

# *A Decade of Regeneration*



Realizing a Vision for  
Lake Ontario's Waterfront

Waterfront Regeneration Trust



## OUR VISION



*Our vision is to protect and restore those elements of waterfronts that we jointly value – ecological health, a sense of community and economic vitality.*

*Fifty years ago, the north shore of Lake Ontario was a string of communities, large and small, separated by farmland and forest, connected by two-lane roads, railways and lake-shipping routes. Today, that same waterfront has become the largest urban conglomerate in Canada with the distinctions among its communities masked by subdivisions and super-highways, its water polluted and its forests and wetlands been reduced to remnants. Despite that, many places on the waterfront provide a special quality of life, providing beauty and recreation for residents and visitors.*

*We see a future inspired by the abundance of wildlife that live in the protected reserves, regenerated forests and wetlands in many places along the shore. We'll stroll along beaches and bluffs watching the waves shape and re-shape the shoreline. The Trail will invite us to walk and cycle, play and picnic. We'll enjoy boating on the Lake in the summer and bird watching all year on the paths that loop and interconnect along the entire waterfront. There will be festivals, dining and shopping in vibrant 'people places' that cluster at the water's edge. Each community will use its heritage to create its own sense of place, with a quality of design that reflects the diversity of its people and creates memorable experiences.*

*For an increasing number of urban dwellers, the daily trip to work will change as we improve transit and expand commuter cycling routes. Some of these routes will be set in the broad corridors of green that wind up the river valleys linking the waterfront to go deep into the community.*

*Fifty years from now, we'll value waterfronts even more than we do now and that sense of value will continue to renew our commitment to work together to ensure that they are clean, green, accessible, connected, open, useable, diverse, affordable and attractive. We invite you to help realize this vision.*

**Adapted from the Lake Ontario Greenway Strategy, 1995**



# *A Decade of Regeneration*

Realizing a Vision for Lake Ontario's Waterfront

**Suzanne Barrett**  
**edited by Ron Reid**



Waterfront Regeneration Trust

**N o v e m b e r   2 0 0 0**

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This book represents the hard work of many people around Lake Ontario and their commitment to the regeneration of the waterfront over the past decade. They include thousands of people from government, business, community groups, schools and individual citizens. The Waterfront Regeneration Trust celebrates your accomplishments, enthusiasm and dedication.

We extend a special thank you to all those who contributed to this publication by providing information or photos, participating in workshops or interviews, and reviewing drafts.

(See Appendix A for a list of contributors.)



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**John S. Hunkin**  
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

CIBC is proud to have had an opportunity to support the restoration of a great natural resource, Lake Ontario, in partnership with the Waterfront Regeneration Trust. Our commitment, over five years, was \$1 million.

The aim of this partnership was to assist the Trust in initiating economic and environmental renewal in our waterfront communities and supporting the implementation of the Waterfront Trail from Niagara to Kingston.

The work of the Trust thus far has been invaluable in helping waterfront communities realize the full potential of their shoreline and watershed areas. We, at CIBC, are impressed by the diversity of projects and of partners. Both the private and public sectors have come together to realize a vision of a revitalized waterfront that will not only benefit those of us who live near the lake's shores today, but will echo with future generations.

Our commitment to the Trust underscores CIBC's commitment to projects that promote community economic and environmental development across the country.

Congratulations to all of the community leaders from along the shores of Lake Ontario whose hard work and dedication have accomplished so much in so little time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John S. Hunkin".

**John S. Hunkin**  
*Chairman and Chief Executive Officer*







## P R E F A C E

In its call to action for a new decade of regeneration, the Waterfront Regeneration Trust and its partners are re-committing us to an enormously exciting, productive and successful venture.

The Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail and Greenway have already proven to be the historic catalyst we all hoped for ten years ago.

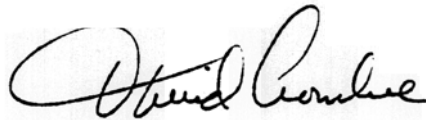
Through the implementation of a strong philosophy and organizing principles in over a hundred projects, the Trail and Greenway have become a unique and evolving story of local actions, regional benefits and continental significance. From Niagara-on-the-Lake to Gananoque, communities along the 650 km Waterfront have begun - vigorously and imaginatively - to respond to the particular challenges of their own waterfronts. They are re-investing in their natural and cultural heritage with an energy and commitment that are truly remarkable.

Now more than ever people are insisting that their waterfronts and watersheds be understood as special places when plans for restoration and rejuvenation are being developed and implemented. In doing so

they are enhancing their public assets, expanding their civic capacity and providing opportunities for private sector initiatives that will benefit not only themselves and other Canadians but also visitors from around the world.

During the next decade the creative energies of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust and the Lake Ontario Waterfront Network, made up of people and organizations from around the Lake, will be placed at the disposal of a new generation of projects. Waterfront and watershed stewardship will increasingly become a part of everyday thinking. New ideas and new partnerships will emerge to make an even greater impact on our lives.

What was a vision of hope in the last decade has become a workbench for reality in the new one. It's a great time to get involved. See you on the Trail!



**David Crombie**

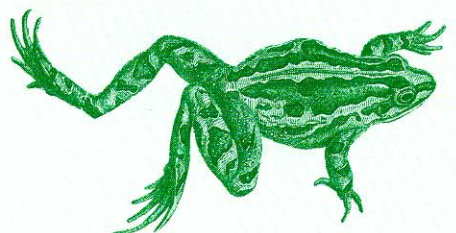
*Founding Chair*

*Waterfront Regeneration Trust*



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# *Introduction*





Since aboriginal people first settled on the banks of Lake Ontario, the waterfront has attracted human activity. Generations of people have found places to live and work, sources of food and drinking water, means of transportation, and prime areas for recreation, all at the edge of the lake. Settlement by Europeans, and in recent decades immigration of people from around the world, has brought many different uses to the shoreline. Some of these uses have been in harmony with its special conditions, while others have had damaging effects.

This book is about our special relationship with Lake Ontario as expressed by the communities and activities along its shore. It seeks to remind us that the waterfront of today is a product of the heritage of its past - a heritage not just of buildings and culture, but also a heritage of ideas and traditions, and of the interactions between nature and people. It places special emphasis on the major changes in attitude and action that have characterized the past decade, on recognizing and celebrating the excellence in waterfront regeneration that has been achieved in many communities. And it looks ahead to the next decade, to focus and energize our ongoing work towards a healthier, more sustainable future.

While this book was compiled by the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, it is a product of many voices. It draws on surveys filled out by waterfront communities, interactive workshops with community foundations, agency staff, business representatives and citizens, and a series of interviews with people who provided a range of personal and professional perspectives.

No one agency or individual bears responsibility for renewal of the Lake Ontario waterfront. Instead, that responsibility is shared among waterfront landowners, users, industries, municipalities, and a wide range of agencies and supporters. The Waterfront

Regeneration Trust however, plays a special role. A descendant of the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront, the Trust seeks to uphold the vision expressed by many Ontarians to that Commission, and to translate the vision into concrete actions.

The Trust works by sharing experiences and information about waterfront regeneration projects, by matching together good projects and potential sources of funding, and by inspiring communities and agencies to participate. This book provides a measure of our shared success in the decade since the Royal Commission's work, and in the five years since the Waterfront Trail was opened and the *Lake Ontario Greenway Strategy* completed. It is a celebration of vision, partnerships and hard work. It examines our collective experience to draw out lessons and themes for future work, and concludes with a call to action to continue revitalizing the waterfront with respect, excellence and innovation.







*Watershed*



In 1990, the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront, headed by the Honourable David Crombie, published a ground-breaking report called *Watershed*. It was the result of two years of research, workgroups and public hearings that illuminated the values and problems of the waterfront, and proposed new ways to address them.

*Watershed* highlighted the importance of Lake Ontario as a significant Provincial resource, comparable in value to the Niagara Escarpment, the Oak Ridges Moraine, Georgian Bay and other major natural features in the Province. And it described the many ways in which environmental degradation, loss of natural and cultural heritage, and inappropriate forms of land use and development have severely diminished the values of many waterfront places, to the point that people felt a sense of crisis, and of profound disconnection from the Lake.

*Watershed* captured, on behalf of the public that participated in the process, an understanding of ecosystem connections that was absent in most of our bureaucratic and political structures. It showed how the waterfront is linked to its

watersheds, and how we cannot have healthy ecological, social or economic systems unless we address these interactions, articulating a vision and process towards a better future.

*The Greater Toronto Bioregion is, both literally and figuratively, at a watershed. It is clear that a good quality of life and economic development cannot be sustained in an ecologically deteriorating environment. The way we choose to treat the Greater Toronto Waterfront is crucial. If governments and individuals recognize – and act on – the need to resolve past environmental problems and forge strategies to protect the waterfront now and in the future, we will, indeed, have successfully crossed a watershed.*

**David Crombie, *Watershed*, 1990**

## Greater Toronto Bioregion





*When you bring a person by bicycle they come more slowly and feel the environment better. This is a very important aspect of trails.*

*Jane Hughes, Councillor, Regional Niagara*

*Watershed* expressed a new philosophy based on some sound foundations:

- An ecosystem approach which recognizes that everything is connected, that humans are part of the ecosystem, and that we are therefore responsible to ourselves, other generations, and other species;
- Respect for heritage in all its forms, so that creating the future incorporates conserving the past;
- Round-table processes for better decision-making, with different jurisdictions, agencies and groups coordinating their work rather than acting in isolation;

Partnerships to develop and implement projects, involving various levels of government, community groups, and private enterprise;

Nine principles to guide waterfront regeneration: clean, green, useable, diverse, open, accessible, connected, affordable, and attractive.

Over the past decade, that new philosophy has been incorporated into many projects and policies, along the waterfront and elsewhere. And if anything, the public priorities and expectations expressed to the Royal Commission have become stronger and more urgent. More than ever, people want the water and air cleaned up. More than ever, they expect that waterfront redevelopment will feature outstanding design and will contribute to heritage renewal and environmental restoration. More than ever, they want public access to the shore. The success of the

Waterfront Trail has introduced many more people to the Lake Ontario waterfront, and inspired them with the possibilities that this area offers.

At the same time, several broader social trends have reinforced the motivation to take action.

### ***Demographic Trends***

The timing of the Lake Ontario Greenway and Waterfront Trail has coincided with trends towards healthier lifestyles for all ages, outdoor activities, individual environmental action, and learning about nature and culture. This has provided strong support for trail development and regeneration, and ensured a good return on public and private sector investments.

Highlighting today's emphasis on prevention of illness, many public health units (for example in Durham Region, Port Hope and Cobourg, and the Greater Kingston Area) have worked in partnership with conservation authorities, municipalities, Volkspoint clubs and others to develop practical trail guides with information on distances and trail surfaces, and tips for health, comfort and safety.

In a 1998 Mississauga study on future recreation needs, over 80% of respondents said their greatest need for outdoor activities was more bikeways and pedestrian trails. This high level of interest was demonstrated in a summer 1999 user survey which estimated a total of 900,000 visits to Mississauga's trail system, with an average stay of 80 minutes.

.....

*In Niagara-on-the-Lake, the development of a Waterfront Trail link across the historic military Commons has provided accessible recreation opportunities for residents of a nearby senior citizens home.*







*In 1991, there were four identified watershed/waterfront groups in the Toronto region; by 2000, that number has grown to 34. For example, the Humber Watershed Alliance, coordinated by Toronto and Region Conservation, includes citizens, representatives of community groups, municipal councillors and agency staff.*

## ***Transportation Shifts***

Burgeoning traffic congestion, combined with concerns about air quality and growing interest in personal fitness, means that urban trails will increasingly be used by people to move from home to work. Many municipalities are working to integrate bicycle-friendly measures into their communities. For example, the City of Mississauga has been working with its Cycling Advisory Committee to create over 104 km (167 miles) of paths, bicycle lanes and routes. The Town of Ajax is preparing a plan for an integrated recreational and

transportation trail system that will link residential neighbourhoods, commercial and retail areas, river valleys and the waterfront.

A 1998 Environics National Survey on Active Transportation showed that 7 out of 10 Canadians would cycle to work if there was a dedicated bike lane that would take them to the workplace in less than 30 minutes.

## ***A Maturing Environmental Movement***

The number of citizen groups and volunteer hours engaged in waterfront and watershed regeneration is growing steadily. Citizen environmental action has evolved from simple tree-planting to more complex habitat restoration projects, and from fighting for preservation to cooperating on stewardship. Many environmental groups have also demonstrated a new attitude towards collaboration, using decision-making processes that reach balanced solutions meeting many objectives as effectively as possible.



*The City of Toronto's Environmental Plan, published in February 2000, represents an unprecedented level of participation and consensus among City Councillors, municipal staff, environmental groups and citizens. It sets a strong direction for the City to adopt decision-making systems and policies towards an environmentally sustainable future and will be implemented through the City's Official Plan and Strategic Plan, as well as a newly established Sustainability Roundtable.*





The Oshawa Second Marsh Defence Association, formed in 1976 to stop the proposed development of port and industrial facilities in this Provincially significant lakeshore wetland, has changed its name to Friends of Second Marsh and become an effective manager and steward of the marsh and its watersheds, developing a wide range of collaborative partnerships in the community.

*Spadina Quay wetland and the Toronto Music Garden just wouldn't have been done 10 years ago they are great steps forward.*

**Mike Filey, Toronto Sunday Sun**



A formerly barren parking lot on Toronto's Queen's Quay has been transformed into a diverse .35 ha (.86 acres) complex of wetland and terrestrial habitat. The Spadina Quay wetland was created by making several breaks in the dockwall to allow water exchange with the Bay and provide conditions that will attract spawning northern pike, as well as many other species.

## ***Ecological approaches***

There has been a steady shift in public and agency expectations for urban open space - from parks as "lawns with trees" to areas where diverse wildlife habitats are integrated with recreation opportunities. We have also learned to leave natural areas alone, and to work with ecological processes instead of trying to control them. Methods that employ natural systems of water management, such as constructed wetlands, disconnected downspouts, rooftop gardens, open swales, infiltration trenches, porous paving and backyard ponds, are growing in acceptance.



Brighton's upgraded sewage treatment plant includes the largest constructed wetland in Ontario - 6 ha (14.8 acres) - designed to provide final treatment for the effluent from the wastewater lagoon. In its first year of operation, water quality in the adjacent Presqu'île Bay has already improved, providing an opportunity for wetland and aquatic habitat restoration. A kiosk with interpretive panels provides interesting information for the public.

*The public has different expectations of open space - it used to be they wanted a gazebo in every park, now they want trails and natural areas, not manicured lawns.*

***Mayor Diane Hamre, Clarington***



Tommy Thompson Park on the Leslie Street Spit in Toronto involved an ecological approach to park development, as established in the 1992 Master Plan and Environmental Assessment. The Park has been allowed to evolve with natural processes, assisted by habitat creation projects, to create a spectacular and diverse urban wilderness, thanks in large measure to the philosophy espoused by many citizens groups such as Friends of the Spit, working in collaboration with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

Rain gardens are an attractive and environmentally friendly way to reduce the amount of polluted stormwater in urban areas. Individual home owners and businesses can landscape their grounds to redirect water flow from rooftops and paved surfaces onto gardens created in low-lying areas with layers of soil, sand and organic mulch. These layers filter and store the rainwater, nourishing the gardens' grasses, trees and shrubs. Rain gardens are also aesthetically beautiful, create shade and wind breaks, absorb noise and attract wildlife.





*Regeneration.*  
*in*  
*Action*



The past decade has witnessed a renaissance of interest in the waterfront, expressed in a wide range of changes, large and small, that are transforming the relationship between waterfront communities and their Lake. These changes are at the heart of the concept of regeneration. What does regeneration in action look like? Here are some examples:

Where communities previously lacked access to their waterfront, 350 km (218 miles) of Waterfront Trail now link 177 natural areas, 143 parks and promenades, 80 marinas and yacht clubs, and hundreds of historic places, festivals, and museums.

- Where soils and groundwater were contaminated by industrial activities, new homes and parklands are being created on Cobourg's waterfront.

Where a dangerous roadway was the only way for a pedestrian to cross the Humber River, a new pedestrian and bicycle bridge provides a striking link between Etobicoke and Toronto.



- Where Toronto's eastern beaches were frequently closed to swimming, an underground detention tank now prevents flows of untreated sewage into the Lake, reducing beach closings from more than 40% of the summer to only a few days per swimming season.
- Where upstream activities were depositing large volumes of sediments into Oshawa's Second Marsh, watershed landowners and developers are learning about protective measures to control runoff.
- Where the Lower Trent River waterfront was unattractive and neglected, the Trenton Renaissance program is creating a public greenway as the setting for stores and restaurants, boosting local business.





*Waterfronts are now the centre of redevelopment for most great cities of the world; they are the greatest natural asset, and can be a focal point for the community - look at Paris, London, Barcelona.*

**David Peterson,**  
*former Premier of Ontario*



Actions to promote these changes are part of the *Lake Ontario Greenway Strategy* developed by the Waterfront Regeneration Trust and its partners to:

- protect the physical, natural and cultural attributes of the waterfront;
- identify restoration needs and methods and encourage landowners, communities and agencies to implement them;
- promote greater awareness, understanding and recreational use of the waterfront and encourage community pride and participation in its regeneration;
- promote economic activities and employment that are compatible with other Greenway objectives; and
- foster cooperation in cost-effective public and private initiatives by reducing jurisdictional gridlock, sharing resources, and coordinating waterfront activities.

The regeneration context of the Greenway - incorporating natural and cultural heritage, shoreline, community health and economic benefits - conveys meaning to the Waterfront Trail and gives it an appeal and justification that make it more worthwhile than the average "hike and bike" trail. The Trail acts

both as a symbol of this broader regeneration process, and as a potent way to build public support for other waterfront renewal activities.

This comprehensive, ecosystem-based approach to landscapes is part of a world-wide trend. For example, the concepts of heritage corridors and greenways are being used throughout the US to integrate historic preservation and ecological conservation with a framework for responsible local economic development.

What have we learned from our experience along Lake Ontario over the past decade? A rich variety of activities is steadily implementing the Greenway Strategy. Collectively, they illustrate a number of recurring themes that have been instrumental in successful regeneration and provide valuable lessons for continued success:

- Make the waterfront a community priority
- Look beyond your boundaries
- Set the stage with good planning
- Use milestone projects to build momentum
- Design with heritage in mind
- Add value with connections
- Make it happen with creative partnerships
- Secure strategic public investment
- Attract private resources

*On the south side of Lake Ontario, the Genesee Valley Greenway follows the path of the abandoned Genesee Valley Canal and Pennsylvania Railroad, providing trail based recreation and a framework for inter-community cooperation on greenspace protection, heritage protection, interpretation, and regional tourism.*





# MAKE THE WATERFRONT A COMMUNITY PRIORITY

When a public vision for the waterfront is developed, its regeneration quickly becomes a priority, not only for those residents and businesses located near the lakeshore, but also community-wide. This focusses attention on immediate needs and stimulates public and private investment. It also helps to transform not just the physical character of the waterfront, but also community attitudes about its value.

A restored waterfront is a magnet for community events. Probably due to a combination of

factors - sense of space near the Lake, cool summer breezes, rejuvenated parks - waterfront public spaces attract many festivals and other events, with considerable local economic and social benefits. In some cases, these activities have become so successful that additional facilities are required. For example, in Hamilton, efforts are being made to develop alternate, inland venues for events to expand the opportunities beyond the highly popular Pier 4 and Bayfront Parks.



Ten years ago, the City of Mississauga approved a 30 year plan for its waterfront - Vision 2020. Since then, with the Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail as a catalyst, the City and other agencies have invested close to \$70 million in waterfront land acquisition, a marina, heritage restoration, and park rejuvenation. The private sector has followed the lead of the City and made substantial investments in new businesses, housing, restaurants and a hotel.



The City of Belleville has been working to create a public greenway across its entire waterfront since 1990. One of the first phases was Bayshore Park - successfully integrating the Waterfront Trail, habitat islands, ponds and reefs, shoreline naturalization, and an artificial wetland for stormwater treatment. A riverfront trail up the Moira River is now being built to connect the Trans Canada Trail and Waterfront Trail.

The Town of Gananoque's transition from a predominantly industrial economy to one that relies to a great extent on tourism and recreation has been led by a focus on its waterfront. Over the past 15 years, careful planning in conjunction with public sector (over \$3 million) and private sector investment have brought about a major transformation - improved habitats, reduced erosion and pollution along the shoreline, upgraded parks, an expanded municipal marina, and an historic village with a museum, restaurants and shops.





*In 1997 the Toronto Bay Initiative was launched to draw public attention to the degraded state of Toronto's central waterfront, and to promote a cleaner, greener, healthier and more accessible Bay. One of this community group's most successful annual events is the Big Summer Splash! – a swim race across the Bay and a ceremonial plunge by community leaders, to celebrate improvements in water quality, to increase environmental literacy, and as a call for further action. The event takes place at Harbourfront Centre – a 10-acre cultural and recreational complex.*



*The rejuvenation of Oakville's Coronation Park, including the construction of a performance stage, stimulated the growth of the highly successful Oakville Waterfront Festival.*



*The Waterfront Trail is used constantly - there are people on it all the time. It's very positive because it gets people walking along the lakefront that never had the chance to do that before. The Trail connects people to our history - like Canada House, one of Port Hope's oldest, and a wonderful marshy area near Gages Creek.*

**A.K. Sculthorpe,  
Willow Beach Field Naturalists**





*The Town of Fort Erie, in partnership with the Niagara Parks Commission and others, has made waterfront access and revitalization a priority over the past decade, and is starting to reap the rewards. Private lands have been brought into public ownership through the development process, a boat launch ramp has been constructed, the Niagara River Recreational Trail has been extended, an abandoned railway line is connecting the Niagara River, Fort Erie shoreline and Niagara Peninsula trails, a riverwalk is being developed, and local businesses are planning improvements to take advantage of the enhanced waterfront setting.*



*The previously industrial Cobourg waterfront has received such an attractive and dramatic transformation over the past decade that it has become a popular vacation destination and a favourite location for special events. These have included the annual Waterfront Festival, Canada Day, the Great American Land Regatta, and Driftwood Theatre productions. The Waterfront Festival alone hosts 60,000 visitors over three days, including many Americans who come across the lake by boat. A new marina, waterfront promenade, campground, Victoria Park and extensive, pristine beach are all developed with a heritage theme, consistent with the nearby historic downtown main street. With estimated revenues of \$90.00 per day per person, the economic spin-offs from the Waterfront Festival alone are \$2.7 million annually.*



Celebration of success is another important way to reflect community priorities. Many waterfront projects have received awards during the past decade, applauding a wide range of accomplishments.

A selection of the awards given to the Waterfront Trail, and the municipalities and organizations involved in the Lake Ontario Greenway over the past decade:

- 2000 Attractions Ontario Award as the province's best Outdoor Tourist Site to the **Royal Botanical Gardens**.
- 2000 City of Toronto Architecture and Urban Design Award in the Large Place category for the **Don Valley Brickworks**, to Oleson Worland, Landplan Collaborative, Hough Woodland Naylor Dance Leinster, and Baird Sampson Architects.
- 1999 Ontario Professional Planners Institute Award for Outstanding Planning in the communications/public education category to **Brookfield Homes** for the Whitby Shores homeowner stewardship kit.
- 1999 Canadian Institute of Planners Awards for Planning Excellence Honour Award to the **Red Hill Creek Watershed Plan**, coordinated by the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth.
- 1998 Grand SAM (Sales & Marketing) Award from the Canadian Home Builders' Association, and 1998 Project of the Year from The Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association, to **Tribute Homes/Runnymede Development Corp.'s Lakeside Project** on the Ajax waterfront.
- 1998 Canadian Institute of Planners Awards for Planning Excellence Honour Award for Urban Design to the **Stoney Creek Olde Towne Urban Design Plan**, by the City of Stoney Creek Planning Department and Dillon Consulting.
- 1998 Canadian Institute of Planners S. George Rich Award for Planning Excellence Grand Prize to the Humber River Watershed Task Force and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, for **Legacy: A Strategy for a Healthy Humber**.
- 1997 Mississauga Urban Design Award of Excellence to the **Port Credit Harbour and Credit Village Marina**.
- 1997 Excellence on the Waterfront Award in the Park/Walkway/Recreational category to the **Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail**, by the Waterfront Center in the US. This was jointly awarded to all the Lake Ontario Network members, an impressive group of over 120 organizations.
- 1997 Corporate Habitat of the Year to **Ontario Hydro's Darlington Station** by the Wildlife Habitat Council in the US.
- 1997 Excellence on the Waterfront Award in the Park/Walkway/Recreational category to the **Humber River Pedestrian Cycling Bridge**, by the Waterfront Center in the US. The Humber Bridge also won a Canadian Architect Magazine Award of Excellence, and a 1995 Award of Excellence for outstanding steel structure in Ontario from the Canadian Institute for Steel Construction.
- 1997 Federation of Ontario Naturalists W.E. Saunders Natural History Award to **Friends of the Spit**, for their work on the Leslie Street Spit in Toronto.
- 1997 Excellence on the Waterfront Award Honor Award, to the Royal Botanical Garden for its **Hamilton Harbour Fish and Wildlife Restoration Project**, by the Waterfront Center in the US.
- 1997 Clearwater Award for outstanding efforts of a non-profit citizen's organization, to **Rattray Marsh Protection Association** in Mississauga, for their efforts since the 1960s to protect and restore the marsh, by the Waterfront Center in the US.
- 1997 and 1999 Best Outdoor Mural to the **"Whaling Wall"** by Wyland, on the Redpath Sugar raw sugar shed, by NOW Magazine readers in their annual Reader's Poll.
- 1996 State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference Steering Committee (USA and Canada) Letter of Commendation to **Friends of Second Marsh**, for exceptional and distinguished achievements in Great Lakes Ecosystem improvement.
- 1994 Federation of Ontario Naturalists Lee Symmes Municipal Award to the **City of Oshawa**, for its contribution to the health of its Lake Ontario shoreline marshes.
- 1992 Canadian Institute of Planners Award for Planning Excellence to **Bringing Back the Don**, a publication of the City of Toronto Task Force to Bring Back the Don.
- 1989 Federation of Ontario Naturalists Conservation Award to the **Thickson's Woods Heritage Foundation** (TWHF) for their efforts to raise funds and purchase a white pine forest on the Whitby waterfront. TWHF has also received recognition awards from CLOCA, Pickering Field Naturalists, Durham Region Field Naturalists, and the Town of Whitby.



## LOOK BEYOND YOUR BOUNDARIES

Over the past decade, communities around the Lake have benefitted from what they call the "domino effect". Through the Lake Ontario Waterfront Network, they have shared information and experiences that have inspired healthy competition and provided valuable learning opportunities.

The initial work of the Royal Commission on the Future of Toronto's Waterfront encompassed Metropolitan Toronto. After the first year, then Premier Peterson requested that

the Commission extend its work to the GTA waterfront. Port Hope and Cobourg then asked to be included, and the initial Waterfront Trail spanned the shore from Burlington to Trenton. The domino effect continued, with Hamilton and the Niagara Peninsula becoming involved in the mid 1990s, and most recently Belleville, the Bay of Quinte, Prince Edward County and the Greater Kingston area coming on board.



*The Trust's International Brownfield Exchange provides opportunities to exchange information, establish new working relationships, and test the best new practices for sustainable brownfield development. Amsterdam's Westergasfabriek project is an excellent example – showing how a former coal gasification plant can be transformed with local government leadership, community collaboration, cultural reuse of historic buildings, a phased remediation plan, and most importantly, the visionary ideas of the project team.*





Members of the Mayor's Waterfront Task Force in Pickering visited a number of other Lake Ontario communities early in their process, providing inspiration and resulting in greater efficiency and more varied approaches to their own waterfront plan. The City has recently established a Waterfront Coordinating Committee which is now assisting with a comprehensive approach to the management of Frenchman's Bay and its watersheds, an exciting program of public art and signage, a design study for the revitalization of the Liverpool Road area, and the development of a Millennium Square and Trail on the waterfront.

The Great Lakes Community Foundations' Environmental Collaborative is a project coordinated by the Council of Michigan Foundations to help community foundations build their capacity to protect and restore the environment. As part of this project, the Toronto Community Foundation and Waterfront Regeneration Trust have initiated a network of Canadian and US community foundations around Lake Ontario and the Niagara River. The network is learning more about environmental issues and potential roles for community foundations; sharing information about activities; and initiating collaborative activities. The participating foundations recognize that they are in a unique position to provide leadership and focus a wide range of community interests on projects that integrate economic, social and environmental objectives.

*The lessons we have learned are not specific to the waterfront. Mainly it is the critical value of public engagement in the process. With community input we have articulated a collaborative waterfront vision and got buy-in for a wide range of participation. We couldn't have done that working as government alone.*

**Mayor Wayne Arthurs, City of Pickering**

## SET THE STAGE WITH GOOD PLANNING

Comprehensive, ecosystem-based planning sets the stage for re-investment along the waterfront. The planning process must be transparent and include grass-roots involvement if public support and assistance in implementation are to be assured. Where this was not done well, as in the early proposals for the Waterfront Trail in Northumberland County, much work was needed to allay fears that the Trail would be imposed on private properties.

Community-based planning involves local residents and businesses in deciding on their future, brings agency staff together, directs developers to incorporate public objectives, and establishes the policy framework for waterfront revitalization, trail building, environmental restoration and other priorities.



*The Integrated Shoreline Management Plan, prepared by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority with assistance from the Trust and other partners for the Scarborough waterfront, is the first of a new generation of ecosystem-based shoreline plans integrating physical, biological and cultural factors. It addresses public use, natural heritage, public and property safety, and shoreline regeneration.*

*Hamilton's West Harbourfront Development Study provides for a dramatic transformation of vacant and under-utilized industrial and railway lands to a mixed use community with housing, commercial, retail, recreation, and entertainment uses, combined with an open space network and waterfront parks. The concept plan has become an important tool to guide capital developments by the municipality and to evaluate development proposals to ensure that the community vision for the area is realized. Progress includes acquisitions of land and waterlots, the development of 3.4 km (2.1 miles) of waterfront trail, renovation by a private developer of an abandoned CN station to create a banquet/conference facility, purchases of land by the private sector to prepare for redevelopment, and a review of transportation options in the area.*





*In 1998, the Waterfront Regeneration Trust helped Buffalo and Fort Erie develop an International Waterfront Gateway Strategy, in response to their shared desire to improve their waterfronts and attract more visitors off the Peace Bridge that links them across the Niagara River. The Strategy defines a single international gateway with connections to the assets, attractions, events, activities and business centres of both communities. Many of the projects recommended in the Strategy are now being implemented.*



*A Citizens' Map was used to summarize the results of tours and workshops organized by the Waterfront Regeneration Trust in 1997 for the citizens of Niagara Falls, New York as part of a process to plan for the future of the City and the surrounding region. The Map is a poster which depicts the local and regional assets and opportunities based on the heritage of the community and its relationship to the Niagara River, the Falls and State parks. It has become a planning framework and tool used by the City and the recently established Waterfront Revitalization Task Force to help set priorities, develop partnerships, guide investment and improve the overall quality of life for the people who live, work and visit the area.*



*We need big plans, like the Waterfront Trail and most recently the Fung Waterfront Revitalization Task Force. If you go at it piecemeal, you can end up with a jigsaw puzzle with only a few pieces and nothing around them.*

**Dick O'Brien, Chair, Toronto and Region Conservation**



Sometimes a site specific plan, such as the one prepared for Lemoine Point Conservation Area on the Kingston Waterfront in 1995, can be a stimulus for a broader planning initiative. In this case, the Eastern Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Waterfront Working Group formed in 1996 and initiated the application of a bioregional perspective to a broad stretch of waterfront and watersheds from Glenora to Gananoque.

Changes in waterfront land use provide opportunities for public access, habitat restoration and improved shoreline management, especially when the appropriate policies are in place to take advantage of them. As early as 1974, the Town of Oakville established a visionary policy to require dedication of a minimum 15 metre (18 yds) strip of waterfront land for linear public parkland during redevelopment, as a condition of development approval. Since then, many other municipalities have established similar requirements. The most recent example is Regional Niagara, which is currently developing a Policy Plan amendment to ensure that the Waterfront Trail is accommodated whenever redevelopment occurs along Lake Ontario.

Over the past decade, the City of Toronto has made some major changes in planning philosophy and practice, reflected in a recent report prepared to indicate directions for the new official plan, **Toronto at the Crossroads: Shaping our Future**. The report introduces five campaigns – for beautiful places, sustainable transportation, housing, greening, and a dynamic downtown. Some of the City's new thinking has already been expressed in the revitalization of the formerly industrial King-Spadina and King-Parliament areas – through designation as reinvestment areas, accompanied by innovative and flexible techniques to encourage private sector investment in mixed use development. Other initiatives that will be incorporated into the official plan, and that will have a significant effect on the waterfront, include the Environmental Plan; the Mayor's waterfront vision **Our Toronto Waterfront! the wave of the future**; and the report March 200 of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force, **Our Toronto Waterfront: Gateway to the New Canada**.



## USE MILESTONE PROJECTS TO BUILD MOMENTUM

Big plans are essential, but so are bold moves, and most communities can point to a key project that got the ball rolling and created the impetus to do more. Often, the development of the Waterfront Trail acted as a symbol and catalyst for broader waterfront revitalization.

In some cases, the dismissal of a proposed project is an important milestone, such as the Ontario Municipal Board's refusal of Home Depot's request to build a big box store in the Toronto Portlands.

The OMB recognized the value of the city's

proposals for the area, which are based on the strategic significance of the site at the entrance to the Portlands, a place that demands a particular scale and design quality from redevelopment proposals.

Some of the most frequently cited milestone projects are bridges. They not only create a physical link across a major barrier, but also link political jurisdictions and communities in a symbolic way that bodes well for further cooperation. Examples include trail bridges at Port Dalhousie, Grindstone Creek Marshes, Mimico Creek, Humber River, Duffins Creek, and Cobourg Creek.



*In Quinte West, the Trenton Renaissance program includes the redevelopment of Fraser Park Marina along with new trails, parklands and shoreline restoration from the Lake Ontario waterfront up the Trent-Severn Waterway to Lock One. Public investments by the City and the Lower Trent Conservation Authority, with assistance from federal Great Lakes funding, are stimulating involvement by the private sector, including outdoor patios for businesses and restaurants that take advantage of the waterfront location.*

*The Duffins Creek Bridge, a challenging project in an environmentally sensitive location, demonstrates the important role that can be played by service clubs. The Rotary Clubs of Ajax and Pickering rallied behind the project and made sure it was implemented. The bridge was also a catalyst for Waterfront Trail development in Pickering; by the end of 2000, an off-road trail will stretch across most of the City's waterfront.*







The revival of the Sunnyside Beach area as a lively recreation area is being stimulated by the new Western Beaches boardwalk and the Humber River Bicycle-Pedestrian Bridge. In summer 1996, a new café was opened in the historic Sunnyside Pavilion under a 10 year lease from the City of Toronto. This mediterranean-style café takes advantage of the interior open-air courtyard as well as a patio on the beach-front.

The Humber River Bridge has become a handsome landmark on Toronto's waterfront. As well as improving waterfront access, it demonstrates magnificent design quality and interesting interpretations of cultural and natural history. And, being the result of a difficult, lengthy, multi-stakeholder process, it is also a symbol of cooperation and partnership.



*Here's my best news story of the decade: the Municipality of Clarington deserves tons of credit for preserving the fabulous wetland area at the mouth of Wilmot Creek before development gets there. They're doing all the right things - running the trails away from the sensitive areas, restoring habitats, involving volunteers, doing a watershed study.*

**Margaret Carney, Thickson's Woods Heritage Foundation**



# DESIGN WITH HERITAGE IN MIND

As the pace of change in our lives continues to quicken, buildings and places that allow us to maintain connections to our cultural and natural heritage become increasingly important anchors for stability and community identity. And as the opportunities to make creative use of heritage structures and landscapes diminish, the remaining assets become increasingly precious.

Adaptive re-use of cultural heritage creates important connections to our roots, especially

along waterfront areas where settlement has the longest history. Protection of natural habitats and restoration of ecological systems improve environmental quality, creating more healthy conditions for people and wildlife alike.

Sensitivity to heritage encourages design excellence and helps to ensure that projects are enduring, satisfy community objectives, and provide flexibility to meet the needs of future generations.



*McNichol Park in Burlington, a node on the Waterfront Trail, is a 5.7 hectare (14 acre) estate featuring a 1930's stone mansion, gatehouse, barn, stables, heritage gardens and dollhouse in the natural setting of the Lake Ontario shoreline and Shoreacres Creek valley. Restoration will enable re-use of the estate for high-end social banquet functions, corporate meeting and executive training, environmental art education, heritage interpretation and general community use. It will provide a range of opportunities for the local community as well as a tourist destination.*

Port Dalhousie has benefitted from an integrated approach by local businesses, homeowners, service clubs, the City of St. Catharines and Regional Niagara, including a waterfront promenade, new shops and restaurants, an on-road bicycle lane, and a renewed park and beachfront, all in the context of a heritage district, with benefits for local residents, tourism and economic development.



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

**David Crombie, *Regeneration*, 1992**



*In the highly populated Western Beach area of Toronto, a separated trail system with a boardwalk for pedestrians and asphalt for cyclists and in-line skaters fits well with the traditions of an urban community. In the natural areas of Gages Creek along the Port Hope waterfront, a narrow stone chip path is a more appropriate design.*

One of the most interesting aspects of the Lake Ontario waterfront is the diversity among communities - large and small, urban and rural. And one of the keys to success is to recognize these differences and adapt policies and approaches to local landscapes and traditions.

As increasing numbers of people enjoy trails and develop an appreciation for nature, it can

become challenging to ensure protection of natural systems and wildlife. Designing with heritage in mind can avoid damaging overuse by directing people away from sensitive areas, and designing appropriate facilities. Education through signage and trail guides (such as the *Waterfront Trail Guidebook: Explore Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow along the Shore of Lake Ontario*) can also help to build public awareness and encourage stewardship.

*In Grimsby an historic 1905 water pumphouse is being lovingly restored as a community station and waystation on the Trail. It will include an information booth, a multi-purpose room for family and community celebrations and events, a location for exhibitions, and a public meeting space with a patio overlooking the Lake.*



*Rattray Marsh in Mississauga was suffering from considerable trampling of soils and forest edges. Construction of an elevated boardwalk now keeps people out of the wetland, and focussed in a specific corridor, while providing excellent opportunities for nature appreciation and wildlife viewing.*





David Crombie, Mayor Ann Mulvale, Bill Smith and Elaine Magri both of CIBC unveil a new trailhead sign at Bronte Harbour in Oakville. Thanks to the support of CIBC, the Trust installed eleven signs along the Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail, and hosted events celebrating the Trail's fifth anniversary and recognizing community leaders who made the Trail possible.

Oakville's Millennium Heritage Trails project, led by the Community Foundation of Oakville, is an excellent example of the integration of cultural heritage protection with environmental stewardship of the river valleys and healthy, accessible recreation opportunities. Three north-south trails on Oakville's major creeks will connect to the Waterfront Trail in the south and a utility corridor trail traversing north Oakville. Ten information pavilions and six info-columns will tell a three dimensional story of Oakville: historical, environmental and botanical, aiming to entertain, excite and educate. Visit the website: [www.oakvilletrails.com](http://www.oakvilletrails.com).



**Fort York: Setting it Right** provides a practical example for other communities wishing to design with their cultural and natural heritage. A collaboration between the Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common, and the Fort York Management Board, this book is based on fifteen guiding principles that could have a significant impact on the Toronto Waterfront. It aims to ensure that downtown Toronto redevelopment considers and preserves both the historic and natural features of Fort York and its surroundings and brings back dignity, legibility, visibility, and accessibility to this site. The book's recommendations include the rediscovery of the topography of the Garrison Creek Ravine to the North and East of the Fort, as well as the historic shoreline of Lake Ontario and the lakeside topography from the Armouries to the mouth of the Garrison Creek east of Bathurst Street.

For more information on integrating trails and natural and cultural heritage, see the following Waterfront Regeneration Trust publications:

- **Restoring Natural Habitats**
- **The Waterfront Trail and Wildlife Habitat Protection**
- **Lake Ontario Waterfront Experiences**
- **Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail Interpretation Plan**



Public art, such as murals, sculptures, and fountains, is another way to incorporate heritage, meaning and beauty into our landscapes. We have many fine examples, and opportunities to do much more.

*The Sheldon Point lookout near the Humber Bridge was donated to the community by David and Sylvia Sheldon in commemoration of their parents, Julius and Ada. It includes a spectacular arrangement of huge rocks (Bracebridge granite), placed to enhance the views and designed to celebrate the cycles of life - the seasons and the summer and winter solstices. "The result," says Gunta Mackars, the parks designer, "is the only place along Toronto's waterfront that brings you out into the lake."*

The Redpath Sugar storage building on Toronto's Queen's Quay East boasts a dramatic, 31.5 metres (90 foot) mural by internationally renowned marine artist, Wyland, depicting a family of female whales followed by their young. The mural took a week to complete, during which time the Trust, with support from Loblaw's, held community barbecues and children's activities. The mural is one of 77 around the globe — a project by Wyland to raise awareness about the need to protect our waters, and the inter-connectedness of the world's oceans, lakes and rivers.



*In Etobicoke, a group known as the Waterfront Trail Artists raises funds to use art to teach school children about the waterfront's natural and cultural heritage. In 1999, over 2,000 students created papier mâché replicas of the now extinct passenger pigeon and held a symbolic "flight" on the grounds of the historic Lakeshore Hospital.*



*Artist Dorsey James is creating a series of sculptures in partnership with Dunbarton High School students and staff. The carvings will grace the Pickering waterfront with their depictions of aboriginal imagery, early settlers, and local animals and plants.*



## CONNECTIONS

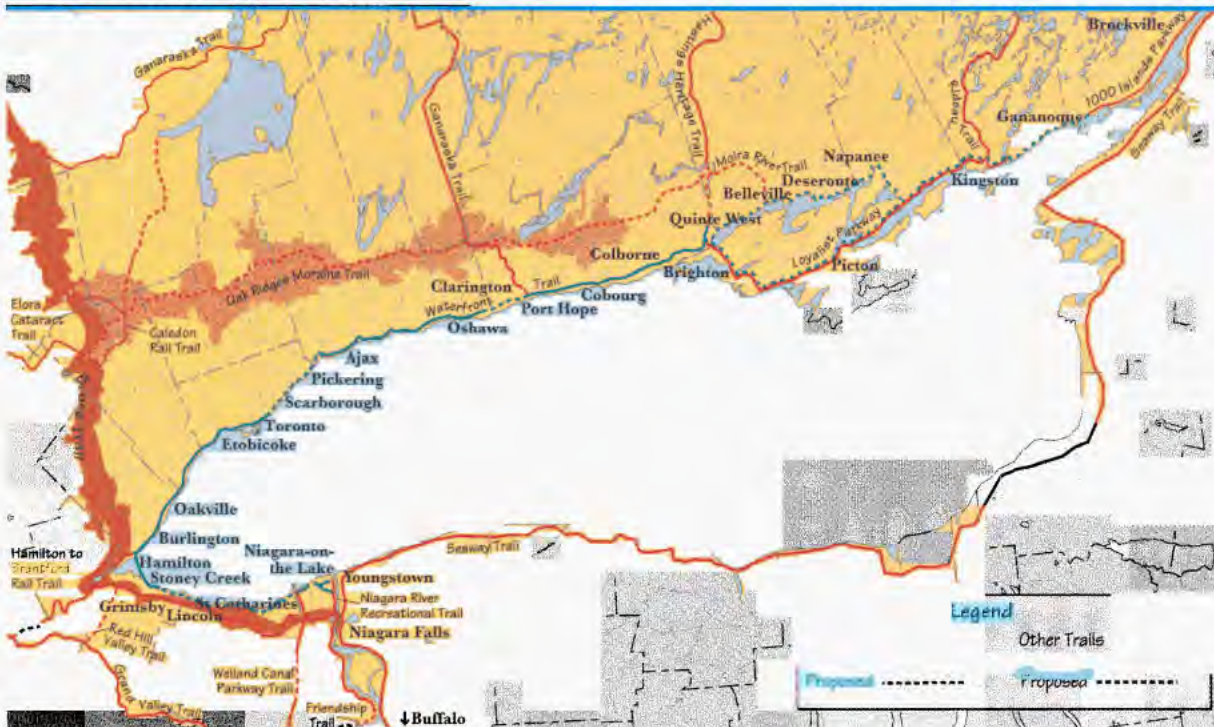
The value of the Waterfront Trail is increased tremendously by connections to it down the river valleys or through local neighbourhoods. Fundraising efforts can be enhanced by promoting a network of trails within a regional context. The pressures of over-use can be reduced by dispersing people through a larger network of trails and open spaces. People can use trail systems more effectively for commuting and recreational uses if the individual pieces are connected. And tourism destinations can add economic value by providing interesting packages linked by trails like the Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail, Northumberland County Apple Route and Niagara Wine Route.

There are a number of existing trails that link to the Lake Ontario Waterfront. Examples

include Niagara River Recreation Trail, Welland Canal Parkway Trail, Forty Mile Creek Trail, Red Hill Valley Trail, Hamilton to Brantford Rail Trail, Royal Botanical Gardens trails, Bronte Creek Trail, Oakville Heritage Trails, Humber River Trail, Lower Don Trail, Duffins/Seaton Trail, Oshawa Creek Trail, Ganaraska Trail, Moira River Trail, and the Rideau Trail.

There is also an opportunity to make a continuous trail around Lake Ontario by linking to the Seaway Trail in New York state. The Seaway Trail is a 730 km (454 mile) scenic byway that extends the entire northern border of the state along the shorelines of Lake Erie, Niagara River, Lake Ontario, and St. Lawrence River, passing through historic villages, fishing ports and natural areas.

### Lake Ontario Trails







The TransCanada Trail doubles up with the Waterfront Trail from Ajax to Hamilton as part of its Ontario route.



The Town of Lincoln, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, and Regional Niagara are working with local wineries, restaurant owners and other businesses to create a trail loop around Jordan Harbour. It will connect the Prudhommes area on the waterfront via the Twenty Valley bicycle route to the Cave Springs Winery in Jordan, Jordan Historical Museum of the Twenty, Balls Falls Conservation Area and Niagara Region Bicycling Network.

In the Greater Kingston Area, the Cataraqui Trails Alliance was recently formed by the Cataraqui Trail Management Board, the Eastern Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Waterfront Working Group, the K&P Trail Group and the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority to create a 440 km (273 miles) trail network incorporating eight existing and proposed trails in the region. The Alliance is working cooperatively on promotion, fundraising and trail management.



# MAKE IT HAPPEN WITH CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration among all levels of government, conservation authorities, service clubs, community groups, businesses and industries brings together the ideas and resources that turn visions into reality. Very few projects along the

waterfront involve only a single player. Most involve partnerships among a complex mix of actors, each bringing their own perspective and contributions, and each gaining a variety of shared and individual benefits.



*In the mid 1990s, the Port Darlington Community Association raised alarm bells about plans to quarry the Westside Creek Marsh adjacent to their community. Despite the adversarial nature of the dispute at that time, the Association agreed to participate in a process with the Municipality of Clarington, St. Marys Cement Company (now Blue Circle), Ontario Hydro, the Central Lake Conservation Authority, provincial and federal government agencies and many other groups. With the help of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, this diverse group collaborated on a plan that has protected about 60% of the wetland, while providing alternative local sources of aggregate, and creating new waterfront parklands.*



*The future of the Provincially significant Lynde Creek Marsh in Whitby has been a source of concern since residential developments immediately to the east of it were proposed in the late 1980s. During the 1990s, a number of measures were put in place to improve protection of the wetland, including ecological restoration and barrier plantings on the east side of the Marsh, a local monitoring committee, watershed protection initiatives, and a new homeowners stewardship kit. The Provincial government's Natural Areas Protection Fund includes an allocation of up to \$4.5 million, complemented by \$750,000 from the Town of Whitby, to be used for acquisitions to increase the size of the conservation area. This work required an impressive level of cooperation and commitment among a wide range of partners, including the Save Lynde Marsh group, municipal and provincial staff and political representatives, the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, Central Lake Ontario Conservation and the developers.*

The Township of Haldimand worked with the Trust to sort through the approvals necessary to create a public boat launch and picnic area on an otherwise inaccessible area of the Northumberland shoreline. Funding for the project came from jobsOntario Capital; labour was donated by Behan Construction and materials donated from the nearby St. Lawrence Cement quarry.



In the 1970s, an ambitious program of land acquisition was launched by the City of Hamilton, the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority (HRCA) and the Province to convert Hamilton Beach from residential uses to an open space/ recreational corridor. By 1986, local opposition and shifting public opinion made it clear that a new approach was needed. A new Beach Neighbourhood Plan was developed, providing for a mix of residential, commercial and recreation uses. An innovative partnership involving the City, HRCA, Waterfront Regeneration Trust and the Province enabled the transfer of public lands to provide for parkland, private sector development consistent with the plan, and financing for Waterfront Trail development.

*We are going to have a unique waterfront trail that will take time and money from private corporations, service clubs, governments, community associations and Pickering taxpayers. I am confident that we will see the fruits of our labour begin to blossom this year (2000). A lot of hands make light work, nothing good is accomplished by one person alone.*

**David Steele, Chair, Mayor's Waterfront Task Force, Pickering**





In Oshawa, General Motors designated most of its headquarters property as the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve. The Reserve is nestled between Second Marsh (owned by the City of Oshawa) and Darlington Provincial Park, and this complex of creeks, wetlands, meadows and woodlands is one of the largest natural areas along the north shore of Lake Ontario. It features a wheelchair accessible trail with interpretive panels including braille, developed in cooperation with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

The 16 ha (39.5 acres) Arsenal Lands, formerly a small arms and munitions manufacturing facility, is located in Mississauga adjacent to Etobicoke Creek and Marie Curtis Park (City of Toronto). Since the purchase in 1992 by the TRCA and funding partners (Province of Ontario, Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, City of Mississauga and Region of Peel), an integrated park plan and site remediation plan, including extensive public consultations have been completed. With the assistance of the funding partners and the former owner - Canada Post Corporation, the site has been remediated in readiness for the rebirth of a degraded industrial site to a diverse and ecologically healthy parkland setting.

In several pollution “hot spots” around the Great Lakes, RAPs (Remedial Action Plans) prepared under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement have been a valuable catalyst for collaborative action in environ-

mental restoration. RAPs put into practice the use of watersheds as organizing frameworks for community action, and promote the development of multi-functional projects.



A major focus of the Bay of Quinte RAP has been the reduction of phosphorus and sediment inputs to the Bay. With a broad base of watershed stakeholder involvement, over 450 rural clean-up projects, focusing on a landowner stewardship approach, have helped to curb stream erosion, protect habitats and reduce pollution from agricultural sources. Four sewage treatment plants have been upgraded and innovative stormwater treatment facilities have been built.





*In the Toronto area, the RAP is led by a partnership among Environment Canada, Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Toronto and Region Conservation, and the Waterfront Regeneration Trust. Remedial action is stimulated by as many as 34 community groups focusing on specific watersheds and waterfront areas, including the Rouge Alliance, the Don Council, the Humber Alliance, the Etobicoke/Mimico Task Force, Citizens for the Future of Etobicoke's Waterfront and the Toronto Bay Initiative. These groups have been a tremendous vehicle to raise public awareness, develop informed community leaders, create strategies with governments and the private sector, and undertake numerous habitat and water quality improvement projects.*

*Over the past decade, the Hamilton Harbour Fish and Wildlife Restoration Project has involved dozens of partners in rehabilitating 11 km (6.8 miles) of shoreline habitat and restoring 200 ha (494 acres) of wetlands at nine sites around the harbour with leadership from the Bay Area Restoration Council and the RAP office.*





# SECURE STRATEGIC PUBLIC INVESTMENT

Public funds, such as the Provincial jobsOntario *Capital* funding in the mid-90s, or the Federal Millennium Fund in 2000, are an essential catalyst to get waterfront regeneration projects started. They can help stimulate:

- re-allocation of existing municipal and conservation authority funds by bringing together existing parks, recreation, infrastructure, and works budgets;
- new partnerships among agencies, land trusts and landowners;
- attraction of new funds from businesses, service clubs, residents and user groups.

The investments from the jobsOntario *Capital* fund in Lake Ontario waterfront projects from 1992-95, coordinated by the

Waterfront Regeneration Trust, stimulated nearly a hundred projects in communities around the Lake. The provincial investment of \$12M resulted in the leverage of \$24M from local sources for Trail and Greenway initiatives.

The federal government continues to support a broad range of Lake Ontario waterfront projects through the Canada Millennium Partnership Program, which has granted approximately \$2.6 million to support projects totalling \$15 million. They include trail projects in Niagara Falls, Hamilton, Toronto, Pickering, Quinte West, Belleville and Eastern Ontario; gardens and parks in Bowmanville and Cobourg; educational programs in Etobicoke and the Rouge Valley; and heritage projects in Burlington and Port Hope.

David Crombie presented former Etobicoke Mayor Bruce Sinclair with a jobsOntario *Capital* cheque in the amount of \$185,000 to help complete the Etobicoke portion of the Waterfront Trail. The presentation, one of many along Lake Ontario, took place during the opening ceremonies of the Lakeshore Community Festival, June 1994.



The Provincial Rural Job Strategy Fund (RJSF) is providing \$510,000 to a partnership including the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, Conservation Niagara Foundation, Town of Lincoln and Jordan Merchants Association to implement a two-year, \$1.6 million marketing initiative. The project will promote the Twenty Valley/Jordan Harbour area as a tourist destination and create 20 jobs.

Over the past 20 years, the City of Brockville has transformed an industrial waterfront to a well planned mix of parkland, trails, harbour facilities, restaurants and condominiums. The participation and financial support of all levels of government has been an essential cornerstone of the program, totalling \$8.6 million in public infrastructure that has attracted significant private sector investment dollars.

Another key area for public investment is in securing a land base for conservation and public access. The high profile of the waterfront for local recreation as well as its tourism potential has led to long-term efforts to acquire public parklands through purchase, dedications and

casements. The range of these projects is considerable, from the largest park within an urban area in North America - the Rouge Park at 4700 hectares (11,605 acres) - to much smaller "pocket parks" being acquired within existing urban waterfront areas.

The Rouge Park was created in 1994 with a generous contribution of \$10 million each from the Federal and Provincial governments, as well as the land-holdings of Toronto and Region Conservation and other public agencies. Following purchase of available lands, the remaining funds were placed in the Trust's Waterfront Regeneration Fund where they are being managed to support projects that ensure the long-term conservation of the Rouge Park.



In Prince Edward County, the 1997 acquisition of 50 km (31 miles) of abandoned rail line from the Murray Canal to Picton opened up the possibility of new routes for public access to the countryside. Combined with the existing Loyalist Parkway, this has led to creative opportunities to incorporate many natural and cultural features of the County in the route of the Waterfront Trail.

In the past decade, a number of high quality and diverse parks have been added to Toronto's waterfront, including Colonel Samuel Smith Park, Humber Bay Shores, Roundhouse Park, Harbour Square Park, Toronto Music Garden, Spadina Quay Wetland, and Woodbine Park.

Ten years ago, Stoney Creek had only one waterfront park. Since then, through purchase as well as dedication during development, Waterford Park was developed adjacent to a private marina, and other parks are in the planning stages for the Fifty Point neighbourhood and Cherry Beach.

*If we start now to re-acquire parts of the waterfront that have been in private hands, we hope people will be enjoying it 115 years from now. It speaks to people's sense of birthright.*

**Mayor Wayne Redekop, Town of Fort Erie**



# ATTRACT PRIVATE RESOURCES

A shared vision and strong planning attract private sector involvement. This is especially important in those waterfront areas that are experiencing changing land use and market conditions. Public sector investment in infrastructure and parks often provides attractive conditions and increases confidence to encourage private sector investment.

Groups such as service clubs and business improvement areas have demonstrated tremendous community leadership through fundraising for capital projects. All across the waterfront, there are projects organized and

funded by the members of the Lions, Rotary, Optimist, Kiwanis Clubs and others.

There is a growing trend in the development and industrial sectors towards greater environmental and community responsibility, not just because it's the "right thing to do", but because it also makes good business sense. Increasingly, residential developers like Brookfield Homes in Port Union and Whitby are participating in local nature restoration projects, contributing to the development of the Waterfront Trail, and including information about the Trail and environmental stewardship in their sales packages.



*In Burlington, the increased accessibility to the Lake provided by the Waterfront Trail in combination with a make-over of Spencer Smith Park have resulted in a boom in restaurants and other businesses in the downtown waterfront area. The number of restaurants alone jumped from fifteen in the early 90s to forty by 2000. Many of the restaurants now open at 7 am to cater to the growing numbers of early morning walkers and joggers.*



In 1999, the Bronte BIA (Business Improvement Area) in Oakville initiated the Bronte Butterfly Park, just east of historic Bronte Harbour. The park will be a year-round community facility and tourist attraction including gardens to provide for all phases of butterfly life cycles, fountains and a flowing waterway that will become a skateway in winter. The \$2.4 million project has already raised significant funds through private donations, including major contributions from Lloyd Phinney and Alex Szinegh of Exit Realty; Ontario Trillium Foundation; and AGRA.



Perhaps the most unique private development on the Lake Ontario waterfront is the Nawautin Shores subdivision in Haldimand Township. The owners, Bob and Margaret Marshall, wanted to create a special place that could be enjoyed not only by the residents of the thirty new homes in the subdivision, but would also be accessible to the public, school groups and naturalists. Instead of creating standard stormwater management ponds to protect the Lake from runoff, they developed a diverse 5.7 hectare (14 acre) complex of lagoons, rapids, meadows and beach habitat that is now home to deer, fox, beaver and grouse and a peaceful sanctuary on the Waterfront Trail.

In 1999, AGRA hosted the 5th Envirorun, a 5k run and 3k walk, in support of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust. Approximately 90 people from AGRA staff and Trust supporters participated in the event which included a live performance from the band Stratochief and Laura Hubert, a barbeque and children's games. In addition to over \$3,000 in pledges, AGRA donated \$10,000 to the Waterfront Regeneration Trust to support its work along the waterfront.



*Waterfront protection and environmental stewardship have become part of the development approval process, as well as being the right thing to do and a cost of doing developments. Overall it's a trend in the industry to be more environmentally sensitive which we emphasize in our sales and marketing. The public expects it of us, so do governments.*

**Katy Schofield, Vice-President Development, Brookfield Homes (Ontario) Ltd.**



Runnymede Development Corporation's new subdivision near the mouth of Carruthers Creek has a strong emphasis on the natural features of the Lake and the Waterfront Trail. This award-winning development was designed to conform to the "environment first" philosophy of the secondary plan developed by the Town of Ajax. An excerpt from the Tribute sales brochure demonstrates how this philosophy is also part of their marketing approach:

*Picture this, the beach at your doorstep. An early morning jog down by the water, a family picnic in the park, or a leisurely bike ride with the kids on the Waterfront Trail which winds through the community. If this is the lifestyle you've always dreamt about, your dream can finally become reality in "Lakeside".*



Large industrial landholdings along parts of Whitby's waterfront were formerly inaccessible to the public. The Town successfully negotiated with Co-Steel LASCO, Dupont and Nor-Arm Development to provide public access, through land dedication and leases, for one of the most attractive sections of Waterfront Trail, set in a broad landscape of regenerated habitats.



There are now many excellent partnerships involving utilities like power generating plants, sewage treatment plants and water treatment facilities. Employees from the Darlington Nuclear Generating Station volunteered their time to build the portion of the Waterfront

Trail that goes through their property, linking it to an existing fitness trail. The Regional Municipality of Durham, working in partnership with the Town of Clarington, will dedicate lands for the Waterfront Trail near its new sewage treatment plant in Courtice.



Ontario Power Generation is working with local stakeholders to develop a publically accessible conservation area on the Lennox Generating Station property west of Kingston. The proposal incorporates a Provincially significant wetland, managed by Ducks Unlimited, habitat restoration, re-routing the Loyalist Parkway, and a new waterfront park.



Brownfield redevelopment, providing new uses for potentially contaminated lands, is starting to benefit from innovative planning approaches. In 1996, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE) released the *Guideline for Use at Contaminated Sites in Ontario*. It provides more certainty and a range of approaches to site clean up, including a site specific risk assessment technique that allows strategic design of remediation plans with increased cost-effectiveness, but without compromising the protection of environmental and human health.

In January 2000, the Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario released an advisory document - *A Standard Municipal Model for Development Approvals at Potentially Contaminated Sites in Ontario* - encouraging a common, pragmatic, approach to dealing with lands that are subject to soil and groundwater contamination. This approach is intended to satisfy municipal responsibilities, to limit municipal exposure to liability, and to be fully in keeping with current initiatives to streamline the municipal review process. It relies on the Record of Site Condition, provided in the

MOE Guideline, as a practical way to confirm that a site does not require clean-up or has been cleaned up to the standard.

In August 2000, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing published its *Brownfields Showcase* materials which establish new education and training initiatives geared to municipalities.

Additional tools for facilitating brownfields redevelopment include:

- Historic land use inventories to proactively identify issues
- Multi-stakeholder advisory committees to build broad-based support
- Availability of environmental insurance
- Tax increment financing to finance remediation
- Escrow/closing funds from lending institutions to deal with issues arising at later dates

An increasing number of success stories along the waterfront counter the prevailing view that contaminated soils and groundwater left by industries, ports and railways are prohibitively expensive to clean up.



Cobourg is typical of many small Great Lakes towns, with a legacy of contaminated soils and groundwater from former industrial, rail, fuel storage and shipping activities. With a change in land use to mixed uses (residential, recreational and commercial), the landowners on the Cobourg waterfront have cooperated to an unusual degree on an innovative clean up plan. For example, Imperial Oil has now successfully completed a bioremediation process to clean up its lands.





A 14.2 hectare (35 acre) property in South Buffalo, formerly owned and operated as a steel manufacturing facility by Republic Steel/LTV, is now the site of the high-tech Village Farms greenhouse – producing hydroponic tomatoes. The site had been contaminated by many years of leaking oil storage tanks. An innovative partnership was struck between the City of Buffalo and the developer whereby the City retained ownership of the land and entered into a long-term lease with the developer. Once that certainty was provided, 13,005 cubic metres (17,000 cubic yards) of soil were removed, treated, and returned to the site at a cost of approximately \$US 800,000. Clean up costs were shared by the City and the court-ordered escrow fund established in the Republic Steel/LTV bankruptcy proceedings. Private investment in constructing the facility was about \$US 14M. Today, the greenhouse operations employ 105 permanent employees and generates in the order of \$US 774,000 in local property taxes.

Shell Canada operated a distribution and lubricant blending centre for 60 years in Toronto's Port Industrial area, leaving the soils and groundwater laced with fuels, lube oils, pesticides, and traces of arsenic and other heavy metals. In the mid 1990s, an effective clean up provided an innovative model for restoration and re-use of industrial lands, at half the cost of a traditional approach. 21,000 tonnes (23,153 tons) of soil were remediated using low temperature thermal desorption and returned to the site, and another 35,000 tonnes (38,589 tons) of more heavily contaminated soils were disposed of off-site. The new user is a Toronto Hydro service centre providing a workplace for 1000 people.

# WORK IN PROGRESS

What can we conclude from our collective experience of the past decade?

We celebrate the fact that the 32 communities along the Canadian shore of Lake Ontario now share the vision of a regenerated and connected waterfront. Having worked together to articulate this vision in the *Lake Ontario Greenway Strategy*, they have incorporated it into their own strategies, plans and policies.

Over a hundred projects along the waterfront greenway – ranging from parks to housing, restaurants, beaches, wetlands, historic buildings, and marinas – have demonstrated the power of partnerships and the benefits of integrating economic revitalization, community renewal and environmental regeneration in the context of a strong vision and good planning.

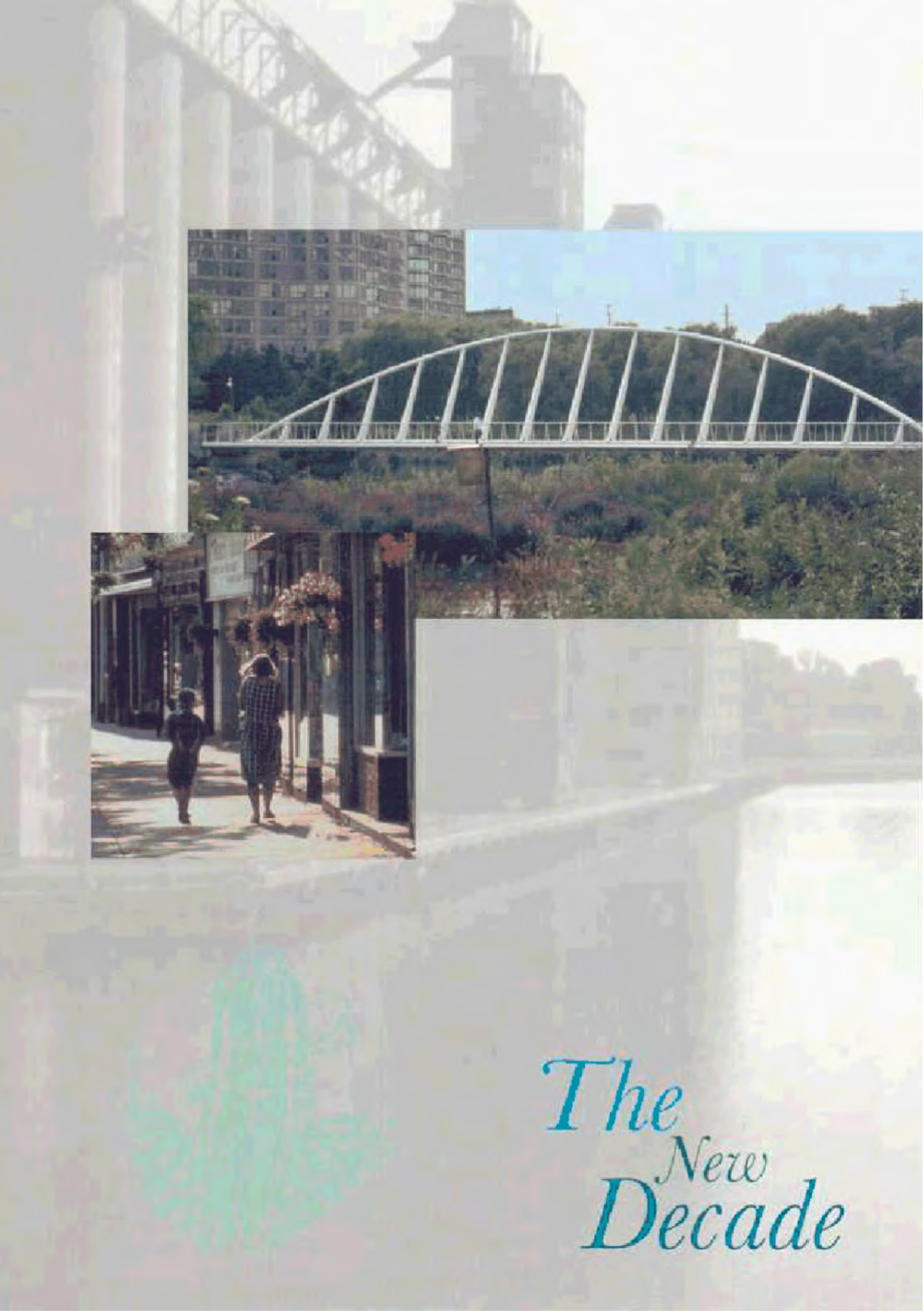
And new developments increasingly show a commitment to design excellence, public access, and respect for waterfront heritage.

The Waterfront Trail has been embraced as a symbol of regeneration and a valuable asset in each community. Some 350 km (217.5 miles) of Waterfront Trail are in place, with a strong commitment to complete the full 650 km (404 miles) from Niagara-on-the-Lake to Gananoque.

Finally, we recognize that this is a work in progress – much has been accomplished, but there is much more to do to realize our collective vision. New opportunities and challenges lie ahead, waiting to be met with the collaborative approaches and practical knowledge developed over the past decade.







*The  
New  
Decade*



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

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

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





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

**David Crombie, *Regeneration*, 1992**

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

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

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

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



# SHARE THE VISION WITH A NEW GENERATION

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

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

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

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



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

**Jane Jacobs, Author and Urbanist**




# COMPLETE AND ENHANCE THE WATERFRONT TRAIL AND GREENWAY

The Waterfront Trail has proven to be an important symbol of a new attitude to the waterfront and a catalyst for waterfront improvements – it is the signature project that ties all the others together while providing much-needed public access to the Lake.

While the Waterfront Trail is substantially complete from Hamilton to Trenton, there are several significant gaps (for example in Scarborough and Hope Township). The Trail is close to 50% complete in the Niagara Peninsula and is in the early stages of development in Quinte Country, Prince Edward County and the Greater Kingston area (Glenora to Gananoque).

There are also sections of existing Trail that need re-alignment and/or upgrading to improve safety and the quality of experience. Currently 38% of the Trail is off-road and 62% is on-road. The majority of on-road portions are on quiet, attractive residential streets and rural routes. However, others are on busy streets, and should be re-routed to provide a safer, more pleasant experience, closer to the Lake. Some of the sections of Trail that need particular attention are in parts of Etobicoke, downtown Toronto, Whitby, Clarington and Hamilton Township.

Completing the Trail and continuing to implement new greenway projects will build on the investments of the last decade and maximise their value. Benefits will include tourism opportunities, healthy recreation, local economic development, cultural heritage protection, and environmental regeneration.

 Communities along the Lake will undertake a rich variety of projects over the next decade – continuing to realize our shared vision of a revitalized waterfront. Here is an illustrative sample of planned initiatives:

- Fort Erie Riverwalk
- Upper River View Trail and Niagara Gorge Hiking Trail, Niagara Falls, New York
- Lakeshore Road improvements to accommodate cyclists, Niagara-on-the-Lake and St. Catharines
- Charles Ansell Park in St. Catharines, at meeting point of Waterfront Trail and Welland Canals Parkway
- Victoria Shores Trail, Lincoln
- Forty Mile Creek Park improvements, Grimsby
- Powerline Trail linking Bruce Trail to Waterfront Trail in Stoney Creek
- Retail complex featuring waterfront amenities at Bayfront Park, Hamilton
- McNichol Waterfront Park, Burlington
- New linear waterfront parkland to be secured during residential redevelopment in Oakville
- Port Credit Harbour/Memorial Park East shoreline regeneration, Mississauga
- Mimico Apartment Strip waterfront revitalization (parks, Trail, boat mooring)
- Restoration of Don River Mouth, gateway to Toronto Portlands
- Port Union Village Common and Waterfront Trail from Highland Creek to Rouge River, Scarborough
- Restoration of Frenchman's Bay wetlands and Hydro Marsh, Pickering
- Restoration of Duffins and Carruthers Creeks coastal marshes
- Performance area in Rotary Park, Ajax
- Land acquisitions to expand Lynde Shores conservation area in Whitby
- Recreational development of Oshawa's western lakefront lands
- Securement of public lands in Bowmanville Marsh area, Clarington
- Centre Pier Development, Port Hope
- West Harbour Park, Cobourg
- Butler Creek Trail to connect with Waterfront Trail in Brighton
- Waterfront Trail link from Quinte West to Belleville
- Millennium Trail, Prince Edward County
- Lennox Generating Station conservation area and Trail
- Joel Stone Beach project, Gananoque



*Waterfront regeneration is a project that will never be completed – that's part of the beauty of it. It's a matter of having a long term plan and seizing the moment whenever it presents itself to do the bits and pieces that will add together to be something truly wonderful. To be part of something in your time that will make a difference in times to come.*

***Ian Wilson, Past Chair, Eastern Lake Ontario – St. Lawrence River Waterfront Working Group***

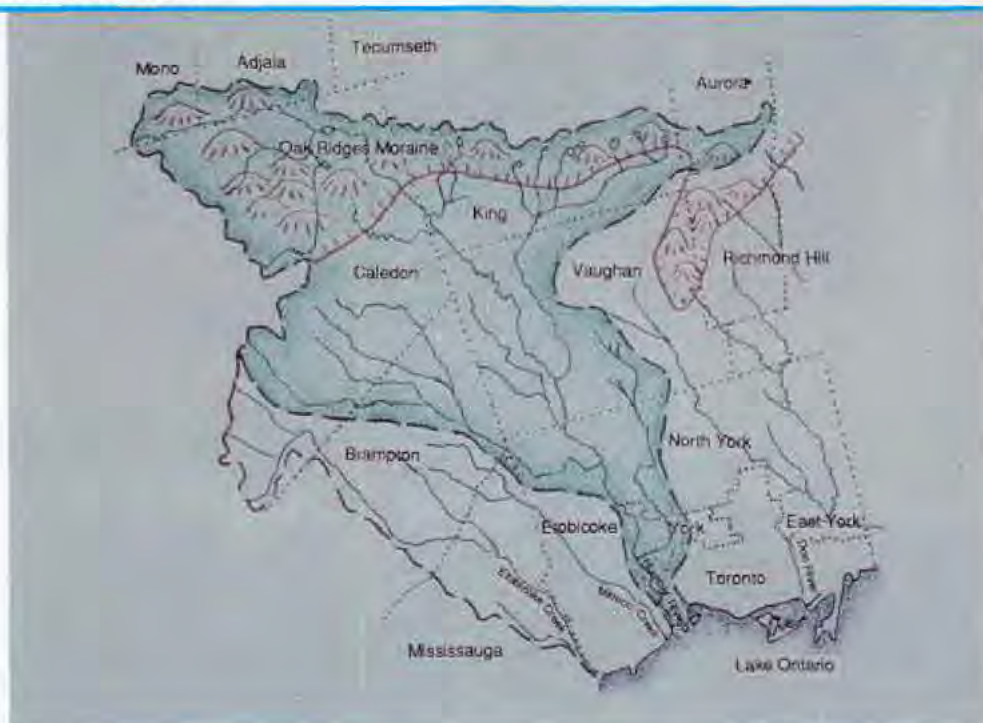


# EXPAND WATERSHED STEWARDSHIP

In the Great Lakes Areas of Concern along the Niagara River and Lake Ontario, the pressures of land use and environmental degradation prompted special designation by the governments of Canada and the US in 1987. In some of these areas, such as Hamilton Harbour, Toronto and Region, and the Bay of Quinte, the remedial action plans (RAPs) have been particularly successful in stimulating watershed-based strategies and actions as well as the development of diverse community partnerships. For example, groups such as the Don Watershed Council and Humber Alliance, coordinated by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, have made significant advances by developing community-based action strategies (eg *40 Steps to a New Don*) and report cards to assess progress.

While progress has been made, environmental monitoring of the RAP areas shows that much more needs to be done to fully restore these areas to health. Beaches are still posted to warn of unsafe pollution levels, habitats are fragmented and degraded, sediments are contaminated, fish consumption advisories are needed because of contaminant burdens in fish flesh, and there are still concerns about taste and odour of drinking water. Renewed mechanisms for inter-governmental cooperation through the Canada-Ontario Agreement, renewed funding commitments for conservation authority and municipal initiatives, and increased community and business involvement in stewardship are all essential to address these issues.

## ***Humber Watershed***





Many of the watersheds between the RAP areas are vulnerable to similar land use pressures and environmental degradation, but have not had the benefit of the focussed attention, planning and funding that accompanies designation as a Great Lakes Area of Concern. Sharing the philosophy and methods developed within the RAP areas in other watersheds along Lake Ontario would buttress the existing efforts of conservation authorities and community groups, and result in significant environmental restoration benefits along the entire waterfront area.

The effects of climate change are becoming increasingly apparent, and will continue to do so over the coming decades, with potentially profound implications for the health of our watersheds. We expect to experience more extremes in local weather conditions – greater fluctuations in air and water temperatures, changes to precipitation patterns. Ecological concerns include changes to groundwater infiltration and discharge rates, the distribution of cold and warm water fisheries, freezing and thaw patterns, spring freshets, acidification of watercourses, flash flooding in small watersheds, the dynamics of stormwater management systems, and the breeding patterns and distribution of aquatic and terrestrial plants and animals.

A 1999 symposium on *Climate Change and Watershed Management* held in Toronto recommended a number of measures to accelerate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and to implement adaptive management to deal with the unavoidable impacts of climate change. They include local climate change scenarios to identify possible impacts, improved coordination among government agencies, watershed management responses, and extensive social marketing to help citizens modify their behaviours and adapt to expected changes.







Two extensive geomorphological features of the Greater Toronto Bioregion warrant particular attention in the coming decade, to ensure that remedial action directed to degraded areas is not counter-balanced by new environmental damage in currently high-quality areas.

The Oak Ridges Moraine – a 160 km (99.4 miles) ridge of land formed by glacial sediments – has been the topic of considerable discussion over the past decade in response to growing urban development and resource extraction pressures. The Moraine includes the headwaters of most of the bioregion's watersheds and is one of the last continuous corridors of greenspace and wildlife habitats left in southern Ontario.

In 1991, the Ontario government declared a provincial interest in the Moraine and embarked on a multi-stakeholder exercise to develop *The Oak Ridges Moraine Strategy for the Greater Toronto Area: An Ecosystem Approach for Long-Term Protection and Management*. The Strategy was never adopted by the Provincial government, leaving a vacuum in public policy for this critical area.

A number of initiatives are underway to address this vacuum. They include a joint regional initiative involving the Regions of Peel, York and Durham; three private member's bills by MPPs Steve Gilchrist, Mike Colle, and Shelley Martel (with Marilyn Churley); a groundwater management strategy for Peel, York and Durham Regions through a municipal - conservation authority partnership; a joint initiative by the nine conservation authorities that share the Moraine; the establishment of an Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust; and an action plan coordinated by STORM (Save the Oak Ridges Moraine) Coalition, Earthroots and the Federation of Ontario Naturalists.

The effectiveness of these initiatives will be severely limited without a comprehensive policy framework under Ontario's Planning Act. This would provide consistent support and direction to the plans and growth management strategies of local and regional municipalities, as well as a much-needed statement of Provincial policy to the Ontario Municipal Board.

*The Town of Whitby recently adopted a secondary plan for the Taunton North area that gives an exemplary level of attention to the protection of the Lake Iroquois shoreline aquifer and wildlife habitats. Based on an environmental audit, the plan designates areas that are too sensitive to develop, areas that require an environmental impact study, and areas that can be developed without further study.*

The little-known Lake Iroquois shoreline – a band of bluffs and beaches created some 12,500 years ago by the lake that preceded Lake Ontario – also needs greater awareness and actions to protect its aquifer, headwater and natural habitat corridor functions.

Finally, along the less disturbed areas of Lake Ontario shoreline, the concept of Biodiversity Investment Areas (BIAs) offers potential for new approaches to protection. BIAs are broad coastal areas along the Great Lakes that contain clusters of exceptional

biodiversity values, including rare species and communities, unusually diverse landscapes and species, and especially productive habitats. In a series of studies prepared for the State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conferences, BIAs have been proposed for nearshore lands, wetlands, and aquatic habitats, including the rugged coastal areas and islands from Presqu'île eastwards to Kingston. This designation would encourage governments and community groups to direct their attention to how to protect the natural features within these areas of high quality.





# DEVELOP AND APPLY NEW TOOLS

During the first decade of waterfront regeneration, many new tools were developed to put the ecosystem approach and nine principles into practice. They cover a wide range of activities – brownfield redevelopment; integrated shoreline management planning; habitat restoration; stormwater management; trail planning, design and maintenance; and heritage preservation. Their application is reflected in the case studies in this book, and many of them will continue to be useful into the next decade (see Appendix B). But our knowledge of the best ways to do things is constantly evolving, based on monitoring of previous experiences, the development of new techniques and ideas, and the emergence of new challenges such as global climate change. Applying the collaborative approaches we developed in the previous decade will be essential to help us to stay at the leading edge and bring the best available knowledge and experience to bear on our work.

New tools could be useful in many forums: new approaches to financing and incentives,

environmental management, heritage conservation, recreation use management, and many other areas. In many cases, the biggest challenge seems to be the ability to actually implement new techniques, even when they offer clear advantages. Identifying changes to legislation, policies, or local by-laws to enable implementation can help bring these new tools to reality. For example, in September 2000 the Province announced the appointment of a senior level Advisory Panel to make recommendations on legislative and regulatory changes as well as other steps that can be taken to spark re-investment in brownfields.

Learning and discussion opportunities should not just involve governments, but also include developers, landowners, and community activists in applying the ecosystem approach and the nine waterfront principles. They could also promote innovative means of implementation, such as the “Smart Growth” approach now being promoted as an alternative to urban sprawl.



*In the Niagara Region, our vision to create a vibrant, international community is about more than economic benefits. It is also about confidence. Confidence in ourselves, in what we can accomplish together, and in a shared vision of our future. And even beyond that, it is about obligation, stewardship, and commitment to the kind of community we will leave for successive generations.*

**Bill Connor, CEO,  
Niagara Economic and Tourism Corporation**



### **Smart Growth**

The countryside of the Greater Toronto Bioregion, including the headwaters of most of our rivers and streams, is under pressure from urban sprawl. The concept of Smart Growth is not new, but it represents the most recent and comprehensive packaging of a range of principles designed to meet anticipated community growth while minimizing impacts on the environment. Among leaders in this approach are Oregon (which was the first to impose an urban boundary in 1979), Colorado, Maryland, and in Canada, the Greater Vancouver Area. The guiding principles include:

- Strengthening existing urban areas with mixed use, mixed density developments, and intensification and recycling of existing buildings
- Supporting these urban areas with necessary expenditures to improve public transportation, social amenities, and hard infrastructure
- Protection of important environmental resources, particularly rural lands subject to environmental pressures. For example, in the case of the Rural Legacy Program in Maryland, State funds have been allocated to purchase conservation easements for agricultural lands as well as forests and natural areas
- Fiscal responsibility by providing public funds for infrastructure only in areas designated urban and tightly restricting uses in rural areas
- Understanding the true cost of urban expansion and using a full cost account approach including future infrastructure and servicing costs



# DEVELOP INNOVATIVE NEW PARTNERSHIPS

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

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

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

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

## The Central Waterfront Development Concept

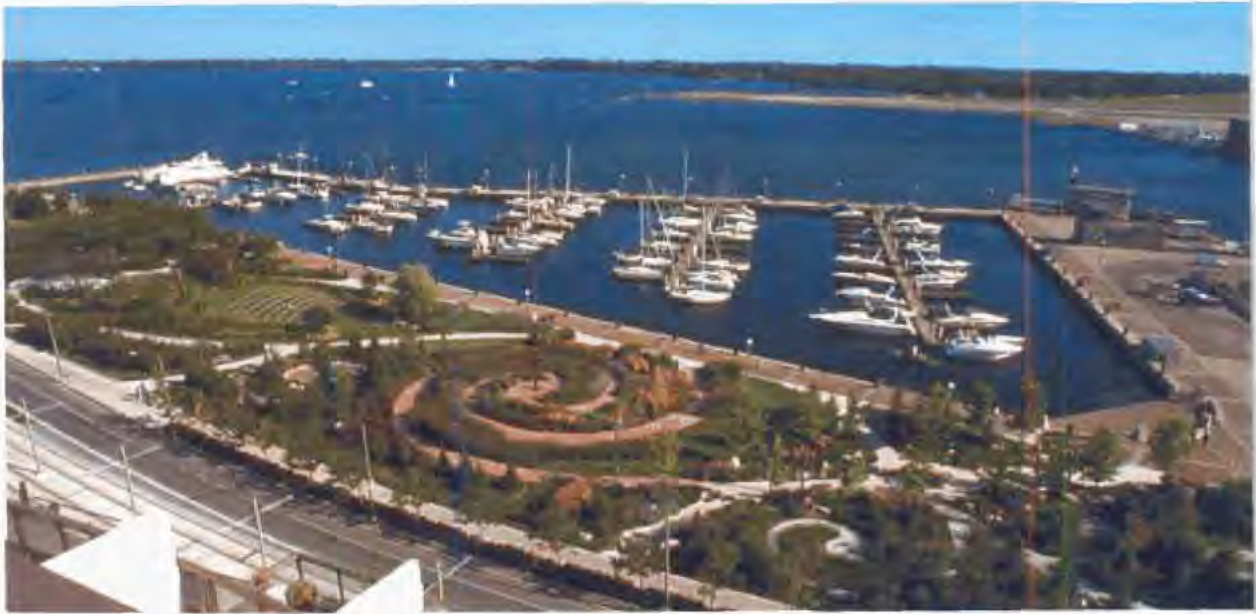


Toronto's waterfront could see some dramatic changes over the next few decades if the report of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force, chaired by Robert Fung, is acted upon. The Task Force, acting for all three levels of government, drew on a strong understanding of the wishes of the people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



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

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



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

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

**Jim Fleck**



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

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


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

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



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



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

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

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





*Conclusions*





The Lake Ontario waterfront was not degraded in one fell swoop; rather, its quality and health declined gradually, one small insult at a time. The past decade has seen a reversal of that slow process of decline, influenced by the renaissance of interest in the waterfront resulting from the publication of *Watershed*. But regeneration will not happen overnight either; it will be an ongoing process of gradual renewal, one project at a time.

Until the 1990s, people and communities had tended to turn their back on the Lake Ontario waterfront. Now that they have begun to face the water's edge again, they see the possibilities there, and expectations are rising steadily. Those expectations are not complex – clean water, clean air, no more beach closings, access to the shore, more green spaces, fewer large buildings and excellent design quality. Much progress has been made already, but continuing to realize this vision will require ongoing dedication, enthusiasm, hard work and persistence.

If there is any one lesson from the past decade, it is a message of optimism. It has been said that true leadership involves the lifting of our vision to higher sights, bringing

within reach that which was previously thought to be impossible. The leadership provided by the Royal Commission, the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, and countless communities, groups and agencies has indeed brought the goal of waterfront regeneration within reach.

Leadership also creates an atmosphere where the creative potential of many people can be best expressed. The past decade has created a new generation of community leaders who understand the potential of waterfront regeneration to increase quality of life, bringing with it economic vigour and healthier communities. In time, that may be seen as our greatest collective achievement, and our greatest hope for a better future.

*There is no quick fix for waterfront challenges. The Waterfront Trail will continue to evolve and improve over many years to come. Progress on water quality, wildlife habitats, economic renewal, and community development will often seem frustratingly slow and uneven. But we will make progress. We will learn from the successes, and from the failures, of our own and other communities. We will persist in the face of inertia and ineptitude, and innovate in the face of obstacles. We will leave our children a healthier, more attractive waterfront than the one we inherited. So welcome to tomorrow's waterfront, full of bright promise.*

**David Crombie, *The Waterfront Trail Guidebook*, 1995**



# APPEND X A: CONTRIBUTORS

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Amy Lavender Harris <i>Town of Gananoque</i>	Don Loucks <i>Hotson Bakker Architects</i>	George Nicholson <i>Regional Niagara</i>
Rosemary Hasner <i>Toronto &amp; Region Conservation Authority</i>	Brett Lucyk <i>Town of Oakville</i>	Rob Nisbet <i>Friends of Second Marsh</i>
	Tija Luste <i>Waterfront Regeneration Trust</i>	Dick O'Brien <i>City of Toronto/ Toronto &amp; Region Conservation Authority</i>



Andrea Patterson  
*Port Hope and District Chamber  
of Commerce*

Bob Perkins  
*Town of Oakville*

John Perry  
*Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake*

David Peterson  
*Cassels Brock & Blackwell*

Jim Phillips  
*Town of Brighton*

Laura Piette  
*City of Mississauga*

Werner Plessl  
*City of Hamilton*

Tim Post  
*Village of Colborne*

Laurie Prudhomme  
*Trenton District Chambers of  
Commerce*

Wayne Redekop  
*Town of Fort Erie*

Susan Richardson  
*City of Toronto*

Marilyn Ridout  
*City of Stoney Creek*

Donna Mae Robinson  
*Mississauga Board of Trade*

Katy Schofield  
*Brookfield Homes Ltd.*

A.K. Sculthorpe  
*Willow Beach Field Naturalists*

Karen Sharpe  
*City of Quinte West*

Karey Shinn  
*Safe Sewage Committee*

Bob Short  
*Town of Whitby*

Patricia Smith  
*City of Hamilton*

David Stonehouse  
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Ernest Stoneman  
*Township of Cramahe*

Fred Stride  
*Fred Stride Environmental*

Darren Stulberg  
*Town of Whitby*

Catherine Talbot  
*City of Burlington*

Paul Taylor  
*City of Mississauga*

Jason Thorne  
*Toronto Bay Initiative*

Eugene Todd  
*Town of Port Hope*

Penny Ulbinas  
*City of Hamilton*

John van der Mark  
*Region of Hamilton-Wentworth*

Tom Villella  
*Town of Fort Erie*

Jeremy Vink  
*Town of Brighton*

Gord Weeden  
*Rouge Park*

Ian Wilson  
*St. Lawrence College*

Peter Windolf  
*City of Oshawa*

Darleen Wolters  
*Quinte Conservation*

Pieter Wyminga  
*Pieter's Appleyard*

## APPENDIX B: SELECTED REFERENCES & WEBSITES

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<http://www.waterfronttrust.com>

Home page of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust

<http://www.stormco.org>

Home page of the Save the Oak Ridges Moraine Coalition, with basic information about the Moraine, and up-to-date developments in planning and policy issues.

<http://www.gtsb.on.ca>

Greater Toronto Services Board web site with information about the GTA, member municipalities, and publications.

### ***Waterfront Trail and Trails***

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<http://www.oakvilletrails.com/about.asp>  
Oakville's heritage trails and future trail plans.

<http://www.tctrail.ca/>  
Home page of the Trans Canada Trail.

<http://www.railtrails.org/>  
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, a 13-year-old nonprofit organization dedicated to enriching America's communities and countryside by creating a nationwide network of public trails from former rail lines and connecting corridors.

<http://www.ontariotrails.on.ca/index.html>  
The Ontario Trails Council, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the creation, development, preservation, management, and use of recreational trails in Ontario.

<http://www.hikeontario.com/>  
Hike Ontario, a non-profit organization which represents the interests of walkers and hikers in the province of Ontario, Canada.

<http://www.interlog.com/~orta/>  
Oak Ridges Trail Association, on the Oak Ridges Moraine.

[http://www.goforgreen.ca/home\\_e.html](http://www.goforgreen.ca/home_e.html)  
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Waterfront Regeneration Trust. 2000. *Lake Ontario/Niagara River Community Foundation Workshop Proceedings*. January 29, 2000, Toronto.

<http://www.conservation-ontario.on.ca/profile/consareas.htm>

Links to every conservation authority in Ontario, including those with jurisdiction over Lake Ontario watersheds.

<http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/aoc/>

US Environmental Protection Agency site with links to pages about all US Areas of Concern.

<http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/glimr/intro-e.html>

GLIMR (Great Lakes Information Management Resource) site with information about RAPs, LaMPS, Great Lakes health and environment, conferences, etc.

<http://www.epa.gov/OWOW/>

Home page for the EPA office of wetlands, oceans and watersheds, with information about runoff, water policy and issues, restoration, monitoring, etc.



<http://www.trca.on.ca>

Home page of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, including information about Toronto area watersheds.

<http://www.community-fdn.ca/cfs.html>

Listing of community foundations in Canada, with links to those that have websites (only a few in Ontario).

<http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/envhome.html>

Environment Canada home page, with links to subpages about climate change, air, water, nature, and more.

<http://www.gov.on.ca/OMAFRA/english/index.html>

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs, with subpages about the rural job strategy fund, and the rural youth job strategy, as well as information about agricultural practices, policies, and links to water quality and environmental health.

[http://www.millennium.gc.ca/menu\\_e.html](http://www.millennium.gc.ca/menu_e.html)

The government of Canada millennium site, with information about projects that received Millennium Partnership Program funding, and the activities of millennium communities.

<http://www.projectaware.org>

Home page of Project AWARE (Aquatic World Awareness, Responsibility and Education), a non-profit organization committed to preserving the aquatic environment and its resources.

## ***Niagara Region***

Fort Erie Museum Board. 1996. *Many Voices: A collective history of Greater Fort Erie*. Fort Erie Museum Board. Ridgeway.

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<http://www.niagaraparks.com/>

Niagara Parks Commission site, with information about history, attractions, and events.

<http://www.rin.buffalo.edu/>

Western New York Regional Information Network, with lots of links to local organizations and public services.

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City of Hamilton. 1995. *A Vision for the Future: West Harbourfront Development Study*. Final Report. Prepared by the Department of Public Works, Parks Division. Hamilton.

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Waterfront Regeneration Trust. 1995. *The West Don Lands*. Toronto.

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<http://www.gov.on.ca/MBS/english/government/cities/>  
Links to all Ontario municipalities with websites.

<http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/greentoronto/greengroups.htm>  
Links to environmental organizations in Toronto area watersheds and waterfront.

<http://www.to-2008.com/>  
Home page of the 2008 Toronto Olympic Bid.

<http://www.city.mississauga.on.ca/planbldg/polplan/html/watplan.htm>  
Mississauga waterfront planning site, with details about the Vision 2020 process.



## ***Brownfields***

Environment Canada, Ontario Ministry of the Environment, & Waterfront Regeneration Trust. 1998. *A Guide to Remedial Methods*. Toronto.

Ontario Ministry of Environment and Energy. 1997. *Guideline for Use at Contaminated Sites in Ontario*. Toronto.

Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario Working Group on Potentially Contaminated Sites 2000. *A Standard Municipal Model for Development Approvals at Potentially Contaminated Sites in Ontario*. Toronto.

Waterfront Regeneration Trust. 1999. *The Nature of Possibility: International Brownfield Exchange 1998-1999*. Toronto.

<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

The US Environmental Protection Agency home page about brownfields.

<http://www.globaltechs.com/>

A remediation technologies directory.

<http://oceta.on.ca/sedtec/>

Subpage of the Ontario Centre for Environmental Technology Advancement (OCETA) website that includes a directory of contaminated sediment technologies.

<http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/epb/ecnpd/remed.html>

Environment Canada's Remediation Technologies Program home page.

<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/business/brownfld/index.asp>

Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs Brownfields Showcase home page.

<http://www.glc.org/robin/>

Regional Online Brownfields Information Network: ROBIN is an Internet clearinghouse for information about brownfields cleanup and redevelopment throughout the binational Great Lakes region. As one of the products of the Council of Great Lakes Governors Brownfields Project, ROBIN was developed by the Great Lakes Commission.

# APPEND X C:

## PHOTO CREDITS

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## **About the Waterfront Regeneration Trust**

*The Waterfront Regeneration Trust Corporation is a not for profit charitable organization that brings people, ideas and resources together for the revitalization of waterfronts and watersheds.*

*Working with communities around Lake Ontario, the Niagara River, the US and abroad, the Trust links environmental, social and economic actions to create solutions that have multiple and long term benefits. Our core programs are the Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail, Toronto & Region Remedial Action Plan, Brownfield Redevelopment and Waterfront Heritage.*

*Website: [www.waterfronttrust.com](http://www.waterfronttrust.com)*





## Waterfront Regeneration Trust

Ten years have passed since the release of **Watershed**, the interim report of the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront. What have we learned from our collective experience since then? What are the lessons and tools that can guide us in the next decade?

**A Decade of Regeneration** is about our special relationship with Lake Ontario, and the remarkable progress that is being made by thousands of people dedicated to the Lake Ontario Greenway. The book brings attention to waterfront excellence and celebrates waterfront heritage as a reflection of buildings & culture, ideas & tradition, and of the connections between people and nature.

With a myriad of examples, **A Decade of Regeneration** documents initiatives large and small where trails have added measurable value, where creative partnerships and funding have resolved an apparent gridlock, and where excellence in design has elevated a typical project into a piece of art and heritage. **A Decade of Regeneration** sets a new direction for the next decade of regeneration to capture the momentum and renew our commitments.

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