

# review

News from the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy

## NRTEE launches urban and brownfield information session series in Calgary

**T**he National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE) kicked off its seven-city tour on investing in the environmental quality of Canadian cities in Calgary, where more than 150 government, industry and community leaders gathered to discuss recommendations aimed at addressing challenges such as heavy traffic volumes, urban sprawl, brownfield redevelopment, maintaining city core vitality and air quality.

David J. McGuinty, NRTEE President and CEO, welcomed panelists and participants to the half-day session, held September 30.

Edwin Aquilina, a member of the NRTEE Urban Sustainability Task Force, provided an overview of the NRTEE State of the Debate Report *Environmental Quality in Canadian Cities: The Federal Role*. A local perspectives panel then looked at the report's findings. On the local perspectives panel were: His Worship Dave Bronconnier, Mayor of Calgary; Peter Burgener, Senior Partner, BKDI Architects; and Roger Gibbins, President and CEO, Canada West Foundation.

Mayor Bronconnier noted the strain Calgary's growth has put on housing, schools, parks, services and



*Calgary Mayor Dave Bronconnier speaking as part of the environmental quality local perspectives panel.*

transportation, but also on the environment. Bronconnier said, "As a city, we're moving as far and as fast as we can," and called for federal tax credits for energy-efficient retrofits, dependable dedicated funding to support investment in public transit, and partnerships with federal and provincial governments.

Angus Ross, chair of the NRTEE Task Force on Brownfield Redevelopment, presented *Cleaning up the Past, Building the Future: A National Redevelopment Strategy for Canada*.

The local perspectives panel on

### The 2004 Greening of the Budget Submission *Natural Capital: A Critical Foundation of Our Economy*

**T**o sustain a healthy society and economy, the federal government needs to bring a better accounting of natural capital assets into its fiscal policy—that's the theme of the recommendations in the NRTEE 2004 Greening of the Budget submission.

According to the submission, close attention is paid to Canada's economic capital, but other types of capital such as natural capital, which consists of our environment and how we use it, also make up our national assets.

"We've created a deficit in our natural capital," explains NRTEE President and CEO David J. McGuinty. "To rectify this we need to change the way our assets are measured and valued through a better linking and integration of economic and natural capital in federal fiscal policy."

The NRTEE's 24 budget recommendations for this year fall into three categories.

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• **New NRTEE Member – Patrice Merrin Best**

• **New Program: Conserving Canada's Boreal Forest**

**NRTEE Publications Brochure Inside**



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## Urban Tour, continued...



*Edwin Aquilina addresses the Calgary information session: (left to right) Peter Burgener, Senior Partner, BKDI Architects; His Worship Dave Bronconnier, Mayor of Calgary; Patricia McCunn-Miller, NRTEE Vice Chair and Vice-President, EnCana Corporation; David J. McGuinty, NRTEE President and CEO; and Edwin Aquilina, NRTEE member and Senior Advisor to the Mayor of Ottawa.*



*Addressing over 150 participants at the Vancouver session, Maureen Enser, Executive Director, Urban Development Institute, is joined by: (left to right) Marvin Hunt, Councillor, City of Surrey and Chair, Board of Directors, Greater Vancouver Regional District; Michael Harcourt, NRTEE member and Chair, NRTEE Urban Sustainability Task Force; and David J. McGuinty for the Environmental Quality in Canadian Cities panel discussion.*

brownfield redevelopment was made up of: Dan Van Leeuwen, Vice-President, Development and Construction, APEX Corporation; and Alex MacWilliam, Partner and Co-Chair, National Environmental Law Group, Fraser Milner Casgrain LLP Barristers and Solicitors.

Van Leeuwen stressed how important it is to developers to have a consistent response across the country to potential brownfield redevelopment. MacWilliam observed that lia-

bility is the greatest barrier to brownfield redevelopment in Canada.

Each local perspectives panel ended with a question period and discussion.

David McGuinty wrapped up the meeting with a summary of the key points from each session and thanked everyone for participating.

The cross-country information series landed in Vancouver on October 30, and in Winnipeg on November 4. Local presenters

and panelists in Vancouver included Michael Harcourt, NRTEE member and Chair, NRTEE Urban Sustainability Task Force; Marvin Hunt, Councillor, City of Surrey and Chair of the Board of Directors, Greater Vancouver Regional District; Maureen Enser, Executive Director, Urban Development Institute; Cheeying Ho, Executive Director, Smart Growth BC; Paul West, Chair, Science Advisory Board, Contaminated Sites BC, University of Victoria; and David Negrin, Senior Vice-President, Development, Concord Pacific Group.



*Winnipeg Mayor Glen Murray addressing the media following his participation at the National Round Table urban and brownfield information session held in November in Winnipeg.*

In Winnipeg, local presenters and panelists included His Worship Glen Murray, Mayor of Winnipeg; Gord Steeves, Councillor, City of Winnipeg; Dudley Thompson, Principal Architect, Prairie Architects Inc.; Dr. Lloyd McGinnis, CEO, ISIS Canada Research Network; Terry Duguid, NRTEE member and Chairman, Manitoba Clean Environment Commission; Serge Scrafield, Assistant Deputy Minister, Manitoba Conservation; and Sheryl Rosenberg, Associate, Thompson Dorfman Sweatman Barristers and Solicitors.

Next stops on the tour include Montreal on January 15, Halifax on January 22 and Ottawa on January 30, 2004, then Toronto on February 24.

For more information on the upcoming sessions, please visit [www.nrtee-trnee.ca](http://www.nrtee-trnee.ca). **b**

Budget 2004, continued...

## 1. Improving the natural capital information base

You can't manage what you don't measure, and these recommendations are meant to help track the impact of current economic practices on this country's natural, human and social capital.

The NRTEE proposes that Statistics Canada publish annually the six environment and sustainable development indicators already identified by the Round Table, and that the Minister of Finance incorporate these indicators into the federal budget statement. The Round Table recommends that StatsCan, Environment Canada and Natural Resources Canada be provided with \$5 million annually to improve and report on these indicators.

StatsCan should also be provided with \$20 million a year to begin the process of collecting and integrating the data needed to expand Canada's System of National Accounts to include information on all types of natural, human and, eventually, social capital.

Environment Canada should be provided with \$20 million a year to enable the Canadian Information System for the Environment (CISE) to become fully operational, and to improve environmental data.

## 2. Helping rural and Aboriginal communities protect natural capital

These six recommendations focus on:

- creating incentives for stewardship of natural capital by everyone, including agricultural, rural and Aboriginal communities and resource industries;
- strategically investing in boosting the capacity of Aboriginal communities to share the economic benefits from resource development and manage their natural capital sustainably; and
- accelerating conservation planning in areas where opportunities exist to plan in advance of major industrial development, particularly in the Mackenzie Valley in the Northwest Territories.

Specific recommendations include, for example, strengthening the Ecogifts Program to further encourage private landowners to conserve ecologically sensitive lands, and providing a five-year funding commitment of at least \$2.2 million per year to the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board.

## Conserving Canada's boreal forest: Nature program moves to second phase

Canada's boreal forest represents a significant share of our natural capital: our boreal forest covers 350 million hectares, a third of this country's land area, and has been identified as one of the world's three great forest ecosystems.

But pressure on the boreal forest is growing rapidly as industry—forestry, oil and gas exploration and development, mining, and hydro-electric development, for example—moves north and provinces open up boreal areas for development.

Because the ecological footprint of this development in our boreal forest is significant enough to raise concern, the NRTEE is embarking on a second phase of its nature program focusing on the boreal forest. The new program will focus on conservation of public lands allocated to resource development. Case studies and a state of the debate report will be produced as part of this program.

This follows up on the finding of the Conservation of Natural Heritage program that in many instances, while industry is willing to plan for conservation on lands where it operates, there is little government support or incentive for industry to take on this bigger role.

## 3. Protecting natural capital in urban communities

These recommendations focus on establishing, through fiscal policy, a leadership role for the federal government in ensuring urban centres function effectively while not depleting our natural capital—agricultural lands and air quality, for example.

The recommendations are based on two recent NRTEE reports, one examining environmental quality in Canadian cities and the other brownfield redevelopment.

The 15 recommendations include, for example, the creation of a 10-year stable, long-term urban transit fund with a \$1 bil-

In 2000, the NRTEE identified nature conservation as one of the key sustainability issues facing Canada at the beginning of the new millennium, and launched its

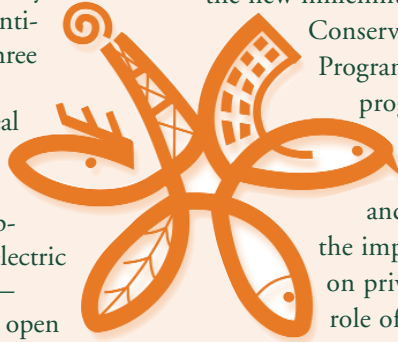
Conservation of Natural Heritage Program the following year. This program examined the stewardship of public and

privately owned land and water, and recognized the importance of conservation on private lands as well as the role of communities and individual landowners in conserv-

ing ecosystems services found on their lands. The result of the first phase was the State of the Debate Report *Securing Canada's Natural Capital: A Vision for Nature Conservation in the 21st Century*, released in June 2003. The report describes the state of nature conservation in Canada, identifies key barriers to further progress on conservation, and makes 20 recommendations for federal action in five key areas: conservation planning for whole landscapes; partnerships with industry on working landscapes; community stewardship; conservation of marine ecosystems; and implementing a national framework for action. **b**

lion investment each year; an increase in the new housing GST rebate for R-2000 homes; and amendments to the Income Tax Act to create, among other fiscal incentives, deductions for remediation expenses and tax credits for redevelopment.

The NRTEE started making budget submissions to the federal government in 1996. These submissions are based on the NRTEE's program reports, which are the result of extensive multistakeholder consultations. This year's recommendations were presented in September to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance. To download a copy of the submission, visit [www.nrtee-trnee.ca](http://www.nrtee-trnee.ca). **b**



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## Virtual Library

Visit the NRTEE's Virtual Library at [www.nrtee-trnee.ca](http://www.nrtee-trnee.ca).  
 The Virtual Library allows access to over 300 NRTEE documents and publications that are organized into easy-to-search categories including: natural resources, community awareness, atmospheric issues, greenhouse gas emissions, trading, greening government policy and health.



## New NRTEE member

The National Round Table welcomes new member **Patrice Merrin Best**, appointed in October by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien.

Ms. Merrin Best, Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer of Sherritt International Corporation, a 75-year-old public Canadian company, is also a director in Sherritt's coal and base metals businesses and chairs the board of its soybean crushing operations.

Patrice Merrin Best was the first executive director of Planned Parenthood in Toronto in 1971. Since then, she has worked for some of Canada's largest companies, including Canadian Pacific and Molson, and served on numerous non-profit boards of directors. **b**

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