

**Constructing a Foundation for Change:
The Ecosystem Approach and the Global Imperative on
Toronto's Central Waterfront**

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Abstract:

This paper explores the micro-level politics involved in the processes of planning Toronto's Central Waterfront in the period between the mid-1980s and the early 2000s. Using a conceptual framework that reviews and integrates ideas from growth machine literature as well as urban regime, regulation and globalization theories, the paper sets current waterfront development efforts in a theoretical context through which they can be understood as a 21st-century strategy for capital accumulation. In order to understand the ways in which Toronto's waterfront has come to be mobilized to accommodate the imperatives of global economic and spatial restructuring, this paper takes an historical approach, reviewing waterfront planning activities undertaken in Toronto in the past twenty years. A new and novel "ecosystem approach" to waterfront planning was adopted in this period which, through its ability to both encompass and conceal a range of meanings, allowed its proponents to accommodate a variety of historical problems that had impeded waterfront development. This paper demonstrates that, in so doing, this approach set the stage for the elite pursuit of world city status through the development of Toronto's Central Waterfront.

Foreword:

My enrolment in the MES program was intended as a step toward a new career in a related but perhaps tangential field to the one in which I had worked for more than a decade. Now, in reviewing my journey over the past two years, I am struck by the degree to which the program was instead an opportunity to realign my ideological compass and to bolster my understanding of the world through a new set of theoretical and conceptual tools. My application of these tools to Toronto's Central Waterfront throughout my coursework and in writing this major paper has been a fascinating and challenging task, one which has broadened my appreciation for the role of urban waterfronts – and, indeed, urban regions writ large – in the world's changing political and economic geography. It has also solidified my conviction that urban areas and the politics with which they are inscribed are not only the sites at which domination is enacted, but also primary locations through which emancipation can occur.

While specifically fulfilling Component 3.2.2 of my Plan of Study, this major paper brings the three components of my plan together in an integrated and comprehensive whole. In contributing to my understanding of urban planning, this paper has demonstrated that, indeed, planning processes which aspire to the ideals of egalitarianism are instead “necessarily and fundamentally skewed toward the interests of private capital” (76). An examination of the processes of urban development and the geometries of urban politics has been fundamental to this paper, and has been informed by a variety of theoretical frameworks which have helped me to better understand the motivations and connections behind the activities of any given urban regime. And while this paper has demonstrated that Toronto's elite are almost inexorably reshaping the city's waterfront to conform to the global imperative, it has also shown that waterfront development is fundamentally influenced by local conditions, indicating the importance that a rigorous examination of context plays in uncovering the opportunities for change.

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Introduction:

Waterfront Planning in Toronto: Contradictions and Connections

In 1992, the Royal Commission on the Future of Toronto's Waterfront released its final report, entitled *Regeneration*. After nearly four years of study, two interim reports, countless consultations and public forums, and a plethora of published working papers and reports, all of which examined many aspects and areas of the waterfront, *Regeneration* introduced what was then heralded as a new era of progressive, holistic, environmentally-based planning for Toronto's waterfront and the ecosystem to which it is connected. The "ecosystem approach," as it was called, promised to bring together in one development model "the long-term promise of a healthy environment, economic recovery and sustainability, and maintaining a livable community" (Royal Commission 1992: 16-17). Ecosystem planning was said to produce "more effective and creative solutions" than traditional planning due to its concentration on understanding the interactions in ecosystems and on its long-term view of change (77). Founded on the notion that "everything is connected to everything else" (Royal Commission 1990b: 17), the ecosystem approach recognised connections between human activity and the natural world and the various impacts of environmental health and degradation on economic and social activity. Only through a reconfiguration of waterfront planning and development from within the intersection of environment, economy, and community, the ecosystem approach proclaimed, could the vision be found to "restore the health and usefulness of the waterfront" (83).

The approach quickly gained currency. It was described publicly as "very heady stuff" (Valpy 1990), and "the wave of the future" (Toronto Harbour Commissioners 1992: 4), a revolutionary "greenprint" (Armstrong 1992a) praised by environmentalists, academics, politicians and pundits alike. The tenets of the ecosystem approach were seen in several municipal and Metro Toronto

and Region Conservation Authority planning documents, the report of John Sewell's Commission on Planning and Development Reform in Ontario and the "Golden Report" of the Greater Toronto Area Task Force. Some contemporaneous academic literature said that the work of the Crombie Commission signalled "the emergence of an innovative approach to waterfront planning and policy-making" which "placed urban waterfront planning in the novel context of environmental sustainability" (Goldrick and Merrens 1997: 219, 220). The ecosystem approach became a requisite part of contemporaneous municipal planning efforts; Commissioner David Crombie himself is said to have remarked that, in discussions with "politicians, business leaders and environmentalists, the ecosystem approach philosophy is no longer questioned – it is taken as the basic ground rule" (Suzuki 1992b).

Within ten years, however, a new approach to waterfront planning and development had gained ascendancy, one which had another vision of the imperatives for which waterfront planning and development should be undertaken. In November of 1999, the federal, provincial and municipal governments announced an unprecedented co-operative plan to redevelop 46 kilometres of Toronto's waterfront and, within one year, publicly committed to a \$1.5 billion investment in major infrastructure, public space, and environmental remediation that would spark a "virtuous cycle," attracting billions in private investment from the companies and people fuelling key sectors of the global economy, thereby creating jobs and, ultimately, the tax revenues necessary to fund public services (Toronto 1991a: 7). To oversee this new vision, the three levels of government joined forces to create the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation (TWRC), a new and nominally public body whose planning and implementation work is driven by the so-called disciplining force (cf. Toronto 1999a: 7; Evenson 2005) of its private sector board, management team, and consultants. The TWRC's plan for waterfront development, entitled the

Development Plan and Business Strategy, addresses and responds to many of the same problems – and indeed, proposes many of the same solutions – as those of the Crombie Commission.

However, this new vision is clearly focused on the economic benefits which can be derived from waterfront development. More importantly, however, it positions waterfront development as a crucial and strategic competitive necessity for the economies of Toronto, the GTA and the nation in the context of 21st-century global economic restructuring. The *Development Plan* positions its various components, such as land use, transportation, public space, and environmental remediation, as strategic investments in “fostering economic growth and rebranding Canada” (TWRC 2002: 7). In order for Toronto to compete globally in the 21st-century, this new vision implores, the waterfront must be developed in particular ways that accommodate the needs and desires of the global economy. The Toronto waterfront has become the “gateway to a new Canada” (n.p.) and presenting Toronto’s best face to the world is now paramount.

While on the surface these two approaches to waterfront development may seem incongruous, I demonstrate in this paper that they have deep-seated historical political and economic connections that allow them to be seen as two particularly entwined moments along the long continuum of waterfront change in Toronto. Moreover, I argue that it is within the Crombie Commission’s “ecosystem approach” to waterfront development and specific subsequent activities undertaken by its principle actors that the roots of the current global vision for the waterfront can be found. While it is certainly difficult to “untangle the knot of forces behind any waterfront development” (Malone 1997: 6), and while claiming to capture anything approaching the complexity of this knot of forces is disingenuous at best, I argue that the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront represents a particular strategic moment in Toronto’s waterfront history in which an approach to development was popularised that allowed a variety

of actors working in concert to contain political and economic struggle by resolving long-standing institutional and political problems. As with many other attempts to contain crisis, the resolutions to these problems created their own set of contingent circumstances which, in combination with economic and political activities occurring on a variety of scales, have resulted in the current configuration of ideological and economic imperatives driving the revitalization of Toronto's Central Waterfront.

Among the vast range of issues addressed by the Crombie Commission (and subsequent related agencies), the resolution of three problems stands out as being crucial in contributing to current circumstances. First, the intertwined and often contradictory mandates and activities of a variety of agencies and levels of government, which commentators, politicians, and academics have identified as perhaps the most long-standing problem plaguing waterfront development in Toronto, created a "jurisdictional gridlock" that threatened to keep the waterfront in a permanent state of suspended animation. Overcoming this barrier to development through a new politically acceptable development paradigm, the creation of a new institution to facilitate change, and the pursuit of a global mega-event would contribute not only to the accommodation of public-private partnerships into planning and development, but also to the broader goal of ensuring Toronto's economic place on the world stage. Second, as industrial activity on the Central Waterfront, which had formerly created not only a considerable tax base but also family-supporting blue collar jobs, continued to decline, struggles over the acceptability of new uses for the land contributed to the lack of integrated and politically defensible development. Resolution of the land-use question was integral to creating the new opportunities for capital accumulation which are currently being pursued. Third, the growing use of waterfront lands for private purposes – both in terms of privatised residential access to the water and private development profit – led to

a fear that the changing waterfront would prevent realization of the public benefits that had been promised since the 1800s. Paradoxically, this fear was resolved through a decision-making process that, while seemingly equitable, explicitly privileged private sector interests, and – through the construction of a broad-based coalition of both public- and private-sector actors in support of new forms of development – would lead to new and greatly conflated roles for both the state and the private sector in waterfront development, all for the sake of what I call “the global imperative”.

In this paper, I examine the ways in which the work and legacy of the Crombie Commission resolved or sufficiently accommodated struggles around these three problems – jurisdictional gridlock, land use, and the role of the private sector in waterfront development. Through an examination of Commission’s ecosystem approach, the work of its successor agency, the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, and the influence of the 2008 Olympic bid, which was pursued by the Trust in concert with a variety of private- and public-sector interests, I argue that the ecosystem approach was much more than a “novel approach” to development as set within a context of environmental sustainability. Rather, its novelty resided in the ways in which it contributed not only to the resolution of particular historical problems associated with waterfront development in Toronto, but also to the creation and consolidation of the conditions within which the vision for Toronto’s global waterfront could be conceived. In other words, by legitimating an ecosystem approach to Toronto’s waterfront development, the Crombie Commission was a major contributor to constructing a basis for change that is consistent with 21st-century capitalist development.

In the first chapter, I set current waterfront development efforts, as undertaken by the TWRC, within a conceptual framework that reviews and integrates ideas from growth machine literature

as well as urban regime, regulation and globalization theories, providing a context within which Toronto's global imperative can be understood as a 21st-century capital accumulation strategy. The second chapter describes the struggles occurring around each of the three problems in the period immediately preceding the creation of the Crombie Commission which themselves contributed to its formation. Chapter Three demonstrates the ways in which resolutions and accommodations to each of these three problems were found through activities undertaken by the Crombie Commission. The fourth and fifth chapters explore the activities of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust and the 2008 Olympic bid respectively, demonstrating the means through which the Trust carried on the work of the Commission, how the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation arose from these activities, and how this response to the global imperative benefited from the earlier efforts of the Commission and the Trust. Conclusions will be drawn and elaborated upon in the final chapter.

The approach that I have taken to exploring Central Waterfront development in Toronto is an historical one, drawing from a variety of documents including media reports, City of Toronto Council minutes and staff reports, federal and provincial legislative debates, and a wide range of planning and policy documents from all four levels of government. I have also examined the myriad reports of the Crombie Commission, conducted interviews with some of the key players of the period, and have incorporated academic literature about development politics in Toronto, environmental politics in Ontario, and waterfront development and Olympic Games research worldwide. My analysis views the qualitative data through a critical lens in order to more fully examine the contingent nature of the urban political economy and its role in constructing a particular vision for waterfront development.

While “urban development processes have become increasingly associated with ecological concerns” (Desfor and Keil 2004: xii) it is not my intention to engage in a critique of the ecosystem approach itself, as the literature examining the pitfalls of ecological modernisation has already deftly demonstrated that such “win-win” approaches to urban problems subsume environmental concerns under neoliberal concerns of “efficiency, competitiveness, marketability, flexibility and development” (Keil and Desfor 2003: 1)¹. Rather, I illustrate the ways in which recent locally-focused political struggles and economic activities influence the processes of urban change.

As well, I do not argue or want to imply an instrumentalist correlation between the activities of the Crombie Commission and the formation of the TWRC. Rather, I highlight the significant notion that the variety of activities undertaken under particular local conditions and influenced by extra-local economic and political transitions are important in the construction of the urban landscape, and in particular the capitalist urban landscape. In so doing, I demonstrate, in a contemporary context, that “what is happening along the urban waterfront is a reflection of changes in the city itself and, more importantly, of the changing political economy in which the city is located” (Desfor *et al* 1989: 499).

Chapter One:

The Global Imperative: Urban Theory and the Toronto Waterfront

Urban waterfronts as geographic territories are subject to local political and economic influences, but they also express activities being undertaken at a variety of scales with connections to broader economic and social processes. Historically, waterfronts have acted as the local sites of connection between a city and its port, and the territorial link between that port-city complex and other cities and nations around the world (Konvitz 1978). However, waterfronts have seen a succession of significant reconfigurations of their landscapes and functions resulting from a variety of technological developments, environmental transformations, and changes in economic activity (Hoyle 1988). Most recently, waterfront lands have been impacted by global economic restructuring and shifts from a Fordist to post-Fordist mode of development and an associated industrial suburbanization, deindustrialization, and decline in port-related activities (Malone 1997). Many of these lands have been vacated or underused, are generally polluted from years of reckless use, and are often seen, as in the Toronto case, as both barriers to and opportunities for urban revitalization. As such, waterfront lands have become new “terrains of availability” (Greenberg 1997), deindustrialised “frontier” spaces (Desfor *et al* 1988, 1989) upon which new configurations of power and governance, new uses for the lands, and new economic opportunities can be and have been set. This is the case not only in Toronto but in cities such as London (Florio and Brownill 2000), Bristol (Basset *et al* 2002), Copenhagen (Desfor and Jørgensen 2004), Melbourne (Sandercock and Dovey 2002), and many others (see Malone 1997; Breen and Rigby 1994; Hoyle *et al* 1988). The reconfiguring of these frontier spaces through entrepreneurial efforts undertaken by the local state in conjunction with private development interests has seen waterfronts take on a particular shape – they have become the sites of large-scale urban development projects, spectacularised destination developments with massive

residential and commercial components increasingly directed by market forces and packaged for sale to the globalized professional classes (Swyngedouw *et al* 2002). These spaces are the contemporary strategies through which cities pursue economic growth and competitiveness, the mechanisms through which globalization is urbanised, and the catalysts of urban spatial and political change (Moulaert *et al* 2003).

Like waterfronts in many cities around the world, Toronto's waterfront is currently being reshaped, both literally and conceptually, in ways that both respond to and engender the exigencies of global capitalism in a post-Fordist, 21st-century context. In the words of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation, it is "one of the last and largest of the great waterfront revitalizations among important global cities" (Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation 2002: 14), taking its cues from waterfront development projects in London, New York, Barcelona, Melbourne, and a host of other so-called "world class" cities. As the mission statement of the TWRC illustrates, the current revitalization effort is intended,

to put Toronto at the forefront of global cities in the 21st century by transforming the waterfront into beautiful, accessible new communities, parks and public spaces, fostering economic growth in knowledge-based, creative industries and ultimately, re-defining how the city, province and country are perceived by the world (TWRC 2003: 1).

Toronto's Central Waterfront is in the process of becoming "a new waterfront for a new millennium" (City of Toronto 1999a: i), a showcase to the world intended to "surpass other world cities" (5) through the construction of enormous mixed-use residential and commercial areas, vast new stretches of public parks, and spectacular cultural attractions. This large-scale urban development project constitutes "an astonishing opportunity" (Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force 2000: 16) to transform a vast stretch of derelict and degraded inner city space into Toronto's "front porch and our welcome to the world" (1), inviting private

investment, tourists, and new economy knowledge workers and businesses to help Toronto “maintain its role as a major world city and act as a gateway or portal on the Canada of tomorrow” (4).

From the inception of this development strategy in then-Mayor Mel Lastman’s 1999 *Wave of the Future!* document, through a privatised “visioning” exercise undertaken by the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force, to the creation of the City of Toronto’s *Central Waterfront Secondary Plan* and the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation’s *Development Plan and Business Strategy*, an overriding imperative and underlying rationale is guaranteeing Toronto’s place on the world stage, solidifying Toronto’s status as a “world city,” and ensuring that Toronto is able to compete in increasingly flexible and open global economic and labour markets. This global imperative – the notion that recent waves of global economic change necessitate particular strategies, technologies, and forms of waterfront development in Toronto – underlines the importance of the material impacts of globalization in recent transformations in urban built environments and its role in contemporary urban change. As such, understanding globalization, the ideological basis through which it can be said to operate, and the impacts and outcomes of its processes on local governance – as cities increasingly adopt entrepreneurial policies and programs – serve as an important entry point into an examination of the “astonishing opportunity” that constitutes the new vision for Toronto’s waterfront.

Globalization

In academic examinations of contemporary processes of urban restructuring, much emphasis has been placed on the impact of globalization and its geographical implications. While globalization can be said to encompass a variety of social and cultural changes, technologies and functions, it

is in large part an expression of the processes by which capital (and, to a lesser degree, labour) flows in an increasingly rapid and mobile manner. These flows are facilitated by a variety of new communications technologies and the scrapping of national financial regulations, which together allow finance capital to be transferred to any part of the globe instantaneously (Smith 2002). While debate continues about the global-ism of globalization – whether both economic and cultural internationalization is substantively different from that which has existed for the past several hundred years – there is considerable agreement that current understandings and manifestations of globalization stem from an increasing de-nationalization of economic production (Smith 2002). Following the economic crises of the 1970s, the location of commodity production has shifted from a predominantly national base to an international one. This is particularly notable within large transnational corporations which marshal resources and labour in a variety of countries and market their products to consumers in locations around the world (Smith 2002). This de-nationalization has significantly reconfigured the spatial division of labour in that location becomes less important in determining the availability of the factors of production; economic globalization has, as Marx famously wrote, annihilated space through time.

Paradoxically, while globalization has reduced the importance of location in terms of the factors of production, the very nature of global economic fluidity has increased the importance of location in terms of providing a basing point from which the management of disparately located factors of production can occur. The geographic implications of economic restructuring have been examined extensively in the world cities literature (eg, Friedmann and Wolff 1982; Sassen 1991, 1994; Knox and Taylor 1995). This literature supports the view that management functions in the new global economy have become concentrated in particular urban “nodal points” around

the world, termed “world cities” (Friedmann and Wolff 1982). World cities thus operate as the “control centres of the global economy” (319), being comprised in large part of transnational corporate headquarters, financial markets, banks, and financial and producer services. While certainly much more occurs in world cities in terms of the social and cultural implications of managerial agglomeration (cf. Keil and Kipfer 2003), it is significant to note that the rise of world cities as economic regulators underscores the importance of activities occurring at the urban scale in the processes of globalization.

Associated with globalization is the transition since the early 1970s from a Fordist to a post-Fordist regime of capital accumulation. While economic activity under Fordism was largely characterised by Taylorist mass production and associated mass consumption, under post-Fordism economic competitiveness is said to largely derive from flexible specialisation, arrived at through a highly-skilled, knowledgeable and empowered workforce as well as technological flexibility, low-cost labour and an emphasis on new communication tools (Leborgne and Lipietz 1988; Piore and Sabel 1984). However, as the Regulation School literature emphasizes, an important component of the shift from Fordism to post-Fordism is the associated transformation of the social, cultural and political institutions, forms, and processes which regulate or stabilise economic activity (see, for example, Aglietta 1979; Amin 1994; Boyer 1990; Peck and Tickell 1992). Bob Jessop, who has focused his approach to regulation on transformations in governance at the national scale, characterises these changes as a shift from a Keynesian Welfare National State to a Schumpeterian Workfare Postnational Regime (SWPR) (Jessop 2002). In this model, formerly redistributive Keynesian economic policies, which functioned to support economic well-being at the national level, have been largely replaced by a neoliberalised, fourfold program comprised of an increasing emphasis on i) international competitiveness through innovation; ii)

the subordination of social policy to economic policy; iii) a growing reliance on partnerships with other sectors; and iv) the transferring of policy-making and implementation from the national level along three axes: upward to international and global institutions, outward to the private sector through privatisation and new partnership arrangements, and downward to the regional and local levels. This fourth aspect of the SWPR – the “hollowing-out” of the nation-state (Jessop 1993) – highlights both the importance of and the rationale for the increasing role being assumed by urban governments in ensuring the economic competitiveness of both their own jurisdictions and that of their nation-state. While Jessop’s model has been criticised for being too deterministic and not sufficiently sensitive to particular local manifestations of national-scale activities (Jones 1997), it does provide a way of understanding the rise in importance of the urban scale as a site of economic regulation, and leads to an examination of the impact of this transformation on the processes of governance operating at the local level.

Canada’s national government has not seen the extensive hollowing-out that has been seen in other nations, owing perhaps to the constitutionally-mandated deference of municipal governments to the provinces, the political and economic imperatives of Canadian regionalism, and the federalist compromise (Todd 1995). And while hollowing-out should be thought of as a continuing process rather than an end state, there are indications of these transformations in the Canadian case, and particularly on Toronto’s waterfront. Recommendations made by the Crombie Commission for a local body to co-ordinate waterfront development can be understood, particularly within the context of the federal Mulroney government’s program of large-scale deregulation, downloading, and privatisation through the 1980s and early 1990s, as not only an attempted resolution of the problem of jurisdictional gridlock on the waterfront but also as a locally-constituted process for attempting to regulate development-related economic activity

involving national, provincial, and local interests. Recent calls from Toronto politicians and business leaders for a “new deal for cities” can be understood largely as a response to the reassignment of national responsibilities (whether through downloading or deregulation) onto provincial governments, who in turn burdened municipalities with additional programming and regulatory commitments but failed to provide corresponding fiscal resources. And the very concern for developing the waterfront, with its underlying motivation to make Toronto and thereby the entire nation more competitive through the “speculative construction of place” (Harvey 1989: 8), can be understood as a local manifestation of the restructuring of national economic policy in a globalized, post-Fordist era.

This motivation is explicitly outlined in all of the documents that delineate the vision for the current wave of waterfront redevelopment, and particularly in the *Development Plan and Business Strategy* that guides the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation’s (TWRC) planning and development activities. In outlining the benefits of waterfront revitalization, the document foregrounds the threat posed by global economic restructuring to the Canadian economy: “Although the [economy has] performed relatively well in recent years, there is growing cause for concern. Old economy industries are giving way to new. Canada is no longer defined by the export of natural resources. The country is struggling to carve out a niche in the global marketplace and establish its relevance, particularly in relation to the United States” (TWRC 2002: 8). As such, it says, an economic response on the part of governments is essential. However, as the processes of globalization have localised many of the processes of economic regulation, and as “governments around the world have increasingly agreed that large cities drive their national economies,” (6) locally-scaled interventions, based on spatial policies designed to increase land rents, have become key. As the state-mandated overseer of the development

project, the TWRC's acknowledged task is to "restructure the landscape to induce vast private investment" (27). And the preferred location for this restructuring in Toronto is the waterfront: "As with so many other urban success stories, Toronto's revitalization must focus on its waterfront" (22).

The processes of post-Fordist suburbanization, deindustrialization, and decline in port-related activities that have left Toronto's waterfront (Desfor *et al* 1989) a "terrain of availability" (Greenberg 1997) for new economic activities and social uses have had similar impacts on waterfront lands in many cities around the world (Hoyle 1988; Hoyle *et al* 1988; Malone 1997; Meyer 1999). These cities have undertaken similar projects of reinvestment and revitalization on their waterfront lands, building large-scale mixed-use developments, cultural facilities, and recreational spaces (Breen and Rigby 1994; Desfor and Jørgensen 2004; Florio and Brownill 2000; Moulaert *et al* 2003; Sandercock and Dovey 2002; Swyngedouw *et al* 2002). While the revalorization of waterfront lands across international boundaries in the service of post-Fordist economic development could be conceived as an indication of the inexorability of global economic restructuring exerting itself from above, it is perhaps more useful to understand this transformation as demonstrating both the territorial embeddedness and the distinct urbanity of recent modalities of capital accumulation. As David Harvey has shown, capital requires a "spatial fix" to mediate its inherent tendency toward crisis, in the form of investments in the built environment (Harvey 1982). As global economic restructuring reorients flows of capital investments toward and through urban areas, it becomes increasingly clear that urbanization and globalization are in fact inextricably intertwined processes of material change. In other words, globalization is not a disembodied set of economic flows occurring in a decontextualized and deterritorialized space, but rather "realizes itself through concrete material and discursive

processes and projects such as urbanization” (Keil and Kipfer 2003: 345). Globalization is best understood, therefore, as a territorialized process of sociopolitical, cultural, and economic change that employs particular modes of urban development and restructuring.

Neoliberalism

Inasmuch as globalization can be said to constitute a restructuring of space through local/global economic and social transformations, neoliberalism can be understood as the “operating framework or ‘ideological software’ for competitive globalization, inspiring and imposing far-reaching programs of state restructuring and rescaling across a wide range of national and local contexts” (Peck and Tickell 2002: 33). The concern for economic freedom, the commitment to market logic and competitiveness, calls for less government, economic deregulation, and the abandonment of welfarist policies are just some of the constituents of the neoliberal program. In Canada, we have seen this kind of destructive neoliberalism in the aforementioned federal Tory program of downsizing and deregulation and the adoption of similar policies by the federal Chrétien Liberal governments, the Harris Tory government in Ontario, and by governments of all political stripes, at all levels and in all regions of the Canadian state (Keil 2002).

However, as Peck and Tickell (2002) have shown, neoliberalism – like globalization itself – is not an end state, but rather a process which exhibits a variety of sometimes contradictory dimensions. The destructive aspects of “roll back” neoliberalism which sought to reduce Keynesian interventionism are being accompanied by “roll out” neoliberalism, which seeks to re-regulate and re-intervene, albeit in new forms (Peck and Tickell 2002) but for the same ends. For example, the massive cutbacks in federal transfer payments to the provinces in the 1990s under then-Finance Minister Paul Martin were passed on to urban and regional governments through

provincial program downloading, privatisation, metropolitan amalgamation, and program cuts. Resulting municipal budget pressures, among other imperatives, have necessitated a search for new forms of revenue generation by cities, which is being enacted through a variety of “roll out” policies including, for example, the speculative construction of place on Toronto’s waterfront.

While certainly it is incorrect to totalise “roll back” and “roll out” neoliberalism as constituting distinct successive waves of policy creation, in that these processes can and do occur concurrently, current reconfigurations of urban space demonstrate the particular contemporary significance of roll out neoliberalism in the urban context. As Roger Keil (2002) has persuasively demonstrated, urban neoliberalism is defined by a “contradictory re-regulation of everyday life” (230) which, in the Toronto case, is reflected in local state restructuring through municipal amalgamation, the sanitization of the city for global consumption, rising socio-economic inequality through both economic and social policy formation, and a host of deregulatory and re-regulatory programs that reconfigure societal relations with nature, the urban imaginary, and understandings of both the role of the city and its rightful inhabitants (242-246). While much of the reconstruction of the urban in Toronto has resulted from the so-called Common Sense Revolution of the provincial Harris Tories in the late 1990s, Keil does show that these higher-level activities have also served to entrench neoliberalism in the operations of the local state, and as such that local governance in the amalgamated City of Toronto is undergoing its own neoliberal shift (246-248).

Such roll out neoliberalism can be clearly identified in the new processes of change on the waterfront. The TWRC as an institutional response to economic change is itself a neoliberalised public-private partnership arrangement between the public sector and the development and finance industries which is intended to drive “an economic model that will help redefine Canada

in the global economy” (TWRC 2002). Current efforts by a newly (and nominally) progressive City of Toronto Council to increase the attractiveness of the urban core, of which the revitalised waterfront will be “a focal point for realizing many of our civic aspirations” (City of Toronto 2001: 6), have led to such re-regulatory policy programs as the recent enactment of a bylaw prohibiting postering on city lampposts, with city beautification – particularly to enhance the city’s image for tourists and potential investors – as its underlying rationale.

Local Governance and Urban Change

Local governance is understood for the purposes of this paper through the frameworks of growth machine and urban regime theories. In Harvey Molotch’s well-known formulation, cities operate as growth machines through “coalitions of land-based elites, tied to the economic possibilities of places, [who] drive urban politics in their quest to expand the local economy and accumulate wealth” (Molotch, in Jonas and Wilson 1999; 3). Closely associated with the notion that land-based growth drives urban politics is the understanding that local governments are ineluctably constrained by their economic dependence on property taxation (Fainstein and Fainstein, in Lauria 1997: 2). And while local government is enacted through the various mechanics of the local state, local governance is produced through the informal interrelationships between these state institutions and officials, and the forces of economic productive capacity in urban areas, which reside largely in private hands (Lauria 1997: 3; Stoker 1995). As such, those with property-related economic interests are often given a privileged position in decision-making and policy formulation in cities. This is particularly visible in the Toronto case in the activity of a variety of private-sector development industry actors who were given a significant and decisive role in the process by which the City of Toronto’s *Central Waterfront Secondary Plan* was shaped, which will be discussed further in Chapter Five.

While urban governance has long been concerned with the politics of economic development and growth, a new form of urban governance is being expressed in the context of neoliberal globalization. David Harvey (1989) has described this change as a shift from “managerial” to “entrepreneurial” governance. He argues that a former focus on the provision of services to local populations has been replaced by a governance model which privileges public-sector partnerships with private-sector actors in the interest of creating new institutions to pursue speculative opportunities for wealth generation through the development of new forms and uses for local lands. In other words, “the new urban entrepreneurialism typically rests on a public-private partnership focusing on investment and economic development with the speculative construction of place rather than amelioration of conditions within a particular territory as its immediate (though by no means exclusive) political and economic goal” (8).

Giving over planning and development of waterfront lands to the “public enterprise” model embodied in the TWRC therefore exemplifies not only the networked relations between state and non-state actors that typically comprise urban governance regimes, but more importantly the increasing entrepreneurialism of the local state under neoliberal globalization. This entrepreneurialism is also evidenced in the planned massive public expenditures, in the range of \$1.5 to \$4.3 billion (TWRC 2002: 12), which are to be invested in a vast new infrastructure network and environmental remediation activities as well as grand public amenities, parks and cultural attractions. The investment of these public dollars is predicated on the hope of attracting similarly large-scale private sector investment, residential relocation, and tourist spending, without which the new waterfront vision will fail to be realised. As such, the public sector has been reconfigured to conform to a mode of governance which undertakes speculative investment in the built environment in order to generate private wealth.

Urban entrepreneurialism is fuelled by globalization as cities compete with one another – both within and, importantly, across national state boundaries – for the external private investment required to realise their economic goals. Interurban competition for global capital thus pits city against city, with each trying to outdo the other to create the kinds of physical (and economic and social) spaces and places that will attract (global) investment, (high quality) jobs, and (well-heeled) tourism. Paradoxically, however, interurban competition also fuels globalization, in that the serial reproduction of the kinds of places that attract what is a limited supply of this investment means that “any competitive advantage within a system of cities [is] ephemeral” (Harvey 1989: 12) as “cities are therefore actively facilitating and subsidizing the very geographic mobility that first rendered them vulnerable” (Peck and Tickell 2002: 46). In this way, cities’ responses to the global imperative paradoxically construct the global imperative itself. More perniciously, however, as municipal policies and programs are enacted to create the conditions within which global capital can best operate, interurban competition can also engage cities in a race to the bottom, operating as “an external coercive law forcing the lowest common denominator of social responsibility and welfare provision within a competitively organized urban system” (Harvey 1989: 12). As such, interurban competition plays a dual role in the socio-economic (and unevenly distributed) emancipation and subjugation of urban areas.

The seeming inevitability of engaging the global economy through enacting spatial policies designed to respond to the exigencies of interurban competition is an integral part of the rationale for the current wave of waterfront development in Toronto. As the TWRC’s *Development Plan and Business Strategy* asserts, “the increasing integration of the global and North American economies means that Toronto is challenged by competitor cities such as Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, New York, and a whole range of Sunbelt cities” (TWRC 2002: 19). Since “under

globalization, the ‘winner takes all, or most of it’” (8), Toronto must compete with these cities and others, re-envisioning and reshaping its waterfront in ways that create “a vibrant, high quality of life...to attract the most successful people and the best companies” (7). The hazards of failing to live up to the global imperative is clear: “Canada and specifically Toronto, one of the country’s major generators of growth and wealth, must not be left behind” (19).

World City Formation

As cities become more important and more active players in advancing local, regional, and national economic interests, and as urban entrepreneurialism fuels interurban competition, the ideological and spatial influence of neoliberal globalization can be seen to accentuate processes of world city formation as cities compete with one another to become the preferred location for the “nodes” of managerial command and control functions in the global economy and to reap the associated economic, social, and cultural benefits that are seen to accompany them.

Toronto has been classified in the world cities literature as a “secondary core” city (Friedmann 1986), indicating both its role in connecting Canada’s national economy to the world and the relative significance of its functions to the global economy. Graham Todd (1995) notes the increasing concentration in Toronto of Canada’s financial and associated services sectors and the increasing integration of the Canadian economy into the world economy, with a resulting exacerbation of Canada’s regional disparities. As the country’s financial and business services centre, Toronto has benefited from this uneven development in that “the city has rapidly become the space for a significant amount of national and international command and control functions within the global regime of finance-based accumulation” (198-99). As a result, he says, “the central area of the City of Toronto has been transformed into an economic space servicing the

requirements of global financial capital” (199). The current wave of waterfront development in Toronto, with its emphasis on reconnecting the waterfront to the city and in particular the adjacent Central Business District, and “opening up the waterfront lands...by providing more accessible and more attractive locations close to the downtown core for participants in the new economy” (Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force 2000: 21) thus not only contributes to the unevenness of Canadian economic development by concentrating productive locations for global capital accumulation within Toronto but, more importantly, increases Toronto’s position as a ‘node’ in the global economy and its presence as a significant local player on the world urban stage. This quest for what is understood colloquially as gaining “world class” status can thus be understood more theoretically, through an understanding of neoliberal globalization and its effects on local governance, as a process of world city formation.

As the TWRC’s *Development Plan and Business Strategy* makes clear, urban space matters in the global economy and to Toronto’s place within it: “the key to the ongoing success of [new economy] economic clusters is their ability to innovate [which can be] greatly enhanced when the people who work in one industry commingle or converge with people in different, creative, knowledge-based industries” (TWRC 2002: 8). As such, “geography plays an important role in facilitating this exchange of knowledge – proximity becomes critical” (8). Toronto, which “ranks in the second tier of world cities,” (19) has a leg up on its competitors by virtue of its “extensive wealth of economic clusters” (8) such as media, information and communications technology, pharmaceuticals and biotech, and financial services. However, since “the competition for global status is fierce” (19), the race is on to create the kinds of places that will “attract the investment and people that are critical to 21st-century knowledge-based economies” (14). Through a new program of economic intervention that leverages the speculative construction of place on the

waterfront, the various levels of government can “act in unison to ensure that the country’s economy is not allowed to slip further behind its global competitors” (19). The objective is clear: “The end result of this work will be Toronto securing its place as a world class city” (7).

While world city formation has been underway in Toronto for many years, neither beginning nor ending within the period examined in this paper, and while entrepreneurialism on the part of Toronto’s local government and associated agencies has perhaps been a fixture – particularly on the waterfront – for some time, it is instructive to understand that the economic and spatial imperatives that are driving current development efforts on the waterfront are part of larger transitions taking place in the post-Fordist era. Of course, the manner in which world city formation is acted out is specific to each locale in which it occurs, and the particular political, economic, and institutional arrangements designed to accommodate economic transitions responds to these particular historical circumstances. This is the case in Toronto in which, in the period preceding the formation of the Crombie Commission, the problems of jurisdictional gridlock, land use, and concerns about the role of the private sector in planning and development were hampering efforts to develop the waterfront in ways that would accommodate 21st-century strategies of capital accumulation.

Chapter Two:

Waterfront Development Struggles in Context: Setting the Stage

In the years prior to the formation of the Crombie Commission, a number of tensions threatened the continuing viability of development on Toronto's waterfront and, therefore, the ability of capital to secure a spatial fix in the changing economic and political conditions associated with post-Fordism. Disputes between governmental bodies and agencies, not only over the relative supremacy of their planning and development powers but also and often over changing perceptions of the appropriateness of particular land uses, as well as the seeming incompatibility of the demands of private profit with a desire for public access, resulted in situations in which many development projects, such as some of those at Harbourfront, were significantly delayed or not permitted to proceed. While the problems surrounding jurisdictional wrangling, changes in land use, and the private-sector's seemingly unchallenged entitlement to determine the direction of waterfront planning were deeply intertwined, this chapter, and indeed the paper as a whole, will attempt to unravel these problems separately in order to more fully understand not only their individual nature but also their collective impact, which in large part prompted the formation of the Crombie Commission as a vehicle through which they could be addressed.

Conflicting Mandates and the Problem of Jurisdictional Gridlock

As with waterfronts in cities around the world, Toronto's was historically a centre of industrial and port-related activity. Much of this activity took place on land that was reclaimed by the Toronto Harbour Commissioners (THC) through a massive lakefilling project undertaken in the period between 1912 and the 1940s. The THC was a joint municipal-federal agency created in 1911 to undertake both industrial land development as well as management of the harbour and port. While nominally a federal institution, the City of Toronto had majority control over

appointments to the THC's board, with the remainder coming from the federal government and the Board of Trade. Historically, the THC did perhaps more than any other agency or jurisdiction to shape the Central Waterfront, both literally through lakefilling and its pursuit of industrial activity, and figuratively through its inability to respond to political and economic change (see Desfor 1993, 1988; Desfor *et al* 1989; Goldrick and Merrens 1990; Merrens 1988). For example, it created the 1300 acres of land at the mouth of the Don River that became known as the Port Industrial District², which was intended to be the hub of Toronto's industrial activity. As well, its intransigence in the face of concerns over the use and development of its lands led to heated disputes with the City and the general public and resulted in repeated calls for the THC's dissolution and the transfer of its lands to City ownership (Desfor 1993)³. The THC, however, continued to assert its historical authority over land use and development and was thus a powerful force on the waterfront.

In addition to the THC, a number of other governmental agencies and bodies had mandates that gave them power over various aspects of the waterfront. While the federal government's interests were often expressed through the THC, its mandate was not therein restricted. Various federal departments and ministries had jurisdiction over a variety of issues including fisheries, navigation, shipping, Canada-US trans-boundary water questions, and some environmental matters. The provincial government's interests also included environmental issues, as its mandate included the protection of water resources, wetlands and fisheries, as well as monitoring and regulating the clean-up of lands polluted by industrial use. However, the province also had jurisdiction over municipal land-use planning, giving it effective veto power over all land-use decisions made by lower-tier governments. Operational authority over land-use planning, however, resided with municipalities, and thus the City of Toronto had the authority to plan for

Central Waterfront development. In addition, the City of Toronto had responsibility for the construction and maintenance of sanitary and storm sewers, which emptied into the lake (Barrett 1991: 102).

A fourth, regional level of government also held authority over waterfront lands. Created in 1953, the Metropolitan Toronto (Metro) level of government had both regional responsibility as well as authority and fiscal capacity to plan for and implement transportation, sewage treatment, and water services, and, eventually, housing and welfare programs, among others (Donald 2000). Metro's interest was centred primarily on the provision of the infrastructure required to maintain the waterfront's regional importance as a prime site of economic activity. As well, Metro was partially responsible for funding the Toronto Area Industrial Development Board (TAIDB), whose mandate was "to promote and coordinate industrial development in the Toronto economic district" (2135). As a centre of industry, the waterfront was of particular interest to the TAIDB "in recognition that the health of the entire region was dependent on the economic vitality of the downtown core" (2135).

Another provincially-mandated agency with waterfront jurisdiction was formed after the devastation wrought by Hurricane Hazel in 1955. The Metro Toronto and Region Conservation Authority was constituted with a mandate to protect floodplain lands through dam and channel construction, and to undertake farmland planning, control pollution, and promote conservation (Toronto and Region Conservation Authority 2005). Its mandate expanded over the years and, by the 1980s, it had jurisdiction not only over mitigation of flood risks in the Don River watershed but also over the monitoring and control of lakefilling projects, such as the Central Waterfront's Leslie Street Spit and Tommy Thompson Park.

In addition, a federally-mandated corporation called Harbourfront had development powers over a large parcel of land on the water's edge between York Quay and Bathurst Street south of Lakeshore Boulevard. These lands were expropriated by the federal Liberal government and presented, immediately preceding the 1972 federal election, as a gift of waterfront parkland to the City of Toronto. The uses to which these lands were put changed from parkland to mixed cultural-commercial-residential use through a series of decisions taken by the City as well as a long public consultation process (Greenberg 1997: 209), and a federal crown corporation was put in place to manage the site's popular cultural programming as well as the planning and development of the commercial and residential buildings (Gordon 1997a, 1997b). As a microcosm of the larger jurisdictional stalemate, it was ten years before the four levels of government (federal, provincial, Metro and the City) finally gave approval to Harbourfront's 1982 development plan (Gordon 1997a: 67).

The patchwork quilt of governments, agencies, departments and bodies with overlapping and sometimes conflicting mandates was often blamed for the continuing indecision, delays and lack of coherent development planning on the waterfront (Desfor 1993). It can be argued that this "jurisdictional gridlock" was reflective of an increasingly outmoded set of institutional relationships, some of which had their roots in and were particularly important for Fordist modes of regulation⁴. As such, with the economic and political transformations associated with the crisis of Fordism placing a wealth of pressures on governments to become more efficient and to rationalise and streamline decision- and policy-making structures and processes, the creation of a new set of jurisdictional relationships was key to ensuring continuing possibilities for capital accumulation through waterfront development. The disputes that arose between these various bodies in the mid-1980s were a significant contributor to the formation of the Crombie

Commission and a large part of its early work was concerned with sorting through many of these specific problems. However, the resolution of jurisdictional gridlock would continue to be a major concern for the Crombie Commission throughout its mandate, and its suggestions for resolution, as expressed through the ecosystem approach, would ultimately play a role in the formation of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation as a regulator of development.

Industrial Hegemony and the Politics of Land Use Change

The Central Waterfront has seen a variety of uses which allowed for and responded to prevailing economic and political trends and requirements. Historically, these uses have included the port-related transfer of passengers and goods, shipbuilding, munitions production, steel rolling and ironworks, a range of manufacturing uses, electricity generation and the storage and distribution of grain, coal, petroleum products, construction materials, and various waste products (Barrett 1991; Stinson and Moir 1991). Nonetheless, significant areas of the waterfront remained relatively under-used. The intensity of industrial uses envisioned by the THC in its early years, particularly on the Port Industrial District and East Bayfront, was never fully realized, in large part due to the economic effects of World War I and the Great Depression, as well as the failure of the St. Lawrence seaway to bring anticipated levels of shipping activity (Barrett 1991; Desfor 1993). In addition, changes in rail and shipping technology as well as industrial suburbanization and outmigration led to widespread industrial and commercial decline through the decades leading up to the Crombie Commission (Donald 2002: 2133-2134; Desfor 1993: 172; Goldrick and Merrens 1990: 136-137; Desfor *et al* 1989: 439). Despite this decline, the waterfront remained an important generator of economic activity and job creation and in 1985 provided ten percent of the city's industrial jobs and twenty-five percent of its industrial land (Tedesco 1985). Pressure to retain industrial jobs and defend the historic role of industry in the Toronto economy

led both Metro and Toronto City Council to maintain strong policies reserving the Port Industrial District and much of the East Bayfront for industrial use⁵. As well, the THC continued to insist that port-related activity would ultimately rebound, requiring a significant portion of the waterfront to be reserved for this use.

These uses for the waterfront meant a significant disconnection between the city and the lake, which was exacerbated by the physical barrier caused by the railway corridor, constructed in the mid-1800s on lakefill south of the water's edge, and the Gardiner Expressway and Lake Shore Boulevard, built south of the railway corridor in the 1950s. A growing swath of vacancy and obsolescence on the waterfront, coupled with a public increasingly demanding recreational access and better environmental quality, contributed to calls for re-connecting the city and its waterfront, as well as a growing understanding of these lands as a terrain of economic availability. As the hegemony of industrial uses waned, residential and commercial projects began to be built, which were profitable for developers and could generate much-needed tax revenue for the city. Harbour Square, erected on the water's edge at the foot of York and Bay streets, was one such early mixed-use project. Built in 1972 after many delays under a pro-development Council and a Harbour Commission eager to capitalise on the value of its underused lands, the massive condominium and hotel complex engendered significant negative public outcry. Its inward orientation and considerable size made it seem like a "ceramic curtain" that blocked views of the lake (Israelson 1986a; Goldrick and Merrens 1997: 221). As well, the park included in the project was intended for public use but was situated on a small piece of land between the complex and the lake, making accessibility to the lake confusing and physically difficult. These problems led to calls for better development guidelines, height and density restrictions, and more public access to the water's edge (Greenberg 1997).

While calls for increased public access to the water had been made since the mid-1850s, when a proposal for a public esplanade was superseded by construction of the railway (Habel 2005: 9), no systematic program of parks and open space creation along the waterfront was ever implemented. Indeed, public demands for the provision of waterfront parkland were instrumental in the federal government's expropriation of the 111-acre Harbourfront site⁶, which lay immediately west of the towering bulk of Harbour Square. This development would likewise provide the impetus for an important change in waterfront land uses but would also result in significant public outcry and pressure on all levels of government for a co-ordinated solution. In the ten years between the site's consolidation and the approval of its development plan, a long debate between the federal government and the City of Toronto and a substantial public consultation process resulted in a considerable reconfiguration of its intended uses. As a result, the vision for a large waterfront park became instead one of a mixed-use development with residential, commercial, and institutional uses, a notable cultural and arts programme and a significantly smaller proportion of open space (McLaughlin 1987: 25).

While much of the early residential development and cultural programming at Harbourfront was lauded by both the public and local politicians alike (Gordon 1997a: 72), by the mid-1980s it was becoming clear that the expectations for fiscal self-sufficiency, as outlined in the financial agreement between the federal government and the City in the 1978 Development Framework, were causing major variations from the original development plan. In order to pay for its cultural programming, Harbourfront's Board, which had shortly before been appointed by the neoconservative Mulroney government, "vigorously pursued its financial objectives over the next 5 years" (Gordon 1997a: 70). Attempting to capitalise on a mid-1980s boom in the real estate market (see Livesey 1988), it sought to obtain the highest residential densities possible,

even pursuing density increases at Committee of Adjustment despite having obtained substantial densities from the City through an amended Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw (McLaughlin 1987: 26). As John Tory, a Harbourfront board member, remarked in 1988, “We as a corporation got greedy. I think we got greedy with the best of intentions,” (Tory, in Livesey 1988).

Harbourfront thus became a site of conflict over the use of the lands. Many of the residential buildings were deemed ugly and were met with disdain by the public, development professionals, and politicians alike. The high densities resulted in much taller buildings than were originally planned, which, like the Harbour Square towers before them, blocked views of the lake. And while the development program reserved prime water’s edge sites for residential projects, the public demanded that the water’s edge be opened to public use (Gordon 1997a: 64, 78). The result was a development programme that not only alienated the general public but also the province and much of City Council, which had originally been very supportive. To make matters worse, Harbourfront became mired in charges of corruption resulting from the sale of prime residential suites to a variety of insiders and the suspect awarding of contracts (Crook 1983; Ferguson 1987e, 1987f). Both the City and the Province hastily declared development freezes on the lands in order to provide an opportunity to find resolution to the problems (Gordon 1997b: 260). However, many individual developments were already in the planning, approvals, and development stages, and developers threatened legal action (Taylor 1988). After announcing yet another development freeze, David Crombie, as the federal Member of Parliament for Rosedale and Secretary of State, assisted in talks to reconfigure Harbourfront’s land-use plan to provide the additional parkland demanded by the public and to appease developers with land trade-offs (Gordon 1997b: 261; Ferguson 1987b; Fine 1988), although the issue would not be completely settled for some time.

At the same time that Harbourfront was engendering such negativity, two other large-scale developments – the World Trade Centre and the Harbour Castle Hilton – were raising similar concerns about the advisability of these uses for the lands (Lewis Stein 1987). In addition, a private-sector-led bid for the 1996 Olympic Games was in the works⁷. Begun in 1985 and spearheaded by Paul Henderson, a businessman and former Olympic yachtsman, the Olympic bid proposed using waterfront lands for many of the sports venues and for the Olympic villages to house athletes and the media. While the bid had initially received unanimous support from City Council as well as promises of support from the federal and provincial governments, this support proved soft due in part to the election of an anti-development majority on Council in 1988 (Kidd 1992). While the potential catalytic effect of the Olympics was recognised by many, significant public pressure was brought to bear against the bid. In a climate of economic recession, job losses, and government cutbacks, the Bread Not Circuses coalition (BNC) brought together a number of social service agencies, labour unions, arts groups, community groups, and anti-poverty activists to demand that public monies not be spent on a mega-event strategy for economic development when “the real needs of the people of Toronto” including affordable housing, good jobs, and accessible daycare “were not being met” (Bread Not Circuses 1990:1). Media criticism mounted and local politicians became divided, with many working publicly to support BNC. Ultimately, political division and public opposition were cited as contributing factors in the bid’s demise. Nonetheless, the Olympic bid contributed significantly to the debate over the appropriate use of waterfront lands, and both its proponents and opponents recognised that these lands held enormous value and the potential for non-industrial activities, such as residential and commercial uses. The 1996 bid would thus not only set the stage for the

acceptability of a variety of uses on the waterfront, it would also create a precedent for another Olympic bid, the impact of which will be discussed at length in Chapter Five.

In the period immediately before the formation of the Crombie Commission, developers were finding new, more profitable uses for abandoned industrial lands, the City was approving these uses to provide new housing and generate important tax revenues, but the public expressed a growing desire for a reconnection to the water's edge through the use of the lands for park space. At the same time, pressures to preserve industrial jobs in the face of economic change required a strong political commitment to industrial land retention. All of these conflicts were part of what the city's chief waterfront planner identified in 1986 as a "policy gap" on the waterfront, stating that "elected officials and the public have been unable to offer a precise vision of what they want the waterfront to be" (in Israelson 1986b). The Crombie Commission would be instrumental in constructing a new vision for these lands.

Private Interests on the Waterfront: Public Access and the Public Interest

With the number of residential and commercial developments being built on deindustrialised waterfront lands growing, the public increasingly expressed concern about what, in shorthand, I will call the "privatisation" of the waterfront. Waterfront views and access to the water's edge were being commodified as developers used the waterfront's locational advantages to realise higher profits. Publicly-held lands were being rationalised and, ultimately, sold by the THC and Harbourfront in order to accommodate the demand for highly-profitable real estate. And public planners and private developers alike seemed unresponsive to public input. While private interests had long been involved in guiding public planning for the waterfront (Desfor 1993), the new developments at Harbour Square, Harbourfront, the World Trade Centre, and the Hilton

contributed to the sense that private profit-taking was being privileged over the public interest⁸. Exchange values for views of and access to the lake were increasingly being reserved as a private residential amenity, and the market-driven rationale for these developments in a burgeoning real estate market meant that suites were being sold for relatively high cost, with Harbourfront said to be “mainly luxury units” (Crook 1983: A6). This, coupled with a plan for high-end stores and boutiques along Queens Quay, meant that only the well-heeled could enjoy the growing exclusivity of the water’s edge, which ran directly counter to historic calls for public access to the water and the urgent need for new affordable housing construction. By 1989, “one-third of all waterfront tenant households paid 30 per cent or more of gross family income for rent, and one-fifth had severe affordability problems” (Valpy 1989).

As the first interim report of the Crombie Commission stated, the public expressed considerable “dismay and anger at some of the redevelopment in the Central Waterfront. They feel that, at the moment their waterfront was reappearing, it was being lost again. That instead of being joined to it, they were being further separated from it. That instead of being opened up, the waterfront was being walled off,” (Royal Commission 1989a: 9-10). In other words, as deindustrialization and industrial outmigration made waterfront lands increasingly available for new uses, market imperatives were being privileged by the state rather than a variety of other interests such as building affordable housing, providing better public access, restoring the environmental health of the waterfront, and creating public parkland, all of which would help to restore the city’s connection to the water’s edge in a more equitable manner. The disjuncture between the public’s interest in waterfront accessibility and affordability and the City’s approval of exclusive private development was a significant political problem.

Concerns over privatisation of the waterfront also stemmed from a growing shift towards market-based rationales for and an increasing neoliberalisation of public policy at all levels of the Canadian state. In 1984, the Progressive Conservative party led by Brian Mulroney had won the largest majority in Canadian history, defeating the Liberal Party which, under John Turner, suffered from the immense unpopularity of the latter Trudeau years, political fallout from the early 1980s recession, and a growing mistrust of “big government.” The Tories’ overwhelming victory signalled not only the widespread public disaffection for “the government party” but also a significant shift to the right of the political spectrum. Mulroney had campaigned on a program of privatisation, program rationalisation, and less government intervention in the economy (Savoie 1994: 89), and the impacts of this shift were felt almost immediately.

The day after taking office, Mulroney appointed Deputy Prime Minister Erik Nielsen to head up the Ministerial Task Force on Program Review, which signalled the government’s intention to pursue an agenda of downsizing, program rationalisation, deregulation, privatisation, pursuit of competitiveness, a managerial ethos that privileged private-sector led initiatives over public, and a business-based economic rationale for public sector service delivery (Desfor 1993; Savoie 1994). Reporting in 1985, the Task Force recommended “a rigorous programme of divestiture...and a need to change the organization of government for property management” (Desfor 1993: 174). With significant land holdings on the waterfront, the federal government’s change in direction threatened to further contribute to waterfront privatisation.

At the same time, provincial land policy was also becoming more rationalised and driven by fiscal concerns. In 1986, under the Peterson Liberal government, then-Minister of Government Services and chair of the province’s Management Board, Elinor Caplan, announced a new real estate strategy. This strategy “provided for a business-like, cost-effective approach to the

management of real estate assets and it aimed at realising the highest possible revenues from properties declared surplus” (Currie *et al* 1987), which contributed to a policy position that saw publicly-owned waterfront lands as a valuable economic resource.

With controversy over the waterfront mounting, in late 1986 the federal government appointed Stephen McLaughlin, former City of Toronto planning commissioner and Crombie confidante, to review all of its land holdings in the Toronto region and provide “recommendations for more effective management of federal lands...within the current policy framework that Federal real property ‘be managed so as to maximize the efficient provision of government services and the economic use of Federal property while taking into account broader social, economic and environmental objectives”” (McLaughlin 1987: 1). McLaughlin was to review the management of all 25,000 acres of federal lands in the metropolitan Toronto region, including THC and Harbourfront holdings, and his recommendations were awaited with growing concern.

Speculation ran rampant that all federal lands were about to be sold, and that the lion’s share of benefits would accrue to private developers (Lewis Stein 1987) whose projects would ultimately undermine the public’s desire for more appropriate development forms as well as access to the water. While the McLaughlin Report ultimately disavowed wholesale divestiture, it was very critical of the activities of the THC and Harbourfront and concluded that “the federal government’s legitimate constitutional responsibilities did not include being in the ‘land business”” (Desfor 1993: 174). Instead, McLaughlin called for the creation of an intergovernmental committee to make changes to the way these bodies operated.

All levels of government realised that action was required to attempt to quell the chorus of widespread and increasingly vocal public discontent arising from Harbour Square and Harbourfront and to find a resolution to the jurisdictional problems, competing land-use visions

and concerns about waterfront privatisation. A new vehicle to guide waterfront change had to be constructed to help implement the recommendations of the McLaughlin Report and to accommodate the changing public policy imperatives of the variety of governments involved. However, such a vehicle would also have to accommodate the variety of concerns arising from contemporaneous waterfront development projects.

Toward a Royal Commission and the Future of the Toronto Waterfront

After discussions in early 1987 between Premier Peterson, Mayor Eggleton, and Secretary of State Crombie, the media speculated that a “superagency” was about to be created which would “take control of Toronto’s waterfront” through a centralised management team composed of representatives from all levels of government (Ferguson 1987d). The new body would take over the land development powers of both the THC and Harbourfront, restricting their mandates to port operations and cultural and recreational programming respectively, and would have responsibility for land owned by all levels of government. As a specific response to issues of affordability and access, the superagency would also reduce density at Harbourfront while increasing the amount of parkland; Premier Peterson in particular “expressed unhappiness that the public interest in the area – affordable housing and access to the water – has been eroded in favor of private interests which have, almost exclusively, built luxury housing” (Ferguson 1987d). The superagency would also significantly slow down the rapid pace of waterfront development in order to “ensure that in the future, development comes down on the grass and trees side, rather than on the high-rise side” (Ferguson 1987c). This signalled the beginning of an environmental emphasis which would, through the Crombie Commission, become much more highly pronounced.

Despite assurances that “direct public participation” would be enshrined on the superagency’s Board of Directors and in regular public meetings, and despite the involvement of Crombie, the well-liked, reputedly anti-development former Toronto mayor (Ferguson 1987c), the idea was met with disdain, most particularly by Toronto City Council. Many members of Council, particularly the remaining civic reform councillors whose anti-development stance was well known, saw Crombie’s involvement as a federal power grab intended to usurp their control over land-use planning on the waterfront and sell off large tracts to private developers (Ferguson 1987c). It was also seen as a cynical effort by Crombie to increase his dwindling political profile (Taylor 1987). As well, the development industry, concerned about a slow-down in development approvals, expressed a “great deal of bitterness” (Ferguson 1987c). Critics charged both Crombie and Stephen McLaughlin with having laid the ground for the Harbourfront mess, as decisions made during their respective terms as mayor and planning commissioner were said to have contributed to the problems (Taylor 1987).

By July 1987, the grand superagency had been reduced to a watered-down co-ordinating body, which was comprised of Crombie, Metro Toronto Chairman Dennis Flynn, Mayor Eggleton, and headed by Premier Peterson (Byers 1988). The Intergovernmental Waterfront Committee would “oversee and co-ordinate development of Toronto’s waterfront” and “ensure that there is open public comment on all proposals it considers” (Ferguson 1987a). However, this too met with criticism and suspicion, this time centred on Peterson who was said to be imposing “his own grand scheme for the waterfront” (Byers 1988). Despite the Committee’s intention to produce a co-ordinated waterfront plan, the City refused to let planning staff contribute and effectively stymied the Committee’s efforts.

At the same time, however, David Crombie was contemplating his future in politics. Crombie had achieved much success and public admiration as mayor from 1973 to 1978, due in large part to his involvement in the civic reform movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s and his resulting reputation as an advocate for human-scale, reasonable development. In 1978, Crombie had resigned as mayor and entered federal politics in a by-election, holding the Rosedale seat for the Conservatives for the ensuing ten years. However, after having lost the leadership of the party to Brian Mulroney, Crombie became increasingly disgruntled with the discontinuity between his “red-Tory”-ism and the Mulroney government’s neoliberalism and his inability to achieve the same level of success at the federal level as at City Hall (Desfor 1993: 175; Lee 1988). Amid rumours that his health was deteriorating, in 1988 Crombie decided to leave politics. However, discussions with Mulroney resulted in the creation of the Royal Commission as a vehicle through which Crombie could return to “an old love, the Toronto waterfront” (Crombie, in Cohn 1988; Crombie 2005). The Crombie Commission also served, however, to position the federal government as proactive in responding to the deafening public uproar over inappropriate and perhaps corrupt waterfront development and the growing speculation about the impending sale of its waterfront land holdings. As such, the Commission also demonstrated federal commitment to Toronto in advance of the impending 1988 election.

Crombie realised the importance of having the provincial government institutionally involved with his Commission as its mandate and responsibilities dovetailed with the concerns that he was to address. The Peterson Liberals had already indicated their interest in the waterfront, having declared in their November 1987 throne speech that “waterfront areas play a vital role in the economic and social development of our province” and that the government planned to “encourage the responsible development of our waterfront areas to meet needs associated with

tourism, recreation, heritage preservation and industrial development” (Ontario 1987).

Discussions between Crombie and Peterson resulted in an agreement for a bi-partite Royal Commission, although it would be one year before the province officially signed on (Royal Commission 1990b).

The Crombie Commission thus became an institutional vehicle through which the variety of existing waterfront problems could find some measure of resolution. During the first year of its mandate, the Crombie Commission embraced an approach to waterfront planning that responded to prevailing political conditions and economic trends. This approach provided the basis for resolving existing jurisdictional conflicts and consolidating the acceptability of new uses on waterfront lands, and introduced a decision-making model through which private-sector involvement in waterfront planning could be both facilitated and made acceptable. The ways in which the resolution to these problems was undertaken allowed for the construction and consolidation of a larger and more broadly-based growth coalition in Toronto and ultimately contributed to the conditions within which the waterfront could be reconfigured to respond to the global imperative⁹, as discussed in Chapter One. The next chapter will explore this approach as well as the mandate and decision-making model of the Crombie Commission, and the ways in which the Commission’s actions took steps toward creating the conditions within which a 21st-century vision for the waterfront could be composed.

Chapter Three

Toward Resolution: The Royal Commission

On 1 June 1988, David Crombie was appointed sole Commissioner of the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront, the mandate of which was to:

inquire into and make recommendations regarding the future of the Toronto waterfront and to seek the concurrence of affected authorities in such recommendations, in order to ensure that, in the public interest, federal lands and jurisdiction serve to enhance the physical, environmental, legislative and administrative context governing the use, enjoyment and development of the Toronto waterfront and related lands

(Royal Commission 1992: 1).

The mandate clearly indicates that jurisdictional issues were to be one of the Commission's major concerns as it was to "seek the concurrence of affected authorities" and take action to enhance the "legislative and administrative context" surrounding waterfront development. In other words, the Commission was intended from the beginning to serve as a vehicle through which a new model for waterfront development could be produced, one with a common vision that all agencies with jurisdiction on the waterfront could support¹⁰. Crombie, who drafted the mandate himself (Crombie 2005), commented that the number of governments, agencies and regulatory bodies with overlapping mandates on the waterfront meant that "you can hardly move down there to do anything that will have a significant effect" (in Cohn 1988). Clearing jurisdictional space for a new approach was thus a necessity.

The mandate also positioned the Commission to address issues of land use, as its work was intended to "enhance the physical [and] environmental...context governing the use, enjoyment, and development" of the waterfront. It is important to note that Crombie, who as mayor of Toronto had worked hard to ensure that commercial and residential uses were incorporated into the parkland plans for Harbourfront (Livesey 1988), refused as Commissioner to rule out these

non-industrial uses for the waterfront despite opposition by the THC, industry groups, labour unions and progressive councillors, as well as the industrial retention policies of the municipal governments, stating at the outset that he was open to all uses for the waterfront (Cohn 1988). As such, creating a plan that would “open up and connect the waterfront to the rest of the city” (Toronto Star 1989b) would be one of the Commission’s primary goals.

While the mandate of the Commission did not explicitly include examining the role of private interests in waterfront development, it is clear that this was to be an issue in Crombie’s deliberations. At one of the first of the Commission’s hearings, he stated that a resolution of waterfront problems could only be found through “the willingness of public authorities and private interests to recognise the needs of others and the value of concerted action” (Toronto Harbour Commissioners 1989c: 2), which indicates that he intended to address both the actions of governments as well as the ways in which the private-sector could be involved. As well, the inclusion in the Commission’s terms of reference of an investigation into the possible use of the waterfront as a site for the Olympic Games (Canada 1988), a venture which is commonly spearheaded by and involves both the financial investment and organisational activity of the private sector (Andranovich *et al* 2001), signals the inclusion from the outset of private-sector interests in the Commission’s deliberations.

The Commission began by setting up five work groups that spent the first year investigating a variety of issues¹¹ and two special steering committees, which looked at the THC’s mandate and the operation of the Island Airport. Staff of the Commission and a variety of experts were engaged to work on the committees, each of which produced a report for the Commissioner’s consideration¹². The issues, suggestions, and recommendations made in these reports formed the basis for the Commission’s first *Interim Report*, published in August 1989. The provincial

government officially joined the Commission in October of 1989 (Ontario 1989), making it one of only two joint provincial-federal Royal Commissions in Canadian history (Crombie 2005), and expanded its territory to allow study of the entire Toronto watershed. A variety of reports, working papers, and technical papers were published and two series of public hearings were held between then and the release of the Commission's second interim report, *Watershed*, in August 1990. Another work group was struck and four additional studies were published, including a two-volume environmental audit of the Port Industrial District and East Bayfront and a transportation review of the Central Waterfront. In early 1992, the Commission published its 530-page, comprehensive and summative final report, entitled *Regeneration*. While an examination of all of these documents is well beyond the scope of this paper, a close and critical reading of certain of the Commission's reports and activities in the context of contemporaneous political and economic factors form the basis for this chapter.

The Ecosystem Approach

Through an exhaustive research and consultation process that spanned nearly four years and cost \$9.3 million (Armstrong 1992a), the Crombie Commission ultimately recommended a host of changes to the way in which planning and development could and should be undertaken across the waterfront from Burlington to Newcastle and north to the Oak Ridges Moraine. The most significant change, however, was one of overall vision. Rather than pursuing a piecemeal planning approach, Crombie recommended that planning be undertaken in a cross-jurisdictional, holistic manner across the entire length of the waterfront and throughout the Toronto watershed through an "ecosystem approach." While the ecosystem approach was not the brainchild of the Commission¹³, its application to the waterfront was novel, and the notion that "everything is connected to everything else" allowed for a wide and sweeping mandate for change.

The Commission's ecosystem approach, broadly speaking, recognised that human activity has an impact on the environment, and vice versa, defining the environment in a way that includes "natural, physical, social, cultural, and economic" factors (Barrett 1991: 37). It also focused on "links and relationships" and emphasised the preservation of "the integrity, quality, productivity, dignity, and well-being of the ecosystem" (37). It proposed understanding cities as natural ecosystems unto themselves within which environmental, economic, and community concerns are viewed as interrelated and mutually constitutive. Waterfront-related studies and plans, therefore, "must be undertaken in an integrated way, examining the links among economic, social, and environmental matters" (Royal Commission 1992: 34). As a correlate of the kind of comprehensive planning that has largely defined the planning profession¹⁴, the ecosystem approach sought to be large-scale in perspective and broad-based in approach and was comparably driven by detailed analysis and rationality and an emphasis on providing a new orderliness to the waterfront¹⁵, while more explicitly incorporating environmental values. Despite its insistence on balance and integration, key to the approach was the notion that "a good quality of life and economic development cannot be sustained in an ecologically deteriorating environment" (Royal Commission 1990b: 156) and thus the environment – or rather, its health – was positioned as functionally fundamental to social and economic growth. The ecosystem approach was thus able to address much more than the environmental concerns implied by its name. As Harvey (1996b) notes, "the contemporary battleground over words like 'nature' and 'environment' is a leading edge of political conflict" because these words "convey a commonality and universality of concern that can all too easily be captured by particularist politics" (118). In this case, the universality of concern implicit in the ecosystem approach

helped to quell political conflict, and a large part of the Commission's success lay in the ability of both the term and the approach to encompass – and conceal – a range of meanings¹⁶.

While the ecosystem approach has defined the Commission's legacy, it was not an integral part of its work from the outset but rather developed over time through a long series of public meetings and working committee reports. In fact, while Crombie himself was "predisposed" to deal with environmental matters, the environmental focus of the Commission's work was written into its mandate in part to delineate a jurisdictional point of departure. As the federal government had responsibility for certain environmental matters, a mandate so concerned would not offend the other levels of government, whose jurisdictional authority on the waterfront – and thus over the issues that were pressing at the time – was more direct (Crombie 2005). However, the important role that the environment would play in the Commission's work surfaced early. The Commission's initial *Interim Report* of 1989 indicates that "environmental concerns...dominated the [Commission's] hearings... [and] almost everyone urged the Commission to spend more time on environmental matters and to view the Commission's mandate through the prism of environmental responsibility" (Royal Commission 1989a: 12). While the *Interim Report* dealt mainly with jurisdictional matters, it also recommended, although almost as a footnote, that protecting the environment while promoting development required the creation of "a 'green strategy'" for the entire watershed (195). By 1990, this 'green strategy' had taken the form of the ecosystem approach. The Commission's second interim report, entitled *Watershed*, explained at length the fundamentals of such an approach and indicated that "the best place to start is to adopt an ecosystem approach to all phases of activity – study, planning, remediating, protecting and developing" (Royal Commission 1990b: 17). The approach was further elaborated in the Commission's final report, *Regeneration*, which reviewed the Commission's success in applying

the ecosystem approach to its own deliberations and introduced specific strategies for implementing its host of ecosystem-related recommendations. It is clear that the Commission recognised that creating new strategies for development was impossible without acknowledging the integral connection between nature and society, and that new opportunities for capital accumulation had to address the limitations embodied in the compromised health of the environment wrought by earlier modes of development.

It is not insignificant that the Commission's adoption of the ecosystem approach occurred during a period of intense public interest in environmental issues. Environmentalists and scholars have identified various periods in Canada and the US in which environmental concern among the general population was heightened (McKenzie 2002; Krajnc 2000; Hartmann 1999). These so-called "green waves" have been shown to have led not only to increased environmental stewardship activity on the part of the public but also to an increase in public pressure sufficient to motivate governments to give more weight to environmental concerns, often resulting in improved legislation, regulation, and enforcement. One such wave of heightened environmental concern among the Canadian public is commonly held to have occurred between 1988 and 1992 (Krajnc 2000: 123), corresponding exactly to the period of the Royal Commission's mandate.

The public pressure that was brought to bear in this period on all levels of government was expressed through a variety of new policy directions and the strengthening of environmental legislation, programs and enforcement. Federally, the Mulroney government opened the environmental policy-making process to environmentalists and other groups (McKenzie 2002: 110) and instituted the National Task Force on Environment and Economy, which concluded that "environmental and economic concerns must go hand in hand" (115). As well, in 1988, the Tories bolstered the Ministry of Environment by appointing a senior Cabinet minister and

respected bureaucrats to assume its management. In 1990, the federal Environmental Assessment Act was introduced (110) and Canada's Green Plan was announced, which was to invest \$3 billion in environmental programs over five years (115). In Ontario, this period saw the introduction of the Environmental Bill of Rights, the Ontario Roundtable on Environment and Economy, the Waste Reduction Office, and a green industry program (Krajnc 2000: 116-117). In addition, a variety of new policies and programs were instituted "related to water pollution...acid rain, and solid and hazardous waste" as were regulations that took a prosecutorial approach to environmental enforcement and broadened the application of environmental assessment legislation (117). Municipally, the City of Toronto established the Special Advisory Committee on the Environment in 1988, the Energy Efficiency Office in 1991, and the Toronto Atmospheric Fund in 1992, (Lambright *et al* 1996). As well, the City instituted its household blue box recycling program for glass bottles, jars, and metal cans in 1989 and its grey box program for newsprint and paper products in 1995 (Herbert 2005).

Certainly, the Crombie Commission's adoption of the ecosystem approach can be understood to have responded to the same publicly-driven political pressures that drove much of this environmental policy creation. As noted in *Regeneration*, "the public, ahead of governments, were aware of the nature of the [waterfront's environmental] problem" and "dozens of deputants" repeatedly urged the Commission to consider ways to improve the environmental condition of the waterfront (Royal Commission 1992: 2). As such, the emphasis on environmentalism was at least as much a strategy that responded to public sentiment as led it; as Crombie later remarked, "We were on a curve and we took it further" (Crombie 2005). It was also a strategy, however, which served to engender support for waterfront development from among a group traditionally opposed to the imperatives and consequences of growth. It is

significant to note, however, that the “more conciliatory” wave of environmentalism in this period incorporated such concepts as “market-based incentive, demand side management, technological optimism, non-adversarial dialogue, and regulatory flexibility,” and was characterised by “a recognition that any solutions [to environmental problems] needed to make use of the marketplace” (McKenzie 2002: 65). As such, the Crombie Commission’s linking of environmental and economic concerns and its focus on ensuring environmental health as a basis for economic renewal dovetailed neatly with prevailing attitudes. The ecosystem approach and the wide-ranging consultations that led to and followed from its adoption were thus instrumental in expanding the city’s growth coalition, significantly improving the conditions within which new waterfront development strategies could support the further accumulation of capital.

The Crombie Commission’s ecosystem approach was widely heralded by politicians, pundits, community members, and environmentalists alike. Noted environmentalist David Suzuki, whose description of cities as “the Gaian equivalent of cancer” prefaced the Commission’s final report, described the ecosystem approach as “common sense” and “a major contribution” which constituted “the most hopeful news I’ve had in a long time” (Suzuki 1992a, 1992b). The recommendations of *Regeneration* were endorsed by the federal Treasury Board president and the Minister of Environment, praised by the provincial government, and lauded by Metro Chair Alan Tonks (Armstrong 1992a). Then-provincial Minister of Environment Ruth Grier described it as “a landmark document...a greenprint that is going to shape the future of the waterfront” (Armstrong 1992a). As will be shown, Grier could not have been more correct.

Unlocking the Jurisdictional Grid

The problem of jurisdictional gridlock was identified early and often in the Commission's deliberations. Its responses to this problem and its recommendations for change encompassed specific strategies to resolve particular historical issues, especially those involving the Toronto Harbour Commissioners (THC) and Harbourfront, as well as more general strategies that produced a broad-based decision-making model. Both will be examined in this section, with the former being largely confined, for issues of space, to a review of the situation related to the THC.

The Toronto Harbour Commissioners

One of the initial tasks of the Crombie Commission was to address the mandate of the THC. While this work was undertaken in the first year of the Commission's mandate, before it had fully adopted its ecosystem approach, a review of the steps taken to resolve these problems is integral to understanding the Commission's role in freeing up the gridlock that was hampering the processes of waterfront development.

As has been identified, the intransigence of the THC in the management of its lands and the conflicts between its responsibilities and those of other agencies, most particularly the City of Toronto and Metro Council, had been major impediments to progress on waterfront development. The THC's 1911 legislation had given it extraordinarily broad powers, not only to manage the harbour and port but also to "acquire, expropriate, hold, sell, lease and otherwise dispose of such real estate ... as it may deem necessary or desirable for the development, improvement, maintenance and protection of the harbour" (Goldrick and Merrens 1990: 124). The THC thus had seventy years of relatively unfettered control over the development of the waterfront. However, its name belied its major interests; while the THC did control the port and

harbour, its major historical activity had been land creation and development, and its unbending attitude toward its authority to capitalise on its lands, for whatever purpose and without consultation, caused a great deal of friction and dispute (Desfor 1993). The McLaughlin report of 1987 had determined that the THC's speculative real estate activities were "an area of public policy concern and urgency" (McLaughlin 1987: 33) and had recommended not only a moratorium on the development of all THC lands, but also that the federal government renegotiate the THC's legislative authority and take steps to determine if the Port of Toronto was truly an integral part of the Canadian ports system (184).

The Crombie Commission appointed a steering committee, composed of some of its most influential staff members, which addressed the problems associated with the THC in a report entitled *Persistence and Change* (Royal Commission 1989b). The Commission's *Interim Report* incorporated many of the committee's ideas and, taking McLaughlin's recommendations one step further, recommended a series of major changes that would significantly reduce the THC's jurisdictional influence on the waterfront. First, the Commission said that "the THC's responsibility, jurisdiction, and mandate to operate the Port of Toronto should be clearly separated from planning or development of lands that do not serve the Port function" (Royal Commission 1989a: 118). Second, it determined that "greater local control" (118) was necessary for successful waterfront planning. Third, the Commission recommended that, while a commercial port operation was necessary in Toronto, the THC did not need all of its "substantial acreage," which could be used instead for "new possibilities and opportunities for economic diversification in the City" (114). These recommendations posed a serious threat to the THC, which had long been relying on sales of its land holdings to resolve its persistent deficits (Desfor 1993: 172). That the THC should be limited only to port-related functions and lose a significant

portion of its lands would considerably reduce its influence and effectively remove its power to shape the waterfront as it saw fit. However, the federal government agreed with the Commission and indicated its willingness to pursue the transfer of non-port related lands to another body (Royal Commission 1990b: 136).

Fourth, the Commission indicated that it would pursue a “complete environmental evaluation” of the THC’s and adjacent provincial lands under Part 3 of the provincial Planning Act¹⁷ in order to determine future courses of action for their development. The rationale for this recommendation was clearly related to the THC’s jurisdiction, as “the THC has not shown the same interest or skill in protecting the environment [as running the port, and]...has generally considered itself exempt from municipal, federal, and provincial environment legislation” (Royal Commission 1989a: 117). Once again, the THC’s hubris was revealed. The province quickly obliged, declaring a Provincial Interest in the Port Industrial District and East Bayfront in order to prevent the THC from pursuing development in the interim. Premier Peterson is said to have remarked that, as a result of this declaration, “nothing will be allowed to be built at the port – not even a toolshed – without the province’s permission until Crombie completes his inquiry” (Kerr 1990). The environmental evaluation began in November 1989 and was to prove extremely significant, not only to the THC’s authority but also to the future of waterfront development itself.

The THC quickly fought back. General Manager Ian Brown declared that “Eliminating or substantially reducing the role of the Harbour Commission would lessen the chances of achieving a co-ordinated, unified approach to the many issues involved on the waterfront,” adding that “The many government agencies, private interests and individuals currently vying with each other for control would become even more contentious and combative – and the public interest would suffer” (Toronto Harbour Commissioners 1989a: 4). Despite its long history of

promulgating the kind of contention and combativeness that it was now reputedly able to overcome, the THC declared that, as a body, it represented “the best opportunity to bring a renewed sense of purpose, balance, vision and fairness to waterfront planning” (5).

Nonetheless, the Commission continued on its stated path. In its second interim report, *Watershed*, the Commission recommended that the port be consolidated into approximately 100 acres, far fewer than the 1200 acres then controlled by the THC, and that much of the remaining lands be given over to the Toronto Economic Development Corporation (TEDCO), the newly-created development body of the City of Toronto mandated to create jobs on underutilised lands. This land transfer was to engender a contentious, difficult and long-lasting dispute between the THC and the City of Toronto, which was fuelled by the 1999 conversion of the THC into the Toronto Port Authority as well as a battle over the expansion of the Toronto Island Airport¹⁸. While the details of these issues are largely outside the scope of this paper, some will be addressed in following sections.

In January of 1991, the THC responded with an ambitious plan to clean up the polluted soils of the entire Central Waterfront as well as a large-scale mixed-use redevelopment project on Polson Quay, both of which were intended to demonstrate its improved stewardship over the lands. Then-Commissioner Betty Disero made it clear that responding to the criticisms of both the Commission and the City of Toronto was key to the Polson Quay plan: “We have achieved the objectives of both [bodies]... It’s a fabulous plan that creates jobs and brings people to the waterfront” (Deverell 1991). However, the plan was met with much skepticism. Ronald Doering, the Crombie Commission’s Executive Director and Counsel, remarked that “anybody who thinks that the harbour commission has been good at creating jobs and green space should take a walk down there” (Downey 1991) and Mayor Eggleton charged that the plan was “a desperate attempt

[by the THC] to save their own skins” (Deverell 1991). The THC also wrote to the City of Toronto and the federal government claiming that it required over 550 acres, and not the 100 acres recommended by the Commission, “to operate a port, marina operations and for industrial development in the transportation and communications field” (Globe and Mail 1991).

Despite these efforts to respond to the problems that threatened its existence, and with public animosity on the rise (cf Landsberg 1991), the Council-appointed majority on the THC’s Board moved to resolve the issue. In August 1991, and with the strategic advice of Commissioner Crombie providing the impetus for their actions, the Board’s three Council appointees voted in principle to support the transfer to TEDCO and to take the steps necessary to facilitate it (Desfor 1993: 176). Shortly thereafter, General Manager Ian Brown was fired – again through a majority vote of the Board – for insisting that the lands be retained. The THC proclaimed that it was pursuing a “change in direction and operating philosophy” (MacLeod 1991).

Meanwhile, in April 1991, the Commission released its report of the environmental audit of the Port Industrial District and East Bayfront, entitled *Pathways*. The audit was the first of the Commission’s investigations to explicitly use the ecosystem approach as a model for decision-making and proved “a pioneering effort” in this regard (Barrett 1991: 19). In addition, *Pathways* represented a major contribution to the understanding of the ecological processes at work on the waterfront and the extent of pollution and contamination that had been caused by industrial uses. It reported in detail that “serious problems” existed which “must be addressed if the healthfulness of the area for wildlife and for human uses is to be improved” (Barrett 1991: 96). These findings allowed the THC to be portrayed as negligent toward protecting the environmental quality of its lands and thus added to the rationale for breaking the THC’s hold over the waterfront; however, they also laid bare the factors which most circumscribed

opportunities for development, the resolution of which would in future be instrumental in reconfiguring the role of the public sector in waterfront planning and development.

As many of the intricacies of the dispute over the transfer of lands and the Board's internal legal battle in the period before mid-1993 have been examined elsewhere (see Desfor 1993), they will not be included here. However, it should be noted that the transfer was not finalised until 1995. In the interim, a new slate of Council appointees had joined the board after the November 1991 municipal election and took a position in defence of the THC, which issued warnings of annual losses of \$34 million should the land transfer be completed (Armstrong 1993a). The THC and TEDCO were unable to reach agreement on a variety of issues, including financial compensation to the THC for loss of the lands. Hoping to force the issue, then-mayor June Rowlands and David Crombie, as Chair of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, appealed to the federal government to step in (Armstrong 1993a). Audits commissioned by the City and the federal government criticised the THC for its precarious financial position, the transfer of liability for environmental cleanup to the City, its unaccountability, and inappropriate spending by some Commissioners (Desfor 1993: 178; Deverell 1993). Rowlands openly criticised the THC for these problems (Armstrong 1993b), and Council-appointed Commissioners countered by accusing Rowlands of trying to destroy the THC's credibility in an effort to "grab most of the eastern port industrial lands without paying" (Deverell 1993). A vitriolic feud ensued between Rowlands and THC's Chair, Councillor Michael Walker, who said that the City was "on a land-grabbing mission" and that the THC's Board "do not intend to commit corporate suicide" (Deverell 1993). After a failed bid to have the courts block their ouster, Walker and fellow Commissioners Steven Ellis and John Adams were unceremoniously removed from the Board at a special Council meeting in June 1993 and replaced with three senior City bureaucrats who, it

was assumed, would be required to uphold the majority will of Council (City of Toronto 1993: S2.6-S2.8; Wong 1993; Macfarlane 1993). The THC's president was fired (Armstrong 1994c) and, after considerable dispute, Rowlands received the support she required for motions to direct the THC to close a variety of its operations (Armstrong 1994a). In early 1995, an article appeared in the THC's public relations organ, the Port of Toronto News, announcing that the THC was now "primarily in the port and shipping business" after having its holdings reduced to "just under 100 acres of land" through the execution of the land transfer to TEDCO (Toronto Harbour Commissioners 1995: 5).

While the transfer to TEDCO was a blow to the THC, as Graham Todd has demonstrated, arm's length economic development bodies like TEDCO are important markers of the increasing entrepreneurialism of local governments in the context of global, post-Fordist economic restructuring and constitute "important changes of kind in the contemporary political economy" (Todd 1996: 175) in that they represent "a different kind of intervention" (177) than that traditionally pursued by the local state. As such, TEDCO is an example of the kind of roll-out neoliberalism wherein "more 'flexible' and innovative forms of state intervention" (179) are pursued. As well, it is an important indication of the increasing importance of local interventions in the economy and a "shift towards a more locationally sensitive economic geography [which] encourages all levels of the state to be more 'local' in their economic policy" (176). The transfer of THC lands to TEDCO therefore represents much more than a jurisdictional coup – while the THC could certainly be considered an historically 'entrepreneurial' body, the land transfer is emblematic of a transformation of urban governance under changing political and economic conditions and the transfer of powers over economic intervention from the national to the local scale. The long battle between the City of Toronto and the THC also demonstrates that "the

translation of economic change through the grid of predominant ideas and into policy frameworks and institutions is never straightforward but is fraught with conflict between competing interests” (173). While the fight over the transfer of THC lands to TEDCO did not completely end the THC’s influence on the waterfront, as will be seen, the transfer did significantly curtail its ability to direct development.

An Ecosystem Approach to Jurisdiction: The Stakeholder Roundtable Model

As the ecosystem approach gained currency within the Commission’s work, a model for resolving problems was created that corresponded well with its inclusive and holistic nature, as well as to prevailing political attitudes about the value of wide-scale participation. A key to the value of the ecosystem approach in resolving jurisdictional problems is captured in the notion that “ecological processes...rarely conform to political boundaries, such as city limits” (Royal Commission 1992: 41). In other words, the ecosystem approach is “based on natural geographic units – such as watersheds – rather than on political boundaries” (Royal Commission 1990b: 20). As such, taking a broad, ecologically-based view of the waterfront allowed for a geographical expansion of the waterfront’s territorial purchase, thus expanding the scope and scale of the issues and jurisdictions involved, transgressing political boundaries, and, ultimately, subsuming them under a larger geopolitical unit, the watershed. This approach not only allowed Crombie to expand his geographical mandate (Kipfer and Keil 2000: 30-31) but also focused the attention of the various political jurisdictions on a broader scale and on concerns larger than their own. This same approach, a broadening of scale, will be seen again in the examination of the 2008 Olympic bid.

The ecosystem approach thus called for a new model for decision-making, one based on the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders. After the publication of *Watershed* in 1990, the *Pathways* report on the environmental audit of the East Bayfront and Port Industrial District was released. The audit was important for a variety of reasons, but in terms of issues of jurisdiction its strength lay in its alternate approach to decision-making. The report explicitly rejected both the status quo of “fragmented” decision-making as well as the superagency model, submitting that attempts to resolve cross-jurisdictional problems instead “depend on more effective co-ordination and joint programs by existing bodies” (Barrett 1991: 104). As such, it recommended a “stakeholder roundtable” approach that would bring together all relevant stakeholders, broadly defined. This co-operative decision-making model, in keeping with the principles of the ecosystem approach, would “allow for more flexibility, co-operative involvement, and timely decision-making than the linear, fragmented systems currently in place” (104).

The Commission used this decision-making model in its own consultative and research processes in order to “break out of the debilitating constraints of the fragmented bureaucratic system” (Barrett 1991: 19). In so doing, the Commission “linked agencies, organizations, levels of government, and individuals together – in some cases, those that had never worked with or even met each other before” (Royal Commission 1992: 46). This, perhaps, was the greatest strength of the Commission, both in terms of addressing jurisdictional gridlock as well as in its ability to forge a new consensus for waterfront development and thus expand the bounds of Toronto’s growth coalition. The Commission’s work groups, committees, and public consultations brought together a range of people from across a variety of fields, including academics, labour leaders, environmental experts, heritage specialists, community members, housing activists, industrial and other business interests, transportation planners and engineers, aviation experts, and many

others. This broad inclusivity – particularly in the context of the prevailing and politically influential environmentalism reflected in its ecosystem approach – assisted in galvanising support for waterfront development from not only all levels of government but also a variety of other groups and sectors, and the support would later prove crucial to the work of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust as well as the staging of the 2008 Olympic Games bid.

Land Use: Ending the Supremacy of Old Industry on the Waterfront

The Crombie Commission’s recommendations to broaden the possibilities for non-industrial land uses, particularly in the Port Industrial District and East Bayfront, were controversial but ultimately helped advance the transition from an industrial waterfront to one which promises to better perform within a post-industrial economy. As such, the eventual resolution of the question of land-use legitimacy in the Port Industrial District and East Bayfront prepared much of the groundwork for the 21st-century waterfront currently being planned by the TWRC. This section will explore the ways in which the Commission’s work, in the context of the ecosystem approach, made a concentrated effort to break the supremacy of traditional industrial uses on the waterfront through proposals for residential development, new “green” economy industry, and a system of “green infrastructure.” These efforts must be seen in light of the jurisdictional issues that have already been reviewed as the two were intertwined in ways that are not easily untangled; for instance, the work undertaken to reduce the THC’s mandate was accomplished in part through highlighting environmental contamination on its lands. Other conditions played a role in restructuring the potential for economic growth and wealth creation under changing conditions, including the mid-80s boom in residential real estate and its subsequent crash in the early 1990s, the urgent need for housing given the city’s low vacancy rate, the private-sector led bid for the 1996 Olympic Games, Toronto and Metro councils’ policies of industrial retention,

and the results of the Commission's environmental audit, which all added layers of complexity to the Commission's drive to reconfigure waterfront land use.

Residential Uses: Plans for a Liveable Waterfront

While mixed commercial / residential developments and public space had already been built on the Central Waterfront's west side, the East Bayfront and Port Industrial District retained much of the waterfront's industrial character and were the sites of continuing hope for an industrial renaissance in the city. As has been noted, industrial uses on these lands continued to be strongly supported by the THC, but they were also supported by the industrial retention policies of both Toronto and Metro Councils. The Councils resisted changes to these policies as the waterfront's industrial activity was seen not only as a general economic benefit for the city and the region's productive capacity as well as an important source of property tax revenue but also, particularly to Council progressives, as a generator of high paying, blue-collar unionised employment. However, with traditional industrial use continuing to decline, vast tracts of land sitting relatively unused, and with the need for housing becoming an increasingly pressing problem, these policies – and those who held them – had to be challenged.

One of the Crombie Commission's first forays into this issue came in the report of its Housing and Neighbourhoods work group in 1989, entitled *The Liveable Waterfront*, which made a case for doubling the size of existing residential neighbourhoods – which then numbered 170,000 people (Royal Commission 1989f: 5) – and allowing “an appropriate residential and industrial mix in the East Bayfront ... and residential, as well as port, industrial, park, and open space uses in the Port Industrial District” (89). The report also commended the recently announced residential redevelopment project for East St. Lawrence Square, which later became known as

Ataratiri, an 80-acre area immediately north of the Port Industrial District and East Bayfront, as an example of productive re-use of industrial lands¹⁹. Stephen McLaughlin, then a member of the Work Group, said that while residential uses admittedly conflicted with industrial retention policies, “‘We’re challenging that’” (Moloney 1989). He said “there’s room for both housing and industry” in the Port Industrial District and indicated that the industrial retention policies were not adequately making use of the land’s inherent value. McLaughlin also urged the consolidation of the port, which would free up nearly 900 acres for housing, parks, “and regional attractions.” While the economic importance of industry was recognised, “If the industry is not port-related, it should not go [in the Port Industrial District]” (Moloney 1989). The Commissioner agreed, and in his *Interim Report* said that “the existence of more than 485 hectares ... of THC lands, and other under-utilized, publicly owned lands south of Front Street, makes it possible to consider other pressing needs, especially recreation and housing” (Royal Commission 1989a: 115). Further, he said that “there is no reason why, with careful planning ... housing could not co-exist comfortably with waterfront industries” (116).

At the same time, the 1996 Olympic Bid was gaining momentum and its organisers had proposed using the waterfront for a variety of Olympic venues. In addition to sports-related developments, which were said to contribute a recreational legacy to the city over the long run, as many as 4,000 residential units would be located on the Ataratiri site, the Port Industrial District and the East Bayfront to house athletes and the media. Proponents of the bid promised that the housing crisis would be addressed by converting the Olympic villages to affordable housing after the Games, that much-needed waterfront parks and community facilities would be built, and that the developments would provide the impetus to conduct an environmental clean-up on these lands, with partial financing coming from Olympic bid organisers (Toronto ‘96 1989).

While the Olympic bid was ultimately unsuccessful, the confluence of interests between the bid and the Crombie Commission was mutually beneficial. The bid's proposals for residential uses on the waterfront, its high profile, and the debate that it sparked both in the community and among politicians assisted the Commission's efforts to expand traditional ideas about acceptable uses for the lands. Conversely, the Commission's work to change land use policies as well as to reduce the THC's authority over the lands provided part of the means through which support for the subsequent Olympic bid was constructed.

The THC, which at this point still retained control over the Port Lands and East Bayfront, objected vociferously. General Manager Brown told the Commission that "We do not believe housing is an appropriate use of the land," and that "housing and industry do not mix, and that is a well established land-use principle" (Toronto Harbour Commissioners 1989a: 4-5). The THC's Board jealously guarded both their control over these lands and its industrial and port-related character. Saying that the Portlands are a "ludicrous" location for housing that would endanger the future of the port, the THC sent a letter to the Olympic bid organisers telling them that "the lands in the port area east of Parliament Street are not available for residential purposes" (Toronto Harbour Commissioners 1989b: 11).

This position received public support from the so-called leader of reformist forces on Toronto City Council, Jack Layton, who at the time was one of Council's appointees to the THC's Board. In a prescient reading of the macro-economic times and their geographical effects, Layton said that the loss of the port would see Toronto "end up as a city of head offices and an entertainment centre." Instead, he said, "We want a city where people live and work and we have to ensure there is land for industry to locate" (Toronto Harbour Commissioners 1989b: 11). Layton also predicted that promises to provide affordable housing would be swamped in the rush by

condominium developers to build high-end residential projects. Metro Councillor Dale Martin agreed, saying that allowing housing for the Olympics would constitute “a ‘Trojan Horse’ that would allow private and government landowners, businesses and developers to reap huge profits while compromising sound planning and environmental principles” by opening the door to yet more luxury housing while effectively putting an end to blue-collar jobs in the city (King 1989). As just such economic consequences had resulted from similar territorial transformations on waterfronts in port cities around the world, this defence of traditional industry (and, by extension, the Fordist compromise between labour, capital, and the state) was not unwarranted.

Nonetheless, the pressure to allow residential uses in the Port Industrial District and East Bayfront continued. The Commission’s *Watershed* report said that “an attractive and vibrant waterfront supports a wide range of uses [and that] residential neighbourhoods, industry and commerce, utilities, and transportation facilities all have places there” (Royal Commission 1990b: 59). Residential uses for the waterfront thus corresponded well with the ecosystem approach’s focus on bringing disparate elements of waterfront development together. In addition, the *Toronto Central Waterfront Transportation Corridor Study* of 1991 said that a “substantial and sustained long-term housing program would be a catalyst” for the important work of “place-making and community building” on the waterfront. The study – making use of the breadth of scope offered by the ecosystem approach – thus belied its name, offering “new insights” on a host of issues that would be outside the purview of a traditional transportation plan.

Regeneration picked up on the results of the transportation study, forwarding them as the Commission’s final word on the Central Waterfront. Stressing ecosystem concerns, it noted that the Fordist predilection for suburbanization and land use segregation had resulted in a host of environmental and quality of life problems such as increased smog, commuting times, and gas

consumption, and the loss of natural areas and farmland. These problems could be ameliorated by an increase in density in Toronto's core and, as such, residential development in the Port Industrial District and East Bayfront was conceived as crucial: "a quantity of new housing is particularly important; it will reduce pressures for more long-distance commuting; create a livelier, more diverse, and safer place day and night throughout the week; and reduce the tendency to destroy outlying countryside" (Royal Commission 1992: 320). Despite the concerns about residential density that were voiced in advance of the Commission's creation, the ecosystem approach allowed the Commission to reconceive of residential density on the waterfront as a necessary response to environmental problems and a contributor to urban quality of life, both of which provided new rationales for encouraging waterfront development²⁰.

The Commission's succession of proposals to include residential uses on the Port Industrial District and East Bayfront, given the Commission's ecosystem approach to waterfront planning, the social, political, and environmental pressure for much-needed housing stock, contemporaneous residential proposals at Ataratiri and those accompanying the 1996 Olympic bid, all in the context of the area's history of relative dereliction and thus economic potential, assisted the process of opening up these lands to new uses. While the City of Toronto's land use policy for the East Bayfront changed rapidly, provision for residential uses on the Port Industrial District would not be accomplished until well after the end of the Commission's mandate. Indeed, it was the work of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust and its pursuit of the 2008 Olympic Games that would ultimately resolve this question.

Industry of the Future: Environment, Economic Development, and Industrial Lands

In addition to residential uses, the Crombie Commission explored options for alternate industrial uses in the Port Industrial District. The report of the Jobs, Opportunities and Economic Growth Work Group, which was released in June 1989, acknowledged the THC's contention that "The departure of industry from Toronto could have a devastating effect on our economy," (Toronto Harbour Commissioners 1989a: 4-5) and vociferously supported the preservation of the Port Industrial District and East Bayfront for industrial use, citing as its rationale the notion that the economic transformations promoting deindustrialization "are not inevitable or natural and ... governments should adopt creative and coordinated policies ... to maintain a healthy industrial presence on the waterfront" (Royal Commission 1989c: 31). Nonetheless, these same economic transformations were recognised as requiring a more flexible industrial strategy that promoted what was termed "second-generation industry," and thus the report made a number of recommendations for alternate uses that would encourage economic growth and job creation. It promoted sectors such as "electronics, communications, laser technology, development of computer hardware or software, research and development, fashion, medical equipment and technology, bio-engineering, and printing and publishing" ... "in which a high per-employee value is added in the production process," (17). These "high value-added industries that are competitive in the world marketplace" (89), the report said, could assist Metro Toronto in the implementation of its increasingly globally-focused Economic Development Strategy. Over time, the recognition of the economic importance of these sectors to the Port Industrial District and the city as a whole would prove advantageous to the TWRC's work on the waterfront, which much more explicitly promoted them as an opportunity to capitalise on waterfront lands within the context of economic globalization.

Taking its cue from the Work Group's report, the Commission's subsequent *Interim Report of 1989* recommended that "an industrial strategy for the Port and THC lands should give rise to new possibilities and opportunities for economic diversification in the City" (Royal Commission 1989a: 114). However, with environmental concerns exerting an increasingly powerful influence on the Commission's deliberations, the THC lands were touted as the location for "a showcase for future-oriented industries, operating on an environmentally sound basis, as Toronto heads into the 21st century" (114). While this statement demonstrates the need for a response to economic imperatives that contributed to the deindustrialization of the waterfront, in that economic change necessitated productive flexibility, it also signals the importance of the environment – or rather the degradation of the environment caused by past economic activity – in creating new opportunities to generate wealth. This and other statements made by the Commission in its *Interim Report* and future documents reflect both the political expediency of the ecosystem approach as well as the aforementioned accommodation of "third wave" environmentalism to economic and technological fixes for environmental problems. As the Commission stated, "Given the public's concern about the quality of the environment, the THC lands could be used to encourage industries whose very operations or products are geared to environmental protection and improvement" (115). Environmental degradation was thus increasingly perceived to hold the potential for economic benefit, and the steps taken to realise this benefit became characterised as the productive activity of the future.

True to its roundtable approach, the Commission sponsored a symposium in late 1989 "to consider new ideas for developing environmentally sound industry on Toronto's Port Lands" (Desfor 1990: 1). The Urban Waterfront Industry Symposium brought together a wide variety of interests in the Port Industrial District, including industrial producers, labour representatives,

environmental organizations, academics, health proponents, consultants, and public sector officials from all levels of government. The report of the Symposium, released in March 1990, indicated that “the ‘greening’ of industry has already begun” and that “it is in industry’s own best interests to find ways to create wealth while sustaining the quality of the environment” since “industries that do so will survive, while others will not be able or be permitted to exist” (7). The list of suggested “green” industries included “pollution abatement, marine-related industries ... biomedical supplies, film, construction-related industries ... and industries making energy-efficient appliances” (19). The Symposium also produced a suggestion for “a research facility for environmentally sound industry” which could “promote environmentally sound production technologies and assume an educational role” (19). This facility would become a significant point of continuity throughout the Commission’s activities and those of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust and the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation.

Watershed recommended creating a “new waterfront industrial park” on non-port related THC lands (Royal Commission 1990b: 140) which mirrored the industrial symposium’s suggestion for a green industry centre. *Watershed* said such a centre would respond to contemporary economic transformations “where jobs are based on, and contribut[e] to, knowledge and information” (142), but would also act as “industries without smokestacks” and therefore be environmentally-friendly. In a frank expression of ecological modernisation, the report links environmental clean-up with emerging economic opportunities as an attempt to benefit from capital’s over-exploitation of the productive capacities of nature: “the key to the burgeoning environmental industries sector is the recognition that current environmental problems are an opportunity to profit – quite literally – from past mistakes” (142). In order to do so effectively, the report recommends that the Port Industrial District be used as the site of “a catalyst to bring the

different sectors and interests together and to convert the potential for green enterprise and industry into reality” (143), not only signalling the economic use of environmental degradation as a generator of wealth, but also a recognition of the importance of geographical proximity – or agglomeration – to the creation of wealth in a globalized economy.

The Commission’s final report, *Regeneration*, picks up the new industry theme, reiterating its recommendation for “a new waterfront industrial area, containing a Centre for Green Enterprise and Industry” (Royal Commission 1992: 409) on the Port Industrial District²¹. Economic opportunities for this centre were said to exist in “the horrendous environmental problems in eastern Europe [and] industrialization of the Third World” (410-411) and the challenge to Toronto was to “build and attract [green] industries” in order to “play a major role in Canada’s industrial future” (411). Concurrent with the release of *Regeneration*, the NDP provincial government announced that it would pursue a “green industrial strategy” in order to “make Ontario a leading producer and exporter of environmental goods and services” (Ontario 1992b). With the early 1990s recession deeply affecting the province’s economy, “green industry” was to lead Ontario toward new economic and job creation opportunities on a global scale.

The Commission’s recommendation to establish a catalytic green industry / knowledge economy centre in the Port Industrial District conformed with environment-economy connections of the Commission’s ecosystem approach to planning, and the influence of the idea has persisted. Each new iteration of this idea, whether in the work of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, the City’s *Central Waterfront Secondary Plan*, or the TWRC’s *Development Plan and Business Strategy*, calls for a slight variation on the specific economic sector which this centre is supposed to support, which has changed as sectors rise and fall in prominence within the economy. As such, this recommendation has created the conditions within which new economic uses, and

particularly those which are intended to attract global investment and consolidate Toronto's influence in the global economy, could be located on the waterfront.

Parks and Public Spaces: Green Infrastructure and the Water's Edge

The controversy over Harbourfront, with its significant deviation from its parkland origins and use of water's edge lands for residential development, raised the ire of the public and contributed to calls for greater public access and increased park space. These uses corresponded neatly with the Commission's ecosystem approach to waterfront planning²², and the Commission ultimately recommended a "continuous waterfront promenade" at Harbourfront as well as "no further building" south of Queens Quay (Royal Commission 1992: 372). The situation at Harbourfront was the subject of lengthy negotiations between the City of Toronto and the Harbourfront Corporation, with Commissioner Crombie weighing in with suggestions and recommendations, and was resolved, as has been noted, through the relocation of a several residential development projects in order to retain the water's edge for public use. Despite the resolution of this site-specific issue, however, the notion of providing public access along the entire length of the water's edge – which had been a point of contention in Toronto since the mid-1850s – continued to inform the work of the Commission and proved to be one of its unifying themes.

Several of the Commission's work groups made recommendations about the ownership of the water's edge and the use to which these lands should be put. These ideas were incorporated into the Commission's *Interim Report*, which recommended "a green belt, created from an integrated system of nodes and linkages, across the Toronto waterfront" (Royal Commission 1989a: 188) which should be brought completely under public ownership. The green belt would provide important wildlife habitat and be "generous enough in width...to ensure meaningful public use"

(193), forming the basis for a “‘green’ strategy” that would “preserve the waterfront...and other significant features in the public interest” (195). These ideas were greeted in the press as “a welcome change of focus” (Toronto Star 1989a) and Premier Peterson pledged both financial and legislative assistance for efforts to improve accessibility to the water’s edge (Lalonde 1989).

The Commission’s subsequent *Green Strategy for the Greater Toronto Waterfront* study suggested that this “green strategy” be embodied in the creation of a Waterfront Trail, which would connect the variety of existing recreational and cultural facilities and green spaces and provide further opportunities for water’s edge related uses (Reid *et al* 1989). The Commission’s *Watershed* report built on this suggestion, recommending that the provincial government undertake to “plan, co-ordinate, and implement a Waterfront Trail from Burlington to Newcastle” through the creation of a special purpose body mandated to implement the trail (Royal Commission 1990b: 88). The trail would become “a symbol of the importance the Province places on the waterfront, and its determination to manage the waterfront in an integrated, ecosystem-based manner” and the entire system would make “the public open spaces far more accessible and attractive” (88), signalling an economic as well as recreational rationale.

This rationale was made more plain in *Regeneration*, the Commission’s final report, in which the Trail was said to provide economic benefit through its use as a “spur for urban redevelopment, prompting private investment in adjacent areas” (Royal Commission 1992: 186). Its construction would allow for recreation, public use, the retention of public land, access to waterfront views, alternate transportation, community building, and improved quality of life, more than answering the public’s initial concerns. More than this, however, the Trail would become a major component of what the Commission called “green infrastructure” (335) which would provide the basis for development on the Central Waterfront. A heavily development-oriented term, this

“green infrastructure” system was recommended to be built “as early as possible to begin the process of re-creating the Central Waterfront” (335). The Trail was thus able to serve a variety of functions, whether environmental, social, or economic, and as such demonstrated the strength of the ecosystem approach to consolidate disparate values and uses under one development paradigm.

The Waterfront Trail was praised by all levels of government. The federal government pledged to work with area municipalities and the province to “give the public right of way across our lands” (Armstrong and Bill 1992). Many municipal governments and individual councillors applauded the Trail’s environmental vision, and the province set up the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, which was charged with establishing the Trail (Ontario 1992a). The Waterfront Trail was to become the centrepiece of the activity of the Trust, which used it as a catalyst to promote development in communities along its length, and later as a step toward promotion of development through the 2008 Olympic bid, a much larger and more globally-focused catalyst.

Environmental Audit: New Land Use and the Environmental Straightjacket

While the degraded quality of much of the land and water along the Central Waterfront had been known for some time, making it “among the most chemically contaminated hot spots on the Great Lakes” (Ferguson 1985), virtually all of the Commission’s work groups pointed to the direct negative impact that this contamination would have on the land uses they were recommending. The Commission determined that protection and restoration of the environment was key to development, and thus that “a joint environmental audit of the THC lands and adjacent provincial lands” (Royal Commission 1989a: 195) was necessary in order to “ensure a brighter future for Toronto’s waterfront” (123). The Commission appointed a steering committee

of Commission staff, academics, environmental experts, ministry bureaucrats and consultants to undertake Phase One of the audit, and five work groups were convened with additional representation. In early 1990 the audit team released the first report, entitled *East Bayfront and Port Industrial Area: Environment in Transition*, which concluded that “soils and groundwater in many parts of the area are indeed contaminated” and that therefore these areas “will require remediation before any redevelopment can occur” (Royal Commission 1990a: 129-130). In other words, the contamination of the land was a limiting factor for development, which had to be remedied before new forms of wealth creation could take place on the waterfront.

The impact of environmental quality on the development of industrial sites was forcefully illustrated in the demise of the Ataratiri housing project on the lands immediately north of the Port Industrial District. After the NDP took office in 1990, they instituted a new and more rigorous set of environmental standards for remediation of polluted soils. The costs associated with meeting these new standards ballooned from \$3.3 million under the old regime to \$160 million, and those for meeting provincial flood control standards tallied in at \$40 million (McInnes 1992b). At the same time, the over-inflated real estate market collapsed, resulting in a significant decline in projected revenues. This combination of revenue collapse and cost increases made the project economically unfeasible and the province and the City of Toronto cancelled the project in March 1992. The media was widely critical, not only of the project itself, but also of the regulatory framework which was seen to have led to its demise. A number of media reports characterised the NDP’s environmental standards as too harsh (Armstrong 1992b; Toronto Star 1992; Kerr 1992), insisting that Ontario’s “gold-plated environmental standards ... among the toughest in the world ... pushed the projected cost from \$444 million to more than \$1 billion” (Toronto Star 1992) and thus destroyed the opportunity to productively reuse the land.

Finding ways to ensure productive reuse was a main focus of Phase Two of the environmental audit, which was released in the *Pathways* report of 1991. The report made a series of recommendations for co-ordinated soil and water remediation efforts as well as “comprehensive planning” to address the Don River’s flooding threat. It also incorporated a plan for the creation and naturalisation of a new mouth for the Don River, which was then being made by Toronto’s Task Force to Bring Back the Don (Barrett 1991: 136). As a result of the environmental audit, *Regeneration* stated that the starting point for development planning in the area was “a strategy to restore environmental health” which would be predicated on the provision of the aforementioned “green infrastructure” as well as the remediation of polluted lands and waters and the amelioration of the flood threat (Royal Commission 1992: 401-403). *Regeneration* also recognised the opportunities for providing wildlife habitat as well as passive recreational space through an “improved Lower Don [with] a new mouth...south of the one that exists, with a gradual curve opening up to a re-created estuary” (402). These recommendations for remediation would later form the basis for the new cross-jurisdictional funding alliance that opened the waterfront to development and would be incorporated into the TWRC’s development plan, in which environmental health would also be used to attract international investment.

As the Commission’s work proceeded, new suggestions for the use of traditionally industrial lands on the waterfront were made which responded to a variety of concerns expressed by the public, politicians, and others. The provision of housing would ameliorate the city’s growing housing crisis, reduce exurban sprawl, and provide new sources of property tax revenue for local municipalities. Reconfiguring lands to pursue new economy industries, particularly those which contributed to environmental quality, would allow Toronto to become a centre for “green industry” and thus improve the city’s and province’s positions in the economy. The construction

of “green infrastructure” would help to reconnect the city and the lake and provide important parks and amenity space near the downtown core, increasing the area’s aesthetic qualities and providing terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitat. All of these new uses would allow the lands to serve the needs of capital for a new spatial fix in a changing economy. However, to accommodate the new spatial fix, the ground for future development would first have to be prepared by undertaking an expansive – and expensive – environmental remediation strategy.

Many changes in legislation were made which reflected the Commission’s recommendations for new land uses. For example, at the same time that the Commission was completing its work, the City of Toronto was engaged in a process to create a new Official Plan, called CityPlan. While a variety of the ecosystem approaches of the Commission were evident in CityPlan (Kipfer and Keil 2000: 30), a significant new policy was instituted which opened up the East Bayfront to residential uses and mixed use developments, as well as parks, community services, and public facilities in order to “reinforce the goal of increased public enjoyment and use of the Waterfront” (City of Toronto 1992: 14.29, 1994: 14.28). The new policy called for “a linked system of public open spaces and parkland which, among other things, contributes to the creation of a comprehensive waterfront trail” (City of Toronto 1992: 14.29) as well as “consistent, comprehensive and equitable approaches to flood control and soil remediation...in advance of redevelopment” (14.29). The industrial retention policy for the Port Industrial District was retained, however, although CityPlan stated that “new and relocating high employment industries [should] be encouraged to locate in this area” and that limited areas should be allowed for parks, recreation, habitat protection and retail as well as a “water’s edge promenade” in order to increase “the attractiveness of the Port Industrial District to the public and to industry” (City of Toronto 1992: 14.33-14.38, 1994: 14.35-14.40). While CityPlan went some way toward

preparing the waterfront for new uses, the Port Industrial District would not be “unlocked” for some time. Having planted the seeds to open up the waterfront to new uses, the Commission’s leadership would take additional steps to help end the hegemony of traditional industry on the waterfront and prepare the way for the TWRC’s globally-focused vision for a waterfront of the 21st-century.

Private Sector Interests: A Seat at the Table, a Finger in the Pie

Although public concern about the dominance of private interests on the waterfront was one of the many factors behind the creation of the Crombie Commission, it was clear that the Commission took a position in favour of having these interests represented in the processes of waterfront planning. While Crombie insisted that “the need to articulate, determine, and defend the public interest” (Toronto Harbour Commissioners 1989c: 1) was paramount in times of economic and social change, the approach taken by the Commission nevertheless supported an important role for the private sector in urban development, echoing the McLaughlin Report’s position that being “in the land business” was not an appropriate public sector activity (Desfor 1993: 174). Planning for development was rightfully a function within the public domain, but a big seat at the table would have to be reserved for capital.

The role of private interests in waterfront development was an underlying theme throughout the Commission’s work, and many of the Work Groups made related comments and suggestions. Most germane to this investigation are those made in the 1989 report of the Jobs, Opportunities and Economic Growth Work Group, which indicated that infrastructure spending on the part of various governments had not kept pace with growth, resulting in an urgent need for significant investments. In the context of government downsizing and declining public sector spending,

however, the report said that “careful consideration would have to be given to a method for financing such projects” (Royal Commission 1989c: 124). As such, “new and innovative financing techniques may have to be found if Toronto is to avoid the very high debt service costs that marked Metro’s early years” (124). While the report did not recommend a specific role for the private-sector in public-sector infrastructure projects, the notion of governmental inability to keep pace with and effectively service growth is crucial to understanding the future resolution of the issue of infrastructure financing. In addition, *The Toronto Central Waterfront Transportation Corridor Study* of 1991 recommended that “The framework and conditions for private-sector involvement in waterfront development should be established, in order to fully exploit its enterprise, initiative, and capability for investment and creativity” (Royal Commission 1992: 309). The perception of the private sector as superior to the public sector, which was characterised as inefficient and incapable of undertaking large projects, was a common sentiment of the neoliberalised times²³ and was bolstered by the failure of Ataratiri. Even then-NDP Housing Minister Evelyn Gigantes condemned Ataratiri as “an ill-conceived megaproject that simply exceeded the capacity of both levels of government involved and overwhelmed the regulatory framework” (McInnes 1992b).

The perception that government was unable to “go it alone” was implicit in the ecosystem approach, as expressed in *Watershed* and the *Pathways* report. As a response to environmental degradation caused by human activity, the ecosystem approach “highlights the interactions among ecological, social, economic, and political systems within the bioregion,” suggesting the necessity for a response that recognises “that governments alone cannot solve our environmental problems” (Royal Commission 1990b: 46). As such, it was incumbent on the public sector to work with “the 6,000 industries in the GTA and its four million residents” for the purpose of

“setting goals in common, changing attitudes, coordinating plans and actions across jurisdictions, coordinating mechanisms for allocating and using resources, and planning cooperatively” (46).

As discussed, the Commission adopted the stakeholder roundtable model for decision-making to overcome the jurisdictional problems which had stymied waterfront development efforts and the political realities of the fractured and overlapping but constitutionally-mandated powers of the various jurisdictions involved. As described in *Pathways*, this model was “based on the premise that all the partners should be at the table when plans are being made for the waterfront” (Barrett 1991: 104), including governments, members of the public, and the private sector proponents of development (105). Through a process of stakeholder negotiation, facilitated by a purportedly neutral chair, environmental, economic, and social concerns would be reconciled and a new, more holistic and environmentally sustainable approach to development achieved. Particularly in conjunction with its public consultation strategy, this model was used with great success by the Commission in creating its own plans for a variety of waterfront areas and in constructing a broad coalition of support for its recommendations. However, this model of decision-making suffers from a significant blind spot. In many ways comparable to the communicative and advocacy-based processes embraced by planners seeking to find better ways to serve social justice concerns (e.g. Davidoff 1965; Forester 1985; Healey 1992), the stakeholder roundtable model is similarly devoid of a recognition of the differential power relations that characterise and are deeply embedded in planning as a discipline (see Checkoway 1994; Flyvbjerg 2002; Friedmann 1998; Neuman 2000; Yiftachel 1999 for criticisms of such approaches). As such, the Crombie Commission’s approach to decision making presupposed a specious equality between stakeholders within a power-laden process that is necessarily and fundamentally skewed toward the interests of private capital.

As a function of state-mediated processes of social reproduction under capitalism, urban development planning must constantly walk the knife-edge of balancing public versus private interest due to its role in facilitating capital accumulation through the productivity gained from investments in the built environment (Harvey 1996a, 1981). As such, the practice of planning under capitalism is rife with much-contested and often fractious political processes. Moreover, as Harvey (1996a) has rightly identified, the contemporary ideology of planning has been deeply affected by the economic restructuring of the post-Fordist period, in which both public and private interests have been defined and redefined in relation to “the underlying logic of capital accumulation” (194). As much as other functions of governance, planning has taken on the neoliberal mantra of fiscal efficiency and the promotion of economic development. In this context, the Crombie Commission’s stakeholder roundtable model as a co-ordinated approach to reconciling the wide variety of interests at play in waterfront development, insofar as the Commission’s work represents a comprehensive urban development planning exercise, must be understood as being both structurally and philosophically predisposed toward privileging the interests of private capital.

The adoption of the stakeholder roundtable model did, however, express particular sympathies with the decision-making models being pursued by the provincial NDP government of the day. In the process of instituting new public-private partnership models in order to position Ontario within the growing knowledge-based global economy, the Rae government created a framework for economic policy making that addressed both social equity and economic efficiency concerns through “ongoing deliberation among diverse representatives” (Bradford 2003: 1010). The trust built up between these parties would produce a compromise between interests, ultimately resulting in more opportunities across sectors for economic gain and the creation of a shared

vision for Ontario's economic future. In much the same way that Rae declared that "we have to create a new culture, a new sense of shared values" (1012), Crombie proclaimed that "the key is to have a shared vision" (Livesey 1988). Whether a political strategy to consolidate favour with the provincial government as well as generate cross-sectoral support for waterfront development, or a genuine belief in the ability of negotiated solutions to resolve powerfully divergent interests, the Commission's neocorporatist stakeholder roundtable approach provided a framework which philosophically privileged business-related private sector interests in the processes of waterfront development. Ultimately, through the 2008 Olympic bid, these interests were able to usurp the public sector's role in waterfront planning.

The notion that private interests were being given special consideration by the Commission was reflected in its efforts to address the question of land use in the Port Industrial District. Metro Councillor Jack Layton saw these efforts and the provincial government's declaration of an interest in the Port Industrial District as having been prompted by a desire "to assist the development industry break council's ironclad policy to keep the port lands for industry" (Kerr 1990). Despite its efforts to bring all parties to the table in a process of co-operative decision-making, the position that the Commission took on land use led to a conviction on the part of some local politicians that "the one-time tiny perfect mayor will pave the way for landowners in the port – and that includes the federal and provincial governments – to make billions of dollars profit simply by designating the port lands for residential development" (Kerr 1990).

Nevertheless, co-operation between the private and public sectors was recommended as part of the Commission's six-step implementation strategy, as outlined in *Regeneration*. While governments were to "adopt the ecosystem approach" and "plan for sustainability" they were also to "create the framework and conditions for private-sector involvement; capitalise on its

enterprise, initiative, creativity, and capability for investment” and find ways to “establish partnerships: among governments, and between the public and private sector, in accordance with planning and project requirements” (Royal Commission 1992: 457). In order to implement this strategy, and to provide Crombie with a continuing platform from which to influence waterfront development, a new agency with responsibility for establishing such partnerships was required and, in 1992, the Waterfront Regeneration Trust was formed.

Chapter Four:

Waterfront Transformations: Institutional Responses and Mega-Strategies

As the Commission's mandate ended, continuing action was needed to expand upon the steps it had taken to reconfigure the waterfront's political, economic, and spatial landscape. Between 1992 and 2001, a period in which significant political and economic change occurred, an organization with considerable influence over reshaping the waterfront was the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, a new and strategically mandated institution established by the province to implement the Crombie Commission's recommendations. After a brief discussion of the major ideological shift which took place at the provincial level in this period, this chapter will explore the contemporaneous activities of the Trust, demonstrating the ways in which the Trust built upon the legacies left by the Crombie Commission's ecosystem approach, focusing on the Port Industrial District and the West Don Lands. It will also address the Trust's privatization under a new, neoliberal provincial regime and the response taken by its leadership to continue the promotion of waterfront development in the face of significantly reduced institutional capacity.

The Provincial Political Climate

In fall of 1990, Bob Rae's NDP had defeated the Peterson Liberals, installing the province's first social democratic government. Rae continued the Peterson government's support for the Crombie Commission, and it was his government that oversaw the establishment of the Trust. However, Rae's NDP was elected in the midst of a difficult

nation-wide economic recession which hit Toronto particularly hard, with its effects being felt well into 1996 (Metropolitan Toronto 1997: 1). In 1995, the Mike Harris Conservatives soundly defeated Rae's NDP, largely in response to the continuing effects of the economic downturn as well as the widespread unpopularity of Rae's proposals to respond. The election of Harris' regime signalled a significant shift in provincial policy-making as the new government's extreme neoliberalism brought about drastic cutbacks to provincial programs and services, including environmental protection, which engendered considerable opposition among the general public. In its drive to promote the private accumulation of wealth, the Harris government displayed "a genuine lack of interest in environmental matters and...an apparent lack of understanding of the notion of sustainability in which the health of the environment and economy are closely linked" (Krajnc 2000: 123). As such, the ecosystem approach to planning and development lost much of the currency it had achieved within the provincial sphere and in 1999 the Trust was made a not-for-profit charity dependent on private-sector funding. While it was under Rae's watch that the Trust was created to carry on the Commission's ecosystem approach to waterfront development, the neoliberalism of the Harris regime would prove deeply influential to the Trust's continuing efforts.

A Vehicle for Change: The Waterfront Regeneration Trust

The Crombie Commission made more than eighty recommendations in the course of its deliberations, one of which was the creation by the province of a public agency to facilitate the Commission's implementation strategy. With the release of *Regeneration* in 1992, this new

agency was formed. The Waterfront Regeneration Trust was structured as a non-profit agent of the provincial Crown (Ontario 1992a) and provided with a \$2 million annual budget and a staff of eleven (Armstrong 1992a), many of whom had been key staff members at the Crombie Commission (Lewis Stein 1992). The mandate of the Trust was to advise the provincial Minister of Environment on all issues related to the waterfront, consult with the public, co-ordinate provincial programs and policy, act as a clearing house of information, and establish the Waterfront Trail (Ontario 1992a). Five priority projects were assigned to the Trust, including the Lake Ontario Greenway Strategy and the Lower Don Lands Strategy, both of which will be discussed below. The Trust did not have ultimate power over waterfront decision-making and was constituted specifically as a co-ordinating body²⁴; nonetheless, it was given significant financial and legal powers and was acknowledged as the provincial body responsible for negotiating with other levels of government over waterfront development projects (Goldrick and Merrens 1997: 227). As such, it provided a specifically-tailored institutional response to the jurisdictional problems that continued to stand in the way of waterfront development.

Facilitating Growth through Jurisdictional Co-operation

In announcing the creation of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, then-NDP Environment Minister Ruth Grier responded to continuing concerns that the mandates of the various bodies with jurisdiction on waterfront lands would be subsumed under this new agency. She said that “Crombie’s new role as head of the waterfront agency is to advise and mediate – not usurp the power of local governments” (Armstrong 1992a). However, suspicion lingered among members of Toronto City Council and, to a large degree, the Trust was only able to engage in a few small-scale projects within the city. Nonetheless, the problem-solving strategy that arose out of the Commission’s ecosystem approach – the inclusion in stakeholder roundtables of all relevant

jurisdictions with a variety of mandates and expertise – was carried on by the Trust in its efforts all along the water’s edge. While the initial vision was to “get communities along the waterfront to enter into partnership agreements with Queen’s Park” (Lewis Stein 1992), the Trust also facilitated agreements with a variety of groups, organizations, and agencies, whether community-based, corporate, or public. The Trust’s primary role was “to convene,” and through this facilitative approach “many, many people who had never got together because they were competitors all sat around a table and shared ideas” (Evenson 2005).

The Lake Ontario Greenway Strategy (LOGS), the umbrella plan under and through which the Trust facilitated construction of its largest and most successful project, the Waterfront Trail, was an important part of the Trust’s promotion of jurisdictional co-operation. Institutionally, LOGS brought together “representatives of the federal, provincial, regional and local governments, conservation authorities, and non-government groups” (Waterfront Regeneration Trust 1995b: 23) on a steering committee chaired by Crombie. Six work groups, which each included additional experts and representatives, made recommendations on various issues, mirroring the strategy undertaken by the Commission and similarly generating support not only for LOGS but also for the wide variety of development projects resulting from it.

Operationally, LOGS served to implement the Commission’s recommendation for “green infrastructure” through construction of the Waterfront Trail from Hamilton to Port Credit. This part of the Trust’s mandate was quickly realised, in part because, upon the Trust’s formation, “60 per cent of this trail [was] already complete” (Armstrong 1992a) and the major thrust of activity was to establish connectivity between existing sections. By 1995, the Trust had announced the opening of “a 350-kilometre, virtually continuous trail along the Lake Ontario shoreline, which connects hundreds of parks, historic and cultural sites, wildlife habitats and recreation areas from

Stoney Creek to Trenton” (Waterfront Regeneration Trust 2005). The role of the Waterfront Trail was to become an integral part of the strategy of “progressive incrementalism” (Evenson 2005) used by the Trust to realise small development projects along the entire length of the Lake Ontario waterfront. Although admittedly “small victories” (Evenson 2005), these projects – which included the construction of the popular and much-celebrated Humber River pedestrian-bicycle bridge in Toronto, remediation of industrial land for recreational purposes in Coburg, facilitation of \$145 million in investment for parks, restaurants and businesses in Whitby, construction of a boardwalk and café on Toronto’s western beaches, (McAndrew 1999) as well as, on Toronto’s Central Waterfront, conversion of a parking lot into a wetland on Spadina Quay and rehabilitation of the York Street teamway²⁵ – were models for creatively accommodating and facilitating a spatial response to economic change, and transformed many formerly industrial lands into newly productive landscapes. The Waterfront Trail acted as a “clothesline” on which these projects were hung (Crombie 2005), providing a physical and political incentive for the variety of jurisdictions along the waterfront to engage in development planning. The Trail thus acted as a catalyst, providing a project around which governments, community members, businesses, and groups and organizations of a variety of descriptions could coalesce, with a concept upon which they all could agree – environmental protection, social benefit, and economic revitalization, in the ecosystem-based mode.

The Trust’s activities in the Port Industrial District – as well as the adjacent Ataratiri / West Don Lands site – were part of the Lower Don Lands Strategy, which was to “integrate environmental protection and remediation, land use, and community, economic, and transportation planning” in order to “guide the redevelopment of...1,700 acres strategically located at the mouth of the Don River just east of the financial district in Toronto” (Waterfront Regeneration Trust 1993: 1). In

the spirit of the ecosystem approach, in early 1993 the Trust held a two day workshop on site remediation “in partnership with the Provincial Government, ...the Canadian Urban Institute²⁶, and private-sector companies” in order to “focus on the needs, barriers, and opportunities for the regeneration of contaminated lands in the Lower Don Lands” (1). The workshop brought together a wide variety of technical experts, public- and private-sector planners, representatives of waterfront-related public-sector agencies, bodies and governments, businesspeople, private-sector developers and real estate brokers, consultants, and others in a co-operative process that resulted in a variety of commonly-held conclusions, the most important of which was the notion that “it is not only necessary to remediate and regenerate the Lower Don Lands, it is possible” (82). Not only did this workshop produce a common position on the possibilities for remediation, it also built a coalition of support from among the public and private sectors for the redevelopment of these lands.

Similar processes of consultation and co-operation were undertaken in the production of the Trust’s *West Don Lands* report of December 1995 and the subsequent *Greening the Toronto Port Lands*, and their significant impact on land use strategies will be discussed below. In addition, however, they encouraged the involvement of private-sector actors in public-sector planning, and thus helped to usher in the strategies for waterfront development currently being pursued.

Land Use: The Environmental Foundation

The Lake Ontario Greenway Strategy promoted the same new uses for the waterfront as had been proposed by the Crombie Commission, and the co-ordinating role played by the Trust in facilitating the implementation of development plans along the Waterfront Trail saw many of these uses established. In May 1995, the Trust released a comprehensive report on LOGS which

outlined the environment-economy-community objectives through which waterfront development, intended to meet the ecosystem-based planning principles of the Commission, was being operationalised. LOGS was clearly based on the ecosystem approach and employed a broad perspective and multidisciplinary method to foster waterfront development.

The new land uses which LOGS promoted, including residential, “new” industry, and parks and public space, were all intended “to achieve the vision of the waterfront of the future” (Waterfront Regeneration Trust 1995b: 74). Dense, centralized, and small-unit condominium or apartment developments on the waterfront were deemed necessary due to a variety of environmental and social pressures, such as urban sprawl, economic recession, and an aging population (63). Land uses that would fuel “new enterprises” including “television, film and communications, graphics, health research, and recycling industry” as well as “tourism, sports, trading and entertainment” were necessary for job creation (62). Tourism would be enhanced by uses that improve the quality of the waterfront environment, and thus habitat renewal, parks and recreational development were necessary to realise the “potential [for tourism] to bring a significant growth in economic benefits” (65). The waterfront of the future would be a place to “live, work, and play” with economic development given priority.

Making space for these new uses on the waterfront was clearly predicated on cleaning up polluted soils and waters and, perhaps more unambiguously than the Crombie Commission’s *Regeneration*, the LOGS report makes explicit the ecomodernising predisposition of the ecosystem approach:

The need for restoration touches on all three of the overlapping circles of community, environment and economy that characterize the ecosystem approach. While pollution or habitat fragmentation are usually thought of first as environmental problems, the posting of a beach for health reasons on a summer weekend can have a major impact on traditional community activities. In places along the waterfront where past activities have

contaminated soils and groundwater, the resulting clean-up costs can render future land uses uneconomic. In addition, many communities are discovering that an attractive and healthy waterfront can help attract new businesses, in contrast to the way that polluted waters and despoiled landscapes can discourage investors (Waterfront Regeneration Trust 1995b: 90).

The ecosystem approach thus had a strong impact on the ways in which environmental values on the waterfront were viewed – that is, the ecosystem approach evaluated the environment, attaching economic value to its qualities and functions and their effects on social processes. As such, the strength of the approach – its ability to accommodate a variety of values and political imperatives – provided the conceptual basis for the commodification of nature on Toronto’s waterfront.

Flexibility in land use policy was also stressed as a necessary strategy for municipalities to pursue. In outlining the Trust’s plans for promoting economic activity on the waterfront, which was one of the LOGS objectives, the report stressed the importance for municipal governments to act in a flexible, entrepreneurial fashion to promote waterfront development:

Waterfront municipalities should maintain the flexibility necessary in their policies to respond to a rapidly changing economic environment; encourage existing and new businesses to recognize trends in industrial, commercial, and residential development; and address the implications of these trends in their planning documents. (Waterfront Regeneration Trust 1995b: 129)

Such regulatory flexibility was echoed in the City of Toronto’s CityPlan of 1994, which began to focus the City’s planning efforts on the economic benefits gained by intensifying the downtown through redesignating certain lands as mixed-use areas. In other words, CityPlan signalled a declining role for the traditional strict separation of land uses and the incorporation of a more flexible system, such as was instituted on the East Bayfront. Then-planning commissioner Bob Millward indicated that “creating new downtown neighbourhoods will be the planning theme for the next decade” (Armstrong 1992b).

In the fall of 1995, an activity that would have a powerful impact on land use policy on the waterfront was undertaken as principals of the Trust quietly began work on putting together a bid for the 2008 Olympic Games. Described as “the last project of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust” (Evenson 2005), the bid was to take on immense significance for waterfront development and generate a consensus of support that the 1996 bid was never able to achieve. While the impetus for and legacy of the 2008 bid will be discussed later in this paper, important here are the land uses which were proposed for the Port Industrial District and West Don Lands. The uses proposed for the Olympic Bid and the plans forwarded by the Trust were congruent, and the combination of the two agencies working in concert was highly effective in contributing to changes in municipal land-use policy.

Like the 1996 bid, the 2008 bid proposed siting a number of Olympic venues on the Central Waterfront. The Port Industrial District’s Polson and Cousin Quays were proposed as the site for the athletes’ village and the West Don Lands would house the media village, providing up to 22,000 new residential units in total (Toronto 2008 1998: 33; City of Toronto 2000a: 45). The Olympic villages were intended to be “part of an emerging plan to develop the overall Waterfront into a vital urban space with mixed-use communities” (City of Toronto 2000a: 45) and would be converted into “much needed housing units” after the Games, with assurances that some portion would be designated as “affordable” (45). The City of Toronto was very supportive of the 2008 bid and, with the additional influence of work undertaken by the Trust, its land use policies would subsequently be changed as a result.

In 1995, at about the same time that the Olympic bid was begun, the Trust published a report entitled *West Don Lands*. The influence of this report was enormous. As has been noted, the Ataratiri residential project had been cancelled due in part to the high cost of remedying soil

contamination and containing the flooding threat. Zoning subsequently put in place on the West Don Lands prohibited residential uses and limited most permitted uses to pre-existing buildings until such time as the area's environmental problems were resolved (Waterfront Regeneration Trust 1995a: 6-7). As such, any measures to significantly develop the area – including locating Olympic housing thereon – were impossible. In order to provide the conditions within which development could occur, therefore, the Trust undertook to resolve these problems.

First, the report recommended a new, dual-purpose land use – a “virtually imperceptible berm” (13) that would run along the east side of the site down the western bank of the Don River. A raised platform of earth, the berm would not only serve as a physical barrier between the Don River and the West Don Lands, preventing flood waters from imperilling the area, it would also provide for much-needed recreational space on its wide plateau and naturalized habitat areas along its sloping sides. As an example of “green infrastructure,” the berm promised to establish both “desirability and marketability for the lands,” since “improving the image of the lands is an important step towards attracting investment” (13) and would resolve the flooding problem in a manner that would “reduce the costs of flood protection from approximately \$21 million to between \$6-8 million” (13). This solution was eagerly embraced by the City of Toronto, and the use was subsequently incorporated into both its Official Plan (City of Toronto 2002: S4.3) and Central Waterfront Secondary Plan (City of Toronto 2003: 8; 2001: 45, 52-53).

The report also indicated that a considerable reduction in the cost of remediation could be achieved owing to the provincial Ministry of Environment's relaxation of regulations, which were part of the Harris government's neoliberal program of promoting “economic recovery by slashing red tape and getting rid of obstacles to growth” (Ontario 1996). The new regulations were greeted as “good news” by the Trust's site remediation director (McAndrew 1996). Among

a host of changes, the 1996 *Guideline for Use at Contaminated Sites in Ontario* significantly reduced requirements for remediation and introduced a site-specific assessment process which tailored remediation standards to a site's proposed use²⁷. The *West Don Lands* report lauds the new regulations as providing “needed certainty and flexibility” as well as “the potential to significantly decrease the costs of remediation without compromising health or safety” (Waterfront Regeneration Trust 1995a: 16). The Trust conducted a series of soil and groundwater remediation tests based on the relaxed regulations and determined that “soil and groundwater conditions are not severe as many may have thought” and that “cost effective environmental management solutions” (11) were possible. While the new regulations were economically short-sighted and potentially damaging to individual and community health, they provided the conditions necessary to kick-start economic growth in the West Don Lands.

The Trust also highlighted the importance of new, more flexible land-use regulations that had previously been announced by then-Mayor of Toronto, Barbara Hall. These new regulations were largely a response to the business community's increasing concern that the Greater Toronto Area was losing its competitive edge (Alexander 2005). In November 1994, shortly after the municipal election that saw NDP candidate Barbara Hall defeat the incumbent, June Rowlands, a forum was held by the business community to discuss a private-sector response to the economic downturn. The Economic Forum on the Future of the Greater Toronto Area produced a number of recommendations that the business community could use as tools with which to lobby government and sparked considerable media attention. Many media reports warned of the threat of American-style “urban doughnutisation” facing the entire Metropolitan area (Barber 1994; Galt 1994; James 1994a, 1994b, 1994c; Rusk 1994; Spears 1994a, 1994b; Swainson 1994). That Toronto's downtown core could become a vacant “hole in the doughnut” wasteland, with both

residents and businesses relocating to suburban areas or other provinces or countries to take advantage of better economic conditions, was identified as a key problem for the city and the region, and globalization was identified as the major factor in this trend.

While many speakers at the Forum, including Crombie as Chair of the Trust, identified high property taxation as a primary issue for governments to address (Economic Forum 1994), a different strategy – marked by flexibility in land use regulation – was put in place under Mayor Hall’s tenure. In order to promote the kind of economic competitiveness deemed necessary to foster business and residential development, increase tax revenues for the City, and discourage large-scale relocation, two areas adjacent to the Central Business District were rezoned (Alexander 2005; City of Toronto 1996, 1997, 2002). “The Kings” rezoning centred on large areas around the intersections of King-Spadina and King-Parliament, the latter of which encompassed the West Don Lands, and was a significant departure from the previous planning regime in these areas. The existing patchwork of industrial, residential, and commercial zoning designations was replaced by a system in which virtually any land-use, except heavy industrial, would be allowed (City of Toronto 1996). The Trust’s *West Don Lands* report praised this new land-use strategy, indicating that it would “promote the emergence of economic uses that can attract the private capital necessary to reinvigorate certain areas of the downtown core” (Waterfront Regeneration Trust 1995a: 12) – just the kinds of economic uses that had been identified by the Crombie Commission as essential in a condition of industrial outmigration.

All in all, the Trust produced a plan for development of the West Don Lands which was based on the principles of the ecosystem approach, the flexibility and wide applicability of which demonstrated clearly that “the goals of economic renewal, community well being and environmental health can be combined to promote redevelopment and job creation” (Waterfront

Regeneration Trust 1995a: i). In other words, the Trust's application of the ecosystem approach to the West Don Lands privileged development above all else and in so doing subsumed issues of environmental quality and its impacts on health to the drive for wealth creation. The Trust's recommendation for the flood protection berm and its promotion of neoliberalised soil remediation regulations would provide the technological solutions required to resolve the environmental problems that had limited development.

In 1997, as part of the Lower Don Lands Strategy, the Trust published a report entitled *Greening the Toronto Port Lands*, which takes the ecomodernisation of the ecosystem approach and its commodification of nature one step further in efforts to open up the Port Industrial District to new economic opportunities. Based on "a vision...introduced in the publications of the Royal Commission" (Waterfront Regeneration Trust 1997: ii), the report outlines a "green infrastructure" plan for the Port Industrial District made up of a system of parks, corridors, water's edge promenades and development parcels to provide "an attractive and functionally useful setting for future development in the Port Lands" (2). The utility of each of the components in the plan is measured in relation to how well they perform a variety of functions, from air quality improvement to recreational opportunities, and the performance criteria for each is described; in the case of 'major parks' for example, performance is determined in part by size, since "wildlife biologists have found that the larger the habitat area, the more diverse the wildlife" (18). In addition, these components are judged by their ability to "provide aesthetic order and visual quality to the public landscape, enhance property values, celebrate the Port Lands' industrial heritage, establish linkages, and improve public access" (27). This evaluation of the characteristics of the environmental aspects of the "green infrastructure" plan – identified

in the report as “the first step in the revitalization process” (2) – is also an important moment in the commodification of nature on the waterfront.

In an examination of the impact of national environmental policy-making on the economic use of wetlands in the United States (Robertson 2000), four conceptual moments have been identified in the process through which nature is commodified. The first of these four moments is the abstraction of natural features into functional categories which allow for the complexity of nature to be viewed through the lens of “a set of characteristics considered relevant by the scientist, engineer, or developer” (472). This process of categorisation results in “the instant abstraction of services, severing the characteristic being measured from the messy uniqueness of the physical site” (473). This first level of abstraction can then lead to the monetary valuation of the services that these natural features perform. A second abstraction of these functional categories across space is then possible, which leads ultimately to an exchange system for natural features. As yet, nature on the waterfront has not been commodified to the extent of wetlands in the US – wherein, for example, wetland banks have been created to allow the trading of nature credits between developers and governments both within and between states. Nevertheless, it is certainly the case that the Trust’s assignment of functional values to its system of “green infrastructure” contributed to the abstraction of nature in a way that allowed for its use as the foundation for economic development and wealth creation on the waterfront.

The “green infrastructure” plan for the Port Industrial District was subsequently taken up by the City of Toronto, which in 1999 published a report entitled *Unlocking Toronto’s Port Lands: Directions for the Future*. While the City had continued to maintain its industrial retention policy for the area, the confluence of the recommendations for new land use made by the Crombie Commission, the Trust’s *Greening the Portlands* recommendations, the provincial government’s

relaxation of remediation standards, and the land uses proposed by the 2008 Olympic Bid, as well as the changes being seen in the Kings as a result of the new land use strategies and the economic development focus of the newly-amalgamated City of Toronto, the City determined that the time was right to review its policies for the Port Industrial District.

Unlocking Toronto's Port Lands wholeheartedly embraced the green infrastructure plan of the Trust's *Greening the Toronto Portlands*, calling it a "structure plan" which "creates a framework around which land uses and new development should be organized" (City of Toronto 1999d: 8). The basis of the framework is "a system of diverse, linked open spaces, natural areas and parks" which "is important both in terms of amenity and environmental quality, but also in terms of attracting new investment into the area" (8). The echoes of the Crombie Commission's "environment, community, and economy" mantra can clearly be heard herein. Fundamental to the structure plan are a system of "water's edge promenades and public spaces, natural areas, green corridors, and parks" (8), including creating "a natural mouth to the Don River" (12). All of these "green infrastructure" components answer the historic calls in Toronto for greater public access to the water's edge and respond to many of the problems created by Harbourfront and Harbour Square which had, to a large degree, originally provoked the formation of the Crombie Commission. More importantly, however, for the emerging vision of global interurban competitiveness that fuels current rationales for waterfront development, the report compared the "green infrastructure" system to similar facilities in a variety of waterfront cities around the world. Photographs of international promenades, café strips, parks, and public spaces were peppered throughout the report "in order to assist in defining this vision" (19), and while explicit comparisons were not drawn in the text – as they would be in the TWRC's documents – these

examples served as important visual benchmarks of the possibilities for waterfront revitalization and the opportunities which Toronto had as yet not realized.

Unlocking Toronto's Port Lands also set out a land use plan for the Port Industrial District which demonstrates “a true diversity of uses” (20) including residential, commercial, recreational, port-related, retail, “clean” industrial, “old” industrial, research and development, business services, and various others, with a focus on new economic and job creation opportunities. The Polson and Cousins Quays, the proposed site for the Olympics' Athletes' Village, are envisioned as “a place where people work, play and live in the most diverse urban community imaginable,” with residential, work, and recreational opportunities creating “a place like no other in the city” and offering “stunning views” (20) of Toronto's Inner Harbour and skyline that could eventually be marketed to the world. A subsequent intense public consultation process, comprised of a “Community Forum” and an “Industrial/Business Forum” that both met weekly for four months, determined that while residential uses generated some division amongst members of both Forums, consensus was achieved on the acceptability of the other uses (Lura Consulting 2000). This relative consensus among a variety of groups provided some of the political support necessary for the City of Toronto to proceed with plans for a diversity of uses in the Port Industrial District.

The *Unlocking* report and its new land uses, which had been proposed by the Commission and promoted and facilitated by the Trust, was adopted by Council in principle in mid-1999. In a “clear, bold vision that unlocks Toronto's Port Lands” (1), the report was said to have brought “together various interests and provide[d] a co-ordinated direction for the political, investment, and planning decisions that have to be made to revitalize the area” (2), in effect undertaking exactly the kind of work originally proposed by the Commission and the Trust. Thus, *Unlocking*

Toronto's Portlands – based on the legacy of the ecosystem approach – provided much of the jurisdictional clarification, land use proposals, and private-sector involvement necessary to reconfigure the Port Industrial District for the new economic uses of the 21st-century.

In its succession of land use-related documents and planning processes and its promotion of the 2008 Olympic bid, the Trust took steps to promote and consolidate both political acceptance and legislative action in support of the same new economy uses for the Port Industrial District that had been recommended by the Crombie Commission. Through the continuing promotion of the ecosystem approach, the Trust was able to bring jurisdictions and stakeholders together to agree on new uses for these lands. More importantly, it was able to provide the technological solutions necessary to resolve environmental problems, allowing for the development of these new uses to be both practical and acceptable. In doing so, however, it promoted the entrepreneurialism of local government and the adoption of neoliberalised policy regimes, and contributed significantly to the conceptualisation of nature as an economic entity that could be used as a commodity. In taking these steps, the Trust's work effectively ended the era of industrial hegemony on the Port Industrial District, and began a new era wherein the City of Toronto became an active promoter of new uses. However, while new uses for the lands would be accepted legislatively, determining responsibility for their environmental clean-up would ultimately and truly unlock the lands.

The Private Sector: Who Pays? and the Global Imperative

The Trust's continuation of the Commission's ecosystem approach meant a wide variety of private-sector interests were included in waterfront planning, including community-based organizations and groups as well as businesses and corporations. As well, the Trust's role as convenor or facilitator of development projects provided the vehicle through which the private-

sector could have a direct bearing on the shape of waterfront lands. All along the Waterfront Trail, for example, as the Trust pursued its co-ordinating role, it brought a variety of public infrastructure projects, such as the Humber bicycle-pedestrian bridge, together with the private funding required to finance it. The York Street Teamway project, for example, was accomplished using “public property, private money, [and] we worked through the regulatory roadblocks to get the project done. It looks like a public-private partnership. But what is it? It’s a wonderful public asset built with private and public money...and it’s a model.” (Evenson 2005).

As in the work of the Commission, the Trust’s rationale for private-sector involvement in infrastructure projects, which are traditionally understood as not only the exclusive domain but also the rightful responsibility of the public sector, was the ecosystem approach-based notion that “the challenges ... are great, often beyond the ability of any one individual, group or agency” (Waterfront Regeneration Trust 1995b: 14). However, with the nature of planning privileging capital and the influence of government downsizing requiring new sources of funding, the Trust insisted that “encouraging private sector involvement in waterfront planning and stewardship is essential to [the waterfront’s] future” (70).

The Trust’s Lake Ontario Greenway Strategy envisioned an important role for the private sector in financing “green infrastructure” development. It proposed that “future allocations of government funds to Greenway projects should continue to require some form of local matching” (154) from businesses and community groups. It outlined a proposal to “broaden the base of support for the Lake Ontario Greenway, in particular with the private sector” through a promotional campaign making use of sponsorships, donor recognition opportunities, and “use of the waterfront logo” (154) thus commodifying the waterfront for corporate exploitation. However, the Strategy also suggests that “public spending on infrastructure projects” be

“positioned to encourage the maximum related private investment” (175), indicating that public investments in infrastructure should be made speculatively rather than being focused on specific development proposals. This kind of entrepreneurial public sector investment policy would soon become the dominant form of public sector involvement in waterfront development.

While private funding for small development projects around the Trail was encouraged, the Trust’s position on large-scale infrastructure funding, such as that required in the Port Industrial District and the West Don Lands, would be significantly different. The Lower Don Lands Strategy, as outlined in the report of the site remediation workshop of 1993, the *West Don Lands* report of 1995, and 1997’s *Greening the Toronto Portlands*, was concerned with improving the quality of the environment for the sake of encouraging private-sector investment and with finding technological solutions to the environmental problems that were impeding development, particularly those which would reduce financial liability for the private-sector. The discussion paper that framed the workshop spoke of the necessity for “some form of assurance that [lender] liability will be minimized” in order to “ensure a more available flow of capital to those businesses and ventures that are necessary to the regeneration of the Lower Don Lands” (Waterfront Regeneration Trust 1993: 16). It posited that some groups should be exempt from liability since “problems arise when these parties are not in a position to fund remediation” and posited a variety of financing mechanisms, such as a cleanup fund or environmental liability insurance. However, it also indicated that “earmarking general taxation revenues for cleanup” may be a fair way to proceed, “given that all taxpayers may have benefitted from that activity which caused the contamination” (16). Despite the provincial government’s position that “the idea that the ‘polluter pays’ is paramount” (59), the workshop participants agreed: “given that so many of us have benefitted from the end products of polluting processes, which we collectively

failed to control, perhaps we will all have to pay via taxes” (79). The notion that corporate financial responsibility for environmental contamination should be shifted to the public sector, which constitutes a “roll-out” (Peck and Tickell 2002) neoliberal response to the economic conditions impeding development, would soon be realised. Since “uncertainty kills investment,” it would become incumbent on governments to assume an “essential role in reducing uncertainty about standards, remediation strategies and, in particular, liability” (50). The public sector’s role in waterfront development would therefore become primarily facilitative of private capital, and its investments in infrastructure purely responsible for creating the conditions within which investment, and thus the potential for a productive return on investment, could be realised.

In addition, the *West Don Lands* report was overwhelmingly weighted toward encouraging private sector investment. It spoke of the need to find ways “to return the West Don lands to productive economic use” (Waterfront Regeneration Trust 1995a: 2) in order to improve “the prospects for reprivatization of the West Don lands” (4) since “investor perception about the environmental condition of the West Don lands could be a major barrier to re-privatization and productive reuse” (11). Its action plan for the provision of “green infrastructure,” including the flood protection berm, a program for soil and groundwater remediation, and the provision of parks and recreational space, was intended to “add value to the lands” (11) for the sole purpose of making “the area attractive to new economic uses that can generate the capital necessary to reinvigorate this important part of Toronto’s waterfront” (23). While the *West Don Lands* report was silent on the issue of financing green infrastructure, implicit is the notion that public investment would allow private capital to be both the primary beneficiary of green infrastructure provision as well as the most appropriate owner and best re-generator of the lands.

The Trust's work demonstrates an increasing emphasis on both generating private wealth through waterfront development and providing economic opportunities for the private sector that result from public sector investment in environmental improvement. Moreover, these documents also reveal a growing concern with reconfiguring waterfront lands in order to meet the imperatives of the global economy. The Trust's inclusive planning processes, which gave the private sector a seat at the table, not only brought with it the logic of capital, but also conveyed support for acknowledging the changing geography of capital accumulation. The 1993 site remediation workshop report, for instance, spoke of creating "an economically competitive waterfront" which offers "a competitive advantage in the global economy" (Waterfront Regeneration Trust 1993: 4). In outlining the major shifts in the global political-economic geography arising from the crisis of Fordism, the report says that "we must understand the world we live in and the interaction of the global economy on local and regional interests" (4). Global economic shifts "mean that the business environment in which the waterfront operates has changed" and thus necessitates focusing waterfront development on "value-added knowledge intensive activities" to allow the waterfront "to play its constructive role in positioning the Toronto region for the 21st century" (5-6). Far from providing a reconstituted natural environment or benefits to Toronto's local population, development of the waterfront – and the waterfront itself – is intended as the instrument for participation in, and furthering of, the global economy. Reconfiguring the waterfront's overlapping jurisdictional authorities, the uses made of its land, and the role of the private sector in its transformation become the means by which the waterfront is made to both respond to and foster the global economy's reach.

Clearly, the imperatives of the global economy were being advanced by many more powerful political and economic influences than this one workshop – not the least of which was Canada's

ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994. Nevertheless, the Trust's accommodation of the private sector in its waterfront planning efforts brought along with it an understanding that the political, physical, and ideological landscape of this specific local territory needed to be reconstituted in particular ways, and that this reconstitution would provide the conditions for a proliferation of new strategies of capital accumulation. However, the influence of the global imperative on the City of Toronto's waterfront plans would subsequently be consolidated through the 2008 Olympic bid.

Going Big: The Olympics as a Mega-Catalyst for Growth

Although the Waterfront Regeneration Trust contributed much to resolving jurisdictional issues, reconfiguring land use, and facilitating private sector involvement on the waterfront, it faced a threat to its existence, as did so many other provincial bodies and programs, following the election of Mike Harris and his neoliberal government. Shortly after the 1995 election, Harris undertook a large-scale privatisation programme which eventually, in 1999, resulted in conversion of the Trust into a non-profit charitable organization made dependent on private-sector donations, grants, and financing partnerships. The Trust's leadership knew that privatisation was coming, and would inevitably result in revenue reductions and reduced institutional capacity. To maintain a focus on waterfront development, they determined that a large-scale project would be necessary. Jeff Evenson, the Trust's former Director of Central Waterfront Projects, said, "we knew that the government of Ontario was shutting us down ... [so] we sat down and made a conscious decision to go big. What we had to do was we had to focus attention on the waterfront. And the way to do that – Olympics" (Evenson 2005).

Chapter Five:

The 2008 Olympic Bid: Waterfront Development via Mega-Event

In much the same way that the Trust had used the Waterfront Trail as a catalyst for development in communities all along the waterfront, the Trust determined that the development of Toronto's Central Waterfront could be ensured through the catalytic impact of hosting the 2008 Olympic Games. Crombie himself "got into it...because I was actually following a pattern that we were following all around the lake. In order to get local governments, local businesses, local community organizations together with federal and provincial representation, whatever other stakeholders that you needed, you had to look for issues that would bring them together" (Crombie 2005). But while Trail-related projects could spark interest in smaller communities, Toronto's particularities posed a problem: "Things get lost in Toronto. What would be a big impact in Whitby wouldn't make the news [in Toronto]. So you needed something that would focus on the waterfront and push everybody to look in the...same direction with all these complex, disparate organizations" (Crombie 2005). That "something" was the Olympics.

This chapter will examine the ways in which Toronto's bid for the 2008 Olympic Games resolved the various waterfront problems that the Commission and the Trust were, on their own, not able to accomplish. The Olympic bid solidified the commitment of the three levels of government to a waterfront development plan that would introduce a variety of new uses critical for wealth generation, especially in the Port Industrial District, while placing the private sector in a position to direct the terms of and approach to that development, concurrently re-constituting the public sector's role. In the process, the bid consolidated a globally-oriented vision for the waterfront intended to increase Toronto's place in the 21st-century economy. While the work done by the Commission and Trust was supported by governments and the public alike, it was to

a large degree the limiting effect of environmental contamination on much of these lands – and the inability or unwillingness of either the public or private sectors to take on its resolution – that prevented development from taking place. Through the Olympic bid, a source for funding the green infrastructure required to answer this problem was found, which was the key to opening up Toronto’s waterfront to the 21st-century.

Jurisdiction: Consolidating the Growth Coalition

While the defeat of Toronto’s 1996 bid was attributed by many to a combination of the local opposition of groups like Bread Not Circuses, the refusal of the bid’s proponents to respond to local concerns, and the division these created among local politicians – whose united support was crucial for the Bid’s success – the 2008 bid team would suffer no such defeat. Having learned from the 1996 bid and from the Trust’s ecosystem approach-based successes that a broad-based, inclusive and consultative strategy was critical to success, the Trust began a series of one-on-one and small group discussions to gauge and consolidate support, at least one year before news of the bid became public (Evenson 2005; Crombie 2005; Lorinc 1998). Evenson, one of the key organisers, said that their success came because they “didn’t shy away from discussions with people” (Evenson 2005). Indeed, Crombie and his key Trust staffers met with artists, residents’ groups, environmentalists, faith communities, the non-profit sector and community service agencies, municipal representatives, athletes, and a wide variety of other groups – including Bread Not Circuses – both organising and attending “scores of meetings” and using the various connections that had been built through the work of both the Crombie Commission and the Trust (Crombie 2005; Evenson 2005; Lorinc 1998, 2001). This multi-sectoral, community-based strategy, which the 1996 bid eschewed, secured much-needed support from across a wide range of sectors. While Bread Not Circuses again took an anti-bid position, it

was unable to rally the same level of opposition as before. Media reports speculated that the city might not only have been different but better had the 1996 Olympic bid been successful (Spears 1996), and Crombie was said to have “gone to elaborate lengths to diffuse [BNC’s] strange power by mollifying...sympathizers in downtown social-welfare and community organizations (Lorinc 1998). In addition, while organized labour had been a large part of the earlier BNC coalition (Bread Not Circuses 1990: frontispiece), many unions signed on to support the 2008 bid. This was especially true of the building trades and construction unions, who were convinced that the Olympics and its intense construction requirements would provide much-needed jobs for its membership (Cameron 1998a, 1998b).

With public support and positive media coverage building, the bid organising team, known as BidCo, sought to ensure the strong and continuing support from all levels of government that the 1996 bid had not enjoyed. By the late 1990s, however, the political conditions across all scales of the Canadian state had shifted. Federally, Jean Chrétien’s Liberals had resoundingly defeated the much-reviled Conservative party in 1993. Nonetheless, while having campaigned on a promise to abrogate the contentious North American Free Trade Agreement, upon election Chrétien’s government instead ratified it. Indeed, the Chrétien government’s trade and economic policies were shaped not only by the drive toward fiscal efficiency and debt reduction but also by the increasing integration of the global economy, with “domestic policy issues...subordinated to the seemingly ineluctable demands of the international market” (Macdonald 1997: 190). Taking steps to help secure a coveted international event such as the Olympics – which would generate world-wide publicity for Canada and its largest city – dovetailed well with these policies. With lobbying from the right contacts providing an opportunity for the Liberals to contribute to Toronto in advance of the 2000 election²⁸, Chrétien himself would later sign on.

Provincially, Harris' neoliberal provincial government was instituting its Common Sense Revolution and, while initially disinterested in Toronto's Central Waterfront (Crombie 2005), Harris himself would become one of the bid's biggest supporters. Shortly after news broke that Crombie was preparing another bid, Jim Ginou, one of Harris' friends and key fundraisers, called Crombie to indicate that the Premier was interested in discussing the Bid's prospects (Crombie 2005). An Olympic bid would provide a good opportunity for Harris to exercise his new-found interest in "world class" cities. In his first year in office, Harris had become a convert to the growing mantra of the significance of urban areas to the global economy, and the "importance of large powerful cities as engines of the late twentieth century economy" (Ibbitson, in Bradford 2003: 1018). The Harris government's economic policies were deeply affected by this conversion, and a series of policy changes were made that were intended to provide Ontario's cities with the ability to "mobilize private sector partners in matters ranging from urban infrastructure financing, regional service delivery, and the formation of 'economic clusters' (Bradford 2003: 1019) to emphasise urban competitiveness at the global scale. The 1996 contaminated site guidelines which the Trust had vociferously praised, for example, were introduced largely to provide the conditions for urban development in the pursuit of "world class" city status (Desfor and Keil 2004: 164). And in January 1998, Harris amalgamated six local municipalities and the regional government into one large mega-city, the 2.5 million resident-strong City of Toronto. Although undertaken in part to break the power of the progressive regime in the former City of Toronto and its opposition to the Harris government (Kipfer and Keil 2002), the amalgamation, coupled with massive program downloading, supported the government's vision of "decentralized economic governance anchored in urban

public-private partnerships privileging business interests” (Bradford 2003: 1020). The Olympics fit well with this neoliberal vision and Harris’ support was assured.

And municipally, while the 1996 Olympic bid had prompted progressive leaders on Metro Council like Jack Layton to proclaim that “We are certainly not convinced that megaprojects contribute to the quality of life” (Hough 1989) by the time of the 2008 bid, the progressives had been compelled and mollified, if not entirely convinced. After amalgamation, Toronto Council was headed by Mel Lastman, a conservative, boosterist, former salesman who focused on business interests and whose penchant for grandiose schemes and large-scale promises was well-known. The new City had been fiscally hamstrung by Lastman’s three year property tax freeze and the province’s refusal to fund downloaded services. Toronto Council found itself in an untenable financial situation in an economy increasingly weighted toward the necessity for cities and city-regions to provide the conditions for wealth creation, and a national and provincial policy context increasingly pushing cities to do so. The City’s own economic and planning policies were becoming increasingly neoliberalised (Kipfer and Keil 2000, 2002), with its new Corporate Strategic Plan emphasising Toronto’s role as “the nation’s leading economic engine [and] a centre of innovation and growth with a strong international presence” (City of Toronto 1999c: 2) and its Official Plan highlighting the importance of economic competitiveness and partnering with the corporate sector²⁹. In such conditions, as Harvey (1989) has noted, “even the most resolute and avantgarde municipal socialists will find themselves, in the end, playing the capitalist game and performing as agents of discipline for the very processes they are trying to resist” (5). With the economic pressure of these conditions weighing heavily, as well as the personal pressure to carve out their place in the new mayoral regime (Kipfer and Keil 2002; Lorinc 1998), even the most determined progressives on Council, such as Layton and Olivia

Chow, voted to support the bid (City of Toronto 1998, 2000c). However, to make the Olympics more palatable, the City's support was made subject to a long series of conditions and the adoption of a statement of "Olympic Principles" related to environmentalism, provision of affordable housing, financial accountability, public consultation, social inclusivity, and the mitigation of social impact (City of Toronto 1998). These conditions were intended to respond to the social and economic concerns raised by opponents to the 1996 bid (City of Toronto 1998), and discussions to meet them ensued between BidCo, the City, and a variety of groups, including BNC. As Joe Pantalone, an influential progressive member of Council, later said, the 2008 bid organisers had "learned from the 1996 Olympic effort what the problems were and addressed them head on" (Pantalone 2005). Joe Halstead, the City's Commissioner of Economic Development, Tourism and Culture – who concurrently held a position on BidCo's executive committee – reported assiduously throughout the duration of the bid on progress made to meet these conditions, which largely convinced both Council and much of the general public of the bid's social and environmental conscience.

With work underway to secure the support of governments, the Toronto Harbour Commissioners once again threatened to frustrate progress. First, its chair, Harold Peerenboom, along with former chair Councillor Walker, made a series of accusations in the media and at Council: that BidCo was funding the bid from the Trust's taxpayer-funded monies; that private donations were being used inappropriately; and that the bid had paid huge fees to a consultant with direct ties to the Salt Lake City IOC bribery scandal (Lahey 1999; City of Toronto 1999b). Then, as it had in 1996, the THC objected to residential uses in the Port Industrial District and invoked its antiquated but legislated right to block development on the Polson and Cousin Quays (DeMara 1998). Crombie insisted that the use of public monies for the Olympic bid was well within the

Trust's public mandate in furtherance of waterfront development (Crombie 2005) and the connection to the IOC scandal resulted in a sharp but short-lived decline in private sector donations (Lorinc 2001). The THC's block on development, however, proved more politically sensitive and was resolved through a much larger policy change being undertaken concurrently by the Liberal government in Ottawa.

The federal government was in the midst of rationalising Canada's seaports through the 1997 Canada Marine Act. The Port of Toronto did not meet the criteria for inclusion in the new federal port system as its operations were too small, and it was therefore destined to be "transferred ... to local interests" (Canada 1996) – finally giving the City complete control over its port. However, last minute political manoeuvrings by Peerenboom and Liberal MP Dennis Mills resulted in a third-reading amendment on the floor of the House of Commons to include Toronto in the federal system (Canada 1997b; Evenson 2005; Crombie 2005). This meant not only that the THC would become a federal Port Authority, but also that the majority of its new board would be appointed by the federal government, and thus that an "instrument of the federal will" would continue to have a presence on the waterfront (Evenson 2005; Persichilli 1999). Toronto City councillors responded with howls of outrage, and travelled to Ottawa to unsuccessfully petition the Senate to overturn this gerrymandering (Canada 1997b). The legislation was not to take effect until mid-1999, however, and Peerenboom – a close associate of Transport Minister David Collenette – seemed assured of his continuing appointment as chair. However, when the appointments were announced, Peerenboom had been passed over and a new slate of directors approved. In defence of the change, Collenette indicated cryptically that Peerenboom's "vision of the port differed from that of the federal government" (Persichilli 1999). However, as Minister responsible for the Greater Toronto Area, Collenette was also in control of the government's

support for the Olympic bid (Persichilli 1999). His five picks for the Port Authority's board included a well-connected Liberal and father of one of BidCo's Vice Presidents as well as a member of BidCo's environment and venues committees (Baxter 1999; Crombie 2005; CBC 2001; Canada NewsWire 1999; Lorinc 2001). After announcing the appointments, Collette declared, "I'm hoping they will...work well with the city, the province and the Olympic bid" (Baxter 1999). While the Port Authority and the City continued their bitter battle over contested acreage – which was put on hold pending the outcome of the bid – the dispute over residential uses in the Port Industrial District and thus between the Port Authority and BidCo was resolved.

As a "world class" event, the Olympic Games was a draw for governments clamouring for attention on the world stage and increasingly focusing their policies around assuring their place in the global economy. As well, the consultative approach taken by the bid team to address the concerns of as many groups as possible using already-existing relationships helped consolidate both public and political support for the Olympics and therefore for waterfront development more generally. The globally-scaled nature of the Olympics thus provided yet another step toward resolving the jurisdictional fragmentation that had plagued waterfront development for years. Additionally, however, the mega-event strategy became the consolidating moment for the land-use plans that had already been made by the Commission and the Trust.

Land Use: The Politics of Olympic Support

As noted, BidCo's proposal to use the Polson and Cousins Quays for the Athlete's Village, in combination with other factors including the contemporaneous work of the Trust and the political declawing of the Toronto Port Authority, resulted in a striking and historic change in the City's position on the acceptability of new land uses in the Port Industrial District. However, the

catalytic impact of the 2008 bid resulted in the official policy change that would prove to be the final step in the long process of reconceptualising the Port Industrial District for 21st-century economic uses, allowing the City to abandon its industrial retention policy and open up the area to new avenues of capital accumulation.

In November 1999, Prime Minister Chrétien, Premier Harris and Mayor Lastman gathered on the waterfront in an unprecedented demonstration of tripartite co-operation to announce “a grand, 10-year plan for massive redevelopment of the city’s 46-kilometre waterfront” (Moloney and Demara 1999). The plan was embodied in a document entitled *Our Toronto Waterfront: The Wave of the Future!*³⁰, a highly boosterist report which, despite bearing the logo of the City of Toronto, is reputed to have been written by one of the TO-Bid team (Evenson 2005). The land uses proposed in *Wave of the Future* were an almost mirror image of recommendations from the Crombie Commission and ideas either forwarded or supported by the Trust. These included such “green infrastructure” elements as “building a 30- to 50-metre wide ‘greenway’” along the entire waterfront, “restoring the mouth of the Don River,” (Moloney and DeMara 1999), and making the waterfront an “area that nurtures wildlife, restores and creates natural habitats, and provides water that is clean and healthy” (City of Toronto 1999a: 5). However, in the spirit of the ecosystem approach, it also included building public amenities such as “bandshells, a new aquarium, a new museum” providing “affordable and attainable housing,” (City of Toronto 1999e) and creating in the Port Industrial District a “home for Toronto’s growing and internationally-competitive ‘imagination industries’ such as new media, film, animation, and digital creations” and “for leading-edge environmental industries” (City of Toronto 1999a: 17) to usher in the new economic sectors of the 21st-century. In fact, the Port Industrial District would be “reborn as a vibrant mixed-use district embracing environmental, residential, industrial,

business, sports and recreational activities” (9) just as the Commission and Trust had envisioned. As Premier Harris said, “the political will for what will no doubt be a multi-billion dollar project now exists” after “decades of political wrangling” (Mallan 1999). Various community leaders, including Crombie and former mayor Barbara Hall, were extremely supportive of the plan as the three levels of government were finally making the commitment required to reconnect the city and its waterfront (Moloney and DeMara 1999).

Although the waterfront plan was said to be related to the attempt to secure the Olympics, this connection was initially considerably downplayed. Despite having earlier publicly disavowed the notion that public sector involvement in the development of the waterfront was tied to the Olympic bid (Daily Commercial News and Construction Record 1999), Lastman acknowledged at the November announcement that “We are bidding for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games and the waterfront venues will help make our bid more attractive” (in Moloney and Demara 1999). The *Wave of the Future*’s hyperbolic plan for the waterfront said only that “our waterfront vision is big enough to embrace the 2008 Summer Olympics” (City of Toronto 1999a). In addition, the three politicians made repeated promises that waterfront development would proceed with or without the Olympic Games (Toronto Star 1999; DeMara 1999; City of Toronto 1999a). Perhaps anticipating that the Commission and Trust’s successful expansion of Toronto’s growth coalition provided more political support for fixing the waterfront than that which existed for another attempt at a mega-event, the plan was clearly intended to foreground the benefits of waterfront development and position a successful Olympic bid as a possible but subordinate outcome. Despite this political positioning, however, it soon became clear that the Olympic bid was the catalyst, as the Trust had desired, for the unprecedented level of commitment – both political and financial – to transforming the industrial waterfront into a waterfront for the new millennium.

Private Sector Involvement: Olympic Investment as a Subsidy for Growth

Staging an Olympic Games bid in North America is typically a private-sector endeavour, with local business interests from various sectors coalescing around the mega-event's potential for increased revenues both during the Games as well as over the longer-term due to increased tourism and investor confidence (Andranovich *et al* 2001). While a wide variety of businesses and corporations became involved as sponsors and organisers of Toronto's 2008 bid, their willingness to take on its time-consuming organisational tasks and risky financial responsibilities was initially in doubt. As such, the Trust undertook its broad-based organising campaign as much to assure corporate interests of community support as to consolidate the necessary jurisdictional co-operation, and it spent nearly \$1 million in public funds "getting the bid to the point where the private sector agreed to invest" (Evenson 2005)³¹.

With the increased participation of the business community, however, BidCo's stakeholder roundtable strategy was largely abandoned. Although many of the details of BidCo's internal politics have been published elsewhere (Lorinc 2001), it is sufficient to say here that Crombie and his Trust team were superseded by a private-sector-led coalition of business interests who had direct ties to and support from Premier Harris, as well as strong connections to Prime Minister Chrétien and Mayor Lastman (Crombie 2005; Lorinc 2001). This coalition determined that BidCo's approach was too unwieldy, as evidenced by its 106-member Board of Directors which Crombie defended as a signal of the bid's inclusivity (Vincent 1999). Influential members of BidCo deemed the roundtable strategy, which had initially brought them on board and secured the support of Toronto Council, an inefficient method of garnering international support from the IOC. These BidCo members ultimately prevailed in ensuring that a more business-like approach would be taken (Crombie 2005; Evenson 2005).

In an attempt to ensure this more business-oriented approach, Jim Ginou, Steve Hudson, Premier Harris and others (Crombie 2005) manoeuvred to oust Crombie, eventually replacing him with fried chicken magnate John Bitove Jr.³² as the public face of the bid. In spring 1999, Bitove was appointed CEO of the new, re-tooled BidCo, now known as TO-Bid (Vincent 1999). Bitove was well-known for his feisty and daring business acumen and his involvement in sport, having brought the Raptors NBA franchise to Toronto, developed the Air Canada Centre, and organised a variety of large-scale sporting events (Vincent 1999). His appointment was seen as a signal of an elitist takeover and, despite having taken a cautious although largely negative position until then, Bread Not Circuses publicly declared its opposition to the bid (see Bread Not Circuses 2000; Christie 1999). Crombie's apparent ouster was also greeted with alarm by members of Council (Lorinc 2001). Nevertheless, Crombie himself determined that "I had a choice. I could have said, 'OK, I'm gone.' But that would have killed the bid," (Crombie 2005). Rather than risk jeopardising the support of both Council and the groups he had worked so hard to win over – and thereby risk losing the opportunity for waterfront development to proceed – Crombie stayed on as the Board's co-Chair and took over responsibility for ensuring continued local support, publicly insisting that "there's no tension...not a bit" (in Starkman 1999).

In much the same way as the Commission's stakeholder roundtable approach mirrored the Rae NDP government's model for public-private partnerships as a response to economic restructuring (see chapter 3), the Olympic bid's new "efficient" approach corresponded well with the Harris government's "neoliberal partnership paradigm" (Bradford 2003: 1011). In pursuing public-private partnerships, the Harris government favoured business elites over other sectors and instilled private sector operational practices into the public sector so that it would "become more business-like in brokering deals to harness private investment to rebuild the province's fraying

physical infrastructure, especially in urban centres” (1011). Bitove and the private sector management approach adopted by TO-Bid would prove instrumental in determining the future direction of both private- and public-sector involvement in waterfront planning and development, and would provide the foundation, both literally and figuratively, for new opportunities for wealth generation on the waterfront.

With the change in leadership came a new spatial plan for the Olympics. While Crombie had initially intended to locate a number of the major athletic venues on the Canadian National Exhibition grounds, the new team at the helm of TO-Bid moved these venues to the Port Industrial District, and moved the Athlete’s Village from the Polson and Cousin Quays to a site south of the ship channel. The moves would purportedly provide a “more dramatic” backdrop to the Games and give the athletes a quieter atmosphere (Lorinc 2001; Byers 1999). However, the new locations would also require a considerable infusion of new investment to remediate the area’s polluted soil and water as well as to provide new sewerage, sidewalks, transportation links, and a variety of other items, particularly as the entire area south of the ship channel was not serviced by any City works.

None of these major cost items, however, could appear as expenses in the Olympic Games budget. The International Olympic Committee’s financing rules were such that only Games-related infrastructure costs, such as a new stadium, could be included in a host city’s budget. Any costs that would have a longer-lasting, city-building impact had to be financed by “the public authorities or the private sector” (International Olympic Committee 2000) and thus these expenditures, with their potential to provide the necessary conditions for further future development, would have to be financed externally. Determining which costs were which and finding sources to provide them would be TO-Bid’s next task. For this, Bitove enlisted the help

of Robert Fung (Lilley 2003; Evenson 2005), a successful investment banker, corporate financier, mining company director and long-time Liberal Party member whose close personal ties to Prime Minister Chrétien³³ would help him convince the federal government to finance these costs (Crombie 2005). Premier Harris was already firmly on board, as revealed by the central role taken by some of his key fundraisers and strategists in the leadership of TO-Bid as well as the ouster of his previously appointed Olympics Commissioner, MPP Morley Kells, who had publicly criticised the bid as a giveaway to developers that would burden taxpayers with billions in waterfront- and Olympics-related spending (Mackie 2000; Brennan 1999a, 1999b; Daily News and Construction Record 1999). Securing the City's financial commitment was all that remained.

Shortly thereafter, the November 1999 announcement was made and the City's position, as written by the bid team in the *Wave of the Future* document, was made clear. Not only did *Wave of the Future* trumpet the benefits of new land uses, it portrayed these new uses as the catalysts for an economic renaissance, indicating that the "spectacular" places and spaces that would be built on the waterfront would "create the synergies that will draw even more jobs and investment to Toronto" (City of Toronto 1999a: 3) and "add to Toronto's allure as a tourist destination" (21). The document exhorted Toronto to respond to the exigencies of the global economy and the "highly competitive world where entrepreneurs, skilled workers and innovative companies gravitate to cities that offer the best quality of life" (3) and positioned a revitalized waterfront as the optimal location for that response. The Port Industrial District would see "the biggest and most dramatic change" as it "provides a unique opportunity for a wide range of activities that will spark economic and social life in an underused part of the city" (9). However, as all of this potential for economic development was contingent on environmental remediation and

infrastructure provision, and as though in direct response to the position of the Trust's remediation workshop in 1993, *Wave of the Future* pledged that public-sector funds would be spent to create these new opportunities for capital accumulation:

Strategic public investment in cleaning up contaminated sites and improving public spaces, primes the pump and creates new opportunities for investment. It creates a "virtuous cycle" in which new business generates more property taxes, more property taxes lead to better public facilities, better public facilities attract more investment and more investment creates more jobs. (City of Toronto 1999a: 7).

This is a ground-breaking statement. Not only does the public assumption of such investment allow the private sector to externalise the massive costs of remediation, which only a few years before were considered its rightful responsibility, it also transforms a Keynesian-based rationale for public sector spending into support for a speculative and entrepreneurial 'trickle-down' neoliberal economic and social policy. The public sector was indeed to become "more business-like" (Bradford 2003).

At the November 1999 announcement, it was also announced that Robert Fung had been appointed by Lastman to head what was called a "citizen task force" (Moloney and DeMara 1999) that would report to Council within sixty days on the waterfront development project's "implementation cost, investment, timing, inventory of assets and opportunities for government and private sector involvement" (City of Toronto 1999e). The Waterfront Revitalization Task Force was made up almost exclusively of private-sector businesspeople, many of whom were directly connected to the Olympic bid³⁴. Although it held no public consultations, the Task Force sought the advice of senior real estate and finance executives, corporate strategists, and urban design, engineering, and production consultants (Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force 2000: appendix). In early 2000, the Task Force produced its report, entitled *Our Toronto Waterfront: Gateway to the New Canada*. While *Wave of the Future* had indicated that

waterfront development was “not just for government” and the public sector, as underwriter, was dependent on the private sector’s “expertise...advice and wisdom” (City of Toronto 1999a: 7), the Fung Report went a step further. While the Olympic bid was acknowledged as providing the “focus and sense of urgency” to kindle waterfront development, the report took the position of the 1993 Economic Forum on the Future of the GTA that Toronto’s downtown was “in decline” and that, Olympics or no, drastic steps were necessary to reverse residential and business outmigration and forestall the risk to the city’s quality of life (Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force 2000: 21). As such, a three-part “strategic business plan” was required (27).

The Task Force’s “development concept,” or, more traditionally, its land-use plan, provided for all of the uses that had been accommodated in the Crombie Commission’s ecosystem approach: new residential development, a “green border” along the water’s edge, “450 acres of new public open space” (30), and a “naturalized” mouth for the Don River (36) as well as a “convergence centre” in the Port Industrial District to accommodate the “new media and the new high-technology and knowledge-based economy” (31), and “new attractions and places” to stimulate tourism (33). The “financial concept” anticipated a \$5.2 billion investment to accommodate the infrastructure and environmental remediation needs of the project, with the assumption that “governments will undertake much of the infrastructure activity” (70) just as the Trust’s work had foreseen. And the “operational concept” called for the creation by governments of a “development corporation” that would “operate in a business model” offering “investors or partners a greatly simplified planning process” with an “efficient and action-oriented” governance structure and “the authority to sell, lease or mortgage their land assets” (61), which provided a market-focused institutional remedy to the problem of jurisdiction. The Task Force report thus consolidated the work of the Crombie Commission and the Waterfront Regeneration

Trust in a development model incorporating the operational practices of the private sector and functioning in accord with the logic of capital.

The Task Force report was subsequently approved by Council (City of Toronto 2000e) and, in October 2000, the “three amigos³⁵” converged once again on the waterfront to announce a joint investment of \$1.5 billion – \$500 million from each level of government – in “major infrastructure development; a thorough environmental clean-up of the area, including the Don River; and the creation of greenspaces at key points along the waterfront” (Ontario 2000). The announcement was made shortly before that year’s closely timed municipal and federal elections and was carefully framed to both respond to the historic call for action on the waterfront as well as to support the Olympic bid. Although federal funding for Toronto would usually be considered “bad politics,”³⁶ an investment in the waterfront could be justified to other parts of the country as contributing instead to the Olympics, which, when positioned as a Canadian benefit, could transgress the political boundaries that typically delineate the territories to which pre-election spending is directed. As such, the Olympics allowed Chrétien to contribute to infrastructure financing with the justification that the funding would help the entire nation through the global reach of the Olympics. Provincially, Harris’ notorious anti-Toronto stance (Kipfer and Keil 2002: 245) could be ameliorated through his support for improving the waterfront. And municipally, Mel Lastman would benefit from having been the mayor who finally brought all jurisdictions together and wrestled \$1 billion from the higher orders of government to solve Toronto’s historic waterfront problem. Not only would a cleaned-up waterfront become “the kind of place that everyone can enjoy” (Ontario 2000), the announcement would “show the IOC that we have the funding in place to build the greatest games in the history of the Olympic movement” (Canada 2000).

The Olympics thus not only refocused governmental attention on the waterfront and got them all looking in the “same direction,” as the Trust had desired, but also, as Crombie said, “force[d governments] into having to make investments which they would not otherwise have to make” (Crombie 2005). Financing environmental remediation and infrastructure provision was, from the beginning, one of the main focuses of the Olympic effort, not only because of the longer-term benefits to development interests, but also, more strategically in the short term, because environmental initiatives were one of the International Olympic Committee’s three Olympic “pillars,” along with sport and culture (McAndrew 2000). Crombie was often quoted as saying that cleaning up the waterfront was important for the bid in that “we get points for stuff like this” (in McAndrew 2000). “To put it at its bluntest,” he said, “if you’re going to win the bid, you can’t say: ‘We’re going to have a wonderful waterfront concept and here’s the dirty water. And you can’t say, ‘Those are brownfield³⁷ sites, but we haven’t fixed them up’,” (in Walls 1998). And, with infrastructure provision having taken on an environmentally-tinged hue with the Trust’s notion of “green infrastructure” colouring not only soil remediation, parks and wildlife habitat but also the kind of remediation that would see the construction of sewers and sidewalks, public spending on both could be rationalized within the rubric of an environmental fix. As such, the pressure for investment in environmental remediation and infrastructure provision – the very conditions which would allow waterfront development to proceed – was exerted not only from the local level, as it had been for many years, but also now through the imperatives of an international organization whose criteria had to be met in order to achieve success.

The politics of the Olympic bid thus saw two mutually reinforcing, scaled strategies at play. The Trust’s plan to bid for the 2008 Games – a global event which promised the potential for economic benefit to all levels of government – made investment in waterfront infrastructure in

Toronto palatable for all governments regardless of the geographic bounds of their constituencies. Conversely, the local environmental and economic benefits that would accrue from government investment in the waterfront's green infrastructure – a legacy of the Crombie Commission's ecosystem approach to development – made the globally-focused Olympic bid palatable for local politicians and residents. As such, a “green Olympics,” as the 2008 Bid became known (Pantalone 2005), was a forceful strategy to facilitate waterfront development. In Toronto, as in many other cities, the mega-event strategy both consolidated the growth coalition and operationalised its ambitions, permitting “the powerful interests in cities to attach their agendas to the Olympic process, creating the perfect policy mechanism for ensuring a growth agenda” (Andranovich *et al* 2001: 127).

The October 2000 announcement that saw governments pledge \$1.5 billion to the waterfront also committed them to the corporate model for development management which the Task Force had recommended. With one month to spare before the IOC's decision would be announced, Council voted in May 2001 to support the creation of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation – which had been, as Evenson later said, “created for one reason and one reason alone, and that was to take the infrastructure costs of hosting the Olympics off the Olympic balance sheet” (Evenson 2005). At the same time, the Fung Task Force report was hurriedly being “translated” into the City's *Central Waterfront Secondary Plan* by many of the same planners, urban designers, and urban strategists who had worked as consultants to the Task Force (Crombie 2005; Urban Strategies 2005). Although the Secondary Plan was not officially adopted by the City until 2003, its principles were released in 2001 in a colourful, boosterist report called *Making Waves*, which could just as easily be used to demonstrate to the IOC the City's commitment to making waterfront improvements for the Olympics as to explain the City's plan

for the waterfront to the public and potential private-sector developers. Thus the plan for the Olympics, which the Fung Task Force was in effect intended to produce, also became the City's waterfront plan. As Crombie said, "Don't forget there were two things, one was the bid and the other was the City's waterfront plan. Now they were two separate things, or could have been. We made them one or out of the process they became one. So now we had a City plan and it was also the Olympic plan" (Crombie 2005). The roles between the private-sector in planning for the waterfront and those of the public sector had been reversed. As Karen Pitre, TO-Bid's Vice-President, said, "What's Olympic work and what's waterfront work? This is all in furtherance of waterfront issues" (in Sewell 2001).

More than this, however, the Olympic bid / City waterfront plan was clearly characterised as the vehicle through which Toronto could be repositioned on the global stage and thus become a "world class" city. All of the documents resulting from the Olympic bid's work, including the Task Force report, *Making Waves*, the City's *Central Waterfront Secondary Plan* bylaw, and the TWRC's *Development Plan and Business Strategy* made explicit comparisons between Toronto and other international cities, such as London, Barcelona, Baltimore, New York, and Cleveland, which were said to be "reaping the benefits" (Harris, in Moloney and DeMara 1999) of their own waterfront development initiatives. While many of these cities have experienced negative social, environmental, and economic impacts resulting from these projects (Moulaert *et al* 2003; Basset *et al* 2002; Florio and Brownill 2000; Sandercock and Dovey 2002; Swyngedouw *et al* 2002), the economic benefits to business, the catalytic "sparking" of external investment, the improvement of urban aesthetics, the luring of well-heeled tourist dollars, and the construction of a cosmopolitan, vibrant, and urbane aura that were said to have arisen from their reconfigured waterfronts were lauded as models for Toronto and proclaimed as the ultimate answer to

Toronto's longstanding waterfront problem – despite Crombie's earlier promises that Toronto's waterfront would not resemble “the ‘carbon copy, franchised’ variety” (Toronto Star 1989b) of other cities. Toronto was to reconfigure itself into an entrepreneurial entity using speculative investment in green infrastructure to bring the world to its waterfront. As such, responding to the global imperative of both the Olympics and the global economy, as captured in Lastman's characteristic hyperbolic style, would see Toronto “build the greatest waterfront in the world” (in City of Toronto 2000b).

From the Trust's perspective, the Olympic bid was a highly effective strategy to continue the transformation of the waterfront to respond to economic and social change. Not only did the bid solidify the commitment of the various jurisdictions, it capitalised on the ecosystem approach to construct a plan that would take Toronto's waterfront, with governments eagerly contributing to a development model driven by private-sector interests, into the 21st-century.

*Epilogue: Bid Dies, Vision Endures*³⁸

The pursuit of the Olympic Games has been described as part of a “mega-event strategy” undertaken by increasingly entrepreneurial local governments in the face of reduced funding and increasing economic globalization (Andranovich, Burbank and Heying 2001: 113). While such mega-events are said by their proponents to have enormous potential for generating interest and investment in urban areas, contributing to city-building, urban regeneration, and community pride, their pursuit constitutes a “new and potentially high-risk strategy for stimulating local economic growth” wherein large public expenditures are made in pursuit of an external event, with a variety of potentially fatal contingencies – such as securing sponsor interest, generating sufficient tourism growth, the potential for local opposition, boycott, or scandal, or the ever-

present possibility of losing out to another city – being difficult if not impossible to mediate (117). Toronto’s pursuit of the 2008 bid proved to be just such a risky endeavour.

With the city holding its breath, on July 13, 2001 the International Olympic Committee announced that the host of the 2008 Olympics would be, not Toronto, but Beijing. Despite this loss, described by Bob Fung as “a great disappointment, but not a tragedy” (Fung 2001), the promises made by governments that waterfront revitalization was nonetheless assured continue to be repeated. The Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation, with its private-sector Board of Directors and development industry management team, was given full provincial legislative authority through the adoption of Bill 151 in 2003 (Ontario 2003). However, the TWRC has been plagued by continuing delays in funding, a cumbersome bureaucratic process that requires each of its decisions be approved by all three levels of government, and a variety of actions undertaken by agencies of all three governments, including TEDCO, which circumscribe or entirely preclude future development possibilities. Although the TWRC has enjoyed much public support through its consultative “precinct planning” process, criticism is beginning to be levelled for the amount of money that has been spent on the extensive number of private-sector consultants engaged to undertake the bulk of its work. A recent review of its governance model revealed that the TWRC had not been given sufficient independent powers to successfully complete its given mandate (Mercer Delta 2004). The City has taken the position that politicians, who were purposely excluded from occupying positions on the TWRC’s Board of Directors, should be given the right to do so in order to resolve the political problems that are hampering development (City of Toronto 2004), but the federal government continues to block this change. It appears that the same jurisdictional gridlock that the Crombie Commission was created to resolve has, in the absence of the Olympic catalyst, reappeared.

Nonetheless, the City's *Secondary Plan* for the new waterfront of the 21st-century endures. Public pressure has led governments to release necessary funding to the TWRC. Plans for both the West Don Lands and the East Bayfront have been approved by Council, and the TWRC intends to break ground in the West Don Lands in 2006 with the flood protection berm, a reconfigured mouth for the Don River, contaminated soil remediation, and a public housing project funded by governments leading the way (TWRC 2005). Businesses that don't adequately meet the "clean and green" criteria are actively being relocated (Adams 2005). New plans for a vast waterfront park that will serve local as well as regional recreation needs are in the works (TWRC 2005). The Port Industrial District is the subject of an intensive planning process that will see a variety of mixed-use areas, including a catalytic "Centre for Creativity and Innovation" (TWRC 2002), developed in stages between 2006 and 2035, with green infrastructure projects acting as the "first key steps in Port Lands implementation" and the Polson and Cousin Quays intended as the location for the heaviest concentration of residential development in order to take advantage of their "spectacular waterfront views" (TWRC 2005). The environment-economy-community vision of the ecosystem approach has been reconfigured into a *Sustainability Framework* which is said to be "the new imperative for cities in the 21st century" (TWRC 2004: 1-1). And, perhaps most importantly, the global vision for the waterfront endures, with the City continuing to insist that the waterfront must conform to the global imperative. As has been said of the Olympics generally, "The symbolism of the Olympics allows advocates of growth to set the terms of the policy debate in cities, and these terms have been very narrowly defined" (Andranovich *et al* 2001: 128).

Conclusions:

A New Waterfront Development Paradigm

The planning and development of Toronto's waterfront has a long history as a contested site on which a variety of political, economic, environmental and social imperatives have been played out. The most recent wave of waterfront planning invokes "the global imperative" as its overriding rationale, but in doing so exposes the benefit it has gained from this history. In particular, current efforts have been significantly influenced by the earlier adoption of an approach to planning which accommodated many of these imperatives under a powerful new development paradigm. Examining the historical trajectory of this approach to planning allows me to draw a number of conclusions, the most fundamental of which relates to the way in which waterfront development is part of more general processes of urban capital accumulation.

In their quests to find new opportunities for wealth generation and capital accumulation under changing economic conditions, the public- and private-sector elites that typically direct urban governance have found myriad strategies through which to capitalise on increasingly derelict waterfront lands. From the so-called "Guggenheim Effect" which has helped transform Bilbao from an anachronistic steel town into a global tourist destination, to the use of privately funded transportation infrastructure to transform 5300 acres of abandoned London docklands into a residential and financial centre touted worldwide as a model for waterfront development, these contemporary quests for capital accumulation have significantly restructured many spatial, environmental, political, economic, and social waterfront landscapes. The pursuit of "world class" status is often the rationale for this 21st-century spatial fix and the global imperative which underlies it – which promotes competition with other similarly reconfigured cities for the

economic, territorial, and social spoils of the global economy – both directs and is directed by its activities in the urban realm.

In Toronto, world city formation has been underway for at least twenty five years (Kipfer and Keil 2000) but between 1989 and the early 2000s much of the efforts of Toronto's growth coalition were directed through a politically powerful approach to waterfront planning. The Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront adopted an ecosystem approach to waterfront development which took advantage of a prevailing public concern over environmental issues. In doing so, it popularised a conception of the relationship between nature and society in which resolving the economic limitations of environmental degradation becomes essential to facilitating growth. Massive public sector investment in so-called "green infrastructure" on Toronto's Central Waterfront is required, it is claimed, to create new opportunities to capitalise on lands made fallow by the legacy of macro-economic change. The effects of this investment promise not only to improve environmental conditions but also to transform the waterfront's frontier-like terrain of availability into a beachhead of possibility, possessing the necessary foundations upon which capital can continue to re-create space in its own image. As such, this infusion of public sector funding, and indeed the ecosystem approach itself, can best be understood not only as "'a mode of social regulation' for facilitating economic growth" (Desfor 1993: 179), but also as an example of "roll out" neoliberalism, which continues to reshape urban social relations in Ontario (Keil 2002). The prime conclusion arising from my research, therefore, is that the ecosystem approach to waterfront planning has permitted intervention in the Toronto waterfront's built environment in a way that subsidises capital accumulation "by providing the relatively fixed territorial structures that permit the accelerated circulation of

capital and the relatively unhindered operation of market forces” (Swyngedouw *et al* 2002: 200) while simultaneously reconfiguring urban governance over waterfront land.

In my examination of waterfront planning activity over the past twenty years, I have demonstrated that the Crombie Commission’s ecosystem approach was a highly effective development strategy. Under the aegis of this approach, the Commission and its successor agency, the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, largely resolved a variety of historic problems that were impeding the progress of waterfront development. In the course of their work, these two bodies creatively accommodated changing political conditions and constructed a new and expanded growth coalition from among a variety of sectors. As such, the ecosystem approach constitutes a new model for urban waterfront development – it is a powerful paradigm in which a variety of conflicting groups, ideological positions, political imperatives, environmental concerns, and social values were reconciled, providing the political climate necessary for continued growth under changing macro-economic conditions and opening up the conceptual and physical space necessary to allow for a new spatial fix.

In the face of limitations posed by jurisdictional gridlock, the expanded geography of the ecosystem approach was able to overcome traditional political boundaries. In doing so, it brought together a variety of governments, agencies, boards, and bodies to engage in common purposes. Within the decision-making structures of the Crombie Commission, inter-jurisdictional co-operation was initially facilitated to respond to public concern over the waterfront’s degraded ecosystem and the limitations posed to recreational use. After the Commission’s mandate ended, a variety of public agencies with overlapping jurisdictions were brought together – often with private-sector interests – by the Waterfront Regeneration Trust for the sake of local economic and social benefits arising from projects undertaken along the Waterfront Trail. With an

impending foreshortening of the Trust's capacity under Harris' neoliberal program, and with the Trail proving an insufficient catalyst for promoting Central Waterfront development, three levels of government were brought together as waterfront development allies to pursue a large-scale economic strategy that focused on a global mega-event, the 2008 "green Olympics."

In responding to public concerns about privatizing the waterfront, the ecosystem approach, while based on populist notions of fairness and equity, privileged the interests of capital in its planning and decision-making model. Both the Commission's and the Trust's work reflected this predisposition to accommodate private sector interests and, when combined with the anti-government zeitgeist, this model allowed for a program that encouraged public-private partnerships in both the planning and financing of development projects all along the Waterfront Trail. Incorporating the mid-90s neoliberal turn of the Harris government, the ecosystem approach promoted the public environmental and private economic benefits of the relaxation of regulatory regimes, including environmental remediation standards and an increasing flexibility in land-use regulations. With this neoliberal turn came an institutional threat, but the broad-scale conception of "economy-environment-community" inherent in the ecosystem approach led to the adoption of the risk-taking, mega-event strategy which eventually handed over public sector planning to the private sector.

One of the commissions' primary achievements through the ecosystem approach was facilitating an end to the hegemony of Fordist protectionism of industrial waterfront lands. Through the use of both political and technological tools, the ecosystem approach promoted the acceptability of non-industrial land uses. The Commission's willingness to promote all land uses, regardless of industrial retention policies or sectoral opposition, combined with the contemporaneous realities of the housing market and the demise of the Ataratiri plan for the West Don Lands to open up the

East Bayfront to the possibilities for mixed-use development. With the assistance of the Harris government's neoliberal turn at the provincial level, the ecosystem approach also helped establish the regulatory conditions in which development of these uses could be made possible as well as profitable. The variety of technological fixes found by the Trust to resolve the environmental problems of the Lower Don Lands contributed to the municipal policy changes necessary to accommodate growth, given the understanding that, in the 21st-century economy, "the gold lies in mixed use development" (Evenson 2005). But the Olympic requirements for housing and sport venues on the Port Industrial Area, when combined with these other factors and public sector support for the Olympic bid, were key to making these policy changes. The pledge of public sector funding to support the Olympic bid through the construction of remediative green infrastructure constituted the moment in which the Port Industrial District was truly unlocked.

The Olympic bid also served as the vehicle through which management over waterfront development was reconfigured to conform to a private sector, market-led, profit-based corporate model. Indeed, the ecosystem approach ushered in a new system of governance over waterfront development which transformed the role of the public and private sectors to better conform with the neoliberalised governance forms of late capitalism. As David Crombie pointed out, in an ecosystem-based approach to waterfront development, "There has to be strong participation from the private sector to make this work and if they're there, then you're going to find that governments are there as well. One hand will wash the hand of the other," (in Moloney and DeMara 1999).

Although Toronto's Olympic bid failed, it did succeed in advancing the cause of waterfront development. The promise to continue preparing the ground for development, which was elicited

from all three levels of government via the exigencies of the politics of mega-event financing, endures. While much of the jurisdictional fragmentation that was the bane of developers and politicians alike has resurfaced, many new activities are constantly being undertaken to resolve it – from recent reports of Mayor Miller’s impending assumption of a seat on the TWRC board and his appointment of a new waterfront advisor, to the commitment by the province to fund West Don Lands revitalization regardless of a governance agreement and the resolution of tri-partite funding issues, and the current exploratory measures taken by the City to pursue another mega-event, the 2015 World’s Fair. The TWRC continues to plan for development, anticipating the governments’ continuing commitment to funding green infrastructure, and relying particularly on the City of Toronto’s continuing pursuit of “world class” status through waterfront restructuring.

As a conceptual framework which connected the values of environmentalism with the demands of economic growth, particularly in a context in which environmental concern was at an historic peak and the malign legacy of deindustrialization was increasingly impenetrable, the ecosystem approach allowed proponents of growth to overcome antagonism between economy and environmental health. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly for economic growth, the ecosystem approach to waterfront planning consolidated the acceptability of the pursuit of “world class” status, and thus the acceptability of interurban competitiveness as a strategy for economic development. While proposed by the Trust as the catalyst for investment in the waterfront, the Olympic bid was also a significant contributor to the global imperative. In effect, bidding for the Olympics represents the ultimate in interurban competition, pitting international cities against one another for a variety of intangible benefits, and reorienting governments toward so-called global concerns in order to conform to the standards and expectations of an international and undemocratic body headed by unelected leaders. In Toronto, it was ultimately

the pressure to conform to these standards that convinced governments at all scales of the Canadian state to undertake the speculative construction of place on Toronto's waterfront as the economic development policy of choice.

The ecosystem approach, like the *Wave of the Future's* waterfront vision, was "big enough to embrace the 2008 Summer Olympics" (City of Toronto 1989a: 3), and in the same way that the ecosystem approach expanded the territorial bounds of the waterfront in order to cut through jurisdictional boundaries, the mega-event strategy for development expanded the conceptual purchase of the waterfront's territorial bounds, explicitly connecting the waterfront with activities undertaken at the international scale and the imperatives of the global economy. The global imperative, which has become the dominant paradigm through which Toronto's elites view their economic, social, and regulatory activity, now infuses the action and rhetoric of virtually all public pronouncements on the part of the city's elites. Whether petitioning for new powers and funding arrangements through the "new deal" for cities or exhorting city residents to "can the litter," the proponents of urban growth – including the municipal government – have reoriented their actions and policies to align with the perceived exigencies of the global economy, rationalising these changes as essential for continued quality of life. As such, the pursuit of the Olympic Games in Toronto is a particularly interesting example of "glocalisation" (Swyngedouw 1992) occurring at and through various scales of the Canadian state.

While the ecosystem approach and the variety of activities taken under and through its aegis were an effective strategy to clear through legislative, political, economic and environmental impediments to growth, an important question to consider is the underlying reason for the continuing failure of Toronto's growth coalition to create the conditions under which waterfront development can proceed unhindered, even without the catalytic effect of the Olympics. As

Desfor (1993) has shown using a regulationist framework, the longevity of the Toronto Harbour Commission – and, as this paper demonstrates, the substantial efforts required to overcome its influence – indicates that “there may not be a simple correspondence between a regime of accumulation and a mode of regulation” (179). This is certainly reflected in the insufficient powers given to the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation to undertake its mandate. A more purely regulationist approach, particularly addressing the similarities and differences between the Toronto Harbour Commissioners and the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation, may uncover some historical particularities which would more clearly illuminate post-Fordist economic regulation in the Toronto case.

As Desfor and Keil (2004) and Kipfer and Keil (2000, 2002) have demonstrated, programs of ecological modernisation such as the Crombie Commission’s ecosystem approach are deeply embedded in both the contemporary technological responses to environmental concerns in Toronto and the processes of world city formation that have seen Toronto take on the characteristics of the “competitive city” (Kipfer and Keil 2002). As such, the case of Toronto’s Central Waterfront is a particularly good location from which to further explore the interactions between nature and society in the construction of urban landscapes and imaginaries. As Crombie himself said at the release of *Regeneration*, the waterfront “is not only a fantastic piece of historical opportunity, it is the new city, the new core of the city. It’s the 21st century that we have to plan for now” (McInnes 1992c).

End Notes

¹ For a fulsome discussion of ecological modernisation in Toronto, see Desfor and Keil 2004.

² This area has gone by many names over time and will be referred to in this paper as the ‘Port Industrial District’, the original name as designated by the Toronto Harbour Commissioners. In some cases, the names ‘Port Industrial Area,’ used by the Crombie Commission, and ‘Port Lands’ or, more colloquially, ‘portlands’ will be used in the citations within which they originated.

³ As many commentators have noted, this intransigence was largely a result of the oath sworn by all board members, which required a level of fiduciary duty to the THC that prevented City appointees from acting as executors of the will of Toronto City Council (Desfor 1993: 171; Royal Commission 1989a).

⁴ Of course, the THC was a pre-Fordist institution whose roots can be found as far back as the late 1800s. See Desfor 1988 for a discussion of the political, economic and social forces shaping the THC’s genesis.

⁵ City of Toronto *Official Plan Amendment for the Central Waterfront* 1978; City of Toronto *Central Waterfront Official Plan Amendment* 1988; Metropolitan Toronto *Official Plan* 1980; Metropolitan Toronto *Plan Review* 1988.

⁶ While the original parcel of land expropriated by the federal government was 92 acres, its size increased over time to an eventual 111 acres. The federal government spent \$54.4 million assembling the site (Gordon 1997b: 246).

⁷ See Lenskyj 1996, 1994, 1992; Kidd 1992; Haxton 1999; Bread Not Circuses 1990 for critiques of and commentary on Toronto’s 1996 Olympic bid.

⁸ Certainly the term “the public interest” is so open to interpretation as to be nearly meaningless, bound up as it is in the discursive expression of power relations at any given scale of the state. However, in this instance it was defined in terms of accessibility to publicly-owned lands which had long been unavailable for public use.

⁹ The conceptual reconfiguration of the waterfront is complete, but its physical reconfiguration has just begun.

¹⁰ Or, encountering opposition, could be overhauled in order to secure support.

¹¹ The work groups, named after their assigned issues, were: Environment and Health; Housing and Neighbourhoods; Access and Movement; Parks, Pleasures and Public Amenities; and Jobs, Opportunities and Economic Growth.

¹² The strategy of creating work groups not only allowed the Commissioner to bring a wide variety of people into the process, thus expanding the city’s growth coalition, it also allowed for a variety of views to be brought to the table, from which the Commissioner could choose depending on what he thought were the best ideas. In this way, the Commission was able to legitimate whatever approach it chose to follow (Desfor 2005).

¹³ The term “ecosystem approach” was coined in 1935 and has been applied to a variety of planning and development projects around the world (Royal Commission 1990: 18; Barrett 1991: 39). For information on several recent ecosystem approach-based planning exercises in the ‘Golden Horseshoe Region,’ including the work of the Royal Commission, see the website of Dr. Martin Bunch, Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, Toronto (www.yorku.ca/fes/bunchmj).

¹⁴ Here I refer to such planning professionals as Alan Altshuler, whose approach to comprehensive planning and views on the expertise of comprehensive planners resulted in such specious but unintentionally disingenuous statements as “It may still be plausible to maintain, however, that [comprehensive] planners are custodians of values that somehow deserve to take precedence over the values propounded by other [planning] specialists” (Altshuler 1965 in Faludi 1973: 203).

¹⁵ Unlike most comprehensive planning, however, the ecosystem approach both implicitly and explicitly allowed for flexibility in land use – multi-use zoning, for example, which reflects the regulatory needs of the post-Fordist economy – and embraced the city as a ‘natural’ socio-spatial form. See Irving 1993 for an interesting take on the ‘postmodernity’ of the ecosystem approach.

¹⁶ I have not chosen to undertake a discursive analysis of the Royal Commission’s use of the term, but rather to examine the activity of the Commission and its successor agencies within the rubric of the term; however, a rigorous assessment using the tools of discourse analysis is certainly warranted in order to more clearly demonstrate the term’s utility as a rhetorical tool within a wider political strategy.

¹⁷ This part of the Act allows the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to make an amendment to any municipal government's Official Plan if the "Minister is of the opinion that a matter of provincial interest ... is, or is likely to be, affected by an official plan" (Ontario Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, Part III. 23(1)).

¹⁸ The Island Airport dispute and its relation to waterfront revitalization was the issue on which David Miller's successful 2003 mayoral campaign was built. This dispute was not fully resolved until May of 2005 (Canada 2005 Press Release at <www.torontoport.com/PortAuthority/media_content.asp?id=218>).

¹⁹ This is perhaps the first contemporary link between this area and waterfront planning and development. While Ataratiri was a similar site of industry and warehousing throughout much of the 20th century, its physical and conceptual links to the waterfront were long severed as a result of the THC's many years of lakefilling.

²⁰ See Bunce 2004 for an examination of this strategy of ecological modernisation in the City of Toronto's 2002 Official Plan - which, I would contend, has its roots in the work of the Crombie Commission.

²¹ The District was now being called the "Lower Don Industrial Area," perhaps to discursively delineate the separation between the THC's port-related lands and those set aside for TEDCO and a green industry focus.

²² Clearly, the question as to whether or not parks constitute "nature" is well beyond the scope of this paper.

²³ Of course, promulgating this perception was also a political strategy by neoliberal policy lobbyists intent on decreasing government intervention in the economy. See Carroll and Shaw 2001 for a recent history of a variety of neoliberal 'think-tanks' in Canada and their impact on public discourse and public policy.

²⁴ Crombie has indicated that he insisted the Trust not be given decision-making powers that would override local municipal powers, despite the desire of provincial bureaucrats to do so, as he wanted to ensure this new body would act only as a coordinator between jurisdictions (Crombie 2005).

²⁵ The "teamway" is the pedestrian walkway running under the railway viaduct adjacent to the roadway. It is so named because of its historical use as a thoroughfare for transporting goods via wagons drawn by teams of horses.

²⁶ The Canadian Urban Institute was formed by the City of Toronto and Metro Toronto in 1990, and is the current workplace of David Crombie and some of his Royal Commission and Trust staff.

²⁷ For a more detailed although similarly critical approach to these changes, see Desfor and Keil 2004: 140-172.

²⁸ Karen Pitre, the Vice President of BidCo, had managed Chrétien's 1984 and 1990 leadership campaigns in Ontario (Moscovitz 2001) and, along with Bob Fung, was responsible for engaging his support for the bid (Lorinc 2001).

²⁹ Indeed, the City's Economic Development Strategy, adopted in July 2000, insisted that "cities have emerged as the building blocks of a global economy" and that, in order to adequately compete with its competitor cities, Toronto would benefit by adopting such neoliberal tools as so-called "innovative new financing instruments" along with "harnessing the power of public, private and voluntary sector partnerships" and adopting "new roles in economic development" such as "entrepreneurship" and "risk financing" (City of Toronto 2000d: 6, 20-21).

³⁰ Highly economically driven, *Wave of the Future* reads more like a public relations document than a land-use plan and thus its contents more clearly represent a campaign strategy than a plan *per se*. Nonetheless, in the context of the City's increasingly "visionary" planning documents, which have become almost entirely devoid of traditional planning details, *Wave of the Future* is not out of step with the new mode of planning in Toronto.

³¹ These funds were eventually paid back to the Trust through private sector donations to BidCo (Crombie 2005).

³² Bitove is the CEO of Prizsm Canadian Income Fund. Prizsm has a majority interest in KIT LP, which in 1999 took over Scott Restaurants Ltd., the owner and operator of numerous fast-food outlets – including all Kentucky Fried Chicken locations – in seven provinces across Canada (NewsWire 2005; Lorinc 2001).

³³ Fung reportedly got Chrétien a job at Gordon Capital Corporation in Montreal, where he was vice-chair and director, during the latter's hiatus from politics between 1986 and 1990. Chrétien has appointed Fung to numerous federal task forces and committees, including the Advisory Committee on Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation and the International Trade and Agriculture Team Canada Advisory Board, which gave advice to the federal government on strategic direction and performance objectives for international business development.

³⁴ Steve Hudson was the Chair of the bid's Executive Committee; Ruth Grant was Chair of the Olympic bid's Environment Committee and had been Vice-Chair of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust; Rod Phillips was Mayor

Lastman's Chief of Staff; and Robert Wright was Chair of the Toronto Port Authority and, as has been mentioned, is Karen Pitre's father.

³⁵ Chrétien, Harris and Lastman were dubbed the "three amigos" by the press due to the uncharacteristic fraternity they displayed at waterfront announcements, during which they jokingly referred to one another as "my buddy" and "my new best friend".

³⁶ As Karen Pitre, VP of the Bid, explained, "Spending money in Toronto is bad politics, you know, for both probably the provincial and the federal governments. But I think what they've also found is spending money or investing in the Olympics, because it's a national project, is politically acceptable. So I think it's huge. I mean, it's very difficult for the federal government to spend a lot of money in Toronto. For whatever reason, just the politics of it. You know, people love to hate Toronto" (Moscovitz 2001).

³⁷ "Brownfield" is the common, although highly regrettable, term for sites which are polluted from former industrial use. The Ontario government in particular has identified development of these sites as an important remedy to urban sprawl and has recently instituted a number of policies to provide the private sector with the kind of "investor certainty" deemed necessary to invest in development. The province has also designated Toronto's Central Waterfront as a key location for densification in their 2005 "Places to Grow" strategy for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

³⁸ This title was that of the front page story in the July 14, 2001 Toronto Star announcing the loss of the 2008 Olympic Games to Beijing.

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