, presented in Rio De Janeiro, June 1992, and the United States 1992 Chevron Conservation Award presented in Washington, D.C.

The natural image of the Region of Sudbury suffered as a result of past forestry and mining activities and natural events, like forest fire. The Region's Vegetation Enhancement Technical Advisory Committee (VETAC) was formed to take on the task of rehabilitating the some 10,000 hectares of land that had been affected.

Research showed that it was possible to establish ground cover on barren sites. The VETAC volunteers went to work. Since VETAC was established, more than 80 representatives of the community, including Inco Limited and Falconbridge Limited, Laurentian University, Cambrian College, Ontario Government ministries and many individuals with technical expertise served on the committee.

With generous funding assistance of $14 million from the Federal and Provincial Governments, some 3,200 people were hired.

The program focussed largely on the Region's highway corridors and neighborhoods. Today these areas bear no resemblance to their former appearance. Grass and more than 1.5 million trees replace the starkness of hard pan soil. 3,000 hectares has been revitalized and another 1,000 hectares significantly improved.

The land reclamation program has received wide provincial, national and international recognition for its contribution to the heightening of world awareness of environmental rehabilitation. Over the years, it received The Government of Canada Environmental Achievement Awards, 1990, The 1990 Lieutenant Governor's Conservation Award, the 1990 Arboricultural Award of Merit, presented by the International Society of Arboriculture Ontario Inc. and the 1986 Community Improvement Award presented by the Ontario Horticultural Association.

Members of Regional Councils over the past 14 years saw this as a major initiative to create a sense of pride in the people for their community.

MACBLO AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION TO BUILD NORTHERN ONTARIO'S FIRST O.C.C. PLANT

by B. MacFarlane
abridged from an article, *The North Bay Nugget* 92/06/27

For the community of Sturgeon Falls, recycling is the key to MacMillan Blodel's future in the town.

The Loyal Pulp and Paper Mill is switching to recycling next spring at the mill's corrugated medium paper operation.

The $14.5 million plant (a joint venture between MacMillan Blodel and the West Nipissing Economic Development Corporation) will extract plastics from cardboard through a repulper system and turn them into 100 percent recycled materials, eliminating the current virgin fibre production.

Without recycling, the mill faced possible closure and the town would lose 150 jobs and over $1 million annually in municipal taxes.

Financing for the $14.5 million project came from various government and commercial loans, including a local $1 million fundraising project to cover the costs of borrowing.

All recycling equipment has been ordered and is expected to arrive in the fall. Workers are busy preparing the site in the old hardboard area of the mill. Materials for recycling will arrive in bale form from all over the province.

The final recycled product has a guaranteed client—MacMillan Bathurst, a joint venture between MacBlo and Stone Consolidated. The first 70,000 tons of recycled product from the mill will be shipped to box-making plants across Canada owned by MacMillan Bathurst.

John Jung reports on recent activities related to Teleports and long haul communications facilities. (See letter, P. 9)

In addition to the response, which included extensive discussions with developers, planning consultants, officials, decision makers, and service providers on the topic of fibre optics and an integrated telecommunications system for Toronto and other cities, I would like to report on the following flurry of activities in recent weeks and months which may be of interest to your readers:

(i) On June 12, 1992, the CRTC ended the monopoly of long haul communications which would permit others to enter the marketplace, furthering competition and opening a variety of opportunities in the telecommunications field. Parts of this ruling are currently being appealed;

(ii) Metro has included a significant policy statement in its forthcoming Official Plan supporting the expansion of electronic communications networks and the potential to export Metro services, technologies and expertise;

(iii) The Metropolitan Toronto Telecommunications Committee was created at the July 2, 1992 meeting of Metro Council which also called for Metro Toronto to declare itself a "Telecommunications Centre of Excellence," establishing policies and programs in support of the telecommunications industry;

(iv) Metro is currently in the process of moving its entire staff into a state-of-the art intelligent building. As much as Toronto's City Hall symbolically heralded the way for Toronto's new architectural and community spirit in the 60's, Metro Hall may become recognized as the symbol for Toronto's emergence as a significant global player in the field of information driven economic activity as we enter the next millennium;

(v) Metro is also currently looking at future opportunities with respect to its extensive fibre optic system, which connects not only its major road networks but also other Metro facilities;

(vi) Provincial Ministries are looking actively at the opportunities for telecommunications in the province. For example, the Minister of Culture and Communications announced on March 17, 1992, the development of a Telecommunications

Strategy for Ontario. An Advisory Committee was formed and will be looking into four areas: economic development, quality of life, the telecommunication sector, and the Province's use of telecommunications to serve the public and manage its programs. The draft report may be out as early as September of this year;

(vii) On August 10, 1992 the City of Toronto's Commissioner of Public Works and the Environment will be seeking Council approval for a Request for Proposals from the private sector to develop a communications/data information system in the downtown core.

(viii) At a recent meeting of the City of Toronto's Economic Development Committee, I submitted a brief proposal on an approach to creating an "Intelligent City" and I also tabled the idea of creating a joint public/private Telecommunications Development Corporation. Another idea is to investigate the merits and opportunities to create a new public utility specifically to develop and maintain an integrated telecommunications system.

(ix) On May 27, 1992, the Government of Canada announced a $40 million investment in R&D in communication technology for Montreal. Of this, $30 million will fund new multimedia research at the Canadian Workplace Automation Research Centre (which will also have a strategic network linking York University's Cultech facilities); $7.5 million will go to the World Electronic Data Interchange Institute; and $2.5 million will help to fund projects in advanced communications undertaken by private corporations. According to the press release it claims "that the Montreal region is a focus of attention in the Canadian telecommunications industry."

The Toronto region has all me necessary ingredients to make it a premier centre for the telecommunications industry in North America. With greater awareness and interest in this important economic development endeavour for Toronto, at the local and Provincial levels, it will become especially important for the Federal Government to begin to consider assisting and supporting the emerging Toronto area initiative as well. Without this support, Toronto's hope to carve out a unique competitive edge in the global marketplace, may be seriously undermined.

John Jung
is Director of Planning & Development
Toronto Harbour Commission

CONFERENCE ON AUTO-FREE CITIES

by Vikki Armstrong

"The Conference ... delivered all and more than promised. Every session I attended offered an excellent mix of private and public sector opinions, of private and public individuals in an atmosphere of candid, open, and productive discussion." Linda Russell, Telecommuting Consultants International, in a letter to the organizers.

Dealing with the increasing number of private automobiles clogging up urban streets and affecting the quality of the urban environment is not a task for traffic engineers and city planners alone. City-dwellers from all walks of life are tackling this problem in their own ways. To bring together people who are working on these issues, Transportation Options organized "Car Dependence: Costs, Causes and Cures, the Second International Conference on Auto-Free Cities." For three days in May, the Toronto conference drew more than 500 people—planners, traffic engineers, economists, cyclists, autoworkers, environmentalists, parents, activists, business people, artists, cultural theorists, visionaries of every description. With 26 workshops, nine plenary speakers, a reception and tribute to the Stop Spadina Expressway campaign, a children's program, a high school student's program, a teacher's curriculum workshop, an "on the road" picnic on St. George Street, a video festival, and lengthy action sessions on Toronto Islands, it is fair to say that the complexity of car dependence and how to move beyond it was explored from many possible angles and sometimes even celebrated.

Planning for People, Not for Cars

Almost all attendees held the view that for too long we have planned our cities for the convenience of automobiles at the expense of the quality of life of the citizens. In the workshop "Keeping our Transit Systems on Track," George Haikalis, of Auto-Free New York, listed a number of reasons to reduce automobile use: to make New York City (or any city) more livable, to bolster economic activity, to maintain mobility for the widest range of citizens, to reduce pollution and conserve resources, and to reduce deaths and injuries from traffic accidents. In the workshop "Urban Traffic Management," panelists Judy Cohen of the Toronto Transit Commission and Marjorie Fulton of Ottawalk, a citizen advocacy organization, both referred to the need to adopt the Sewell Commission priority list for planners, an idea that was echoed in many sessions. The list gives priority to, in descending order, 1. walking 2. cycling 3. transit 4. transportation of goods and lastly 5. private automobiles. Similarly, in the workshop "How to Think About the Future of Transportation," Chris Bradshaw, of Ottawalk, presented a green transportation hierarchy with a further layer of preference: short trips would take precedence over long ones, slower travellers over fast, small vehicles over large, and vehicles using human power and renewable non-polluting fuels as more valued than others.

Barriers to Car Reduction

It did not go unnoticed that there are considerable complex barriers to implementing these ideas. For example, our cultural ties to the automobile were discussed in a workshop entitled "How Do We Love Thee?" and our economic ties were discussed in sessions such as "Labour, the Economy and Cars." Following a session on "The Challenge of Suburbanization," the workshop "The Politics of Intensification" provided an opportunity to analyze the myriad political and social expectations encountered with seemingly good technical solutions.

Throughout the conference, traditional economic assumptions and planning assumptions about transportation were under scrutiny. Professor Setty Pendakur from the University of British Columbia pointed out biases in usual economic arguments. He calculated that the post-production subsidy of the auto infrastructure in the Toronto-Hamilton-Niagara corridor averages $2950 per year, per taxpayer. He then remarked that had this revenue simply been transferred to the present public transit system allowance, each passenger would receive 19 cents per trip. Professor Pendakur also used examples from third world cities to illustrate the self-defeating nature of

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FIRST CLASS

traditional car-based thinking. He spoke of Bangkok, Thailand, a city where the atmosphere is so polluted that one third to one half of its traffic police suffer from lung diseases. Most of its viable land has been paved over to accommodate the growing number of automobiles (Bangkok is home to about 50% of all of Thailand's cars). Although there is considerable reliance on walking and pedalling in the city, much more so than in a typical North American city, planners in Bangkok do not include pedestrians or non-motorized transport in their traffic counts. Their roles are disregarded, and by omission, are made more difficult as infrastructure for the "counted" traffic is created. In this kind of situation, the car-based thinking only serves to diminish the means with which the city can revive itself.

Building a Movement

There were no illusions that any of these issues could be solved in a three-day conference. Specific technical issues were addressed in workshops on neighbourhood traffic calming; pedestrian streets and auto-free zones; and modal integration. There was of course much creation of new contacts, networking, and informal sharing of technical resources. Perhaps one of the most valuable outcomes of this gathering and others like it is the learning of each others' languages and the building of a movement. During the Sunday sessions, Marilou McPhedran of the Toronto Healthy City Project pointed out that many people, planners and policy advisors within government (many of whom were at the conference) who are trying to do good work need to have the pressure of outside voices in order for the work to be given priority and to be supported politically. Most of all, these issues require long-term thinking. As one presenter observed, politicians are ruled by the short term so it falls to planners to keep an eye on more distant objectives. It also falls to planners to understand what the citizenry wants. And, in turn, it falls to outside citizen advocates to ensure political recognition and support for acceptable plans.

The third conference will be held next year in Mexico City, organized by Movement to Bicicletario. Four representatives from that organization came to Toronto for the conference and were very excited to bring the conference and the created possibilities back to Mexico City. For many of us, the idea of Mexico City conjures up images of the worst imaginable congestion and smog. What better place to confront the complexity of the problems, to dream of endless possibilities, and to put into motion the solutions.

Vikki Armstrong is a Toronto bicycle advocate and writer, and was one of the conference coordinators. She is currently working on a book based on the conference proceedings, which should be available the spring of 1993.

To join Transportation Options and/or to order the book, please write to: Transportation Options, 427 Bloor St. West, Suite 205, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 1X7, or call (416) 960-0026.

EASTERN

Summer in the Eastern District has not been quiet (nor particularly warm). The District's busy programming season closed with the third annual golf tournament, which took place in Renfrew in early July. While the District's many volunteers were taking a well-deserved respite, things were brewing for the District's AGM next fall (more next issue).

In the news: **Bob Tennant** and **Ted Fobert** recently formed **Fotenn Consultants Inc.** in Ottawa. Ted was formerly with the City of Ottawa, and Bob has served in a variety of capacities in the planning and development fields... **Bill Perry** of the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton recently stepped down as co-editor of *Vibrations*, the District's newsletter. Thanks Bill, for your many years of service to the District, in these and other capacities. **Dave Becker** of HMD Consulting Group in Ottawa, has taken over from Bill. Editorial responsibility remains with the undersigned.

David Kriger