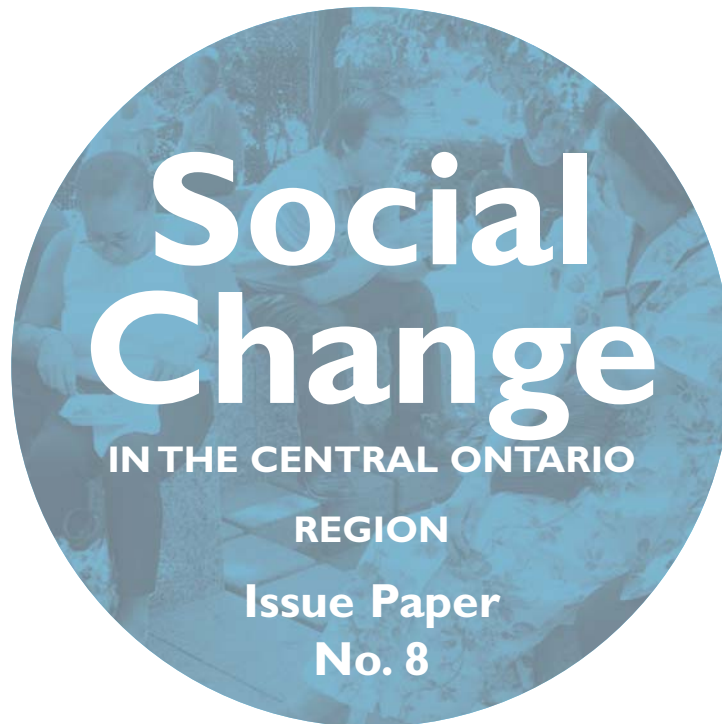


Larry Bourne



neptis
THE ARCHITECTURE
OF URBAN REGIONS

This is the eighth in a series of nine issue papers commissioned by the Neptis Foundation for consideration by the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel established by the Government of Ontario.

Bourne outlines the major demographic trends that are shaping the Central Ontario Zone and their implications for planning, public policy, and the quality of life. In particular, he focuses on the rapidity of population growth, the aging of the baby boom, the trend towards smaller households and more non-family households, the effects of large-scale immigration, and the widening gap between rich and poor. The spatial effects of these changes are unpredictable, and Bourne argues for flexible policies to respond appropriately to social changes.

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- 1 Agriculture in the Central Ontario Zone, Margaret Walton
 - 2 Air, Water and Soil Quality, Ken Ogilvie
 - 3 Energy and Smart Growth, Richard Gilbert
 - 4 Greenlands in Central Ontario, Donald M. Fraser
 - 5 The Growth Opportunity, Pamela Blais
 - 6 Smart Development for Smart Growth, Pamela Blais
 - 7 Smart Growth and the Regional Economy, Meric Gertler
 - 8 Social Change in the Central Ontario Region, Larry Bourne
 - 9 Travel Demand and Urban Form, Eric Miller and Richard Soberman
-

Research for the series has been coordinated by Dr. Pamela Blais, of Metropole Consultants.

Neptis is an independent, privately-funded, registered charitable foundation, based in Toronto, Canada, that supports interdisciplinary research, education and publication on the past, present and future of urban regions.

The opinions and ideas expressed in this report are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Ontario.

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	5
<i>Objectives</i>	5
<i>Why Social Change Matters</i>	5
<i>The Social Dynamics</i>	6
The Central Ontario Zone: Boundaries, Form, and Organization	6
Social Trends in the Central Ontario Zone	8
<i>The Rate of Change</i>	10
<i>Demography</i>	10
<i>The Components of Change</i>	11
<i>Geography</i>	12
<i>Immigration and Diversity</i>	13
<i>Living Arrangements and Lifestyles</i>	14
Outcomes and Implications	15
The Links between Social Change and Urban Form	18
Conclusions and Emerging Issues	22
References	27
Central Ontario Zone: Population change between 1996 and 2001	

Executive Summary

This report argues that an improvement in our understanding of and ability to anticipate social change is fundamental to any smart growth strategies. The major component of social change in the Central Ontario Zone driving the agenda for smart growth has been the very high rate of population and economic growth. That growth is primarily attributable to external factors and population flows, notably immigration, which now accounts for 75% of total population growth. Adding to the challenge, this high rate has been accompanied by an increasingly uneven geography of growth and change across the Zone.

Within this context, four other dimensions of social change have transformed the character and social geography of the Central Zone, and will continue to do so in the future. All of these changes are generally well-known, but their effects are often underestimated.

1. The demographic transition – the postwar baby boom and subsequent bust – has produced age cohorts of markedly uneven size, which continue to send ripples through the demand schedules for almost all public and private goods. In parallel, historically low fertility levels have meant a rapidly aging population, even with higher levels of immigration.
2. The importance of natural increase to the growth of the Central Zone has declined, and net domestic migration remains very low.
3. Immigration from non-traditional source countries has changed the character of the population and created unprecedented levels of social and ethno-cultural diversity.
4. Changes in the way we construct families and households, which are the units of collective consumption, has resulted in an average household size that is 60% smaller than it used to be and a corresponding increase in housing demand.

These trends pose a number of challenges for policy-makers and service providers. Immigration will continue to determine the overall rate of population growth, while demographic change and changing living arrangements will shape the geography of that growth within the Central Ontario Zone. The overall rate of growth, however, is likely to decline as the population ages, a process that will accelerate after 2011. The key question then becomes: where

The major component of social change in the Central Ontario Zone driving the agenda for smart growth has been the very high rate of population and economic growth.

Immigration will continue to determine the overall rate of population growth, while demographic change and changing living arrangements will shape the geography of that growth within the Central Ontario Zone.

will this greying population locate? At the same time, the proportion of the population under 29 years will decline.

Through immigration, the population will also become even more diverse in ethno-cultural terms than at present, particularly in the new suburbs and subsequently in the regional periphery. These social transformations will present serious challenges to all municipalities, but especially those in suburban and exurban areas, which are generally ill-equipped to handle the diversity of demands on their service agencies. It would not be unreasonable for the Province to request a substantial increase in federal funding for the settlement of new immigrants, for both social and physical infrastructure.

As for the impacts of social change on the geographical distribution of growth in the Central Zone, the relationships are more uncertain. On balance, however, it seems likely that population (and thus jobs) will continue to decentralize as people search for lower-cost housing and environmental amenities. Much of that growth will occur on the margins of one of the nine urban nodes in the Central Zone. Little of that growth is expected to migrate to the slower-growing parts of the Zone. An aging population is more likely to move out of the urbanized core to smaller towns or retirement communities than to brownfield sites. That migration, in turn, will place more stress on social (and medical) services in the receiving centres, and on the regional transportation system. The increasing level of social diversity, often expressed in distinct ethno-cultural communities, will further challenge service providers and budgets and likely contribute to increasing inequalities in income across the Zone.

The challenge for policy-makers in developing a smart growth strategy will be to accommodate rapid growth, massive social change, and increasing diversity. We are not planning for the same populations that we were 20 years ago. Policy initiatives will require considerable flexibility to adapt to new social and employment realities, while not making other problems – such as concentrated poverty, housing affordability, or congestion – worse. If the Province decides to redirect growth to certain parts of the Central Ontario Zone, or encourage more compact development, it will have to provide incentives and regulate development where it is not wanted or required. It would help if the Province put in place, as part of a smart growth strategy, a system for monitoring the character and geography of social change in the Central Ontario Zone.

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17 December 2002

It seems likely that population (and thus jobs) will continue to decentralize as people search for lower-cost housing and environmental amenities.

Suburban and exurban areas are generally ill-equipped to handle the demands on their service agencies caused by immigration and increasing social diversity.

We are not planning for the same populations that we were 20 years ago.

Introduction

Cities, and especially large urbanized regions, are extremely complex entities. They are not only immense physical constructions – most visible in the scale of the built environment – but also dynamic economic, social, and institutional systems. Each of these systems has its own internal logic, its own geography, and its own trajectory of change over time, but all are interrelated. These relationships, not surprisingly, defy easy generalization. In other words, the challenge of managing growth and change in such systems is daunting.

Objectives

The purpose of this paper is twofold: first, to outline the major factors and social trends that are shaping the Central Ontario Zone, and second, to identify the outcomes of those trends and their implications for planning and public policy and the quality of life in the Zone. The broader objective is to demonstrate the scale and intensity of the social transformations that have swept over the Zone – and will continue to do so for some time – and to illustrate the importance of these changes for planning and governance. The results reported here, however, cannot be viewed in isolation. They must be interpreted in conjunction with ongoing research on the regional economy and the transportation system.

Why Social Change Matters

Why does social change matter in an exercise primarily concerned with physical planning? It matters precisely because the physical form and structure of any region reflect the underlying social character, structure, and behaviour of residents of the region. How and where people live, work, play and shop – in other words, the needs and rhythms of everyday life – are shaped by and in turn shape the physical form of the Zone and the challenges facing strategic planning. More broadly, planning is ultimately concerned with people and their well-being, and with the social sustainability of urban places, not simply with physical objects¹. Thus, the first stage in any physical planning exercise is to determine who the citizens of the Central Ontario Zone are, to examine how that population is changing and why, and to assess people's needs and aspirations. During periods of rapid social and demographic change – such as we have witnessed over the last few decades and expect to experience over subse-

The physical form and structure of a region reflect the underlying social character, structure, and behaviour of residents of the region.

1. See, for example, R. Stren and M. Polese, eds., *The Social Sustainability of Cities: Comparative Policy*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000.

quent decades – understanding the dynamics of the population becomes even more important in mapping our urban future.

The Social Dynamics

Consider the challenges posed by the dynamics of a regional population such as that in Central Ontario. In a region of more than 7.6 million people there are approximately 2.5 million households (defined here as the primary units of collective social consumption), who occupy a roughly equivalent number of dwelling units, and drive more than 4.3 million vehicles. These households in turn are linked through complex local labour markets to perhaps 4 million jobs distributed among 100,000 or more work locations. Moreover, both people and jobs tend to move, some frequently. In parallel, the Central Ontario region welcomes between 80,000 and 100,000 overseas immigrants each year. A smaller but significant number emigrate. In addition, every year some 50,000 people move in from other regions within the province and the rest of Canada, and a similar number move out. Natural increase, births minus deaths, in turn adds another 40,000 people.

The argument here, in essence, is that over a typical ten-year planning horizon, as many as one million people may be new to the Central Ontario Zone at the end of the period; and half a million may have moved away. Moreover, among continuing residents, between 15 to 18% of the population, or over 1.2 million people, change their place of residence within the Central Ontario Zone. There is no such thing as a fixed population or labour force; there is no fixed social geography. As a consequence, planning must deal with anticipating flows of people as much as it does managing the existing population.

The Central Ontario Zone: Boundaries, Form, and Organization

The Central Ontario Zone, as defined by the Smart Growth panel, is itself a challenge as a unit for both analysis and planning. It is, for example, much larger than alternative regional delimitations focused on the urbanized core of Toronto. The most obvious and widely used delimitations are the census metropolitan area (CMA) and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Neither is the Central Ontario Zone a natural or ecological region or a unit of governance. The building blocks used to define the region – the old counties – are in many instances no longer useful as geographical containers. Nor is it a "functional region" in the sense that it is based on integration or linkage criteria, such as the daily journey to work (used to delimit the CMAs) or weekly recreational

The Central Ontario region has more than 7.6 million people in about 2.5 million households, who drive more than 4.3 million vehicles. Between 80,000 and 100,000 overseas immigrants and about 50,000 people from other parts of Canada arrive each year and another 50,000 leave the region.

The Central Ontario region is not a natural or ecological region, it is much larger than a Census Metropolitan Area, and it is not a "functional region" such as a commutershed. Only limited data sources cover the region as a whole.

travel (often called the urban field). Nor does it represent the service hinterland of Toronto or of the other urban nodes. It also incorporates distinctively different physical and socio-economic landscapes.

As an additional reservation, only limited data sources and almost no analytical studies cover the Central Ontario Zone. Thus, there is no accumulated history of empirical research or policy studies. Finally, the timing of this project is difficult with respect to the release of detailed social information from the 2001 census². Consequently, this paper will rely primarily on interpretations from a scattered base of academic research and government reports³. It offers no new empirical analyses.

How is the Central Ontario Zone organized? What is its basic social and economic geography? Despite its immense physical size, the Zone's population and economy are overwhelmingly urban and highly nucleated. The Central Ontario Zone is essentially organized around nine major urban nodes, consisting of five census metropolitan areas (CMAs) and four census agglomerations (CAs), and a set of smaller urban centres⁴. The five CMAs, Toronto, Hamilton, Oshawa, Kitchener-Waterloo and St. Catharines-Niagara, and four large CAs – Peterborough, Guelph, Barrie, and Brantford – constitute the major urbanized nodes (urbanized cores) within and through which the entire Central Ontario Zone is organized as a spatial system. Combined, they represent over 90% of the Zone's population, employment, and productive capacity.

In terms of geographical space, we might think of the Central Ontario Zone as

The Central Ontario Zone can be thought of as four subzones: (1) the densely populated CMAs of Toronto, Oshawa and Hamilton; (2) a surrounding subzone of newer suburban communities; (3) a third tier of metropolitan areas (Kitchener-Waterloo, St. Catharines-Niagara, Guelph, Barrie and Peterborough); and (4) the thinly urbanized hinterland.

2. For present purposes, the most useful social data from the census will become available between December 2002 and June 2003.

3. See, for example, P. Blais, R. Gilbert, L.S. Bourne, and M. Gertler, *The State of the GTA in 2000*, Toronto: GTSB, 2001; L.S. Bourne, R. Basu, and S. Starkweather, *People and Places: A Portrait of the Evolving Social Character of the Greater Toronto Region*, Toronto: Neptis Foundation, 2000; T. Bunting, P. Fillion, and H. Priston, "Centralization, Decentralization and Recentralization," *Cahiers de Géographie du Québec* 2000, 44, pp. 341-361; Canada, *Citizenship and Immigration. Immigration Overview: Facts and Figures 2000*, Ottawa: CIC, Communications Branch, 2001; N. Bradford, *Why Cities Matter: Research Perspectives on the New Localism in Canada*, Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks, 2002; GHK International, *Growing Together: Prospects for Renewal in the Toronto Region*, report prepared for the City of Toronto. Toronto: GHK, 2002; Ontario, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, *Smart Growth Profile: Central Region*, Toronto: Smart Growth Secretariat, 2002; Statistics Canada, 2001 Census Analysis Series: *A Profile of the Canadian Population: Where we Live*, Cat. 96F0030XIE010012001, Ottawa, 2002; Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, *Housing the Boom, Bust and Echo Generations*, Research Highlights No 77. Ottawa: CMHC, 2002.

4. Statistics Canada defines CMAs (Census Metropolitan Areas) as consisting of a central municipality and surrounding suburbs that have an urbanized core of at least 100,000 population. CAs (Census Agglomerations) are defined in the same way but have urbanized cores of more than 10,000 but less than 100,000.

consisting of at least four subzones. These subzones are both ecological and hierarchical, in the sense that they display marked differences in their social attributes, development patterns, local economies, the service functions performed by the individual municipalities, and the size of their respective trade areas. The first subzone, the urbanized core of the entire Central Ontario Zone, includes the densely populated portions of the Toronto-Oshawa-Hamilton CMAs⁵. This core is surrounded by a subzone of newer and smaller suburban and exurban communities and by a third subzone of metropolitan areas and smaller urban centres, including Kitchener-Waterloo, St. Catharines-Niagara, Guelph, Barrie, and Peterborough⁶. All have their own urbanized core, their own local (but regionally nested) labour market, and their own more-or-less distinct area of influence. The fourth subzone is the hinterland, that part of the Central Ontario Zone that is not heavily urbanized and indeed may not be tightly integrated with any of the urbanized cores in the Zone.

Social Trends in the Central Ontario Zone

The social processes affecting this Zone are in broad outline similar to those influencing other urban regions and the nation as a whole. But in the case of large urban regions, and especially in the case of the Central Ontario Zone, these changes tend to be more intense and more concentrated. The rate of social change is invariably higher in urban areas than in non-urban areas, and the impacts of change are often more visible, dramatic, and more geographically uneven.

There are at least four major sources of change that have swept over this Zone and that guarantee rapid social change in the future. These four include:

1. the demographic transition;
2. shifts in the rate and components of population growth;
3. immigration and increased social and ethno-cultural diversity;
4. alternative living arrangements; households, families, lifestyles, and life choices.

5. Indeed, for most purposes these three CMAs may be considered as one consolidated Census Metropolitan Area. Compared to definitions used in the U.S. census, Canadian CMAs tend to be geographically "underbounded" (i.e., smaller in area).

6. It is expected in preparations for Census 2006 that the CAs of Barrie (149,000), Guelph (117,000), and possibly Peterborough (102,000), will be reclassified as CMAs, and their boundaries redrawn accordingly.

The rate of social change is invariably higher in urban areas than in non-urban areas, and the impacts of change are often more visible, dramatic, and more geographically uneven.

It is important to differentiate between the processes underlying demographic changes, the outcomes of those processes, and the implications of these outcomes.

Table 1: Social Change in Urban Regions: A Summary of the Processes, Outcomes, and Implications for Public Policy

Processes	Outcomes	Implications
Demographic transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby boom/baby bust • Aging population • Declining fertility • Uneven size of age cohorts • Increasing proportion of senior workers • Decreasing younger age cohorts • Intergenerational differences in wealth • Lower densities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age structure truncated • Age drives the housing market • Smaller households • Changes in mix of services required • Changes in mix of service required • Employment shortages • Increased demand for community care, medical facilities • Reduced residential mobility
Changing components of population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreasing importance of natural increase and domestic migration • Increasing importance of immigration in terms of rate, location, social origins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population growth more uncertain • Location of growth less responsive to local factors • Rapid social change • More intense residential segregation
Social and ethnic diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attributable to recent • Increasing minority population • Increasing social and spatial clustering • Culturally distinct communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge of accomodating diversity • Stress on service providers and public institutions • Concentrations of socially disadvantaged groups • Lower levels of social cohesion
Changing attitudes to family and lifestyles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proliferation of living arrangements • Fragmentation of the family • Reduced household size • More diverse households • More single parents • Fewer workers per household 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing demand will increase faster than rate of population growth • Increase in dependenvy levels • Increase in special needs • Higher incidence of pverty • Polarization of income distribution

Each of these represents an ongoing social transformation, but each has its roots in processes started two generations ago. All, however, will continue to send ripples through the social structure and social geography of the Central Ontario Zone well into the future. Since most of these trends are well-known⁷, although not necessarily as widely appreciated, the emphasis here is placed on their implications for planning and public policy.

7. D. Foot and D. Stoffman, *Boom, Bust and Echo: How to Profit from the Coming Demographic Shift*, Toronto: Macfarlane Walter & Ross, 1996; R. Beaujot, *Immigration and Canadian Demographics: The State of Research*, Population Studies Centre University of Western Ontario, London, 1998; Statistics Canada, 2001 Census Analysis Series: A Profile of the Canadian Population: Where we Live, Cat. 96F0030XIE010012001, Ottawa, 2002.

Given considerable confusion about terminology in the popular media, it is useful to differentiate between the factors influencing:

- the overall rate of change (e.g., population growth);
- the composition of change (e.g., age group, ethnicity);
- the where, or pattern of change within the Central Ontario Zone (e.g., the geography).

It is also useful to differentiate between the processes underlying these changes, the outcomes of those processes, and the implications of these outcomes. Examples of the latter are provided in summary form in **Table 1** as a basis for the following review and discussion.

The Rate of Change

The overwhelming expression, and source, of social change in the Central Ontario Zone is the very rapid pace of population growth. This high growth rate is both a blessing and a curse. It underlies almost all of the planning issues and strategies currently under debate, and it magnifies all four of the social changes identified above. If this were a slow-growth or no-growth region, we would almost certainly not be debating the same issues. High rates of population growth provide welcome social benefits, increased employment, a rising tax base, and opportunities for civic improvement. They also tend to overwhelm almost everything: housing markets, roads, infrastructure, schools and social services, systems of governance, the natural environment, and efforts by public institutions and government to manage change.

To place the rate of growth in the Central Ontario Zone into perspective, consider the following examples. Adding a population of 100,000 annually is the equivalent to building an entirely new Peterborough every year; a London every five years; an Ottawa-Carleton every ten years. This is a staggering task of accommodating and servicing new growth.

Demography

The demographic transition refers to the dramatic upward shift in fertility (i.e., birth) rates, and corresponding changes in family characteristics, that followed the Second World War, and the equally dramatic decline in those rates beginning in the 1960s and 1970s. Birth rates in Canada and Ontario after the Second World War rose to levels not seen since the 1920s. These rates, which peaked in 1961-63 at 25 out of every 1,000 population, were among the highest in the western world. The subsequent decline (the baby bust) was equally

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High rates of population growth provide social benefits, increased employment, a rising tax base, and opportunities for civic improvement. They also overwhelm housing markets, roads, infrastructure, schools, social services, governance systems, the natural environment, and efforts to manage change.

sharp, falling to a level below 15/1000 in the 1980s. The much-anticipated echo-boom (children born to the initial baby-boom population) was relatively muted. By 2001, fertility rates had fallen below 11/1000.

Although the "transition" was essentially complete by the 1980s, the implications will be with us for another half century. The primary outcome has been the very uneven size of age cohorts, from the small pre-1945 cohort to the very large baby-boom cohort to the much smaller baby-bust and echo generations. With declining fertility rates, in turn, the population has been aging rapidly. The proportion of the population over 65 years is likely to double in the next two decades, from 12 to 25% by 2021; the proportion under 19 years will decline sharply to 2021 and then (probably) stabilize.

The Components of Change

Declining fertility levels, and sharply higher immigration rates, have altered the relative importance of the components of population growth for the Central Ontario Zone. Recall that the growth rate for any geographical area is the result of three distinct components: 1) the rate of natural increase, 2) net domestic migration and 3) net foreign immigration. Cities, historically, have seldom reproduced their own populations, and have always relied on attracting in-migrants to sustain their population base and to achieve growth.

The current combination of growth components, however, is historically unique. In the case of the greater Toronto region, immigration now accounts for 70 to 75% of total population growth annually. Fertility rates, as noted, have declined. Net domestic migration for the region, the difference between in-migrants from other parts of the country and out-migrants, has fluctuated widely depending on local economic conditions, and at times has been negative. But throughout much of the recent period, it has contributed relatively little to regional growth.

One obvious result of this shift in the relative contribution of different components of population growth is that the growth rate is more uncertain. Natural increase is relatively predictable, and internal (domestic) migration rates is relatively constant – because they are largely determined by the age structure – although the geography of domestic migration does vary. Immigration is neither constant nor uniform, and thus is not easy to predict. It is subject, for example, to the whims of federal policy and special-interest groups, and to conditions abroad. Regional population forecasting, as a result, is now more difficult than it was in the past. Moreover, even if researchers agreed on an overall rate of growth expected for the Central Ontario Zone based simply on pro-

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The growth rate for any geographical area is the result of the rate of natural increase, net domestic migration, and net foreign immigration. Cities have always relied on attracting in-migrants to sustain their population base and achieve growth.

In the greater Toronto region, immigration now accounts for 70 to 75% of total population growth annually. Immigration is neither constant nor uniform, and is not easily predictable, making regional forecasting difficult.

jecting past trends – an exercise fraught with errors – this rate will tell us little about the social composition, character or geography of that growth.

Geography

There is considerable variation in the rate of population growth, and in the interplay of these three components, across the Central Ontario Zone. The highest rates of growth in the most recent census period, as expected, are in the contiguous ring of suburbs around the City of Toronto (York, Peel, Durham, and Halton regions), in outlying urban nodes such as Barrie, Guelph, and Kitchener-Waterloo, and in a few smaller nodes. Most of the fourth subzone, and especially those districts located beyond a reasonable commuting radius from the urbanized core, such as Brant, Haldimand, Niagara, and the eastern counties, have shown relatively slow or zero growth, or even moderate decline.

Currently, growth is most rapid in the ring of suburbs around the City of Toronto (York, Peel, Durham, and Halton regions), in outlying urban nodes such as Barrie, Guelph, and Kitchener-Waterloo, and in a few smaller nodes.

Table 2: Population Growth in the Major Urban Nodes of the Central Ontario Zone, 1996-2001

CMA/CA	2001 Total Population	Total Population Growth 1996-2001		Migration Rates (%)			
		000s	000s	%	In	Out	Net
Toronto CMA	4,682.8	419.1	9.8	4.2	6.2	-2.0	7.9
Hamilton CMA	662.4	38.0	6.1	8.1	8.0	0.1	2.5
Oshawa CMA	296.3	27.5	10.2	15.1	10.7	4.8	1.1
St. Catherines CMA	377.6	4.6	1.2	6.6	6.6	0.0	1.5
Kitchener-Waterloo CMA	414.3	31.4	8.2	10.8	10.5	0.3	3.1
Barrie CA	148.5	29.8	25.1				
Guelph CA	117.3	11.4	10.7				
Peterborough CA	102.4	2.1	2.1			not available	
Brantford CA	86.4	1.6	2.0				
Urban Area Totals	6,887.4	565.5	8.2				
Ontario	11,410.1	656.5	6.1				
Urban Areas in Central Ontario Zone as % of Ontario	60.4%	86.4%					

In = in-migrants; Out = out-migrants; Net = net domestic migration; Imm. = foreign migration, as percentages of base year population

The individual components of this growth also differ within the Central Ontario Zone. **Table 2** summarizes census data on growth for the major urban nodes (the CMAs and larger CAs) in the Central Ontario Zone for 1996-2001, and, for the CMAs only, provides a measure of the relative contribution of domestic migration and immigration to overall growth. The Toronto CMA, and even more so the City of Toronto, loses population in the exchange of migrants with the rest of the country, but gains substantially from immigration.

Hamilton and Kitchener-Waterloo CMAs also gain primarily from immigration rather than domestic migration, while Oshawa is the recipient of strong domestic migrant flows (primarily as suburban overspill from Toronto), but proportionally fewer immigrants.

More detailed examination of the urbanized core suggests that while the inner subzone continues to benefit from international migration, it typically loses population through decentralization to the outlying urban centres and to the hinterland generally⁸. The hinterland is not, at least up to the last census date, a primary destination for in-migrants from either outside the Central Ontario Zone or outside the country. The more peripheral parts of the hinterland, on balance, are net losers of population to the urbanized cores within the Central Ontario Zone.

Immigration and Diversity

Increased levels of immigration, and new sources of immigrants, have produced an even more dramatic and visible transformation of the social, ethnic, and racial composition of the Central Ontario Zone's population. The scale of this transformation, which is also widely acknowledged but seldom evaluated, has been unprecedented. Although the rate of immigration into the Central Ontario Zone is not historically unique (as a proportion of resident population) compared to the early 20th century, the degree of geographical concentration and the characteristics and sources of those immigrants are different. In fact, the flow of immigrants into the country has become even more concentrated in a few of the larger metropolitan areas (the so-called gateway centres), but especially in the greater Toronto region⁹. In 2000-2001, for example, the Toronto CMA received more than 47% of all immigrants to Canada, and the Central Zone as a whole received more than 53%.

In the same year, more than 78% of those immigrants were from so-called non-traditional sources – in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, and south and central America – and almost all fall into the category of visible minority. In the urbanized core of the Toronto region, and in some of the newer suburbs, the visible minority population is rapidly approaching majority status.

While the inner subzone continues to benefit from international migration, it loses population through decentralization to the outlying urban centres and the hinterland.

In 2000-01, the Toronto CMA received more than 47% of all immigrants to Canada, and the Central Zone as a whole received over 53%. More than 78% of those immigrants were from so-called non-traditional sources – in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, and south and central America – and almost all fall into the category of visible minority.

8. L.S. Bourne et al., *People and Places: A Portrait of the Evolving Social Character of the Greater Toronto Region*. Toronto: Neptis Foundation, 2000.

9. See L.S. Bourne et al., *People and Places: A Portrait of the Evolving Social Character of the Greater Toronto Region*, Toronto: Neptis Foundation, 2000; Canada, Canada, Citizenship and Immigration, *Immigration Overview: Facts and Figures 2000*, Ottawa: CIC, Communications Branch, 2001. Similar levels of concentration among immigrant flows have also been observed in the United States, where the gateway centres or high immigrant metropolitan areas include New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami, and San Francisco.

Although statistically significant, what difference does this make? We do not know in any detail how this new and culturally diverse population will behave over the longer term with respect to consumption patterns, the labour market, the housing market, participation in the political system, and in the demands placed on infrastructure and public services. At the very least we know that new and relatively homogeneous concentrations of recent immigrants (and refugees) have emerged throughout the Central Ontario Zone.

Living Arrangements and Lifestyles

The fourth and parallel transformation in social structure has been in terms of changes in living arrangements, that is, shifts in the ways that we choose to construct (or deconstruct) households and families, and the lifestyles and attitudes associated with these shifts. This transformation has also been of fundamental importance, but its effects are often underestimated. It should be stressed that the process of household formation defines the units of collective consumption, as in the case of housing, and the units that shape income distributions and anchor individual links to urban labour markets. While it is individuals who work and earn income, it tends to be households that spend that income and make the major decisions about consumption of housing and other goods, as well as about residential and workplace location.

The shifts in the nature and composition of households and families have been equally dramatic. Families have been redefined, reflecting a wide variety of factors: changes in fertility levels, higher income levels, more flexible social practices (such as living alone or same-sex marriages), revised public policies (such as those on divorce), and changes in attitudes and lifestyles. In parallel, average household size in Ontario has shrunk over the postwar period from over 4.0 persons per household in the 1950s and 1960s to under 2.7 in 2001. This represents a decline of roughly 30% in average household size. In the older parts of the Toronto region, the average household size is now under 2.1, and in the central core it is below 1.5 persons. Fewer children per family, more non-family households (now 30% of the total), more single-parent households, and more single people living alone, especially among the young and the elderly, have all contributed to this shrinkage and therefore to fragmentation of the units of collective consumption, increased income inequalities, and the diversification of housing demand.

These trends have also changed the linkages between households and the world of work. For example, there are now, on average, fewer workers per household. The most rapid increase has been in households with no workers in the labour

The process of household formation defines the units of collective consumption. In general, individuals work and earn income and households spend that income and make major decisions on housing, residential location, and workplace location.

Average household size has shrunk over the postwar period from over 4.0 persons per household in the 1950s and 1960s to under 2.7 in 2001. In the older parts of the Toronto region the average size is now under 2.1, and in the central core it is below 1.5 persons.

force – the unemployed, single parents, retired households, and those not otherwise in the labour force. There has also been a relative decline in those households with one worker, an increase in those with two workers, and a decline in the proportion of multi-worker households. These shifts have immense implications for the distribution of income from employment, and the rise in the incidence of poverty.

This decline in household size, in turn, has resulted in a corresponding increase in the number of dwelling units, land area, and capital investment required to house an equivalent number of people. This downsizing alone, by my own calculations, accounts for almost half of the growth in aggregate housing demand. It has also accounted for the majority of the decline in population densities in established urban neighbourhoods, a process known as *demographic thinning*¹⁰. Such density declines, often cited in the planning literature as a cause of concern, are in this instance a direct result of demographic change and rising incomes.

The decline in household size has resulted in a corresponding increase in the number of dwelling units, land area, and capital investment required to house an equivalent number of people. Household downsizing accounts for almost half of the growth in aggregate housing demand.

Outcomes and Implications

What are the implications of these trends for cities and urban development? It is, in fact, possible to interpret many of the broad trends in urban form over the postwar period as the direct outcomes of social and demographic change. The exploding baby-boom population, spurred on by cheap fuel, mass-produced automobiles, and rising prosperity, produced the massive shift to suburban development. The subsequent baby-bust population, characterized by smaller households and an increase in childless families, stimulated the inner-city apartment boom of the 1960s and 1970s. Parallel changes in attitudes and family sizes also combined to bring about the widespread gentrification of the 1970s and 1980s. The modest echo-boom in family population and continued shrinkage of household size have simultaneously generated both suburban expansion of single-family subdivisions as well as inner-area condominium development during the 1990s.

The baby boomers, at present aged 35 to 55, are driving the demand for suburban, often upgraded, housing, and will do so for the next decade or so.

For a more detailed assessment of the varied implications of these social trends, see Table 1. The demographic transition and the shift to smaller and non-traditional households have changed the mix of demands for housing and servic-

10. For example, a neighbourhood with 100 single-family houses in the 1950s with average family size of 4.0 would accommodate 400 people. The equivalent neighbourhood in the 1990s, with average family size of 2.6, would house only 260 people. These declines are even more pronounced in areas of residential upgrading and gentrification, such as in Toronto=Cabbagetown neighbourhood.

es. The aging of the population that followed the declining fertility rate from the 1960s onward has created bubbles of demand that track the huge baby-boom population through the life course. That group, at present aged 35 to 55, is driving the demand for suburban, often upgraded, housing, and will do so for the next decade or so.

The increasing importance of immigration not only makes conventional population forecasting exercises, as noted earlier, much more uncertain, it means that the location of growth is often less responsive to local factors. New immigrants, by definition, know less about the geography of housing and employment opportunities and constraints within the Central Ontario Zone. Therefore, they tend to use kinship networks to obtain information on jobs and entry to the housing market, and tend to follow well-established migration chains in their location decisions.

The increased social and ethno-cultural diversity that is associated with recent immigration has transformed the resident population and added immense vitality and human capital to the Central Ontario Zone, but it has also added stresses and tensions. Those stresses are reflected in the everyday activities of service agencies and public institutions, perhaps most obviously the school system and medical facilities. There is also clear evidence that new and distinctive cultural communities have developed throughout the Central Ontario Zone, although primarily still within the urbanized core. As a consequence, the overall level of residential differentiation (more provocatively, segregation) has increased, particularly in the newer suburbs. This concentration is not necessarily a matter of policy concern, and indeed for certain groups it has many positive features in creating more positive and supportive living environments for new residents.

The same cannot be said for the low-income disadvantaged population. One consequence of the combination of trends outline above – in demography, household fragmentation, labour market restructuring, and immigration – has been a polarization of the distribution of income, increased levels of poverty, and the emergence of new and relatively intense geographical concentrations of disadvantaged populations¹¹. Most of these are located within the older urbanized cores, notably in Hamilton, Oshawa, and Toronto, and in the older suburbs. But others are appearing as smaller pockets in the mature suburbs, and in

The increasing importance of immigration makes conventional population forecasting more uncertain, because the location of growth is often less responsive to local factors. For example, new immigrants tend to use kinship networks to get information on jobs and housing, and tend to follow well-established migration chains in their location decisions.

Increased social and ethno-cultural diversity adds vitality and human capital, but also puts stresses on service agencies and institutions.

Economic and demographic trends have contributed to a polarization of incomes, increased levels of poverty, and the emergence of geographical concentrations of disadvantaged populations in cities, small towns, and rural areas.

¹¹ United Way of Greater Toronto, *Toronto at a Turning Point: Demographic, Economic and Social Trends*, Toronto: The United Way 1999; A. Kazemipur and S.S. Halli, *The New Poverty in Canada: Ethnic Groups and Ghetto Neighbourhoods*, Toronto: Thompson Educational, 2000; Bourne, L. S., "The Changing Dimensions of Inequality and Social Polarization in Canadian Cities: The Toronto Example," in I. Kim, et al., eds. *Diversity of Urban Development and Urban Life*, Seoul: National University Press, 2002, pp. 296-309.

cities, small towns, and rural communities scattered across the Central Ontario Zone, from Brampton and Mississauga to Brant, eastern Lake Simcoe, and the eastern counties. There is no longer one location, or even one source, of lower-income populations.

Looking to the future, it is likely that both demographic structure and an aging population will slow the growth rate of the Central Ontario Zone. Fertility rates show no sign of increasing; the proportion of the population in the high fertility age cohorts will continue to shrink; and, most important, the level of immigration will remain uncertain. It will be difficult for the federal government to maintain the recent level of immigration, at 225,000 to 250,000 annually (or 150,000 to 200,000 net), without a significant change in entry standards, let alone expand that level to meet the stated policy goal of 300,000 a year, because of increasing global competition for skilled immigrants. Nor do we know where these immigrants will come from, or what their attributes and attitudes will be. It is as likely that the rate could be reduced, by policy, as in Australia, or by circumstances, as it is that it will increase. If the rate does decline, or if there is a concerted effort by federal and provincial governments to distribute future immigrants more broadly across the country, the impacts on urban development in the greater Toronto area and the Central Ontario Zone generally will be substantial.

The proportion of the population over 65, or of retirement age, will also increase dramatically, especially after 2011, and will subsequently reach 25 to 30% within the following decade or so. This will shift the focus of housing, social services, and health as dramatically as the young baby-boom population did some 40 years ago. It will also, among other impacts, reduce the level of residential mobility, increase the level of social dependency, increase the demand for community-based care and special needs housing, and decrease the demand for traditional suburban housing.

The key question is: where will this large aging population locate? Will they "age in place," thus requiring more diverse and flexible housing forms within existing communities, or will they relocate? And, if they relocate, where will they go? Most will likely age in place, increasing the demand for suitable housing within their own communities. For those who do move, the two obvious and extreme alternatives are to relocate to apartments and condominiums in inner city areas, or to ground-level housing in small towns and rural settings in the outer suburbs, the hinterland, or beyond. No one, of course, knows the answer. As a group they will probably follow all three courses, but in what proportions is unclear. On balance, and based on past experience, they are more

Both demographic structure and an aging population will slow the growth rate of the region. Fertility rates are not increasing and future levels of immigration remain uncertain.

If immigration declines, or the federal and provincial governments try to distribute future immigrants more broadly across the country, the impacts on urban development in the greater Toronto area and the Central Ontario Zone generally will be substantial.

The aging of the population will reduce the level of residential mobility, increase the level of social dependency, increase the demand for community-based care and special needs housing, and decrease the demand for traditional suburban housing.

likely to move out to less expensive, greener and less congested locations. The Toronto CMA has a net migration loss to the rest of the country in the over-65 age category. This will in turn lead to a further decentralization of population within the Central Ontario Zone.

The continued fragmentation of households into smaller units, and the rise of non-traditional types of living arrangements, will have somewhat different but equally important implications. At the most obvious level, these trends will increase the range of housing and tenure types in demand, but should offer greater flexibility in where these households are housed. Some may be attracted to inner-city locations, even to older brownfield sites, by the pull of urban amenities. For family households, however, there is no evidence of a shift in values regarding housing locations. Indeed, recent CMHC surveys indicate that younger households still retain a strong preference for ground-level housing with some associated space, at a reasonable price, and in lower-density settings. In other words, they will continue the search for lower-cost and more spacious housing in locations that also offer environmental amenities, good services, and reduced levels of pollution and congestion.

The challenge of getting to and from work in a decentralized urban setting seems to be a second-order concern, or at least an acceptable cost, for many residents of the new suburbs. As a result, the challenge of matching housing and job opportunities, and providing the infrastructure necessary to support a decentralized but nonetheless multi-nucleated urban form, will continue to grow.

The Links between Social Change and Urban Form

What are the links between the social changes, trends and issues documented above and the form of the Central Ontario Zone? How will these trends shape the future form of the Central Ontario Zone? What opportunities and constraints do they present? And, finally, what is the contribution of social change to the development of a Smart Growth strategy for the Central Ontario Zone?

The direct links between social processes and physical form are, in one sense, tenuous. Very different social formations, diverse populations and contrasting ethno-cultural communities, can and do exist within similar physical designs and built forms. On the other hand, almost all urban forms are shaped by changes in social composition, directly and indirectly, through demography and migration, household and family formation, and by changes in attitudes and

Older people may choose to stay put, or move to smaller units in urban areas, or to houses in small towns and rural areas. The choices they make will affect the whole region.

Non-traditional households may opt for new kinds of housing, but young families want what they have always wanted: ground-level housing with a yard, at a reasonable price, in a lower-density setting. The challenge of commuting seems to be a second-order concern, or at least an acceptable cost, for many suburbanites.

Population growth determines aggregate rates of residential land consumption and the demand for housing, infrastructure, and social services. Demographic change determines demand for services such as schools and health care.

preferences about where, how, and with whom to live.

Population growth determines aggregate rates of residential land consumption, and the demand for housing, infrastructure, and social services; demographic change sets demand for specific services such as schools and health care. The locations at which these demands are expressed, in turn, defines the distributions of population, local employment and the labour supply, and the locations of public services, as well as infrastructure and transportation needs.

To what extent will recent and anticipated social changes influence the evolving form of the Central Ontario Zone? To what extent will they contribute to meeting the specific mandate of the Smart Growth strategy sub-panel with respect to issues of intensification and compact development, the balance of brownfield and greenfield development, the balance of centralizing and decentralizing tendencies, and the challenges of overcoming the infrastructure gap? These are difficult questions that call for careful and detailed treatment; indeed, they would require another paper of equal or greater length. Here, in the limited space available, I can offer only a few examples of how those linkages might evolve over time.

It is worth reiterating that most of the sources and trajectories of social change outlined above are largely outside the direct influence of local and regional governments. In contrast, what is primarily within the scope and influence of local and regional governments is the geography of social change within the Central Ontario Zone. This includes, for example, the pattern and mix of employment, housing, and particular population groups, the locations of the most disadvantaged groups, the degree of spatial income polarization, the transport links between housing and jobs, and the level of equity in the provision of services across the Central Ontario Zone.

The first set of questions relates to urban form and the geography of growth and specifically to densities, the relative balance of development in brownfield (inner area) and greenfield (new suburban) sites, and the mix of jobs and housing. A continuation of the high rate of population growth is likely to place additional pressure for living space on both inner areas and outlying locations. In other words, the social processes outlined above will influence development in both directions – towards decentralization and suburbanization and towards intensification and brownfield re-use, depending on the specific groups and uses involved, and on timing. Smaller, non-family households, especially younger households, will likely move in larger proportions to the more urbanized and accessible locations. As this population cohort shrinks, however, the

The social processes described in this paper will influence development in two opposite directions: the baby boomers are leading the move toward decentralization and suburban development, while smaller, non-family households are creating demand for intensification and brownfield re-use in cities.

The movement of the baby-boom population through the life course will – at least in the immediate future – support the demand for suburban housing..

demand for inner-city locations and specifically for brownfield sites is also likely to shrink. The movement of the baby-boom population through the life course, on the other hand, will at least in the immediate future, support the demand for suburban housing. Given the huge difference in the size of these age cohorts, the overall balance of urban development is almost certain to shift to suburban and exurban, largely greenfield, locations.

It is also the case that some municipalities, especially Toronto, have had considerable success to date in attracting populations into their downtown cores and into other redevelopment locations. Indeed, the level of population growth in the central core is among the highest on the continent; and renewal is widespread throughout the urbanized area. It should also be noted, however, that this renewal of growth has taken place during a period when the context has been highly supportive of such trends. That context includes public policy initiatives, suitable market conditions (e.g., growth, prosperity), an appropriate demographic structure (e.g., young households), and flexible lifestyles (e.g., smaller and childless households). Those conditions may not persist for much longer. Additional initiatives – in terms of financial incentives and reduced environmental liabilities – could accelerate the redevelopment process, but by how much is not clear.

As the population continues to age, and as this process accelerates significantly after 2011, the movement of the grey population will begin to exert even more pressure on the housing market. This in itself will contribute to a continued detachment of decisions on job location and housing. Over the longer term the key question is: where this population will locate before and during retirement? Past experience indicates that many of the elderly will move further out from the urbanized core, into small towns and the semi-rural hinterland, or outside the Central Ontario Zone. They will not, however, likely move to the slow-growth portions of the Central Ontario Zone, at least not in sufficient numbers to substantially increase local growth rates. This combination of trends poses important challenges for planners and service-providers in outlying areas.

The continuing reorganization of households and families, both in size and composition, will also create its own challenges. The increase in two-worker households almost guarantees a further separation of jobs and residential location. For many of these households, decisions on job location is increasingly irrelevant; those locations can be adjusted as needed after the housing and community decisions are made. The other expanding population, households with no workers, will also contribute to this separation of work and home. Thus,

Population growth in Toronto's core was promoted by prosperity, young households, and certain lifestyles – but these conditions may not persist much longer.

As the population continues to age, and as this process accelerates significantly after 2011, the movement of the grey population will begin to exert even more pressure on the housing market.

Many households today make decisions about residential location without regard to job location. These households include retired seniors, households in which no member is currently working, and two-income households, where job location may be selected after residential location has been established.

given multiple work locations, attempts to provide a balance of jobs and housing in any part of the sub-region will be difficult, as the Don Mills experience has demonstrated, at least without very strong planning intervention and an explicit policy of housing and social mix.

These trends are related to efforts to address the uneven geography of growth within the Central Ontario Zone. The persistence of slow-growth areas – notably Brant-Haldimand, St. Catharines, and the eastern counties – calls for special attention and policies. The social trends described above do not offer much if any evidence in support of the argument that the current situation will be reversed, especially for the older urban communities such as Brantford. Even the more remote recreational hinterland is unlikely to attract much in the way of new population, at least not without vastly improved infrastructure. The obvious conundrum is that any efforts to decentralize growth into these regions will also require considerable investment in social and physical infrastructure, including health services and highways, and this will inevitably increase both servicing costs and long-distance travel.

The emergence of small *pockets of disadvantaged populations* throughout the Central Ontario Zone raises another set of questions. These pockets include older inner-city and suburban areas of Toronto, Hamilton, Oshawa, Kitchener, and Brantford, as well as localized concentrations in semi-rural settings. The very different characteristics and locations of disadvantaged populations require different kinds of policy solutions. It is, however, unlikely that shifting jobs to these locations will help, since their problems tend to relate primarily to demography, skills, and social attributes (e.g., household structure) rather than physical access.

The issue of increasing the *density of development* is equally problematic. First there is no widely acceptable definition of what density means. Is it population per hectare; or households per hectare; or dwellings per hectare? Is it net or gross? The common yardstick in planning is population density, but density is as much a function of household and family size as it is levels of housing consumption and subdivision design. In much of the Toronto region densities have gone down because of the process of demographic thinning – a fixed housing stock now accommodates 30% fewer people. If, instead, we use household (and thus dwelling) density rather than population density, we find that densities have continued to increase over time, in both older and newer areas. The principal problem, as I have argued elsewhere and above, is not residential densities per se but rather decreasing commercial, industrial, and recreational densities, the lack of integration of employment lands and residential areas (where feasi-

The remoter recreational hinterland is unlikely to attract much new population without vastly improved social and physical infrastructure.

Shifting jobs to areas with high levels of poverty will probably not improve the lives of very low-income households, since their problems tend to relate to demography, skills, and social attributes rather than physical access to employment.

Low residential densities may have less impact on the future of the region than decreasing commercial, industrial, and recreational densities, the lack of integration of employment lands and residential areas, and weak coordination between both uses and the transportation system.

ble), and the weak coordination between both of these uses and the transportation system.

Conclusions and Emerging Issues

This paper has argued that understanding and anticipating social change are fundamental elements in the exercise of developing rational, efficient, and equitable planning strategies. We have examined the social processes influencing the Central Ontario Zone, provided examples of the outcomes of those processes, and illustrated the role of these changes in shaping the future form and growth of the Central Ontario Zone. On the basis of this review, we can extract the following generalizations.

- The defining feature of the social character of this Central Ontario Zone is the **very rapid rate of growth in population** (and, thus, in economic activity and development). Moreover, the overwhelming source of that growth is external, notably immigration. If current levels of immigration continue, growth will continue; but immigration is subject to much greater uncertainty than the other two components of regional population growth. If immigration levels decline, the growth rate of the Central Ontario Zone will decline, unless foreign migrants are replaced by greater numbers of domestic in-migrants, which is highly unlikely.
- Even with a steady flow of immigrants, the **overall growth rate will decline** gradually in future decades as the population ages. Current forecasts of growth in the Central Ontario Zone, therefore, seem too high.
- The demographic transition has produced **markedly unequal age cohorts**, ensuring that the demand for housing and other services will fluctuate widely over time. Declining fertility also means that the number of new households entering the market will decline sharply over the next two decades. The fastest-growing age cohort in the next two decades will be the over-60 population.
- The **fragmentation of households and families** has led to roughly 50% more households, and thus higher dwelling needs and land consumption rates, than was expected in the 1950s.
- As is obvious, **immigration has also transformed the social fabric and ethno-cultural character** of the Central Ontario Zone's population almost beyond recognition, raising questions about our collective ability to adapt to the differing needs of culturally distinct groups.

The defining feature of the social character of this region is the rapid rate of population growth, most of it attributable to immigration. But even if immigration continues at present levels (which is by no means certain), the overall growth rate will drop. Current forecasts of growth in the region are probably too high.

The fragmentation of households and families has led to the creation of about 50% more households – and thus higher dwelling needs and land consumption rates – than was expected in the 1950s.

- The combination of smaller households and higher immigration, with extensive economic restructuring, has meant an **increase in income inequalities** and an even more marked increase in the degree of income polarization within the social landscape of the Central Ontario Zone.

Linking these trends to questions of urban form, and the mandate of the Smart Growth secretariat with respect to new planning strategies for the Central Ontario Zone, the review outlined in this paper suggests that:

- Within the Central Ontario Zone population **growth will continue to decentralize**, but within that framework, most growth will tend to concentrate in or adjacent to existing urbanized cores and around outlying urban nodes, especially those in the north and west of the Zone. There is little evidence that slow-growth portions of the regional hinterland in the southwest and northeast will see a significant turnaround, at least not without massive up-front expenditures on infrastructure, both physical (for example, highways) and social (medical infrastructure).
- Overall, the pattern of growth within the Central Ontario Zone is likely to be one of **concentrated decentralization**, rather than dispersion.
- Almost certainly, **population densities will decline in many established neighbourhoods**, even with the addition of new housing, because of smaller household sizes and the increasing consumption of housing space. This at least raises the opportunity for further infill development.
- These **social changes will act to both encourage and discourage the reuse of older (brownfield) sites**, given the demographic structure, and the opportunities and relative pressures for intensification will vary decade by decade. On balance, however, given current conditions, most of the above trends will tend to favour suburban and exurban development on greenfield sites.
- Within the urbanized core, some municipalities have been very successful in attracting considerable residential population through redevelopment and infill¹². **Outside Toronto and perhaps Mississauga, however, the potential for such repopulation elsewhere in the Zone seems relatively limited.**
- **Population growth in the City of Toronto represents roughly 15% of total**

Growth will continue to decentralize, but slow-growth portions of the regional hinterland in the southwest and northeast will not see a significant turnaround without massive expenditures on infrastructure.

Outside Toronto, the potential for intensification of older city areas seems limited. Since population growth inside Toronto represents only 20% of total growth in the region, intensification in Toronto will not substantially reduce the demand for greenfield development.

¹² Over the last 10 years, the City of Toronto population has increased by 18,000 persons a year on average. This is impressive, particularly since it is a net figure; that is, it indicates the degree to which the population added through new construction (redevelopment and intensification) exceeded the loss of population in other neighbourhoods.

growth in the Central Ontario Zone. On its own, this infill process is unlikely to sharply reduce the overall demand for greenfield locations. Moreover, a significant proportion of that population increase does not represent planned reuse and intensification of brownfield sites but rather intensified occupancy of existing housing space, often in low-income neighbourhoods, including some new immigrant communities¹³.

- The most rapidly growing age cohort in the next three decades, the over-60 population, poses another question. **Will older people age in place or relocate elsewhere; and if so, where?** On balance, they are not as likely to move to inner-city locations as to outer exurban and hinterland locations.
- **Pockets of poverty** continue to exist in their traditional locations, the inner cities, but others have recently appeared in the older and newer suburbs, and in the rural hinterland, often tied to the availability of low-cost housing.
- These trends, in combination, are likely to widen the **gap in social infrastructure** across the Central Ontario Zone.

Pockets of poverty can be found not only in older inner cities, but in the suburbs and the rural hinterland.

The challenge for the Province then seems to be twofold: (1), the challenge of accommodating and servicing rapid growth, in a context of increasing social and cultural diversity, widespread employment decentralization, and highly variable demands for services and housing; and (2), attempting to meet stated objectives in developing "place-space" strategies for smart growth in the Central Ontario Zone.

Within the province, population and economic growth are overwhelmingly concentrated. The nine major urban agglomerations in the Central Zone alone accounted for more than 87% of all population growth in the province during the 1990s. Add the three other principal urban nodes (the Ottawa, Windsor, and London CMAs) and the figure is nearly 100%. The rest of the province is not growing and, given its truncated age structure, will likely witness further population decline in the future.

Within the province, population (and economic) growth is overwhelmingly concentrated. The major urban agglomerations in the Central region accounted for most growth during the 1990s. The rest of the province is not growing.

Within the Central Zone, growth is decentralizing at a strong pace, despite the relative success of some municipalities to attract redevelopment and infill. Given the costs, the difficult administrative hurdles, and length of time involved in redeveloping brownfield sites under current conditions, and the potentially limited demand for those sites as the population ages, the pace of decentraliza-

13. An example of this process is in St. James Town, where the population increased by 20% during the last census period, without any increase in the number of dwellings.

tion will likely continue. This is not necessarily a bad thing, provided that the rate is not excessive, that development is carefully coordinated with transportation and service provision, and that it avoids certain sensitive natural environments. Decentralization will, however, require more innovative planning policies and substantial infrastructure investments, and may also make it more difficult to attain current intensification targets.

What might the current planning panel do in response to these trends?

- First, it must incorporate into any new strategy some recognition of the importance of social and demographic processes and the uncertainty of future growth estimates, especially the immigration component. And it must acknowledge increasing diversity by making the strategy both flexible and inclusive. To assist in these continuing reassessments, there should be a mechanism in place for monitoring social and demographic trends and the contribution of migration and immigration to regional growth.
- Second, it must make realistic assessments of what it is possible and not possible to achieve through physical planning. If a more balanced mix of jobs and housing is desired, then the province will have to employ a wide range of approaches including legislating a wider variety of dwelling types and prices within each new suburban development, and ensuring greater mixing of employment lands and housing.
- Third, the increasing diversity of household types, and the variable number of workers per household, makes the spatial matching of labour and housing supply much more difficult than it used to be, and even then the matching was partly illusory. Higher energy costs, real-cost vehicle pricing, differential road pricing, and improved transit, would help reduce the jobs-housing imbalance, but would not in themselves be sufficient.
- Fourth, if more compact and higher density development is a desired goal, the Province will have to be more aggressive in providing incentives and in regulating development where it is not wanted or required. It should insist that municipalities restrict scattered housing and leapfrog developments.

Moreover, as noted earlier, net residential densities are not the primary problem; instead, the major problem is the declining densities of commercial and employment lands and other non-residential uses. For at least a decade the density of new suburban development, measured in dwellings per hectare, has been increasing, despite the effects of demographic thinning and the mandated increases in non-residential space (such as parks). We now have the highest suburban residential densities on the continent. Many of our newer subdivisions,

Given the costs, the administrative hurdles, and length of time involved in redeveloping brownfield sites, and the potentially limited demand for those sites as the population ages, the pace of decentralization will likely continue.

If more compact, higher-density development is a desired goal, the Province should insist that municipalities restrict scattered housing and leapfrog developments.

as currently built out, however, seem to have lost one of the principal features of earlier suburbs, flexibility in built form over the longer term.

At the same time, if the government wishes to lead growth in particular directions, it must be proactive in its investments. It must be willing to make up-front expenditures in infrastructure, notably in social services, roads, transit, and underground services, as directional incentives. Failure to do so is why (and where) Ontario lost the transit battle during the 1970s and 1980s in the older suburbs. It must use its taxing and regulatory powers to discourage unwanted development; and use tax incentives and other tools to redirect growth to other locations, where the degree of coordination between land use and transportation can be improved. It could also level the playing field in property tax levels to remove any incentive to excessive rapid and inefficient decentralization, and to reduce regional equalities in service provision. And, it must do so without unduly restricting the supply of buildable land and thus avoid contributing negatively to regional job creation and the affordable housing problem.

In terms of social services and infrastructure, a number of other initiatives are worth considering in response to the above trends.

- First, given the overwhelming contribution of immigration to the growth of the Central Ontario Zone, it would not be unreasonable for the Province to argue for a substantial increase in the level of federal funding for the settlement costs associated with new immigrants. This support might include a per capita infrastructure package (both hard and soft infrastructure) to help accommodate newcomers wherever they locate.
- Second, efforts to influence the direction of future growth in the Central Ontario Zone, and to mitigate the tendency to increasing social polarization, would be facilitated by an aggressive policy with respect to affordable housing.
- Third, the rapid aging of the population, particularly in the periphery of the Central Ontario Zone suggests the need to rethink policies on the provision and funding of social services and health care facilities in those areas.

Finally, balancing the need for flexibility in responding to rapid social change and increasing diversity, with the need to design, or at least influence, the direction and shape of development in the Central Ontario Zone in an efficient and equitable fashion is a difficult challenge requiring innovative thinking and proactive, long-term policies.

The Province should invest in infrastructure, notably in roads, transit, and underground services, to discourage unwanted and inefficient development, and should use tax incentives to redirect growth to particular areas.

The Province should argue for a substantial increase in the level of federal funding for the settlement costs associated with new immigrants and implement an aggressive affordable housing policy to mitigate the tendency to increasing social polarization.

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