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STEINER RESIGNS

TEDCO mandate TBD

Toronto Economic Development Corporation president and CEO, **Jeffrey Steiner** announced his intent to resign at the end of this year, on Wednesday.

Less than a month since the opening of the initial phase of Filmport, the economic development corporation's crown jewel, Steiner told *NRU* it's time to move on.

"There's never a perfect time," he said. "But with the first phase of the film studio open and after six-and-a-half years of public service...now was a good time."

Steiner has been with the corporation since 2002 and said it's a very different corporation now than it was back then. He has told the board of directors that he will stay on until the end of the year so that he can receive the mandate review recommendations—a suggestion in the mayor's blue ribbon panel report and a priority action in the *Agenda for Prosperity*—expected in the next few weeks.

"I want to make sure that what we've built here isn't jeopardized," Steiner said, adding that recruitment for his replacement, whether done internally or externally, cannot begin until the mandate review is complete and he will stay to help with the transition.

The mandate review follows a major shuffle in the city's economic development, culture and tourism department, which has had a vacancy in the executive director position for more than a year. TEDCO's mandate review will likely touch on issues like—should one agency handle all development, should real estate expertise be centralized, how much land and where should the corporation focus?

TEDCO recently published its corporate plan, highlighting not only the work it has done to encourage private investment on the waterfront at Filmport, but also the work on its building to house **Corus Entertainment's** headquarters

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• Jeffrey Steiner

OMB REFORM

Councillor wants stronger OP

Toronto councillor **John Filion** wants developers stripped of the right to appeal official plan amendments once the **Ontario Municipal Board** approves city's official plan.

Wednesday's planning and growth management committee voted to establish a subcommittee to discuss reforming the OMB and bringing ideas forward to the province.

"I know there are people who want to eliminate the OMB," Filion told *NRU*. "I don't think we have to go that far."

Calling the board "a disaster by any objective standard," Filion spoke of the futility of planning in the face of an OMB that overturns city policy and renders "our official plan meaningless."

Filion's proposal calls for an official plan set in stone.

"Some things should not be appealable unless what you're appealing is that the city isn't following its own official plan," Filion explained. "If the city's official plan allows a 25-storey condo and council says no to it for political reasons, then the developer should have a right to appeal that decision."

The subcommittee will work with a group proposed earlier this year by Councillor **Peter Milczyn**, which was established to consider setting up an independent Toronto-based panel to hear committee of adjustment appeals, separate from the OMB. (See *NRU-Toronto Edition June 6*.) **NRU**

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Coming Up

SEPTEMBER 15

Parks & Environment Committee,
9:30 a.m.

SEPTEMBER 16

Economic Development Committee,
9:30 a.m.

SEPTEMBER 18

TTC meeting, 1:00 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 19

Affordable Housing Committee, 9:30 a.m.

SEPTEMBER 24

City Design Review Panel, City Hall,
Committee Room 2, 12:00 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 24-25

Council, 9:30 a.m.

OCTOBER 6

Executive Committee, 9:30 a.m.

OCTOBER 7

Community Councils, 9:30 a.m.

OCTOBER 8

Waterfront Toronto Design Review Panel, Waterfront Toronto offices, 20 Bay Street, Suite 1310, Main Boardroom, 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

OCTOBER 9

OPPI Toronto District: Healthy Communities, Planning & Public Health Event, Metro Hall, 6:30 p.m.

OCTOBER 10

Public Works & Infrastructure Committee, 9:30 a.m.

OCTOBER 14

Planning & Growth Management Committee, 9:30 a.m.

OCTOBER 15

Waterfront Toronto Board of Directors Meeting, Waterfront Toronto offices, 20 Bay Street, Suite 1310.

OCTOBER 17

Parks & Environment Committee,
9:30 a.m.

OCTOBER 20

Economic Development Committee,
9:30 a.m.

LIKES AND DISLIKES

Sign bylaw feedback

The first in a string of public meetings seeking input from business owners and residents on what should be included in or omitted from the city's consolidated sign by-law took place at the Etobicoke Civic Centre, Wednesday night.

About 20 people were given a brief overview of the ongoing work by an

the audience members.

One suggested roof signs be allowed across the city, instead of the varying rules across the former municipalities. Another person suggested the team look into establishing rules and regulations around illumination and brightness of signs. The size of sign in relation to the building it adorns is an important aspect, with one audience member saying it shouldn't overpower and should be in proportion.

From an environmental perspective, one person suggested third-party signs,



internal team under building chief **Ann Borooh** and project manager **Dan Mousseau** and an external consulting team led by former East York commissioner of planning **Martin Rendl**.

The teams are reviewing existing sign by-laws and will come to council with a draft by-law and enforcement protocol by next summer.

Part of the process involves public consultation and as the floor opened to comments, many people had questions about the process, what a new by-law will include or exclude and who will be affected. Many of the questions could not be answered by staff, who continued to draw likes and dislikes out of

like marketing billboards, draw from a source of renewable energy instead of the city's electricity grid.

Staff is also investigating and reporting back on the use of a billboard tax to generate revenue for sign by-law enforcement to the November 10 executive committee meeting. Staff also will be reporting to the November 13 planning and growth management committee meeting about the progress of the sign by-law project.

Sign by-law public meetings are scheduled at 7 p.m. on September 18 at the North York Civic Centre, September 24 at Scarborough Civic Centre, and September 25 at city hall. **NRU**

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PROPERTY TAX INCENTIVES

Pros and cons

Unsure about the title “property tax expert,” director of the **Institute on Municipal Finance and Governance**, Dr. Enid Slack told a breakfast gathering of the **Economic Club of Toronto** that she has been studying the topic for years and had some insight into the city’s new property tax incentives.

“There really is no consensus on whether property tax incentives are good or bad or whether they work (to achieve economic growth),” she told the group, Tuesday.

There is no argument that property tax is a good tax for municipalities, she said. It provides autonomy for the municipality, it’s a visible tax and therefore provides accountability and it’s easy to collect since property doesn’t move.

Recently, Toronto took advantage of a legislative change that allowed it to implement a tax increment equivalent grant,



THERE REALLY IS NO CONSENSUS ON WHETHER PROPERTY TAX INCENTIVES ARE GOOD OR BAD OR WHETHER THEY WORK (TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIC GROWTH).

• Dr. Enid Slack

which provides businesses with an incentive of a temporary reduction of property tax in exchange for locating in the city.

However, Slack told the group that some studies done in the U.S. show that property tax differentials are not the top deciding factor for businesses looking to relocate. The services provided by the municipality ranks higher, she said.

As well, some studies show that incentives can be wasted on firms that would have located in the municipa-

lity without it and can lead to a situation where firms will not locate without some form of incentive.

The more effective way to increase business activity, supported by research, is the overall reduction in non-residential property taxes, Slack said.

NRU

Steiner resigns continued from page 1

in the East Bayfront precinct and remediating land in south Etobicoke and relocating Canpar to a site with a new LEED-certified building.

“During (Steiner’s) tenure as president and CEO, TEDCO has accomplished a great deal to help Toronto become a vibrant and prosperous city, with a focus on aggressive and innovative development, including cutting-edge green buildings,” said the city’s deputy mayor, **Joe Pantalone**.

Steiner previously served in Canada’s federal government



TEDCO vice president of development, Don Logie with president and CEO, Jeffrey Steiner.

as chief of staff to the Minister of National Defence and to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. He told *NRU* that he will take the next few months to “look at all opportunities.”

He has also served as a member of the board of the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario and was the founding president of the BC Paint Care Association, an industry-funded and operated environmental stewardship organization.

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RISING ABOVE RICHMOND

Hotel-condo in the works

Richmond Street could be home to a unique building, rising from the rubble of the Joker nightclub, across from the Scotiabank Theatre.

American boutique hotel company **Gansevoort** has teamed up with **TAS Design Build** and **Teeple Architects** to develop the site with an eco-minded hotel/residence building, “which is quite different from the standard Toronto condominium,” according to architect **Stephen Teeple**.

The proposed building will achieve a minimum LEED-silver accreditation, though a higher rating is not out of the question.

Key to the LEED rating is the insulation of the building, which will significantly reduce the amount of energy required to heat and cool the rooms, Teeple explained.

“The way we start is with the correct percentage of glass to solid wall. For a silver building the maximum is about 60 per cent glazed area and 40 per cent solid, which makes it different than a lot of those all-glass towers [where] you’re fighting an uphill battle to make it an energy efficient building.”

Describing the current development standard as “basically a box skinned with the cheapest skin imaginable,” Teeple said that the Gansevoort project would be “heavily insulated.”

Teeple wants the project to stand out against other high rises in the city, designing a building with an emphasis on plants and greenery, using a series of terraces that will step back from the podium.

Teeple believes the building relates to both the immediate area—where it will tower over other buildings along Richmond—and the broader neighbourhood—which includes a high-rise apartment building north on Beverley Street and the Holiday Inn and under-construction Festival Tower on Widmer Street.

“The way that the volumes relate to Beverley and to Widmer will fix it in a bigger urban scale, while the podium base will attach it to Richmond Street quite nicely,” Teeple said. “It’s relating to the city at two scales: a more distant scale as one of the significant buildings in the city and then it has a distinct base that makes it a nice part of Richmond Street as well.”

Conceptual rendering of the Gansevoort hotel and residence.



Rendering of the podium



Images courtesy of Teeple Architects Inc.

“It’s got a different spirit. The Gansevoort is a different hotel.”

The project, which would be Gansevoort’s fourth hotel with sites in New York City and Miami Beach, include restaurants and a bar. A rezoning application for the site is currently being processed by city staff.

One of the biggest challenges said Teeple, is “making sure that people understand the value of these things and living in something very special.”

“It’s special not only because it’s very sculptural and relates to urban conditions beyond itself, it’s better environmentally so getting people to buy in and see that as value is a challenge.”

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Rising Brownies

BROWNFIELD SUCCESSES

Community action essential

By Doug Bennet

In anticipation of the 2008 Canadian Urban Institute Brownie Awards ceremony and gala dinner on October 23, NRU presents a series of articles about past Brownie winners.

2006 Brownie Award winner for communications, marketing and public engagement—Sorauren Park Fieldhouse and Wabash Community Centre.

Project lead non-profit Wabash Building Society partnered with the City of Toronto to revitalize two derelict heritage buildings and convert them for community use. Located in the west end, near Roncesvalles Village, Sorauren Park and its residents have benefited from the completion of the fieldhouse, which offers community space, a kitchen, storage areas and washrooms. Redevelopment of the larger building as a community centre is currently in the planning stages.

If and when the project was completed? If not, why? If it took much longer than originally anticipated, why?

The Wabash Building Society project involves a derelict brownfields site with two abandoned buildings adjacent to a popular Toronto park. In May 2008, Wabash and the city officially opened the renovated smaller building, a former 2,000-sq. ft. office. That building has been turned into the Sorauren Park fieldhouse, a public facility providing washrooms, a community kitchen, meeting space on two floors and some park storage. The fieldhouse was the catalyst for the launch of the new Sorauren Park farmers' market. Landscaping around the Fieldhouse is well under way, assisted by a \$10,000 **Evergreen Foundation/Wal-Mart** Common Grounds grant. Some aspects of the fieldhouse need to be completed this fall, such as final interior painting and flooring, but already the fieldhouse has become a valuable community asset.

The larger, old building on the property, a 40,000-sq. ft. former linseed oil factory, remains abandoned and the focus of the final phase of the project. The Wabash Building Society, the city and the community continue to discuss various development models.

What proved to be the key implementation challenges?

Renovation of the smaller building, now complete, did suffer delays because of the city's precarious financial situation. A

budget crisis in 2007 forced the city to put all capital projects on hold until further review. Fortunately, while our project was delayed, it was eventually approved thanks largely to community action and the momentum we had built up through things like the Brownie Award we won in 2006.

What, if any surprises did you encounter in implementing this project?

The City's budget crisis was a surprise, though we have dealt with a general lack of funds throughout the entire process.

How did the project impact the community in the short- and long-term? Did it bring about changes? If so, what were they and why did they occur?

In the short-term, the fieldhouse development has provided much-needed washrooms for the park, where a kids' sports program attracts 750 registrants. The fieldhouse has also become home to the new Sorauren farmers' market, the Sorauren Park Festival and other community events. The city, which operates the building, has received dozens of requests for permitting use of the building by various community groups.

CONTINUED PAGE 6

York University, Faculty of Environmental Studies FACULTY APPOINTMENTS

The following positions, to commence July 1, 2009, are subject to final budgetary approval. For complete position descriptions and application details, see www.yorku.ca/acadjobs. Information about the Faculty of Environmental Studies is available at www.yorku.ca/fes. Successful candidates must demonstrate experience or potential in research and teaching, and be able to contribute to both the undergraduate and graduate programs in the Faculty.

Urban Sustainability and Transportation Planning

Applications are invited for a tenure-track position at the Assistant Professor level in Urban Sustainability and Transportation Planning. Candidates should have expertise in the planning and design of sustainable transportation systems, including transportation demand management and the integration of land-use and transportation planning, as well as alternative approaches to transportation. Candidates should have a broad interdisciplinary approach that examines the sustainability of urban communities in an integrated manner. The deadline for receipt of completed applications is **October 31, 2008**.

Urban and Regional Planning

Applications are invited for a 3-year contractually limited appointment at the Assistant Professor level in Urban and Regional Planning. Candidates should have expertise in urban and regional planning, and take an interdisciplinary and critical approach to planning and urban problems. The deadline for receipt of completed applications is **November 21, 2008**.

York University is an Affirmative Action Employer. The Affirmative Action Program can be found on York's web site at www.yorku.ca/acadjobs or a copy can be obtained by calling the affirmative action office at 416.736.5713. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadian citizens and permanent residents will be given priority. For the contractually limited term position only, temporary entry for citizens of the U.S.A. and Mexico may apply per the provisions of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Rising Brownies continued from page 5

Is there anything that you would do differently if you were to be involved in another brownfield development?

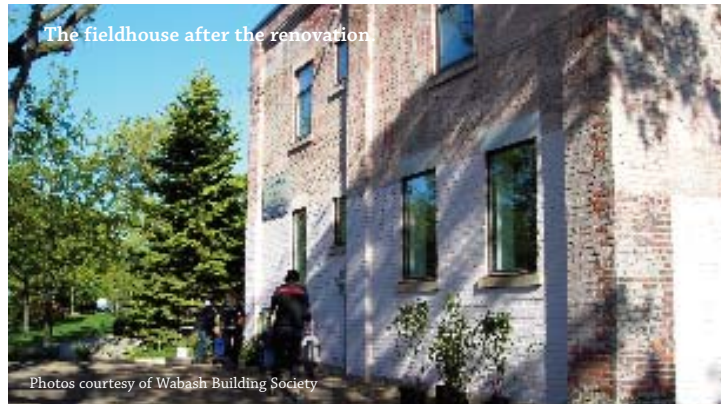
It took a long time for us to focus our energies on a politically-acceptable and financially-viable progress, versus the “big dream.” We have learned that nothing happens without real political leverage.

What did you learn from this experience? What would

you pass on to other brownfield developers? What would you pass along to government as regulators of brownfield development?

Political leverage is essential but one of the ways to get that is through solid community action, built step-by-step, from petitions to fundraising campaigns to media campaigns. The politicians have to be on your side; you cannot fight them. It is also essential to get the bureaucrats on your side, to understand the constraints they work under, and to get them personally excited about the project.

Doug Bennet is president of the Wabash Building Society. **NRU**



Photos courtesy of Wabash Building Society

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This key mandate calls for an individual who excels in a multi-stakeholder environment, and has demonstrated strong leadership and communication skills and at least 5 years of proven experience in all aspects of solid waste management and project/program management capabilities. You are familiar with current waste management technologies and relevant legislation, and hold a degree in Civil/Environmental Engineering, Environmental Studies, Chemistry or Biology, or its equivalent. This position is located in Newmarket.

Committee Agendas

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Economic Development Committee will consider the following at its meeting at Toronto City Hall on Tuesday, September 16 at 9:30 a.m. in Committee Room 1.

REPORTS

Building up Liberty

A letter from the **Liberty Village Business Improvement Area** requesting the city build an east-west road connecting Dufferin Street and Strachan Avenue, implement consistent zoning standards across the Liberty Village area and increase commercial development efforts. The BIA calls for capital investment on city-owned lands in the area. The city, **Toronto Parking Authority** and **Toronto Economic Development Corporation** own significant properties in the area, including Lamport Stadium.

Fort York competition

Report recommends a limited design competition be established for the new Fort York Visitor Centre. The intent is for the competition to be open to teams with experience working with historic sites. The report notes that the visitor

centre would be the centrepiece of the War of 1812 bicentennial events. A December 2011 completion date is projected, for a June 2012 opening.

GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Government Management Committee will consider the following at its meeting at Toronto City Hall on Wednesday, September 17 at 9:30 a.m. in Committee Room 1.

REPORTS

Guild Inn proposal

Report recommends the Chief Corporate Officer enter into negotiations with **Centennial College** and the **Toronto and Region Conservation Authority** to discuss Centennial's proposal to use part of the Guild Inn site for a new Institute of Culture and Heritage Management and to set up a small-scale conference-style hotel on the site.

Division design causes legal divide

Report recommends the city solicitor continue legal proceedings initiated against **Nelson Wong Architects Inc.** with regard to an alleged breach of contract and/or negligence that arose during the construction of a new police station for 43 Division at **4331 Lawrence Avenue East**, which was designed by the firm. **NRU**

City in Brief

Happy anniversary

Humber Valley Golf Course celebrated 50 years of holes-in-one this week. It is one of five municipally-operated clubs in the city and is a par 70, 5,446-yard, 18-hole course located along the west bank of the Humber River.

After Hurricane Hazel, land alongside the watercourse was given to the city by the **Toronto and Region Conservation Authority**, with the understanding it only be used for parks and golf courses. In 1958, the city acquired 40.9 hectares from the **Summerlea Golf Club** and opened the new Humber Valley Golf Course. The total cost of acquisition and development was \$357,554.

In 1992, Metro parks and culture department completed a \$1.25-million renovation of the course with design firm **Thomas McBroom Associates**. Last year, a total of 189,000 rounds of golf were played at all five municipal courses with nearly 40,000 at Humber Valley.

A house that pays for itself

A 60-year-old wartime home in the city's Topham Park community has been retrofitted to require almost no energy and to produce enough energy from renewable sources to pay for it. The "Now House" is one of the 12-winning teams in the **Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's** Equilibrium Sustainable Housing Demonstration Initiative. It is the brainchild of design consulting firm, **Work Worth Doing**.

The "Now House" is the only proj-

ect focused on the renovation and retrofit of an existing home and features sustainable building technologies such as upgraded insulation, new windows, radiant floor heating, Energy Star appliances, solar hot water system and solar panels. There are 200-similar wartime homes in this community and an estimated 1-million wartime homes across Canada.

Spadina on deck

Waterfront Toronto will officially open the Spadina WaveDeck today. It is the first in a series of new public spaces built along Toronto's central waterfront. The 620-square metre wavedeck provides a new waterside gathering place in an area that formerly lacked public access to the lake. It is at the foot of Spadina Avenue at Queens Quay Boulevard west.

Toronto OMB News

Forest Hill home approved

In a decision issued September 8, board member **Peter Atcheson** allowed an appeal by **Project Core Inc.** against a decision of the committee of adjustment to refuse an application for minor variances to permit construction of a two-storey house at **199 Forest Hill Road**, southwest of Avenue Road and Eglinton Avenue West.

The board was informed that a settlement had been reached between Project Core and the **City of Toronto**.

The requested variances, amended as per the settlement, include an increase in the permitted gross floor area from 163.64 to 314.65 sq.m. and a below-grade garage at the front of the building, although the zoning by-law prohibits such a garage. Previously sought front and side lot line setback variances were dropped and a variance requesting permission for a front porch that is 1.5 metres above grade was added to the request.

Julius de Ruyter (PMG Planning Consultants) provided planning evidence on behalf of Project Core, in favour of the appeal. The area contains a variety of house

sizes, designs and characters, de Ruyter said, and renovations, demolitions and even full reconstructions are occurring in the vicinity. He also testified that the size of the proposed house is on the low end for the neighbourhood.

Martin Rendl (Martin Rendl Associates) provided planning evidence on behalf of **J. Robinson** and **M. Markovic**, area residents opposed to the development. While Rendl agreed that the proposal fits within the character of the neighbourhood, he testified that the proposed house is too large for the site. He also said that the below-grade garage was prohibited for safety reasons and because it negatively affected the existing neighbourhood. Rendl did admit that below-grade garages had been permitted in the area after the prohibition came into effect.

Area residents **Ian Taylor** and **Erin Hogan** spoke in opposition of the proposal, stating that the building will be too large and would not fit in with the rest of the neighbourhood, existing trees may be negatively affected and the below-grade garage is uncharacteristic for the area.

The board allowed the appeal, authorizing the variances.

Solicitor **Jason Park (Fraser Milner)** represented Project Core Inc. Solicitor **Abby Moscovich** represented the City of Toronto. **S. Hannon** acted as agent for J. Robinson and M. Markovic. (*See OMB Case No. PL080714.*)

CONTINUED PAGE 9

BUILDING QUALITY THROUGH INNOVATION TASDESIGNBUILD

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Toronto OMB News continued from page 8

Forest Hill attic space approved

In a decision issued September 3, board member **Steven Stefanko** allowed an appeal by **Marilyn Goldman** against a decision of the committee of adjustment to refuse minor variances requested to permit expansion of a main floor kitchen and addition of living space in the attic of the property at **112 Heddington Avenue**, northwest of Avenue Road and Eglinton Avenue West.

Goldman revised the variances presented and has settled disputes with the abutting neighbours to the north and south, who now support the plans.

Among the proposed variances was a request to increase the permitted gross floor area from 152.43 to 235.9 sq.m. Goldman also put forward a variance to decrease the

required driveway width from 2.6 to 1.08 metres.

Eros Fiacconi (EGF Associates) provided planning evidence on behalf of Goldman, in support of the appeal. Fiacconi said that the proposed construction is in keeping with the neighbourhood's character.

Area residents **Mary Ann Hogan-Wilson**, **Deirdre White** and **Daisy White** appeared in opposition to the proposal.

In commenting on the matter, the board noted that the driveway width variance reflects an existing condition and that the gross floor area variance relates, for the most part, to the use of existing attic space. The board concluded that the proposal will not result in a significant expansion of the building.

The board allowed the appeal, authorizing the variances on condition that the living space to be added to the attic not exceed 496-sq.ft.

Solicitor **Bruce Ketcheson** (**Ritchie Ketcheson**) represented Marilyn Goldman. (See OMB Case No. PL080724.) **NRU**

City in Brief

Scarborough social housing

At the Danforth-Midland housing development in Scarborough, officials announced that 869 units will benefit from \$4.3 million in funding as part of the \$100 million earmarked in the provincial budget for social housing retrofits. The funding will go toward much-needed kitchen and bathroom repairs, as well as plumbing valves and water main replacements in the **Toronto Community Housing Corporation** development with three high-rise buildings and townhomes.

Spadina subway extension cash

A contribution agreement has been signed by federal, provincial and municipal governments to begin the flow of funds for the Spadina subway extension. The federal government has committed \$622 million under the Building Canada infrastructure program for the project that includes an 8.6-kilometre extension to the TTC Spadina subway line, service to York University and Vaughan Corporate Centre.

Port Authority financials

The **Toronto City Centre Airport** is the only line of business at the **Toronto Port Authority** that did not turn an operating profit, according to the agency's 2007 financial performance

report. The port authority reported an operating loss of \$1.8 million, down from 2006 losses of about \$6 million. The improvement is due to increased revenues from the airport and **Porter Airlines** operations, according to management's analysis. Port revenue increased 20 per cent during the 2007 fiscal year compared to 2006.

The Toronto Port Authority was incorporated in 1999 as a government business enterprise under the *Canada Marine Act*. It is a federal public authority providing transportation, distribution, storage and container services to businesses. The agency owns and operates the Toronto City Centre Airport, Marine Terminals 51 and 52, and the Outer Harbour Marina. **NRU**

City People

Toronto Port Authority president and CEO, **Lisa Raitt**, is taking an unpaid leave of absence to run for office in the upcoming

federal election. She will be running as the progressive conservative candidate in the Halton riding.

Former Ontario Premier **David Peterson** has been named the chair of the province's bid to host the 2015 Pan American Games in the Greater Golden

Horseshoe area. Peterson, who was Premier from 1985 to 1990, is a senior partner and chair of the law firm **Cassels Brock**.