

Fred Morley
Opening Remarks (Beginning of Program)
Building our Future, featuring Larry Beasley
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My name is Fred Morley
I'm senior vice president
And chief economist
With the Greater Halifax Partnership.

I'd like to welcome you
Here today to the first installment
Of this year's Building our Future speaker series.

I am looking forward
To hearing from our guest speaker
Mr. Larry Beasley
I've had a chance
To hear Larry a couple of times now
And believe me
You are in for a treat

As the economic growth organization
For Greater Halifax,
The Partnership is committed

To stimulating discussion and debate
On issues of growth.

Today we're discussing urban design.

The Partnership has been working this issue
Through our SmartBusiness initiative
We have met with close to a thousand CEO's
In the last twenty months.

The goal of SmartBusiness is
To create the most competitive
Business climate in Canada.
We've been listening.
And we've been responding.
Helping business
Break down barriers to growth.

One group we've heard from is developers
They've given us their concerns
We've taken them to HRM
And HRM is responding
After a dozen

Consultations and meetings

Is everything fixed?

No.

But HRM is aware of the issues

And is committed to fixing them.

These are complicated issues.

Development agreements,

Planning process, appeals, counter-appeals.

It can be a messy

It can be a time-consuming

But it doesn't just affect developers,

It affects all of us.

That is why we're here today.

We need fresh approaches,

Fresh perspectives,

New ways of thinking

New ways of growing

It's not enough to grow

We have to grow smart

That is why we've brought Larry here today.

To share his perspective.

To share his experiences in Vancouver.

The timing is right

A new regional plan is very close

A First Economic Strategy for HRM is approved.

Two important steps.

And we're now about to begin

The development of our own

Urban design strategy

And

We can help

If we listen

If we get informed

And if we get involved

While we're not the poster child

For a problem city

But we know we can do better

One example –

We've lost 40 thousand residents

From the Peninsula since the 50s.
While this trend has reversed
We need to pick up the pace.
Our urban core is a major economic asset
Good urban design
Is critical
For attracting and holding
The creative people we need to drive
Our knowledge economy
In the future

Every city in North America is competing for.
Those 25 to 35 year olds
That the US based group CEOs for Cities
Calls the young and the restless
They want to live in places
They can brag about
Places that are clean and green
Places that are alive 24/7
They want to live down-town

Good urban design
Also makes

Good financial sense
Right now
People in HRM think
That growth means higher taxes
But good urban design
And density can bring
Big benefits in tax dollars.

The United Gulf project
Will pay \$3.5 million in taxes every year.
With no incremental service costs

You'd have to build 1,500
Homes in a new subdivision
To generate that kind of tax revenue –
And
At a higher
Servicing cost.

So again, it's not enough to grow
We have to grow smart.

I encourage you to look

At today's edition
Of The Chronicle Herald.
You will find two pages
Dedicated to the topic of urban design.

Thanks to the Urban Development Institute of Nova Scotia,
and HRM for working with us to bring Larry to Halifax.

Finally, thanks to our Building Our Future partners –
Presenting partner, The Chronicle Herald. Other partners:
the Halifax International Airport Authority, Mount Saint
Vincent University, Office Interiors and RBC Financial
Group, for the important role they are playing in advancing
our economy.

I would now like to call on Dan Leger, Assistant Managing
Editor, of the Chronicle Herald to bring greetings on behalf of
our presenting partner.

Dan