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The Pearson Area Employment Lands The Next Great Investment Opportunity?

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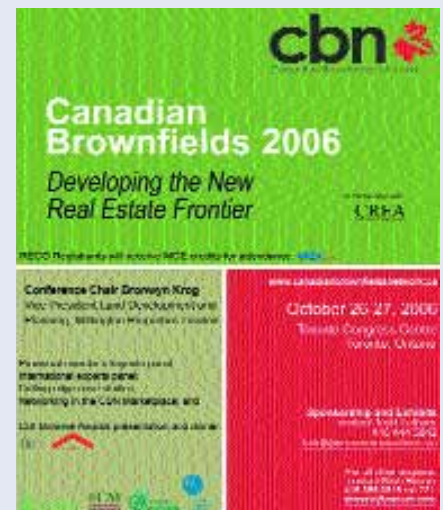
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Employment Intensification Goals

Does Pearson Airport Represent Our Best Hope?

Antony P. Lorus

The area around the Lester B. Pearson International Airport (LBPIA) has great potential for employment intensification. This has important implications for new provincial planning initiatives, which encourage more intense forms of employment growth. The recently adopted *Places to Grow* directs municipalities to plan for employment intensification within developed areas and to achieve higher densities on greenfield employment land. The Provincial Policy Statement also promotes intensification and redevelopment to accommodate employment opportunities. Collectively, these are important planning objectives because of their potential to revitalize downtowns, create more complete communities and provide a focus for transit investment.

While employment intensification is possible, making it happen will be a challenge. One place with unique potential to meet this challenge is LBPIA and the employment lands that surround it. But concerted action needs to be taken to address congestion, not just to keep the area competitive, but to ensure that its full economic potential is realized.

Airport and Abutting Employment Areas Have Some of the Largest Concentrations of Jobs in the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton

There are currently about 200,000 jobs in the employment areas surrounding the LBPIA. Approximately 65 percent of these jobs are located in the very large northeast industrial district in the City of Mississauga, followed by the Rexdale employment district in the City of Toronto and the Airport Corporate Centre in



Photo: Brent Gilmour

Employment lands represent a key resource

Mississauga. When the 20,000 jobs at the airport facility itself are included, this adds up to nearly 220,000 jobs in the area. This is a significant concentration of employment for the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton (GTAH): by comparison, current employment in Toronto's financial district is about 120,000 jobs.

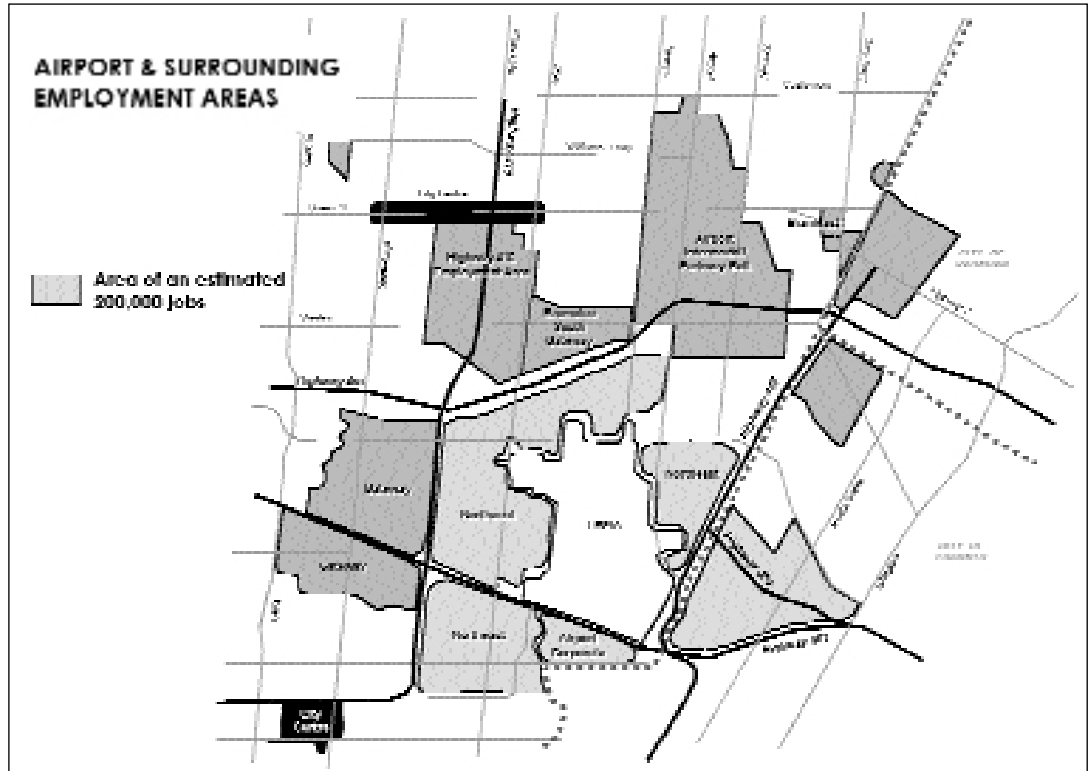
The evolution of such a large concentration of jobs around the LBPIA can be attributed to many factors. The LBPIA provided impetus for the development of a superior road transportation system. This made the area highly accessible for the movement of goods and the labour force. Restrictions on residential development in the surrounding areas also provided long-term certainty in land use, minimizing speculative pressures. The combination of a strategic location and certainty in

land use made the area highly attractive for industry and led to the development of both traditional industrial as well as more prestigious concentrations.

Success of the Area is Only Partially Attributable to the Airport

Like most major international airports, the LBPIA has a major economic impact both in terms of employment and other types of economic activity. The Greater Toronto Airports Authority estimates that in 2001, LBPIA and its associated activities were responsible for \$14 billion in revenue for local businesses, \$3.9 billion in personal income and \$2.8 billion in tax revenue. What has not been as well understood is the role that the LBPIA itself actually plays in attracting economic development.

Air transport itself is less of magnet for development than is commonly assumed. Less than 10 percent of the jobs in the employment areas abutting the LBPIA are in economic sectors directly related to the facility. Of these jobs, most are either linked to the principal function of the facility, such as air passenger and freight transport, or are in sectors providing services such as hotels and conference facilities, travel agencies and airline reservations. The main attraction of the area is location: LBPIA is the geographic centre of the GTA urbanized area. Proximity to a superior transportation network means rapid access to other firms, employees and a large customer base. In the airport area, these features do not diminish over time. This advantage, combined with continued certainty in land use, provides unique opportunities for employment intensification.



Airport Area Provides a Unique Opportunity For Employment Intensification

Nearly every employment area will follow a pattern of maximizing employment density while it is relatively new and at its most productive, then after a couple of decades will begin to decline as buildings age, site ownership changes and competition from higher value uses erodes the land base. Employment areas are often “recycled” to new economic activities, but rarely to industrial uses. There is very little evidence of employment intensification occurring in older employment areas in the GTA or other communities in Canada or the United States. Redevelopment economics favours residential and commercial development over industrial redevelopment in virtually every urban circumstance.

Around the LBPIA, however, the situation is different. There are strict federal rules and regulations in place preventing residential development and the area is far too large for any commercial redevelopment to significantly limit the available area for other employment uses. Long-term certainty in land use combined with the highly desirable nature of the location suggests that this is our best opportunity for employment intensification in a mature urban industrial area. The challenge will be much greater in most other locations.

Achieving More Intense Forms of Employment in Most Other Locations Will be a Significant Challenge

In order to promote higher employment densities in built and greenfield areas, the Growth Plan is proposing two broad planning objectives: to direct more major office development to transit-oriented nodes; and to achieve higher densities with new development on greenfield industrial or business park environments. To date, however, the market has had different ideas:

- Most of the transit-oriented nodes that have been planned for office development in the GTA have yet to develop. Almost all new office space in the last 15 years has been developed in scat-

tered suburban locations or “edgeless cities.” The exception is downtown Toronto, where significant amounts of office space have been added through brick-and-beam conversions and a number of major new office developments have recently been announced—all planners should be celebrating signs of life at the long-dormant Bay-Adelaide Centre site.

- Likewise, the current density of suburban business parks is relatively low—as low as 30 jobs per hectare (as defined in the Growth Plan) and even lower in communities near the edge of the metropolitan area such as Hamilton and Brantford. This reflects the role these locations play in accommodating large-scale goods production and distribution uses.

Higher employment densities are observed in only a very small number of central GTA business parks, peaking in the Highway 404-407 areas of Markham and Richmond Hill. These areas accommodate a significant amount of office and service uses in non-traditional forms such as industrial multiples and “flex space” facilities. They are also major office concentrations, a component of which is accommodated on employment land. There is only one place like this in the GTA because it is a very small part of the market.

Changing this pattern is very difficult. For most communities, achieving higher employment densities would mean office development in greenfield business parks. There are not enough offices to do this everywhere and, besides, it would undermine other goals to focus offices in the transit-oriented nodes. Without more offices, higher densities in suburban business park environments would need to be achieved by significantly limiting landscaping and moving to a pattern of development characterized by multi-storey manufacturing and distribution; structured parking; or shared or multi-storey truck bays and turning areas. None of these building types are currently economically viable, especially in a competitive regional and global environment.

Illustration: Antony Lortis, Henson Consulting



Location not always compatible with amenity

Planners Need to Better Understand How Land Uses Around the Airport May Evolve Over time

The fundamentals for employment intensification are in place at the LBPIA, but the types of development that can be expected and how this may unfold is uncertain. We really have not been here before in a suburban industrial environment. There are occasional examples of facilities being recycled for modern cargo or transportation facilities, but very little information is available on the broader issue of the evolution of land uses around major airports. The area around the LBPIA is not yet old enough to fully test its potential. If we start now, however, planners have an opportunity to gain a better understanding of what types of uses may develop or how demand for services or infrastructure may change. Examining the historic pattern of land use around other airports with older development would be a good starting point.

Maintaining the Efficiency of the Transportation Network is Critical

What is clear is that the area needs to remain competitive. Economic activity around the LBPIA depends heavily on goods movement. This will not change. Actions need to be taken to ensure that the transportation network remains efficient so that the full potential for employment intensification is realized. A number of key freight corridors are already experiencing high levels of congestion and the situation is expected to worsen. The prospects for additional development are less promising if the transportation network is struggling to cope with current levels of economic activity.

There is little opportunity for additional road capacity in the area. A transportation demand management strategy focused on the needs of goods movement should be considered by the Province, Toronto and Peel Region along with other options to

address congestion, including: transit or commuter rail; dedicated expressway links; or adding special truck-only lanes. Most of the solutions will still require a significant investment in infrastructure, particularly those related to higher-order transit. Given the scale that is involved, cooperation with other levels of government and the private sector is likely required. Planners and decision makers will need to make a concerted effort to leverage the assets around the LBPIA and take full advantage of the area's unique potential for increased economic activity through employment intensification.

Antony P. Lorus is a senior consultant with Hemson Consulting Ltd., a firm that specializes in long range planning, growth management and municipal finance. He can be reached at 416-593-5090 (extension 34) or alorus@hemson.com. This is his second cover story looking at the role of employment lands.



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Inequality Growing in Toronto Neighbourhoods

The Rich Get Richer

Markus Moos



Higher value neighbourhoods attract reinvestment

I went to Toronto to visit 20 neighbourhoods as part of my master's thesis research. This tale is about what I saw in these neighbourhoods and the impression it left on me. I only wish it were a tall tale rather than the naked truth about inequality in a city so many of us call home. But sadly it is no news to write about social segregation and inequality in Toronto. A recent article in the *Toronto Star* pointed towards research by one of North America's leading experts on segregation, Douglas Massey, which showed that Toronto is becoming more and more segregated. Studies completed at various planning schools and geography departments across Canada point in the same direction. Where we live is increasingly defined by our income and social status. This has important implications for planners.

Not many of us can visibly experience the contrast of lived realities in different parts of the city on a daily basis. "What do you mean?" you say. Large cities have long been examples of poverty in the midst of astonishing affluence, the Toronto financial district executives side-by-side with the homeless and impoverished is a case in point. But it is not the guy asking for spare change on the subway who represents the principal face

of urban inequality. Panhandlers represent only the tip of the iceberg. Urban researchers keep telling us that more and more Canadians are facing housing affordability problems and the number of urban poor has increased over the last 30 years. Combined with a decrease in the affordable housing stock, families are struggling to make ends meet.

In my research I looked to the housing market as an indicator of social division. I used census data to identify areas of Toronto that have increased the most and least in their residential real estate values from 1971 to 2001. I then looked at how these neighbourhoods had changed in social composition and how they are served by amenities. The story is one of increasing segregation. The areas with the highest increases in real estate value saw an incremental increase of high-income earners and residents with higher levels of education. The areas growing the least attracted those with less education and lower incomes. The economic differences between the sample neighbourhoods increased over time.

I found the contrast between high-priced, single-family dwellings in picturesque neighbourhoods virtually adjacent to modest homes that have not seen a paint

brush since they were built over 50 years ago quite shocking. The areas that have not grown as much in real estate value display signs of urban decay and blight. These neighbourhoods are characterized by empty buildings, peeling facades and unattractive streetscapes. Areas that have grown the most in real estate value tended to be quieter, greener and more visually appealing. Our perception about the city is dramatically coloured by where we live.

Not surprisingly, the largest increase in housing values occurred in and around the inner city, the area south of Highway 401 and west of the Don Valley. Areas with lower housing prices are increasingly found in the older suburbs such as Etobicoke and Scarborough. This has contributed to a shift of lower-income households from the inner areas to the outer parts of the city. But there are also neighbourhoods in the older suburbs that have grown significantly in real estate value. The neighbourhoods in the older suburbs are further from personal, health and government services than those in the inner city. This finding is not unexpected. But the pressures of unequal development are persistent. My research suggested that only the lower value neighbourhoods in the outer areas have fewer amenities than the inner city. The areas in the older suburbs that have grown more in real estate value have as much or better access to services and other amenities than areas in the inner city. Real estate value growth is linked to proximity to services.

Unfortunately, the services are further from those who actually have fewer means to get to them. How far we have to travel to see a doctor or to inquire at a government office appears to be linked to how expensive our homes are.

One problem with decline is that passing judgment on the quality (or not) of an area seems to be self-fulfilling. Articles hinting at an area's attributes probably stimulate a positive reaction within the real estate market. Those areas growing less in real estate value tend to attract those with lower incomes who have fewer means to maintain their homes or attract services to their areas. It is not surprising that renewed inner-city areas have become attractive to

wealthy gentrifiers, for example. Creating equal cities without displacement should be the aim of our urban planning tactics, and planners at the City of Toronto have begun to work with community organizations to try to create better access to services in all areas of the city.

Perhaps there needs to be a debate about the role of planning in addressing urban inequality. One thing is certain, neighbourhoods that exclude people with lower incomes by virtue of their design reinforce the pressures that result in unequal development.

Obvious examples are gated communities and neighbourhoods with lots so large that only a few can afford them. While our intentions might be to guide the market's hidden hand, our actions can be a slap in the face of those without the means to purchase adequate housing. Perhaps there is a need for more processes that can help illuminate the exact impacts of planning decisions on neighbourhood inequality and social segregation.

Critics sometimes point back to earlier times and say our cities have actually grown

much more equal, citing examples of the slums of early industrial cities. Have cities always been unequal? Perhaps. Is the trend getting worse? Maybe. Should we stop writing about it for fear of being unoriginal, repetitive or even stating the obvious? Never! Only continued dialogue about the unequal treatment we receive based on who we are and where we live will help us come together and try to create a community of equals without despair and suffering. Now that would be a story worth writing about. Utopian dream?

Probably, but there is nothing like a good dream to make us aware of reality.

Markus Moos is a master's student in the School of Urban and Regional Planning at Queen's University. He gratefully acknowledges his supervisor, Professor Andrejs Skaburskis, and the financial support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institute of Planners.



Lower value areas can get stuck in a rut

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Aging and Mobility: What Other Countries Are Doing

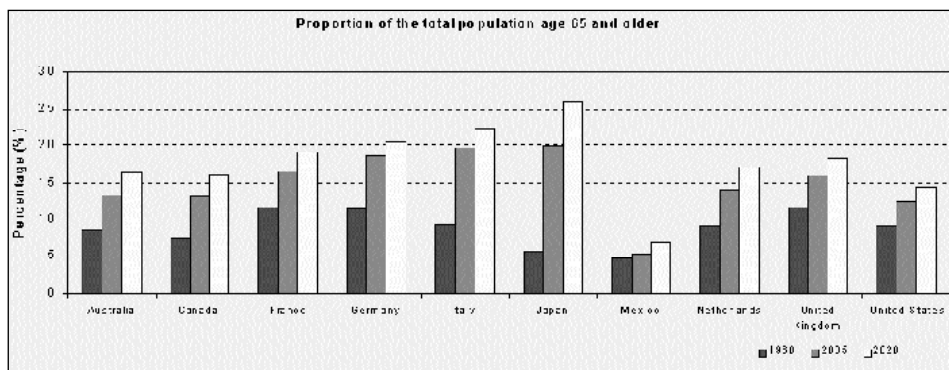
Glenn Miller, Gordon Harris and Ian Ferguson

This is the second of three articles that examine the challenges facing older Canadians as they adjust to declining levels of mobility. This article looks at how the rest of the world is tackling the issue; the series will conclude with recommendations for dealing with the situation in Canada.

Walking through any workplace today, we would be shocked to find people sitting at their desks puffing away on cigarettes. It would be just as surprising for guests at a party to look on benevolently as fellow party goers staggered towards their cars, clearly intoxicated. These are just two examples where attitudes and acceptable norms have completely altered in the space of a generation. People still smoke; and they still drink and drive. But laws and regulations are now in place, backed up by dramatically different social conventions, which represent a completely different view of the world compared to only 20 or 30 years ago.

Is it possible that our attitudes to aging and our approach to designing communities could undergo a similar shift? Compared to many other problems like racism or energy shortages, is dramatic change necessary or even desirable? The first article in this series identified a number of physical and practical problems with the way cities provide for people as they age. Our efforts to satisfy the demand for single family dwellings inadvertently created thousands of car-dependent, single-use communities across the country that lack accessible services and amenities. As their physical abilities decline, senior citizens will likely find that the same places which satisfied their needs so well when they were younger and mobile turn out to be hostile territory when they have to give up driving.

But misery loves company. Canada is not alone in facing such problems. Although Canada has been singled out by the OECD as a country where the pace of aging will have significant, measurable impacts on society, a number of places have begun to face up to demographic change. Many countries in the European Community are already experiencing massive pension shortfalls, for example, as the number of workers contributing to pension plans shrinks and



Canada's future rate of increase in seniors singled out by OECD
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the liabilities payable to retired workers increase. Demands on health care are also rising, putting pressure on those responsible for deciding spending priorities. Canada's current fixation with reducing hospital waiting times gives an insight into the difficult debates that await us.

Unlike Canada, the European Union has begun to make a concerted effort to address the myriad problems associated with an aging society. The U.K. was one of the first countries to embrace the issues with gusto. With a high proportion of seniors to the total population, the U.K. is clearly motivated to take action. Although, like many countries, there is evidence that the population is generally getting healthier, life expectancy is increasing at a faster rate. Advances in medicine have managed to prolong life, but there are fewer answers for how to extend the quality of living for those who live longer. As a result, current investment in long-term care facilities in Britain is spurring a mini-industry in its own right.

Over a decade ago, the U.K. established a ministerial working group called Active Ageing (their *e*, not ours). To address how to deal with the implications of demographic change, they established a "Foresight Programme," dedicated in part to protecting quality of life. It operates like a permanent royal commission, issuing reports on a five-year cycle with a process of consultations across the breadth and depth of society.

One of the topics addressed by the program is Design for Living, which deals with policies and regulations affecting local plan-

ning, housing and transport. Many cities have appointed Foresight Coordinators, and in the largest cities, there are programs that operate at the local scale. In London, the Foresight Coordinator is responsible for outreach to the business sector as well as the general public. One group that has responded to the entreaties of the coordinator is the industrial design sector, which, with colleagues in the rest of Europe, is busy developing new products and variations on existing ones with older people in mind. The European "Design for Ageing Network" sponsors partnerships between private industry and academic researchers to stimulate faster change.

Another urban centre with a remarkable track record in "responding to treatment" is the northern city of Leeds, which is home to a higher-than-average seniors population. The local bus company responded by investing in a fleet of low-floor buses, but was frustrated by the relatively poor response from seniors and others who could have been expected to applaud the arrival of these new machines. On the advice of seniors engaged in an on-going consultation process led by the local foresight coordinator, the bus company reassigned its low floor buses to routes where the seniors population was known to be highest. Rather than take the "equitable" step of distributing the fleet of low-floor buses across the city, Leeds was advised to concentrate the buses on a few, carefully selected routes so that customers knew that all buses on a particular route were always going to be low-floor. The bus company

managers noticed an immediate improvement in patronage by seniors. They then developed a “full quality package” whereby the drivers were given sensitivity training to improve their understanding of the needs of seniors. They worked with local businesses to upgrade bus stops and relocate them when necessary to make it easier for older people to use the bus. IT specialists enhanced the information systems, including making clearer announcements. Marketing specialists were employed to spread awareness of the program. In sum, thanks to the advice of the seniors using the system and a willingness on the part of the bus company employees to make improvements, the routes with low-floor buses enjoyed a phenomenal 70 percent increase in seniors ridership in the space of two years. As Leeds acquires more low-floor buses, the program will be gradually expanded to cover the entire city.

The special contribution made by the national government in this case is that the Foresight program is active in other sectors as well. But be careful what you wish for: as a result of lobbying and intense debate among employers, older workers and those in charge of private and public pensions, recommendations are currently working their way through the legislative process to consider raising the retirement age beyond 65. Similar forces are at work in Ontario, and as of December 31, 2006, mandatory retirement will no longer be enforceable. (This is a complex issue and there are exceptions.)

Another country that has taken the aging of its population seriously is Australia. An initiative that has sparked change within many levels of society is a National Speakers Series, sponsored by the Office for an Ageing Australia, a division of the department of Health and Ageing.

Interestingly, the choice of the word “ageing” suggests that the Aussies understand that ageing is a dynamic process with unique implications for planners. Because the demographic profile is literally changing all the time, this automatically results in a shift of perceptions and priorities, so the problems – and solutions – have to be constantly reassessed. When Canada’s seniors population comprised 10 percent of the total in the 1970s, forecasts about demographic change elicited a yawn. Now that the proportion of seniors in the population has doubled, the forecasts are getting more attention. Meanwhile, in Australia, the speakers initiative, which brings together planners, architects, builders, academics and policy makers, is called “A Community for

All Ages.” The series is inspired by Bernard Isaacs, founding director of the Birmingham Centre for Applied Gerontology. “Design for the young, and you exclude the old,” he says. “Design for the old and you include the young.” The series focuses on three themes:

- How the built environment shapes the mobility, independence and autonomy of the country’s senior citizens.
- How the built environment impacts on quality of life in old age.
- How it helps or impedes the quest for a healthy lifestyle at all ages.

A tangible issue of great concern in some Australian cities is that the isolation



Retirement at 65 no longer mandatory in Ontario?

imposed by lonely lives in car-dependent suburbs built since the war is forcing older citizens into long-term care much sooner than should be necessary. This is not only an unfortunate circumstance for the individuals involved, but imposes huge costs on government.

The final stop on this whirlwind tour is Japan, which may well have the highest proportion of seniors in the developed world. For reasons related to the war and its aftermath, Japan did not experience a baby boom. The turning point for Japanese policy on aging stems from a 1986 report that predicted a rapid increase in the number of seniors. The report forecast that by 2030, one in 25 Japanese would be 65 or over.

Worryingly, without the option of massive immigration to swell the ranks of workers, the number of people eligible to contribute to generous old-age pensions and special payments to cover the cost of services required by older citizens would fall to dangerously low levels. The response was as well planned as the rapid improvements in the quality of automobiles that has seen companies like Toyota and Honda take their place as leaders in the global auto industry.

The Minister of Construction immediately launched a five-year project to target improved standards in housing, transportation, town planning and the components of the public realm that are the responsibility of government such as stairways, public washrooms and street furniture. Shortly after passing the Accessible Transport law in 2000, the national government then took the unprecedented step of adopting the concept of Universal Design, to be applied to the entire country. The resolution adopted by the Diet (the parliament) translates roughly as, “[The government will] promote the formation of a universal society by setting out guidelines for accommodating the disabled and the elderly; implementing and retrofitting products and facilities so they are made in the universal design method; and strengthen relevant regulations and public finance.” Just five years later, visitors to the R&D design showrooms of Panasonic and Toyota can see prototypes and other evidence that Universal Design is moving from concept to reality.

The examples briefly described in this article illustrate how innovative government policy and strong leadership can both engage society and leverage the powerful forces of industry to mutual benefit. Canada has the resources and the brainpower to set its own standards in preparation for the aging of society. The concluding article in this series will explain how this can be accomplished.

Glenn Miller, FCIP, RPP, is director of education and research with the Canadian Urban Institute in Toronto and editor of this magazine. Gordon Harris, MCIP, is the principal of Harris Consulting Inc. in Vancouver and a frequent contributor.

Ian Ferguson, MD, FRCPC, is an old-age psychiatrist practicing in Toronto. They are working on a book on this subject. Part three of the series will appear in the November/December issue of the Ontario Planning Journal.

Canadian Urbanism group formed in Vancouver

Broadening the base for urban design

Alex Taranu and Dan Leeming



Photo: Jeffrey Zhang

Larry Beasley shows the way

Since 2000, the CIP National Urban Design Group has attempted to bring together professionals interested in urban design. At the Calgary conference last year, the core group met and decided to work on the idea of forming a broad, inter-disciplinary national body, to expand the dialogue to the other main professional organizations involved in urban design and to establish contacts across Canada. This idea became a reality recently at the Super Saturday event on June 17 in Vancouver jointly organized by CIP, the RAIC and the CSLA, in conjunction with the World Planners Congress and the World Urban Forum.

The first “Canadian Urbanism Forum” attracted over 60 professionals. This event had two distinct parts:

“Canadian Urbanism from Coast to Coast” was a presentation of current urban design practice illustrated with relevant examples spanning our country from St. John’s and Halifax to Vancouver and Victoria. Prepared through a concentrated effort from a number of contributors, this presentation was realized through the generous efforts of the Planning Partnership firm of Toronto, coordinated by Dan Leeming, hosted by Rick Merrill and included:

- Andy Fillmore, Urban Design Project Manager in Halifax;
- Aurele Cardinal, architect and urbanist from Cardinal Hardy of Montreal;
- Robert Freedman, Toronto’s Director of Urban Design, Dan Leeming, partner with

the Planning Partnership, and Eric Turcotte, associate with Urban Strategies of Toronto;

- Brent Toderian, Manager, Centre City Planning + Design in Calgary;
- Larry Beasley, (then) Director of Planning in Vancouver,

Despite the limited time available, this presentation effectively illustrated urban design practice and experience across the nation and—as far as we know—was the first attempt ever made to do so. It showed a wide variety of issues and challenges but also a very consistent interest in the creation or places of meaning and interest, of cities, neighbourhoods and public spaces that nurture and support the common goals across the nation of quality of life, and sustainable development with a strong character, based on our own identity and traditions.

The ideas presented included:

- Create a national body (the name presented was “Canadian Urbanism” to coordinate activities and organize professionals with an interest in urban design.
- Refine the draft Canadian Urbanism Manifesto, to summarize its main characteristics and the group principles, goals and objectives.
- Secure support from all professional organizations including CIP, RAIC and CSLA
- Involve other national players such as CMHC, Canadian Urban Institute and

others, in the group’s activities.

- Expand the presentation to include other examples from other provinces and cities, raising awareness of a wider selection of urban design issues.
- Develop the presentation as the core a symposium on urban design in 2007 or 2008 where a full dialogue will take place.
- A core group of representatives from across the country will be set up as an executive body to continue the initiative with specific roles assigned to each member.
- A web site will be set up and work will proceed to establish the group’s identity, with the presentation and the event materials as the first materials to be posted. A web discussion group should be formed and participation and exchange of ideas across the country be enabled and encouraged.
- The importance of urban design education was highlighted and the possibility to form an interest group among educators was mentioned.

This was an important moment in the history of Canadian urbanism, of urban design history and practice and with a sense of high energy and commitment from all present. Many offered their support and asked to be included on the communication list and the follow up events. The dialogue was expanded to key participants from Quebec, Manitoba and pan-Canadian representation was strengthened. Offers for contributions and models for organization were discussed and the commitment in principle from CIP and RAIC was secured with offers for support and sponsorship from a number of firms and national bodies.

(For further coverage in this issue, see page 24.)

Those interested in materials related to this event and initiative please watch the CIP NUDIG Web site (http://www.cip-icu.ca/English/aboutplan/ud_welc.htm) as well as the future upcoming CanU web site. For more information and to be part of the CanU discussion group, please contact: Alex Taranu, MCIP, RPP, manager with the City of Brampton. He can be reached at alex.taranu@brampton.ca. Dan Leeming, MCIP, RPP, is a partner with the Planning Partnership in Toronto. He can be reached at dleeming@planpart.ca.

Central

Waste Not, Want Not— Celebrate Waste Reduction Week in Canada 2006

Greg McDonald

Waste-free living—as big as this goal seems, there are things each and every one of us can do to further it. Participating in Waste Reduction Week (WRW) in Canada is a good first step. During October 16 to 22, 2006, the Recycling Council of Ontario (RCO) wants you to implement waste reduction methods into your everyday life.

Originally launched in 1984 as Recycling Week, WRW in Canada is now developed and delivered through a collaborative effort of Provincial Environmental Not-for-Profit Organizations from across Canada. Representatives from each of these organizations design the national campaign and

spearhead efforts to implement the program in their respective provincial and territorial jurisdictions. The program's aim is to inform and engage Canadians about the environmental and social ramifications of wasteful practices.


The WRW in Canada Program has enjoyed a great deal of expansion during its first years of development. Over these years, the number of participants in all three target audiences, schools, local governments and small to medium-sized businesses, have more than doubled. In 2005, more than 10,000 schools, 3,400 municipalities and 2,500 businesses received WRW resources and became ambassadors of the program.



WRW in Canada is the only national program promoting waste reduction ideals to the Canadian public. The program is unique in that it provides encouraging and engaging

messages, coupled with “simple and doable” daily living suggestions to Canadians. The program is about “action” relying on participants to incorporate its’ messages when shopping, working, at play and in the community. WRW in Canada has a col-

lection of current, accurate, user-friendly and creative promotional and resource materials, custom-made to support each of the target audiences. All of these materials can be viewed by visiting the website at www.wrwcanda.com.




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OPPI Builds its First Habitat for Humanity House!

Ann Tremblay and Nadia De Santi

Good news...Planners can plan and fund-raise!

As you've heard before, the Eastern District of OPPI launched on November 2, 2004, a campaign to raise \$75,000 to build a Habitat for Humanity project to be known as OPPI House. Who knew what we were into, but 22 months later here we are, OPPI House is a reality and standing proudly at 855 Pinecrest Rd. in Ottawa. Can a second OPPI House be far behind? Maybe Central or some soon-to-be-created district may want to take up the challenge. The Eastern District can tell you this if you do, there's no greater sense of contribution, nor better approach to team-building district-wide and fostering partnerships with the development community than endeavouring together towards a worthwhile cause.

Planners on the Ground

You all know Habitat for Humanity: it is a non-government, non-profit organization that builds simple, decent, affordable houses for working, low-income families. Potential Habitat for Humanity families are working families living in inadequate housing, and once selected for Habitat home ownership, are required and indeed eager to contribute 500 hours of "sweat equity."

Planners Build from the Ground Up

"Having a decent, affordable home gives a family stability and an opportunity for chil-

Thanks to all who helped make OPPI House a reality.

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dren to grow up in a safe environment, in a community where the whole family can contribute. The pride of ownership that these families exhibit is incredible," says Donna Hicks, the Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity NCR.

And who made OPPI House a reality? Many, many people and organizations, that's for sure. On the OPPI front, support from Council got the ball rolling, which then allowed a very dedicated group of volunteer planners, the Fundraising Committee, to begin working together to raise the necessary funds. Through generous donations from corporate and individual sponsors and numerous fundraising events, a grand total of \$75,000 was raised. Memorable events include a tremendously successful Gala in November 2005 at the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa,

(over 300 people from the Eastern District, the community, public and private sectors, developers, and other professional organizations attended), a House Crawl and silent auctions.

Today OPPI House is more than a structure; it is home to an El Salvadorian family of 6, who are active in their church community and have helped to build both their own home and other Habitat homes in El Salvador. We wish the family much happiness and fulfillment in their new home and neighbourhood surroundings.

Special thanks to all our very generous corporate and individual donors.

Ann Tremblay, MCIP RPP, is the planning director, airport planning at the Ottawa International Airport Authority and can be reached at Ann.Tremblay@Ottawa-Airport.ca.

Nadia De Santi, MCIP RPP, is a planner at FoTenn Consultants Inc. in Ottawa and can be reached at desanti@fotenn.com. They are the fundraising co-chairs for this project.



OPPI made a tangible difference

Brenton Toderian Lands Top Job in Vancouver

Brenton Toderian, who left Ontario some years ago to work for the City of Calgary, where most recently he was in charge of the downtown plan, has been selected to replace the recently retired **Larry Beasley** as director of Vancouver's planning department. Brenton has maintained strong ties with his Ontario colleagues, including playing a role in the development of a national focus on urban design. Faithful readers of the *Ontario Planning Journal* will remem-



Brenton Toderian

ber Brenton's contributions on downtown planning and related issues when he was a consultant with MHBC Planning in Kitchener.

Douglas W. Stewart, who is an Associate and Senior Planner with Planning & Engineering Initiatives Ltd. in Kitchener has been elected as President of the Waterloo Region Home Builders' Association for 2006/2007. Douglas will use his over 30 years of municipal and private professional experience on behalf of the Association. Douglas is also Vice Chair of Land Committee with the Ontario Home Builders' Association, and a member of the Urban Council and Board of Directors for the Canadian Home Builders' Association. Douglas can be reached at dstewart@peil.net.



Douglas Stewart

Earlier this year, Tunnock Consulting Ltd welcomed **Andrew Pascuzzo** to their practice. Andrew, who will be based at Tunnock's Perth office, graduated from the University of Waterloo with a B.E.S. Honours Planning/Decision Support and GIS Specialization. His speciality is landscape design. **Greg Bender**, a vice president with the firm, is now managing the Windsor office. Greg is promoting the use of a "Virtual Zoning By-law," a tool that helps people understand zoning by-laws with visual aids. The graphical demonstration of these diagrams may be used for anything from public meetings showing proposed site design to site plan control. More information on Tunnock's ambitions for serving southwestern Ontario can be found at www.tunnockconsulting.ca or by calling 800-924-0128.

Narism Katary has retired from the OMB. Prior to his lengthy tenure at the Board, Narism was director of planning at the City of Sudbury. In addition to many professional accomplishments, he chaired a major planning conference there in the early 1980s, an event noted for its impact on planning in Ontario.



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Katherine Larkin— An Appreciation

Katherine Dianne Emerson Larkin, MCIP, RPP, passed away at the age of 47 on August 20, 2006, after a 16-month battle with ovarian cancer. Katherine, or to those who knew her, Kath, graduated with honours from the School of Planning at the University of Waterloo in 1982. After graduation she began working at the Town of Newmarket. In 1986 she was appointed Director of Planning, becoming at the age of 27 the youngest planning director in York Region. Over the 16 years she was employed by the Town, 12 as Director, the Town's population doubled. During this time Katherine participated in many key projects including adop-



Katherine Larkin

tion of the Town's current zoning by-law, as well as the 1996 Official Plan and represented the Town professionally in numerous OMB hearings. Those who were fortunate enough to have the opportunity to work with Katherine appreciated her integrity, professionalism and her solution-oriented approach to planning matters. Katherine also provided an opportunity for planners starting their career and was a tremendous role model and mentor.

In 1998, Katherine left the Town to devote her energies to her family, her three children's increasing social activity needs, her two dogs and her garden. She maintained her connection with the planning profession as a principal of LARKIN+ Associates Planning Consultants Inc. Her counsel was a valued resource to the firm.

Katherine always brought her practical and problem-solving abilities to every task she undertook. She was a Past Warden of St. Paul's Anglican Church in Newmarket and was involved as a volunteer in numerous community activities, including the Newmarket Skating Club, the Iced Energy Synchronized Skating Club and Girl Guides of Canada. Katherine was loved and respected by all who knew her and her energy, humour, enthusiasm and love of life will be truly missed. Katherine leaves behind her husband of 19 years, Michael, and three children; Kate (16), Tom (14) and Beth (11).

Michelle Banfield was a friend of Katherine's who works at Larkin + Associates.

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Making a Difference On the Ground

Gary Davidson

The Romero family, mother, father and three kids, stood looking excited. They shifted their glance between the looming thunderstorm and the vacant patch of ground where their new house would grow. It was a new start for the Romeroes, in a house they could call their own.

A few weeks earlier Stephen Lewis held the closing session of the World Planners Conference in rapt attention as he cried out to the planning profession to advocate for radical change to improve human dignity. Everyone took the message to heart, some with tears in their eyes, and pondered how they could meet such a gargantuan challenge.

Rising to the task of improving human dignity in the world is a serious challenge for Ontario's planners. It can be met in ways both local and international, all equally important. Two recent activities serve as examples.

The Romeroes will live in OPPI House, which represents an amazing initiative of the Eastern District of OPPI; over the past year the Eastern District has been in partnership with Habitat for Humanity to raise money to build a house. Yes, a house. They achieved their goal and on July 29 the ground-breaking ceremony took place. By the time you read this article the house will be under construction. Part of the construction will be undertaken with sweat equity donated by planners from the Ottawa area.

As well, the Ottawa planners donned their policy hats to give further assistance. They created the business case rationale for why Habitat for Humanity, in building cooperative housing for families in need, should not have to pay certain development charges. This helped the Romero family get

into their house faster and left a lasting contribution for future projects by Habitat for Humanity in the City of Ottawa.

Another effort, of a wide scope, that OPPI has been instrumental in, is the founding of Urbanistes Sans Frontières/Planners Without Borders (USF / PWB). The idea originated with Quebec planners through L'ordre des urbanistes de Quebec, and, with the help of OPPI and CIP, the organization was developed at the World Planners Conference as a CIP as a legacy project.

Urbanistes Sans Frontière, is an innovative way to finance planning cooperation between developed countries to assist developing areas of the world. It is another level of response to Stephen Lewis's appeal to advocate and improve human dignity. A website has been established and you can learn more in the coming months by clicking on www.usf-pwb.org. Even at the conference, planners from all over Canada were asking

how they could get involved and help.

Planners in Ontario are involved at many levels—from the ground up—in the quest to improve human dignity, both at home and around the world. I hope you will get involved in whatever manner suits your perspective. There is a great deal that needs to be done.

As for the Romero family, the rains held off, the ground was broken. They should be in their new home with their new community later this fall.

Gary Davidson, FCIP, RPP, is President of OPPI, and the principal of his own consulting practice. He can be reached at davidson@scsinternet.com.



Gary Davidson



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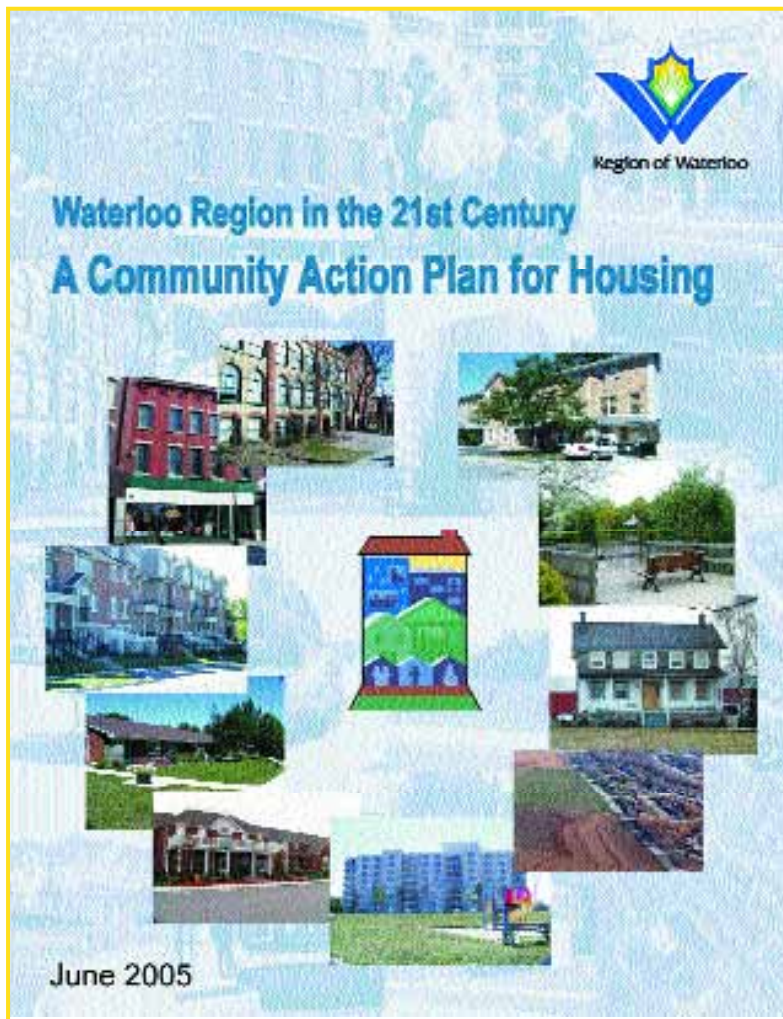


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REGION OF WATERLOO PLANNING – HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES Waterloo in the 21st Century: A Community Action Plan for Housing

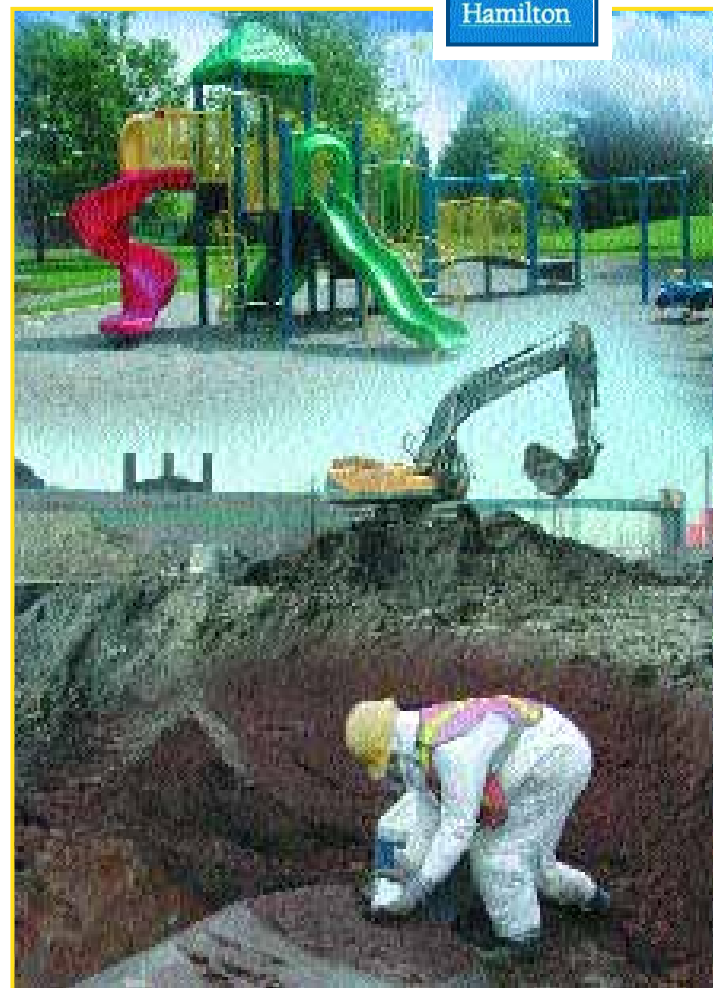
Not all municipalities make a direct connection between growth management and affordable housing, but the Region of Waterloo has a reputation for forward thinking and innovation. This action plan links the two with a strategy to address current housing gaps and plan for future housing needs in the Region. It addresses everything from urban design to infrastructure to accessibility, with 49 actions, each of which is aimed at a particular group of stakeholders and has a clear timeframe for completion. The plan, which was developed through extensive community consultation, is available in hard copy, on CD and on the Region's website, with brochures designed to help the public understand the issues. In the words of the jury, "Housing has never before been studied at this level of sophistication. [It] will have a profound impact on housing in the Region."



RESEARCH/NEW DIRECTIONS

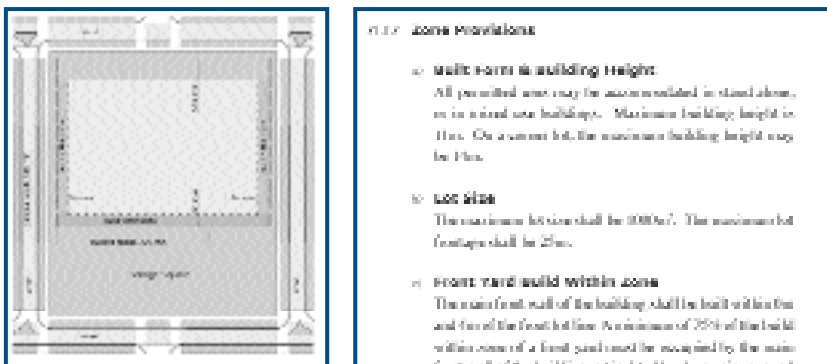
CITY OF HAMILTON PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT Contaminated Sites Management Program for Municipal Works

The City of Hamilton has long been a leader in the management and restoration of brownfield sites. This award recognizes the City's innovation in integrating the management of contaminated sites into the process of planning. Under the program, as part of the evaluation of sites for development or redevelopment, planners and project managers must consider the sub-surface characteristics of the site and evaluate the impact of known, potential, or even perceived contamination of the soil and groundwater. The program, which was launched in January 2005, includes staff training and continuous feedback from planners using the program. The jury praised the way in which the program ensures a consistent approach to development and the way the new requirements link land use planning with infrastructure planning.



THE PLANNING PARTNERSHIP AND DILLON CONSULTING LIMITED Bouffard and Howard Planning Districts: Illustrated Zoning By-law and Development Standards Manual, Town of LaSalle

Traditional zoning by-laws are usually written in dense technical and legal jargon. The link between the overall objectives and the details of specific provisions are unclear at best and non-existent at worst. In this innovative document, that all-important link is clarified with photographs and diagrams as well as words. The proof of the document's success is that new development in the Town of LaSalle is achieving the character of built form intended in the by-law, and the fact that other municipalities are using it as a prototype for their own zoning by-laws. The jury called it "an outstanding piece of work" and stated that they felt it "would have a significant impact on the way municipalities approach zoning and urban design in the future."





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WORKING GROUP
Seizing Opportunity in Urban Development**

Planners in municipalities across the province want to promote compact, pedestrian-friendly developments, but many have a hard time “selling” the idea to the public and to developers. The Region of Waterloo tackled this perennial problem head on with a public-private partnership to improve collaboration and communication among development industry stakeholders and to educate the community on the benefits of reurbanization. The Working Group brings together staff from local municipalities and the Region with members of the Waterloo Region Home Builders’ Association. The builders and developers set the priorities for the group. The group’s achievements include a community forum, held in June 2005, and a feasibility study to demonstrate the market potential for housing in the form of infill, intensification, adaptive reuse, or redevelopment. The jury was particularly impressed by success of the community forum, which brought together about 250 people over three days and gained good media coverage.

JUDGES

OPPI would like to thank all those who served on the juries of the 2006 Excellence in Planning awards.

- Manon Belle-Isle, MCIP, RPP, Town of Hawkesbury
- Cindy Fisher, MCIP, RPP, County of Huron
- David Gordon, MCIP, RPP, Queen’s University
- Anne Harris, MCIP, RPP, Ministry of Natural Resources
- Ian Kilgour, MCIP, RPP, City of North Bay
- Brenna MacKinnon, MCIP, RPP,
Regional Municipality of Waterloo
- Leslie McEachern, MCIP, RPP, City of Thunder Bay
- Geoff McKnight, MCIP, RPP,
Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury
- Rino Mostacci, MCIP, RPP, Town of Fort Erie
- Gerry Murphy, MCIP, RPP, Municipality of Chatham-Kent
- Michael Otis, MCIP, RPP, United Counties of Stormont,
Dundas and Glengarry
- Jeff Port, MCIP, RPP, City of Kenora
- Chandra Sharma, MCIP, RPP, Toronto and Region
Conservation Authority
- Pamela Sweet, MCIP, RPP, FoTenn Consultants
- Heather Watson, MCIP, RPP, SGS
- Richard Zelinka, MCIP, RPP, Zelinka Priamo Ltd.



Lee Ann Doyle



Martin Rendl



Janet Amos



Drew M. Crinklaw



Caroline J. Draper



Dr. Andrew Pipe

Member Service Awards

Lee Ann Doyle, MCIP, RPP

Since her days as a student representative of CIP in the 1980s at the University of Waterloo, Lee Ann Doyle has been a leader in her profession. Before OPPI was formed, she was active in the South Western Ontario Chapter of CIP – her work has taken her to Sarnia, Essex, and Maidstone and she is now based in Windsor. She has served on OPPI's membership committee and nominations committee, been a judge for the Excellence in Planning awards, and helped organize the OPPI conference in Windsor in 1999. She is strongly committed to the idea and practice of mentorship – not only did she serve on OPPI's mentoring committee, but she also initiated and implemented an employee mentoring program at the City of Windsor based on the OPPI mentoring guidelines. She has received a certificate of achievement from the CIP and is listed on the Institute's honour roll.

Martin Rendl, MCIP, RPP

Martin Rendl served two terms on OPPI Council as Central District Representative, and spearheaded the consultation process on the division of Central District into four new districts. The final recommendation on restructuring received the unanimous support of Council. Martin's involvement with OPPI on policy matters has included the City of Toronto Act, the Oak Ridges Moraine, the Development Permit System, and the OMB policy paper. His work on other OPPI initiatives includes the Millennium Strategic Plan, governance policies, and World Town Planning Day events in Central District. He is currently the Central District treasurer and coordinates OPPI input to the Toronto Zoning By-law Project. Martin was OPPI's representative on CIP's Plan Canada Task Force and served on the 2004 Joint OPPI/CIP Conference Committee for which he organized several popular sessions and led a winning team in the scavenger hunt.

Janet Amos, MCIP, RPP

Janet Amos is vice-chair of the Lakeland Planners – Central District, a position she has held for four years. Since joining the Simcoe-Muskoka-Dufferin Sub-District in 2001, Amos has challenged the group to develop a broader membership, a new name, and a clear identity. The Lakeland Planners have hosted numerous events, including the wildly successful "Festivus for the Rest of Us" holiday party. During her tenure, the Lakeland group can boast the most funds raised for the Central District Scholarship fund and the most participants in the 2005 Planning Act review forum. In 2003 she served on the conference committee for the OPPI conference in Deerhurst Resort by organizing the mobile workshops. Well-known as a supporter of high professional standards for OPPI members, she has also served as a member of the OPPI Natural Resources Working Group, among other policy initiatives.

Scholarships

GERALD CARROTHERS GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP Drew M. Crinklaw

Drew Crinklaw is working in London as a Rural Planner for the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs while completing his thesis for the Master's program in Rural Planning at the University of Guelph. His research concerns the protection of agricultural land and functions near urban areas. It is a topic close to his heart, since he grew up on a farm within the city limits of London. Drew spent summer 2005 working for the County of Middlesex in the Department of Planning and Economic Development, and summer 2006 working for the County of Huron's Planning and Development Department. He has worked as a research assistant for the Farmland Preservation Research Project at the University of Guelph and served on the Graduate Student Council at the university. Currently he serves on the Board of Directors for the Ontario Farmland Trust. Drew looks forward to further exploring planning concepts with others interested in agriculture and rural affairs.

UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Caroline J. Draper

Caroline Draper is studying planning at the University of Waterloo in the cooperative program. Her work terms have included stints at the City of Kitchener Planning Department, the legal firm of Davies Howe Partners, and the Regional Municipality of Waterloo's Transit system. She has participated in the OPPI government and legislation working group, served as the treasurer of the Waterloo Environmental Studies Endowment Fund and various roles on Waterloo's Planning Student Association. She has just finished her undergraduate thesis, which investigated the relationship between transportation accessibility and actual travel behaviour. She plans to pursue a master's degree in the near future.

Honorary Member

Dr. Andrew Pipe

This year, OPPI is pleased to designate an honorary member. Honorary membership is intended to recognize the work of non-planners who contribute to OPPI's goal of "Great Communities." Our new member is Andrew Pipe, C.M., M.D., LL.D.(Hon), D.Sc.(Hon), Director, Prevention and Rehabilitation Centre, University of Ottawa Heart Institute. Dr. Andrew Pipe is recognized as one of Canada's leading experts in physical activity and health and cardiovascular disease prevention. In addition to his clinical responsibilities, Dr. Pipe is extensively involved in sports and sport medicine. President-elect of the Commonwealth Games Association, he served as the chief medical officer to Canada's 1992 Summer Olympic Team in Barcelona and has been the team physician for Canada's National Men's Basketball Team since 1978. He is the recipient of the International Olympic Committee's Award for Sport, Health and Wellbeing. His honorary membership in OPPI recognizes his work in raising awareness of the health impacts of physical inactivity, and his promotion of strategies for improving health through planning for active living, in particular physically active commuting to work.

Supporting Growth From the Inside Out Unlocking the Potential of Brownfields Suggests that Reurbanization Need Not Be a Pipe Dream

Glenn Miller

The world of planning in Ontario has undergone many changes in the past few years, most of them positive.

Although there is still work to be done, the accomplishments of the province in creating and adopting the Growth Plan and other critical elements of planning reform, cannot be ignored. The twin thrusts of a focus on reurbanization—embracing a long-term commitment to brownfields—and carefully managed greenfields expansion make good sense.

Central to the success of provincial planning reform is a recognition that for bold new policy to be accepted as credible by people whose decisions spell the difference between implementation and irrelevance, there must be certainty and consistency, coupled with strategic investment in infrastructure.

A case in point is the immense swath of employment lands surrounding Pearson Airport—the subject of this issue's insightful cover story by Antony Lorius. He documents how sticking to the script on land use around the airport has paid off for both government and the private sector to the tune of billions of dollars in annual tax and corporate revenues. This is not to say that the policies have not been challenged or that change and innovation has not been possible. There has also been continued massive public investment in 400-series highways that have endowed the area with unparalleled accessibility. But the time has come to renew the investment cycle, this time focusing on transit. Now that this area is front and centre in the newly adopted Growth Plan, it makes sense to return to the tried and true formula of deciding on a policy direction, investing in infrastructure improvements and facilitating private-sector reinvestment. As Lorius points out, the Pearson area represents the best chance for success in the desire to intensify employment lands.

Mindset plays a huge role in determining what is possible and what is not.

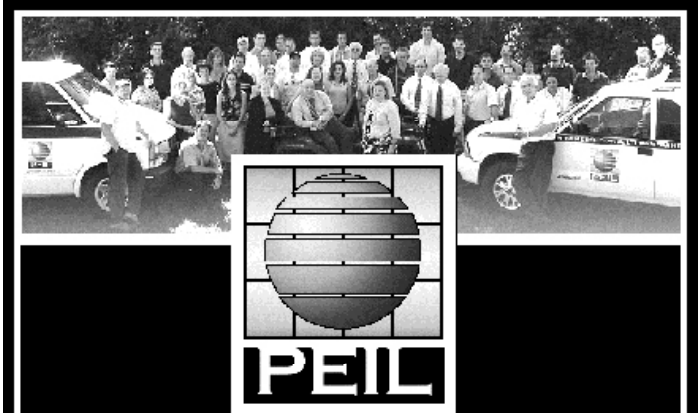
The impact of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe is an example of this. Although it deals with only a fraction of the provincial land mass, its adoption clearly signals a resolve that one hopes can be sustained through 2007—an election year—and beyond. The plan is deservedly attracting notice from other jurisdictions, but admiration can quickly turn to cynicism if the resolve is perceived to be weakening. The events unfolding in various parts of the 905 need careful scrutiny, in that regard.

To achieve its full potential, the plan needs to be supported by consistent decisions from every ministry. The philosophical equilibrium needs to be maintained as well. The integrity of the Growth Plan requires as much attention to source water protection as it does to heritage, as it does to brownfields

redevelopment and a host of new tools contemplated by Bill 51.

Nothing drains the appetite for economic investment like uncertainty. This is a concept learned in Real Estate 101. All the more reason, then, for the province to come forward with policies that move the yardsticks on brownfields, which continue to be the centrepiece of reurbanization. Removing barriers to regulatory uncertainty in brownfields would help unlock investment potential in dozens of core area brownfields throughout the province.

Glenn R. Miller, FCIP, RPP, is editor of the Ontario Planning Journal and director, education and research, with the Canadian Urban Institute in Toronto. He can be reached at editor@ontarioplanning.com.



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More Developers Moving to Brownfields

Bronwyn Krog

Chairing the brownfields conference this October is an exciting prospect – it allows me to share my enthusiasm for brownfields projects. These properties tend to be extremely well located from a real estate perspective, and while there are often contaminants present in soils, familiarity with the process makes it a routine and easily managed proposition.

Most of the clean-ups we deal with in Toronto result from landfills which occurred when standards were non-existent or considerably lower than those of today, or from care-

less disposal of petroleum products, cleaning solvents, or acids in the past. In fact, I would expect that in Toronto today, most every infill site has some level of remediation to address to meet either the industrial/commercial or the residential/parkland soil remediation standards. It's just a part of doing development. Developers are actually making a huge contribution in our urbanized environments to cleaner and greener city living.

Planning for large-scale site cleanups is also step one in the opportunity to work on some of the most interesting and challenging master-planned projects in our cities. How often does one get the chance to plan the development of new communities within walking distance of downtown and the waterfront? It takes a huge financial and time commitment for developers to wade through the legislative and regulatory processes (and the actual clean-up and disposal), but there are many professionals in all the involved fields that are year-by-year becoming ever more skilled and expert in their various practices.

Developers (or planners with a strong development bent...) and their professional consultants are working with the regulators, and providing feedback to the City and Provincial officials, to help continuously refine our laws and processes for remediating



Bronwyn Krog

brownfields to current “best practices.”

It is enormously satisfying to work on reclamation of a brownfield—to watch it emerge as a newly productive community and commercial area over time, knit into the surrounding city. There is a lot of gratification to be had from being involved in creating a vision, creating land value where it did not exist before, and designing the implementation strategy to realize that new place over time. Ultimately one aspires to make a place that people will take pleasure in, that they will choose to live or work or hang out or be entertained in, and that will be sought after as a preferred setting for the

routine of daily life and special occasions alike. And in our contemporary cities, such aspirations generally start with understanding the magnitude and cost of the mundane—what will it take to clean up the soil on this particular piece of land for this particular land use?

Bronwyn Krog, MCIP, RPP, is vice president of Wittingdon Properties Ltd. She is chairing the 2006 Canadian Brownfields Network conference to be held on October 26-27 at the Toronto Congress Centre. (See billboard for details.)

Letters

Cuban Lessons Abound

I thoroughly enjoyed the June-July issue and read it cover to cover. Paul Bedford's article on Sustainability by Necessity in Cuba particularly inspired me, as I too am fascinated by the creativity and tenacity with which Cubans are facing their challenges. What puzzled me however, was why Paul left out the amazing urban agriculture program—a most fundamental part of sustainability—and the child care system, an important part of social sustainability. Does it imply that Western and Canadian planning does not consider availability of food and the care of the young—or old, for that matter—as the mandate of our profession? Or equally indicting, is it because providing meals in the home and looking after young children or elderly is still considered women's work, still economically unrecognized and taken for granted? When will reforms of the *Planning Act* address the areas of food security and social services—not counting the stillborn NDP attempt in the 90's?

Yes, Bedford is right “Western democracies often view civilization through one prism of economics without the additional lenses of social perspective”—including gender equity.

Reggie Modlich is a retired member of the Institute.

Autos have changed the shape of our communities

Thanks for your article regarding issues of mobility among older Canadians when their ability to use a car declines or disappears.

As you accurately describe, since the Second World War we have to a large extent created a built form in Canada that is dependent upon cars in order to interact with our communities – be it visiting friends, taking kids to soccer, shopping, going to work and visiting health professionals.

The car, like many technologies before it, has changed the shape of our communities and how we relate to them. Imagine life without a telephone, Internet or railways to move goods and people around. All is fine as long as you are able to use the technology.

Losing the ability to drive in many rural areas, small towns and suburbs can lead to a significant loss of mobility which in turn leads to a loss of independence – something most cherish deeply. In past decades planners have already had to consider the needs of Baby Boomers – big yards for their kids to play in, an ever-growing number of schools and recreation centres for their kids and highways and public transit systems to move them between their homes in the suburbs and their jobs in larger cities. Now the kids are growing up, starting families of their own

and the Boomers are continuing to age.

Boomers' needs and wants in their senior years, as they experience challenges to mobility, independence and seek more community and health services, need to be an important part of planning our communities going forward.

*Christian Fisker, M.A., M.C.I.P.,
VP – Development, Spectrum Seniors
Housing Development*

Design for everyone

I appreciated your article about the mobility of seniors. However, I think that the problem is much deeper than satisfying the requirements of seniors (notwithstanding that I am extremely senior). A sizable segment of the urban population is deprived of the freedom of movement, including young people and the impecunious.

Low-density housing does create a problem. However, driving low-income residents out of the downtown area (as has occurred in recent years in Toronto) to areas far from possible employment creates a transportation demand. So does the tendency to close small schools and replace them with monsters with a large catchment area. Perhaps one should tackle the root of the problem and try to reduce the need for transportation (as you do suggest with respect to neighbourhood stores). The means are not only in physical city planning, but also in the many public instruments that may either support or thwart the intention such as the several forms of taxation, public housing policy, location of public facilities.

*Blanche van Ginkel, MCIP, RPP,
is an award-winning planner and architect
living in Toronto.*

Civility a lost cause?

I loved Philippa Campsie's article The Inaccessibility of the Constantly Accessible. This is a theme that I have researched for the last eight years.

Below are some statements I use in a slide

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send letters to editor@ontarioplanning.com

Formatting do's and don'ts:

Do name your files ("OPPI article" doesn't help) and do include
biographical information.

Don't send us PDFs. Don't embed graphics
with text.

[in my e-mail workshops] titled Rudeness Rant. I think rudeness has reached epidemic proportions and deserves lots of comment. This is more about venting than any real hope for a return to civility.

At meetings:

- Start by placing your BlackBerry on the table where everyone can see it.
- Use it continually to let others know they don't have anything important to say.

In your office:

- Keep keying while you talk on the phone.
- Constantly watch your monitor while someone is talking to you.

In restaurants:

- Always leave your cell phone on.
- Talk very loudly so everyone can hear you.

*Peter A. (TBS) Turner works in Ottawa
and maintains a website:
www.themailshrink.com.*

*He can be reached at
Turner.PeterA@tbs-sct.gc.ca.*

Time to Update Design Guidelines for Transit-supportive Land Use

The most recent Ontario Planning Journal's cover photo of two elderly women advancing down a sidewalk next to a 4-lane street made an excellent visual accompaniment to the question "Mobility Under Attack: Are Older Canadians Ready to Live Without Their Cars?" But the elderly are just one part of the "mobility question." Mobility is also an issue for the parents pushing children in strollers, and teenagers on their way across town to an Air Cadets meeting. Access to public transit is a key component in mobility for all three groups. Ontario's Transit Supportive Land Use Planning Guidelines a good place for planners to find mobility-enhancing ideas. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs publication is now 15 years old and out of stock. My suggestion is that OPPI initiate a joint venture with the province to update and enhance it to the Pedestrian, Bicycle and Transit-Supportive Land Use Guidelines. As the cover story points out, only two percent of seniors move from cars to transit, so let's plan for alternatives now. It is also worth noting that in developing Building Code standards for the disabled during the mid-1990s, Ontario drew heavily on legislation in U.S. states, which were leaders in the field as a result of the impact of disabled Vietnam war veterans. But where do we look for examples of land use planning for Ontario's aging population?

Do we consider the mythical lady who has taken residence on the QE2 as an alternative to a nursing home? Do we look to the Florida gated retirement communities? How about looking to our own Elliot Lake—why are seniors attracted there? I suspect is a combination of affordability, mixed land use and access to social services. But to find out what works in your community, check it out, do a survey of your seniors and disabled, what's important for them. Look globally—act locally.

*Mary Ellen Warren, MCIP, RPP,
lives in Toronto.*

The Tipping Point for Seniors?

I read with interest the recent article on Mobility Under Attack. An issue experienced here in Niagara Falls and of recent concern at City Council is that many seniors are resorting to the use of motorized scooters (3 and 4 wheel varieties) to get around town once their licences are forfeited or physical condition declines. However, they complain that the sidewalks are too narrow, are riddled with driveway cuts (causing the scooter to tip), and that inadequate curb cuts at intersections and obstacles of newspaper boxes, utility poles, etc make the sidewalks a risky place to ride to their destinations. They therefore resort to driving/riding on the streets. The safety issues here are obvious. More work is obviously needed between land use, transportation planners and civic engineers to address many of these concerns. Are more off-road paths needed to accommodate these pieces of equipment? Are better/wider on-road bike lanes the answer? Maybe your follow-up feature will touch on these.

*Alex Herlovitch, MCIP, RPP,
is Deputy Director of Planning and
Development with the City of Niagara Falls.*

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Urban Design

Presentation a unique glimpse of pan-Canadian interest in urban design

Alex Taranu

The presentation by urban design professionals at the World Planners Congress may well be the most comprehensive attempt yet to articulate the state of the art across the country. The discussion around the presentation created the starting point for the second part of the Vancouver meeting, underlying its main ideas:

- Physical planning and design, from theory to practice, is a crucial element to ensure support for a healthy public life, high quality of life and sustainable development.
- There is a specific “Canadian Urbanism,” based on our own roots and traditions, common ideals and values and our practice environment.
- There is a strong interest among professionals involved in the design and planning of our cities, towns and villages to get together, to establish a dialogue across the country, to share information, to organize and to coordinate activities.

- There is a need to expand urban design education to professionals, politicians, and the public at large.

For more information on the progress towards creating a pan-Canadian movement dedicated to broadening the appreciation and understanding of urban design, and focusing on consolidating a home-grown approach to urban development, contact Alex Taranu, MCIP, RPP, at alex.taranu@brampton.ca or Dan Leeming, MCIP, RPP, at dleeming@planpart.ca.

(For further coverage in this issue, see page 11.)

Alex and Dan are both founding members of the Urban Design Working Group, which has been promoting a broader understanding of urban design issues through the Ontario Planning Journal and initiatives such as design charrettes at OPPI conferences for more than six years.



Dockside Green in Victoria now under way



Dockside an icon in the making



Smart communities smart cars



B.C. on an Olympic marathon



Montreal projects an outstanding adaptive reuse



Calgary design a work in progress

Beltline Neighbourhoods

- 1 West Connaught: Located between 14 Street SW and 8 Street SW
- 2 Connaught Centre: located between 8 Street SW and 4 Street SW
- 3 Victoria Crossing: located between 4 Street SW and Macleod Tr.
- 4 East Victoria: located between Macleod Tr. and the Elbow River and north of Stampede Park.

Expo 2015—Toronto, Ontario and Canada Welcome the World!

Carlo Bonanni



Once every five years, a city gets the opportunity to step onto the world stage and become the focal point of international attention and achievement. In 2015, that city could be Toronto. If awarded the right to host the 2015 World Expo (also known as World's Fair) Toronto would join the elite ranks of cities like London, Paris, New York, Brussels, Osaka and Shanghai that have won this prestigious prize in the past.

A World Expo is the largest ongoing celebration of human accomplishments, bringing together the nations of the world to explore issues of shared significance while showcasing participating countries' ingenuity, culture, achievements, excellence and leadership. It places significant world attention on the host city, province and country.

There are two types of World Expos: Registered and Recognized. Registered exhibitions occur once every five years. A Registered Expo is longer in duration (to a maximum of six months) and typically encompasses a larger site area (larger than 25 hectares/61 acres). "Recognized" exhibitions are much smaller and run for no longer than three months.

The first Expo was held in London in 1851, followed by Paris in 1855, which resulted in the construction of the iconic Eiffel Tower as a legacy that still defines the city.

Expo '67 in Montreal and Vancouver's Expo '86 also made a significant impact. Expo '67 in Montreal was arguably Canada's "coming of age" that launched our country onto the world stage

in a six month international centennial birthday celebration. More than 50 million visitors attended Expo '67 at a time when Canada's population was only 20 million; setting a record for World Fair attendance that still stands.

Expo '86 held in Vancouver – a "Recognized" event—coincided with the city's centennial. In all, 22 million people attended the Expo. It was so successful that it was held over an additional two months.

While the Bureau International des Exposition will not make a decision on a host city for the 2015 World Expo until February 2008, many people have been hard at work for over a year to prepare the requisite work needed to submit a formal bid for Toronto.

In April 2005, following extensive studies, Toronto City Council concluded that an Expo for Toronto was a feasible venture. Council directed the Toronto Economic Development Corporation (TEDCO) to establish the Toronto 2015 World Expo Corporation to determine the feasibility of the bid and carry out due diligence. In addition to TEDCO and Expo Corporation staff, 13 consultants were retained, each focusing on a particular aspect of the World Expo bid.

The consultant team eventually recommended the 161 hectare (400 acre) Port Lands site encircled by the harbour as the preferred Expo site. As well, they prepared a conceptual site plan identifying possible locations for pavilions, performance venues and on site services.

Access to the Port Lands would be achieved by

means of an LRT extension from the extension of Queen's Quay East. Lea Consultants have also suggested the a dedicated "Expo Express" LRT line from Union Station along the existing rail embankment to Cherry Street to connect to the Expo site. A temporary GO Station at Cherry Street is also being considered.

Acknowledging the extensive planning history of the waterfront, the Expo Corporation adopted the principle of "complement, don't compete." The Expo work would be done in concert with ongoing plans and would not duplicate efforts or funding that has already been committed for its implementation. The site must be ready for the anticipated May 2015 opening of the Expo, and implementation of these plans could be accelerated to meet this fixed deadline.

What will be the legacy from Expo 2015?

Expo would leave long-standing legacies well beyond the demolition date of the last temporary structures. What remains would become the framework for a city-building exercise—a fully remediated Port Lands mixed-use community knitted into the existing urban fabric of the city and connected to an existing network of transit through an expanded LRT system. The bid is seen as a catalyst for city-building, with the potential to generate \$13.5 billion in new GDP in Ontario and the rest of Canada, 215,000 jobs in Canada, with 143,000 in Toronto; and provide \$8.4 billion in wages and salaries in Canada and Ontario, with \$5.6 billion in Toronto.

Next Steps

The next milestone date for the World Expo Corporation is November 2nd, 2006, the deadline date to which Prime Minister Harper must submit the official letter of candidature to the BIE stating that Canada, on behalf of the City of Toronto is bidding to host the 2015 World Expo. Upon receiving this letter, Toronto becomes an official "bid City" and a new governance structure will be created. A bid book would be prepared for early in the New Year, and Toronto will host BIE officials on their Mission of Inquiry most likely in the spring of 2007. This all leads toward the important February 2008 date when the BIE makes the official announcement on which City will welcome the world in 2015.

Carlo Bonanni, MCIP, RPP, is a Project Manager for the Toronto 2015 World Expo Corporation. He is currently on leave from his position as a Senior Planner with the City of Toronto, City Planning Division to work on this project.

Managing Decline

Paul Bedford



Photo: Martine August

Students bike St. Louis

These days it often feels as if all attention is focused on how to manage the unprecedented growth in the GTA and there is little discussion of cities that have undergone major decline. Recently, I had the opportunity to accompany 20 enthusiastic University of Toronto graduate planning students and associate professor Paul Hess in the Geography & Planning Programme on a field trip to St. Louis. It was a real eye opener that left lasting impressions on all of us.

Why go to St. Louis? What can Canadian planners learn from the U.S.? What lessons might be transferable to Ontario cities experiencing decline?

It is particularly significant that the answers to these and many other questions


were provided from a Canadian perspective, as the Director of Planning and Urban Design for St. Louis is a transplanted Torontonion, Rollin Stanley. He worked in the City of Toronto Planning and Development Department for about 20 years on a wide variety of issues including the King-Spadina reforms until he decided to head south four years ago. Interestingly, he deliberately sought out jobs in cities in decline. He was drawn to places like Detroit, Cleveland and St. Louis specifically because of the huge challenges facing these communities. Our visit to St. Louis certainly confirmed this reality and gave us a new appreciation of the totally different planning mindset required to succeed.



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The magnitude of decline over the past 50 years is enormous; the city has lost 500,000 people. At its peak, St. Louis had a population of 856,000 in 1950. This figure dropped to 348,000 by 2000. The regional population of approximately 2.5 million has remained unchanged since 1975.

Many factors contributed to this major loss. The construction of five Interstate highways through a 62-square-mile city, the elimination of an extensive streetcar system, white flight to the suburbs, shifting economics and job loss, poverty, the erosion of basic community amenities and a very bad public school system were all primary causes. However, St. Louis also practised "red lining" that restricted where the black population could live through mortgage and home insurance eligibility. Race segregation, low incomes, health care deterioration, crime and abandoned housing all compounded the problem of fewer people generating less and less income to pay for city services. The drastic decline has affected every aspect of daily life and the mindset of the people. We experienced this feeling on our visit; there were few people on downtown streets, little traffic and a general lack of energy.

St. Louis is still racially divided. The north

is black and the south side is white. The results are quite visible and devastating. Most of the former north-side neighbourhood commercial streets are abandoned, residential blocks are only half occupied or in many cases are totally devoid of any housing and left vacant. In these areas it is possible to purchase a house for as little as \$1,600.00 and an entire school building can be bought for \$35,000.00. Several local schools have been closed and are being converted into other uses, including housing. In addition, all of the basic neighbourhood support services such as libraries, day care, health clinics and recreational amenities simply do not exist. Only 34,000 children are enrolled in the entire public school system and only four high schools remain open.

Approximately 14 percent of properties are now city-owned as a result of non-payment of taxes and abandonment. Extensive tracts of vacant land, vacant buildings and environmental contamination are common. The downtown core has traditionally been viewed only as a place to work with very few people living there. Many store owners left the core for the suburbs so there is little street life. Underground parking costs can-

not be recovered due to the low land values, so it is not uncommon to see 10-storey above grade parking garages throughout the downtown. The level of decline has been so profound in much of the city that land and density is worth little or nothing.

Planning and Political Realities

St. Louis has the only city planning department in the U.S. that is funded entirely by the federal government. The City is governed by a Democratic mayor and a completely Democratic council of 28 Aldermen. Each ward has only about 12,500 people. Given the lack of city resources, block grant funding from the federal government is heavily relied on. Each alderman demands their fair share of funds for their respective ward priorities, so it is very difficult to concentrate money in targeted areas of the city for maximum impact. The planning department staff of 30 was cut to 20 last year as a result of drastic funding reductions.

The Financial Tool Box

The general revenue menu for the city is both unique and complicated. It consists of a combination of financial tools that are for-



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eight to Canadian cities. There is a one percent tax on income for all those working in the city, regardless of place of residence. In addition to regular property taxes, St. Louis also levies a personal property tax on the value of all vehicles, a retail sales tax, a demolition tax, an affordable housing tax, a utility tax and a hotel tax. Even if someone buys a car outside the city limits, the money flows back from the car dealerships to the City.

In order to entice development, a staggering mix of tax incentives is available. These include property tax abatement where taxes on improvements can be totally forgiven for up to 25 years. Another tool is tax increment financing (TIFs) where anticipated new tax revenue to be generated from a new project or redevelopment area is capitalized and a bond sold with the funds spent on the new project site or redevelopment area. TIFs can be site-specific and/or district-based and can run for up to 23 years. Additional financial tools include Transportation Development Districts and Community Improvement Districts, which can be added to a TIF for more benefit. In these areas a special financial assessment is levied and the funds used to make targeted improvements.

The importance of these combined financial tools cannot be underestimated. Simply put, they must be made available in order to encourage the private sector to invest and develop in the city. Recently, St. Louis announced the first new private-sector high-rise residential building in the past 35 years! The building is a 26-storey condo in the Central West End and was only feasible through a bundling of the above menu of tax incentives.


Positive Signs

As the new planning director, Stanley championed the development of a new Strategic Land Use Plan to reflect the needs and priorities of the 21st century. The new plan is the first done in 50 years since the 1947 plan was still in force. The new plan consists of a large two-sided poster. It contains only 10 land use designations and introduces new terminology such as Special Mixed Use Areas and Opportunity Areas. It was adopted by the council in January 2005. The plan seems to have signalled a new beginning for the city which is slowly starting to reverse its long decline and come back to life.

Within the downtown the importance of additional tax instruments for historically designated buildings has sparked the re-emergence of the housing market. Since 2003, population decline has stopped and

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the City has actually grown by 5,000 people. This is a major turning point. The stock of historic and architecturally important office and industrial buildings is rich. They are being discovered and brought back to life through state and federal historic tax credits. This tool allows for tax credits to be sold on the open market to buyers who want or need to reduce their own tax burden. Generally, banks tend to be large purchasers. It is a lucrative instrument which, when combined with the other array of tax incentives, is starting to bring people back to live downtown and is spawning new retail, restaurant, service and entertainment uses. Within the last three years, a small boutique grocery store has opened to serve the new emerging housing market. It remains the only place in the entire downtown where you can buy groceries, wine and basics but it is definitely a positive sign.

Another encouraging sign of change is the St. Louis Metrolink light rail transit system. Given that the city and region are totally blanketed with Interstate highways, the opening of a rail transit system is nothing short of miraculous. The system is 46 miles (74 kilometres) in length, has 37 stations and two lines. It serves both Missouri and Illinois. It opened in 1993, which is about 50 years since the last streetcar was taken out of service. While there are only two-car trains, 15-minute peak hour service and a weekday ridership of only 47,000, the system links the airport directly with downtown—something that Toronto has still not been able to accomplish!

The capital cost to build the initial phase was \$464 million. Of that amount, \$348 million or 75 percent was supplied by the Federal Transit Administration. A further eight-station extension was later opened in Illinois and a second transit line was just opened to the St. Louis suburbs this summer. These were funded jointly by the Federal Transit Administration and the local Transit District through a sales tax levy approved by the voters.

This article will be concluded in the next issue—Ed.

Paul Bedford, FCIP, RPP, is contributing editor for Planning Futures. He is an urban mentor, providing advice on planning issues. He is a frequent speaker, and teaches at the University of Toronto and York University. He also serves on the National Capital Commission Advisory Committee and Toronto's Waterfront Design Review Panel.

The Changing Field of Ethical Enquiry Reflections on Current Thinking

George McKibbin

This discussion of what we do as professionals centres on planning ethics. Our code of ethics deal with responsibilities we have to the public, our clients and the various communities within which we work, as well as responsibilities related to the profession and ourselves. We have not always held ethical actions as central to our work. In the 1960s and 1970s, planners discussed planning theory, in the context of what we do that is unique to our profession. Here are some alternative ways we have looked at our profession that may allow us to reflect upon our current practice, taking into account ethics and values of our clients and their surrounding communities.

Central to the discussion of the theory behind our practice was the rational planning model. Using this model, we believe we can objectively formulate goals and objectives and through analysis, identify alternatives. Through careful comparison and systematic evaluation, a preferred solution can be selected and implemented. By appropriate use of the process described in the model, the planner's creativity will serve the public interest.

The basic tenets of the rational planning model were challenged by advocacy planners. These planners felt that the rational planning model was incomplete. Their earliest proponents practised in inner cities, often with disadvantaged communities. Advocacy planners focused on the ends (for example, public housing) sought by decision makers and identified alternative ways of achieving these ends. They developed criteria with which inner-city residents could evaluate and compare alternatives in more humane ways. Differing values could be addressed by visualizing the alternatives as choices to better enable selection of a preferred alternative. With time, other variations on the rational and advocacy planning models emerged to address language, decision making and reflection.

Values are embedded in our words, which if unexamined, lead to results that may not be ideal for the participants involved in the process. For example, Aboriginal communities understand their place in creation and on the land differently from Caucasian communities. Successful planning for the Aboriginal com-

munities must support these understandings. Successful work within multiple constituencies addresses the ways in which all involved in the planning project use language.

We can make provision for language (and therefore values) of the various parties who make or are affected by decisions by formulating targets for negotiation and creating conditions in which the interests can control the outcome. Our understanding and the process of negotiation drives the design and assessment of our interventions. Throughout the planning process we need to maintain our credibility with these varied interests of all parties by being honest brokers of valuable information.

Creativity involves personal and corporate reflection. When I begin an assignment, I work with the expectations and goals being addressed and relate the circumstances to past experience, comparing and contrasting these together. By drawing upon past experience while making allowances for changed circumstances, a planning approach emerges. I often seek external information from peers or published sources to augment my experience and knowledge. Professional practice involves comparison of unique circumstances with previous examples to make sense of the task and identify alternatives.

People within organizations conceive projects to address their organization's mission and goals. Affected parties may experience these projects differently. Reconciling these differences within the planning process involves corporate reflection. This includes identification of alternatives, structuring the decision-making to enable affected parties and the proponent to share their experiences—good and bad—and negotiating ways in which impacts may be mitigated. Project implementation must honour agreements between proponents and affected parties so they must be completed and done carefully and wisely before project implementation.

Creativity is stimulated by the interactions among clients, affected communities and planners. Creativity occurs during observation, experimentation, evaluation and redirection of effort as the project

unfolds. Planners contribute concepts, theory, analysis, knowledge; perspective, and systematic information-searching procedures to this process. Clients and host communities contribute contextual knowledge within which decisions are made; alternatives, norms and values, priorities, judgment, and operational details. Together, the exchanges between the client and host community, orchestrated by the planner, can lead to a creative and acceptable synergy with a high probability of being successful.

Much has changed since the 1960s and 1970s. The notion of a single definable public interest central to planned action has evolved to one of multiple public interests, some conflicting and indefinite. Does our inability to define what is in the public interest render planning's central activity unimportant? I don't think so. It simply means we need to be more attentive to our practice as a means by which we focus on these multiple public interests. Our current focus on ethical practice is incomplete without reflection on this multi-faceted creative activity we engage in as planners.

George McKibbin, MCIP, RPP, is a principal of McKibbin Wakefield Inc. in Hamilton. He can be reached at gmckib@nas.net.



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A Tall Story for the Ages

This year would have been the 40th anniversary of the construction of the World Trade Center. Although this small fact would likely have merited no more than a footnote among architectural historians, destruction of the twin towers sparked a renewed interest in the inherent qualities of tall buildings. There are more than a dozen new books on the genre. This review deals with three volumes that I was lucky enough to get for my birthday earlier this summer. Coincidentally, working with colleagues at the City of Toronto, I am organizing a program of seminars to examine the role of tall buildings on and within the skyline of big cities like Toronto. —Glenn Miller

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Higher: A Historic Race to the Sky and the Making of a City

Neal Bascomb
Doubleday, 2003
Paperback, 342 pages
\$22.95

Higher, Taller, Bolder

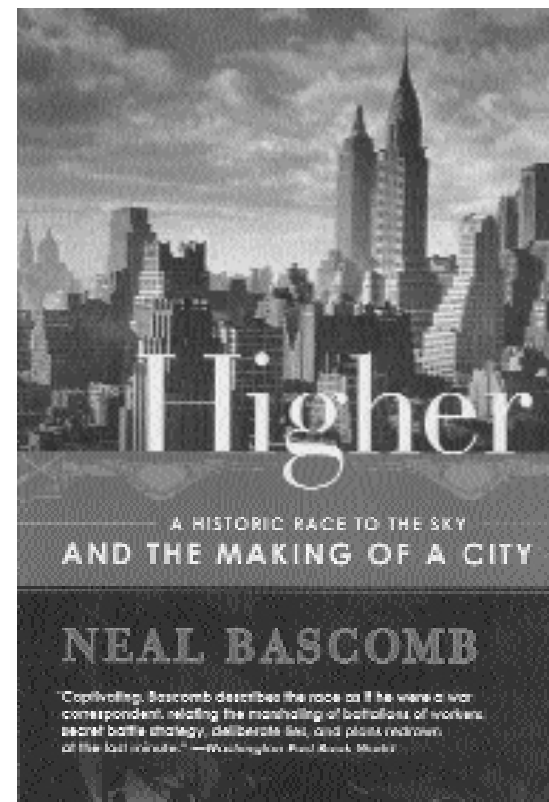
For most of us with an interest in what sparks change affecting the quality of life in our cities, the 1950s and 1960s represent a key period when Ontario's economy was transformed beyond recognition. These were the decades, after all, when we cast aside restraints imposed by war, when we began to acquire a taste for excess, and when we learned to extend our reach beyond our grasp. Because the coming of the automobile, the low-density subdivision and the spread of industry were so instrumental in moulding a different way of life, we often overlook the impact of another post-war decade: the 1920s.

Although the American experience during this time was apparently far more intense, *Higher—A Historic Race to the Sky and the Making of a City*, which chronicles the exploits of a cast of characters whose collective curricula vitae rival anything that Hollywood could possibly invent, documents the creation of new concepts and approaches to city-building that give us insights into our own history, and which suggest why a closer look at what went on places like Toronto and Hamilton in the 1920s might be a worthwhile endeavour.

F. Scott Fitzgerald coined the term "Roaring Twenties" for a reason.

Told in the classic narrative style popularized by Robert Caro, author of the *Power Broker*, *Higher* blends historical fact and a keen journalistic instinct to give the reader a fascinating glimpse into the role of industrialists, architects and construction companies in commissioning, designing and building skyscrapers in New York City. Bascomb knits his tale around the ambitions that led to the creation of three buildings: the Chrysler Building, 40 Wall Street and the

Empire State. Almost without exception, the major players described in this book come from humble backgrounds, lacking formal education, rising to positions of prominence by dint of their personal drive and ingenuity. Walter Chrysler, for example, honed his skills as a mechanical genius in the railway business before mov-



ing to the company that became General Motors. Piqued at what he perceived as a lack of recognition, Chrysler started his own car company. The notion that a single individual could launch a manufacturing business that moved from prototype to a production line capable of turning out thousands of cars a month in only a few years seems remarkable today, but Chrysler's experience was by no means unique. That he decided to invest his rapidly acquired millions in an iconic headquarters building was also par for the New York course.

This book is about much more than personality portraits, however. We learn,

for example, that while zoning rules and the power of municipal regulation were apparently well established in New York in the 1920s, the profession of architecture was still struggling to define itself. Most of the practitioners we meet in *Higher* learned their craft through thousands of poorly paid hours of indenture, while a privileged few attended "finishing school" at the Ecole des beaux arts in Paris.

Bascomb also explains the liberating role of the elevator (invented by Elisha Otis), detailing the example of the first office building to incorporate such a device. Hard to imagine, but financiers at the time saw this innovation as a significant risk. The same is true for the first use of structural steel in place of load-bearing masonry walls. The architect who persuaded his client that a ten-storey building was feasible had to agree to move his own offices to the top floor to underscore faith in his calculations.

Once the physical limits to building taller had been overcome, the concept of determining "economic height" was quickly assimilated into the nascent development industry. In Bascomb's examples, the architect, builder and banker worked as a team to determine the point at which building a taller building incurred greater costs and

risk than justified by the returns. The author devotes as much attention to the skills of the companies and the various trades responsible for constructing tall buildings as he does to the motivations of those responsible for paying the bills. We also marvel at the logistical challenge of specifying and sourcing building materials – woods and granite for the Chrysler building came from four continents, while the steel beams required for the Empire State were calculated to be the equivalent of a 57-mile trail – at a time when calculations were done with a slide rule and every transaction required an army of clerks and stenographers to turn decisions into reality. We get a glimpse of the harrowing, incredibly risky actions of riveters hurling, catching and driving in hot rivets 70 storeys in the sky; the boldness of construction managers who devised unique solutions to raising massive steel structures higher than anyone had ever dreamed was possible.

The thrill of the pace of the Roaring Twenties comes through in rich detail. Readers are even given a glimpse of the tenacity of the backers behind the Empire State, who persisted with the project even after the stock market crashed.



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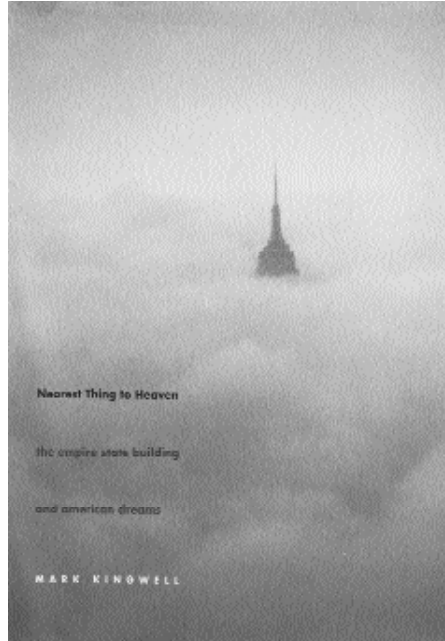
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Nearest Thing to Heaven: The Empire State Building and American Dreams

Mark Kingwell
Yale University Press
221 pages
\$20.50


The story of the Empire State building is picked up by Toronto-based philosopher and author, Mark Kingwell, whose *Nearest Thing to Heaven: The Empire State Building and American Dreams* spins a sometimes arcane web of ideas and provocative links to both the mundane and the metaphysical. This is a very different book from *Higher*. I could only read one or two chapters at a time, in part because it is a rich confection which prompted thoughts that distracted me from the job of following Kingwell's line of reasoning. Although written in an engaging style, it is full of sometimes obscure references that span many disciplines and every one of the 75 years since the Empire State was built. Kingwell's love of New York is obvious, how-

ever, and he clearly agrees that New York was the only possible place to launch a risky project like the Empire State. In acknowledging the "profound gravitational pull of the great world capital," Kingwell displays a deep and affectionate intimacy with archi-



ecture and the motivations that drive entrepreneurs and designers alike to construct tall buildings. He concludes that "form follows function" – a sentiment that "motivated the designers of the Empire State Building," conceding that "the building offers a superb example of how to negotiate the strict setback restrictions of the 1916 Manhattan zoning by-law...the plan was designed to maximize density without blocking out the sky and casting the streets below into permanent shadow."

There are also numerous fascinating riffs on the value and meaning of buildings as icons, which made me wonder about a place like downtown Vancouver: is it possible to build a tall building with iconic qualities when there are literally dozens of other equally tall buildings in the immediate surrounds? Kingwell also has some fun with the idea of tall buildings as an exercise in efficiency, quoting Lewis Mumford: "The architects who have put forth vertical transportation as a remedy for street congestion – which in turn is caused by this overcrowding of the land – are only having their little joke." Mumford went on to liken the motivation for constructing a tall office tower to the industrialist's "blissful" feeling towards his factory "belching forth soot and foul gases." Guess how Mumford felt about Manhattan's skyline?




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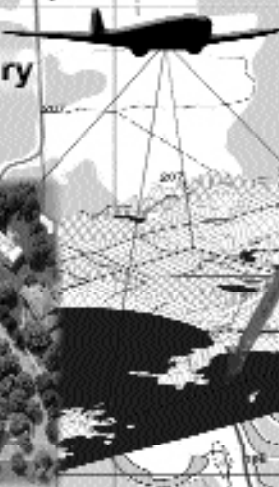
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SKY SCRAPERS

ANDRES LEPIK

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Sky Scrapers

Andres Lepik
Prestel, Munich
157 pages
\$51.00

A third book focused on tall buildings is what may well be the definitive volume on the state of the art. *Sky Scrapers*, assembled by Berlin-based writer, curator and teacher Andres Lepik, is a magnificent coffee-table book that presents stunning photographs and descriptive detail on 50 of the world's iconic skyscraper projects. Like Bascomb and Kingwell, Lepik identifies a series of key breakthroughs that turned potential into reality. His European perspective offers a variation on the theme, however. He traces the development of the self-supporting iron skeleton to England in the first half of the 19th century, but suggests that Gustave Eiffel's invention of riveted iron construction was a more important driver than Otis. But Lepik credits the German Werner von Siemens, inventor of the electrically powered elevator, with setting a new standard for high-speed vertical travel. The riveted iron technology arrived in the New World as the supporting structure for the Statue of Liberty. The competition between European and U.S. engineers and architects intensified with the Paris

World's Fair in 1899. A Minneapolis architect, Leroy Buffington, patented a structural system known as the Cloudscraper – 28 storeys – at around the same time.

Lepik's background as a curator serves the reader well; he sets out a chronological progression for development of the sky scrapers that puts the ambitions of their designers into the context of architectural competitions and commissions, as well as the public's perception and receptivity to advances in architectural expression. There is much to absorb in this remarkable book. Lepik also captures the deceptively powerful drive to establish new benchmarks that accompanies the lead up to both the 20th and 21st centuries. His detached prose also embraces broader impacts like the rapid spread of the ecological movement that has resulted in the layering in of "green" considerations. I almost wish

that his text was available as separate small volume – the quality of the photographic coverage of his chosen 50 clearly demands a large format, but it is rare for coffee-table-sized books to have such compelling written content. Perhaps an addendum to my haul of birthday gifts should have included a weight-training package.

Glenn Miller, FCIP, RPP, is editor of the Ontario Planning Journal and director of education and research with the Canadian Urban Institute in Toronto. Details of the tall buildings program can be found at www.canurb.com.

Health and Community Design: The Impact of the Built Environment on Physical Activity

Lawrence D. Frank, Peter O. Engelke and Thomas L. Schmid,
Island Press, Washington DC.,
2003,
199pp.

David Aston

It is difficult now to pick up a newspaper that does not contain an article dealing with some aspect of the growing problem of childhood and adult obesity and the associated health concerns. Poor diets, particularly an over-reliance on fast foods, and too much time spent on sedentary activities are often mentioned as key contributors. What is the role played by the physical environment, the environment that is the focus of our professional activities as planners, in this growing health concern? That is the subject tackled in *Health and Community Design*.

The book evolved from research that the authors carried out in Atlanta, Georgia, and Seattle, Washington, on the relationships between the built environment, travel choice and air quality. Lawrence Frank, who is with the School of Community and Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia, is a prolific writer in this field.

While the authors note that many of the examples used in the book are drawn from these communities, I did not find this to be limiting to their argument. Throughout, they draw heavily not only on their own research, but also on the research carried out by many others, including research carried out in Canada and Europe. The endnotes



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Health and Community Design

THE IMPACT OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT
ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



LAWRENCE D. FRANK
PETER O. ENGELKE
THOMAS L. SCHMID

and references at the end of the book are over 30 pages. This format actually improves the book's readability.

The conceptual model is that land use patterns, urban design characteristics of the community and transportation patterns affect activity patterns which in turn affect public health. The authors begin by reviewing the public health roots of modern planning such as the garden city movement, the development of zoning controls, building regulations and so forth. They conclude this discussion with the following statement:

In 1900, the leading causes of death were infectious and communicable diseases such as pneumonia and tuberculosis. Now, the leading causes of death are non-communicable diseases caused not by bacterial or viral infection but by routine and related daily habits. Ironically, the urban solutions that were implemented decades ago to help solve public health problems of the day now contribute to these health risks and the onset of chronic disease.

The authors demonstrate, through the examination of public health data from the U.S. and Europe that moderate exercise such

as walking and cycling can have significant health benefits, particularly for people who had previously been sedentary. These activities have a low threshold for take up, can be easily incorporated into a person's lifestyle and can be adhered to over a sustained period of time. Walking and cycling can also serve utilitarian functions such as journeying to work or shopping.

The potential for utilitarian walking and bicycling may be much higher than that for recreational walking and bicycling because utilitarian forms can be more easily worked into daily living patterns.

Unfortunately the built environment often discourages walking and cycling for utilitarian purposes. The authors argue that seniors, the young and the poor suffer the most from environments that are built primarily for motorists.

They then discuss how different environments influence physical activity, particularly walking and cycling. In the examination of street patterns, they clearly demonstrate how grid or modified grid street networks can reduce travel distances compared to the more typical disconnected suburban street layout. People are more likely to walk or cycle when travelling shorter distances, therefore the street pattern has a significant influence on this type of activity. Denser developments and mixing of land uses also increase the opportunity for utilitarian walking and cycling trips. Street and site plan design guidelines that also serve the needs of walkers and cyclists can also have an influence.

While many of their conclusions and recommendations are in line with the new urbanism agenda, the authors are also critical of many new urbanist developments. Many such developments are built at the edge of urban areas, and while they may encourage walking and cycling for internal trips, are heavily auto-dependent for shopping and commuting trips, and as a result represent only a partial solution.

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