

DEVELOP INNOVATIVE NEW PARTNERSHIPS

The 1990s was a time of transition from significant participation by upper levels of government (Federal and Provincial) to greater reliance on local communities to finance waterfront projects. While the upper levels of government will continue to be important partners in a variety of ways, the next decade will require a broader range of participation by foundations, corporations and individuals.

Foundations are already showing greater involvement. For example, it is encouraging to see the interest among community foundations around Lake Ontario in strengthening their involvement through training for Board members and volunteers, information exchange, promoting innovation and excellence in waterfront regeneration projects, and participation in joint initiatives.

As the previous chapter – *Regeneration in Action* – demonstrated, many waterfront corporations are already participating in environmental or community development programs. Greater philanthropic participation by the corporate sector could be encouraged, recognizing both the local and the Province-wide benefits of revitalizing the Lake Ontario waterfront.

New residential, mixed use and industrial developments also provide opportunities for corporations to become partners in regeneration. There is increasing recognition in the corporate sector of the sensitivity of the waterfront setting, the need for close cooperation with governments and communities, and the business and community relations benefits of participating in waterfront regeneration.

The Central Waterfront Development Concept



Toronto's waterfront could see some dramatic changes over the next few decades if the report of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force, chaired by Robert Fung, is acted upon. The Task Force, acting for all three levels of government, drew on a strong understanding of the wishes of the people of Toronto to develop a plan that incorporates quality green spaces, a clean environment, restoration of the Don River mouth, waterfront connections, housing, business, employment, the new economy and transportation, as well as the potential 2008 Olympic Games. Successful implementation will require a publically accountable, multi-jurisdictional administrative structure, as well as innovative forms of financing to facilitate both public and private sector investments.

Toronto's Bid to host the 2008 Olympic Games is driven in large part by our recognition that the Games would provide a tremendous catalyst for much-needed waterfront revitalization. A waterfront Olympic Games, focussing on degraded areas like the Portlands, would be the opportunity to translate over a decade of reports, plans and studies into reality. We are confident that, as in Barcelona, and now Sydney, the Games will bring significant energy, quality and investment to urban regeneration.

**Ruth Grant, former vice-chair, Waterfront Regeneration Trust;
member, Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force**



Opened in 1999, the Toronto Music Garden is the newest addition to the City of Toronto's Harbourfront park system. The design of this beautiful park was inspired by Bach's First Suite for Unaccompanied Cello and evolved through a unique collaboration between cellist Yo Yo Ma, designer Julie Messervy and the City of Toronto Parks and Recreation staff. Already heralded as a jewel in the City's parkland system, the Music Garden is a result of an extraordinary partnership between the private and public sector. Mr. Jim Fleck led the private side of the collaboration, raising over \$1.3 Million through private donations which were held in the Trust's Waterfront Regeneration Fund until needed for construction. The City acted as the project manager and maintains ownership of the land. Neighbouring residents help to maintain the park, live music performances are held on summer weekends, and summer programs engage children from across the City in music, drama, crafts and story-telling.

I was intrigued with Yo-Yo Ma, Julie Messervy and the other people involved and impressed with the creativity and beauty of the project. Yo-Yo Ma's charisma, a sense of civic pride, a passion for gardens and an appreciation for innovative and aesthetic design inspired contributors to support the project. I am proud to have been part of its realization.

Jim Fleck

Involvement of individual citizens and businesses, community groups and service clubs is also expanding the possibilities for public/private sector partnerships. They encompass many facets of a project - gaining political support, planning, fund-raising, contributions of time and materials, programming, education and more.

Individual property owners can play an important role in stewardship and land securement, especially if local organizations such as land trusts and conservation authorities are available to facilitate their involvement.

Over the past decade, the number of land trust organizations in southern Ontario has jumped from about half-a-dozen to over 20.

These non-government groups receive donated lands and conservation easements, and often work with private landowners to encourage stewardship of natural areas. Land trusts are active in the Kingston, Quinte, and Oak Ridges areas, with several other communities considering their formation. The land trust movement has been assisted by Federal initiatives to provide enhanced income tax treatment and reduced capital gains tax on the donation of ecologically sensitive lands, and by Provincial actions to exempt their nature reserves from property taxation. While land trusts often access various foundation or agency grants for specific projects, much of their funding comes from individual donations within their local communities.



Lower Trent Conservation initiated a private land stewardship program in the mid-1990s, focussing on 28 significant natural areas on or near the Northumberland County Lake Ontario shoreline. Three hundred and forty landowners were contacted and about 70 of them received site visits to explain the natural values of the areas and discuss ways to manage them to assist protection, as well as meet other objectives the landowners have for their lands.



In August 2000, landowner Arnold Boes donated 47 acres of ecologically valuable shoreline, wetland and woodland habitats on Presqu'île Bay, Brighton, to the Nature Conservancy of Canada. This donation has huge significance – not only at a local level, but also as a catalyst for future donations in the Lake Ontario Greenway, and a contribution to the nation-wide Natural Legacy 2000 project of the NCC, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Canadian Nature Federation and World Wildlife Fund (Canada) with support from the Government of Canada's Millennium Partnership Program.

By observing the natural laws of the Earth, we can learn the right way to live. Whenever we are able to live in balance and harmony with each other and the environment we create beauty and happiness.

***F. Henry Lickers, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne
Words that Come Before All Else, 1998
Haudenosaunee Environmental Task Force***