

# ONTARIO PLANNING JOURNAL

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VOLUME 19  
NUMBER 3

ONTARIO PLANNERS: VISION · LEADERSHIP · GREAT COMMUNITIES

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# The Passion of the Chief

By Ian Graham

On April 23, Paul J. Bedford, Chief Planner for the City of Toronto, retired after 31 years of public service with the City. The story of his career as a planner and his dedication to planning is truly remarkable. It is a story that should convince anyone, at any point in their career, that they can make a difference and that their chosen career can make a genuine contribution.

On first impression, Paul Bedford resembles a Jimmy Stewart character. Tall, thin, likable, but slightly edgy. Passionate in his views and in the way he expresses his ideas. He is a man of principle. He gets respect from friend and foe. And even after more than three decades as a public servant, he may be weary but, remarkably, he is not cynical. How did Bedford manage this feat? What made him the way he is?

## Setting the Stage—The Early Years

Paul was raised in Oakville in the 1950s when the town was still a bedroom community. Bedford senior was a local councillor. His father's political career, development of the iconic New City Hall in Toronto and a summer job with a paving construction company all helped to point him towards a career in urban planning. The journey continued with a degree in planning from the University of Southern Illinois.

His first summer planning job was in a small town in Connecticut. He would spend every weekend and every dime at his disposal traveling to Boston, New York and Washington to satisfy his curiosity about life in 'big city.' In 1970, while still a graduate student, Paul got a job working for the St. Louis Redevelopment Authority on downtown urban renewal projects, which exposed him to a very different side of planning.

Throughout his time in the States, Paul subscribed to the Toronto Star, The Toronto Telegraph and the Vancouver Sun to keep in touch and monitor the classifieds for potential planning jobs. This strategy eventually paid off. Soon after graduation in 1971, Paul applied for a junior planning position with the District of Surrey, B.C. He cobbled together the money for a \$400 plane ticket from St. Louis, via Chicago and Seattle to Vancouver for the interview. He got the job.

Paul's first full-time planning job

exposed him to the usual planning duties, land studies and reports—like any other new kid in a planning department. But his instinct to get involved and to make his views known started early. He helped organize the first commuter bus service from Surrey to downtown Vancouver by unconventional means, standing by the roadside with signs promoting transit use to the oncoming cars. He and his wife also helped fight a proposed third bridge over the Burrard Inlet in Vancouver. He expressed his concern that Vancouver was starting to become dominated by the automobile with strident letters to the editor and comments at public meetings. This led to getting a "cease and desist" letter from Vancouver authorities to the city manager in Surrey. Paul soon started looking for work back home in Ontario. Faced with three offers, he chose the City of Toronto job, even though it paid the least.

By joining the Toronto Planning Board, Paul felt that he was going to be part of something significant. The Crombie reform council was a major departure from the politics of the 1960s. The Spadina Expressway battle, the controversial height by-law, the level of citizen advocacy and the introduction of the Central Area Plan created a heightened sense of public awareness of the role and importance of urban planning in 1970s Toronto. For a young planner this was a special time.

Bedford's first assignment was as a planner in the North Toronto site office working with a citizen advisory committee on a controversial development plan being debated for the Yonge-Eglinton area. This was an era when citizen participation was held in high regard. That this positive involvement with the public made such an impact on his personal development as a planner is ironic, given the vitriol that greeted him some 30 years later when he recommended adoption of a plan to build a pair of 50 story-plus condominium towers in the same location.

Another highlight while working in the north site office was the development of housing in North Toronto for seniors (HINTS). This proved to be another strong influence, one that he credits with his strong belief that neighbourhoods should cater to the needs of people at all stages of their lives.



You have to push to get support for transit, says Paul Bedford

Nothing toughens a planner like giving testimony at the Ontario Municipal Board. For Bedford, this initiation took place barely six months into his tenure, coming up against veteran lawyer, Eddie Goodman. New to the rigours of expert testimony, Paul committed his evidence to memory. The young witness not only survived but was able to claim a modest victory. After seven years in North Toronto, he left for a promotion opportunity with the waterfront section at City Hall.

Tackling projects as diverse as the future of Exhibition Place and the challenge of integrating the new Metro Convention Centre at the edge of the Railway Lands, Bedford moved into management in the Central Area before becoming Director of the Community &

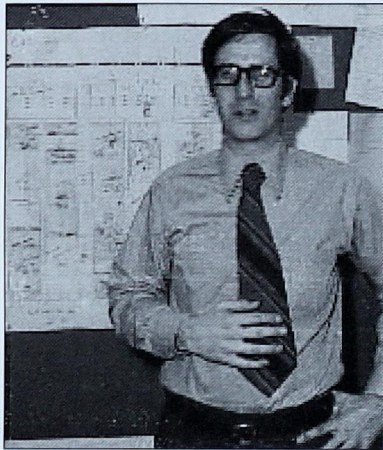
Neighbourhoods division. In the blur of the hyperactive 1980s, the Garment District study, redevelopment of the Massey Ferguson lands (now Liberty Village) and the Junction Triangle all came under his purview. The need to accommodate rapid growth, fed by the

desire to extract benefits from wealthy developers in the late 1980s, City Hall became synonymous with 'let's make a deal' planning.

For someone who had become used to seeing projects meet expectations, the highly touted "Main Streets Search for Ideas Competition"—a concept to encourage

intensive mixed-use development along Toronto's arterial roads—proved to be a major disappointment. Problems with land assembly, parking standards and a major recession combined to move "Main Streets" into the "loss column." The upside proved to be "lessons learned" when he returned to the issue post-amalgamation. Similarly, the Ataritari Project. (now known as the West Donlands), a concept for developing a new central community,

based on the success two decades earlier of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, was doomed by uncertainties over soil contamination and naive application of the new but then untried environmental assessment process.



Bedford as a beginning planner

## OCAD Changes Toronto's View of What's Possible

By Glenn Miller

Will Alsop doesn't spend a lot of time hob-nobbing with the elite. The British architect responsible for changing Toronto's skyline forever is happier talking to the people likely to occupy his buildings or who live near-by his projects. His genuine delight is listening to what matters to local residents. It turns out that this is the source of inspiration for the Ontario College of Art and Design's stunning expansion—nine storeys in the air on stilts!

"I went and had a glass of wine with the people across the street," he told me at the unofficial preview of his radical new building in March. "They said that access to the Grange Park was their biggest wish." That Alsop was able to grant that wish with such élan is a credit not only to his imagination but the attitude of his client, which wanted to create common spaces large enough for its elite students to work together and display their designs. (OCAD is a university, don't be fooled by the name.) He also got support from Paul Bedford's planning department

where it counted. Chances are he had a glass of wine with the planners too, a convivial fellow to be sure.

The building is already on the circuit for structural engineers who come to learn about the unique solutions required to hang two full floors more than 30 meters in the air. Heritage planners are also intrigued with the emergence of very special cultural precinct (OCAD is a neighbour of the Frank Gehry expansion to the Art Gallery of Ontario) linking half a dozen heritage gems.

Looking out of one of the box windows at the city below, Allsop beams with pride. "People go on about the building being on stilts but what I really love is the park underneath. When it's finished it will be a spectacular space that will function both as a pathway from the neighbourhood to the Grange as well as a protected space where the college can hold events. Come back when the landscaping is in," he suggests. "We'll have a glass of wine."

### In the blink of an eye, 20 years had passed.

Paul needed a break, but true to his reputation, he turned a seven-month sabbatical in the early 1990s into a "busman's holiday," taking his family on a boat trip down the Eastern seaboard, where he visited planning directors in every major US city along the way, ending up in Florida. This bid to recharge his batteries and develop fresh ideas proved to be a turning point in his career and one that set the stage for the changes he would face over the coming decade.

### The Passionate Years

Bedford came back to Toronto in the spring of 1993 with fresh ideas and a new perspective, inspired by the knowledge acquired during his sabbatical. Equipped with a new title—Deputy of Community and Physical Planning—he turned his attention to dealing with the extreme rigidity that now characterized the planning department. In Jane Jacobs' words, "planners had become control freaks."

Always ready to think 'out of the box,' he decided it was time to encourage others to do the same. Soon after Barbara Hall became mayor, Paul started floating the idea of loosening the planning regulations for the central industrial areas, now known as "The Kings." The potential for residential and mixed-use development in these areas was huge. The mayor met with planning staff to suggest it was time to perhaps rethink the planning strategy. This fit well with ideas that Paul had seen put into practice in some of the cities he visited while on sabbatical. Helping staff accustomed to specific rules on density and land use get used to deregulation required a lot of hand-holding, and no small amount of blind faith. Throwing out the zoning regs in favour of built-form policies was a huge risk, not just for the city but also for Bedford personally.

After consultation with architects, focus groups, industry, and developers the new approach was adopted. It worked in part because of the timing of the economy and the demand for loft-style housing. It also did not involve the usual NIMBY issues, since there were no existing residents in the areas that were to be affected. It was a window of opportunity that led to unprecedented levels of reinvestment. It was also an important victory for Paul that would allow him to push the envelope of his planning career to go all the way with his ideas and passion.

Like other senior staff during this period Paul found himself reapplying for his job on a regular basis. It was fashionable at the

time for government to try to emulate the private sector and the old City of Toronto instituted a board of management structure that resulted in the 'super commissioner' set up. As luck would have it, he never won one of these assignments. This left him in his element as a creative urban planner. As it happened, the constant pressure to compete proved to be good preparation for life in "the mega city," the new corporation brought into being by the Conservative government.

When the Province set up the transition team to help organize the new City of Toronto, the chief planners of the former cities met to discuss how planning should be organized under the new structure. They recommended to the transition team the importance of having urban planning under the same roof as economic development, a structure that the old City of Toronto had adopted. This idea was shot down in flames.

After a period with an interim head of the new department, Paul Bedford emerged as "executive director" of planning in the new city—a title he quickly changed to "chief planner"—an important move symbolically as Bedford and his team prepared to create a new official plan to reflect the diversity of the amalgamated city.

In his new position, Paul now needed to learn and understand the new city for which he was responsible. He went on field trips to Scarborough, Etobicoke, North York, East York and the former City of York to see what was going on and find the talent in each of these former municipal planning departments that would help shape the new culture of the planning division. It was a difficult period. Many talented planners were leaving, threatened by the restructuring and staff cuts. Eventually the staff from all parts of the new city would get to know their chief planner and begin to understand his agenda for planning in the new city.

On top of the restructuring issues, Paul had a lot of major planning issues to contend with over his six years as chief planner. There was the 'big box' OMB fight on the waterfront, the Olympic bid, the Minto towers at Yonge and Eglinton, and the Gardiner Expressway East take down, to name just some. But perhaps Paul's biggest achievement and legacy as the first chief planner for the City of Toronto was the new Official Plan.

Paul wanted to take a new approach. The secondary plans that he helped develop in the 1970s, which were like zoning by-laws, did not represent the right direction. He wanted a simple plan based on principles that could be readily understood by 'non-planners' and which established a long term

'vision' for the city. Away with density numbers! Instead, he proposed to develop a framework that would explain the relationship between land use planning and transportation, direct growth and promote attractive built-form. In November 2002, Toronto council adopted the new Official Plan that is now subject to various OMB appeals. Also in 2002, Paul was made a Fellow of the Canadian Institute of Planners for his contribution to the profession.

So, six years after taking on—and successfully completing — one of the toughest assignments any planner could face, Bedford handed in his resignation, figuring it was time to do something different. While he may be retired from the city as a planner, Paul is not retired from life.

*Ian Graham, MCIP, RPP, AICP, is publisher of NRU Publishing Inc., a company that produces weekly news products on municipal issues in Toronto and the GTA. Ian worked as a planning assistant in the former City of Toronto in the late-1980s under Paul Bedford. Recently Ian has formed his own planning consulting operation and is involved with CRAFT Development Corp., a retail development company based in Toronto.*

## Pearls of Wisdom

- The CAO and 'super commissioners' model may work well for mid-size cities, but does not function for 'big cities' such as Toronto.
- Council needs to be restructured to allow for city-wide issues to triumph over NIMBY attitudes.
- Toronto should be planned as a North American city with European values.
- People should be able to live without a car and not feel deprived.
- Development charges should be waived for buildings that fulfil official plan policies (such as those on The Avenues) but charged in full for lower density development.
- Transit passes should be tax deductible.
- Road tolls should be introduced on the 400 series highways (and the Don Valley Parkway).
- Full environmental assessments should not be required for transit projects that have already been through extensive planning study.

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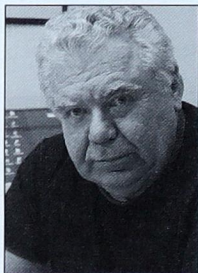
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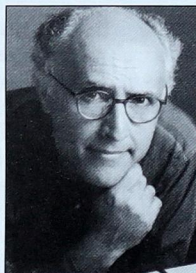
**Jaime Lerner:** Brazilian architect Jaime Lerner graduated in architecture and urban planning from the School of Architecture of the Federal University of Parana in 1964. Responsible for the creation of the Institute of Urban Planning and Research of Curitiba (IPPUC) in 1965, he participated in the preparation of the master plan for the capital of Parana that resulted in its physical, economic and cultural transformation. He was elected mayor of the city for three terms. Elected Governor of Parana in 1994, re-elected in 1998, Jaime Lerner promoted the greatest economic and social transformation in the history of the state. Jaime Lerner is an Urban and Regional Planning professor at the School of Architecture and Urban Planning of



Jaime Lerner

the Federal University of Parana (Brazil) and was a guest professor at the University of Berkeley (California, USA). He has won numerous awards.

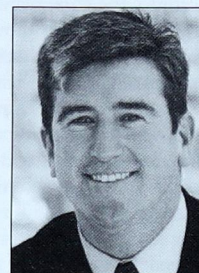
**Avi Friedman:** Dr. Avi Friedman is the co-founder and current director of the Affordable Homes Program at the McGill School of Architecture. Known internationally for the Grow Home and Next Home designs, Dr. Friedman's work has been published in the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, and Popular Science, among others, and featured on the ABC, BBC, CNN, and HGTV networks. He is the author of four books on housing, a syndicated columnist for Southam newspapers, and the



Avi Friedman

recipient of numerous awards, including the Manning Innovation Award and the United Nations World Habitat Award.

**Glen Murray:** Come and chat with friends and colleagues at a reception sponsored by the 2005 Conference Committee from Calgary, followed by a gala dinner during which awards will be presented to members. Our special guest speaker for the evening is Winnipeg Mayor Glen Murray, an original and outspoken advocate of the urban agenda. A graduate of Montreal's Concordia University, where he specialized in urban studies, Mayor Murray has devoted his considerable energies to downtown revitalization, heritage preservation and alternative approaches to generating revenue for cash-strapped cities such as Winnipeg.



Glen Murray

**David Miller:** Toronto Mayor David Miller will welcome delegates to the 2004 conference. As the Mayor of Canada's largest city and a strong advocate of urban democracy, he will comment on some of the critical issues facing municipalities across the country.



David Miller

**John Gerretsen:** The government of Ontario is proposing fundamental reforms to the Province's land use planning system. Ontario's Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, John Gerretsen will speak at the luncheon on July 12 on the provincial vision for a planning system that will help our communities grow, prosper and offer a high quality of life.

*The dinner will be chaired by David Crombie, President and CEO of the Canadian Urban Institute.*



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## Unlocking the Potential of the Arts and Creative Sector in Cities and Communities

By Tim Jones

Can you remember what you were doing when Tina Turner was topping the charts with "What's Love Got to do with it?" To jog your memory, consider that this was also when an obscure company called Apple was launching a revolutionary new computer called the Macintosh.

Incredibly, this all took place in 1984, 20 years ago. It never ceases to amaze what new directions our curiosity for things new and fresh will drive us to. You could say that it is what makes us human.

When you consider how primitive the Apple now seems in our wireless digital world, you get a sense of just how powerful our thirst for "new and improved" can be and how creativity and commerce are inextricably linked. Can you think of any type of positive growth or change that is not driven by creativity?

Perhaps this explains why the work of Richard Florida has captured our imaginations. He makes the case that creativity is the driving force of growth and change, reminding us that it was ever so, from the invention of the wheel to the agricultural revolution. Florida's theories have had a profound impact on how communities approach economic and creative sector development. While not all economists and cultural theorists have bought into Florida's creativity index, my sense is that most people agree with the central premise because it makes intuitive sense.

So what is the creative sector and how does it work? I like the metaphor developed by a UK organization called Creative Clusters that describes the creative ecosystem:

*The creative industry ecology is one of whales and plankton: a handful of high-profile global players, stars and multinational companies, dependent upon vast shoals of project-based micro-enterprises. From the surface, only the bigger players are visible, but these big fish are wholly dependent on the small fry further along the supply chain.*

*New value is created when technical innovation, artistic creativity and business entrepreneurship are deployed together to make and distribute a new cultural product.*

*Content-creating enterprises must be quick to respond to changes in fashion and technology. Their assets are invisible and volatile: reputation, skills and brands. They operate in global niche markets. They evolve by getting better rather than by getting bigger. Key players are rewarded by lifestyle and reputation as much as by money. Much of the critical infrastructure*

*is external to the firm. All this adds up to a business profile that is not widely recognized by banks, investors or government.*

So if creativity is such an important driver of growth and change we should logically do everything we can to nurture and stimulate it. Unfortunately, this is not always the case in Canada. In contrast,



Photo: T. Korttinen

Healthy streetscapes haven for creativity

government in the UK really "gets it." Governments and development agencies at all levels are investing tens of billions of pounds in creative sector development initiatives. In Canada, we are not even in the policy development mode let alone setting up agencies and delivering programs.

Why does Canada lag behind in this area? To begin with, there are gaps in our understanding about how to proceed.

Investing in creativity is risky business because there is never a guaranteed payoff. So programs that support new science, art, research and development are easy targets when money is tight. Creativity is a very mobile commodity and we have become extremely adept at taking advantage of the best new art, entertainment, ideas and products from other places. In the short-term at least, communities can get by without sup-

porting creativity. Our global marketplace allows us to benefit from creative people everywhere.

But imagine what our communities will look like 20 years from now if we don't begin working to grow creativity within them. While it is impossible for us to know what the future will bring, we do know that left on its own, the marketplace will do what some describe as "normalizing" our communities. You can find the same shops and entertainment attractions anywhere on the planet. Surely we should have higher aspirations for the future than competing for the next Pottery Barn franchise. People crave authentic cultural experiences and for that you need the arts and you need an environment that is conducive to creativity.

In his speech at last fall's Creative Places conference in Toronto, Mayor Glen Murray of Winnipeg made the case that cities should adopt a values-based approach to government. He said: "When you think of the cities in the world that you want to go to and live in, where you want to spend your money, where you want to participate in the creation of wealth and ideas, they're the beautiful places. Utilitarian values are about fear of difference. Creative values are about the celebration of difference. To be creative you have to entertain difference. If you are building utilitarian structures and focus only on function, difference doesn't matter."

So what are we doing in Canada to create environments that are conducive to creativity? Almost nothing. You can't create an environment that is conducive to creativity by just supporting creation and arts programming. And it is not good enough to roll out a capital grants program for the arts once every ten years. But unfortunately that has been our approach.

Two key reasons why this approach will always fail are that artists and most arts organizations simply don't have the tools or resources to navigate the real estate market. Second, financial institutions have little or no understanding of the creative sector and are allowed to neglect non-profit organizations with impunity.

At Artscape, we are developing some new theories around creative clusters, backed up by innovative tools that can help make it happen. I will describe this approach in the next issue.

*Tim Jones is executive director of Artscape, a Toronto-based not for profit corporation dedicated to providing artists with affordable real estate.*

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# The Zoning Trilogy: Grand Epic, Prequel and Sequel in One Package

By Brent Gilmour

Address: http://www.zoningtrilogy.com/

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Sun, May 16 2004 - 9:47:24 PM

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What's Hot? auto-scroll off LZT

Zoning Trilogy—sounds like an epic mini series. It is, however, a planner's "everything you wanted to know guide" to creating a zoning by-law. Since 1994, Zoning Trilogy has provided the municipal planning community with a three-volume set of detailed model zoning codes, which incorporate a readily accessible dictionary of terms, a full text of zoning provisions, and zoning diagrams. Recently, Bob Lehman, author of the Zoning Trilogy and president of Meridian Planning Consultants, placed the guidelines at the click of a mouse by going on-line (<http://zoningtrilogy.com>).

The functionality, focus on traditional zoning, and ease of access which made the guidelines popular among planners has remained intact with the on-line version. Zoningtrilogy.com is laid out in a similar manner to the loose-leaf version, and allows users to select from a range of options, including over 1663 zoning definitions, 409 zoning provisions, 70 zoning diagrams, 156 zoning resources and a host of other references and links.

In today's fast paced work environment, being able to find what you need quickly is imperative. Bob Lehman acknowledged that concern through the design of the website which provides users with a variety of methods to locate information, from a keyword search of the entire site or just specific sections to multiple dropdown menus. In addition,

the site also places the interests of the user first. For instance, zoning diagrams open in separate windows as PDF files for ease of printing and distribution, and model codes. The mixture of US and Canadian examples, are virtually applicable to any municipality. The site has also refrained from excessive commentary and, where necessary, provides common interpretations or explanations of the model diagrams and provisions.

Zoningtrilogy.com deals primarily with traditional zoning and does not delve significantly into performance-based zoning or alternative resource-conserving development techniques. Although the site offers an impressive array of model definitions and regulations which can be copied directly into local by-laws, some users might find the lack of model subdivision standard examples and minimal case study references on the application of zoning codes below their expectations.

What makes the site unique is the opportunity for users to fill in the gaps in content and share ideas or experiences. In the realm of professional planning, the opportunity to interact and exchange information with fellow planners is often left to either a boardroom or a plenary session.

Zoningtrilogy.com has recognized the ability of the internet to act as an alternative means of communication by providing a discussion forum where questions, responses, comments and ideas can be posted. Users

may also directly submit model materials and reference sources.

Creating a dynamic and informative website is a challenge on its own. Developing a website that is visually interactive, while at the same time providing users with an opportunity to share and discuss policy and regulation, takes interactive learning one step further. Zoningtrilogy.com recognizes the fact that municipalities never stand still, and neither should zoning. Take a test spin of the site today and sign up for the two-week free subscription.

*Brent Gilmour is a candidate for a masters in planning degree from the University of Toronto. For the past year he has been working with the Canadian Urban Institute and the Toronto Atmospheric Fund. Visit Bob Lehman's website at [www.zoningtrilogy.com](http://www.zoningtrilogy.com).*

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## Suburbia Is No Place to Grow Old

By Gordon Harris

For a growing number of older Canadians, life in the suburbs is less enjoyable than it used to be. Suburbs are not desirable places to grow old, especially if growing old brings any loss of mobility or other infirmities. Suburbs are fine as long as residents have their health and a car to provide mobility. Absent these necessities, the suburbs become a hostile and unsupportive living environment.

In many cases, older suburban residents will continue to drive simply because there is no other option. A recent article in *The Province* newspaper about elderly drivers noted that as a society we need to consider the public health and safety issues associated with an aging population. The article cites a Transport Canada study of 65-plus drivers and accident rates from 1988-98, which finds that the proportion of fatal collisions involving elderly drivers jumped by 50 percent to 15.5 percent in 1998, up from 10.5 percent in 1988. Injuries increased to 11.5 percent from 8.1 percent in the same period.<sup>1</sup> As people age, their physical and neurological capacity can diminish. Recognizing this, we need to design suburbs where people can live without a car.

Another recent article, this one in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, notes that in the Atlanta region alone there are nearly 100,000 older residents who face isolation and diminished access because they can no longer drive. The story in Canada is not much different. Our aging population and our highly suburbanized cities create a number of challenges for anyone who has trouble getting around on their own. As planners, we need to make sure that our cities work for everyone at all stages of life.

Over the next 25 years, the number of Canadians aged 65 and older will double from 4.1 million today to 8.7 million. As a proportion of the total population, this group's share will grow from 12.8 percent to 22 percent.<sup>2</sup> According to Statistics Canada, 17 of the 25 fastest-growing municipalities in Canada are those that surround the core of census metropolitan areas. If this trend towards suburbanization continues, it is reasonable to expect that a large proportion of the growing 65 plus population will find themselves in the suburbs.

In large city neighbourhoods, shops and services are within walking distance. There is bus and taxi service for those times when see-



Photo: M. Minnett

Life in the suburbs needs a car

ing a doctor or visiting friends requires a trip outside the neighbourhood. The situation is virtually the same in small towns. Where things are different is when we enter the landscape that is neither city nor town. For decades, we designed our suburbs with the clear intention of segregating land use and human activities. In hindsight we are finding that these environments, which made so much sense 20 or 30 years ago, are very difficult to move around in. In many cases, there is no store within walking distance and sometimes no bus service to the nearest shopping area. As a consequence, as residents age and become less mobile, they are being starved of social interaction and are losing their sense of belonging to the community. They also experience a loss of independence, relying on family and friends for assistance with simple daily trips to the store or bank.

Many "new urbanism" and "smart growth" principles that focus on more intense forms of development and more walkable communities can begin to address the challenges of the less mobile. The following principles are fundamental in creating an accessible neighbourhood that allows older citizens to age-in-place while leading an independent, social, and more meaningful lives:

- Promote compact and walkable neighbourhoods—higher density housing at or near

the neighbourhood nodes and in close proximity to public transit and other amenities reinforces a sense of community and makes it easier for older residents to get around and maintain their independence. A 1998 article in *Plan Canada* refers to the province of Noord Holland's definition of a senior-friendly zone as: "areas with appropriate and affordable dwellings, situated within 500 meters . . . from the main services for the elderly... shops, public transport, medical facilities, post office and recreation facilities."<sup>4</sup>

- Encourage mixed-use zones—housing integrated with commercial and community uses reduces the distance between these uses and thus eliminates reliance on a vehicle.
- Provide a range of housing options—this provides choice for those who can no longer maintain or maneuver easily in a two-storey, single-family dwelling. Alternative housing options such as townhouses, condominiums, secondary suites and granny flats can address the need for a smaller and more accessible residence. Specialized congregate or assisted living seniors facilities are important to ensure seniors can remain in their communities.
- Concentrate new growth into existing areas—growth concentration creates a critical population mass to support public

transit, retail shops, and community services.

- Link new development to public transit and other transportation options—this ensures that transportation options other than the automobile are available day one in a new community and can be relied upon if someone loses their mobility.

Municipalities must be sensitive to the needs of the aging population and ensure that municipal policies are in place to create accessible communities with reduced automobile-dependency. Beyond land use planning and housing options, attention to transportation and urban design is required to address the needs of the less mobile such as paratransit services, low-floor transit vehicles, adequate ramping space at curb cuts for electric scooters and wheelchairs, and wider sidewalks. Provincial governments also need to be innovative with when it comes to regulating driver licences. An article in the Ontario Planning Journal suggests that graduated licensing (the mirror image of the process used for beginning drivers) will be needed to allow seniors to continue to do local shopping trips without having to meet the tougher test of highway driving or nighttime driving.

With a significant wave of aging Canadians about to break on our suburban landscape over the next quarter century, planners face some big challenges if our suburbs are to become desirable places to grow old. Losing mobility is hard enough without the added burden of losing one's place in the community.

- 1 The Province, 2 Drivers, 101, Still On Road: British Columbia, Thursday, April 15, 2004, p.A1,6-7
- 2 2001 Statistics Canada Census base, 2004 to 2029 Projections from Urban Futures Inc.
- 3 SmartGrowthBC, 2001
- 4 Mish, Janet and Rice, Bruce, Senior Partners. Regina's Work in Progress: Planning for a senior-friendly city: Plan Canada Vol.38, No.4 July 1998, p.30
- 5 Implications of Driving Restrictions in Older Age, Dr. Ian Ferguson, MD, FRCPC, Ontario Planning Journal, Vol. 16 No.2.

*Gordon Harris, MCIP, is the principal of Harris Consulting Inc., a Vancouver-based firm specializing in strategic planning and development studies for public and private sector clients in Canada and internationally. Gordon is a regular contributor to the Ontario Planning Journal.*

*He can be reached at [gordon@harrisconsults.com](mailto:gordon@harrisconsults.com).*

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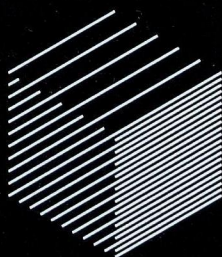
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## Membership Services Continue to be Enhanced

By Paul Chronis

The Professional Practice and Development Committee continues to focus on three significant initiatives:

**Standard of Practice (SOP)**

During 2003, two additional SOPs were prepared and adopted by Council: "Disclosure and the Public Interest," and "Trespass."

These two SOPs complement "Independent Professional Judgement" and will soon be followed by an SOP on "Conflict of Interest."

The SOPs have been incorporated as a schedule to the OPPI General By-law.

The SOPs are an important resource document to all members because they amplify and provide an interpretative guideline to OPPI's "Professional Code of Conduct." The SOPs are available for downloading at [www.ontarioplanners.on.ca](http://www.ontarioplanners.on.ca). Just click on Members Area, Planning Tools.

The SOPs have been developed, in part, to:

- a) provide higher professional standards and a better understanding of the OPPI Code;
- b) enhance professional competency through awareness;
- c) provide a "first line" of consultation on issues arising in professional activities; and,
- d) recognize OPPI's strong support and commitment to its member and the public involving the identification and protection of the public interest through the application of principles of good land use planning.

This year, District Representatives on the Professional Practice and Development Committee will be encouraged to hold education/information sessions on the SOPs in combination with other scheduled District events. Recently, the Ontario Municipal Board was provided with a presentation of the SOPs.

**Continuous Professional Learning (CPL)**

This program received National approval during the Canadian Institute of Planners' conference in Halifax. Affiliates are now reviewing the national directives.

The Institute has retained an external consultant to review the national directive with a view of

providing Council assistance in determining the most effective manner to deliver CPL for its members. Preliminary membership pre-consultation has begun, aimed at defining issues important to the general membership. In order for our members to develop informed opinions, the Institute will engage in widespread consultation on any implementation proposals that might emanate from this review. Once adequate information is exchanged and views are shared, the membership will be asked to vote in adopting a policy of mandatory CPL.

Additional information on this initiative will be disseminated in due course. I also invite members to attend a special session on this topic during the CIP/OPPI's 2004 Joint Conference (Moving Minds: Our Urban Challenge) entitled "A Learning Professional—How to Make it Happen." The session is scheduled for Wednesday, July 14, 2004.

**Mentoring Program**

Last September, OPPI Council resolved to transfer the administration and delivery of the Mentor Program through OPPI Districts at the local level. The idea is to ensure a timely connection for matching mentors with protégés, ensuring a less cumbersome process with a more direct "hands-on" involvement of the local Districts. Local Districts have a better understanding of the capabilities and time commitments of the potential mentors, and the specific needs of the protégés.

Once again, I would like to recognize the con-

(Cont. on page 14)



Paul Chronis



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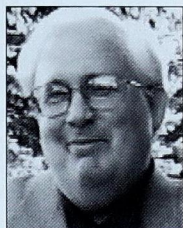
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# Membership Services Committee

Ron Keeble

A number of new initiatives are underway in the Membership Services area. In our ongoing efforts to improve the membership process for our now 1000 plus Provisional members, we have successfully launched the "Log-on-Line" system that allows our members to submit their "Records of Relevant Planning Experience" electronically. Provisional Members in particular are encouraged to visit the Members Only area of the OPPI web site and review this new service. While you are there, review your personal membership file and check your status in terms of your period of relevant planning experience already successfully logged, exam eligibility, and exam results.



Ron Keeble

We are also putting in place the necessary supports that will allow individuals who were Provisional Members at the time of the Institute By-law changes in 2002, to complete all of the requirements for Full Membership and Registration in Ontario by the required date of 2010. The Membership Course has been revised and will be launched in its in-class format later this month. The web-based version of the course will be launched in 2005. Be advised that as of 2005, any Provisional Member wishing to enroll in the Membership Course must have at least 50 percent of their minimum period of relevant planning experience submitted and validated in order to register.

Provisional Members will soon be receiving an individualized electronic report on their current status in terms of logging their planning experience. Those who are behind in their logging will be reminded of their obligation to submit their logs on an on-going basis and will be encouraged to do so. All

Provisional Members will also receive notice of a new "E-Bulletin" available on the OPPI web site that addresses the need for all to be actively logging their planning experience.

The "Exam A Preparation Workshop" will soon be available on-line from the OPPI web site. Watch for the announcement of the formal launch date.

To conclude, I would also ask all of our Full Members to consider becoming actively involved in the membership process by serving as a mentor or sponsor for a Provisional Member. We also need a number of Full Members to volunteer to serve as Examiners for the Institute's oral Exam A. For those interested, we will be holding an Examiner Training Session in July in conjunction with the CIP/OPPI Conference in Toronto. Please contact Denis Duquet at the OPPI office to register.

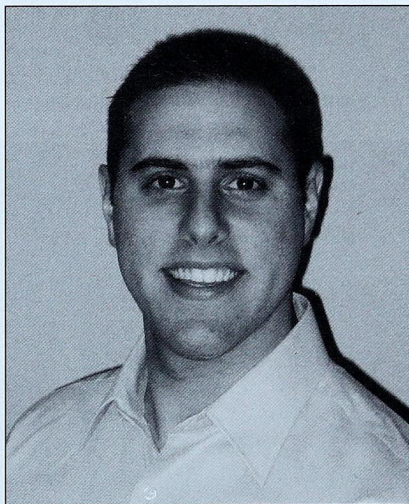
*Ron Keeble, MCIP RPP, is Registrar and Director, Membership Services as well as a professor at Ryerson University.*

# Meet Your New Student Delegate

As the newly elected Student Delegate to OPPI Council, I am honoured and excited to begin the challenging task of listening to and representing the interests of planning students across Ontario. I would like to thank Greg Atkinson for the great job he has done and I look forward to building on his work. As a way of introducing myself to students and the planning community at large, I present to you some background about myself and thoughts about the planning profession, as well as what I hope to accomplish in my new position.

Currently, I am working toward a Planning degree through the Master of Environmental Studies Program at York University. I hold a Bachelor of Arts from Trent University and a Master of Arts in Sociology from Queen's University where I studied the relationship between technology, the organization of space, and the pace of life. After gaining valuable exposure by travelling to cities across Canada, the United States, and Europe, I decided planning was the best way to link knowledge and action by contributing to the design and development of healthy communities.

Planning is an exciting and diverse profession that continually offers new challenges given the changing and complex nature of



Joran Weiner

the social, natural, and built environments. Planners analyze and interpret information, and must be able to communicate ideas in a manner that is clear and comprehensible by audiences with varying degrees of technical understanding. Planners negotiate between different interest groups and mediate between conflicting parties. Planners require knowledge of the institu-

tional and legal frameworks within which planning takes place, and as professionals, planners need to responsibly uphold a Code of Conduct. The opportunity to use these skills and knowledge on a day-to-day basis makes planning an attractive career choice.

As your new Student Delegate, I feel that promoting active student participation within OPPI is an important way to uphold the values, ethics, and conduct of the profession while strengthening the community of future planners. Encouraging communication between the many planning students across Ontario is an excellent way to begin the relationships that are vital for career success and facilitate dialogue among planners who come from a variety of backgrounds. I strongly encourage students to submit their work for publication in the Ontario Planning Journal because it is an excellent way to get your ideas exposed. I thank all planning students for granting me the opportunity to represent their interests and I look forward to working with planning students and planners across Ontario. Have a great summer and I hope to meet many of you at the conference in July.

*Student Delegate Joran Weiner can be reached at [jweiner@yorku.ca](mailto:jweiner@yorku.ca).*

# Ryerson University Launches Two New Planning Programs

By Ron Keeble

Starting in September of this year, Ryerson University will offer two new Planning Programs. Both are to be delivered by the School of Urban and Regional Planning in conjunction with the long established four-year degree program. In 2003, the University approved the Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning degree designation (B.U.R.P.I.) for a new two-year (22 course credit) offering for candidates already holding a completed Bachelors degree.

Also approved for the Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning degree designation is a new five term (25 course credit) offering for graduates of the Mohawk and Fanshawe College Urban

and Regional Planning Technology programs. Developed in close consultation with the two colleges, this new degree completion program at long last provides a direct formal academic route for graduates of these two programs to qualify for membership in the Canadian Institute of Planners.

Information on these new planning programs is available from the Ryerson University web site at [www.ryerson.ca](http://www.ryerson.ca) or by calling the University at 416-979-5036.

*Ron Keeble, MCIP, RPP  
is a professor at Ryerson and  
a member of Council.*

## Membership Services

(Cont. from page 12)

tinued efforts and contribution of my colleagues on this sub-committee for their ongoing support as we collectively marshal towards advancing the profession in pursuit of the OPPI's goals and objectives:

Marcel Ernst (Eastern District);  
Vicky Simon (Central District);  
Maureen Jones (Southwest District);  
Brian Smith (Southwest District);  
Greg Daly (Member-at-Large)  
Carla Guerrera (Member-at-Large)  
Jerry Smith (Deputy Registrar)

The Professional Practice & Development Committee welcomes any thoughts or input for the membership-at-large on the above goals or any other related matters. Please direct your input or inquiries to me by email: [pchronis@weirfoulds.com](mailto:pchronis@weirfoulds.com) or telephone at (416) 947-5069.

*Paul Chronis MCIP, RPP, is Director,  
Professional Practice & Development. He is  
also the longtime contributing editor for the  
OMB column in this magazine.*

## 14 / DISTRICTS & PEOPLE

### Eastern

## Rethinking Brownfield Development

By John Meligrana

The School of Urban and Regional Planning at Queen's University, in partnership with OPPI and the City of Kingston, hosted a one-day workshop entitled "Rethinking Brownfield Development: Linking Strategies, Technology and the Planning Profession." The workshop was attended by over 60 people and featured Dr. Ann McAfee, Co-Director of Planning for the City of Vancouver, as the keynote speaker. The workshop also brought together experts from all levels of government (Treasury Board, Environment Canada, Ontario Ministry of the Environment, local governments, conservation authorities) and academics from a variety of disciplines (Civil Engineering, Environmental Studies, Geology, Law and Planning). Ten main themes emerged from this brownfields workshop:

1. *New Legal & Regulatory Environment:* A number of provinces and US states have

recently passed legislation and/or regulations to address the development of brownfields. This suggests that there is an opportunity to compare notes and learn

from the legislative experiments in other jurisdictions.

2. *Brownfield Opportunities:* Brownfields are a source of opportunity(ies). These sites



Student Volunteers at the OPPI-Queen's Brownfield Workshop, March 25, 2004

have moved from dirty secrets to economic opportunities. This change in perception augurs well for stimulating economic interest in brownfield properties.

3. *Liability/Responsibility*: Who is responsible and who is liable? How this legal question is ultimately addressed will either significantly hinder or assist the remediation of brownfield sites.
4. *National Plan*: We need national planning and a national vision for brownfield development. The leadership role of the federal government and the research undertaken by the National Round Table on the Environment and Economy is critical to any new deal for cities.
5. *Complete Communities*: Brownfields must form part of a strategy to develop complete communities.
6. *Public-Private Partnerships*: Brownfields require new types of public-private partnerships. Partnerships between the private and public sectors as well as universities and research centres can create synergies needed to make brownfield redevelopment a success.
7. *Inclusive Brownfield Definition*: Brownfields are not just an urban problem. For example, the DEW Line facilities in Canada's arctic represents the nation's largest brownfield remediation project.
8. *Science of Brownfield Remediation*: We need to understand the science of remediation, for example, geological condition, the types of contamination, sampling methods, and how this science can be made accessible to the general public.
9. *New Technologies*: Planners need to be aware of the advances in new technologies as well as the pros and cons of various remediation techniques.
10. *Knowledge*: Documentation and analysis of successful brownfield remediation strategies are needed to develop confidence that the benefits outweigh the risks of brownfield redevelopment.

These are just some of issues that emerged from over a dozen research papers given by the speakers at this workshop. The papers are available on CD-ROM, please contact me if you are interested in a copy, [jmeligra@post.queensu.ca](mailto:jmeligra@post.queensu.ca).

*John Meligrana, MCIP, RPP, is a member of OPPI Council and a professor of Urban and Regional Planning, Queen's University.*

OPPI supports the Canadian Brownfields Network ([www.canadianbrownfields.ca](http://www.canadianbrownfields.ca)) and is a member of the Canadian Urban Institute Brownie Awards Committee. The fifth annual brownfields conference will take place in Toronto on October 21-2 (see billboard for details).

#### Central

## Waterfront Blues: Waterfront Corporation Still Needs Basic Powers

*By Loretta Ryan, Amrita Daniere, and Jill Rooksby*

In late April the University of Toronto's Planning Alumni Committee held its annual 'Friends of Planning Spring Social 2004.' Approximately 200 planners from the public, private and not-for-profit sectors gathered at Hart House to network and listen to John Campbell, President and CEO of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation, speak about the corporation's plan to spark a renaissance along the waterfront. He noted that he is responsible for an area 20 times that of Canary Wharf or Battery Park City, two famous sites known for their vibrancy. Campbell cautioned that integrating waterfront development remains one of his biggest challenges. Amenities that help build community cannot be added as an afterthought, he noted. Campbell also complained that although Bill 151 described the powers needed to get the waterfront redeveloped, his corporation still lacks these basic tools, the most important of which is the power to raise capital. The Planning Alumni Committee also announced a scholarship partnership that includes matching commitments from the University and the province. The successful recipient will get about \$5,000 a year.

The event organizers would like to thank the dozen or more sponsors, including "platinum" sponsors Fraser Milner Casgrain, Hemson Consulting and Cassels Brock & Brockwell LLP. OPPI and the U of T's Faculty of Arts & Science were in-kind sponsors and provided promotional support.

*Loretta Ryan, MCIP, RPP, Professor Amrita Daniere, MCIP, RPP, and Jill Rooksby.*

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## Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Session

About 30 planners, transit service planners, engineering technologists and students attended Lakeland's Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) session in late March at the York Region Administrative Centre.

Constable Thomas McKay of Peel Regional Police Crime Prevention Services and Wayne Nishihama, Manager of Design with the City of Mississauga lead an informative and entertaining multi-media presentation on the principles of CPTED. Through the use of case studies, the presenters challenged us to look at residential, commercial, industrial and institutional developments in a new, critical manner. The application of the CPTED principles of natural surveillance, natural access control, territorial reinforcement, and maintenance were presented and discussed with the underlying theme of common sense. The attendees and presenters were pleased with the opportunity to be able to get together to share ideas. Thanks to Tom and Wayne and to James Stiver of the Region's Planning Department for organizing a terrific session. James is also a member of the Lakeland Planners Program Committee, which is organizing more exciting events for members. Stay tuned to the Journal and OPPI's website for details ([www.ontarioplanners.on.ca/content/oppi/eventsnm.asp?section=events](http://www.ontarioplanners.on.ca/content/oppi/eventsnm.asp?section=events)).

### Northern

## CIP Planners in China

*Beate Bowron and Carlos Salazar*

Tired but excited, nine Canadian planners returned recently from their second visit to two Chinese communities, Jiashan County (near Shanghai) and Dongguan City (close to Guangzhou and Hong Kong).

The CIP team included representatives from across Canada (three from Ontario) with wide-ranging experience in urban and rural planning and was led by CIP's Past-President, Dave Palubeski.

In line with CIP's Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Land and Resources of the People's Republic of China, the CIP team commented on the planning approaches in the two communities and guid-



Carlos Salazar (top right), Nathalie Prudhomme, David Pawbeski, Beate Bowron and Chinese hosts at the Great Wall

ed their Chinese colleagues through a workshop process to help them identify their issues, objectives and the actions necessary to reach their objectives.

This was the first of several missions anticipated by the Chinese Ministry of Land and Resources. The Ministry has also committed itself to a new professional training model akin to Canada, including the creation of a professional planning association.

Come to hear the Vice-Minister speak at the July CIP Conference in Toronto. The CIP team will also discuss their experiences during one of the regular conference sessions.

*Beate Bowron, MCIP, RPP, and Carlos Salazar, MCIP, RPP, were members of CIP's first planning mission to China.*

### Southwest

## SWOD April Dinner Meeting Meets OMB Face to Face

*By Amanda Kutler*

Approximately 70 people attended Southwest District's April Dinner Meeting held at Saffron's Restaurant in London. Members enjoyed a delicious meal prepared and served by students of Fanshawe College's Hospitality program and caught up on the latest Tips, Trends and Themes happening at the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) with Member Jennifer Smout. Ms. Smout, a former Solicitor for the City of

London and current member of the OMB, provided an update on themes, roles, and responsibilities of the planner at the Board.

Noticeable trends include the greater complexity of OMB cases, increasing desire of the public to become involved in hearings and the use of mediation to scope issues or eliminate the need for a hearing altogether. All OMB members are trained in mediation and offer this service if all parties are interested in participating. It was also of interest to hear that nearly 50 percent of OMB cases relate to minor variances and consents. Ms. Smout also reminded the group how important it is to be prepared for the hearing and stressed the importance of professional conduct. For more information on the OMB and access to current decisions check their website at [www.omb.gov.on.ca](http://www.omb.gov.on.ca).

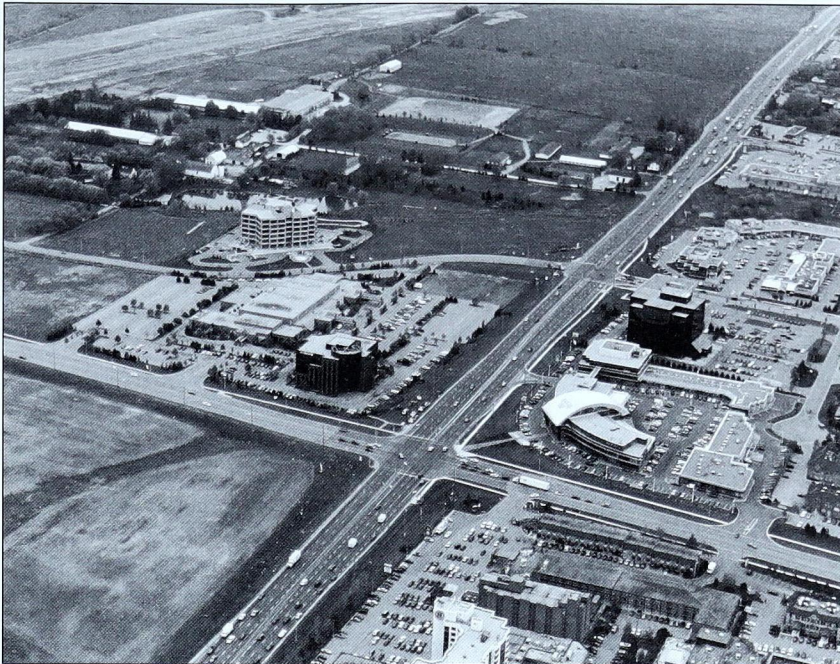
Thanks to everyone who participated. Southwest District is busy planning upcoming meetings including meetings in Sarnia and Owen Sound. Remember to check the OPPI website at [www.ontarioplanners.on.ca](http://www.ontarioplanners.on.ca) and your mailings for updates on SWOD activities.

## Bring On the New Members

If your name and address appear on the back cover of this magazine then you don't need to be reminded of the benefits of becoming a member of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI). OPPI is the only organization that brings together all of Ontario's professional planners and represents more than



Photo: M. Mamett



OMB hearings characterized by increasing complexity

2,400 practicing planners across the Province. However, there are still planners practicing in Ontario that are not members. As a member, you are encouraged to pass on the benefits of membership to your colleagues, employers and/or employees.

What are the Benefits of Membership?

- Access to Professional Development training opportunities
- Networking Opportunities: District Events, Seasonal Socials, Conferences
- Invitation to Annual Conferences
- Subscription to the Ontario Planning Journal
- Automatic Membership in the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP)

- Automatic Professional Liability Insurance
- Credibility of being a member of an organization which promotes, maintains, and regulates high standards of practice and ethics.

Southwest District is undertaking a drive to encourage membership. If you would like to participate in this initiative or have ideas that would encourage membership please contact Amanda Kutler at 519-575-4818 or by email at [kuamanda@region.waterloo.on.ca](mailto:kuamanda@region.waterloo.on.ca).

*Amanda Kutler, BES, MCIP, RPP, is a Principal Planner with the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and Vice-Chair of Southwest District.*

## People

### OMB Loses Krushelnicki, Burlington Gains

**B**ruce Krushelnicki, an OMB member for many years, has been appointed as the new Director of Planning and Development for Burlington starting in June. Known for his lucid, well-written decisions, Bruce's acumen is a loss to the Board, commented one of the hundreds of planners to give evidence before him—but Burlington's gain.

**Ruth Cousey**, who had been the Director of Planning for the Town of East Gwillimbury for nine years has left the Town to become the new Director of Planning and Development for the City of Orillia. Ruth has been a very active member of OPPI, having most recently been the co-chair of the joint OPPI OLA conference held in 2003 in Huntsville. Ruth replaces **Terry Edwards** who has moved to Peterborough.

**Gerry Thompson**, CAO of the Region of Waterloo, will be retiring in June, after making an immense contribution to the region (see Vol 18, No 6—the story of the region's growth management initiative). Like Paul Bedford, Gerry would "rather be boating," and plans to put in lots of time on the water in the coming months.

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

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Editorial

## Expectations Are Rising for the Urban Agenda

By Glenn Miller

For planners in Ontario, even those who sleep without a copy of the Planning Act under their pillow, the month of June promises to be rich with ideas.

The government's platform for planning reform is proceeding apace and June will see the long-awaited release of a draft revised Provincial Policy Statement as well as discussion papers on the new legislation and the OMB. The consultation bandwagons will be crisscrossing the province on Greenbelt, Reform, Smart Growth. To its credit, the McGuinty government continues to earn the respect of players on all sides of the planning and development debates for taking credible positions and maintaining a welcome tone of civility. Recent announcements concerning heritage protection were a welcome surprise, for example.

It is also likely that by June we will be thinking seriously about a federal election. What a great time to be a planner! The good news is that we currently have an MP—the Hon. John Godfrey—who is articulate, genuinely committed to advancing the urban agenda but running for re-election. The bad news is that the political winds have blown through the Cities Secretariat and left it clogged with the dust of shredded position papers. From cities to “communities” in less time

than it takes to introduce the 10 o'clock news. Or as John Godfrey ironically proclaims: “when it comes to the urban agenda, there is no hamlet too small.”

But city watchers in Ontario are mostly pleased with the budget handed down in mid-May. The references to cities, and an acknowledgement that growth management should be part of the budget rhetoric is progress. The precedent taken with the allocation of gasoline tax is also a promising move, although the squabbling between “cities” and “communities” will now start in earnest. Particularly difficult will be the quarrels over how to allocate monies in the GTA. What should be the method? On the basis of population or ridership?

But rhetoric doesn't fare well in a vacuum. We need and welcome debate. This means that planners (public, private, academics, everyone) have to speak up. The upcoming conference is a good place to do that. Over to you.

*Glenn R. Miller, MCIP, RPP, is editor of the Ontario Planning Journal and Vice President, Education & Research, with the Canadian Urban Institute in Toronto. He can be reached at [editor@ontarioplanning.com](mailto:editor@ontarioplanning.com) or at [gmliller@canurb.com](mailto:gmliller@canurb.com).*

Opinion

## Urban Agenda Should Acknowledge Importance of Food Production

By Elbert van Donkersgoed

Canada's debate about a new deal for our cities is focused on infrastructure, on the assumption that the billion-dollar investment in Toronto's subway system is representative of this new arrangement. Not everyone agrees. A number of voices, my own included through my involvement with the Toronto Food Policy Council, have sent a message to Toronto MP John Godfrey, Parliamentary Secretary for Cities and Mike Harcourt, Chair of our federal government's new Advisory Committee for Cities—this message: improved urban life means better food solutions.

Food plays an important role in the economy of Canada. Food choices account for some 20 percent of retail sales and of service jobs, ten percent of industrial jobs, 20 percent of car trips and traffic, 20 percent of chronic diseases, 25 percent of fossil fuel energy and air pollution, 40 percent of garbage, 80 percent of sewage.

Food is about economics: it influences our health and productivity, and our cul-



Photo: M. Minnett

The Holland Marsh supplies southern Ontario with fresh produce

ture. More than with any other of our biological needs, the choices we make around

food affect the shape, style, pulse, smell, look, feel, health, economy, street life

and infrastructure of our cities.

There's an old saying: we are what we eat. It is equally obvious: a city is what it eats.

Food habits determine the character of our cities:

- Whether our main streets are fast-food strips or lined with spots that breathe local flavour and character.
- Whether there's a Little Italy, Little India or Asian Village anchored by restaurants and groceries that nourish entrepreneurs and cultural cooking traditions
- Whether the poor, elderly and physically disabled can access nearby grocers that sell fresh nutritious produce.
- Whether backyards are splashed with the green hues of vines, squash and corn, or sport fence-to-fence grass.
- Whether people treat food scraps as garbage or as valuable compost.
- Whether highways are clogged with refrigerated 18-wheelers transferring produce across the continent or local farmers bringing in the day's harvest on pick-up trucks.
- Whether our health systems are forced to deal with expensive diet related crises

such as heart disease, diabetes, obesity, or cancer.

- Whether low incomes families have a place at our bountiful table.
- Whether the money spent on food stays in and near the city to create more jobs here, or leaves town overnight to create jobs there.
- Whether shoppers drive to pick up convenience foods from box stores or walk to neighborhood outdoor markets for locally grown fresh and homemade products.

A new urban agenda for Canada cannot only be about public transport and infrastructure. Our cities are what we eat, as well as what we build.

*Elbert van Donkersgoed P. Ag. (Hon.) is the Strategic Policy Advisor of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, Canada. Corner Post has been heard weekly on CFCO Radio, Chatham and CKNX Radio, Wingham, Ontario since 1997. He is also a member of Toronto's Food Policy Council. (Reproduced with permission.)*

## Letters

### Bousfield's Article Strikes Chord

I wish to salute John Bousfield's excellent and objective paper (Vol.19, No.2, 2004) and thank Malone Givens Parsons for their magnificent map of the main urban areas. The "Strong Communities Act (Bill 26)" includes minimum time frames for OMB appeals; the end of private appeals to the OMB regarding boundary changes without local government support; requires that matters "be consistent with" Provincial Policy Statements; and raises the possibility of Ministerial declarations of Provincial Interest, thereby moving such matters to Cabinet rather than the OMB.

I concur with my colleague Bousfield that the minimum time frames are likely of little significance for the bulk of development.

The question of targeting private applications for boundary changes is strange. The Bousfield paper correctly argues that it is an error to label recent GTA growth as "urban sprawl" (which is a meaningless pejorative term, and not a professional definition). By contrast to the 1950s, speculators do not lead such changes; urban areas have sharp edges; land severances are under strict control; and in any case, as he points out, it is ALL

planned lower-density urban development. By cutting out the input of the development industry, in my 50 years of experience, the net result, if no other action is taken, will be shortages of development land, rising costs and rising prices.

I suggest that our planning profession needs to present significant vision and leadership to guide Ontario through the likely consequences of this highly interesting legislation. If we do not, we will simply be regarded as "paper-pushers."

*Norman Pearson is a long-time member of the Institute and a fellow of the Royal Town Planning Institute. This letter is extracted from a longer piece contrasting his experience with the greenbelt and decentralization plans in post-war London and the Toronto Centred Region plans of the 1970s. This article will appear in the July August issue. John Bousfield's article can be found on line in the members section of the OPPI website.*

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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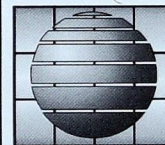
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## Water Taking as a Land Use: Options for Municipalities

Nick McDonald and Joe Nethery

Many planners have long been concerned about Permits to Take Water (PTTWs). Increasing environmental awareness and a better understanding of the impacts of water use have thrust the issue of water taking into the public sphere. Should water taking be considered a land use under the Planning Act?

### The current PTTW process

Section 34 of the Ontario Water Resources Act (OWRA) requires that a Permit to Take Water be issued for any ground or surface water taking in excess of 50,000 litres per day (50,000 litres roughly equals the amount of water that comes out of a garden hose if left on for 24 hours).

In considering an application, the MOE Director in charge of the application is required to consider the protection of the natural ecosystem function and any groundwater or surface water sources that may be affected by another taking as per Regulation 285/99, the Water Taking and Transfer Regulation.

Applications must include accurate information on the location and the proposed quantity of the taking and if applicable, any information about water storage, use of ponds, pumping tests or existing problems.

Applications are submitted to a MOE Regional Office. One of the four main regional offices review the application for completeness and then posts the application on the Environmental Registry under the Province's Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR). No other notice is provided unless any party makes a request to be notified. It should be noted that some municipal water takings, takings for the irrigation of crops and takings of less than

one year in length are not posted on the Environmental Registry.

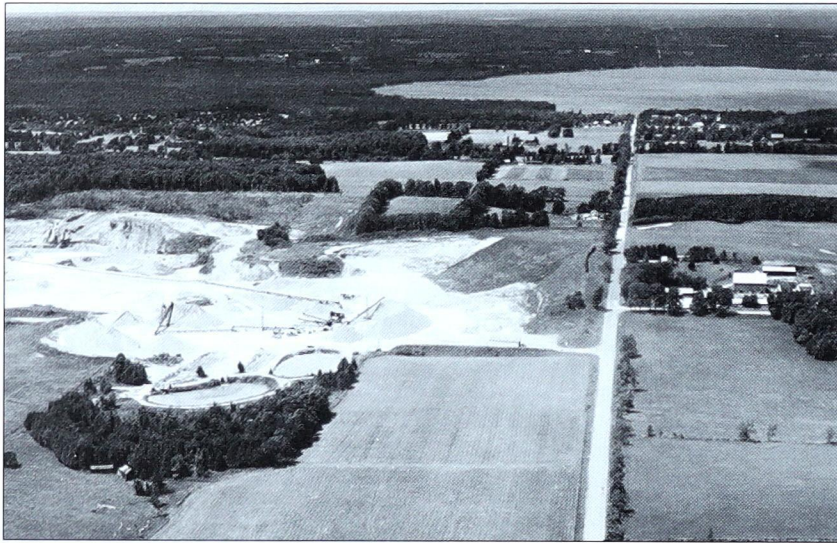
All PTTW proposals are posted on the Environmental Registry for public comments for at least 30 days. After the 30-day period has passed, the MOE posts a Decision Notice, which indicates whether or not a permit has been issued and reasons for the decision. Any resident of Ontario may seek leave to appeal the decision by serving written notice within 15 days of the decision date. The appeal must be served

appealed to the Minister of the Environment. If a decision is not appealed, the water taking is then permitted.

Given the nature of the process followed above, many municipalities have historically not been aware of water takings within their jurisdictions and residents sometimes only find out about a water taking when they see water trucks on their road, because the process does not require direct notification to potentially affected parties. This was the case in Oro-Medonte,

where a water bottling operation obtained a PTTW in 1994 on the Oro Moraine, which is considered to be a significant recharge area. In this case, the applicant (Gold Mountain Springs) eventually submitted applications for official plan and zoning by-law amendments to permit the processing and storage of water on the site. These applications were refused by the Township and by the OMB, which indicated in its decision that:

"When considering applications under the Planning Act ... this Board has a positive obligation to examine the environmental and ecological impact of the proposed land use and its associated water taking. Section 2 of the Planning Act states "...the Municipal Board, in carrying out [its] responsibilities under this Act, shall have regard to, among other matters, matters of Provincial interest such as, (a) the protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features and functions; (b) the protection of the agricultural resources of the Province; (c) ... the supply, efficient use and conservation of ... water." The Provincial Policy Statement



Too many cooks in the kitchen: water issues coming to the boil?

upon the Environmental Commissioner, the MOE and the proponent, and is heard by the Environmental Review Tribunal (ERT). The leave for appeal must demonstrate that:

- a) there is a good reason to believe that no reasonable person, having regard to the relevant law and any Government policies developed to guide a decision of that kind, could have made the decision; and
- b) the result of the decision could result in significant harm to the environment.

In recent years, a number of PTTW applications have been appealed and dealt with by the ERT. ERT decisions can also be



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[PPS] provides a further elaboration of the Provincial interest and, at section 2.4.1, states: "The quality and quantity of ground water and surface water and the function of sensitive ground water recharge/discharge areas, aquifers and headwaters will be protected or enhanced."

Notwithstanding the refusal of the applications by the OMB, water continues to be extracted from the well and residents continue to have concerns about the long-term impact of the use. In this case, given the inability of the municipality and the OMB to control the water taking, it may have been better planning to permit the use pursuant to the Planning Act so that the local municipality potentially could have some control over the use and possibly manage the impacts of the use through agreements. This would mean that the lack of jurisdiction over one component of the use would have provided the basis for a Planning Act approval.

The Environmental Commissioner of Ontario (ECO) reviewed the PTTW system as part of testimony at the Walkerton Inquiry and identified many problems with the current system. These included inaccurate or ambiguous water source and quantity information on applications, inconsistent use of measurement systems, regional variations in evaluating applications, insufficient accounting of available water quantities in particular watersheds and a lack of definite assurance that the permit evaluation was completed using an ecosystem approach. Consequently, the ECO stated that the PTTW process could not be relied upon to develop historical water taking trends, determine the exact amounts of water taken and water still available in any given area and determine the impacts of cumulative water takings on an ecosystem.

It has been estimated by the Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA) that if the maximum volumes permitted in every PTTW were pumped in 1999, 1,800 billion litres of water could have been taken from groundwater sources. That figure represents only the volumes of water takings we know about. Takings that pump less than the 50,000 litres per day threshold and those for emergencies, domestic use or livestock watering are not catalogued in any comprehensive way, because they do not require MOE approval.

#### Water Taking as a Land Use

Land use regulation has long played an integral role in attempting to mitigate the impacts of human activity on the environment and our resources, with the protection

of both now becoming a cornerstone of provincial and municipal policy. Currently, the Planning Act permits a municipality to control and regulate uses on the land through official plans and zoning by-laws. Some of these land uses can impact on the quantity of water available to other users or have an impact on the quality of both surface and groundwater. The consideration of these potential impacts is currently an integral part of the planning approval process.

However, dealing with the taking of groundwater has historically not been a municipal responsibility and municipalities have historically lacked the ability to adequately protect water sources from being exhausted or stressed by water users. The taking of groundwater can have a profound impact on nearby land uses, if these land uses rely upon groundwater.

It is on this basis that there is a need for there to be a much more effective relationship between land use controls and groundwater protection to ensure that informed land use decisions are made in the future. In our opinion, the only way to accomplish this objective is for both the use of land and the use of groundwater to be subject to approval processes under the Planning Act.

In November 2002, The Superior Court of Justice, Divisional Court ruled, in the hearing for Grey Association for Better Planning v. Artemesia Waters Ltd., (which was an appeal of an OMB Decision - Order #0454, March 27, 2001) that water taking is a land use under the Planning Act (Court File 504/02, November 21, 2002). The Divisional Court stated that:

... the taking of water as proposed by the present respondents was a use of land within the meaning of the Planning Act and properly the subject matter of the appeal hearing ... the Board was to hold. The entire operation constituted a single use of land and the question before the Board was whether the entire operation, including the taking of water, should be a permitted use. In deciding that the taking of water was not a use of land and in confining the subsequent hearing to issues relating to the storage and loading of water ... it denied those opposed to the appeal the right to adduce evidence and argument relevant to the question of whether the proposed operation should be a permitted use under the official plan and zoning by-law.

The ruling of the Divisional Court was appealed by the applicant, but the appeal was abandoned in October 2003. This means that the ruling of the Divisional

Court now stands. The MOE is currently studying the ruling and has not made a formal statement on its implications.

It is on this basis that we have recommended to some municipalities, including the Township of Oro-Medonte in the County of Simcoe, that water taking be controlled through zoning. The policy basis for this approach is contained within OPA 17, which is currently at the County of Simcoe for approval. The OPA is structured so that a comprehensive zoning by-law amendment is required to add water taking as a land use. Certain water takings would require a rezoning, with such a rezoning granted only if certain criteria are met.

A monitoring agreement may also be required as a condition of a Hold removal, much like municipalities now typically require site plan agreements, subdivision agreements, encroachment agreements or cost sharing agreements as a condition of Hold removal. However, given that the OWRA allows the MOE to issue a PTTW subject to conditions, any agreement between a PTTW proponent and the municipality must be structured so that it complements the conditions set out by the MOE. The nature of the agreement itself and its relationship with the OWRA will have to be carefully considered to ensure that it is enforceable.

OPA 17 states that, in considering an application for re-zoning to permit a water taking use, Council shall be satisfied that:

- a) The quality of groundwater and surface water in the area will be maintained and, where possible, improved or restored; and
- b) The quantity of water available for other uses in the area and as base flow for rivers and streams in the sub-watershed will not be affected.

We are not arguing that the PTTW process pursuant to the OWRA be abandoned. Instead, we suggest that a parallel process pursuant to the Planning Act be established to work in concert with the OWRA process. Specifically, the use of land for a water taking would not be permitted unless the lands were properly zoned. This is the same process that is currently in effect for aggregate extraction operations, where the MNR has the authority to issue a license to extract pursuant to the Aggregate Resources Act, provided the lands are appropriately zoned pursuant to the Planning Act.



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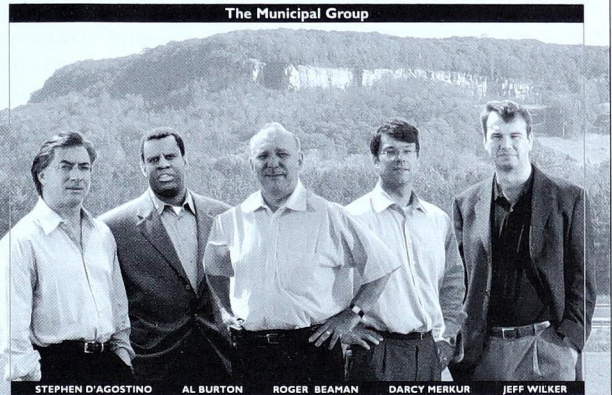
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## What About the recent MOE White Paper?

In February 2004, the MOE released the White Paper on Watershed-based Source Protection Planning. This document discusses the implementation of Source Protection Plans for each watershed in Ontario. These plans are intended to identify water supplies and create management actions for protecting those sources from potential risks. The document also discusses PTTW system reform that includes early and regular notification to interested parties and increased applicant responsibility to address public concerns.

Many prominent stakeholders in water takings have called for measures similar to those proposed in the White Paper. However, the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario (ECO), the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Canadian Environmental

Law Association (CELA) and Conservation Ontario have lobbied for greater municipal control over water taking, something that is not proposed in the White Paper.

Processes established under the Planning Act have proven to be effective in ensuring that all land use impacts have been considered before decisions are made. There is a mandated public process and a requirement that all planning decisions "have regard" to Provincial policy and conform with policies that have been developed locally. In many cases, local policies are very detailed and provide the basis for the comprehensive and transparent review of applications. The current and proposed PTTW process does provide for this open, comprehensive and locally-driven review.

It is our view that municipalities have a stake in improving and protecting the quality of life of its residents. It is on this basis that

establishing a locally-driven planning process that provides for an effective relationship between land use controls and groundwater protection represents good planning.

*Nick McDonald, MCIP, RPP, is a partner at Meridian Planning Consultants Inc. and has worked on groundwater policies with municipal clients for a number of years. Meridian currently provides advice to over 60 municipalities in Ontario. Joe Nethery was a Student Planner for eight months at Meridian. He is a third-year undergraduate student at the University of Waterloo.*

*Steve Rowe, MCIP, RPP, is the principal of Steven Rowe, Environmental Planner. He is also contributing editor for the Ontario Planning Journal on Environment.*

## Communications

# Do you mean what you say? Do you know what you mean?

By *Philippa Campsie*

**B**e honest, now. How many of you have a dictionary in your office? One you can actually find? And—this is the important part—how often do you consult it?

Many people seem to feel that dictionaries are for schoolchildren. Real Planners Don't Use Dictionaries, right? It's a mark of weakness or desperation, like consulting Microsoft Word for Dummies when your computer locks up.

Pity. A dictionary is full of all sorts of useful and surprising information. A good dictionary can be used to settle arguments, or even bets, and I know of at least one pub, much frequented by writers, where the owner keeps a Concise Oxford behind the bar precisely for that purpose.

A well-thumbed dictionary is the mark of a careful writer, the sort of person who cares about the distinctions between, say, flout and flaunt, or disinterested and uninterested, or precipitous and precipitate, or cement and concrete.

But it's not easy being a careful writer these days. As Bob Blackburn noted in a despairing treatise on language abuse, *Words Fail Us*: "The awful dilemma confronting the careful writer today is the choice between selecting his [or her] words according to what they mean or selecting them according to what the audience might think they mean."

So, for example, what to do with the word

fulsome? Check the dictionary. It means "excessive or insincere, esp. in a distasteful way." Yet most people think it means simply "full" or "abundant." A careful writer may use the word properly, but many readers won't know what it means, and a snide put-down will be completely overlooked.

And what about enormity? My dictionary defines it as "extreme wickedness." But many people assume it means "hugeness" as

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**"In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold, Alike fantastic if too new or old: Be not the first by whom the new are tried, Nor yet the last to lay the old aside."—Alexander Pope (1688-1744)**

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in, "I realized the enormity of the task that faced me." So careful writers search for another term to denote an appallingly bad deed.

The same can be said of many words that sound as if they ought to mean one thing but, through some quirk of etymology, mean something quite different. Noisome sounds as if it ought to have something to do with noise, but it really relates to the offensiveness of certain smells. Fortuitous which simply means "by chance" is often confused with fortunate. Nauseous (causing nausea) is

conflated with nauseated (experiencing nausea). Do people who complain of being "nauseous" know that they are claiming to be sick-making?

Some dictionaries have given up the struggle, and list the wrong meanings as "informal" or "non-standard." This is bad news for those who count on winning bets in bars to pay for the next round. Just when you thought you had your opponent on the ropes, insisting that cohort means a group, not an individual, up pops someone waving some reference work that says it's okay to use it to mean a companion or colleague.

The pessimists among us foresee a day in which we have only a handful of vague, all-purpose words left with which to express our thoughts ("He's like, duh, hello? And I'm like, whatever"). The optimists note that many thousands of new words are created each year and believe that our tools of communication are expanding (at least for those who want to talk about blogs, vapourware and applets).

And the careful writers? We steer a middle course, repeating to ourselves the words of Alexander Pope (1688-1744): "In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold, Alike fantastic if too new or old: Be not the first by whom the new are tried, Nor yet the last to lay the old aside."

*Philippa Campsie introduces some of the techniques of careful writing in her plain language workshops and newsletters and is deputy editor of the Ontario Planning Journal. She can be reached at [pcampsie@istar.ca](mailto:pcampsie@istar.ca).*



## Legislative Initiatives Stuck in Consultative Mode

By Jason Ferrigan

After a promising start, activity at the Legislative Assembly seems to have virtually ground to a halt. Nine new Bills were brought forward in the first three months of the year. The only Government Bill advanced during this time was the MPP Salary Freeze Act (2004). We hope to see legislative activity resume for key planning initiatives later in the spring session. In the meantime, the Government appears to be devoting its attention to consultation on existing and new emerging legislative initiatives.

implementation of a future greenbelt and develop a clear and transparent process for dealing with lands affected by the existing and proposed moratoriums. Consultations are expected over the spring, summer and fall, resulting in a final greenbelt policy in place by the end of this year.

### New Emerging Initiatives

Also last February, the Government released a white paper on watershed-based source protection planning, which is seen as the first step in implementing key water

source protection recommendations flowing from the Walkerton Inquiry. The paper proposes a legislative framework for the development and approval of water source protection plans and examines ways of enhancing the province's existing water taking management system. Last December, the Government imposed a one-year moratorium on new water taking permits, pending a review of provincial groundwater supplies.

According to the paper, water source protection plans would be created for watersheds in Ontario and, where conditions warrant, two or more watersheds. The overall goal would be to protect public health by conserving and protecting current and future sources of drinking water. These plans, which would be based on a detailed assessment of existing conditions

and contain a management strategy, would be developed by multi-stakeholder Source Protection Planning Committees. Source Protection Planning Committees would be established by the boards of existing conservation authorities or, in watersheds without a conservation authority, Source Protection Planning Boards (a new entity created by the province). The Conservation

Authority/Source Protection Planning Committee Board would play a coordination role and endorse the completed protection plan. Final approval authority for the protection plans would rest with the Ministry of the Environment. Limited rights of appeal would be available to challenge the Ministry's decision.

The white paper is positive in that it continues to emphasize the importance of addressing complex issues, including land use planning, at the broader watershed system level. However, the proposals contained in the paper also give rise to a number of questions relating to organizational capacity and administrative overlap. It is also unclear as to how the protection plans would relate to existing municipal planning systems, policy and regulations. The legislation and regulations to implement this initiative will be developed once the work of a recently established multi-stakeholder implementation committee provides its recommendations to the Government. The Government has stated that it wishes to enact this legislation before its moratorium on water taking permits is lifted in December this year. Perhaps this will be one of the initiatives that we see brought forward in the coming months.

Stay tuned for further updates.

*Jason Ferrigan, MCIP, RPP, is a planner with Urban Strategies Inc. in Toronto. Melanie Hare, MCIP, RPP, and John Ghent, MCIP, RPP, also contribute to these articles on behalf of OPPI. If you are aware of legislative initiatives that readers should know about, contact Jason at [jferrigan@urbanstrategies.com](mailto:jferrigan@urbanstrategies.com).*



Photo: M. Marmont

Watershed plans could be a requirement

### Existing Initiatives

Last February, the Minister of Municipal Affairs struck a Task Force consisting of stakeholders from across the GTA and chaired by Burlington Mayor Rob Maclsaac to head up the consultations on the creation of a greenbelt for the Golden Horseshoe. The Task Force has been asked to provide recommendations on the scope, content and

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## Caveat Emptor: On the language of transportation

By David Kriger

What do transportation planners do in their spare time (what spare time)? Some of us are learning Latin: *Volo gubernare!* (I want to drive!) Actually, I've been taking a few (humble pie) language lessons in talking transportation planning with the public. Case in point: as part of a major goods movement study last year, I spoke with a manager of a large trucking firm. His company specializes in transporting parts for a large multi-international industry, and must manage several

hundred truck movements in and out of the firm's main plants every week day. Towards the end of our conversation, the manager explained to me how he felt planners could do a better job of removing drivers from the roads. He spoke of the need for more transit in the suburbs and, also, for designing our cities so that people didn't have to travel so far to get to their jobs. I eventually realized that he was advocating high-density, mixed-used, transit-friendly suburban development nodes . . . but he

expressed his point in straightforward, plain English and in terms that anyone could understand. More to the point, he was talking from the perspective of how transportation planning could help his business operations—in other words, his interest in an official plan is not that of a landowner but of a private sector business operator, and he is willing to support transit and tenets of land use planning to achieve his business aims.

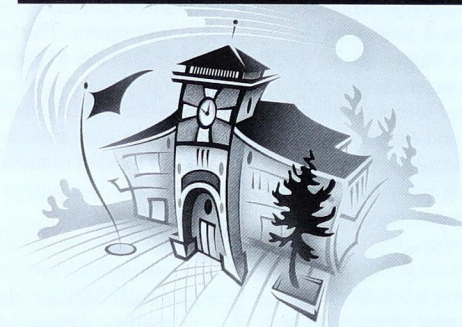
His is the perspective that would add a lot of weight to planning decisions. So why don't we hear more from these people when we prepare OPs, corridor plans and so on? Should we be expressing more clearly the impact on economic prosperity of our plans? I think we do speak to the range of impacts—economic development, quality-of-life, health—but only superficially: What does a plan actually mean in terms of job creation? How many incidents of asthma will be avoided if we implement an air quality plan? If we want people to be engaged, what are we saying (or not saying) to them in our plans and policies; and we are expressing ourselves in meaningful terms? (I've had similar experiences with plans that were driven largely by consultation: everyone says that traffic congestion is a problem, but people really start to take ownership of the problem only when its impacts are expressed in individual terms; not as total modal shares or annual percentage increases in traffic volume.)

*The moral:* If you can't express your plans in terms that engage people, then you may be reduced to *Latine blaterare incipias* (babbling in Latin).

*David Kriger, P.Eng., MCIP, RPP, is the Ontario Planning Journal's Contributing Editor for Transportation, a member of the OPPI Policy Development Committee, and Chair of its Transportation Working Group. When he is not practicing his syntax in dead languages, David is Vice President of iTRANS Consulting Inc.*

*Submissions for the Transportation Column are always welcomed. Reach David at [dkriger@itransconsulting.com](mailto:dkriger@itransconsulting.com). (See "X-treme Latin" by Henry Beard for other useful Latin planning terms.)*

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## US Economist Dispels Urban Myths, Creates New Ones

Paula Tenuta

From time to time during a lecture, one notices a raised eyebrow or two among the audience—this is usually a sign of skepticism. At a recent lecture sponsored by the Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association, I saw many raised eyebrows—throughout the talk!

In early May, Randal O'Toole, economist and director at the Oregon-based Thoreau Institute, presented his views in a talk entitled, "Smart Growth or Dense Thinking?" His claims that the "war on sprawl" is really a "war on lifestyle choices" are based on his book "The Vanishing Automobile and Other Urban Myths." His entertaining but edgy presentation relied on a series of statistics and "real life" urban examples to challenge current thinking about urban planning, arguing that smart growth will not reduce traffic congestion or air pollution, but will make things worse.

Comments like "urban planning has

more often than not lead to disaster" must have rocked the many planners in the audience. Politicians in the crowd must have pondered statements such as "regional governments are undemocratic and tend to be controlled by special interest groups." Our cars are said to "liberate" us as our morning drive in to work helps us prepare for the day, and our cars are a tool for us to "decompress" on the way home.

His book is replete with bold interpretations of myth and reality:

**Myth:** Smart-growth planning can design communities that allow people to walk to many of their destinations and significantly reduce driving.

**Reality:** The population densities required to significantly reduce driving are staggeringly high.

**Myth:** Smart growth gives people more housing and transportation choices.

**Reality:** Smart growth isn't about giving

people more choice; it's about taking away choices.

**Myth:** Urban sprawl forces Americans to devote half to two-thirds of urban land to roads, streets, parking lots, and other automobile purposes.

**Reality:** Low-density suburbs devote less land to pavement than high-density cities.

**Myth:** Low-density suburbs increase congestion because they force people to drive more.

**Reality:** Suburbanization is the solution to congestion."

O'Toole's claims will likely never find complete acceptance in this part of the world. He nevertheless gave his audience a chance to mull over possible parallels with some recent occurrences in the GTA. In his description of land-use planning in Portland, Oregon, O'Toole explained, "Metro has apparently succeeded at slowing highway expansion, building light-rail lines, shrinking house lot sizes, and building more multi-family dwellings." One would think that these are positive elements related to the successful application of smart growth principles. However, O'Toole continues, "these are only the means to an end, and the end is supposed

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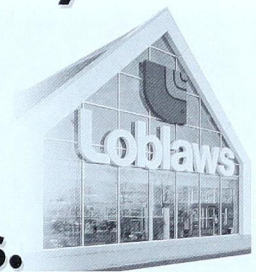
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to be a more livable Portland. By objective standards of livability—including congestion, pollution, the cost of living, and accessible open space—Metro's plan is a spectacular failure."

One reason for this failure is what O'Toole attests is Portland's unsuccessful attempt at land-use planning with the use of an urban growth-boundary. There are plans for something similar with the proposed tightening of the process regarding boundaries as well as the move to create a greenbelt around the GTA. O'Toole's list for the reasons why this growth management tool has failed in Portland is extensive, but one daunting parallel relates to housing costs. In Portland, since 1990, the price of an acre of land available for housing developments has grown from \$20,000 to upwards of \$200,000. A local paper reported that "every major home builder in the region was now aware of every single build able parcel of 10 acres and up inside the Portland area's urban growth boundary including who owned it and whether they might want to sell it. As a result, housing process more than doubled and in some parts of the region that tripled."

Builders in the GTA are increasingly




Photo illustration: GO Transit; B. Smith

O'Toole says that public transit cannot deal with congestion

reporting that they cannot find enough building lots. Those that they do find are increasingly expensive. With what can be considered, the restrictive land development policies imposed by the Liberal provincial government through its pro-

posed greenbelt legislation, we are already seeing a dramatic impact on the price of serviced lots and new housing.

Restrictions in land supply will mean higher land prices, higher lot prices and higher home prices—hindering affordability



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for the projected population increases that we are expected to see in the GTA. The consequence of limiting the supply of land is quickly showing up in higher housing costs. For example, in 2002, the price of an acre of land in Mississauga was roughly \$440,000. This same parcel today can be valued 44 per cent more at \$635,000. In Richmond Hill, an acre that cost \$275,000 less than two years ago would today cost over 45 per cent more at \$400,000.

Increased land costs translate into increased lot prices. On average, across suburban GTA, lot prices have increased 36 per cent since the end of 2002. The highest increases are seen in the 20-foot townhouse lots, which are typically the type of housing that supports principles of Smart Growth. The growing cost of land and serviced lots, coupled with the declining availability of land will have a serious impact on affordability, consumer choice and the overall economic contribution of the housing industry.

The City of Toronto cannot meet all of the GTA's future population growth. It can only accommodate 537,000 people by 2031 under its official plan, yet expects the GTA to grow by nearly 2.4 million in that same period. This projected population will have to live somewhere, and since we hear time and time again that we are again already building to high-record densities, government attempts to restrict land supply which are not based on environmental science cannot be a feasible solution. The general public concern with preserving environmental and agricultural lands has to be balanced with the need for adequate supply to meet the projected demand, while at the same time sustaining economic growth and housing affordability. This is a lot to digest, and its complexity and sensitivity is the reason why growth management issues are top of the agenda for our local municipalities.

As much as O'Toole's statements were bold and often made me shake my head in disbelief, there may be some real lessons from his lecture. One would be to learn from what has happened as a result of the imposition of urban-growth boundaries in Portland. How do we strike that fine balance of preserving agricultural land while meeting the demand for development?

*Paula Tenuta, MCIP, RPP, is the Municipal Government Advisor for the Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association. She can be reached at [ptenuta@gthba.ca](mailto:ptenuta@gthba.ca)*

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# One More Time: What is a Geographic Information System?

By George Lysenko

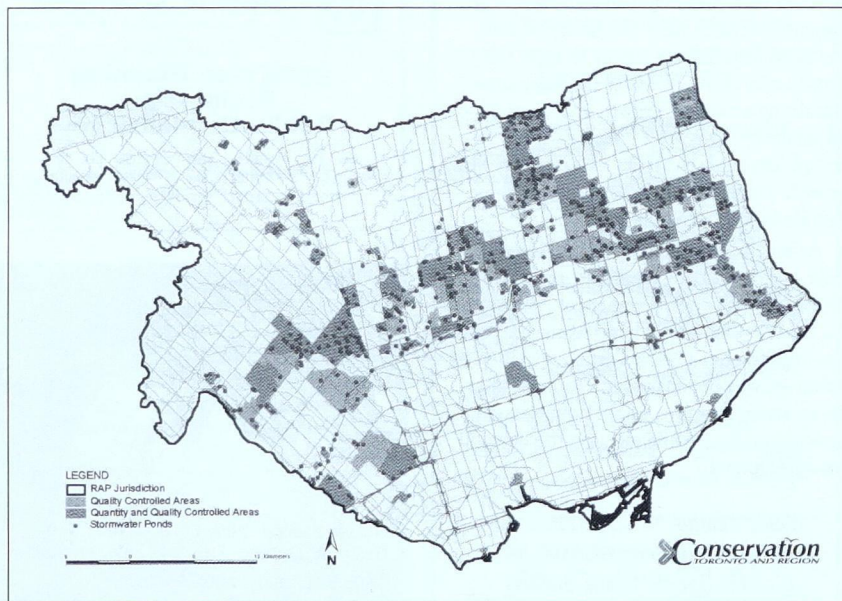
Maybe the best way to understand GIS is to know its roots—mapping. Maps have been, and always will be, an intrinsic part of human existence. Whether mentally visualized, etched in the sand, painted on cave walls, or engraved on sheepskins in order to be movable, maps have always played a major role in guiding activities supporting the basic necessities of life. Such maps identified the locations of shelter, food, and water, as well as the routes and barriers to moving between these points of interest. These same maps were then used to establish territorial claims and guide for the exploration of the unknown to access new resources, support new activities, and define new realms.

For centuries, maps have been painstakingly created by hand, evolving into the science—some would say art form—known as cartography. In addition to making maps attractive, cartography set out to simplify the human interpretation of maps through the use of symbolization and rendering. Cartography also gave rise to the advent of geographical projections to transform the spherical surface of the earth into a two-

dimensional space capable of providing the ability to determine location, measure distance, and navigate.

The introduction of Computer Aided Drafting (CAD) technology in the 1960s, only a heart beat ago considering the longevity of mapping, began to radically transform cartography into what we know as GIS. CAD technologies first transformed cartography by replacing the pen with a puck (the forerunner of the mouse) and paper with digital storage. This streamlined cartographic production capabilities through facilitating rapid map compilation, rendering, and editing, at various scales and resolution. Map features consisting of points, lines, and polygons (areas bounded by a closed loop of line segments) were created and stored as geometry. This transformed cartography from manual map-making to Automated Mapping (AM) through the use of CAD-based technologies.

A number of key innovations advanced AM to GIS. The most critical was linking the rather arbitrary geometry of map features to real world geographic coordinates.



GIS helps us make sense of complex data

As such, map features became vector-based geographic features. Raster-based imagery such as aerial photography and other products of remote sensing, together with survey technology, provided the means for this transformation. This fact establishes the crucial role that survey disciplines, such as geodetic, photogrammetric, and cadastral surveying (depending on the subject matter), play in GIS. In addition to being a source of creating vector-based geographic features, raster-based remote sensing products such as aerial photography are increasingly being orthorectified and integrated with vector-based geography.

Orthorectification is the process of removing distortions due to varying elevation, tilt, and surface topography from a vertical aerial photograph, so that it represents every object as if viewed directly from above.

Another cornerstone of GIS is topology. Simply put, topology stores the relationships of one geographic feature with respect to another. Topology facilitates analytical and modeling capabilities through geoprocessing operators that facilitate spatial selection, thematic overlay, measurement, distance analyses, and the like.

The ability to link attributes to geographic features is another key characteristic of

GIS. Unlike cartography that utilizes symbology and rendering to differentiate the characteristics of map features, geographic features have the ability to link to virtually unlimited attributes of various types and formats.

Initially, the ability to store common geographic features as separate themes and overlay various themes of geographic features for an analytical purpose was a true differentiator between AM and GIS technologies. Today, that characteristic has been further enhanced through the use of object/relational database functionality. Without getting into the technical details, this approach significantly reduces overhead for GIS practitioners creating and maintaining geographic features and provides greater functionality for GIS users who can now take advantage of industry specific geographic data models.

If you put together remote sensing, survey technology, an object/relational database of geographic features with real world coordinates, topology, geographic feature attributes, together with the right technology platform of hardware and software, as well as professional operating personnel, you have GIS. (The latter ingredients,

hardware/software technology and GIS providers/users, will be explored in subsequent articles.)

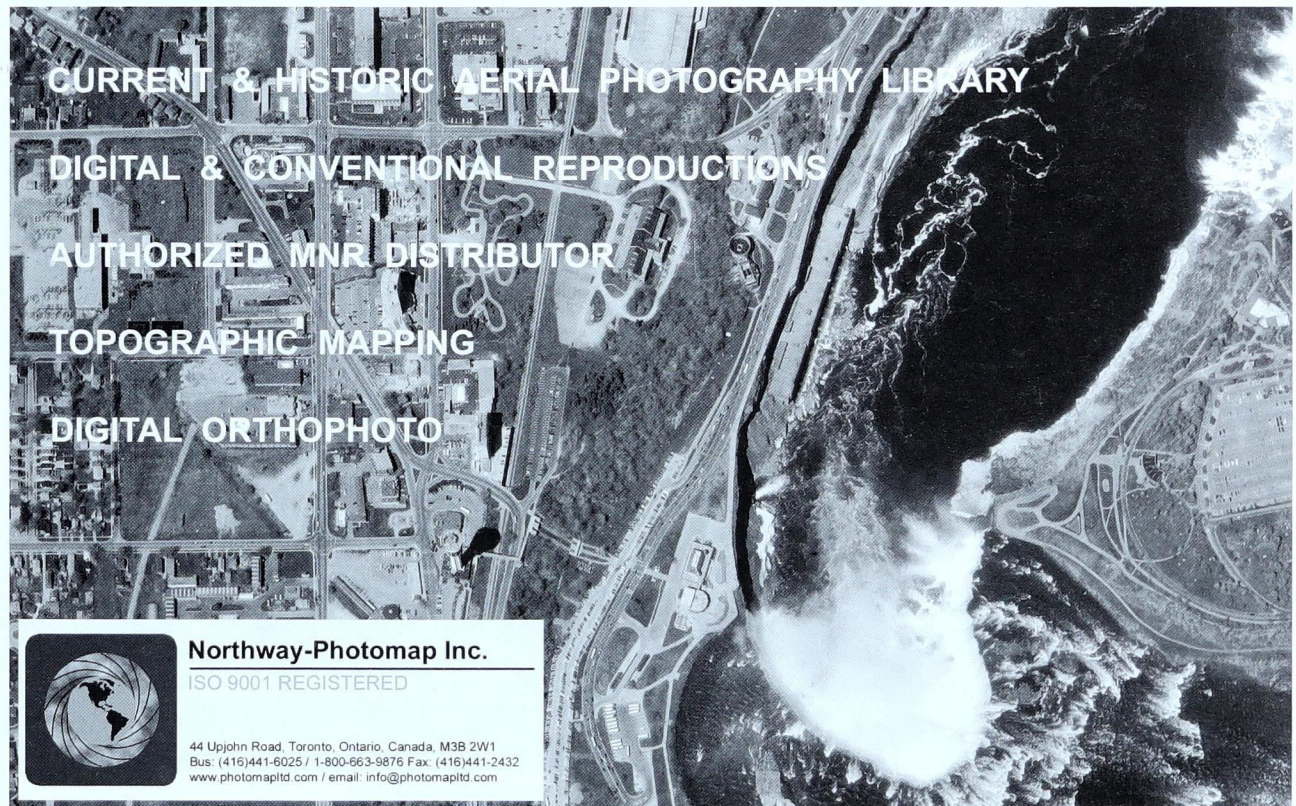
I personally like the National Aeronautical and Space Administration (NASA) definition:

GIS is an integrated system of computer hardware, software, and trained personnel linking topographic, demographic, utility, facility, image and other resource data that is geographically referenced.


Building on this short history of the evolution of thinking in GIS, in the next issue I will explore the role and impact of the many organizations competing for the attention of GIS professionals, and suggest a useful role for OPPI to improve understanding and appreciation for the potential of GIS.

*George Lysenko, MCIP, RPP, is the Ontario Planning Journal's contributing editor for Technology. He is also Principal and Spatial IT Practice Lead with Sierra Systems' Toronto Branch.*

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## A Design-Based Approach To City Planning: A Southwest Ontario Municipal Perspective

By Ryan Mounsey, Gabe Charles and Anne McIlroy

From an urban design perspective, local and regional governments are responsible for the construction of roads, public spaces, parks and government buildings. In addition to these functions, municipal planning departments are responsible for preparing planning policies, approving development applications and responding to public inquiries. Given these parameters and recent development trends, a growing number of large Canadian cities, many GTA municipalities, and several mid-sized cities in southwest Ontario are moving towards a design-based approach to city planning. This type of approach includes a high-level vision statement, clear design policies and flexible guidelines, firm public leadership, and an effective public education program.

This article concentrates on several mid-sized cities in southwest Ontario, including Windsor, London, Waterloo and Kitchener. These cities are experiencing relatively strong development pressures however, they have different market conditions and design expectations compared to many GTA municipalities. As a

result, southwest cities tend to have different design approaches as indicated below.

Windsor has a population of 208,000. In 2000, the City made a transition towards a design-based approach through new urban design policies in the City's Official Plan. By 2002, a new Urban Design and Community Development Section was established in the



Illustration: GSP Group

Conceptual sketch showing new civic entrance to Kitchener's Victoria Park

City's Planner's Office. This past March, the City launched "Windsor Seen," a new urban design agenda for the City which supports a strong civic image through public sector investments and proposes new city-wide design guidelines. Currently, the City is collaborating with the University of Windsor

with the design of a "green" pedestrian bridge above Huron Church Road.

London has a population of 348,000, and is experiencing strong development pressures in the north. The City's urban design framework includes general urban design policies in the Official Plan, more detailed urban design policies contained in Community Plans, and Commercial Urban Design Guidelines approved by Council in 1999. The commercial guidelines are implemented through site plan control and zoning. Two years ago, the Urban Design Working Group led a design workshop for the former London Psychiatric Hospital lands owned by the Ontario Realty Corporation.

The City of Waterloo has a population of 102,000, and has a more complex design framework. General urban design policies are provided in the Official Plan and Special Area Policies. Detailed design policies are provided in the City's District Implementation Plans, and additional City guidelines are provided for the site plan process and site specific areas in the City. As part of the development approvals process for large scale or

geographically significant lands, the City typically requires special design studies for Council approval. The City will be preparing new urban design guidelines to implement their Height and Density Study.

Kitchener has a population of 190,000, and is updating its urban design framework.



Source: University of Windsor

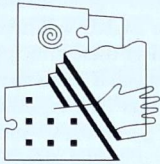
Early conceptual design for Windsor's "green" gateway pedestrian bridge



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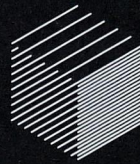
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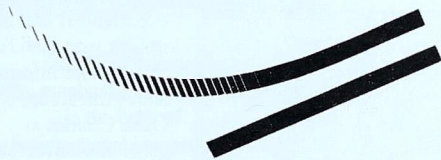
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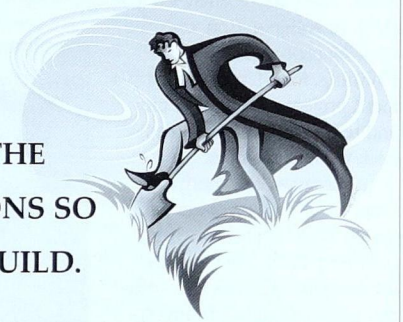
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General urban design policies are provided in the City's Municipal Plan, and detailed design policies have been incorporated into the new Commercial Policy and Downtown Strategic Plan. The Commercial Policy places higher emphasis on design quality, and requires the City to prepare Design Briefs for specific land use designations such as the Mixed Use Corridors. The City now has an Urban Design Manual. This is generally applied to site plan applications. The Planning Division has a specialized urban design position, and is currently considering new design guidelines for green field development. The Planning Division recently made a presentation to Council on the importance of urban design. This televised presentation included delegations from the Urban Design Working Group, local consulting companies, and the Grand Valley Association of Architects. This presentation was well received by Council, and new urban design initiatives will be proposed in an upcoming report. The City has invested in several civic projects including the Victoria Park entrance feature and the new Kitchener Market in downtown. The City recently led a design workshop, in collaboration with the U of Waterloo School of Planning, for a large redevelopment project in the inner city and resulted in valuable feedback to the developer.

In summary, the southwest cities are moving towards a design-based approach to city planning. Each city includes urban design policies in its official plan, and most are investing in major civic improvements in the downtown. In the future, mid-sized cities will focus more attention on street design, public spaces, neighbourhood design, and incorporate more public education programs which are prevalent in many GTA municipalities.

### Continuing the CCNU initiative

Following a successful November meeting of the "Canadian Council of New Urbanism." (the tentative name for this fledgling organization) a number of design and planning

professionals met at the City of Brampton in March to discuss the historic City Beautiful movement, "Best Practices" in design used among international cities, and possible links with the U.S.-based Congress of New Urbanism.



View of Downtown Brampton, part of a new Image Master Plan

The theme for our March meeting was "Making the City Beautiful" – echoing the upcoming CNU Congress in Chicago. The City Beautiful movement in Chicago had an important effect on the planning profession in both the U.S. as well as Canada, and



Sega City, Mississauga

some current Chicago examples were recognized for the positive effect they have had on the urban renaissance of the Windy City. The meeting began with an introduction from Brampton City Manager Lorne

McCool who recounted his experience with New Urbanism during the advent of the Cornell community in Markham. City of Brampton staff also highlighted some of the City's recent endeavours with the Flower City strategy and Image Master Plan.

The group's discussion focused on the need to implement urban strategies in Canadian cities and examples of successful design elements in international cities were acknowledged. It was argued that in order to make cities beautiful, an organization such as CCNU has to promote the benefit of New Urbanist principles through the Town, City and Regional states. The establishing of the CCNU will need to reflect these principles through a "Statement of Values", the organization of its governing Committee, the roles and activities of the Council, and potential

ties with the Congress of New Urbanism. To this end, future meetings will be pursued with the intent of connecting practitioners and professionals from across Canada, and an invitation was extended to bring a Canadian contingent to the CNU Congress in an effort to highlight our experiences, and gain more insight into CNU's success.

For more information about the group, contact Gabe Charles at [gabe.charles@city.brampton.on.ca](mailto:gabe.charles@city.brampton.on.ca).

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Gabe Charles, MUDES, MCIP, RPP is a planner with the City of Brampton and a member of the Urban Design Working Group.

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Still much to learn about smart growth

## Ideas that can be successfully imported to Canada?

### Getting to Smart Growth: 100 Policies for Implementation

97 pages  
Smart Growth Network  
2003

Anyone reading the fiction in the New Yorker might think North Americans mostly live in banal places with the souls of shopping malls, having nowhere to mingle except traffic jams, nowhere to walk except across the parking lot to the health club. Characters typically revel in their suburban-style in decentralized housing and, of course, in their beloved automobiles.

Though poignant and often humorous, this fiction ignores the hopeful reality: many North American communities are slowly evolving

into places of distinction, and much of this positive—though slow—evolution can be credited to the principles of “smart growth.”

Simply put, smart growth addresses concerns confronting our communities and resulting from the highly dispersed development patterns characteristic of the past 50 years. In 1996, and in direct response to the increasing multitude of challenges increasingly facing American communities, several non-profit and government organizations formed the Smart Growth Network (SGN), a broad coalition of 32 American private, public, and non-governmental organizations that support smart growth. The SGN examined the characteristics of successful, vibrant and healthy communities across the United States and, in response, developed ten principles of smart growth (including mixed land uses; compact building design; the provision of a range of housing opportunities; walkable neighbourhoods; a sense of place; the reten-

tion of open, natural, and agricultural spaces; densification of existing communities; transportation choices; fair and cost effective development decisions; and participatory community involvement).

In turn, the SGN produced *Getting to Smart Growth: 100 Policies for Implementation*, a primer that concisely distills the sometimes lofty and always conceptual ideas of smart growth into a language of clarity and possibility. Through intelligent definition, example, and brief analysis, the SGN creates a vivid and effective portrait of vibrant, cohesive, participatory communities. 100 Policies for Implementation is a checklist planners can rely on to assist in translating our realization of the benefits of smart growth into effective policies and practices.

This primer challenges readers to re-evaluate existing notions of community development by providing dozens of well-documented examples of what communities are. Short

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of area for public open space, sunlight, and nature? Boston replaced a parking garage with underground parking and a park on top; Dane County, Wisconsin, features an open-space plan which facilitates the linking of public lands and trails in various political jurisdictions to amplify their accessibility and recreational use. Need innovative solutions for community issues?

Liberty, Missouri, actively engages grade school students in its decision-making processes by including them as active members on the local long-range planning committee; public input is entirely guiding the design and development process for an affordable residential community on a large parcel of land in upscale Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Even for those well-versed in smart growth approaches, the varied and rich examples included in this primer serve as instructive reminders of sensible urban possibilities.

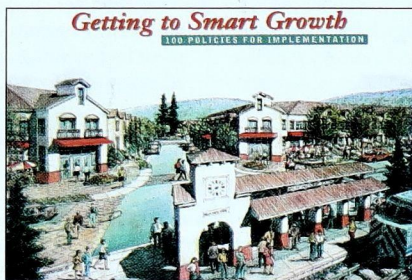
100 Policies for Implementation does not offer a complex theoretical framework; read-

ers, instead, are simply given a road map to successful communities, supported by a multitude of effective American examples. Of course, even a colorful road map is no certain recipe for a successful neighbourhood, town, or city; places of distinction can only arise when they flourish in their own unique characteristics. Most obviously, Canadian

communities, growth patterns and governments are quite different than those of our southern neighbours. This primer, consequently, is not a panacea; it is, however, successfully persuasive because it acknowledges achieving smart growth will

be different in every community, as will the outcomes.

Since the Second World War numerous urban planners and academics have warned North Americans that sprawl is an evil to be fought. We have increasingly condemned cars as the cause of city-killing growth and idealized mass transit. Policies and subsequent zoning laws have been created, often



successfully, which enhance civic life, champion the human scale, celebrate tradition and authenticity, and augment our yearning for everyday environments worthy of our affection and attention. Sprawl, nevertheless, has happened, rapid development continues and communities from Ucluelet to Halifax continue to grapple with the intricate complexities of remaining—or becoming—viable places to live and work.

Can the momentum of sprawl be halted? Can we effectively address the need for change expressed in such unhappy phrases like “no sense of place” or “loss of community”? Can we ensure that the communal settings for New Yorker fiction in future become an increasingly ironic backdrop to the reality of successful, evolving and, indeed, smart Canadian communities? These questions require more than a checklist; however, armed with a clear and comprehensive understanding of smart growth rich in both description and prescription, readers of *100 Policies for Implementation* will be well-equipped to tackle these questions with fresh insights and a refreshed perspective.

And fresh off the press from the same people is *Getting to Smart Growth II: 100 More Policies for Implementation*.

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T.J. Cieciora, MCIP, RPP, is contributing editor for *In Print*. He is also a planner with Design Plan Services Inc. in Toronto. Readers interested in doing book reviews should contact TJ at [tjc@designplan.ca](mailto:tjc@designplan.ca).

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