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DeGasperis remembered for his vision

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The product of Fred DeGasperis' vision for community development can be seen — both underground and above ground — across the Greater Toronto Area and other parts of Ontario.

“Accomplishments he brought to the York region are on the streets, people live in them, people work in them,” said Bill Fisch, chairman and chief executive officer (CEO) of The Regional Municipality of York.

DeGasperis created a billion-dollar construction empire with his vision, which started with the launch of [ConDrain](#) 50 years ago. He passed away unexpectedly on March 27 at the age of 79.

With the massive amount of success he's garnered over the decades, DeGasperis always maintained his integrity and his word whenever doing business.

“I could always rely on him to live up to his promises whether they were in writing or not,” said Fisch.

“I didn't have to get it in writing, I didn't have to get witnesses, I didn't have to have anything. I had to have his word and he never let me down.”

Founded by DeGasperis and his two brothers, ConDrain laid water and sewer lines for many communities including, Mississauga, York Region, Collingwood, Niagara Region and others.

DeGasperis is widely remembered for his passion and drive toward building communities and doing it right.

The company helped develop the Erin Mills community in Mississauga and built a 57-kilometre water transmission line from Collingwood to Alliston, Ont.

“He was so meticulous and so specific to ensure that the details to his communities were correctly built,” added Fisch.

“He went the extra mile. I always knew no matter what, he'd always deliver even if it was no longer in his better interest as a business.”

After leaving Italy at the age of 18 in search for better opportunities, DeGasperis brought his two brothers over to Canada before starting ConDrain and operating it out of a bungalow in Toronto.

“For someone who's an immigrant and made their start in Canada, he's clearly a great example of a success story,” said **Residential & Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario** executive director, Andy Manahan.

“A lot of people talk about entrepreneurs being risk takers but he took smart risks. He was ahead of the curve in terms of predicting where growth was going to go.”

But with everything he has built and accomplished, DeGasperis' pride and joy was his family.

DeGasperis kept the business in the family when his two sons, Jim and Romeo, were appointed as co-CEOs of ConDrain back in 2000.

“He had so many glowing things to say about his children and grandchildren,” said Fisch.

Fisch also says DeGasperis was generous with his wealth, donating his money and time, which usually went widely unnoticed.

He leaves behind his wife, Teresa, two brothers, two sons, a daughter and a handful of grandchildren.