

Little effort was made to preserve the capital's natural beauty until the Ottawa Improvement Commission was formed in 1899. The present National Capital Commission was formed in 1959 to carry out the master plan conceived for the national capital region by town planner Jacques Gréber.

Ottawa and Hull comprise the core of the national capital region, an area of about 4662 km² in Ontario and Quebec with a population of about 660,000. Industrial development in the region is limited. A large proportion of the work force is employed by the federal government.

Although the terms of reference of the National Capital Commission are "to prepare plans for and assist in the development, conservation and improvement of the national capital region in order that the nature and character of the seat of the Government of Canada may be in accordance with its national significance," the commission does not have jurisdictional authority over any municipal or regional authorities or the two provincial governments concerned. Most matters affecting the municipalities — planning, zoning, land use, building density, public transit, parking and construction of streets, arterial roads and highways — are within their sole jurisdiction, subject only to provincial government approval. The commission in its development efforts depends essentially upon the co-operation of each municipality and provincial government.

In recent years, the efforts of the commission have focused on development of a unified and lively core for the capital. At a constitutional conference in Ottawa in 1969, the federal and provincial first ministers declared the cities of Ottawa and Hull and their surrounding areas to be the Canadian capital region. Almost immediately, work began to remove the longstanding economic disparity between Hull and Ottawa; land was acquired in Hull for a federal building program to house various government departments.

1.6 The environment

The environment department was created in June 1971 to ensure the management and development of Canada's renewable natural resources and to head the attack on pollution. It has the responsibility to initiate government-wide programs and co-ordinate efforts related to environmental protection. It also provides specialist advisory services to other departments in setting up programs and in development of regulations under federal acts assigned to other ministries.

The department's environmental protection service is responsible for developing and enforcing environmental protection regulations and other instruments to implement federal laws relating to the environment. It is also an information source for other federal departments.

The water pollution control program's main objectives are: reduction of existing pollution and prevention of new problems; achievement of regional water quality objectives; and development of technologies to solve water pollution control problems more economically. Regulations and guidelines have been developed for the pulp and paper industry, for mercury from the chlor-alkali industry and the petroleum refinery industry, and for the meat and poultry, potato processing, fish processing and base metal, uranium and iron ore mining and metal finishing industries. These regulations under the Fisheries Act restrict the amount of effluents an industry can discharge into waters inhabited by aquatic life. Regulations are being developed for other industries. Other programs include water pollution surveys in shellfish growing areas; phosphorus concentration control regulations; analytical and advisory services to other federal agencies; inventories of water pollution problems in Canada and annual assessments of pollution control costs and studies on the treatment of municipal and industrial waste waters.

Broad objectives of the air pollution control program are to preserve, restore or enhance the quality of air in Canada. Programs include: collection and evaluation of information regarding air pollution sources; development of abatement and compliance