

# The Land Economist

## 2 News Briefs

- Post-minority-election economic landscape
- Waterfront Toronto & Sidewalk Labs
  - Hamilton bans dumping of out-of-town fill
- Burlington is Canada's best place to live • 10 Ontario centres to get climate change support

**'Arrested decay +' wins UK award**

## 3 Bold Choices

## 4 Many reasons to update high-rise parking standards

## 5 News Briefs

- Ellis-Don SVP on information tech
  - More WAN awards
  - OHBA awards

## 6 Exploring the Crosstown

## 8 Legislative Beat

- Queen's Park • Unsticky Stickers
- Transit Deal: City Retains Assets, Province Builds 4 Subways
  - Regional Government Review
  - Passing of David Caplan

## PROFESSIONAL JOURNAL



**ASSOCIATION OF  
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ECONOMISTS**

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ILLUSTRATION: Moriyama & Teshima Architects + Acton Ostry Architects

George Brown College's proposed Tall Wood building, *The Arbour*, has just added another to its growing list of prizes – the World Architectural News (WAN) [Gold award for Future Projects - Education](#). The 10-storey future home to the School of Technology and the Tall Wood Research Institute on the college's expanding Waterfront Campus is designed by Moriyama & Teshima Architects + Acton Ostry Architects. At the moment, the Ontario Building Code only allows wood structure buildings up to 6 storeys, so [the mass timber project](#) was recently submitted to Toronto for approval under the alternative solution process. The design competition took place in 2018. Projected start of construction is Aug 2021.



## NEWS BRIEFS

### POST-MINORITY-ELECTION ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE

Shortly after the Oct 21 election, BMO Capital Markets compared details of how the Liberal/NDP platforms overlap. A main conclusion for housing: “enough overlap to roll out further meaningful measures”. One specific: “The NDP proposal to ‘create’ a half million affordable units over a decade (50,000 per year) would boost annual housing starts by about one quarter, so it’s a material pledge.

But ... would it involve subsidizing builders or buyers?” If the latter, the restraining effect on prices of new supply could be neutralized by the boost to demand. On energy: in line for broader climate change and the carbon tax plan; net negative for the Trans Mountain pipe-line. On the deficit: higher, possibly leaving less room to manoeuvre in the next downturn. Short term stimulus could be offset by a dimmed outlook for the energy sector, heightened business caution or somewhat higher interest rates than would otherwise be the case.” See the special report and chart [here](#).

### WATERFRONT TORONTO & SIDEWALK LABS: QUAYSIDE

There has been a general feeling of relief now that Sidewalk Labs and Waterfront Toronto (WT) have signed off on a much-reduced scope for the Master Innovation and Development Plan for Toronto’s waterfront east. Huge threshold issues have been dutifully removed since the big, controversial Plan announcement in June – and the terse letter from WT Chair Stephen Diamond that followed it.

For more info, see: Toronto Star: Details of the reduced proposal [here](#) and a look at the role of WT’s Chair [here](#). Spacing magazine: *Waterfront Toronto’s power move on Sidewalk Labs* [here](#). WT: letter from Stephen Diamond [here](#).

### HAMILTON BANS DUMPING OF OUT-OF-TOWN FILL

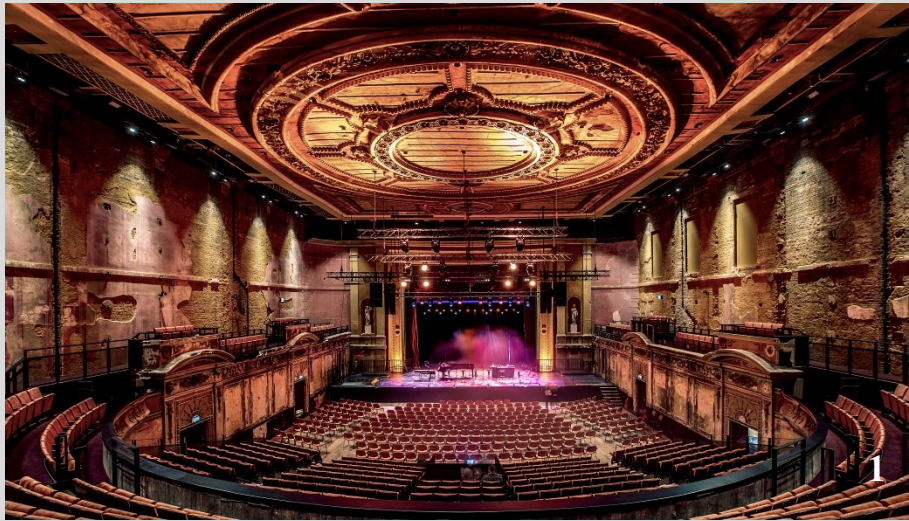
In October, Hamilton Council passed an emergency bylaw amendment to ban dumping of any out-of-town fill within city limits. An article in the Hamilton Spectator said residents have been reporting an exponential increase in trucks dumping GTA developers’ uninspected fill on local farmland. Click [here](#) to read the full article.

### BURLINGTON IS CANADA’S BEST PLACE TO LIVE

Back this summer, Macleans magazine collected research in 10 categories (including wealth, employment rates, housing affordability, population growth, health care, crime, taxes, culture, amenities and the weather) and ranked towns and cities. Somewhat embarrassingly, southern Ontario dominated the lists. Best community in Canada: Burlington, followed by Grimsby, Ottawa and Oakville. Best place to retire: Toronto. Hmmm ... See article [here](#).

### 10 ONTARIO CENTRES TO GET CLIMATE CHANGE SUPPORT

25 Canadian municipalities were selected to join the first Showcase Cities led by the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, Canada. Over the next year, these municipalities will receive intensive support to help reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change. Ontario centres are Burlington, Hamilton, Oakville, London, Brampton, Orangeville, Ottawa, Kitchener, Kingston and Windsor. See news release [here](#).



### ‘Arrested decay +’ wins UK architecture award

Earlier this year, the Alexandra Palace East Wing Restoration Project in north London received 3 awards from the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), including a prestigious National Award.

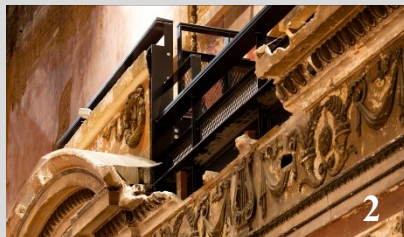
The conservation work on the building envelope and the opening up and “vibrant floor painting” of the East Court won much acclaim. (See lower photo at right.) But it was the Victorian theatre and the ‘arrested decay’ approach to restoring it that the judges praised most highly.

“The real architectural surprise and delight is to be found in ... the almost magically revealed theatre, a treasure trove of crumbling Victorian plaster, pragmatically retained and stabilised in-situ,” the award judges said. (Photo above and detail at upper right.)

The space had been mostly inaccessible to the public for 80 years. Rebuilding of the floor and roof now accommodates modern theatre approaches, equipment and flexible seating.

**Client:** Alexandra Palace

**Architect:** Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios



For more details, see:

- [this article](#) from Australia,
- <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-46394219>,
- <https://www.alexandrapalace.com/restoration/overview/>, and
- <https://fcbstudios.com/work/view/Alexandra-Palace>.

# Bold Choices

by Michael Collins-Williams

A wide spectrum of interrelated challenges affects the new housing and development industry's ability to build the new housing Ontario's growing population needs in communities right across the province.

The Ontario Home Builders' Association (OHBA) strongly believes that a healthy housing system only exists when cities and regions have housing:

- in the right mix of housing choices and supply,
- that addresses all residents' shelter needs through their full life cycle,
- at prices people can afford.

Today, lack of supply has created high home prices and rents affecting all parts of Ontario, from big cities, to northern and rural communities.

In this environment, the provincial government has set in motion housing and land use planning policy reforms through the *Housing Supply Action Plan* that we believe will have a positive impact on the private sector's ability to navigate the approvals process faster and, ultimately, bring more housing supply to the market.

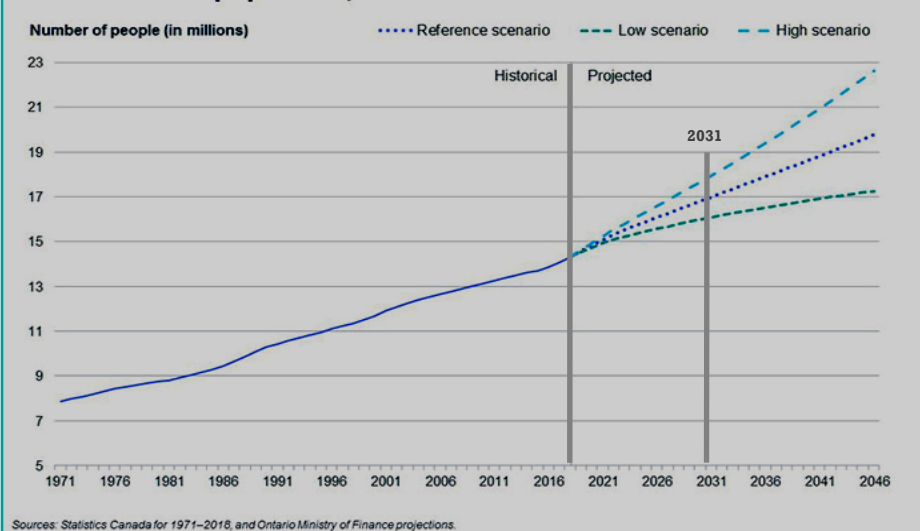
Builders certainly acknowledge that there is a diversity of perspectives on planning policy, and some municipal politicians have expressed opposition to the changes that Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Steve Clark is bringing about. Transformative change is never easy, but bold changes are necessary to deliver not just more supply, but the right type of housing in the right locations.

## A million more homes

This is especially true because the population of Ontario is anticipated to grow by approximately 2.6 million people by 2031 (source: Ministry of Finance). Over the next 12 years, we need to build one million more homes.

OHBA applauds the provincial government for recognizing constraints on housing supply and for their determination to reduce red tape to make it easier to live and do business in Ontario. In May the Minister released an updated *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* that recognized a 'one size fits all' and Toronto-centric approach to density and intensification targets, would actually constrain new housing supply in many smaller and medium-sized municipalities.

Chart 1: Ontario population, 1971 to 2046



Additionally, the new *Growth Plan* doubles down on supporting transit-oriented development by expanding the size of *Major Transit Station Areas* where new supply is encouraged.

The government then followed up with the *More Homes, More Choice Act* (Bill 108). It includes:

- legislative amendments that will create efficiencies in a variety of environmental approvals without compromising the integrity of those processes
- amendments to the *Planning Act* to expedite approval timelines, encourage the adoption of development permit systems (a pre-zoning framework) and facilitate the construction of more purpose-built rental housing by deferring the payment of development charges
- steps to fix the broken land use appeals system, including hiring more adjudicators to deal with the backlog of appeals that have left tens of thousands of housing units in limbo
- more cost certainty for development proponents, by amalgamating components of development charges with parkland charges and Section 37 density bonusing, into a new Community Benefits Charge (its framework and design is now out for comment)

The provincial government recently concluded a ninety-day consultation on proposed amendments to the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). The PPS provides overall policy directions on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development, and applies province-wide. OHBA believes this current review offers the Ontario Government an opportunity to provide long-term and sustainable benefits to the citizens of Ontario; support certainty and

economic growth; reduce barriers and costs; support urban, rural and northern communities; and increase housing supply and mix.

## Alarmed by some responses

Since the *Housing Supply Action Plan* was announced, the development industry has been alarmed by some municipal actions that are at best counter-productive, and at worst, deliberately undermining provincial steps intended to reduce the cost of delivering new housing supply. Some municipal councillors are taking it upon themselves to slow down the approvals process for projects they don't like, while other municipalities passed new development charges by-laws with large increases just prior to the passage of Bill 108.

As housing costs and rents continue to escalate, now is the time for the provincial government, the development industry and our municipal partners to work together to reduce costs, speed up the complex and, in some cases, overlapping approvals systems and ultimately get more housing built in Ontario.

The fact is, we can expect nearly 2.6 million additional people to call Ontario home over the next dozen or so years. That population growth and the million new homes required to accommodate it, is the elephant in the room that no one wants to talk about.

We need to recognize that the current affordability levels are only going to get worse unless we get serious about public policy reform to deliver new housing supply across Ontario.

Michael Collins-Williams is  
Director of Policy at the  
Ontario Home Builders' Association



# Many reasons to update high-rise parking standards

by Andy Manahan and Paul De Berardis

Many will recall a dramatic police rescue, in August 2018, of two men in west-end Toronto after they were trapped in a flooded, below-ground parking elevator during a severe rainstorm.

While these kinds of life-and-death situations are rare, we are experiencing more floods in Canadian cities which can turn standard underground parking in high-rise buildings into potential swimming pools of excess stormwater.

When construction projects involve below-grade parking in areas with strained sewer capacity, it is a recipe for disaster. In parts of Toronto with aging infrastructure and antiquated combined sewers, we need to reduce sewage and stormwater from entering Lake Ontario.

Further, punching more holes into the ground has a cumulative effect on hydrology and water tables. Upgrading the city's aging infrastructure would be a good solution, but we can't wait a decade for this to happen.

It was for this reason that RCCAO commissioned a report by the Ryerson Urban Analytics Institute, *How Parking Regulations Need to Evolve for High-Rise Buildings*. Even though the impetus for the study had to do with how the city could continue to grow in the face of these infrastructure constraints, Ryerson's research team highlighted that advances in transportation technology are transforming the way we travel – and park.

A growing number of people do not aspire to car ownership at all. Many, including empty nesters, are using apps on their smart-phones to hail rides from services such as Uber and Lyft – or they use car-sharing programs – which reduces parking requirements for owned vehicles, particularly in the downtown. In the future, the rise of shared automated vehicles will mean even fewer cars will be parking for lengthy periods of time and parking space sizes will shrink.

Meanwhile, multi level, below-grade structures are costing between \$50,000 and \$100,000 per space to build in more expensive housing markets such as Vancouver and Toronto. This has a direct impact on affordability. Further, it is an unnecessary expense, with so many mobility options in cities.

Without regulatory change, we may end up with significant amounts of costly underground space that is not needed for parking, and is not suitable for anything else.

Focusing on Toronto, Ryerson found that Canada's largest city has not meaningfully updated its parking standards since 1986 and has not addressed the consequences of maintaining strict minimum parking standards when demand for space is declining.

The study recommends building above-grade instead of underground parking in high-rise residential buildings. Above-grade parking is not only less expensive and quicker to construct but, more importantly, the space can be repurposed later if it becomes redundant, meaning there is a longer-term value proposition.

**Click [here](#) for full, illustrated report**

The report gives several examples of repurposed above-grade parking garages.

- The Summit is a 426,000 sq. ft. hotel in Cincinnati, Ohio that was once a parking garage but now features 239 rooms, an art gallery, rooftop terrace, ballroom and 19 meeting spaces.
- Peckham Levels is a community hub and art space located in a refurbished parking garage in London, England. It is a seven-storey structure which includes 50 studio spaces, restaurants, children's play areas, a 3D printing lab and a yoga studio.
- Calgary's new 9th Avenue Parkade (9AP) is a great example of a new, multi-use, above-grade structure which can be converted to other uses because it has a non-standard floorplate, with increased floor-to-ceiling heights. Further, 9AP's design does not require external ramps and allows for the parkade to be converted to residential or commercial space in the future.
- On the other side of the globe, Moreland City Council, a suburb of Melbourne, Australia will eliminate minimum parking requirements by 2021. This spring, Moreland adopted an integrated transport strategy which supports a shift toward walking, cycling and transit use, with a resolution designed to ensure that residents of new developments in certain neighbourhoods carefully consider their car ownership needs.

The City of Toronto deserves credit for showing flexibility on parking ratios for new projects such as those near subway stations. In addition, car-share parking spaces have been permitted to reduce minimum resident parking requirements. We have heard, however, that once the developer turns the building over to the condo corporation, some residents express safety concerns about outsiders using the building's parking spaces.

Unfortunately, Toronto's Tall Building Design Guidelines state a preference for below-grade parking, and that is turning out to be a critical factor in addressing stormwater capacity concerns. If the municipal system has insufficient capacity to handle a peak load, then no connection to the sewer will be granted.

At a recent public workshop, Lou Di Girolimo, general manager of Toronto Water, identified how sewer capacity constraints (private water discharge permits and/or long-term agreements for groundwater) impacted two commercial and five residential high-rise building projects. If underground parking had not been required for these projects, the equivalent of nearly 20,000 additional suites could have been built. This represents a classic trade-off between the city's current requirements and its intensification objectives.

We must be forward thinking in the way we plan new parking in urban centres across Canada.

The consequences of building too much underground parking are profound. These include overloading our stormwater and sewer systems, interfering with hydrology, increasing construction costs, and overbuilding for declining parking demand. Even the environmental costs of transporting and disposing of excess soil generated through the process of building below-grade parking can be significantly reduced by reforming parking standards.

Let's embrace flexibility and plan properly for the future of parking in Canadian cities. Let's change policy for minimum parking standards so that the generations that follow us can effectively use or repurpose what we planned decades before.

*Andy Manahan is the executive director of the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario*

*Paul De Berardis is the director of building science/innovation for the Residential Construction Council of Ontario*

A version of this article originally appeared in ReNew Canada.

## NEWS BRIEFS

### ELLIS-DON SENIOR VP ON INFORMATION TECH

Global Law Firm Dentons has produced three interesting short videos on the impact of new technologies in construction. As part of the firm's Smart Cities initiative, Karl Shober, Senior Associate, Corporate (Toronto) talks with Jody Becker, Chief Strategy Officer and Senior Vice President International & Digital Services and Sustainability at Ellis Don.

Videos are available on the Dentons site.

Part 1: [Leveraging Data](#) (reorienting a construction company for a digital world)

Part 2: [The P3 Model](#) (challenges and opportunities in the model and data use)

Part 3: [New Directions](#) (risks and benefits of converged systems)



### HOUSING REVIVAL IS 'SAD'?

In an [early November piece](#), Globe and Mail columnist Rob Carrick provocatively stated: "The revival of the housing market is a sad moment in personal finance." Many of the 60 commenters on his piece do not agree. A spokesperson for the Canadian Home Builders' Association adds that owning a home is more than just acquiring a mortgage and debt. Homeownership provides security, stability, and long-term financial growth.

Carrick pointed out that Canadians have been showing some signs of retrenchment in spending and debt – slower growth in non-mortgage borrowing, flat retail sales, dropping luxury car sales – at least until recently. But not in housing, where ongoing price increases and availability of cheap money are fueling sales into dangerous overextension. "Owning a house and building equity doesn't earn you an automatic A+ in personal finance," Carrick said. People also need to cover other costs and to save for the future.

"Around the world, there's concern about slowing economic growth and recession ..." he wrote. "Central banks are playing defence while Canadian home buyers go on the offensive."



PHOTO: Marc Cramer

### MORE WAN AWARDS

Further to our Cover story, other Canadian projects picked up one more Gold, a Silver and a Bronze in the WAN Awards.

**BEST OF THE BEST- House Of The Year, BRONZE = Ice Shore House, Montreal.** (CONRATH Architecte/INDESIGN Inc.) Photo above. Both rustic and urban, this universally accessible, geothermally heated home respects and challenges its district's working class heritage. Click [here](#) for the WAN write-up and [here](#) for Conrath's news page.

**SPECIALIST - Sustainable Bldgs, SILVER = University of Northern British Columbia Wood Innovation Research Laboratory** (Stantec Architecture Ltd.) The first Passive-House-certified education building in Canada, this industrial-type space surpassed the requirements for airtightness by almost a factor of 10. Click [here](#) for the WAN write-up, [here](#) for a page and/or [here](#) for a video, both from Stantec.

**SECTOR - Education, GOLD = Myhal Centre for Engineering Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the University of Toronto** (Montgomery Sisam in association with Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios). Located in the heart of the U of T campus, the Myhal Centre opened in 2018 as 'one of the three most sustainable post-secondary facilities in Canada'. Click [here](#) for the WAN write-up and [here](#) for details from Montgomery Sisam's website.

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### HOME BUILDERS' AWARDS

Key awards given out by OHBA in Sep:

- **HOMEBUILDER OF THE YEAR** went to **Tridel Corporation**.
- **RENOVATOR OF THE YEAR** went to **Amsted Design-Build**.
- **PROJECT OF THE YEAR – LOW-RISE** was given to **Treasure Hill Home Corp.** for **Charbonnel** in Toronto.
- **PROJECT OF THE YEAR – HIGH OR MID RISE** was given to **Tridel** for **Aqualuna** in Toronto.
- **PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD** went to **Acorn Developments** for **Limerick Point** in Richmond Hill.

## Welcome New Members!

**David Fitzpatrick**  
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Members and guests only

## AOLE HOLIDAY PARTY

The Wallace Gastropub

1954 Yonge St., Toronto  
one minute walk from the Davisville subway station

**Wed. Nov 27, 2019**  
**5:30 - 8:30 pm**





# Exploring the Crosstown



AOLE's very popular summer tour event offered a close-up look at the western end of Toronto's 19.7 km Light Rapid Transit line scheduled to open September 29, 2021. Members and guests were shuttled to the Eglinton Maintenance and Storage Facility (EMSF), where they were split into two groups of 15 and fitted out with personal protective equipment. Here are a few highlights.

**Project Overview:** Alex Iantorno, of design/construct/maintain consortium Crosslinx Transit Solutions, gave details of the half underground and half dedicated-right-of-way-surface-track with 15 underground stations and 10 surface stops. The Crosstown will link to subway stations at Cedarvale (currently Eglinton West), Eglinton (at Yonge) and Kennedy, to GO Transit lines at Mount Dennis (Kitchener Line), Caledonia (Barrie) and Kennedy (Stouffville), and to the Union-Pearson Express at Mount Dennis. Permitting has presented unique challenges for station construction scheduling. "For some stations the primary and secondary entrances fall under wards belonging to different municipal permitting offices," said Kalt Studio's Christina Kalt. Infrastructure Ontario has been helpful in designing new permitting frameworks. Avenue Station is at the highest elevation. Eglinton Station is an "engineering wonder" with its 269-m-long area being built below the extremely busy existing station at Yonge. Click [here](#) to see how it's done.

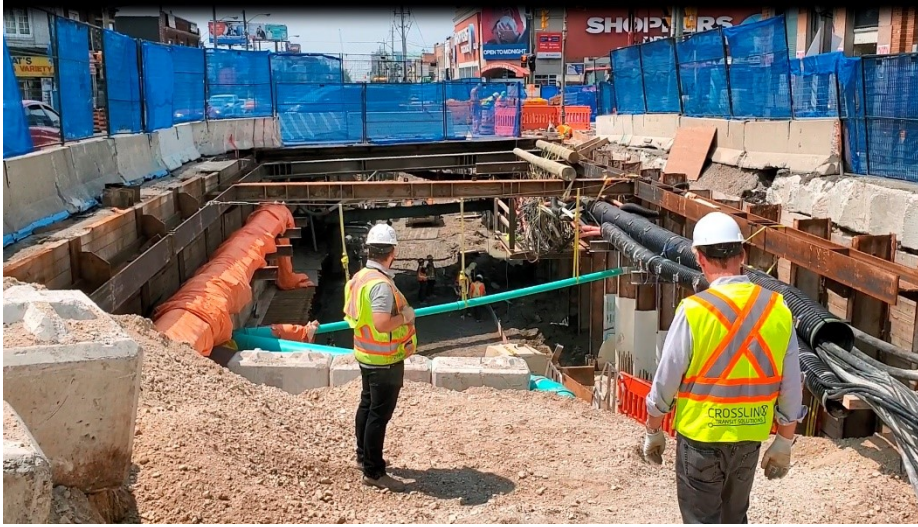
**Vehicles and Automation:** The first few Bombardier 'Flexity' Light Rail Vehicles (LRVs) were delivered in the winter and another had just arrived before AOLE's tour. Almost identical to the TTC's new streetcars but on a standard wheel gauge, they each have 62 seats. Each train will have two to three cars, accommodating up to 490 people. Within the underground tunnels, the vehicles are autonomous and can travel 80 km/hr. At grade, the drivers are in control, but an override stops them from driving too fast or too close to others.

## Eglinton Maintenance and Storage Facility (EMSF):

This 42-acre facility is where all 76 initial LRVs are being delivered for inspection, testing and commissioning (and in future will be sent for maintenance). Gord Campbell, Revenue Vehicle Manager, explained that the 8.5 km of track on site is fully automated – no drivers will be required. Buildings are designed for LEED Silver, including green roofs.

*Continued on page 7*





**Crosstown** Continued from page 6

They had just stopped being ‘construction zones’ three weeks before AOLE visited, so people could tour the interior without safety gloves and hardhats.

The top photo on the previous page shows the overhead catenary system (OCS) which powers the vehicles, and three levels of service access. As well as seeing the entry and redirecting systems, servicing bay areas and catwalks, a wheel lathe pit (all vehicles need to have their wheels re-cut every 18 months), washing and painting stations etc., AOLE members got to go on board one of the new LRVs.

### Station visits:

**Caledonia** This Station is located west of both Caledonia Road and the GO Barrie line, where Metrolinx’ expansion plan calls for a new GO station to be constructed after completion of the Crosstown. Then the two services will be linked by a pedestrian bridge.

Because Eglinton dips south of the line here, Caledonia Station was able to use traditional excavation and bottom-up construction. Scheduled for completion in 2020, it will see immediate use for vehicle testing.

AOLE participants climbed down to track level (bottom photo on previous page) to view progress on the station box and tunnel, including initial below-grade structural work. Neighbouring Westside Mall is looking like a prime redevelopment site.

**Fairbank** Construction on Fairbank Station uses a top-down, cut-and-cover method to build beneath the road (photo at left). The group gathered at the work site taking up part of Eglinton Ave. West at Dufferin Street.

There, they learned how the ground that will be above the roof gets removed. Then the roof structure and formwork is assembled and concrete poured. After that, as much as possible of the road portion is backfilled and rebuilt.

They also walked down to see how the space below the roof gets excavated, and so on, down to track level.

The tour group visited Fairbank Station’s main entrance on the southeast corner of the intersection, which was starting to take shape. When complete, this entrance will front on a plaza incorporating a water feature and providing a gathering space with seating comparable to the prior St. Hilda’s parkette.

RM

## LEGISLATIVE BEAT Continued from page 8

Seiling has [expressed his disappointment](#) with the outcome of the process: “We gave them recommendations to improve accountability, improve performance of political bodies, how they should be structured. We talked about how service could be delivered.”

Despite the decision not to impose reforms, Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Steve Clark said that municipalities should apply for the \$143 million in grants to improve service delivery and decision-making.

Construction industry stakeholders should be pressing municipal officials to take advantage of this opportunity to modernize, streamline and expedite approval processes, local regulations and inspections.

It was a challenging file for Clark as certain measures would have been difficult to implement and a ‘one size fits all’ approach would have been impossible.

For example, there was political tension within Peel Region, as Mississauga wanted to extricate itself from the region, while Brampton wanted to stay. If Clark had acted on Mayor Bonnie Crombie’s call for Mississauga to be a standalone municipality, how would police services, for example, have been handled? With one highly urban and one primarily rural municipality, would Brampton and Caledon have been considered a more efficient region?

The areas under study included Durham, Halton, Muskoka District, Niagara, Oxford County, Peel, Waterloo, York, and Simcoe County, plus lower-tier municipalities – for a total of 82. Unless there is a leak or a successful Freedom of Information request, the report will remain on a shelf.

### PASSING OF DAVID CAPLAN

On a final note, former Cabinet minister David Caplan passed away suddenly on July 24 at the age of 54.

I will fondly remember my interactions with him, especially during the period when he was Ontario’s first minister of public infrastructure renewal.

While there, he was instrumental in bringing forward the public-private partnership model known as alternate financing and procurement and for shepherding the *Places to Grow* legislation and the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*. See Vol. 34, No. 3, of *The Land Economist*, amongst other issues from 2004 forward.

Industry colleagues will also remember him as a champion of building and maintaining our water and wastewater infrastructure.

He will be sorely missed.

*Andy Manahan is Executive Director of the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario, and a member of AOLE’s Board of Directors*



# The Legislative Beat

By Andy Manahan, PLE

## QUEEN'S PARK

The Legislature reconvened on Oct. 28 following a hiatus over the summer. [Some surmise](#) that Premier Ford was asked to lay low so that Conservative leader Andrew Scheer would stand a better chance of winning seats in vote rich Ontario. (There were no photo ops of the two of them campaigning in an Etobicoke riding.)

During the federal election campaign, Prime Minister Trudeau held Ford as an example as to why the Conservative party under Scheer should not be elected (“deeper cuts” and a “do nothing approach” on climate change). Despite this, the Ontario leader’s tone has been less combative this fall. He even congratulated the PM on his victory by saying that he looks forward to working with Ottawa to address “shared priorities,” including infrastructure, internal trade and mental health.

In June, Ford vowed to appeal the Ontario court of appeal’s decision that the federal *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act* was constitutionally valid, but in August promised to let the voters decide on whether the challenge would proceed based on the electoral outcome. A few days later, however, Ford vowed to continue with his appeal of the carbon tax at a reported cost of \$30 million.

Part of the reason for the more conciliatory tone can be attributed to the “resignation” of Dean French as the Premier’s chief of staff and by his replacement, Jamie Wallace. French’s ‘running roughshod’ style antagonized PC Caucus and staff. His tenure came to an abrupt end in late June when it was revealed that several patronage appointments with dubious credentials were made from among French’s personal connections, apparently without

the knowledge or consent of the Premier. For those at Queen’s Park who had hoped to advance based on merit, the elevation of unqualified individuals hurt morale.

## UNSTICKY STICKERS

Gas stations in the province are [required to post stickers](#) which “inform” drivers of the increased cost of filling up due to Ottawa’s carbon tax but do not provide information about the rebates which taxpayers would receive. Due to a lack of adhesive, many stickers did not adhere to the pumps, or were easy to remove. Although another firm was responsible for the government contract to produce the stickers, this was embarrassing to the Premier as his family’s company is in the business of making decals and packaging products. In some locations, gas station owners registered the quiet legal protest of only using the official French language version of the sticker.

Green Party leader Mike Schreiner said this during question period in late October: “The premier’s stickers that don’t stick continue to ignore how the carbon rebate will leave eight out of 10 people with more money in their pockets. I’m shocked, Mr. Speaker, that the premier doesn’t understand how markets work. We can put a price on pollution, we can reduce emissions and put money in people’s pockets.”

## TRANSIT DEAL - THE CITY RETAINS ASSETS, PROVINCE BUILDS 4 SUBWAY PROJECTS

The subway upload proposed by the Ontario government and described in Vol. 49, No. 1 has now been abandoned. After months of discussions between Queen’s Park and the City, the province determined that a takeover of the TTC’s existing subway network would not be advantageous. (This was not put for-

ward as a reason, but taking on the TTC’s \$33.5 B state-of-good-repair bill, projected over the next 15 years, would not be conducive to balancing the provincial budget.)

The Province expressed its commitment to build four subway projects, contingent on Toronto being in alignment with these projects as priorities. (These projects were first announced a day prior to the April 11<sup>th</sup> budget.)

Recognizing that the Province has the upper hand in these types of matters, [Council voted](#) 22-3 to accept the terms of the deal on Oct. 29. Mayor John Tory emphasized that the \$28.5 B cost of the four projects will be borne by the Province (although the Province is counting on funds from the federal government).

A significant change to the City’s Relief Line phase 1 was proposed with the introduction of the so-called [Ontario Line](#) – the centrepiece project of the four. It would run from Ontario Place in the west, through the downtown core and then head north to the Ontario Science Centre on Don Mills Rd.

An aggressive schedule has been put forward for the 15.5 km Ontario Line, despite the low level of engineering design completed to date (figure unknown but less than 10%). In July an initial business case was released for the project.

Metrolinx and Infrastructure Ontario have indicated that there will be a market sounding to tap into private sector expertise, that Requests For Qualifications/Requests For Proposals will be released in 2020 and that the project will open in 2027. Costs are estimated to be lower than the former approach, because a lighter technology will be used rather than heavy rail.

## REGIONAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW

After having received a confidential report from two special advisors – Michael Fenn and Ken Seiling – the Province has decided to back off on any direct intervention on municipal reform or amalgamation. Instead, after an eight-month consultation process which elicited 8,500 submissions, the Province has offered \$143 million to help local governments find service efficiencies.

*Continued on page 7*