

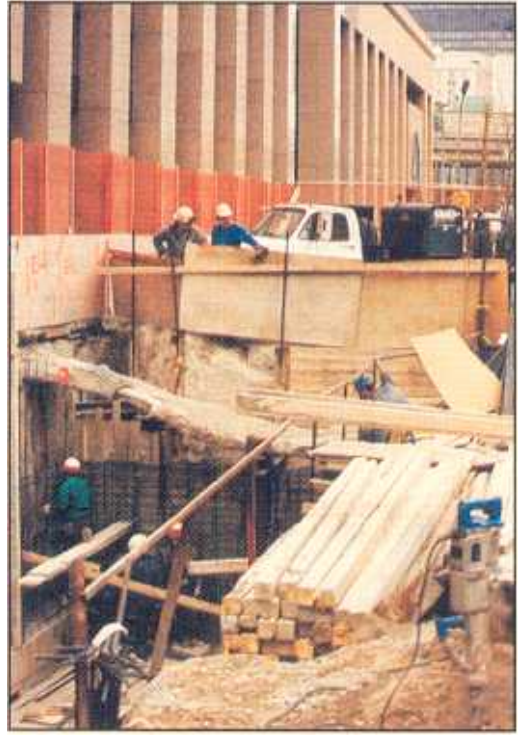
an unemployment rate as high as 40 per cent.

The economic downturn has been difficult, and in some cases devastating, for the individuals, families, and corporations directly affected; nonetheless, Torontonians, like other Canadians, are still optimistic about themselves and their communities. For example, in his weekly column in the *Globe and Mail*, on 9 November 1991, David Olive wrote:

Incredible. In the midst of widespread lay-offs and plant closures, unprecedented cynicism directed at governments and signs that their country is on the verge of cracking up, Canadians appear to be pronouncing themselves mightily pleased with the way their lives are going.

Certainly there are worse ways of starting a week than to read, as we did on Monday, the upbeat findings of a *Globe and Mail*-CBC News poll of 2,631 Canadians conducted between Oct. 21 and 28. If we are to believe this survey, an astonishing 91 per cent of us feel we have a good or very good quality of life. Two-thirds of Canadians are confident we'll have enough money to cover future expenses. Nine of 10 people polled say they're satisfied with their communities as good places to live. And 51 per cent say their jobs give them a great deal of satisfaction, with an additional 38 per cent saying they get at least some satisfaction from their work. The poll results cut across both genders, and all ages, regions and income levels.

The Commission believes that, if this is an accurate reflection of the state of the regional economy and of the way people in



Constructing Queen's Quay station for Harbourfront LRT, Toronto

Greater Toronto view themselves and their community, there is a basis for action. A program for regenerating the waterfront — utilizing our human and financial resources, built on what we have learned about the ecosystem approach and dealing with environmental issues — will help stimulate the regional economy. The three elements of this proposed program are to:

- build new infrastructure compatible with the environment;
- deliver a long-range housing program on the Central Waterfront and around GO stations elsewhere along the waterfront; and
- develop green enterprise and industry.

The first element of the program is the recognition, common among the different levels of government as well as the private

sector, that the region has been living for more than 15 years without maintaining appropriate levels of investment in its basic infrastructure. For example, the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto, in its 1991 annual report, has been among those who argue that inadequate investment in infrastructure is one of the threats to the economic status of our community. The resulting backlog is potentially very damaging unless there is prompt action to restore a better balance in investment priorities. If a program could be agreed on and put in place now, it would have a useful counter-cyclical impact and stimulate the economy.

The idea of using an appropriate infrastructure to help the Greater Toronto region recover its economic health is hardly new: reconstruction of the Sunnyside boardwalk and the early work on the Queen Elizabeth Way were used to combat the Depression of the '30s; reforestation of the Ganaraska helped the region weather post-war difficulties; and the Government of Canada's \$2.4 billion Special Capital Recovery Program helped pave the way for the economic prosperity of the mid- and late 1980s.

A broad range of infrastructure is needed, and much of it should be in waterfront areas, including "green infrastructure" (the greenway and trail, parks, and other open spaces); environmental management and control (water and sewage treatment plants and systems); transportation (expansion of commuter rail services and urban transit); and new and expanded facilities for tourism, trade, and convention business.

Many of these elements of infrastructure have been clearly identified by various governments; some projects now in various stages of the design and approvals process could be accelerated.

The second element of the strategy involves housing, in the Central Waterfront area as well as in other parts of the waterfront — for example, clustered round GO stations. The Commission's Publication No. 15, the *Toronto Central Waterfront Transportation Corridor Study*, (discussed in Chapter 10 of this report), as well as other studies and planning reports carried out for the Commission and for the City of Toronto, Metropolitan Toronto, and the Province came to the conclusion that a substantial housing program is needed in the Central Waterfront area.

The consulting team that prepared Publication No. 15 calculated that construction of 3,500 units of housing a year on or close to the Central Waterfront (in line with the volumes proposed in Cityplan '91) would stimulate an annual construction investment of \$400 million and produce 7,000 person years of direct and indirect employment annually. The team proposed that this level of effort be maintained over the next 20 to 30 years, and said there is sufficient land — some 304 hectares (750 acres) — in the Central Waterfront area to accommodate this additional population.

Such a program would also be more benign environmentally than allowing sprawl to continue unchecked. It would help reduce growth pressures for long commuting trips to the Central Area via the Central Waterfront, would encourage greater use of transit, help to create a richer urban experience, and greatly reduce land consumption in the suburbs.

The third element in the proposed program is to create green industry and enterprise in the region. This is already happening to some extent, but its full potential is only beginning to dawn on people. In



Little Sugar Creek Greenway, downtown Charlotte, North Carolina

order to explore and carry out productive investment in industry, services, and jobs, a Centre for Green Enterprise and Industry in the Lower Don Lands was proposed by the Commission in the *Watershed* report.

Chapter 10 of this final report discusses additional studies and activities related to the concept that have appeared since the publication of *Watershed*. It also identifies some green industry possibilities: telecommunications, film and television, design and graphic arts, waste recycling, among them. New products and processes are suggested that will repair existing environmental damage and prevent it in the future — everything from industrial scrubbers to closed-loop manufacturing systems.

Green industry can be considered in a broader context as well: cleaning up a Great Lake or a regional watershed; decontaminating polluted soils; expanding a GO system instead of an urban expressway; redeveloping obsolete industrial and transportation lands in the inner city for housing and

mixed use rather than taking over agricultural land on the periphery — all are green enterprises.

If governments can agree on a proposed program for recovery and are prepared to enter partnerships, there are numerous opportunities along the waterfront for projects large and small, public and private. Private-sector projects that are based on the principles and practices of the ecosystem approach and that conform to municipal waterfront plans should be approved expeditiously. Small-scale public projects that are within the scope and the budgets of individual public agencies should also be identified for early implementation.

A substantial number of major strategic projects are beyond the financial capabilities of single agencies or levels of government, particularly given the very tight fiscal constraints that all governments face. These would require intergovernmental — and, in some instances, public/private-sector partnerships — to become reality.

While these projects are proposed for various places along the waterfront, and appropriate partnerships should be maintained or formed to carry them out, the majority are slated for the Metropolitan Toronto waterfront. That is where the most extensive land transitions are occurring, where the environmental strains are the heaviest, and where economic opportunities are greatest.

Stage I of the Central Waterfront program, integrating environment, land use, and transportation, would provide the core for a recovery program here.

The Central Waterfront offers four major redevelopment opportunities: at Humber Bay, Garrison Common, the Central Transportation Corridor, and the Lower Don Lands. Within each of these areas, major multi-million-dollar projects are being proposed or planned by various

public- and private-sector proponents. They include:

- major parks and open-space expansion, including a greenway and trail connections;
- expansion and upgrading of environmental management and control systems (water and sewage works);
- flood control measures;
- expansion of commuter rail and local transit systems, as well as new stations for GO Transit and additional subway lines;
- improvements to arterial roads, expressways, and bridges;
- railway relocation;
- housing and mixed-use developments, such as Etobicoke's Harbour Village, Garrison Creek, CityPlace, Southtown, St. Lawrence Park, and Castlepoint at Polson's Quay;
- additional commercial cultural, recreational, and entertainment facilities in Exhibition Place and Ontario Place;
- upgrading and expansion of convention, tourism, trade, and business facilities; and
- possibly, an international exhibition (Expo '96, '97 or '98).



Windward Co-op and Little Norway Park, Bathurst Quay, Harbourfront, Toronto

The costs of the public elements are substantial: for example, as of December 1991, Metropolitan Toronto's waterfront capital budget alone includes \$1.2 billion of works in progress, \$1.1 billion of works to which some commitment has been made, and a further \$700 million of works that could be done in the next five years, but for which there is no current commitment.

The City of Toronto and the Province also have multi-million-dollar projects on

their books. The Province has given high priority to the new GO Stations, for instance, while the City of Toronto has its own high-priority, multi-year capital project in the \$350-to-\$400-million Sewer System Master Plan, which will virtually eliminate combined sewer overflows and will control and treat stormwater run-off.

Which brings us to the fourth step in the strategy: given the range, size, and complexity of these capital projects, the tight budgetary restraints facing all governments, and the urgent need for both economic recovery and environmental regeneration, there is only one way to proceed.

Governments must get together promptly, agree on plans, projects, and priorities, consolidate their capital budgets, and pool resources. They must then create conditions under which the private sector will willingly bring its resources to bear, in order to create investment and jobs.

Fortunately, this has already begun. The round-table process initiated by the Royal Commission for the environmental audit, the Garrison Common Preliminary Master Plan, and the Toronto Central Waterfront Transportation Corridor Study brought together governments and private-sector interests. The process is now at the point where the four governments on the Central Waterfront — the Province, Metropolitan Toronto, the City of Toronto, and the City of Etobicoke — are beginning to exchange information on capital plans and to look at the use of their extensive public lands along the waterfront as equity they

could put into public-private partnerships. The Government of Canada has committed to do its share in its own jurisdiction.

If governments agree quickly, the fifth of the six steps that comprise the strategy will have been reached and this will create the conditions for step six: establishing partnerships among governments, and between the public and private sectors, in accordance with planning and project requirements.

The Commission believes that the conditions are present for creating a critical mass of public and private sector activity, once governments agree on plans and projects to be implemented so that the private sector can design, finance, and construct them. This will “jump-start” environmental regeneration

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and contribute to economic recovery, providing both short- and long-term jobs along the waterfront and in the region.

To obtain the maximum benefits from the proposed strategy, an agreed intergovernmental

process for co-ordination, including the establishment of appropriate Waterfront Partnership Agreements, and possibly one or more development “vehicles” to support public and private initiatives, will be needed.

Co-ordinating efforts and establishing partnerships should include, local, regional, provincial, and federal governments, as appropriate; special authority agencies; private-sector interests; and community groups. Any development instruments should operate at arm’s length from governments and should adopt a business approach to their mandates.



EPILOGUE

It is difficult to think of another period in our history when the incidence of change has been so great and the opportunity to do it right has been so exceptional.

In offering its perspective on places along the waterfront of the Greater Toronto bioregion, and in recommending specific courses of action to regenerate them, the Commission is guided, of course, by the principles and values of the ecosystem approach.

They are based on certain fundamentals that we need to keep reminding ourselves are there: that hydrology, topography, and climate set the fundamental conditions

for human habitation and that, if respected, these conditions give our places unique shape and character.

We also need to remind ourselves that nature exists in cities, that there are still the wild places and natural systems — rivers, creeks, valleys, hills, shorelines, and vacant lots — in which, healed and cared for, life-giving regeneration can occur.

We need to take advantage of the new thinking already being practised in our suburban places: beginning as essentially residential enclaves, dependent in the main on the core city for jobs, they made commuting a way of life. But over time, many suburbs have begun to emerge as important places of employment, social diversity, and cultural energy. Now, the new approach calls for greater integration and intensity of land use and built form, energy conservation,

and public transportation. This regeneration of the suburbs, which is occurring around the world, may propel our suburban places into the role they always promised they would play: offering the best of both worlds, city and country!

We need to remember the value of maintaining our landscapes: natural landscapes born of ecological processes and meeting our need for environmental balance; working rural landscapes in which goods are produced to feed us and future generations; and city landscapes that remind us of our cultural heritage and a way of life that enriches us all.

We are responsible for the consequences of our own actions — to ourselves and to other people, to other generations, and to other species. The ethic that justifies moving in, using up, throwing away, and moving on is no longer acceptable.

We are responsible for the consequences of our own actions — to ourselves and to other people, to other generations, and to other species.

We believe, with Toronto architect Jeffery Stinson that, “our history is imbedded in everything we build”; that valuing what has been will make us more careful as we plan what is to be.

When we assume that “progress” means degrading our natural and built heritage, that it’s better to “start all over again”, we are always in danger of wiping out collective memories. In consequence, we often reduce our history to personal genealogy and visit European, Asian, and African places to link ourselves with the past — of which so little remains in our local experience. Moreover, when the winds of change blow, we are not rooted enough to know what is important to us or our sense of ourselves and how

to defend it. As a result, our places become indistinguishable from other modern places in the western world and people — even those who have lived in one place all their lives — find themselves increasingly disconnected from it.

We need to understand the evolutionary way: there is no ultimate perfect city and, inevitably, our changes will be changed by those who come after us. We need to understand that change comes as a better friend when it is done within an overall context of continuity.

We need to understand and appreciate our natural and human heritage — making a careful inventory of what we have, reusing and recycling what we can, developing what we require, and weaving the new into the old.

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. It is the Commission's view that, 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.

Finally, in this report, we have tried to keep in mind the Olympian insight of Lewis Mumford (1938) in his great work, *The Culture of Cities*.

Cities are the product of time. They are the molds in which men's lifetimes have cooled and congealed, giving lasting shape, by way of art, to moments that would otherwise vanish with the living and leave no means of renewal

or wider participation behind them. In the city, time becomes visible: buildings and monuments and public ways, more open than the written record, more subject to the gaze of many men than the scattered artifacts of the countryside, leave an imprint upon the minds even of the ignorant or the indifferent. Through the material fact of preservation, time challenges time, time clashes with time: habits and values carry over beyond the living group, streaking with different strata of time the character of any single generation.

The city is a fact of nature. But [it] is also a conscious work of art, and it holds within its communal framework many simpler and more personal forms of art. Mind takes form in the city; and in turn, urban forms condition mind. For space, no less than time, is artfully reorganized in cities: in boundary lines and silhouettes, in the fixing of horizontal planes and vertical peaks, in utilizing or denying the natural site, the city records the attitude of a culture and an epoch to the fundamental facts of its existence. The dome and the spire, the open avenue and the closed court, tell the story, not merely of different physical accommodations, but of essentially different conceptions of man's destiny. The city is both a physical utility or collective living and a symbol of those collective purposes and unanimities that arise under such favoring circumstance. With language itself, it remains man's greatest work of art.