The historical background of Metropolitan Toronto

North America has been settled by immigrants—and by the descendants of immigrants. At the end of the American Revolution in 1783 population pressure was beginning to send settlers towards British North America; the United Empire Loyalists were only a little ahead of the advance wave of American frontiersmen. Loyalists and disbanded soldiers crossed the St. Lawrence and Niagara Rivers and founded British settlements in the territory that in 1791 was declared to be the Province of Upper Canada. In the subsequent years others followed from the United States, many of German origin. All sought new homes for themselves in a country covered with virgin forests.

In 1791 the British sent out Lieutenant-Colonel John Graves Simcoe as Lieutenant-Governor of
Upper Canada. In 1793, leaving behind Newark, now Niagara-on-the-Lake, which had served as his Provisional Capital, Simcoe crossed Lake Ontario to find a new and permanent seat of government on the shores of Toronto Bay. In that same year southern Ontario was divided for administrative reasons into nineteen counties, with the region to the north of the new military camp being called York. This was also the name given to the town planned for the north shore of Lake Ontario between the Humber and the Don Rivers.

The little town of York grew as settlers occupied the fertile land to the north. Government officials were primarily concerned with the preservation of law and order in the new colony; local government was concerned mainly with improvement of roads to serve the settled areas. Very early the forerunners of the rural townships appeared; the southern portion of York County along Lake Ontario was divided into Etobicoke, York and Scarborough Townships. Thus York was the name for the embryo town, the township surrounding it, and the county for which the town served as the administrative seat. In addition to being the county seat, York prospered as the capital of the growing Province of Upper Canada, surviving the depredations of the War of 1812. The first thirty years of the nineteenth century saw a slow population growth; in 1830 the population of York and the three townships finally passed 8,000 persons. Thereafter immigration from the British Isles and elsewhere in Europe accelerated the growth of the colony. In 1834 the Town of York enlarged its boundaries and was incorporated as the City of Toronto with a population of 9,254. By 1848 the Toronto region contained 37,285 persons, with 23,503 in the city, 7,120 in York Township, 3,728 in Scarborough and 2,914 in Etobicoke.

By the middle of the nineteenth century Canada West (the name for Upper Canada after the Act of Union of 1841) was no longer in the pioneer stage. In 1849 Attorney-General Robert Baldwin introduced a body of laws for municipalities which when passed by the legislature became known as the Municipal Act. In 1850 the older townships and the counties were formally incorporated into municipal corporations with broad responsibilities for local administration. Thus the date of incorporation for the Townships of York, Scarborough and Etobicoke and the County of York is 1850.

Provision was made for the incorporation of villages and towns as urbanization proceeded, but also for their retention within the two-tier system of county government. The cities and towns with older charters of incorporation were allowed to remain outside the county system except for the administration of justice; to this day all Ontario cities and the “separated” towns are not part of county government. In the days when there was a clear cut distinction between urban and rural areas this was a satisfactory arrangement. The assumption was that a city had the resources to carry out local government responsibilities within its boundaries, while a rural-oriented municipality had to cooperate with other such municipalities to provide basic facilities such as roads and bridges. The City of Toronto had sole responsibility for local matters within its boundaries, while the townships, the villages and the towns formed after 1850 were joined together for certain county purposes. The county was the first federation of municipalities in Ontario.

As the population of the City of Toronto grew to fill out the 1834 boundaries, many small towns and villages developed within York Township. Among the last to do so and the only one to survive to the present was the Town of Weston, incorporated in 1881. Just two years later, in 1883, the City of Toronto made the first of a long series of annexations which continued to the First World War in 1914.
By then all of the early villages and towns except Weston had been encompassed by the expanding city. In the geographical area of the old Township of York the only other municipality beside the city and the township was the Town of Leaside, incorporated in 1913 and having within its boundary 42 persons. In 1900 there were 20,000 persons within the city limits, and 25,000 in the suburbs. By 1914 the population of the expanded city had more than doubled to 470,000, while the suburbs had some 40,000 residents. New arrivals were now building homes west of the Humber River, and two new municipalities were created on the lakeshore out of Etobicoke Township—Mimico in 1911 and New Toronto in 1913.

Soon after the war the city's population passed the 500,000 mark, and there were 60,000 persons in the suburbs. Toronto showed reluctance in absorbing additional land and people and in any case the city was still capable of absorbing new development within its boundaries. In 1928 the City Council formally decreed a policy of no further annexations of suburban lands. The city population continued to grow, probably reaching a peak of 700,000 in the overcrowded period immediately after 1945, the end of the Second World War. The suburban population also continued to grow, and new municipalities were formed. The large rural-oriented part of York Township broke away in 1922 to form the Township of North York. The next year the eastern urban area seceded from North York to form the Township of East York. Three new villages were created before the depression of the thirties discouraged further municipal ventures. Forest Hill (1929) and Swansea (1925) out of the remnant of York Township, and Long Branch (1930) out of Etobicoke. Only Scarborough retained its original 1850 boundaries. About 1923 the population of Toronto's suburbs passed 100,000: in 1935, 200,000 and in 1948, 300,000. The 1951 census revealed 442,000 in the suburbs; since then the average annual increase has been 50,000 persons, a dramatic surprise to many older Toronto residents. There are now more persons in the suburban municipalities than in the central city; the actual number is not far from one million. The municipal pattern in 1962 remains substantially what it was in 1930, but with a profound difference, the existence of the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto. While many advocated, and still believe in, the full amalgamation of the built-up urban area into one municipality, provincial legislation in 1953 established a federation of the thirteen municipalities for area-wide matters. The twelve suburbs were separated from the County of York to be joined with the city in the first urban federation in North America. Within the federation, provincial legislation allows changes in municipal boundaries, but a special committee of Metropolitan Council in 1961 decided on no change in the existing arrangement. Meanwhile the existing local governments continue to deal with the important problems of urban government and so create a better environment for their citizens.
Metropolitan services

The Metropolitan Corporation is responsible for the following metropolitan services:

Assessment The uniform assessment of all industrial, commercial and residential lands and buildings in each of the 13 local municipalities.

Water Supply The construction and maintenance of pumping stations, treatment plants, trunk mains and reservoirs for the wholesale distribution of water to the 13 municipalities. The Metropolitan Corporation sells water to the local municipalities on a wholesale basis. The local distribution systems and the retail sale of water to consumers remain the responsibility of the local municipalities.

Sewage Disposal The construction and maintenance of trunk sewer mains and sewage treatment plants providing a metropolitan sewage disposal system which accepts sewage from each of the 13 municipalities on a wholesale basis. The local sewage collection systems remain the responsibility of the local municipalities.

Air Pollution Control The Air Pollution Control Division of the Works Department operates to regulate the emission of smoke and other atmospheric pollutants with the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto.

Roads The designation of certain highways as metropolitan roads and the establishment of an arterial system of highways. Metropolitan roads are financed to the extent of 50% for construction and maintenance by the Metropolitan Corporation and 50% by the Province of Ontario.

Transportation The Toronto Transit Commission whose members are appointed by the Metropolitan Council has a monopoly in respect of and is responsible for public transportation in the metropolitan area.

Health and Welfare Services The hospitalization of indigent patients

Post-sanatorium care for consumptives.

Homes for the aged

The maintenance of wards of the children's aid societies.

Education The Metropolitan Corporation includes in its annual budget the current estimates of the Metropolitan School Board. The Metropolitan Corporation on the advice of the Metropolitan School Board determines the amounts of funds to be approved for the purchase of school sites and the erection of new school buildings. The capital funds required for these purposes are raised by the Metropolitan Corporation on the credit of the Corporation and are transmitted to the local boards as required.

Administration of Justice The Metropolitan Corporation is required to provide and maintain a courthouse and jail for the County of York and a juvenile and family court for the metropolitan area.

Riverdale Hospital. The Metropolitan Corporation in 1957 acquired from the City of Toronto the Riverdale Isolation Hospital. As the need for this type of hospital care diminished, it was decided to use it to provide convalescent and chronically ill hospital care. As a result, the buildings of the old hospital were completely renovated to provide 104 beds for this type of care. To relieve the overcrowded active treatment hospitals, construction is well under way to provide an 808 bed addition which will be completed early in 1963.

Metropolitan services
The expressway system, together with the metropolitan arterial road system, the collector road system and the public transit system, comprise the major systems of transportation that facilitate the movement of people and goods. The expressway system, designed to accommodate large volumes of long-trip through traffic, and relieve the existing major arterial roads of excessive traffic, will provide express service between large residential areas, employment areas and the central business area.

Housing The Metropolitan Corporation has all the powers of a municipality with respect to housing and redevelopment. In February 1954, the Metropolitan Council approved the formation of a limited dividend housing corporation to provide low rental housing for elderly persons in the metropolitan area. The Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority was appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council in December 1955 to administer public housing projects in the metropolitan area initiated and constructed through arrangements between the Federal, Provincial, and Municipal Governments.

Licensing The Metropolitan Licensing Commission exercises jurisdiction over practically all aspects of licensing in the metropolitan area.

Police The police forces of the thirteen municipalities which comprise Metropolitan Toronto were joined on January 1st, 1957 to form the Metropolitan Toronto Police Department. The area has been divided into police districts with the policing boundaries of smaller municipalities disappearing to merge into larger functional units. Command of the force is under a Chief of Police and four Deputies responsible to the Metropolitan Board of Commissioners of Police. The Commission is appointed by the Province of Ontario and composed of a permanent Chairman (a Magistrate) a County Court Judge, the Senior Metropolitan Magistrate, the Chairman of the Metropolitan Council, and a member of the Council.

Planning The Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board has jurisdiction over the metropolitan area and all adjoining township areas. Its duties include the preparation of an official plan for the metropolitan planning area, the general scope of which shall include land uses, ways of communication, sanitation, green belts and park areas, and public transportation.

Parks The Metropolitan Corporation is empowered to establish metropolitan parks under the Metropolitan Parks Act, which was established in 1955.

Emergency Measures The Metropolitan Corporation is responsible for the implementation of Government policy relating to emergency measures within the area. It is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Toronto Emergency Measures Organization to formulate and carry out plans relating to survival operations, continuity of civil government, civil defence natural disaster, and co-ordination of the functions of the various departments and agencies of the Municipal and Metropolitan governments of the Metropolitan Toronto government. The Metropolitan Toronto Emergency Measures
Organization also has the task of organizing, training and administering the rescue, warden, communication, and radiological volunteer services to ensure their efficient co-operation with the staffs of municipal departments when in operation in time of disaster.

Acquisition of Assets from Local Municipalities. All the assets which the Metropolitan Corporation took over from the local municipalities to be used for metropolitan services were acquired without compensation other than the assumption by the Metropolitan Corporation of any outstanding debt in respect of such assets.

Provincial Finance Assistance. The Province of Ontario makes annual grants to the Metropolitan Corporation. In 1961, these grants were $5.50 per capita for unconditional grants to relieve the municipality from social welfare costs, administration of justice costs and for general purposes. This unconditional grant amounted to $8,608,897 in 1961. 50% of capital and 70% of current costs for aged persons' homes 50% of eligible capital and current costs of highways 40% of children's aid societies costs 20% of Provincial liquor licence fees (for policing services) 75% of labour costs re unemployment relief works 90% of expenditures for civil defence 10% of Benefit Fund contributions and workmen's compensation re police Riverdale Hospital—approximately 70% of expenditures re new buildings, 66% of expenditures re renovations and alterations of existing buildings, and a special capital grant of $7,800 Education grants for certain expenditures.

Finances. The Metropolitan Corporation establishes an annual budget for its estimated expenditures and collects that amount from the 13 constituent municipalities by a metropolitan levy upon the assessment in each local municipality. Local municipalities no longer issue debentures. Their requirements for debenture financing are submitted to the Metropolitan Corporation. The Metropolitan Corporation determines, subject to an appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board, what local permanent financing should be done and debentures for such requirements are issued by the Metropolitan Corporation and no longer by the local municipality.

WILLIAM R. ALLEN, Q.C.
Chairman

Metropolitan Toronto's government is providing the vast network of municipal transportation facilities required in an efficient metropolis. This section of the Frederick G. Gardiner Expressway from Spadina Avenue to Dufferin Street, north of the C.N.E. grounds, will be paved and in use by the fall of 1962. During 1962 construction will continue to progress easterly from Spadina Avenue and will also start at the Don River and progress westerly. The seven mile expressway is an elevated structure for four miles from the C.N.E. grounds to the southern end of the Don Valley Parkway. Through traffic will be carried in minutes along the multi-million dollar freeways to and from the western and northeastern suburbs.
The land-locked Port of Toronto is a busy lake and ocean port with over 75 lines operating in the lake and direct overseas trade. The harbour was a deciding factor in the location of the small settlement of York which has grown to become Metropolitan Toronto. As well, the port itself has grown tremendously. Over 12 miles of berthing, modern and efficient dock facilities which include the most modern transfer terminals, a 300-ton heavy lift crane, and special gantry cranes, all contribute to fast, efficient and economical movement of waterborne cargo. The entire inner harbour has been dredged to Seaway depth. In 1961 the port had its second biggest cargo tonnage year in history with over 900,000 tons of cargo being handled on the overseas vessels, and almost 4 1/2 million tons of domestic and U.S. cargo on the lake carriers.

### Statistical data

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<th>Years</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Dwelling units completed</th>
<th>Construction contracts awarded</th>
<th>Total taxable assessment</th>
<th>Number of passenger vehicles</th>
<th>Harbour cargo tonnage</th>
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*Estimate for 1961
Municipalities forming Metropolitan Toronto showing dates of incorporation