



*The
New
Decade*



The progress of the past decade inspires optimism for the future, and provides a rich heritage of ideas, information and experience. But our review also highlights further action that must be taken to ensure a healthy, sustainable future for both human and natural communities of the bioregion. Fortunately, we embark on the first decade of the 21st century with a clear mandate for **continued** progress, knowing that the public – along the waterfront and in the watersheds – has a strong desire to see the essential work of regeneration continue.

The challenges are clear. The population of the GTA alone is expected to rise from 5 million today to 6.7 million by 2021. Land use changes will continue to affect the Lake Ontario waterfront through the conversion of former industrial or transportation lands to new uses such as light industry, commercial or mixed use developments. The development of new housing, either as infill in existing urban areas, or in previously rural areas, will further change the waterfront landscape.

These changes provide opportunities for community economic revitalization and for the restoration of environmentally degraded areas. They also pose challenges in meeting the housing, transportation and recreation needs of the growing population without destroying the natural resources and heritage values of the waterfront and its watersheds.



Our current path is unsustainable. Both our economy and our environment are under stress; we are sacrificing the future to mask the reality of the present....Done effectively and imaginatively, the process of regeneration will not only contribute to the husbanding of our resources for economic recovery, but will also give us places where unique features are enhanced rather than homogenized and where “development” and “conservation” become kindred ideas that bring us together.

David Crombie, *Regeneration*, 1992

Fortunately, the experience of the past decade has shown that it is possible to integrate economic, environmental and social goals, through plans and projects that are carefully designed to contribute to a healthy and sustainable future.

This section identifies some key priorities to address the challenges of the new decade and ensure that the momentum continues. They include:

- Share the Vision with a New Generation
- Complete and Enhance the Waterfront Trail and Greenway
- Expand Watershed Stewardship
- Develop and Apply New Tools
- Develop Innovative New Partnerships

All participants with a stake in the waterfront have a role in addressing these priorities – decision-makers, residents, special interest groups, businesses, industries, educators and funders. For our part, the Waterfront Regeneration Trust will continue its role as a leader, catalyst and facilitator – bringing together people, ideas and resources for the continued regeneration of the waterfront and watersheds.



SHARE THE VISION WITH A NEW GENERATION

Waterfront regeneration is an ongoing process – the *Lake Ontario Greenway Strategy* has a 50 year vision. Over time, the community leaders who have accomplished so much – mayors and councillors, municipal and conservation authority staff, citizen volunteers, business partners – will hand the torch to others. We need to ensure that the vision, philosophy, and tools for regeneration are also transferred and adapted to meet the needs of the next generation of leaders and partners.

One proven way of sharing the regeneration vision is by maintaining strong communications, information exchange and shared learning among a wide range of stakeholders in waterfront communities.

This can be done through conferences, the internet, a speakers bureau, site visits and other joint activities. Education, awareness and recognition activities can be oriented to the general public, businesses and industries, agencies, consultants, decision-makers, schools, or colleges and universities.

Undertaking collaborative projects also allows waterfront communities to take best advantage of our Lake Ontario-wide resources and networks. Projects such as the development and implementation of a joint marketing and communications strategy will bring people and communities together, and provide tangible benefits such as an updated website and new editions of the Waterfront Trail guidebook and mapbook.



We shouldn't try to master-mind too much into the future – open it up to possibilities and connect it to other things in the City. The waterfront isn't just something unto itself, it's connected to everything else.

Jane Jacobs, Author and Urbanist