

Report To:	Chair and Members of the Planning and Public Works Committee
From:	Peter M. Crockett, P. Eng., Commissioner of Planning and Public Works
Date:	March 4, 2008
Report No. - Re:	PPW18-08 - Comments on the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario's Annual Report 2006-2007 "Reconciling our Priorities"

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT Regional Council endorse the following ten recommendations from the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario's (ECO) Annual Report 2006-2007 "Reconciling our Priorities":
 - a. Recommendation #1: The ECO recommends that MNR significantly speed up the process of wetland identification and evaluation and ensure that Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSW) are incorporated into municipal official plans.
 - b. Recommendation #2: The ECO recommends that MMAH amend the Provincial Policy Statement to prohibit new infrastructure such as highways in Provincially Significant Wetlands unless there are no reasonable alternatives and it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on their ecological functions.
 - c. Recommendation #3: The ECO recommends that the provincial government reconcile its conflicting priorities between aggregate extraction and environmental protection. Specifically, the Province should develop a new mechanism within the ARA [*Aggregate Approvals Act*] approvals process that screens out, at an early stage, proposals conflicting with identified natural heritage or source water protection values.
 - d. Recommendation #4: The ECO recommends that MMAH work with MPIR to increase the GGH Plan's intensification and density targets above existing business-as-usual development targets.
 - e. Recommendation #5: The ECO recommends that MNDM reform the Mining Act to reflect land use priorities of Ontarians today, including ecological values.
 - f. Recommendation #6: The ECO recommends that MNR reform the Public Lands Act to create a planning system that provides MNR with the tools to better protect ecological values on all Crown lands.

- g. Recommendation #7: The ECO recommends that MOE develop a comprehensive, mandatory, province-wide road salts management strategy to ensure aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems are protected from chlorides.
 - h. Recommendation #8: The ECO recommends that MNR improve the rehabilitation rates of Ontario pits and quarries by introducing stronger legislation with targets and timelines, by applying up-to-date rules to grandparented licences, and by further strengthening the ministry's own field capacity for inspections.
 - i. Recommendation #9: The ECO recommends that MOE and OMAFRA develop quality standards that support land application of stable "pathogen-free" sewage biosolids.
 - j. Recommendation #10: The ECO recommends that, where new emitters are seeking entry into heavily burdened airsheds, MOE implement measures to minimize cumulative effects, for example, by obtaining emission offsets and speeding up the process of updating older Cs of A [Certificates of Approval] in that airshed.
2. THAT the Sustainable Halton Plan implement the principles of landform permanence and an enhanced natural heritage system, representing the Region of Halton's fundamental values in land use planning as recognized in both the Regional Official Plan and Report No. PPW15-06.
 3. THAT the Regional Chair write a letter advising the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario of Regional Council's endorsement of Recommendation #1 and the analysis of his Annual Report 2006-2007 "Reconciling our Priorities" and indicating how the Regional Official Plan and the Sustainable Halton process incorporate and implement the concepts contained in his report.
 4. THAT the Regional Clerk forward a copy of Report No. PPW18-08 to the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, Ministry of Natural Resources, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, City of Burlington, Town of Oakville, Town of Milton, and Town of Halton Hills for their information.

REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide an analysis of the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario's (ECO) Annual Report 2006-2007 "Reconciling our Priorities" and to demonstrate how the Regional Official Plan and the Sustainable Halton process incorporate and implement the concepts contained in the ECO's report. The ECO's report includes commentary on issues relating to growth in Southern Ontario, aggregates and the environment, and makes ten recommendations on issues such as wetland identification, conflicting priorities between aggregate extraction and the natural environment and increased intensification and density targets. The ten

recommendations have been addressed within this report, and staff will also provide a response to the commentary on accommodating growth and living sustainably as well as the Sustainable Halton process.

Halton Region's Position on the Ten Recommendations

The following are the ten recommendations made by the ECO and Halton Region's response to each recommendation.

Recommendation #1 - The ECO recommends that MNR significantly speed up the process of wetland identification and evaluation and ensure that Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSW) are incorporated into municipal official plans.

Halton's Position – Supports the Recommendation

As detailed in the report, the Commissioner references a number of municipalities experiencing wetland loss as a result of gaps in information and, in some instances, lack of political will by municipalities to appropriately identify wetlands in their Official Plans.

Staff support this recommendation; however, it should be noted that while there remain significant gaps in wetland evaluations on a provincial scale, the evaluation of PSW and their appropriate recognition in municipal planning documents is not a significant issue in Halton Region. The lack of MNR resources to conduct wetland evaluations has long been a criticism by municipalities since the introduction of the 1997 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). Halton Region and the GTA are fortunate in that the vast majority of identified wetlands in this region have been evaluated and classified. The MNR, in conjunction with the Conservation Authorities (CA) have traditionally conducted or updated wetland evaluations where development pressures are most pronounced. Where wetlands have been identified as part of a major planning application which have not been evaluated, MNR has stepped up. Recent examples of this include the evaluation and classification of PSW in North Oakville and the Grindstone Creek Headwaters, which have evolved from the North Oakville Secondary Planning Process and the Nelson Aggregates Quarry Expansion applications respectively.

The ECO's report advocates for the restoration of an MNR role in land use planning; however, it fails to acknowledge that many municipalities including Halton Region have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the CA to provide technical advice and peer review of matters relating to Section 2 of the PPS pertaining to natural heritage. CA have also entered into MOU with the Province to assume full plan review responsibilities under Section 3 of the PPS which deals with natural hazards. With their considerable expertise and knowledge of local environmental conditions, particularly on a watershed-based scale, and in consideration of the relationship of wetlands to all natural features (i.e. terrestrial ecology, stream and valley corridors, significant habitats, groundwater), CA are best suited to continue their current roles in municipal plan review on wetlands and other natural heritage features. Indeed, the PPS acknowledges the watershed as the ecologically meaningful scale for planning purposes. Furthermore, each of Halton Region's CA have staff trained in the Ontario Wetland Evaluation Classification System, and MNR remains the review and approval authority for all such evaluations.

The Commissioner's Report also comments on the effectiveness of the CA to protect wetlands under new Regulations of the *Conservation Authorities Act* by citing inconsistencies as to how some CA only regulate PSW, ignoring Regionally Significant or unevaluated wetlands. This is not the case in Halton Region as all three of our CA protect wetlands regardless of their evaluation status. Halton Region's CA are continuing to refine their Regulated Areas mapping to include all wetlands in addition to all other natural hazard features under the standardized provisions of the recently approved Generic Regulation.

The Regional Official Plan Greenlands A and B designations implement a systems based approach. PSW are one of several environmental features protected. Halton Region supports and encourages any technical and policy direction from MNR on the protection of features and functions. Regional staff is of the opinion that the policies of the Regional Official Plan and current MOU with our CA to rely on their significant local experience and expertise is appropriate to ensure PSW and all natural heritage features are protected.

Recommendation #2 - *The ECO recommends that MMAH amend the Provincial Policy Statement to prohibit new infrastructure such as highways in Provincially Significant Wetlands unless there are no reasonable alternatives and it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on their ecological functions.*

Halton's Position – Supports the Recommendation

Section 2.1.3 of the PPS currently states that development and site alteration shall not be permitted in PSW; however, infrastructure is exempt from the definition of "development" where authorized under an environmental assessment process. Infrastructure is defined in the PPS as physical structures that form the foundation for development and include: sewage and water systems, waste management systems, electric power generation and transmission, communications and telecommunications, transit and transportation corridors, and gas pipelines and associated facilities.

The intent of the recommendation would appear to be an effort to grant a higher degree of protection to PSW in the context of the PPS for infrastructure works. However, the recommendation does not exclude infrastructure in PSW where the test of "reasonableness" for no alternative, or where no negative impacts to their ecological functions are anticipated. The Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process already embraces these tests. All Municipalities in Ontario follow the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process under the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act to complete an Environmental Assessment (EA) for most infrastructure projects. The Class EA is a phased planning approach that includes five main study phases and public consultation. The complexity and extent of the environmental impact of a specific project determines the number of phases to be completed to comply with the Class EA process, which is all done under a comprehensive public consultation process. This includes the identification of alternatives and the weighing of costs and benefits, in particular, the potential for environmental impacts. The more potential, such as those projects within or around a PSW or other significant features, the more stringent the process. Accordingly, the existing Municipal Class EA process adequately incorporates the principle of "no reasonable alternative" and the

protection of ecological functions in its evaluation process. When Municipal Class Environmental Assessments are being undertaken, the Region makes certain that all regional and local policies, documents and planning directions that are available are considered to ensure that all relevant and available information is reflected in the assessment.

Recommendation #3 - *The ECO recommends that the provincial government reconcile its conflicting priorities between aggregate extraction and environmental protection. Specifically, the province should develop a new mechanism within the ARA approvals process that screens out, at an early stage, proposals conflicting with identified natural heritage or source water protection values.*

Halton's Position – Supports the Recommendation

The ECO references aggregate extraction particularly in Southern Ontario; and, while a number of concerns about extraction and its social and environmental impacts are made, the discussion does not take into account the Province's need for aggregates, particularly for infrastructure. The focus of the ECO's report is on the perceived problems with the approvals process and the absence of an overall strategy.

It is agreed that the industry can do more to justify its predictions and statements on the need for the resource and the need for locating resource areas as close to market as possible. It was initially hoped that MNR would review this issue, in particular in the context of an update to the 1992 State of the Resource Study. While it is indicated in the ECO's report that the revised study will be available by the end of 2007, the Terms of Reference for the study have yet to be released as of December 2007, and it is not anticipated that the study will be completed until late 2008 or early 2009.

It is also recognized that the Growth Plan places some onus on the Province in determining where 'significant mineral aggregate resource areas' are in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH). However, as part of the current Halton Aggregate Resources Management Strategy process, it has been determined that the Province has no plans to initiate the process that would result in the identification of significant mineral aggregate resource areas in the GGH. This is very unfortunate, since municipalities are now faced with the task of determining what is 'significant' in the absence of an overall Provincial context. This lack of Provincial context was identified very early on in the Halton Aggregate Resources Management Strategy process and has been acknowledged by the Province as a concern.

The Region is also concerned, as is the ECO, about the nature of the use being characterized as an 'interim use', particularly given that many pits and quarries have lifespans that exceed 50 years. While the nature of the use as an interim use is a consideration as part of the approval process, much greater emphasis should be placed on the shorter - term environmental and social impacts in the approval process. This principle will have an impact on the criteria that are developed as part of the Halton Aggregate Resources Management Strategy and which will be applied to new and expanding resource operations in the Region in the future.

The Sustainable Halton Phase I Aggregate Resources Management Report, finalized in December 2007, also indicates that there are concerns about the "self-policing" aspects of the MNR compliance process. In this regard, it is noted that MNR staff are only able to visit each site once every five years. Unless the Province commits to providing the MNR with the resources to visit sites more often and be more active in the compliance process, municipalities such as the Region of Halton will have to consider how it can fulfill this role following the approval of a license. It is anticipated that there may be some opposition to the municipality assuming any role in this regard, since it is not provided for through legislation. However, it is staff's understanding that MNR does go out to sites in response to complaints.

The Province has been actively involved in the development of a number of resource strategies, including recently a case concerning urban development over extraction in the City of Brampton as a result of its support of the Northwest Brampton Urban Expansion Area. It is anticipated that the Province will be a participant in the development of the Halton Aggregate Resources Management Strategy.

The ECO does not discuss the relationship to some of the new policy directions in the Greenbelt Plan. There is no reference to the 'net gain of ecological health concept' for example. The addition of such a policy framework at the Provincial level is positive and is the beginning of a framework for considering expansions and new operations in the future, particularly with respect to determining how impacts are to be minimized. It is anticipated that the Region of Halton Aggregate Resources Management Strategy process will break some new ground in this particular area and develop criteria and policies which greatly assist in assessing applications for resource extraction in the future.

The Region agrees that MNR is conflicted because of its dual role in protecting aggregate extraction and the natural environment. It hampers the decision-making abilities of MNR staff and slows the commenting process on aggregate applications. The Province may want to consider separating the two roles into different ministries to address this conflict.

An appropriate Provincial context and full disclosure from the Province on supply and the rationale behind siting resource operations close to market would obviate the need to demonstrate a resource use on a case by case basis and introduce an element of certainty into the land use planning process.

Recommendation #4 – The ECO recommends that MMAH work with MPIR to increase the GGH Plan's intensification and density targets above existing business-as-usual development targets.

Halton's Position – Supports the Recommendation

The ECO's report discusses growth and the natural environment of Southern Ontario, and that current land development pressures are using up valuable greenspace and agricultural lands and that this growth is placing increased demands on a landscape that is already built up with human structures. Based on this discussion, the ECO recommends in his annual report that MMAH work with MPIR to increase the GGH Plan's intensification and density targets above existing business-as-usual development targets.

The Region of Halton agrees that achieving more than business-as-usual targets is something that all Regional and Local governments in the province should strive to achieve. In February 2006, Regional Council adopted Report PPW15-06 (Joint Submission on Places to Grow Plan) which stated that it is Halton Partners' position that the monitoring of intensification performance should be based not solely on meeting targets but also on the strength and intent of a municipality's policies, Council decisions, complementary programs and initiatives, comparison with past records and other intangibles.

However, the Region requests that if intensification and density targets increases are to be considered, that the following occur: municipalities be consulted on the increase to the intensification and density targets, the targets reflect the individual situations of each of the municipalities, and that the consultation between MMAH, MPIR, and the municipalities result in targets *specific* to each municipality at the Regional level. In addition, if a municipality is already achieving residential intensification greater than 40 per cent, then that is the density target that should be applied on a go-forward basis. The intensification targets are measured using the built boundary line issued by MPIR (proposed final version dated Fall 2007). For some municipalities, this translates into greater intensification opportunities than others. Halton Region is currently in the process of evaluating how to achieve the 40 per cent intensification target outlined in the GGH in terms of housing mix and location.

In 2006, the NEPTIS Foundation reported that "to achieve the benefits of intensification, housing and workplaces must be added in sufficient quantities in the right locations and in a form conducive to transit use, walking and cycling. Not all intensification effectively contributes to higher transit use or compact form". Through the Sustainable Halton process, intensification areas will be identified and aligned with the Transportation Master Plan, Water and Waste Water Master Plan and Community Infrastructure Plan to maximize public investments and support other public policy initiatives and investments (e.g. utilization of existing community facilities) and utilize existing transit investment within the Region. As such, greater density and intensification targets are admirable; however, they need to translate into achievable and realistic targets for municipalities.

Recommendation #5 – The ECO recommends that MNDM reform the Mining Act to reflect land use priorities of Ontarians today, including ecological values.

Halton's Position – Supports the Recommendation

This recommendation is not directly applicable to the Region of Halton, however, the ECO report references a 722 page document released in April 2006 that is to be used by MNR staff members in administering the Aggregate Resources Act (ARA). The Manual is intended to provide a consistent approach to the administration of the ARA across the province and a transparent process for the aggregate industry, stakeholders, municipalities and others. It was noted that the Manual was made available to the public (through the EBR process) and that numerous comments and recommendations from various stakeholders were received, including Halton Region.

It is noted by the ECO that the Manual only requires identification and protection of “significant” natural heritage features, as defined in the PPS under the Planning Act. In this respect, the ECO is of the view that information about all natural heritage should be required and considered by MNR when considering approval of a pit or quarry application. It was also recommended by the ECO that the final text of the Manual be made available on the MNR website for public access, as well as future revisions and updates.

A detailed review of the Manual will be carried out as part of the Halton Aggregate Resources Management Strategy program.

Recommendation #6 – *The ECO recommends that MNR reform the Public Lands Act to create a planning system that provides MNR with the tools to better protect ecological values on all Crown lands.*

Halton’s Position - *Supports the Recommendation*

Although the ECO makes specific reference to northern Ontario regarding this recommendation, the recommendation would be applicable to all Crown lands. Halton Region has no objection to this recommendation based on the ECO’s statement that “legislation should provide legislative requirements, as well as legal authority for land use plans on Crown land. In addition, the new legislation should identify provincial interests, set out detailed planning requirements, and provide protection for ecological values. Such a planning system should take precedence over laws that govern other disparate land uses, such as those for forestry and mining”.

Recommendation #7 – *The ECO recommends that MOE develop a comprehensive, mandatory, province-wide road salts management strategy to ensure aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems are protected from chlorides.*

Halton’s Position – *Supports the Recommendation*

The five road authorities within the Region (Halton Region, City of Burlington, Town of Halton Hills, Town of Milton, and Town of Oakville) have developed a Salt Management Plan that strives to minimize the amount of salt entering the environment by including best salt management practices, and using new technologies to ensure its most effective use over the road system. The Plan is a policy and procedural framework ensuring continuous improvement of the management of road salt used in winter maintenance operations and reflects a commitment to reducing the environmental effects of excessive salt use and is consistent with Environment Canada’s stated objectives. Environment Canada has stated it will not ban the use of road salts but rather will encourage users to develop their own salt management strategy.

In addition, in September 2007, the Region with Ecoplans Ltd., finalized its Salt Vulnerable Areas Study and Salt Management Strategies in Salt Vulnerable Areas Reports, further solidifying its commitment to reducing the effects of road salt use.

The ECO’s recommendation is applicable to the entire province and the recommendation is within the provincial context. The ECO’s report notes that “several municipalities are currently realizing

the environmental, economic and health benefits of implementing a road salt minimization strategy. Provincial guidelines that mandate best practices would assist other municipalities and large salt users to design a salt management plan suited to their geography, roads and water conservation area”. As Halton Region already has in place a Salt Management Strategy, the Region concurs with the recommendation that provincial guidelines regarding best practices in salt management be developed in consultation with municipalities.

Recommendation #8 – The ECO recommends that MNR improve the rehabilitation rates of Ontario pits and quarries by introducing stronger legislation with targets and timelines, by applying up-to-date rules to grandparented licences, and by further strengthening the ministry’s own field capacity for inspections.

Halton’s Position – Supports the Recommendation

The Region is in agreement with the ECO’s recommendation that MNR improve the rehabilitation rates of Ontario pits and quarries. By increasing efforts on enforcing the rehabilitation requirements of licences, there may be a resulting restoration in the faith of the public that rehabilitation will be completed in the most effective and timely manner.

The Region is in agreement with the ECO’s recommendation to strengthen the ministry’s own field capacity for inspections. The Region feels that there is not enough overseeing of the aggregate industry by MNR and that self-policing by the aggregate industry is not working in terms of ensuring that rehabilitation is undertaken and that complaints are responded to. The Region feels that a solution would be for MNR to take back its supervisory function and re-establish the rehabilitation fund and increase staffing at MNR for this purpose. If this is not a feasible option, then perhaps MNR should adequately fund the municipalities and other review agencies who have taken on this role by default. In addition, the Region has recently created an Aggregate Monitoring Co-ordinator position within the Infrastructure Planning Section who will be responsible for monitoring aggregate licenses after they have received approval under the *Planning Act* and the *Aggregate Resources Act*. The Co-ordinator will largely be responsible for ensuring that all agreements are implemented, maintaining the Region’s Aggregate Sites Database and reviewing compliance reports to ensure that aggregate operators are fulfilling their agreements.

Recommendation #9 – The ECO recommends that MOE and OMAFRA develop quality standards that support land application of stable “pathogen-free” sewage biosolids.

Halton’s Position – Supports the Recommendation

The Region is supportive of the ECO’s recommendation with respect to the development of quality standards that support land application of stable “pathogen-free” sewage bio-solids. The Region has in place a Biosolids Management Program which is a comprehensive and Region-wide program. The program is evolving as the Region continually looks to new technologies and partnership opportunities.

Recommendation #10 – *The ECO recommends that, where new emitters are seeking entry into heavily burdened airsheds, MOE implement measures to minimize cumulative effects, for example, by obtaining emission offsets and speeding up the process of updating older Cs of A in that airshed.*

Halton's Position – *Supports the Recommendation*

The Region is supportive of the ECO's recommendation. The ECO's report speaks to the need to consider background Air Quality issues when dealing with Cs of A. The public health sector and a number of epidemiologists in academia have been proposing such a move for some time. The Region's Health Department, through Council adopted Report MO-57-07 (Need for Improvements in Provincial Air Quality Regulations) requested that the MOE consider background air levels and improve the air standards for Cs of A.

Currently the Region uses the D-6 Guideline developed by the Province to address compatibility between industrial facilities and sensitive land uses to reduce health concerns, discomfort and complaints that can result when homes and schools are located too close to facilities that emit substantial quantities of air pollutants. The D-6 Guideline recognizes that Cs of A do not necessarily provide adequate protection for residents from fugitive emissions, spills, fires, noise and odour that can be associated with industrial facilities. However, the D-6 Guideline does not address air quality issues along highways, nor does it address cumulative air quality impacts.

The Region does agree with the ECO on the importance of the MOE accelerating the speed with which it reviews outdated Cs of A for industrial facilities to ensure that they are complying with current air standards. The Region also agrees that the MOE must develop a means by which it can address cumulative air quality impacts when assessing Cs of A for industrial facilities that are sited in "heavily burdened airsheds".

What Halton Region is Doing – The Sustainable Halton Plan

In addition to the 10 recommendations, the report by the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario contains commentary on a number of general areas such as: the threat of "irreconcilable priorities", Principles of Sustainable Development, Considerations in Planning for Sustainability, and Outcome of GGH Intensification.

The ECO's report explores whether the growth predicted by the Growth Plan and other recent provincial planning initiatives will achieve ecosystem protection and the creation of truly sustainable communities in Southern Ontario and that the risks will be great should these efforts fail. The ECO suggests that there are "irreconcilable priorities" in the province's plans for balancing growth and ecosystem sustainability. The ECO reports that sustainability must become the key principle in accommodating the population increases projected for Southern Ontario.

The report explores four topics involving irreconcilable priorities:

1. Living sustainably within a watershed, or pushing beyond natural limits?
2. Creating a sustainable transportation system, or paving over the landscape?

3. Protecting wetlands, or draining for development?
4. Preserving natural areas, or extracting aggregates wherever they lie?

The ECO's report discusses these four priorities and in the cases of #3 Protecting Wetlands and #4 Preserving Natural Areas, the report makes recommendations with respect to these irreconcilable priorities (Recommendations #1, #2, and #3) which were discussed in greater detail earlier in this report.

Policy 26 of the Regional Official Plan recognizes the importance of population and employment growth to the social and economic life of its residents. The Region acknowledges that further urbanization and changes to its landscape are expected in the next decades. Therefore, as part of the Sustainable Halton Plan, the Region will undertake the necessary steps to ensure that growth will be accommodated in an orderly, manageable way, with sensitivity to its natural environment, agriculture, heritage, culture and community structure. Policy 26 also speaks to the concept of landform permanence which represents the Region's fundamental value in land use planning and which will guide all Regional decisions and actions on proposed land use changes.

The Sustainable Halton Plan is a growth management strategy intended to promote the concept of sustainable development, which is defined in the 2004 Regional Official Plan. Policy 25 of the Regional Official Plan defines sustainable development as "*meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need*". This definition is the exact definition used by the ECO in his report, and is a principle strongly supported by the Region and the basis of the Sustainable Halton Plan. The policy goes on to further state that "*planning decisions in Halton will be made based on a proper balance among the following factors: protecting the natural environment, enhancing its economic competitiveness, and fostering a healthy, equitable society*". The overall goal is to enhance the quality of life for all people of Halton.

The ECO's report outlines Six Principles of Sustainable Development developed in 1989 by the Ontario Round Table on Environment and Economy (ORTEE). The six principles are intended to promote sustainability and include:

1. Anticipating and preventing problems are better than trying to react and fix them after they occur.
2. Accounting must reflect all long-term environmental and economic costs, not just those of the current market.
3. The best decisions are those based on sound, accurate, and up-to-date information.
4. We must live off the interest our environment provides and not destroy its capital base.
5. The quality of social and economic development must take precedence over quantity.
6. We must respect nature and the rights of future generations.

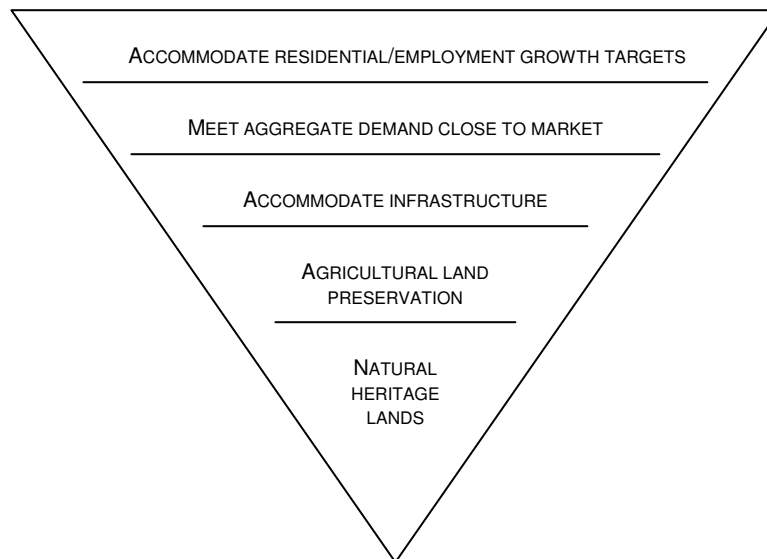
These six principles of sustainable development are reflected in some of the work that has already been completed for Sustainable Halton and help form part of the basis of the Sustainable Halton plan. The Plan involves anticipating and planning for the projected growth the Province has indicated will occur between 2021 and 2031 using the best sustainability principles. The Plan aims to accommodate the required growth in a manner that is Halton specific, and one that is

designed to anticipate and discuss upfront the potential problems that may occur as a result of this projected growth, and as the Plan moves forward, will identify and present the best solutions for dealing with these potential problems. Phase I of the Sustainable Halton Plan formed the “building blocks” of the process and culminated in the development of twenty-two background reports on issues specific to the Region. There were conflicting elements in the twenty-two background reports, and to address this, the Region consulted with stakeholders through a half-day symposium to gain a better understanding of the conflicting elements and their relationships. Phase I provided the Region with a solid foundation in developing a sustainable growth management strategy.

One of the reports completed in Phase I dealt with the Region’s Natural Heritage System. The report outlined three options and the Region has opted to develop Option 3, the enhanced Natural Heritage System, based on enhanced ecological integrity and which provides a much greater assurance that regional biodiversity and ecological functions can be preserved in perpetuity. This reflects Council’s goal in the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan which speaks to “implementing an enhanced systems approach to natural heritage preservation” and the action of “developing a Natural Heritage System to be reflected in the Sustainable Halton plan”.

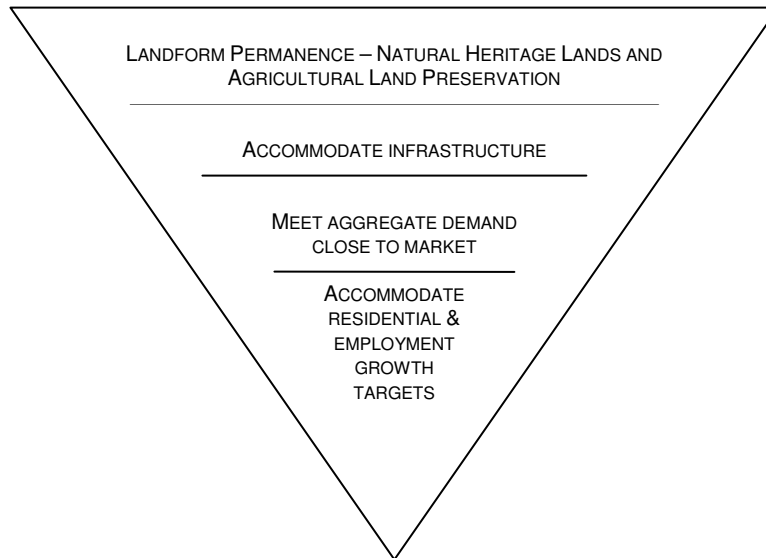
In his presentation to the Region of Halton on February 11, 2008, the ECO discussed his opinion on the hierarchy of development planning in Ontario and that from the ECO’s perspective the protection of natural heritage is the last stage of the process as outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Hierarchy of Development Planning in Ontario (ECO Report)



The Planning Framework in Halton is dissimilar to the Planning Hierarchy outlined in the ECO’s report as it is predicated on the Principle of Landform Permanence and that this Principle guides the decision making process. In this regard, the Sustainable Halton process and other land use matters in the Region, is based on developing and implementing an enhanced natural heritage system, under the auspices of a healthy community paradigm in decision making, as the first priority (Figure 2). An enhanced NHS system will be used as a starting point for all future growth scenarios.

Figure 2 – Hierarchy of Development Planning in Halton Region

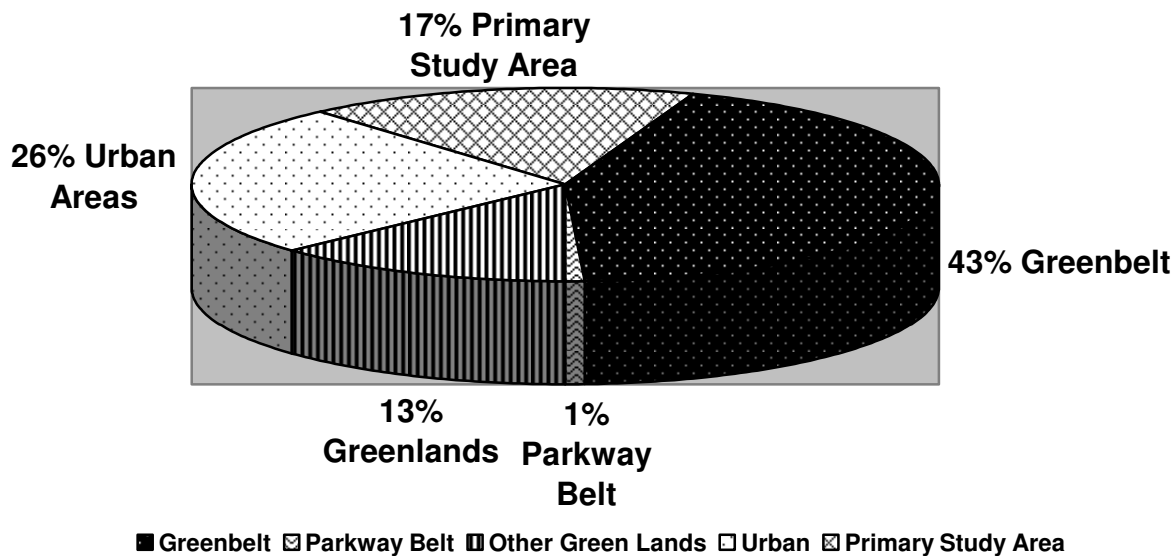


To reinforce the concept of landform permanence as being the fundamental value in land use planning in Halton Region, this report contains a recommendation that Regional Council reconfirm its endorsement the principles of landform permanence and an enhanced natural heritage system through the Sustainable Halton plan, as contained in the Regional Official Plan.

Total Regional Land Base by Major Land-Use Category

The Sustainable Halton Phase I Technical Background Report “Regional Land Analysis”, by Hemson Consulting Ltd., outlined the basis of the Regional land uses to conceptually identify and account for all land uses in the Region. The Region was divided into five land use categories as outlined in Figure 3. The Region is comprised of 43% Greenbelt, 26% Urban Areas, 17% Primary Study Area, 13% Other Green Lands and 1% Parkway Belt which means that 74% of the Region is currently non-urban. When the new Greenfield residential and employment lands identified through the Sustainable Halton Plan to meet the *Places to Grow Plan* population and employment targets (3,010ha) are added to the Urban Area total for the Region, 71% of the Region will remain non-urban.

Figure 3 – Total Regional Land Base by Major Land-Use Category



As part of Phase II of the Sustainable Halton plan, the Region is undertaking a number of additional studies and strategies to help inform the process and ensure that we make the best decision we can with the most accurate information. To give just two examples, the Region is undertaking a LEAR study (Land Evaluation Area Review) to help the Region better define its Prime Agricultural and Rural areas within the entire Region and an Aggregate Strategy to help improve the approach to dealing with aggregate extraction within the Region.

The Region will also undertake a Financial Impact Assessment of the short list of growth options to understand the costs associated with accommodating the growth identified by the Province and new Transportation and Water and Wastewater Master Plans will be completed to understand what upgrades and new services are required and the costs associated with these for the preferred growth option. The Region has been clear with its *Fairness for Halton* Campaign that growth will not occur in the Region without the financial support of the province. Accepting the growth targets will be predicated on a two-way agreement between the Region and the Province being reached, with the Province financing the necessary services needed based on the projected growth.

As part of Phase II of Sustainable Halton an Evaluation Framework is being developed to evaluate and measure the growth options as part of the Region's conformity exercise with the *Places to Grow Plan*. The Evaluation Framework includes goals, objectives and measures which form the basis of the framework and which will be used to rank the growth options. The Framework is based on 4 themes first derived from "the four key principles that emanate from the Sustainable Halton Plan (Phase 1) process (Report PPW76-07). These four themes are: 1. Protect What is Valuable; 2. Promote Health for All; 3. Foster Complete, Healthy and Sustainable Communities; and 4. Ensure Sustainable Infrastructure to Support Growth.

The principles or themes of the Evaluation Framework were detailed by drawing from best practices in growth management, Provincial, Regional and Municipal policy directions, and

community consultation. The Evaluation Framework includes goals and objectives that foster the three interconnected elements of sustainability (i.e. environmental, social, and economic well-being of the Region).

The Sustainable Halton Plan is about more than just where the Region will grow between 2021 and 2031. First and foremost, it is about landform permanence. It is about building compact, complete communities, and planning for the people and business that will call Halton home. Sustainable Halton promotes providing a mix of housing options, mixed uses, walkable communities, transit-oriented development, and cost effective growth. These are reflected in the Sustainable Halton Principles and Evaluation criteria which are being developed to evaluate the growth options. Options that best reflect these principles will be ranked the highest. The Sustainable Halton plan is about ensuring that all the things that make Halton unique are reflected throughout the Sustainable Halton process and protected beyond 2031.

What Halton Region is Going to Do

In order to better address the six principles outlined in the ECO's report, the Region will be undertaking the development of an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, which will be the basis of the Region's sustainability initiative. A new position has been created within the Planning and Transportation Services Division that will be responsible for co-ordinating and communicating the Region's environmental initiatives (climate change programs, air quality monitoring, energy generation, conservation demand management, energy efficiency, etc.). The Senior Policy Analyst – Sustainability, will ensure that all Regional initiatives and programs are identified, coordinated, and reported.

Included in the 2008 Planning and Public Works Committee Plan for the 2007 – 2010 Strategic Plan is Action 2b) which requires the Region to “Develop an enhanced natural heritage system monitoring tool” and the development of a greenlands securement strategy in accordance with Policy 201 of the Regional Official Plan. This will be developed and has been included in the 2008 Budget.

There are a number of other issues discussed in the ECO's report that will also be incorporated into the Sustainable Halton work plan:

Sustainability Framework Checklist

Development of a Sustainability Framework checklist to ensure new developments meet the Region's Sustainability targets will be developed in Phase IV of Sustainable Halton, which is the drafting of the Official Plan Amendment to implement Sustainable Halton. The Official Plan will be amended to include policies and a checklist against which all new developments must be weighed to determine whether it meets what the Region defines as sustainable development. This will be prepared in collaboration with various Regional Departments. The checklist will incorporate ways of diminishing the ecological footprint of new developments as outlined in the ECO's example of Dockside Green, Victoria, British Columbia (Attachment #1).

Ecological Footprint/Carrying Capacity Study

As part of Phase II of Sustainable Halton, the Region will be exploring the concept of carrying capacity and measuring the Region's Ecological Footprint as an added item to the Sustainable Halton work plan. The Region will investigate what does the concept of carrying capacity mean, what other municipalities have undertaken this type of study, what factors were used in the analysis and how the results were used.

It is important to acknowledge the work the Region has already done to help reduce its Ecological Footprint. There are a number of current initiatives in place which aim to make the Region more sustainable and improve the quality of life of the residents. Some of these initiatives include our Smart Commute Initiative, the Green Cart program, recycling, the residential ultra low flow toilet rebate pilot program promoting wise water usage in the home, the recently approved Sustainability Fund intended to support the Region's participation in strategic initiatives related to economic development and environmental protection and the air monitoring and conservation demand programs.

Increased Intensification and Density Targets

As part of Phase II of Sustainable Halton, the Region will explore increased density targets across the greenfield areas and increased intensification within the existing urban areas to look at additional opportunities for increasing the targets defined in the Places to Grow Plan. To date as part of the Sustainable Halton process, a number of the local municipalities have provided areas for intensification and the density targets they feel can realistically be achieved. In order to increase the density targets, the Region may need to identify and explore additional opportunities not identified by the local municipalities in order to best take advantage of all opportunities Region-wide and fulfill the ECO's recommendation for increased intensification and density targets.

Transit

The ECO's report also discusses creating a sustainable transportation system and how through the Growth Plan the Province intends to reduce the need for travel, lessen traffic congestion, support the use of transit, and encourage walking and cycling. The Principles and Evaluation Criteria currently under development look at locating new growth along existing transit lines and transportation corridors. The Principles also differentiate between corridors for goods movement and growth corridors to ensure that all types of movement are properly accounted for.

What the Sustainable Halton plan does acknowledge is that there needs to be transit connections established or enhanced between the four Local Municipalities to provide Halton residents better mobility across the Region and also to attract new transit users to lessen traffic congestion in the Region and provide residents better choice in which transportation mode they choose to use. The Sustainable Halton plan will create the vision, framework, and structure to support public transit while these will need to be implemented by the Local Municipalities. The Sustainable Halton plan is building on Provincial decisions relating to a transit-oriented urban structure, and the Transportation Master Plan will support these Provincial decisions.

There have been recent initiatives within the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton focused on improving transit. In December 2007, the Government of Ontario's Fall Economic Statement announced nearly \$100 million of funding for implementing the Metrolinx Quick Win projects. The Quick Win projects include \$57.6 million for a Halton Region Bus Rapid Transit system providing continuous service to inter-regional GO Stations between Hamilton and Mississauga. In addition, more GO Transit parking spots within Halton will be made available including 150 spots at the Oakville GO Station and 150 spots at the Bronte GO Station. Along with the additional parking spots, new parking structures will be built at each location, resulting in an additional 250 parking spots at the Bronte GO Station and 700 to 900 spots at the Oakville GO Station.

FINANCIAL/PROGRAM IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

This report supports the 2008 Planning and Public Works Committee Plan Theme 2, Goal 2 "Implement an enhanced systems approach to natural heritage preservation".

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Lou Tanner MCIP RPP
Director, Planning and Transportation and
Chief Planning Official



Peter M. Crockett P. Eng.
Commissioner of Planning and Public Works

Approved by



Pat Moyle
Chief Administrative Officer

If you have any questions on the content of this report, please contact:

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Dockside Green

Overview

What does this mean to you? - [Learn More](#)

While there have been eco-residential and eco-industrial developments in the past, none, to our knowledge have incorporated such a wide range of uses as Dockside Green.

A model for holistic, closed-loop design, Dockside Green will function as a total environmental system in which form, structure, materials, mechanical and electrical systems will be interrelated and interdependent - a largely self-sufficient, sustainable community where waste from one area will provide fuel for another. Here you will find a dynamic environment where residents, employees, neighbouring businesses and the broader community will interact in a healthy and safe environment, reclaimed from disuse and contamination.

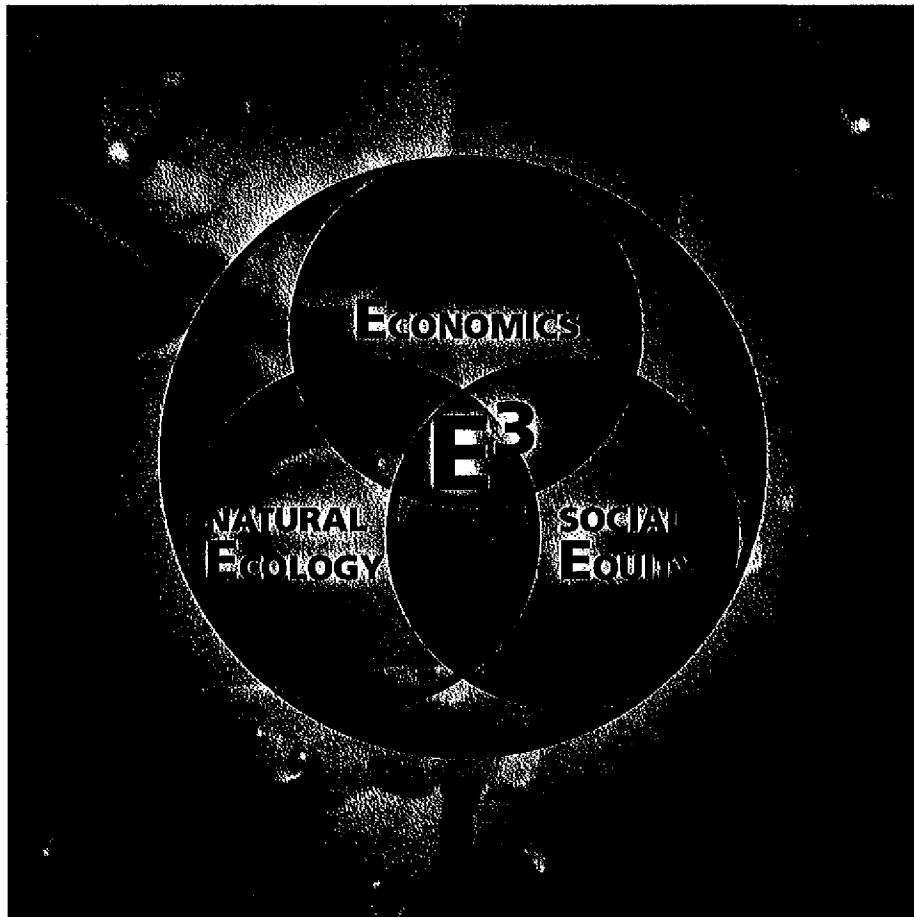
As a LEED® Platinum targeted project, Dockside Green's principles of New Urbanism, smart growth, green building and sustainable community design are all essential elements of our development plan. We understand the economics of the triple bottom line approach and we have the experience, vision and drive to deliver on it.

Read about our sustainability features in our [Annual Sustainability Report](#) or review a summary of Dockside Green's [Environmental Features](#).

"Dockside Green has redefined the words bold and leadership when it comes to Green Development. In this one project, what is possible has been redefined for cities everywhere, a brilliant achievement that will change our world." - Paul Hawken Author, Natural Capitalism and Ecology of Commerce

All visuals are representative only. The Developer reserves the right to modify the building design, floor plans, prices, suite features and specifications. The Developer also reserves the right to alter, add to, or choose not to proceed with any amenities.

Our Triple Bottom Line...



A Better Approach

We embrace what we consider to be our responsibility as developers to balance profits with environmental and social dividends.

We believe that our long-term economic prosperity depends on our ability to preserve and improve the quality of life and health of the environment within our communities.

As such, we are developing Dockside Green, a dynamic environment where residents, employees, neighbouring businesses and the broader community will interact in a healthy and safe environment.

The principles of New Urbanism, Smart growth, green building and sustainable community design are all essential elements of our development plan.

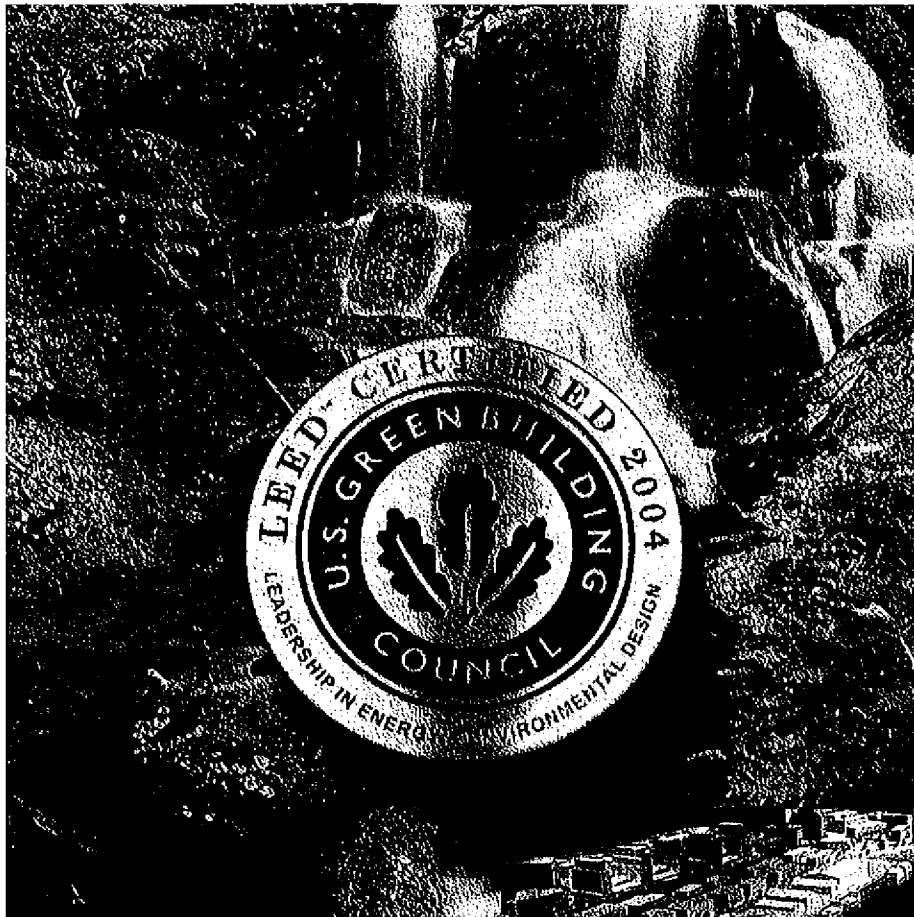
We understand the economics of the triple bottom line approach and we have the experience, vision and drive to deliver on it.

DOCKSIDE **GREEN**

Vancity



LEED Platinum Target...



First time ever for an entire community!

Dockside Green is the first community ever to target LEED Platinum certification for buildings developed in a master planned community.

LEED[™] is an independently audited, green building tool whereby points are awarded for energy and water efficiency, site ecology issues, indoor air quality, the use of environmental building materials and climate change initiatives.

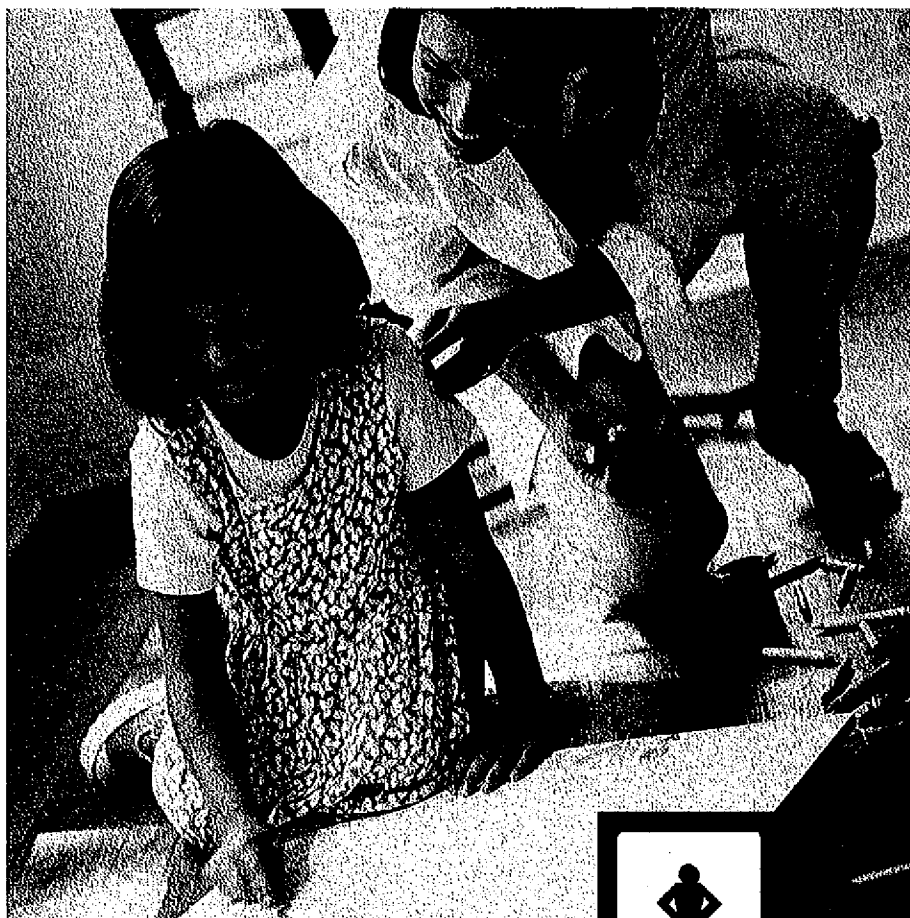
Only four buildings in the world have reached the platinum level.



How are we standing behind our commitment?

We have backed up our commitment with a potential penalty of up to \$1 million dollars (\$1 per buildable sq. ft.) payable to the Municipality should we not obtain the LEED Platinum designation for each building.

Healthy Buildings...



Healthy People

Most homes and offices are toxic environments. Numerous studies have shown dramatic increases in health, happiness and productivity for people living or working in green buildings.

Our buildings provide 100% fresh air through either a central or individual heat recovery ventilators.

At Dockside Green we use low or no volatile organic compounds (VOC's) paints, sealants and adhesives and we avoid the use of urea-formaldehyde composite wood products.

EcoFact:

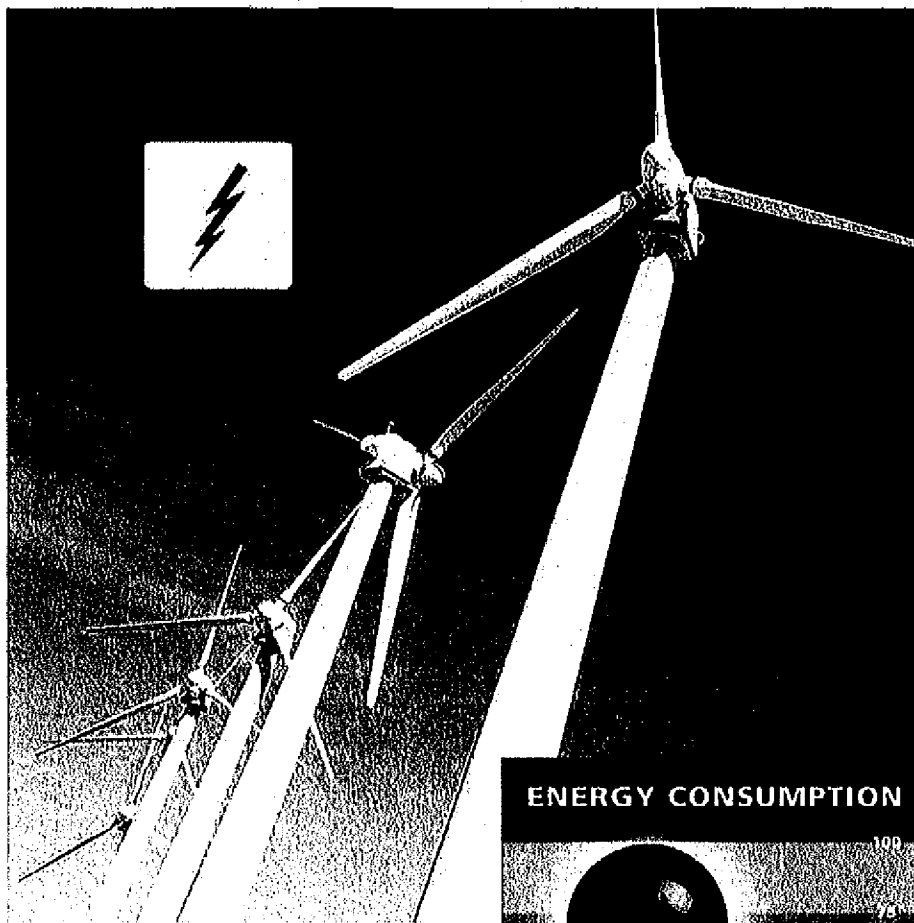
Our 100% fresh air system utilizes heat recovery from the exhaust system and preheats incoming air saving energy costs while providing fresh air.

"My daughter, Sidney, has had bronchial and respiratory problems since an early age. A couple of weeks before we moved into the building, we had taken her to the pediatrician, and as usual he said, "Keep her humidified...give her the cough syrup." On July 15th, we moved into The Solaire. A week went by, and then another week went by and my husband and I noticed that Sidney's cough had gone away. It's been a true benefit for us living here."

"People want to know what they are getting for their money, but with green, the benefits can't always be quantified in that way. You can show benefit in energy savings and water savings, but you can't put a value on better health or productivity. Better air, cleaner water...these things speak to peoples' health. People who live in The Solaire are healthier, happier and more productive people - how do you quantify that?"

Residents of "The Solaire" Green Building, New York, NY

Energy Performance...

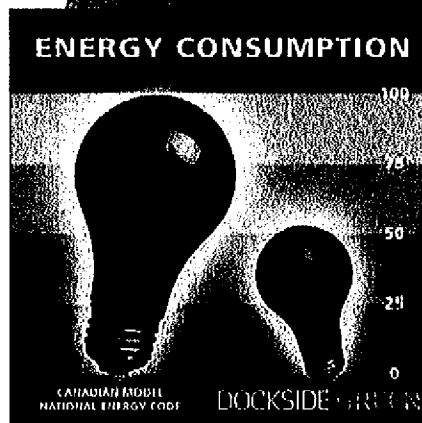


Designed to Save...

Our Buildings are being designed to use 45 to 55% less energy than the Canadian Model National Energy Code (MNECB/H). This saves residents money while reducing harmful, green house gas (GHG) emissions.

We have numerous strategies to saving energy including; 4 pipe fan coil system, low e double glazing and exterior blinds on the west and south faces of the building to keep interior spaces cool. Saving energy not only results in lower strata fees but as utility costs increase the amount of that increase is significantly less than standard building design.

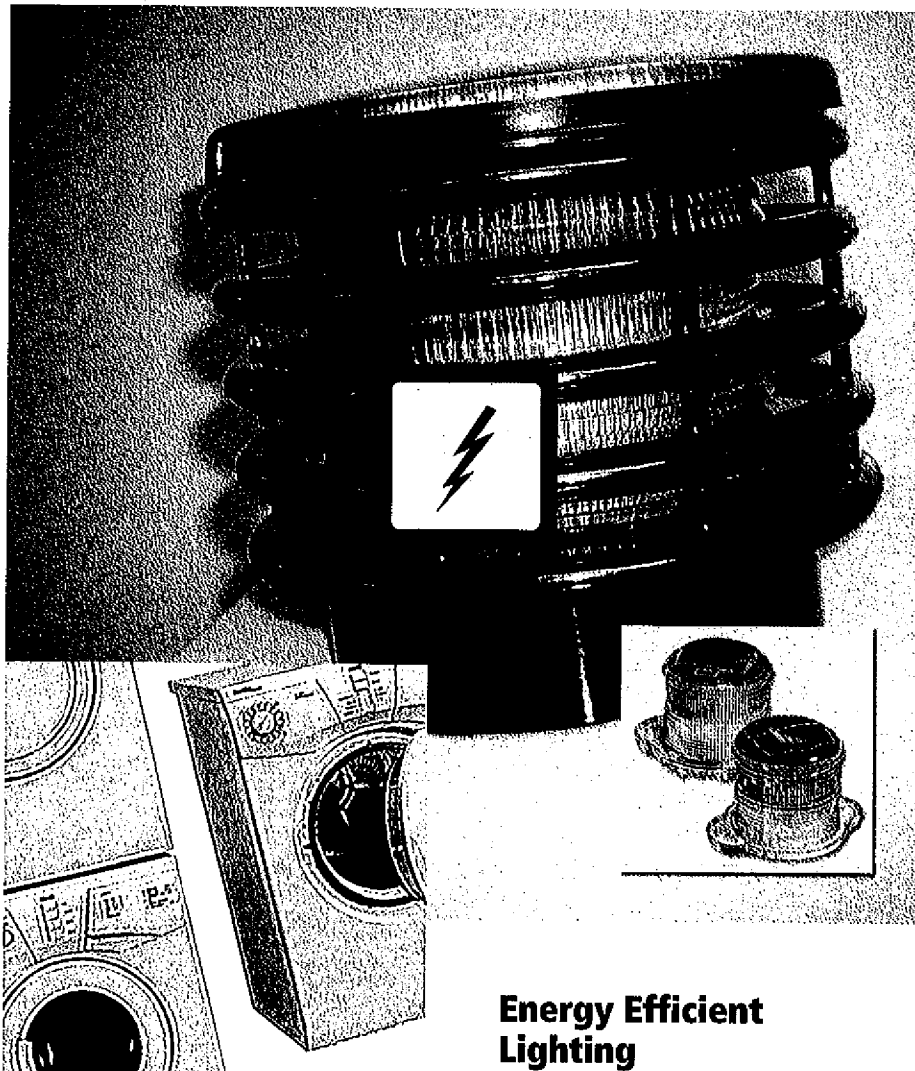
Ask about our "Green Loan™" program.



EcoFact:

Energy efficiency saves residents money and reduces the emission of green house gases! It is estimated that Dockside's Phase 1 building will save over 259 tonnes of GHG's per year due to the building's energy efficiency.

How we do it...



Energy Efficient Appliances

Our investment in Energy Star efficient appliances results in an average 47% energy saving over the Canadian Model National Energy Code base energy rating for appliances.

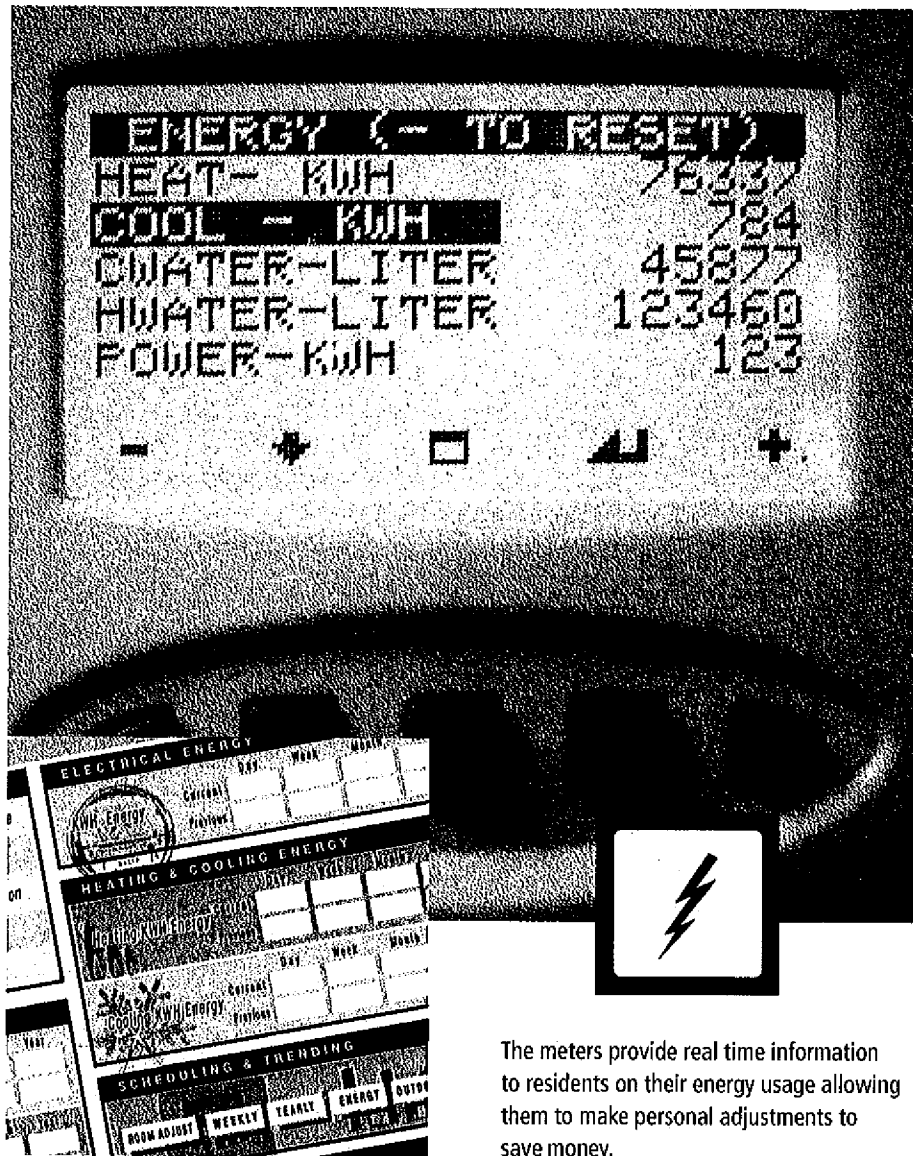
Our high end, energy efficient, condensing dryers not only save energy but operate quietly and protect your clothes from the damages of over-drying by using moisture and temperature sensors.

Energy Efficient Lighting

We are using compact fluorescent lighting, LED lighting in Corridors, occupancy sensors and some solar lighting in landscape areas to reduce electrical costs from lighting.

We have paid attention to design that allows for an abundance of daylight into your home.

How we do it...



Metering

We are providing meters in each suite to measure:

- Domestic hot and cold water use,
- Heating bills and
- Electricity usage

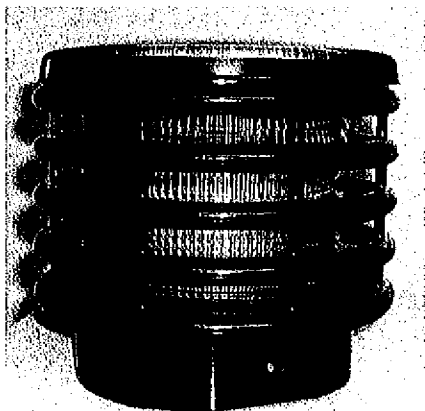
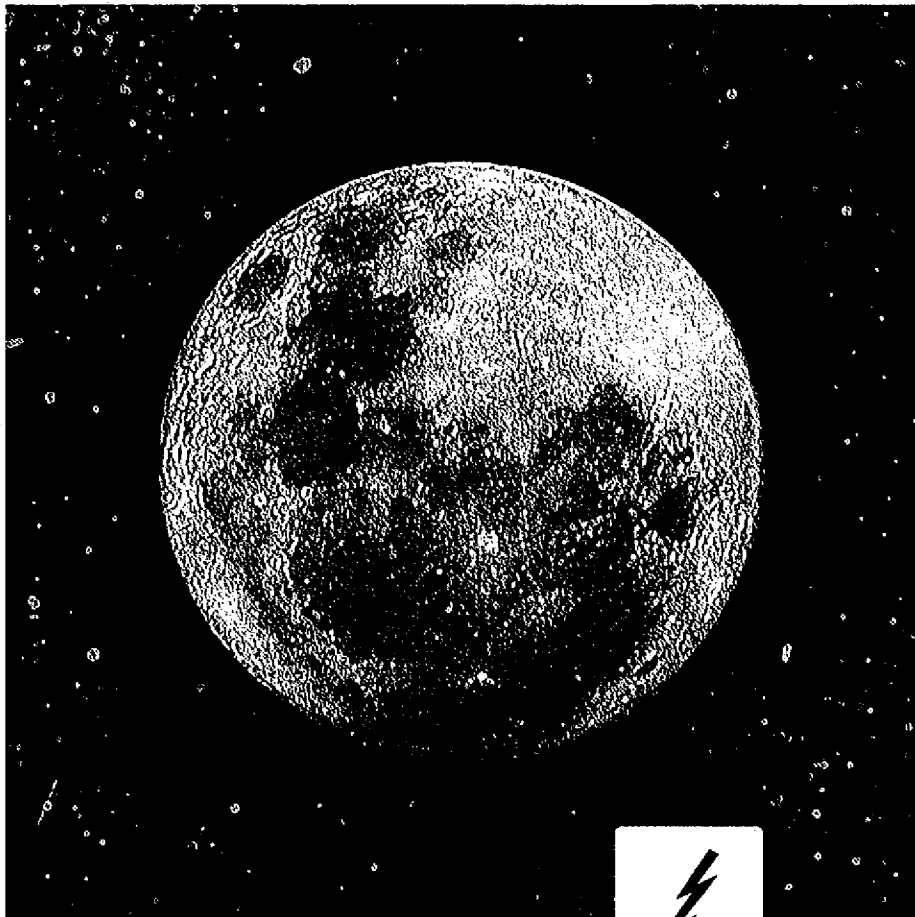
The meters provide real time information to residents on their energy usage allowing them to make personal adjustments to save money.

Preprogram your temperature settings to be lower while you are away from home. Monitor and adjust your settings on the meter or on your computer while at home or remotely via a secure website.

Ecofact:

Individual meters have been shown to result in up to 20% energy savings by providing real time information to residents.

How we do it...



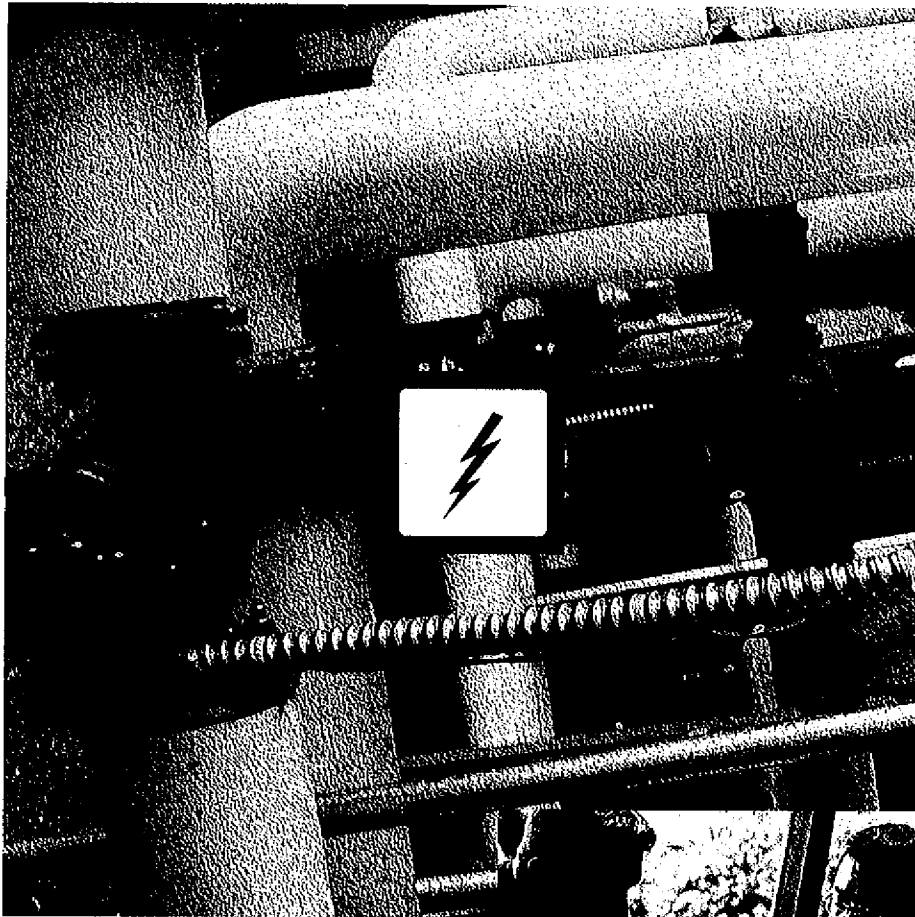
Light Pollution

We don't believe in wasting energy to light the sky.

We use fixtures that provide downward lighting to enhance safety and save energy while retaining the natural beauty of the night sky.

In addition, we are using photovoltaic lighting on site for landscaping areas, harvesting electricity from the sun.

How we do it...



Building Commissioning

We will retain the services of an independent commissioning agent to verify that mechanical systems are designed and working properly upon construction completion.

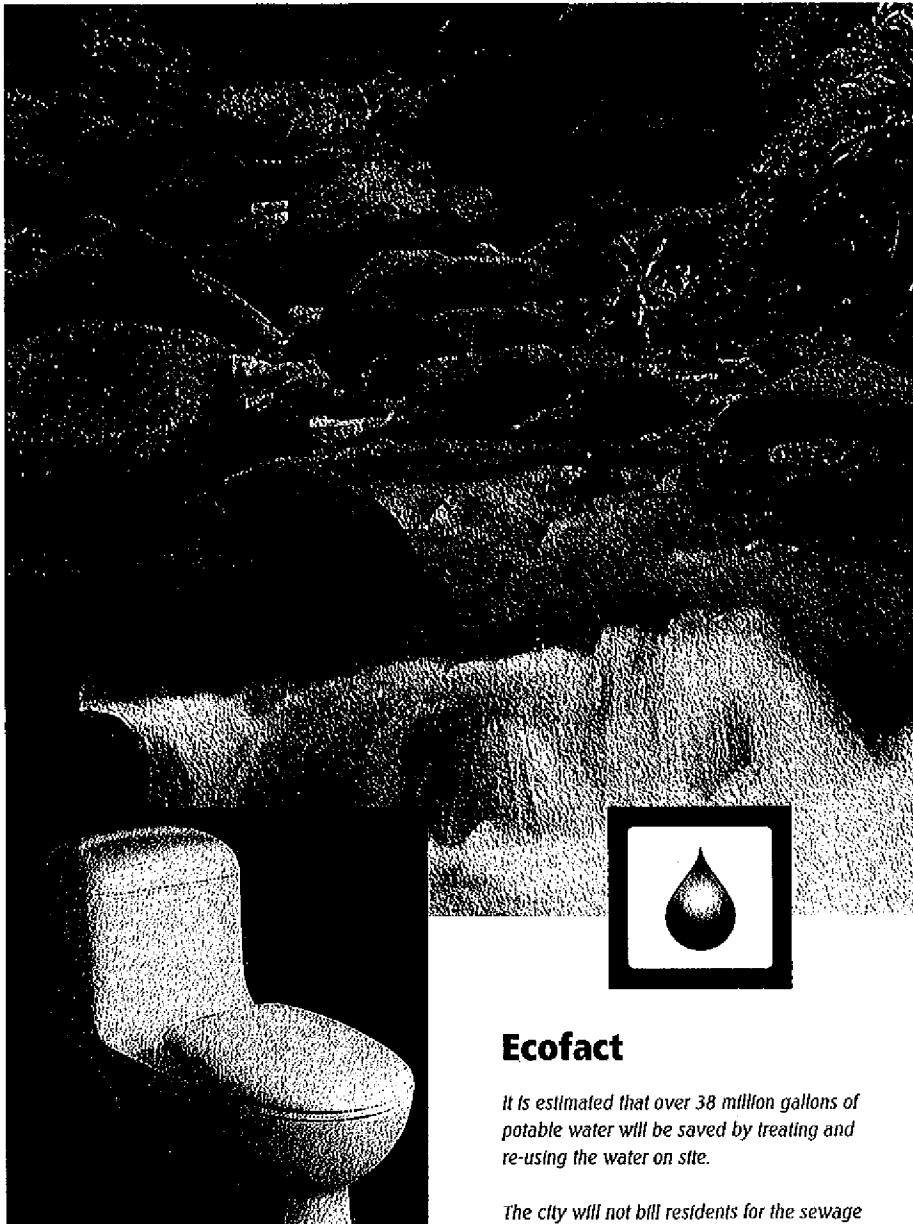
We also have the commissioning agent revisit the building within a year of occupancy to retest the mechanical systems to ensure they are working properly.



EcoFact:

There are numerous studies that show non-commissioned buildings are generally 5 to 15% less energy efficient because systems were not fine tuned and/or parts were incorrectly installed or not working properly.

Sewage Treatment...



... and Reuse of Treated Water

The development will treat 100% of its sewage on site and use the treated water for flushing toilets, landscape irrigation and water features.

Ecofact

It is estimated that over 38 million gallons of potable water will be saved by treating and re-using the water on site.

The city will not bill residents for the sewage component charge of the water bill nor for the use of treated water. This saves you money.

Water Conservation...



Potable Water

The Potable Water Consumption at Dockside Green is estimated to be 65% less than traditional developments.

We accomplish this by using high performance water fixtures and appliances such as water efficient dishwashers, washing machines, dual flush toilets, faucets and shower that save water without sacrificing personal comfort.

The amount of water saved for the entire development is equivalent to the annual water use of 580 homes, saving you money.

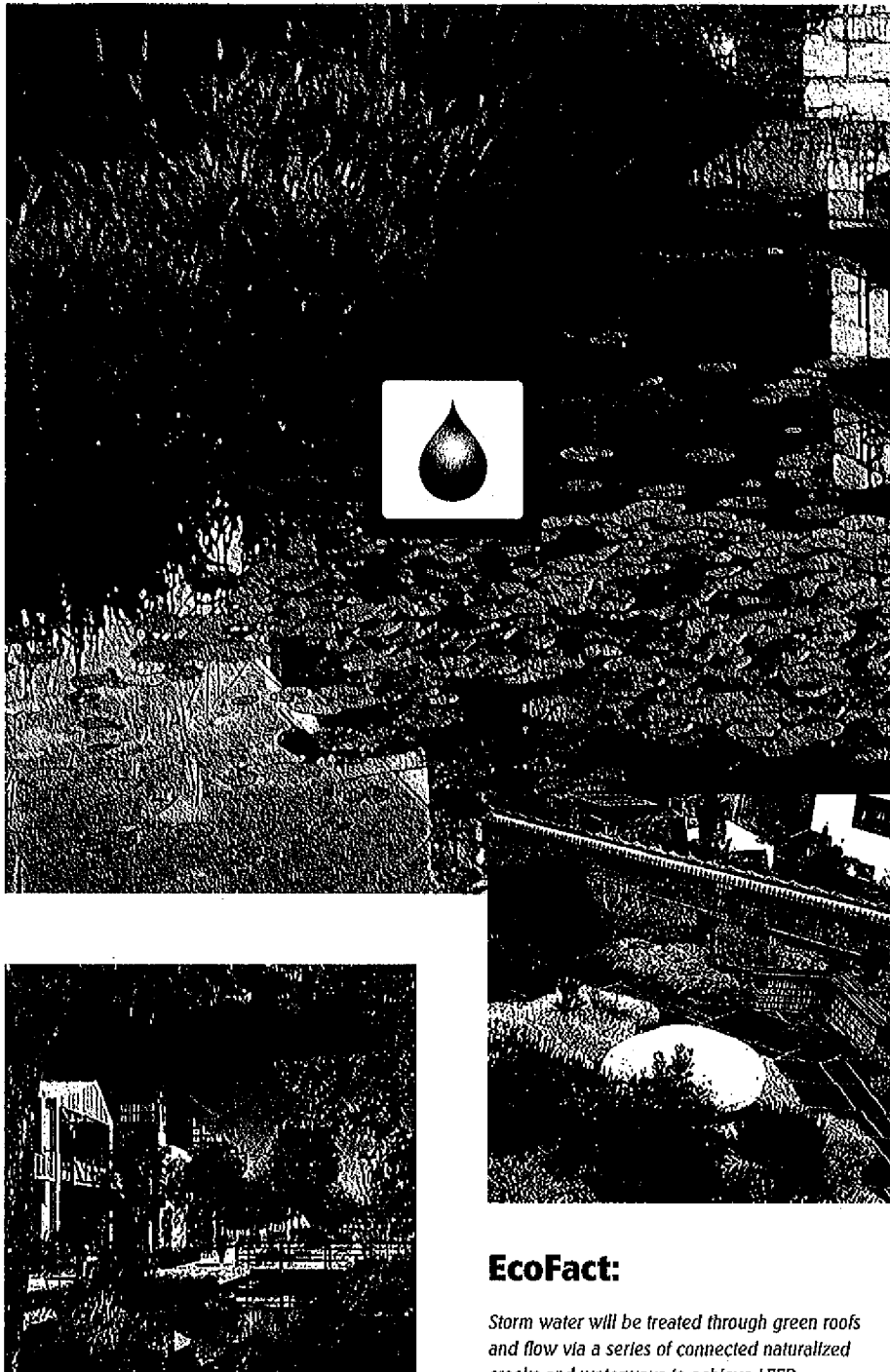


EcoFact:

The entire development is anticipated to save over 70 million gallons of potable water per year – the equivalent of the Greater Victoria region's water use on the driest day of the year.

The dollar savings from water efficient fixtures, the reuse of treated water and no sewage charge from the city are projected to exceed the operating costs of sewage treatment on site. Residents will save money from sewage treatment!

Stormwater & Urban Ecology...



EcoFact:

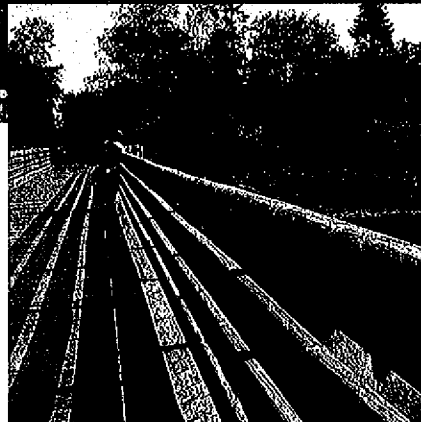
Storm water will be treated through green roofs and flow via a series of connected naturalized creeks and waterways to achieve LEED requirements and create a delightful, lush and 'living' urban environment.

Alternative Transportation



Alternative transportation strategies at Dockside Green will reduce one's reliance on the automobile. Enjoy the car share program, upgraded bike trails and bike racks in each building, harbour ferry dock, transit and a mini-transit shuttle bus.

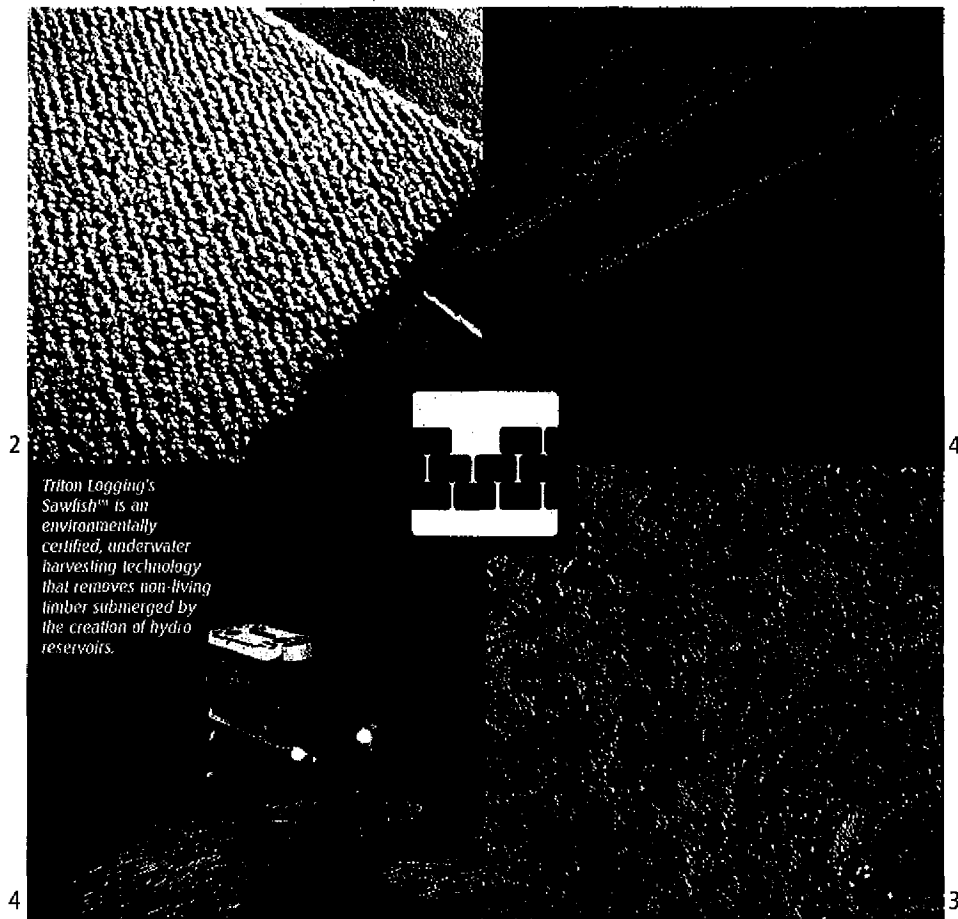
You can save money by not owning a car or eliminating the need for a second car.



EcoFact:

The project is designed with many trails and walkways throughout the development which enhances livability. The Galloping Goose is a regional bike trail providing Dockside residents onsite, non-vehicular access between BC Ferries and Sooke and all points in between. Over 632,000 people enjoy this trail annually.

Materials and Resources...



Triton Logging's Sawfish™ is an environmentally certified, underwater harvesting technology that removes non-living timber submerged by the creation of hydro reservoirs.

Durable and Eco-Friendly...

We are committed to selecting materials that are durable and environmental-friendly.

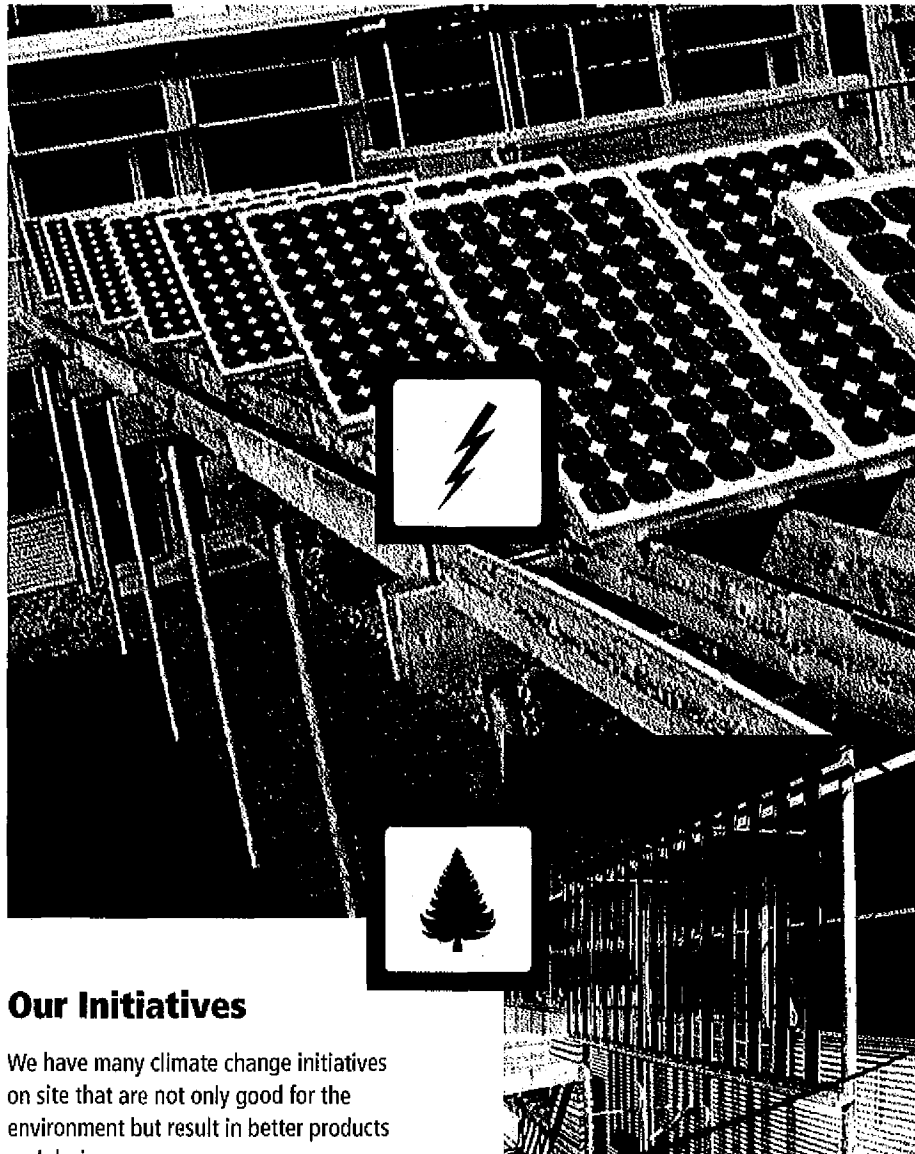
1. Carpets are carefully selected based on low emissions and environmental qualities.
2. We use more expensive carpet tiles for corridors in the residential buildings as this will reduce long term maintenance and waste for condo owners. In addition, we purchase our tiles from Interface a global, sustainable business leader utilizing their "Cool Carpet™" program which means their products are GHG neutral.

3. Bamboo flooring and Cabinets will be used in the development with upgrade options for other environmentally friendly products like Cork flooring.
4. We will also be using some salvaged wood products to promote sustainable harvesting practices.
5. Our goal is to recycle or reuse 90% of our construction waste on site and we will report our actual results.

EcoFact:

Bamboo is a fast growing grass and is sourced from areas where it is being sustainably harvested every 3-6 years. Our supplier verifies that no fertilizers or pesticides are used in the growth process.

Climate Change...



Our Initiatives

We have many climate change initiatives on site that are not only good for the environment but result in better products and design.

Dockside Green will showcase various renewable energy strategies

- Energy efficient Building Design
- Fly ash will be used in Concrete
- Various Renewable Energy Strategies on site with emphasis on BC technologies.
- We have a successful program of supporting local businesses and suppliers which supports our local economy and reduces CO2 emissions by minimizing transportation needs.

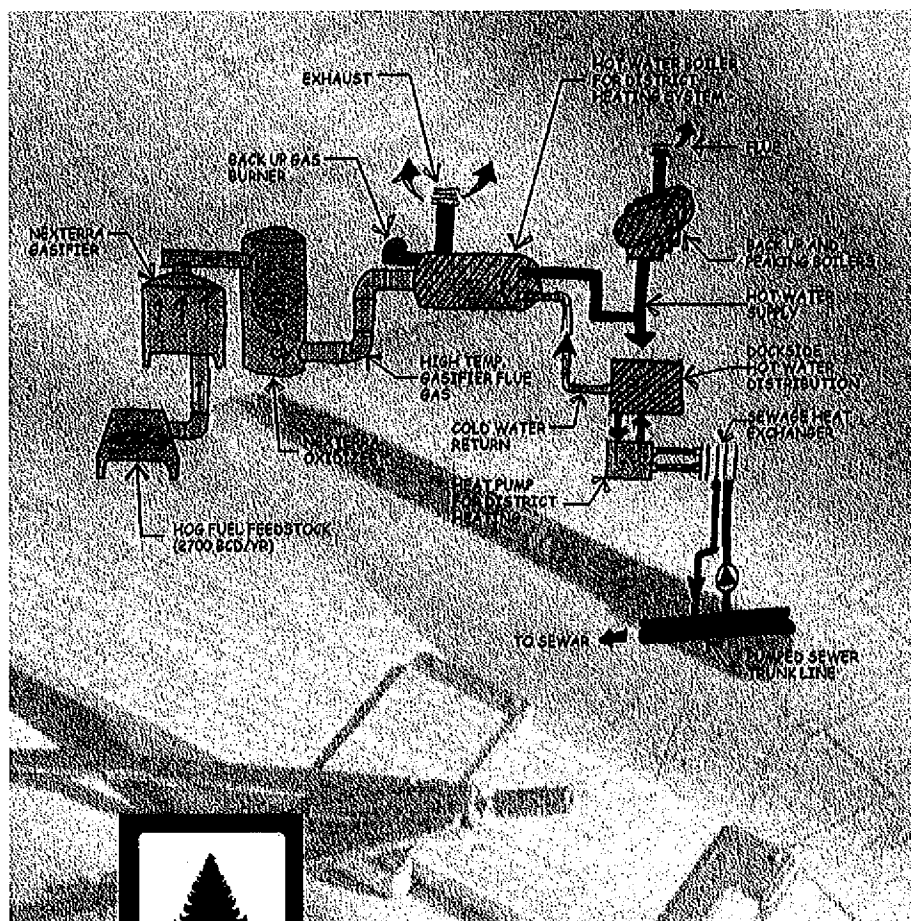
- Extensive Tree planting and green roofs to absorb carbon

The biomass system when implemented will result in the first greenhouse gas positive community development in North America.

EcoFact:

One tonne of cement production generates about one tonne of CO2 and is a significant generator of GHG. By utilizing the ash waste product from cement production in our concrete mix we are reducing the amount of CO2's and making the concrete stronger.

Biomass System...



Greenhouse Neutral...

Dockside Green is striving to be the first greenhouse neutral development from a building energy perspective.

To that end we are investigating an onsite centralized heat plant that would use waste wood biomass to produce a clean gas that converts to heat for heating and domestic hot water needs on site.

The entire system would be backed up by central boilers in the event the primary plant was down providing complete backup.

Buildings would be required to hook up to this system and the utility rates would be consistent with other central plants in the province such as the Lonsdale plant.

There would be no need for individual boilers in buildings under this approach which would save residents maintenance and replacement costs associated with boilers.

EcoFact:

Rising Utility costs and environmental pressures will change the way buildings are built. Our goal is to develop buildings at Dockside that appreciate in value (because of our environmental and energy efficient design), and also provide energy security. We call this "future proofing" your investment. If the biomass system proceeds, this will be the first large scale community development to be green house gas neutral.