

Something has to be done.

It's important that we all begin to take action, both individually and collectively. We have to change what we do with rain water in Toronto. We need better ideas.

The kinds of approaches outlined in this brochure, can save money and make a healthier and more efficient city. Each of us can play a part, both through individual initiative and action, and by working together to help the city government change how it manages storm water..

If you would like to help explore these issues further, please call the Natural Systems Group at 977-5909.

The Natural Systems Group
Community-Based Solutions

Rain . . .



The publication of this information was made possible by a grant from the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Energy. The views and ideas expressed herein are those of the Natural Systems Group and do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Ministry of the Environment and Energy.

In some parts of the world, people pray for it. In places where water is plentiful, such as Toronto, rainfall is often seen as a problem — either there's too much of it, or it gets into the wrong places.

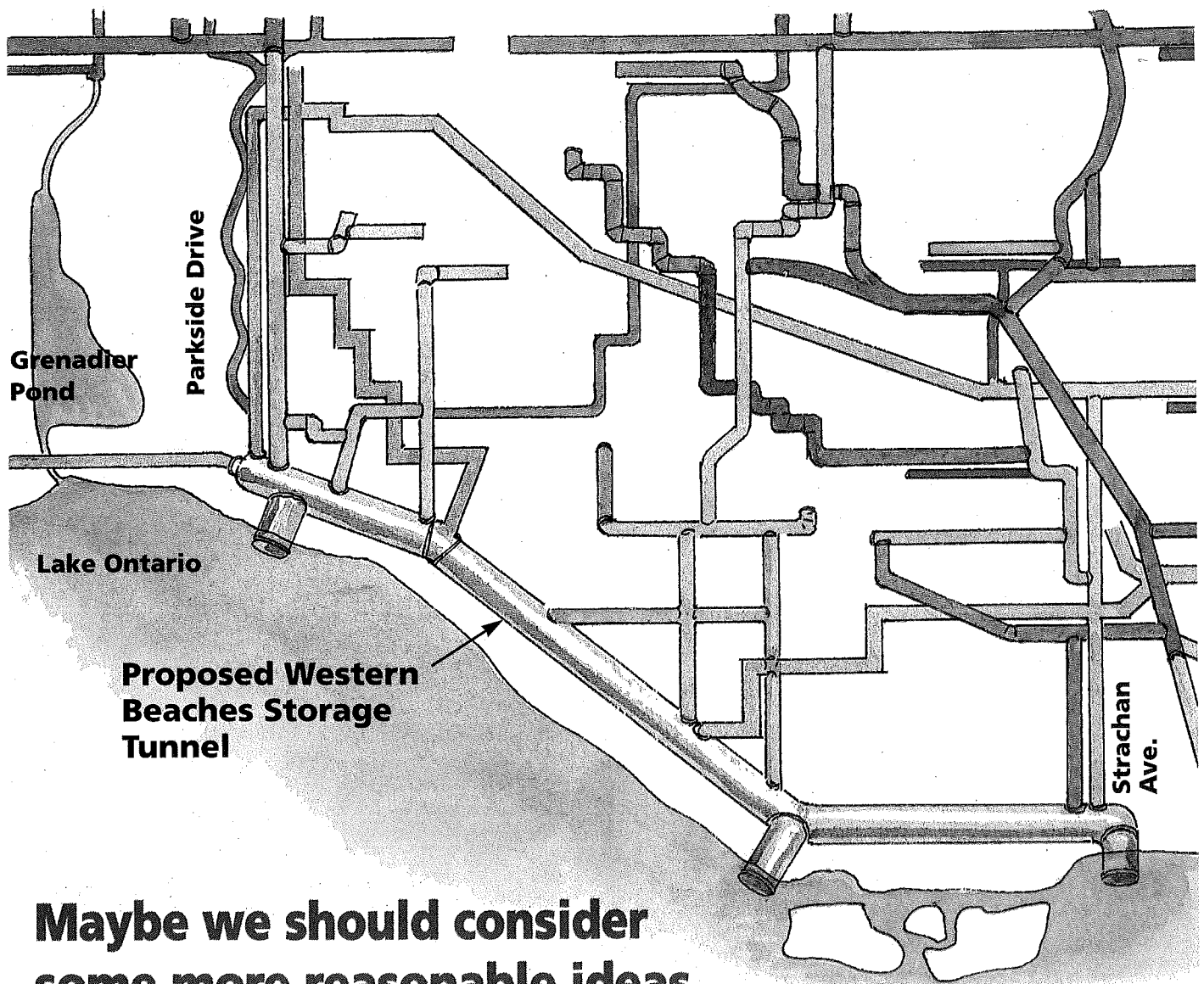
In trying to avoid some problems . . .



... and the new "solution" is going to cost you and me a lot of money.

City engineers have proposed building a large tunnel (with a 5.5 meter diameter) running under the water's edge for 4 kilometers to capture the flow from the sewers that now empty into the lake. The project is called the

Western Beaches Storage Tunnel and it's estimated it will cost tens of millions of dollars. This is a lot of money — and once the disruption of construction is over, it may not be the best solution.



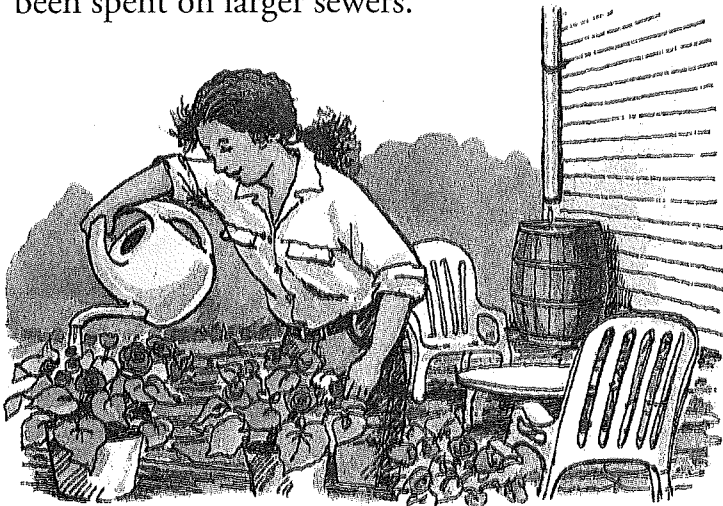
Maybe we should consider some more reasonable ideas . . .

a Resource

h of us can do at home:

Install rain barrels

We can install rain barrels under downspouts so that water can be stored and saved for watering the lawn and the garden. This actually saves the expense of paying for tap water from the city. It also saves tax dollars that would otherwise have been spent on larger sewers.



Use porous pavement

When paving yards (for parking), we should use porous pavement which allows rain water to be absorbed into the ground.



gs we can do together, through the city:

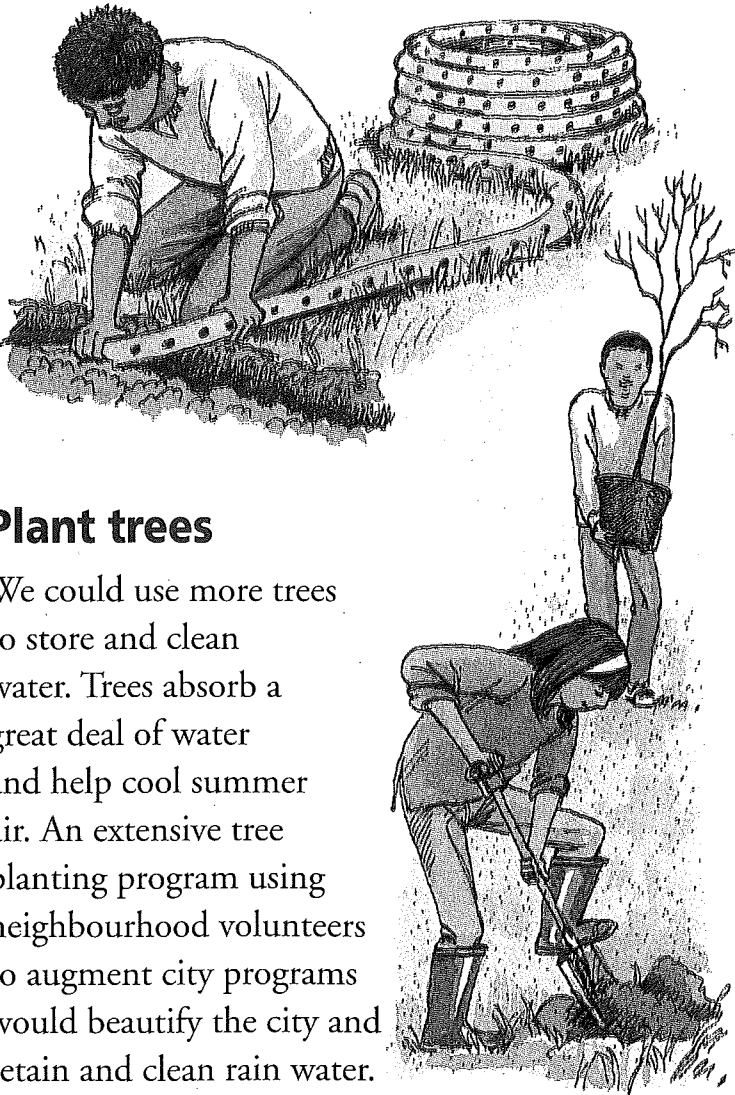
Create small marshes

Water cleans itself naturally in wetlands and small marsh areas, where plants thrive on the very things that make water polluted. Establishing some of these natural purifiers on parts of our beaches would also attract birds and other wildlife.



Install "leaky" pipes

The city can institute a program of installing perforated pipes which, instead of rushing rain water into the lake, help rain water become absorbed into the soil. The City now uses "leaky" pipes in rear lane drainage systems: this should be expanded to include other areas.



Plant trees

We could use more trees to store and clean water. Trees absorb a great deal of water and help cool summer air. An extensive tree planting program using neighbourhood volunteers to augment city programs would beautify the city and retain and clean rain water.



It's important that we all begin to take action, both individually and collectively, and change our approach to rain water.

For years we have assumed that it was good to get rid of rain water as quickly as possible by rushing it to the lake in storm or combined storm/sanitary sewers. It is now clear that this is not a solution to the problem. Instead, let's help rain water get into streams and ponds, and be stored to water our gardens and lawns. Let's look at alternatives.

These kind of approaches save money and make a healthier and more efficient city. We can all play a part, both through individual initiative and action, and by working together to help the city change its approaches and priorities.

If you would like to help explore these issues further, please call the Natural Systems Group at 977-5909.

A RESOURCE AND SAVE TAXPAYER DOLLARS

