

The Land Economist

Fall 2004, Vol. 34, No.3

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Professional Journal of the



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MISSISSAUGA'S ERIN MILLS-MEADOWVALE AREA PHOTO: HERB WARE

Changes on the “Row”

by **Keith Hobcraft AACI, FRICS, PLE**

Bayview Avenue starts life as a narrow two-lane road in a derelict industrial area a little north of Toronto's waterfront.

It meanders along the road of the Don River valley until it joins Rosedale Valley Road. There it appears to take heart, turning itself into a four-lane semi-divided highway, that continues along the Don Valley, and then up over Bennington Heights to the south side of Moore Park.

Continuing north, Bayview Avenue becomes one of the City of Toronto's desirable neighbourhood retail shopping districts, well known for its diversity and generally better-quality retail tenancies.

At Eglinton, Bayview abruptly changes character again. First, there is a short section of low density suburban development. Then, as it reaches towards the

west branch Don River Valley Ravine Lands, Bayview's development for the next mile or so becomes rolling, open valley space.

Estates to institutes

Originally developed as large country estates in the early 19th century, by the 1950's the property had almost entirely been acquired by institutional users which undertook large-scale, but still low density, building programs. The predominance of these uses gave rise to the nickname "Institutional Row".

The Row starts with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) lands on the east side (behind which are three other users), and the former Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College site on the west. As you continue north, institutional uses include the Salvation Army training facility, Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences

Centre, York University's Glendon Campus, the Toronto French School, the Granite Club, Crescent School, the Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf and the Canadian Film Centre.

Until recently, the only break to this pattern was a small pocket of housing opposite Sunnybrook Hospital and the redevelopment of the Slater mansion grounds, north of the Glendon Campus, with attractive, high quality condominium apartments.

But the character of the area is set to change further, as some of the institutional owners free up their land for redevelopment.

CNIB lands

In 2002, the CNIB, taking stock of its existing headquarter facilities, decided that many of its buildings were old and obsolete. It consequently sold the rear 12 acres of its 16-acre site, retaining approximately four acres fronting Bayview, upon which to construct a new head-quarter facility.

This redevelopment would also be turned into an opportunity to improve the site's access from Bayview Avenue. Resolution of the access was a priority for the Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre, which was planning a significant redevelopment program of its own as noted later in this article.

Prior to the current proposals, a narrow private lane ran from Bayview along the north side of the CNIB lands and gave the primary access to Bloorview MacMillan, Toronto Rehab's Lyndhurst Centre, and the Toronto Centre for Addiction. These three facilities can be approached by small streets in the residential area to the south, but for visitors access can be difficult to find.

The purchasers of the CNIB lands proposed a high density, high rise development, essentially unsuited to the area - a mini Mississauga City Centre.

Some 1,100 apartment units in 18-storey buildings were proposed. Amazingly, this was not popular with the area

AOLE presents A walking tour of the Distillery District on November 3



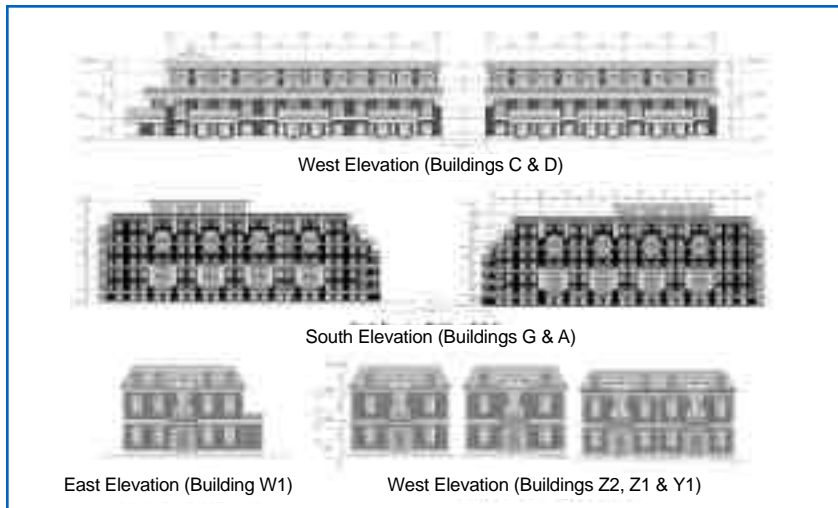
Lance Alexander, a planner with the City of Toronto who was instrumental in the revitalization of this area, will lead the one-hour tour. It starts promptly at 6 p.m. from the front gate at Trinity and Mill Streets. Afterwards, gather at The Boiler House mezzanine level for appetizers and open bar.

To reserve your place, contact AOLE offices before before Nov. 1.

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This early concept of the Kilgour Estates is presently being modified.

residents, city planners, politicians or the community council.

After achieving little more than a fierce fight and agreement over a new public road along the north side of the CNIB site, the proponent transferred its interest to the Daniels Group, a more urban oriented developer.

Daniels proposed a development of 458 units with a maximum 8-storey height, and included 46 townhouses, 24 semis and 8 detached houses. This plan, called Kilgour Estates after the original land owner, was far more in keeping with the existing residential development to the south, and with the general tone of the subject neighbourhood. It was approved in April 2004.

Children's Centre proposal

Simultaneously, the Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre was proposing its own significant changes. For this co-location of two formerly separate facilities, it is virtually rebuilding itself with a stacked five-storey structure of 31,851m². The five stories are being kept to the north of the site and away from the existing single family houses. This development in itself has not been without some contention by area residents.

Five storeys sounds fairly innocuous, but five institutional storeys is probably equal to about eight or nine residential storeys. Effectively, this building will loom as large on the horizon as any of the new eight-storey residential buildings to its west.

Former chiropractic college

In 2003, the Chiropractic College, lying opposite the CNIB on the west side of Bayview, sold its holding to Kolter Property, the adjoining landowner – who promptly proposed 472 units in three buildings of 10-12 storeys on the combined 4.59 acre site. The now well-practised opposition mobilized instantly, naturally, and the proposal was scaled down to the latest proposal, in Sept. 2004, of 195 suites in three buildings. The density (floor space index or fsi) would be only 1.4 x the site area, just a bit lower than the Daniels project.

So far there has been no further study or hearing on this proposal, though one resident has already written to the city in opposition.

Further changes to Bayview at Eglinton are coming - already the McDonalds restaurant has been sold and will likely become an apartment development. Application has been made for a nine-story building with an FSI of 4.19. Several other low density commercial uses must surely get regular attention from developers. So it looks as if Bayview will adapt again and become a major residential intensification district for the city.

Keith Hobcraft is President of Bosley Farr Associates Ltd. and serves on the Association of Ontario Land Economists' Council as Journal Chair.

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Urban sprawl or planned de

by Lloyd Cherniak CRA, PLE

Instead of looking at the real problems of a growing city, the debate on urban sprawl often can't rise above whether suburban development at low density creates waste. This paper argues that development has responded to the need for smart growth with changed standards and smaller lots — and that there is still a real need for growth throughout the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and beyond.

Suburban Growth is still needed

Toronto and the GTA are expected to grow by a population of three million more residents by 2031, with 1.8 million new jobs and one million more vehicles. The GTA is now among the 10 largest metropolitan areas in Canada and the USA, and is the second fastest growing city, slightly ahead of Dallas-Fort Worth. It is expected to surpass Detroit within the next decade and Boston in the following decade. ¹

A recent study by Malone Given Parsons calculates that accommodating this growth will require more than 56,600 hectares of residential land by 2031. That should provide 1.2 million new residential units, of which 840,000 units will be in new urban areas. This assumes 30 per cent intensification, and 40 per cent of the new units as high and medium density. ² In addition, 14,500 hectares of employment lands are

required. ³

It is clear that — while intensification is needed for Toronto — it cannot alone handle the three million new residents that are expected in the GTA by 2031.

For one thing, Toronto has faced a declining family size and it needs intensification simply to maintain its population. The 1987 Metro Plan review reported that 209,000 new units would be needed by 2011 to maintain the city's existing population. Metro correctly concluded that its population would be exceeded by the suburbs within 20 years.

I think this conclusion more than any other has led to the misapprehension that intensification within

Metro would solve growth needs.

Current work by Hemson Consulting for UDI shows that from 1951 to 2001, while there were 141,000 new units in Toronto, the population declined by 28,000.

If the City took an aggressive target of adding 500,000 in population over the next 20 years, it would need to build more than 250,000 new housing units

and increase the percentage of apartments in Toronto to more than 60 per cent of residential units.

Incidentally, there is some question how much residential intensification actually reduces "sprawl". In the example of Mississauga, a recent study by Hemson found that residential land was less than 25 per cent of the overall area, and that, if all Mississauga's residential units had been built as high density, it would only have saved six per cent of the total 30,000 hectares of land in that municipality.

Urban form

Now let's look at the density argument. The overall GTA is slightly less than 30 per cent high density, which ranks above New York

Growth forecast for GTA (including Hamilton)

	2001	2031
population	5,600,000	8,000,000
housing units	2,000,000	3,200,000
total employment	3,000,000	4,300,000
employment land jobs (40% of total employment)	1,200,000	1,800,000

MALONE GIVEN PARSONS LTD.

Population densities in urbanized areas of major cities

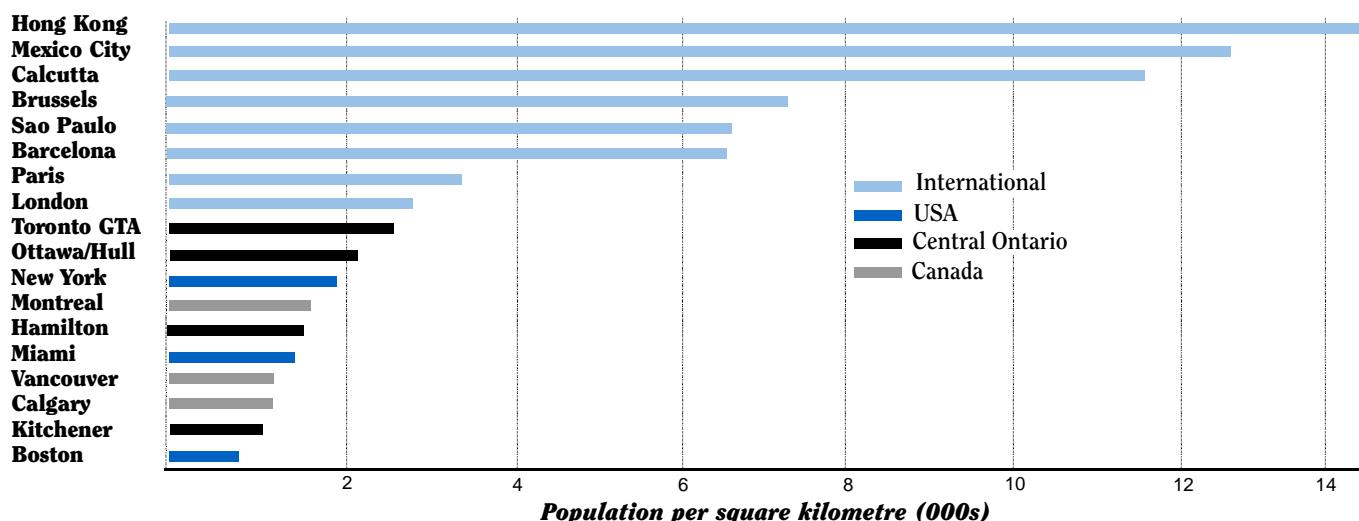


CHART INFORMATION COURTESY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Development?

and Boston. At the same time, Toronto is slightly below Paris and London in overall density. (See *Population Densities table*.)

The City of Toronto currently has close to 47 per cent of its residential units in high density form while suburban areas will take time to intensify.

Toronto's density comes at least partly because of what it does not provide in terms of parks, schools, etc. For example, the Annex in Toronto – with 62 hectares and 3,600 units – has a density of 58 units/hectare. However, there are only 2 acres of parkland, no open space, one private school and limited mixed use on Bloor Street and Dupont Avenue. As well, more than 76 per cent of the units are apartments, and the area averages only two persons per unit.

Density in the Beaches is 29.6 units/hectare. Wilket Creek is 7.5, Yonge and Sheppard is 15.2, and Lawrence Park is 10.6.

Open Space

As I mentioned above, one of the main reasons for lower gross densities in suburban areas is public open space. In Toronto, creeks were piped and covered over, few parks were provided and schools were on small sites with limited parking. In the 905 area, recent approvals have been increasing public open space requirements to more than twice previous levels and way beyond anything existing in Toronto.

For example, storm-water management ponds which are outside valleys and streams have added buffers and setbacks increasing natural areas substantially. School boards and parks have also been increasing their requirements, along with community centres, ice rinks, libraries and fire stations. The result is less land for residential development.

So you can't compare density figures as though they were apples to apples. With reduced road widths and shallow lots, current plans of subdivision we have developed in suburban areas range from 33 to 40 units/hectare net of public land.

We also have reduced setbacks in new developments to fit a family house on these smaller lots. This maintains average population of 3.2 people/unit, making the overall population density comparable to densities achieved in Toronto.

Work by Don Given shows that, if current planning standards were applied to Toronto's Beaches neighbourhood, residential densities would have to increase by 65 per cent (to approximately 50 units/hectare) to accommodate the same number of units as it has today.

New Employment is suburban

While Toronto planning looked to intensification in residential development, its tax policy — with the lowest assessment ratio in Ontario for residential taxes and the highest assessment ratio for industrial and commercial taxes — inadvertently encouraged the exodus of industry to surrounding municipalities. Combined with new growth pressures, demand for suburban employment land will remain strong.

Employment expansion is an undisputed need if we are to keep the GTA solvent with the predicted population growth. These employment lands need lower density, large sites with good highway access and proximity to the airport. It is expected that 40 per cent of the employment lands will be of this nature, at 50 jobs per hectare, while the other 60 per cent will be within the residential, retail and service areas.

In fact, this expansion is already occurring with the need to extend urban services — and, of course, a resulting increase in residential demand.

Conclusion

The GTA is facing continued rapid growth over the next 30 years. Intensification cannot accommodate more than 30 per cent of the demand. New suburban development has responded to the need for smart growth with the provision of reduced standards and smaller lots. However, there is a need to plan for continued new growth throughout the GTA to meet the needs of the growth coming to the region.

Lloyd Cherniak is vice president of Lebovic Enterprises Inc., a Toronto development company.

1 Hemson Consulting May 2000

2 Ibid

3 Analysis Of Existing & Expected Density For Selected Municipalities In The GTA-Hamilton Area, Malone Given Parsons

News Briefs

OLE stand on rent controls

In the final weeks before the government was scheduled to introduce rent-control legislation, the OLE sent an urgent letter to Premier McGuinty pointing out the alarming nature of any plan to bring back rent controls.

During the election, the Liberals' "promise" had been to add controls only where vacancies were tight.

The letter pointed out that the province's vacancy rate is finally recovering to a healthy level after being devastated during the rent-control years and that present legislation has encouraged physical improvements in thousands of private sector rental buildings.

The letter expressed alarm at the possibility of once again suffering "an accelerated deterioration of the rental housing stock" and urged the government take a second look at alternatives such as the Nov. 2002 report of the Prime Minister's Caucus Task Force on Urban Issues.

"These solutions would be more effective and more affordable than a full blown program of government-subsidized non-profit housing," the letter stated.

Such a plan could cost provincial and municipal governments \$260.3 million annually according to a study commissioned by the Federation of Rental Housing Providers of Ontario (FRPO). Current information about rental housing issues is available at the FRPO site: www.frpo.org.

Disabilities Access legislation

The provincial government has given first reading to Bill 118, legislation that will force compliance to as-yet-undefined disability access standards on nearly 350,000 public and private organizations. Full compliance is expected to take 20 years, with staged deadlines at five-year intervals.

The text of Bill 118 is available at: http://www.ontla.on.ca/documents/Bills/38_Parliament/Session1/b118.pdf

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Paul Bedford on Toronto

Former City of Toronto Chief Planner, Paul Bedford, spoke at the Association's September reception and dinner. The planning dynamo chatted with most of the attendees before making his keynote presentation. It was a wide-ranging speech that touched on all the major issues in Toronto. Here's just a sampling.

On amalgamation

In the old City of Toronto, 76 per cent voted no (to the amalgamation proposal) in a non-binding referendum. And then, the necessary tools and staff weren't provided.

If someone decided to amalgamate the seven big banks, and 76 per cent of the shareholders voted no, and there were no staff to make it work, "it would be a horror story; it would take a generation to work it out."

On next steps for the region

"This is going to be a region of 10 million within the next 30 years. How regions function with 10 million is

totally different from the way we function now." It will require new governance, and a new financial deal with Ottawa. "There is a huge gap between growth expenditures and revenues ... in Europe, only five per cent of big city revenues come from property taxes, the rest comes from a share of income taxes, user fees, and other sources that grow with the economy."

On Toronto's Official Plan

"I said to myself: 'I'm at a stage of my life when I have nothing to lose. I'm going to lead this and drive this.'"

Toronto has to make room for a million people over the next 30 years – that's a huge change and most people don't like change.

"We said basically that the neighbourhoods are hands off, and targeted new development to about 25 per cent of the geographic area of the city only." That will mean especially along major roads, in 5 – 8 storeys of mixed use. It will also

mean servicing growth through new transit, rather than new roads. Lessons learned? "Don't underestimate the public wisdom. People got it. A lot of the politicians didn't get it at first, but it passed by 36 to 7."

On trusting developers

"In 1996, with the regeneration of the Kings (King-Spadina and King-Parliament, both zoned industrial), ... we threw out all the land use considerations and basically said you can do anything as long as it's not noxious." The strategy to encourage lofts and light commercial uses worked. "People aren't stupid. You don't need to regulate stuff to death."

On the waterfront

"It's been a dog's breakfast, with 16 different agencies involved. They don't have clarity, direction or a mandate. It's still a problem – which certainly didn't help the Rochester ferry... but the public will is so strong that I'm cautiously optimistic."

President's message

It will be an honour to serve as the Association of Ontario Land Economists' 37th President, for the 2004-2005 period. The Association has a long history dating back to 1962. Over the years, it has provided a respected designation and a useful forum for real estate and other land-related professionals and I believe that members truly enjoy the opportunity to network with their industry peers.

Many of you may know my name from having read the Legislative Beat in 'The Land Economist' journal, after Andy Morpurgo decided to relinquish this duty eight years ago. Despite taking on my new duties as President, I have been asked to continue writing about Queen's Park issues of interest to AOLE's membership.

We welcome more articles from our membership. Please contact our Journal editor, Rowena Moyes, if you wish to contribute an article. The exposure that you and your firm get from our publication is multiplied when Konrad Koenig posts the Journal on our web site. Statistics reveal that www.aole.org has had over 15,000 hits during the past 12 months.

Membership is an ongoing priority. Despite the relatively robust real estate market over the past seven years, our membership level has remained fairly stable at 230 - 250.

It will be incumbent on all of us to attract new members in order to maintain a vibrant and relevant Association.

Having been a member of AOLE since 1989, I recognize that not all members want to be actively involved in the association. On top of this, increased telecommunications have helped people avoid the ever-worsening gridlock in the GTA. I would contend, however, that there are benefits to attending our dinner meetings and conversing with your colleagues in face-to-face settings.

Bonnie Bowerman has done a great job as Program and Education Chair. Consider inviting a colleague to our next dinner meeting or function. This type of outreach is necessary for us to attract potential new members. If anyone has an idea for a future dinner speaker, call either Bonnie or me directly.

You'll find contact information for Council opposite. I wish to thank John Morrison who ably served as President



last year. The Board looks forward to his continuing role in the Association. In addition I would like to thank Elgin Douglas, who has decided to step down from the Board, having served as Secretary for the last four years.

I look forward to working with Council over the next 12 months to strengthen the organization for the benefit of all. I also look forward to meeting many more of you over the coming year and sharing a glass of wine (see comment in The Legislative Beat). If there are ways that the Association of Ontario Land Economists can improve, or provide better service, please advise me or any Board member.

Andy Manahan, PLE

The Legislative Beat

continued from page 8

tial, industrial, parkland). MOE will develop certification standards over the next two years to ensure that those responsible for completing a Record of Site Condition are properly qualified.

The Workplace Gateway

The Hon. Chris Bentley, Minister of Labour has introduced a one-stop access point that combines web-based resources for specific industry sectors like construction, restaurants, tourism, and bed and breakfasts. The construction link, for example, leads to detailed information on starting a business or project, licences and trade qualifications, workplace health and safety laws, regulations, etc. The Workplace Gateway can be accessed through the Ministry of Labour's website at www.gov.on.ca/LAB. The Workplace

Gateway outlines the responsibilities of both employers and workers under Ontario law to help ensure employment standards and workplace safety requirements are being met. The website also provides answers to frequently asked questions about health and safety, pay and benefits, and other topics.

Bring Your Wine

Of interest to many wine-loving AOLE members is the intention of the Hon. Jim Watson, Minister of Consumer and Business Services, to bring forward amendments to the Liquor Licence Act that would allow Ontarians to bring a bottle of wine to a licensed restaurant. Participating establishments would be able to charge a corkage fee. In an effort to discourage excessive consumption,

the government is also planning to allow patrons to take home an unfinished, properly sealed bottle of wine that they brought with them or ordered as part of their meal in a restaurant. Other public safety enhancements would be imposed, such as a doubling of fines related to underage drinking in licensed establishments.

Andy Manahan is development promotion representative for the Universal Workers Union, Local 183, and president and legislative chair of the Association of Ontario Land Economists.



Premier tours Ontario

Premier McGuinty has toured the province to better explain the decisions made by his government, which some critics have dubbed "the Liberals." While this tour has not been successful at shoring up support, McGuinty has used it to outline his plans to have a set provincial election every four years and to eliminate partisan advertising from the Ontario government.

The Premier has also announced that the Province aims to give the City of Toronto new powers by the end of 2005.

Land Exchange in North Pickering

Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister John Gerretsen has signed an agreement with six Richmond Hill landowners that will result in these landowners receiving 1,275 acres of publicly owned land in Seaton (North Pickering) in exchange for 1,057 acres of environmentally sensitive moraine lands that they were planning to develop.

The exchange process was overseen by Fairness Commissioner, Justice Lloyd Houlden, who noted that the private sector landowners agreed to a valuation date of May 16, 2001 while the provincial lands are valued as of Nov. 3, 2003. Although a common land valuation approach was originally agreed to, this could have led to protracted disputes.

The land exchange is expected to close in 2005. Significant financial investments for infrastructure have also been agreed to by the land owners in order to develop Seaton. A land exchange with an Uxbridge owner has yet to be settled upon.

Health Care Reform

In addition to the deal hammered out with the federal government for an \$18-billion, six-year health-care agreement, the Hon. George Smitherman, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, has announced a transformation plan of his own.

On Sept. 9, Smitherman introduced a seven-member Health Results Team that would focus on creating an "integrated,

patient-centred health care system" by March 2007.

Places to Grow

The Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, the Hon. David Caplan, made a trio of interconnected announcements this summer beginning on July 12 with the release of a discussion paper on the government's plan for growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The document aims to better accommodate the projected increase of four million people over the next 30 years by concentrating this growth in already established urban areas. MPIR has proposed a target of accommodating at least 40 per cent of new growth through infill and intensification.

Protecting Ontario's natural heritage will be accomplished by establishing a connected system of open spaces. Transportation initiatives will include the creation of High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes on highways, expansion of GO Transit, and improvements to urban transit. The plan also envisages the creation of a Greater Toronto Transportation Authority.

Infrastructure Framework

On July 27, Caplan released MPIR's "Building a Better Tomorrow: An Infrastructure Planning, Financing and Procurement Framework for Ontario's

Public Sector." The plan calls for more than \$100 billion in spending over the next 30 years for both renewal and new projects. A range of funding sources are cited in the paper including gas taxes, public-private partnerships and user fees.

Despite the awareness that private sector expertise and funding is required in certain areas, the Liberals are opposed to private sector ownership or control of hospitals, publicly funded schools and water treatment plants. A 10-year plan for infrastructure investment will be announced this fall.

Expert Water Panel

In mid-August, the government appointed an Expert Panel to advise on future delivery of water and wastewater services. The Expert Panel will advise the provincial

government on all aspects of organization, governance, investment, pricing and financing related to Ontario's water and wastewater systems. It will recommend a solution which maintains public ownership while ensuring that the investment needed to improve water and wastewater infrastructure occurs, and that water and wastewater systems are financially sustainable with water rates that are affordable. The Panel will be chaired by Harry Swain who also chaired the Walkerton Research Advisory Panel. It must submit its report this fall.

Brownfield Regulations

Apparently ignored by the media in the summer doldrums was the joint announcement by Ministers Leona Dombrowsky (Environment) and John Gerretsen (MMAH) on new regulations for brownfield redevelopment. The regulations will be implemented in two phases: on Oct. 1, 2004, the framework for filing a Record of Site Condition to the Environmental Site Registry will be in place, with voluntary filing. Filing will become mandatory in 2005.

Importantly, on the liability front, there will be conditions under which a past owner may receive immunity from environmental orders. Different standards of clean up are required depending on the proposed use of the property (e.g., residen-

See Legislative Beat page 7

