

LAPP report proposes era of physical growth for York

By DAVID BYRNES

Recognizing the futility of waiting for more funding from the Provincial government, York's Board of Governors (BOG) have for several years now been investigating the possibility of leasing some of the 600 acres of the Keele Street campus as a source of revenue.

In 1981 the BOG seriously considered giving the go-ahead for a cooperative housing development to be constructed south of the graduate residences, finally backing out of the project at the last minute.

In 1982 a comprehensive land study was commissioned to investigate the marketability of several areas of the campus, and in 1983 a new committee of the board—the Strategic Planning Committee—was formed to further advance research into the question of leasing York's lands. Now, a new study has been prepared and presented to the BOG which affirms the viability of land-leasing at York, and presents a plan and recommendations, which if implemented, will mean a new era of physical growth and dramatic changes to the Keele Street campus. In the words of York's President Harry Arthurs, this report "might be the most important thing to happen to York in the last 15 years" and "points the way forward for York."

In his report, "Physical Requirements at York University," Board member Philip Lapp argues that York's Master Plan of 1963, on the basis of which all development here has been determined, is now "obsolete." Because of the provincial government's moratorium imposed on university construction in 1972, the campus was left half built and the Master Plan half fulfilled.

The Lapp Report contains a plan providing the board with a detailed framework to guide the future leasing of York's lands. Lapp recommends that a Presidential Advisory Com-

mittee be formed, consisting of "all interested constituents of the York University Community," to consult with President Arthurs as the campus development unfolds.

To get the process of land marketing underway, Lapp also recommends that York establish a Development Corporation which could be set up as an arm of the administration, and would have a governing board of student, faculty, administration and BOG representatives. The Development Corporation, with input from the advisory committee, would work toward establishing "acceptable" new uses for York's land and buildings.

Lapp stresses it is "paramount" that the Development Corporation only act after widespread consultation with university constituencies.

"Issues surrounding campus development are of a very sensitive nature" the report reads. "There may be some cause for concern if the development entity is embedded within what may be perceived as an arcane administration in the upper stratas of the Ross Building."

The first task of the Development Corporation would be to conduct an international competition, designed to give York worldwide publicity. A firm would be selected to develop a new "Master Plan" (Lapp calls it a Campus Concept Plan) for the university, which Lapp says needs to be more flexible than the present one.

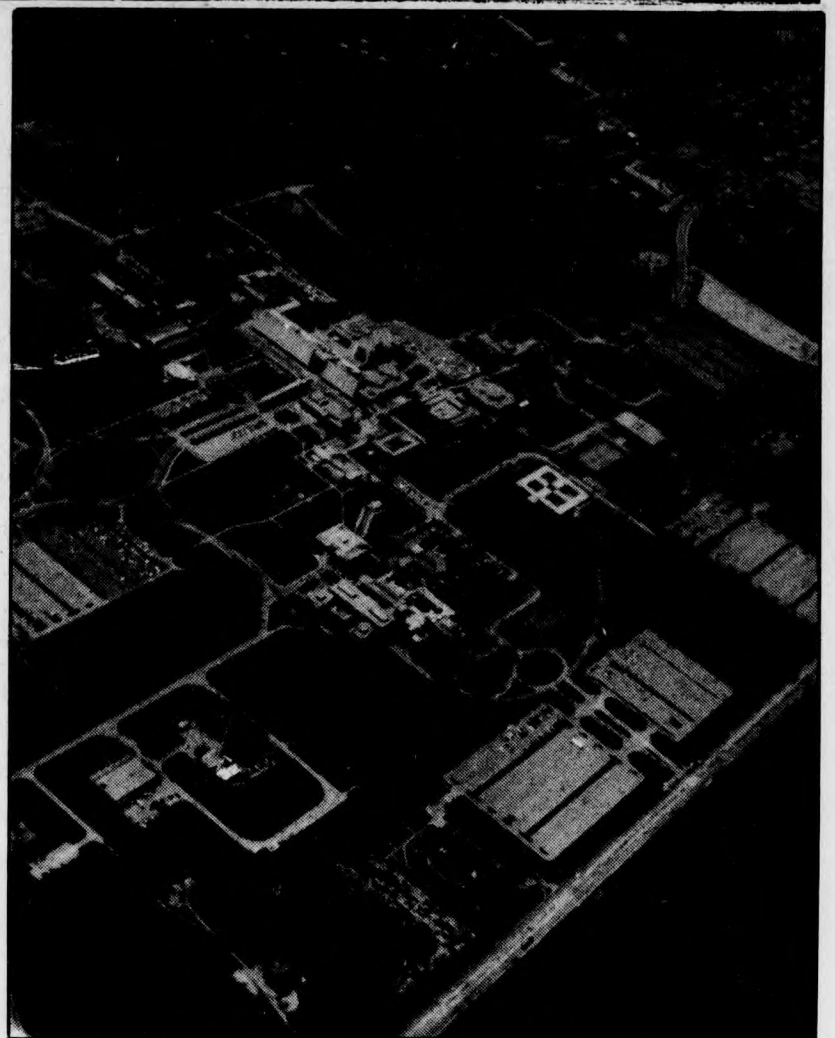
Before the Campus Concept Plan can be carried out Lapp says York must develop an academic "Mission Statement," which will give direction to the University's development.

All this would culminate in an operational plan. After the Campus Concept Study is completed comes the "implementation phase," when the University, through the Development Corporation, would go ahead and negotiate contracts with appropriate land users.

A 1982 land use study commissioned by the Board did a market analysis that found there is interest in York's lands—particularly for hotel-motel, residential, institutional, and to a lesser degree, research, retail and recreational uses.

Summary of Recommendations

1. As a point of departure, the President form an Advisory Committee on Development representing students, teaching staff, administration, the Board of Governors and other appropriate groups to consider the implementation of the report.
2. York University establish a development corporation to be the instrument of the University to market and to promote its land and facilities, to work with and monitor a development associate, and to arrange financing. The board of directors of this corporation would include representation from students, teaching staff, administration and the Board of Governors, and would *inter alia*, establish acceptable non-University land and facility uses and generally reflect the interests of the University in the direction and policies of the corporation.
3. The Presidential Advisory Committee on Development (Recommendation 1) become the Advisory Committee to the York University Development Corporation to provide advice and views on campus development to the Corporation on a continuing basis.
4. The new Corporation undertake, as its first task, the preparation of requirements for a York Campus Concept Study in consultation with appropriate groups within the University, the City of North York and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.
5. The development of a York University Mission Statement be given



You are here: This seagull's eye view of the York campus could change even more dramatically if the Lapp report is implemented.

highest priority, and that the initiative of the Vice President (Academic Affairs) and Senate toward such a statement be pursued with vigor.

6. The Corporation issue an international Request for Proposal in order to select a winning team to conduct the York Campus Concept Study and identify a development associate.

7. An operational plan for the Corporation be developed based on the study and close consultation with York University constituencies.

8. Active and close cooperation be sought with the City of North York, and that mechanisms be found whereby York University and the City can be actively involved in each other's planning activities—at least insofar as York lands and its neighbors are concerned.

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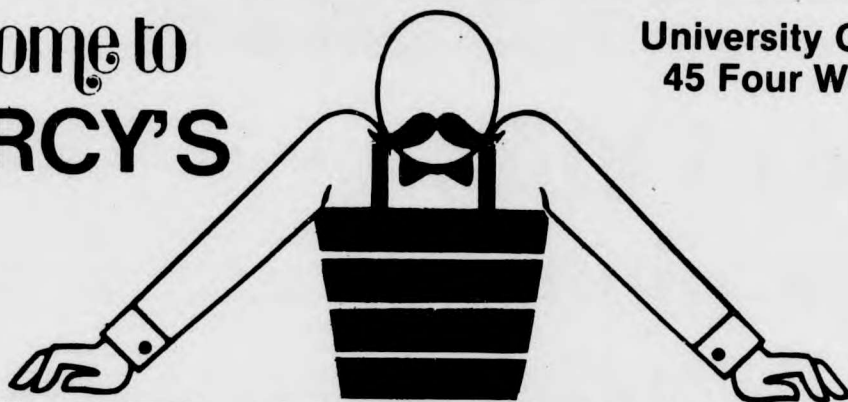
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