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Harbourfront centre

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Sustainability Case Study©: Harbourfront Centre

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Researchers and Authors:
Juliet Dhanraj,
Thomas C. Esakin,
and Francis Pappin

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 1987, both the theoretical concept of sustainability / sustainable development and its practice have been contributory in re-defining the global landscape. Moreover, sustainability is increasingly becoming a prominent catalyst of change within corporate organizations pursuing a triple-bottom-line (3BL) vision of environmental stewardship, economic viability, and social responsibility. This sustainability case study analyzes the current status of 3BL sustainability-related policies, initiatives, and operations at Harbourfront Centre, a prominent Canadian arts and culture organization. It seeks to provide a high-level perspective of Harbourfront Centre's social and economic sustainability initiatives with greater emphasis given to its strategic environmental sustainability approach. This sustainability case study provides a panoramic view of Harbourfront Centre's organizational profile and contextual framework, its organizational ethos, across-the-board policies and practices, sustainability initiatives and practices, and the sustainability challenges of the organization. In addition, it highlights key findings emanating from the research and explores important lessons derived from the analysis of Harbourfront Centre's sustainability practices.

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Foremost acknowledgement goes to Ryerson University for its leadership in developing and furthering formal education in sustainable development through its Certificate in Sustainability Management and other sustainability-related programmes. Particular thanks to Anne-Marie Brinsmead, Program Director, Engineering, Architecture and Science at the G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education, for allowing us the opportunity to engage in this sustainability case study, and to both make a contribution to academia and add to the growing body of knowledge in sustainability / sustainable development. We convey congratulations and heartfelt thanks to the Board of Directors and the entire staff of Harbourfront Centre. Thank you for the honour and privilege of studying your famed organization. Moreover, sincere thanks are conveyed to Randy Sa'd of Harbourfront Centre for his invaluable contribution of time, effort, and expert knowledge to this sustainability case study. Randy, the many hours you invested have not gone unnoticed nor is it in anyway unappreciated. Furthermore, we take this opportunity to express our gratitude to Harbourfront Centre's CEO Mr. William J.S. Boyle, for his knowledgeable feedback that added immense value to the study. A special "thank you" to Professor Kernaghan Webb, from the Department of Law and Business at the Ted Rogers School of Management at Ryerson University, for sharing your expertise and experiences with us. Undoubtedly, you were instrumental in helping us fully conceptualize the general structure of a case study. It was your guidance that enabled our sustainability team to subsequently develop a standardized framework to guide all of our sustainability case studies.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sustainability catapulted into prominence in 1987 by virtue of the Brundtland Commission's final report "Our Common Future", which popularised sustainable development and created the world's accepted definition for the concept and practice (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987, p. 1). Since then, sustainable development has been a driver of change on the global stage: at the national and regional dimensions; within local communities; in the corporate (for-profit and not-for profit) and non-governmental (NGO) sectors; and at the individual level. The cross-cutting theme of sustainability continues to influence and revolutionize the agenda of the corporate world. An increasing number of companies from across the corporate sector have been vying to attain the competitive advantage in the sustainability "race to the top" (Willard, 2012, p.2)

Within the Canadian landscape, the approach to sustainability undertaken by Harbourfront Centre (HFC) has been congruent with its mandate of innovation through "the magic of the creative spirit" (Harbourfront Centre, n.d.,i). Although identifiable attributes of sustainability are prevalent in many of HFC's initiatives, the foremost strategic approach adopted relates specifically to its Environmental Sustainability Program, initiated by HFC in 2007. For this reason, Harbourfront Centre has been selected as a corporate-like entity that provides some empirical evidence within the Canadian context for a "triple-bottom-line (3BL)" sustainability that encompasses social, economic, and environmental dimensions (Norman and McDonald 2003, p.1).

This sustainability case study on Harbourfront Centre explores key aspects of the organizational profile of HFC by utilizing a panoramic view of its social, economic, and environmental sustainability and related initiatives and operations, as gleaned from the organization's experience. Moreover, it does so while placing greater emphasis on HFC's strategic approach to the environmental dimension of sustainable development.

The research design or roadmap for this sustainability case study follows a format which is reflective of the sequential arrangement of the main sections or chapters and respective sub-section(s) within the body of the document. The introductory section that lies at the outset sets the tone for the rest of the case study. Following on the introduction is the section that focuses on the conceptual and analytical framework for integrating sustainability into planning and decision-making across disciplines, sectors, and at different levels and scales of operations. The next section provides an overview of the methodological framework, which is then followed by an outline of the scope of the sustainability case study. A contextual overview of HFC is subsequently given to outline the political, economic, social, technological, environmental, legal/or regulatory and stakeholder influences shaping the organization. The main focus of the next two chapters is to provide a brief historical backdrop of HFC and to discuss the philosophy, vision, mission and programming mandate of the organization. Furthermore, the governance structure and decision-making process, policies, and practices at HFC are also addressed in subsequent sub-sections. The results, findings and analysis of sustainability at HFC are later presented with the emphasis being on environmental strategies, challenges, and lessons learned. In the final section, conclusions are drawn based on the analysis of findings emanating from the case study. Lastly, higher-order questions are provided to guide a reader's analysis of the case study.

2.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTUAL/ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Sustainable development or sustainability is the state achieved when development meets the needs of both current and future generations (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987, p.1). The interchangeable usage of the terms 'sustainable development' and 'sustainability' is reflected in the Brundtland Commission Report of 1987 entitled, "Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future" (Ibid). Sustainability is an all-embracing and integrating concept that encompasses three equal, interdependent and mutually reinforcing dimensions: environmental, social and economic. The Brundtland Commission defined sustainable development as "development which meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Ibid). "This definition embraces all those activities which are ecologically sound, socially just and economically viable, and is embedded within an [intra- and] intergenerational underpinning" (Chengappa et al. 2012, p.2). Alternatively referred to as the "Triple Bottom Line"- the "3BL" (Norman and McDonald 2003, pp.1-19), the dimensions are also expressed as "planet, people and prosperity/profits"-the "Three Ps" or "3Ps" (Rodden 2011, p.1).

Through the lens of sustainable development/sustainability, Earth is an extremely complex ecosystem subdivided into many sub-ecosystems – dynamic entities which comprise great diversity of living organisms - plants, animals and microorganisms - interacting amongst themselves and with their non-living environments, of which we are all parts. Within this multitude of ecosystems are many human societies or social systems, in which in turn reside economies or economic systems. Therefore, the environment is the basis or foundation of our socio-economic development (Duraiappah 2004, p.10; McMichael et al. 2005, p.45). On the economic front, such development includes the use of scarce resources for the production and distribution of goods and services to satisfy human needs and wants, giving rise to the creation of decent jobs, wealth, and so on, to culminate in improved quality of life. On the social side, it includes us humans living in harmony with each other; improved health, education and housing; greater individual freedoms; empowering traditionally disempowered social groups; etc.

Integral to sustainable development is its imperative integration "across fields, sectors and scales" (Robinson 2004, p.378) of the various dimensions of our lives in order to find solutions to development challenges confronting us. Sustainability emphasises the fact that the environment, society and economy interact, interrelate and interconnect constantly. As such, "economic [and social] viability is enhanced by a non-degraded environment, while an economically [and socially] robust [entity is] one which will be able to afford a high level of environmental management and protection" Buultjens et al. 1996, p.7).

In addition, sustainable development is an ongoing process and a theoretical and practical imperative. An action-oriented discipline, sustainability requires understanding and practice of "Systems Thinking" whereby direct and indirect linkages among all things are recognised and acted upon; responsible, critical and creative thinking and action; democratic engagement, participatory (bottom-up) decision-making processes, transparency and inclusivity; as well as cooperation at and among the individual, local, national, regional and international levels.

Inherent in sustainable development is its emphasis on the recognition of the importance of intergenerational and intra-generational equity and the planet's limits. It stresses the right of and vital importance for both future and current generations to fulfill their essential needs, particularly those of the poor, as well as their legitimate aspirations to improve their quality of life. In addition, sustainable development alerts us to the limits of the planet: that its non-renewable resources such as oil are finite (Richards 2008, p. 1), renewable resources such as plant and animal species can and have become threatened, endangered or extinct (US Fish and Wildlife Service 2012, p.1); in some cases ecosystems have collapsed (Jackson et al. 2001, pp. 629-637) including human societies (Diamond 2005; Scheffer, 2009; Taylor, 2009); and Earth has a limited capacity to absorb and break down all the anthropogenic wastes generated (Beder 2006, p.12).

Being sustainable requires us to be: prudent in the use of resources; mindful of the quality and quantity of wastes we generate; more engaging and accommodative with others; proactive in recognising the dynamism of the changing patterns in our lives, environment and productive systems; and responding with responsible, creative, innovative and practical solutions to restore hope and promise to present and future generations.

Based on this paradigm, the "ultimate success or health" of a society or an organisational entity is determined by the "traditional financial bottom line" as well as "its social/ethical and environmental performance" (Norman and MacDonald 2003, p.1). By incorporating sustainable development/sustainability systems thinking in their practices and operations, societies and organisations enhance their value environmentally, socially and economically. Sustainable development concepts, principles and thinking can literally be applied to any area of work or study, whether it is located in business/industry, governmental/political/public service, or third/social economy/voluntary/community/non-profit/civic sectors of activity, engagement, and practice. Utilised in conjunction with other methods and analytical tools, sustainability approaches contribute to undertaking better evaluation and attaining improved overall outcomes.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The methodological framework for this study comprised formal and informal in-person interviews and discussions, as well as e-mail exchanges, with both senior personnel employed by HFC and subject matter experts (including Professor Kernaghan Webb of the Department of Law and Business at the Ted Rogers School of Management at Ryerson University). Furthermore, desk reviews and analysis of pertinent information was employed.

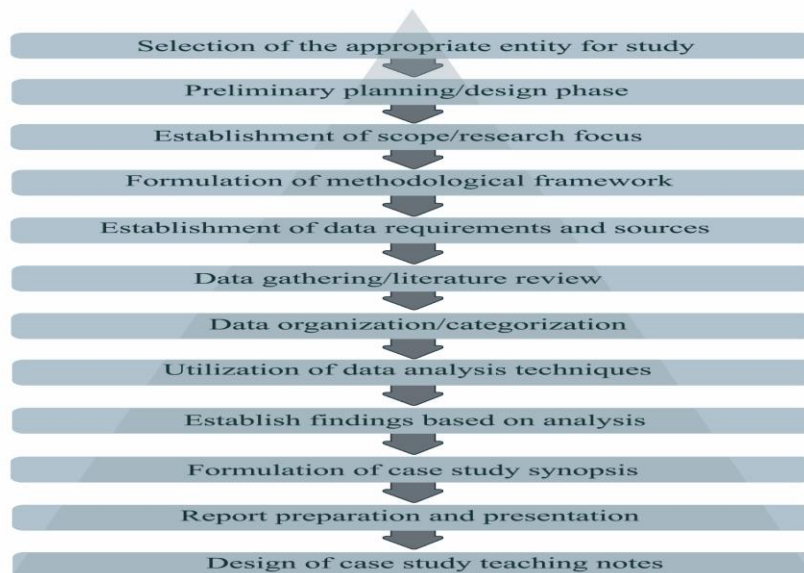
A standardized framework for all sustainability case studies was developed and agreed to by all sustainability case study researchers during the preliminary planning/design phase held prior to official research undertakings. This initial phase also involved a meeting with Professor Kernaghan Webb and three sustainability case study researchers: Francis Pappin, Sadick Sam, and Juliet Dhanraj, held on Tuesday 16th April, 2012 at Ryerson University's Ted Rogers School of Management. In this meeting,

Professor Kernaghan Webb presented a sample business case study and provided guidance on the structure, headings and approaches to the formulation of case studies.

In the research stage primary and secondary, as well as qualitative and quantitative, organization-specific data were utilized. Primary data were derived from formal and informal key informant interviews, and related e-mail exchanges. Two, one-hour interviews were conducted with Randy Sa'd, who holds the title of Strategic Development and leads the Environmental Sustainability Program at Harbourfront Centre (Refer to Appendix 1). These interviews were conducted to elicit the perspective of the interviewee; Randy Sa'd, on the status of the current Environmental Sustainability Program adopted by Harbourfront Centre to determine its alignment with the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. In addition, both Randy Sa'd and Mr. William J.S. Boyle, the CEO of Harbourfront Centre, reviewed the completed final draft of the *Sustainability Case Study: Harbourfront Centre* to verify the accuracy of its contents and to provide additional feedback.

The data collection protocol also involved in-depth reviews of documents from multiple primary and secondary sources such as: HFC internal corporate documents and its public website, Government of Canada reports on HFC, and other publications. These were consulted to glean background information for this sustainability case study. The methodological framework used is sequentially outlined in the schema in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Schema of Methodology



Source: Dhanraj (2012)

4.0 SCOPE OF SUSTAINABILITY CASE STUDY FOCUS

This sustainability case study provides a contextual background of Harbourfront Centre as an organization, in tandem with an analytical focus on the existing policies and operations at HFC, to determine the extent of its compatibility with a triple bottom line (3BL) concept of sustainability / sustainable development that intersects and interconnects social, economic, and environmental dimensions.

From HFC's inception, this socially-driven entity has played an integral role in the social dimension of sustainability. Social sustainability is deeply-rooted in HFC's policies of promoting diversity, nurturing creativity, fostering social cohesion and inclusion, providing access to and enjoyment of the waterfront, and enhancing the quality of life of the local community and HFC's 17 million annual visitors. The already-existing social dimension of sustainability is intrinsically imbued within the mandate of this nationally-prominent arts and culture organisation, and is reflected in its socially-oriented policies and initiatives.

Although HFC has not strategically implemented a formal 3BL sustainability policy, the organization has effectively pursued and given meaningful consideration to adopting many initiatives that synchronize with the social and economic dimensions of sustainability. In 2007, HFC made a conscious corporate decision to focus on its environmental responsibility since this aspect was previously not accentuated. The organization recognised its inherent social and economic capabilities, and embarked on developing an environmental sustainability strategy to improve its performance. In this regard, HFC has placed emphasis on the environmental dimension as opposed to developing an integrated framework that encompassed "planet, people and prosperity/profits" (Rodden 2011, p.1).

This sustainability case study serves to highlight the synergistic nexus between theory and practice in 3BL-like sustainability as undertaken in a government-created, now independent, professionally-managed Canadian non-profit registered charity. *Exemplified in this sustainability case study on HFC is a common misconception in North America, whereby sustainability is viewed through the narrow lens of being a 'green' theory and practice (commonly referred to as 'environmental sustainability') rather than through a holistic 3BL approach.* This case study takes a panoramic, high-level overview in the analysis of operations at Harbourfront Centre, while concurrently exploring the interconnexions among HFC's social, economic/financial and environmental dimensions, notwithstanding HFC's strategic emphasis on sustainability as an environmental practice

Furthermore, this case study reviews the characteristics of HFC's policies, activities, services and operations in tandem with its accomplishments and challenges as a corollary of its implementation of a program that operationalizes sustainability's social, economic, and environmental dimensions as separate and un-connected spheres. The main areas of focus include: a "panoramic profile" of the organization; key findings gleaned from desktop research and key informant interviews; and an analysis of HFC's approach, its challenges, and the extent of its performance based on its conformity with triple-bottom-line sustainability.

5.0 CONTEXT OF HARBOURFRONT CENTRE

This section focuses on the political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and regulatory framework that governs Harbourfront Centre’s operations. Moreover, it includes the key stakeholders of the organization. The rationale for this section is to provide a panoramic overview of the context in which Harbourfront Centre is positioned as a distinct arts and culture organization within all of the Toronto, Ontario, and Canadian landscapes. The principal aim is to present a backdrop to the study that enhances understanding of the participant HFC organization and its embedded attributes of sustainability.

Table 1: A contextual overview of Harbourfront Centre

POLITICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The “Harbourfront Corporation”, a federal Crown Corporation established in 1972, was “re-invented” in 1991 as “Harbourfront Centre” (HFC). On 1st January, 1991 HFC was formed as a non-profit charitable organization “with a mandate to organize and present public events” and given the responsibility to operate a 10-acre site of Toronto’s central waterfront “encompassing York Quay and John Quay (south of Queens Quay West)” and includes the adjacent water lots (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., xix; Harbourfront Centre, n.d., xi p.5; Boyle, 2012; and Sa’d, 2012a). • “The site and buildings are owned by the City of Toronto and leased to Harbourfront Centre on a renewable basis for a period of 99+99 years”. Harbourfront Centre has been assigned the responsibility for performing all necessary operational functions on and improvements to the site. The Pier 4 buildings do not fall within the ambit of HFC’s 99-year land lease but revenues derived from these buildings belong to HFC (Vosberg, 2012; and Harbourfront Centre, 2000, p.9). • Harbourfront Centre’s political mandate is aligned with the federal government’s policies to revitalize the entire central waterfront area that housed abandoned relicts of Toronto’s industrial past. This involves revitalization of the Harbourfront area through the promotion of public cultural events that would unite the downtown core with Lake Ontario (Department of Finance Canada, 2010). • The Centre is governed by a 26 persons volunteer Board of Directors, and operated by a professional management team and staff of approximately 200 full-time equivalents in addition to a workforce of over 2000 volunteers (Boyle, 2012; and Sa’d, 2012a).
ECONOMIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HFC non-profit arts and culture organization offers more than 4,000 multidisciplinary events that are in most cases free or subsidised to ensure its accessibility to the public. HFC has developed entrepreneurial revenue streams (derived from parking, restaurants, shops, sailing and power boating etc.) to help finance its highly-subsidized and free programs (Sa’d, 2012h; and 2012c). • Some annual core operational funding is derived from the federal

	<p>government through the Harbourfront Centre Funding Program (HCFP). The aim of the HCFP is to assist HFC in: covering operational costs; enhancing revenue-generating strategies, and enabling HFC to leverage non-HCFP funding from other governmental tiers (municipal and provincial) and non-governmental sources (Department of Finance Canada, 2010).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HFC generates approximately 1,425 full time jobs and contributes an average of \$132 million annually to the local economy (Ibid). • As of the year ended 31 March, 2011, the assets of HFC are \$35,207,257.00 (which includes current, capital and intangible assets). The HFC operating budget is on average \$32.0 million (Boyle, 2012; Sa'd, 2012a; and Harbourfront Corporation, 2011). • Harbourfront Centre derived its revenue (for the year ended March 31, 2011) from: a Government of Canada operating contribution (\$6.2 million); government programming grants (\$3.9 million); the City of Toronto operating contribution (\$1 million); corporate sponsorship and donations (\$2.6 million); event admissions and registration (\$3.2 million); facility rental (\$1.3 million); and earned revenue of \$4.9 million obtained from parking, concessions and other income (Ibid). • HFC has a number of tenants such as yacht clubs; cruise lines; restaurants; condos and residences; Queens Quay Terminal; City of Toronto buildings (Water Management); the Disabled Sailing Association (Sa'd, 2012d).
SOCIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A multi-use iconic public space and popular tourist destination in Toronto, HFC attracts over 17 million visitors annually, according to the EKOS Survey of 2011 (Harbourfront Centre, 2012c). • HFC has been promoting innovation and creativity through diverse genres of theatre, music, film, dance, visual arts, new media, literature and fine craft (Toronto Community Foundation, 2011). • Harbourfront Centre works in partnership with over 450 community groups to foster innovation and the creativity of the human spirit (Waterfront Toronto Annual Report 2006/7, p.27). • HFC is involved in showcasing a multiplicity of Canadian and international cultures from almost every distinct part of the world. • The Centre is involved in staging year-round artistic, cultural, recreational and educational programming (Ibid). • HFC consists of multiple venues that include places of interest such as: World Café, Enwave Theatre, Fleck Dance Theatre, craft studios, West Jet Outdoor Amphitheatre, Pier 4 and others (Boyle, 2012; and Sa'd 2012a). • The organization places emphasis on intergenerational programming such as school visits, summer camps, workshops, courses, exhibitions and other recreational activities for all age groups. Programmes are designed specifically for youth and children such as: symposia, HarbourKIDS Camp programme, ALOUD, Forest of Reading® Festival of

	<p>Trees™, School Visits programme and others (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., ii).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre promotes family-oriented activities and involves visitors in “active learning” through interactive educational programs and workshops. HFC caters to participation by a wide spectrum of groups within and beyond the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The demographic diversity of local visitors is reflective of the ethno-cultural landscape of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) (Harbourfront Centre, 2012c).
ENVIRONMENTAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The physical site forms part of the publicly protected waterfront area that belongs to the Harbourfront Parks and Open Spaces System. • HFC’s site is located within the Toronto waterfront area and is part of the on-going urban waterfront revitalization process undertaken by Waterfront Toronto (Water’s Edge Revitalization Program) to transform this area into a “public destination with vibrant public and cultural space capable of providing a variety of experiences and amenities” (Waterfront Toronto, n.d., i). • HFC began the development of its sustainability program as a corollary to its organizational commitment in 2007 to improve its environmental performance and minimize impacts. In 2007 HFC initiated its sustainability program, which it asserts to be “sincere and systematic” (Sa’d, 2012h; and Sa’d, 2012f). • The Centre has a Clean Marine Program to ensure proper environmental stewardship of its marinas (Ibid). • The soon-to-be completed Canada Square and Urban Square will feature more green spaces at HFC. These green urban spaces will include “miniature forests” of Quaking Aspen and a “vertical garden” of Metasequoia trees. This is part of the multi-phased Revitalization of York Quay Project (Waterfront Toronto, n.d. ,ii).
TECHNOLOGICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state-of-the art Harbourfront Centre Pump Out (John Quay) has been installed to prevent effluent pollution from entering Lake Ontario (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., iii). • Live WebCams with live stream online videos enable the public to view activities such as outdoor concerts taking place at HFC (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., iv). • HFC has retrofitted the Enwave Theatre and transformed it into the first building in the world with combined building-integrated photovoltaic (BIPV) technology with glass art and heat mirror technology. This project has showcased the aesthetic appeal of sustainable art combined with BIPV solar technology. A permanent artistic image, created by Artist Sarah Hall, has been developed on the glass envelope of the Enwave Theatre to generate electricity during daylight and to be backlit with programmable, colour-changing LED lights at night (Sa’d, 2012j; and Sa’d, 2012g). • HFC promotes multidisciplinary programmes that have a strong focus on integrating technological innovations with creative diversity in

	<p>genres, artistic practices, and interpretative methods (exhibitions, educational and recreational programs, live and recorded performances etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HFC facilitates the integration of technology in the visual and performing arts, such as dance choreography and theatre productions (Next Steps, Dance Works and World Stage among others). Technological innovations such as animation and interactive works are promoted in many of HFC’s programming initiatives (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., v). • The Light Cascade is an innovative and artistic 30 metre reflective glass and mylar artwork (curtainwall) that was built to provide natural daylight for the York Quay underground parking garage (Daily Commercial News and Construction Records, 2012; and Boyle, 2012). • A variety of analytical software tools are utilized for data analyses pertinent to HFC’s environmental sustainability initiatives. These include: Bilan Carbone®; eQuest; DesignBuilder; Hoboware Pro; Fluke Smart View; Power Log; PVSYST; RETScreen and NRCan Project Financing Model (Sa’d, 2012e).
STAKEHOLDERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government of Canada; • The Province of Ontario; • The City of Toronto; • Visitors (children, adults, school groups, tourists, audiences, “gazers”); • Funders (patrons, organizations); • Employees (administrative staff and volunteers); • Agencies and community partners; • Corporate partners and foundations; • Sponsors; • Media; • Program partners and special events participants; • Approximately 450 local and foreign community and ethno-cultural groups each year (involved in arts and culture); • Consultants; • Neighbours/tenants; • Regulatory bodies such as Ontario’s Ministry of the Environment (MOE); and • Community-based organizations.
LEGAL/ REGULATORY FRAMEWORK (federal and provincial laws and regulations; municipal by laws and the City of Toronto’s green policies and programs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA),1999; • Environmental Assessment Act, R.S.O 1990; • Ontario Water Resources Act, R.SO 1990; • Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990; • Ontario 3Rs Regulations (O. Reg 102 and 103); • Waste Audits and Waste Reduction Work Plans (O. Reg 10/94); • This central waterfront area is governed by municipal Zoning By Laws, G1 of the Zoning By Law 289-93 (City of Toronto Official Plan, 2010); • The area occupied by Harbourfront Centre is designated as Parks and

	<p>Open Spaces (G zone) according to Section 4.3 of the Toronto Official Plan, 2006. The waterfront area is classified as a G Zone which permits recreational uses such as: bathing station; conservation lands; golf course; marina; parks; playing fields; public park; public playground and others. In addition, this area has permitted industrial usage. Re-zoning of officially designated land use is required by HFC for change of use as exemplified in the case of retail use (Ibid);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Roof By Law (Section 108 of the City of Toronto Act); • Toronto Renewable Energy By Law; • The Toronto Green Standard (TGS); • Bird-friendly Development Guidelines; • Sustainable Energy Funds (SEFs); • Eco-Roof Incentive Program; • Better Buildings Partnership; • Energy Retrofit Program for City Buildings; • Toronto Atmospheric Fund (TAF); and • Energy Efficiency Building Code (2010).
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6.0 MANAGING SUSTAINABILITY: HARBOURFRONT CENTRE’S APPROACH

An overview of HFC’s historical context and background, corporate philosophies and values, governance structure, decision-making processes, and the policies and practices at HFC are highlighted below within distinctive sub-sections. In addition, the results derived from the analysis of HFC’s sustainability initiatives and organizational approach form an integral component of the discussions in this section. While the across-the-board organizational ethos, programming mandate, policies and practices of HFC are socially-oriented, HFC’s approach to sustainability is predominantly environmental. *The main sustainability focus of HFC is on strengthening its economic base by leveraging funding opportunities to finance its ‘green’ initiatives aimed at reducing its ‘ecological footprint’ through the use of artistic and innovative technology and carbon accounting methodologies.*

The Ecological Footprint concept is originated by William Rees, a Professor at the University of British Columbia, and co-developed alongside Mathis Wackernagel (who is now President of the Global Footprint Network). It is a synoptical statement of the ecological position of an individual, entity, or group based on lifestyle habits that affect resource consumption, waste generation and biological space utilization (Global Footprint Network, 2012).

6.1 HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

This harbour front area in Toronto has been developed by land reclamation through lake filling in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which was undertaken along the northern shores of Lake Ontario (City of Toronto, n.d.). The area stretches along a 100 acre parcel of prime land located within the downtown

core of Toronto. The harbour front area represents a rich tapestry of the historical and cultural heritage that has shaped and re-defined the evolving multicultural City of Toronto. Its historical legacy includes the presence of First Nations' inhabitants, the trading posts of European colonizers, military battles, early industrialization, and shipping and immigration waves (Evenson and Young, 2002, p.24).

Initially, Harbourfront Centre was established (and Harbourfront Corporation formed) through federal government intervention in 1972. It was designated as a crown corporation with a mandate to regenerate 100 hectares of the blighted central waterfront area and to convert it to public use as "parkland and open space" (Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1990 ,p.8). The early planning directive was to revitalize the decrepit waterfront area so that it would be transformed into "a vital, vibrant and accessible public space" that would link the residents of Toronto to the water's edge (The Royal Commission, 1989, p.6).

Harbourfront Centre occupies a 10-acre section of prime waterfront property abutting Lake Ontario. It comprises the York Quay Centre, Enwave Theatre, Power Plant Art Gallery, Fleck Dance Theatre, the Natrel® Rink and Natrel® Pond (seasonal), on-site craft studios, boardwalks, multi-purpose facilities, marinas, plazas, playgrounds, the Westjet and Redpath stages (for outdoor concerts), display venues, administrative offices, restaurants (Lakeside Eats and World Café) and other facilities. HFC has converted its relic industrial buildings from the 1920s, such as the heating and power plant, the ice house and the old trucking garage, into modern facilities through creative adaptive reuse. These original industrial buildings are a remnant of Toronto's industrial and shipping past (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., xi, pp.7-8).

6.2 PHILOSOPHY, MISSION, VISION AND PROGRAMMING MANDATE

The tenets of Harbourfront Centre that guide its policy formulation, strategies and operations are illustrated in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Diagram of the core values of HFC (Source: Adapted from Harbourfront Centre, 2011).



Harbourfront Centre distinguishes itself as “an innovative, non-profit cultural organization which provides internationally renowned programming in the arts, culture, education and recreation, all within a collection of distinctive venues in the heart of Toronto’s downtown waterfront” (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., xi, p.3). Its approach to urban renewal and revitalization of the Toronto waterfront has been through the media of arts and culture (Toronto Community Foundation, 2011).

Table 2: HFC’s Mission, Vision and Programming Mandate.

MISSION: “To nurture the growth of new cultural expressions, stimulate Canadian and international interchange and provide a dynamic, accessible environment for the public to experience the marvels of the creative imagination” (Toronto Community Foundation, 2011).

MISSION FOR CAPACITY AND CULTURE DEVELOPMENT: “To help create a culture of sustainability by:

- Championing easily executable, staff-driven environmental initiatives
- Encouraging engagement of staff on issues and opportunities related to the environment of relevance to the work we do [at HFC] each day” (Harbourfront Centre, 2012a).

VISION: “A vibrant home for the culture of our time, inspiring people through the magic of the creative spirit” (Harbourfront Centre, n.d.,i).

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY VISION: “Harbourfront Centre will take a leadership position through the greening of the Harbourfront Centre site in a manner consistent with its artistic diversity and cultural roots. This should result in the development of a site that is a model of green transformation through aggressive and intelligent improvements, and in doing so; Harbourfront Centre will engage constituents through programming, education and becoming a source of inspiration to all” (Harbourfront Centre, 2012b).

PROGRAMMING MANDATE: “To showcase the work of contemporary Canadian artists in all creative disciplines and to place those artistic achievements within a broad international context by simultaneously presenting leading-edge artists from around the world”

“Harbourfront Centre is committed to working with artists from diverse cultural communities who have not yet worked with a mainstream organization.”
(Toronto Community Foundation, 2011).

6.3 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Harbourfront Centre has been a provincially-incorporated, federally-registered charitable organization since 1991. HFC functions as a separate entity from the City of Toronto and governs its allotted site that is leased in perpetuity. The organization is responsible for operations such as waste management, snow removal, and water clean-up among others (Boyle, 2012; Sa'd, 2012e; and Harbourfront Centre, 2012a).

Harbourfront Centre is framed within a democratic context of inclusive governance, ethno-cultural diversity, and inclusion (Harbourfront Centre, 2012d). It is governed by a community-based Board of Directors that comprises 26 members of which 19 directors are elected members and seven (7) are ex-officio representatives from the three tiers of Canadian government, namely the federal, provincial, and municipal. Two (2) of the seven (7) ex-officio directors are representatives from the Government of Canada, two (2) are provincial representatives from Ontario's Ministry of Culture, and three (3) are from the City of Toronto (DiverseCity, 2011).

The organization is involved in collaborative engagement with its many stakeholder groups. Public and stakeholder consultation has been a key element in the development of Harbourfront Centre. A comprehensive public consultation process has been implemented to foster dialogue among multi-stakeholder groups, strengthen consensus-building, and to develop a common shared vision.

A synthesis of participatory "bottom-up" and "top down" approaches to the decision-making process exist at HFC. For example, the implementation of a "change management plan" alongside HFC's Environmental Sustainability Program has led to more influential roles for employees; two-way channels for communication; stronger decision-making impetus; and more "bottom-up" solutions-oriented actions. The Environmental Sustainability Program has fostered employee-driven initiatives and regular feedback is encouraged within an inclusive program structure. All Directors provide access to their staff for sustainability initiatives at HFC and facilitate their involvement in the decision-making process, thus allowing them to make inputs in the plans and programs of the organization (Sa'd, 2012f).

6.4 POLICIES AND PRACTICES

The policies and practices of Harbourfront Centre are underpinned by the four (4) pillars upon which the organization has been founded. These include the following (Boyle, 2012; Sa'd, 2012a; and Harbourfront Centre, n.d., xi, p. 4):

- **Pillar 1-Physical site** (a prime waterfront asset of Toronto and a legacy conserved for future generations);
- **Pillar 2-Community engagement** (forging partnerships with community and cultural groups and providing the active space for diverse groups to interact);
- **Pillar 3-Artistic innovation and excellence** (a venue to promote arts and culture-based community events and to foster a spirit of artistic creativity and excellence); and

- **Pillar 4-An entrepreneurial organization** (providing free and affordable public programming and developing creative approaches to generating funds).

Diversity is interwoven within the fabric of HFC’s activities and operations. It is regarded as the keystone of the organization. From its inception, diversity has been embodied within the design of its physical space; the array of art and art-forms; cultural celebrations; eclectic programming and the inclusion of Toronto’s multicultural grassroots organizations and artists. It is also reflected in the wide cross-section of local and international visitors and patrons that are drawn to Harbourfront Centre on an annual basis.

Harbourfront Centre has implemented policies that focus on promoting diversity and inclusivity through its targeted recruiting and hiring of volunteers, staff, board members, and advisory and programming committees. In 2003, an Access Strategic Plan was adopted by Harbourfront Centre that was founded on its precursor, the Strategic Plan for Linguistic, Cultural and Racial Diversity (Maytree, 2011). The primary intent was to ensure diversity and inclusivity in Harbourfront Centre that was reflective of the multiculturalism of the City of Toronto. An important feature of this Access Strategic Plan is the “at a glance” grid that serves as a visual yardstick to measure established indicators of diversity (ethnicity, culture, gender, skills, social status, age, language etc.) and to identify gaps that need to be filled to attain equilibrium of inclusivity that is reflective of the wider society of Toronto (Ibid). The Centre is compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards of accessibility. Moreover, HFC adheres to all of AODA’s standards that are founded on the core principles of “independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.” The entire staff is trained in AODA Customer Service Standards (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., vii).

6.5 RESULTS

A panoramic perspective of the policies, operations and initiatives at Harbourfront Centre reveals that HFC has sustainability attributes in a number of key areas. This section seeks to highlight some key 3BL-like achievements at HFC that are congruent with the social and economic domains of sustainability.

The notably identifiable 3BL-like sustainability achievements of HFC collectively include the following, among others:

- In 2008, Harbourfront Centre became the recipient of the Diversity in Governance Award from the Maytree Foundation for its leading role in acquiring a Board of Directors that was “reflective of Toronto’s growing ethnic and cultural diversity.” This emphasis on diversity is echoed by the Chief Executive Officer at Harbourfront Centre, William J.S. Boyle, who has said that, “Reflecting and celebrating Canada’s diverse population has been central to Harbourfront Centre’s mission since its inception...” (Maytree, 2011).
- The Planet IndigenUS Festival at HFC is regarded as one of the largest contemporary international Indigenous arts festival in the world (Ontario Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, 2012).
- The Power Plant at HFC is one of Canada’s foremost contemporary visual art galleries (The Power Plant, 2012).

- HFC hosts large-scale international projects such as World Stage; the International Festival of Authors, and others (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., viii).
- Incubators such as the Craft Studio Artist-in-Residence Programme; HATCH, and Fresh Ground new works serve to inspire, foster creativity and enhance the skills of emerging artistes. Many participants of the annual “Hatch” performing artist residency programme have gained national and international recognition and won awards for their productions, including Hannah Moscovitch’s “The Russian Play” (Ibid, ix).
- The Craft Department at HFC has gained international standing for its four (4) working studios; the Artist-in-Residence Programme, and its unique Post Graduate programme (Ibid, x).
- A participatory approach was employed to engage key stakeholders through the process of a Sustainable Design Charette, which was facilitated by Sustainable Buildings Canada. This was initiated by the City of Toronto who hired Sustainable Buildings Canada to facilitate the process which resulted in HFC’s Green Vision Statement and Harbourfront Centre’s Green Strategies Charrette (Sustainable Buildings Canada, 2009).
- According to the Department of Finance Canada (2010) Evaluation Report, HFC has been “associated with positive economic outcomes in three categories: employment outcomes, value-added-impacts (value created through the production of goods and services) and government revenues.” Moreover, Harbourfront Centre has made strides towards attaining financial sustainability.
- The Concept Development Grant by the Toronto Atmospheric Fund (TAF) has enabled HFC to leverage a number of funding opportunities that are available to support organizations undertaking green/environmental initiatives. Table 2 below shows the leveraged funding obtained by HFC for the period 2009 to 2012 (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., xiv; and Sa’d, 2012g).
- According to Randy Sa’d (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., xvi; and Sa’d, 2012j) HFC has been gaining attention in the corporate sector for what has been referred to as its “innovative and transformative environmental sustainability model”.

Table 3: The funding HFC leveraged as a result of its environmental sustainability initiatives.

FUNDING ORGANIZATION	CONTRIBUTION
CASH GRANTS SECURED	
Government of Canada-Canadian Heritage	\$495,442
Enwave Inc.	\$300,000
Government of Ontario-Ontario Trillium Foundation	\$228,950
City of Toronto-Environment Office	\$149,580
City of Toronto-Energy Efficiency Office	\$10,200
City of Toronto-Toronto Atmospheric Fund	\$50,000
Government of Ontario-Community Energy Partnerships Program	\$36,540
SUB-TOTAL	\$1,325,652
LOANS SECURED	
City of Toronto-Toronto Atmospheric Fund	\$117,000
City of Toronto-Energy Efficiency Office (0% interest)	\$572,000
SUB-TOTAL	\$689,000
TOTAL	\$2,014,652

Source: Harbourfront Centre, 2012b; and S'ad, 2012e.

7.0 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF SUSTAINABILITY AT HFC

The focal point of this section is to provide a succinct analysis of the principal research findings emanating from this sustainability case study. Firstly, it explores the current across-the-board initiatives and strategies at HFC that align with the three dimensions of sustainability. It subsequently highlights the challenges faced by HFC to effectively implement and embed sustainable development within its operations and practices. Thirdly, this section captures the lessons learned from this real-life practice of sustainability at HFC.

7.1 ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES AT HFC

In 2007, Harbourfront Centre, through a mandate by its Board of Directors, committed itself as an organization to the mitigation of its ecological impacts. In its initial stages, HFC had to find innovative ways to manoeuvre through the challenges of developing its Environmental Sustainability Program despite the lack of available finances and other resources, including expertise. The Environmental Sustainability Program at HFC *started from scratch, akin to the adoption of an artistic blank canvass approach*, reflective of the engrained organizational ethos of innovation and creative thinking. Consequently, HFC adopted a strategic approach to environmental sustainability. This journey has led to environmental sustainability initiatives at HFC, which include the following:

- HFC partnered with the consultancy Internat Energy Solutions Canada and the French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME) to become the first organization in North America to use the Bilan Carbone® methodology. Through this partnership with Internat Energy Solutions Canada (IESC) and ADEME (the Government of France), Harbourfront Centre was selected as an overseas demonstration project for the Bilan Carbone® GHG emissions accounting instrument and methodology (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., xvii; and Sa'd, 2012j). The implementation of the Bilan Carbone (rebranded Encompass™ in North America) carbon accounting methodologies and risk management tools helped HFC to employ scientifically-based performance indicators to quantify a full scope life-cycle inventory of its direct and indirect greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions based on the entire breadth of its operations (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., xiv; and Sa'd, 2012g). Furthermore, the Bilan Carbone® methodology is currently being utilized by HFC as a guide and framework for conducting energy audits of its facilities and operations as well as developing its GHG reduction strategy (Harbourfront Centre 2012a, p.12; and Internat Energy Solutions China, n.d.).
- The Enwave Theatre is regarded as the world's first example of a building with a glass envelope that is made up of building-integrated photovoltaic cells (BIPV) combined with heat mirror technology and permanent glass artwork (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., xv; and Sa'd, 2012j; and Sa'd, 2012g).
- In the first year of implementation, over 100 environmental sustainability initiatives were prioritized that resulted in improved operations at HFC. Approximately 40 prospective projects were analyzed in details to quantify and qualify all potential financial, environmental and social impacts for the organization (Harbourfront Centre 2012a, p.12).
- A multi-dimensional profit centre in environmental sustainability was created within the organization. This profit centre is fuelled by externally secured funding and grants as well as cost savings that are regarded as revenue. This is reinvested to fund new projects. The financial model has enabled Harbourfront Centre to develop its entire program as well as initiate and complete over 40 projects valued to the tune of over \$2 million and which started with a zero-dollar budget. The profit centre is founded on the premise that revenue potential can be tapped from a variety of sources. The primary revenue sources include grants, sponsorships, and low-interest loans. The profit centre hinges on synergistic partnerships with external organizations such as companies and government agencies that recognize the benefits of supporting HFC's

environmental sustainability program, methodology-building initiatives, and innovative energy-saving initiatives (Sa'd, 2012f).

- A comprehensive valuation model or a “return on investment” (ROI) model has recently been developed by HFC. This forms part of a system used for prioritizing a broad spectrum of potential impact-reducing environmental projects that are being evaluated by HFC on an on-going basis. A comprehensive methodology was developed for assessing and prioritizing the value of potential environmental projects at Harbourfront Centre based on environmental, social, and financial criteria. Each prospective project is assessed according to potential triple bottom line-like related benefits that can be derived from its implementation. Both qualitative and quantitative assessments are carried out on each project to ascertain the extent of its full potential for the entire organization. This enables HFC to prioritize prospective projects within the broader context of its overarching program objectives and organizational constraints (Sa'd, 2012c; and Sa'd, 2012f).
- A “Change Management Program” was implemented to embed and foster a culture of environmental sustainability by educating, motivating, and engaging employees. Several structures are employed to support decision making and implementation. The Program’s Leadership Team consists of a Program Champion, a private technical partner, the Director of Operations, and CEO; all of whom provide top level leadership. At present, all of HFC’s Directors have been engaged in the Environmental Sustainability Program. An internal Eco Action Team made up of employee representatives from across the organization is involved as part of its “capacity and culture development” to engage employees in the program. Regular communication and engagement with staff on sustainability issues is communicated via newsletters, annual surveys, and an internal website that highlights sustainability (Ibid).
- Harbourfront Centre is in the process of initiating a knowledge-sharing program to disseminate information through educational workshops. These workshops are conducted for other organizations desirous of emulating HFC’s environmental sustainability model. This methodology has been designed by HFC to act as a replicable framework to enable organizations to develop and implement a comprehensive environmental sustainability program. The purpose of the knowledge-sharing network is “to empower leaders to successfully integrate environmental responsibility into their organizations as a core value; one that influences planning and decision-making at all levels and naturally generates a shift in culture” (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., xiii; and Sa'd, 2012e).

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES

Alongside Harbourfront Centre’s commitment to environmental sustainability and its notable achievements in this regard, the organization is also confronted with challenges in achieving its fullest sustainable development potential. Table three (3) below presents a synopsis of the current and potential challenges faced by HFC in addressing a 3BL intersection of environmental, social, and economic sustainability issues.

Table 4:
CHALLENGES FOR 3BL SUSTAINABILITY AT HARBOURFRONT CENTRE.

- The Bilan Carbone® greenhouse gas accounting methodology was utilized to calculate HFC's direct and indirect carbon footprint. The assessment revealed that approximately 95% of HFC's indirect ecological impacts were due to visitor travel (Harbourfront Centre, 2012a, pp.12 and 19). HFC is challenged to effectively reduce its indirect ecological footprint that is primarily due to its 17 million annual visitors who travel to and from the site.
- The implementation of organization-wide 3BL programming strategies that intentionally influence the sustainability attitudes and behaviours of patrons and visitors is needed at HFC. However, a comprehensive sustainability strategy can present a monitoring and evaluation challenge for HFC when considering its available resources, the diversity of its programs, the scale of its operations, and its millions of annual visitors.
- Strategically embedding 3BL sustainability within day-to-day operations is important to mitigate adverse and interconnected environmental, social, and economic impacts throughout the organization. The challenge lies in changing the established mindset of employees and volunteers so that each person becomes mindful of their actions and behaviour, and practices personal sustainability in their daily lives.
- An ongoing challenge exists in creating a staff-driven culture of sustainability and in adopting employee-driven initiatives through the "change management program". Effective consensus building and ongoing employee engagement can be an initial challenge in areas where traditional top-down management practices may, if at all, be entrenched within the organization.
- Harbourfront Centre as a non-profit registered-charity needs to develop a stable and innovative financial model that sustains all programs and ensures the organization's financial self-sufficiency by expanding its horizon to leverage more non-HCFP (Harbourfront Centre Funding Program) funding (Department of Finance Canada, 2010). The main challenge is strengthening the financial capacity of the organization to generate new and ongoing revenue including earned revenues; minimizing the risks associated with any reliance on grant-, donation- and sponsorship-based funding; implementing effective cost-recovery measures; and leveraging funding through innovative strategies.
- Overcoming resistance to change and creating a corporate political will to promote sustainability within the organization is required by HFC (Sa'd, 2012f). A challenge for HFC is achieving unanimity or near-unanimity across all spectrum of the organization (starting with top-level management) to embrace triple bottom line initiatives.
- Formulating a convincing business case for 3BL sustainability as a means to create strong buy-in from its multiplicity of stakeholders can be a challenge for a socially-driven organization with a mandate such as that held by HFC. Furthermore, HFC is a complex organization with a broad spectrum of operations within a multi-purpose building-complex that promotes thousands of programs and activities that are run by hundreds of community groups (Ibid).

7.3 LESSONS LEARNED

An important aspect of this sustainability case study is the identification of crucial lessons learned as derived from HFC's overall commitment to the social and economic aspects of sustainability, and its emphasis placed on environmental sustainability operations, initiatives, and practices. The focus is on providing a high-level or panoramic view of across-the-board sustainability lessons obtained from this case study. Moreover, it not only encapsulates the essence of HFC's notably identifiable successes with sustainability, it also explores the key areas for current and future improvements. Furthermore, these environmental sustainability strategies are reviewed in juxtaposition to HFC's across-the-board 'social' and 'economic' approaches, and are collectively considered from a panoramic perspective of the overall 3BL-like sustainability landscape at Harbourfront Centre.

This section explores two categories of lessons learned. The first category focuses on the principal lessons learned by HFC itself, as based on its organizational experience related predominantly to its environmental sustainability strategies. The second category discusses the broader lessons a reader might learn after benefit of analysing this fuller sustainability case study on HFC.

The principal environmental sustainability lessons learned by HFC itself, as based on its organizational experience, include the following:

1. The primary focus of HFC is public engagement through the compelling and transformative "art of sustainability" by stimulating the sustainable development dialogue with a fresh fusion of fun and inspiration (Sa'd, 2012j; and Sa;d, 2012g). Harbourfront Centre is keen on developing an innovative programming model, in tandem with individual artistic projects, which look at sustainability through the lens of arts and culture. Through its "art of sustainability" approach it has given precedence to the transformative power of memorable experiences through the media of arts and culture. HFC has recognized the *ineffectiveness* of some conventional methods that rely solely on cold facts to foster environmental awareness. This approach has failed to inspire and motivate the non-environmentally conscious members of the public and has instead left many people sceptical and impassive when confronted with sustainability themes. Harbourfront Centre has committed itself to creating memorable artistic experiences that appeal to the emotions and perceptions of visitors so that they can, through self-discovery, explore their personal relationship with the environment and in so doing re-contextualize their responses to its needs. It is envisaged that behavioural change can emanate through the utilization of a stimulus-rich environment that actively engages the minds and hearts of visitors to reconsider behaviours and lifestyles that are unsustainable. Harbourfront Centre is in the process of developing an approach to fostering sustainability awareness and public engagement that is innovative. HFC seeks to:

- 1.1 Devise an innovative approach to exploring sustainability themes and social issues in more compelling manners through thought-provoking, challenging, and inspiring ways rather than through message-enforcing conventional methods;

- 1.2 Provide a unique solution designed to engage the non-environmentally conscious who have been alienated by the barrage of guilt-laden and uninteresting facts by “green-washers”; and
- 1.3 Develop a contemporary arts program that features the works of leading international artists that aims to strike a more emotional chord in visitors by inspiring them through compelling subliminal messages (Sa’d, 2012j).

The broader lessons a reader might learn, after benefit of analysing this fuller sustainability case study on HFC, include the following:

2. In general, the environmental sustainability focus at HFC is substantive and goes beyond any conventional *green* ‘cosmetic’ or ‘window dressing’ approach. HFC’s Environmental Sustainability Program has the potential to become a launch-pad that enables 3BL sustainability initiatives to be embedded into the core of the organization.
3. HFC can recognize the intrinsic potential values that exist within its organization and utilize these as the framework upon which its’ current Environmental Sustainability Program can incorporate a multi-dimensional, systems-like approach to sustainability as a way to ‘add-value’ within the organization.
4. A strategic focus of the Environmental Sustainability Program at HFC is its efforts to develop a model built upon and honed in the context of its operations and innovative initiatives as well as experiences with environmental sustainability. Harbourfront Centre is attempting to produce a universally-applicable “prototype” of corporate environmental sustainability. Moreover, HFC seeks to employ a “ripple effect” approach to sustainability through its efforts to devise a replicable model that can inspire and enhance the capability of other organizations along the sustainability trajectory (Sa’d, 2012f).
 - a. AUTHORS’ NOTE: This case study specifically emphasizes, however, that while a ‘general framework for environmental sustainability’ as applied to other arts and culture organizations may be theoretically-feasible for HFC to achieve, an attempt to develop an environmental sustainability model or “prototype” that is “universally-applicable” to all types of organizations is inconsistent with the ethos of 3BL sustainability. This is as supported by *Agenda 21*, the United Nations 1992 ‘action plan for sustainable development’, which established the early and original framework for sustainability planning and strategies. 3BL sustainability specifically calls for individual, even customized, approaches that reflect the unique needs and context of each organization and its local environment.
5. The organization is developing a sustainable financial model that goes beyond simple payback periods to one that enhances the financial capability of HFC to initiate environmental sustainability projects and to decrease operational costs by utilizing financial opportunities to leverage funding and sponsorship for environmental sustainability initiatives (Ibid).

6. The experience of Harbourfront Centre exemplifies the benefits of a shared value in sustainability that can be derived through internal and external collaboration, including through symbiotic partnerships with other organizations. These partnerships have enabled HFC to secure funding and to acquire knowledge of cutting-edge environmental sustainability-related methodology and technology.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

Harbourfront Centre has given the human factor pre-eminence in its sustainability drive. Moreover, HFC has framed its creative approach to sustainability in an artistic process embedded within an environment where the artistic expression predominates. This entrepreneurial and inventive arts and culture organization has ventured off the beaten path and embraced an innovative approach to sustainability that harnesses “the magic of the creative spirit” (Harbourfront Centre, n.d., i). The compelling power of arts and culture has been recognized throughout human history and this potential is being utilized by HFC to propel its sustainability initiatives and maximize its transformational influence. The sphere of influence for HFC, which is one of Canada’s most popular tourist destinations, extends beyond the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) to include its over 17 million annual visitors from across Canada and around the world.

Since 2007, the environmental sustainability program at HFC has played a key role in mitigating the environmental impacts of the organisation by strategically addressing its carbon footprint; operational costs, and exposure to risk. Its primary focus has been on creating shared value, building social capacity, knowledge sharing, environmental stewardship, social transformative influence, creating financial capacity, and collaborative engagement of stakeholders. Significant strides in sustainability have been made on many fronts. These include the implementation of the Bilan Carbone® methodology, the creation of shared value through strategic partnerships, a change management program, a new profit centre, a knowledge sharing program, and innovative technological initiatives such as the Enwave Theatre retrofit.

Harbourfront Centre has initiated a sustainability framework that, if strategically developed, implemented, and expanded upon, can: re-brand this arts and culture organization as a ‘sustainability organization’; enhance HFC’s competitive advantage; and propel it towards becoming an organization at the vanguard of 3BL sustainability practices in North America and on the global stage.

9.0 QUESTIONS

1. Identify and analyse in what ways, if any, Harbourfront Centre's approach to sustainability can be considered a "3BL approach" based on the conceptual and analytical framework of sustainable development presented. In so doing, identify and analyse key elements of the policies and processes that make Harbourfront Centre sustainable.
2. What gaps exist in Harbourfront Centre's sustainable development efforts? How can the organisation enhance its 3BL sustainability practices?
3. Analyse and determine how Harbourfront Centre can respond to its current challenges to integrate an effective 3BL sustainability program?
4. What are the beneficial factors you would consider when formulating a business case for sustainability to convince the Board of Directors at Harbourfront Centre, a charitable arts and culture organization, to make changes toward 3BL sustainable development?

10.0 REFERENCES

Explanation of citations (based on the Harvard Referencing System):

The sources with no available year of publication are stated as the abbreviated form 'n.d.' within the in-text citation throughout this case study. In this list of references, the source without an established year of publication is indicated with '(no date)', accompanied by a Roman numeral, to match the corresponding 'n.d.' in-text citations.

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11.0 APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR HARBOURFRONT CENTRE CASE STUDY

Name of Interviewer: Juliet Dhanraj

Organization Represented by Interviewer: G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education, Ryerson University

Name of Interviewee: Randy Sa'd

Position Title of Interviewee: Strategic Development, Harbourfront Centre

Mode of Interview: Face-to-face formal interview

Date and time of Interview: Wednesday 22nd August, 2012 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Designated Interview Location: Harbourfront Centre, 235 Queens Quay West, Toronto Ontario

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Thank you for granting me the privilege of this one (1) hour interview and for your kind consideration in this matter. Your cooperation in this exercise is greatly appreciated.

SECTION 2: PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The primary purpose of this interview is to glean background information on sustainability at Harbourfront Centre for a Case Study being formulated for the Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainability Management at the G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson University. Moreover, the primary data derived from this interview will be utilized in tandem with those from secondary sources, to analyze the current status of applied sustainability principles and existing triple bottom line or 3BL practices (social, economic and environmental pillars) at Harbourfront Centre.

SECTION 3: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the principles and objectives that guide Harbourfront Centre's Sustainability Program? Please explain.
2. How has the Sustainability Program assisted in enhancing the quality of life for local communities and visitors to Harbourfront Centre? Please explain.

3. How has Harbourfront Centre's Sustainability Program assisted in generating public awareness and fostering a deeper understanding of sustainability for local residents and visitors? Please explain.
4. What is the "change management program" implemented at HFC and how effective has it been in bringing about transformational change in employee engagement and capacity building in sustainability thinking and practices? Please explain.
5. What is the "innovative financial model" adopted by Harbourfront Centre and what differentiates it from other financial models in the industry? Please explain.
6. How effective has the funding model and "unique profit centre" adopted by Harbourfront Centre been in enabling the organization to achieve its goal of financial self-sufficiency? Please explain.
7. What type of socio-economic impacts does Harbourfront Centre have on the City of Toronto including its residents and visitors? (employment opportunities, investments, services etc.)? Please explain.
8. Is environmental sustainability being embedded in the decision-making process at Harbourfront Centre? If yes, please explain how.
9. What are the key areas of focus for triple bottom line (3BL) sustainability at Harbourfront Centre as it pertains to policy development; day-to-day operations; innovative initiatives and projects and programs for visitors? Please explain.
10. What differentiates Harbourfront Centre's Sustainability Program from other sustainability initiatives in the Non-Profit arts and culture industry? Please explain.
11. Why is the current Sustainability Program being referred to by Harbourfront Centre as "an innovative and transformative sustainability model"? Please explain.
12. What are the challenges, if any, to Harbourfront Centre's environmental sustainability drive? Please explain.
13. How has the utilization of the Bilan Carbone® methodology helped HFC to achieve its environmental sustainability mandate? Please explain.
14. What type of sustainability methodology has been developed by Harbourfront Centre to assess and prioritize prospective projects? Please explain.
15. Has Harbourfront Centre gleaned any economic and social benefits from its environmental sustainability initiatives? If yes, please explain.
16. Is there anything that you would like to add that was not mentioned and you regard as important for me to know about Harbourfront Centre?

Thank you very much for your valued time and insightful views. It is greatly appreciated