

# THE LAND ECONOMIST



## ZOMBIE MALLS

How the IBI Group & Others are  
Transforming Dead Shopping Malls.



Association of  
Ontario Land Economists

## WHERE IT ALL BEGAN:

The Association of Ontario Land Economists (AOLE) was founded in 1963 and was officially incorporated in 1964. Its name reflects a long-standing position as the only body in Ontario open to all qualified professionals who work in the field of land economics. Since its incorporation, each full voting member has been known as an Ontario Professional Land Economist, with the right to use the letters PLE in their title.

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In order to receive the PLE designation, candidates must qualify as a voting member of the AOLE.

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- 1. To have held a position within the industry, in an occupation requiring competency in land economics.**
- 2. Academic study in a related discipline evidenced by a degree, diploma or certificate from a recognized educational institution.**
- 3. All students pursuing approved coursework can also qualify for Student or Graduate Membership.**

For complete qualification guidelines, please contact us at:

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# FEATURES

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# Unearthing one of Canada's oldest settlements in Cupids Newfoundland

By Pat Brennan

*\* Excavation west of a dwelling house built in 1610.*

## CUPIDS, Nfld - Revlon's 771 nail polish plays a significant role in preserving some of Canada's oldest history.

More than 170,000 artifacts have been recovered from a 26-year archaeological dig at Cupids, a town on the shores of Newfoundland's Conception Bay and the oldest known English settlement in Canada.



In 1610 John Guy, an alderman and merchant in Bristol, England, brought thirty-nine men and women colonists to Newfoundland to establish a British colony. Today archaeologist Bill Gilbert and his team of researchers have unearthed 170,000 items that reflect the lives of those colonists on the rugged shore of Conception Bay.

The most recent discovery – late this year – is the oldest English coin ever found in North America. Gilbert said the pure silver coin was minted in Canterbury sometime between 1493 and 1499.

In 2001, an Elizabethan coin, dated 1560-1561, was excavated on the same site. At that time, that coin was considered the oldest English coin ever found in Canada.

However, this newly discovered coin is about 60 years older and would have been in circulation for at least 111 years before being lost. Known as a Henry VII “half groat,” or twopenny piece, the nickel-sized coin was over 500 years old. It features a stylized portrait of King Henry VII and a Latin inscription that says, “Henry, by the grace of God, King of England and France.” The other side features a cross and the king's motto, also in Latin: “I have made God my helper.”

The coin was found under 20 centimetres of soil near the northeast corner of the excavation, just beyond the remains of what was once a wooden palisade, a few footsteps from the water's edge.





\*Left: Elizabethan silver four pence minted between 1560 and 1561. Right: Silver half crown, from 1660-1662.



\*Oldest English coin ever found in North America, minted between 1493 and 1499.



And deep in the bowels of Britain's National Archives in London, Gilbert has found Canada's oldest land deeds that recorded the sale or transfer of land among colonists in Cupids.

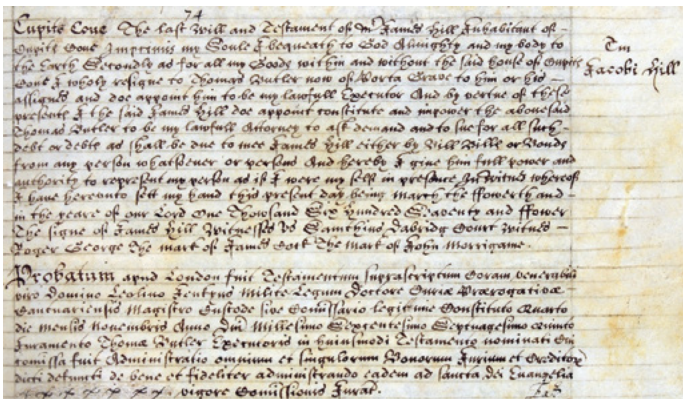
Each item recovered from the Cupids site has to be studied and catalogued and that's where Revlon's nail polish gets involved. Every item, no matter how small, gets an identification number and to ensure that number survives for decades it is painted on top of the clear acrylic nail polish 771 and a second coat is applied above the catalogue number. "771 will stand up to any abuse," said Diane Callahan in Gilbert's archives library.



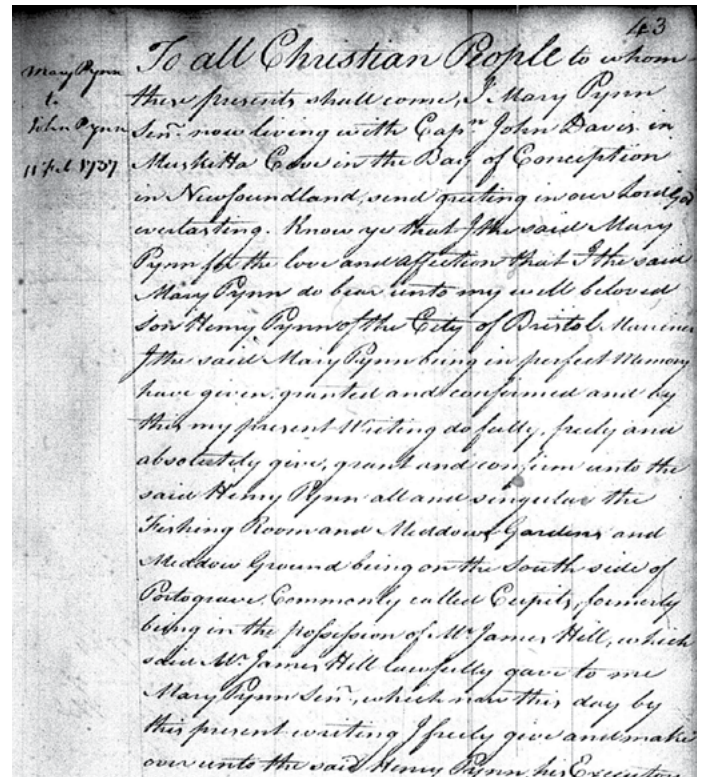
\*German stoneware Bellarmine bottle, circa 1660 found in the ruins of the first house built by John Guy in 1610.

It was just a potato field when Gilbert discovered the colony's location in 1995 following Guy's descriptions in Britain's National Archives listing the number of footsteps from the water's edge to a wooden palisade.

Beneath the potato field lay the remnants of four homes, a stock barn, vegetable gardens, stone fireplaces and thousands of bits and pieces accumulated by everyday life. By 1613, Guy and the colonists had also built Canada's first sawmill and being Brits a brewery!



Left: Mary Pynns' land grant Right: James Hill's last will and testament







\*Spracklin House at the entrance to Cupids Cove Plantation, built by John Spracklin around 1846.



From Top to Bottom: \*Amber bead found outside 1610 storehouse. John Guy traded some of them with the Beothuk in 1612 in Trinity Bay. \*Westerwald cup dated between 1690 -1720 was found on-site. Evidence that the site occupation continued into late 17<sup>th</sup> to early 18<sup>th</sup> Century. \*Diane Callahan in the artifacts archives holds a bottle of Revlon 771.



\*Crew member excavating Structure 9, an early 17<sup>th</sup> century building that was probably a storehouse for salt cod, prior to it being shipped to markets in Southern Europe.

Jamestown in Virginia is England's oldest colony in the new world. It was established in 1607, but nobody lives there today. Jamestown is a National Historic Site and the home of several significant monuments.

Cupids remains a thriving community near Harbour Grace on Conception Bay.

Hundreds of amateur and professional archaeologists – including some from Ontario – have volunteered to assist Gilbert at the Cupids site.

Gilbert said the digging continued last summer despite Covid-19. “The pandemic didn’t stop us from our research last year, in fact it may have advanced it some as we didn’t have any visitors arrive at the site and therefore, we didn’t have to stop to conduct public tours. We are offering tours again this summer and fall,” said Gilbert.

There is a [museum](#) near the dig site that displays most of the recovered artifacts.



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## One of Ontario's most Unusual Factories, 1,800 feet below ground

*Goderich salt mine - underground.*

**GODERICH** - Two miles out under Lake Huron, a young man stands at a street corner waiting for a bus. He's on his way home from one of Ontario's most unusual factories.

It's also the world's largest salt mine - a massive labyrinth under the lakebed - and the biggest employer in Goderich, Ontario. It's his job to produce the stuff that causes those ugly white stains on your leather boots and pant cuffs.

This factory has more than 100 miles of roadways. They are part of an industrial town site that is actually larger than Goderich, the historic town up on the surface. The mine, which opened in 1959, is operated by [Sifto Salt](#), a subsidiary of Compass Minerals. It supplies much of the salt applied to slippery streets each winter throughout Toronto and other cities in the Great Lakes area of U.S. and Canada.



*Goderich salt mine.*



Deep below the waters of the lake more than 400 people work in this subterranean town chewing away at walls of salt deposited about 400 million years ago by an ocean that covered the Great Lakes basin. The mine is so large that it once had a bus system transporting miners out to their work areas a couple of miles off Goderich's beaches.

**Some of the world's largest dump trucks also rumble along these subterranean streets that are wider than Yonge Street. The 40-ton behemoths are stripped down to their frames, lowered 1,800 feet down the mine shaft in bits and pieces, rebuilt, and never again see the light of day.**

All maintenance and repairs are carried out in a large service depot carved out of the salt bed. So too are the lunch rooms for mine workers, storage caverns, workshops, rooms for electric transformers, and a huge crushing plant that grinds salt blocks brought to the mill by dump trucks and five miles of conveyor belts.

Rust is not an issue for these vehicles, even though they drive on roads of salt. There is a constant 65-degree temperature in the mine and little or no water seepage. Lake Huron is 200 feet deep in this area and the mine starts about 1,600 feet below the lake bottom.



*A freighter beside the Goderich salt mine.*

Blasting at different locations in the mine each workday breaks loose big chunks of rock salt. Miners will extract about six million tons of salt from the mine this year and much of it leaves town in the holds of large lake freighters, which tie up at Sifto's front door. Trucks and trains also cart away the product as the salt is used in at least 1,000 other products as well as making slippery roads safe.



*Goderich salt mine - underground.*



Goderich Harbour ships more than salt. It's always been a busy port for Ontario agricultural products too - such as the corn, soya or grain that the bulk freighter *Federal Beaufort* is loading in this picture.



*Algoma Buffalo loads salt from the Goderich salt mine.*

The miners chew out rooms of salt 60 feet by 60 feet, but leave pillars of the same size untouched to support the ceiling before moving on to the next room.

Sam Platt was looking for oil in Goderich in 1866 when his drill bit dug into a salt bed about 1,000 feet below the surface. He wasn't disappointed, as salt was more valuable than oil in those days. Platt had discovered North America's first commercial salt bed. Near Platt's drill site Sifto is still extracting salt the old way. They pump water down into the salt bed, bring up salt water and then evaporate the water. What's left after a year of pumping water is 120,000 tons of 98.2 per cent pure salt. This salt is used primarily for human consumption and in water softeners.



*Goderich harbour grain ship.*



*Goderich salt mine freighter.*

Rowland Howe was manager at the Goderich Salt Mine for fourteen years and guided its growth to become the largest in the world. He retired from Goderich, but not from the salt mining business. Howe has been named president of [Atlas Salt](#) and is currently bringing on stream a new salt mine near Stephenville, Newfoundland.

Howe told me the Goderich mine will be producing salt "for many generations to come" and it sounds like his new venture in Newfoundland will have a similar future.

A known deposit of 908 million tons of 98.6 per cent salt is sitting 190 metres below the surface only four km from an existing deep-water port 25 km south of Stephenville in western Newfoundland. The Trans-Canada Highway runs past the site.

Howe and his management team are currently deciding whether to use a long slopping ramp or a shaft to extract the pure salt. It could be moved by conveyor belt to the nearby port.

Currently eastern Canadian and eastern U.S. cities import more than 8 million tons of salt annually from Turkey and South America to service winter roads. Shipping salt from Stephenville would be much cheaper. 🐾



# Zombie Malls

## How the IBI Group & Others are Transforming Dead Shopping Malls.

By Mike O'Dwyer



### Zombies and shopping malls - what's up with that?

Well, you could say it all started with George A. Romero way back in 1961 when the director/writer/producer jump-started a new craze - the zombie apocalypse film - with the release of *Night of the Living Dead*, in which a group of men and women barricade themselves in an old farmhouse to try and stay safe from a horde of flesh-eating ghouls. That film did not end well for the besieged group but it did lead to a sequel, *Dawn of the Dead*, that follows a few of the survivors who take refuge in an abandoned, upscale, suburban shopping mall during a zombie attack.

Here's a sample of dialogue from that movie as two characters watch hordes of zombies repeatedly bang up against the locked doors of the mall:

*Woman: What are they doing? Why do they come here?*

*Man: Some kind of instinct. Memory of what they used to do. It was an important place in their lives.*



Zombies trying to get into a mall. Still from the film *Dawn of the Dead*

Shopping malls: important to (living) people then and through the intervening years, but maybe lesser so now in what seems to be a sea change in the traditional views and uses of malls heading into the future.

More proof of the difficulties faced by shopping malls, further exacerbated by COVID and a rise in internet purchasing: The proliferation of *zombie malls* (also known as *ghost malls* or *dead malls*) suffering from high vacancy rates, low consumer traffic levels and general deterioration.

While *zombie malls* are more prevalent south of the border than here, there is no doubt that enclosed shopping malls in Canada are facing similar challenges to their continued viability as consumer preferences evolve away from previous shopping norms.

[IBI Group](#) is the largest Canadian architecture firm and the sixth largest in the world, specializing in the design of integrated cities that bridge the gap between design and technology. From IBI's Toronto headquarters, [Robyn Brown](#) leads the Group's Real Estate, Economics and Planning team, which provides its clients with a broad spectrum of real estate advice including best-use, market and feasibility studies. Brown says that COVID didn't create the trend away from malls but it did accelerate it: "Malls were already facing a decline. In 2018-19, malls experienced a 22 percent decline in foot traffic.

"With steady income streams diminishing, mall landlords were forced to look at their assets in different ways. For some, this meant reassessing the need for large brick and mortar footprints and perhaps moving to less square footage. It also presented an opportunity to change - especially for those landlords with excellent locations in the middle of cities."

Coupled with the reduction in mall shoppers and the corresponding growth in online purchasing, mall tenancies are also under fire. But well-located mall properties also offer significant potential for unlocking added value.

"While city-centric malls are often in areas of high growth, they are also constrained by land supply," says Brown. "So, if landlords can't grow 'out', they must look 'inward' and leverage every aspect of their properties. For example, huge parking lots with free surface parking are unproductive - land that could be much better used by moving the parking underground and building multi-unit housing - condos or apartments - over or around a retail footprint."

So, adding a residential component is one way malls are being reimagined - bringing new direct revenue streams to the landlord and adding a substantial cohort of shoppers in close proximity to the retail component of the 'new' mall.

But what should that 'new' mall look like to increase and sustain foot traffic and drive tenant success in an increasingly online world?

"To be successful, reimagined malls must better connect with their communities - become 'destinations' by being social hubs, by expanding cultural offerings - like a more diverse and inclusive food court - and by adding new uses such as offices and residential components. 'New' malls should be welcoming and engaging at street level and provide visitors with a sense of safety, comfort and convenience."

Other industry experts echo Brown's strategies for creating successful 'new' malls. For example, in a 2020 report from Deloitte Canada, *The Future of the Mall - Building a new kind of destination for the post-pandemic world*, interviews with mall landlords, retailers and consumers led to these five critical changes that landlords and retailers must embrace to keep consumers coming back:



1. **Focus on safety and convenience**, balancing consumers' desire for social interaction with their need for a safe, easy shopping experience.
2. **Rethink the role of the store**, emphasizing the associate's role in facilitating an exceptional customer experience and focusing on flagship, showroom, pop-up locations, and other innovation formats.
3. **Make way for the food revolution**, which will become the new anchor that brings visitors to the mall as less relevant fashion retailers move out.
4. **Embrace technology**, capitalizing on digital tools to maximize productivity and efficiency and to create experiences that are dynamic and engaging.
5. **Become a new destination**, creating a multi-purpose environment that offers extensive leisure activities as well as other services, like office, residential, and cultural amenities.

Deloitte's research found that shoppers want 'a multipurpose destination that offers leisure activities as well as other functions like residential and cultural amenities' and one of the top mall modifications that will bring back shoppers is 'green space, trees and parkland for relaxing ambience.'

## Target: Zombies That Strip

So ... where does the zombie/mall connection take us? Over there, by that empty Target store. According to Brown, "Zombie malls aren't really a Canadian thing. The US has much more retail space per capita than Canada. Developers here were more conservative in their developments. But Canada does have zombie properties - for example, large Target store properties that are sitting idle - and *Greyfield* sites that are solid candidates for redevelopment."

*Greyfields* are typically urban area strip malls and empty office parks that are no longer profitable. Unlike *Brownfields* - contaminated properties like defunct gas stations that require expensive remediation measures - *Greyfields* offer greater opportunities for redevelopment because they are frequently situated along arterial roads, have accessibility to public transit, are on large parcels of land, and may already have zoning permissions for mixed-use development.

Brown says, "Old retail plazas with their large parking lots are good choices for intensification including a variety of development options such as townhouses, midrises, office and retail. They are often owned by small investors which simplifies the redevelopment process."



Zombies in a mall. Still from the film *Dawn of the Dead*

## Malls Reimagined Milton Mobility Hub, Milton Ontario



IBI Group was retained by site landlord, [Paradise Developments](#), to prepare a master plan for the redevelopment of the Milton Mall site. Currently, the site is an underutilized mall and big box retail development with vast parking. The 7.6 ha (18.6 acre) site was identified for redevelopment because of its close proximity to the Milton GO Transit Station. The proposed intensified, phased redevelopment will include high-rise mixed use residential buildings, mid-rise apartments and townhomes, a new pedestrian-oriented street network, community spaces, and retail opportunities - transforming the site into a truly transit-oriented development.

Robyn Brown: "The Town of Milton and Metrolinx are seeking to transform a suburban community to transit supportive densities. Through IBI, I will assess the market fundamentals, financial assumptions and feasibility of the planned development."

## Galleria Mall, Toronto, Ontario



This massive project at the intersection of Dufferin and Dupont Streets in Toronto, replaces an aging landmark with a 20-acre mixed-use community with approximately 2,846 residential units (including 150 affordable units), 300,000 square feet of retail space and an 8-acre park.

According to the [ELAD Canada](#) and [Hariri Pontarini Architects](#), the developer and architects for the new development, "The Galleria project ... seeks to create a complete community (...) with a revitalized streetscape and pedestrian network (reflecting) the needs of the community, and improving transit and multi-modal transportation options."

Opened in 1972, the Galleria Mall was an enclosed single storey shopping centre with approximately 50 tenants. Described by Toronto writers as cave-like and run-down, retail activity diminished over the years to the point where tenants could barely survive - and some didn't. For the surrounding, and increasingly gentrified, neighbourhood, the mall was considered an important community hub. The new development retains and expands its place as a



community and retail centre while adding eight mixed-use buildings with 2,900 condo units, 150 affordable rental units, 300,000 square feet of retail, an eight-acre park and a 95,000 square foot community centre.

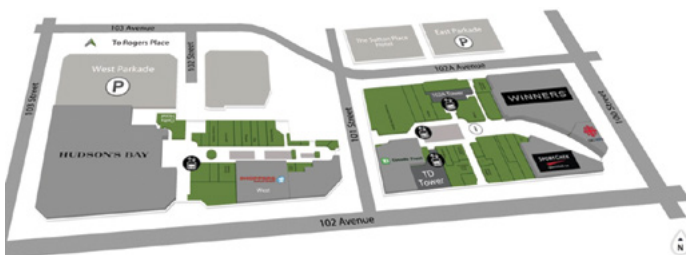


Robyn Brown: “The experiences consumers are looking for have completely changed and malls are adapting. Today’s shoppers want openness to the surrounding streetscape and within a mall that feels and acts like a community hub.”

## Edmonton City Centre Edmonton, Alberta



The Edmonton City Centre Mall is located in the heart of city’s financial district. Redevelopment saw the mall consolidated from four levels to three with the top floor becoming a 500-seat food court. Since 2019, new condo developments have and will add over 23,000 new residents to the downtown area.



Through the past few years, a number of retailers pulled out of the Edmonton City Centre, including major anchors Hudson’s Bay and Holt Renfrew. The mall hadn’t had a renovation since the 1980’s so the \$41.3 million revitalization was extensive - opening up the mall to the streetscape, adding sidewalk restaurants and cafes, as well as multiple new entrances and underground parking.

Robyn Brown: “The Edmonton City Centre is in an ideal location - the LRT is right out front, the Edmonton Oilers arena is nearby,

condos and apartments are rising up - so it made sense to revitalize it. ‘Experiential’ shopping means giving people a reason to come - providing more than they can get from buying online. The Edmonton City Centre redevelopment did just that. It now looks outward, not inward and has become a vibrant part of the city.”

## Jackson Square Hamilton, Ontario

Jackson Square is part of the Hamilton City Centre, a commercial area, located at James Street N. and Wilson Street, in the heart of the city, that is a shell of what it once was. [IN8 Developments](#) is spearheading a \$700 million plan to demolish the existing buildings and construct five residential and commercial towers in its place. Also planned for the site: a convention centre, hotel and shop-filled thoroughfare with an indoor-outdoor ambience.



The design includes approximately 2,000 units in four condo towers joined at their base by ground floor commercial space with a glass exterior that flips the mall’s current inward-facing orientation to an outward look and a more attractive streetscape.





Robyn Brown: “Jackson Square was part of the Hamilton Eaton Centre opened in 1989, built on the same site as the original Eaton’s store that had opened in 1927. It is covered, very inward-looking, dated and struggling. The new mall will be open, spacious and inclusive - a new design for a different time.”

## Cloverdale Mall

Etobicoke/Toronto, Ontario

Built in 1956, Cloverdale Mall at the Intersection of Dundas Street West and Highway 427 is undergoing a complete transformation by landowner, [QuadReal Property Group](#). The aging mall will be redeveloped as the glazed-glass covered Cloverdale Square with 26,000 square metres of retail space and a row of stores along a European-inspired open-air pedestrian street.



The 32-acre redevelopment integrates itself with the surrounding neighbourhoods and features a wide range of living spaces including a mix of market rental, affordable rental, condominiums, and multi-generational housing. Community features include a retirement home and a community centre.



The redevelopment will seamlessly integrate with the Six Points neighbourhood - a massive re-envisioning of Etobicoke’s downtown area.

Robyn Brown: “The increase in online retailing, coupled with changes in the way consumers shop - partly as an ongoing result of COVID - have rendered the traditional shopping centre model a relic of a bygone era. The Cloverdale and Six Points projects have created a micro-city.”

## Burnaby Mall

Burnaby, British Columbia

The City of Burnaby has created a 100-year master plan to establish a high-density downtown core. Central to the plan is the

redevelopment of Metropolis at Metrotown, a 30-year-old, 47-acre shopping centre, owned by [Ivanhoe Cambridge](#), currently the third-largest in Canada with 27 million annual customer visits. The site of the existing 1.7 million square foot mall will be transformed into a new pedestrian-oriented street grid lined with a mix of new high rises - including thousands of new homes and an arts/events and convention centre - retail space, parks, plazas and street-facing podiums that will essentially turn the mall ‘inside out’, according to Burnaby’s director of planning and building, Ed Kozak, as quoted in a *Burnaby Now* article by Kevin Gawley (October 28, 2019).

Kozak also said that the redevelopment plan follows recent urban planning trends away from traditional ‘fortress-like’ malls. “There’s a move away from the exclusively internalized mall model to one that’s more outwardly oriented and one that has a relationship to the streets around it,” Kozak said.



## When change isn’t possible

### Hudson’s Bay Building

Winnipeg, Manitoba

HBC’s Winnipeg store at the corner of Portage Avenue and Memorial Boulevard in the heart of the city’s downtown core, was shuttered by the company in November 2020, citing ‘shifting consumer behaviour’ as a major reason for its closure.

Built in 1923, the six-storey building was once HBC’s flagship store and is a Winnipeg landmark. A prominent, ideally-situated property like this should be ripe for redevelopment but history and cost will very likely keep it empty and untouched well into the future.



The building was designated a historic structure by the city in 2019 - meaning that the façade and many other features would have to be retained during a renovation.

As a consequence, a 2019 appraisal of the building placed its market value at \$0.

Robyn Brown: "The valuation also found that it would cost north of \$100 million just to bring the building up to code - making the commercial rebirth of what should be a prime piece of real estate nearly impossible."



A 2006 view of the Monroeville Mall

The 1.3 million square foot Monroeville Mall opened in 1969. A major renovation took place in 2003-2004 and a second multimillion-dollar renovation/revitalization was begun in 2015 which, according to the mall owners, was designed to 'focus on offering shoppers a welcoming vibrant destination to shop, dine and spend time with family and friends.' However, a fatal shooting at the mall, also in 2015, reduced foot traffic and prompted the mall owners to introduce extensive safety measures in an effort to encourage shoppers to return.

In 2020, citing reduced mall traffic, tenant closures and COVID restrictions, Chattanooga Tennessee-based REIT, [CBL & Associates Properties Inc.](#), owner of 104 mall properties including Monroeville Mall, announced plans for a bankruptcy reorganization. At that time, a company principal said, "Our vision is to transform our properties from traditional enclosed malls to suburban town centers."

As part of that transformation, *The Annex* at Monroeville has been added next to the mall. An open-air centre, it includes an entertainment destination and indoor karting.



Circa 1939 photo



The concourse of *The District*, a 'lifestyle' component of Monroeville Mall.

Will these and other transformations help Monroeville Mall back from its brushes with real, fake and business death? Only time will tell.

The Land Economist would like to thank Robyn Brown of the IBI Group for taking the time to speak to us and provide us with her valuable knowledge and insights. Robyn, a recent new member of AOLE, left us with these parting words. ➤

## The mall where zombies roamed is maybe undead ... maybe not

Monroeville Mall is a super-regional, two-level shopping centre located just east of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It gained a measure of fame when the zombie movie *Dawn of the Dead* was filmed there in 1977-1978 with all-in mall filming taking place at night after the mall had closed. It hosts an annual Living Dead Weekend that includes a horror-themed market and actors from the movie.

The mall has also made appearances in other films and TV shows including *Flashdance*, *Zack and Miri Make a Porno*, *The Boy Who Loved Trolls*, and episodes of *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood*, and the Netflix series *Mindhunter*.



**"The AOLE is a great organization. It's a unique body that provides the opportunity for frank discussion with public and private land economist professionals that broadens and deepens my understanding of industry issues and trends in very important ways."**

Robyn Brown MA, MPL, PLE  
Director - Sr. Practice Lead, Planning  
IBI Group





## Silver & The Fox Cobalt Ontario's Mining Legacy

*Highway 11 - miners enter rock face.*

**COBALT** - Using picks and shovels, hardy miners pulled \$18 billion worth of silver out of the rocks surrounding this historic town.

Mining engineer David Stein expects they didn't get it all. He thinks there may be as much still in there. That's why his Toronto firm, [Kuya Silver](#), is drilling deep into some of the fifty abandoned silver mines in this town. Silver and cobalt tend to share the same veins, and Stein along with the rest of the Kuya prospectors know there is plenty of cobalt in the region known as the *Cobalt Camp*.

The metal cobalt was a nuisance metal easily discarded during the town's first mining boom in 1906-1928. Cobalt had no known use in those days, but today the metal is a vital ingredient in making batteries that power electric vehicles.

In 1903 veins of silver were actually found on the ground's surface before the town of Cobalt existed. The Ontario Government was building a railway from North Bay up to New Liskeard and Haileybury, (now known as Temiskaming Shores) as the land possessed rich loam soil - an unusual island of excellent farm country, surrounded by the hard rocks of the Canadian Shield.

When the new tracks reached mile 103 north of North Bay, a pesky fox was inquisitive about the work of railway blacksmith Fred Larose who threw his hammer at the animal, but missed and hit a rock outcropping instead. When he went to fetch his hammer, he noticed a bright spot on the outcropping, or so the story goes.

Larose knew his minerals and had a piece of the rock assayed. It was rich with silver. He quickly staked a claim, as did his foreman Tom Hebert when Larose told him about the sparkling rock.



*Cobalt refinery in Cobalt, Ontario.*

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Hebert soon sold his claim to Nipissing Mining Company for \$5,000; equivalent to several years' railway pay in those days. But he missed a bigger pay day. Nipissing pulled 92 million ounces of silver out of that claim at an average 53 cents an ounce.

Today, silver is worth nearly \$24 an ounce.

The resulting boom gave birth to Cobalt the town, but also triggered mining exploration throughout Northern Ontario, which today employs 75,000 people and generates \$10 billion annually in commerce.

Art Ross wasn't a silver miner. He was the top scorer for the Cobalt Silver Kings, the town's entry in the National Hockey Association, the forerunner of today's NHL.

The NHL is just one of many firsts that came out of this town during the silver boom. The top scorer in the NHL today receives the *Art Ross Memorial Trophy*.

A panel of historians assembled by TV Ontario selected Cobalt as the most historic town in the province - and not merely because the local hockey team beat the Montreal Canadiens in a pro game. This town also gave birth to mother's allowance, workmen's compensation, Canada's first labour union, the OPP, the 1906 Mining Act and, yes, even the NHL.



Highway 11 - bronze miner.



Highway 11 - miners going to work.



Highway 11 - mining equipment.

That's why Parks Canada has designated the entire town as a National Historic District.

The hundred or so abandoned mines in Cobalt surrendered \$300 million (\$18 billion at today's price) worth of silver between 1906 and 1928. That's \$100 million more than the total take from the famous Klondike Gold Rush in the Yukon from 1898 to 1907.

The silver strike attracted fortune seekers from around the world. Cobalt quickly grew from a handful of railway men laying tracks to a town of 30,000 by 1908. The locals enjoyed everything you can imagine in a wealthy frontier town. They patronized several opera houses and live theatres in the 20's and 30's. Cobalt had thirty-four hotels and nine restaurants open twenty-four hours a day, every day.



Highway 11 - mining equipment.





Cobalt - the Miners' Tavern.



Cobalt - Silver Street Cafe.



Cobalt - abandoned silver mine.

Today Cobalt has 1,500 residents and no hotels, but there is the Miners' Tavern. It's like a community centre where the interior walls depict the town's history. Miners' Tavern celebrated St. Patrick's Day on August 27. "We missed it twice and that ain't nice," said tavern owner Rochelle Schwartz, "so we renovated our tavern during the Covid shut down into an Irish pub and saluted St. Patrick when we re-opened."

Everywhere you look in this town there are remnants of its silver boom days. Mining equipment has been pulled out of the shafts and tunnels to sit in municipal parks.

*The Heritage Silver Trail* is a walking tour that'll steer you around to the many mine shafts and processing mills within the town's core and tells the story of the interesting characters that found and developed the claims.

The shaft that Sir Henry Pellatt sunk, supplied the money to build his dream home - *Casa Loma* in Toronto. Mine owner M.J. O'Brien financed four of the five hockey teams in the NHA and put up the *O'Brien Cup* that everyone played for in the NHL until it was replaced by the *Stanley Cup* in 1926. The *O'Brien Cup* today sits in the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Two popular museums, the [Cobalt Mining Museum](#) and the [Bunker Military Museum](#) outline the history of mining in Ontario and the contributions of the town's mining and its men to Canada's war efforts for both world wars.

Trent Mell, President and CEO at [First Cobalt Corp.](#) is restoring an abandoned cobalt refinery that operated in Cobalt from 1996 to 2015 as North America's only refinery for creating cobalt sulfate - a vital ingredient for [producing batteries for electric vehicles](#).

Mell said China produces 80 per cent of the world's supply of refined cobalt and the supply of raw cobalt for his company's refinery will come from The Democratic



Cobalt book store.



Cobalt - aerial shot of refinery.

Republic of the Congo in central Africa, the largest known deposit in the world.

It will be shipped to Montreal Harbour from South Africa and by rail up to Cobalt. The only other two cobalt refineries in the world are in China and Finland.

Mell said eventually his refinery's supply of cobalt may come from Cobalt Camp, the area surrounding the town of Cobalt that has a known large deposit of cobalt.

Stein said his firm has extracted exploratory cores from drilling in the Cobalt area for silver and cobalt, but hasn't yet seen the assay results on the cores because of a backlog in assaying in a busy Ontario mining industry.

His mines, which are 30 percent owned by Mell's First Cobalt Corp., may eventually replace the Congo as the prime source of cobalt for Mell's nearby refinery. 🐾



# Reina Condos all Female Development Team Will Bring a Softer Look to The Queensway

By Pat Brennan



From Left to Right: Jane Almey - Bluescape Construction, Heather Rolleston - BPP Quadrangle, Emily Reisman - Urban Strategies, Nataliya Tkach - EXP, Sherry Larjani - Spotlight Developments, Taya Cook - Urban Capital, Stacy Meek - EXP, Fatima Shakil - Adjeleian Allen Rubeli, Tara Chisholm - WSP, Fung Lee - PMA Landscape Architects, Lisa Spensieri - BPD Quadrangle, Manling Lau - MarketVision.

Soft curves and rounded corners have been attracting admirers to 689 The Queensway in Etobicoke for two generations. It was the home of The House of Lancaster, one of Toronto's most popular strip joints, but it is now gone.

Architect Heather Rolleston wants to maintain those same features in the new 9-storey boutique condominium she has designed for the site as a member of an all-female development team.

Developer Taya Cook has assembled what is believed to be Canada's only all-female development team to manage the erection of a luxury condo where the House of Lancaster Gentlemen's Club operated for 35 years.

Cook said her 12-member team of experts from the development industry will be building a structure that will bring "a softer, lighter presence on The Queensway, proving you don't have to be loud to transform a streetscape."

Rolleston, a principal at [BDP Quadrangle](#), said her white brick exterior façade features a 'quilted' effect, with soft curves and rounded corners.

Their condo is called Reina which is Spanish for queen. Cook, Director of Development at [Urban Capital](#), joined Sherry Larjani, Managing Partner at [Spotlight Developments](#) to conceptualize a condo designed and developed by women. It helped to have the clout of Urban Capital when it came time to negotiate financing for the project. Urban Capital Property Group has built 9,300 condominium residences across Canada.

The idea for [Reina Condos](#) came to Cook when she read an article in *Toronto Life* touting Toronto's condo titans. None of them were women, and for her it was a wake-up call about gender parity in the industry.



Reina's front side.





Taya Cook & Sherry Larjani.

**“We’re embarking on this project to create more visibility for women in real estate development, and to inspire younger women to see career possibilities. It’s a huge industry and a massive economic driver for the region. For some reason it has been seriously lagging behind in gender equity,” said Cook. “Women have been prominent in all sorts of roles and they are doing fantastic work in this industry, but our accomplishments aren’t well-recognized.”**

So, Cook and Larjani invited some of the best female consultants they knew in Toronto’s development industry to join them in a passion project to create a memorable condominium.



Reina’s terrace corner.



Reina’s side.



Reina’s Lobby.

“We live in one of the most diverse cities in the world. Our built environment should reflect that,” said Larjani. “It’s no longer just the condo kings who are impacting our city.”

Cook and Larjani assembled an all-woman team of architects, engineers, planners, construction managers, and lawyers that includes Jane Almey, [Bluescape Construction](#); Heather Rolleston, BDP Quadrangle; Nataliya Tkach, [EXP](#); Emily Reisman, [Urban Strategies](#); Stacy Meek, EXP; Fatima Shakil, [Adjeleian Allen Rubeli](#); Tara Chisholm, [WSP Group](#); Fung Lee, [PMA Landscape Architects](#); Lisa Spensieri, BDP Quadrangle; and ManLing Lau, [MarketVision Research](#).

The team then embarked on an extensive, year-long consultation process, garnering feedback from a diverse array of users, including multi-generational families, parents with young or adolescent children, and singles. The resulting design is a striking, contemporary mid-rise with atypically large, flexible floor plans and a forward-thinking amenity program geared towards fostering community and familiarity between residents.

“Our team will be listening to what people want in their building and incorporate their feedback into the design. We want to create a building that truly accounts for everyone’s needs, from women to families to investors,” says Larjani. “Etobicoke has a lot of young families looking for good homes. The site gave us everything we wanted - proximity to great schools, expansive parks, and wonderful shops and restaurants. It allows for true family-friendly urban living, and we were excited to reveal our team’s vision,” said Cook.

The resulting design is a striking, contemporary mid-rise with atypically large, flexible floor plans and a forward-thinking amenity program geared towards fostering community and familiarity between residents. 🌱



# Inside Niagara Parks Power Station Now a Magnificent New Museum.

By Pat Brennan



*Niagara Parks Power Station Grand Hall with Generators. Photo by: Benito Del Monte Medina.*

**NIAGARA FALLS** - In 1877 William Birch Rankine was 19 when he arrived in Niagara Falls to begin studying law.

Like most visitors to this town, he was very impressed with his first view of the falls, but it wasn't the beauty or the roar of the magnificent waterfall that made the biggest impression. It was the awesome power of the cascading water that triggered Rankine's imagination. Thus 28 years later in 1905 he opened the largest electric power generating station on the Niagara River. For 100 years it produced electricity to feed the growth of southern Ontario's industrial, commercial and housing infrastructure.

In fall 2021, the [Niagara Parks Power Station](#) opened as the newest and largest museum in Niagara Falls. Niagara Parks was allotted \$25 million to convert the power plant into a museum that shows how hydroelectricity is produced. The huge limestone building demonstrates how water flowing downhill creates hydroelectricity.

Electricity was considered a miracle when Rankine, then chairman of the Canadian Niagara Power Company, opened his \$5.2 million power station. George Westinghouse and his business partner Nikola Tesla assisted in the design and Rankine was able to persuade John Jacob Astor IV, J.P. Morgan and the Rothschild family to invest in the power plant.

Few people understood or experienced electricity in 1905. When electricity reached Fort Erie, a home owner took his wife and children out of the house into the dark night when he turned on the lights for the first time. According to our tour guide Elena, he feared there would be an explosion.



*Power Station construction,  
courtesy of Niagara Parks  
Power Station Media kit.*





Niagara Parks Power Station and surrounding landscape, October 2021 Photo By: Benito Del M. M.

The grand hall, nearly 600 feet long and 60 feet high, is home to eleven generators producing 75 megawatts of electricity from river water flowing into the building and plunging 180 feet through large steel tubes to spin turbines buried deep in bedrock

Each turbine spins a steel shaft 40 inches in diameter and 130 feet tall that connects to a generator eight storeys above that spins at 110 miles per hour. Their 75 megawatts can light up an estimated 68,000 subdivision homes. One reason the power plant closed for good in 2009 was that a shift in the ground under the plant caused the turbines' drive shafts to be slightly off centre with the generators above.

Building the power plant in 1900 was an engineering marvel. The generators are on the surface, but much of the plant's mechanical machinery is buried deep in bedrock. Tunnels 10 ft in diameter and 2,000 ft long had to be cut through bedrock to bring in the water and then return it to the river. Next year the museum hopes to have visitors walking through those tunnels after lowering them down through the bedrock via a glass elevator.

A couple of hundred yards further upstream, the beautiful Toronto Power Station was built in 1906 to provide Toronto with electricity. It closed in 1974. The Beaux-Arts-Style building was designed by Toronto architect E.J. Lennox, who also designed Toronto's old city hall, Casa Loma and several other significant buildings in Toronto. Kate Wassenaar, communications manager for Niagara Parks, said park officials are in the early stages of creating a future use for the spectacular building as a national historic site.

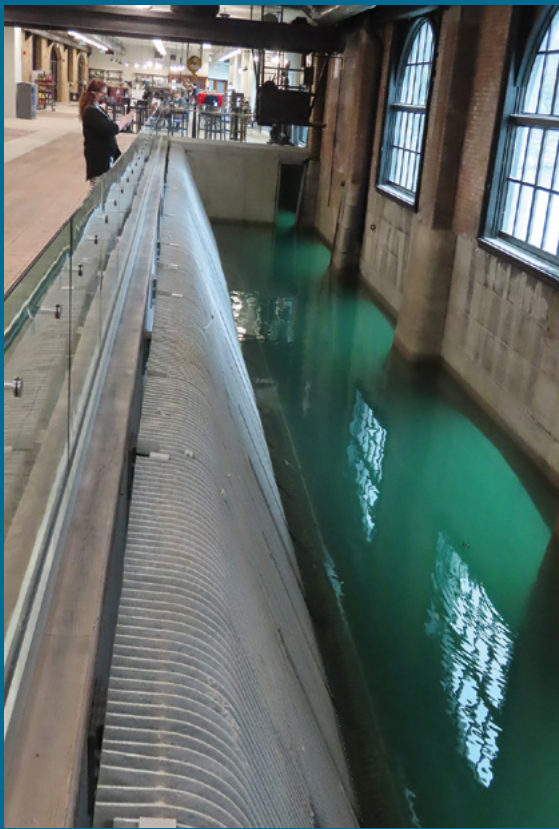


Niagara Parks Power Station Exterior. Photo by: Pat Brennan.



Niagara Parks Power Station Exterior. Photo By: Benito Del M. M.

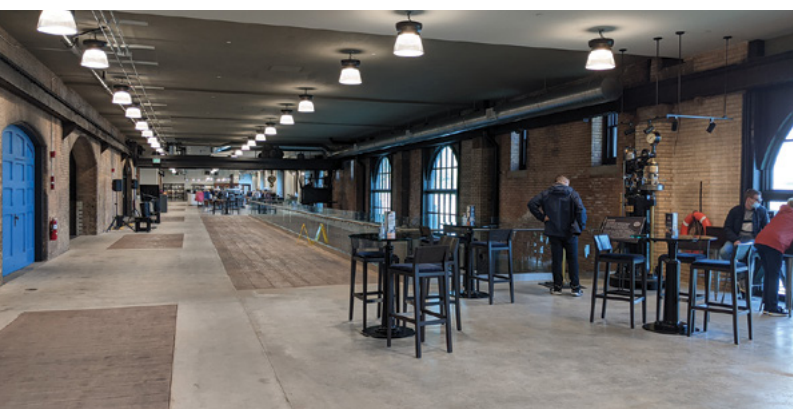




Niagara Parks Power Station Interior. Photo By: Pat Brennan.



Power Station underground infrastructure.  
Courtesy of: Niagara Parks Power Station Media Kit.



In Rankine's generator hall, diagrams illustrate how water plunging through the building turn turbines, which in turn, turn generators to produce electricity. Ironically, the electricity that powers the new museum is now produced several kilometres downstream at the Sir Adam Beck II Power Station.

The Beck II station took over Rankine's certificates to draw water out of the river. A concrete weir protrudes out into the river to divert some of its flow into the power station. The water still arrives in the station's forebay, but no longer enters the building.

Water however appears to flood the great generator hall each night via a spectacular light and music show called *Currents*. The light performance, created by the Montreal studio Thinkwell, makes it appear as if water is flowing over the high walls and across the floor.

[Admission to the museum and the night-time \*Currents\* show](#) is \$40 for adults and \$26 for youth six to twelve. To attend the museum without the night show is \$37 for adults and \$24 for youth, which includes a guided tour. Children five and under are free. 🗺️

Top Museum entrance. Bottom Niagara Parks Power Station Interior. Photos By: Benito Del M. M.

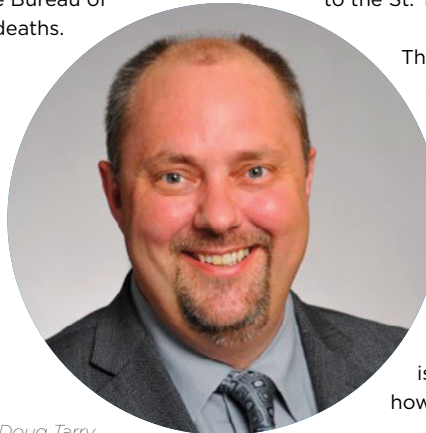


# Tornados, Climate Change and Home Construction.

By Pat Brennan

**BARRIE** - A tornado that roared through this city last July should have created little or no damage to the homes in its path, says one of Ontario's most prominent home builders. However, the EF-2 tornado, with winds gusting to 210 mph, cut a five-mile-long swath through the city and left 75 homes uninhabitable. It also caused \$75 million in damage according to The Insurance Bureau of Canada, although fortunately there were no deaths.

Doug Tarry, president of [Doug Tarry Homes](#) in St. Thomas, Ontario and former president of the Ontario Home Builders Association, says inexpensive upgrades to the Ontario Building Code - such as requiring 2.5-inch nails rather than 2-inch nails to fasten roof sheathing to the rafters, would reinforce the average home against the coming wind challenges from climate change. He also wants to see longer screws plus metal plates used, to connect roof rafters to wall studs.



*Doug Tarry*

Those added construction features are being used in 100 single-family homes Doug Tarry Homes is building in [Harvest Run](#), a subdivision in the southeast quadrant of St. Thomas in conjunction with the [Institute For Catastrophic Loss Reduction](#) (ICLR), a construction research institute funded by a variety of insurance companies.

Tarry has been working with Western University engineering professor Gregory Kopp and the institute, to study wind resistance by homes built inside the university's elaborate wind tunnel. Simply keeping the roof on during heavy wind storms or tornadoes is a requirement to reduce destruction of homes.

"The scientists have warned us that global warming is growing and we are going to see bigger wind events more often. Our homes need to be better built for resistance," said Tarry. He pointed out that the



*Doug Tarry (left) and partner Greg Hussey often conduct business meetings while riding their bikes around St. Thomas, Ontario - through their subdivisions and over Canada's only elevated public park*

additional building techniques and hardware will cost less than \$400 per home without any increase in timing to build it.

His firm is also leading Ontario's home building industry in reducing energy consumption. He builds all his homes (170 this year and 190 next year), roughed in for rooftop solar panels. Next year 20 % of Tarry's 2022 homes will be finished with rooftop solar panels.

Each single-family garage will be roughed-in with an auto charging station. A four-storey rental building Tarry is building in St. Thomas will have electric auto charger spots at 20 % of its indoor parking spots and the other sites will be roughed in.

The rental building will also be finished with solar panels to supply each suite with a built-in heat pump that will both heat and cool the residence. Excess electricity created by the solar panels will be sold to the St. Thomas' public utilities network.

The rental building is being built to NET ZERO specifications, which includes such features as each suite getting a concrete balcony, but the balcony slab is separated from the interior floor slab by an insulated thermal barrier so that the balcony doesn't transfer cold temperatures or hot temperature into the apartment's interior.

Tarry has organized field trips to Puerto Rico for Ontario builders to put roofs back on homes damaged by high winds and hurricanes hitting the island. While on the island they teach local builders how to build sturdier roofs.

Tarry also conducts seminars for Ontario home builders on how to best build NET ZERO housing - homes that produce more energy than they consume. And he is one of the visiting lecturers at *Energy & Environmental Building Alliance (EEBA)*, an international research group for ecological building techniques and components. ➤

## Doug Tarry's Webinar Series Links:

[Changing Our Paradigm - 4 Principles of Modern Design House as a System - A Holistic Approach \(Part 1\)](#)  
[House as a System - A Holistic Approach \(Part 2\)](#)  
[Beyond Net Zero - What's Next?](#)



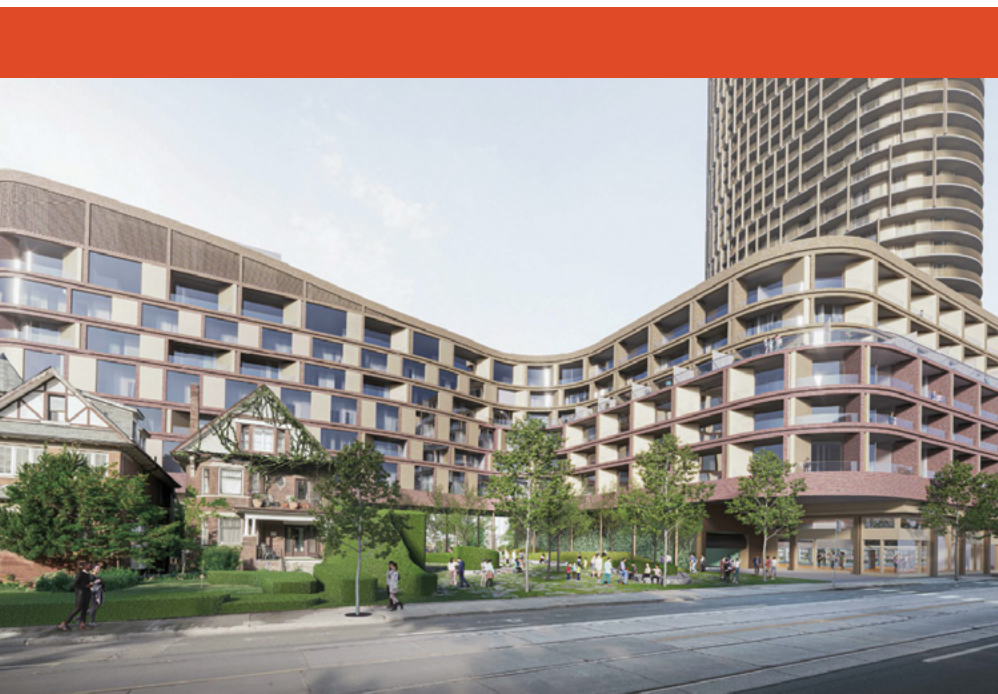


# Proposed Curving Tower's Ravine Side Will Connect Urban Residents with Nature

PUBLISHED: 1:55 PM AUG 27, 2021

Written By Ainsley Smith

First Published by Storeys Real Estate News



Rendering by Norm Li via City of Toronto.

A parcel of land nestled between Toronto's Danforth and Riverdale neighbourhoods could see the addition of a curving tower that would bring residents an abundance of connections to nature and public spaces.

Earlier this month, [Choice Properties](#) submitted an Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment to City planners to redevelop a 13,118 m<sup>2</sup> parcel of land located southwest of the intersection of Broadview and Danforth avenues and the TTC's Broadview Station — just adjacent to the northbound on-ramp to the Don Valley Parkway, in Riverdale.

The developer is looking to build a 35-storey, curving tower atop a 7-storey podium designed by [Superkul](#) that will have a non-residential gross floor area (GFA) of 2090.5 m<sup>2</sup>, a residential GFA of 38,035.20 m<sup>2</sup>, with a total of 503 residential units.

The site — spanning 682, 686, 688, 720, 740, and 742 Broadview Avenue — is currently home to a “dated” Loblaws grocery store and surface parking area, two mixed-



use retail and rental buildings, and three residential heritage buildings. Along the western edge of the site, there's a significant ravine and natural embankment.

If the project gets the green light, the heritage homes on the site would be retained, while the Loblaws and remaining buildings would be cleared to make way for the tower and the rest of the development. Though, upon completion, the grocery store will be replaced and included in the development.

Towards the south of the site, a significant portion of the base building will be raised, featuring an "open and porous" ground floor that transitions into a proposed park, plaza space, and potential new pedestrian and bicycle connections into the Don Valley trail network.

The development's 503 residential units would be distributed throughout the tower and base building, broken down by 274 one-bedrooms, 175 two-bedrooms, and 54 three-bedrooms.



Rendering by Norm Li via City of Toronto.



Proposed development site/Public Work via City of Toronto.





Existing site as it looks today with Loblaws supermarket and outdoor parking lot.



Rendering by Norm Li via City of Toronto.

The new 2,090 m<sup>2</sup> grocery store will serve as a central component of the development and help animate and extend the retail main street along Broadview Avenue.

Though, future residents and the existing community will be pleased to know that the development also includes a unique ravine restoration strategy that provides a significant new public portal and entry point into the ravine, with potential access to a new multi-use trail that will connect the Bloor/Danforth corridor to the various cycling routes within the Don Valley and Riverdale Park East.

Part of the development includes creating a new 460 m<sup>2</sup> public park on Broadview Avenue and a 1,364 m<sup>2</sup> plaza that extends west from the park and integrates into a public realm that invites users to “connect and engage with the improved ravine system.”

Given the site’s size, unique locational attributes, and transit connectivity, the developer says the parcel of land represents a prime location for transit-oriented intensification just outside of the downtown core and an opportunity to provide a new gateway into the Don Valley. ➤

## Tugboat Theodore Now grown up and living in Hamilton

By Pat Brennan



**PIER 8**, a spectacular residential community proposed for Hamilton Harbour, already has its first resident – a handsome TV personality.

Theodore Too is a full-scale model of Theodore Tug, a toy tug that starred on a CBC TV children’s program for eight years in the ‘90s.

It carried on a social life with various ships in Halifax Harbour that had human features and lived social lives.

The TV show was so successful that its creators decided to build the real thing to roam around to east coast and Great Lakes ports to promote the show.





When the show ended in 2001 Theodore Too, who wears a peaked hat and has a boyish face with adjustable eyes, became a popular tour boat in Halifax Harbour. Ambassador Tour Lines sold the vessel and it now lives at Pier 8 - a new residential innovative community replacing dozens of large warehouses on a shipping pier in the west end of Hamilton Harbour. You can read more about Pier 8 in the [Spring - Summer 2021](#) issue of The Land Economist.

Blair McKeil, who recently sold McKeil Marine Services, a Hamilton-based company with a large fleet of real working tugboats plus a half dozen Great Lakes freighters, bought Theodore Too to promote Merchant Marine careers and the shipping industry on the Great Lakes plus to promote water quality.

After its 6-week cruise from Halifax to Hamilton, stopping at many communities, the tug's diesel engine was converted to now run on used vegetable oil supplied by local restaurants.

Theodore Too will roam often from Pier 8 to ports on the Great Lakes and on Canada's east coast. ➡



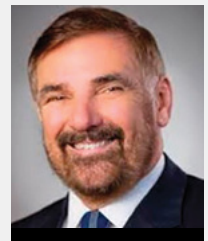
## THE COMPANY WE KEEP

As a marketing benefit designed to assist our members in promoting their companies, we are introducing periodic ebasts that will highlight various member's activities.

Should you want to take advantage of this promotion opportunity like Ed Sajecki, please contact Kari at [admin@aole.org](mailto:admin@aole.org)

### INTRODUCING

**SP** Sajecki→  
Planning



Ed Sajecki, Partner and Co-founder of [Sajecki Planning](#), is well known throughout Ontario for his work as the Commissioner of Planning and Building for the City of Mississauga, Canada's sixth largest city, where he had overall responsibility for planning policy, development applications and building construction. Prior to that, he was Assistant Deputy Minister with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing of the Province of Ontario, where he was responsible for land use planning, building and housing, and provincial-municipal relations.

Ed has wide-ranging senior executive experience in urban planning, development and management with local governments, and served as Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development for several cities within the Greater Toronto Area. Ed is a civil engineer and professional planner and has international experience related to local government in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and the Caribbean and has provided advice to governments on strategic planning, sustainable development/ smart growth and economic development.

Ed is a member of the Board of Directors and a past president of the Association of Ontario Land Economists (AOLE); sits on the Advisory Board of the Urban Land Institute's Toronto District Council and the Advisory Committee of Ryerson University's City Building Institute; and is a past Board member of the Canadian Urban Institute.

Ed is also currently a Senior Advisor with StrategyCorp, providing strategic and planning advice for a range of projects.

**The Association of Ontario Land Economists**  
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[admin@aole.org](mailto:admin@aole.org)



### Speaker Series: Impact of COVID-19 on the GTA Housing Market and What's Next with Andrew Brethour

This event took place live on Zoom on September 29th. A video recording and slides of the original event are available by clicking [Here](#)

### WATCH OUT FOR THE PAUL FISH STORY

In the next issue of The Land Economist, we will be featuring an article on Paul Fish.

Having established the largest real estate consulting firm in North America: The Altus Group, Paul went on to work in some of the poorest countries in Africa to establish a property assessment program, firstly in various cities and towns in Sierra Leone and then in Malawi. We will bring you his remarkable story in the next edition.



## Welcome New Members

**Nathan Stienstra**  
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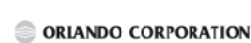
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Want to Hear More about the GTA Land Market - Listen to the Toronto Under Construction Podcast with Steve Keyzer of Colliers!

**A PODCAST with**  
**BEN MYERS & STEVE CAMERON**  
and SPECIAL GUEST  
**STEVE KEYZER**



### Why Canada Needs to Focus on Ways to Encourage More Home Building

Dan Rees, group head, Canadian banking, Bank of Nova Scotia and Jean-François Perrault, Scotiabank's chief economist look at Canada's housing issues that include affordability and accessibility, point to some root causes of housing shortages and offer suggestions. [Read the Full Article](#)

### Estimating the Structural Housing Shortage in Canada: Are We 100 Thousand or Nearly 2 Million Units Short? [Read Scotiabank's Report](#)

### A Power Struggle Over Cobalt Rattles the Clean Energy Revolution

Cobalt is vital for electric vehicles and the Congo supplies more than two-thirds of the world's production. The race for cobalt has set off a power struggle in Congo. China might use its growing dominance of cobalt to disrupt the American push toward electric vehicle. The United States is pressing for access to cobalt supplies from allies, including Australia and Canada. [Read the Full Article](#)

### GTA HOUSING CRISIS - SOLUTIONS TO AFFORDABILITY AND SUPPLY SUMMIT.

Listen to Andy Brethour and Industry leaders in this recorded PMA-CIBC Summit Series webinar as they discuss the possible solutions to the affordability crisis in Ontario Housing. [Watch video](#)

### The Ups, Ins and Outs of Population Growth

Mike Collins-Williams, CEO of West End Home Builders' Association explores "How the Greater Golden Horseshoe is going to accommodate population growth from over 10 million residents today to nearly 15 million by 2051 in his article published in NEXTHOME [Read the Full Article](#)

### US Industrial market Reports -Record-Breaking Quarter for the Industrial Sector!

Cushman & Wakefield reports that "The U.S. industrial market ended the third quarter of 2021 with record-setting statistics and demand outpacing supply for the third quarter in a row. [Read the Full Report](#)

### Montreal industrial: 'I've never seen such a hot market

According to an article published in the Real Estate News Exchange "Tenants must be prepared to settle for less, drive long distances and pay more than they expected in Montreal's sizzling industrial market". [Read the Full Article](#)

### Province on board with building high-speed Calgary-Edmonton rail link

As reported in the Calgary Herald on July 8th "proponents of a high-speed rail link between Calgary and Edmonton say they've received backing from the provincial government to begin developing what's long been an unrealized transportation dream in Alberta." [Read the Full Article](#)

### Major players join financing for Toronto's Properly

As reported by the Globe and Mail on July 21st "Executives from Wealthsimple, SoftBank and Zillow have joined Bain Capital and Intact Insurance to provide \$44-million in financing for Toronto-based real estate brokerage Properly Inc. as it looks to expand across the country and further into financial services." [Read the Full Article](#)

### The Case for the Core

The Canadian Urban Institute(CUI) has issued a report that details the pandemic's "indelible impact on our cities' spatial cores - our central business districts and our downtowns". CUI asserts that "This report is our moment to provoke a massive re-think of what our downtowns need to become, as we emerge from COVID-19. [Read the Full Report](#)

### Women are the answer to Canada's skilled-trades shortage, but many roadblocks still exist

According to an article published in the Globe and Mail "A shortage of skilled workers is intensifying in Canada, potentially threatening the pace of the economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and that has policy makers looking at a largely untapped market for new construction workers: Women." [Read the Full Article](#)

### 'Rich' Millennials are selling out.

According to a [new trend report](#) from global luxury real estate brand [Engel & Völkers](#), 10% of North American homeowners are expected to sell their homes between 2021-2022, with luxury homeowners driving the market. However Millennials and Gen Xers are poised to sell more homes than Baby Boomers over the next two years. [Read the Full Article](#)

### Canadian multires transactions ahead of 2020 pace

"The Canadian multifamily market is very stable and extremely resilient, which is great news during these challenging times," said Marc Hetu, senior VP of capital markets for [CBRE's](#) national apartment group. "Based on the pipeline of firm deals and contingent

deals across the country, we expect 2021 to finish ahead of what we observed last year," said Hetu. [Read the Full Article](#)

### REMAX 2021 Fall Housing Market Outlook

Canadian housing market expected to remain strong this fall, despite Delta variant, say RE/MAX brokers and realtors. Young families driving demand for single-detached homes in cities across the country [Read the Full Article](#)

### A Park is More than its Name

How to design inclusive parks for seniors and the elderly. [Read the Full Article](#)

### GTA High Rise Land Insights Report for 3rd Quarter, 2021

[Read the full Report:](#)

### Avison Young GTA CRE Investment Review Third Quarter 2021

Investors continued to deploy a ready supply of capital into the Greater Toronto Area commercial real estate sector during the third quarter of 2021. [Report Summary Full Report](#)

### Colliers Hotels INNvestment Canada Hotel Quarter 2, 2021 Report

Twenty months into the Covid-19 pandemic, the Canadian tourism industry is now on a glide path to normalcy. Investor sentiment for the lodging asset class continues to improve surpassing full-year volume in 2020 and pacing close behind comparable levels of pre-Covid investment activity in 2019. [Read Report](#)

### Toronto's Prince Edward Viaduct re-envisioned as a new gathering spot for the city

Architect Tye Farrow's vision includes a pedestrian promenade and market stands by reducing the number of lanes to three, - two active and one parking/loading that could switch to active during rush hour. [Read the Full Article](#)

### Are Foreign Buyers Dominating the New Condo Market?

[Read Article on a Computer](#)  
[Read Article on a Mobile](#)

### Benjamin Tal's CIBC Deputy Chief Economist - Insights into the Market .

Benjamin Tal in this video presentation speaks about Covid and the effects it has had on markets worldwide and in Canada, labour shortages, interest rates, inflation and for the first time de-globalization and so much more... [Watch video](#)





# The Legislative Beat

By Andy Manahan, PLE

**Federal Election:** Premier Ford directed all his caucus to remain quiet during the federal election campaign. His office advised Cabinet ministers that they would not be permitted to campaign for federal Conservative leader Erin O'Toole or others who were running. Ostensibly, this was due to not wanting to enter the fray over contentious issues such as vaccine passports but it also had to do with Ford not wishing to make headlines as was the case in the 2019 federal campaign.

Legislative business resumed on October 4 and will end on December 9.

**Housing Crisis:** The lack of housing supply and unaffordability were major themes during the federal campaign and are sure to be hot topics in the lead up to both the provincial and municipal elections next year. A rapid escalation in prices for both ownership and rental accommodation are hot button issues, with bidding wars occurring even for rental [houses](#). The Toronto Regional Real Estate Board reported that average prices surged 19.3 per cent between October 2020 and October 2021. Part of the reason is the lack of new listings for both resale homes and condominiums, but low mortgage rates have also spurred the housing market.

In 2019, Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Steve Clark released the Housing Supply Action Plan. Even prior to the pandemic surge in prices, the Plan stated that in many large communities, home prices and rents have risen faster than household incomes (which rose only two per cent per year in the 2008-2018 period).

During his speech to delegates of the 2021 Association of Municipalities of Ontario annual (virtual) conference, the Minister reflected on this challenging situation but stated that "almost 11,500 units of rental housing were completed in Ontario in 2020 – the highest since 1992." While this type of

progress is positive news, the Federation of Rental-housing Providers released a [report](#) in 2020, based on pre-pandemic data, which estimates that there is a supply gap of 200,000 rental units across Ontario. One solution suggested by FRPO is to allow for more infill development around existing rental buildings where there is space. In essence, this is a free-land scenario where zoning for rental is already in place. Further, over a third of the sites identified are within 800 metres of a current or planned transit station, thus aligning with the province's transit-oriented communities' directive.

Land availability and slow approvals are also culprits in delivering new supply. At AOLE's webinar, Andy Brethour gave an example of a 40-foot lot in Richmond Hill that was \$2,500 per front foot in 2004 but recent sales are now \$20,000 pff. This is a shocking \$800K just for the land to build on. During the Q&A, he stressed that our Zoning By-Laws and Codes are too restrictive and that more flexible zoning would help to increase different types of housing product beyond the polarized single family and high-rise forms. He encouraged politicians to focus on ramping up supply, rather than measures which tend to stimulate demand. To address the urgency of the housing situation, Min. Clark has announced that the Province will host a meeting of the Big City Mayors and Regional Chairs on Dec. 16, with the Premier in attendance. Min. Clark also is beginning to work closely with federal minister Ahmed Hussen who is leading the new Ministry of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion.

**Crane Index:** An Urban Land Institute seminar in September dealt with Toronto's crane explosion. For the third quarter 2021, Toronto had 227 cranes while the count in the 905 region was 109, which is the largest number of any major North American region. Mr. Brethour pointed out, however, that towers that are under construction represent sales that were made four or five years ago. He expressed concern that when

immigration levels return to pre-pandemic levels, the housing supply crisis will be made worse. In a conversation with a construction industry representative, it was highlighted to me that with taller towers, cranes are generally in place for up to 18 months, whereas it was about a year previously. Some contractors are even turning down work because of a shortage of crane operators and other skilled trades.

**One Ontario:** A coalition of close to 35 organizations has been formed to advocate for a data platform which will be a one window approach to streamline building approvals. Representatives from municipal and provincial governments, architecture, engineering and construction stakeholders, software providers and academics are directionally in agreement that a standardized data exchange framework will facilitate a more efficient review of development applications.

Arash Shahi, co-founder and CEO of AECO Innovation Lab provides an example where a conservation authority that is serving 20 different municipalities results in staff dealing with 20 different systems that change every other year. This lack of standardization clearly is inefficient and hinders an agency's ability to provide comments.

Despite the negative repercussions from Covid-19, Richard Lyall, president of RESCON, has expressed that there is a silver lining. The pandemic has served as a catalyst for technological evolution, compelling municipalities to adopt online e-permitting and planning review solutions so that the processing of development applications and building permits would proceed.

**Municipal Comprehensive Reviews:** The Official Plans of upper and single-tier municipalities must be



aligned with the provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe by July 1, 2022. The latest iteration of the Plan was passed in 2019, with amendments in 2020, and provides employment and population growth forecasts in 10-year increments extending to 2051. In a NovaeRes Urbis story, (now) former OHBA CEO Joe Vaccaro indicates that many of the density and intensification calculations being considered by municipalities are resulting in a disproportionate number of high-density units being forecasted, and not enough ground-related housing, especially in suburban areas.

**Excess Construction Soils:** After many years of consultation, Ontario's Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks passed a new regulatory package in 2019. Due to Covid, the initial phase-in date was postponed a couple of times but is now set for January 1, 2022. O. Reg. 406/19 sets rules and standards for the reuse of excess soil, requirements for the planning and tracking of reuse and disposal of excess soil, and requirements for certain

procedures at larger soil reuse sites. Essentially, no more 'dig and dump' of clean soils will be permitted after January 1, 2025. There are separate rules for brownfield or contaminated sites.

While the Ministry had been responsible for policy development over the past decade, the Resource Productivity and Resource Authority (RPRA) has been given the implementation reins. RPRA also looks after circular economy initiatives such as the blue box program, tire recycling and hazardous materials, to name a few. At this stage, RPRA has been given a narrow mandate to establish an Excess Soil [Registry](#) and to implement a fee structure to cover the costs of the registry. Other responsibilities such as outreach to municipalities and other stakeholders or running pilot projects, as occurs with other programs, is not part of the current mission. Enforcement will remain with MECP.

**Supreme Court Ruling:** As reported in Vol. 48, No. 1, one of Premier Ford's first acts upon being elected in 2018 was to

unilaterally cut the size of Toronto Council to 25 members, even though the municipal campaign was already underway. In a 5-4 ruling, Canada's top court dismissed the City of Toronto's challenge. In a Toronto Star opinion [piece](#), University of Toronto scholar Mariana Valverde cleverly wrote "If five judges including the chief justice are so fixated on the words of the unrepresentative group of white men meeting 150 years ago that they ignore that the standard Canadian view that the constitution is 'a living tree' subject to historical change, it won't just be municipalities that suffer." She went on to say that the "BNA Act divided all political power between the feds and the provinces because they were the only ones in the room" (there were no municipal leaders or First Nations). 🐾



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