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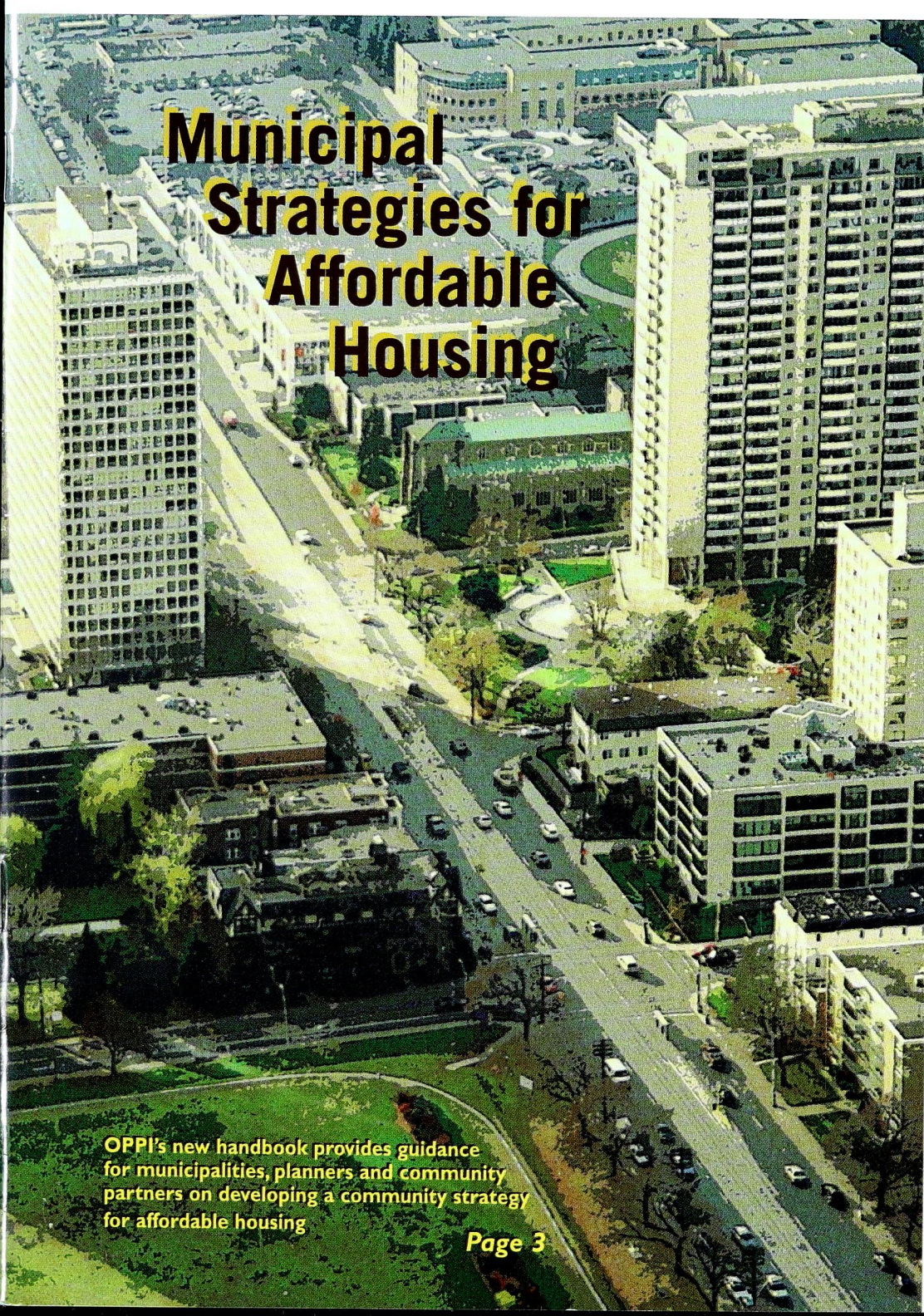
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NUMBER 2

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Municipal Strategies for Affordable Housing

OPPI's new handbook provides guidance for municipalities, planners and community partners on developing a community strategy for affordable housing

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The Municipal Role in Meeting Ontario's Affordable Housing Needs

By Ed Starr
and Christine Pacini

AS PART OF ITS NEW STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE to advance creative solutions for emerging issues in planning policy, OPPI recently sponsored an environmental scan and the creation of a handbook to provide guidance for municipal planners and other community partners on developing a community strategy for affordable housing. These publications set out the process for successfully developing a comprehensive community affordable housing strategy and provide examples of municipal practices currently employed in Ontario and elsewhere. In this article, the authors summarize their work.

Ontario is currently facing a looming crisis of affordable housing. Municipalities have growing waiting lists for subsidized rental housing, record low rental vacancy rates, increasing homelessness, and rising home ownership costs. At the same time, funding for social housing by senior levels of government has been cut and responsibility for housing transferred to local and regional municipalities. The private sector is unable to obtain an acceptable rate of return on investment in new rental housing and traditional alternatives such as rooming houses are in decline.

Affordable housing is the cornerstone for a stable and healthy life for individuals and families, and enables people to participate more fully in their communities. Housing is also a prerequisite for local industry to be able to attract and keep its labour force, reduces the need for emergency shelters, and

meets the needs of thousands of new Canadians.

Municipalities can benefit socially and economically from a community strategy for affordable housing and planners have a pivotal role to play in the process. Planners have in-depth

knowledge on how housing is developed, how to create effective partnerships, how communities can participate in solutions, and how to assess and understand community housing needs.

A holistic approach

In developing the handbook for planners, we felt that a holistic approach is crucial. Meeting affordable housing needs is a complex problem that cannot be solved with one simple solution. It must be addressed from a variety of directions, using a wide range of ideas, tools and resources.

We also knew that a community-based solution is needed. With the decline in funding from senior levels of government, communities need creative solutions to the problem of affordable housing. This does not mean that municipalities should shoulder the entire cost of meeting the affordable housing needs of the community. Senior levels of government, the private sector and other groups have a role

to play. But someone must jump-start the process.

By the nature of their jobs, municipal planners in particular have the community perspective critical to the successful development of a strategy reflecting the perspectives and inputs of all members of the local community. A strategic plan, which can



Photo: Dennis Kar

Infill townhouses can be affordable

change how we think, act and communicate, is a suitable vehicle for addressing community affordable housing needs.

The tools we considered fall into nine fundamental categories:

- research activity;
- policy initiatives;
- regulatory change;
- financial incentives;
- administrative measures;
- advocacy;
- direct provision;
- community education;
- public/private partnerships.

Within each category, various concepts and practices can be adopted to help meet affordable housing needs. The tools available to municipalities and planners may not be new; but the way in which a community determines the most appropriate practices and integrates them into a comprehensive strategy can be both innovative and effective. The approach we suggest is comprehensive, consistent and community-based.

The chart shows the steps involved in crafting a successful community affordable housing strategy and highlights the factors for success. The environmental scan highlights some practices that will interest many communities, and the handbook identifies the costs and benefits of each approach.

A Role for OPPI

OPPI could undertake the following actions to support community affordable housing strategies:

- communicating OPPI's framework and actions for affordable housing to local municipalities;
- encouraging OPPI districts to initiate the strategic planning process;
- helping communities identify potential sources of funding for the development of a community strategy for affordable housing.

OPPI could support proposed changes to the Municipal Act that would allow interested municipalities to offer incentives to the private sector in return for the provision of affordable housing.

OPPI could advocate for a provincial role to help fund the preparation of community affordable housing strategies. Developing a community strategy for affordable housing is a labour-intensive

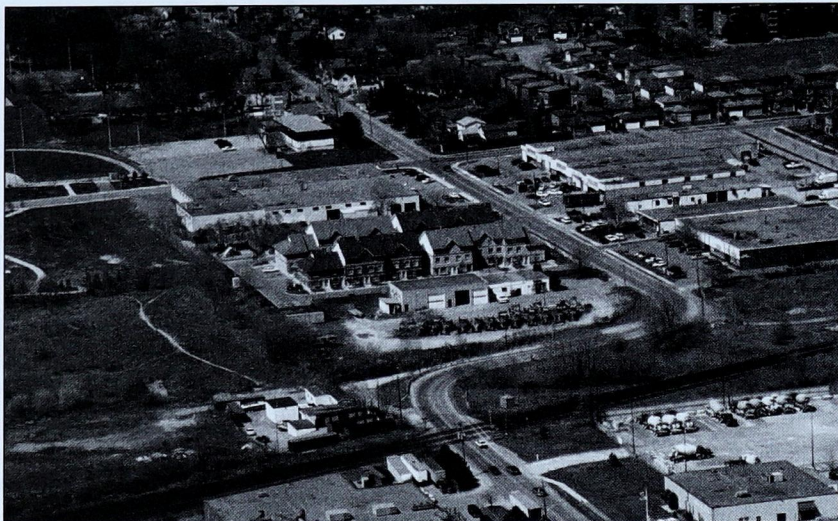
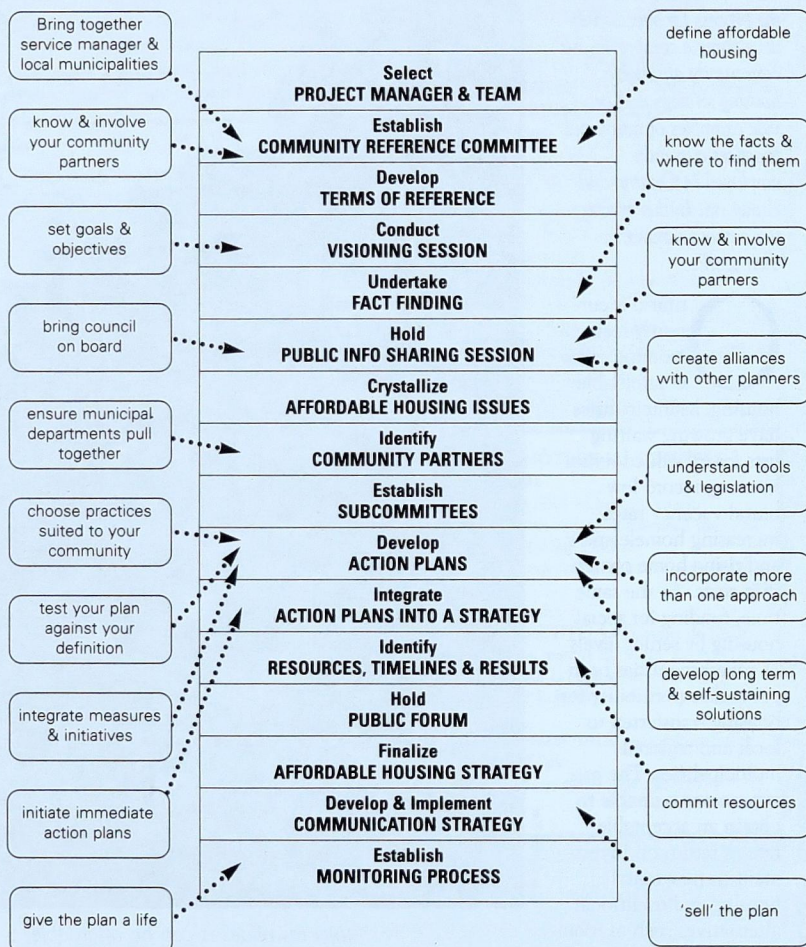


Photo: Michael Manetta, Michael S. Manetta Planning Services Ltd.

Affordable housing built on former industrial land: coops in Richmond Hill



Process & Elements of a Community Affordable Housing Strategy

process. Although the province has transferred the responsibility for social housing to the municipal level, the province has a responsibility to ensure that the housing needs of all Ontario residents are met.

Finally, OPPI could work with municipalities to identify funding programs that could be sponsored by senior levels of government to increase the supply of affordable housing. Although the environmental scan identified a wide range of tools available to municipalities, current experiences of Ontario municipalities have shown that these tools are insufficient to create enough new affordable housing to meet the needs in most communities. The help of other levels of governments is essential.

We hope that the handbook will pro-

vide both guidance and inspiration for planners to help their communities develop workable strategies for affordable housing, for the benefit of all Ontarians.

Edward Starr, MCIP, RPP, is President of The Starr Group, a planning and management consultancy. Ed has directed the preparation of over 30 Municipal Housing Policy Studies and acted as a development consultant for over 60 non-profit and cooperative housing projects. He has prepared numerous studies for leading government agencies, municipalities, associations and community-based not-for-profit organizations on affordable housing and related planning subjects. Ed is also the Vice-President of

the Association of Development Consultants of Ontario.

Christine Pacini is the President of Christine Pacini & Associates. She has experience in housing research and analysis, public policy, marketing and community development. Her clients include the public sector at all levels of government, as well as a wide variety of not-for-profit organizations and private companies. Christine has recently worked on a part-time basis with a City of Toronto Councillor as a Special Assistant on housing Issues.

Copies of the handbook and environmental scan are available at www.ontarioplanners.on.ca.

For further information, please contact Loretta Ryan, MCIP, RPP, at policy@ontarioplanners.on.ca.

5 / FEATURES

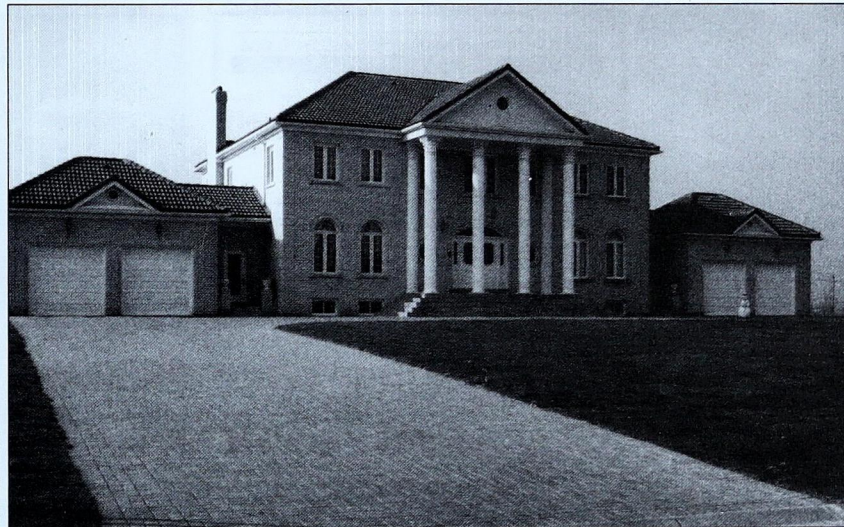
York Region making progress

Housing Policy in York: Challenges in the New Millennium

By Joann Simmons and Bryan Tuckey

The Regional Municipality of York is taking a "big picture" approach to assessing and meeting the housing needs of its fast-growing and changing population. Through far-reaching studies and public consultation—tackling everything from changing demographics to affordability to housing types—York Region is crafting a balanced and proactive strategy to ensure that the ever-changing housing needs of its residents and employers are met.

Photo: M. Manett



York Region's housing ranges from this ...

As one of the fastest growing areas in Ontario, keeping pace with housing demand in York Region is a challenge.

- Its population is 730,000 and is expected to grow to 1.28 million by 2026. It has been estimated that 250,000 new residential units will be needed to meet the demands of the next 25 years.

- Its population is generally young, affluent, educated, and family-oriented.
- Housing needs are changing but the housing stock is still dominated by single detached homes, with a high rate of home-ownership and decreasing household sizes.
- Rental housing has not kept pace with

other housing forms.

- Housing costs are high and housing affordability is therefore a challenge.
- The need for social and special needs housing is increasing.
- Employers are concerned that the cost of housing results in a loss of experienced employees, and makes it difficult to attract young, entry-level employees.

Regional council, through its official

plan, recognizes the importance of a comprehensive and cohesive approach to housing development as a means of maintaining and enhancing the health of its diverse communities. The plan's housing objective is: "to promote an integrated community structure and design that ensures a broad mix and range of lot sizes, unit sizes, hous-

ing form types and tenures that satisfy the needs of the Region's residents and workers." A number of Official Plan policies support the creation of diverse housing types, promote the production of affordable housing and set targets for housing production.

Regional Council recently completed three initiatives that provide an integrated framework. When successfully implemented, the evolving housing needs of residents of York Region will be addressed. These initiatives are:

- 2000 York Region Housing Directions Study;
- From Awareness to Action: Report of the York Region Homelessness Task Force;
- York Region Special Needs Housing Study.

The 2000 York Region Housing Directions Study identifies the key issues, trends and challenges associated with the changing needs of York Region's residents, including impacts on the Region's housing supply since its last comprehensive review in 1991. The 2000 report found the



Photo: M. Manett

... to this (townhouses in Markham).



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Region has made progress since that time in meeting housing objectives and targets including the provision of an adequate supply of draft-approved and registered lots and increasing the diversity of housing types, sizes and forms. Areas where there is room for improvement include: housing for the young, seniors, lone-parent families, rental housing construction and potential users of social and special needs housing. An important conclusion of the study was the recognition that a comprehensive and integrated strategy is required to:

- Ensure that the projected housing supply meets future needs;
- Evaluate the adequacy of existing Official Plan targets for a range of housing types;
- Examine financial, regulatory and other mechanisms to achieve targets for low-cost social and special needs housing;
- Monitor changing housing requirements; and
- Encourage a housing supply that supports the social, economic and environmental goals of the Region.

From Awareness to Action: Report of the York Region Homelessness Task Force is the result of a Council Task Force with the mandate "to identify and develop long term strategies to address homelessness issues in York Region." The report describes the York Region's situation, recognizing that the nature and degree of the problem is different from that in other cities across Canada. The root causes are similar: the pressures of modern life, corporate downsizing, family breakdown, lack of support services for the mentally ill and the loss of support from senior government housing programs targeted to low and middle income families.

The Task Force recognized that the Region's homelessness challenges are still relatively minor and there is an opportunity to benefit from the experiences of other cities in addressing homelessness. If the 26 recommendations can be implemented, the Region has the opportunity to identify effective solutions and prevent the erosion of quality of life.

The York Region Special Needs Housing

Study is a comprehensive overview of Special Needs Housing. Included in the analysis are: government programs and funding; a profile of current special needs residents; an inventory of existing Special Needs Housing; and projected needs, challenges and barriers to delivery. Finally, the report makes recommendations on action to meet the challenges in this highly specialized new business of local government.

It is the first time Regional Council has a comprehensive understanding of housing trends, implications, the fundamental causes of homelessness, as well as the availability and types of special needs housing. As Regional Chair Bill Fisch stated, "Delivering the right mix of housing types to meet the growing demands will be a key challenge for all of us and one that will have a great impact on our quality of life in the future".

Joann Simmons is Commissioner, Community Services and Housing for York Region. Bryan Tuckey, MCIP, RPP, is Commissioner, Planning and Development.

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Largest Land Owner Takes a Stand to Protect Oak Ridges Moraine

By Linda Laliberte

Nine conservation authorities recently announced they are uniting as the Conservation Authorities Moraine Coalition to advocate for and protect the Oak Ridges Moraine along its entire length. Together, the conservation authorities own 10,000 hectares, or five percent, of the Moraine, making them responsible for the largest and most strategically located tracts of land, protecting the headwaters of 35 river systems originating in the Moraine.

"We are joining forces to create a vision for the future of the Moraine by linking the land we own, the areas we manage and regulate, our data bases and our scientific knowledge. Acting together we will be a much stronger force for protection and conservation on the Moraine than we can be individually," Toronto Conservation Chair Dick O'Brien noted.

The Coalition was formed in response to the need for a comprehensive policy, planning and management approach geared to sustaining the health of the entire Moraine. "Although pressures on the Moraine differ substantially across its length, we must ensure these diverse pressures are managed in a way that protects the natural features and functions of the Moraine as a whole," said Gary Atkins, Chair of Kawartha Region Conservation Authority. "For example, some of the Moraine is under stress from urban development pressures; some is facing urban development soon, part of it is rural, and part is almost pristine."

The goal of the Coalition is to bring the full force of its collective holdings and scientific expertise to bear on provincial policy and help shape municipal planning decisions through the Authorities traditional advisory

responsibilities to the municipalities. In addition, the Coalition will use its collective knowledge to target significant land features for acquisition.

The Coalition will be working closely with its municipalities as they work to develop a clear and consistent approach to planning across the Moraine. "Good policy and planning depends on good science. Together the Coalition can and will deliver that science," stated Linda Laliberte, Coordinator of the new Conservation Authorities Moraine Coalition and General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer of the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority in Port Hope.

The Coalition will be an effective voice for the Moraine by:

- Developing a long-term Oak Ridges Moraine Land Conservation Strategy

geared to protecting the natural features and functions in the Moraine, including the headwaters. It will target natural features for acquisition and conservation such as significant wetlands, fish habitat, forests and woodlands, valley lands, habitat of endangered and threatened species, wildlife habitat, important natural landscape features and the land areas that link these features right across the Moraine.

- Drawing on the data bases of each member Authority, to develop consistent technical standards and organize technology transfer. This will give the Coalition a good base from which to monitor the overall health of the Moraine and the rivers that originate in it. The Coalition will provide technical data to feed into Provincial policy making. "We support using the Provincial 1994 Oak Ridges Moraine Strategy and progressive planning initiatives as a starting point," said Laliberte.
- Conducting detailed watershed studies to provide municipalities with the knowledge they need to protect significant lands in the Moraine, including scientific studies

on fish, vegetation, water quality, flows and levels.

- Enabling the individual Conservation Authorities to advise their municipalities and regions on how to act consistently and in concert with their neighbouring municipalities and regions to protect natural features they share.
- Making more straightforward coordination and cooperation with all levels of governments, Ducks Unlimited and hundreds of volunteer organizations like Friends of Kawartha.
- Advocating for an Oak Ridges Moraine Trail.

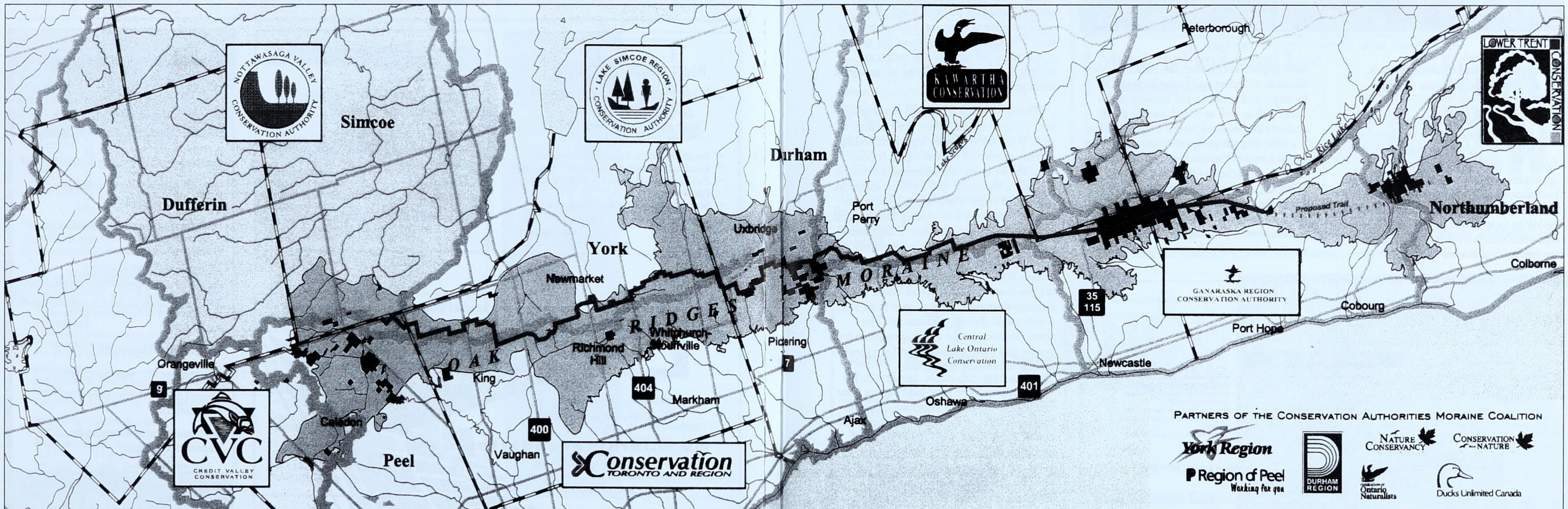
"Central Ontario needs to be vigilant about its natural waterways," said Atkins. "Experts have spent a great deal of time and money understanding the importance of Toronto's shorelines to the health of the environment and the community.

Conservation Authorities were mandated to research and conserve river valleys following the catastrophic impact of Hurricane Hazel. Now its time to put the same effort into understanding the extensive geological fea-

ture forming the Oak Ridges Moraine and educate people about how it sustains the headwaters of river systems."

Conservation Authorities were set up as public private partnerships more than 50 years ago. Their research and professional staff is focused on every facet of water conservation and natural habitat protection and management. They study water courses above and below ground; water levels and rate of flow; purity as measured by sampling, health of fish and types of vegetation; prevalence of wildlife; and interconnections between ground cover and water collecting capabilities underneath. The river systems that originate in the Moraine flow south to Lake Ontario and north to Georgian Bay, Lake Simcoe, Lake Scugog, Haliburton Lakes and Kawartha Lakes.

For more information contact, Ganaraska Region C.A., (905) 885-8173, generalmanager@grca.on.ca. You can get an electronic copy of the maps illustrated here by contacting Janet Eagleson, at the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (416) 661-6600.



Main Street: Understanding the Business of Retail

By Dan Leeming



Main Streets suffer when commercial uses clam up

This is the second of three articles on the dynamics of main streets.

The traditional array of shops along Ontario main streets was based on the size and layout required in the 1920s. For the most part, shops were approximately 6m wide by 15m deep. The basement was used for storage and the 2nd floor was residential or an office. Many buildings were owned by the retail operators while others were rented from absentee landlords. Assorted other buildings

such as post offices, libraries, banks, movie theatres, churches and so forth, would all be larger and break up the massing of the street wall as well as round out the goods and services required by the local residents. If a store became prosperous and needed to expand, two of the smaller modules would be joined together with the central wall being knocked out. This fine grain of different buildings grouped closely along each block of the main street gave a variety of architectural styles, colours, signage and goods and services offered on the sidewalk


and in general encouraged a gathering place where people could browse and meet friends.

Although this fine grain streetscape can support certain types of vendors such as specialty foods, cafes, beauty salons, boutiques, greengrocers, clothing shops and so forth, much of today's retail marketing demands a lot more floor space. As a result, six or seven small shops are redeveloped as a single space or the business goes elsewhere.

Where multiple shop fronts are joined together, the single new user seldom uses all of the window space and store front as effectively as the smaller operator. Storage of goods or offices often occupies much of the front wall resulting in a dead space along the street that diminishes the vitality of the street. If too many of these large users are lined up within a block these small mainstreet areas can become sterilized. This can start to fragment the collective dynamic of activity and uses that invites people to enjoy all the advantages a main street offers.

This is what has happened in Kingsway and, to some extent, Bloor West Village as well. With the relatively high surrounding income combined with an aging population, the Kingsway has witnessed a dramatic change in the goods and services offered in the last 15 years. Many of the smaller day-to-day services such as grocery, butcher and baker shops have closed due to high rents and been replaced by higher generators such as banks, health services and funeral homes. Although local residents obviously use these services, the overall effect is reduced animation on the street front and a noticeable change in character. The street becomes less of a gathering place for people and more a destination for a specific service or business transaction.

Our approach to local banking has been one that is famous for knocking down historic structures at the main four corners of almost every small town in Ontario and replacing them with a modernist cube quite out of keeping with the local character. This has taken place in both the Kingsway and Bloor West. Increased



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prosperity and expanded demand for banking services has seen entire rows of smaller shops combined into a single large bank. Where there were once four or five separate doorways, windows and street front treatments, there is now a single door and a blank wall. Even worse is that dynamic shop fronts now feature office windows occupied by people who do not want a high volume of pedestrian traffic looking over their shoulders. As a consequence, their blinds are always drawn, creating a dead zone.

Most people are aware of the syndrome of success that as a main street prospers, rents increase and many of the small mom-and-pop operations that gave a strong sense of character and personal service to the area are replaced by a retail chain operation. Most of the surviving small retailers remain because they own their own buildings and avoided skyrocketing rents well beyond their ability to pay. In Bloor West, many of the small ethnic food shops and delis that gave a distinct stamp of individuality to the area have succumbed to these economic pressures.

In Bloor West a collective organization of merchants in the mid 1960s formed the Bloor West Village Business Association and became Canada's first Business Improvement Area (BIA). This was a time when shoppers were either driving to the new shopping malls in the suburbs or speeding downtown on the newly opened subway line and the survival of the main street was in great peril. Today, BIAs have become a standard means by which local merchants can organize as a collective to ensure the ongoing health of their area. They share the costs of improvements that best emphasize the unique characteristics of their community in order to attract and maintain customer loyalty.

Dan Leeming, MCIP, RPP, is a partner with the Planning Partnership with offices in Toronto and Barrie. He was the closing keynote speaker at the recent

"Smart Commerce: New Priorities for Retail Investment" conference organized by the Canadian Urban Institute in Toronto in March.



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OPPI Policy Development Committee

By Dave Hardy

As OPPI's new Director of Policy Development, I am pleased to report that public policy, in combination with communications, will continue to enjoy an expanded role as the Institute strives to become an even stronger voice for planners across Ontario.

We typically live in the communities where we work, and, as a result, have an excellent vantage point from which to observe which policies are working and those that need improvement. It is important for planners to know that, in addition to the OPPI Council, the Policy Development Committee is willing to speak on their behalf on issues important to the profession and advocate change toward responsible public policy.

Several initiatives have already helped to increase the profile of OPPI on issues important to planners. An example is the Affordable Housing paper (subject of this issue's cover story), which demonstrates that planners have an important contribution to make in the area of affordable housing. We are also in the early stages of preparing a discussion paper on the Ontario Municipal Board and have given the go ahead for

a study to be completed by Melanie Hare of Urban Strategies on Growth Management Strategies for Urban and Rural Areas. This research is not only timely, but also provides an excellent opportunity to consolidate and express our opinions on issues important to the public.

Through the Policy Development Committee, we are also monitoring implications of proposed policy changes and are responding to numerous requests for the Institute to comment on draft Provincial policies. As well, we are participating in stakeholder consultation activities.

On behalf of the Committee, I am inviting input from planners across Ontario on issues that the Institute needs to address. It is important for the Institute to be able to speak for all planners, in all areas of work. I hope that we can develop an ongoing dialogue on issues that affect us.



Dave Hardy

Dave Hardy, MCIP, RPP, is OPPI's Director of Policy Development. He is also a principal of Hardy Stevenson and Associates in Toronto. He can be reached at 416-944-8444 or HSA@echo-on.net.

I Volunteer—The Value of One. The Power of Many

By Andrea Bourrie

"Volunteering is the most fundamental act of citizenship and philanthropy in our society. It is offering time, energy and skills of one's own free will." (Making a Case for Volunteer Centres, Volunteer Ontario, 1996)

Seven and a half million Canadian volunteers over the age of 15 formally contribute their time and talent to a voluntary organization. Annually, the average volunteer donates more than 149 hours of service to a cause or causes they believe in. In Ontario, the total number of volunteer hours of service equates to more than 200,000 full-time equivalent positions. This statistic makes it easy to see why the voluntary sector is being referred to as the "third pillar of our society." (The 1997 National Survey of

Giving, Volunteering and Participating)

The Ontario Professional Planners Institute is a volunteer-based organization. There are five staff members, but the organization could not function without countless hours of volunteer time:

- Membership committee members who review every logbook submission and interview candidates for membership;
- Conference committee members who coordinate speakers, social events and even set a lunch table or two;
- Policy committee members who review material and make sure that OPPI's voice is heard on important policy matters;
- Special event organizers who organize educa-

tional and fun programs that allow all members to network with each other;

- Award jurors who receive pounds of paper by courier and have to determine if the submitted project is worthy of an award;
- Council members who try to lay a foundation for the Institute and offer the membership value for membership dollars;
- Students who do everything from stuff envelopes to collect event tickets.
- Contributing editors to the Ontario Planning Journal and others who make your magazine a reality every two months.

These contributions allow OPPI to do what it does.

As the Institute continues to grow and work toward achieving the goals stated in the Strategic Plan, we need to give more attention to the important role that volunteers play in the organization. Here are some guidelines for making the most of your volunteers.

Recruitment

- Recruit with a specific goal in mind.
- Recruit year round - plant the seed early.
- Actively seek out the skills the Institute needs.
- Be honest - don't cover up or down play the task as unimportant - the "anybody can do it" syndrome.

Selection

- Make contact. Don't ignore offers to participate.
- Match the skills of the volunteer and/or the skills and experiences they want to gain, with the tasks available.

Orientation

- Set realistic timelines - we all have other responsibilities.
- Create a policies and procedures manual.

- Establish job descriptions.
- Balance "history" with "new blood".

Evaluation/Retention

- Inquire if the volunteer is enjoying the role.
- Conduct exit interviews with retiring volunteers to find out how to improve the program and/or process.
- Carry out succession planning.

Celebration

- Formally acknowledge volunteer contributions.
- Have fun!

An important key to success is ensuring that OPPI members understand and share a vision for the Institute. We need to engage the membership in the process of planning for the future of OPPI and in celebrating successes along the way! It is also important that we value and respect our volunteers. A sure way to discourage member contribution is to view them simply as a means of getting something done without having to pay for it, or to ignore offers to participate. To be successful, there must be open communication and an equitable relationship between staff and the volunteer.

2001 has been declared the International Year of Volunteers. Let's celebrate the important role that volunteers play in making OPPI a strong voice for the planning profession and convey the message to all members that individual actions can make a significant difference. When one person's actions are multiplied by the 2,800 planners that make up OPPI, the profession and in fact, the communities we live in can be changed in very real and important ways. The value of one, the power of many!

I Volunteer: The Value of One. The Power of Many. is a marketing campaign designed to bring energy, interest and excitement to the concept of volunteering. To find out more about IYV, check out the IYV website www.iyvcanada.org or contact the IYV Canada Office at 1-800-670-0401.

Andrea Bourrie, MCIP, RPP, is Central District Rep. on OPPI Council and also serves as a volunteer director on the Board of the United Way of York Region. Andrea recently left Marshall Macklin Monaghan to start her own planning practice. Andrea can be reached at abourrie@planeteeer.com.

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Communications Key to Stronger National Federation

Like many pan-Canadian institutions, the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) faces the ongoing challenge of staying relevant to a diverse membership stretched across a very large country.

The extent of this challenge is not lost on CIP's new Executive Director, Steven Brasier, CAE, who took office in August last year.

Brasier's optimistic approach to his new role is based on solid experience running NGOs and a strong background in communications.

"The combination of communications and association management experience provides a sound basis for working with volunteers and tapping into the membership base to mobilize talent and resources," he says. "I would cast myself as a facilitator, whose role is to help CIP and its affiliates foster a stronger sense of community among members across the country. This includes looking for opportunities and ways for CIP and the affiliates to collaborate and integrate services wherever practical to pro-



Steven Brasier, CAE

vide greater value and benefits to members."

"Among the seven affiliates, resources across the country are very different," he acknowledges. "Recognizing that disparities exist in the Affiliates' numbers of members, volunteer networks, and operating budgets, CIP can play an important role by promoting collaboration and exploring opportunities to increase efficiency by pooling resources and achieving economies of scale."

To that end, there is a broad range of opportunities to pursue. A particularly exciting one, he suggests, is an increased reliance on technology for electronic service delivery.

"Today's computer technology offers affordable solutions to many of our challenges," he notes.

Linking the national and Affiliate websites is an important first step toward helping members learn more about their colleagues in different parts of the country. "CIP and the Affiliates now need to explore enhanced online information and service delivery."

In addition, CIP is actively exploring new services and engaging in other activities that are implicitly national in scope. These include federal policy initiatives and international programs. These activities are nonetheless highly relevant to the affiliates - labour mobility issues being one good example - and so will form an integral part of CIP's contribution to the national/affiliate institute relationship.

The upcoming joint CIP/OPPI conference in Ottawa is perfectly timed, from Brasier's perspective. OPPI is CIP's largest affiliate, offering the broadest range of member benefits, so the effort expended on welcoming other CIP members from across the country has the potential to galvanize a new appreciation of CIP's role in representing the profession on a national basis. Steven Brasier wants to meet as many members as he can, so watch for him at the conference and engage him in conversation. He's a good listener, and there are some important conversations to be had.

You can reach Steve Brazier by e-mail at sbrasier@cip-icu.ca.

Congratulations to the following new Full Members

Abbad Al Radi.....CD
 Bruce Kerr.....CD.....Slokker Canada
 Adrian R. Litavski.....CD.....Kentridge Johnston Ltd.
 Larry R. Morrison.....ED.....City of Gloucester

Welcome to these new Provisional Members

Deborah Alexander.....CD.....Town of Georgina
 Steven C. Bell.....CD.....City of Toronto
 Susannah C. Bunce.....CD
 M. S. Chauhan.....CD
 Iain J. De Jong.....CD
 Derek Dudek.....CD.....Cumming Cockburn Ltd.

Kregg G. Fordyce.....CD.....David Johnston architect Ltd.
 Peter J. Jaruczik.....CD
 Keith Mackinnon.....CD
 D. Louise Morris.....CD.....Federation of Canadian
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 Jane Perdue.....CD.....City of Toronto Urban
 Development Services

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Eastern

Growing Pains in Ottawa

By Don Maciver

February marks the celebration of Winterlude along and around the historic Rideau Canal in the heart of the Nation's capital. Tourism is one of the pillars of the capital's economy, along with government and high-tech. As the new millennium begins, government no longer dominates employment in the region. Nortel, Alcatel, Cisco, Nokia, Motorola, Mitel and Corel are the new power players. Each is spawning numerous start-up companies. At the same time, however, the federal government is about to embark on an unprecedented recruiting drive as the boomers in the bureaucracy start to move into their retirement years.

The changes occurring in Ottawa and its environs demand leadership and vision if the quality of life in the region is to be maintained. This was the theme of a lecture sponsored by the Eastern Ontario District on February 7, 2001, called "Growing Pains: How to Manage Growth and Keep Ottawa's Quality of Life," which drew a crowd of 170 to the council chambers of the new City of Ottawa (formerly Regional) headquarters on Laurier Avenue.

The guest speakers included Joe Berridge, principal, Urban Strategies; Adam Chowaniec, CEO of Tundra Semiconductors and chair of the Ottawa Economic Development Corporation; Judith Maxwell, president, Canadian Policy Research Networks; and Daniel



The Greenbelt pathway in the former Kanata

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Nixey, senior vice-president, Corporate Research Group. Each gave a thought-provoking presentation on growth to date and forecasts for the future.

Daniel Nixey pointed out that in 2000, 25 percent of all the venture capital in Canada went to businesses in Ottawa. Market research indicates that there is a high level of local support for this growth, but there are growing pains, too, as Ottawans experience labour shortages, traffic congestion and pollution. Adam Chowanec noted that, thanks in large part to the National Capital Commission, Ottawa has not been destroyed as a city, which puts it in a stronger position for future growth. Judith Maxwell added that, as the region prospers, citizens at the margins of society should not be forgotten and must be provided for in decision making.

Joe Berridge stated that although big cities are the future of the country, the future of "technopolises" is uncertain. Ottawa now has multiple north-south air links that did not exist five or even two years ago, because economic activity has changed from an east-west national focus to a north-south international one. This implies a change of scale. Ottawa is the fourth-largest city in Canada, but only the 53rd in North America. A balance must be achieved between growth and redistribution. He recommended that local government take on the role of developer as opposed to regulator, in order to influence the pattern and density of growth.

At the end of the evening, the first Eastern District Graduate Student Research Grant was awarded to Shauna Kuiper, a second-year master's student at Queen's University School of Urban and Regional Planning. She will use the grant for her research work on homeless youth in the greater Kingston area. Congratulations to Shauna on being the first recipient, and to the other candidates, who also provided excellent submissions.

All in all, the evening was probably one of the most thought-provoking in the Eastern District for a while. Thanks are due to the organizing committee of Sylvie Grenier, Allison Christie, Daphne Hope and Daphne Wretham.

Don Maciver is manager, Planning and Regulations, for the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority.

Central

Ed Levy Entertains and Educates

To witness Ed Levy's two-hour lecture on the evolution of transportation planning in Toronto was a special treat for anyone who cares about cities as much as Ed obviously does. Several people commented after the fact that we should have videotaped his performance. Some even suggested in jest that Ed be made an Honorary Member of the Institute. The Central

Program Committee must be congratulated for its impresario role.

Built around his unique collection of plans, pictures and specialized knowledge, Ed Levy's presentation traced the evolution of thinking behind various modes of transportation and the interrelationship with land use plans of the day. We learned many secrets, including why the TTC operates on a unique track gage, insights into how we manage to avoid placing stations at locations where transit lines intersect, and how we owe a debt to the engineer who built the Danforth road bridge with the capacity to accommodate trains on a lower deck.



1915 isometric projection prepared by the Civic Transportation Committee

Southwest

New Urbanism: Two Perspectives

Southwest District OPPI and the Michigan Society of Planners are proud to be jointly promoting an important international planning event on

March 8, 2001, in Detroit, Michigan.

"Building New Communities: Implementing the Principles of New Urbanism" is the topic for the evening's panel discussion to be held at the Gem Theatre in downtown Detroit. The meeting will present case studies on adapting the principles of New Urbanism to the realities of markets, regulations and governments, using the examples of a brown-

field project in Monroe, Michigan, and a greenfield development in Windsor, Ontario.

Speakers will include Richard Carlisle, President, Michigan Society of Planning; Doug Caruso, Planning Manager, City of Windsor; Nick Davies, President, Royal Town Planning Institute; and Jim Tischler, Director, Department of Community Development, City of Monroe, Michigan.

For those unable to attend this event, look for an article on the proceedings by Laurel Davies, Core Area Projects Manager, City of Cambridge, in the next issue of the Ontario Planning Journal.

On February 15, 2001, Southwest District members braved the elements to gather in Woodstock for an evening of history. Rather than offering the typical LACAC perspective of heritage buildings, Chris Andrae and Robert Shipley provided unique insights into the value of cultural landscapes, principles of significance, options for management and the real value of heritage. The theme through the evening's discussion was that a definition of heritage cannot simply be bottled. Heritage is as much about one's perspective towards buildings and landscape as it is about the value of preservation.

The District also welcomed the following members as representatives on a number of provincial committees:

Policy Development: Kevin Eby,

Region of Waterloo

Recognition: Craig Manley,

City of Guelph

Membership Services: Nancy Pasato,

City of London

Membership Outreach: Kevin Curtis,

Region of Waterloo

Professional Practice and Development:

Maureen Z. Jones, Aquafor Beech

Windsor Revisited

Last summer, Southwest District sponsored a dinner meeting in Windsor at Patrick O'Ryan's Irish Pub, attended by more than 50 planners from Windsor, Essex County and Michigan. The meeting was preceded by a walking tour of Windsor's central riverfront and city centre, led by Faye Langmaid, Coordinator of Design and Development, and staff from the City's Parks and Recreation and Planning Departments.

After dinner, Faye and Jim Yanchula presented the new vision for the heart of downtown Windsor, and the efforts of the City's Revitalization Task Force. Highlights of Windsor's successes include the implementation of the "neat street brigade," a group of young people hired by the city to act as ambassadors and keep city streets clean; reclamation of five kilometres of the city's riverfront; the beacon program,

which includes the construction of five beacons of light along the riverfront that will provide 24-hour access to city information and community facilities. It is hoped that these projects, together with the other efforts currently being undertaken by the city, will ensure that the downtown will once again contribute to the vibrancy of this border city.

Southwest District Annual General Meeting

The Southwest District of OPPI convened their Annual General Meeting last September, at the Elm Hurst Inn in Ingersoll. More than 50 members were in attendance to vote in the 2000-2001 District Executive and bid farewell to two seasoned district representatives. Long-serving members Brenton Toderian and Steve Jefferson presented their final reports to the district and were thanked for their contributions during the past several years. The following members were approved by the membership to serve on the district executive committee:

Chair: John Fleming, City of London

Vice Chair: Jennifer Passy, MacKinnon & Associates

Treasurer: Cathy Saunders, Township of Middlesex Centre

Program Chair: Erick Boyd, Township of Middlesex Centre

Membership Chair: Mark Seasons, University of Waterloo

In a departure from Southwest District's conventional AGM format, a panel discussion was held following the dinner meeting on the topic of school board planning. Nadine Tischer of the Upper Grand District School Board, Dan McCowell of the York Catholic District School Board, Kathy Dietrich of the Waterloo Region District School Board and Peter Niece of Community Planners Inc. presented an informative session highlighting the role of planners within boards of education, the role of the



New Urbanism Hot Topic



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Ontario Association of School Board Officials, changes in education funding, and community impacts associated with consolidation and closure or surplus facilities. This session proved informative and cast light on the work of an often unrecognized segment of our membership.

Editor's note: We apologise to the authors of the last two reports, which should have been published in a previous issue.

People

Bryan Hill Moves to GTSB

Bryan Hill has joined the Greater Toronto Services Board as Director of Policy and Research. He comes to the GTSB at a critical time in the Board's development, which is now under the leadership of **Gordon Chong**. Bryan came from a spell with the City of Burlington after a lengthy stint with the MMAH.

MHBC Planning Opens London Office

MHBC Planning is pleased to announce their continued expansion with the opening of a new office in London, Ontario. The London office will be managed by **Carol Wiebe**, a principal with the firm, with over 20 years of consulting experience. In addition to offices in Kitchener, Concord, and Kingston, the new office will provide the full range of resource management and planning services, to both the public and private sectors, for which MHBC Planning Limited is widely recognized.

Last fall, MHBC welcomed **Dave Schmidt**. Dave has considerable experience in residential and commercial land development planning in southwestern Ontario, and has also provided consulting services to local municipal governments on a range of issues. Dave provides the new office with extensive local knowledge, an important contribution to the quality of professional advice.

The London office is located at 630 Colborne Street, Suite #202, N6B 2V2. For further information please contact Carol Wiebe at 519-858-2797 or by email at cwiebe@mhbcpplan.com.

Cam Lang has joined MHBC Planning as a Planner. Cam is experienced in development planning and has previous consulting experience with both the public and

private sectors. Cam will be working from the Kitchener office.

As mentioned in the previous issue, **Brenton Toderian**, former Associate with MHBC Planning, recently left the firm to join the City of Calgary Planning Department as Chief Subdivision Planner.

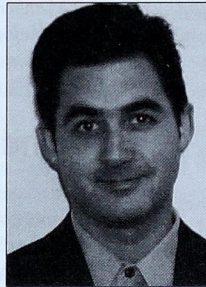
Mark Conway, formerly of the Property and Environment Division of Dillon Consulting, has joined N. Barry Lyon Consulting Limited (NBLC) as a Partner. Mark will contribute to NBLC's expertise in real estate advisory services, especially in waterfront development, brownfields and municipal policy, facilitation and approvals. Mark can be reached at 416-364-4414 ext 201.

Michael Goldberg, formerly of Walker Nott Dragicevic Associates Ltd., has joined with **Stephen Armstrong** and **Craig Hunter** of Armstrong Hunter to create Armstrong, Goldberg, Hunter. The new firm, with offices in Richmond Hill, will specialize in land use planning consulting throughout Ontario. **Daniele Cudizio**, formerly of the City of Mississauga Planning and Building Department, has also joined the firm as a planner.

After working for the County of Renfrew for 12 years as a senior planner, **Gregory Pulham** has left to join the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources as the Municipal Planning Advisor for South Central Region.

There have been two recent changes at the Region of Halton Current Planning Division. **Jody Wellings** has returned to the Development Section as a senior planner after four years at Canadian Tire Corporation. Jody will be dealing with development applications in Burlington. **Brock Criger** has moved from the Development Section to the newly created position of Senior Environmental Planner in the Environmental Coordination and Liaison Section. Brock will be dealing with contaminated site reviews and implementing guidelines for land use compatibility.

Chris Tyrrell has recently been promoted to Senior Planner at Marshall Macklin Monaghan. Chris joined MMM in 1996, after serving three U of W co-op work terms with the firm. His project credits over the past year have included Secondary Plans in Aurora and Newmarket, a new Official Plan and



Chris Tyrrell

Zoning By-law for the Town of Lindsay, an analysis of a number of sites for Ontario Realty Corporation and extensive land development work. Chris is also active outside of MMM, participating in the York

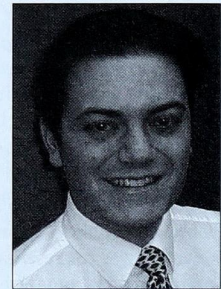
Region Chapter of UDI and the University of Waterloo Planning Alumni of Toronto Committee, and recently served on the Ontario Professional Planners Institute Nominations Committee. Chris can be reached at 905-882-1100 or at tyrrellc@mmm.ca.

Jeff Lehman has settled in Ottawa, having spent the final two years of the previous millennium as a member of faculty at the London School of Economics. Jeff has joined

HOK Consulting, an international planning and design firm focusing on the high-tech industry.

His current work includes advice to municipalities on readiness for high-tech development. Jeff can be reached at 613-226-9650, or by email to jeff.lehman@hok.com. Jeff

has also been a regular contributor to the Ontario Planning Journal and plans to write about Ottawa's growing prominence as a high tech centre.



Jeff Lehman

The contributing editors for People are Lorelei Jones, MCIP, RPP, principal of Lorelei Jones Associates (lja@home.com) and Thomas C. Hardacre, MCIP, RPP, who is with Planning and Engineering Initiatives in Kitchener (thardacre@peinitiatives.on.ca)

Obituary

Han Kwan

Han Kwan died recently. He graduated from the University of Toronto in 1975 with a B.Sc. and had been a Provisional Member of the Institute since 1990. Han worked for the City of Toronto for 25 years.

Editorial

Smart Growth: An Opportunity To Have A Fresh Look At Quality of Decision-Making

By Glenn Miller

The appointment of a new minister of Municipal Affairs is always an important event, but the timing of the cabinet shuffle that saw Chris Hodgson take over MMAH is critical for a number of reasons. First, the ministry is poised to review the Provincial Policy Statement and is preparing a new Municipal Act. Second, a number of cities are coming off tough amalgamations and a stable environment within the ministry will be needed to work through unresolved problems left over from Local Service Realignment (a.k.a. downloading). Third, politically-charged issues (such as the Moraine) will need an experienced hand if they are to be brought to successful resolution. Fourth, and potentially most important of all, the Premier has signaled his intention to adopt Smart Growth as a provincial priority, and this means that policy-setting and legislative change affecting at least four ministries will need to be coordinated.

Municipal Affairs is to be the lead ministry for Smart Growth. Already the coordinator for One Window, a greatly slimmed-down MMAH will continue to play a pivotal role as Smart Growth gets defined in local terms. As research by the Canadian Urban Institute and others has shown, a key contribution to Smart Growth thinking in the

U.S. has been to get the principal interests working together towards a common goal. Smart Growth is not just about government. The role played by organizations such as the Urban Land Institute in orchestrating consensus on Smart Growth in the U.S. has been impressive. From the perspective of OPPI, developments that place cities and urban issues higher on the provincial agenda can only be seen as opportunities. It is also fortunate that, from Minister and the Deputy Minister on down, the Ministry has shown itself to be open to new ideas and willing to promote dialogue on issues such as brownfield redevelopment.

Some people believe that Smart Growth has little to offer a province that has been doing regional planning for more than 40 years. A broader view suggests that if city-regions on every continent are still looking for answers on how to manage growth, we would be wise to keep an open mind on new ideas -- wherever they originate. The appointment of Chris Hodgson is timely. We have an opportunity to look critically at where we are headed and to define Smart Growth to meet the needs of Ontario.

Glenn Miller, MCIP, RPP, is Editor of the Ontario Planning Journal and Director of Applied Research with the Canadian Urban Institute in Toronto.

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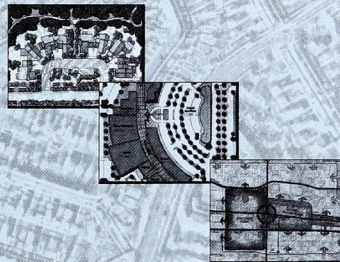
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Implications of Driving Restrictions in Older Age

By Ian Ferguson

A recent article in the *Globe and Mail*, titled "Move afoot to limit seniors' time on roads," described a study carried out by a research psychologist for the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia. Using statistics on accidents and on elderly people who continue to drive despite impaired abilities, the study recommended a "graduated delicensing of seniors..." The article also commented on the differences among provinces regarding testing requirements as people age.

In Ontario, the authority to recommend that a driver's license be restricted or rescinded rests largely with the medical profession. The provincial government has reduced the responsibility of the Ministry of Transportation over time, and since 1996 no longer requires yearly road tests. Drivers over 80 take only written tests and undergo an eye examination every two years.

As a psychogeriatrician, I routinely recommend the rescinding of licenses for patients who have become incapable because of evolving dementia, sensory impairment, physical limitations, or a combination of these factors. Each decision has a huge impact on the individual's independence and inevitably leads to decisions about where they live and whether they can manage routines we all take for granted such as banking, shopping, attending church, or visiting friends and family.

Graduated delicensing may be an alternative to recommending that a license be cancelled entirely. I have a number of patients in my practice for whom that would have been a reasonable recommendation. To accomplish that, however, we need to

improve the tests administered to older people. These tests should discriminate between those who may still drive within certain limits and those who cannot drive under any circumstances.

As the baby boomers reach old age, some will grow old successfully and remain independent, but a significant proportion will no longer be able to drive. Where will those people live, how will they get about, and how will they maintain contact with

the licensing of older adults who live in rural areas without public transportation, because they need to drive to remain independent. However, it is not just rural dwellers who face this situation. For example, the banks' reliance on ATMs and the trend towards closing small banks branches has the potential to render elderly people and others with physical and sensory deficits incapable of managing their own finances.

In past, despite a mild impairment of memory, vision, or fine motor movements was, elderly people could get transactions accomplished with the help of a teller. They cannot always use ATMs or do their banking by telephone. Automatic withdrawals are a partial solution, but they are really designed to solve the problem for the banks, not for individuals.

We are social beings. Any change that reduces our ability to interact among others is harmful. We hold dear the right to live in our own home, manage our own finances, and drive a car. We need to be thoughtful

about the inevitable consequences of losing those perceived rights. Consider an elderly person living without a car or easy access to public transportation. There is no local bank to go to (even by cab). He or she cannot manage the telephone because of hearing loss or relative blindness, cannot dial out because the new 10-digit numbers are too hard to remember. It does not take very much to render us handicapped.

Ian Ferguson, MD, FRCPC, is a psychogeriatrician with the Regional Geriatric Program of Toronto. He has been working in the field of Community Geriatric Psychiatry for 20 years.



An aging population could lose mobility if we don't provide transit or adjust licensing rules

their families and friends? If attention is not paid to public transportation and the location of apartments, retirement homes and long-term care facilities, we will end up isolating a significant portion of the population. This is already a problem. None of the retirement facilities and only three of ten long-term care facilities I visit in Toronto are within walking distance of the subway.

We need to anticipate the consequences of decisions we will be making about everything from the location of housing for older people, to the accessibility of services. Last week I heard a comment on the radio by the president of the Ontario Medical Association, who suggested an alteration in

Letters

Toronto Needs To Grow Up—Literally

Like members of the North Toronto residents' groups opposing high-rise development, I too am a resident of North Toronto. And I agree that the area's streets, lined as they are with single-family dwellings and mature trees, are appealing.

But to oppose serious increases in density in North Toronto is patently selfish and small minded. The neighbourhoods at issue are not in country villages; they border the downtown core of Canada's biggest city.

Increasing residential density in North Toronto is essential to preventing Toronto from becoming even more of an urban nightmare. Toronto is eating up farmland. More and more Torontonians submit to commutes that are as harmful for families as they are for the soul and the environment.

Probably the best solution is to replace all the single family housing with the kind of dense housing found in European cities. But since the residents of neighbourhoods will fight tooth and nail to keep their aesthetics, building high-rises on main streets is a practical alternative.

A shadow over one's property for a few hours a day is a small price to pay for a better city.

Michael Ghert, Toronto

(This letter was originally published in the Globe and Mail. Reproduced with permission.)

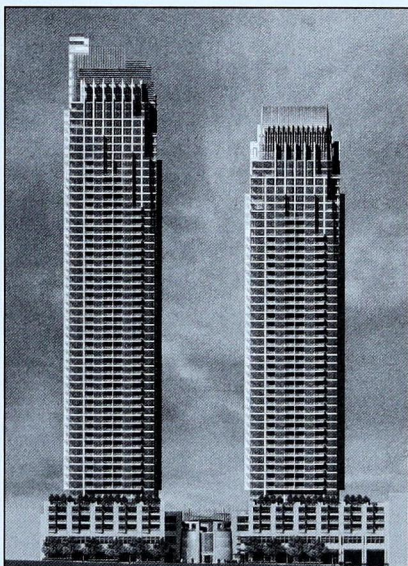


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"Yonge & Eg" is perfect spot for architectural statement

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Question the articles, the assumptions, the conclusions. Articles are short, and important ideas may get left "on the cutting room floor." Fire off an e-mail when you read something that bothers you or puzzles you.

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Economic Development

Community Economic Development vs. Local Economic Development: Is there a difference that matters?

By Norman Raetlie

The field of community economic development (CED) has facets of several disciplinary traditions and professional roles, including business administration, public finance, planning, social planning, community development and even social activism. Also, because of the diversity of communities that individual CED practitioners work in, from remote northern aboriginal communities to urban neighbourhoods, the type of projects and their outcomes can vary dramatically.

The breadth of practice in CED makes for some interesting dialogue, as I experienced at a recent regional policy forum sponsored by the Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet) on strategies for expanding Canadian CED. Those building the capacity of marginalized, impoverished groups in urban areas sometimes find little similarity with rural, small town economic development officers who work primarily with entrepreneurs and businesses.

Are we all in the same business? Is, for example, investment attraction really community economic development? This issue can surface in a polarizing way, even though CED is intended to be an inclusive concept.

This debate is not new. In his 1989 book *Planning Local Economic Development* Edward Blakely had this to say:

"In essence the local economic development profession, or set of practices, is a

hybrid of existing concepts, disciplines, and areas of practice molded together to form a new area of professionalism. . . . In many respects, this flexibility is an asset to this field because practitioners are not restrained by a rigid code. The converse, however, is that the absence of standards makes it difficult to exclude any activities, even the most patently anticommunity activities, from being labeled as local economic development initiatives."

Now add to the mix the language of community development such as, "asset-building" or "capacity building." The use of jargon can often mask real differences in the way practitioners see their role. Key concepts and principles deserve to be revisited.

Generally, local economic development (LED) encompasses these activities:

1. Attracting new basic employers/investment attraction/external marketing;
2. Improving the efficiency of existing firms/business retention;
3. Improving the community's ability to capture existing dollars/import replacement;
4. Encouraging the formation of new business/support for entrepreneurs/access to capital;
5. Addressing labour force and individual life skills; and
6. Ensuring appropriate government assistance is received and physical infrastructure investment occurs.

However, CED principles add some other elements. CED makes the question of "who receives what benefits?" more central and broadens the objectives. Development is not synonymous with growth. As Ron Shaffer summarizes it in his book *Community Economics*:

"Economic growth can occur without development, and development can occur without growth. Growth means more economic activity, while development can be achieved through less economic activity. . . . Development is a multi-dimensional concept that incorporates more than just market values; it includes concern about equity and well-being and the community's ability to adapt to change."

In his book *Community Economic Development in Canada*, David Douglas concludes that community economic development is at one end of a spectrum of local initiatives. As public participation, local control and ownership increase, and as a more holistic perspective is used, the emphasis on capacity building increases. At the other end of the spectrum are crisis driven, short-term, single-sector initiatives.

CED "involves purposeful intervention by the community in selected aspects of the community's economy for the community's welfare. It is about communities addressing problems and opportunities, on their own behalf, which they perceive to be of importance to their quality of life or their community's viability. Implicitly, we see community economic development as a subset of community development."

The following description shows how LED functions are incorporated within CED. CED:

1. Is always multifunctional - a comprehensive strategy or development system;
2. Includes a range of functions:
 - a) strengthening community ownership, community equity for investment and enlarging the asset base of low-income people;
 - b) securing business access to credit;
 - c) building human resources through



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activities such as leadership development, literacy, skills training, career development, entrepreneurial development;

- d) Local capacity building through planning, research, advocacy, strategic networking and partnership development.
3. Integrates social and economic goals;
4. Empowers a broad range of community residents;
5. Is guided by strategic planning and analysis;
6. Uses a businesslike financial management approach and a range of financial partners; and,
7. Employs a core-organization format that is non-profit, independent and non-governmental.

(Adapted and condensed from a list of practice characteristics in CCEDNet 's draft A Policy Framework to Scale Up CED in Canada.)

So, is investment attraction CED? The answer is: it depends. Yes, if it takes place in the context of a purposeful, long-term process that is strategic, broad, integrates

quality of life (social/environmental) goals with specific economic objectives and serves to build local capacity in an inclusive manner. What makes community economic development different from local economic development are its process characteristics and its broader ultimate aims.

Reflecting on my experience coordinating the VISION 2020 Sustainable Community process in Hamilton-Wentworth through the late 1990s, I learned that helping bring together the disparate groups focused on business growth with those focused on social or environmental issues is not without its tensions. While difficult, and sometimes messy, it was an ultimately beneficial process. Like other integrating, action-oriented theories such as "healthy communities" or "sustainable development," CED offers a set of unifying principles for this kind of multi-objective, multi-stakeholder process.

Practically, however my sense is that theory and definitions apply categories to what is essentially a much more fluid and untidy set of activities. Categories we

should be wary of if they alienate or exclude. People will coalesce around concrete projects with tangible outcomes - not mere principles. Ultimately, what brings a variety of community groups into a local process is not theory but a shared understanding of problems or issues that engenders commitment to common cause. And in a self-determining process, what keeps them involved in the long run is being acknowledged for how their particular projects contribute to that common cause.

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Ontario Municipal Board

OMB Sets Out New Commandments For Development of Church Property

By Paul Chronis

A church in the Township of King sought permission to expand its facility by way of a minor variance application. In total, five variances were required dealing with setbacks, gross floor area, lot coverage and height provisions of the zoning by-law.

The application was approved by the Township's Committee of Adjustment on the condition that site plan approval be obtained in order to adequately address the concerns of the neighbour to the north by implementing a vegetative buffer. The adjoining property owners to the north appealed the Committee's decision to the Ontario Municipal Board.

At the start of the hearing, the Board was advised that the applicant and appellants had reached a settlement which provided for the construction of a fully landscaped berm near the appellants' swimming pool. The berm was to be con-

structed at the expense of the applicant and that it was a necessary feature in order for the proposal to constitute good planning.

During the hearing process, the Board considered the planning evidence from the applicant's witness opining that the berm on the appellants' property was not necessary in order to mediate the impacts of the proposal on the appellants' lands. The existing mature landscaping formed a substantial buffer area between the church building and the appellants' lands. This landscaped buffer was to be enhanced by additional plantings. As part of the improvements, the church proposed to construct a berm on its own lands in order to mitigate any impacts on the appellants' property arising from cars using the parking areas located in front of the church.

Given the substantial separation distance between the expanded church

building and the south wall of the appellants' house, combined with the fact that the majority of activity area of the church continued to be at the front where the main doors were located, the Board was persuaded that all the design elements incorporated in the expansion were sensitive to the relationship amongst the two properties and the building had been designed in a manner which directed most of the activity away from the appellants' lands.

Based on the evidence, the Board was persuaded that the impact of the variances on the adjoining property was minor and that the construction of a berm on the appellants' lands was not necessary. The Board indicated that it found no planning rationale for the requirement of a berm on the appellants' property as the evidence clearly indicated that the proposal constituted good planning without the berm.

The Board authorized the variances conditional upon no further building or site alteration being permitted within the northerly 25 metres of the subject property, except in accordance with the site plan approval granted by the Township

for the proposed expansion.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the Board indicated that while it encouraged settlements where possible, the Board generally did not look behind the settlement which resulted in the appeal being withdrawn. However, where the appellants asked the Board to participate in the facilitation of the settlement, the settlement had to be based on good planning principles and be of merit.

Under the circumstances, given the evidence adduced during the hearing, the Board was not persuaded that the settlement reached was based on good planning principles. By asking the Board to participate in the facilitation of the settlement and by providing full details of the settlement to the Board, the Board was compelled to satisfy itself that there was merit in the settlement, that the settlement was based on good planning grounds and that the public interest had been protected.

Source: Decision of the Ontario
Municipal Board

Case No.: PL990159

File No.: V990243

Perlingieri v. Niagara-on-the-Lake

The Committee of Adjustment for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake refused an application for consent to sever lands in the Town for the purposes of a farm retirement lot. A concurrent minor variance was required to reduce the minimum lot size requirement of the retained parcel to allow it to continue to be used for agricultural purposes.

The subject property was located in the heart of the best grape-growing area of the Niagara Region. The landowners had been farming the property with grapes for about 18 years and were seeking a retirement lot due to health constraints. The primary issue at the hearing was whether or not the landowners met the definition of bone fide farmer as contained in the Niagara Regional Plan. The Regional Plan defines a bone fide farmer as:

"A bone fide farmer is an individual who:

(i) owns, is employed on, and manages a farm operation;

(ii) earns a majority of his/her income from farming (the scale of the farm operation should be capable of generating a reasonable operating profit under "normal" economic conditions);

(iii) spends a majority of his/her working time on the farm and is available to work on the farm when required by the farm operation;

(iv) demonstrates a continuing commitment to the farm operation, such as through farm maintenance practices, and investment in equipment, building and crops; and

(v) for the purposes of this definition, a farmer is defined as the principal operator of

the farm together with his/her spouse. Only one retirement lot shall be permitted in this regard."

The main evidence led at the hearing was to address criteria (ii) noted above. Both the Region and the Town disputed whether the scale of the farm operation, both now and if the consent was approved, was capable of generating a reasonable operating profit under "normal" economic conditions.

The Board considered the evidence on the net cash flows on a per acre of land and various assumptions that would be included in the deduction from a gross fruit income that would reasonably be anticipated on the subject land from a cash flow basis. On the evidence of the owners, who testified that they relied on the farm for income, the Board was satisfied that the remaining acreage provided, for them, a reasonable operating profit. Coupled with the landowners' clear commitment to continue to farm the property through the new plantings that would be reasonably undertaken, the Board indicated that the landowners were indeed bone fide farmers within the meaning and met the intent of the Regional Plan.

The proponents indicated as well that approximately 0.5 acre parcel of lands covered by a storage shed would be removed as part of the approval and put into active grape production.

The Board was advised by the Regional Planner that while smaller agricultural parcels existed in the Region, often in the form of greenhouse farms which were viable with small acreages, the 10-acre parcel minimum contained in the Official Plan was an arbitrary limit. Under this circumstance, the Board concluded that each application must clearly be looked at on its own merits.

The Board, having been satisfied with the criteria of Section 51(24) of the Planning Act, allowed the appeal and granted provisional consent to sever subject to certain conditions which included the removal of the storage shed so that the land area could be put into active agricultural production. Similarly, the implementing minor variance application for reduction of lot size of the retained agricultural parcel from a minimum of 10 acres to 6.81 acres was granted.

Source: Decision of the Ontario
Municipal Board

Case No.: PL000791

File Nos.: C000198, V000359

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Haldimand-Norfolk (Regional Municipality) Official Plan Amendment No. 18

The matter before the Ontario Municipal Board was a proposal to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law of the Town of Dunnville to permit the use of the premises as a "farm implements sales and service" establishment. The proponents were in the business of supplying local farmers with automated milking equipment and other similar agricultural machinery and equipment. Included as part of the operation was the servicing of the equipment they sold. The nature of the business required their ability to provide prompt 24-hour parts and service as it was vital to the local dairy farming industry.

The Board reviewed the Town's Official Plan policy with respect to the general prohibition contained for non-agricultural uses in the agriculturally-designated lands as well as the Provincial Policy Statement containing similar restrictions. However, both policy documents recognize that certain uses may be permitted in an agricultural zone on the basis that the uses are required to be in close proximity to the farm operations and are generally small scale.

Although the nature of the business proposed was not that of a typical farm implements dealer in the sense that machineries such as tractors and ploughs were not sold, it was, however, much more small scaled and specialized in a nature which required, as part of the business, to be near the source of the parts and servicing equipment in order to provide prompt 24-hour service. The business employed only a small number of people who were mostly on the road in the farm areas servicing and selling the equipment.

The neighbouring landowners objected to the proposal on the basis that it would have an effect on their enjoyment of the



Farming country needs support services

peaceful rural countryside and would increase traffic and activity in the area. Also of concern was the amount of traffic to be placed on a gravelled road, which was to be used for commercial purposes.

The Board concluded that the particulars of the business did generally conform with what was intended to be permitted as a business that was critical to the agricultural economy and which must be located in close proximity to the farms that it served. It also agreed that the proposed facility was "small scaled", certainly smaller than the large scale feed and fertilizer distributors that were mentioned as permitted uses in the agricultural area.

With respect to the impacts referenced by the appellants, the Board was satisfied that the establishment would generate no more activity, noise or other impact than the adjacent agricultural activities. The Board stated that it had often noted that

the agricultural area was home to the agricultural industry and rural, non-farming residents must expect and come to accept that farming and its related industries formed a modern industry that had some level of reasonable impact necessary to produce food and related commodities.

The Board dismissed the appeals and approved the Zoning By-law and Official Plan documents.

Source: Decision of the Ontario
Municipal Board

Case No.: PL000408

File Nos.: O000121, R000094

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The Art of Constructive Criticism

By Philippa Campsie

Recently, as part of a federally funded project, I edited a document and sent it, as requested, to someone in the government for feedback. I expected that there might be sensitive political issues that would require some rewording. Instead, when the copy came back, I saw that the bureaucrat had carefully removed every comma that appeared before the word "and" and inserted a hyphen between two words.

It's not that the copy was otherwise perfect. I later noticed at least one factual error and I continued to work on the wording, to ensure that the political situation described in the document was fairly presented. The problem lay with the particular bureaucrat, who clearly had no idea how to provide constructive feedback, or even how to read a document for bias and balance.

I hear from participants in my workshops that some planners also long for constructive feedback. Some feel isolated because no one gives them useful comments on their written work. Others are frustrated by supervisors who offer unhelpful, non-specific criticisms ("I don't like the way it's organized" or "It's too long"). Still others work for people like the federal bureaucrat, who fuss about spelling and punctuation and miss important issues. Finally, some are denied the opportunity to learn from their own mistakes by supervisors who simply take the document away and rewrite it themselves, without providing direct feedback.

Giving constructive criticism is not easy to do. Indeed, it is every bit as difficult to provide useful feedback as it is to write a document in the first place. However, the

people who fail to master this essential management skill waste the time of those who work for them. Here are ten "dos" and "don'ts" for managers who want to get better written work from their planners.

1. Do ask what stage the document is at before you start. If it is in first draft, you should be considering the overall organization, the approach taken to the issue in question and the validity of the arguments. If it is ready to go to press, then you are looking only for serious errors that would justify holding up the production of the document while they are fixed.

2. Do scan the document before you start to read. For one thing, this is will save you from writing a long dissertation on "Why have you not dealt with this issue?" on page 4, only to find that the

**People who fail to master this
essential management skill
waste the time of those
who work for them**

same issue is dealt with in depth on page 13. For another, it will give you a sense of the overall structure and logic. If you can't get a sense of the overall organization, that is something to discuss with the author.

3. Do use an erasable pencil if you are going to write comments on the manuscript. Your first impressions can be wrong. You may write a comment or make an editorial change that later seems unnecessary.

4. Don't get bogged down in minutiae, unless, of course, you have been specifically asked to proofread the document for typos, which is not a job for a manager anyway. If you spot typos, say that you noticed some typos and ask that the author have the text proofread.

5. Don't feel that you have to make a change just for the sake of making a change or to prove that you actually read the document. If the document is generally acceptable, say so. If the document is not very important and you are just reading it as a matter of routine, don't waste everyone's time asking for unnecessary changes just because you're the boss.

6. Do be alert to bias in the document. Is one side of an issue favoured over

another? Is there a difference in the way the two sides are described? Are there unsubstantiated claims that a particular course of action represents "good planning"? Can you clearly identify the arguments for and against a course of action and have both been backed up with evidence?

7. Do put yourself in the position of the intended reader of the document. Will readers understand acronyms or planning jargon? How much background knowledge does the document demand of its readers and can they reasonably be expected to have this knowledge?

8. Don't take the document away and rewrite it. If it does need heavy editing to solve problems, at the very least, do the editing on the hard copy and let the author input the changes, so he or she can get a sense of what you have done and pick up some ideas on how to improve his or her writing. Better still, take the time to go over the changes with the author and explain why you made them. In either case, the changes you make should be intended to solve problems in the text, not to impose your own writing style on the document.

9. Don't make your comments to the author into a personal attack. Criticize the document, not the author. Say, "This section is missing information on such-and-so," not "You left out the information on such-and-so." Say, "This information should be mentioned first," not "You should have mentioned this information first." Be particularly careful when you are giving feedback by e-mail. For some reason, people tend to be ruder on e-mail, and blunt comments can make you sound like a boor.

10. Do be positive, not negative when you comment on a document. Good managers can give criticism in such a way that the author can't wait to get started on revisions. They say things like, "The report would be stronger if you did this," or "This issue is too important to be buried in the back of the report." They focus on getting the best work from people, not on scoring points.

In the end, the goal is to produce a good document, while improving the skills of the people who work with you.

Philippa Campsie gives workshops on Plain Language for Planners and Presentation Skills for Planners and is deputy editor of the Ontario Planning Journal. She would welcome constructive criticism on this article in the form of polite e-mails to pcampsie@istar.ca.



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Greater Toronto Services Board at Critical Juncture

By Martin Rendl

The Greater Toronto Services Board (GTSB) began its second term in January. It faces lingering questions about its future and role in dealing with issues of growth and services in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), the second fastest growing urban region in North America.

New Chairman Gordon Chong, a former Toronto councillor, has assumed leadership of the GTSB at a critical time. The GTSB has operated for two years under vague legislation with few direct responsibilities and powers aside from GO Transit. Support among its 30 member municipalities remains uneven. The sentiments of GTA politicians range from lukewarm acceptance or complete opposition to strong support with calls for an enhanced mandate and powers.

Last November's municipal elections saw increased interest in quality of life issues, noticeably outside Toronto. Urban sprawl, gridlock, environmental protection and the

link between land use and transportation in the GTA are all matters a body like the GTSB could address with a broader mandate and real powers.

The GTSB adopted a Strategic Transportation Plan and completed a Countryside Strategy in its first term. Implementation depends on voluntary actions by member municipalities and non-existent senior government funding for transportation infrastructure. The success of these initial efforts depends on how the GTSB redesigns itself.

Frustration with the GTSB's performance is largely due to its intentional design as a work in progress by Queen's Park. The GTSB was conceived in 1998 in an environment of municipal apprehension over a nascent GTA-wide government. In response, Queen's Park gave the GTSB very few powers.

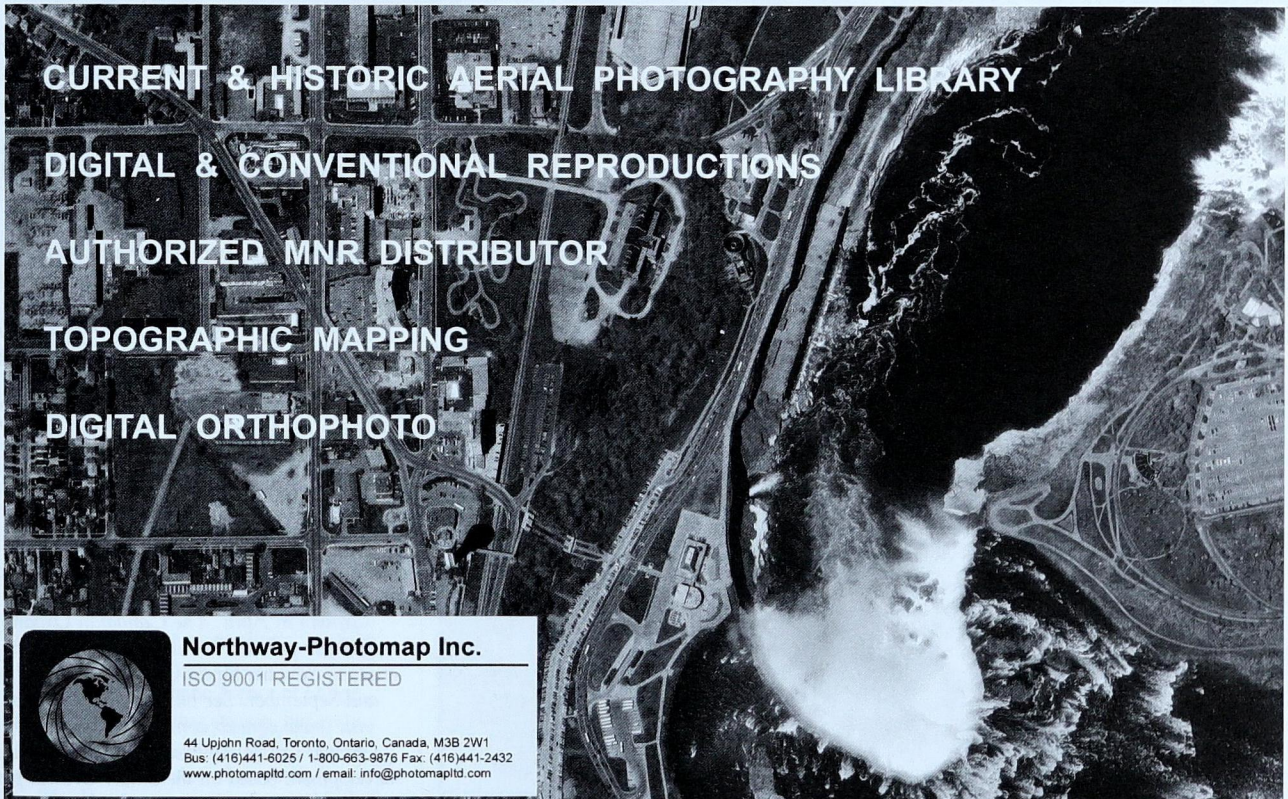
The current GTSB Act uses the verbs *facilitate*, *promote*, and *encourage* to describe

how the Board is intended to achieve its coordination mandate. It is not surprising that after two years of operation under this weak framework, some politicians describe the GTSB as toothless and as effective as a monthly social tea.


The GTSB issued a report evaluating its first term, as required by legislation. The "Getting Started" report presents four options to make the GTSB effective facilitating change in the GTA and ensuring its strategies are implemented. Chong has warned he will recommend the Province dissolve the Board if Queen's Park does not give the GTSB the powers and funding it needs to meet the transportation and infrastructure priorities in the GTA.

One of Chong's priorities is to give the GTSB some form of GTA-wide planning power. Building on one option in the Report, Chong recommends strengthening the GTSB mandate to include responsibility for growth management and preparation of a GTA-wide plan. The official plans of the four regions and City of Toronto would have to comply with the GTSB growth management strategy.

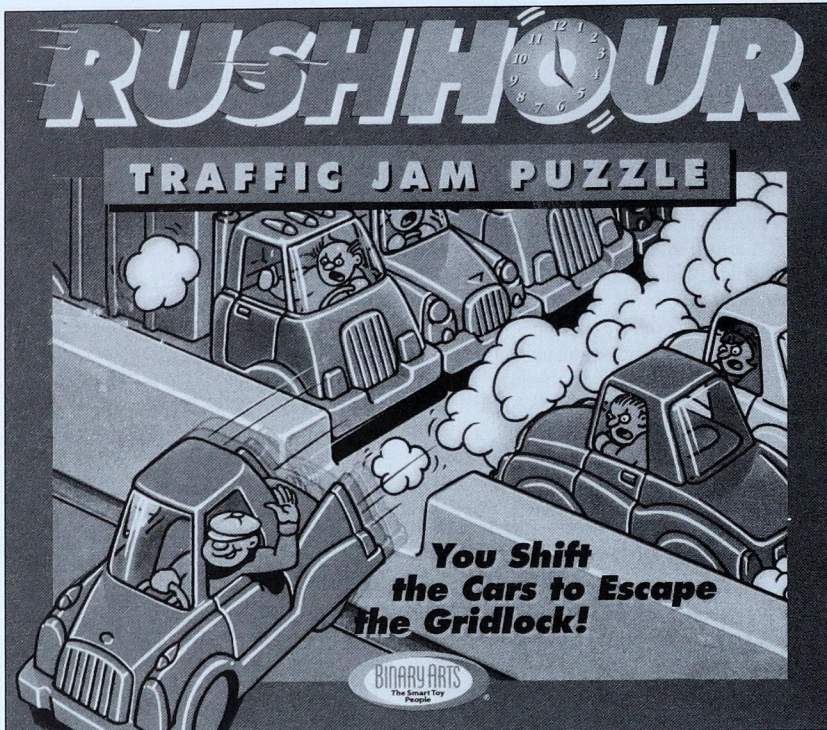
Chong has also recommended a GTA-wide transportation authority be established



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Solving gridlock not child's play

under its. It would co-ordinate transportation planning and administer funds from the senior levels of government.

Talk of the GTSB or a GTA-wide body with planning or any other powers like delivery of services makes many member municipalities nervous. They remain suspicious of actions that would create a perceived or actual new level of government in the GTA. This anxiety was most prevalent outside Toronto so long as the hint of municipal restructuring existed. The Province's recent announcement that it will no longer force municipal restructuring may have reduced this concern.

An explicit collective regional vision for

the GTA has not emerged from the individual official plans covering the GTA. The GTSB's lack of political power together with inter-municipal suspicion and squabbling among its members have hindered real action on growth-related issues.

Chong's initial recommendations to strengthen the GTSB have been tempered in their initial review by the Board's Strategic Planning and Review Committee and are being refined. The Committee has recommended transportation be handled by a special purpose body rather than an agency as recommended by Chong. Further reports have been requested on the particulars of the

growth management program proposed, including the eternal issue of whether municipal plans should comply with or have regard for the GTSB growth management plan. The Board should make final decisions on its new mandate and powers this summer.

Queens Park has recently expressed support for making the GTSB more effective and adopting a new approach to growth issues. Premier Harris and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing have identified the popular American approach of Smart Growth as a necessary response to Ontario's growth and success. Chairman Chong has proposed that the GTSB's growth management plan follow Smart Growth principles.


The details of the Province's made in Ontario Smart Growth program remain to be announced. Smart Growth in the US and elsewhere in Canada has typically involved curbing sprawl, funding infrastructure and developing public-private partnerships. In each case there has been direct participation by the state or province, something missing from Ontario's municipal scene in recent years.

The Getting Started Report and Chairman Chong's recommendations on redefining the GTSB's role and powers coincide with increased provincial and municipal interest in Smart Growth. This intersection of interests has the potential to create a new and effective framework for growth management in the GTA.

A renewed and empowered GTSB can provide the leadership currently missing on GTA-wide growth and infrastructure issues. This should work especially well with the new provincial Smart Growth initiatives. Hopefully there now also exists the public support and the political will on municipal councils and at Queens Park to meet these challenges in a meaningful rather than half-hearted way.

Martin Rendl, MCIP, RPP, is principal of Martin Rendl Associates in Toronto. He is a regular contributor to the Ontario Planning Journal. His most recent article was on growth management in Portland and Seattle. For more information on "Getting Started," prepared by Deloitte and Touche, visit the GTSB website at www.gtsb.on.ca.

OPPI has recently awarded a contract to Melanie Hare, MCIP, RPP, to prepare a paper on growth management. The City of Burlington is hosting an event on Smart Growth in April. The Canadian Urban Institute will also be holding major conferences to examine Smart Growth in May, June and September. See billboard for details or visit www.canurb.com. The new City of Ottawa will be establishing a vision for its development based on the Smart Growth perspective, with a session in June.



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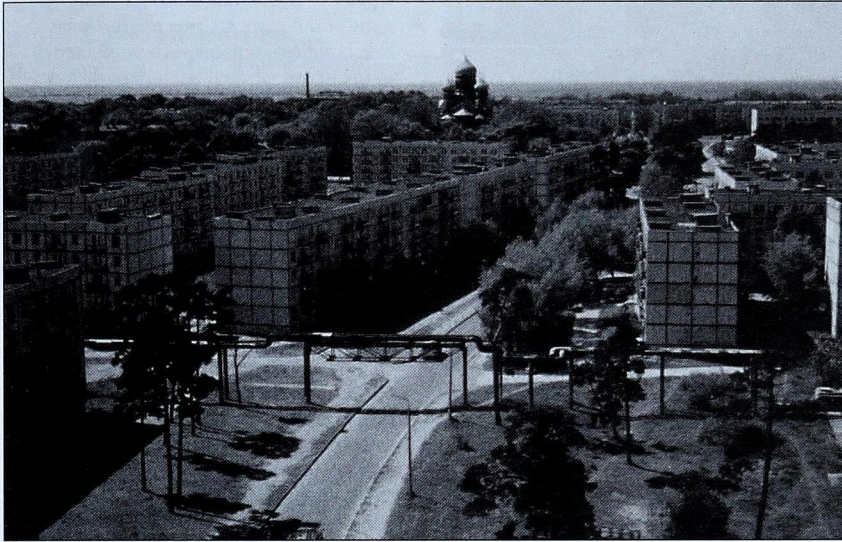
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Housing

Insights from Eastern Europe: Developing a Residential Plan on a Former Soviet Military Base in Liepaja, Latvia

By Linda Lapointe



1980s slab apartments with unusual heating system

Early in 2001, I participated in a housing seminar in Latvia - a country located on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea. The seminar was organized by Michel Frojmovic of Acacia Consulting & Research, an Ottawa-based international development firm, and was the final activity in a six-month CIDA-funded project introducing a range of municipal housing options to the City of Liepaja. The housing project was inspired by a larger project being managed by Dillon Consulting to assist this City of approximately 100,000 people plan the future use of an abandoned Soviet military site.

Our team of "experts" consisted of myself who was asked to talk about municipal housing strategies; Bob Cohen, President of Canadian Housing and Renewal Association, who was asked to talk about housing management models; and Michel Frojmovic, project leader. Rory Baksh and Anne Joyner of Dillon attended the opening session, but were occupied with the larger redevelopment project during most of their visit.

The Latvian project team consisted of

the Manager of the Karosta Housing Enterprise, Guida Kornilko, and the Executive Assistant to the Mayor, Olita Augustovska. Other members of the Latvian team included the Planner for the Liepaja Special Economic Zone, the City's Project Coordinator, three translators and two seminar facilitators. One of our translators, Agnese Mackevic, became invaluable in helping to bridge the linguistic gap.

Overview of Liepaja

Liepaja, an important cultural and industrial centre in Latvia, is situated on the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea. It is on a natural transportation route between Russia and the European Union. In 1994, when the Russian navy departed, the activity of the commercial port was re-established. While the departure was greeted with cheers and relief, it also signalled the beginning of a period of economic and social adjustment. Economic recovery became the major goal of the first elected mayor, Uldis Sesks, and while the local economy has made great strides, the unemployment rate is still around 10 percent. The City is investing heavily in the port area and has set up a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) to attract foreign investment. The Mayor has decided that it is now time to focus on housing and other social issues.

Liepaja has an incredible wealth of historical buildings going back to the 1700s and earlier, with influences from the Germans, Swiss, the Russian Tsarist period and various Soviet periods. The City owes much of its current development to the establishment of a Naval Port by the Russians in 1893 when the Baltic Navy ships first arrived in Liepaja.

The City is wedged between a beautiful white sandy shore and an inland lake connected to the sea by a canal. Liepaja has a healthy downtown area with a tram running through the centre. It was also somewhat disorienting not to hear the rush of traffic but instead to hear the sounds of footsteps, as hundreds of people walked purposefully along the main street.

Karosta—a City within a City

Separated from the rest of Liepaja by a swing bridge over a canal used by the navy, Karosta occupies almost one fifth of the city's

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area. The area was developed as a naval port in the Tsarist Russian empire as a town for soldiers and navy commanders. The buildings in which the elite navy officers lived are still architecturally stunning, although in disrepair. In honour of St. Nicholas, an Orthodox cathedral was built in Karosta in 1903. Horse riding and races took place in the "Manege of Karosta".

Under the Soviet rule, Karosta was a secret military base with a population of 15,000 people. After the Soviets withdrew in 1994, the population declined to half its former size, to approximately 7,000 people. For a few years no one took ownership of the buildings and they began to deteriorate. Those former Soviet citizens (mostly Russian) who decided to stay behind faced a bleak future of no services and lack of employment. As a result, many of the vacant units were stripped - wood was burned to generate heat after the gas was disconnected. The unemployment rate is the highest in the City - at around 18 percent.

Close to two-thirds of the dwelling units are in tall, poorly-built apartment buildings. A number of buildings, close to the cathedral, have been emptied out and these are slated to be demolished. There are several other types of buildings including high-rise

brick buildings built during the Krushchev period, lower-rise apartment buildings built by Stalin which are architecturally very interesting but need a lot of upgrading, and, finally, older historical buildings built during the Tsarist period. There are a number of private dwellings and some new ones are being built on land owned by the City.

Today, the housing is managed by the City through the Karosta Housing Enterprise. The Housing Manager is trying to promote social and physical regeneration in the area. A number of old Soviet block-style buildings are being emptied out and will be destroyed. At the same time, the existing population is being consolidated in other buildings that are in better shape. As the area is slowly being upgraded and rejuvenated, the proportion of tenants paying rent increased from 67 percent in 1997 to close to 100 percent by 2000.

In urban areas such as Liepaja, "privatization" of apartment units is taking place, whereby individuals buy their units using the vouchers that were issued to all citizens when Latvia became independent. (Note - privatization does not necessarily include the land; only the unit.) However, the process has been slower in Karosta because it is part of a Special Economic Zone.

People who rent their apartments pay rent to the Karosta Housing Enterprise; however, the Enterprise does not receive enough rent to upgrade units (the rents that may be charged are limited by the central government). To deal with this problem, the housing manager enters into arrangements with people whereby they invest in units using capital and/or sweat equity and in return their rent is waived over a certain period of time. For some of the more architecturally desirable buildings, tenants with more money to invest are selected because of the considerable amount of upgrading that is required.

While faced with many challenges, residents of Karosta have access to a beautiful seashore, a pine forest and a park area. They also have a strong community spirit, identifying themselves as "patriots" of Karosta. They are anxious to preserve and improve their area including the portion of the seashore that the SEZ Agency has designated for port-related storage activities. As the area improves, people are moving into Karosta - mainly younger people who want to set up their own apartment and people who recently found employment in Liepaja.

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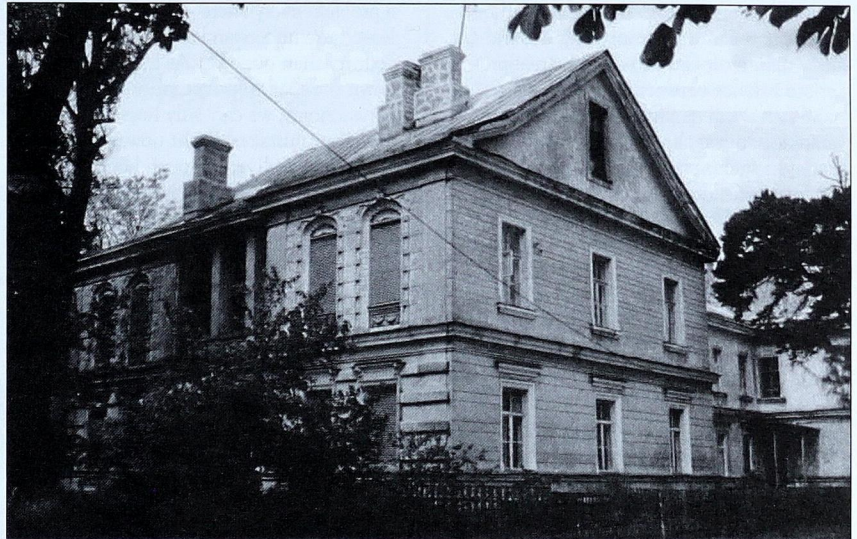
The Role of the Cultural and Information Centre K@2

To really understand how the regeneration in Karosta is taking place, it is necessary to talk about K@2, an NGO or non-government organization. This organization was started by three people with an interest in filmmaking, the notion of art, borders and peace - one is Latvian, the other is Swedish and a third is from Mexico. The cultural and information centre is accommodated in an older building at 2 Katedrales Street which the organization is in the process of upgrading using a mix of new and recycled material and volunteer labour. Various programs are provided here for local children and older people. As well, the founders have organized international art and film workshops. The building is alive with creativity and provides a model of what can be done with little money but lots of ideas, materials and willpower.

K@2 were the hosts and provided us with wonderful coffee and snacks (Latvian coffee is on a level of its own!). A volunteer work crew worked night and day to get the building ready for us. To keep us warm, they used wood to heat large old vats (boilers) containing water. And in a combination of old meets new, as we walked into the facility, they had set up two computers with Karosta's web site for us to look at.

Outcome

The workshop was an important first step in bringing people together in Karosta to develop a common vision and in bringing that vision to reality. We found that the municipal staff in Liepaja were well educated, sophisticated, eager to learn and "quick studies". As well they had a very strong sense of values and fairness.



Tsarist architecture now has heritage value

What emerged from the seminar was a desire by most of the attendees that the Karosta District should be promoted as a unique residential area for a mix of income groups with "environmentally friendly" enterprises. There was an interest in some of the residential developments being turned over to self-governing enterprises - either as co-ops or some type of condominiums. Further advice will likely be provided on alternative management models in the future. Money is needed to upgrade the buildings and this will be a major challenge in the future. There is a strong commitment by local residents to maintaining the unique physical environment. Finally, one of the most important outcomes is that people who rarely talk to one another did. Residents, social workers, housing staff, City officials and staff from the Special Economic Zone Agency had lively

exchanges around a future vision for Karosta.

It is now in the hands of the architect hired by Dillon to come up with a physical plan for housing in Karosta that will identify which buildings can be rehabilitated or need to be demolished and where future residential development should take place. However, there is clearly much work to be developed in terms of housing management models. Will each building be eventually self-managing? If so, should they go the route of a co-operative or a condominium? Will the City retain long-term ownership of the land? City staff are also interested in looking at developing a housing strategy for the City, perhaps using Karosta as a starting point.

Lessons Learned

One of the first things that struck me at

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the workshop was how universal conflicts over the use of waterfront lands are and how difficult it can be to reach an appropriate balance between the interests of commerce and quality of life. Another separate lesson was the importance of local catalysts such as an innovative bureaucrat or committee of community organizers in promoting change and improvement. Our public housing developments would greatly benefit by having organizations similar to K@2.

Finding money for affordable housing is

a problem everywhere - although it is at least more understandable in a less affluent country than our own. As Liepaja moves down the road to privatization and a market economy, we can only hope that they avoid our mistakes. Right now, everyone has a place to live, although housing conditions need to be upgraded, there is a lack of money for such rehabilitation and there is a need to develop appropriate management structures. I am confident the citizens of Liepaja will meet these challenges. I hope to go back and visit this beautiful

and lively country in the near future preferably during the summer time when I can take advantage of all that Liepaja and Latvia have to offer.

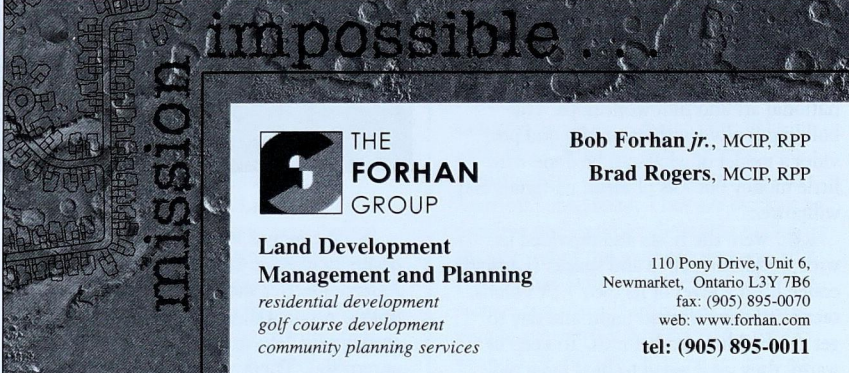
Linda Lapointe, MCIP, RPP, is Principal of Lapointe Consulting. She is the Journal's editor on housing issues and welcomes articles on housing-related topics. She can be reached by phone: 416-323-0807 or fax: 416-323-0992. Her e-mail address is lapointe.consulting@on.aibn.com.

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If Things Are So Good, Why Aren't They Better?

By Jim Helik



Closely watched drains. Office construction a spectator sport once again

“Office vacancy rates are near their historic lows,” scream the headlines—from around four percent in Toronto, to a low of about half that in Ottawa today. This comes as a welcome relief after years of little new office development. Yet if this is the case, planners in centres throughout Ontario are wondering, “Where are all the construction cranes?” Some recent work, based on trends in the Greater Toronto Area, highlights emerging office patterns, and sheds some light on whether we are ever going to see new prime office construction.

We may not be out of the woods yet. When we first started examining office trends in the Toronto area a little over a year ago, nobody had uttered the dreaded word “recession.” Whether we are in the middle or about to enter one is anybody’s guess, but it is important to note that the talk today in North America is about slowdowns—whether we are speaking of Nortel’s Canadian layoffs, or GE’s worldwide cutbacks. Interestingly, even after solid office employment growth in the 1990s, even by the summer of 2000, the City’s office employment had yet to recover to the peak levels of 1989-1990. Developers are, understandably, still skittish.

The financial services sector is no longer driving office growth. Oh, bring back the 1980s, when banks and trust companies were

expanding into new front and back-office buildings throughout Ontario, signing long leases, supplying financing, and even taking up that hard-to-lease ground floor retail space. Well, today there are fewer players in the financial services industry, and those that aren’t cutting back or working through their existing merger (such as TD and Canada Trust), are looking towards their next merger or acquisition, leading to both uncertainty and lower long-term space demand.

Floor space per worker rates no longer on the rise. Much of the growth in office space, determined by optimistic forecasts in the late 1980s, assumed that office workers would continue to occupy more space on a per

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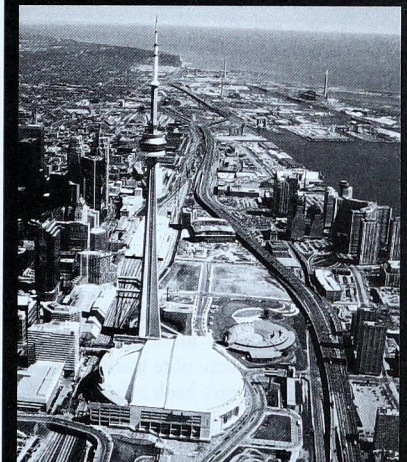
capita basis. A decade of belt-tightening has resulted in just the opposite trend. When you add in a limited amount of hoteling or job-sharing, you are squeezing in more people into less space.

Fewer real estate players. Some big name office developers disappeared in the 1990s (Bramalea and a host of others), others looked to opportunities in the south (TrizecHahn), while still others moved into the asset management, rather than development (Cadillac Fairview). For all of these reasons, there are fewer active developers around today, leading to fewer new properties being developed.

Views of financial risk differ. It isn’t just a case that “the banks aren’t lending for office development” but rather a longer-term re-evaluation of the risk inherent in a rental commercial building. Constructing a rental multi-tenant commercial building represents a commitment of at least a few decades. The experiences of the past 15 years have made many less certain about their ability to forecast the future. By comparison, developing the same site to take advantage of today’s hot condo market is a way for many landowners to finally extract a one-time value from long-held properties.

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We are producing buildings, but not in the usual way, or in the usual places. Even during a recession, there are still deals being made. Tenants move, buildings get renovated and upgraded, while others get torn down. In the GTA, millions of square feet of space have been added in the past few years in Mississauga, Markham and Vaughan, in both purpose-built and competitive buildings. In the City of Toronto,

there have been buildings that have come in under the radar screen including the Air Canada Centre, and renovation projects such as the former Revenue Canada building in the east downtown area.

Development is still causing the shovels to be put in the ground. Planners just have to put up with the fact that the locations chosen don't necessarily mesh with our plans.

Jim Helik, MCIP, RPP, is with the City of Toronto's City Planning Division. He has been a contributor to the Ontario Planning Journal for many years. This is the first in a series of pieces that will be produced by Toronto's Policy and Research Section for the Ontario Planning Journal. The next installment will be an examination of household make-up of migrants within the GTA by Mark Bekkering.

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More material to feed your brain

City in Time and Space

By Robert Shipley

To illustrate our commitment to your reading enjoyment, we are covering both Aidan Southall's weighty book, *The City in Time and Space* (Eudora Pendergrast gives us a good insight into this less than optimistic look at urban history) and *Sustaining Cities: Environmental Planning and Management in Urban Design*, reviewed by Tara-Lynne Franco. As a special bonus, we are also including more Book Pix to catch up on a number of titles that haven't been featured before. Our thanks to Suzette Giles of Ryerson Polytechnic University Library for these additions.

Sustaining Cities: Environmental Planning and Management in Urban Design

Author: Josef Leitmann
Publisher: McGraw-Hill, New York
(Professional Architecture)

Date: 1999
Price: \$59.95
Pages: 404

Review by Tara-Lynne Franco

Planners today are facing some grim realities. In the public sector these include government reorganization, the forced amalgamation of municipalities, staff downsizing and budget reductions, all of which seem to leave them with much more work to do. What Josef Leitmann's book offers is a refreshing look at what is being done across the world, even in the poorest of cities, to improve conditions for citizens, protect the environment and restore areas that have been seriously damaged.

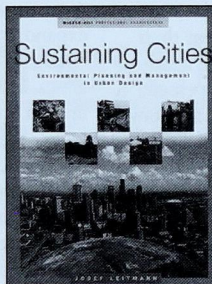
Sustainable development is a term that we hear often and that is frequently debated. We all know that in order for our cities to survive, our actions and decisions must create systems that will be able to continue to function. But what exactly does it mean to be a sustainable community and how do we get there?

As the title of the book suggests, one of the ways of sustaining cities is through environmental planning and management in urban design. To say that this book is about urban design, however, would not give it the full credit it deserves. While design plays a major role in how our communities function, this book goes far beyond this and provides a critical evaluation of the complex relationships between citizens, cities and the environment. It also addresses how planning can bring about positive changes. It presents various strategic approaches and management tools for urban environmental planning. The main question is not *if* cities can be sustained, but *how*.

While the format of this book closely resembles that of a textbook, it appeals to practising planners as well as academic audiences. On the academic side, it includes exercises and research ideas suited for an upper year or masters level course. For professionals, it is an excellent reference guide to environmental management practices from around the world. It contains a useful compendium of over 200 examples of good environmental practices selected from the International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) case-studies series and the UN Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) Best Practices database. The appendices

include worldwide contacts for information resources on specific topics related to sustaining cities, networks and associations, financial resources, and training and research institutions.

Innovation is not something one would normally associate with developing and Third World countries. Cases presented in the book, however, show that many of these countries have found unique ways of dealing with priority issues that all communities face. Examples related to sanitation and drainage, solid waste management, transportation, air quality and urban sprawl are discussed. Singapore, for instance was experiencing serious air quality problems that stemmed from the use of leaded gas in vehicles and traffic congestion. One of the approaches that the Singapore Land Transport Authority used to help minimize the environmental effects of traffic was a Vehicle Quota System. Under this plan the long-term growth of vehicles is set at three percent per year through Certificates of



Entitlement (COE).

As is shown throughout the book, strong leadership "is a critical element of successful design and implementation of environmental actions." In order to have true success, political will, long-term commitment, and resources need to be linked to this leadership. *Sustaining Cities* reminds us that there does not exist a one-size-fits-all solution to our environmental problems. Rather, it is often a precise combination of actions that leads to the success of an initiative. We also learn that it is essential to look beyond our backyard to

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find innovative and unique solutions to our problems. Readers of this book will be amazed with what is being done in other countries that have even more extreme environmental problems and fewer resources to deal with them.

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The City in Time and Space

Author: Aidan Southall

Date: 1998

Publisher: Cambridge University Press:
Cambridge, U.K.

Pages: 473

Reviewed by Eudora Pendergrast

At first glance, the title of this book, written by a noted University of Wisconsin urban anthropologist, may seem like academic code for a standard historical survey of individual cities. Not so. There's plenty of history, but the journey the book takes through eight millennia and across five continents, is a "grand narrative" par excellence. Southall treats cities not as artifacts or organisms or centres of culture, but as nothing less than concentrations of human experience shaped by changes in the material conditions of life.

For Southall, cities are not separate entities in their own right, but byproducts of economic and social relationships as they have evolved in particular times and places. "Cities," Southall asserts, "cannot be reified like actors on a stage, nor can comparisons be made by lifting cities out of context, or by lifting aspects of urban life out of the context of the city as a whole. The history of cities is an integral part of the history of human affairs as a whole."

Notwithstanding Southall's desire for comprehensiveness and integration, when your subject is a history of the entirety of human affairs, some selectivity is required. Southall's choices of what to leave in and what to exclude are shaped by his use of Marxist mode of production theory. Southall refers to Marx's observation that, "the foundation of every division of labour that is well developed, and brought about by the exchange of

commodities, is the separation of town and country." He uses that idea to identify four basic phases in the history of human experience based on four modes of production and four corresponding transformations in the relationship of town and country. These are: (i) the Asiatic Mode — unity of town and country; (ii) the Ancient (Greek and Roman) Mode — ruralization of the city; (iii) the Feudal Mode — antagonism between town and country; (iv) the Capitalist Mode — urbanization of the country.

Before embarking on a temporal and global forays into these phases, Southall introduces what he terms "pristine cities" or concentrations of people and productivity which appeared in major world regions at different times but as similarly innovative and recognizably urban forms. Examples include Jericho, Catal Huyuk, and, in the New World, Teotihuacan, Olmec and Monte Alban.

At the risk of oversimplifying Southall's structure, within such pristine cities certain groups succeeded more than others in the intrinsically human effort to increase the productivity of their relations with nature. The more successful groups became not only wealthier but also more dominant, and thus able to enlist or enforce the services of others in further increases in productivity. The "ambiguous flowers" of this unfolding history of wealth production, dominance and inequality are what we call cities.

Elaborating on this asserted dynamic, Southall surveys economic and social relations in Greek and Roman, medieval European, Chinese, Japanese, Islamic and Indic cities, as well the colonial cities engendered by European expansion. He also examines the "White dominions," such as Australia and New Zealand (and presumably Canada, although it receives no mention), which escaped the typically tragic fate of the non-white ex-colonies.

While acknowledging the cultural and artistic brilliance associated with city life, Southall's account follows an essentially downward spiral and ends with an inventory of late (U.S.) capitalism's "urban scourges": ghettos, gangs, AIDS, prison, homicide, delinquency, homelessness, crowding, congestion, pollution and welfare. Not surprisingly, Southall turns to Kenneth Boulding's 1963 essay "The Death of the City: A Frightened Look at Postcivilization," as more meaningful than the work of contemporary urban thinkers. For example, Southall refers derisively to Manuel Castells' recent work as "substituting meaning for material causation in

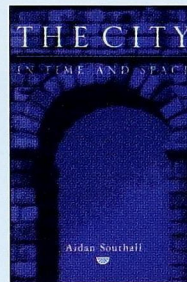
the context of total cultural relativism."

As an anthropologist Southall attempts to fill what he calls the "irrational hiatus." This is the gap between the knowledge of the beginnings of cities, the "pristine cities," that is provided by anthropological archaeology, and the knowledge of what may be the end of cities as we have known them, the cities of late capitalism, provided by contemporary urban anthropology. One consequence of using mode of production theory to fill this gap is the short shrift given to what we would normally consider indispensable stopping points in a global

tour of urban places. New York, for example, gets a single entry in the index, under the heading of "gangs."

Having brought us to the brink of the urban abyss, Southall concludes by offering a vision of an alternative urban future. This future view is not incompatible with the speculations of Peter Hall and Joel Garreau: "a global network of uplifting centres of cultural, aesthetic and inspirational performance and experience, not a centre of production, nor even primarily of residence."

Given the length of this book, the density of its contents, and the unremitting pessimism of Southall's vision, why would a rational person invest the considerable effort required to read it? One reason is the diversity of Southall's inventory of urban places, for example, his account of Japanese cities. Another is the insight the book provides into the differences between the anthropologist and the cultural historian. A third is the gritty vividness of its account of the human misery on which the golden ages of great cities are based. In this respect, Southall provides a sober and perhaps necessary counterpoint to the current stream of competitive global city talk.



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This book is hardly a practical guide for the urban practitioner, and as an intellectual effort it is impressive but feels dated in the company of writers such as Hall and Castells. However, whether we refer to the urban future as post-industrial, post-city, or, with Hall, "the future golden age," Southall's reminder of the price paid for the journey is worthy of serious reflection.

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BOOK PIX

**Transforming the schoolyard:
how local school communities design
and build their playground learning
environments.**

Author: Design Team, Toronto District School Board
Publisher: Toronto: Toronto District School Board
Date: 2000
Description: 136 p.; ill.; plans, forms.

**Redeveloping brownfields: landscape
architects, planners, developers**

Author: Russ, Thomas H.
Publisher: New York: McGraw-Hill
Date: 2000
Description: xiii, 289 p.; ill.; 25 cm. + 1 computer optical disc
ISBN: 0071353119

**Sustainable landscape construction:
a guide to green building outdoors**

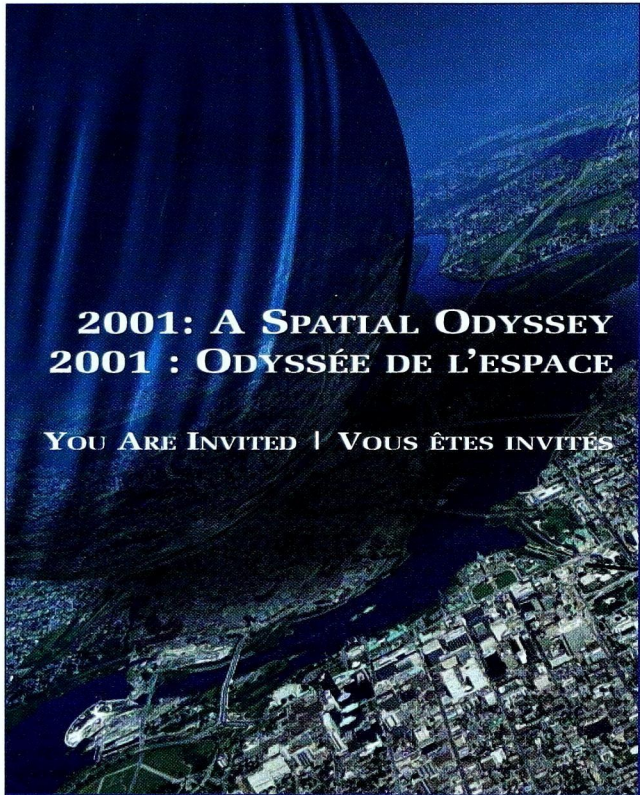
Author: Thompson, J. William and Kim Sorvig; drawings by Craig D. Farnsworth.
Publisher: Washington, D.C.: Island Press
Date: 2000
Description: xxi, 348 p.; ill.; 28 cm.
ISBN: 1559636467


**The Australian metropolis:
a planning history**

Author: Edited by Stephen Hamnett and Robert Freestone
Publisher: London: E & FN Spon; New York: Routledge
Date: 2000
Description: ix, 229 p.; ill., maps; 24 cm
ISBN: 0419258108

**Sustainable communities:
the potential for eco-neighbourhoods**

Author: [ed.] Hugh Barton.
Publisher: London: Earthscan
Date: 2000
Description: xix, 305 p.; ill.; 24 cm.
ISBN: 1853835137





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