

Developing a sustainable community – the challenges of new planning methodologies in the re-invention of public open space in Canada

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Abstract

How does one transform a former military base in suburban Toronto into Canada's First Nation Urban Park? This paper explores this opportunity in the re-invention of this new public space and the impacts it has on public planning and policy development for the community, the city and the country. The crown corporation responsible, Parc Downsview Park Inc. must resolve to do this on a self-financing basis no less! Sustainability is therefore fundamental to the planning and development to-date and the opportunities for positive fundamental change in the future. Following the creation of the park design through an international design competition, the park vision was to transform the rest of the lands required for the self-financing mandate and process. Key to the integration for the rest of the lands and vision was the development of sustainable community development guidelines that would make the site an integrated and cohesive property, and that would challenge the local community to live the sustainability challenges as well. The paper will update on our successes, challenges and next steps.

Keywords: sustainability, public open space, public planning, policy development, self-financing, international design competition, sustainable community development guidelines, public consultation, communications.

1 Introduction

When the Government of Canada announced the closure of Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Toronto in 1994 it stipulated, "the existing DND-owned lands



associated with the Downsview site will be held in perpetuity and in trust primarily as a unique urban recreational greenspace for the enjoyment of future generations” [1].

The Downsview Lands consist of two hundred and sixty hectares (644 acres) of land. These lands are currently divided between two federal agencies: Parc Downsview Park (PDP) Inc., two hundred and thirty-six hectares (583 acres) and the Department of National Defence, twenty-four hectares (61 acres).

PDP’s aspiration is to create a sustainable community, with a national purpose and identity, of great magnitude and prestige for all Canadians and to grow Downsview Park into a model for the world. The sustainable community will include traditional parkland, recreational (indoor and outdoor), cultural, residential, commercial, institutional, sports, and entertainment uses.

Downsview Park will be a leading edge sustainable community. It will set 21st century standard for excellence in landscape architectural design, recreation, urban planning and sustainable development. The goal is to define the leading edge of green development, implement green technologies and promote green business, and to offer in the City of Toronto, for the people of Canada, a wonderful place to showcase environmental, social and economic sustainability on a self-financing basis.

Sustainability is the one word which best captures the essence of the vision and intent of Downsview Park. Sustainability is implicit in the mandate given to PDP by the Government of Canada and is at the core of PDP’s interpretation of the mandate. That vision is to create a community that is a showcase of sustainability for the world. The vision states: “Downsview Park is a unique urban recreational greenspace, a safe and peaceful place, developed according to the principles of environmental, economic and social sustainability, for Canadians to enjoy in all seasons. The park reflects Canada’s mosaic brilliance and celebrates its past, present and future accomplishments.” [2]

Experts from many diverse disciplines recognize sustainability as the development strategy for the 21st century. A sustainable community fosters the interdependence of social, ecological and economic well-being. A balance among the three components enables each component to achieve its maximum potential. PDP plans to create that balance through the integration of common elements among the various land uses across Downsview Park.

PDP is committed to sustainability in all its dimensions and environmental, economic and social sustainability are in evidence in the current and planned operations and activities of Downsview Park.

2 Downsview Park history

The lands where Downsview Park is located have a very rich history and have experienced a number of land uses. These uses, which have included agricultural production and a military base, have helped shape Toronto and Canada and have made Downsview part of some of the most important moments in Canadian affairs. The historical uses have also defined the physical environment of the park.



Downsview is named after an 1830s farm that was called “Downs View”. It was named because of its high elevation and its excellent view looking southward towards Lake Ontario. The Downsview lands were acquired from the aboriginal peoples with the Toronto Purchase in 1787.

In 1851, construction of the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Railway began and by 1853, much of the railway had been completed. The railway ran north through Downsview to Lake Simcoe and Lake Huron transporting passengers, freight and mail. It exists today as the Canadian National Railway, bisecting Downsview Park.

Although Downsview was initially a small rural community, it soon grew to become an urban industrial centre, well connected to the region by both commerce and culture. De Havilland Aircraft of Canada located to Downsview in 1929 and began assembling airframes at a small airfield in Downsview south of Sheppard Avenue adjacent to the railway. Later, land was expropriated from the community to enlarge the airfield and permit its use by jet fighters of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

After the war, the government recognized Downsview’s strategic importance with its proximity to Toronto’s industry and infrastructure. Downsview was considered by the government to be well suited as an air station and logistical support base because of the existing airfield and hangar facilities.

The idea of transforming the Downsview Lands into an urban park was first advanced in 1994 as the closure of the military base was being contemplated. The lands were seen as a large, underutilized tract of land, that contained valuable old assets as well as some heritage buildings which could be renaturalized and developed as a national and international showcase for environmental, social and economic sustainability.

Since 1996, the site has been incrementally transformed, in the perception of the members of the surrounding community as well as nationally, from a military base to a park. This transformation is both physical, (characterized by the replacement of the barbed wire fences that characterized the base with open, more welcoming entrances) as well as attitudinal (characterized by the introduction of programs and events designed to attract visitors to the site).

2.1 The creation of Parc Downsview Park Inc.

Parc Downsview Park (PDP) Inc. was created in 1999 to formally assume responsibility for managing and developing Downsview Park and to harness the opportunity presented with the closure of CFB Toronto. The government recognized that it had an unparalleled opportunity to make a positive impact on the City of Toronto through the retention of the former base lands under federal administration, and to transform the land in an urban area to improve the quality of life for the community.

Since that time, great strides have been made affirming the mandate and refining the vision of Downsview Park as an environmentally, economically and socially sustainable community. Downsview Park represents one of the largest sustainable development opportunities in Canada. Detailed, thoughtful plans are in place to achieve the vision.



On September 29, 2003 Prime Minister Jean Chrétien officially dedicated Downsview Park to the people of Canada and launched the public design consultation phase of the project. Hundreds of people attended the ceremony.

In February 2004, PDP received the final design for the park plan. The exciting and dynamic plan details the park design, budget and implementation process, and was the culmination of a series of informal and formal stakeholder consultations held in the summer and fall of 2003 as well as the expertise of a multi-disciplinary design team. The process originated with an international design competition in May 2000 that chose *Tree City* as the winning concept for Downsview Park.

2.2 The Downsview Park International Design Competition

The Downsview Park International Design Competition was held to realize the vision of creating a unique urban recreational greenspace, with the goal of making Downsview Park internationally recognized as one of Canada's great urban parks. The objective of the design competition was to promote innovative design proposals that would respond to the social and natural histories of the site, while developing its potential as a new landscape, one capable of sustaining new ecologies and an evolving array of public uses and events.

The design competition resulted in an exceptional design team and concept for Downsview Park known as *Tree City*. The winning design did not propose itself as a traditional national park because, unlike most of Canada's parks, the Downsview site does not offer an extraordinary landscape that needs to be preserved or protected. Instead, the site provided an opportunity to think about what it would mean to create an entirely new definition of the urban landscape, one that had the potential to redefine humankind's relationship with nature.

The jury members unanimously selected *Tree City* as a project of incomparable vision and promise. The Jury's Report considered *Tree City* a design concept that links current living conditions to the reality of an urban park for the 21st century. It is a fascinating and cutting edge design, which will give Downsview Park worldwide recognition. Downsview Park may have as much influence on parks for the 21st century as New York's Central Park did for the 20th century.

2.3 Public consultation and the park plan

From the beginning, Downsview Park has been developed through public input and ideas. During the phase of consultation in 2003 a number of stakeholders representing various sectors and the local community were involved in the process. Among the issues that were considered by stakeholders were the overall guiding principles upon which everything in and about the park should be measured, as well as the various recreational, sports and cultural uses on the lands that will contribute positively to the overall transformation of the Downsview Park property.

The consultations confirmed that that the design process should be driven by a set of five core values. The five core values are sustainability: design the



maintenance; stewardship: design the educational effect; play: redefine leisure; legacy: build a living database; and beauty: design the icon. These values have evolved from PDP's five core themes: heritage, technology, innovation, community, and environment.

In April 2004, a panel of landscape architects, architects and planners examined the plan and encouraged the board to move forward.

The park plan envisages a seven-phase design plan implemented over ten years at a cost of \$40 million. Each phase will have a distinct purpose, a desired effect, and will yield a significant and lasting transformation to the former military base.

The recreational greenspace is organized into three distinctive zones—the Action Zone, the Promenade and the Cultivation Campus—unified by a system of pathways for easy pedestrian access. The Action Zone, designed with a distinctively urban feel, will include a mix of commercial and cultural facilities. Notably, this zone will accommodate the Downsview Park National Sport Institute, which will build on the current strengths of the Hangar Sports Complex and serve both as an Olympic Centre of Excellence and training and mentoring ground for promising community athletes. The Zone will also feature a main street thoroughfare that will contain a mix of commercial and artistic opportunities. The Promenade represents a striking change of pace from the Action Zone. It will extend panoramic views, forests, meadows and wetlands to their most aesthetic condition. It will be a place of passive recreation and landscape regeneration. It will serve as a respite from the pressures of urban life. The Cultivation Campus encompasses both the development of the land and of communities. It will extend the park beyond its borders through education and social connections with such amenities as a retail nursery, greenhouse and mosaic gardens.

3 Downsview Park today

Downsview Park today is a vibrant place where hundreds of thousands of Canadians are educated and entertained through a wide variety of community programs and seasonal events. These programs and events promote and broaden the awareness of the significant historical, environmental and cultural features that make Downsview Park unique. They have also established Downsview Park as a place for people of all ages to play, learn and enjoy in every season.

3.1 Community and educational programs

In keeping with the vision of the site as a place “for Canadians to enjoy in all seasons,” [3] a year-round roster of school and community programs has been created to show the potential of the site as a legacy for future generations. Community programs are designed to reflect such values as: culture, heritage, community, technology, innovation, environment, legacy, sustainability, stewardship, beauty, and play. A representative list of titles includes: The Park in



Winter, Heritage Day, National Wildlife Week, Earth Day, Doors Open Toronto, Heritage Toronto Hike, and Sizzling Summer Dayz, to name a few.

Educational programs designed to support the Ontario Ministry of Education guidelines are offered to elementary schools across the Greater Toronto Area. These programs take advantage of the wealth of natural resources and artifacts of Canadian heritage available on the site and focus on themes of environmental sustainability.

Consistent with our mandate as a national urban park, some projects have been designed to raise awareness of the park in communities across the country. Notable among these is our Canada Millennium Quilt. Canadians across the country celebrated the dawn of the new millennium with Downsview Park's 'Our Canada' Quilt Initiative. Five hundred children from every province contributed to it. The Quilt was dedicated on Canada Day 2000 and then sent back to each of the contributing communities so that participants could appreciate the completed work.

3.2 Seasonal and special events

In addition to this, Downsview Park hosts a roster of four large-scale seasonal events that help to define the character of the park as a venue for the entire family. The Springfest event celebrates the fine and performing arts with visual displays and performances from a broad spectrum of locally available talent. Canada Day, our largest annual event, attracts approximately 80,000 people and is widely recognized as the most spectacular Canada Day celebration in the Greater Toronto Area.

A tradition of one-of-a-kind attractions (e.g. For Canada Day 2000 Downsview Park hosted the largest Citizenship Court in Canadian history) has helped to raise the profile of the park as a national attraction. The Fall Fair celebrates the Canadian harvest/thanksgiving tradition each year with a specially designed mix of sports, music and cultural activities. The Winter Festival provides opportunities for families to appreciate and enjoy the many opportunities for sports activities and pastimes that winter creates.

Over the years Downsview Park has also become a venue for a variety of cultural festivals that reflect the ethnic diversity of the Greater Toronto Area. These include Festival de Verano (A Latin festival), Viva Goa (a celebration of Goan culture), The South Asian Trade Show, and The Downsview Park Highland Games. All celebrate Canada's mosaic brilliance.

4 Sustainability in action

It is the policy of PDP to carry on its operations in accordance with the principles of environmental, economic and social responsibility and in line with its vision statement. In fulfilling this policy, PDP will attempt to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.



4.1 Economic sustainability

One of the key foundational elements of a sustainable community is the requirement for economic sustainability. When the federal government created Downsview Park it created the conditions whereby it became possible for Canada's first national urban park to become a sustainable community.

PDP is to be self-financing. Self-financing means that PDP will create a balance of expenditures and revenues to build the sustainable community, with no appropriations from the government of Canada. The sale and sublease of some of the lands will be used to provide sources of funds to finance construction and development of the park property. This Downsview Park will be uniquely developed to generate revenues to build and maintain Downsview Park.

The following are PDP's economic sustainability goals:

- Ensure there is no erosion of the core land base of the park.
- Maintain and improve those key buildings that will generate income for the future benefit of the park.
- Establish a Foundation as a future endowment base for the park.
- Develop a wide diversity of economic activities on the lands of the park.
- Encourage reinvestment and the economic development of the surrounding community.
- Encourage excellence within the human resources of the organization at the staff and board level.

4.2 Social sustainability

Downsview Park focuses on people. That is, after all, what parks are all about. Implicit in the mandate to create a park as a legacy for future generations is the obligation to create a park that is of value to the current generation, the local community and the broader public.

This is the key to increasing the social value of the Downsview Park now and in the future. PDP has committed itself to a strategy of on-going, open and transparent public consultation to ensure that as Downsview Park is developed, that it remains relevant to the needs of the community, and that as communities evolve and their needs change the park is responsive to those changes. This is the essence of social sustainability.

Through innovative programming, Downsview Park embodies the values of community, heritage, environment, innovation, and technology. These values transcend the entire site, across all land uses. As Downsview Park evolves, the values of stewardship, beauty, play, legacy, and sustainability will come into greater prominence.

The following are some of PDP's social sustainability goals:

- Encourage public/community participation as part of the planning and development of the park.
- Encourage formal and informal educational opportunities geared to the park's themes.



- Encourage activities in the park that allow for creative development.
- Promote heritage preservation, commemoration, education, and research at the park.
- Promote educational opportunities with respect to present day and future innovation and technology.
- Encourage respect for cultural diversity, equality of opportunity and people living together harmoniously and in mutual support of each other.
- Provide a social and economic impetus, raising the quality of life in the surrounding community.
- Meet human needs for “re-creation,” relaxation, exercise, and other aspects of healthy living.

4.3 Environmental sustainability

The environmental sustainability potential of Downsview Park is immense. PDP has inherited much of the infrastructure required for the site to sustain itself “off grid” in terms of heat and electricity production and consumption and water safety. There is a steam plant on-site to generate heat and electricity as well as underground water reservoirs.

The buildings on-site are structurally sound and amenable to development and refurbishment as “green buildings” and the park plan contains a well-considered strategy for waste and water management across the site. These are the cornerstones of environmental sustainability and provide a solid foundation on which the Downsview Park sustainable community can be built.

PDP has successfully partnered with Earth Day Canada over the last seven years in promoting the values of environmental sustainability to the local community and the broader public. The company has also collaborated with such organizations as the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Evergreen Foundation, Toronto Wildlife Centre, and the City of Toronto on environmental issues. Collaborative efforts will continue to be pursued.

The following are PDP’s goals for environmental sustainability:

- Provide environmental education opportunities, focusing on environmental renewal in an urban environment.
- Encourage partnerships with environmental organizations on best practices, co-operative projects and education.
- To evolve and enhance the existing urban ecosystem of the park.
- To encourage and promote innovative environmental practices and leading-edge environmental technologies, and encourage environmentally innovative business to locate at the park.
- To promote the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste, and to undertake a composting program so the compost can be used to improve the soil in the park.
- To promote and encourage the use of public transportation as a model for all to follow, and to encourage the use of bicycles and walking.



- To encourage energy conservation and the use of energy sources that will reduce greenhouse emissions, improve local air quality and encourage energy conservation.
- To manage storm water in an environmentally beneficial manner.
- To implement water and waste water conservation practices in buildings and on the lands.
- To utilize safe waste water irrigation in the park.
- To encourage the re-use and rehabilitation of viable building structures.
- To encourage the construction of buildings which are energy and water efficient.
- To encourage the use of recycled materials.

5 Sustainability metrics

Key to the success of PDP's sustainable community is the development of an empirical yardstick by which progress can be measured. PDP is challenging the conventional notion that sustainable parks in urban areas are just islands of nature. PDP's view of sustainability requires a symbiotic relationship between business and park: the park as a business and PDP's business as a park. Downsvie Park aims to be a demonstration of economic, social and environmental sustainability objectives working together to create a new harmony.

Open spaces in highly urbanized areas are almost always degraded by human engagement. Downsvie Park is a public space that was used for another public purpose. Nature working on its own is not sufficient to bring about a socially and ecologically desirable regeneration of the site. Sustainability policies will help PDP assess the impact of its actions over time in achieving the economic, social and ecological balance and integration.

5.1 Sustainable Community Development Guidelines

Sustainable Community Development Guidelines are being developed in the context of the vision for the land. They will define the influence of the park plan on the other areas of the Downsvie Park Sustainable Community: they will provide an explicit framework for the development of the entire site. This will make the entire site (the greenspace, the cultural and recreational lands, the residential lands, and the business/commercial elements) one seamless and integrated community and a showcase of urban sustainability. Commercial development will not overwhelm the greenspace and the promised legacy for future generations. Wherever you are on the site, you will feel like you are at Downsvie Park.

The Sustainable Community Development Guidelines will contain a land use plan and development policies; streets, blocks and community plan; an open space plan; sustainable urban criteria; sustainable building standards; an energy utilization plan; a sewer and water reduction plan; a sustainable housing plan; a public participation and marketing plan; a financial needs assessment for PDP;



and new ideas for further investigation. The Sustainability Community Development Guidelines generally recognize the municipal land use planning process that has been active on the lands and seek to find areas of agreement and areas of evolution, both of which deliver the PDP vision.

While the Sustainable Community Development Guidelines that will be developed will specify test criteria and standards, the following provides a brief description of the 13 modules:

Part 1

Regional planning context

Given the recent work of the City of Toronto and the Province of Ontario in directing future growth in the great Golden Horseshoe, Downsview Park needs to define its future within these two frameworks while remaining true to its vision and mandate. The analysis should show how Downsview Park will help realize the goals for these two initiatives.

Energy utilization plan

This will establish a strategy for the district energy approach and establish reduction and conservation protocols. It will need to address immediate or interim conditions, phasing and progression to the more comprehensive solution. A strong emphasis will be on renewable energy sources. This component shall also speak to the issue of air quality and the Kyoto Protocol. Target and suggested technologies should be identified.

Sewer and water reduction plan

This will outline an approach for storm water management across the site ideally to reduce outflows below today's levels. This will also outline water quality issues and approaches.

Sustainable building standards

Detailed specific standards will be developed for residential – low and high-rise, retail, office and industrial buildings. These will be prescriptive and will provide a range of techniques to be employed to obtain a set level of performance. All classes of buildings will need to achieve specified levels within the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program and shall incorporate proven technologies, "state of the shelf". Areas to be looked at will include at a minimum the following:

- Ecological Footprint of Buildings
- Super Efficiency Envelopes
- Re-use of Building Materials
- Thermal Mass Systems
- Green Roofs
- Life Cycle Analysis of Materials
- Passive Solar Strategies
- Alternate Heating and Cooling Methods
- Insulation and Glazing
- Water Reduction Strategies
- Information Technology Opportunities (i.e. broadband plus wireless)



Sustainable housing plan

This will clearly address PDP's approach to the issue and provide opportunities for a range of housing types and market segments developed on site. This exercise will also identify an area for the construction of innovative market housing solutions as potential demonstration projects. All will be in green buildings.

Transportation

It is not intended that design of the physical infrastructure be required to support the development program. A discussion should take place and a set of direction policy statements should be generated which will influence the type of transportation facilities built and determine the types of transportation demands and relationships that will be created on the site.

Financial needs assessment

Management will assess the capital and operational needs of PDP and provide alternate scenario analysis identifying where appropriate levels of financial resources could be realized and methods or relationships that could be used.

New ideas for further investigation-innovation

Recognizing that not all aspects or ideas can be addressed today, the sustainable community development guidelines will also be a living document, capable of being amended and evolving to a higher standard. A process for review and amendment within the framework should be outlined as well as suggesting other areas of investigation.

Public participation and communications

This plan will outline how PDP will seek community input into its development and identify appropriate vehicles for information exchange and dialogue. A single message for the sustainable community needs to be developed from this process and subsequently communicated.

Part 2

Land use planning and development policies

The land use plan will fix specific land uses to various areas of the site. It will take direction from the park and the context of the community. It shall also reflect the future of the area as the vision of the park is realized. It may also identify short-term and long-term land uses for various areas and address phasing. It shall also take advantage of existing infrastructure and provide for incremental growth. The development policies will address transportation and land use relationships, as well as the major context/relationship and roles created by the Province of Ontario's Places to Grow initiative and the City of Toronto's new Official Plan.

Streets, blocks and community plan

This plan will provide a structure for access and use and provide another measure of connectedness to the broader community. Major access points



to the local and regional street system will be identified and block sizes will be determined. Areas of the site will be organized on a community basis, with connected public space to all parts of the site.

The open space plan

This plan will extend the park physically into the rest of the site. Elements will include entry parkettes, linear parks, sub community parks and key features all indicative of Downsview Park. This will be one of the major vehicles to ensure physical and philosophical continuity throughout the total site.

Sustainable urban design criteria

These will address building and open space relationships and building orientation. They will also address major public spaces, building typologies, streetscaping, pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular relationships.

6 The Hangar and the Downsview Park Film Studios: success stories in sustainability

Downsview Park's Hangar Sports Complex is a 400,000 square foot building divided into five bays, that echoes with the history of aviation in Canada. When the military base closed in 1996, two of the bays in the Hangar were converted into a rudimentary sports facility, five indoor soccer fields, a set of changing rooms, a common space, and a small administrative area run by a private sector operator.

Downsview Park inherited this promising but unprofitable soccer operation and nurtured it back to financial health with the help of the Ontario Soccer Association. Later, in partnership with another sports management partner, Downsview Park added five indoor beach volleyball courts, which currently serve as a training ground for Canada's Olympic Beach Volleyball team. Today, The Hangar attracts more than 300,000 people per year to the park. In addition to this, BMW Canada leases the surrounding tarmac and one of the hangar bays to host its highly successful Advanced Driver Training Program.

The next phase in the development of the Hangar Sports Complex is its evolution into the Downsview Park National Sport Institute, a project undertaken in partnership with the Canadian Olympic Committee and the Canadian Sports Centre Ontario in which the Hangar will expand to accommodate the needs of Canada's elite, high performance athletes.

Downsview Park also inherited from the military a 1,000,000 square foot building, formerly a military Supply Depot complete with a million gallon underground reservoir of water for fire safety and indoor bays for easy transportation. Part of this building has been converted into the Downsview Park Film Studios, which has attracted a steady stream of some of North America's best-known producers, directors and actors.



7 Opportunities for collaboration with stakeholders in the GTA and beyond

Downsview Park presents a wealth of opportunities for imaginative partners to collaborate in the creation of the sustainable park community. These opportunities include public education initiatives, the design and retrofitting of green buildings, district energy, sustainable energy demonstrations, and sustainable industry development, community involvement in horticultural/cultivation initiatives, and collaboration with other sustainable communities.

The aim is to follow a course of strategic development that will produce results well beyond the borders of the park. Downsview Park, located in the heart of the GTA, provides recreational, learning and entertainment opportunities for people of all ages. The magnitude of the enterprise at Downsview is expected to attract a steady stream of tourism and create new employment opportunities in the area. In addition to showcasing Canada's heritage and the mosaic brilliance of our culture, Downsview Park is designed to evolve into a truly sustainable park community.

7.1 Communications and stakeholder engagement

One of the main challenges of building the sustainable community is simply communicating and effectively articulating the unique nature of this initiative to the public and to various potential stakeholder groups, who, once the idea is understood, could become effective champions for the cause.

The idea of using a traditionally commercial instrument (a Crown Corporation) to fulfill a social policy objective (a regenerated green environment that promotes recreation and well-being in an urban environment) using a distinctively non-traditional strategy (sustainability principles and policies) is best explained to the public incrementally, and by example.

The communication challenge is to be met by having the public observe the process of actually building the park. The agenda for building the sustainable community is simple: PDP calls it the *park first* philosophy. Essentially this means lead by building the park, the recreational greenspace. Design the core ambition to ensure that that necessary demand is created around it. This also inspires the belief in observers that a transformation is about to happen and generates interest regarding the nature of the transformation. Then create the sustainable community development guidelines to ensure that the integrity of the values is preserved. The next step is to acquire stakeholder commitments, develop a broad understanding of the ambition, and gain converts willing to support the fulfilment of the mandate. Finally, implement the commitments related to the guidelines that add further credibility to the vision.

To-date, PDP has been successful in adopting and implementing this strategy. Examples of our collaboration with stakeholders include: a tenant relationship with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority which also offers PDP on-going access to the expertise required to fulfill key aspects of the environmental agenda; and collaboration with the Ontario Sports Alliance, Canadian Sports



Centre Ontario and the Canadian Olympic Committee. These and other developing relationships are fundamental to PDP's duty to fuse the various institutions of Canada with its commitment to sustainability.

8 Conclusion

PDP's top strategic priority continues to be the administrative transfer of the Downsview Lands and appurtenances to PDP. In 1998, the Government of Canada approved an operational framework for PDP that included the transfer of responsibilities for the federal lands at Downsview Park to PDP at nominal cost. That decision has not been implemented and PDP cannot achieve its mandate until the lands have been transferred. There are many complex issues associated with the transfer of the land and these involve a number of stakeholders. Discussions continue with all parties to resolve any outstanding issues to achieve the transfer of the land to PDP.

In spite of this challenge, the past successes of PDP have been considerable and the future potential of Downsview Park is immeasurable. A great deal of progress has been made to achieve the vision for Downsview Park. PDP has created a winning formula for the creation of an urban park for the 21st century and a leading edge sustainable community.

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