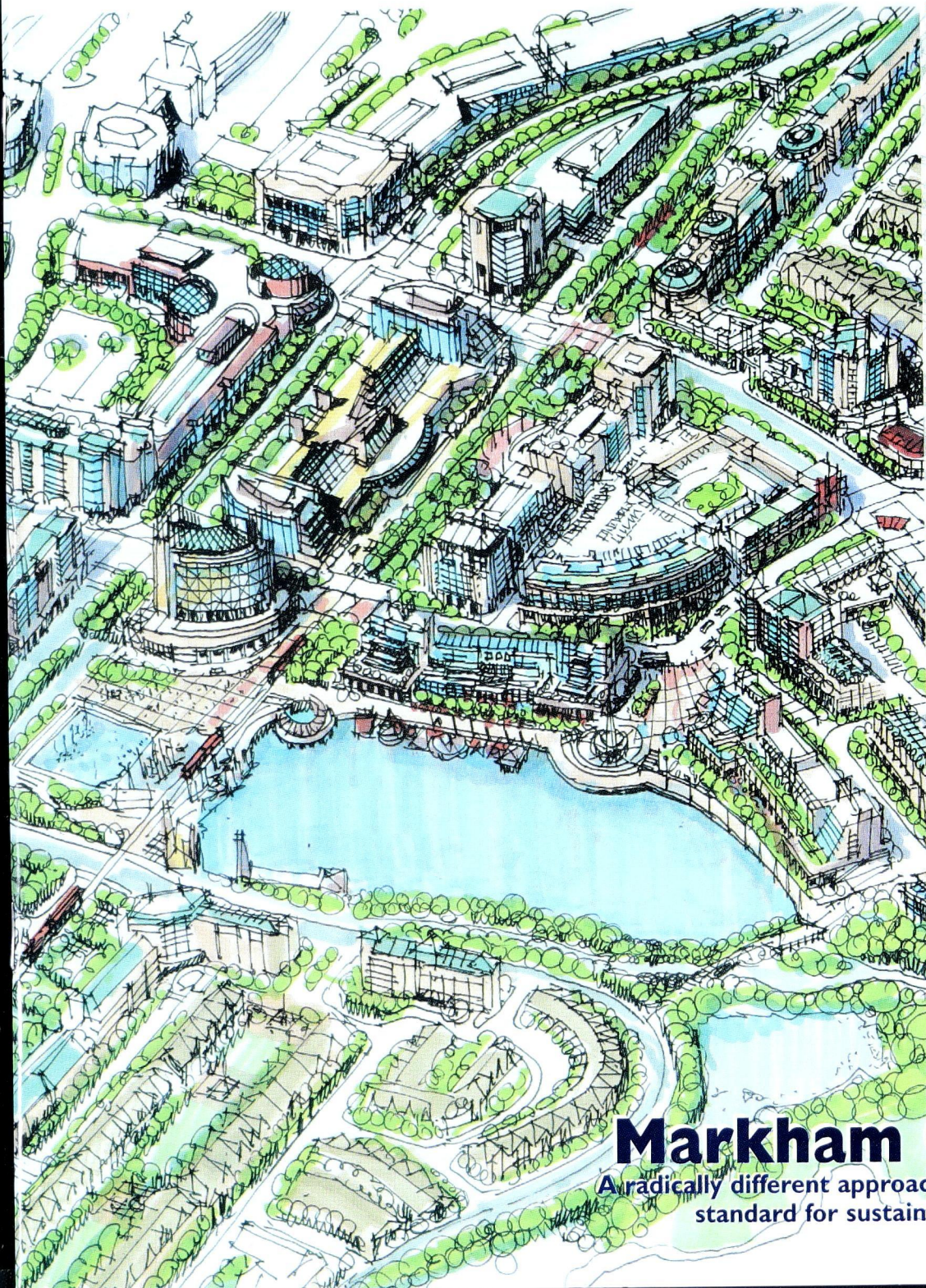


ONTARIO PLANNING JOURNAL

ONTARIO PLANNERS: VISION · LEADERSHIP · GREAT COMMUNITIES

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2003
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NUMBER 1



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Markham Centre

A radically different approach could set a new standard for sustainable development

ONTARIO PLANNING JOURNAL

Volume 18, Number 1, 2003

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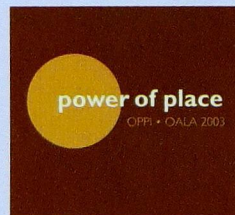
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The Modern Art and Business of Placemaking

The View from Markham Centre

By Neil Innes

Over the years, the challenge of managing urban growth and building attractive places has occupied some of the best brains in the business. Ebenezer Howard, Patrick Abercrombie, Clarence Stein, Thomas Adams have all made crucial contributions. Whether the emphasis is on decentralizing population to avoid unwelcome congestion or designing greenfield communities that seek to create the perfect community, building any type of new urban centre or town centre from scratch has achieved varying degrees of success around the world. Undeterred by mixed results, planners everywhere continue their quest for perfection.

Ontario is no exception. To handle rapid growth and contain urban sprawl, planners in the Greater Toronto Area have turned their attention to the creation of new downtowns in greenfield locations. Most attempts have begun with the establishment of a shopping mall or an existing village centre. The approach being taken in Markham is radically different and could well be setting a new standard for sustainable development in the North American context.

Markham Centre was conceived in the early 1990s. The original plan, based on the principles of New Urbanism, involved the development of some 6,600 acres in the Town's designated expansion area. Early plans proposed the creation of ten new communities that offered mixed housing, employment opportunities, commercial/retail districts and recreational facilities linked to natural spaces and parks. The concept of building self-contained communities for living and working is familiar. A key difference is the recognition by Markham's planners that, to be successful, new development needs to provide a solution to the outward growth of the larger community while at the same time successfully creating a place that works internally.

At the early stages in the Markham Centre plan, residents, businesses, consultants, politicians and Town staff developed ten Guiding Development Principles through a series of public meetings and workshops. The principles intended to shape

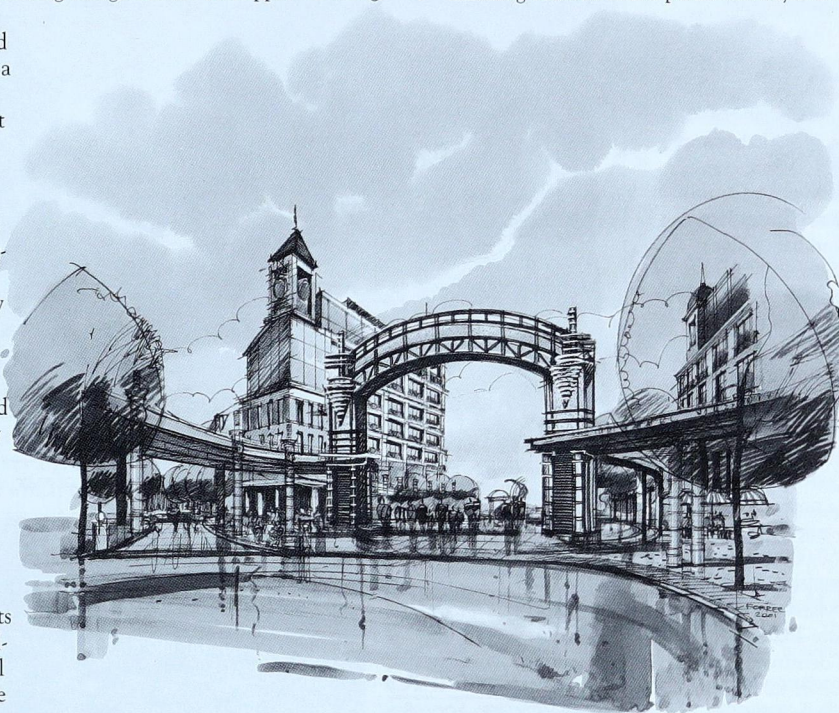
development to date can be summarized as:

1. Protect and enhance the Rouge River Valley
2. Support public transit
3. Transform Highway 7 into an urban boulevard
4. Develop an effective street network
5. Provide a "Sense of Place"
6. Enhance pedestrian activity
7. Ensure ecological sustainability
8. Provide cultural and social focus
9. Manage traffic and parking issues
10. Deliver a financial framework.

Over the last decade, Markham's population has increased by approximately 45 percent to 223,000, and the plan for Markham Centre has changed accordingly. Town officials are putting the finishing touches to the plan that Mayor Don Cousens says will

create a "vibrant, family oriented, people place with pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, wonderful parks and courtyards, great architecture and a clean and healthy environment." This 990-acre sustainable downtown community will be developed on a predominantly greenfield site bordered by Highways 7 and 407, centred on Warden Avenue.

The plan for Markham Centre has been lauded for its innovative involvement of the local community. In early 2002, a 21-member Advisory Committee was set up to develop performance measures that will shape the development of



Markham's new downtown will feature a lake

Markham's new downtown. The members of the Committee were drawn from a broad cross-section of the community with representatives of local and town-wide interests, residents and businesses.

The Advisory Committee in conjunction with the Town of Markham hosted five public workshops in August 2002. The workshops focused on five specific areas of planning—greenlands, transportation, built form, public space and finally green infrastructure. The aim of the workshops was to promote discussion and public participation. Advice and input from the attendees

was welcomed and continues to be valuable in establishing performance measures that will help to guide the implementation of a vibrant, healthy, economically efficient, and sustainable downtown.

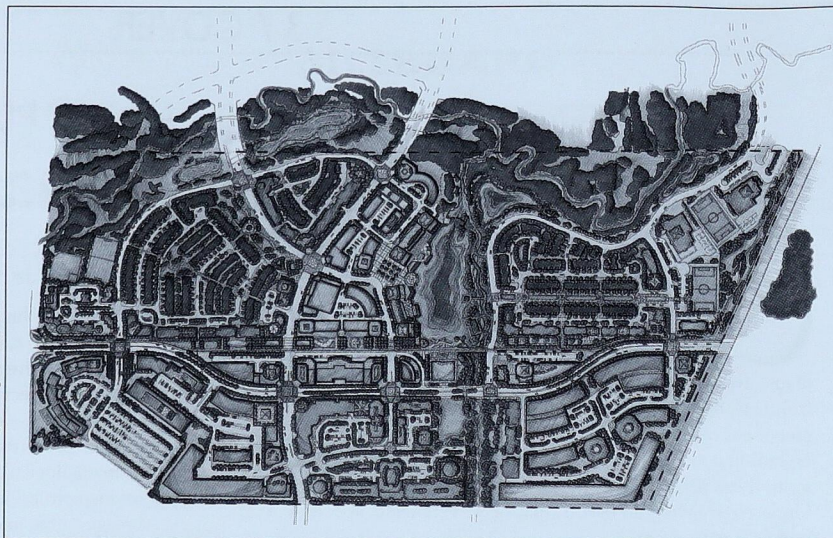
Information gathered from these five workshops culminated at the Markham Centre Public Conference and Open House in September. The free event was well attended and keynote speaker Dr David Suzuki remarked "Markham's plan to involve its citizens to create benchmarks for sustainable development is encouraging evidence of the Town's commitment to creating a progressive, sustainable urban downtown community." The Advisory Committee will work with Town staff to ensure that implementation plans for Markham Centre adhere to the 10 guiding principles developed during the process. According to Mary Frances Turner, Commissioner of Strategic Innovation and Partnerships, coming to grips with the financial matters and coordination issues with respect to staging infrastructure investment will be key. "One of the main responsibilities of the Advisory Committee is to give us a reality check on our progress," she says.

Several developments are already in place in Markham's new urban hub. Two significant commercial developments were the IBM Research and Development Laboratory and Motorola buildings, which were completed in 2001. The proposed centre is also currently home to: the Hilton Suites Hotel and convention centre; Markham Civic Centre; Unionville High School; Markham Theatre; First Markham Village residential/commercial and office developments; and Stringbridge Developments industrial/commercial development. 2003 is likely to be a busy year with the Remington Group's development of 243 acres in the downtown core, which will be built around a six-acre lake, and will include nearly 3,500 apartments and townhouse units, 515,000 square feet of commercial space and the \$18-million construction of a 60,000-square-foot YMCA recreational and health facility.

Upon completion, the Markham Centre is projected to accommodate 25,000 new residents in 10,000 mixed-density housing units and 17,000 employees in 4.2 million square feet of office space. It will also include more than 500,000 square feet of retail space; three elementary schools and one high school; 192 acres of open space, with 75 acres of parkland; and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes and nature paths.

Neil Innes is a planner currently based in Hamilton.

Illustration: Young & Wright Architects



Compact urban form will be driven by investment in a district energy system

Illustration: Young & Wright Architects



Retail will play a major role in development of main street

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There Is A Little Planner In All Of Us

By Janet Amos

At a party, when someone asks what I do for a living, I usually explain that I am a town planner who co-ordinates environmental studies. My fellow guest often feels compelled to recount an experience with town council or to relay a problem or a complex issue about planning. Sometimes people are looking for help with the problem or sometimes they just want to talk about it. Everyone has something to say about planning because planning concerns us all. Planning is about where we live, the park in town, the quality of lake water, and where the new water treatment plant should go.

One experience stands out. My host introduced me as a town planner and I was left to deflect a grilling about what planners should do to solve the affordable housing crisis. Another time, I was regaled with an ordeal in facing off against a stubborn town council on a zoning issue. Mention town planning and we are always off on some new and exciting issue. I've concluded that there is a little bit of planner in all of us.

The role of the planner begins with listening to and learning from all the participants interested in the issue. Planners are responsible for collecting the relevant facts and developing criteria for evaluating projects. Yes, we hear you don't like the project, but is that because it may affect your economic situation, change your quality of life, or impact upon the lakes and trees in your neighbourhood? And which point of view should be given the greatest weight in the outcome? While listening and learning, often it is the planner who articulates the advantages and the concerns about a project for those involved. After the listening and learning, planners co-ordinate the facts and perceptions into an action plan. A large part of our task is to interpret many laws, regulations and policies.

Ideally, a planner should be a spokesperson for "good planning." What this means is that regardless of who pays for the planning advice, we may also represent the "silent" clients who have not yet expressed a view, who have not yet moved to town, or who may not yet have been born. The advice



Sometimes planning leaves us scratching our heads

that planners provide is independent of the client's opinion. Planners are supposed to give good advice on what will work and not just what we hope might work.

In Ontario, a professional planner is bound by a code of conduct to address possible areas of conflict and to ensure that planners promote the same objectives. The basic objective of planning is to promote general well-being, even in cases where it may be in conflict with the apparent interest of smaller groups or individuals. Regardless of the client, a professional planner should protect and promote both public and private interests, as appropriate to the situation. While providing a client with independent professional advice, planners always acknowledge that the greater public good is paramount.

My favourite explanation of "what is planning" is to speak about the value that town planning adds to the community. In my view, planners' contributions should bring out the best in people. Planners should also contribute to better solutions for the long term. Planners translate into action "on the ground" what people want and what

people need. In a way, planners help to express the community's dreams.

Janet Amos MCIP, RPP, specializes in community planning and environmental assessment. Her firm, Amos Environment + Planning, is located in the Milford Bay area. She is a member of the 2003 Conference Committee and a frequent contributor to the Ontario Planning Journal. She can be reached at amos@primus.ca.

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The Role of the Planner in Determining Highest and Best Use

By Robert Hazra

The identification of the highest and best use of a property is a task that requires the expertise of professional planners for matters ranging from the justification of land use changes to expert testimony in land compensation matters related to expropriation.

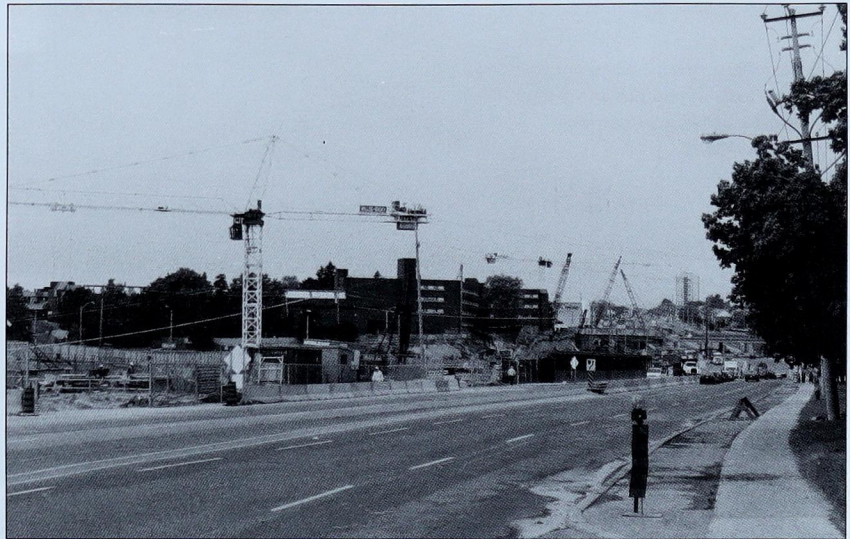
The term "highest and best use" can be interpreted to mean various things—including the most reasonable and probable use of a property. There is no precise definition, nor can there be, because a variety of factors combine to determine the best use of a property.

For each property, the individual factors that define the best use of a property carry a different weight. For some properties, for example, zoning may be a major determinant of property use and value due to rigid land use regulations; while in another community where land use restrictions are more relaxed, the existing zoning may not be as significant to property value.

Although it may be difficult to precisely define the term, it is generally accepted that the "highest and best" use of a property must meet all four of the following criteria:

- The use must be legally possible.
- The use must be physically possible.
- The use must be financially feasible.
- The use must be the most financially productive use of the property.

The first two factors are clearly matters that planners can address.



Road access and exposure from a highway can affect property values

The financial feasibility of a use refers to the fact that the highest and best use of a property is expected to be a profitable use. Some planners may have expertise in the preparation of pro-forma statements analysing the financial returns of several different development options; however, in many cases the assessment of financial feasibility is the domain of accountants and business consultants.

Appraisal professionals are primarily involved in the identification of the most financially productive use of a property. In many cases, though, a planner's expertise is necessary to define or clarify the most productive use of a property, particularly when there is some complexity in assessing the future "probability" of a certain land use.

The identification of the "probable" use of a property is often critical in establishing a value for land. This task requires the expertise of a planner because it involves an interpretation of planning policies and regulations and an analysis of regulatory, technical, socio-economic and environmental issues that affect the development potential of a property.

When planners are hired to assist in the identification of the highest and best use of a property, they are primarily being retained to provide their opinion on what is the most

probable use of a property. The determination of the probable use of a property is fundamental to the relationship between planning and the identification of highest and best use.

The concept of probability is discussed in a decision of the Ontario Municipal Board (*Farlinger Development Ltd v. East York (Borough)* (1975)), in which the concept of highest and best use was described in the following terms:

It would seem to be established that the highest and best use must be based on something more than a possibility of rezoning. There must be a probability or a reasonable expectation that such rezoning will take place. It is not enough that the lands have the capability of rezoning. In my opinion, probability connotes something higher than a 50% possibility.

When retained for assignments on the highest and best use of property, planners are expected to provide their opinion as to what the likely future use of a property will be in the foreseeable future—as clearly and definitively as possible—with a full explanation of their rationale for their conclusions.

The exercise of predicting the future may not be entirely scientific, but planners with their expertise in land use approvals and community planning are often the most

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qualified professionals to assess the likely future use of a property.

The decision in the Farlinger Development case cited above clearly outlines the role of the planner in the determination of highest and best use vis-à-vis the professional appraiser:

The determination of the highest and best use, including as part and parcel thereof the probability of rezoning, is a matter on which the evidence of experts in the field of planning was required. On the other

hand, once the highest and best use has been determined, the amount of compensation to be paid is one on which expert appraisal evidence is necessary.

Clearly planners have a considerable role to play in identifying the highest and best use of properties; however, planners who choose to provide advice in this sphere must be prepared to provide a definitive opinion as to what they believe the most reasonable and probable use(s) of a property will be.

Robert Hazra, MCIP, RPP, is a Senior Arbitrations Officer for the Ministry of Transportation. He handles MTO's land compensation cases that have been referred to the Ontario Municipal Board by claimants across Ontario.

Sources:

The Appraisal Institute of Canada, Basics of Real Estate Appraising, Winnipeg, 1991
Farlinger Development Ltd v. East York (Borough) (1975), Land Compensation Report, 1975

Time to test the assumptions

Vibrant Neighbourhoods: The Role of Mixed-Use Design

By Jun Katoh, Michelle Spencer and Stephanie Tencer

Mixing land-uses has become something of a mantra in contemporary planning, along with its associated terms—transit-oriented, pedestrian-oriented, traditional neighbourhood design, new urbanism, smart growth and sustainable development. Proponents promise economic and social gains, but the research on the tangible benefits of mixed-use neighbourhoods is, in fact, limited.

Jane Jacobs, the guru of mixed land use, describes “vibrant” neighbourhoods as those that offer a diversity of people access to a range of activities throughout the day, night and weekend, thereby ensuring safety and community interaction. Critics do not believe mixed-use design is equally appropriate for all socio-economic groups. Jacobs has been criticized for assuming that middle-class people will adopt working-class styles of family life and sociability and for basing her observations on isolated experiences without testing her hypotheses.

We decided to test her ideas, by looking at the relationship between mixed-use design and neighbourhood “vibrancy.” We tested the hypothesis that mixing uses creates vibrant neighbourhoods independent of socio-economic conditions, but depending on the distribution and design of the mixed-use elements. The research is grounded in the physical scale of the street and the experiences of its users.

The Study

We selected three San Francisco neighbourhoods, and in each, a four-block area containing two blocks of a mixed-uses street:

- 24th Street between Harrison and Folsom, a lower-income neighbourhood;

- Fillmore Street between California and Bush, a middle-income neighbourhood;
- Union Street between Webster and Buchanan, a high-income neighbourhood.

We consulted the 1990 census for data on median household income and ethnic make-up of the three neighbourhoods. We also:

- took measurements and observations to ensure that there were common design elements in all three streets, including rights of way, sidewalk widths, building height and block size;

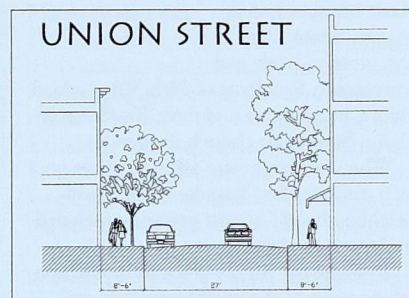


Figure 1: Street section

- counted and compared average daily traffic levels;
- counted mailboxes to gauge residential density;
- mapped the frequency of entrances and catalogued the types of stores to establish that each street provided similar services and that the number and scale of stores were similar;
- prepared maps indicating the different uses of space to compare the proportion and distribution of public, semi-public,

semi-private and private spaces.

We determined if each neighbourhood offered a diversity of people access to a range of activities throughout the day, night and weekend by:

- taking 10-minute pedestrian counts in the morning, afternoon, evening, on a weekday and weekend at each location;
- noting activity types during a 10-minute period, plus a walk around one of the four blocks in the morning, afternoon and evening on a weekday and weekend at each location;
- noting the age and ethnicity of people on the street at each site visit.

We also incorporated the “eyes on the street” theory of safety (that is, how perceptions of safety contribute to neighbourhood vibrancy) by analyzing the transparency of storefronts. A typology was devised and each shop rated accordingly.

We conducted two surveys to gauge people's perception and use of the streets, as well as the degree of community interaction in each neighbourhood. First, we interviewed 20 people on each street; it turned out that half were residents and half visitors (although we didn't plan it that way). Second, we hand-delivered questionnaires to 50 residents in each neighbourhood. This resulted in a sample of 20 residents for each neighbourhood.

What We Observed

Many activities were common to all three neighbourhoods, such as walking, shopping, cycling and dog-walking. Jogging and outdoor dining occurred only on Fillmore Street and Union Street. 24th Street had a number of additional activities, such as

children playing, people hanging out in front stoops or fixing and washing cars, and drug dealing. Except for the drug dealing, which occurred on the main street, these other activities took place on the residential streets. In the other two neighbourhoods, no activities were noted on the residential streets, only the mixed-use one.

In general, the activity on Fillmore Street and Union Street appeared to be focused on shopping or dining. Although these activities did take place on 24th Street, the street was used more for casual social interactions. Fillmore Street appeared to have the widest range of activities engaged in most frequently.

What We Learned from the Surveys

Most of those who responded to the survey had lived in the areas for more than 10 years. In each neighbourhood, residents used the mixed-use street frequently; most said daily or weekly. At Union Street, daily use was a little less common.

When asked, "What attracted you to the neighbourhood?" most people from the 24th Street neighbourhood said, "The community." Many respondents had family in the area or said that they wanted to be close to

their Hispanic roots. For Fillmore Street, the two most popular responses were "Convenience of location" and "People and culture." The two most popular responses for Union Street were "Convenience of location" and "Architecture and beautiful townscape."

More than 60 per cent of residents in each neighbourhood said the street was "Very important."

Residents in each neighbourhood wanted "Additional benches or places to sit" and "More affordable housing." Visitors wanted "More benches" and "Parking."

When asked to respond to a list of adjectives to describe the mixed-use street in their neighbourhood, all residents chose noisy, crowded, fun, vibrant, lively and convenient. Residents of 24th Street added unsafe, inexpensive and dirty. Residents of Union Street also chose homogenous.

When residents were asked to circle on a map the area they consider to be "their neighbourhood," almost everyone included the mixed-use street.

To gauge the degree of social interaction taking place in the neighbourhoods, we asked residents how likely they were to say hello or stop and chat with someone they know on weekday or weekend outings. Overall, Fillmore Street had the greatest degree of sociability. Respondents from Union Street and 24th Street indicated that such interactions were less likely, although they did occur. In each neighbourhood, about one-third said they were engaged in community activities.

What We Concluded

Our findings suggest that all three neighbourhoods can be considered "vibrant." Union Street was less sociable and diverse

but cleaner than the others; 24th Street was less clean and safe, but more diverse; Fillmore Street scored highest in all aspects of vibrancy. Each achieved vibrancy a different way, given the inherent flexibility of mixed-use design.

The consistencies in the way the three streets are used and perceived outweigh the differences. We therefore conclude that mixed use *does* create vibrant neighbourhoods, independent of socio-economic differences but dependent on the design and distribution of the mixed-use elements.

Jun Katoh, Michelle Spencer and Stephanie Tencer are students at the College of Environmental Design, University of California at Berkeley.

For further information, contact Stephanie Tencer at stencer@web.ca. The authors gratefully acknowledge the guidance of Prof. Peter Bosselmann and Neil Hrushowy. Stephanie hails from the Toronto area.

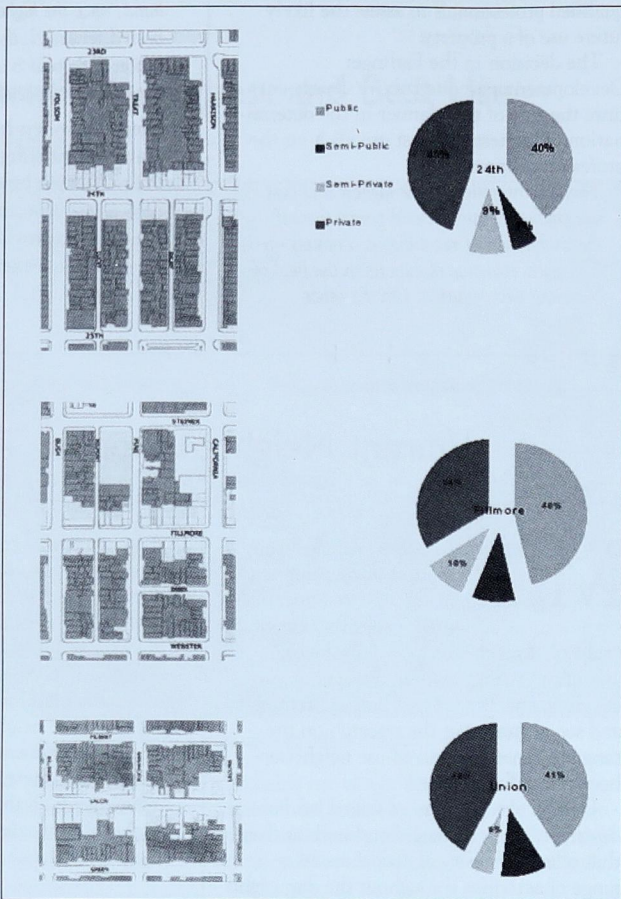


Figure 2: Distribution of space

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Worlds Colliding or Collaborating? Protecting Agriculture in Halton—Part 2

By Helma Geerts

Part 1 of the article touched on the challenges and need to keep agriculture viable in Halton Region and the GTA. Part 2 addresses the five key concerns that inform the strategy being developed at Halton Region.

1. Loss of Farmers to Retirement

The average age of Halton farmers is 54, more than three years older than the provincial average. We need to ensure there are new farmers in the wings as this wave of retirement hits. Otherwise, we will lose farms to non-farm interests.

2. Inflated Tax Assessment

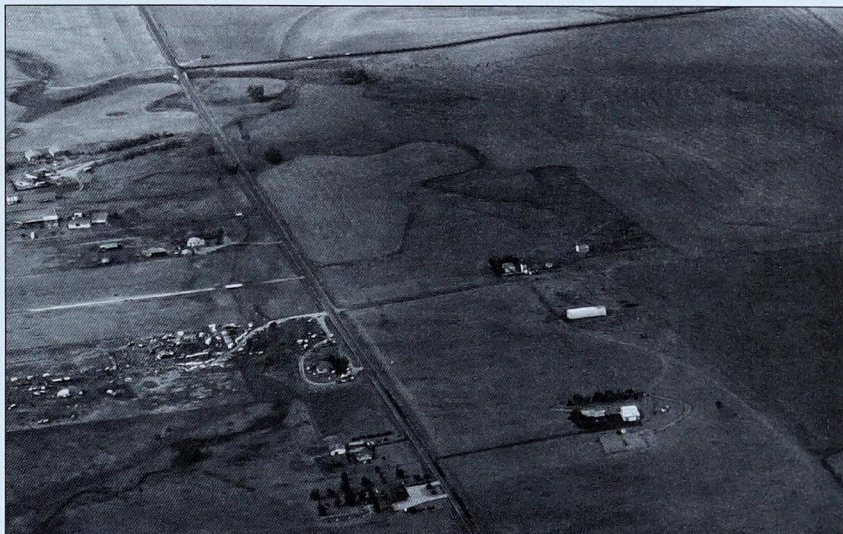
Tax assessment can be a significant part of the economic equation for farmers and can sting deeply in the GTA under current value assessment.

Although the Assessment Act states that farm valuation is to be based on sales to people whose principal occupation is farming (farmer-to-farmer sales), GTA farmers often have to compete against speculators and non-farmers to purchase farmland. This drives up the cost (and assessed value) of farms. Additionally, farmers warn that it is unrealistic nowadays to differentiate between principal-occupation farmers and speculators to separate out the farmer-to-farmer sales. Thus, as farmland sale prices rise, assessed value likewise increases, and, depending on the established mill rate, the resultant taxes can cripple farmers close to urban areas.

Farmland tax rates need to be commensurate with what farmers can sustainably afford from farm product sales, and not be based on land value. This is why some Halton farmers and Halton's Chairman Joyce Savoline have been lobbying for farmland assessment on the basis of farmland productivity (for example, crop yields) rather than market value.

3. Reduced Farm Ownership

With the highest bidder on farmland often being a non-farmer, the ratio of farmland owned to farmland rented has reached 45:55 in Halton. While rental land provides an opportunity for farmers to be in the business without the capital costs associated with purchasing farmland, this does not guarantee that the resource will remain available. Rental agreements are typically year-by-year



High taxes can affect the viability of farms located on the urban fringe

so there is little incentive for renters to maintain the land as if its future productivity mattered.

4. The Impact of the Nutrient Management Act


The new Nutrient Management Act, intended to increase protection of Ontario's water resources by minimizing the environmental effects of practices like manure storage and spreading, will also impact Halton farmers. To meet the regulations, they may need to invest in additional land for manure spreading and new or upgraded manure storage. If these investments do not add value to the property because there is no next generation farmer, we can expect to see farmers prematurely withdrawing from livestock farming. The loss of livestock operations will also reduce the demand for animal feed and bedding, hurting crop farmers and further threatening the sustainability of agriculture.

5. Traffic Conflicts

Farmers working multiple fields need to transport slow-moving farm vehicles on public roads. This can feel a bit like Russian roulette as farmers compete for the road with impatient (rude and dangerous!) commuters. Farmers may also need to contend with urban road cross-sections (for example, curbs), improperly placed signage, and other barriers to safe farm vehicle movement.

Strategy to Move Ahead

Recognizing that GTA farmers may share challenges like these, the Durham, Halton, Peel and York Federations of Agriculture have collectively called for greater collaboration within the GTA Regional Municipalities regarding agriculture. In response, the Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario (RPCO) established a new GTA Agricultural Issues Task Force with representatives from each GTA Region and the City of Toronto. The RPCO was even successful in having the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food's (OMAF) Assistant Deputy Minister Jim

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Wheeler allay a fear expressed by farmers that OMAF had written off agriculture in the GTA. Mr. Wheeler demonstrated his support by assigning staff to assist the GTA Regions and Federations of Agriculture in promoting GTA agriculture. This group, together with the GTA Federations of Agriculture, is planning to develop an economic action plan for GTA agriculture.

At the regional level, we feel that Halton's agricultural strengths—excellent soils, conducive climate, and an enormous customer base at its doorstep—have yet to be fully exploited. Halton is just kicking off a program to market locally available farm products, services and farm activities as well as businesses using local farm produce (for example, restaurants). This will be done via up-to-date and accessible information in:

- A web-based directory of farms, farm businesses, and retailers and restaurants featuring local produce
- A widely distributed Farm Fresh Brochure
- Fax and/or web postings of fresh products currently available for sale by farmers to restaurants, retail outlets,
- We are also proposing to hire an Agricultural Economic Development Officer.

Additionally, Halton's Directions Report recommends that the next official plan contain sunset provisions for farm retirement severances and policy permitting on-farm businesses in the rural area. The strategy will be finalized following completion of the official plan review consultation process.

Originating with Halton farmers themselves, the idea of allowing on-farm businesses is somewhat controversial. However, off-farm income is a necessity for many farmers, so why not allow them to earn this extra income on the farm itself, as long as the business blends in with the existing farm and rural character?

With the help of VDV Consulting and Mark Dorfman, Planner Inc., criteria were developed to discourage businesses more suitably located in the urban area from moving onto a farm to take advantage of lower rents. Farmers would be required to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy from the local municipality indicating that the on-farm business complies with all provisions of the on-farm business by-law. Recognizing that "pride of ownership" will usually mitigate against undesirable uses, farmers must reside on the farm to qualify. They must have a farm business registration number

and be willing to locate their business within the farm building cluster. The business would need to be a dry type use, meet building size limits, and conform with strict site plan standards.

To address transportation conflicts, Halton Region has developed a "Policy Promoting Safe Movement of Farm Vehicles and Equipment." This policy commits to an annual review by the Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee, of locations posing a risk to the safe movement of farm vehicles. Advisory signage and road improvements can then be prescribed to address these problems. The policy also commits to consideration of the needs of farmers in all road construction projects in the rural area.

Since protection of agriculture is one of the pillars of Smart Growth, the commitment to support agriculture remains strong in Halton. This means that we must continuously find creative ways of using planning and economic development tools to support our farmers.

Helma Geerts, MCIP, RPP, is a Senior Planner with the Planning & Public Works Dept., Region of Halton. She can be reached at 1-866-442-5866 ext. 7209, or by email at geertsh@region.halton.on.ca.

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Food for Thought: Are We Food-Ready?

By Alicia I. Bulwik and Dennis Flaming

Canada—"Bread basket to the world"

The Canadian agriculture and agri-food industry is a vital part of the Canadian economy, contributing about 8.4 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Nearly one in seven Canadians is employed, directly or indirectly, in the sector. In 1999, exports reached \$22.8 billion, representing a 3.52 percent share of global agri-food trade. In 2000, this rose to \$23.1 billion, accounting for a 3.52 percent share of world agri-food exports. Thus, the food industry is one of the key strategic sectors in the Canadian economy.

While its core activities include manufacturing (food processing), warehousing and distribution as well as retailing and food service, the food industry cluster is linked to a number of other industries that either service or are ancillary to the sector. These include packaging, production of food industry equipment, biotechnology and agriculture production, specialized transportation (for example, refrigerated), architecture, industrial and graphic design, civil, industrial and environmental engineering, food science and others. This article focuses on food manufacturing and examines the planning implications derived from its rapid growth.

Food Manufacturing in Ontario

Ontario-based companies produce 45 percent of all processed foods in Canada, making food processing the second largest manufacturing sector in Ontario. Furthermore, according to "Toronto Competes," a study commissioned by the City of Toronto, the Toronto region is home to North America's second-largest and fastest-growing food industry cluster. The industry provides employment for new immigrants—especially in related ethnic foods—for lesser skilled persons as well as for second income earners, particularly female. The food industry is recession-proof

and provides a broad and steady source of employment. In fact, during the economic slowdown in the 1990s, many food-processing plants made significant investments in new and expanded facilities throughout the province. However, this important industry is generally taken for granted.

that is, access to road, rail, air, water transportation, and water and sewage facilities, it poses an interesting question: how do we maintain this important source of employment in an environment where both industrial and agricultural land are being converted to accommodate residential growth?

This is a question that deserves more attention. This article highlights some of the planning issues associated with the opportunities and challenges presented by the food industry growth.

Provincial Overview

Ontario's agri-food industry plays a significant role in the provincial economy. It is the second largest manufacturing sector and employs over 700,000 people, 115,000 of whom work in food processing. The total value of food and beverage production in 2001 was approximately \$32 billion, close to 46 percent of the Canadian total. Ontario exported \$7.8 billion worth of agri-food products, about 25 percent of the Canadian total.

Ontario's diverse food industry has a significant number of food manufacturing facilities concentrated in five key food clusters in the province (Figure 1). These cluster areas create "opportunities in the value chain," which translates into the logical or natural choice for more food industry investment.

Food processors in the province have an extremely competitive business climate with access to approximately 130 million customers within a day's drive (see Figure 1).

Given the healthy food processing industry in the Toronto area, there are many opportunities for the food processing sector to grow and expand. With Toronto being the second largest food cluster after Chicago, it is one of North America's food scene trendsetters. It is 2 percent closer to all consumers east of the Mississippi than

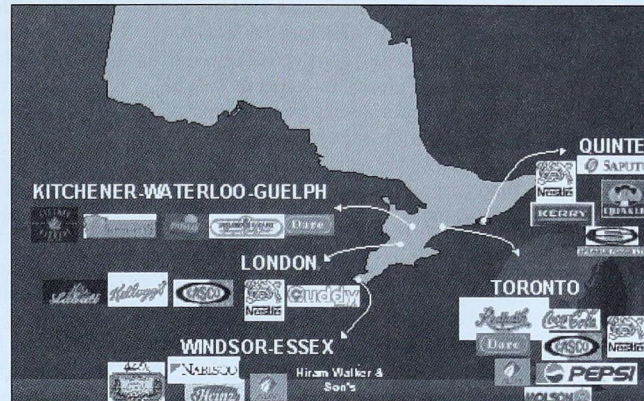


Figure 1: Sample Ontario Food Industry Clusters

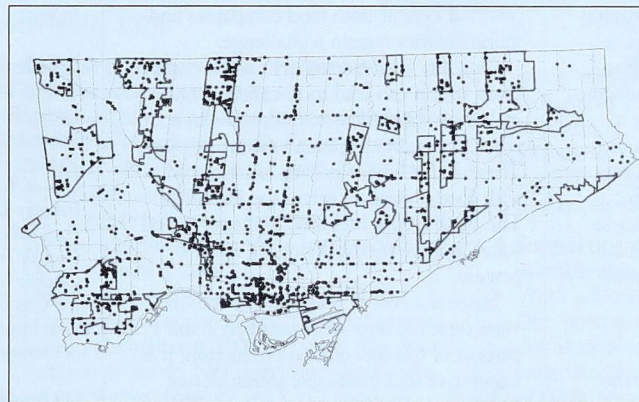


Figure 2: Food and Beverage Manufacturing in the City of Toronto (Source: Dunn & Bradstreet 1999 and City of Toronto Economic Development)

According to "Food Industry Outlook," a study recently commissioned by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the City of Toronto, food processing in Toronto is expected to grow between 9 and 12 percent over the next decade. To accommodate this growth, an additional 12 to 15 million square feet will be required, doubling the current area. Given that this growth in food manufacturing is determined by the availability of suitable land and infrastructure,

Greater Chicago and it has one-third more consumers than the Chicago-area food processors.

Toronto Food Industry Overview

With nearly 25,000 jobs, food processing alone is one of the largest industrial employers in the City, accounting for 12 percent of the total industrial employment. There are 400 food processing facilities spread across the City: 32 percent in former Toronto, 23 percent in Etobicoke, 22 percent in North York, 20 percent in Scarborough and 3 percent in York and East York combined. This geographical pattern is of particular significance for local economic development, as this industry provides a viable employment base across the City (see Figure 2).

The food processing industry is composed of large manufacturers—industry anchors with annual sales of more than \$200 million—and small and medium-sized firms (SMEs)—less than \$200 million in annual sales. While large manufacturers such as Kraft Canada, Maple Leaf Foods employ 8 percent of the total food processing industry employees, SMEs employ the majority of workers in this sector. SMEs constitute two-thirds of the total food-manufacturing firms in the city. This is the group experiencing the fastest growth in the sector.

Food is a well-established manufacturing sector, which offers opportunities to capitalize on innovation, thereby becoming the perfect fit for the ethno/cultural composition of Toronto. Since the food manufacturing industry offers a variety of venues to start up, it is attractive to newcomers or entrepreneurs who have limited resources. Many successful companies in Toronto, such as Wildly Delicious, Carole's Cheese Cake and Dufflet Pastries, began as home-based ventures and developed into multi-million-dollar companies.

Key planning issues

Land: One of the challenges faced by the food industry in the City is a shortage of affordable and suitable food-grade space, in particular for small to medium-sized companies. Standard industrial buildings do not meet requirements for most food processing operations, while stringent regulations require exceptionally high capital investment to meet standard requirements. This represents a financial hardship for burgeoning food businesses. Furthermore, once capital is invested in a facility to make it food-graded, there is a limited return on that capital investment when relocation is required to accommodate growth needs.

Difficulty in identifying available food-grade facilities in today's real estate market hinders growth. This scarcity is exacerbated by conversion of industrial land to "more profitable" land.

Hard infrastructure: Urban food processing plants depend on municipal water and wastewater treatment. Many municipal water and sewer systems in the province are ageing and are in need of an overhaul. Full-cost user pricing is legislated in the province and the adoption of fair pricing systems for wet industry users that addresses the efficiencies they provide to a municipal system must be addressed. This may lead to ongoing financial challenges for food processors. Some municipalities facing sewer and water capacity constraints restrict food industry growth to conserve limited peak treatment capacity for residential growth. Systemic idiosyncrasies in the water and sewer supply regulation system have dampened off-peak capacity utilization strategies in many municipalities.

Among the business infrastructure issues raised in the study, water treatment charges were noted as a major concern. Food processors often generate extremely high sewerage surcharges because their wastewater profiles exceed household sewage by up to 10 times that of household levels. Efficient and effective industrial water and sewer conservation implementation strategies that benefit both food companies and municipalities remain a challenge.

One way a food company can save utility costs, which can lead to re-captured municipal sewer capacity, is to undertake an eco-efficiency audit of the manufacturing plant. These audits have a proven track record with food processors across the province. The track record includes total energy, and water and sewer cost savings of 15 to 20 percent.

Since the cost of water and sewer services typically represents between 2 and 17 percent of the cost of food production, it is imperative that municipal infrastructure and policies be designed in support of the development of the food industry. These may include waste water surcharge rebate programs—such as the one being implemented in the City of Toronto—and zoning by-laws and building permits that facilitate water/wastewater storage.

The food industry relies on an efficient transportation network, in particular for perishables and "fresh" items. Traffic congestion has been identified in the WCM study as a constraint to the growth of the food industry. As this industry is market driven and Toronto represents the largest mar-

ket in the province, food deliveries are becoming increasingly restricted by the ability of delivery vehicles to move around the city. This is a matter that requires serious consideration, in particular, when "fresh" deliveries are impeded due to thoroughfare parking restrictions. Traffic congestion needs to be monitored more closely as it relates to foodstuff delivery in urban areas.

Moving Ahead

As has been mentioned in this article, there are a number of areas that require attention, if we are to retain and attract investment to the food industry. Both OMAF and the City of Toronto are working together to develop initiatives following the outcome of the Food Industry Outlook report. These issues include: raising the profile of the food processing industry as a driver of the economy and an "occupation of choice"; developing better communications between the real estate and food industries, to maximize the utilization of existing food-grade facilities; fostering innovation and productivity improvements; enhancing the value of chain collaboration amongst all chain members, i.e., producers, processors, distributors, retailers; linking human resource development with investment attraction; and enhancing the communication link across the bureaucratic structure to ensure a viable and healthy business climate for the food industry.

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- City of Toronto staff report: *Home Grown: Food Industry Trends in Toronto*, August 26, 2002.
- Food Industry Outlook: A Study of Food Industry Growth Trends in Toronto*, a joint initiative by Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the City of Toronto, August 2002, received an award from the Economic Development Council of Ontario at its recent conference.

Alicia I. Bulwik, MCIP, RPP, MRAIC, was Sector Development Consultant (Food & Beverage and Design) with the City of Toronto Economic Development's Business Development and Retention Division. She recently accepted a secondment to TEDCO, the City's economic development corporation. Dennis Flaming, MCIP, RPP, is a Manager with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food's Competitiveness Branch, focusing on food business retention and expansion activities. He can be reached at dennis.flaming@omaf.gov.on.ca.



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President's Message

The Year Ahead

By Dennis Jacobs

It's the dawn of 2003. For me, this signals the beginning of the last year of my term as your President and so it comes with mixed feelings. My involvement with the governing Council of the Institute and the great staff that support us continues to be challenging and very exciting. As well, my contact with the membership has resulted in many new friendships and connections in our great profession. We have made significant strides in the quest for raising the profile of OPPI and continue to enhance our credibility and stature as a professional association. The release of a series of successful policy papers, coupled with our ongoing response to planning issues of topical interest to the public, has clearly demonstrated the depth and quality of our membership. We are being listened to and sought out for opinions.

What are the priorities for 2003? Council approved the budget in December and has identified a number of initiatives that will move us forward in line with the Millennium Strategic Plan. The following are some highlights of the initiatives for 2003:

1. Broadening recognition of planning and the role of planners

- Spring will bring more than flowers with funding in place to launch the Media Spokesperson Program with a focus on the policy paper on Community Design.
- The web site will be the source of an electronic member newsletter and online version of the Ontario Planning Journal.
- Ontario Planners: Vision, Leadership, Great Communities was successfully launched as our brand statement and 2003 will see it play prominently in all we do. Not quite the Nike swoosh yet, but wait and see.
- Funds have been identified to initiate and participate in community events such as World Town Planning Day (November 2003) at both the provincial and, increasingly, at the District level.

2. Implementing the policy development program

- To keep us out front, a policy paper entitled The Conservation of Rural Character in Community Design will be prepared and presented at the 2003 Conference in Deerhurst.
- On the day-to-day front, we are continuing the relentless pursuit of changes in the ever-evolving field that we work in, through our watching brief

on government initiatives. The Policy Development Committee is our roving eye in areas such as the environment, natural resources, agriculture and rural affairs, economic development, provincial governance and legislation, social policy, transportation and urban design.

3. Improving the Membership Process

- This is an area that got plenty of attention in 2002 with the fruits being enjoyed in 2003. In particular, the changes affecting new and existing provisional members will bring a clearer and more traceable process into play. Through the implementation of the RPP Designation Management module on the web site, aspiring members will be better informed and more easily brought into the fold.
- Our outreach strategy for non-member practicing planners will target planning directors, planning commissioners and principals in private-sector firms.
- A "train the trainer" program is under development to improve the delivery



Dennis Jacobs

of the Membership Course, the Executive Practitioner Course and the Examination A Workshops.

- We are also looking at a program that promotes the RPP designation by acknowledging or profiling the success of members.

4. Supporting members with a dynamic membership services package.

- Work will continue in the area of Practice Directions to assist new and refresh the memories of longer-term members. Two topics that are under development now address the "Disclosure of Public Interest" and "Trespassing."
- We anticipate the launch of the Ethics Course in the fall, which is another way we are assisting our members in their drive to stay in touch with the current thinking in the field.

So 2003 will be another busy year and we look forward to your ideas and participation in our continuing efforts to grow and enhance the planning profession through OPPI.

Dennis Jacobs, MCIP, RPP, is President of OPPI. He is a director of the City of Ottawa's planning department and can be reached at Dennis.Jacobs@ottawa.ca.

World Town Planning Day Activities in Central District

November 8 was World Town Planning Day (WTPD). Central District worked to support the efforts of CIP and OPPI's Recognition Committee by distributing WTPD posters, asking municipalities to proclaim November 8th as World Town Planning Day and reaching out to the community to talk about the role and importance of planning and the OPPI.

As a result of these efforts, the following Central District municipalities passed World Town Planning Day proclamations (in alphabetical order):

- Town of Ajax
- Town of Aurora

- City of Barrie
- Town of East Gwillimbury
- Town of Fort Erie
- Town of Grimsby
- Town of Innisfill
- Town of Markham
- Town of New Tecumseth
- Town of Wasaga Beach.

A number of municipalities have dispensed with the practice of formally passing "proclamations." In some of these instances, our request for a WTPD proclamation was included in Councillors' packages as an "information item" only.

In addition to the WTPD proclamations, on November 8th a presentation on plan-

ning and World Town Planning Day was given to elementary students at the Elmvale Public School.

Finally, WTPD posters were distributed to municipalities and other planning-oriented organizations, well in advance of November 8th.

OPPI now has a great opportunity to build on these achievements, as modest as they may be, so that 2003's celebrations can be more coordinated across the province. With greater advance planning and coordination, this annual day of celebration is a great vehicle to highlight the role of planners and the profession as a whole, to the larger community.

We've learned the following lessons:

- While the proclamations result in a tangible product, some feel that asking municipalities to do this annually may become a little too routine and thus, lose sight of the purpose of the proclamation; further, the inconsistency among municipalities in passing such proclamations should be taken into consideration when planning next year's activities.
- Efforts to reach out to the educational community (elementary and secondary schools, universities, colleges) with both posters and presentations should be expanded; there is a sense that outreach to schools is both productive and meaningful.
- We need to commit to programming an event in each of the Districts/sub-Districts on or about World Town Planning Day 2003 (Saturday, November 8th) to raise the profile of WTPD among planners.

Cheryl Shindruk, MCIP, RPP, and Martin Rendl, MCIP, RPP are both members of Council, representing the Central District.

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Student Planners Listen Up!

By Melanie Williams

A new semester is under way and Ontario's planning school students are busier than ever. However, in the midst of all these courses, projects, work and extra-curricular activities, OPPI's Student Liaison Committee and the student body have undertaken many initiatives to promote involvement with the School, the institute and professional practitioners.

At Queen's University, the planning students organized a Town Hall event for students and planners in the Eastern district, providing a diverse range of perspectives. Other activities include:

- York University and the University of Toronto student associations held social events for their planning students and participated in events held by OPPI.
- University of Waterloo and Ryerson University planning students held their Annual Golden Bulldozer. Waterloo was declared the winner, ending Ryerson's 12-year winning streak.



Melanie Williams

- The School of Rural Planning and Development at the University of Guelph has amalgamated with Rural Extension Studies and Landscape Architecture, creating the new School of Environmental Design and Rural Development. The planning students have been organizing events to increase awareness of OPPI and the planning program.

Being active in your Planning School is a great way for students to get involved in the profession. As a planning student, take advantage of the opportunities that are provided to you through your membership with OPPI. Here are five ways to get involved:

1. The OPPI Mentoring Program

Oscar Wilde once said, "The only thing to do with good advice is to pass it on." The OPPI mentoring program is a foundation for learning and professional development. Open to upcoming planners, those in transition and anyone looking to learn from the



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experience of others, the mentoring program offers opportunities for both protégés and mentors. The program is also a benefit to the mentors. It develops coaching and communication skills, helps to gain insight into upcoming perspectives in the planning field and is an opportunity to try something new.

2. Networking

Participating in school events, conferences, professional development sessions and attending district events helps you make the transition from student to professional planner. Take the lead and introduce yourself at these events. These venues are your opportunity to network and have yourself recognized. Try sitting with someone new and asking questions. And make business cards that describe your area of interest. You never know where that one card will lead you.

3. Conferences

Conferences provide an outlet to learn outside the textbook and possibly be exposed to an area of planning that you did not know

existed but which captures your interest. The 2003 OPPI/OALA conference, "The Power of Place," will provide a great opportunity.

4. Scholarships

One of the many benefits of a student membership in OPPI is the number of scholarships that it provides. These scholarships recognize your academic ability, research initiatives and can help your career. They are open to both undergraduate and graduate students. District scholarship deadlines are in November and OPPI offers its scholarship in February. CIP's scholarship deadline is in April.

5. The Student Liaison Committee

The Student Liaison Committee is another way to get involved with OPPI. Composed of student representatives from each recognized planning school, the Student Liaison Committee is your voice in OPPI and Council. The Committee meets throughout the year to help plan events such as Student Day at the annual conference, discuss student issues, and promote camaraderie

between the schools. Elected by the students, the Student Delegate is the Chair of the Student Liaison Committee and representative on Council. This is an excellent opportunity to expand your personal skills. The call for nominations for the 2003-2004 Student Delegate is currently being held. The closing date for nominations is February 28, 2002, with term beginning in June. Please see the OPPI web site or contact me for more information.

Overall, there are many ways that students can become involved with OPPI and the professional planning sector. It is up to you as a student to take advantage of these opportunities. Keep in contact with your student representative on upcoming events and watch for updates in the mail and on OPPI's web site.

*Student Delegate Melanie Williams
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*(Editor's Note: Students should also think
about writing articles for the Ontario
Planning Journal.)*

The Planner at the Ontario Municipal Board

By Bill Hollo

Are you an OPPI Member with experience at the Ontario Municipal Board who is willing to share that experience? We are looking for volunteers to participate on the panel of experts for OPPI's OMB Course.

OPPI has offered the Planner at the Ontario Municipal Board seminar for many years. This popular one-day session provides practical information for planners who provide expert testimony before the OMB or other bodies. The seminar involves a combination of a panel of experienced lawyers, planners and a member of the Board, and simulation by seminar partici-

pants of various aspect of a hearing.

One of the keys to success is the willingness of the panelists to share their experiences and advice. Another is the willingness of the panelists to show different perspectives arising out of their experience, their professional responsibilities, and their personalities.

A seminar package has been assembled, and is continually improved on an incremental basis (how else would a planner do it?). The panelists are in fact discouraged from preparing speeches or a presentation in advance. Your ability and willingness to simply

talk about your experiences, share war stories, and respond to the other panelists and participants is key.

The seminar takes a day. From past experience, the panelists enjoy the day, and learn a lot themselves. Seminar responses indicate that participants also feel it is valuable, interesting, and, ideally, fun.

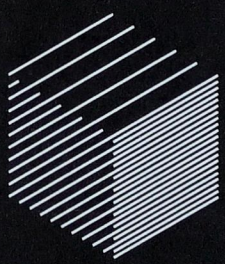
If you are interested in volunteering, you are encouraged to submit your name for the roster of volunteers to sit on the panel. If you know of lawyers practising administrative law who would be good on the panel, we would like to hear about them as well.

*Please send your responses to William
Hollo: 416-222-3712 (phone)
416-222-5432 (fax) or email:
gsiadvisors@sympatico.ca.*

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Southwest

Great Time— Great Fundraising

Southwest District hosted its annual Seasonal Celebration Dinner Meeting in late November at the University Club in Waterloo. Over 80 people attended the event and were treated to an evening of socializing, dining and entertainment. Following dinner, Magician Andrew Pogson amazed the crowd with his unique sense of visual humour.

The annual silent auction held during the evening was a huge success, raising over \$1,200 for the Southwest District Student Scholarship Trust Fund. A special thanks goes out to everyone who donated a gift to the silent auction. Congratulations to Melanie Williams, University of Guelph, recipient of the \$1,000 award and Marta Klaptocz, University of Waterloo, recipient of the \$500 award. Although the scholarships are open to all students in an accredited planning program, this was the first time that a scholarship was awarded to both a graduate and undergraduate student.

The organizers thank all those who attended and helped to make the event a great success. Southwest District is hosting a number of networking and professional development opportunities in the new year. Watch your OPPI mailings or check for updates under District news on the web at www.ontarioplanners.on.ca.

(Pictures taken at the event were unfortunately put under a spell by the magician and are therefore not available.)

Central

Fundraising Successful

Over 140 GTA members attended the Annual Winter Social at Toronto's Marriott Courtyard. In addition to the usual seasonal cheer, the assembled planners and friends raised \$450 for Covenant House and over \$5,000 for the Central District Scholarship. Well done!

The 2002 Central District Scholarship was awarded to Lisa Dalla Rosa, a 4th year planning student at Ryerson University.

We gratefully acknowledge the support provided by our many sponsors. Platinum and gold sponsors include MacNaughton Hermsen Britton Clarkson Planning, Walker

Nott Dragicevic, Bousfield Dale-Harris Cutler & Smith, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Fasken Martineau, Stantec Consulting, Venchiarutti Gagliardi Architects, and John Rogers & Associates.

David McKay and the GTA Program Committee once again organized and delivered a super event for members.

One More Party to Report

The Peterborough and Area Planners held their 11th Annual Christmas Social, on Thursday December 12, 2002, at the Peterborough Arms. The PAPG Committee is consisting of the following planners:

Kevin M. Duguay, Chair
Peter Josephs, Treasurer
Iain Mudd, Member
Rob Franklin, Member
Caroline Kimble, Member
Nancy Rutherford, Member

The PAPG will be hosting a spring workshop comprising two topics: Your District Health Council and A Provincial Government Update: New Programs and Legislation.

To learn more about the group, contact Kevin M. Duguay, who can be reached at kduguay@city.peterborough.on.ca or 705-742-7777, ext. 1735.

Lakeland Planners

Introducing Lakeland Planners (formerly Simcoe-Muskoka Sub-District)

New name, new attitude was the order of the evening as 100 Lakeland members attended the End of the Year Party at Georgian Downs Racetrack & Slots, in the Town of Innisfil. A great networking opportunity was followed by a buffet and some harness racing! While everyone enjoyed themselves, word has it that some actually made money on the evening. A raffle for some wonderful door prizes netted us \$300, with the evening bringing in over \$1,500 towards the Central District Scholarship. Way to go, Lakeland!

Our guest speaker was Scott Rowe, Chairman of Georgian Downs, who spoke briefly about his family history in horses and the incredible success that this facility has been.

We gratefully acknowledge the support provided by our many sponsors. Platinum and gold sponsors included: Skelton, Brumwell & Associates Inc., Elston Watt Lawyers, and Amick Archaeological Consultants.

Brandi Clement (Jones Consulting) and James Stiver (Town of Orangeville) organized the event. Brandi, James and the rest of the Lakeland Planners Committee are to be commended for a job well done!

*Mike Sullivan, MCIP, RPP
Chair, Lakeland Planners (formerly
Simcoe-Muskoka Sub-District)*

People

Ray Simpson is Planner in Residence in Waterloo

Ray Simpson, partner with Hemson Consulting in Toronto, has taken on the role of Planner in Residence at the University of Waterloo's planning school. The announcement was made at the recent Waterloo dinner attended by about 900 people.



Ray Simpson

Markson Borooah Hodgson Architects is pleased to have been awarded two important architectural and planning commissions. In Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the firm is beginning the design of the new Official Residence for the High Commission plus diplomatic staff quarters and a recreational facility. The client is the Government of Canada through the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. The complex, which backs onto the Royal Selangor Golf Course, is scheduled for completion in 2005.



Meridian Planning Consultants is pleased to announce that Dana Anderson, B.A. (Hons), M.A., M.C.I.P., R.P.P. of DLA Consulting has joined our firm as a Partner and will be responsible for our office in Mississauga. Dana first joined Meridian's predecessor firm, Lehman & Associates, in 1990 after working with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and McCarthy Tétraut.

Dana has had extensive involvement in community affairs in Mississauga. She has served on the City's Committee of Adjustment since 1997 and recently served on the Mayor's Citizen Task Force on the Future of Mississauga. She remains active as past chairperson on the Board of Directors for the Mississauga Branch of St. John Ambulance and was recently invested into the Order of St. John. Dana is also acting chairperson on OPPI's Central District Membership Subcommittee.

Dana will continue to provide planning services to numerous private sector development clients throughout Ontario, the Trillium Health Centre in Mississauga and the Towns of Shelburne and Hanover.

Meridian's staff of seventeen offers services in community planning, policy and development approvals. We were originally formed as Lehman & Associates, participated in the Planning Partnership joint venture between 1996 and 2001, and now practice as Meridian Planning Consultants. Meridian currently provides planning services to over thirty municipalities in the Province.



At home in Toronto, **Ronji Borooah** is heading the urban design team for a detailed study for the long-term redevelopment of the 70-acre Regent Park Community east of the city centre. In the 1950s, Regent Park was one of the first urban renewal projects in Toronto. The typical Toronto street pattern was altered and street-related single-family homes were replaced by anonymous apartment blocks and row housing surrounded by undefined and underutilized open space. The design team includes **Greenberg Consultants, GHK International, David Millar Associates, Charles Laven, Jim Ward Associates** and **TSH Associates**. The client is the **Toronto Community Housing**

Corporation and the Let's Build program of the City of Toronto

William Pol joined Cumming Cockburn Limited Engineers and Planners, London Office, as the Director of Planning, last June. With over 22 years of experience in municipal, provincial and consulting planning positions in Brampton, Peterborough and London, William was most recently

with with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, London Regional Office Municipal/Planning Advisor. In his new job, William will be responsible for providing planning advisory/consulting services to municipal clients in Elgin County and private clients throughout Southwestern Ontario. He is looking forward to continuing the tradition of land use planning excellence at Cumming Cockburn Limited. He was recently a member of the Program Committee for the successful OPPI conference in London and will continue to support OPPI as an examiner and sponsor of planning events.

Christy Doyle has joined **Margaret Walton** and **Rick Hunter** at Planscape in Bracebridge. **Daniella Kieguel** recently moved from the Ministry of Transportation to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in Toronto.

Lorelei Jones, MCIP, RPP and Thomas Hardacre, MCIP, RPP, are contributing editors for People. Lorelei is the principal of Lorelei Jones Associates and can be reached at lja@rogers.com and Thomas is a senior planner with Planning and Engineering Initiatives in Kitchener. He can be reached at thardacre@peil.net.



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Editorial

Can We Expect Smart Decisions During the Upcoming Silly Season?

By Glenn Miller

With the very real prospect of a provincial election this spring, municipal elections this fall, and continued speculation about what may happen federally, the pace of policy and project announcements is beginning to pick up. What's in store for our fair province?

Traditionally, the run-up to elections is characterized by short-term thinking at best; rash promises are made, about-turns are executed and everyone keeps their heads down until the silly season is over. In 2003, however, the season promises to be longer than normal and there is a long list of issues that need to be addressed on the environment, transportation, housing and other matters. The stakes are unusually high, even for Ontario. What makes this environment even more politically charged than usual is the potential for decisions affecting local priorities to be linked not only with provincial actions but also to hypothetical moves by a future federal government.

Take the rash of announcements made late last year by the Ministry of Finance. In general, the notion of Enterprise Zones, TIFs and other new financing concepts such as opportunity bonds were well received. These and other new ideas were launched enthusiastically but with no substance or policy framework for their application. (Wait for the regulations, was the advice.) These trial balloons now promise to become barrage balloons, waiting to trap unsuspecting policy makers. Most people assumed that enterprise zones would be applied where the market needed a push, for example. Yet we have already seen some of the highest growth jurisdictions in southern Ontario stating their intentions to enter the bidding for such a

designation. Gasoline on the flames?

Another sensitive matter concerns decisions about extending provincial 400 series highways. Ministry of Transportation staff have been working diligently through short, medium and long-term planning options in many parts of the province. Look for the time horizons on commitments to some of these projects to change around the time of the next budget.

The net thrown over environmental issues is also starting to look a bit threadbare. In some jurisdictions, municipal leaders who have been championing protection of environmentally sensitive lands are watching with concern as their colleagues, more concerned with the quantity of assessment dollars than the quality of development, thirst after big ticket infrastructure projects threaten to undermine the protection efforts. The Oak Ridges Conservation Plan, containing some of the strongest proscriptions seen in decades, might well serve as a model for other policy initiatives such as the Provincial Policy Statements. Time will tell.

Wrap these uncertainties in Smart Growth, add some future contributions from a hard-to-read federal government and you have a recipe for a post-election hangover of unprecedented proportions.

Glenn Miller, MCIP, RPP, is editor of the Ontario Planning Journal.

He is also Director of Applied Research with the Canadian Urban Institute in Toronto. You can reach him at editor@ontarioplanning.com.

Opinion

Farm & Countryside Commentary: Where's the Payback?

By Elbert van Donkersgoed

There's a rising tide of concern, and outright resistance to proceeding with Ontario's Nutrient Management Act, now that farmers have had a look at the 250 pages of regulations and protocols. Five years ago farmers themselves started promoting nutrient management plans. Why is the tide turning against this initiative?

Here's what I'm hearing.

1. The act leaves the impression that nitrogen and phosphorous in livestock manures burden our environment when, in fact, they are a superior nutrient source for crop production. Livestock manures are rich in carbon and a myriad of microbes that can help rebuild soils in Ontario that have not been blessed with manures for decades.
2. Composting, historically considered a superior enhancement for the ability of livestock manures to rebuild the productive capacity of soils, will be discouraged by these regulations. They will also discourage no-till while encouraging continuous corn production.
3. An initiative of this size needs financial support clearly identified from the getgo.
4. The act will turn many law-abiding citizens into law-breakers. Under the present Environmental Protection Act, to charge a farmer with an offence, the Ministry of Environment has to prove that a farmer's activities clearly degraded a natural resource, water for example. The Nutrient Management Act, on the other hand, creates a long



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list of rules that will lead to "non-pollution incidents." Agriculture is dynamic. Sustainable farming requires good planning but always plans in response to sunshine, rainfall, frost, weed pressure or livestock diseases. Farmers will make good decisions for their farms and our environment, but without every permutation written down in their nutrient management plan, will soon find themselves out of compliance. Farmers risk being charged with an offence, despite making the best decision for our countryside. (Incidentally, farmers think that the Ministry of Environment has not had enough resources to effectively enforce the existing rules under the Environmental Protection Act.)

5. Many farmers will be labeled part of the problem, even though their farming activities

are not large enough to make them a part of the solution.

6. The proposed regulations are so focused on the environmental risks of over-applying or careless spreading of livestock manure that farmers may resort to processing and bagging it for burgeoning urban flower gardens. Exporting our countryside's nutrients will erode the long-term sustainability of our productive farmland. Livestock and crop production belong together in a loop.

7. Farmers have little confidence that the effort and expense that this new act will require of them will deliver documentable benefits for our environment.

Nutrient management started out well. Its principles are essential to good environmental stewardship. On the way to law and regulations

we've added impacts on many farmers. By comparison the environmental benefits will be few.

Elbert van Donkersgoed is the Strategic Policy Advisor of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, Canada. This opinion piece first appeared on the Corner Post, which can be heard weekly on CFCO Radio, Chatham and CKNX Radio, Wingham, Ontario. Corner Post is archived on the website of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario: www.christianfarmers.org. CFFO is supported by 4,500 family farmers across Ontario, Canada. To be added to the electronic distribution list of Corner Post send email to evd@christianfarmers.org with SUBSCRIBE as the message. Permission to reproduce sought from CFFO.

Letters

Environmental Column Strikes a Chord

I wanted to express to you how impressed I am by the latest Journal (Vol 17, No 6). Aside from seeing my first article published (thank you!), the entire document was a pleasure to read with insightful articles, helpful graphics, etc. In particular, the article "How Much Habitat is Enough?" was topical and excellent for an environmental reference. Given the current stature of the environment on the political agenda, it was most interesting to see habitat issues quantified, rather than simply demanding that all habitat needs to be preserved, regardless of the true needs. The Great Lakes Habitat Framework seems to be a step in the right direction for natural heritage planning and could be used as a tem-

plate for regional and local areas as well. My compliments on an excellent publication that keeps getting better!

—Michael Sullivan, MCIP, RPP,
Senior Planner with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority. Last year he represented OPPI on the Canadian Urban Institute's Brownie Award committee. He is also chair of the Lakeland Planners sub-district.

Port Huron article on consultation just a start

I read with interest your recent short article about public consultation in Port Huron, Michigan. It looks like a fascinating project to keep an eye on. At the end of the article I was left wanting more because the title refers to "public consultation" but very little of it was described.

I believe that the way we frame public consultations is at a crossroads. We must either become much better at it or roll over and let development be regulated by the people with the power to invest. I still fantasize

that planners care about public involvement so I have a question for anyone involved in OPPI. Do you think that an in-depth discussion of public participation (in planning processes) is of interest to your readers and the profession itself? If so, I would like to play a part in the discussion when it occurs.

Warning: I am not a member of OPPI. In fact, I dropped out of planning school back in the late 1980s due — only in part — to a loss of faith in the possibility of making a difference in my world through that career path. Back then, any time I expressed any confidence in the possibility of including people in planning processes I felt ostracized; surrounded by technocrats upgrading their BA to an MA so they could qualify for a higher pay scale. Classmates sneered and derided participation as unrealistic because, "that's not the way it works." The only professor in the program who specialized in group processes was not replaced when he retired.

Might the anti-participation perspective still be dominant? Would readers of the Ontario Planning Journal be dismissive of the topic?

—John M. Miller
Facilitator & Technology of Participation Trainer with ICA Associates Inc. in Toronto. (visit his website at www.icacan.ca).
Editor's Note: Mr Miller has been invited to contribute an article to start this discussion.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Environment

Reducing the Urban Heat Island Effect using Cool Roofs

By Sherri Rendek

Urban design measures can help make cities more liveable or, if used thoughtlessly, place both human health and the health of our environment at risk.

Cities, with their roads and buildings, create impervious surfaces that absorb and trap heat during the day and reradiate that heat at night. This phenomenon, known as the urban heat island effect, can result in urban temperatures that are up to 8°C hotter than those of surrounding areas. During a summer heat wave, those added degrees can mean the difference between life and death.

Many U.S. cities, such as Chicago and Los Angeles, have begun to implement urban heat island mitigation strategies. The leaders of these cities hope to cool the urban environment, protect residents' health and improve the overall quality of life.

Cool roofs are one measure that cities are using to reduce their heat islands. There are two types of cool roofs: green roofs (roofs planted with vegetation) and light-coloured roofs (roofs with a light surface colour).

Green Roofs

Green roofs have long been used to make buildings more attractive and provide recreational space for building occupants. They are now being recognized for their ability to keep roof surfaces cool during the summer. For example, the heat on a typical gravel-covered roof can rise to between 60–80°C, whereas temperatures on a green roof with a thick plant layer usually stay below 25°C. Green roofs also insulate buildings during the winter, thereby reducing energy use for heating.

Cities in Europe and Asia have long recognized the benefits associated with green roofs and have implemented policies requiring developers to install them. In 2001, Tokyo passed the "Regulation on Conservation and Restoration of Nature of Tokyo City" which requires green rooftops on all new buildings and remodelled buildings. The goal is to reduce energy costs and reduce Tokyo's urban heat island, which has created sweltering summer conditions over the past decade and placed residents' health at risk.

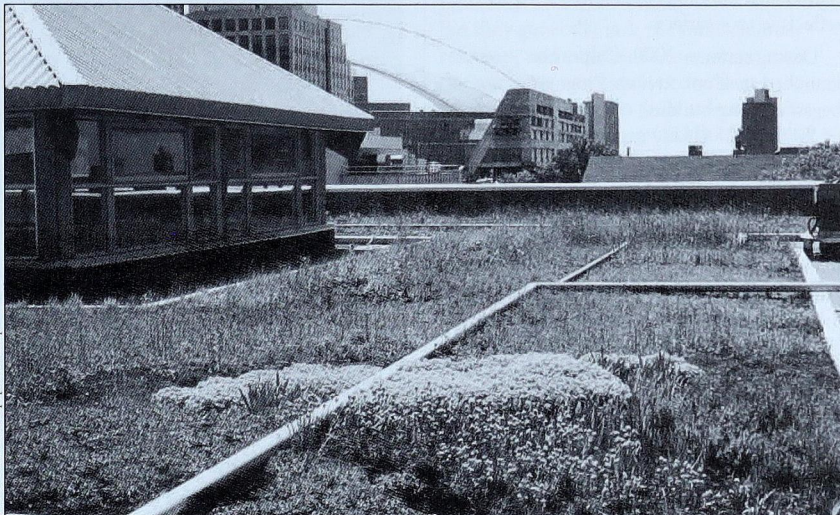


Photo: Mountain Equipment Coop

MEC's green roof surrounds the building's skylight.

Corner plantings (foreground) include alpine, sedum, mixed prairie perennials and roses

Light-coloured Roofs

The second method of cooling a roof is lightening the colour, a less expensive, lower-maintenance option than green roofs. Light colours absorb less heat and reflect more incoming solar radiation than darker ones. A variety of reflective roofing materi-

als and coatings are available for both commercial and residential buildings. Recently, a 9,290-square-metre commercial building in Austin, Texas, was resurfaced using a light-coloured roof coating. The result? Summer energy use in the building dropped by 11%, with an estimated \$65,000 in energy cost



Photo: Mountain Equipment Coop

Roof has designated paths for maintenance crews, staff, and tour groups.

Seeded areas include buffalo grass, little blue stem, fescue, purple cornflower, flax and columbine

savings over the life of the roof.

In July 1995, Chicago experienced a severe heat wave during which more than 800 people died. To prevent such an event from occurring again, Chicago implemented a comprehensive heat island mitigation strategy, including a new Energy Code, in June 2001. Under the Code, new and remodelled buildings must have a highly reflective roof surface.

During summer 2000, California launched its Cool Savings Program and began offering building owners a rebate of \$0.20 to \$0.25 (U.S.) per square foot for resurfacing an existing building with a light-coloured roof. In 2001, the city of Los Angeles began matching the State's rebate as part of its comprehensive heat island reduction strategy. Building owners in Los Angeles can receive up to \$0.50 per square foot for resurfacing an existing building with a reflective roof. Other municipalities across California are also supporting the State's program by providing added incentives in

hopes of reducing their urban heat islands.

Where Does Canada Stand?

Canadian municipalities have acted much more slowly in developing policies to mitigate their heat islands. This is partly due to the perception that winter heating consumption far outweighs summer energy use for cooling. This, however, no longer appears to be the case. In Ontario, for the past decade we have experienced peak energy demand during the summer.

Urban design policies that are sensitive to heat island mitigation can make urban environments more pleasant, while reducing energy consumption for summer cooling. Cool roof policies can not only help cities adapt to higher global temperatures but also ensure that they contribute less to climate change: as urban temperatures are reduced through citywide heat island mitigation techniques, less energy is consumed for cooling, which translates into fewer greenhouse gas emissions released when generating power to meet summertime energy demands.

In the face of global climate change, the frequency of heat waves will only increase. We can no longer ignore the negative impacts of our cities on urban dwellers' health. Planners should do their part by seeking to develop urban design policies that contribute to both the aesthetic vitality of our cities and residents' quality of life.

Sherri Rendek recently completed her master's in environmental planning at the University of Toronto. This article is based on research for her degree. Sherri is currently a Project Manager at the Clean Air Partnership and a Policy and Research Analyst for its Cool Toronto Project. The Clean Air Partnership is an initiative of the Toronto Atmospheric Fund, which was established ten years ago to assist the City of Toronto in reducing its greenhouse gas emissions. Sherri can be reached at srendek@tafund.org. For additional information on these concepts, visit Green Roofs for Healthy Cities-Canadian Eco-Industrial Network at www.cardinalgroup.ca.

Environment

Natural Heritage After the Moraine

By Jim Dougan

This article follows three years of involvement in the debate on the Natural Heritage System (NHS) of the Oak Ridges Moraine (ORM) in Richmond Hill, as part of an expert team that undertook an intensive review of current knowledge in landscape ecology and peer-reviewed drafts of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan for the City of Toronto and Save the Rouge Valley Systems.

The urgency to come up with clearer solutions for protection of the NHS both on

and off the Moraine is driven by continued pressure for urban expansion, new science on the importance of scale in resource management, and a maturing of our understanding of the principles set out in Section 2.3 of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). In my experience, Section 2.3 contains a sound philosophical basis for the NHS and monitoring tests for planning of these resources. It is consistent with a current understanding of the key scientific fields of conservation biology, landscape ecology and restoration ecology.

The ORM debate brought the functional basis for NHS planning into the mainstream, but the "social ingenuity" (see T. Homer-Dixon's *The Ingenuity Gap*, Vintage Canada 2001) to achieve consensus is obviously at a fragile stage of infancy. The PPS lacks clear tests for the balance of economic vs. envi-

ronmental values, but full-cost accounting for ecosystem functions is now gaining sophistication, and is sure to become a core part of the discourse in Ontario. Implementation tools for the PPS such as the Ministry of Natural Resources' *Natural Heritage Reference Manual* (1999), and minimal buffer prescriptions utilized by some Conservation Authorities and municipalities, are becoming obsolete as science debunks past assumptions, in favour of the precautionary principle that advises us to

proceed with caution when we lack empirical knowledge on cumulative effects. It will be interesting to see how these issues are addressed in the ongoing PPS review.

Available knowledge on core areas, corridors and species

is largely based on studies conducted in rural or natural settings, excluding or ignoring the effects of human proximity. Of 80 scientific papers on corridors cited by both sides at the Richmond Hill Moraine hearing, only two studies considered urban ecosystems, and only one contained empirical data based on urban systems. Current conservation policies and requirements for urbanizing areas gener-



Photo: K. Konze, Dougan & Associates

Typical "buffer" behind residences: buffer is mowed, edge of EPA pruned, gate access created

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Townhouse development backing onto wooded EPA with no buffer. Footprint of residential use will extend well into the EPA. Note depth of fill against/over top of sediment control fence. OPA 129 lands in Richmond Hill

ally lack real-time urban data to back them up; we need information on how quality species perform in urban contexts.

Landscape ecology studies the relationships between interacting ecosystems, such as urban and natural. There is a rapidly growing body of landscape ecology data on urban encroachment effects (that is, from noise, microclimate, nutrients, contaminants, pets, pedestrian impacts, illegal trespass, etc.) that generally supports the conclusion that urban "footprints" overwhelm remnant natural features and their functions, resulting in profound changes to species, habitat structure and functions. Effects typically include the loss of species diversity and functions ("services" as defined in the PPS) that the NHS was established to "protect and improve," even where natural spaces themselves are "protected."

A key factor is the lack of consideration of the change from rural to urban landscape matrix. Landscape matrix is the functionally dominant patch type of an ecosystem. In landscapes with inadequate natural cover and pervasive urban effects, resiliency functions "wind down," yielding simplified systems that lack a clear ecological trajectory. Minimal buffers are largely ineffective in avoiding such profound change, leading to abandonment of protected pristine areas on one extreme, or the micro-management of threatened species and spaces on the other.

Targets for the amount of habitat cover to be retained represent one of the "shakiest" areas of natural heritage policy development (see Brian McHattie's article, "How Much Habitat is Enough?" in the previous

issue of the Journal). Maintenance of landscape mosaics within which keystone target species such as area sensitive birds, migratory amphibians, major predators and quality plant communities are self-sustaining will play a larger role, moving into the forefront

as the decline of species and their displacement by simplified exotic-based ecosystems becomes better documented through active monitoring.

From the perspective of ongoing monitoring effort I foresee that the NHS will gradually become a new "hazard" to be regulated. Municipalities and conservation agencies have been downgraded with enforcement of provincial and federal biodiversity initiatives, but they generally lack the funds, human resources and experience to contend with the intensive and complex pressures that urban spaces place on these resources. As urban areas envelop significant natural heritage elements, municipalities and agencies will become more directly liable for ongoing management of these resources, and adjudication of perceived conflicts between man and nature (e.g., backyard coyotes). This increasing liability should form part of the debate over continued urban expansion; currently it is not on the table for discussion.

A key outcome of the Oak Ridges Moraine situation was the official recognition that major natural resources and their functions are unlikely to be sustained in proximity to urbanization. The functional role of countryside was formally recognized as



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a planning tool for nature. This does not resolve the everyday dilemmas that interpretation of Section 2.3 of the PPS present to ecologists and urban planners, but it points to the need for clearer definitions of what the NHS should represent at different scales in relation to urbanization.

Natural areas that will degrade into backyard "green amenity" areas after development should be acknowledged as such when they are planned. To avoid such loss, permanent limits to urban growth must be set as they have been on the Moraine, and underutilized urban spaces used to generate new growth. Larger habitat mosaics set in countryside, will be the best reservoirs of quality species and functions, and therefore warrant dedicated management. Linked as regional and continental systems, these hold the real promise of sustaining nature.

Jim Dougan is Principal and senior ecologist with Dougan & Associates, a firm of ecologists specializing in habitat studies, impact assessment and monitoring of natural heritage systems. He has been engaged in environmental planning since 1976, and is Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Faculty

Photos: T. Fall, Dougan & Associates



New residential lots backing onto wetland EPA formerly known to support migratory amphibian populations. Note limit of grading immediately at edge of wetland

of Architecture, Landscape and Design at the University of Toronto, focusing on urban ecology and design. For more information, refer to several reports produced by the City of Toronto/Save the Rouge expert review team at www.city.toronto.on.ca/moraine/reports.htm,

or from Access Toronto. Steven Rowe, MCIP, RPP, is the Ontario Planning Journal's contributing editor for the environment. He is principal of Steven Rowe Environmental Planner and can be reached at deyrowe@sympatico.ca.

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From the GTSB to Smart Growth: A Transportation Perspective

By Dennis Kar

In September 2001, the Ontario government announced the reversion of GO Transit as a provincial responsibility, the commitment of \$3 billion in transit funding over a 10-year period, and the establishment of Smart Growth Panels to replace the Greater Toronto Services Board (GTSB) in the Central District and cover the rest of the province.

These new Smart Growth and transit initiatives have been in place for over a year, and questions have arisen about the province's ability to implement the solutions to congestion in the GTA and Hamilton that the GTSB could not. Clearly, new funding for transit has become an important first step. In the Central Division, the Smart Growth Panel recently completed a report containing interim advice "to unlock gridlock" for review by the province. Will this advice evoke a greater response than the GTSB's "Removing Roadblocks" report?

If Smart Growth is to succeed in implementing solutions to gridlock, transportation advice is secondary to the structure in which the advice is given. This article will examine three principles of effective inter-regional transportation planning structures and

compare them to the GTSB and the Smart Growth Panels to determine the potential impact that Smart Growth will have on improving our transportation situation in Ontario.

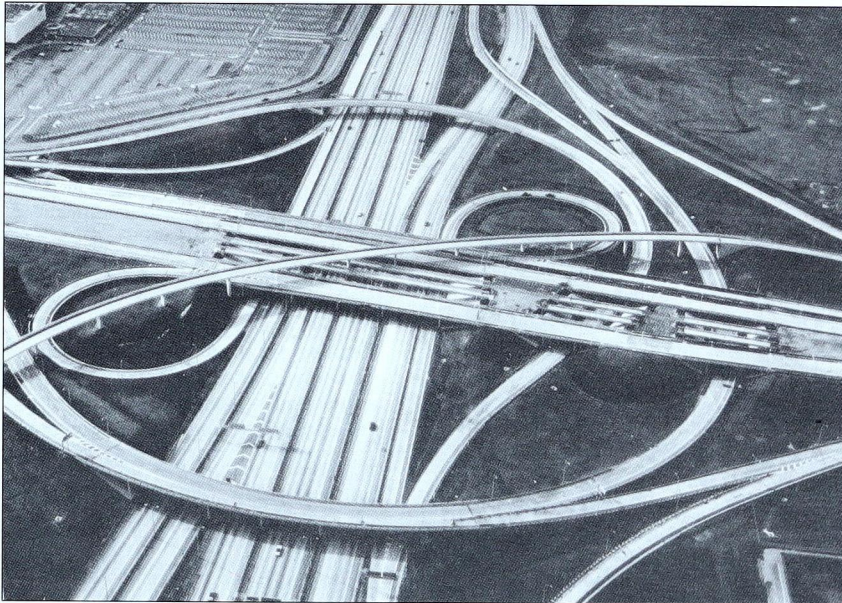
Comprehensive Mandate a Clear Improvement

Ontario's Smart Growth mandate is comprehensive. Brad Graham, Executive Coordinator of the Smart Growth Secretariat, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, described in a recent interview the mandate of the Smart Growth Panels as:

- working on priority issues identified by the Minister (such as gridlock and solid waste management in the Central District);
- advising the province so that it can develop a Smart Growth Strategy for each district.

The panels may comment on transportation investments, programs and policies, including major roads, inter-regional transit, transportation demand management and goods movement.

This mandate is similar to that of the



Smart Growth needs balanced transportation decisions



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GTSB. The GTSB produced several studies, including an inter-regional transit strategy, a goods movement strategy and a coordinated transit information strategy. This broad-brush approach provided the Smart Growth Panels with the ability to look at transportation components as a network, thereby promoting a common vision of a sustainable transportation system.

Will the Bid to Coordinate Land Use and Transportation Prevail?

A key premise behind Smart Growth is the connection between transportation and land use. While the Smart Growth initiative is headed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, other players include the Ministry of Transportation, which administers provincial transit funding programs, and the Ministry of Finance, which controls the SuperBuild Capital investment program. According to Graham, these three ministries and other stakeholders meet regularly to coordinate Smart Growth strategies. The Ministry of Transportation has recently completed a "Strategic Transportation Directions" reports to provide input to each of the Smart Growth panels.

This coordination between land use and transportation planning is potentially a step forward over the GTSB, which had no legislated power to address land use planning directly or coordinate it with transportation planning. Most GTA municipalities made it clear that they did not want the GTSB getting involved in land use, which they considered a local issue.

Although it is too early to determine whether similar problems will occur under the Smart Growth initiative, it is clear that this new structure creates a platform that encourages this type of coordination, if only at the high-end policy level.

As Always, the Key is Implementation

Having advisory authority alone clearly limits its ability to implement recommendations, as the demise of the GTSB shows. The GTSB legislation did not require its member municipalities to have regard to the Board's actions, with the exception of its powers over GO Transit.

The Smart Growth initiative is also described as an advisory board rather than a level of government. According to Brad Graham, although the province will respect local jurisdiction, the Panel has tools that the GTSB did not possess to promote implementation, including funding authority, jurisdiction and legislative authority.

The GTSB and GO Transit were funded by the GTA municipalities and the City of

Hamilton, using money from property taxes, user fees and development charges. The appropriateness of this funding source, and the fact that it was the only funding source, affected the GTSB's capacity for implementation. Funding GO Transit and local transit systems entirely from municipal revenues puts transit in competition for funding with other municipal services. When demands for services exceed available funds, priorities had to be set that were detrimental to the GTSB's strategies.

In September 2001, Ontario re-entered the transit business by dedicating funds to inter-regional transit investments and programs. Most provincial transit funding will come from the Golden Horseshoe Transit Investment Partnerships (GTIP) and the Transit Investment Partnerships (TIP) programs.

GTIP and TIP are part of the provincial \$9-billion, 10-year transit investment plan, of which \$3 billion will be funded by the province, with matching contributions from municipal governments and expected matching contributions from the federal government. GTIP will provide up to \$1.25 billion to improve inter-regional transit within the Golden Horseshoe while TIP will provide transit expansion funding outside the Golden Horseshoe. Both sources provide stable funding to implement Smart Growth strategies.

Although the smart growth strategy is still a work in progress, many of the criteria used to evaluate individual applications for GTIP funding are based on smart growth principles, including the coordination of land use and transportation. The extensive work completed by the GTSB provided a foundation for inter-regional transit improvements in the Central District.

According to Brad Graham, once the smart growth strategy has been completed, future GTIP applications will require a stronger commitment to the strategy. For now, proceeding with implementation in an environment in which transit investment is years behind demand is better than waiting for a smart growth strategy to be adopted.

Dennis Kar is a graduate of Ryerson and McGill University's School of Urban Planning. He wrote this article last year while working at Entra, a Mississauga-based transportation consultancy. He recently moved to Dillon Consulting in Toronto.

David Kriger, MCIP, RPP, is a contributing editor of the Ontario Planning Journal and a vice president of I-trans Consulting Inc., an Ontario-based consultancy. He welcomes contributions to the column, and can be reached at dkriger@itransconsulting.com.

The Limits of Plain Language and the Challenge of Change

By *Philippa Campsie*

In response to my article about planning buzzwords, I received an interesting e-mail from Mark Simeoni in Sudbury, who said (among other things):

"Have you ever read Plato? His view was that the citizen has as much of a duty to the state as the state has to him. He further suggested that one of the duties of the citizen was to be informed, to get with the program. Municipalities spend countless dollars informing people in the manner prescribed under regulations appended to the Planning Act. People show up at meetings and claim that 'Nobody told me.' Tough!

"I suspect people spend more time learning how to run a VCR or playing with their computers than they do attempting to become informed about local government issues. If you think planning jargon is bad, what is your view on your VCR manual? You know what the difference is: it's that people know that planning issues are considered in the democratic model and therefore they have a right to complain about everything. Jargon is simply a focal point for this type of thinking."

Well, yes and no. I have always maintained that jargon has a useful function as shorthand between colleagues (see my column of Jan/Feb 2002), but doesn't belong in public documents, whether they are VCR manuals, official plans or insurance policies. However, it is possible to write the clearest, most understandable document and still be misunderstood because its intended audience didn't bother to read it.

Item: Mary Ann Rangam mentions that the OPPI office has received numerous calls from members, all asking the same question about a recent change in the fee structure. She points out that the answers have been mailed out (twice) and posted on the Web. Yet still people call the office.

Item: At a plain language workshop, a planner told me that some years ago, he decided to find out how carefully his manager and director read his reports. In the middle of a report, he inserted a vulgar four-letter word, and waited for a reaction. Nothing. (He did, however, remove it before the report went to Council.)

True, we all have a duty to keep ourselves informed, and yet most of us fail. In Plato's day, the number of planning applications in Athens was not so high that the average citizen couldn't keep abreast of them, as well as

matters such as professional association dues for the Socratic Institute. Today we are swamped. And we have to be multilingual—we need to know planning jargon, political jargon, computer jargon, Internet jargon, education jargon, management jargon, retail jargon, journalistic jargon, VCR jargon, and the jargon of our particular recreational pastimes, just to get through the day. If we sometimes feel that everyone around us is speaking Greek, well, Plato might understand.

What to do? In some cases, perhaps, we are writing when we should be speaking, printing newspaper ads when we should be placing radio ads, sending off e-mails when we should be picking up the telephone. Of course, we can't and shouldn't avoid the written word. But if our readers have come to expect incomprehensible baffle-gab from us, then we shouldn't be surprised if some of them give up before they start. Lots of people don't like to read, some have genuine difficulty reading, and everyone has too much to read, so generating more paper may not be the road to better communications.

In fact, I later wrote to Mark to ask about ways in which a municipality could cut down on paper and make better use of Intranets (Sudbury is doing rather well at this and Mark is something of an expert). I asked because at a workshop, the participants had complained about the amount of paper-pushing they had to do. Yet at the same time, they seemed gloomily resigned to generating lengthy reports, some of which they agreed were unnecessary and even counterproductive. After giving me some practical tips to pass along, Mark added:

"Remember this when you deal with them:

the world is changing and it will pass them by if they don't respond . . . You know, it amazes me that we actually sent people to the moon. Can you imagine if this feat had relied on planners? 'We have never been there before.' 'We tried that 400 years ago and it did not work.' 'We can't afford that.' Sound familiar?

"I remember once, a long time ago, when I just started here, a staff discussion which split along the lines of age, the older guys saying the usual, 'We tried that before, blah, blah, blah (more jargon).' There must have been a course in planning school on how to thwart change, which I obviously skipped. So anyway, I finally have enough and launch into an impassioned diatribe about how we continually fail to take on new challenges when they don't reflect the status quo.

"I drew an analogy from the Second World War, comparing our efforts to those who planned the D-Day invasion (very impassioned speech). I even stated, 'They were being shot at and they did it; nobody is shooting at us.' In summary, my question is: how is it that if one examines human history there are countless examples of people overcoming huge adversities and ending up changing the world, but we can't resolve email protocols?

"When our children's children consider our time 100 years from now, I am convinced that they will be unimpressed by the status quo decisions that we seem to make on a daily basis and will only remember the great breaks from tradition as the truly defining moments of our time."

I think I will pin that up over my desk, and I encourage you to do the same. Thank you, Mark, your message couldn't have been plainer.

Philippa Campsie is always on the lookout for best practices in planning communication and information management. If your municipality or company has found a better way to get information through to planners or the public, call her at 416-686-6173 or e-mail pcampsie@istar.ca



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Masters of Our Own Domain

By Jim Helik

This is the third in an occasional series of articles on professional practice. This article looks at how current private-sector management practices are learning to deal with newly active Boards of Directors—something that public sector planners have long been familiar with.

Planners often question the applicability of typical management theory to their work because of a seemingly unique set of circumstances those in the public sector face—an elected body of politicians who sit at the top of the organizational pyramid. How can private-sector management theories be applied when there are individuals at the top who can—and do—alter our plans, change their (and our goals) and sometimes never get around to articulating strategies to help achieve these goals.

Surely this is a state of affairs no private organization will ever have to deal with.

Well, it is happening today in the private sector. Private-sector organizations are discovering the phrase “board governance” in an effort to redefine the role of their own Board of Directors—who can loosely be thought of as similar to elected officials in the public sector. Slowly disappearing is the old-fashioned supine board that sleeps through discussions of organization policy and goals in an effort to more to the important part of any board meeting—the free lunch. The publication last year of two books—*Corporate Boards That Create Value* (by John Carver, Wiley 2002) and *Chairman of the Board: A Practical Guide* (by Brian Lechem, Wiley, 2002) bear witness to the resurgence of discussion in redefining, or even defining for the first time, the role that all boards should play.

What Should Boards, Including Political Bodies, Do?

The new consensus that is generally emerging places boards in a more serious light in that the task of any board is direction, not management. The board looks outwards, while the job of executives is operations-oriented. This is a crucial distinction, made all the more important by the constant attraction to some board members of getting involved in day-to-day management. But the effort to separate roles is worth it. As Carver notes, “Once a board has defined ends and bounded means, it has established

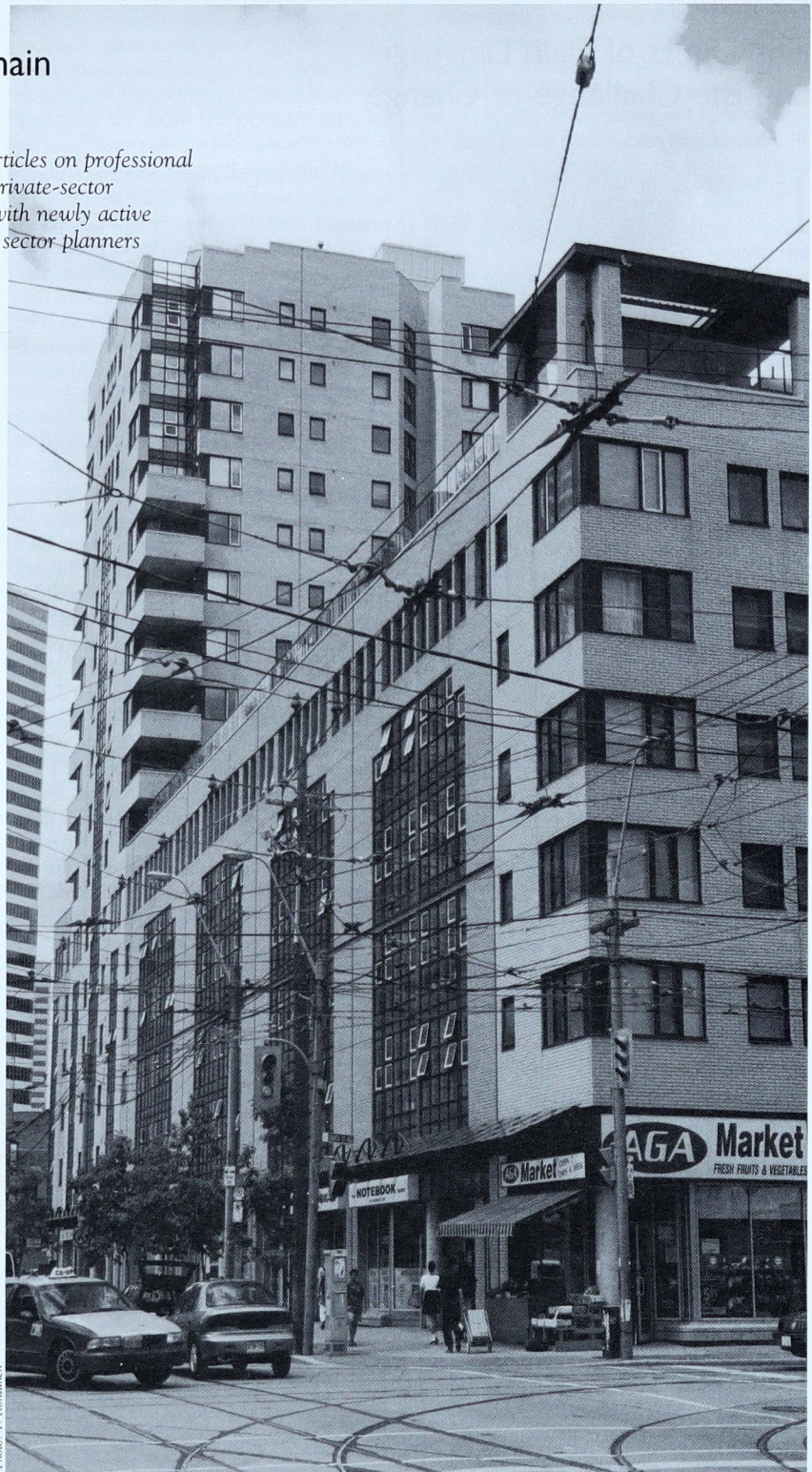


Photo: T. Kontinen

Political decisions drive public- and private-sectors

an unequivocal basis for the separation of board and management roles.”

If roles are clearly defined, the resulting balance can strengthen both parties—an autonomous board which has authority, and strong management that is viewed as an asset, rather than being merely tolerated. This division of labour stands in sharp contrast to what some people have thought of as the traditional role of boards—providing grey-hair based advice (often coming from individuals on the board, not the board of a whole, thus muddying the waters about the role of boards in general), as well as more ill-defined benefits (remember that O.J. Simpson was on the Board of Directors of a publicly traded company).

Thus, the board models that are being discussed today are both for more activist roles for boards (setting direction, and not just waiting for items to be brought for approval) and at the same time more passive (setting clear goals, then getting out of the way of management).

Here is a brief checklist for this new-model board:

- provides a custom-made structure for management, taking into account strengths and skills of those in management;
- clarifies who does what, on both the board and management side;
- provides written policies accessible in one place;
- writes policies that start broadly (the easy part) and stop where any reasonable interpretation of the words is acceptable;
- states values and direction that are durable, with no need for constant updating, and which are generated by the board for management, not the other way around.

The future will likely see a continued call for boards to expand their true functions of planning and leading. When this works, it could be great, and when it doesn't—well, many of us in the public sector can tell about that—but that is another story.

Jim Helik, MCIP, RPP, is the Ontario Planning Journal's contributing editor for Professional Practice. He is a senior planner with the City of Toronto's planning and development research division and can be reached at jhelik@toronto.ca.

Jim also lectures in the Faculty of Management at Ryerson University in Toronto.

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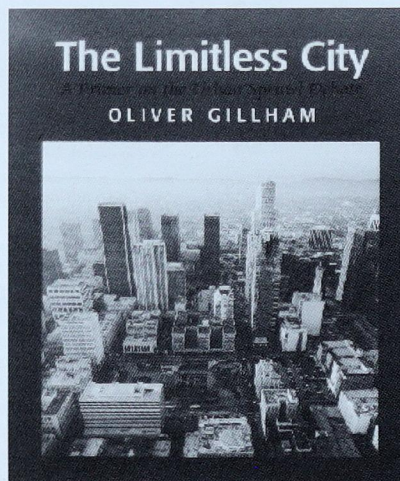
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Not another coffee table book

The Limitless City

Review by Brendan Cormier

In the past 20 years the literature on suburban sprawl has exploded. What began with a trickle with Kenneth T. Jackson's *The Crabgrass Frontier* and Robert Fishman's *Bourgeois Utopias* in the 1980s soon ushered in a torrent of 1990s literature on the subject. James Howard Kunstler's poetic rant stirred our senses. Mike Davis took us behind the scenes of L.A.'s Jim Crowesque Housing Associations while Peter Hall



shone the light on European sprawl.

The newest addition to sprawl literature is Oliver Gillham's *The Limitless City: A Primer on the Urban Sprawl Debate*. In it, Gillham attempts to layout a comprehensive unbiased account of the issue. In a very orderly fashion, Gillham goes through sprawl's history and the factors that made it possible and outlines the issues behind the debate (congestion, land consumption, social segregation). The last part of the book is devoted to surveying various planning initiatives across America trying to tackle the problems of sprawl. Portland's attempt at regional government and an Urban Growth Boundary and San Diego's Trolley revival are highlighted as well as the Traditional Neighborhood Developments of the Duany/Plater-Zyberk firm and Peter Katz's Pedestrian Pockets. Gillham's advantage is his unbiased approach. While other authors like Davis cloud their historical accounts with their political leanings, or like

Kunstler, go overboard with emotionally charged rant, Gillham allows the reader to compare arguments and statistics and formulate his/her own opinion on the debate.

The weak point of the book is that because of its comprehensive nature, it tends to be repetitive and dry. Also, because it generally avoids taking sides on the debate, it lacks inspiring prose or conviction. *The Limitless City* is just what its subtitle claims it to be, an excellent primer on the debate about sprawl. The charts and statistics and commentary inside make for an excellent resource for planners and students and all those involved in the growth of our cities. However, if you are looking for a book that digs deeper into the issue, explores wider metaphysical and contextual aspects or takes a more personal and specific approach, recounting tales of individuals wrapped up and affected by the day-to-day realities of sprawl, rest your copy of *The Limitless City* down on your coffee table and pick up Fishman's *Bourgeois Utopias* or Garreau's *Edge City*.

Brendan Cormier is a student of Urban Planning at Ryerson University. He can be contacted at regularchickens@hotmail.com.

A trip worth taking

Preserving the World's Great Cities: The Destruction and Renewal of the Historic Metropolis

Author: Anthony M. Tung

Publisher: Three Rivers Press ISBN 0-609-80815-X

Date: 2001

Pages: 431 (Paperback)

Price: \$28.50 (Can)

Review by Matthew Reniers

In 1995, Anthony Tung, a former landmarks commissioner for New York City, set out on a tour of the world's great cities to examine first-hand how architectural con-

ervation practice worked or failed in these places.

In each city visited, Tung sought the answer to this fundamental question: To what degree has this special place—its architectural culture, its urban beauty, its high material accomplishments, its civic dignity, and the spirit of the metropolis itself—survived our century of self-inflicted destruction? Other questions to which he sought answers were: What was the reality of conservation practice in the face of the forces of power, politics, poverty, money, corruption, and the drive for economic growth and what lessons could be learned from these other places that could inform the debate on conservation issues?”

Preserving the World's Great Cities, which describes conservation efforts in 18 of these cities, is the result of this research.

The following statement, which concludes a chapter describing heritage conservation efforts and failures in London and Paris, expresses Tung's view of the importance of heritage conservation:

The historic city has become a finite resource, and urban preservation has become a matter of saving not just important individual structures but of saving the special character of whole cityscapes, of the way their parts were woven together in a comprehensible visage that marked the distinctiveness of old urban centres in a world that in many aspects began to

evolve toward global cultural conformity. Heritage conservation is about recognizing and respecting the creative potential that exists within the urban landscape. Tung does not present an anti-development diatribe, but argues that new development should be integrated into the existing built fabric. In a chapter on Amsterdam and Vienna, Tung praises the way in which Amsterdam has been able to integrate con-

temporary social housing within its urban context.

For most of the cities discussed, Tung provides an historical sketch of how the metropolis developed. The historical description provides context for current conservation activities. While the historical sketches are brief, they do provide for fascinating reading. For example, the two chapters on Rome provide an account of how the ancient city was destroyed and rebuilt many times

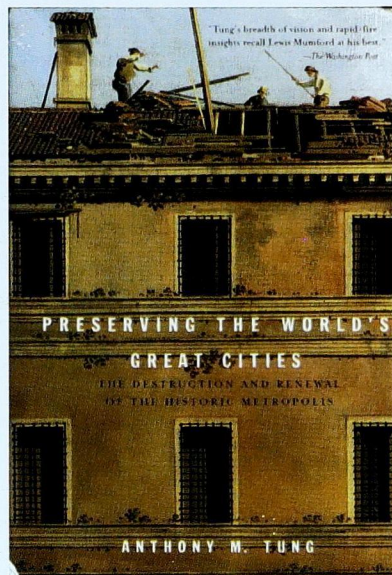
as the result of changes in the dominant cultural milieu—paganism to Christendom to fascism—as well as to the current challenges presented by modernism and the largely ineffective but complex conservation bureaucracy established by the Italian government.

The chapter on Cairo describes how the pressures of poverty, explosive population growth, corrupt bureaucracy and environmental degradation are affecting conservation of its Islamic legacy. Venice provides an

example of the importance of maintaining an environment balance and of the mixed blessings from tourism. Singapore provides an example of how the preponderance of modernist structures can destroy a unique urban environment. In New York City the struggle to maintain relatively low-scale heritage structures in areas of extremely high land values is described. Moscow and Beijing provide examples of how changes in the ruling ideology can effect conservation of the historic city.

Tung praises the heroic efforts to reconstruct historic Warsaw following the devastation wrought during the Second World War. The challenges encountered in Berlin to preserve the difficult memory of the Nazi regime are described in a chapter with the title “The City Redeemed.” Tung laments the paucity of structures remaining in United States relating to the era of slavery. Heritage conservation must reflect the collective social conscience. Tung argues that:

The very act of preserving sites that record injustice and barbarity demonstrates an impulse in city dwellers to hold themselves responsible for the conditions that they have caused. If there is no accountability for the human inferno, can we ever hope to constrain it? In this regard heritage preserva-



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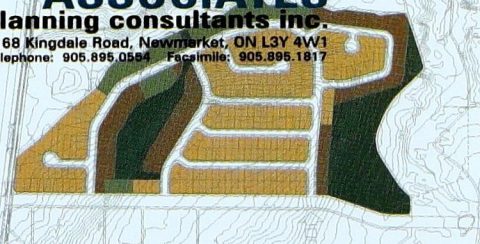
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tion involved much more than architectural aesthetics.

Despite all the strengths of *Preserving the World's Great Cities*, I do have a few complaints. I found Tung's writing style to be tiresome at times. More pictures or diagrams would enhance detailed descriptions of architectural features that Tung occasionally provides. The photos are in one central location rather than dispersed throughout the text resulting in a lot of leafing back and forward. The majority of the cities dealt with are European and I would have preferred the inclusion of more cities from different cultural backgrounds.

These complaints are minor, however. In *Preserving the World's Great Cities*, Tung provides the reader with an account of the many diverse challenges encountered in conserving the urban past. Tung also describes what can be lost if we fail to find ways to integrate new development within the context of existing urban environments.

Matthew Reniers, MCIP, RPP is the Manager of Planning & Heritage for the City of Brantford. Matt can be reached at mreniers@city.brantford.on.ca.

BOOK PIX RETURNS

The Choices Don't Get Easier

The following bookpix were provided by Suzette Giles, Data, Map and GIS Librarian, Ryerson University Library:

Planning the new suburbia: flexibility by design

Avi Friedman ; with David Krawitz [et al.]
Vancouver : UBC Press, c2002. xii, 194 p. :
ill. ; 21 x 24 cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Focusing partnerships: a sourcebook for municipal capacity building in public-private partnerships

Written and edited by Janelle Plummer ;
with contributions from Chris Heymans
[et al.].

Sterling, VA : Earthscan Publications,
2002. xix, 341 p. : ill.

Includes bibliographical references
(p. 323-333) and index.

Urban clustering: the benefits and drawbacks of location

Boris A. Portnov, Evyatar Erell.
Aldershot ; Burlington, VT : Ashgate,
2001. xvii, 317 p. : ill. ; 23 cm.

Making people-friendly towns: improving the public environment in towns and cities

Francis Tibbalds.
London : Spon Press, c2001. ix, 116 p.
: ill. "First published 1992 by Longman
Group UK, Ltd." — T.p. verso.
Includes bibliographical references and
index.

The following Bookpix were provided by
Kathleen M. Wyman, Urban Affairs
Library, Metro Hall, 55 John Street,
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Designing Cities: Critical Readings in Urban Design

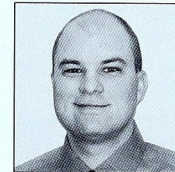
Published by Blackwell, 2003

Of States and Cities: The Partitioning of Urban Space

Published by Oxford University Press,
2002

Seduction of Place: The City in the Twenty-First Century

Published by Pantheon Books, 2000



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