

**LANDSCAPE ONTARIO HORTICULTURAL TRADES ASSOCIATION**  
**STRATEGIC PLAN: A VISION FOR THE FUTURE**  
**March 2004**

**Preface**

In January 1991 the Past Presidents felt that due to the continual and unprecedented growth of the Association it was necessary to develop a long-range vision. The purpose of this was to outline the future direction and priorities of Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trades Association in order to build a responsive organization that will best serve the interests of the membership and the industry.

In 1993 the plan was adopted and has acted as a prophetic document. Many of the ideas generated have been adopted.

In 1997 the Board of directors asked the Past Presidents to prepare a revised Strategic Plan which would guide the development of the Association into the next millennium. In 2001 the past presidents again revised the plan for the board. This document is the result.

It is the sincere hope of the Past Presidents and Board of Directors that this document:

- Will build consensus in defining the mission and priorities of the Association.
- Will provide continuity as the leadership changes from year to year.
- Will communicate clearly the purpose and value of the organization to all members, potential members and the Horticultural Industry.
- Will chart a long-term direction so that the association will continue to be pro-active rather than reactive.
- Will set out specific goals and objectives that can be evaluated yearly.
- Will set out a program that will yield results in making the organization responsive to the challenges faced by the membership and industry.
- Will identify possible opportunities, threats and constraints and suggest actions to deal with relevant issues.



**LANDSCAPE ONTARIO HORTICULTURAL TRADES ASSOCIATION**  
**MISSION STATEMENT**

**“The mission of Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trades Association is to be the leader in representing, promoting and fostering a favourable climate for the advancement of the horticultural industry in Ontario.”**

**OUR MEMBERSHIP**

Landscape Ontario seeks to attract members who:

- Share a long-term commitment to the horticultural industry.
- Strive to offer high quality products and services.
- Observe ethical business and trade practices.
- Realize the value of building a professional industry.
- Recognize the necessity to constantly upgrade knowledge and skills.
- Contribute ideas, information and resources which will help advance the association and industry.
- Are committed to promote and market the benefits and value of the horticultural industry.
- Are committed to promote a safe working environment

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE- WHY WE EXIST?**

- To unite in a common organization those engaged in the green industry in Ontario.
- To formulate and maintain a high standard of business ethics in the industry.
- To improve the products and services of the industry through the development and promotion of research, education and professional development activities.
- To develop minimum technical standards in order to enhance quality and professionalism.
- To disseminate industry news and information.
- To promote the products and services of the horticultural sector in order to enhance public profile and awareness and thereby improve the economic well being of industry members.
- To participate and co-operate with governmental agencies in moulding legislative policies which are in the best interest of the industry and public.
- To act as an industry advocate and to oppose existing or proposed legislation which is or can be detrimental to the advancement of the horticultural industry
- To identify industry constraints, issues and opportunities in order to develop pro-active strategies to enhance industry development.
- To develop membership services and programs which will financially benefit the members through group purchasing activities.
- To develop and promote training and educational programs to further professional development within the industry.
- To provide opportunities for information exchange and networking with other members of the industry.
- To promote co-operation, good will and fellowship among members.
- To support the activities of the Canadian Nursery Landscape Association/Landscape Canada.
- To improve the standard of living for those involved in the industry.
- To improve industry safety standards.
- To develop effective communication strategies to ensure member awareness of benefits of the association.

Since the beginning of Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trades Association in 1973 its' structure has evolved in order to facilitate action and focus energy on the achievement of these goals. The Strategic Planning Committee have reviewed all aspects of the association and have developed strategies to ensure further growth and responsiveness to the challenges and opportunities of future. It is interesting to note that although priorities continually shift, the mission, values and overall goals of the association have remained constant. The following is a summary of the topics discussed and the recommendations made. Please note that the

general topics and specific recommendations are listed in order of priority.

## **1. EDUCATION (General, Youth, Professional Development, Safety)**

### **Background**

Landscape Ontario has been instrumental in guiding the development of horticultural education in Ontario. Every post-secondary school program in the province has had association input. The Qualified Plants-man program at the University of Guelph and the Ontario Horticulturist Apprenticeship Program were initiated and continue to be supported by the Association.

In recent years, the Association has expanded its professional development activities through the development of the winter workshop series, support of the National Certification Program, implementation of the safety awareness program and development of the Pesticide Technician Program. In addition, the chapter and commodity groups continue to host a variety of educational events. Congress, Chapters, Commodity Groups and magazines will always provide excellent educational opportunities.

Education can be classified into four major categories:

- 1.1 General Goals and Activities
- 1.2 Youth Education
- 1.3 Professional Development
- 1.4 Safety Education

### **Recommendations:**

#### **1.1 General Goals and Activities**

- a) The association will take responsibility for advancing all four categories of education.
- b) Assign a member and committee to take responsibility for the Education strategies in order to monitor the educational activities of Landscape Ontario.
- c) Be actively involved with new Federal and Provincial Government Training Initiatives.
- d) Take an active role in the Horticultural Human Resource Council activities in order to focus more energy on our education and human resource needs.
- e) Develop an Education Program paper to be presented to the Ministry of Education and Training and HRD Canada in order to advocate the importance of horticultural education and training.
- f) Pursue funding support from various government agencies responsible for training and education.
- g) Investigate the pros and cons of lobbying for legislation which would regulate those entering the industry by ensuring that they are properly trained.
- h) Explore the benefits of licensing by analysing jurisdictions that are currently licensed.
- i) Pursue the goal of establishing an industry Educational Training Institute (a Centre for Excellence in Horticulture) to be housed in our own facility.

#### **1.2 Youth Education**

- a) The association will continue to develop educational opportunities at the elementary, secondary and post secondary in order to develop future human resources.
- b) Monitor, improve and expand the Apprenticeship program. Successful European-training models should be emulated.
- c) Integrate the CHT with all formal horticultural programs in the province and Canada. We will encourage all post secondary programs to adopt the CHT evaluation process.
- d) Promote Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program and co-op programs at the high school level.
- e) Continue work with Skills Canada to increase awareness and image of horticulture in high schools and Colleges.
- f) Ensure that all horticultural programs have a strong practical horticultural component. Plant material education should be given a high priority.
- g) Maintain membership in Advisory Committees for Community College Horticultural Programs.

- There should be pro-active action on advisory boards of all educational institutions.
- h) Maintain membership on the Industry Advisory Committee responsible for the Apprenticeship program.
  - i) Develop a full time school for horticulture to be housed on our site in Milton.
  - j) Work closely with all educational facilities to ensure relevant programs are developed.
  - k) Investigate the development of an improved privatized industry driven apprenticeship program.
  - l) Develop methods and programs to educate elementary and high school children about the joys and benefits of gardening and careers in horticulture. Analyze the dairy industry examples to see if they are applicable.
  - m) Investigate the hiring of an education coordinator to promote horticulture to high school students and to implement the Labour Task Force recommendations. (See Labour Section of the Strategic Plan)

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### **1.3 Professional Development**

- a) Investigate amending the Certified Horticultural Technician (CHT) process so that it is customized for Canada.
- b) Pursue the goal of ensuring that any company entering the industry is qualified and employs well trained individuals by encouraging further education.
- c) Promote the CNLA certification program for our own membership.
- d) Develop training programs and opportunities to prepare candidates for the CNLA certification program.
- e) Investigate a two stage certification process.
- f) Continue to implement professional development programs for all areas of Ontario and for all levels of experience.
- g) Develop basic training programs for seasonal labour.
- h) Develop garden centre staff training programs.
- i) Develop basic training programs for landscape companies that can be delivered by the employer.
- j) Develop on-line training systems for all aspects of horticulture.
- k) Continue to develop and provide quality education programs at the chapters, commodity groups, Congress, Education Clinic, Education Month, etc.
- l) Centralize the chapter education events.
- m) Ensure that educational opportunities are accessible with respect to cost and location.
- n) Introduce the Certified Landscape Professional Program

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### **1.4 Safety Education**

- a) Develop safety-training programs for all commodity groups in the form of practical winter programs. This will include claims management information.
- b) Develop a generic company safety manual for the members.
- c) Reduce WSIB rates through educational and awareness programs.
- d) Improve communication and partnerships with WSIB and FSA.
- e) Provide CPR training for our members.

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## **2. PROFESSIONALISM/ MEMBERSHIP ACCREDITATION/ CODE OF ETHICS**

A major goal of the association has always been to enhance professionalism within the industry. The membership invitation system attempts to limit active membership to bonafide, full time companies who supply references and agree to abide by a code of ethics. The philosophy of the association has been to welcome all potential members subject to the above minimum qualification requirements and thereafter provide development activities to continually improve membership professionalism.

### **Recommendations**

- a) In light of the increased public awareness of Landscape Ontario it is recommended that the association establish an Accreditation Committee every number of years in order to review current entry standards, philosophy and Code of Ethics.

- b) Add an option to the accreditation process, which will allow endorsement from 3 -10 year members within their commodity group. Proof of financial stability will still be required.
- c) Add option to accreditation process – members to provide proof of insurance and/or WSIB coverage.
- d) To integrate the CNLA certification program with membership accreditation.
- e) To promote interim membership for those who do not meet the requirements.
- f) The Association should actively promote the Code of Ethics within our membership and to the public.
- g) The Code of Ethics should be publicized through the use of trade magazines, framed posters, consumer magazines, vehicle signs, congress and L.O. functions.
- h) Promote the mediation service to the members only.
- i) Our target market is the consumer and non-members. An attractive communications package should be developed by staff. Our members could use this package for promotional purposes with bid packages and estimates.
- j) Develop a stamp (similar to the OALA stamp) which can be used by members on their contract documents and drawings. As of July, 2003 – Designers “CLD” and Irrigation “CIT” have stamps. This would enhance the professional stature of membership. This will only be issued subject to a certification process.
- k) Promote the Certified Landscape Professional program, Certified Irrigation Technician Program, Certified Landscape Professional program and any other certification programs which increase competence and professionalism.
- l) Develop business education opportunities that will enhance profitability.

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### **3 PROMOTION**

#### **Recommendations**

- a) Develop structures and strategies to raise the money required for effective green industry promotion.
- b) Pursue the formation of a Promotion Agency similar in structure to Plant Promotion Holland. The goal of the promotion agency is to stimulate demand for horticultural products and services.
- c) Increase the public profile of LO members by ensuring that our members are accredited.
- d) It was felt that the best promotion for the industry is industry members who act ethically and professionally in their dealings with the public. When our members are truly accredited then we should promote the fact in all promotion materials.
- e) Develop contacts with the media in order to create awareness of the value of the industry.
- f) Provide biweekly or monthly promotion information to the local media. This can take the form of garden information, events, how-to information, etc. Ongoing Media packages should be developed and sent out by the office under the guidance of local promotion committees.
- g) Local committees should report to the provincial promotion committee
- h) Supply editorial information to the media in the form of articles for newspapers, magazines, radio and television.
- i) Nurture television and all other media promoting the industry
- j) Continue to place a high priority on stimulating primary demand through industry promotion but also focus on promotion of Landscape Ontario members. It was felt that the proposed promotion agency focus on generic industry promotion and the association focus on the members.
- k) Develop promotional programs that have the support of the local Chapters and Commodity Groups.
- l) Co ordinate the various and diverse promotional messages derived from the activities of the commodity groups and committees and chapters.
- m) Promote the development of a outdoor world class garden show and continue supporting Canada Blooms.
- n) Hire professional marketing staff to assist in promotion activities as required.
- o) Continue to develop a web site presence and incorporate the web in all communication activity
- p) Investigate an interactive children’s gardening web site.
- q) Develop a co-operative marketing program for stimulating export sales of plant material.

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### **4. GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS AND REPRESENTATION**

## **Background**

The association has always been involved with legislative issues. Decisions made by all levels of government have a potential to do enormous damage to the industry. Alternatively, creative partnerships and consultative relationships between government and industry can nurture and help an industry grow.

## **Recommendations**

- a) Increase our visibility with all levels of government.
- b) Survey all levels of Landscape Ontario to determine the legislative issues which need to be addressed.
- c) Prepare and present industry position papers on areas of legislative concern with an immediate focus on Pesticides, Labour and Safety.
- d) Focus more energy and resources to government representation and legislative issues.
- e) Assign dedicated staff to legislative matters.
- f) Co-ordinate municipal involvement with local chapters.
- g) Develop a rapport with the media in order to communicate industry legislative issues with the public.
- h) Encourage liaisons with other organizations, (Flowers Canada, Crop Life, UPMC, ISA, PIC, etc.) to create a stronger industry voice.
- i) The association should defend the right to use and sell legal plant protection products.
- j) Produce and distribute pro-active information on the value of plant protection materials.
- k) Prepare resolutions for CNLA to present to Canadian Horticultural Council.
- l) Pursue minor use registration for materials not yet available in Canada.
- m) Hire dedicated staff to deal with the Pesticide Issue by promoting IPM and defending judicious pesticide use.
- n) Request Government assistance in creating an Industry Development Plan, however ensure that our industry retains its strong independent entrepreneurial spirit.
- o) To actively lobby the WSIB to reduce the WSIB burden to all commodities.

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## **5. MEMBERSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP SERVICES**

### **Recommendations**

- a) Develop and improve membership services in order to retain members.
- b) Promote existing services through trade publications, direct mail, chapter communications, etc. Many of our members do not know about the existing services.
- c) Feature articles by existing members outlining the reasons they retain their membership.
- d) Develop a new member orientation program to ensure a proper welcome to the association goals and activities. This should be done in conjunction with the chapters and should include a phone call from staff or president.
- e) Continue using the web to solve communication issues.
- f) Investigate the development of computer help-line and database.
- g) Consider offering larger member discounts for association events and programs.
- h) Develop an endorsed relationship with a digital communication services provider.
- i) Send out annual report and promotion material with membership invoice.
- j) Develop a mentor system for new members.
- k) Continue to develop How-To videos for the public.
- l) Offer mailing list services to the membership.
- m) Focus on providing quality chapter events which are publicized properly.
- n) Centralize the chapter programming.
- o) Develop programs which will enhance the professional stature of our membership.
- p) Encourage members to present themselves professionally through promotion materials, dress code, and appearance of equipment, logos, and letterhead, etc.
- q) Promote a standard of excellence.
- r) Develop programs to attract new members.
- s) Develop a membership drive contest which will reward existing members who sponsor new members.
- t) Investigate the possibility of a commission membership sales person.

- u) Develop programs which encourage membership involvement.
- v) Continue to attract greater membership participation on the Committees, Chapters, Commodity groups and Board of Directors by assigning formal nominating committees the task of encouraging and developing potential association leaders.
- w) Utilize a regularly scheduled orientation program for the Chapter Presidents, Treasurers and Commodity Group Chairman.
- x) Formalize a nomination process utilizing the past presidents as the nominating committee for chapters.
- y) Expand the Awards of Excellence Program and find ways to promote the program to the public as well as membership. Look at reducing pricing and offering quantity discounting.
- z) Develop a consumer magazine tied to the Awards of Excellence Program patterned after the "Best Gardens in Quebec Magazine"
- aa) Initiate talks with related sectors to examine the feasibility of forming alliances. e.g. Nursery Sod Growers, Christmas Tree Growers.
- bb) Investigate the feasibility of forming an industry credit union.
- cc) Investigate the feasibility of forming our own Insurance Company

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## **6. CONGRESS and GARDEN EXPO**

### **Background**

The trade shows have evolved to become a major revenue generator for the association. The Congress move to Cops Coliseum in 1990 proved highly successful. The move to Toronto in 1996 was even more successful. Congress has grown by 100 percent since moving to Toronto. It continues to be the largest horticultural trade show in Canada. Garden Expo has tripled in size since its inception in 2000.

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### **Recommendations**

- a) Investigate the separation of association functions and seminars from the trade show. This could be done by organizing pre-congress seminars. This action would also provide recognition that the Annual General Meeting and the Awards Program are important events.
- b) Work at developing Congress into an International Supershow.
- c) Work at developing Garden Expo into a fall Super show
- d) Ensure continuity in the Congress committee by encouraging chairs to remain for more than one year.
- e) Integrate the Congress chair position with the board in order to enhance communications.

## **7. CHAPTERS**

### **Background**

There are currently nine regional chapters within Landscape Ontario. Each chapter is given a budget according to the number of members in the local area. Each chapter is governed by its own board and has the freedom to operate within the By-laws. Chapters administer their own finances according to guidelines provided by the board and have total freedom to raise their own funds over and above the budget allocation.

### **Recommendations:**

- a) Improve the orientation program for chapter boards. This will include a province wide meeting where all chapter executives will discuss their goals and programs for the entire year. The orientation meeting should be structured to allow smaller break out groups for Presidents and Treasurers.
- b) Develop a uniform chapter meeting structure.
- c) Review and update the Chapter Manuals
- d) Maintain and update a speaker bank in order to assist with chapter programs.
- e) Investigate reducing the minimum meeting requirements for chapters
- f) Centralize the chapter programming.
- g) Investigate the relevance of the chapter system by analysing the present demographic makeup of our

members.

- h) Encourage the commodity groups to integrate their education programs with the chapters.
- i) Develop an orientation program for all new members. The orientation program should include a phone call from the Executive Director. The orientation program could include a mentor process.
- j) Improve the communications between the Chapters, Commodity Groups, Provincial Board, staff and individual members.
- k) Encourage chapters to utilize Horticulture Review for disseminating information in a timely manner.
- l) Assign a chapter communication officer the task of communicating with a dedicated staff communications officer and with the Board. The Provincial Chapter Representative would be the best person for the job.
- m) Assign commodity group representatives to communicate group activities.
- n) Encourage part-time paid clerical staff to assist the chapters.
- o) Use the internet as much as possible for communication purposes
- p) Assign a staff person the job of keeping in regular contact with the Chapter boards in order to facilitate communication and information flow.
- q) Add a new chapter only if there is local interest. However, we should actively promote membership in small communities.
- r) Identify growth areas for new chapters
- s) Develop annual events at the Landscape Ontario Centre.

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## **8. RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP**

### **Background**

The Ontario Horticultural Trades Foundation was created to act as the research and scholarship arm of the association. It has been successful at amassing funds and uses only the interest generated from the capital in order to perennially fund industry driven research as well as scholarship and bursary programs.

### **Recommendations**

The following are recommendations from the Association to the Foundation. These recommendations will be worked on jointly.

- a) The Foundation should define its own research projects by surveying the industry on an on-going basis.
- b) Develop fund raising strategies in order to increase the capital funds within the Foundation.
- c) Pursue the establishment of a legislated levy on plant material in order to pay for research and promotion.
- d) Improve the marketing of the Foundation and the importance of research activities.
- e) Encourage chapter commodity group activities and events in order to raise money for research and scholarships.
- f) Develop research activities which could be sold.
- g) Engage the services of a professional fund raising firm.
- h) Evaluate current investment strategies.
- i) Encourage and promote memorial funds in order to attract estate funding
- j) Continue to implement a scholarship and bursary plan which disperses a minimum \$20,000.00 a year.
- k) Develop a High School Scholarship program – sponsored by members

## **9. ASSOCIATION FINANCES**

### **Background**

The association has always enjoyed a strong financial position. It has been the role of the Finance Committee to oversee the investments and develop financial control policies. In recent years the operating budget has grown to significant proportions.



## **Recommendations**

- a) The Association strives to maintain a minimum equity equal to one year's annual expenses.
- b) There will be no deficit financing without membership approval
- c) To continue to engage the services of a professional financial investment broker who would manage the association investment portfolio in order to produce the maximum return with minimum risk. The parameters should be Full Equity Investments with maximum liquidity without penalties. The ultimate financial responsibility would still remain with the Finance Committee and Board of Directors
- d) The Auditors report should include a review of financial practices and summary of investment portfolio.

## **10. FACILITIES**

### **Background**

In 1994, the Association purchased a 50-Acre site along the 401 in Milton. Prophetically the site meets all of the criteria identified in the original Strategic Plan. Great progress has been made to turn the site into a major Centre for Horticultural Activity. The site has allowed us to run Youth Initiatives Programs, Certification Programs and has hosted thousands of members participating in the various workshops, meetings and social events. The Master plan for the site has been completed and the Building Management Committee and Board are excited about bringing the plan to fruition.

### **Recommendations**

- a) The facility must be self-supporting and therefore will not be a liability for the membership.
- b) Lease out balance of the facility in order to generate income.
- c) Continue to develop education programs for members and public.
- d) Continue to implement the master plan
- e) Develop a full time horticulture school
- f) Utilize the facility to promote horticulture to the public.
- g) Encourage the building committee to come up with a 5-year development plan with public perception in mind.
- h) ~~Develop a centre of excellence for horticulture in conjunction with NRC and educational institutions.~~
- i) ~~In light of the situation regarding servicing costs, look at various options to ensure that the site does not become a financial burden.~~
- j) ~~Investigate the hiring of a consultant to do a feasibility study on the master plan.~~
- k) ~~Review the components of the master plan to ensure that activities are appropriate and cost effective.~~

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## **11. PUBLICATIONS- LANDSCAPE TRADES AND HORTICULTURAL REVIEW**

### **Background**

The magazines have evolved significantly since 1973. Originally two separate magazines were published. Landscape Trades covered national news whereas Landscape Ontario Magazine served Ontario. In the mid 80's the two magazines were merged into one under the banner of Landscape Trades. The national scope of Landscape Trades created an information void for regional and association news. In 1990, this problem was solved by the purchase of Horticulture Review. The publications department now has the capability to produce two major magazines as well as brochures, catalogues, flyers, booklets and newsletters.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendations will be classified into:

11.1 General

- 11.2 Landscape Trades Magazine
- 11.3 Horticulture Review Magazine

**11.1 PUBLICATIONS (GENERAL)**

- a) Editorial of both magazines must remain independent, controversial and timely.
- b) Solicit articles from those willing to present an outsider's perspective
- c) Advertise the fact that we seek and will print opposing and controversial viewpoints
- d) Solicit article ideas by readership survey or editorial committee
- e) Publishing capacity will be expanded to include the development of brochures, polybag services, catalogues, newsletters, website services and other materials which our members can use.
- f) We should explore the possibility of renting out targeted mailing lists as a service to our associates and as a revenue generator.
- g) Landscape Ontario should take advantage of existing publications by writing articles for them e.g. Property Managers Magazines etc.
- h) Include advertisers and sector representation on the Publication Committee.
- i) Develop a website magazine integration plan

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**11.2 LANDSCAPE TRADES MAGAZINE**

- a) LANDSCAPE TRADES must remain a reasonably priced advertising vehicle for our associate members.
- b) It must generate non-dues income for the association.
- c) Continue to expand and improve the Source Book.
- d) Utilize paid international industry authorities to write articles of interest for all our sectors.

**11.3 HORTICULTURE REVIEW MAGAZINE**

- a) HORTICULTURE REVIEW is to remain a timely, event driven regional magazine.
- b) It should strive to break even. It will feature member information as well as general industry news.

**12. COMMODITY GROUPS**

**Background**

There are currently eight sector groups which were formed to look after the collective interests of the related but diverse business sectors in Horticulture. In 1991 Commodity groups were given full status on the provincial Board of Directors. Also in 1991 the Grounds Management Commodity Group was formed to complement the Growers, Garden Centres, Lawn Care and Contractor's Group. In 2000 Irrigation and Designers were added. In 2001, the Interiorscape group was added.

Each commodity group is governed by its own board and has the freedom to operate within the By-laws. Commodity Groups administer their own finances according to guidelines provided by the board and have the freedom to raise their own funds over and above the budget allocation.

**Recommendations**

- 12.1. Develop strategies to communicate activities of the commodity groups to the general membership. This can be accomplished by the following:
  - a) Better use of the trade publications to highlight activities. A "commodity corner" column in Horticulture Review would be helpful.
  - b) develop commodity group booths for congress
  - c) a commodity group board member should be assigned communications responsibility in order to ensure that information flows to the magazines
  - d) Each chapter should assign commodity group representatives whose job it is to communicate activities back to the chapter.

- e) The commodity representatives on the provincial board should be encouraged to perform their communications duties.
  - f) Continue to encourage the groups to maintain a chapter liaison and to develop a travelling chapter program.
  - g) Encourage all groups to hold at least one lecture series/short course type general meeting and use these meetings for reporting and elections.
- 12.2. Initiate discussions with the other sectors of horticulture about the possibilities of forming new groups.
- 12.3. Continue to develop programs and services which will serve the specific business interests represented by the groups.
- 12.4. Develop safety programs and promote safe working practices in all sectors.
- 12.5. Consider endorsing consultants in various sectors of operation. (e.g.: lawyer, accountants, business, etc.) who would assist members.
- 12.6. Encourage commodity groups to interact and discuss similar issues and ideas (eg: Interiorscape and Grounds Management)

## **SPECIFIC ISSUES BY GROUP**

### **13. GROWERS:**

#### **Background**

The growers group has always been very active in dealing with the many sectoral issues which constantly arise. Their traditional activities include organizing the Research Auction, Summer Tour, Fall General Meeting, Growers Short Course and funding the Research Graduate Assistant Scholarship Program at the University of Guelph. In addition they have been very active dealing with plant protection issues.

#### **Recommendations**

- a) Focus efforts on building demand for Nursery Stock by developing a Promotion/Research Agency modelled after Plant Publicity Holland.
- b) Develop opportunities to increase dialogue between the growers and purchasers of Nursery Stock in order to help nurseries determine what to grow.
- c) Host an annual meeting of all purchasers of nursery stock to inform growers directly.
- d) Develop marketing and advertising strategies to promote Ontario grown nursery stock.
- e) Develop an Ontario Plant Source Web site which would act as a searchable database for Ontario grown Nursery Stock
- f) Develop and promote training and education programs to further professional development within the nursery sector of the industry.
- g) Determine research needs and priorities that will benefit provincial growers. This can be accomplished through the use of a "think tank" focus group and be funded through the Foundation.
- h) Develop activities and structures to stimulate export into the U.S. and International markets.
- i) In conjunction with CNLA, Lobby Government to streamline and facilitate pesticide registration so that improved and safer plant protection products are made available.
- j) In conjunction with CNLA, carefully monitor Government Plant Protection policies to ensure that they are not damaging to the industry
- k) Develop and promote environmental stewardship among the growers of the province especially water management plans.
- l) Encourage certification.
- m) Develop a Plum Pox Virus certification program
- n) Lobby for emergency compensation programs in cases where prohibition of movement orders cause industry damage.

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### **14. LANDSCAPE CONTRACTORS:**

- a) Develop strategies to assist professional high quality contractors cope with sub-standard contractors.
- b) Develop promotional material which sets professionals apart, i.e. Contractor Rating System, Information Brochures, etc.

- c) Educate owners about the value and benefits of using professionals,
- d) Continue to educate the residential consumer about choosing an LO contractor.
- e) Encourage the use of the CNLA pre-qualification form.
- f) Continue to develop a Manual of Professional Practice in conjunction with the OALA.
- g) Continue to develop structures to promote good relations and dialogue between Landscape Architects and Landscape Contractors.
- h) Develop an information brochure to describe the responsibilities relating to labour issues.
- i) Encourage certification of members

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#### **15. LAWN CARE GROUP:**

- a) Continue to monitor government legislation to ensure that it is sensitive to the needs of the industry.
- b) Hire a media clipping service to monitor all media with regard to pesticide issues
- c) Develop an information and education program which would visit all Municipalities with a professional and balanced presentation on the benefits and risks of pesticide use.
- d) Assign a staff lobbyist to act on behalf of the commodity group.
- e) Develop a certification program which will ensure that all pesticide applicators are properly trained in the safe use of pesticides.
- f) Develop a manual which deals with pesticide reduction strategies.
- g) Develop materials which will be distributed to member clients in order to improve public relations and public misconceptions about the lawn care industry.
- h) Continue to work towards the unification of the lawn care sector.
- i) Continue to develop educational opportunities for the professional development of the Lawn Care sector.
- j) Continue to promote IPM Accreditation

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#### **16. GROUNDS MANAGEMENT GROUP:**

- a) Develop educational opportunities for professional development particularly in business management topics.
- b) Host at least one general meeting with an educational focus on business skills.
- c) Develop short courses delivered at night or weekends dealing with business/management skills. These short courses could be sponsored by associates
- d) Develop marketing tools to assist the sector promote the value of professional maintenance.
- e) Continue to develop a specifications and standards manual.
- f) Develop materials which will assist members to deal with snow removal issues.
- g) Continue to work with the Contractors Group on the development of a landscape handbook which will promote the use of professional contractors.
- h) Develop strategies to increase dialogue and communications between Grounds Management firms and their commercial clients.
- i) Continue to develop strategies to promote professionalism.

#### **17. GARDEN CENTRE GROUP:**

- a) Develop methods and strategies to help the independent garden centres excel at marketing horticultural products.
- b) Investigate group promotion potential through the use of consumer flyers and promotion materials.
- c) Host a garden centre employee-training program
- d) Develop programs to encourage the public to shop at member establishments i.e.: Arbor Week Promotions, Plant and Win Promotions, Garden Contests, Articles written for media etc.
- e) Encourage retail certification
- f) Continue to develop consumer information materials, which will help position, the independent as horticultural professionals.
- g) Develop promotion and marketing strategies which stimulate demand for garden products.
- h) Develop funding mechanisms to support generic industry promotion.
- i) Develop programs which will assist members to deal with changing retail trends.
- j) Promote merchandising and marketing partnerships between suppliers and retailers.
- k) Promote communication partnerships between the retailers and garden communicators and media.

## **18. LANDSCAPE DESIGNERS GROUP**

### **Background**

In 2000 a new commodity group was formed to represent and advance the Landscape Design Sector.

### **Recommendations:**

- a) Develop Programs which would create awareness for the importance of design.
- b) Develop a Designers Certification Program and encourage certification.
- c) Develop professional development programs for the sector

## **19. IRRIGATION GROUP**

### **Background**

In 2000 the former Canadian Irrigation Association became a commodity group of Landscape Ontario.

### **Recommendations:**

- a) Work to integrate the Irrigation Group as a specialty of Horticulture able to access the same legislative exemptions as the rest of agriculture and horticulture.
- b) Promote on going professional development.
- c) Promote the Certification of Irrigation Contractors.

## **20. INTERIORSCAPE GROUP**

In July of 200, a steering committee was set up to determine if the Interiorscape sector could benefit from joining Landscape Ontario. In October of 2001, the Interiorscape group was added as an official commodity group within the LO structure. Following are the main issues that the group will be working on:

- a) Develop Marketing and Promotion strategies promoting the value of Interior Landscaping.
- b) Increase professionalism through the promotion of education and certification.
- c) Revive the Canadian Interior Landscape Conference as a way to stimulate education, camaraderie and networking opportunities.
- d) Develop standards of practice
- e) Provide a communication conduit for industry information using Horticulture Review and Landscape Trades Magazines.
- f) Enhance government relations particularly with regard to legislation that would harm or enhance the industry. (EG. Pesticide regulations, Minor Use Expansion, WSIB, Safety Issues, Education, Labour etc.)
- g) Work with other commodities to find ways to attract labour into the industry.

## **21. COMMITTEES**

### **Background**

The present committees of Landscape Ontario were formed to focus energy on the many specific goals and objectives of the association. Each of the recommendations that have been made falls under the jurisdiction of a committee or commodity group.

### **Recommendations**

- a) To continually review and enhance the terms of reference and mission statements for all committees. This should be done by the Board of Directors. It would be up to the committee chair to implement the mandate. The mandates and progress should be reviewed on an annual basis.
- b) It is the job of committees to make recommendations to the board. It is up to the board to decide how, when, and if the recommendations should be implemented.
- c) Investigate the need to form other committees to further the aims and objectives of the association
- d) Actively recruit new members for all committees in order to prevent burn out.
- e) Committees should be added only if there is a need and be dissolved once they have completed their

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work.

- f) It is the job of the President to appoint committee chairs.

## **22. POSSIBLE FUTURE COMMITTEES AND MANDATES**

### **a) Public Relations Committee**

To assist staff and board in identifying and developing public relations programs. There are numerous public relations activities that the association could and should take advantage of. These activities could be generated under the guidance of a public relations committee but implemented by dedicated staff.

### **b) Associate Members Committee**

To enhance communications between industry and suppliers and advise board on supplier needs and concerns. Because so much of the association's non-dues revenue come from this sector through advertising, congress, and other support gestures, the needs of associate members should not be overlooked.

### **c) Statistics Committee**

To identify and develop strategies to obtain timely, accurate and necessary business and industry enhancing statistical information. Required information sometimes does not exist and sometimes is only available after extensive research. This is an important undertaking which requires enormous input and effort. Professional staff should be dedicated to this project under the guidance of the committee.

### **d) Botanical Gardens and Arboreta Committee**

Enhance communications and co-operation between industry and public gardens and arboreta.

Deleted: e) Safety Committee:  
This committee will assist staff and board in identifying safety issues and program education for members.

## **23. DUES SYSTEM**

### **Background**

The dues system has been overhauled to go towards a one-fee system. This was implemented in 1997 and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

## **24. BOARD OF DIRECTORS STRUCTURE**

### **Background**

The Board structure has evolved in recent years. Currently there are nine chapter representatives, 8 commodity group representatives, two members at large and an Executive Committee formed of the Past President, President, First Vice President, Second Vice President and Treasurer. The Finance Committee is the Executive Committee.

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### **Recommendations**

- a) Assign the Provincial Past Presidents the job of back up in case problems arise on the Board.
- b) Utilize the Past Presidents as a nominating committee.
- c) Past President will hold the position of CNLA rep.

## **25. FUTURE ISSUES - THE LONGER VIEW**

The following issues and trends will influence the development of the association and the Industry in the future.

- a) Environmental Awareness

- b) Economic recession and recovery.
- c) Shift in economy from a manufacturing/industrial base to an information base.
- d) Increased move towards service and information society.
- e) Mass Merchandisers in the business.
- f) Difficulty in negotiating operating loans.
- g) Collection problems.
- h) Increase in competition (both domestic and imports)
- i) Ageing affluent population.
- j) Second baby boom flooding the workplace.
- k) Improved educational opportunities.
- l) Changing technology.
- m) Improved information and communication delivery systems.
- n) Less time available for volunteering
- o) Globalization of markets.
- p) The shift from producer driven to market driven economy.

### **Recommendation**

- a) The association should work towards developing a statistics collecting and dissemination role because the industry is lacking in statistics which can be used to make management decisions.
- b) The association should assign a committee to review these issues and trends and suggest how the industry can exploit the opportunities which will arise in the future.

### **26. STAFF**

It is important that all activities of staff be guided by the appropriate committee of the board.

The recommended ideal staff responsibilities which should be developed in the future are as follows. (In many cases one person can be responsible for more than one function.)

Executive Director  
 Lobbyist/Government Representative  
 Education Officer  
 Promotion and Public Relations Officer  
 Membership Services Officer  
 Statistics and Research Officer  
 Publication Division Head  
 Editorial Director  
 Layout and Production Officer  
 Art Director  
 Editor - Horticulture Review  
 Editor - Landscape Trades  
 Circulation Manager  
 Sales Manager  
 Congress and Meeting Planning Head  
 Garden Expo and Meeting Planning Head  
 Assistant congress and Meeting Planner  
 Accountant  
 Accounting Clerk and Collections  
Administrative assistant  
Executive Assistant▼  
 Safety Officer  
 Marketing Officer  
 Consultant (computer, estate)  
Webmaster

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