

INTERSECTION

The Future of Civic Engagement

- + Matt Galloway
The State of Toronto
- + April Rinne
The Collaborative Economy

“Evergreen CityWorks will fill a key gap in the drive to build better cities. By applying design-based solutions to the big problems that have proven resistant to change, it is an exciting approach that will bring people together around real change.”

Alan Broadbent

Chairman and CEO of the Avana Capital Corporation and Chairman of the Maytree Foundation

INTERSECTION

Building Our Urban Future
Summer 2014: Volume 1 No. 1

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EVERYONE, PULL TOGETHER

Welcome to the first edition of *Intersection*, the quarterly publication of Evergreen CityWorks. Designed as a bridge and a translator, CityWorks sits between the researchers, policy makers and various stakeholder groups with the goal to move great ideas into action. We build new coalitions around ideas like Tower Renewal, which you'll read more about in this issue. We curate great ideas from citizens like 100 in 1 Day. We bring together communities around transformative ideas like proper financing for public transit or the affordability of housing.

The World Bank recently did an inventory of the studies they had commissioned over the past decade. Shockingly (to them), it showed that 30 percent of their reports on critical global issues had never been downloaded and another 40 percent had been downloaded less than 100 times. Millions of dollars and thousands of person-hours were spent on these reports, only to see them collect dust on shelves. And this is not just a World Bank problem. A recent analysis done by the Martin Prosperity Institute at the University of Toronto showed that approximately three studies are released about Toronto each month—a total of approximately 200 over the past five years. And yet we still seem stuck on some of the major challenges of our time—from social and economic inequality to climate change. So if reports aren't the answer, what is?

Canadian cities are working well compared with many others around

the world. Whether it's international measures of quality of life, economic competitiveness or resilience, we tend to do well. Clearly more is needed on the critical challenges of our time. CityWorks believes that more bridges, connectors and intersectorors are needed. Let's align ourselves around a few big changes and bring the public into the discussion using engaging, fun and effective tools.

Intersection is designed to be an exploration of some of these ideas and experiments. We hope that something in this issue will catch your eye, make you think of a connection we hadn't considered or create a strategy we had not yet explored. And if it does, send it our way. Because we need everyone pulling together. It is the only path forward.



John Brodhead is the Executive Director of Evergreen CityWorks and was the Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy for Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty.

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Photo: Office of the Premier

MATT GALLOWAY

and the State of Toronto

With an ongoing Mayoral election campaign and civic issues being hotly debated in living rooms across the city, we sat down with CBC Metro Morning's Matt Galloway to discuss his take on the state of Toronto.

Matt, what keeps you up at night when it comes to Toronto issues?

Transit and how we'll pay for it. Toronto as a divided city. The isolation of certain areas of our city. Civic complacency (don't get any big ideas, they're not gonna happen).

If Toronto were a stock, would you be a buyer or a seller? Why?

A buyer. People chose to leave their lives behind and travel here. We could do a better job of integrating them into society, helping them get work, get around and find somewhere to live, but the fact that we remain a global draw means that people want to be here. They're our greatest resource. Ignore that and it's selling time.

What are some of the most interesting on-the-ground innovations that you think could transform the city?

I'm a big fan of the Open Streets idea – reconfiguring streets to make them safer and more user-friendly for people outside automobiles. The pilot projects along John Street and putting bike lanes along Adelaide and Richmond are really intriguing in that way. I'm a huge fan of the work that Success Beyond Limits does in Rexdale and the Jane & Finch area to connect young people from that community to opportunities in the wider city. Sabina Ali and the Thorncliffe Women's Committee have transformed one of the densest communities into a vibrant, dynamic neighbourhood. Her energy could be replicated across the city.

"It's not boosterism but instead a way to get people to talk about the good and the bad in their city."

How do you see your role as a journalist in helping the city?

Hopefully by curating conversation and getting people to think about their city in different ways. Part of that can be holding those who want to and have the power to shape the city to account. Part of that can be taking people to neighbourhoods that they're not familiar with and introducing them to ideas and people they otherwise wouldn't encounter. It's not boosterism but instead a way to get people to talk about the good and the bad in their city and ideally encourage them to play an active role in building it. 🏘️



Photo courtesy of CBC



Photo: Mike Derblich

CITIZEN VOICES

The Future of Civic Engagement?

By John Brodhead



In late December 2013, an email went out from AIR MILES to nearly 500,000 households across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). Unlike many offers to their customers, this one from AIR MILES had a different tone. "It's Time to Move on Gridlock" it said, followed by key information on the challenge of traffic in the region. It offered AIR MILES Rewards Members 20 AIR MILES to complete a survey on the website of Move the GTHA, a collaboration on transit financing that is convened by Evergreen CityWorks.

In order to engage with more residents in the GTHA about the region's transportation problems, Move the GTHA embarked on a new type of strategy. We approached AIR MILES for Social Change, a customer loyalty program that offers

incentives to consumers who make more socially responsible decisions. The results paid off. Within 24 hours nearly 30,000 people had completed the survey on the website and 2,000 had signed a pledge to their elected officials to take action on transit. In the course of the next month, 774,000 households in the region were reached.

Jump forward to April 22, 2014. At 7:30pm, 200,000 calls go out to residents across the GTHA. Folks are invited to join a telephone town hall hosted by Move the GTHA with special guests Premier Kathleen Wynne and Metrolinx CEO Bruce McCuaig. 22,500 people join the call and ask questions to the Premier live about their views on transit in the region. They stay on the line an average of 17 minutes. >

These two citizen engagement tools ended up reaching nearly 1 million residents of the region in a few short months. They complemented more traditional tools of engagement like door-knocking (we partnered with the Toronto Environmental Alliance to hit 20,000 doors), a poll done with Angus-Reid, a report card done by the Pembina Institute and a full-page ad in the Toronto Star that called for politicians to act on the issue.

Nothing of the breadth of either campaign had been undertaken before by not-for-profit groups on this issue in the region. It allowed Move the GTHA to hit an unprecedented number of people in a short amount of time and within a not-for-profit's limited budget.

So what was the impact of all this wide-ranging activity? Well, it is impossible to correlate this campaign directly with changing poll numbers, but the Angus-Reid poll released April 15 showed that 59 percent of residents in the region would support a political leader who brought in new financing tools to pay for public transit. No poll that we could find had ever broken 50 percent on a similar question.

Traditionally, the number of people these tools allowed us to reach are reserved for those with million-dollar ad budgets. These engagement tools allowed us to reach people easily, coming to their doors and their phones, and in the case of AIR MILES, even incenting them to participate in the discussion.

“Traditionally, the number of people these tools allowed us to reach are reserved for those with million-dollar ad budgets.”

Having shown the ability of these tools to reach a huge number of people in a light way, we now want to test the other end of the engagement spectrum—conversations at the block level on key city issues. Block Captains is a pilot being developed in partnership with the amazing design firm archiTEXT. So far, we are training 20 of these Captains to host conversations on their own blocks about key city issues. First on the list is housing, to bring a citizen voice into a major housing research project we are undertaking. In the long term, we envision Block Captains as a potentially permanent citizen-engagement strategy, a way to get feedback on an idea (transit, housing, etc) or to solicit ideas from citizens.

We need residents to engage in order to enable the large-scale changes we need in our cities. To do this, we need to test new ways of bringing them into the conversations. Whether it is through AIR MILES or Block Captains, Evergreen CityWorks and our partners will continue to find new ways of doing just this. 🏡

John Brodhead is the Executive Director of Evergreen CityWorks.



Photo: Mike Derblich

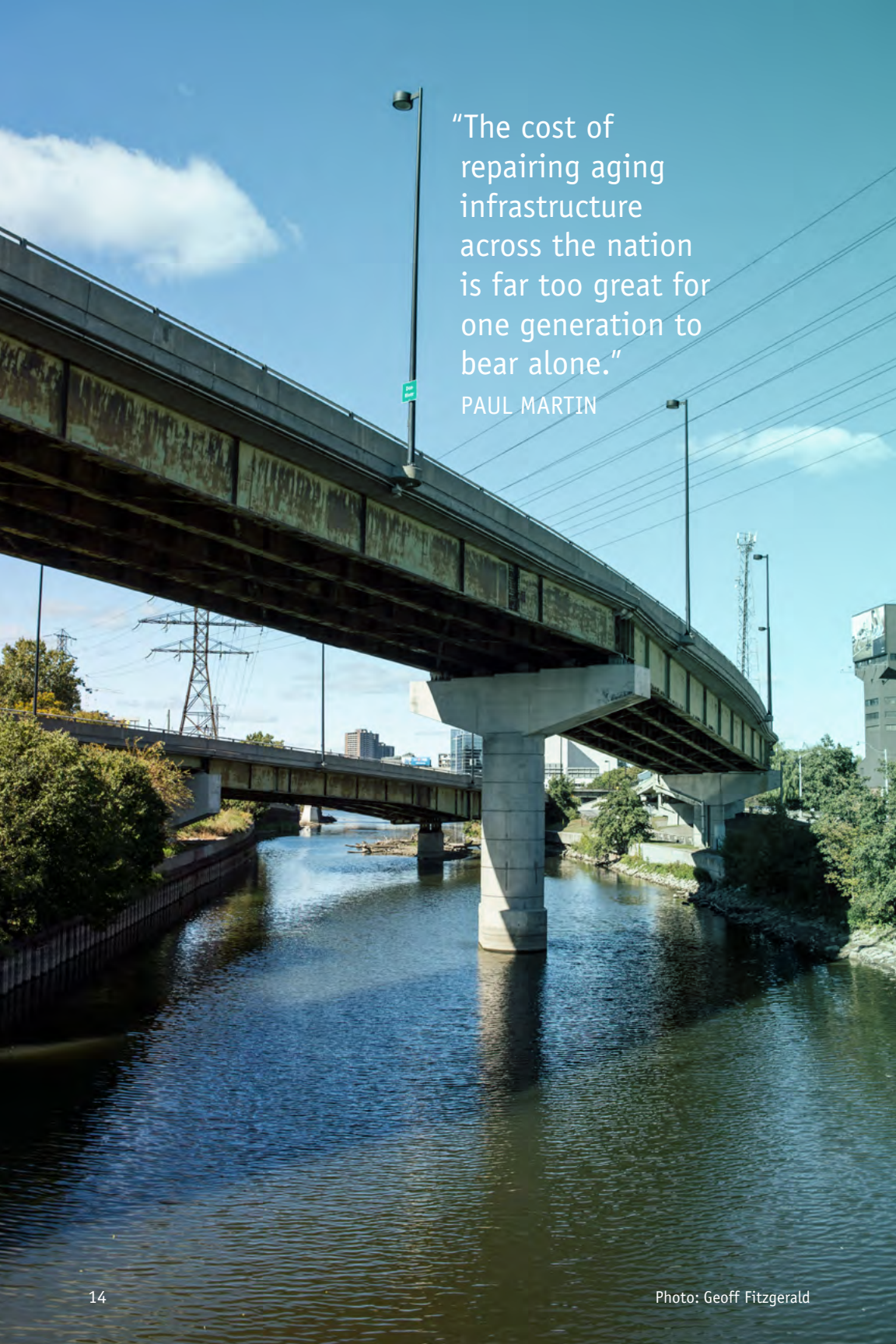


Q&A

BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

Developing a New National Urban Agenda
Paul Martin, former Prime Minister of Canada

On April 10, 2014, Evergreen CityWorks was honoured to host former Prime Minister Paul Martin. The importance of Canadian cities was central to the Martin Government that cumulated with the New Deal for Cities and Communities, an innovative policy that allocated federal gas-tax revenue to municipalities. Ten years after the New Deal, the urgency to invest in city infrastructure continues to prevail. Evergreen CityWorks sat down with the former PM to get a candid perspective on how to best equip cities with the tools to thrive into the 21st century. >



“The cost of repairing aging infrastructure across the nation is far too great for one generation to bear alone.”

PAUL MARTIN

The benefits of infrastructure are often classified as economic and environmental. Is there any aspect of the conversation that you may feel is overlooked?

Investing in infrastructure today is integral to mitigating the immense burdens that will be placed on forthcoming generations of Canadians. The failure to share the extensive costs of new infrastructure with younger generations is breaking the intergenerational contract. The cost of repairing aging infrastructure across the nation is far too great for one generation to bear alone. If we continue to prolong the maintenance, upgrade and expansion of municipal infrastructure, the implications will be insurmountable. We need to make investments now that will meet our needs today, and for decades to come.

Based on your experience, how do you think municipalities will be able to tap into new revenue opportunities?

When we were putting together the New Deal For Cities and Communities I saw the power of having meaningful conversations among all three levels of government. We should not be afraid of having diverging viewpoints at the table. A holistic and inclusive conversation will create an institutional memory and generate goodwill. This process will cultivate a better understanding of shared problems and of the appropriate tools to fix them.

How can Canada develop a national vision around cities?

I believe it is possible by building a national coalition of stakeholders. Government cannot fix these problems alone. There is a need to have multi-sectorial meetings across the country to stimulate debate around difficult conversations. Learning institutions need to become more involved in delivering research where the public sector has faltered. The private sector has the ability to be a powerful force in cultivating a dialogue around new revenue tools. Citizens need to become engaged in issues that matter to them and hold their elected representatives responsible for delivering action. Nurturing and strengthening relationships between these groups will activate a broad and powerful mobilization surrounding urban issues.

Why is it important to invest in Canadian cities?

Canada's global competitiveness is contingent on the strength of our cities. Urban regions must lure international talent and investment, cultivate an environment for innovation and provide citizens with a high quality of life. Reliable, efficient and integrated infrastructure networks are no longer viewed as a competitive advantage; they are viewed as a minimum requirement. Canada's competitiveness is dependent on our ability to equip cities with the necessary infrastructure to attract and retain economic and social capital. In many of our major cities, we are failing to maintain this standard. This reality will have devastating long-term effects. 🇨🇦



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GAME CHANGERS

CITIES FOR PEOPLE

A New Movement

By Stephen Huddart

In cities here and around the world, there is a deep yearning for change—a sense of urgency and possibility. Cities for People proposes that we can make cities more resilient and livable through innovation networks. By linking local efforts across the country with those taking place in other parts of the world, our goal is to foster and accelerate a culture of continuous, place-based social innovation.

During this initial phase we are exploring four themes:

- **New Economies** is about making economies and money work better for people, cities and the planet, it is curated by One Earth in Vancouver.
- **Citizen Spaces**, curated by the Montreal Urban Ecology Centre, is about empowering civic engagement and improving municipal governance.
- **Art and Society** is engaging people and communities in artistic projects that engender shifts in civic perception and possibility. It is curated by Musagetes in Guelph, Ontario.
- **CityScapes** addresses the built and natural environment and focuses on building resilient and livable city spaces. It is curated by Evergreen CityWorks in Toronto.



A woman slides at the new Corktown Common park in Toronto's new Canary District. Photo: KJ Bush

As an expression of philanthropic innovation by the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, Cities for People places resources at the discretion of the curators, each of whom is uniquely positioned to surface and support the most promising new ideas in their fields. Collaboration and dissemination are encouraged—we are working with award-winning Spacing Magazine and Blog Network, and have a vibrant paid internship program in place. A counterpart initiative is in development with the Municipal Arts Society of New York.

The opportunity before us is to give expression to people's aspirations, to formulate and test models of possible futures and to harness collective energy. We want to draw on the creative capacities of cities to shape cultures that work for the long term and for everyone. We invite you to share your thoughts and engage in conversation with us by visiting our website. 📧

Stephen Huddart is President and CEO of the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation.
 ➤ citiesforpeople.ca

CITIES FOR PEOPLE

How Art Makes Us and Our Cities More Resilient

By Shawn Van Sluys

Art creates a space for altering how we think. When people encounter, participate in and co-create art, they explore and interpret their feelings, memories, longings as well as their responses to their environments. Something happens in this personal exploration—something that is powerful and instinctual. Our lives are a continual succession of deep engagements with the world; these experiences can disrupt our existence, transform our sense of self and contribute to our sense of belonging and meaningfulness. The arts play a fundamental role in mediating our experiences, making artistic creativity central to healthy, empathic, social and conscientious ways of living. The Cities for People movement believes this is how art contributes to the resilience of our cities, our communities and our neighbourhoods.

But art doesn't only illustrate a desire for resilience or ways in which other aspects of society enhance resilience; it has to shift our collective consciousness towards resilience. This consciousness is greater than social engagement. Even more than just a sense of belonging, it is an awareness of injustices in relation to the world and its inhabitants.

“Hundreds of participants moved from site to site, creating a cultural map of the city.”



Justine Giles plays with the Inco Superstack in the background in Sudbury, Ontario.

Photo: Jamie Gamble, courtesy of Musagetes



The audience at Strange Attractor's show at the foot of Mount Adam in Sudbury

Photo: Bik Van der Pol, courtesy of Musagetes

Musagetes, the curator of the Art and Society theme of Cities for People, works to make the arts more central and meaningful in people's lives, in their communities and in their cities. In 2012, Musagetes worked with Rotterdam-based artists Bik Van der Pol to create a concert series on black rocks throughout Sudbury. The project, titled *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, consisted of eleven concerts over eleven hours on eleven different black rocks in and around the city. Hundreds of participants moved from site to site, creating a cultural map of the city. They celebrated young musicians and the northern landscape, and contrasted that with the sublime and complex mining infrastructure that dominates Sudbury's identity.

One participant had this to say about the experience: “We were invited to that beautiful nowhere to glimpse at what has been created by and for the youth of Sudbury to act out their years in whatever ways they can come up with. I hope to embark on an adventure of rediscovery, to see this city as I would like it to be.” This is a good example of just how art makes our cities more resilient. 🎵

Shawn Van Sluys is the Executive Director at Musagetes.

➔ musagetes.ca

CITIES FOR PEOPLE

Participatory Budgeting and the Power of Engaging People

By Mark Anto

Civic apathy is a rising problem. Recent statistics show that most Canadian cities need to find sustainable solutions to cope with decreasing participation rates in municipal elections, overdependence on property taxes as their main source of revenue, increasing demands due to population growth and crumbling infrastructure. But these conditions leave property developers with a free reign on urban development. The fallout is that citizens grow increasingly disconnected from the political and economic decisions that impact their daily lives.

We need to put people in direct control of at least a part of their city's budget. Participatory budgeting gives public the right to propose, deliberate and vote on projects that will get funded by their city. Participatory budgeting creates a space for all to debate the particular needs of their communities and get informed on municipal budgeting processes and costs. It also creates a platform for dialogue and engagement to keep citizens active and involved in between election campaigns.

New funding models have been proposed to provide cities with supplementary diversified revenue streams. Organizations such as the nationally focused Open North and city-based projects like Better Budget Toronto and *Montréal pour tous* have been working to ensure that municipalities produce transparent and comprehensible budgets that engage, rather than disorient, citizens.



“Participatory budgeting has now been used in over 1,500 cities around the world.”



Photo: Bill Wilson

Started in Porto Alegre in 1989, participatory budgeting has now been used in over 1,500 cities around the world. Canada has also seen several examples of participatory budgeting processes, such as in Toronto's community housing sector, in District 7 in Halifax and in the borough of Plateau Mont-Royal in Montreal. The Montreal Urban Ecology Centre (MUEC) is accompanying the town of St-Basile-le-Grand in its participatory budgeting process. This summer and fall, the MUEC, in collaboration with the Participatory Budgeting Project, a leading organization based in New York City, will be hosting a series of trainings and forums to increase knowledge and awareness in Canada.

Although participatory budgeting can present particular challenges in the first years of the process while the community and elected officials learn how to negotiate new power

dynamics, it ultimately allows both citizens and the municipality to identify key areas of intervention and develop sustainable solutions for the future. Its success is achieved when citizens are involved and engaged in every step of the way and when political will is present and committed to see the process developed over several years. Participatory budgeting then becomes part of a community's landscape and represents an excellent way to ensure that our cities respond to the needs of its citizens.

The Montreal Urban Ecology Centre is leading a national tour on participatory budgeting in Canada this fall. [MUEC](#)

Mark Anto is a Cities for People Collaborator and is based in Montreal. ecologieurbaine.net

APRIL RINNE

and the Collaborative Economy

Q&A



IN FEBRUARY 2014, Evergreen CityWorks hosted the Sharing Economy Tour's Toronto stop with Social Innovation Generation (SiG) and One Earth. Guest April Rinne, formerly of the Collaborative Lab in San Francisco and a World Economic Forum Young Global Leader, is an expert on the sharing economy. She possesses more than a decade of professional experience in disruptive business innovation, financial inclusion, law, policy, micro-entrepreneurship and social enterprise. And she inspired attendees across the nation with the power of this new economy. CityWorks sat down with April to talk about the sharing economy and how it can build more sustainable and efficient cities.

It seems like there's a buzz around collaborative consumption and the sharing economy. But what do these terms mean?

The sharing economy is often also referred to as collaborative consumption, though there are distinctions. ➤

As Rachel Botsman (whom I worked with at Collaborative Lab) has said, collaborative consumption refers to the reinvention of traditional marketplace transactions – like renting, bartering, swapping and lending – through technology. It creates new markets and means of exchange.



April Rinne, global leader on collaborative consumption

In the sharing economy, the focus is on sharing of underutilized goods. Typically the sharing is done between individuals, or peer-to-peer (P2P), although businesses can participate. These new economic models are completely revolutionizing the utilization and sharing of resources—things like idle cars, empty beds, tools and kitchen appliances that would otherwise be collecting dust. In fact, the average Canadian family has approximately \$4,000 worth of items that are sitting idle.

Why has there been a surge in the sharing economy?

First, let's keep in mind that there's nothing particularly "new" about sharing. We've been sharing assets throughout human history. However, for contemporary purposes let's look at the surge in the sharing economy that has taken place in the past decade or so.

I would say there are two primary factors. The first, and in my opinion by far the most significant, is the role that technology plays. It enables sharing on a whole new scale: we can find people and things to share literally around the world, at the touch of a fingertip. Technology has also enabled greater

trust and accountability between parties. The second factor is a generational shift. We are moving from what Mary Meeker has called an asset-heavy generation to an "asset-light" generation. This has been reinforced by economic realities of Millennials. For example, many Millennials consider a car a liability (expensive to purchase and maintain) rather than an asset (symbol of freedom and success).

What are some of the best examples of the sharing economy you've seen in Toronto?

Toronto is starting to fully embrace the benefits of the sharing economy. Transportation examples include Autoshare, car2go, Zipcar and Bike Share Toronto. (Of course public transportation is also shared!) Not Far From The Tree is a not-for-profit that picks fruit from trees throughout the city and shares the bounty among the tree owner, the volunteers and local food banks. Swapsity is a thriving swap and barter community. Websites like LocaWoka and Kutoto provide a platform for people to request a task or service they are unable to do that can be performed for a fee by a third party. In large cities like Toronto, with lots of people and lots of idling assets, the sky is the limit.



Ridesharing platforms like Lyft, based in the United States, are challenging policy makers with their new business models. Photo: Alfredo Mendez

What challenges or restrictions do you see facing the sharing economy?

One of the greatest challenges for these new businesses is policy and regulation. Many governing laws and policies were not only established before the platforms existed, but also sometimes before the Internet existed. As a result these businesses are increasingly finding themselves in regulatory "grey zones" and, sometimes, in court.

But, these issues are not unique to the sharing economy. This is the natural part of the process of innovation and we have been dealing with how to appropriately regulate business for centuries. Now, we need to be bold in promoting the benefits that these new business models and platforms can provide while maintaining the public interest.

Are these marginal innovations or will they lead to systems change?

I think we will see more and more that what seem like innovations at the margins are in fact having a systemic impact.

An example is a community-driven ride-sharing platform called Lyft. In about 30 American cities, personal vehicles identified by Lyft's official pink mustache are transporting people to their desired destinations. Passengers use an online app to request a ride and their driver is a local person driving their own car; peer review helps both passengers and drivers ensure good experiences.

A number of cities are pushing to halt services for Lyft and other ridesharing platforms due to pressure from the taxi industry and (in some cases) concern about issues like insurance and liability. We are in the early stages of policy reform, but there are encouraging signs in many places. For example, last year California became the first state to authorize ridesharing services such as Lyft by establishing a new form of legal entity, a Transportation Network Corporation (TNC). This may set a good precedent for other places as well. 🚗



Tower Renewal

By Graeme Stewart & Derek Ballantyne

Nearly 1 million people in the Greater Golden Horseshoe live in concrete residential towers, many of which are in dire need of repair.

Built between the late 1940s to early 1980s, and often energy inefficient, these towers comprise roughly 20 percent of Toronto's total housing stock and many of them are now in dire need of repair. Tower renewal initiatives in the region aim to transform these inefficient buildings into complete communities.

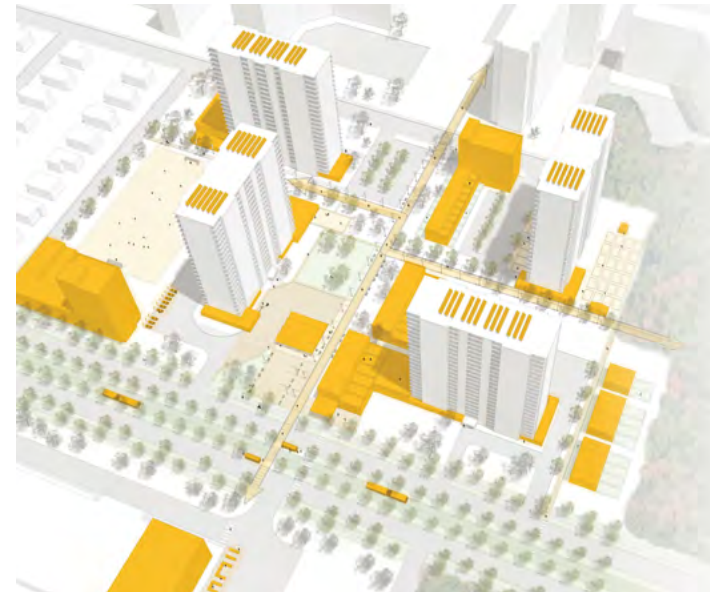
The Tower Renewal vision was launched in 2007 by Graeme Stewart and Michael McClelland of ERA Architects. Further developed through the Centre for Urban Growth and Renewal (a research vehicle for Tower Renewal formed by ERA and planningAlliance in 2009), and the City of Toronto, the Tower Renewal vision has three basic facets. First is an energy retrofit of existing buildings. Then increased social and economic opportunities within tower neighbourhoods are developed to improve the livability for renters and their surrounding communities. And finally, there is better integration of tower neighbourhoods into their surrounding communities and the City at large through mixed-use infill development, better use of the green space around these towers and improved transit connections to and from these neighbourhoods. Together these measures



Solar wall tower retrofit, Berlin, Germany, 2009



Retrofit of apartment block to include mid-rise housing and commercial, London, United Kingdom, 2006



Mixed-use infill structures, landscape and public space upgrades leading to neighbourhood revitalization
Images: Graeme Stewart

offer the transformation of currently isolated and often socially marginalized dormitories into dynamic, integrated and low-carbon hubs across the City.

The Centre for Urban Growth and Renewal is partnering with Evergreen CityWorks and Derek Ballantyne to help bring this vision to life. Our goal is to work with partners to create three Tower Renewal Showcase projects. We aim to test a new financing model for a site renewal. Our theory is that by using some of the innovative energy retrofit financing tools and adding new development to a site, other much-needed improvements can be funded. Ultimately, the goal is to enhance the quality of life for all residents. We are currently working with building owners across the region to identify three sites that have the potential to be Showcase projects.

The Tower Renewal vision has the potential to integrate social, environmental and economic investment in these tower neighbourhoods across the city and beyond. Many pieces of the vision are underway through great work from the Toronto Atmospheric Fund, United Way Toronto and others. 🏡

Graeme Stewart is an Associate at ERA Architects and one of the founders of the Centre for Urban Growth and Renewal.

Derek Ballantyne is the former CEO of Toronto Community Housing Corporation. He is now a principal at DKG Inc. as well as the lead at the Community Forward Fund.

👉 towerrenewal.com

Social Innovation Labs: Addressing Wicked Problems

By Chad Park & Robert Plitt

There is ample evidence around us every day that typical approaches to strategic planning and multi-stakeholder collaboration are not solving the big systemic challenges of our time. The issues and systems are too complex and dynamic.

We know that we need to innovate on a massive scale to address these challenges. While many of the solutions surely lie in the realm of technology and science, social process innovation is an equally critical—but largely overlooked—part of the equation. Innovative social processes are the key to new types of conversations, shared learning and collaborative action that, in turn, have a huge role to play in evolving cultural narratives, relationships of trust and policy frameworks that help accelerate new solutions.

Too often it seems like effort is being wasted as myriad organizations work at cross-purposes or in isolation on similar objectives. There are simply not enough resources and too many challenges for us to continue to work in our usual ways. Enter social innovation labs.

Like the scientific labs that inspired their creation, social innovation labs are, first and foremost, spaces for



ongoing experimentation and innovation. They are also new ways for a range of stakeholders to come together in collaboration.

The Natural Step Canada launched its Sustainability Transition Lab program to tackle some of our most wicked sustainability challenges. One of the first projects is a collaboration with Evergreen CityWorks around the issues of the housing system in the Greater Toronto Area.

The housing system in the GTA appears to be approaching a triple threat to its future: an economic threat, a social threat and an environmental threat. Housing prices continue to rise across



Photos: Sammy Tangir

the region, threatening economic prosperity as talent leaves for more affordable cities. The energy intensity of the system is unsustainable and the system continues to exacerbate growing inequality in its communities.

Many individuals and organizations have spent significant amounts of time on a range of efforts to improve the system. Yet somehow it seems as if more is still needed. If there were ever a complex issue that could use a platform for stakeholders to unite in ongoing experimentation to find new solutions, this would appear to be it.

The Housing Action Lab is now underway. So far, we have completed nearly 40 interviews with experts from across sectors: finance, development, housing operations, planning, transit, health and more. We co-hosted a workshop June 17 to bring together many of the key players to start discussing potential areas of shared action.

Our goal by the end of 2014 is to land on three key actions that the group can work on together. These could be “on the ground” prototype projects, policy or regulatory changes, communications campaigns, citizen-engagement initiatives or other projects. But the goal will be to find shared areas of interest where cross-sectoral groups can align to make a large scale and carefully identified change.

Our view is that the Housing Action Lab and other social innovation labs like it will be powerful tools for collaborative work on systems change. A breakthrough awaits! 🚀

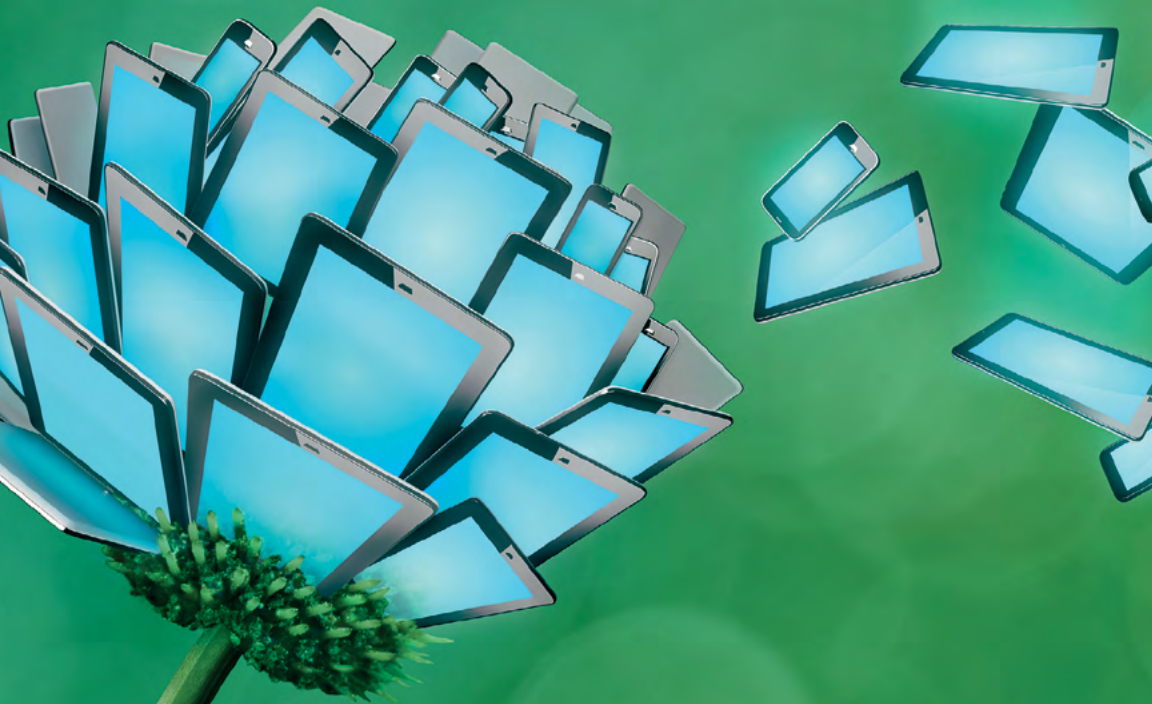
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The Top 10

PARKit Design Challenge, Surrey

The City of Surrey is empowering citizens to transform boring grey parking lots into exciting places designed for people. PARKit Design Challenge asks individuals and groups to submit ideas for sustainable, outdoor public space that are capable of supporting mobile food vendors. In the process, parking lots and underutilized grey spaces are transformed into thriving pop-up public places.

Reinventing Affordable Housing, Vancouver

Social housing often gets stigmatized, but not in Vancouver. The city has taken an innovative approach to delivering social housing. Materials from 12 recycled shipping containers now provide women an affordable place to live, a thriving community and a mentorship program.

Strathcona Green Zone Resource Park, Vancouver

The Strathcona business improvement area has turned waste from nearby industrial spaces into new opportunities. The Green Zone Resource Park offers pickup service for compost and recycling matters. Rows of sheds serve as storage lockers for composters, plastics and metals that can be repurposed. Next to the sheds is a small urban garden that uses compost to grow food for local restaurants.

Citizen Dashboard, Edmonton

The City of Edmonton has created a citizen dashboard that enables residents to hold elected representatives accountable to delivering key city-building initiatives such as transportation, livability, urban form, environment, economy and finance. By quickly glancing on the website, residents can see how their municipal government is measuring up to performance measures.

➔ dashboard.edmonton.ca

Beakerhead, Calgary

Last year, Beakerhead explored the possibility of understanding science and engineering in a more meaningful and inclusive way. Based in Calgary, this 5-day event invites engineers to show their creative side, artists to get technical—it's where science hits the street. In its first year, 70 organizations came together to produce more than 40 events that drew over 62,000 people into public spaces and other venues across the city.

➔ beakerhead.org

Pilot Infrastructure Projects, Calgary

Bike lanes: you either love them or hate them. But what if you could take the emotion out the equation? That's exactly what Calgary is doing. Calgary will use data produced from temporary bike lanes to determine if long-term infrastructure investments should be made. Testing new ideas and making informed decisions based on sound research leads to sustainable city-building.



Photo: Jason Paris

Rouge Park

Rouge Park is Canada's first urban national park. At 40 square kilometres, it is 13 times larger than New York's Central Park and 33 times the size of London's Hyde Park. Not only is Rouge Park within an hour drive for 20 percent of Canada's population, but also it is accessible by public transit.

McGill Students Win Hult Prize

A group of McGill students won the 2013 Hult Prize for an innovative social enterprise that addresses food insecurity in urban slums. The students developed affordable and sustainable technologies that bring nutritious food to urban slums.

Curious City

Evergreen CityWorks has partnered with Bell Local Media and archiTEXT in launching a new television show. Curious City highlights urban issues for the 21st century through mini-documentaries and engaging conversation. You can check out the full series:

➔ local.bell.ca/toronto/shows/curious_city.html

Gallery City, Toronto

Empty storefronts as a source of inspiration? This was the spark that drove citizens into action in the York-Eglinton BIA of Toronto. 'Gallery City' is an attempt to beautify vacant neighbourhood storefronts by providing free window space for local artists to showcase their work. The result? A more vibrant streetscape and inclusive community.



Vancouver's Innovation Hub CityStudio

By Duane Elverum

CityStudio Vancouver is an innovation hub inside City Hall where staff, university students and community members co-create, design and launch projects on the ground. The central mission of CityStudio is to innovate and experiment with the ways cities are collectively created, while teaching students the skills needed to collaborate on real projects in Vancouver with City staff and community stakeholders. These projects improve Vancouver and enrich neighbourhoods, making the city more joyful and viable.

CityStudio convenes stakeholders, defines problems and creates solutions while improving student skills and retaining talent in the city. This group aims to create a culture change at City Hall and determine future possibilities. The studio is working to build the next generation of change-makers and active city-builders.

With a vision that provides students with engaged learning experiences within the practices of dialogue and design, CityStudio is changing the way students participate in municipal governance.

CityStudio's Key Programs:

- 1 One Year Studio Program
- 2 Partner Network
- 3 Convening and Consulting Services



Photos: CityStudio Vancouver



CityStudio aims to create City Hall in the model of a "Teaching Hospital:" universities and other cities collaborate with interdisciplinary teams of students who create solutions and real work on the ground.

In the past three years, CityStudio has engaged 33 city staff and 1,700 students from six universities in 50,000 hours of training, research and action supporting the Greenest City Action Plan, and the Healthy City and Engaged City Strategies. 🏡

Duane Elverum is Co-director and Co-founder of CityStudio Vancouver.

➔ citystudiovancouver.com

Green Bloc: Shrinking Footprints

By Helen Beynon

Biking or walking to work. Eating local, organic produce. Cutting down on red meat. How many of these eco-conscious habits do you practice regularly? For the residents of the Riley Park, Vancouver neighbourhood, these are now daily considerations. They are participating in Project Green Bloc, a community-driven initiative to lower their neighbourhood ecological footprint by 25 percent over three years. This target mirrors the City of Vancouver's Greenest City Action Plan Lighter Footprint target – a 33 percent reduction of the City's footprint by 2020.

In September of 2013, 20 bankers, lawyers, teachers, doctors, artists and parents all committed to tracking their daily habits—what they eat, where they go, how they travel, what they throw out, how they heat their homes—in order to calculate their household level ecological footprints. It adds up to a measurement of the earth's resources required to support their lifestyles. After a month of rigorous data collection, each participant had a thorough picture of how their habits affect the planet – and that despite their best efforts to live sustainably, many were still consuming far more than their fair share of resources.

A series of three dialogues led by SFU Public Square brought these neighbours



Project Green Bloc residents are measuring their carbon footprint and taking steps to reduce their environmental impact at the neighbourhood scale. Photos: Mychaylo Prystupa

together to discuss their ecological footprints and come up with a plan for reducing their impact. The dialogues created opportunities for neighbours to get to know one another and to build the relationships that are critical to engaging in tricky issues such as climate change and consumerism. By the end of the third dialogue, the group emerged with three innovative projects that they will work on collaboratively over the next year to catalyze behaviour change and lower footprints. Project Green Bloc provides a model for other neighbourhoods interested in building connections and creating a healthier, more sustainable community. 🏡

Helen Beynon is the Community Development Coordinator at Evergreen.

➔ evergreen.ca/cityworks



DEEPCITY 2030

By Chris Lowry

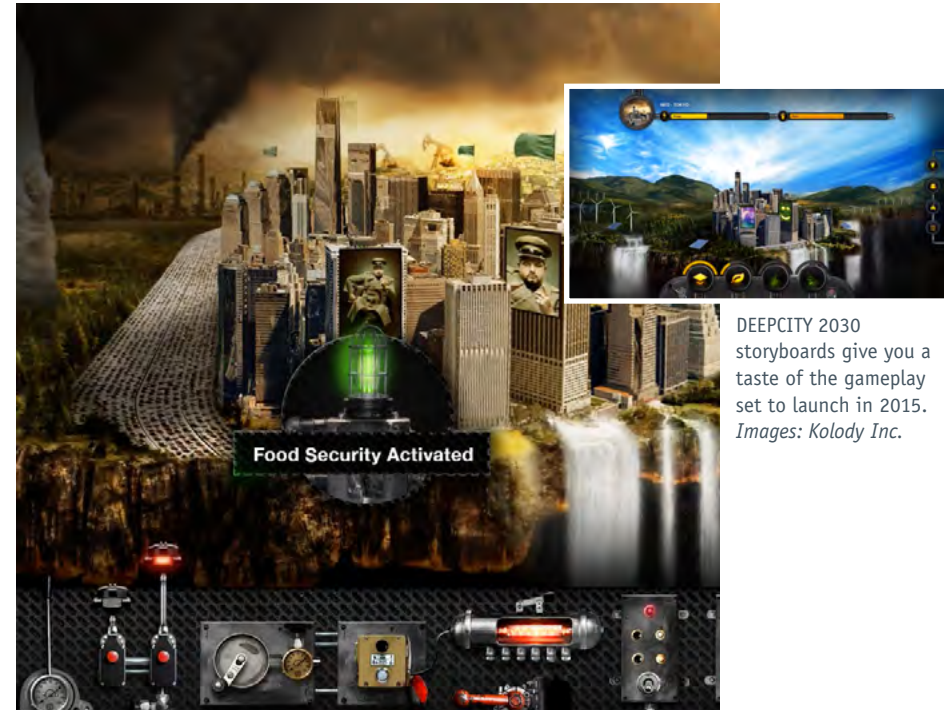
Unless you are one of them, it may surprise you to know that 58 percent of all Canadians are “gamers” and that the average Canadian gamer is 31 years old. Great games like *Half the Sky*, *Civilization* and *SimCity* can engage players in complex problem solving, ethical dilemmas, design and strategic thinking. Since *SimCity* arrived on the market 25 years ago, city-building games have become popular worldwide with a vast cohort of city-building and open-world strategy gamers who are now adults.

What if cities could save the world? That’s the question that underlies an epic online strategy game called *DEEPCITY 2030*. By the year 2030, six

out of 10 humans will live in cities. The way cities evolve to manage their energy and waste will determine the fate of the planet.

DEEPCITY taps into the immense popularity of political strategy and city-building games and the rise of post-apocalyptic visions in the popular imagination. It will challenge players to build a resilient, livable city in a future beset by mega-storms and monsters, where toxic waste is lethal and energy is as precious as life itself.

Your goal is to survive and prosper, using whatever tactics you choose. You can cooperate with other players to make your city a better place for everyone or



DEEPCITY 2030 storyboards give you a taste of the gameplay set to launch in 2015. Images: Kolody Inc.

you can embrace your inner Ayn Rand and go rogue. It’s about having some fun while inventing possible futures.

The project is a partnership between Evergreen CityWorks and a team of independent game makers to engage a new cohort of city builders in our urban future. The game combines a gritty Steampunk aesthetic and off-beat humour with resilient, morale-building opportunities.

According to Toronto’s Chief Planner, Jennifer Keesmaat, “urban places rise or fall depending on the choices that we make. *DEEPCITY 2030* makes these choices transparent and real, unveiling implications that result in

winners and losers—just like real cities. I see *DEEPCITY 2030* as a tool for better city-building that will grow our capacity for making more sustainable choices.”

Funding for *DEEPCITY 2030* is a mix of donations, crowdfunding (June 2014), sponsorship, grants, patient capital, deferrals and tax credits for digital media. We hope that by launching this innovative and ambitious project we can engage folks in city-building who may not otherwise engage—and through the game find new ways of tackling our deeply urban future. 🏙️

Chris Lowry is the Project Director of *DEEPCITY 2030* at Evergreen CityWorks.

➔ deepcity2030.com



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