

Meaford

Waterfront Strategy & Master Plan

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SHOREPLAN



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Meaford Waterfront Plan is to:

1. Implement the *Meaford Economic Development Strategy (2010)* through the development of recommendations regarding the preservation and promotion of the waterfront
2. Develop waterfront-specific policy recommendations to guide decision making in the face of future development pressures to urban waterfront lands and adjacent Special Policy Areas.
3. Provide the necessary information to update the *Meaford Harbour Strategic Plan (2009)* with consideration to a broader waterfront context.
4. In addition to the development of the Meaford Waterfront Plan, the Meaford Harbour Remediation Task Force Committee was established with a separate mandate to advise Council on a plan that identifies and technically evaluates the options to remediate the navigability and use of the Old Harbour at the Bighead River mouth.

Over a century ago, Meaford played a key role as an industrial waterfront with direct access to the transportation of goods and later passengers via the Grand Trunk Railway. The Georgian Bay shoreline and Bighead River mouth were inundated with commercial and private ships, as well as recreational boats. The remnants of this history are vivid in the stories of the local residents, memorabilia, and its natural heritage landscape. Over the last few decades, the waterfront lands have seen continuous transformations that have heightened the dedication of these lands as open public space, bringing the community together through events and festivals, boating, fishing, passive recreation, trail use and direct water access.

The Municipality has had a long-standing interest in developing the waterfront to enhance economic development through tourism activity and encouraging the establishment of new businesses to support the commercial use of the Downtown Core. Many projects have been undertaken to support and enhance the lands surrounding the waterfront including the restoration of the Meaford Museum and Meaford Hall. An interest has also emerged in the last few years from local entrepreneurs to invest in the development of the waterfront and the Downtown.

Over the last two decades, the Municipality invested in plans that shaped the future of the waterfront lands in the urban area. The most recent was the *Meaford Harbour Strategic Master Plan (2009)* which identified strategic actions to ensure that the harbour lands were developed and managed consistent with the vision, goals and values outlined in the *Meaford 2005 Official Plan*. The *Community Improvement Plan (2008)* reinforced the need for strong physical and visual connections between the Downtown and Harbour, and the *Meaford Economic Development Strategy (2010)* recognized that seasonal tourism traffic in Meaford should be better connected to the waterfront lands.

The Meaford Waterfront Plan urban study area includes the open space and harbour lands along Bayfield Street, the Old Harbour walls, the Bighead River mouth, the open space lands east of the harbour, the beaches, and the New Harbour. The Municipality owns most of these lands, however, some of the lands are privately owned (i.e. Richardson Boats) or leased from the Small Craft Harbours Branch of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (i.e., wharves and marine-related facilities). Consideration is also given to the land use and connectivity of Special Policy Areas 1 and 2 given their proximity to the study area and their potential to act as a catalyst to drive change and economic growth in the Municipality.

PHYSICAL SITE CONDITIONS

The review of the study area was one of the initial steps to better understanding the physical site conditions and any limitations that may impact future land use change and redevelopment of the site. The research undertaken by the Meaford Harbour Remediation Task Force Committee is also included in this report, providing the context for the existing infrastructure, operations and the coastal processes within the study area. A review of the existing waterfront uses within the study area was also of importance in order to balance and protect the range of public interests throughout the waterfront lands.

In 1983, 2007 and 2009, Public Works and Government Services Canada prepared *Phase 1 and 2 Environmental Site Assessments (ESA)* of the Meaford Harbour as part of the transfer of the lands from the federal government to the municipality. At that time, it was confirmed there were locations of impacted soils (metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs)) at the Coast Guard Search and Rescue Station, across the Harbour open space area, and in an isolated location along the east beach area in proximity to Stanley Knights Limited. It also confirmed that a very small volume of petroleum hydrocarbons was present on the leased Richardson Boat lands. Impacted groundwater (metals and PAHs) was also confirmed on the Harbour open space area likely related to former railway activities. The impact of these contaminants depend on the ultimate uses on these lands. Site-specific remediation can be employed to address these issues. Both the Old and New Harbours have been confirmed to have impacted sediments (metals and PAHs primarily). These conditions are, however, common in harbours throughout the Great Lakes and in other communities where redevelopment of the harbours to a diverse range of tourism uses has been achieved.

It was concluded that appropriate risk management measures for the impacted soils will require further investigation into the extent and source of the metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons. Risk management measures could include: excavation of soil with metals and/or polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon concentrations above the generic MOE standards and/or use of a Risk Assessment to determine property-specific standards for the site that are protective of human health and the environment.

SHORELINE INFRASTRUCTURE AND COASTAL PROCESSES

A review of the shoreline infrastructure was undertaken including an on-site assessment by a coastal/marine engineer and identification of notable deficiencies in shoreline structures or notable erosion of natural shores. The site review did not uncover any such notable deficiencies. The breakwaters of the New Harbour appear to be in good condition with normal amount of fractures in the armour stones. The shores of the basin appeared stable with no obvious signs of erosion. The shores of the Old Harbour in the Bighead River

EXISTING WATERFRONT USES

Although the waterfront historically supported a range of industrial functions in the 19th and 20th century, the last 20 to 30 years have focused on recreation uses. The urban waterfront lands are comprised of Fred Raper's Park along the Georgian Bay shoreline, the Meaford Museum with its adjacent parkland, the green space located east of the Bighead River including the picnic areas the Rotary Harbour Pavilion, the Harbour Complex Building, Coast Guard Search and Rescue Station, historical railway storage shed, sailing school, chip wagon, public washroom building and a fish cleaning facility. A large grassy-gravel area is used for concerts, community events, parking, and in the winter as boating storage. The green spaces have a number of large mature shade trees and ornamental landscape features. A second naturalized, less-maintained beach is located on the east end of the study area providing open views to Georgian Bay. The marine uses include: transient dockage, seasonal dockage, commercial charter fishing, boat servicing and repair, winter storage, sailing lessons and launching. The shoreline supports, shore fishing, swimming, festivals, parking, recreational vehicle camping for fishing patrons and trails.

It is also important to acknowledge and protect traditional uses of the waterways, shorelines and lands in and around the Municipality of Meaford for the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation, Saugeen First Nation (referred to as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation) and the Métis.

mouth are also functional. They do show greater signs of deterioration, including the concrete cap on the south side of the Old Harbour basin; however, no signs of structural instability were observed. Any repairs or planned improvements to the shoreline infrastructure should consider the declining water levels of Georgian Bay.

A review of background information regarding coastal processes along the shoreline beyond the Harbours was undertaken to provide comments with respect to function and possible enhancement of existing beaches. It was concluded that a major extension of the beach south of the New Harbour in a southerly direction beyond its present location would be difficult. The alignment of the shoreline is not appropriate for a beach. A very long groyne would be required with substantial infill to realign the shore before the beach could be constructed. However, the existing beach could be improved if the groyne at the south end of the beach was expanded. Expansions of the beaches on the north side of the Old Harbour were also assessed. It was concluded that the north cell has the most potential for beach improvement due to very shallow near shore. Detailed modeling would be required as would material supplied from external sources because natural littoral material is not available to naturally enhance the beaches.

A review of the sedimentation of the Harbours was conducted with coastal information from the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Shoreline Management Plan (Sandwell, 1992) and reports regarding erosion and sedimentation issues on the Bighead River (Ainley and Associates, 1979, Cumming-Cockburn, 1985, Cumming-Cockburn, 1985/86, Cumming-Cockburn, 1987,) to assess and understand dredging of the Old Harbour. From the background reports, it became clear that the rate of infilling of the Old Harbour has not been established with any accuracy, and there is no reason to believe that the rate of infill would be any different in the future than it has been in the past. The source of sediment is not only from the river, but also the lake. Sediment moves along the Georgian Bay shoreline from north to south and enters the entrance of the Old Harbour (Bighead River mouth). Some sediment is flushed out during large flow events, but some remain and accumulate in the shallows where littoral transport moves the sediment back towards the river mouth. Future dredging proposals needs to consider further expected reductions in the water levels of Georgian Bay. Although also impacted by lake level decline, the New Harbour is not subject to the same rate of sedimentation

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Key stakeholder interviews and survey results exposed Meaford's waterfront authenticity, charm and intimacy and how significant that was to the 'sense of place' for so many local residents. The community takes pride in the events and festivals on the waterfront that attract visitors to Meaford for Canada Day, concerts, Farmer's Market, Scarecrow Invasion to name only a few. Residents and tourists alike use the waterfront lands for boating, beaches, swimming and walking, while also accommodating access for the Aboriginal traditional activities. The community also identified the deficiencies in the existing waterfront lands and the key opportunities for future improvements.

At the initial stage of the project, key stakeholder interviews were held over a two day period to provide information and an update on the Meaford Waterfront Plan process and to obtain input from key informants who actively use the waterfront and have contributed to the development of the amenities along the waterfront. Representatives from the Rotary Club of Meaford, Coast Guard Search and Rescue Station, Stanley Knight Limited, Chamber of Commerce, Meaford Public Library, Friends of the Meaford Harbour, Reef Boat Club, Richardson Boats, Councillors and Municipal Staff participated in the discussions.

A community survey was also circulated at the early stages of the project to gather input from the public on the existing site conditions and the 'top of mind' concern. Approximately 50 surveys were received and, although not statistically representative of the entire population of the Municipality, it provided insight into the preferences of the public who were engaged and really passionate about the future of the waterfront lands.

A design charrette is an intensive, visionary hands-on workshop that brings people from different disciplines, backgrounds and interests together to explore land use and design options for a particular site. A public design charrette was held on a summer evening in July at the Meaford Hall to engage the community in the creative process of guiding the overall vision for the waterfront, as well as the potential locations for business development, pedestrian connections, beautification, Harbour improvements, enhanced green space, tourism generators, and cultural and natural features.

Community members attending the public design charrette worked in four groups to prepare conceptual alternatives to the options that had been provided to stimulate discussion. As each group presented their revised concepts, it became apparent that many elements had the unanimous support of the participants, while there were other issues, related to the Bighead River Mouth, where the participant's views differed.



WATERFRONT PRECEDENTS

Best practices and precedents in other municipalities on a similar scale with recent waterfront renewal focusing on economic redevelopment (i.e., Keswick, Crate's Landing in Georgina, Dryden, Thunder Bay, Deseronto, Cobourg and Port Perry) were reviewed to help identify a range of new uses that would enhance Meaford's waterfront. Kincardine and Saugeen Shores were also looked at as examples for Meaford. Kincardine provides an example of a nearby waterfront community that has recently been able to attract investment in a new hotel, while Saugeen Shores recently completed its own Waterfront Master Plan.

The two waterfront community precedents that are particularly informative to Meaford's current situation and future direction were highlighted: Gravenhurst and North Bay. Both precedents provide examples of communities which have successfully revitalized their harbour/waterfront areas into important economic and tourism generators. They also provide examples of distinct waterfront redevelopment strategies: Gravenhurst, a waterfront redevelopment involved a partnership between the municipality and private developer; and North Bay, a municipally retained site being redeveloped for recreational purposes.

There was consensus on themes and ideas that included the importance of connecting the waterfront with the Downtown, fostering commercial activity along Bayfield Street, maintaining and expanding boating in the New Harbour, and enhancing recreation in Fred Raper Park, around the Rotary Harbour Pavilion and the east waterfront lands that back onto Special Policy Area # 1. There were differing opinions on the need to maintain and expand boating in the Old Harbour if it required long term dredging to manage sedimentation. As part of the consultation process, Council provided feedback on the outcomes from the public charrette and stakeholder engagement activities. The briefing session was also an important opportunity to explore how the work of the Meaford Harbour Remediation Task Force would be integrated to provide direction for the future use of the Old Harbour.

In acknowledgement and to protect the traditional uses of the waterways, shorelines and lands in and around the Municipality of Meaford by the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation, Saugeen First Nation (referred to as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation) and the Métis, the Municipality met the consultation requirements in recognition of the importance of pro-active relationship building. Input from this consultation was included in the recommendations of the Meaford Waterfront Plan.

A public open house was held in late October to present the Draft Meaford Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan content, including the two preferred concepts that emerged from the public charrette and Council input. The session also presented recommendations for the Official Plan policies, economic development and implementation strategies and the overall preferred concept.

MARINA MARKET OVERVIEW

In Meaford, the Marina component of the waterfront was reviewed in detail. While marinas serve an important function in the boating industry, it is also important to recognize that public marina operations provide significant community benefits, offering support for economic development and/or additional community recreation space. Marina operations help to stimulate the local economy, attracting expenditures from visiting boaters and local boaters alike. In addition, marinas are often a focal point for recreation within waterfront communities and provide a gateway function, beyond providing boating infrastructure and services. Although currently there is some short-term momentum in the boating industry due to an increase in recreational boat sales and signs of recovery for the boating industry, the business outlook for Marinas in Canada and Ontario is generally rated as 'moderate' given the decline in marina employment, rising marine fuel costs and the impacts of declining water levels. Locally, there has been growth in the sailing segment of the market and decline in the motorized boating primarily due to fuel costs. Meaford is suited to sailing and could capture a share of the larger sailboat market with suitable moorings

and support facilities. New and Old Harbours in the Municipality of Meaford are running under-capacity, and the combined docking space requirements could be accommodated in the New Harbour, while still operating below 75% capacity. Any future economic development would make the marina operations more attractive to boaters, but market research shows the New Harbour would most likely have the capacity to handle the increased demand.

PRELIMINARY CONCEPT OPTIONS

Three preliminary concept options were developed in response to the physical conditions, opportunities and challenges identified through the background review, site evaluation and consultation. The preliminary concepts explored the potential land use distribution, site access, natural heritage features, pedestrian connections, vehicular access and marine infrastructure. The three concepts were characterized as: Cultural Heritage – Status Quo; Ecologically Sustainable – Harbour Village; and Active Harbour Option – Reconstructed River Mouth.

CONCEPT COMPARISON

The three options for the redevelopment of Meaford's urban area waterfront lands were evaluated with criteria that ranked potential impacts and contributions to: culture and tourism; natural environment and open space; along with affordability. The criteria represent the planning objectives for the Meaford urban area waterfront lands, as identified in the Official Plan policies and Meaford Economic Development strategies. An initial comparison illustrated that the Ecologically Sustainable – Harbour Village Option overall had the strongest contribution to and potential for enhancement of the waterfront lands, balancing the integrity of the natural environment and the diverse demands of the community and visitors. The Active Harbour – Reconstructed River Mouth option provided tourism opportunities mainly for the boating/marina related services, with limited contributions to the natural environment and limited open space enhancements. The cultural heritage – status quo concept provided open space enhancement potential, while having a modest opportunity to improve the natural environment and little contributions to enhance Meaford's culture, tourism and economic impact.

TWO CONCEPTS

It became evident that the status quo – maintaining the existing Harbour did not meet the Guiding Principles and was not realizing the potential economic benefits that a more diverse tourism destination could provide. Following the public meetings, it also became clear that both concepts needed to be further refined and evaluated because the Remediation Task Force had not concluded their study, the boating community was advocating maintaining the moorings and Richardson Boat Works in the current location in the Old Harbour. There remained an underlying uncertainty around the viability of maintaining boating in the Old Harbour due to the cost of dredging and current lack of market for expanding boat moorings to justify managing two harbours. The pivotal distinction between the two concepts was the primary function of the Old Harbour at the Bighead River mouth, which impacts the potential uses on the adjacent lands and the opportunity for diversifying economic opportunities.

In response to the community's interest in maintaining boating in the Old Harbour, the Harbour Village Concept was refined to maintain access to Richardson Boats and some existing docks on the west harbour wall, presumably with modest annual dredging to facilitate mooring where sedimentation could be managed.



PREFERRED CONCEPT

The preferred concept was developed to maximize the potential social, economic development and tourism, and environmental long term contributions and impacts. Although some uncertainty exists about the future of many environmental, social, financial, technical and economic factors in the Municipality and beyond, it is important to recognize at the early stages of planning, the preferred concept option allows for the flexibility to change course as necessary in the longer planning horizon as conditions change.

- **Natural Heritage Enhancement:** the improvements of the aquatic and terrestrial habitats, the urban forest and wildlife corridors are strongly supported by the Municipality's Official Plan policies. Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept provides a considerably stronger case for the enhancement of the natural heritage with fish habitat improvements in the Bighead River mouth, less disturbance of the aquatic habitat, and less parking requirements that increase the open space area along the waterfront.
- **Open Space Enhancement:** the improvements to the open space are essential to support active transportation, healthy living and an authentic waterfront. Although both concept options provide considerable improvements to the open space network along the waterfront, Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept offers better connectivity between the open spaces with the additional lands that are used for parking in Option 2- Intensified Boating Concept.
- **Affordability:** the Municipality of Meaford will need to assess the cost implications for each concept. Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept provides a strong case for affordability, given its partial strategic dredging of the Old Harbour in comparison to the full-harbour intervention and dredging for Option 2 – Intensified Boating Concept. Option 2 also requires a large number of costly studies to resolve sedimentation issues in the Old Harbour.
- **Redevelopment Opportunities:** the redevelopment of the waterfront area is a priority in the Meaford Economic Development Strategy. Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept provides a considerable range of commercial, tourism and recreation opportunities to build itself as a vibrant waterfront gateway with successful development of related businesses.
- **Economic Climate:** the redevelopment of the waterfront reflects the current and future market conditions in Meaford and beyond. Although both concept options reflect on the importance of boating activities, Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept provides a stronger response to the economic climate by maintaining the current harbour functions with major improvements to facilitate the operation at full capacity, while diversifying the range of waterfront users by accommodating other uses, such as commercial, non-motorized boating, and recreational.
- **Economic Input:** the redevelopment of the waterfront provides significant contributions to Meaford's waterfront and the Downtown, as supported by the Official Plan and the Meaford Economic Development Strategy.

- **Tourism Impact:** the redevelopment of the waterfront draws tourists to Meaford and the waterfront. Although both concepts provide significant improvements to attracting tourists to Meaford and the waterfront, Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept accommodates a broad range of users and economic development that ensures year-round tourism activity.
- **Recreation Impact:** the improvements to the recreation areas are essential to support active transportation, healthy living and provide both passive and active recreation opportunities. Both options equally provide moderate opportunities for tourists and locals to embrace and enjoy the beaches, parks and trails.
- **Compatibility:** the improvements of the waterfront need to be compatible with the adjacent land uses to maintain strong and stable neighbourhoods and/or areas of the municipality. Although both concepts are compatible with the adjacent land uses, Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept provides the commercial opportunity along the Old Harbour west wall that complements the strategic direction to have commercial development along Bayfield Street, while creating a stronger link between the waterfront and Downtown areas.
- **Value to the Community:** the redevelopment of the waterfront provides additional amenities for local residents. Although both concepts provide significant improvements to the waterfront amenities, Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept provides a diverse set of waterfront uses, including a potential restaurant along the waterfront which was identified as extremely important through community consultations.
- **Value to the Municipality:** the redevelopment of the waterfront provides value to the Municipality through implementation of its existing policy framework and improves municipal finances. Overall, Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept illustrates the strongest case to reduce operating costs and improve revenue.
- **Precedents:** the redevelopment of the waterfront has already been tested elsewhere and has been successful.
- **Commercial Feasibility:** the redevelopment of the waterfront draws commercial partners and other development interests to invest in Meaford. Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept provides the strongest case for commercial feasibility given the already established entrepreneur interest to invest in commercial uses along the waterfront and partnership and funding opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Preferred Concept for the Meaford Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan (Meaford Waterfront Plan) is based on the input received from the community, stakeholders, staff and Council. The purpose of the Meaford Waterfront Plan was to develop a waterfront master plan as an update to the *Meaford Harbour Strategic Plan (2009)* and policy recommendations that implement the strategies developed through the *Meaford Economic Development Strategy (2010)*.

In the development of the Meaford Waterfront Plan, two concept options were considered for the Municipality of Meaford urban area waterfront redevelopment – the two concepts' land use, harbour functions, and tourism and economic development potential were the main differentiators. Based on a deep understanding of the Municipality of Meaford's Official Plan policy gaps and 'environment-first' mandate, the technical, regulatory and navigation challenges in the Old Harbour, community support, and the economic development and market conditions evaluation, it is the recommendation of the Meaford Waterfront Plan that the – Harbour Village Concept be adopted as the preferred waterfront master plan. The Harbour Village Concept provides the greatest opportunities for creating a balanced mix of uses, tourism activities and economic development.



1.0 INTRODUCTION

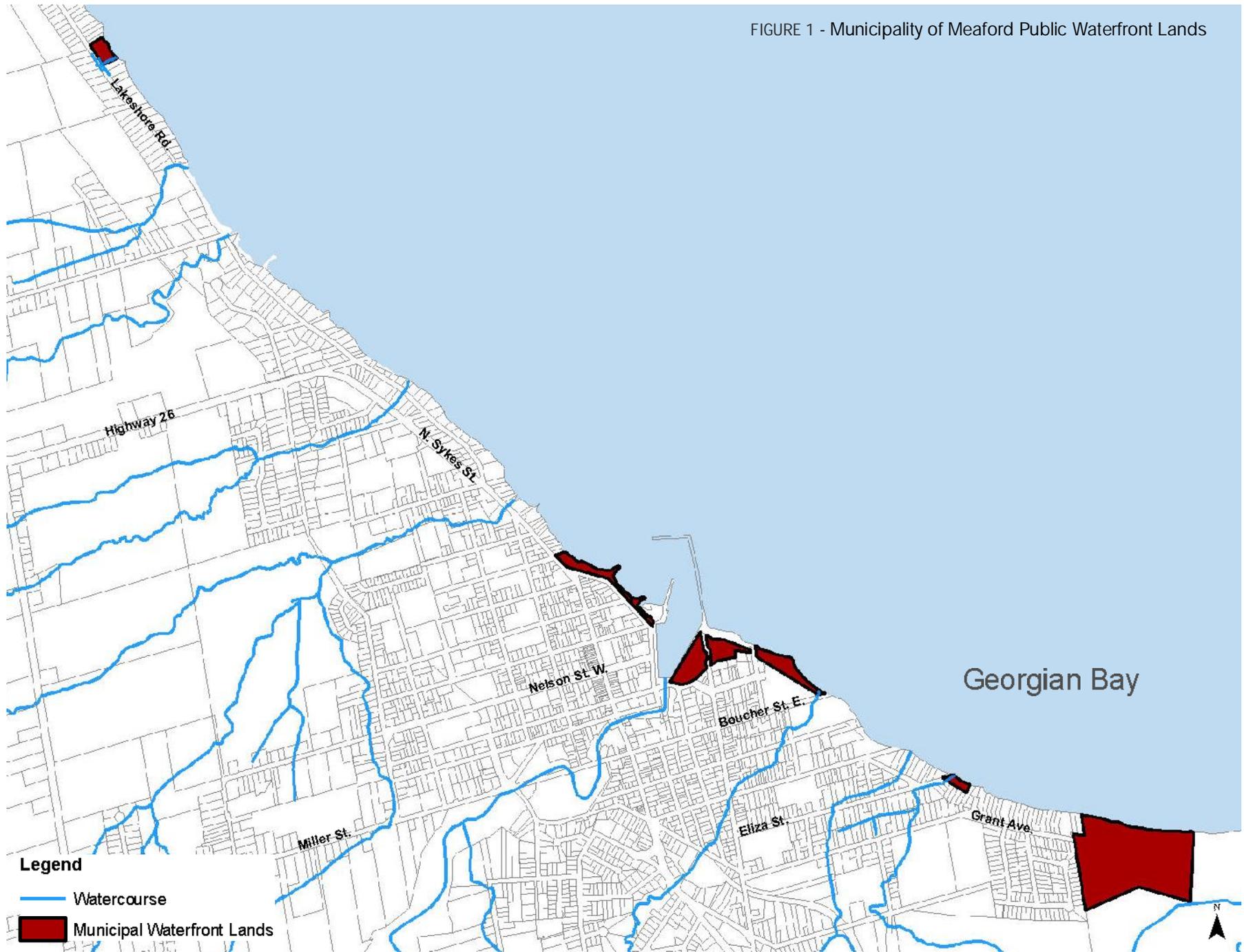
Waterfronts are much celebrated public spaces in any community that fronts a body of water. Although the past, present and future uses and interactions with the waterfront differ from one community to another, the undeniable energy, drive and excitement to make contact or catch a glimpse of the sparkling water remain the same across all locations. The Municipality of Meaford's urban area has an extensive public waterfront on the Georgian Bay – the continuous chain of public lands spans the Bay shoreline and wraps around the mouth of the Bighead River. Although the study area for the *Meaford Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan* is defined within the urban area of Meaford, consideration is also given to the connectivity of the study area to adjacent municipal waterfront lands (see Figure 1).

The Municipality has had a long-standing interest in developing the Harbour to enhance economic development through tourism activity and encouraging the establishment of new businesses to support the commercial use of the Downtown Core. Many projects have been undertaken with both public and private funding sources, including the Services Clubs of Meaford, to support and enhance the Downtown and Harbour, including streetscaping, pavement repairs in the Harbour, construction of the Rotary Harbour Pavilion, restoration of the Meaford Museum and Meaford Hall. An immense interest has also emerged in the last few years from local entrepreneurs to invest in the development of the waterfront and the Downtown.

Over the last two decades, the Municipality invested in plans that shaped the development of the waterfront lands in the urban area. The most recent was the *Meaford Harbour Strategic Master Plan (2009)* which identified strategic actions to ensure that the harbour lands were developed and managed according to the vision, goals and values outlined in the *Meaford 2005 Official Plan*. The *Downtown Community Improvement Plan (2008)* reinforced the need for strong physical and visual connections between the Downtown and Harbour, and the *Meaford Economic Development Strategy (2010)* recognized that seasonal tourism traffic in Meaford should be better connected to the waterfront lands.

Successful waterfronts require a clear and strategic direction, and realistic and achievable master plans that guide the redevelopment. The need to update the strategy to recognize new trends and community needs has led to the development of this *Meaford Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan* (Meaford Waterfront Plan).

FIGURE 1 - Municipality of Meaford Public Waterfront Lands



The purpose of the Meaford Waterfront Plan is to:

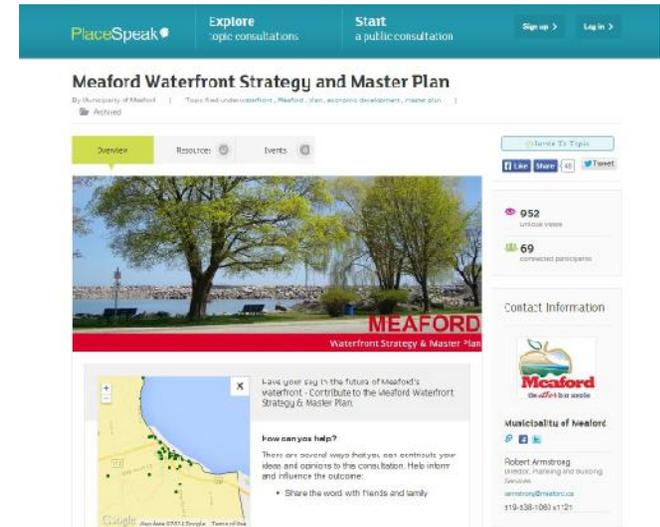
1. Implement the Meaford Economic Development Strategy (2010) through the development of recommendations regarding the preservation and development of the waterfront as a tourist attraction.
2. Develop waterfront-specific policy recommendations to guide decision making in the face of future development pressures to urban waterfront lands and adjacent Special Policy Areas.
3. Provide the necessary information to update the Meaford Harbour Strategic Plan (2009) with consideration to a broader waterfront context.

The development of the Meaford Waterfront Plan was based on a comprehensive review and analysis of the site context in Section 2, and in-depth traditional and online consultation (Sections 2.5, 2.6 and 3.3) with the community and key stakeholders and community leaders who actively use the waterfront. The consultation included key stakeholder interviews, community surveys, a public design charrette, an online discussion forum via PlaceSpeak and a Public Open House. Sections 3 and 4 of the Meaford Waterfront Plan present the preliminary conceptual design process, the development of the two concept options, as well as the preferred concept for the Municipality's urban area waterfront lands.

In addition to the development of the Meaford Waterfront Plan, the Meaford Harbour Remediation Task Force Committee was established with a separate mandate to advise Council on a plan that identifies and technically evaluates the options to remediate the navigability and use of the Old Harbour at the Bighead River mouth. The conclusions and recommendations of this work will strengthen the preferred vision and policies for the future development of the waterfront lands. The final recommendations developed for the Meaford Waterfront Plan are presented in Section 6.



Visit - <https://www.placespeak.com/topic/749-meaford-waterfront-strategy-and-master-plan/>



2.0 SITE CONTEXT

The Meaford Waterfront Plan urban study area is approximately 23 ha and includes the open space and harbour lands along Bayfield Street, the Old Harbour walls, the Bighead River mouth, the open space lands east of the harbour, the beaches, and the New Harbour (refer to Figure 2). The Municipality owns most of the lands within the study area (see Figure 3), however, some of the lands are privately owned (i.e., Richardson Boats) or leased from the Small Craft Harbours Branch of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (i.e., wharves and marine-related facilities). Consideration is also given to the land use and connectivity of Special Policy Areas 1 and 2 given their proximity to the study area and their potential to act as a catalyst to drive change and economic growth in the Municipality.

The next section explores the Municipality's rich cultural heritage, policy framework and strategic plans that guide the physical and economic development of the Municipality, and the existing physical conditions that deepen the understanding of the opportunities and challenges in the redevelopment of the waterfront lands. The local knowledge was conveyed through key stakeholder interviews and a community survey. Finally, the study area's size, functions and economic development models were compared with other mainly northern municipalities through a waterfront precedent study.



FIGURE 2 - Meaford Waterfront Plan Study Area

2.1 HARBOUR HISTORY OF CHANGE

Small-town waterfronts have changed dramatically over the last century and often have remnants of their past character and use. Traces remain of the early settlements and industries that enabled regional prosperity and growth. As portrayed in *Pictorial Meaford (1991)* and the draft *Meaford Heritage Conservation District Study (2013)*, the Municipality of Meaford was a desirable settlement location along the shoreline of Georgian Bay in the vicinity of the Bighead River due to the generally well-drained soil, potable water sources and multiple navigation routes. Petun native people (Algonquin and Hurons) traveled the area, and a mid-19th century map (see Figure 4) shows records of an 'Indian Camp' on the waterfront lands. The Bighead River was named after early settlers found a large skull at a point jutting out near the mouth of the river which was presumed to be the burial grounds of the Aboriginal chief.

Early settlers had also developed lands along the waterfront by the mid-19th century that were supported by a continuous expansion of the industrial economy base (i.e., planing mill, foundry, tannery, etc.). The Harbour was used for shipping and receiving goods (i.e., coal), passenger steamers, small commercial fishing industry, and recreational fishing and boating. By the end of the 19th century, the 1872 North Grey Railway was replaced by the Grand Trunk Railway which was constructed along the Harbour allowing Meaford to become an important waterfront-rail port. The 1901 harbour plan resulted in improved harbour



FIGURE 3 - Meaford Waterfront Plan Study Area Land Ownership

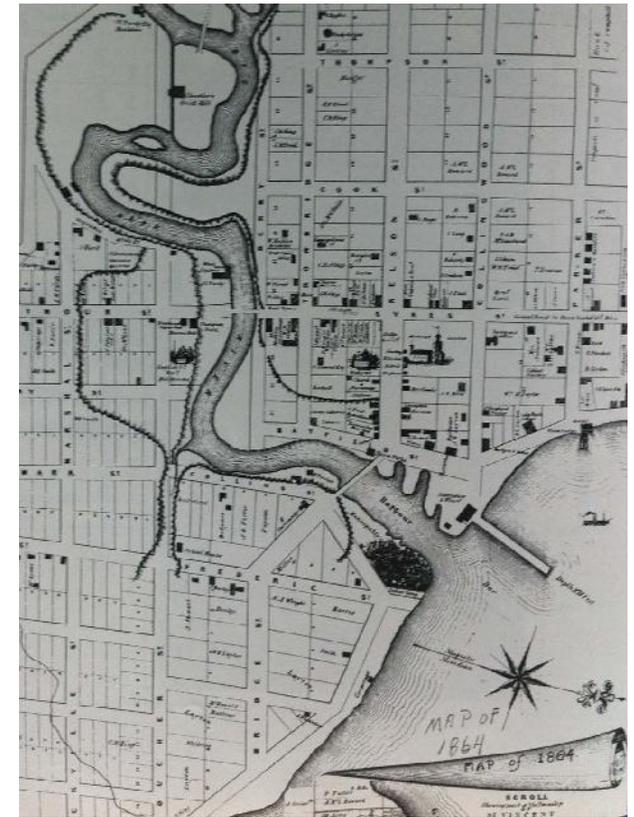


FIGURE 4 - 1864 Map of Meaford



walls, dredging, new storage elevator, new station and associated sheds, siding, round-house, turntable and water tank. The rail and harbour station served both passenger and freight needs for sixty years, through two world wars and a depression, until the services were fully discontinued in the mid 1980s due to a continuous decline in service. Today, the former railway corridor is enjoyed as the Georgian Trail (see Figure 5).

The Bighead River's dynamic fluvial processes near the river mouth have also been rerouted to flow within the grid layout of the Downtown urban area. In more recent history, the southeast end of the shoreline was filled to construct the Coast Guard Search and Rescue Station in 1992, which continues to have a key role and presence on the waterfront lands. As typically seen across many other 19th century harbours in Ontario and Canada, Meaford's Harbour, adjacent lands and the shoreline itself have been altered to continuously accommodate the changing uses that support community needs, and market demands at the time. Meaford's waterfront lands have evolved from being a prime working industrial area to a more passive public recreation, boating and open space area for the residents and tourists alike.



FIGURE 5 - Georgian Trail Map (source: <http://www.georgiantrail.ca/trailmap.html>)

2.2 MEAFORD HARBOUR STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN

In 2009, Council approved the *Meaford Harbour Strategic Master Plan* (Meaford Harbour Plan), a document which sought to integrate stakeholder input, Meaford Official Plan policy objectives, and a review of operational and capital challenges to generate specific strategic directions and actions that would guide the development of the Harbour area in the face of anticipated future development trends and pressures. The Meaford Harbour Plan's strategic directions and actions were founded on the *2005 Meaford Official Plan* (Official Plan) vision for the Harbour Open Space Area:

The Meaford Harbour lands are intended to be one of the cornerstones of public open space in the Municipality. It will be maintained and developed to be an all-season public park and centre for community events. The Meaford Harbour is one of the most attractive and accessible waterfront parks in the Georgian Triangle and efforts will be made to promote this facility to citizens and tourists who travel by foot, car, boat or via the Georgian Trail, which is directly connected to the Harbour.

Seven high-level Guiding Principles were developed through the Harbour Master Plan:

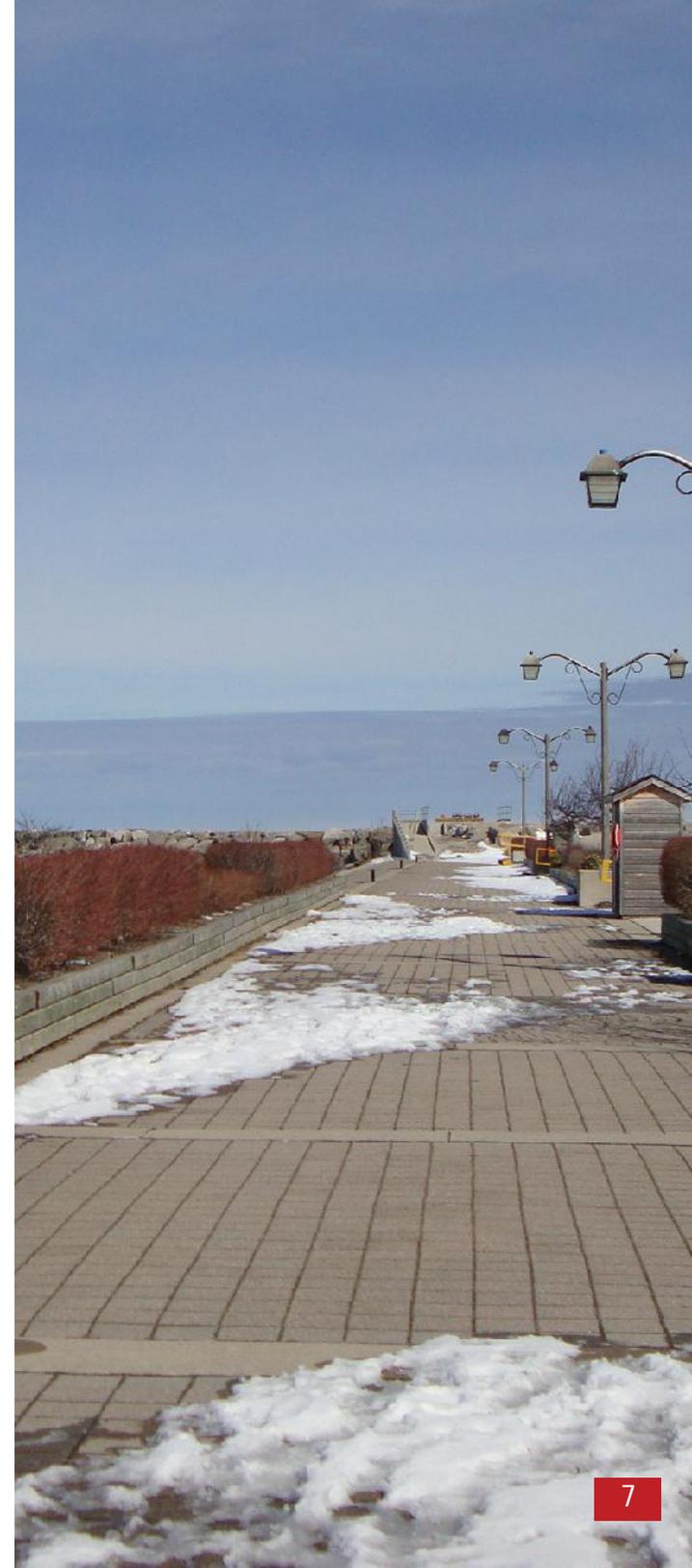
Environment – With 'environment first' philosophy, precedence is given to the protection of significant natural heritage features and functions in the Municipality for the benefit of current and future generations. In the redevelopment of contaminated sites, studies and plans in accordance to Ministry of Environment guidelines are required to ensure no adverse effects on the proposed uses or adjacent lands.

Community Impact and Safety – Design minimizes any potential negative impacts to adjacent residential uses through the use of planting, fencing and the provision of appropriate access and parking, appropriate lighting and safe pedestrian access from adjacent residential areas.

Operations and Security – Management to be in-line with the broader corporate visions: to be recognized as a leading edge organization engaging best practices in technology, customer satisfaction, finance and operations.

Connectivity and Pedestrian Focus – Connection to the trail systems, cycling routes and natural heritage corridors, as well as the Downtown and Georgian Trail via pedestrian linkages. Be accessible to individuals with all levels of ability and in line with Provincial Accessibility Standards.

Signage, Design and Promotion – Improve the visitor experience with those traveling by foot, car, boat or via the Georgian Trail, and establish the Meaford Harbour as a prominent recreational focal point and public



open space area in the municipality as well as the regional area. Meaford Harbour is acknowledged as a gateway into the Municipality, with improved connections between the Harbour and the Downtown.

Special Policy Areas – Develop with consideration to the adjacent Special Policy Areas (see Section 2.3.1.4).

Public Access and Use – Become a cornerstone of public open space with a mix of public and recreation-oriented uses.

Strategic actions were established in the Meaford Harbour Plan for each one of the principles discussed above to address the specific items that will need further work and implementation plans. While implementation started on a number of the strategic actions, it has been recognized that the plan did not comprehensively address the broader urban waterfront area or include an optimized concept plan for the Harbour or adjacent waterfront lands.

Legend

- Urban Living Area
- Shoreline
- Urban Employment Area
- Urban Highway Commercial
- Rural Highway Commercial
- Downtown Core Commercial
- Downtown Core Transitional
- Institutional
- Harbour Open Space
- Major Open Space
- Major Recreation
- Two-Zone Policy Area
- Rural
- Special Policy Area
- Agricultural
- Specialty Agricultural
- Environmental Protection
- Waste Disposal Site - Closed
- Subject to Official Plan Section
- Schedule Boundary
- River/Stream

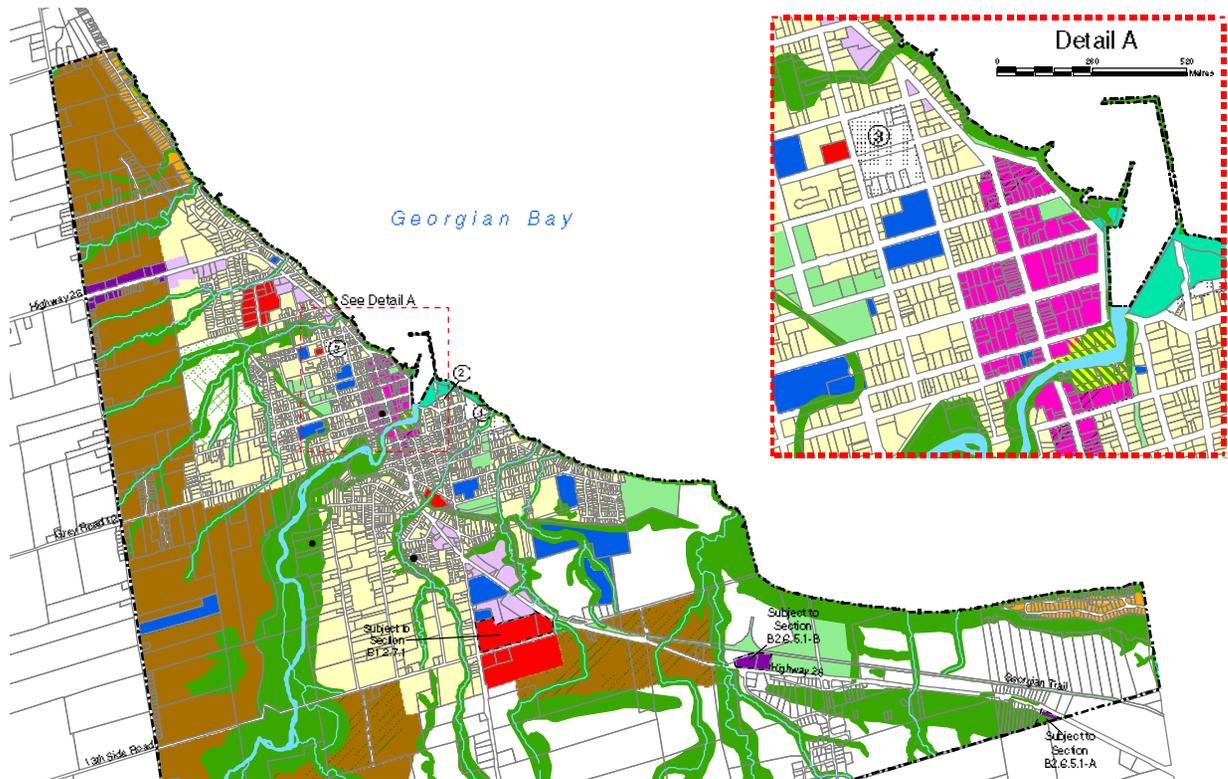


FIGURE 6 - Municipality of Meaford Official Plan Land Use Designations

2.3 PLANNING CONTEXT

As part of a comprehensive review of the current planning framework and strategic plans within the Municipality of Meaford, the following documents were reviewed: 2005 Meaford Official Plan and the Draft Official Plan Amendment, Meaford Vision 2020, Downtown Community Improvement Plan and Meaford Economic Development Strategy.

2.3.1 OFFICIAL PLAN

An Official Plan describes policies on how lands are used within a community to ensure planning and development will meet the specific needs of the community and future generations. The Municipality has nearly completed the five (5) year review and update of the 2005 Official Plan, as required by the Planning Act of Ontario. The Official Plan Amendment was adopted by Council on June 24, 2013 and submitted to the County of Grey for final approval. Objectives and policies that are relevant for the Meaford Waterfront Plan study area lands, as described in the 2005 Official Plan, were reviewed with consideration of the proposed Official Plan Amendments.

The 2005 Official Plan has an 'environment-first' mandate to protect and give precedence to significant natural heritage features and functions over development, while also recognizing that further intensification should happen in the urban area and that urban waterfront areas should be redeveloped with mixed-use development in such a way to attract major tourism opportunities (*Sections A2.2.2 and A2.5.2*). The development of additional employment and tourist commercial uses are to be encouraged in the Downtown and Harbour areas (*Section A2.5.2*), as well as hospitality and tourist-related uses that enhance pedestrian connections between the Harbour and Sykes Street (*Section B1.3.5.2c*). Under *Section B1.3.1* of the proposed Official Plan Amendment, an improved "*visual, economic and pedestrian connection [should be made] between the Downtown and the Meaford Harbour to create a unified central area.*"

The study area falls within the 'Urban Area' and 'Environmental and Open Space' land use designations in the Municipality's Official Plan. The more specific land designations are 'Harbour Open Space' and 'Major Open Space', as shown in Figure 6. In addition, properties abutting the Georgian Bay shoreline and the Bighead River mouth have also been designated as an 'Environmental Protection' area under the proposed Official Plan Amendment. Key relevant policies in the Official Plan are discussed below.

2.3.1.1 Harbour Open Space

Under Section A3.1.5 of the Official Plan, "*public lands in the Harbour area of the Meaford urban area...will continue to be used for open space, recreational uses.*" The objectives for the Harbour Open Space (Section B1.5.1) in the Official Plan are to:

- *Establish the Harbour lands as a prominent recreational focus point and public open space area in the Municipality as well as the regional area;*
- *Develop a mix of public and recreation-oriented uses on the Harbour lands; and*
- *Create a pedestrian environment and linkage between the Harbour, the Downtown and the Georgian Trail.*

Under Section 5.1.5.3 of the Official Plan, the vision for the Harbour Open Space area is: "*The Meaford Harbour lands are intended to be one of the cornerstones of public open space in the Municipality. It will be maintained and developed to be an all-seasons public park and centre for community events. The Meaford Harbour is one of the most attractive and accessible waterfront parks in the Georgian Triangle and efforts will be made to promote this facility to citizens and tourists who travel by foot, car, boat or via the Georgian Trail, which is directly connected to the Harbour.*"

Among the permitted uses within the Harbour Open Space designation are: public uses including parkland and picnic facilities, tourist information centers, festivals and special events, libraries, boat rental establishments, storage of boats, sailing schools, tourist-oriented retail uses, parking areas, museums and art galleries, seasonal food vendors, marinas, and limited recreational vehicle site rentals¹.

2.3.1.2 Major Open Space

Section B3.2.2 of the Official Plan defines the location of open space lands with the Major Open Space designation, including "*all major community parks in the Meaford urban area, the settlements and the shoreline area.*" The objectives for the Major Open Space (Section B3.2.1) in the Official Plan are:

- *Ensure that the use and development of open space lands is consistent with the 'environment-first' philosophy of this Official Plan;*
- *Ensure that the impacts of the use of the open space lands on adjacent land uses are minimized; and*
- *Ensure that the residents of the Municipality have access to a properly planned and accessible parkland system.*

1 Limited Recreation Vehicle site rental is a new bullet in the proposed Official Plan Amendment (2013).

Among the permitted uses within the Major Open Space designation are *"limited to passive and active recreational uses, conservation uses, forestry uses in accordance with good management practices and accessory uses."*

Under *Section B3.2.4* of the Official Plan, the components of the Major Open Space designations are identified, which include the Georgian Trail, Small Community Parks and Road Allowances in the Shoreline Area.

The Georgian Trail component is described in *Section B3.2.4.1* as the following: *"The Georgian Trail is located on the former Canadian National railway line. It is the intent of this Plan to encourage the use of this trail by a wide variety of non-motorized uses, such as hiking, walking, cycling and cross-country skiing. Motorized vehicles and hooved animals are not permitted. It is further the intent of this Plan to encourage development of facilities and uses in close proximity to the trail that may take advantage of tourists and related economic development opportunities. Such uses and facilities may include bed and breakfast establishments, bicycle-rental establishments and interpretation centers. The development of 'feeder trails' into the Meaford Trail system is also encouraged, provided such a trail conforms with the 'environment-first' objectives of this Plan."*

The Small Community Parks and Road Allowances in the Shoreline Area component is described in *Section B3.2.4.3* as the following: *"In addition to the major community parks, there are a number of other Municipality-owned lands that are used for recreation purposes. These include the smaller park areas and road allowances accessing Georgian Bay. Although these areas are considered to be part of the Municipality's open space system, they are not considered to be major open space areas since they are intended to be used on a low intensity basis."*

Although not directly in the study area for the Meaford Waterfront Plan, Memorial Park, Beautiful Joe Park and McCarroll Park are considered in the wider context for connectivity; therefore, the Major Community Parks in the Urban Area and the Settlements component is described in *Section B3.2.4.2* of the Official Plan as the following: *"The major community parks in the settlements area are also considered to be part of the Municipality's major open space system. These parks include Memorial Park and Beautiful Joe Park. It is a policy of this Plan that these parks will continue to provide a wide range of recreational opportunities for the Municipality's residents."*



2.3.1.3 Environmental and Open Space

The Georgian Bay shoreline and Bighead River mouth contribute to the health and function of the Municipality's natural heritage system. *Section B3.1.2* of the amended Official Plan defines the components of the Municipality's Natural Heritage System, which includes floodplains as confirmed by the Conservation Authority or the Ministry of Natural Resources. The objectives for the Environmental and Open Space (*Section B3.1.1*) in the Official Plan are:

- *Maintain and enhance the ecological integrity of the natural heritage system;*
- *Eliminate the potential for the loss or fragmentation of significant wetland and the habitats and ecological functions they provide;*
- *Provide the tools to properly assess development applications located in close proximity to environmentally sensitive features and areas;*
- *Implement the 'environment-first' objectives of this Plan; and*
- *To maintain, restore and improve natural features and functions by recognizing linkages among natural heritage features and areas, surface water and groundwater features².*

Among the permitted uses within the Environmental and Open Space designation are "*limited to forestry, conservation and passive recreational uses. For the purpose of this section, a golf course or similar land use is not a passive recreational use...Buildings, structures or site alterations are generally not permitted in this designation³.*"

Under *Section B3.1.4.4* of the proposed Official Plan Amendment, "*the diversity and connectivity of natural features in an area, and the long term ecological function and biodiversity of natural heritage features should be maintained, restored or, where possible, improved, recognizing linkages between and among natural heritage features and areas, surface water features and groundwater features. The cumulative effects of new development on the natural environment and surrounding land uses shall also be addressed.*"

2 A new bullet inserted in the proposed Official Plan Amendment (2013).

3 Revised section from the proposed Official Plan Amendment (2013).

4 A new bullet inserted in the proposed Official Plan Amendment (2013).

2.3.1.4 Urban Special Policy Areas

The study area for the Meaford Waterfront Plan is adjacent to Special Policy Area # 1 and Special Policy Area # 2, as shown in Figure 7. Under Section A3.1.8 of the proposed Official Plan Amendment, Special Policy Areas provide a designation for "lands that are planned to be the site of new recreational, residential and/or commercial development."

Special Policy Area # 1

Under Section B1.8.1.1 of the proposed Official Plan Amendment, the vision for Special Policy Area # 1 is as follows: "Special Policy Area # 1 is a contiguous area of land that was previously designated for industrial use and which is still occupied by existing and former industrial uses and buildings. It is the intent of this Plan to encourage the redevelopment of this area into a pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use area. The lands identified in Special Policy Area # 1 are considered to be integral to this objective, given their location on the shoreline and immediately east of the Meaford Harbour area."



FIGURE 7 - Municipality of Meaford Special Policy Areas in the Study Area

The following principles shall guide the redevelopment of the Special Policy Area # 1 lands:

- The lands will be planned and redeveloped in their entirety as opposed to being developed in an ad-hoc or piecemeal basis.
- The lands will be used for a suitable mix of residential, open space and commercial uses related primarily to the hospitality, tourism and service sectors.
- The development will be compatible with surrounding residential uses.
- The development will create and improve linkages to existing open space and harbour lands.
- The development will provide pedestrian space and access to the waterfront and will minimize the amount of space used for parking cars.

Prior to development, a Zoning By-law Amendment will need to be approved with the following criteria: a mixed-use land use plan with active transportation linkage to the Downtown, Geotechnical Assessment, Functional Servicing Report, Traffic Impact Assessment, Phase 1 and 2 Archaeology Assessment, and an Economic/Market Impact Study⁴.

Legend
Waterfront Study Boundary
Special Policy Area

Special Policy Area # 2

Under Section B1.8.2.1 of the proposed Official Plan Amendment, the vision for Special Policy Area # 2 is as follows: "Special Policy Area # 2 is comprised of five lots which abut the Meaford Harbour and, as a result of this close proximity to the Harbour, have good potential to accommodate commercial uses such as restaurants, inns, craft and gift shops, studios and art galleries which complement the harbour area. The intent of allowing small-scale commercial development in this area is to create an opportunity to use these lands in a manner that supports the Meaford Harbour and will assist in making this area an attraction for tourism. In addition to the above uses, low-rise residential uses may be permitted in this area, if there is no market for additional commercial uses. However, the consideration of residential uses on these lands should only be considered if it is determined that a greater long-term public interest would be served if such uses are developed instead."

The following principles shall guide the redevelopment of the Special Policy Area # 2 lands:

- The lands will be planned as a logical extension to the Meaford Harbour, providing a definite boundary to the Meaford Harbour.
- The lands will be used for a suitable mix of commercial uses related primarily to the hospitality, tourism and service sectors.
- The development will be compatible with surrounding residential uses.
- The development will provide pedestrian space and access to the waterfront and will minimize the amount of space used for parking cars.

All development in Special Policy Area # 2 shall be subject to rezoning. Prior to considering a proposed zoning by-law amendment, Council shall be satisfied that:

- The use will have minimal impacts on the established residential neighbourhood to the south.
- The uses are oriented to the Harbour area.
- Parking can be adequately accommodated by a combination of on-site parking and public parking.
- The use will contribute to the vitality of the Harbour.

2.3.1.5 New Official Plan Sections

Amongst many revisions and updates to the Municipality's 2005 Official Plan are new sections that also relate to the Meaford Waterfront Plan, including policies on sustainable forms of land use and development (including provisions for the development of Green Development Standards, energy and water conservation, tree canopy protection and enhancement and outdoor lighting) and active transportation (including recreational and active transportation infrastructure, trails, and safe, convenient and attractive streetscapes).

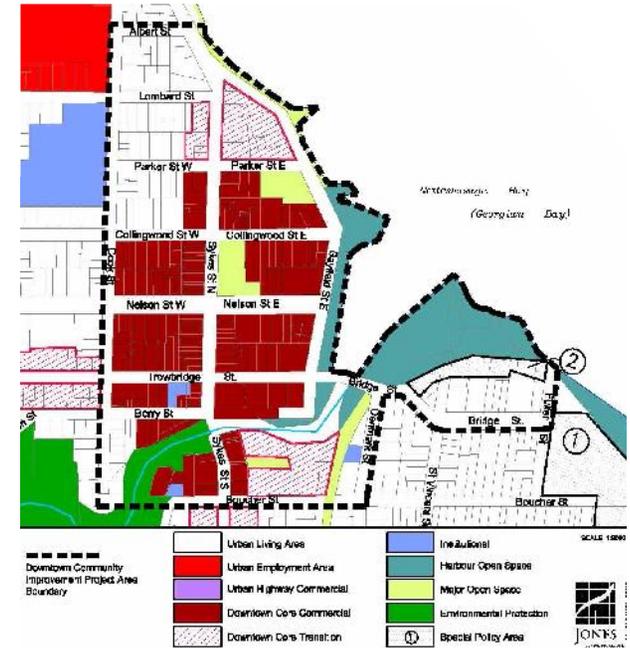


FIGURE 8 - Downtown CIP Study Area Boundary



FIGURE 9 - Downtown CIP Streetscape and Urban Design Strategy

2.3.2 DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The *Downtown Community Improvement Plan* (2008) (Downtown CIP) boundary contains lands within the Downtown Core Commercial, Downtown Core Transition and Harbour Open Space designations within the Municipality of Meaford (see Figure 8). The east waterfront area and the westerly portion of the harbour lands are included in the study area. A background review of the study area revealed the following deficiency: “*poorly defined pedestrian and vehicle linkages to Meaford Harbour, the waterfront, the Bighead River, residential neighbourhoods and other community amenities*”. A redevelopment strategy was identified, “*create a strong pedestrian and streetscape connection from the Downtown to the waterfront*”, in recognition that Nelson Street provides a significant link between the Downtown and the waterfront (refer to Figure 9). General guidelines were established in the Downtown CIP on the community gateways, and the Harbour was presented as an important arrival location for visitors arriving to Meaford from the water-side. It was noted that the gateway should be a point of reference or landmark, with way-finding, signage and other landscape amenities. The Downtown CIP also identified all the available financial incentive programs and funding sources for rehabilitation of lands and buildings within the study boundary, as well as the implementation action plan and monitoring.

There are a number of existing policies and incentive programs that encourage redevelopment in the Downtown and Harbour areas, which have already been implemented through the Downtown CIP.

2.3.3 MEAFORD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The *Meaford Economic Development Strategy* (MEDS), developed in 2010, identified that the Municipality of Meaford’s tourism traffic is highly seasonal, making it very difficult to sustain a strong tourism business. The MEDS indicates that there are a limited number of retailers currently serving the outdoor recreation market locally. Moreover, there is also a lack of arts & cultural retailers in Meaford. To address these issues, a number of strategic actions and objectives with respect to the ‘Tourism’ pillar of economic activity are proposed, including the preservation and promotion of Meaford’s existing attractions.

The Municipality is currently in the process of updating the Economic Development Strategy. One of the key deliverables is expected to be the implementation of the Meaford Waterfront Plan.

2.3.4 MEAFORD VISION 2020

In 2011, the *Municipality of Meaford Strategic Plan, Meaford Vision 2020* (Meaford Vision 2020) was developed to identify the priorities of the Municipality, with a mission to “*provide community leadership and deliver quality, innovative and sustainable services*”. Meaford Vision 2020 defined objectives and strategies for a healthy economy, healthy community and customer-focused services. The Harbour expansion/redevelopment was identified as a medium term (4 years) special project that is already in progress, along with community trails, tourism growth, health clinic and restaurants. Update of the *Harbour Master Plan and Harbour Strategic Plan* was identified as a way to drive environmental sustainability in Meaford’s built and natural environments.



2.4 PHYSICAL SITE CONDITIONS

A site review was one of the initial steps to better understand the physical site conditions and areas of concern, along with the necessary mitigations to support future land use change and redevelopment of the site. The research undertaken by the Meaford Harbour Remediation Task Force Committee is also included in this section, providing the context for the existing infrastructure, operations and the coastal processes within the study area. A review of the existing waterfront uses within the study area was also of importance in order to balance and protect the range of public interests throughout the waterfront lands.

2.4.1 PROPERTY TRANSFER ASSESSMENT (PTA) MEAFORD SMALL CRAFT HARBOUR

Commissioned by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) through Public Works and Government Services Canada, a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was completed to Canadian Standards Association (CSA) principles. The Phase 1 ESA targeted a soil and sediment sampling program combined to produce a PTA of the Meaford Small Craft Harbour to determine environmental liabilities associated with the site.

Phase 1 ESA activities identified the following potential areas of concern at the site:

- Surficial soil and fill of unknown quality adjacent to the east wall of the Old Harbour (former coal storage activities and grain elevator fire).
- Fill of unknown quality at the Coast Guard Search and Rescue (SAR) Station.
- Surface and subsurface petroleum hydrocarbon impacts on leased Richardson Boats lands on the west side of the Old Harbour (existing and former fuelling facilities).
- Waste materials, impacted soil and groundwater below the site from a former dump site (reportedly located south of the SAR Station).
- Impacted sediments within the Old (river mouth) and New Harbour.
- Impacted groundwater migration to the site from the former Georgian Foundry (previously located on the northwest corner of Bridge Street and Bayfield Street).
- Impacted groundwater migration to the SAR Station portion of the site from the former Imperial Oil Property (located south of the SAR Station).
- Fill of unknown fill quality located behind the east and west walls of the Old Harbour (river mouth) and along the shoreline south of the New Harbour.

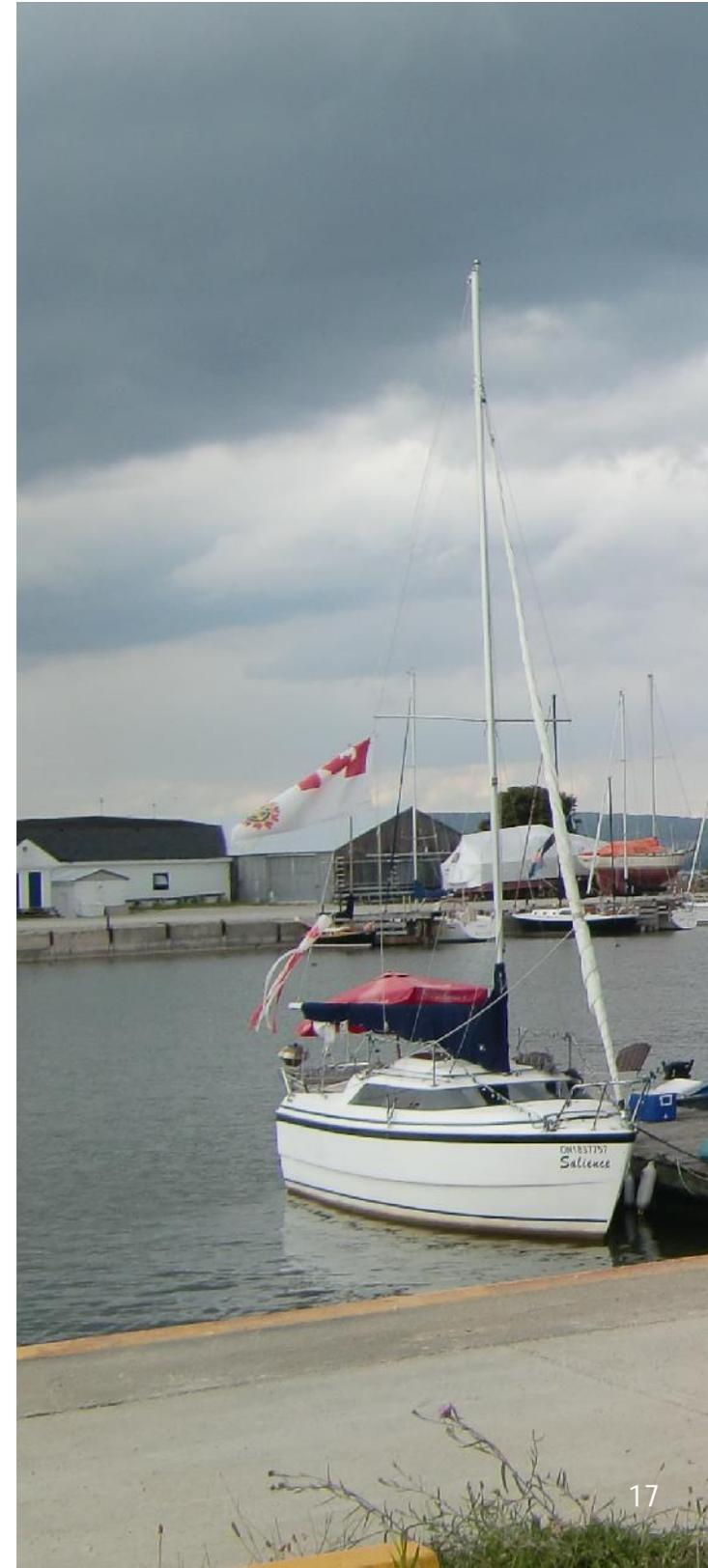
The sediment sampling program expanded on DFO samples collected and analyzed for metals, oil & grease and Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) in 1983. Samples submitted in 1983 were screened against the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) sediment guidelines and Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE) Table 1 sediment standards. Samples collected in 1983 were only from the Old Harbour, and most of the samples submitted from the inner portion of the harbour had metals exceedances (typically chromium and copper). One sample also exceeded the CCME Interim Sediment Quality Guideline (ISQG) for DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane).

Seven sediment samples were collected as part of the 2007 sampling program; six locations were within the New and Old Harbours and one was collected outside of the Harbour areas to represent “background” sediment chemistry. Of the seven samples submitted for analysis, five had metals exceedances of CCME and/or MOE Table 1 standards (typically copper and nickel). One location adjacent to the SAR Station also had polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon exceedances.

Environmental drilling was completed at the SAR Station property and the leased Richardson Boats land to collect soil samples as part of the sampling program. One borehole location (two subsurface soil samples collected) and two surficial soil samples were collected from the Richardson Boats land. Petroleum hydrocarbon exceedances of CCME values (F2 and F3) were present in one of the surficial soil samples collected near fuel pumps. The volume of impacted soil is estimated to be 0.2 m³. Significant concentrations of petroleum hydrocarbons were not detected in subsurface soil.

Six borehole locations were advanced on the SAR Property and subsurface soil samples collected to analyze the fill present. Fill thickness was reported to range from 2.4 metres to 3.7 metres across the site and consisted mainly of silt and clay fill, layers of dark brown to black sand and other poor quality fill materials. The layers of poor fill do not appear to be continuous between boreholes and are likely pockets of heterogeneous fill. Metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons concentrations were above the CCME guideline values from three of the six borehole locations.

Contamination is present at levels above generic standards in soil, groundwater and sediment. There is also some uncertainty related to the location of a former waste disposal site. These issues can be addressed through additional site characterization work followed by remediation and/or risk management measures to either generic property standards (i.e., MOE O.Reg. 153/04, as amended) or to property-specific standards developed through a risk assessment process.



2.4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENT (PHASE 1)

A Phase 1 ESA was completed in 2007 following CSA principles to identify environmental liabilities that could impact the redevelopment of the harbour lands. The harbour lands were separated into two areas of investigation; Area A (Harbour Area) located immediately south of the Meaford Small Craft Harbour (New Harbour) and Area B (East Shore Area) located to the east of Area A, consisting of a water lot with frontage along Georgian Bay (see Figure 10).

Phase 1 ESA identified no actual sources of environmental contamination; however, the following potential sources of contamination were identified on-site (see Figure 11):

- Impacted soil and groundwater by petroleum hydrocarbons, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and metals due to historical CN rail line operation and associated infrastructure.
- Soil of unknown quality adjacent to the east wall of the Old Harbour where large quantities of coal were stored;
- Waste materials, and the potential for impacted soil and groundwater below the site from a former waste disposal site located south and east of the Old Harbour;
- Poor quality fill located behind the west wall of the Old Harbour and along the shoreline east of the New Harbour, where significant modifications to the shoreline have been made; and
- Dredged material from the Old Harbour was deposited along the shoreline on Site B – sediment samples collected in 1983 reveal metals at levels above the current CCME sediment quality guidelines, but below MOE Table 1 Standards.

The Phase 1 ESA also identified potential sources of contamination originating off-site:

- Poor quality fill materials and the potential presence of metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons on the adjacent Coast Guard SAR property;
- Former Imperial Oil Ltd. property located south of the site was used to store oil (suspected above ground storage tanks); and
- Stanley Knight Limited, hardwood flooring manufacturing facility, located at the east end of Site B, in operation for many years (at least since 1925), had impacts from historical operations.

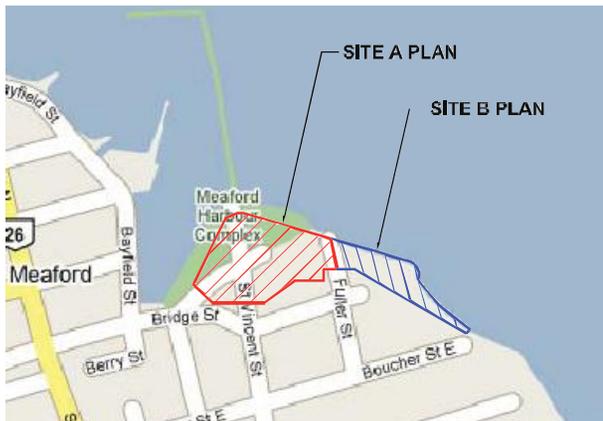


FIGURE 10 - Phase 1 ESA Areas of Investigation



FIGURE 11 - Sources of Environmental Contamination within the Meaford Waterfront Plan Study Area



2.4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENT (PHASE 2)

A Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was completed in 2009 for the municipal harbour lands with the objective to evaluate areas of potential concern identified by the Phase 1 ESA. At the time, the Municipality of Meaford was considering redevelopment of Site A and B (see Figure 10) for public recreation use as well as the possibility of constructing a small recreation vehicle parking area. The Municipality intended to use the Phase 1 ESA and Phase 2 ESA reports to support the filing of a Record of Site Condition (RSC).

The environmental Phase 2 ESA field program included the advancement of ten boreholes, with six boreholes completed as monitoring wells, collection of subsurface soil samples from these locations, collection of three additional shallow soil samples and the subsequent measurement of water levels and collection of groundwater samples from installed monitoring wells.

Soil profile encountered at the site was sand and gravel fill and silt and clay layers, with increasing depth. A coal-like material and/or slag was encountered at depths ranging from 1 to 3 metres below ground surface at the site. The water table was recorded between 1.1 and 2.8 metres below ground surface.

Sample results were compared to MOE Table 1 or 3 Standards (Table 1 if < 30m from Georgian Bay, Table 3 if > 30m from Georgian Bay).

Site A: Soil parameters above appropriate criteria included metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons. Lead, in particular, was found in numerous samples across Site A. Groundwater parameters above appropriate criteria included metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.

Site B: Antimony and petroleum hydrocarbons (F3) were above the appropriate criteria at a sample located in proximity to the hardwood flooring factory. Groundwater parameters were below the applicable standards.

It was concluded that appropriate risk management measures for the site will require further investigation into the extent and source of the metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon impacts. Risk management measures could include: excavation of soil with metals and/or polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon concentrations above the generic MOE standards and/or use of a Risk Assessment to determine property-specific standards for the site that are protective of human health and the environment.

2.4.4 SHORELINE INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS

A visual review of the shoreline infrastructure was undertaken during an initial site visit. The review included a site walk by a coastal/marine engineer and identification of notable deficiencies in shoreline structures or notable erosion of natural shores. The site review did not uncover any such notable deficiencies. The breakwaters of the New Harbour appear to be in good condition with normal amount of fractures in the armour stones. The shores of the basin appeared stable with no obvious signs of erosion. The docks are floating relatively straight and level indicating well-functioning anchoring system and proper flotation. A considerable amount of aquatic vegetation was noted in the east part of the basin.

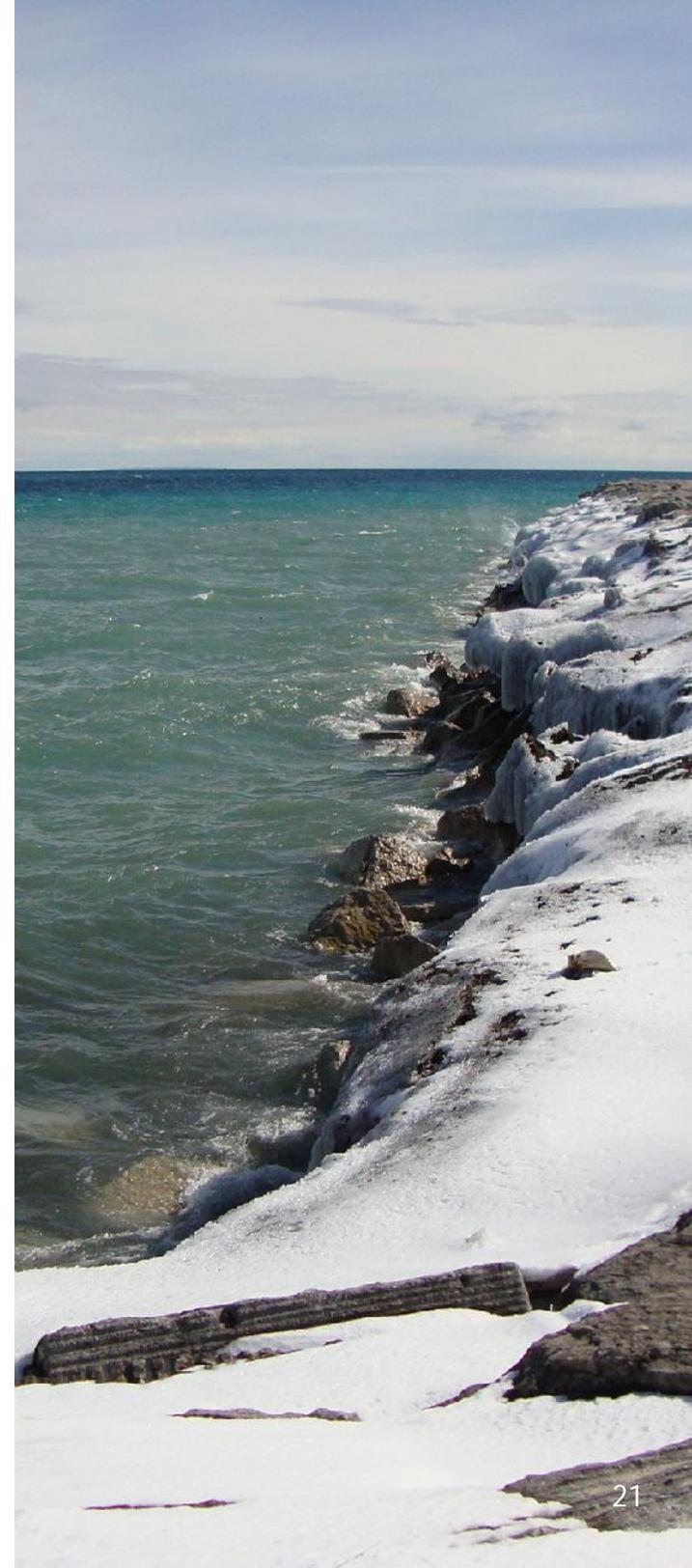
The shores of the Old Harbour are also functional. Some show greater signs of deterioration, like the concrete cap on the south side of the Old Harbour basin; however, no signs of structural instability were observed.

Any repairs or planned improvements to the shoreline infrastructure should consider the changing water levels of Georgian Bay. The water levels of Georgian Bay are not likely to reach historic highs as they did in the late eighties based on present understanding of factors controlling water level. There are two factors that may be contributing to lowering of the lake levels, climate change and possible increased outflow from Lake Huron. These are very complex issues that are being addressed by senior governments and agencies; however, the impact on the level of Lake Huron/Georgian Bay is that predicted water level reductions in Lake Huron would be lower by 0.5 to 1 metres, on average in 30 to 50 years. These assessments/predictions were already achieved in the early 1990s and more recent reports do not contradict these initial predictions. Therefore, any infrastructure work along the shoreline, such as repairs of shore structures or dredging should consider lower water level scenarios.

2.4.5 COASTAL PROCESSES

A review of background information regarding coastal processes was undertaken to provide comments with respect to function and possible enhancement of existing beaches. Within this context, the following comments are provided:

- The extension of the beach south of the New Harbour in southerly direction beyond its present location will be difficult. The alignment of the shoreline is not appropriate for a beach. A very long groyne would be required with substantial infill to realign the shore before the beach could be constructed. The existing beach could be improved by providing smaller gravel on the beach slope. This would require lengthening of the existing groyne at the south end of the existing beach.





- Expansions of the beaches on the north side of the Old Harbour will be also hampered with the alignment of the shoreline. The “middle” cell is not the appropriate alignment. The north cell is slightly better, but will require longer groynes and supply of cobble or coarse gravel. Only cobble or coarse gravel beaches are suggested because sand beaches would require substantial sheltering. The north cell has the most potential for beach improvement due to very shallow nearshore.
- The alignment of the beaches in the study area is difficult to assess using only aerial photography, which is the first approximation normally used, because there are many long groynes along this shore. A detailed numerical model assessment would be required. Any beach improvement will require that gravel or cobble material is supplied from external sources, because natural littoral material is not available to sufficiently enhance the beaches.

A review of coastal information contained in the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Shoreline Management Plan (Sandwell, 1994) and a number of reports dealing with erosion and sedimentations issues on Bighead River (Ainley and Associates, 1979, Cumming-Cockburn, 1985, Cumming-Cockburn, 1986, Cumming-Cockburn, 1987) were reviewed within the context of dredging of the river harbour.

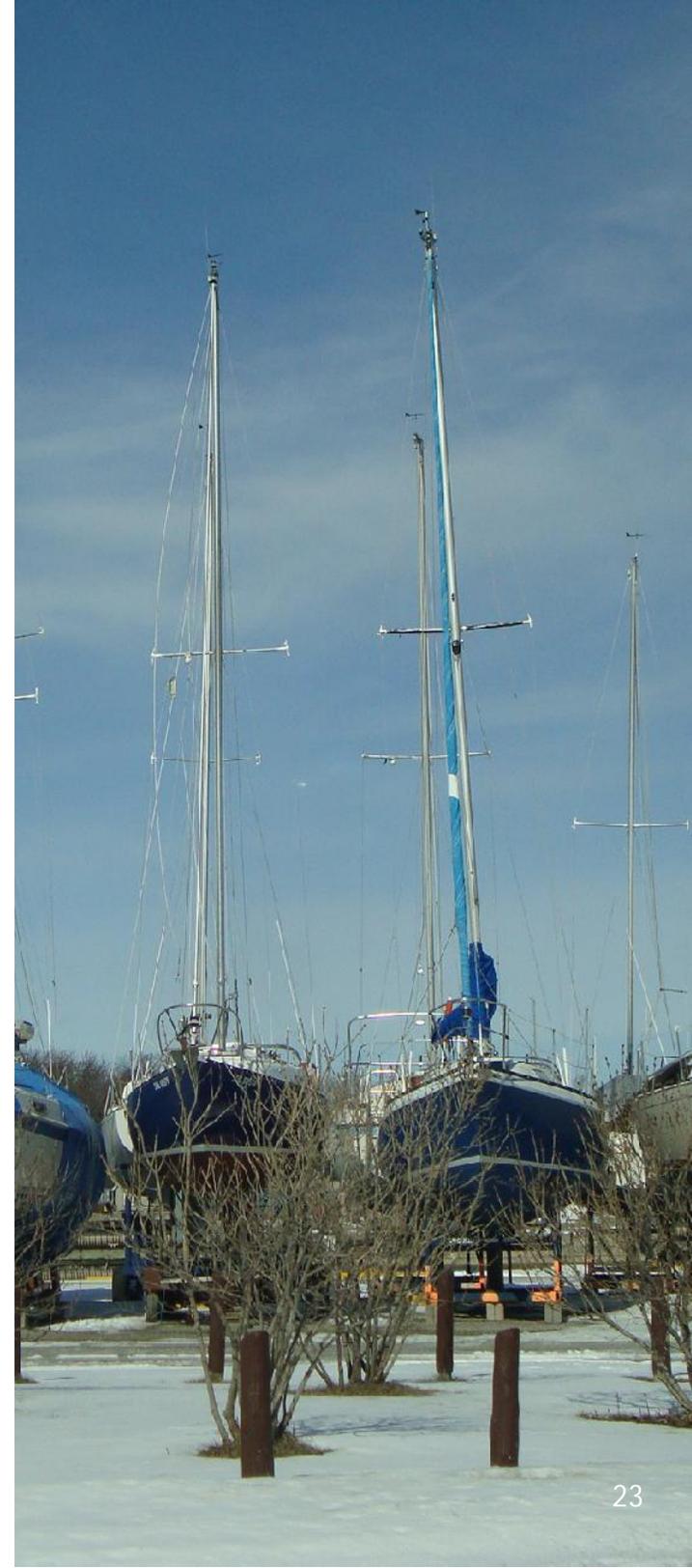
- The rate of infilling of the Old Harbour has not been established with any accuracy. There is no reason to believe that the rate of infill would be any different in the future than it has been in the past.
- The source of sediment is not only the river, but also the lake. Sediment moves from north to south and will enter the mouth of the Old Harbour basin. The sediment may be flushed out during large flow events, but remain within relatively shallow area where littoral transport can move the sediment back towards the river mouth.
- Any dredging proposal needs to consider the expected reduction in the water levels of Georgian Bay described above.
- The New Harbour is not subject to the same rate of sedimentation, but is impacted by lower water levels.

2.4.6 EXISTING WATERFRONT USES

Although the waterfront has historically supported a range of industrial functions in the 19th and 20th century, in the last 20 to 30 years, it has been used as a recreation space and for community events. The urban waterfront lands are comprised of Fred Raper's Park along the Georgian Bay shoreline that includes picnic tables, benches, a gazebo, two beaches, a lookout area and a promenade. The Meaford Museum is adjacent to this park. Public open area is located east of the Bighead River, with a large picnic area, the Rotary Harbour Pavilion, along with the Harbour Complex Building, Coast Guard Search and Rescue Station, historical railway storage shed, sailing school, chip wagon, public washroom building and a fish cleaning facility. A large grassy-gravel area is used for concerts, community events, parking, and as a boating storage area in the winter months. The green spaces have a number of large mature trees, as well as some ornamental landscape features. A second naturalized, less-maintained beach is located on the east end of the study area, contributing to sustaining an accessible waterfront with open views to Georgian Bay.

The full spectrum of marine uses along the urban waterfront lands include: transient dockage, seasonal dockage, boat servicing and repair, winter storage, sailing lessons, launching, shore fishing, swimming, community events and festivals, parking, recreational vehicle camping for fishing patrons, walking, picnicking, passive recreation, biking and commercial charter fishing.

It is also important to acknowledge and protect traditional uses of the waterways, shorelines and lands in and around the Municipality of Meaford for the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation, Saugeen First Nation (referred to as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation) and the Métis.

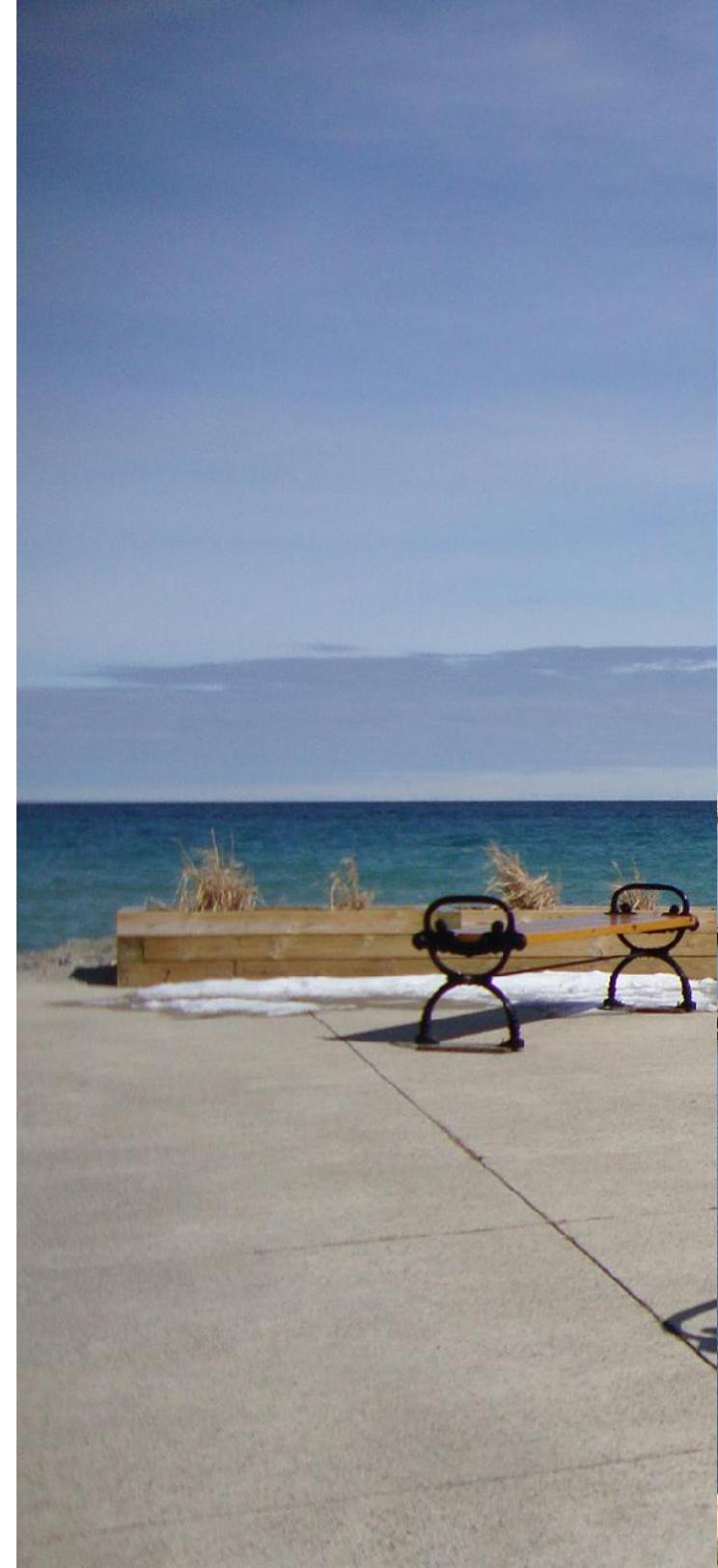


2.5 LOCAL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE – STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS, PHASE 1 CONSULTATION

At the initial stage of the project, key stakeholder interviews were held over a two day period to provide information and an update on the Meaford Waterfront Plan process and to obtain input from those who actively use the waterfront and/or protect the public's interest. Representatives from the following groups were in attendance: Rotary Club of Meaford, Coast Guard Search and Rescue Station, Stanley Knight Limited, Chamber of Commerce, Meaford Public Library, Friends of the Meaford Harbour, Reef Boat Club, Richardson Boats, Councillors and Municipal Staff. Knowledge was exchanged on the site conditions and uses, history, deficiencies, challenges, celebrations and potential opportunities for future new uses. Interview questions are included in Appendix 1.

The highlights of the stakeholder discussions include:

- Main characteristics: access and intimacy/charm of waterfront, not too big, authenticity, farming-culture tourist oasis, Richardson Boats the only commercial use, aging population, and marina as the jewel of the municipality.
- Well-liked community events: farmer's market, fish fry, ice-cream at chip wagon, ScareCrow Invasion Parade that ends at the Harbour, concerts, Canada Day festivities, Harbour Open House event, and Bighead River salmon run.
- Current waterfront uses: walking along the waterfront, attending community events, picnics at the pavilion, dog walking, great Harbour and marina access, boat servicing, beaches, passive recreation, plays/skits, family-oriented activities, fishing, biking, and First Nation access.
- Main concerns: facilities are neglected, need repair, decline in water level and inadequate dredging, need growth/improvements, lack of entrepreneurial initiatives, perpetual dredging for navigation of boats, too much parking and gravel, privatization of waterfront, green spaces are 'broken' and old, pedestrian access on the existing bridge is dangerous, high maintenance costs for the Old Harbour, use of marina revenues not applied to marina, activities at the waterfront will take away from the Downtown activities, seasonality of commerce, lack of vision to drive investments, New Harbour not operating at full capacity, liability and safety of the pier (no railing or ladder), and the decline in the number of boaters and racing.





- Main opportunities: cafe, splash pad, commercial uses and restaurants, canoe and sailing club, health and wellness as a development theme, hotel, boardwalk, patios, regattas, amphitheatre, winter shows, boat clubs, Mallets Bay Boat Club on Lake Champlain in Vermont, east-west pedestrian connection, pedestrian bridge, fitness, connection between Downtown and the Harbour, more green areas, railway station replica, cultural heritage theme, library, rail/marine/harbour related shops, improve way-finding and signage, vistas, provide car with trailer parking, maximize public access, economic sustainability, environmental sustainability, linkage with Georgian Trail, connectivity to Beautiful Joe Park, attract developers that provide quality built form, and public/private partnerships.
- Other much-liked waterfront destinations: Kingston Ontario Park, Granville Street Market in Vancouver, North Bay, Owen Sound, Gravenhurst, Thunder Bay, Gananoque (Thousand Islands), Perry Sound, Keswick (Town of Georgina), Cobourg, Burlington, Oakville and Halifax.

2.6 LOCAL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE – COMMUNITY SURVEY, PHASE 2 CONSULTATION

Hard copies and electronic copies (via PlaceSpeak) of the community survey were also circulated at the early stages of the project to gather input from the public on the existing site conditions and the ‘top of mind’ concerns (see Appendix 1). Approximately 50 surveys were received, and although not statistically representative of the entire population of the Municipality, the following provides a small window into the preferences of the public who were engaged and really passionate about the future of the waterfront lands:

- Waterfront use: walking, biking and the use of trails was the most preferred activity along the waterfront, along with the use of the beaches and swimming, boating and sailing and attending community events. The use of the parks and passive recreation was another popular preference.
- Summer use: the waterfront was heavily used in the summer – the majority of respondents had daily access, with a very large proportion also accessing the waterfront for the entire season and/or on a weekly basis.
- Winter use: the waterfront was less used in the winter – the number of respondents that made weekly trips was approximately the same as in the summer, while the number of respondents using the waterfront lands on a monthly basis or never increased significantly. A smaller percentage of respondents accessed the waterfront lands on a daily basis or for the entire season.
- Mixed-use tourism: the majority of the respondents liked the waterfront lands to reflect mixed-use development with tourism opportunities.
- Recreational vehicles: the majority of respondents disliked having recreational vehicles on the waterfront lands.
- Role of Meaford’s waterfront: the majority of respondents agreed that the waterfront lands should be used as parkland and for recreation, with preferences for public access, tourism, mixed development and marina uses.
- Like: the most frequently mentioned items included the views and landscape, harbour/marina/boating, walking and trails, and public access.
- Dislike: the most frequently mentioned items included that there was no maintenance, low water levels, missing amenities and attractions, and the lack of food services.
- Attracting new businesses: the most frequently mentioned items included green spaces, food services and waterfront-related business.
- Missing: the most frequently mentioned items included the lack of food services and waterfront plan or vision.





2.7 ONTARIO WATERFRONT PRECEDENTS

In order to fully appreciate the scale and potential for economic activity on Meaford's waterfront lands, a 'size-comparison study' (see Figure 12) was undertaken. The urban area waterfront lands in Meaford are quite extensive and can be compared to Gravenhurst and Kincardine's waterfront land base, which are both successful and unique waterfront tourist destinations in Ontario. North Bay and Owen Sound are also well known and established waterfronts that span along a longer waterfront edge. The precedent photo-collage (see Appendix 2), with photographs of Harbours, green parking lots, waterfront ambiance and public beaches, was developed as a tool for the public design charrette (see Section 5.3) to test and discuss waterfront design approaches, treatment and suitability for the redevelopment of Meaford's waterfront lands.

Best practices and precedents in other municipalities with similar waterfront redevelopment projects (i.e., Keswick, The Forks in Winnipeg (MB), Crate's Landing in Georgina, Dryden, Thunder Bay, Deseronto, Cobourg and Port Perry) were reviewed to help identify a range of uses that would enhance Meaford's waterfront. Kincardine and Saugeen Shores were also looked at as examples for Meaford. Kincardine provides an example of a nearby waterfront community that has recently been able to attract investment in a new Marriott hotel, while Saugeen Shores recently completed its own Waterfront Master Plan.

The two waterfront community precedents that are particularly informative to Meaford's current situation and future direction are highlighted below. Gravenhurst and North Bay provide examples of two communities which have successfully revitalized their harbour/waterfront areas into important economic and tourism generators. Both of these communities provide examples of a distinct waterfront redevelopment strategy: Gravenhurst, a waterfront redevelopment involved a partnership between the municipality and private developer; and North Bay, a municipally-retained site being redeveloped for recreational purposes.

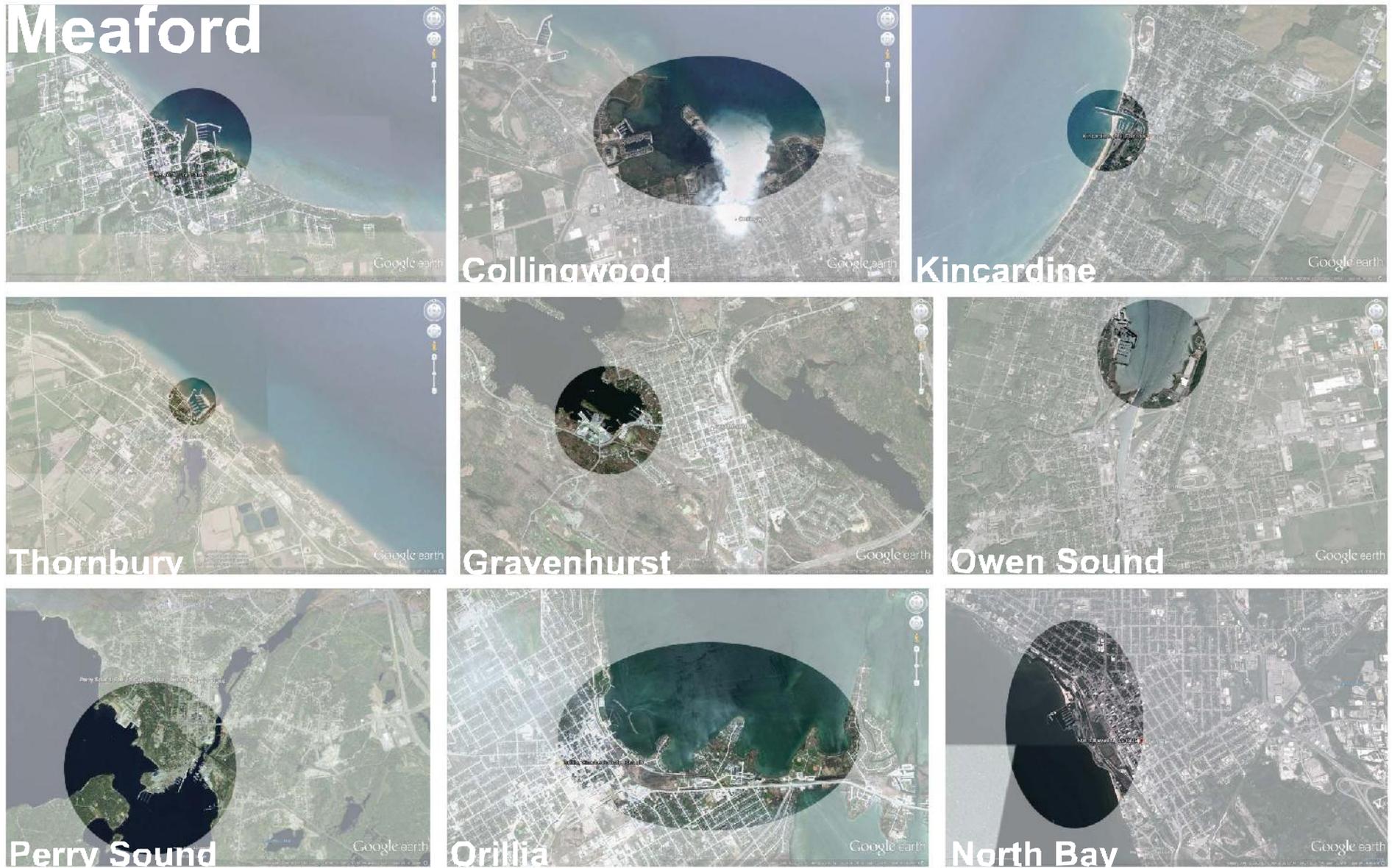


FIGURE 12 - Waterfront Size Comparison Study

2.7.1 GRAVENHURST (MUSKOKA WHARF)

Although waterfront redevelopment has been an important economic development challenge in Gravenhurst since the 1980s, it was in 2005 that the Muskoka Wharf project was completed and the waterfront was revitalized with a mix of shopping, dining, cultural/historic features and community events, in addition to residential and hotel space.

The waterfront redevelopment in Gravenhurst has been concentrated on a 90-acre parcel at the south end of Lake Muskoka. The total cost of the Muskoka Wharf development was approximately \$120 million, and the project was structured as a partnership between the municipality and Evanco, a private sector developer.

The economic impact of the Muskoka Wharf project has been significant in the local community, creating approximately 300 jobs during construction, in addition to the employment related to the ongoing operation of the development. In a short period of time, the Muskoka Wharf development has quickly become a focal point for tourism and economic activity in the local community.

Gravenhurst provides an example of many potential uses that would be appropriate for Meaford and helps to promote local economic development and tourism, including:

- Art Studio/Gallery;
- Outdoor Recreation Retailer;
- Spa/Wellness Centre;
- Restaurant(s); and
- Hotel/Resort.

These types of commercial uses would not only be suitable for Meaford's waterfront, but they have already been included in the Meaford Economic Development Strategy and/or the Meaford Harbour Strategic Plan. Moreover, some features of the Muskoka Wharf, such as a museum and medium density residential development, already exist in Meaford's waterfront (i.e., Meaford Museum and Harbourside Condominiums). With the development of a range of commercial uses in the waterfront area, Meaford has the potential to replicate the success of Gravenhurst, while also supporting the local policy framework. Figure 13 illustrates the land uses included as part of the Muskoka Wharf development, and also identifies the various incentive programs available for waterfront properties in Gravenhurst, in comparison to those available in Meaford.



	Existing Composition of Land Uses ⁽³⁾	Incentives	
		Available in Gravenhurst ⁽⁴⁾	Available in Meaford
Location: Gravenhurst	Accommodation (106 rooms - 40 condo-hotel units) Residence Inn Marriott Hotel	Planning and Design Grant Planning and Building Permit Application Fees Grant	n/a Building Permit Fee Grant Program
Population⁽¹⁾: 11,640	Food services (approximately 20,000 square feet) Boston Pizza	Building Facade Improvement Grant(s) Structural Improvement Grant	Facade Improvement Loan Program n/a
Year Completed⁽²⁾: 2005	Dock of the Bay Sunset Grill	Landscaping and Property Improvement Grant Heritage Restoration Grant	n/a n/a
Size of Waterfront Area: 90 acres	The Wolf's Den Cafe Ice Cream at Muskoka Wharf	Signage Improvements Grant Property Tax Increment Grant	n/a Residential Development Charge Grant Program
Estimated Cost⁽³⁾: \$170 million	Specialty retailing (approximately 35,000 square feet - also includes commercial services space) Applause Toy Store	Heritage Property Tax Grant n/a	Tax Incremental Equivalent Grant Program Parkland Dedication Fee Grant Program
Funding Structure: A single private partner was engaged to develop the waterfront in Gravenhurst	Blue Willow Tea Shop David Dawson Studio & Gallery Due North Apparel Hawkestone Soap Co. The Spa at Sagamo Commercial services Century 21 Muskoka Steam ships Stratus Construction Muskoka Recreation (approximately 25,000 square feet) Muskoka Boat & Heritage Centre Muskoka Wharf Marina Children's playground Sports facilities Residential Condominiums (3 buildings - 129 units)		

SOURCE: urbanMetrics inc.

1) Population refers to the unadjusted 2011 Census population

2) Town of Gravenhurst, <http://www.gravenhurst.ca/en/discoverus/muskokawharf.asp>

3) Discover Muskoka: Muskoka Wharf, <http://www.discovermuskoka.ca/directories.html?pid=696&sid=384:Muskoka-Wharf->

4) Town of Gravenhurst Community Improvement Plan

FIGURE 13 - Gravenhurst Waterfront Redevelopment (Muskoka Wharf) Summary

2.7.2 NORTH BAY (COMMUNITY WATERFRONT PARK)

Like Gravenhurst, waterfront redevelopment has been a longstanding priority in North Bay. The vision for the waterfront in North Bay is now being realized due to a series of programs and investments originally established in 2000. The objective was to create a plan to beautify North Bay's waterfront area, revitalize the community and contribute to an improved quality of life for local residents.

In 2001, Community Waterfront Friends (CWF) was officially established as a non-profit organization, and developed an environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable plan for the redevelopment of North Bay's waterfront. While the waterfront redevelopment in Gravenhurst focused on commercial uses and economic development, North Bay provides an alternate example of a waterfront redevelopment strategy that is more focused on leisure and recreation. The CWF's mandate was to come up with an alternative to commercial development on the 38 acres of reclaimed rail lands situated between the Downtown Core and waterfront along Lake Nipissing. The new waterfront vision was adopted by municipal council in 2003, which included the development of a captivating, prominent waterfront park, featuring a variety of socially, environmentally and economically sustainable features. More than \$10 million in total investments have been made to-date. The majority of these improvements in North Bay have been oriented towards providing outdoor recreation space on the waterfront in order to enhance tourism and create a focal point for the community.

Many of the investment strategies to revitalize the North Bay waterfront are applicable to Meaford as well. Providing additional outdoor recreational space on the waterfront in Meaford would recognize the interests of local residents and support the existing policy framework. The Official Plan emphasizes the importance of establishing the harbour lands as a prominent recreational focal point, featuring a combination of public and recreational uses. Furthermore, the Harbour Master Plan seeks to establish the waterfront area as a *"thriving, sustainable, multi-use public recreational destination."*

Figure 14 illustrates the land uses included as part of the North Bay waterfront redevelopment (Community Waterfront Park), and also identifies the various incentive programs available for waterfront properties in North Bay, in comparison to those available in Meaford.



	Existing Composition of Land Uses ⁽²⁾	Incentives	
		Available in North Bay ⁽⁴⁾	Available in Meaford
<i>Location:</i>	<i>Recreation</i>	Renovation Study Grant Program	n/a
North Bay	Education/recreation centre for children	Planning and Building Fees Grant Program	Building Permit Fee Grant Program
<i>Population ⁽¹⁾:</i>	Events/staging area	Facade Improvement Grant Program	Facade Improvement Loan Program
53,651	Museum	Rehabilitation and Redevelopment Loan Program	n/a
<i>Year Completed ⁽²⁾:</i>	Children's playground(s)	n/a	Residential Development Charge Grant Program
On-going	Swimming pool/water play areas	Tax Increment-Based Grant	Tax Incremental Equivalent Grant Program
<i>Size of Waterfront Area:</i>	Civic plaza	n/a	Parkland Dedication Fee Grant Program
38 acres	Skating rink		
<i>Estimated Cost ⁽³⁾:</i>	<i>Food services</i>		
\$49 million	n/a		
<i>Funding Structure:</i>	<i>Specialty retailing</i>		
<i>The municipality acquired the site and has retained ownership, while the Community Waterfront Friends organization has led the redevelopment efforts</i>	n/a		
	<i>Commercial services</i>		
	n/a		
	<i>Accommodation</i>		
	n/a		
	<i>Residential</i>		
	Marina Point Retirement Residences (200 units)		

SOURCE: urbanMetrics inc.

1) Population refers to the unadjusted 2011 Census population

2) North Bay Community Waterfront Friends

3) Community Waterfront Friends is currently undertaking a study to determine capital and operating costs. Figure based on an article in The Nugget (<http://www.nugget.ca/2009/07/15/waterfront-funds-dry-up>)

4) City of North Downtown Community Improvement Plan

FIGURE 14 - North Bay Waterfront Redevelopment (Community Waterfront Park) Summary

2.8 MARINA MARKET OVERVIEW

In the redevelopment of any waterfront, it is essential to understand and identify the market for recreational marina/harbour operations in Ontario and, more specifically, the local context for the Municipality of Meaford that is situated on the Georgian Bay. The sections below provide a high-level overview of the existing trends and future indicators for the growth or decline of certain marina/harbour operations.

2.8.1 ROLE OF MARINA OPERATIONS IN ONTARIO

Marinas in Canada are operated by federal, provincial and municipal government organizations, or private organizations, which are responsible for the management of the facilities and services associated with their commercial operations. According to data published by the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA), there are 642 marina operations in Ontario. Marinas have the potential to provide the widest range of goods and services to all other boating sectors, including moorage, transient docking, boat sales and rentals, boat repairs, fuel sales, winter storage, retail sales, and other services. In many communities, marinas serve an important economic function, by directly offering these services and/or partnering with private companies to operate various services, including restaurants and/or accommodations.

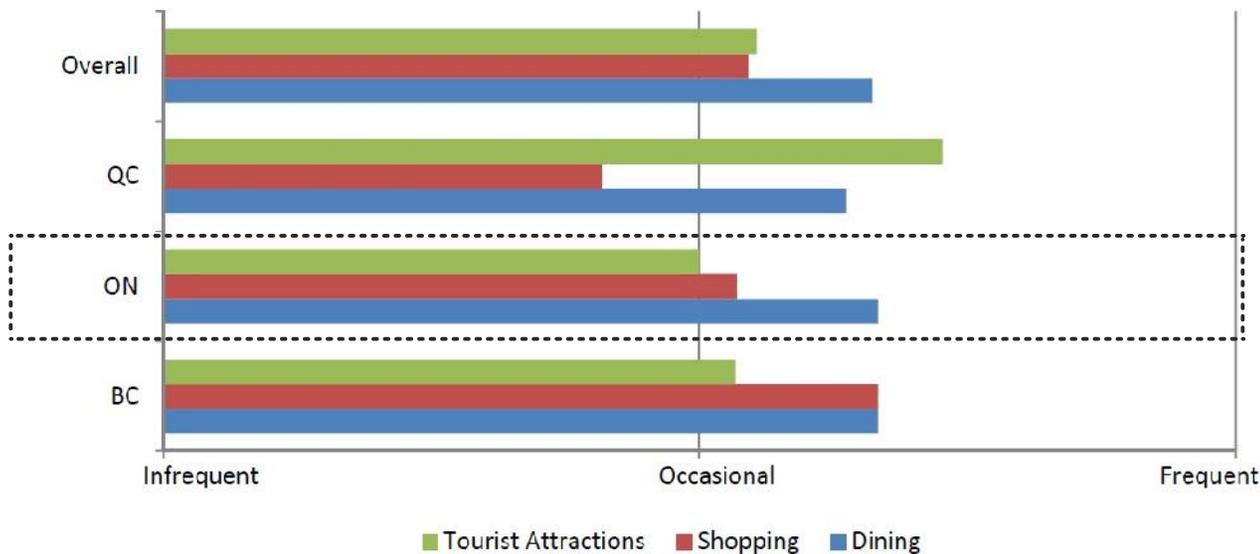


FIGURE 15 - Activities of Boaters while on Shore (source: The Economic Impact of Recreational Boating in Canada 2012)

While marinas serve an important function in the boating industry, it is also important to recognize that public marina operations provide significant community benefits, offering support for economic development and/or additional community recreation space. Marina operations help to stimulate the local economy, attracting expenditures from boaters visiting from outside the community, and also local boating residents. In addition, marinas are often a focal point for recreation within waterfront communities and provide a gateway function, beyond providing boating infrastructure and services. Of note are also marina operation's direct impacts on the tourism industry. According to the NMMA, the top activities of boaters in Ontario while on shore included: (1) Dining; (2) Shopping; and (3) Tourist attractions, as illustrated in Figure 15.

2.8.2 MARINA MARKET INDICATORS

According to a survey completed by the NMMA in 2012, approximately 35% of Canadian households (9.4 million residents) participated in recreational boating activities. More than 20% of Canadian households owned at least one recreational boat, and Canadian residents own approximately 4.3 million boats, including an estimated 1.8 million boats in Ontario. Ontario, in fact, has the highest percentage of residents who participate in recreational boating activities.

The demographic characteristics of a “typical” Canadian boater include:

- Household income: less than \$80,000;
- Employment: full-time;
- Education: university certificate, diploma or degree;
- Family/household characteristics: have children still living at home; and
- Marital status: married.

The market demand for marina business operations is closely related to boat sales and the demand for recreational boating activities. Despite the high percentage of Ontario residents who participate in boating activities, the sales performance levels for recreational boats in Canada have not been very strong during the past five years. The declining sales performance levels observed in the boating industry have coincided with the onset of the global economic downturn in 2008. However, recent statistics from the NMMA indicate the boating industry is once again showing signs of recovery, with sales of new recreational boats in Canada rising by 13% in 2012. Sales of used recreational boats also increased dramatically in 2012, rising by 17%. It is, however, important to note that Transport Canada does not require human powered boats or engines under 9.9 horse power to be registered. As a result, these sales projections may not reflect the strength of the sailing market and the growing popularity of the sport, particularly in communities situated along the shores of Lake Huron and Georgian Bay (i.e. Meaford). In terms of attracting the sailing market, Meaford has a favourable location on Lake Huron, which is known for some of the best sailing conditions in Ontario. There is also a sailing club operated in Meaford, which helps to introduce sailing to those who are new to the sport. Recognizing that sailing has been growing in popularity it is anticipated that there will be demand for some additional docking slips to accommodate sail boats in future years.

The increased sales performance observed in the boating industry in 2012 reflects an improvement in consumer confidence amongst Canadians, and the overall recovery of the boating industry following the 2008 economic downturn. Although the improved sales performance levels also indicate increasing

momentum for the boating industry in the short-term, it is important to emphasize that the commercial prospects for marinas are not as buoyant as the boating industry in general. According to data released by the NMMA, there is expected to be negative growth in marina employment in future years, despite the fact that growth in marina employment has been strong in the past, as illustrated in Figure 16.

In addition to projected declines in marina employment, rising marine fuel costs are another important consideration limiting the demand for marina operations in future years, along with the continuous impacts of declining water levels. In fact, dramatically declining water levels in Georgian Bay and the Great Lakes region in general are already impacting marina operations, and requiring regular dredging to maintain accessibility.

Based on data provided by the NMMA, the business outlook for marinas in Canada is generally rated as “moderate” (between neutral and positive rating), although weaker than most other segments of the boating industry. As a result, it seems highly unlikely for a dramatic increase in the demand for marina operations in the Municipality of Meaford that would warrant any significant increase in the number of boat slips, given the employment growth projections by sector, declining water levels and rising fuel costs, amongst other factors.

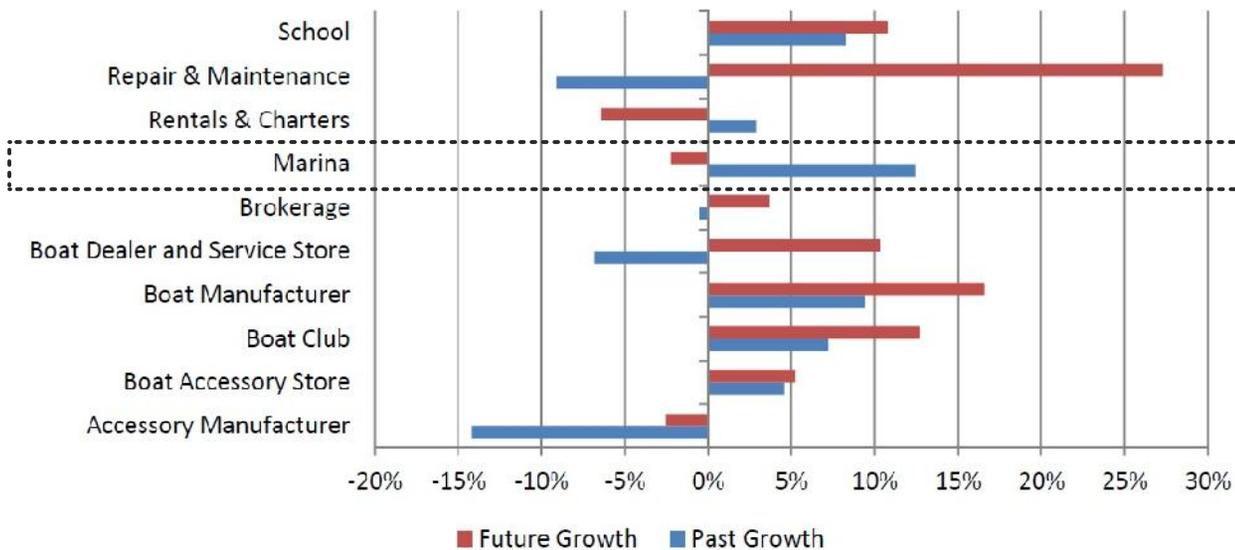


FIGURE 16 - Employment Growth in the Boating Industry (source: The Economic Impact of Recreational Boating in Canada 2012)

2.8.3 LOCAL MARINA MARKET OVERVIEW

In evaluating the local market for marina operations, Meaford was compared to the three nearby communities of Thornbury, Midland, and Wiarton. As illustrated in Figure 17, the demand for a significant amount of additional docking space is limited based on the existing operations of these nearby marinas. Meaford's two harbours are operating under-capacity as the existing docking spaces are not fully occupied. According to the local community feedback, there is continuous loss of recreational boaters to other nearby marina facilities, including Thornbury and Wiarton. In discussion with marina staff of the three communities, it became apparent that there is a waiting list at only one of these facilities, Thornbury. A more detailed review shows that Thornbury's waiting list is mainly for boats over 21 feet in length. Although the waiting list captures 22 to 27 feet and 28 to 35 feet boats, the annual turnover rates in these categories are normally sufficient to meet the current demand. As a result, there appears to be only excess demand for docking space to accommodate larger boats in excess of 36 feet.

Thornbury's waterfront features restaurant space and a hotel/resort, which have helped to stimulate tourism and economic development. Although Thornbury has a much smaller local population than Meaford, it encompasses more commercial activities in the vicinity of the harbour/waterfront area and is, therefore, a more popular marina.

There seems to be a sufficient number of existing boat slips to serve the current and future boating demand in Meaford, without adding any additional docking facilities. In recognition that the redevelopment of the waterfront area in Meaford will provide marina operations that are more attractive to boaters, and the prospects for the boating industry in general are positive, Meaford still has the opportunity to "re-capture" the recreational boaters and to reach the existing capacity. With improvements to the waterfront area, there is potential for some additional docking space, but the development of commercial uses in the Harbour will be essential in order to create a compelling destination that generates increased demand for marina operations in Meaford.

	MEAFORD (Current)	MIDLAND	THORNBURY	WIARTON
Number of Slips	195	97	250	250
Waitlist(s)	n/a	no waiting list	21' and smaller - n/a 22' - 27' - 10 boats on wait list 28' - 35' - 20 boats on wait list 36' and larger - 30 boats on wait list	no waiting list - haven't had one for the past few years
Transient Docks	3	4	25	10
Maximum Length	45'	42'	100'	75'
Fuel Availability	n/a (fuel available at Richardson Boats)	Gas	Gas Diesel Pumpout	Gas Diesel

FIGURE 17 - Competitive Analysis - Nearby Marina Operations (source: urbanMetrics inc., based on the OMOA Member Database and discussions with marina staff members.

2.9 MEAFORD WATERFRONT CONTEXT SUMMARY

Over a century ago, Meaford played a key role as an industrial waterfront with direct access to the transportation of goods and later passengers via the Grand Trunk Railway. The Georgian Bay shoreline and Bighead River mouth were inundated with commercial and private ships, as well as recreational boats. The remnants of this history are vivid in the stories of the local residents, memorabilia, and its natural heritage landscape. Over the last few decades, the waterfront lands have seen continuous transformations that have heightened the dedication of these lands as open public space, bringing the community together through events and festivals, boating, fishing, passive recreation, trail use and direct water access.

Key stakeholder interviews and survey results exposed Meaford's waterfront authenticity, charm and intimacy and how significant that is to the 'sense of place' for so many local residents. The community takes pride in the events and festivals that put Meaford on the map as the place to visit for Canada Day, concerts, Farmer's Market, Scarecrow Invasion to name only a few. Residents and tourists alike use the waterfront lands for boating, beaches, swimming and walking, while also accommodating access for the Aboriginal traditional activities. The community also identified the deficiencies in the existing waterfront lands and the key opportunities for future improvements, which are discussed in Section 2.9.2.

While marinas serve an important function in the boating industry, it is also important to recognize that public marina operations provide significant community benefits, offering support for economic development and/or additional community recreation space. Marina operations help to stimulate the local economy, attracting expenditures from boaters visiting from outside the community, and also local boating residents. In addition, marinas are often a focal point for recreation within waterfront communities and provide a gateway function, beyond providing boating infrastructure and services. Although there is some short-term momentum in the boating industry due to an increase in recreational boat sales and signs of recovery for the boating industry, the business outlook for Marinas in Canada and Ontario is generally rated as 'moderate' given the decline in marina employment, rising marine fuel costs and the impacts of declining water levels. The New and Old Harbours in the Municipality of Meaford are running under-capacity, and the combined docking space requirements could be accommodated in the New Harbour, while still operating below 75% capacity. Any future economic development would make the marina operations more attractive to boaters, but market research shows the New Harbour would most likely have the capacity to handle the increased demand.

Phase 1 and 2 Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) of the Meaford Harbour confirmed the locations of impacted soils (metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) at the Coast Guard Search and Rescue Station property, across the Harbour open space area, and an isolated location along the east



beach area in proximity to the hardwood flooring factory, Stanley Knights Limited (see Figure 18). It also confirmed that a very small volume of petroleum hydrocarbons is present on the leased Richardson Boat lands. Impacted groundwater (metals and PAHs) was also confirmed on the Harbour open space area, and is likely related to former railway activities; however, the definition of impacted may depend on which standards are ultimately required for the site. Both the Old and New Harbours have been confirmed to have impacted sediments (metals and PAHs primarily). These conditions are, however, common in harbours throughout the Great Lakes and in other communities where redevelopment of the harbours to a diverse range of tourism uses has been achieved.

Former municipal landfills were operated at Bridge Street - CNR Right of Way - Bighead River (MOE Reference No. 2077) and the 'Fuller Street Dump' at the corner of Bridge Street and St. Vincent Street (MOE Reference No. 2089), reportedly also active in the 1940s while accepting rural municipal/domestic waste and closing around 1946. There is a possibility that these reference numbers are for the same site.

The Downtown CIP emphasizes the importance of clearly defined pedestrian and vehicular (streetscape) linkages, especially between the Downtown and the Harbour. In addition, the MEDS identifies Meaford's tourism to be highly seasonal and, in order to achieve sustainable tourism business, the Municipality needs to consider multiple strategic actions under the Tourism pillar of economic activity – the strategic objective to introduce businesses connected to the waterfront by the year 2015 is addressed through this Meaford Waterfront Plan.

The 2005 Official Plan and the proposed Amendments to the Official Plan, through the 5-year official plan review and update process, emphasize the importance that the harbour lands be developed with a mix of public and recreational-oriented uses, be recognized as a regional and municipal prominent recreational focus point, and that visual, pedestrian and economic connections are made between the Harbour, Downtown, and the Georgian Trail. The proposed Official Plan amendments introduce new policies on the sustainable forms of land use and development and active transportation, which the development of the waterfront lands should adhere to. The adjacent Special Policy Areas 1 and 2 are to be well-connected to the harbour lands and contribute to the vitality of the Harbour.

The Meaford Harbour Plan identified a vision for the harbour lands that supports the objectives and policies in the 2005 Official Plan. The Guiding Principles for development were: environment, community impact and safety, operations and security, connectivity and pedestrian focus, signage, design, promotion, special policy areas, and public access and use. Both the Official Plan and Meaford Harbour Plan acknowledge the likelihood of additional demand for recreational and residential space in the Downtown and Harbour areas in future years. The primary objective of the Meaford Harbour Plan was to establish the Harbour area as a "thriving, sustainable, multi-use public recreational destination."

Meaford Vision 2020 provided direction that the update of the Meaford Harbour Plan was a way to drive environmental sustainability in Meaford's built and natural environments.



FIGURE 18 - Site Context Review & Synthesis

2.9.1 POLICY GAPS

Through a comprehensive review of the Municipality of Meaford's strategies, plans and policy directions, the following gaps were identified:

- Vision, objectives and policies for the larger context of the waterfront lands, and those within the urban area of the Municipality.
- 'Environment-First' policies that protect and enhance the ecological functions of the Georgian Bay shoreline and Bighead River mouth.
- Policies on the Environmental Protection shoreline designation along the waterfront lands.
- Policies promoting the waterfront area for tourism activity.
- Implementing zoning by-laws that permit new uses at the waterfront lands.
- Inclusion of Waterfront/Harbour Guiding Principles for the waterfront lands.
- Development policies; protection of existing buildings which are historically or culturally significant, guidelines for any new structures or buildings, and parking.
- Provisions for economic development/revitalization of the waterfront lands.
- Provisions of public space/sustainable design elements.
- Policies on maintaining public access to the water's edge.
- Policies on the physical and visual connectivity between the waterfront lands and Special Policy Area # 1.
- Provisions for providing waterfront accessible to all ability-levels.
- Provisions for preserving cultural heritage or scenic significance through the Heritage District Designation.



2.9.2 OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

A thorough background review, site analysis and synthesis, and engagement with the local community lead to a well-established set of opportunities and challenges for the economic development and physical redevelopment of the Municipality's urban waterfront area, as outlined below. These opportunities and challenges establish key considerations in the development of the Meaford Waterfront Plan.

- Contaminated sites – specific areas of the waterfront lands have contaminated soil, groundwater and sediment levels above the generic standards. These issues may be addressed through additional site characterization work followed by remediation and/or risk management measures to either generic property standards (i.e., MOE O.Reg. 153/04, as amended) or to property-specific standards developed through a risk assessment process.
- Declining water levels – water levels are dropping quicker than forecasted, affecting the operations and viability of many harbours across Ontario, including the Old and New Harbours in Meaford. There is the potential to develop a sustainable long-term strategy based on the environmental, regulatory and market-driven factors that will sustain the most appropriate use of the two harbours to address the existing continuous need to dredge due to declining water levels.
- Dredging and operation costs – granted approval from the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, the Municipality has considerable annual costs associated with dredging of the Old Harbour to maintain navigability to the existing Richardson Boats and slips. There is an opportunity to re-consider an operational and financial strategy that reflects the environmental conditions, regulatory requirements, boating market and municipal spending.
- Recreational space – recreational spaces are not well connected, are out-dated and lack an array of



uses that reflect current demands to make the waterfront lands the focal point of the community. There is an opportunity to protect, expand and re-energize the open space and recreational amenities on the waterfront lands to meet future community growth and programming demands.

- Connectivity – there is a disconnect between the Harbour and Downtown, and the physical extent of the public waterfront lands is not known. Creating a strong physical (i.e., streetscape and design elements) and visual connection (i.e. signage, views) between the Downtown Core and Harbour, specifically along Nelson Street East to link the Downtown to the waterfront lands, presents itself as a great opportunity. There is also the potential to create a strong physical and visual connection to the Georgian Trail to welcome tourists using the regional trail system, and to plan for future connectivity between all public waterfront lands at a wider municipal context.
- Sustainable development – revitalize waterfront lands with exemplary sustainable development measures and design elements, endorsing Meaford's 'environment first' philosophy while also attracting green industries/business.
- Active transportation – provide multi-modal networks that improve circulation, as well as the streetscapes and trails in and around the waterfront lands.
- Natural heritage – ecological restoration of the Georgian Bay shoreline and Bighead River mouth to ensure health of local ecosystem and protection for the enjoyment of future generations.
- Cultural heritage – incorporate the historic and culturally significant properties and landscapes to uncover the significant contributions of Meaford's industrial past.
- Gateway location – incorporate a prominent gateway feature for the waterfront lands, from both land and water-based points of entry.
- Tourist destination – tourism traffic is highly seasonal, which impacts both direct tourism-related businesses and indirect tourism businesses. The redevelopment, revitalization and all-year round programming of the waterfront lands will help establish Meaford as a successful tourist destination.
- No critical mass or major attraction - no critical mass in Meaford's tourism industry to distinguish it from other nearby communities. There are a large number of relatively small attractions and events in Meaford – but very few compelling attractions to encourage people to stop and stay for an extended period of time. Creation of a distinguished feature and program for visitors will be very important in the development of the tourism sector.
- Accommodation – There is an opportunity for additional accommodation space in Meaford given the limited existing supply of 75 motel/hotel rooms and 34 bed and breakfast rooms.
- Commercial uses – significant competition from big-box retail being established outside the Downtown

area, and in neighbouring communities with more aggressive retail activity. There is limited retail draw to attract traffic going to Owen Sound and Collingwood/Blue Mountain. Further, the current retail areas have little connection with each other, little retail support for tourism activities, too much service commercial (real estate offices, etc.) and not enough retail space. The establishment of additional compatible uses on the waterfront lands that are connected to the waterfront, including restaurants, banquet facilities, inns, craft and gift shops, studios and art galleries have tremendous potential in Meaford.

- Commercial market – limited number of retailers currently serving the outdoor recreation market locally, as well as the lack of arts and cultural retailers in Meaford provide a good economic opportunity for additional space for the above-mentioned uses.
- Adjacent lands – redevelopment of Special Policy Areas 1 and 2 could energize the programming and provide vibrancy and connections to the waterfront lands.
- Hotel and/or spa – leverage the close proximity to the Blue Mountain Resort area to strengthen Meaford’s tourism sector (contributing to less seasonality), with the potential to also develop a hotel adjacent to the waterfront lands and the development of a spa or wellness centre operated in combination with a hotel, or as a free-standing attraction.
- Arts and cultural attractions – large number of local artists than what can be supported by existing local retail art outlets or galleries; therefore, there is an opportunity to strengthen both the retail and the arts and cultural sectors of the local economy by introducing more retail/gallery space.

3.0 PRELIMINARY CONCEPT OPTIONS

3.1 PRELIMINARY CONCEPT OPTIONS

Three preliminary concept options were developed in response to the physical conditions, opportunities and challenges identified through the background review, site evaluation and consultation. The preliminary concepts explored the potential land use distribution, site access, natural heritage features, pedestrian connections, vehicular access and marine infrastructure. The three concepts were characterized as: Cultural Heritage – Status Quo; Ecologically Sensitive – Harbour Village; and Active Harbour Option – Reconstructed River Mouth.

3.1.1 CULTURAL HERITAGE - STATUS-QUO

This option proposed modest improvements to the connectivity of the waterfront with the Downtown (see Figure 19). The concept required continued partial dredging of the Old Harbour to provide access to the Harbour Services (Richardson Boats) and the dozen small boat slips along the eastern harbour wall. The New Harbour operations continued to exist, with dock and moorings layout improvements and increased boat security and privacy. Harbour Support uses, such as parking, boat servicing and fuel, the Coast Guard Search and Rescue Station (SRS), ramps and the fish cleaning station, were relocated to the New Harbour. This option presented the opportunity for Harbour Commercial uses to be proximate to both harbours and future mixed-use development remained flexible to respond to market demand.

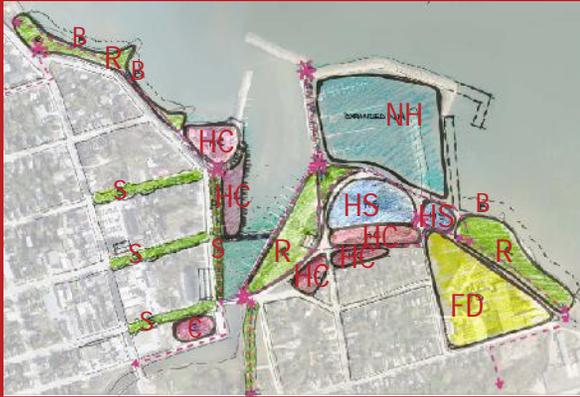
The two new recreation areas around the Rotary Harbour Pavilion intensified the waterfront open space system with provisions for an expanded pedestrian connection to the Georgian Trail and the urban trail network. Improved recreation areas along Georgian Bay provided better access and enjoyment of the lake and potential beaches. The streetscape improvements along Bayfield, Trowbridge, Nelson and Collingwood streets strengthened the pedestrian linkage between the Downtown and the two harbours. The infilling commercial uses along these streets also fostered stronger links between the waterfront and the Downtown. This option primarily focused on modest changes and interpreting Meaford's rich cultural heritage through streetscaping, park improvements and programming.



OH - Old Harbour
NH - New Harbour
HC - Harbour Commercial
HS - Harbour Support
C - Commercial
R - Recreation
FD - Future Development
B - Beach
S - Streetscape
* Special Feature
--> Pedestrian Trail

FIGURE 19 - Preliminary Concept Option 1
Cultural Heritage - Status-Quo

3.1.2 ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE – HARBOUR VILLAGE



- OH - Old Harbour
- NH - New Harbour
- HC - Harbour Commercial
- HS - Harbour Support
- C - Commercial
- R - Recreation
- FD - Future Development
- B - Beach
- S - Streetscape
- * Special Feature
- > Pedestrian Trail

FIGURE 20- Preliminary Concept Option 2
Ecologically Sustainable - Harbour Village

This option proposed reimagining the Old Harbour as the location of a new waterfront village that expanded uses that appealed to residents and visitors (see Figure 20). This option responded to the reality that dredging the river mouth would be perpetual given siltation from the river and that climate change research anticipated declining water-levels. This option suggested that the need to commit to long-term dredging was not sustainable financially or ecologically and that repurposing the Old Harbour and expanding the New Harbour were options that should be investigated. Once dredging is discontinued, the natural river flows will create new self-sustaining habitats fostering improved aquatic and terrestrial habitats. Small craft and non-motorized boat activity would continue to utilize the Old Harbour and naturalized river, and the New Harbour accommodated the relocation of motorized and sail boats into an improved marina basin, with reorganized docking and additional moorings. The potential for marina expansion at the south east side of the New Harbour was presented as an option if market demand warranted this. Harbour Support, such as parking, boat servicing and fuel, the Coast Guard SRS, ramps and the fish cleaning station, were re-located to New Harbour. The Harbour Commercial uses provided opportunities for waterfront-related commercial activities at the New Harbour and at the river mouth. The river mouth Harbour Commercial area provided continuous commercial activity on a shoreline wharf along the west harbour wall. This location provided views to the river and the bay, with an elevated pedestrian boardwalk/pedestrian crossing the Bighead River at Nelson Street. The Future Development area adjacent to the east end of the waterfront lands remained flexible for a larger mixed-use development to add an influx of people, services and businesses to the waterfront.

The new enhanced recreation facilities and parkland improvements at the Rotary Harbour Pavilion and near the New Harbour contributed to the waterfront’s open space system and provided an opportunity for an integrated trail connection to the Georgian Trail, as well as the urban trail network. The Recreation areas along Georgian Bay provided physical access to and the enjoyment of the lake and beaches. The streetscape improvements along Bayfield, Trowbridge, Nelson and Collingwood streets, as well as the pedestrian connection across the river mouth strengthened the pedestrian movement between the Harbour and the Downtown. Commercial uses are located in the Downtown, except for an expanded commercial node on the southwest side of the bridge that could attract the movement of people between the waterfront and the Downtown.

3.1.3 ACTIVE HARBOUR – RECONSTRUCTED RIVER MOUTH

This option embraced the intensification of marina uses and assumed a substantial market demand for the operation of both harbours at full capacity, justifying the ongoing maintenance costs to keep the Old Harbour entirely navigable (see Figure 21). The Old Harbour was modified to accommodate approximately 400 boats, and improvements were made to the New Harbour docks and mooring layout, as well as increased boat security and privacy. Harbour uses, such as parking, the Coast Guard SRS, ramps and the fish cleaning station, were located to the New Harbour. This option presented the expansion of boat services at Richardson Boats, and that the Harbour Commercial uses supported all waterfront-related activities. The Future Development area to the east of the Waterfront lands remained flexible for a larger mixed-use development to add an influx of people, services and businesses to the waterfront.

Improved recreation and landscape amenities around the Rotary Harbour Pavilion contributed to the waterfront’s open space system and provided an opportunity for a more integrated trail connection to the Georgian Trail, as well as the urban trail network. The recreation areas along Georgian Bay provided access and the enjoyment of the lake and potential beaches. The streetscape improvements along Bayfield, Trowbridge, Nelson and Collingwood streets strengthened the movement of people between the two harbours and the Downtown. Additional commercial infill uses along these streets fostered an exciting synergy between the waterfront and Downtown.



- OH - Old Harbour
- NH - New Harbour
- HC - Harbour Commercial
- HS - Harbour Support
- C - Commercial
- R - Recreation
- FD - Future Development
- B - Beach
- S - Streetscape
- * Special Feature
- > Pedestrian Trail

FIGURE 21 - Preliminary Concept Option 3
Active Harbour - Reconstructed River Mouth

3.2 PRELIMINARY CONCEPT COMPARISON

The three options for the redevelopment of Meaford’s urban area waterfront lands were evaluated with criteria that ranked potential impacts and contributions to: culture and tourism; natural environment and open space; along with affordability. The criteria represent the planning objectives for the Meaford urban area waterfront lands, as identified in the Official Plan policies and MED strategies. An initial comparison, as shown in Figure 22, illustrated that the Ecologically Sustainable – Harbour Village option overall had the strongest contribution to and potential for enhancement of the waterfront lands, balancing the integrity of the natural environment and the diverse demands of the community and visitors. The Active Harbour – Reconstructed River Mouth option provided tourism opportunities mainly for the boating/marina related services, with limited contributions to the natural environment and limited open space enhancements. The Cultural Heritage – Status Quo preliminary concept provided open space enhancement potential, while having a modest opportunity to improve the natural environment and little contributions to enhance Meaford’s culture, tourism and economic impact.

	OPTION 1 status quo	OPTION 2 harbour village	OPTION 3 reconstructed river mouth harbour
Tourism + Cultural Enhancement	low	high	medium
Natural Environment Enhancement	medium	high	low
Greenspace Enhancement	high	high	medium
Affordability (operating & capital costs, partnerships)	medium	medium	low

FIGURE 22 - Preliminary Concept Comparison



3.3 EXPLORING VISION, OBJECTIVES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES - COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The three preliminary concepts became the focus of the community consultation and were used to stimulate discussion on the broad vision for the Meaford urban area waterfront lands. The preliminary concepts were a tool to obtain valuable input from the community, stakeholders, staff and Council.

3.3.1 EXPLORING THE VISION – PUBLIC DESIGN CHARRETTE, PHASE 2 CONSULTATION

A design charrette is an intensive, visionary hands-on workshop that brings people from different disciplines, backgrounds and interests together to explore land use and design options for a particular site. A public design charrette was held on a summer evening in July at the Meaford Hall to engage the community in the creative process of guiding the overall vision for the waterfront, as well as the potential locations for business development, pedestrian connections, beautification, Harbour improvements, enhanced greenspace, tourism generators, and cultural and natural features.



Community members attending the public design charrette worked in four groups to prepare conceptual alternatives to the options that had been provided to stimulate discussion (see Figure 23). As each group presented their revised concepts, it became apparent that many elements had the unanimous support of the participants, while there were other issues where the participants' views differed.

Unified themes and ideas included the importance of connecting the waterfront with the Downtown, fostering commercial activity along Bayfield Street, maintaining and expanding boating in the New Harbour, and enhancing recreation in Fred Raper Park, around the Rotary Harbour Pavilion and the east waterfront lands that back onto Special Policy Area # 1. There were differing opinions on the need to maintain boating in the Old Harbour or expand boating in the Old Harbour if it meant dredging to manage sedimentation in the long term.

3.3.2 EXPLORING THE VISION – COUNCIL BRIEFING SESSION, PHASE 3 CONSULTATION

As part of the consultation process Council provided feedback on the three preliminary options, outcomes from the public charrette and stakeholder engagement activities. The briefing session was also an important opportunity to explore how the work of the Meaford Harbour Remediation Task Force would be integrated to provide a clear and unified direction for the future use of the Old Harbour.



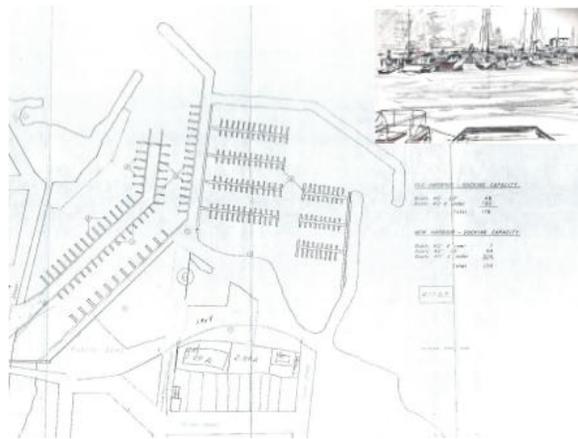


FIGURE 23 - Public Design Charrette Waterfront Concepts

3.3.3 EXPLORING THE VISION – ABORIGINAL LAND CLAIMS, PHASE 2 & 3 CONSULTATION

In acknowledgement and protection of the traditional uses of the waterways, shorelines and lands in and around the Municipality of Meaford by the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation, Saugeen First Nation (referred to as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation) and the Métis, the Municipality met the consultation requirements in recognition of the importance of pro-active relationship building. Input from this consultation (see Appendix 1) was included in the recommendations of the Meaford Waterfront Plan.

3.3.4 TESTING AND REFINING THE CONCEPTS – PHASE 4 & 5 CONSULTATION

Critical contributions were made by the local community, key stakeholders, Municipal Council and staff in the development of the two preferred concepts for the urban area waterfront lands (see Section 4.1).

3.3.5 COMMUNITY CONCEPT PREFERENCE SURVEY

Hard copies and electronic copies (via PlaceSpeak) for the community waterfront concept preference survey were circulated to seek input on the two preliminary preferred concepts, three illustrative drawings and the vision, objectives and principles for Meaford's urban waterfront lands (see Section 4.0 and Appendix 1). Approximately 45 surveys were received, and although not statistically representative of the entire population of the Municipality, the following provides insight into the preferences of the public who were engaged and passionate about the future of the waterfront lands:

- Guiding principles from the 2009 Waterfront Plan: the majority of the respondents found them still relevant and applicable to include in the Meaford Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan.
- Proposed additional principles: providing waterfront access and a healthy harbour were deemed as the most important considerations.
- Preliminary Concept 1 – Harbour Village Concept:
 - LIKE: sustainable healthy community for the long term, improving terrestrial and aquatic habitats, variety of uses, relocated Richardson Boats still viable in New Harbour, pedestrian bridge, commercial along Old Harbour, business connectivity, pedestrian focus, improved visitor experience.
 - CONCERNS: overcrowding of the New Harbour, loss in revenue from Old Harbour, viability/ access to Richardson Boats and sailing school, compatibility/viability of commercial area, cost, historical significance of the river mouth as a harbour.

- Preliminary Concept 2 – Intensified Boating Concept:
 - LIKE: stimulate boating focus and local marine business, Harbour connectivity, attractive to boaters and public, keeping the historic use of the Old Harbour, more slips, improvements to pedestrian access, pedestrian bridge, consistent with adjacent communities' harbours.
 - CONCERNS: need for ongoing dredging, traffic and parking congestion, loss of peaceful Harbour, feasibility, taxpayer contributions, cost, loss of boardwalk, limited because use is seasonal only, focus on boaters needs only, loss of other tourism opportunities, not ecologically sustainable, opposes guiding principles, eliminates sailing school, uncertain market for boating.
- Preferred Concept: majority of respondents preferred Option 1, citing harmony with nature and sustainable in the long term, ecologically and economically beneficial, balanced mix of uses for larger user groups, diverse tourism opportunities, pedestrian focus
- Harbour Village Illustration:
 - LIKE: safe and direct connection with Downtown, healthy, sustainable river mouth, improved New Harbour, family-oriented parkland, boardwalk, supports projected water-level decrease, allows non-motorized boating activities.
 - CONCERNS: naturalizing a man-made harbour, too shallow for boating traffic, cost, location of bridge, disruption of the open views, limitations for sailing club, boat storage
- St. Vincent Illustration:
 - LIKE: promotion of active transportation, buried power lines, attractive, landscape treatments and abundance, pedestrian safety, planting around the pavilion
 - CONCERNS: sidewalks unnecessary, trees blocking views, priority given to cars, lack of commercial activity, more recreational space, paved parking
- East Trail Illustration:
 - LIKE: beautiful, multi-trail, boardwalk, landscape treatments, open views, welcoming, connection with entire waterfront
 - CONCERNS: more parking, paved trail, presence of poison ivy, separate human and natural areas (extensive bird habitats), maintain beach access for small boats and canoes, lack of broader trail linkages beyond the urban area.

3.3.6 PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

A public open house was held in late October to present the Draft Meaford Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan content, including the two preferred concepts that emerged from the public charrette, recommendations for the Official Plan policies, economic development and implementation strategies and the overall preferred concept.

In general, the feedback was positive at the public event and through the PlaceSpeak discussion board. However, concerns remained related to the fate of Richardson Boat Works and the impacts of sediment accumulation if there was no maintenance dredging. The naturalization of the entire Old Harbour was a concern if it blocked the seasonal flow of ice and debris in the spring and during storm events. Other concerns were related to costs, the necessity of the pedestrian bridge and the location of boat maintenance facilities. The feedback received and the discussions held at the public open house influenced the final concepts.



4.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Guiding Principles serve to provide an overarching set of intentions to guide the long term redevelopment of the waterfront lands in Meaford. The following principles are based on the 2009 Meaford Harbour Plan's guiding principles and were informed by the values conveyed throughout the consultation process, as well as the best practices in the waterfront planning and design.

1. Protect the environment for the benefit of current and future generations.
2. Promote a healthy waterfront.
3. Promote the urban area waterfront as a gateway and focal open space area.
4. Become a cornerstone of public open space with a mix of public and recreation-oriented uses.
5. Consider the compatibility, access and synergies with the adjacent Special Policy Areas and the Downtown Core Commercial area.
6. Protect and enhance lands for boating opportunities.
7. Protect and enhance passive waterfront recreation.
8. Protect and enhance public access to the waterfront lands.
9. Provide safe access through design and minimize community impacts.
10. Provide safe, continuous public trail access along the water's edge.
11. Enhance the physical and visual connectivity of the pedestrian circulation and links.
12. Promote excellence in design.
13. Celebrate Meaford's heritage.
14. Enhance economic benefits.

4.1 TWO CONCEPTS

A check between the values and needs of the community, the Guiding Principles, and the Cultural Heritage - Status Quo preliminary concept revealed that maintaining the existing Harbour operations does not meet the intent of the Municipality's policies and strategies, while also not realizing the potential economic benefits of a diverse tourism destination. The other two preliminary concepts (Ecologically Sustainable – Harbour Village and Active Harbour Option – Reconstructed River Mouth) were also further refined and evaluated with the Guiding Principles and community's input. The boating community was advocating maintaining the moorings and Richardson Boats in the current location in the Old Harbour, without the key conclusions and recommendations of the Remediation Task Force's study that was prepared at a later date. At the time, there remained an underlying uncertainty around the viability of maintaining boating in the Old Harbour due to the cost of dredging and current lack of market for expanding boat moorings in Meaford to justify managing two harbours.

The pivotal distinction between the two concepts going forward for further public consultation was the primary function of the Old Harbour at the Bighead River mouth, impacting the potential uses on the adjacent lands and the opportunity for diversifying economic opportunities.

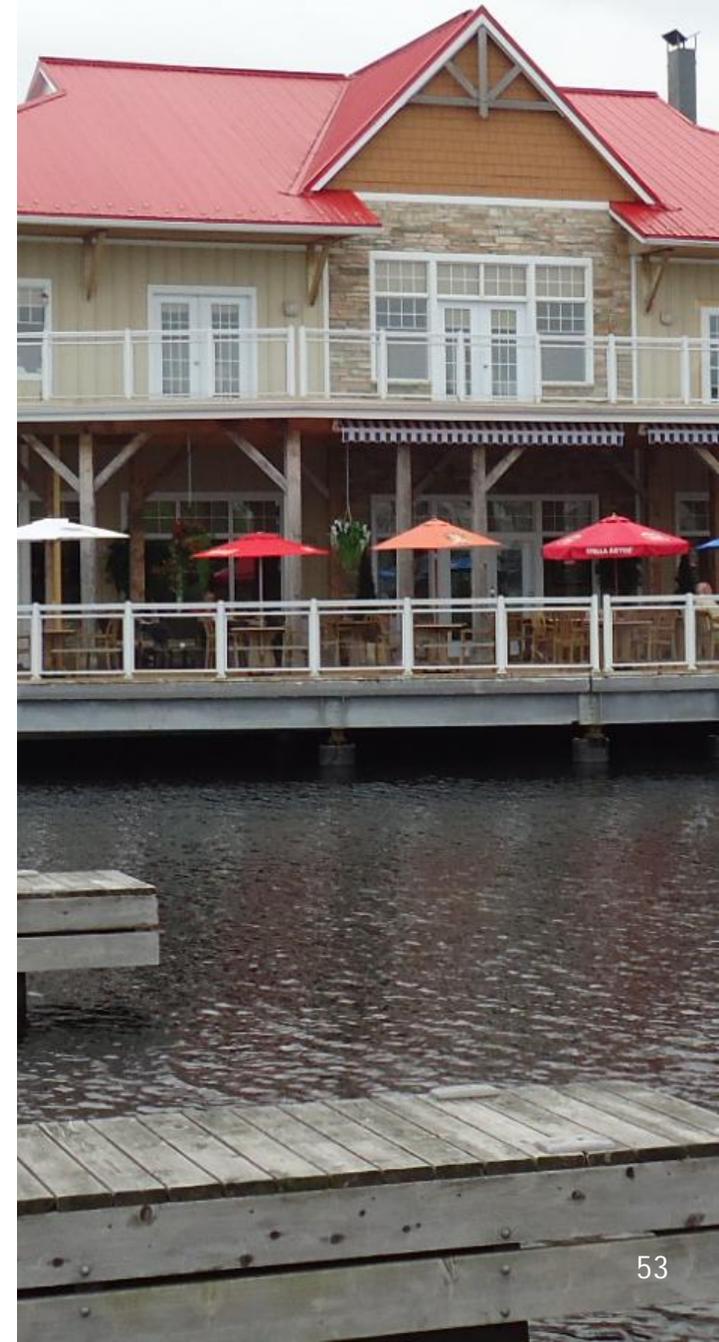




FIGURE 24 - Option 1- Harbour Village Concept

4.2 OPTION 1 - HARBOUR VILLAGE CONCEPT

The Harbour Village Concept accepts a continuous decline in water levels, a market for commercial diversification along the waterfront, issuance of an annual permit for partial dredging of the Old Harbour to maintain access to Richardson Boats and small boat slips, and the market for boating to support the New Harbour at full capacity (see Figure 24). This strategy maintains the status-quo for some boating activities in the Old Harbour, enhances fishing access with modest habitat enhancement opportunities within the Bighead River mouth where the flows of the river can sustain healthy fish habitats and establishing new Harbour Village commercial uses along Bayfield Street and the west harbour wall (see Figure 25). The vision, objectives and economic development evaluation for Option 1- Harbour Village Concept are discussed below.

4.2.1 FUTURE VISION

"The Municipality of Meaford takes pride in its urban area waterfront for the exemplary approach and design that encompass the 'Environment First' philosophy through sustainable design elements and ecological features, becoming one of the most frequently visited locations on the Georgian Bay. The modest intervention in the Old Harbour acknowledges the decreasing water-level trends, and embraces the existing location of the boat service and fuel operations while providing boat dockage for 38 small boats along designated areas of the east and west harbour walls. The Old Harbour also features reclaimed lands in the Bighead River mouth with fish habitat enhancement measures and fishing piers, as well as the Harbour Village. The New Harbour is improved with additional mooring spines and reconfiguration of the docks to expand the number of berths, providing excellent facilities for the boating community of Meaford and beyond. The Coast Guard Search and Rescue Station's presence is of great value and pride to Meaford's waterfront lands.

The Harbour Village attracts local residents and tourists alike with its shops and restaurants along the west wall overlooking the Bighead River mouth that is animated with anglers and water-based activities on kayaks, canoes and small sailboats. Community fairs and events spill over from the Harbour Village to the extended sidewalks on Bayview Street that are enhanced with street trees, lighting, benches and decorative paving. Nelson Street, is animated with ground level commercial activity and is a key pedestrian corridor from the Downtown to the waterfront and the pedestrian bridge across the river. The Rotary Harbour Pavilion, with striking views to both harbours and the bay, shines as the gathering place for small and large community events. The waterfront is a vibrant space within the Municipality of Meaford and is well connected to the existing urban fabric, as illustrated in Figure 26. The open spaces and beaches along the waterfront back onto natural heritage areas that support a continuous pedestrian trail along the lake, connecting to the Georgian Trail and the Downtown" (see Figure 27).



FIGURE 25 - Harbour Village Illustration



FIGURE 26 - St. Vincent Street Illustration

4.2.2 OBJECTIVES

- Recognize the waterfront for its tourism and recreation opportunities.
- Develop a balanced mix of uses, including recreation, harbour, commercial, natural heritage, open space and harbour support.
- Maintain boat access to boat services and fuel operations in the Old Harbour contingent upon the current operator maintaining these services.
- Improve the layout and operations of the New Harbour.
- Attract businesses to Meaford's waterfront at the Harbour Village.
- Improve connectivity between the waterfront, Downtown and the Georgian Trail.
- Improve aquatic and terrestrial habitats of the Georgian Bay shoreline and Bighead River mouth.

4.2.3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION

The Harbour Village Concept provides the best opportunity for the Municipality of Meaford to promote diverse tourism and economic development on the urban waterfront lands. It recognizes that there is surplus mooring capacity in the two harbours and, with modest improvements, there is a sufficient number of boat slips to serve current and future demand in the New Harbour. The Concept maintains access to Richardson Boats and a small number of boat slips with minor dredging near Richardson and the mouth of the harbour. This approach has a lower cost and is less environmentally intrusive than full harbour dredging presented in the Intensified Boating Concept.

The Harbour Village Concept fosters opportunities for increased retail and restaurant businesses along the waterfront, providing a distinct Harbour Village on the water. The advancement of the planning framework for the Harbour Village will foster the redevelopment of the waterfront as a commercial destination on Meaford's waterfront, attracting locals and visitors alike while also recognizing the strategic objectives of the *Meaford Economic Development Strategy*.

This concept also directly supports the direction and intent of the Official Plan policies in that the Harbour/ waterfront area has "*good potential to accommodate commercial uses such as restaurants, inns, craft and gift shops, studios and art galleries.*" Furthermore, based on existing tourism research conducted in Bruce-Grey-Simcoe, a strong connection between the waterfront and nearby commercial facilities will help to increase tourism spending and improve visitor experiences. The commercial uses included in the Harbour Village Concept would help promote the new revitalized use of the Old Harbour and also help to establish a greater physical connection between the waterfront and Downtown commercial area.



FIGURE 27 - East Beach Illustration

4.3 OPTION 2 – INTENSIFIED BOATING CONCEPT

The Intensified Boating Concept requires significant remediation of the Old Harbour to mitigate the sediment deposition in the Bighead River mouth in the form of full dredging of the Old Harbour, control of the sediments upstream and reduction of the sedimentation from the lake at the mouth of the harbour or engineered structures to promote 'self-flushing' in the river mouth (see Figure 28). In order to support the cost of removing and controlling the sedimentation, it requires a significant expansion of mooring slips to pay for the works. This option intensifies the boating activities at the expense of other tourism opportunities around the Harbour. Increased moorings require a proportionate increase in the land base support facilities such as parking. The vision, objectives and economic development evaluation for Option 2 – Intensified Boating Concept are discussed below.

4.3.1 VISION

"The Municipality of Meaford has focused its urban area waterfront to become a destination marina having two expanded boating facilities in the Old and New Harbours. Major investments have been made to accommodate up to 500 boats in the two harbours, as well as the supporting boat services and parking. The two harbours are recognized by the boating community in Meaford and beyond as premier facilities for mooring on Georgian Bay. The Coast Guard Search and Rescue Station's presence is of great value and pride in Meaford.

Nelson Street, with its first storey marine-related commercial activity and pronounced streetscape design, becomes a key pedestrian corridor to the waterfront and the pedestrian bridge across the river. Nelson Street also connects the waterfront to the well-established Downtown commercial area. The Rotary Harbour Pavilion, with striking views to both harbours and the bay, shines as the gathering place along the waterfront that is focused on small and large community events. The waterfront is a vibrant space within the Municipality of Meaford and is well connected to the existing urban fabric, as illustrated in Figure 26. The open spaces and beaches along the lake back onto natural heritage areas that support a continuous pedestrian trail along the waterfront lands and connections to the Georgian Trail and the Downtown" (see Figure 27).



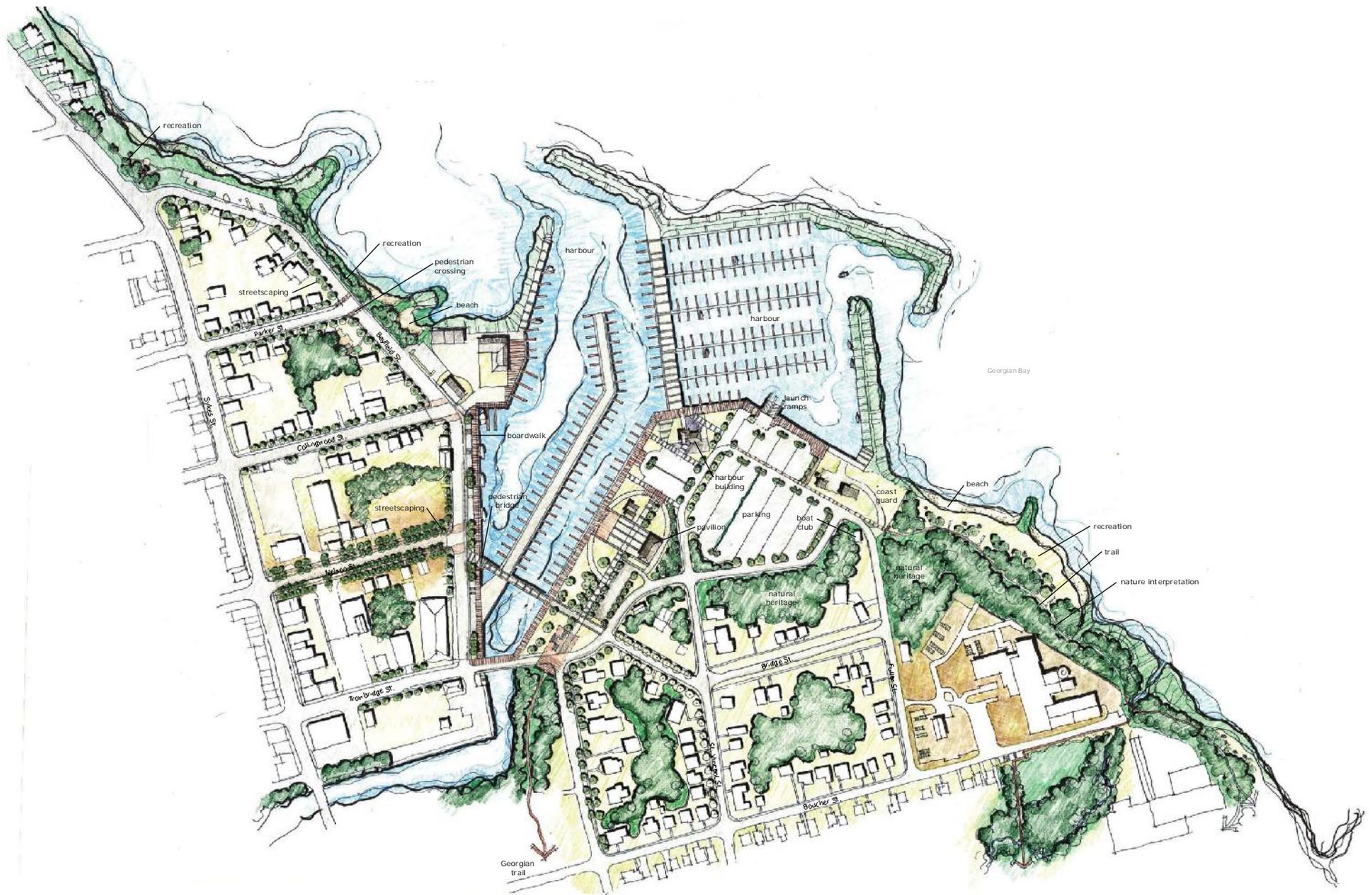


FIGURE 28 - Option 2 - Intensified Boating Concept

4.3.2 OBJECTIVES

- Recognize the waterfront for its boating activities.
- Develop the waterfront primarily for harbour-related uses, along with harbour support recreation, natural heritage and open space.
- Improve navigability and boat dockage capacity in the Old Harbour.
- Improve the layout and operations of the New Harbour.
- Attract boaters to Meaford's two harbours.
- Attract harbour-related businesses to the Downtown commercial area.
- Improve connectivity between the waterfront, Downtown and the Georgian Trail.

4.3.3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION

The Intensified Boating Concept focuses economic development in the boating and marina segments of the market. Commercial space supports marine and boating related retailing. The space available for other commercial use is limited in the waterfront because the lands are needed for parking and other marina supportive facilities such as boat storage, service areas and maintenance and repair facilities. This option does not include a range of community uses and there are also fewer opportunities to promote economic development, diverse tourism opportunities or the establishment of 'sustainable' new businesses (as per the *Meaford Economic Development Strategy*).

There has been extensive market research conducted in Bruce-Grey-Simcoe to evaluate waterway assets and tourism development. Existing tourism research highlights the importance of the waterfront as a major economic driver. There is also evidence that a strong connection between the waterfront and nearby businesses will improve experiences for tourists and other visitors, while also encouraging increased spending and economic activity. The Intensified Boating Concept does not provide the same level of opportunity for economic development as the Harbour Village Concept.

The Intensified Boating Concept also is not economically sustainable with the existing underutilization of the two harbours in Meaford and given that the boating and marina market forecasts are weak, poses greater risks for investment from the perspective of the Municipality. The existing harbours are currently operating below maximum capacity and have been losing market share to other nearby communities which offer a broader range of amenities and services. Recognizing the high costs of the Intensified Boating Concept, the investment in new facilities and costly ongoing maintenance could only be justified if all of the approximately 500 boat slips were occupied. Even if marina operations were expanded under the Intensified Boating Concept, there would be limited economic benefit to the Municipality relative to the tourism and economic benefits of the Harbour Village Concept. Given the significant investment required, it is not recommended that the Municipality assumes this level of financial risk associated with the implementation of the Intensified Boating Concept.

4.4 MEAFORD HARBOUR REMEDIATION TASK FORCE COMMITTEE

The Remediation Harbour Task Force was established by the Municipality of Meaford Council to look at options to address the on-going siltation issues within the Old Harbour at the river mouth. The Remediation Harbour Task Force made a number of observations and draft suggestions that included:

1. Rounding out of the corners of the river bend before the Bridge Street bridge.
Rounding out the river bend would improve flow capacity of the channel and potentially help with the reduction of ice jams. The costs of this undertaking may be significant and proper cost benefit analysis needs to be carried out.
2. Creation of a “flow-through” in the north breakwater.
The benefit of the flow-through is unclear. Based on discussions with local boaters during the Public Open House (see Section 3.3.6), it appears that a flow-through existed in the past and reportedly reduced surges in the harbour. There is no evidence other than anecdotal information, and it is difficult to demonstrate a scientific explanation beyond a very minor effect of such a structure on surge within the Old Harbour. The implementation of a second outlet from the river basin would likely reduce velocity through the main entrance and potentially increase siltation within the entrance.
3. Construction of a guide wall in the middle of the harbour, as per Option 2 – Intensified Harbour Concept.
The concept of a wall/solid pier dividing the harbour to increase the flow velocity and reduce sediment depositions is sound. The practical execution of such a plan is challenging. The plan would need to look at depositions supply and sedimentation rates under various flow and sediment load scenarios and ensure that the net change is a benefit. This benefit would be then need to be considered in light of the loss of aquatic habitat and other undesirable potential impacts, such as increased ice jamming and impairment of navigation. Proper assessment and balancing of all of these effects and impacts needs to be carried out and would be challenging.
4. Creation of new mooring area north of Richardson’s Boat Works and relocation of the boat service area to this new location.
The creation of a new basin north of the Richardson’s Boat Works is also challenging because of the potential siltation caused by any silt-laden water entering from the river. Although the load would be substantially reduced from that experienced in the existing river harbour at the river mouth, the silt will still be present. The bathymetry in the area suggests that more than half of the proposed enclosed area is too shallow (above -2m) and would require dredging. Also, this is a popular swimming area that would be lost if the use was changed to boat mooring. These use conflicts will need to be resolved.



5. Reclaim land areas on the east side of the existing basin that are naturally silting to narrow the channel and concentrate flow.

The final idea addresses permitting areas that now silt in to become reclaimed lands. This would achieve the narrowing of the channel and, therefore, potentially cause the sediment to be carried out further towards the harbour entrance. A review of the navigational chart of bottom contours in the Old Harbour does not support that the east side is the primary siltation area as suggested in the comments. The siltation patterns would change as areas are reclaimed, thus a very detailed assessment of the siltation patterns and progressive changes would need to be undertaken. It is important to also note that approval for such an undertaking will likely be very difficult to obtain because of concerns related to the loss of fish habitat

In summary, pursuing any structural solution to resolve the siltation issues in the Old Harbour should be done with extreme caution and only after considerable technical assessment. Although basic principles of siltation are relatively simple, the subtleties of any structural changes on siltation are very complex and will impact not only where silt deposits occur, but also ice movement, aquatic habitat, water quality, wave penetration into the harbour and many other issues. Such studies will take years to complete and costs for these assessments will be significant for the proponent. It is unlikely that any solution would completely eliminate the need for periodic dredging. Also, the more complex the intervention, the more difficult it will be to evaluate the impact and convince the regulating authorities that there is no harm to the environment.

Further, with the understanding that the existing Old Harbour is subject to substantial wave penetration and agitation during storms from the north, Old Harbour would need additional wave protection to be fully functional as a safe mooring location, regardless of the approach to resolve siltation and dredging issues.

4.5 REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

Although the extent of modifications to the harbours varies between Option 1 and Option 2, both will require the following additional approvals once the Environmental Assessment Study, Record for Site Conditions and detailed design have been completed.

4.5.1 NAVIGABLE WATERS PROTECTION ACT

Approval under the Navigable Waters Protection Act protects the public right to boat freely on the waterways in Canada. Approval is required for any structure to be placed in any navigable waters. The Navigation Protection Act is expected to come into effect in spring 2014 which will replace the Navigable Waters Protection Act and may change some of the requirements.

4.5.2 FISHERIES ACT

Section 35 (1) of the Fisheries Act states that “No person shall carry on any work, undertaking or activity that results in the harmful alteration or disruption, or the destruction, of fish habitat”. Fisheries and Oceans Canada will review projects to identify any impact to fish and fish habitat or delegate this authority to a local agency and work with proponents to identify if mitigation measures are possible.

4.5.3 DEVELOPMENT, INTERFERENCE WITH WETLANDS, AND ALTERATIONS TO SHORELINES AND WATERCOURSES REGULATION (ONTARIO REGULATION 161/06)

Proposed shoreline works is regulated by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation in order to prevent flooding and erosion. Approval will be required for any and all works proposed within the lands regulated pursuant to Ontario Regulation 161/06.

4.5.4 PUBLIC LANDS ACT

Public Lands Act (PLA) may be also required. The approval is provided under a Work Permit issued by the Ministry of Natural Resources. Lake and river bottoms are owned by the province and MNR administers these lands under PLA.

Finally, there are land ownership challenges related to the few parcels that are in private ownership. To move forward with the Meaford Waterfront Plan, the acquisition of the remaining public lands should be considered.



4.6 WATERFRONT PLAN COST ESTIMATE

The cost estimate for the waterfront has several components including improvements to public parkland, modest enhancements to the harbours and the Special Policy Areas illustrated in the Master Plan. The Master Plan also illustrates streetscape improvements that are part of the Community Improvement Plan area, but outside the designated waterfront lands. A separate cost has been provided for these works.

The Plan recommends repurposing some of the lands on the west side of the Old Harbour for either a new commercial 'Harbour Village', as described in Option 1, or 'Intensified Boating' uses, as illustrated in Option 2. It is recognized that any new commercial redevelopment will require an alternative delivery model such as a public-private partnership, or a long term lease by the municipality to an investor who will finance the commercial redevelopment whether for tourism uses, or expanded marina uses. This is the model that has been used in municipalities like Gravenhurst. The cost to the municipality, if any, will be dependent on the nature of the partnership, the intensity of the commercial redevelopment and revenue sharing agreements.

The improvements to the public parkland for the lands designated as waterfront are in the \$3 million range. The streetscape improvements in the CIP are estimated at \$1.65 million. These estimates are in order of magnitude rather than detailed costs (see Appendix 3).

4.7 POTENTIAL WATERFRONT USES

Recognizing that one of the primary objectives of the existing Meaford Economic Development Strategy is to introduce new businesses connected to the waterfront, potential commercial, recreation, and future development uses have been identified based on the review of existing policy documents, public engagement and detailed analysis of existing waterfront redevelopment strategies in various communities throughout Canada. The potential uses that would complement the waterfront and provide an opportunity for private sector participation are summarized in Figure 29.

It is important to note that some of these potential uses were previously located in the harbour/waterfront area. For example, the former Moose building, which was located at the northwest corner of Bayfield Street and Nelson Street, before being demolished in 2012, was previously the home of a number of waterfront eating and drinking establishments, including the Harbour Moose, Pier 74, and Grant's Restaurant.

Although there has been some discussion about the possibility of the municipal library being relocated to the waterfront, a 2010 potential site review completed by staff did not identify the Harbour as an ideal site and emphasized the role the library plays as a significant and prominent Downtown anchor. Existing policy direction and strategic planning in Meaford, including the Meaford Harbour Strategic Master Plan, does not identify the library as a potential use for the waterfront lands.

<p>Commercial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fine dining restaurant Other restaurant Banquet and/or event facility Health and wellness Specialty retailing and services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Art gallery Outdoor recreation store 	<p>Recreation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor education centre Events/staging area <p>Future Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Condominium Retirement accommodations Hotel/Resort Sailing clubhouse/facilities
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FIGURE 29 - Potential Waterfront Uses

In addition to the potential uses identified in Figure 29, there are also a number of existing uses which should continue to operate with some improvements or enhancements, including:

- Farmers' Market – expand and improve the Farmer's Market through the redesign of the open space in order to attract more visitors to Meaford throughout the entire year.
- Trail system – improve the connectivity between the waterfront trails and the Georgian Trail, with direct access to active transportation options and other recreation activities.
- Boat storage operations – move and consolidate existing operations as it is not an essential use on the waterfront, allowing prime waterfront land to be occupied by uses which stimulate tourism and economic development.
- Parking – reconfigure the existing parking to improve efficiency, and as a result, create greater opportunity for the development of commercial and recreational uses that stimulate tourism and economic development.

4.8 CONCEPT COMPARISON

The two concept options have two very distinguishable visions for the Meaford urban area waterfront lands, adjacent land uses and economic sector development. The comprehensive evaluation of the two options is critical to identify the extent of the potential social, economic development and tourism, and environmental long-term contributions and impacts. Although uncertainty exists about the future of many environmental, social, financial, technical and economic factors in the Municipality of Meaford and beyond, it is important to recognize at the early stages of planning the sufficiency and shortfalls of these plans to meet the desired future outcomes that are expressed through long-range planning policy and strategic plans. Further, understanding the deficiencies of each concept option allows for the flexibility to change course, as necessary, in the longer planning horizon as planning conditions change.

As illustrated in Figure 30, the two concept options were evaluated on their contributions to making a strong, moderate or weak case for specific development criteria to move forward as the preferred concept. The two concept options were compared using the following criteria:

- **Natural Heritage Enhancement:** the improvements of the aquatic and terrestrial habitats, the urban forest and wildlife corridors are strongly supported by the Municipality's Official Plan policies. Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept provides a considerably stronger case for the enhancement of the natural heritage with fish habitat improvements in the Bighead River mouth, less disturbance of the aquatic habitat, and less parking requirements that increase the open space area along the waterfront.
- **Open Space Enhancement:** the improvements to the open space are essential to support active transportation, healthy living and an authentic waterfront. Although both concept options provide considerable improvements to the open space network along the waterfront, Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept offers better connectivity between the open spaces with the additional lands that are used for parking in Option 2- Intensified Boating Concept.
- **Affordability:** the Municipality of Meaford will need to assess the cost implications for each concept. Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept provides a strong case for affordability, given its partial strategic dredging of the Old Harbour in comparison to the full-harbour intervention and dredging for Option 2 – Intensified Boating Concept. Option 2 also requires a large number of costly studies to resolve sedimentation issues in the Old Harbour.
- **Redevelopment Opportunities:** the redevelopment of the waterfront area is a priority in the Meaford Economic Development Strategy. Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept provides a considerable range of commercial, tourism and recreation opportunities to build itself as a vibrant waterfront gateway with successful development of related businesses.

	OPTION 1 harbour village	OPTION 2 intensified harbour
Natural Heritage Enhancement the concept plan improves aquatic and terrestrial habitats, urban forest cover and wildlife corridors	strong case	weak case
Open Space Enhancement the concept plan provides an extension to the existing greenspace with improved visual and physical connectivity between all parks	strong case	moderate case
Affordability the concept plan reflects a sound design with just capital and operation costs, while providing multiple funding opportunities	moderate case	weak case
Redevelopment Opportunities the concept plan provides a range of opportunities for redevelopment, including commercial, tourism and recreational space	strong case	weak case
Economic Climate the concept plan reflects local market conditions in Meaford and the surrounding area both now and in the future	strong case	moderate case
Economic Impact the concept plan helps to support local economic development (e.g. business growth, increased tax assessment) in the waterfront area, as well as downtown and other areas	strong case	weak case
Tourism Impact the concept plan helps to draw tourists to Meaford and the waterfront area, encouraging increased visitation (frequency, length of stay, overnight stays) and expenditures	strong case	moderate case
Recreation Impact the concept plan embraces the existing public recreation amenities provided in the waterfront area	moderate case	moderate case
Compatibility the concept plan poses few potential threats in terms of destabilizing other parts of the community	moderate case	strong case
Value to the Community the concept plan provides many additional amenities for local residents (e.g. new restaurants, additional recreational space, sense of pride in the community)	moderate case	moderate case
Value to the Municipality the concept plan provides value to the municipality through support for existing policy framework and improved municipal finances (e.g. reduced operating expenses, increased operating revenues)	strong case	weak case
Precedents the concept is consistent with the scale and scope of other successful waterfront precedents in comparable communities in Ontario	strong case	moderate case
Commercial Feasibility the concept plan will draw the attention of commercial partners and other development interests looking to invest in Meaford	strong case	weak case

STRONG CASE for moving forward with concept plan

- Strong economic climate
- Many redevelopment opportunities
- Significant impact on economic development
- Significant impact on tourism activity
- Significant impact on recreation (quality/quantity of space)
- Few threats or limitations
- Significant value to local residents
- Significant value to municipal government / consistency with policy framework
- Many successful precedents
- Strong economic feasibility

MODERATE CASE for moving forward with concept plan

- Moderate economic climate
- Some redevelopment opportunities
- Moderate impact on economic development
- Moderate impact on tourism activity
- Moderate impact on recreation (quality/quantity of space)
- Some threats or limitations
- Moderate value to local residents
- Moderate value to municipal government / consistency with policy framework
- Some successful precedents
- Moderate economic feasibility

WEAK CASE for moving forward with concept plan

- Weak economic climate
- Few redevelopment opportunities
- Limited impact on economic development
- Limited impact on tourism activity
- Limited impact on recreation (quality/quantity of space)
- Many threats or limitations
- Limited value to local residents
- Limited value to municipal government / consistency with policy framework
- Few successful precedents
- Weak economic feasibility

FIGURE 30 - Two Concept Option Comparison



- **Economic Climate:** the redevelopment of the waterfront reflects the current and future market conditions in Meaford and beyond. Although both concept options reflect on the importance of boating activities, Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept provides a stronger response to the economic climate by maintaining the current harbour functions with major improvements to facilitate the operation at full capacity, while diversifying the range of waterfront users by accommodating other uses, such as commercial, non-motorized boating, and recreational.
- **Economic Input:** the redevelopment of the waterfront provides significant contributions to Meaford's waterfront and the Downtown, as supported by the Official Plan and the Meaford Economic Development Strategy.
- **Tourism Impact:** the redevelopment of the waterfront draws tourists to Meaford and the waterfront. Although both concepts provide significant improvements to attracting tourists to Meaford and the waterfront, Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept accommodates a broad range of users and economic development that ensures year-round tourism activity.
- **Recreation Impact:** the improvements to the recreation areas are essential to support active transportation, healthy living and provide both passive and active recreation opportunities. Both options equally provide moderate opportunities for tourists and locals to embrace and enjoy the beaches, parks and trails.
- **Compatibility:** the improvements of the waterfront need to be compatible with the adjacent land uses to maintain strong and stable neighbourhoods and/or areas of the municipality. Although both concepts are compatible with the adjacent land uses, Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept provides the commercial opportunity along the Old Harbour west wall that complements the strategic direction to have commercial along Bayfield Street, while creating a stronger link between the waterfront and Downtown areas.
- **Value to the Community:** the redevelopment of the waterfront provides additional amenities for local residents. Although both concepts provide significant improvements to the waterfront amenities, Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept provides a diverse set of waterfront uses, including a potential restaurant along the waterfront which was identified as extremely important through community consultations.

- Value to the Municipality: the redevelopment of the waterfront provides value to the Municipality through implementation of its existing policy framework and improves municipal finances. Overall, Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept illustrates the strongest case to reduce operating costs and improve revenue.
- Precedents: the redevelopment of the waterfront has been already tested elsewhere and has been successful.
- Commercial Feasibility: the redevelopment of the waterfront draws commercial partners and other development interests to invest in Meaford. Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept provides the strongest case for commercial feasibility given the already established entrepreneur interest to invest in commercial uses along the waterfront and partnership and funding opportunities.

Through this comprehensive evaluation and community support, Option 1- Harbour Village Concept was refined to maintain access to Richardson Boats and some existing docks on the west harbour wall, presumably with modest annual dredging to facilitate mooring where sedimentation could be managed. The preferred concept for the Meaford Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan is presented in Figure 31.

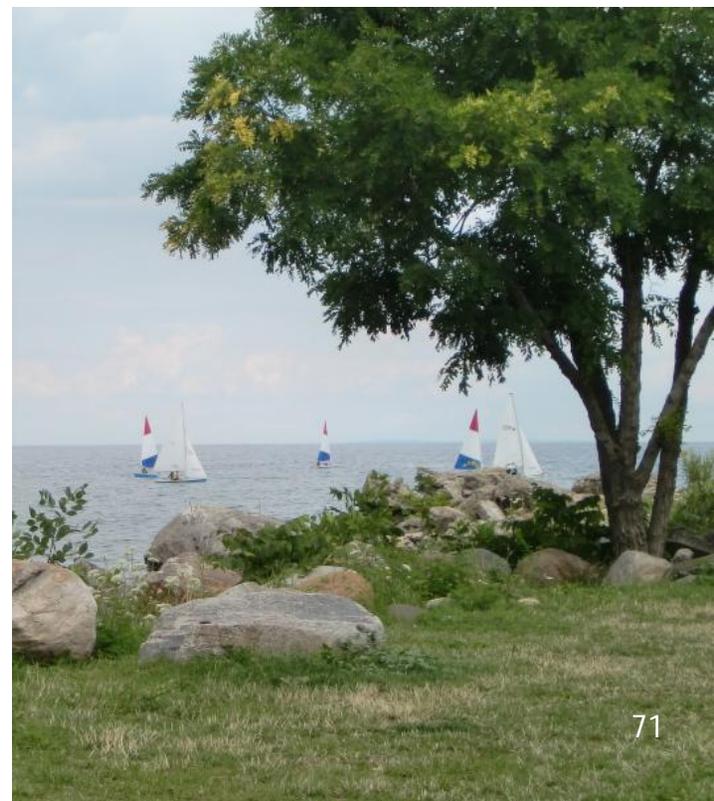
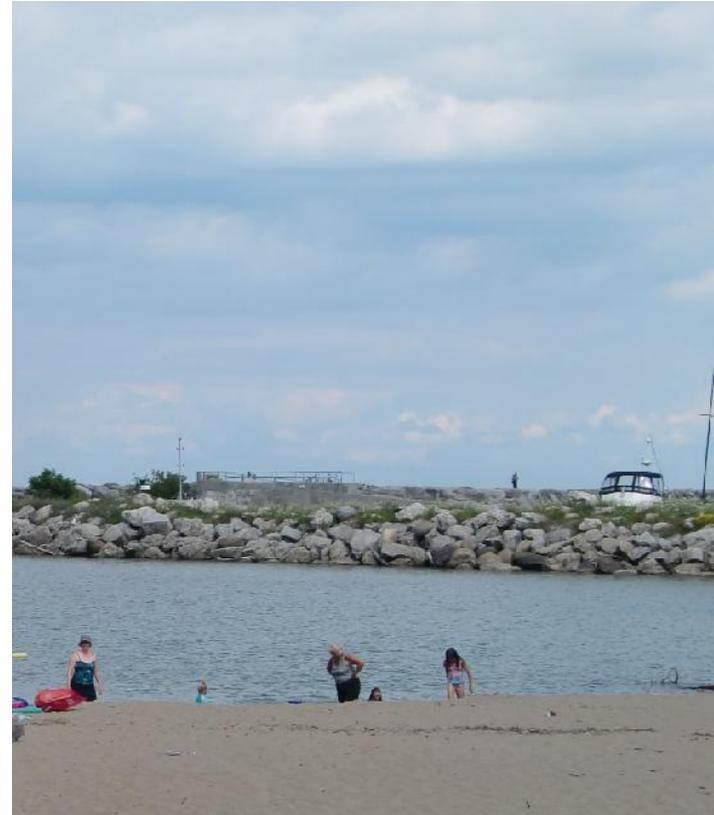




FIGURE 31 - Meaford Waterfront Preferred Concept

5.0 FUNDING STRATEGY

Many municipalities in Ontario have developed creative financial incentives and other programs to support the redevelopment of underperforming area. The primary objective of the economic development analysis was to identify sources of funding for the Meaford Waterfront Plan. Based on feedback received through consultation and the evaluation of business opportunities, funding mechanisms are identified in this section as well as the recommendations for an overall strategy to minimize the burden on the Municipality of Meaford. The funding strategy explored the existing financial tools available to municipalities, private sector partnership opportunities, fundraising and community involvement, partnership opportunities with other agencies, and opportunities to collaborate with upper levels of government.

5.1 MEAFORD'S EXISTING FINANCIAL TOOLS

A number of the financial tools are already used by the Municipality of Meaford to encourage redevelopment and provide financial assistance to property owners in the Harbour/waterfront and Downtown. These programs (including both grants and loans) are available through the Meaford Downtown CIP and apply to the lands within the Downtown CIP Area Boundary, which includes the Harbour/waterfront area, as illustrated in Figure 9. The existing financial tools which are available in Meaford through the Downtown CIP include:

- Residential Development Charge Grant Program - provides a one-time grant, equivalent to the amount of the applicable residential development charge for property owners who are investing in redevelopment and/or expansion of existing buildings located within the Downtown CIP;
- Tax Incremental Equivalent Grant Program (TIEG) - provides financing for a portion of the increased property taxes associated with any redevelopment or rehabilitation of a downtown property;
- Building Permit Fee Grant Program - provides a one-time grant, equivalent to the amount of the applicable building permit fee for property owners within the Downtown CIP Area;
- Parkland Dedication Fee Grant Program - provides a one-time grant, equivalent to the amount of the Parkland Dedication Fee, in situations where the Municipality of Meaford requires cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication;
- Façade Improvement Loan Program - provides an interest-free loan to property owners to finance improvements to the façade of an existing building, and must be consistent with the Municipality of Meaford's urban design and façade guidelines; and
- Upgrade to Building Code Loan Program - provides an interest-free loan to property owners to finance improvements to the façade of an existing building, and must be consistent with the Municipality of Meaford's urban design and façade guidelines.

The incentives programs available through the Downtown CIP could help to attract private sector partners to invest in the redevelopment of Meaford's Harbour/waterfront area, including residential and commercial property developers. These incentives help to increase the return on investment for developers considering investments in the Downtown area.

It is important to note that Downtown CIP does not pertain to the redevelopment of brownfields, which may require remediation before redevelopment can occur. As noted in a staff report from the Building & Planning Services Department (PB071-2011) the inclusion of incentive programs for brownfields could help to assist with the development of certain properties that may not otherwise be redeveloped due to the financial burden of remediation.

Notably, this staff report also indicates that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has permitted private developer funding for the revitalization of brownfields. This funding is available to developers through the FCM, but it is contingent upon municipal grants or tax assistance by means of an approved Community Improvement Plan in the local community. As a result it important that the Municipality of Meaford amends the existing Downtown CIP as planned in order to ensure that Brownfield incentives are included, allowing private developers to receive additional funding through the FCM.

5.2 PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The redevelopment and revitalization of the waterfront in Meaford presents a number of private sector partnership opportunities, including joint ventures, sponsorships/advertising, and stewardship programs.

5.2.1 JOINT VENTURES

The redevelopment of Meaford's waterfront/Harbour area provides an opportunity to establish a joint venture partnership with a private development company, or a group of companies. This type of partnership structure would be most appropriate for the financing, design and construction of commercial space in the Harbour/waterfront area. As described in Section 2.7.1, Gravenhurst (ON) provides an example of a joint venture partnership agreement that could be replicated in Meaford, whereby a private sector partner is secured to develop commercial space in tandem with a clear vision of a people-oriented waterfront experience.

5.2.2 SPONSORSHIPS AND ADVERTISING

In addition to joint venture partnership opportunities with various private sector partners, the redevelopment of the Harbour/waterfront also provides some discrete sponsorship and advertising opportunities, which would allow sponsors (both corporate and personal) to demonstrate support for new investment and the promotion of tourism and economic development in Meaford. There are a number of sponsorship programs already in place in many other municipalities in Ontario, such as Oakville, Milton, Newmarket and Burlington, amongst numerous others. There are even firms that focus specifically on providing municipalities with assistance identifying and marketing local sponsorship and advertising opportunities. The Municipality of Meaford could investigate if similar programs could be established in Meaford as a method of encouraging tourism and economic development in the Harbour/waterfront area.

- Naming facilities – Meaford could explore the potential for sponsors to exchange monetary donations for the naming rights to certain recreation facilities on the waterfront (including parks, beaches, etc.).
- Signage – like naming facilities, Meaford could permit sponsors to install signage in strategic locations throughout the community. For example, sponsors could be engaged to provide financing used to improve waterfront park spaces, in exchange for a signage and advertising rights.
- Both Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept and Option 2 – The Intensified Boating Concept features recreation space, including trails and a boardwalk that extends across the Bighead River. Meaford could sell the naming rights to the new boardwalk, and the municipality could also capitalize on its extensive trail network by introducing an adopt-a-trail program, where monetary donations are exchanged for recognition on a sign positioned at the beginning of each trail. Meaford currently

features 180 kilometres of outdoor recreation trails and proposes to add more through the redevelopment of Harbour/waterfront area. Proceeds from the adopt-a-trail program could be used to finance the ongoing maintenance of the trail system which extends throughout Meaford.

- Recreation guides – sponsorship and advertising opportunities should also be made available on the Parks & Facilities pages of Meaford’s website. The Municipality of Meaford provides an online overview of local parks, trails and recreational facilities, which could be levered as an advertising opportunity (<http://www.meaford.ca/parks-a-trails.html>). For example, under the Parks tab (which also includes beaches), on the Parks & Facilities page, Sail Georgian Bay or the Reef Boat Club could benefit from advertising.

5.2.3 OTHER PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Like joint ventures, stewardship programs provide an opportunity for the municipality to establish a partnership with a private sector organization. While a joint venture would involve collaboration between the municipality and a private partner, with the establishment of a stewardship program, Meaford would delegate responsibility for managing the redevelopment and operation of the Harbour/waterfront area, or a portion of it, to a private partner. This private sector partner would be responsible for acting on behalf of the community, to oversee the redevelopment and revitalization of one of Meaford’s most valuable community assets, the harbour/waterfront area.

5.3 FUNDING AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

In addition to opportunities to partner with a private development company in the redevelopment of the waterfront/harbour in Meaford, there could also be an opportunity for community involvement. Some of the strategies that could be employed in Meaford as a method of encouraging fundraising activities and community involvement in the redevelopment of the harbour/waterfront include a “Friends of” program and special events.

5.3.1 SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events provide an opportunity for fundraising activities, but also an opportunity to feature the waterfront and attract tourists to the local community. There are numerous events which could potentially be used for fundraising purposes. For example, the Dragon’s Den Meaford event could potentially be used as an opportunity to identify new waterfront businesses. The annual Meaford Scarecrow Invasion presents another potential fundraising opportunity, and is traditionally hosted in the harbour/waterfront area. The synergy between the Scarecrow Invasion and the redevelopment of the waterfront is evident, as both seek to promote local tourism and commercial activity in the vicinity of the harbour/waterfront and the Downtown. As a result, these events and other similar programs could be used to encourage community involvement in the redevelopment of the waterfront, and to assist in fundraising activities.

5.4 OPPORTUNITIES TO COLLABORATE WITH UPPER LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

The redevelopment of Meaford’s waterfront also presents a number of opportunities to collaborate with upper levels of government, and secure financing to offset the associated costs, and reduce the burden on local taxpayers. There could be opportunities to secure funding from the Provincial Government and/or the Federal Government to help finance the redevelopment of the waterfront in Meaford.

For example, the redevelopment of the waterfront/rail lands in North Bay has been facilitated by a \$2.1 million dollar investment from the City of North Bay, a \$2.0 million contribution from the Provincial Government through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (“NOHFC”), and \$1.5 million from the Federal Government through the Federal Economic Development Initiative in Northern Ontario (“Fednor”). There was also an additional \$1.0 million contribution promised by Community Waterfront Friends, although fundraising is still ongoing, as discussed in Section 4.3. Moreover, Fednor also contributed an additional \$500,000, along with another \$200,000 by the City of North Bay as a condition of the Fednor grant. While Meaford would not be eligible for funding through the NOHFC or Fednor, North Bay provides an example of

a municipality that has collaborated with upper levels of government to help finance the redevelopment and revitalization of the waterfront. Like North Bay, waterfront redevelopment initiatives in Toronto have also been facilitated by funding from three levels of government (municipal, provincial, federal).

Meaford could be eligible for funding through the Ontario Provincial Government. For example, the Ontario Trillium Foundation is an agency of the Ontario Provincial Government, which provides funding to charities and not-for-profit organizations through three grant programs:

- Community Grants;
- Province-wide Grants; and
- The Future Fund.

Recognizing that the Ontario Trillium Foundation grants are directed to charities and not-for-profit organizations, a not-for-profit charitable partner would have to be engaged by the Municipality to secure this type of funding. Based on the eligibility criteria for each, a non-profit partner would be most likely to secure a Community Grant, which is intended for activities that have a local impact within a single catchment area. The Ontario Trillium Foundation provides grants of up to \$375,000 over five years, with the level of funding varying depending on how well each application coincides with the sector priorities, desired outcomes, and areas of focus for the agency.

There are also alternative federal funding programs, which could be used to provide financing for the waterfront redevelopment in Meaford, such as the New Building Canada Plan. This program was established as a result of the Economic Action Plan 2013, and promises to contribute \$47 billion in new funding over the next 10 years. This program builds on the Building Canada Fund that was established in 2007, with the objective of creating a stronger economy, a cleaner environment, and prosperous communities. The New Building Canada Plan has been introduced to provide financial support for new construction and infrastructure projects, which function as key drivers of economic growth and job creation. The program focuses on projects that promote economic development through innovative strategies, including public-private partnerships. As a result, there is a clear synergy between the New Building Canada Plan, and the redevelopment of harbour/waterfront in Meaford.



6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations for the Meaford Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan (Meaford Waterfront Plan) are based on the input received from the community, stakeholders, staff and Council. The purpose of the Meaford Waterfront Plan was to develop a waterfront master plan as an update to the Meaford Harbour Strategic Plan and policy recommendations that implement the strategies developed through the Meaford Economic Development Strategy.

In the development of the Meaford Waterfront Plan, two concept options were considered for the Municipality of Meaford urban area waterfront redevelopment – the two concepts' land use, harbour functions, and tourism and economic development potential were the main differentiators. Based on a deep understanding of the Municipality of Meaford's Official Plan policy gaps and 'environment-first' mandate, the technical, regulatory and navigation challenges in the Old Harbour, community support, and the economic development and market conditions evaluation, it is the recommendation of the Meaford Waterfront Plan that Option 1 – Harbour Village Concept (see Figure 31) be adopted as the preferred Waterfront Master Plan.

The Waterfront Master Plan provides the greatest opportunities for creating a balanced mix of uses, tourism activities and economic development in Meaford. Although the development of certain features, such as the cantilevered harbour village cluster, may encounter ownership, regulatory and funding challenges, it should not limit or undermine the potential for a successful development of the waterfront, including the promotion of harbour-related uses on the west side of Bayfield Street.

Detailed recommendations for the redevelopment of the waterfront as a Harbour Village are identified below:

6.1 GENERAL

1. The Municipality should invest capital budget into the placemaking elements of the urban area waterfront lands, such as the trail experience as the path meanders along commercial areas, softer edges of the adjacent parks, continuous waterfront boardwalk, flexible street/plaza, beaches and the green system. Other examples include: gateway entrances, signage and way-finding, public spaces (such as the Meaford Rotary Pavilion), and streetscapes. The development of commercial areas that support the tourism activity in the urban area waterfront should come through other funding strategies.

2. The Municipality should consider the future relocation of boating services and fuel to the New Harbour in the event that Richardson's can no longer provide this service.
3. The Municipality of Meaford should recognize the Métis traditional use of the waterways, shorelines and lands in and around the Municipality's boundaries. All future development and development currently under processing for permitting in the vicinity of shorelines should not impede access of the Métis to these traditional areas. In order to better understand and mitigate the potential impact of such developments, the Municipality of Meaford should consult the Métis community, working through the MNO Georgian Bay Traditional Territory Consultation Committee.

6.2 POLICY

1. The Meaford Waterfront Plan becomes a policy of the updated Official Plan (2013) and that the recommendations provide the basis for continuous water and land-based waterfront improvements as funding becomes available.
2. Apply an 'urban area waterfront' designation to all lands within the study area of the Meaford Waterfront Plan, with a unified vision and set of objectives that support sustainable redevelopment of the waterfront lands and important connections to the adjacent lands.
3. Objectives:
 - a) Recognize the waterfront for its tourism and recreation opportunities.
 - b) Develop a balanced mix of uses, including recreation, harbour, commercial, natural heritage, open space and harbour support.
 - c) Maintain boat access to boat services and fuel operations in the Old Harbour.
 - d) Improve the layout and operations of the New Harbour.
 - e) Attract businesses to Meaford's waterfront at the Harbour Village.
 - f) Improve connectivity between the waterfront, Downtown and the Georgian Trail.
 - g) Improve aquatic and terrestrial habitats of the Georgian Bay shoreline and Bighead River mouth.
4. Update the Land Use Plan to reflect the new vision, strategic objectives and potential waterfront uses, as reflected and supported by the Meaford Waterfront Plan, for the urban area waterfront and adjacent supporting lands.
5. Apply separate waterfront designations, vision and objectives for all other public waterfront lands within the Municipality.
6. Distinguish the importance of the urban area waterfront for tourism activity and the synergy with the Downtown Core Commercial Area.



7. Define policies for the Environmental Protection shoreline designation along the urban area waterfront lands.
8. Adopt the full set of Guiding Principles for the waterfront lands as policy through the Official Plan:
 - a) Protect the environment for the benefit of current and future generations.
 - b) Promote a healthy waterfront.
 - c) Promote the urban area waterfront as a gateway and focal open space area.
 - d) Become a cornerstone of public open space with a mix of public and recreation-oriented uses.
 - e) Consider the compatibility, access and synergies with the adjacent Special Policy Areas and the Downtown Core Commercial area.
 - f) Protect and enhance lands for boating opportunities.
 - g) Protect and enhance passive waterfront recreation.
 - h) Protect and enhance public access to the waterfront lands.
 - i) Provide safe access through design and minimize community impacts.
 - j) Provide safe, continuous public trail access along the water's edge.
 - k) Enhance the physical and visual connectivity of the pedestrian circulation and links.
 - l) Promote excellence in design.
 - m) Celebrate Meaford's heritage.
 - n) Enhance economic benefits.

Protect the environment for the benefit of current and future generations.

- i) Protect significant natural heritage features and functions.
- ii) Promote and encourage sustainable forms of land use and development.

Promote a healthy waterfront.

- i) Diversity waterfront uses to include a balance and awareness of the marine heritage and boating, recreation, tourism economic and employment opportunities.
- ii) Foster arts and culture, with the provision of immediate and large event spaces for year-round events and festivals.
- iii) Create naturalized areas that increase tree canopy coverage.
- iv) Expand pathway network within the urban area waterfront and encourage the use of alternative transportation.
- v) Apply sustainable standards to stormwater treatment and on-site management of pollutants.
- vi) Address maintenance of the infrastructure and open spaces.

Promote the urban area waterfront as a gateway and focal open space area.

- i) Promote the authentic character of Meaford.
- ii) Develop the identity within the regional context.
- iii) Establish the urban area waterfront as an important public amenity and node.
- iv) Provide architectural and landscape features to mark the gateway entrance.
- v) Provide way-finding and signage to help establish the urban area waterfront.
- vi) Incorporate a meaningful cultural/heritage theme to establish a distinction of the area from other adjacent lands.

Become a cornerstone of public open space with a mix of public and recreation oriented uses.

- i) Create interconnected parks and open space system.
- ii) Create high-quality streetscapes and placemaking.
- iii) Develop Bayfield Street as a 'complete street' over time to allow extended sidewalks, sufficient space for street tree roots, stormwater collection and to allow for flexible public space programming of the street for community events.
- iv) Make the urban area waterfront lands a source of enjoyment and pride for the community.

Consider the compatibility, access and synergies with the adjacent Special Policy Areas and the Downtown Core Commercial area.

- i) Apply an open space designation for Special Policy Area 2, which could also permit seasonal commercial uses that support the adjacent harbour and open spaces (such as the chip wagon), to act as a buffer to the adjacent residential zone.
- ii) Establish height limitations and built form guidelines for the development of the adjacent Special Policy Area 1, in order to minimize the impact and to protect the small-town nature of the Municipality.
- iii) Ensure compatibility of the new development plans to the adjacent residential land uses.
- iv) Ensure public realm is integrated into any new development.
- v) Ensure the provision of visual and physical access to the urban area waterfront.
- vi) Provide municipal services to the site in a way that best utilized existing infrastructure and minimizes impact on the environment.
- vii) Ensure the establishment of high-quality development.

Protect and enhance lands for boating opportunities.

- i) Recognize and celebrate the boating history within the community.
- ii) Assess the New Harbour configuration, and develop a phasing plan.

- iii) Provide gas dock and marine service facilities.
- iv) Implement best practices for New Harbour management and operations.

Protect and enhance passive waterfront recreation.

- i) Expand opportunities for outdoor lifestyles and recreational opportunities.
- ii) Improve the quality of the open spaces.
- iii) Improve the quality and access of the beaches.
- iv) Protect quiet and quaint open areas with views to the water.

Protect and enhance public access to the waterfront lands.

- i) Protect and provide for equal access to all community members, including the implementation of accessibility guidelines and overall balance between diverse uses (such as boating, swimming, picnicking, walking, sailing, etc.)
- ii) Protect and enhance open views to the Georgian Bay and the Bighead River.
- iii) Water and land access for the Métis traditional areas should be protected.
- iv) Design spaces that are attractive for both day and night time use and for all seasons of the year.

Provide safe access through design and minimize community impacts.

- i) Provide a safe and efficient pedestrian circulation system through designated sidewalks, trails and the pedestrian bridge.
- ii) Provide appropriate lighting.
- iii) Provide access and security for the New Harbour.
- iv) Integrate access points and trails through the adjacent land uses.
- v) Provide natural heritage buffers to allow for greater separation between adjacent land uses.
- vi) Ensure urban area waterfront uses are compatible with adjacent land uses.

Provide safe, continuous public trail access along the water's edge.

- i) Acquire properties to increase and improve public access to the waterfront across the Municipality.
- ii) Maintain public right-of-way parcels for future expansions as parkland, trails or recreation and boat/launch ramps.
- iii) Promote the use of bike sharing systems and bike storage facilities.
- iv) Improve way-finding and signage within the Municipality.

Enhance the physical and visual connectivity of the pedestrian circulation and links.

- i) Develop a trail hierarchy (regional, waterfront and inner-city) and identify a trail classification system.
- ii) Encourage active and healthy communities by creating pedestrian and cycling friendly environments.
- iii) Connect the Georgian Trail to the waterfront lands and provide appropriate way-finding and signage.

Promote excellence in design.

- i) Ensure Meaford's authentic character is reflected through the design of any park, built structure or urban design elements.
- ii) Develop urban design guidelines for the Downtown and urban area waterfront.
- iii) Ensure good quality of design and materials.
- iv) Utilize stormwater management and Low Impact Design.
- v) Provision of sustainable design elements.

Celebrate Meaford's heritage.

- i) Recognize that the majority of urban area waterfront lands are within the proposed Heritage Conservation District (HCD).
- ii) Establish provision for preserving cultural heritage and scenic landscapes through the HCD.
- iii) Establish guidelines for the development of new buildings or structures within the HCD.
- iv) Protect cultural heritage assets and encourage interpretative depiction of Meaford's history and character.
- v) Protect traditional activities of the harbour, such as fishing and boating.

Enhance economic benefits.

- i) Promote harbour-related uses along the west side of Bayfield Street to support the viability and connection between the waterfront and the Downtown (i.e., ground floor commercial, accommodation, etc.).
- ii) Expand commercial space on the east side of Bayfield Street, along the west wall of the Bighead River mouth, to complement the harbour-related uses along the west side of Bayfield Street.
- iii) Explore the opportunities to fund economic development through existing financial tools, private sector partnership, fundraising, agency partnerships and upper level of government partnerships.

- iv) Allow the following uses in the Downtown Core Commercial Area, in particular along Nelson Street and Bayfield Street, as they provide the main linkage between the Downtown and waterfront, which support the vibrancy of the urban area waterfront lands and tourism activity.

Commercial

- Food services (fine dining restaurants, other restaurant)
- Banquet and/or event facility
- Health and wellness
- Specialty retailing and services (art gallery, outdoor recreation store)

Recreation

- Outdoor education centre
- Events/staging area

Future Development

- Residential (condominium, retirement accommodations)
- Hotel/resort
- Sailing clubhouse/facilities

6.3 IMPLEMENTATION

1. Complete more work on the former landfill location to target a greater area than investigated through the Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) completed in 2009. Further investigation may be needed where the hydro excavation encountered waste, to be able to properly evaluate and characterize where the former landfill is located.
2. Select the risk management measures (excavation/remediation or risk assessment) to be implemented to address the contamination identified in areas of the waterfront.
3. A mandatory MOE Record of Site Condition (RSC) must be completed before changing the land use of the site to a more sensitive land use, such as residential or parkland. The RSC documentation must demonstrate, once a remedial strategy is complete, that the soil and groundwater on the site meet generic and/or risk-based standards for more sensitive land uses.
4. Update/redo both Phase 1 ESA (2007) and Phase 2 ESA (2009) reports completed for the Municipality compliance with the new (July 2, 2011) requirements for Record of Site Condition (RSC) submission - the date of the last work on all the components of either the Phase 1 or 2 ESA or P2ESA must be completed within 18 months of filing for a RSC .

5. Complete a costal process study in order to understand the coastal processes, engineering conditions, potential habitat implications, timeline of required upgrades, and potential for additional public access created during upgrades. These studies will also be required in order to implement any changes to shoreline that might impact alongshore water flow and aquatic habitat. New erosion control structures may require completion of a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment and Conservation Authority approval).
6. Develop an Implementation Plan that identifies specific sources of funding based on the ultimate composition of uses included in the final Land Use Plan.
7. Develop a Business Plan which identifies the capital and operating costs related to the updated Land Use Plan.
8. Include Brownfield redevelopment incentives in the Downtown Community Improvement Plan in order to allow developers to access funding through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Consideration should also be given to expanding the boundaries of the Downtown CIP to include specific Brownfield properties.
9. Develop a Marketing Strategy to provide a clear direction and mechanisms for communicating with potential markets and/or customers. This could include the development of a 'Shop in Meaford' experience which promotes local businesses in Meaford's waterfront area, as well as the Downtown.
10. Develop a Request for Proposal to engage private sector development partners to participate in the redevelopment of Meaford's waterfront area.

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